

The Faith of Job and the Recovery of Christian Atheism

FREDERIEK DEPOORTERE

Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium)

It would be easy to dismiss Slavoj Žižek's contributions to *The Monstrosity of Christ* as coming too late, 45 years too late to be precise.¹ For what Žižek defends, namely the Hegelian reading of Christianity, was itself already developed in all of its radicality by Thomas J. J. Altizer, the most colorful proponent of the so-called "God is dead" theology, a short-lived theological movement which flowered in the second part of the 1960s. The Hegelian reading of Christianity which was proposed by Altizer (in his 1966 book *The Gospel of Christian Atheism*) and which is now being re-endorsed by Žižek in *The Monstrosity of Christ* entails that it was God Himself who died when Christ died on the cross on Calvary and that this death marks the transition from God as transcendent Father to the Holy Spirit as the community of believers, understood by Žižek in terms of a collective of revolutionary individuals.² This basic scheme, adopted from Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, has informed the Christological reflections offered by Žižek in the past ten years,³ but it has been rejected by a majority of theologians as being heterodox and therefore unacceptable. Moreover, "God is dead" theology – albeit somewhat fashionable for a couple of years and sparking many heated debates in the media and among theologians – was never fully able to become mainstream. Such comes as little surprise, given the fact that it is actually a theological dead-end: it seems to offer merely a *theological* justification for the end of theology as God-talk. Moreover, Žižek's dependency on Hegel's basic scheme seems to suggest that one is forced to an all-or-nothing choice when it comes to accepting or rejecting his Christological reflections: either one shares this basic scheme and is able to follow Žižek in his ruminations on Christ or one does not share the basic scheme and can only reject Žižek's interpretation of the Christ-event. However, the aim of the present article is to show that in approaching Žižek, even if one does not follow him in his Hegelianism, one can nevertheless enter into a theological dialogue with him. As Žižek's contributions to *The Monstrosity of Christ* are very dense and touch upon a wide variety of issues, in what follows I will focus on one element, namely his interpretation of the Biblical character of Job and its relation to the issue of atheism. To start our discussion from within the context of contemporary theology, I will begin by taking a look into the reading of the Book of Job which has been offered by French philosopher Paul Ricoeur (1913–2005), one of the founding fathers of contemporary hermeneutical theology.

Paul Ricoeur: The Faith of Job

Paul Ricoeur's most extensive discussion of the Biblical character of Job can be found in his early work *The Symbolism of Evil* (1967; French original in 1960).⁴ In the first part of this book, Ricoeur discusses three "primary symbols" of evil: defilement, sin and guilt. Here, the figure of Job is introduced as witnessing to a crisis, the crisis caused by what Ricoeur

designates as “the hypersubjective reality of sin,” the fact that “my sin [is conceived to be] within the absolute sight (*regard*) of God” (84). As noted by Ricoeur, this “being seen by God” was initially a positive thing: it was a source of self-awareness, the person who is seen by God becomes a Self precisely by being seen by God (84–85). In the case of Job, however, the sight of God has become “an inimical seeing that pursues him” (85). God’s sight, Ricoeur continues, “suddenly reveals itself as the seeing of the hidden God who delivers man up to unjust suffering” (85–86). The seeing of God, which used to be experienced as salutary, has now become unbearable, an “inquisitorial eye which makes man guilty” (319).

The second part of *The Symbolism of Evil* deals with four “‘myths’ of the beginning and the end” (“the ‘ritual’ vision of the world,” “the ‘tragic’ vision of existence,” “the ‘eschatological’ vision of history” and the vision that expects “salvation through knowledge”). In this context, further reference is made to the figure of Job in the fifth and final chapter of the book (titled “The Cycle of the Myths”), in a section dealing with “The Reaffirmation of the Tragic” (310–326). According to Ricoeur, the God of the Bible is to be understood as “an ethical God” and the Hebrew Scriptures basically offer “a moral vision of the world”. This entails that “History is a tribunal, pleasure and pains are retribution, God himself is a judge. At the same time, the whole of human experience assumes a penal character” (314). In Ricoeur’s view, the Book of Job signals the breakdown of this understanding of history. Here, the “‘ethicization’ of man and God” collides at its limits. The case of Job shows that there is evil in excess of that which can be accounted for by retribution. Retribution is not able to explain all of the unhappiness and suffering in the world (314). It should be noted, as Ricoeur does so himself, that this problem of unjust suffering – that is, suffering that cannot be justified in terms of “he that mischief hatches, mischief catches” – is inherent to the ethicization present in the Hebrew Scriptures. Indeed, it is only when God is conceived as “ethical” that the problem of *unjust* suffering can come into existence. Outside the context of such an ethical vision, suffering can still be a problem (cf. Buddhism), but it cannot be a *moral* problem, an issue of *justice*. For, what happens in the case of Job is that a tension comes into being between God as Creator, who may be excused for moving in a mysterious way, and God as Lawgiver, who may reasonably be expected to comply with his own law.

