



## **Answer to Job: (From Vol. 11 of the Collected Works of C. G. Jung) (New in Paper) (Jung Extracts)**

*C.G. Jung , R.F.C. Hull (Translator) , Sonu Shamdasani (Contributor)*

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Considered one of Jung's most controversial works, *Answer to Job* also stands as Jung's most extensive commentary on a biblical text. Here, he confronts the story of the man who challenged God, the man who experienced hell on earth and still did not reject his faith. Job's journey parallels Jung's own experience--as reported in *The Red Book: Liber Novus*--of descending into the depths of his own unconscious, confronting and reconciling the rejected aspects of his soul.

This paperback edition of Jung's classic work includes a new foreword by Sonu Shamdasani, Philemon Professor of Jung History at University College London. Described by Shamdasani as "the theology behind *The Red Book*," *Answer to Job* examines the symbolic role that theological concepts play in an individual's psychic life.

## **Answer to Job: (From Vol. 11 of the Collected Works of C. G. Jung) (New in Paper) (Jung Extracts) Details**

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# From Reader Review Answer to Job: (From Vol. 11 of the Collected Works of C. G. Jung) (New in Paper) (Jung Extracts) for online ebook

**Jason , etc. says**

Job is the most beautifully written book in the bible, period. It's more prose than anything else. Jung's Answer to Job's cry of 'Why' is amazing. Jung believed in God, which is pretty amazing when considering the stance of most of his contemporaries. His answer to the ultimate question of suffering is worthy of anyone's time, believer or not.

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**???????? says**

"?????? ?????????? ? ?????? ?????????????, ???? ? ????????????????? ?????? ? ??????? ?  
???????????????? ???? ?????? ??????????, ????? ? ????????????? ??????????. *Ex perfecto nihil fit.*"

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**John Pistelli says**

The back cover advertises *Answer to Job* as "one of Jung's most controversial works." He wrote it toward the end of his life, in the early 1950s, and according to the introduction to the 2010 edition by Sonu Shamdasani, he composed it in a kind of fever and later considered it the only one of his works he would not wish to alter. A short, swift book, written in a dryly sardonic style, it is a plea to update Christianity, or monotheism more generally, so that it can face the dangers of the atomic age.

*Answer to Job's* thesis is that Judeo-Christian monotheism dangerously denies that God, as a concept of wholeness and totality, *must* contain both evil and the feminine, and that much of western religious history, from the moral protest against God's injustice in the Book of Job to Pope Pius XII's 1950 doctrine of Mary's Assumption into Heaven, has been an attempt to redress these imbalances in the deity.

*Answer to Job* also has a meta-thesis: because "[w]e cannot tell whether God and the unconscious are two different entities," and because God as an image of wholeness is the archetype of the self, humanity has to get God right—our idea of God is in a sense our own self-concept, and now that we have the power to destroy the world, we cannot afford to be insensible to our own dark side or to the appeal of affects and values other than masculinist domination:

Since [man] has been granted an almost godlike power, he can no longer remain blind and unconscious. He must know something of God's nature and of metaphysical processes if he is to understand himself...

Jung's method of demonstrating these theses, which will probably not persuade either the Biblical scholar or contemporary psychologists but which should not offend the literary critic at all, is to treat the books of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation as a single continuous narrative, albeit composed at different historical moments by different sensibilities, that shows the development (or circular non-development) of God's personality from the jealous and dangerous deity of the early books through the attempt at reform and

atonement running from the Hebrew Bible's wisdom literature through the Incarnation in the New Testament, back to the unintegrated omni-destructive force described by John of Patmos (whom Jung construes, wrongly I believe, as the John of the Gospels and Epistles).

Throughout the Bible, Jung claims, both God and His people made many attempts to reform the God-image. Job is a turning point because it is the first time God is called to moral account by a mortal man as Job continues despite his suffering to believe in God's justice and thus, according to Jung, becomes more just than God: "a mortal man is raised by his moral behaviour above the stars in heaven, from which position of advantage he can see the back of Yahweh," Jung writes. The Book of Job coincides, Jung further argues, with a body of Hebrew wisdom writing that describes a feminine force called Sophia, which supplements the excessively masculine deity with a feminine counterpart. Jung argues that "[p]erfection is a masculine desideratum, while woman inclines by nature to *completeness*"; so this "anamnesis of Sophia" portends the next stage in God's development, wherein God—through the agency of a mortal but perfect woman—will incarnate himself as a man in his continuing quest for wholeness rather than unconscious self-division. In the crucifixion, we find the "answer to Job" of Jung's title: "God experiences what it is to be a mortal man and drinks to the dregs what he made his faithful servant Job suffer."

