

**The Inscrutable Question: Metaphorical Use of *Kavoth*: Job 1:1-3, 21; 2:7, 9-10; 19:9**

- 10- This metaphorical sense is called “glory.” It speaks of the outward manifestations of his successful life such as his holdings, land, herds, flocks, homes, possessions, and finances. Job is a good example.

**Job 1:2 -** There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God, and turning away from evil.

**v. 2 -** And seven sons and three daughters were born to him.

**Job 1:3 -** His possessions also were 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys (jennies), and very many servants; and that man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

- 11- Job is classified as a righteous man in verse 1 who has taken on a lot of “weight” according to verses 2 and 3. This “weight,” or *kavoth*, is a manifestation of his righteousness. The Holy Spirit observes the invisible asset of righteousness as an explanation for the material manifestations of it.
- 12- Lucifer observes these material manifestations of Job’s success and decides that he has a false humility. He seeks to demonstrate the accuracy of his claim by suggesting that if God allows him to destroy all of Job’s possessions then Job will “surely curse You to Your face (Job 1:11).”
- 13- Knowing that Job is a righteous man and has the spiritual assets to orient and adjust to difficult circumstances, God allows Lucifer to exact terrorism upon Job’s possessions. These possessions are a material manifestation of Job’s internal spiritual possessions which will later be referred to as *kavoth*, or “glory.”
- 14- In verses 13-19, both God and Lucifer unleash strikes against Job’s family, land and herds. In verses 14-15, the Sabeans rustle his oxen and jennies and murder his ranchers. In verse 16, lightning strikes and consumes Job’s flocks and shepherds. In verse 17, three units of Chaldeans raid his herd of camels and kill the ranchers. Finally, the weather angels generate a strong wind that blows down the home of Job’s oldest son where he is entertaining all his siblings gathered for a party, killing them all.
- 15- Job’s response to this is recorded in:

**Job 1:21b -** “The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.”

- 16- Still unconvinced, Lucifer counters with the suggestion that Job’s health be withdrawn after which he contends Job will then curse God. God approves a nonlethal attack upon Job’s health:

**Job 2:7 -** Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

- 17- This attack was more than Job’s wife could take. Her advice to her husband is found in:

**Job 2:9 -** Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!”

- 18- Job demonstrates his resolve to indeed hold on to his integrity when he responds in:

**Job 2:10 -** But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

- 19- What we learn from this example is an application for the term “glory.” Job has been stripped of all possessions, family, and health and left with a bitter and unsupportive wife. He has lost all the worldly manifestations of wealth and prosperity. This loss is described in:

**Job 19:9 -** “God has stripped my honor from me and removed the crown from my head.”

- 20- The word translated into the English as “honor” is *kavoth*, “glory.” This “glory” makes reference to the accumulation of goods, possessions, holdings, wealth, employees, and children, and a reputation of high esteem and respect by all who knew him and did business with him.
- 21- The thinking of Job was based on an inventory of doctrinal ideas that over time produced the visible manifestations of his inner integrity. The word that defines these visible assets is *kavoth*: glory.
- 22- These concepts and applications of *kavoth* are discussed by:

**Jenni, Ernst and Claus Westermann. *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated by Mark E. Biddle. Vol. 2. (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 594:**

One may attribute *kavoth* to a person in reference to his wealth, but also to his significance. This parallels the English word “weighty.” This weightiness of a person is identical for the Hebrews to the respect one has among one’s acquaintances; one’s weightiness is one’s respect, one’s honor. Honor proceeds not from those honoring but from those honored; it is a reflection of a person’s significance.

- 23- Before a person can achieve honor he must first acquire wisdom. And wisdom cannot be acquired without the genuine humility that accompanies spiritual growth. These concepts are brought out by two verses in Proverbs:

**Proverbs 15:33 -** Respect of the Lord is the instruction for wisdom; and before honor comes humility.

**Proverbs 18:12 -** Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, but humility goes before honor.

- 24- The concept of manifest glory among men is also provided by:

**Harris, R. Laird (ed.). *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. Vol. 1. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 426-27:**

**כבוד / *kavoth* /** Common translations are “honorable” and “glorious.” The reputation of an individual is of central importance in these usages. Thus the person of high social position and accompanying wealth was automatically an honored, or weighty, person in the society. Such a position, its riches, and long life were commonly assumed to be just rewards of a righteous life. While one would be honored automatically if one attained this stature, it is also clear that one was expected to merit the honor and the glory. Persons in positions of responsibility and authority were deserving of honor. Giving glory and honor is to say that someone is deserving of respect, attention, and obedience.

- 25- And, of course, those who are assigned the primary position of responsibility and authority under the Order Code are parents whose children are mandated to honor them under the Fifth Commandment found in:

**Exodus 20:12 -** “Honor your father and mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you.”