It is here of course that theodicy begins, the attempt to justify God in light of unjust suffering. This is the way taken by Job’s pious friends. They do their best to close the gap which opened between the Creator-God and the ethical God, “mobili[z]ing forgotten sins, unknown sins, ancestral sins, the sins of the people, in order to restore the equation of suffering and punishment” (315). Job, in contrast, refuses this option and it is here that Ricoeur sees a tragic vision re-emerging in the heart of the Biblical ethicization of God. Job rediscovers “the tragic God” – that is, “the inscrutable God of terror” (319). In this way, he moves beyond the ethical vision of man and God, world and history, and enters “a new dimension of faith, the dimension of *unverifiable* faith” (319). Moreover, what also makes the Book of Job a return of tragedy is its outcome: Job falls silent and God answers out of the whirlwind, but what He says is in no way an answer to Job’s predicament. All God does is “show him Behemoth and Leviathan, the hippopotamus and the crocodile, vestiges of the chaos that has been overcome, representing a brutality dominated and measured by the creative act” (321). In this way, Ricoeur continues, God “gives [Job] to understand that all is

order, measure, and beauty – inscrutable order, measure beyond measure, terrible beauty” and He points to “an order beyond order, a totality full of meaning, within which the individual must lay down his recrimination” (321). When Ricoeur returns to the symbolism of evil in his later book *The Conflict of Interpretations* (1974; French original in 1969), this renunciation is interpreted in terms of love: “The only thing shown to [Job] is the grandeur of the whole, without the finite viewpoint of his own desire receiving a meaning directly from it. A path is thus opened ... I renounce my viewpoint; I love the whole as it is.⁵ In this regard, Richard Kearney, following his master Ricoeur, sees the Book of Job ending with “a contemplative wisdom of love:” at the end of the story, Kearney writes, Job has learned to love God for nothing.⁶

The figure of Job also plays an important role in Ricoeur’s 1966 Bampton Lectures, titled “Religion, Atheism, and Faith.”⁷ In these lectures, a new direction and contemporary meaning of Job is mapped out. During his Bampton Lectures, Ricoeur defended “the religious significance of atheism,” stating “that atheism does not exhaust itself in the negation and destruction of religion” but that it rather “clears the ground for a new faith, a faith for a post-religious age” (59/440). This entails that atheism, and it is the atheism of Freud and Nietzsche Ricoeur has in mind here, takes the intermediary position between religion and faith, it is what links them together and what separates them. Or, as Ricoeur puts it: atheism destroys religion and liberates us for a faith beyond religion (60/441). The religion that is to be destroyed is summarised here by Ricoeur in terms of “two fundamental activities,” “the fear of punishment and the desire for protection” – i.e., “accusation” and “consolation.” This entails that the God that has to pass away is the “moral God who [is] the principle and foundation for an ethics of prohibition and condemnation” (68/447) and “the providential God” – that is, God both as “the ultimate source of accusation” and as “the ultimate source of protection” (82/455). According to Ricoeur, this “death” of the ethical God, enables a transition to new kind of faith, a “tragic faith beyond any assurance or protection,” and it is precisely Job who is put forward by Ricoeur as the model for this new faith (82/455–456, 87–88/460). This post-religious faith is described by Ricoeur as follows:

It would be a faith that wanders in the darkness, in a “new night of understanding” – to use the language of the mystics – before a God who has not the attributes of “Providence.” This God does not protect me but delivers me up to the dangers of a life worthy of being called human. Is not this God the Crucified, the dying God, the God whose weakness alone may help me? The new night of the understanding is a night for our desire as much as for our fear, a night for our longing for a protective father. Beyond this night, and only beyond it, will be recovered the true meaning of the God of consolation, the God of the Resurrection, the Pantocrator of Byzantine and Romanesque imagery. (88/460)