The elevation of Mary to the status of quasi-divinity shows that the feminine becomes more central to the God-concept, but Mary's immaculateness, i.e., sinlessness, means that though God now at least partially includes the feminine, He still excludes the evil that is necessarily part of *any* whole: Mary is "the incarnation of her prototype, namely Sophia," but because "[b]oth mother and son are not real human beings at all, but gods," then "Yahweh's perfectionism is carried over from the Old Testament to the New" and "the feminine principle...never prevailed against the patriarchal supremacy."

God's dispatch of the Holy Spirit to dwell in humanity implies that all human beings, not only Christ, should incarnate God, a "Christification" of man that will realize divinity on earth, yet, again, as long as God, however newly feminized or humanized, remains an impossible idea of perfect goodness, the evil part of the psyche remains unintegrated, which means that it will continue to be expressed in destructively unconscious ways. Hence the Bible's concluding outburst in the wild violence and apocalypticism of Revelations, on the images and scenes of which Jung offers this mildly sarcastic clinical opinion: "Their author need not necessarily be an unbalanced psychopath." Nevertheless, Revelations also imagines a female divinity and a new birth (the sun woman and her child): the struggle to integrate the God-concept will continue.

Accordingly, Jung concludes by praising the Catholic Church for its doctrinal enshrinement in 1950 of Mary's Assumption, itself a response to a popular cult of the Blessed Mother including visions and revelations, which restores to the court of Heaven a figure of female divinity, a mother-bride of the deity: "The feminine, like the masculine, demands an equally personal representation."<sup>[1]</sup> This flexibility on the part of Christian religious authority, Jung suspects, is a good sign that we might still productively revise the God-image now that, with modern technology and weaponry, we really have put on God's power and so cannot afford fantasies of self-righteousness.

What to think of Jung's ideas? As long as they are stated at a high level of generality, I largely agree with them. An enormous amount of trouble in the world is caused by wishing away unpleasantly intractable emotions and psychic forces or imputing them wholly to "the enemy," in which locus they can be annihilated. Jung's recommendation of psychic balance based on a realistic assessment of the individual and collective personality and what it cannot help but contain seems unexceptionable to me—and even timely: we may be in less danger from nuclear annihilation than in Jung's time, but no one can deny that American and perhaps global politics is in death spiral of self-devouring self-righteousness and hypertrophic "identities" that blame all badness on others. While there is very often real justification for blaming others

for bad behavior, this cannot be accompanied by a refusal to recognize the complexity of the self or the absolutely universal capacity for evil. Keep this Jungian sentence in mind as you browse social media: "Irritability, bad moods, and outbursts of affect are the classic symptoms of chronic virtuousness." In this way, Jung is faithful to Freud's Enlightenment intention for psychoanalysis: we cannot deny the irrational, but must strive to understand it so that we are not wholly controlled by it.

On the other hand, there is the New Agey side of Jung. He can, like Job's annoying counsellors, seem a bit too optimistic about the possibility of cosmic justice. What if it is not only our psyches but the universe itself that is out of order? What if there is no containing evil? What if the psychic forces cannot be brought into an alignment that will remove the possibility of danger? What if Jung is a bit of a chivalric sexist and overrates the beneficence of what he calls "the feminine"? For my part, I was raised within mid-to-late-twentieth century Catholicism, in the atmosphere of Mariolatry that Jung praises—every spring, we schoolchildren would be lined up in the garden of the rectory to crown the Blessed Mother statue Queen of May—and it did not notably reduce the puritanical attitudes of the faith, nor did it prevent various abuses in the school or in the church at large. I actually agree with Jung that the feminine, however construed, needs to be a part of metaphysics, but I do not agree that this will make the moral difference he seems to think it will.[2]

I wonder, ultimately, about Jung's own need for a humane monotheism. He seems to find polytheism superior in some ways ("in Greek mythology matriarchal and patriarchal elements are about equally mixed," he observes), but believes that the human self and the God-image are too united for us not to need an idea of one God. Plenty of people throughout history and culture, though, have gotten along without this idea, have relied on multiple psychic and cosmic agencies controlled, perhaps, by a single law, but not ruled by anything that looks like a human person. This is why the Book of Job itself may in the end be more compelling (and more radical) than Jung's answer to it, for its disturbing message out of the whirlwind is that we should not and must not assume the humanity of the universe:

Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

[...]

Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.

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*[1] Jung's contemporary and fellow psychologist William Moulton Marston had a similar conviction about the necessity of female divinity to modern consciousness, which is why he created Wonder Woman, whose latest adventure is now playing at a theater near you. I saw it yesterday and found it a bland, inoffensive film, more Marvel than DC in mood and tone; but Gal Gadot's emotionally complex performance, persuasively uniting iron will and conviction to winsomeness and compassion, does justice to the idea of bringing together traditionally masculine and feminine ideals.*

*[2] On the other hand, I don't read Jung's positing of the masculine and the feminine oppressively essentialist as it touches on actual people; here, Jung's controversial idealism saves him, as masculinity and femininity for him are not rooted in bodies but are autonomous psychic vectors that can be imagined or incarnated in various ways. This rejection of Freud's biological determinism is probably what Deleuze and Guattari had in mind when they observed in passing in A Thousand Plateaus that "Jung is in any event profounder than Freud." For a good essay on Jung in a Deleuzian vein, see [here](#).*

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## Richard Wu says

Any fictional universe of sufficient salience will create among those who consume it a devoted cadre of individuals known as “fans,” from *fanatic*, who hunger for verisimilitude between the stated details of that universe and their memories of them. If one should in the course of conversation with an *X-Men* fan casually toss around a few thoughts about something something “Wolverine’s titanium claws,” then like clockwork will he correct you with something like, “You mean adamantium,” and of course refuse to move on with the discussion unless you concede the fact. Engineers, by the way, are fans of our physical universe.

Now among the category of fans there exists a certain selection deserving of the full epithet, fanatic. These fanatics have so fully internalized the nooks and crannies of their favorite worlds that they feel ready to contribute *fan theories*, and these theories are usually so fleshed-out that only those with a prior and in-depth understanding of said worlds can appreciate the full extent of their complexity. Here is an example of a fanatic who claims that the black rectangle in Kubrick’s *2001* is supposed to represent nothing other than the movie screen itself, which I admit, if true, may be the single greatest prank any director has ever pulled on the audience in the history of cinema, and trust me, I’ve seen a lot of movies. Only problem is, we can’t resurrect Kubrick and ask him if it’s true, and even if we could, he’d probably deflect the question or laugh and say why that’s the most ridiculous thing I’ve ever heard. So we’d actually need to build a machine that could travel back in time and read the intent in Kubrick’s mind while he was writing the script or while he was directing the film, because only then might we learn the truth behind this prank, a secret so compelling that any genius who came up with it would naturally want to take it to the grave.

The surer position, however, is to say that every narrative operates according to a logic, a system of rules and constraints that limits and defines its realm of possibility. Every word, paragraph, and chapter opens a space for events to unfold by creating a precedent for future developments. Note however that the end of a story is not the end of its lifeworld, but simply the point at which its author reached satisfaction with regards to tying threads he considered of particular import. Indeed, no author is, or can ever be, wholly privy to the implications set forth by his imagination. Thus criticism, thus hermeneutics, thus fanfiction. And who should be the singular Carl Jung but the spitting archetype of the Bible fanatic?

*From the human point of view Yahweh's behaviour is so revolting that one has to ask oneself whether there is not a deeper motive hidden behind it.*

It is clear that Jung reads Job through at least two paradigms, that of Christianity and that of his analytical psychology. But another undercurrent runs through and arguably animates the whole edifice, the spirit of Victorian politesse. Jung speaks as if “the human point of view” is the most self-evident thing in the world, and furthermore with the confidence that he is in full possession of such an artifact. Now don’t get me wrong, I believe it is absolutely the case that if we polled the generality of his contemporaries—or perhaps even ours—regarding the conduct of God towards Job (with the names changed), it would opine in the disapproving negative, sharing for the most part the cultural presuppositions required for the formation of such opinions. But as we are, like Jung, in the business of investigating root causes, we should not pretend as if his flabbergastion at the (perceived) sheer barbarity of the omniscient from which this whole instigation was derived were not itself a vital gear in some ulterior narrato-logic, some metastory whose resolution could only be achieved when its Jung character managed to reconcile his own internal turmoil with a satisfactory just-so object logic, the nigh-mathematical product of which being of course this very volume.

