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Job. Notes. undated.

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Book of Job (1)

A Problem in Theodicy

(a defense of the justice + goodness of God in the face of the existence of evil in the universe)

1) Prose Prologue — chaps 1, 2

2) Dialogues with 3 friends — ch. 3 - 31

3) Intrusion of Elihu — ch. 32-37

4) God's Answers from Whirlwind — ch 38-42:6

5) Prose Epilogue — 42:7-17

1. Prologue

Job put to test by Satan twice

Read chs. 1-2

2. Dialogues

A. Eliphaz tries to console Job. He speaks warmly. But his thoughts come to one conclusion: God punishes the guilty. Job is conscious of his innocence and refuses the comfort of Eliphaz. Job is irritated by his easy words. In his agony his friends do not understand him.

Eliphaz: 4: 1-8, 17
5: 17, 26

Job: 6: 14-18
7: 11-21

B. Bildad is a man of firm and simple faith who believes in God's unfailing justice. He is shocked by Job's violent speech, but says nothing to help Job in his anguish. Job now challenges God's justice.

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This is his most daring utterance. He questions God's rule of the earth according to righteousness. It is the cry of a sorely afflicted human being caught in the net of a mystery he cannot understand.

Bildad: 8: 1-6
Job: 9: 1-4, 21-24

C. Zophar is more outspoken and brutally frank than the other two. He charges Job with wickedness + secret wrong-doing and declares that Job has more than merited his suffering. Job is now in complete despair of

his friends. He turns from them and without fear questions God. He demands to know why God persecutes him.

Zophar: 11:1-6, 13-18
Job: 12:1-3; 13:1-5; 13:13-15; 13:20-25

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3. Instruction of Elihu

Elihu is a young man somewhat pompous & vain. He explains that suffering is God's way of warning Job not to continue his wrongdoing. God is trying to prevent Job from further sinning.

32:1-10
33: 8-18, 28-30
34: 31-32
36: 15

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4. God Speaks from Whirlwind

God shows the utter littleness of man in the presence of the mystery of creation. How can such a little being understand the meaning of suffering?

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God bids Jft look away from his own darkness and see the wonderfully made world about him. Let Jft renew his faith in the wisdom, goodness & justice of God even though he cannot entirely understand them. Jft is overwhelmed. His questions are still unanswered, but he has found a faith that helps him. And he is now satisfied and at peace.

God: 38: 1–41
God: 40: 6-8

Jft: 40: 3-5
Jft: 42: 1-6

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5. Epilogue (Reward)
42: 7-17

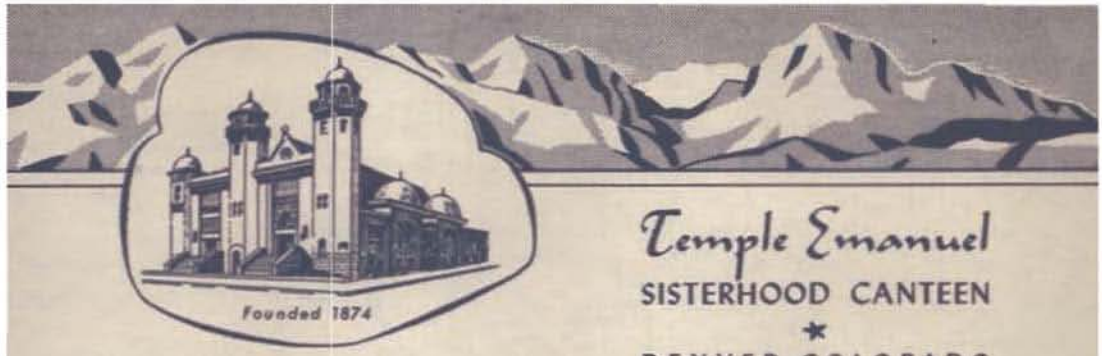
Three Themes of Job (according to Ralph Marcus)

(with various attitudes: sometimes sufficient, defiant, plaintive, righteously indignant)

I. Job's plea to be released from suffering by death (variation: regret at ever having been born)

3: 11-13
3: 20-23
6: 8-9
7: 15-16
10: 19

II. Job's accusation that God is mercilessly persecuting him, pressing him like an enemy, rather than passing sentence with judicial calm. Job accuses God of taking sadistic pleasure in causing suffering to man



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6:4
13:25
16:9
16:12-24
19:6-11
23:13-16
30:19-21

Job accuses God of misusing his divine power to crush a defenseless man who is bewildered by his fury and is unable to understand why God so relentlessly pursues him.