This suggests that for Ricoeur atheism can play an instrumental role on the way to a purified faith. In his view, atheism should have the same effect for us today as the crisis of the moral God that befell Job had for him. In this regard it is important to note that Ricoeur emphasises that Job, despite his severe criticism of God, always remains in relation with God.⁸ His criticisms are precisely formulated as complaints addressed at God. As Job passed through a

dark “night of understanding” and rediscovered God, but a God beyond the law of retribution, the modern believer should pass through the darkness of atheism to recover God at the other side of the night. Or, as Ricoeur put it at the end of his Bampton Lectures: idols have to die in order to be recovered as symbols (98/467).

Slavoj Žižek: From Job to the Recovery of Christian Atheism

Let us now bring forward Slavoj Žižek to join the conversation. The figure of Job appears in Žižek’s oeuvre on a regular basis. This happens for the first time in the early *Enjoy Your Symptom!* (1992).⁹ Here, Žižek first endorses René Girard’s basic claim concerning the Book of Job as put forward in the latter’s book on Job.¹⁰ Girard dismisses the whole set-up in the Prologue – with Satan seducing God into putting Job to the test to check whether he will still be righteous when all is against him – as a mythification which hides the subversive core of the book, namely that Job is a sacrificial victim, the scapegoat of his community, subjected to religiously sanctioned violence. The revolutionary character of the Book of Job, Žižek states, while following Girard, consists in the fact that we encounter here a victim that speaks, that refuses to undergo his victimization in silence, but protests and rebels instead. Moreover, the subversive power of the Book of Job consists in the fact that the perspective of the sacrificial order (represented by Job’s “pious” friends) and the perspective of the victim are found next to each other. As a result, the “official” perspective is deconstructed by the perspective of Job while the presence of the perspective of the perpetrators guarantees the truth of the perspective of the victim (56). Although Žižek endorses Girard’s basic claim concerning Job, he is also critical of him. He reproaches him for turning Job into merely a forerunner of Christ, “the true paradigm of a victim who speaks out and subjectivizes himself” (57). However, Žižek states, insofar as Christ’s death on the cross is “a gesture of love,” something is lost in the transition from Job to Christ, namely “the anxiety-provoking abyss of the Other’s [i.e., God’s] inconsistency” (57). In Christ, Žižek adds, “God himself changes into a lover and reaches back toward man – thereby concealing the abyss of Otherness that no sacrifice could appease, i.e., with which no relationship of exchange is possible” (58). This suggests that at the time *Enjoy Your Symptom!* was written in the early 1990s Žižek was still rather critical of Christ’s gesture and seemed to prefer Job over Christ.

Almost ten years later, Žižek’s next reference to the Book of Job appears in *On Belief* (2001). Here Žižek’s earlier criticism that Christ is a step back in comparison with Job is not repeated and the claim will not reappear in future work. In *On Belief*, Žižek mentions Job in passing when he writes that what happens in Christianity is that God himself as Christ finds himself in the situation earlier experienced by Job, the situation of being God-forsaken. When Christ dies on the cross, abandoned by his Father, the gap that separates human beings from God, the gap earlier experienced by Job, is reflected back into God himself.¹¹

The next year, in the Foreword to the second edition of his *For They Know Not What They Do* (2002),¹² Žižek devotes a couple of pages to the figure of Job. Žižek begins his discussion of Job by repeating the link, already made the year before in *On Belief*, between Job and Christ. He states that Job is the key to understand the Christ-event (Job prefigures Christ) (li), while adding that both are linked by the meaninglessness of their suffering. What distinguishes Job from Christ is of course that when Christ suffers, it is God who is himself

the victim and is abandoned by God (liii). This time, Žižek also focuses on the *dénouement* of the Book of Job. He dismisses God's intervention at the end of the book as "a pure argument of authority grounded in a breathtaking display of power" and as "a kind of cheap Hollywood horror show with lots of special effects." God, Žižek notes, behaves here like somebody who is "caught in [a] moment of impotence – weakness, at least – and tries to escape his predicament by empty boasting" (li). Žižek further stresses that "the true greatness of Job," which, in his view, consists in his persistent refusal to give in to the "ideology" of his theological friends who want to give some meaning to his suffering (li–lii). Žižek even claims Job as the first true materialist, someone who is able to accept the contingency of the vicissitudes of life without having to search for a hidden design behind them (lii). But if Job, as Žižek claims, staunchly refuses to accept that his suffering can have any meaning and resolutely rejects any secret design hidden behind it all, why does he fall silent? Why does he even repent?¹³