*Yahweh is not split but is an antinomy—a totality of inner opposites—and this is the*

*indispensable condition for his tremendous dynamism, his omniscience and omnipotence. Because of this knowledge Job holds on to his intention of "defending his ways to his face," i.e., of making his point of view clear to him, since notwithstanding his wrath, Yahweh is also man's advocate against himself when man puts forth his complaint.*

Given one is kind enough to entertain them, Jung's trains of thought are quite the joyride. Bizarre and uncanny are the twists and turns required to conform the aforementioned paradigms with each other, and I am pleased to inform my readers that our beloved psychologist has more than enough erudition and panache to attempt such a task in good faith. Here one would do well to imagine himself in the writer's shoes to get a richer impression of what was at stake for him, namely the relationship between religion, mythology, empirical science, and personal psychology. Above all this is an urgency to convey these discoveries, as if the fate of the future depended on it:

*[Man] can no longer wriggle out of it on the plea of his littleness and nothingness, for the dark God has slipped the atom bomb and chemical weapons into his hands and given him the power to empty out the apocalyptic vials of wrath on his fellow creatures.*

Asks Jung: In what world would the life of Jesus be not a contingent event but a logical necessity? *Answer to Job* is an argument that that world is this world; perhaps we would do well to pay attention. Not because it's correct *per se* (unlikely, let's be honest), but because it demonstrates well the limits of scholarship, and because it's fun.

#### Favorite quotes

"God does not want to be just; he merely flaunts might over right. Job could not get that into his head, because he looked upon God as a moral being. He had never doubted God's might, but had hoped for right as well."

"For, just as completeness is always imperfect, so perfection is always incomplete, and therefore represents a final state which is hopelessly sterile. "Ex perfectio nihil fit," say the old masters, whereas the *imperfectum* carries within it the seeds of its own improvement. Perfectionism always ends in a blind alley, while completeness by itself lacks selective values."

"As always when an external event touches on some unconscious knowledge, this knowledge can reach consciousness. The event is recognized as a *déjà vu*, and one remembers a pre-existent knowledge about it. Something of the kind must have happened to Yahweh."

"If one knows that one has been singled out by divine choice and intention from the beginning of the world, then one feels lifted beyond the transitoriness and meaninglessness of ordinary human existence and transported to a new state of dignity and importance, like one who has a part in the divine world drama."

"To this rule there is only one significant exception—the despairing cry from the Cross: 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Here his human nature attains divinity; at that moment God experiences what it means to be a mortal man and drinks to the dregs what he made his faithful servant Job suffer. Here is given the answer to Job, and, clearly, this supreme moment is as divine as it is human, as 'eschatological' as it is 'psychological.'"

"A rationalistic attempt of that sort would soak all the mystery out of his personality, and what remained would no longer be the birth and tragic fate of a God in time, but, historically speaking, a badly authenticated religious teacher, a Jewish reformer who was hellenistically interpreted and misunderstood—a kind of Pythagoras, maybe, or, if you like, a Buddha or a Mohammed, but certainly not a son of God or a God

incarnate.”

“Christ would never have made the impression he did on his followers if he had not expressed something that was alive and at work in their unconscious.”

“If, in physics, one seeks to explain the nature of light, nobody expects that as a result there will be no light. But in the case of psychology everybody believes that what it explains is explained away.”

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## **max says**

In Jung's dense and wild meditation on Christianity, published nine years before his death, he seeks some lofty antecedents, but lets his fast and loose language of archetype cover for some questionable footwork.

Jung clearly built his book as an homage to Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*, substituting the philosopher's exegesis of Isaac and Abraham for an inquiry into the nature of Job. For Kierkegaard, several Rashoman-like retellings of the story eventually yield to furious, brooding analysis in the face of the absurdity: A father willing to kill his son for his faith. Kierkegaard's study culminates with the introduction of Jesus Christ as the Christian password to an intractable Old Testament cipher. Jung, however, has chosen a parable with considerably fewer hand-holds. Instead of father and son as human protagonists, the bible presents only Job (with a supporting cast of his friends). Instead of a denouement on Mount Moriah, Job's trial culminates with Elihu's mediation on behalf of his friend.

While Kierkegaard sucks the ethical marrow from his story through painstaking study, Jung blasts at the story of Job with his full arsenal of newfangled clinical terms, launching his little book into an atmosphere of conjecture that better befits his heady era than ours. His basic thesis is that a) the god of Job is an unconscious psyche with no capability for self-reflection, and hence an enormous capacity for breaking his own laws, and b) this god envies man's moral and self-reflective abilities and wishes to become a man himself.