III. Job's insistence upon his innocence and integrity (variation: his plea that God bring him to trial and give him opportunity to speak in his own defense)

7:20
9:32-35
13:3
13:22-23
23:3-5
27:5-6

(5) (according to Ralph Marcus)

God's answer to Job's three complaints?

God is so much involved in trying to control the demonic forces of the universe which he has created, rules and cares for, that he has, so to speak, neither time nor inclination to look out especially for Job, let alone persecute him.

40: 7-14

Just as God exerts his heroic will to subdue the demonic elements in the universe and to sustain his creation by bringing light to the stars, rain to the sea & land, and food to all living creatures, so must man exert his will to subdue evil and overcome frustration. It is an exhortation to emulate God's unconquerable will.

U. S. ARMY

A Masque of Reason
by Robert Frost

God to Job.

I've had you on my mind
a thousand years
To thank you someday for
the way you helped me
Establish once for all the
principle
There's no connection man
can reason out
Between his just deserts
and what he gets.
Virtue may fail and
wickedness succeed.
Twas a great demonstration
we put on. . . . . .

U. S. ARMY

My thanks are to you for
releasing me
From moral bondage to the
human race.
The only free will there
at first was man's,
Who could do good or
evil as he chose.
I had no choice but I
must follow him
With forfeits and rewards
he understood -
Unless I liked to suffer
loss of worship.
I had to prosper good and
punish evil.
You changed all that. You
set me free to reign.

U. S. ARMY

You are the Emancipator
of your God,
And as such I promote you
to a saint.

God to Job's wife:
.... your husband Job and
I together
Found out the discipline
man needed most
Was to learn his submission
to unreason;
And that for man's own
sake as well as mine
So he won't find it hard to
take his orders
From his inferiors in intelligence
In peace and war - especially
in war.

U. S. ARMY

God to Job

Job, you must understand my
provocation,
The tempter comes to me and
I am tempted.
. . . . . — —
— — — — — —
— — — He thinks he can
convince me
It is no different with my
followers
From what it is with his.
Both serve for pay.
. . . — — — — — — —
— — — — — —
— — — He could count
on no one:
That was his look out. I
could count on you.
I wanted him forced to
acknowledge so much.
I gave you over to him, but with
safeguards.

With kind regards
DM.

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JOB AND GOD

RALPH MARCUS
Associate Professor of Hellenistic Culture, University of Chicago

WHETHER THE PROBLEMS which nature sets before the natural scientists are more complex than those which literary texts set before the philologist (using the name in the broad sense of linguist-historian-critic) is in itself a problem with which we are fortunately not concerned here. But, whatever the relative degrees of complexity in the two broad fields, there is no doubt that the problems that face the philologist in interpreting an ancient literary text are more troublesome, in at least two respects, namely, in that he is never sure whether he has seen all the problems or whether he has solved any of them.

If, however, for convenience and simplicity—two virtues not sufficiently appreciated by literary critics—we assume that the philologist has certain primary responsibilities, we seem to get along best by reducing their number to three: (1) understanding an author's language literally and figuratively; (2) understanding the background of his work, the landscape of his ideas and attitudes; (3) understanding the form of the work and the intention of the author.

I

The first of these conveniently assumed responsibilities becomes an unusually formidable one in the case of *Job*. Like all poetry, biblical Hebrew poetry is more obscure than prose. Furthermore, the obscurities of the poetic style of *Job* are multiplied by the following factors: the Hebrew vocabulary and idiom are strongly colored by borrowings from Aramaic and Arabic which leave the limits of meaning in doubt in the case of certain not too familiar Hebrew words; the manuscript tradition is often uncertain; there are obvious signs of theological tampering with the original text.