This question does not receive an answer in *For They Know Not What They Do*, but it does the next year, in *The Puppet and the Dwarf* (2003).¹⁴ In *The Puppet and the Dwarf*, Žižek first repeats his reflections on Job already printed in the Foreword to the second edition of *For They Know No What They Do*. In this repetition (124–126), he further inserts the idea that Job is confronted with the impenetrability of God (124). After the material that was repeated, Žižek raises the question which remained unanswered the year before: why Job's silence – especially when the discrepancy between Job's question ("why do I suffer?") and God's answer (power display, boasting) is so obvious? To this question, Žižek now formulates the following answer:

What, then, if *this* was what Job perceived, and what kept him silent: he remained silent neither because he was crushed by God's overwhelming presence, nor because he wanted thereby to indicate his continuous resistance, that is, the fact that God avoided answering Job's question, but because in a gesture of silent solidarity, he perceived the divine impotence. God is neither just nor unjust, simply impotent. What Job suddenly understood, was that *it was not him, but God Himself, who was actually on trial in Job's calamities*, and He failed the test miserably. Even more pointedly, I am tempted to risk a radical anachronistic reading: Job foresaw God's own future suffering – "Today it's me, tomorrow it will be your own son, and there will be no one to intercede for *him*. What you see in me now is the prefiguration of your own Passion!" (126–127)

More recently, Žižek has elaborated once more on Job at the occasion of the paper he contributed to *St. Paul among the Philosophers* (2009)¹⁵, a paper which was almost verbatim reprinted in *The Monstrosity of Christ* (43–55, 56–61 and 87–89), or vice-versa (in what follows we refer to *The Monstrosity of Christ*). Falling back on the remarks on the outcome of the Book of Job by the English Catholic writer Chesterton (1874–1936) in his "Introduction to the Book of Job," Žižek notes that what we get there is that God answers Job's questions about the design of the world by showing that the world is in reality even more incomprehensible than Job already thought it was (53).¹⁶ Žižek even suggests that the end of the Book of Job presents us a God who himself does not understand it all, "a God

overwhelmed by his own creation” (244) and maybe a God who is, as Žižek had already suggested in *On Belief*, even a mystery for himself: “the enigma OF God” is also “the enigma IN God Himself”, “God is an enigma also IN AND FOR HIMSELF.”¹⁷ The figure of Job, Žižek further adds in *The Monstrosity of Christ*, shows us how to respond to catastrophes that have befallen us or may befall us in the future: by resisting any attempt to give them meaning, by refusing to integrate them into a larger whole (53). This also entails that we should get rid of “the standard transcendent figure of God as a secret Master who knows the meaning of what appears to us to be a meaningless catastrophe” (54). Clinging to such a God, Žižek contends, is “obscene” in light of the atrocities that have happened and are still going on around the world (54–55).

In *The Monstrosity of Christ*, Žižek also once more links Job to Christ. He repeats his view that in the crucified Jesus, God occupies the place of Job: the gap that separated Job from God is transposed into God himself. To emphasize the far-reaching and revolutionary character this has in Žižek’s view, we can first refer to his comments on an unfinished drawing of the crucified Christ by Michelangelo (reproduced on the cover of *The Monstrosity of Christ*). Žižek draws attention to a number of “unsettling details indicat[ing] an underlying attitude of angry rebellion, of defiance” and in particular to the stretched finger of Christ’s right hand, a gesture which Žižek interprets (following Quintilian) as a gesture of devilish rebellion (277–278). This can be linked to a fragment from Chesterton’s *Orthodoxy*, quoted by Žižek, in which the former states that only Christianity has a “god who has himself been in revolt”, a god who has shared the atheists’ isolation, a “God [who] seemed for an instant to be an atheist.”¹⁸ Thus, what happens when Christ is on the cross, is that God the Son rebels against God the Father. Like Job before, the Son staunchly refuses to accept that his suffering can have any meaning and resolutely rejects any secret design hidden behind it. Therefore, Žižek concludes (following Chesterton), “Christianity is ‘terribly revolutionary’.”¹⁹ He explains this further as follows:

In the standard form of atheism, God dies for men who stop believing in him; in Christianity, God dies *for himself* ... Christianity ... enacts the reflexive reversal of atheist doubt into God himself. In his “Father, why have you forsaken me?”, Christ himself commits what is for a Christian the ultimate sin: he wavers in his Faith. While in all other religions, there are people who do not believe in God, only in Christianity does God not believe in himself. (48–49)

Žižek vs. Ricoeur: Concluding Remarks

1. It is obvious that Ricoeur’s Job and Žižek’s Job stand for two diametrically opposed responses to the phenomenon of (unjust) suffering. Ricoeur’s Job opts for resignation and for the hope that his suffering, which appears as senseless from his limited perspective, will somehow turn out to fit in a larger picture (this hope is what Job’s “unverifiable faith” seems to amount to in Ricoeur’s view); Žižek’s Job, in contrast, opts for resistance and staunchly refuses to accept that his suffering could have any meaning at all. This shows that Žižek rejects Ricoeur’s interpretation of the outcome of the Book of Job, according to which Job is

convinced – and even repents for daring to suppose that the world does not make sense²⁰ – because God makes him aware of “the possibility of [...] an unassignable design, a design which is God’s secret.”²¹ According to Žižek, no such design can ever justify unjust suffering.

2. Ricoeur and Žižek also give completely different answers to the question of what the case of Job teaches us about God. According to Ricoeur, Job learns that God is impenetrable and inscrutable. His motives and the design inspiring his actions are hidden and beyond human comprehension. In other words, Ricoeur emphasizes the enigma *of* God. Žižek, in contrast, stresses the enigma *in* God and underscores that Job discovers God’s secret, namely that He is actually impotent and imperfect. Remarkably, there is nevertheless a link between Ricoeur and Žižek. Ricoeur’s view implies that Job has learned to love God for nothing. The love for God also appears in Žižek, who defends that it is precisely God’s imperfection that makes it possible for God to become an object of love. In *The Monstrosity of Christ*, Žižek explains this as follows: “Love is always love for the other insofar as he is lacking – we love the other *because* of his limitation. The radical conclusion from this is that if God is to be loved, he must be imperfect, inconsistent in himself” (39). This suggests that, if we follow Žižek in this understanding of love, the true religious attitude does not consist in worshipping God *qua* perfect Being, but in loving God *qua* impotent and imperfect. This also entails that the Ricoeurian answer to the predicament of Job, loving God *for nothing*, is only possible when God is *not* an omnipotent actor, *not* the one who is running the show, and when there is no hidden design behind what befalls us. God is not “a transcendent caretaker who guarantees the happy outcome of our acts” (55). In other words, we should accept the contingency of everything that happens.

3. Furthermore, while Žižek explicitly links the figure of Job with the figure of Christ, this link is absent in Ricoeur’s discussions of Job. It is possible, however, to introduce this link in the work of Ricoeur as well. The starting point for doing so could well perhaps be Ricoeur’s reference to the figure of the Suffering Servant of the Lord from Second Isaiah, who has traditionally been understood as a prefiguration of Christ and in whom Ricoeur sees the opposition between suffering as retribution and unjust suffering surpassed in a third form of suffering, suffering as expiation for the sins of others.²² Yet, interpreting Christ’s death in terms of this kind of expiation seems to entangle us in a “perverse” reading of Christianity, according to which God is “a *perverse* subject” playing games with his son and humankind or a cruel, merciless and jealous creature in need of a bloody sacrifice to satisfy his offended honor.²³ According to Žižek, a non-perverse reading of the Crucifixion entails that one should understand it, *not* as a higher form of suffering, but precisely as the moment God is himself thrown in the abysmal experience of being subjected to unjust suffering. The Crucifixion is, as Žižek puts it in *The Monstrosity of Christ*, the moment when Christ “confronts the Father with the meaninglessness of it all” (57). This shows that, next to the ethical God of the Hebrew Scriptures and the tragic God which re-emerges in the Book of Job, there is a third “face” of God, namely the *suffering* God and, Žižek explains, it is in the suffering God that the tension between the two other “faces” of God is overcome (52).