If Jung had left things at that, this book would be shorter, neater, and more widely accepted into the philosophical canon. Instead, Jung, at full warp-drive capacity, speeds directly to Revelations via the Book of John, which he assures us, via his clinical authority, share the same author. Large heapings of apocrypha serve to further muddy things, wherein Jung seems convinced his reader (or followers) will accept Sophia as God's queen, Lilith as Seth's mother, the Virgin Mary as an incarnation of Sophia, and many, many other staples of New Age, Kabbalah-drenched Christianity.

Nevertheless, Jung presents a fascinating notion of a many-sided god who seeks to compensate for his Old Testament extremes by continuously incarnating himself in Jesus, the Holy Ghost, and in Jung's mind, many other characters, including, if you read long enough, you and I. Brave and bold surveys of metaphysics should certainly consider adding Jung's early chapters on Job's plight as a rider to Kierkegaard's seminal examination of the ethics of faith.

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## **Ali Jones says**

I boken *Answer to Job* analyserer Jung menneskets psykologiske forhold til arketyper og gud som



underbevisst fenomen. Man ser til og med at Jung flere ganger har vansker med å skille mellom det underbevisste og gud ettersom begge to konstitueres av en fundamental antinomi som forutsetter muligheten til å handle seg til fullkommenhet overhodet. Gud ville finne et troløst individ, dermed valgte han å bringe terror over den mest troende og gudfryktige av alle, kun siden gud stadig ville gjøre rede for menneskets iboende trang til dødelighet og hovmod - Job rettferdiggjorde guds veddemål med satan ved å forstå seg på nødvendighetens form i verden. Det gud utøver mot mennesket er ikke nødvendigvis godt for subjektet ved spontan analyse, men en innser snart at det ikke er noe gud gjør som ikke er godt og at det ikke kan være noe annet utgangspunkt enn dette.

Jeg anbefaler denne til alle som ser verdien i røttene som den vestlige sivilisasjonen er bygget opp av, og til dem som er interessert i underbevissthetens funksjon i psykologien - 4/5.

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## John says

Wow. A 108 page psycho-social analysis from both the individual and society levels of the bible—meaning the Old and New Testaments. This book uses the Story of Job in the Old Testament as the event after which man and God's relationship was forever altered and required Jesus to become incarnate.

This was a fascinating, but super dense read. It rang more as more authentically Christian than well, mainstream Christianity. This story is much more compassionate, self-sacrificial and self-esteem imbuing (for us humans) as opposed to the originally tainted with sin stuff.

For Jung, Jesus did not die for man's sins, Jesus became incarnate in order to die for Yahweh's sins.

Hmmm. That's a bit different. Yahweh, in addition to smoting people left and right like a conscience-lacking phenomena rather than an entity after which man was modeled, had unleashed all sorts of needless torments and suffering on Job. Job, feeling justifiably screwed, argues his case, mistakenly believing Yahweh to be rational. True to form, God responds with a temper tantrum and Job realizes God is whack, so he drops his case.

Job shows himself to be more mature and wiser. He turned his cheek. This could not go unnoticed by man, consciously or not. This is where Jung's theorizing on the collective unconscious, its archetypes, ie, the hero, virgin, etc come in as well as an implicit and fascinating concept of an interplay between God, the collective unconscious and the individual—surely spurred along by the quantum science discoveries being made during Jung's time.

How can an omnipotent and omniscient being face defeat and continually be fooled by the devil he created? Did man force Yahweh to bring forth Jesus? If Jesus did come forth because of man demanding it and Yahweh recognizing "his bads", Jung sees that there is still something wrong. God did evolve with a bit more of the feminine, but did he evolve with enough gentleness and wisdom? If so, why does the Holy Ghost need to "stick around" after Jesus? Someone (i.e. the holy ghost) still needs to have our back with God.

And let's not get Jung started on the Book of Revelations--which he covers in this book as well.

God sends Christ to die as a mea culpa for all the devil-induced suffering and potentially--in recognizing man's progress via Job--to get the bittersweet taste of mortality. This recognizes Job was a darn impressive dude. This is some good old honest self-sacrifice within the immediate celestial family, where it is needed--a sending forth of its son with a radical new living philosophy born of God learning (more or less) from his

defeat by Job.