In addition to these special problems of interpreting the Hebrew text of *Job*, the philologist is faced by the general problems of translation. Every translation, as I have ventured to remark before,[1] is a compromise between two civilizations. A meaning can be carried over

1. "Jewish and Greek Elements in the Septuagint," *Louis Ginzberg Jubilee Volume* (New York, 1945), pp. 227-46.

from one language to another only in the degree that the two communities of speakers share experiences. To take a homely example, every speaker of English with a little knowledge of French knows that *savoir faire* has the same general meaning as American English *know how*. But the similarity in general meaning is counteracted by an important difference in specific meaning, since *savoir faire* means knowing how to act in polite society and to do things characteristic of French culture, while American *know how* means knowing how to organize a group or repair machines or to do things characteristic of American culture.

These problems of text and linguistic differences may be illustrated for the English reader of *Job* by commenting on three of the best known verses of the book as they are rendered in the Authorized or King James Version. In 13:14-15, Job is made to say, in what seems to most unprejudiced readers inconsistent language:

> Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth
> and put my life in my hand?
> Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him
> but I will maintain mine own ways before Him.

The unsuspecting reader, who may have his own theory about the central theme of *Job*, should be told that the words, "Yet will I trust in Him," are not a rendering of the oldest consonantal Hebrew text that has come down to us, but are based upon the traditional Jewish interpretation, here theologically influenced, perhaps, and upon some of the ancient versions. The oldest Hebrew text reads, "I will not have trust" or, perhaps even more accurately, "I will not wait patiently." If we are to emend the text, we should be more faithful to the context by adopting the suggestion of some modern scholars that we transpose the consonants of the Hebrew verb *'y ḥ l* and read *'ḥ y l*, and render, "I will not tremble."

Another example of the kind of translation that may throw the non-Hebraist off the track of the probable meaning of the original text, occurs in the Authorized Version in 9:20, where Job says to Bildad:

> If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me,
> If I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.

Here, aside from the fact that God and not *it* is probably the subject of the verb "shall prove me perverse" (which is a single grammatical

form in Hebrew), the rendering "perfect" for Hebrew *tam* gives the wrong impression, since *tam* does not mean "perfect" in the priggish or complacent sense, but rather "innocent" or "of good conscience." Neither here nor elsewhere does Job claim to be wholly without fault. He merely maintains that he is not guilty of such enormous sins as his unsympathetic sympathizers suppose responsible for his misfortunes.

A third familiar rendering may serve to conclude this brief demonstration of the importance of going back to the original text in order to understand the literal and figurative meanings. In 19:23-26, Job concludes his reply to Bildad's second speech by expressing the desire for vindication in his lifetime. The Authorized Version translates verse 25:

> For I know that my Redeemer liveth
> and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.

Here, there are several corrections of the Authorized Version that might be made, but perhaps the single most disturbing rendering is "Redeemer", which inevitably suggests the concept and image of a divine Savior who delivers the soul and body from everlasting death. Such, indeed, was the interpretation of many Jewish and Christian theologians of the past. But the word *go'el*, here boldly rendered "redeemer" (as in the Targum and Vulgate), has the more prosaic meaning of "legal defender" or "vindicator." Moreover, it is not at all unlikely, in my opinion, that the word is not applied here to God, although it is so applied in several passages elsewhere in Scripture. Both the context and a proper feeling for Hebrew usage fully justify us in rendering the verse, "And as for me, would that I might know my vindicator in my lifetime."

II

> Wer den Dichter will verstehen
> Muss in Dichters Lande gehen.

This wise counsel of Goethe, if taken in the wider sense of exploring the spiritual landscape as well as the physical environment of a poet, is not easy to follow in the case of an anonymous work like *Job*, which bears no obvious indications of date or original language or place of composition or literary prototypes. In dealing with these

problems, modern as well as ancient commentators have had to resort to conjecture, and to be content with marking out a large area rather than pointing to a definite locus.

