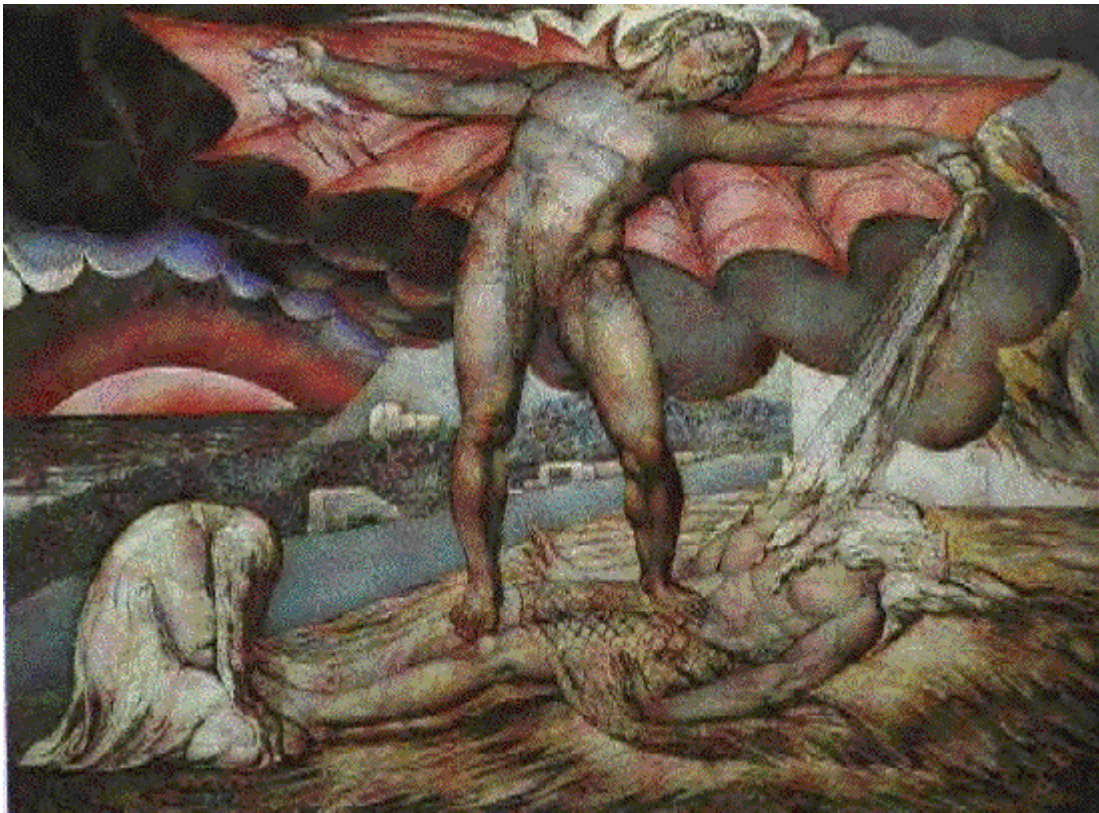


Job's Shame



In the book of Deuteronomy, we are assured that the godly person "shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water...and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like chaff which the wind driveth away". This is the predominant view of biblical writers: that "the good" will be rewarded, and "the bad" will receive their just deserts. All is well in the world, which has an ordering that is both just and invariant. This is an obvious nonsense on a rational level. Yet, at a psychological and emotional level things may not be so simple. The biblical writers were simply articulating what might be the predominant view in the unconscious – the wished-for reality in which disillusionment has no place.

In contrast, the Book of Job offers alternative explanations for why there should be suffering, illness and bad luck that is unrelated to one's actual guilt or innocence.