4. Finally, Ricoeur and Žižek also conceive the link between the case of Job and the issue of atheism in differing ways. For Ricoeur, atheism remains something which is instrumental: it occasions a purification of the faith, but it remains something which originates from outside the realm of faith and something which, in the end, needs to be overcome – after the dark

night of atheism, a new daybreak of faith has to follow. According to Žižek, atheism is an intrinsic part of Christianity because Christianity is, as Chesterton stated, the religion in which God himself becomes an atheist. It is of course obvious that Žižek goes beyond Chesterton. For Chesterton, God was an atheist only for an instant on the cross. For Žižek, in contrast, Christ's experience of God-forsakenness on the cross is the moment God *qua* transcendent Father actually dies. This view of Žižek is of course a result of his Hegelianism. But, next to Žižek's faithfulness to Hegel's basic scheme, there is no justification for this transition from God the Son sharing the atheist's experience on the Cross to the death of God the Father – unless one limits the Father of Christ to the God *qua* “secret Master who knows the meaning of what appears to us to be a meaningless catastrophe” and the “transcendent caretaker who guarantees the happy outcome of our acts” who is discredited by the case of Job. Thus, even if we follow Chesterton and Žižek in considering atheism to be an integral part of Christianity, it does not automatically follow that we should also follow Žižek in his plea for a Hegelian reading of Christianity and his defence of Altizer's God-is-dead theology. But even if we don't do this, it remains possible to stick to Žižek's basic insight, to be found in *On Belief*, that “When I, a human being, experience myself as cut off from God, at that very moment of utmost abjection, I am absolutely close to God, since I find myself in the position of the abandoned Christ.”²⁴ Thus, to conclude: *The Monstrosity of Christ* is a great opportunity for its readers to (re)discover the suffering and weak God at the heart of Christianity. Missing this opportunity because one rejects Žižek for his endorsement of Hegelian-style God-is-dead theology would therefore be a pity.

Notes

1. Slavoj Žižek and John Milbank, *The Monstrosity of Christ: Paradox or Dialectic?* ed. Creston Davis (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2009).
2. Thomas J. J. Altizer, *The Gospel of Christian Atheism* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966).
3. For further details, see Frederiek Depoortere, *Christ in Postmodern Philosophy: Gianni Vattimo, René Girard, Slavoj Žižek* (London/New York: T&T Clark, 2008), esp. 123–125.
4. Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967).
5. Paul Ricoeur, “The Demythization of Accusation,” in *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*, ed. Don Ihde (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 335–353, 351.
6. Richard Kearney, *On Paul Ricoeur: The Owl of Minerva* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 92.
7. Alasdair MacIntyre and Paul Ricoeur, *The Religious Significance of Atheism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969). Paul Ricoeur, “Religion, Atheism, and Faith,” in *Conflict of Interpretations*, 440–467.
8. See Ricoeur, *Symbolism of Evil*, 86, 319–20.
9. Slavoj Žižek, *Enjoy Your Symptom! Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and Out* (New York: Routledge, 1992).
10. René Girard, *Job: The Victim of his People* (London: The Athlone Press, 1987).

11. Slavoj Žižek, *On Belief* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 146.
12. Slavoj Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor* (2nd ed.; New York: Verso, 2002).
13. See: Job 42:6.
14. Slavoj Žižek, *The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2003).
15. Slavoj Žižek, "From Job to Christ: A Paulinian Reading of Chesterton," in *St. Paul among the Philosophers*, ed. John D. Caputo and Linda Martín Alcoff (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009), 39–58.
16. Gilbert Keith Chesterton, "Introduction to the Book of Job," <http://chesterton.org/gkc/theologian/job.htm>.
17. Žižek, *On Belief*, 145.
18. Quoted in Žižek and Milbank, *The Monstrosity of Christ?*, 48; See: Gilbert Keith Chesterton, *Orthodoxy* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), 165.
19. Žižek and Milbank, *The Monstrosity of Christ?*, 48; with reference to Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*, 165.
20. Compare "Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation," *Harvard Theological Review* 70/1–2 (1977): 1–37, 12; see also Ricoeur, *Symbolism of Evil*, 321.
21. Ricoeur, "Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation," 13.
22. Ricoeur, *Symbolism of Evil*, 324–325.
23. Slavoj Žižek, *The Fragile Absolute: Or, Why Is the Christian Legacy Worth Fighting For?* (New York: Verso, 2000), 157; *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism? Five Interventions In the (Mis)Use of a Notion* (New York: Verso, 2000), 47. See also Depoortere, *Christ in Postmodern Philosophy*, 98–101.
24. Žižek, *On Belief*, 146 (emphasis in original).