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## **Jake says**

Once upon a time the all-knowing God made a bet with Satan about the faithful Job and whether he could stand all manner of persecution. A couple of thousand years later, Jung wrote about it and it was much more enlightening than the thoughts of the Pharisees and Saducees. Was this the turning point in the old school yin/yang love-you/kill-you God of great fear and trembling into the modern God of love? Or does the Book of Revelations prove that God is still very angry at you? Read this to find out.

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## **David says**

This work puts the old testament biblical god under the psychiatrist's microscope. Carl Jung doesn't concern himself with the truth or non-truth of biblical events and nor does he see that as important. Jung concerns himself with the truth or reality of the psyche itself freeing himself up to just focus on the functional structure and patterns of mythology (be it traditional myth or just scriptural accounts whose devotees would take offense to being lumped into the mythological category).

Jung outlines a process of psychological evolution the biblical god progressed through starting with illustrating the suppressed shadow side of the manic old testament deity. Yahweh is a jealous god who was greatly feared by his followers and this is often brushed over by modern followers. Though they loved him, the ancient Hebrews were genuinely afraid of this deity. The turning point for this deity's evolution seemed to be his unjust treatment of the faithful servant Job. Job saw this deity for how loving and how cruel he was, elevating his own morality and understanding of justice above that of the deity. This created a need for god to become man, not because man did wrong against god but because god did wrong to man. It was to repair the widening gap that deity created through his cruelties.

Jung is well-versed in old and new testament scriptures as well as apocryphal texts and thoroughly references these and presents his hypothesis intelligently, respectfully, and logically.

For those unfamiliar with Jung it would be useful to read a short bit on his explanations of archetypes and the collective unconscious. For me, this book was read as the last chapter in a collected work called The Portable Jung, so the preceding papers, essays and excerpts built into this work wonderfully. The important idea to specifically understand before reading these is there are common, recurring mythological motifs and characters in all world cultures which are loosely defined as "archetypes". These archetypes are ideas human beings share and according to Jungian psychology they also are somewhat autonomous and defined outside of man's personal unconscious mind. These archetypes can change over time and assume different forms in dreams, myths, and visions, so in this work the psychologist Carl Jung analyses one specific of these archetypal forces, examining scriptural writings to give the reader a better understanding of how it changed and morally evolved over time.

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## **Billy says**

First off, I'm a Freudian. So whenever I pick up anything written by Jung it is always with a sense of

reluctance. His work is both the furthest departure from his great mentor (Freud himself), and at the same time completely saturated with Freudian Thought.

The last and by far most controversial work by the master's star pupil, this book is at times a breathless read and at others a walk through a swamp. For all of his brilliant insight Dr. Jung was, in my opinion, limited at least to a small degree by his strict Christian rearing and frequent forays into the mysterious subject of Alchemy.

Having said all this, I loved it. Jung is never an easy read, and this book is by no means an exception. His vocabulary is abstruse and he darts wrecklessly from one idea to the next. But this serves less as a distraction and more a testament to his genius.

How could anyone possibly justify the morally repugnant suffering bestowed upon a completely loyal servant? Jung's got a theory, and like Jung himself, it's brilliant.

## Rob the Obscure says

(chuckle....smile....expel air) wow.....

## Night0vvl says

[illegible]

## la Maga De Rayuela says

?????? "?????????????" ????? - ?????, ????? ????????? ?????????.

## Iver Raknes says

Close to his death, Jung once was asked whether he would rewrite any of his books if he had the chance. He answered that he would re-write all of them only with one exception: his Answer to Job.

Jung was brought up during the mid 19th century. Jung had problems with his faith from an early age. A particular instance of this was a dream he had during his early childhood; In the dream, he saw God defecating on the church of his father-breaking through the roof and destroying the building. Jung spent many years wrestling with his faith and reading a wide variety of literature on Gnosticism as well as all the religious texts he managed to get a hold. He was troubled by the break between Catholicism and Protestantism, and he thought it necessary to unite them in some way. Even throughout reading his thoughts on religion it became apparent that he had a unique problem with the Protestants. Jung spent about forty

years of his life writing *Answer to Job*. Debating whether or not he would ever pen down his thoughts, he knew it would get radical opposition from both scientists and Christians. He attempts to psychoanalyse the words of the Bible, with the particular interest in the interpretation of the God image where his ontology is more clearly laid out than in any other book of his. The book is short and swiftly written in a dryly sardonic style- an exploration of the need to update Christianity or monotheism in general, so that the stories can face the dangers of the atomic age.

