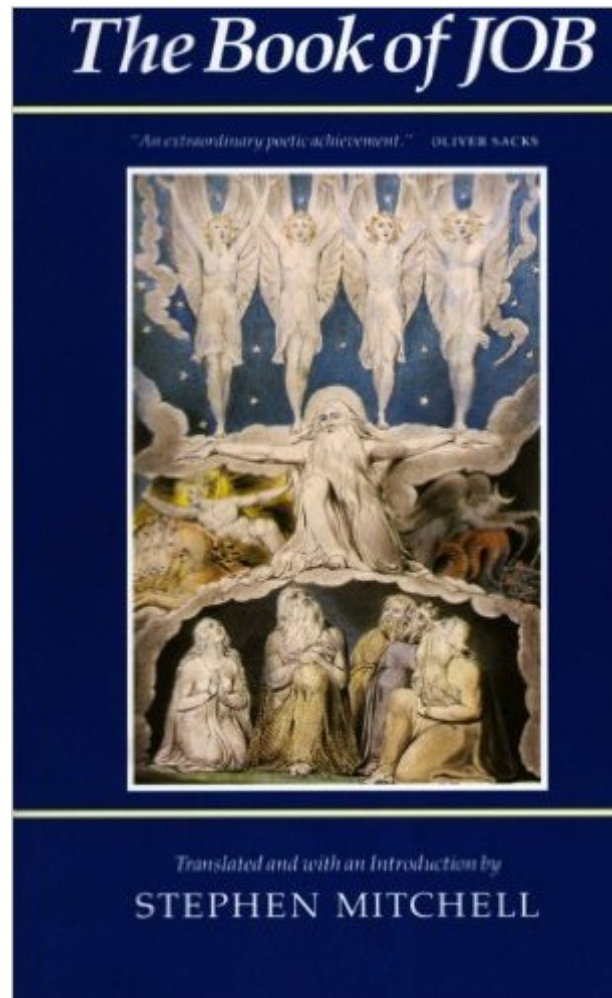


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The BOOK OF JOB



Synopsis

The theme of The Book of Job is nothing less than human suffering and the transcendence of it: it pulses with moral energy, outrage, and spiritual insight. Now, The Book of Job has been rendered into English by the eminent translator and scholar Stephen Mitchell, whose versions of Rilke, Israeli poetry, and the Tao Te Ching have been widely praised. This is the first time ever that the Hebrew verse of Job has been translated into verse in any language, ancient or modern, and the result is a triumph.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (46 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

. . . even though I'd like to deduct a star for its omissions. As with so much of Stephen Mitchell's work, it's easy to pick on him for what he's decided to leave out. Here, his translation of Job omits the hymn in praise of Wisdom and the speech (in fact the entire presence) of the young man Elihu. I tend to disagree with his reasons for skipping them (yes, yes, I know some scholars regard them as later additions). But having read his translation for nearly a decade now, I have to admit we don't miss them much. His work has been described as "muscular," and that's a very apt term. Not only in Job's own language (from his "God damn the day I was born" to his closing near-silence after his experience of God) but in the voices of all the characters -- and most especially in the speech of the Voice from the Whirlwind -- Mitchell's meaty, pounding, pulse-quickening poetry just cries out to be read aloud. And as always, I have nothing but praise for Mitchell's gift of "listening" his way into a

text and saying what it "wants" to say. In particular, his translation of the final lines has a wee surprise in store for anyone who hasn't already read it. (He disagrees with the usual repent-in-dust-and-ashes version and offers a denouement more fitting to the cosmic scope of Job's subject matter.) Moreover, all this and much else is discussed in a fine introduction that -- in my opinion as a longtime reader of Mitchell -- may well be his finest published commentary to date. Essentially, he deals with the so-called "problem of evil" by simply dissolving it.

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