From the Jungian perspective, all religious documents should read as truths of the psyche, not truths of the material world. Of course, then religion could not fall into the realm of the natural sciences. *Answer to Job* is a thesis that states that Judeo-Christian monotheism dangerously denies God as a concept of wholeness and totality. God must contain both Evil and the feminine. In much of western religious history, there has been an attempt to readdress these imbalances in the deity; the moral protest against God's justice in the Book of Job to Pope Pius XII's 1950 doctrine of Mary's Assumption articulate well the struggle between the two.

Jung argues that we cannot tell whether God and the unconscious are two different entities. One could claim that the Old Testament God is that of the King rather than a sort of wholeness- both the tyrannical and the liberal. Jung wants to convince us that the modern man should strive to reach wholeness in God, and since the image of the self is the same as the archetype of wholeness, one cannot tell God from the self. Our idea of God is, in a sense, our self-concept. Now that we have the power to destroy the world, we cannot afford to be disconnected with our dark side or to the appeal of effect and values apart from the masculine tyranny. The modern man has yielded an almost godlike power, and cannot any longer be careless and unconscious. He must comprehend something of God's nature and metaphysical processes if he is to know himself. Jung's method of demonstrating these theses- which will probably not persuade the Biblical scholar or contemporary psychologists, but should not offend the layman - is to view the books of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation as a single unbroken story, albeit composed of different historical moments by different sensibilities. They demonstrate the development of God's personality from the jealous, tyrannical deity of the early books through the incarnation in the New Testament, back to the unintegrated Omni-destructive force described by John of Patmos.

Throughout the Bible, Jung claims, both God and His people made many attempts to reform the God-Image. Job is a turning point because it is the first time the mortal man calls God to moral account after his own rules. As Job continues despite his suffering to believe in God's justice, and thus, according to Jung, becomes more just than God. "A mortal man is raised by his moral behaviour above the stars in heaven, from which position of an advantage he can see the back of Yahweh," Jung writes \*. The Book of Job coincides, Jung further argues, with a body of Hebrew wisdom writing that describes a feminine force called Sophia, who supplements the excessively masculine deity with a feminine counterpart. Jung reasons that "perfection is a masculine desideratum, while woman inclines by nature to completeness," meaning this "anamnesis of Sophia" portends the next stage in God's development. God — through the agency of a moral but perfect woman — will incarnate himself as a man in continuing the quest for wholeness rather than unconscious self-division. In the crucifixion, we find the "Answer to Job" of Jung's title: "God experiences what it is to be a mortal man and drinks to the dregs what he made his faithful servant Job suffer." God's dispatch of the holy Spirit to dwell in humanity implies that all human beings, not only Christ, should incarnate God, a "Christification" of man that will realise divinity on earth. Although, as long as God remains newly feminised or humanised, it is an impossible idea of perfect goodness. The evil part of the psyche remains unintegrated, which means that it will continue to express itself in destructively unconscious ways. Therefore the Bible's concluding outburst in the wild violence and apocalypticism of Revelations.

What should we make of Jung's ideas in this modern light? As long as they are stated at a high level of generality, I mostly agree with them. An immense amount of unnecessary suffering in the world caused by

wishing away unpleasant, intractable emotions and psychic forces by imputing them wholly to "the enemy," in which locus can shatter. Jung's recommendation of psychic balance based on a realistic assessment of the individual and collective personality. What I cannot help but contain seems unexceptionable to me and even timely. We may be in less risk of thermonuclear annihilation than in Jung's time, but it's hard to deny that American, and perhaps international politics, is in a death spiral of self-devouring self-righteousness and hypertrophic "identities" that accuse all the evils of the world on others. While there is very often a real justification for blaming others for bad behaviour, this cannot accompany a refusal to recognise the complexity of the self or the universal human ability for evil. Have this Jungian sentence in mind as you browse social media: "Irritability, bad moods, and outbursts of effect are the classic symptoms of chronic virtuousness." In this way, Jung is faithful to Freud's Enlightenment intention for psychoanalysis: we cannot deny the irrational but must strive to understand it so that we are not wholly under its control.

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### **Jon Ungerland says**

this book challenges any christian to examine our somewhat naive concept of the shadow of god, and encourages us to reach past our all-too-often childish understanding of salvation.

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