On the evidence of vocabulary and style and stage of theological development, most scholars in recent times[2] have fixed the time of composition of the book between 600 and 300 B.C. Those readers who are impatient of scholarly reservation may be partly satisfied by being told that, in our present state of knowledge, a dating in the fifth century B.C. seems to present fewer difficulties than any other similarly narrow and equally uncertain dating.

The setting of the book and the attitudes of the characters are not obviously Palestinian, and it remains a problem whether the author (or editor) meant "the land of Uz" to indicate a real locality, presumably in Transjordan or Edom, or merely a fictive place. But whether or not the book of *Job* is translated from or modelled after a non-Israelite work, there can be no doubt that, in its present form, it is predominantly Israelite in thought and feeling.

More rewarding than the search for such facts of literary history, however desirable further information about them would be, is the attempt to discover the intellectual setting of the book and its place in the history of ancient near-eastern speculation about the meaning of human suffering and the relation of man to God. One of the most assured results of recent biblical research is the discovery that Hebrew literature was profoundly influenced not only by Mesopotamian writings, as was realized two generations ago, but also by Canaanite and Egyptian forms of belief and expression. The decipherment of ritual and mythical texts of the fourteenth century B.C. found at Ugarit (modern Ras Shamra), on the coast of Syria, has revealed that many of the symbols and poetic devices used in the Prophetic books and in Psalms are derived from Canaanite literature, and also that many Israelite religious ceremonies are modifications of Canaanite rites.[3] Similarly, several passages of biblical Wisdom literature, of

2. An excellent survey of modern discussions of *Job* is given by Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York, 1941), pp. 660-92.

3. See, among other works, W. F. Albright, *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel* (Baltimore, 1942); J. H. Patton, *Canaanite Parallels in the Book of Psalms* (Baltimore, 1944); W. Baumgartner, "Ugaritische Probleme und ihre Tragweite für das Alte Testament", *Theologische Zeitschrift*, III (1947), 81-100.

which *Job* forms a part, have been shown to be translations or adaptations of Egyptian writings.[4]

Let us, then, at least tentatively, explore the landscape of *Job* in this broad, cultural sense, and see what the author's literary predecessors, whether known to him directly or indirectly or not at all, may have said about the great moral problems that concerned him, such as those of human suffering, of the relative merits of life and death, of just or unjust punishment for sin, of divine providence or divine indifference.

In undertaking this brief exploration, we must bear in mind two things: first, that the Egyptian and Mesopotamian Wisdom books which, by good fortune, have been discovered, are probably only a small part of what anciently existed, and second, that the interpretation of these meager remains is even more uncertain than that of the book of *Job*.

Among the extant Egyptian Wisdom books that in some way touch on the themes treated by the author of *Job*, are two that some scholars have considered relevant to our study. One is the so-called *Complaint of the Peasant*, preserved in a papyrus of the Middle Kingdom (*ca.*2000–1600 B.C.).[5] According to the German Egyptologist, Erman, the point of the work seems to be that eloquence is necessary to expose the misconduct of government officials. It is, indeed, difficult for an unprejudiced reader to see much more than an external resemblance to the anguished tone of Job in the cry of appeal to Anubis, made by the peasant who has vainly sought help from a high official. It is even more difficult to be fully persuaded by the Swiss scholar, Humbert, that "the very problem of the book of *Job*, its theodicy, is a philosophical transposition of this demand for justice which forms the basis of the *Complaint of the Peasant*, though here it is limited to human justice."

The second Egyptian book which may, with much greater justice, be considered a literary and philosophical parallel to *Job*, is the so-

4. The material is conveniently summarized by Paul Humbert, *Recherches sur les sources égyptiennes de la littérature sapientale d'Israël* (Neuchatel, 1929). Humbert, however, is too confident about the Egyptian origin of some passages in *Job*.

5. See Adolf Erman, *Literatur der Aegypter* (Leipzig, 1923), pp. 157-75, or the English translation of Erman's book by A. M. Blackman (London, 1927), pp. 161-31.

called *Dialogue of the Life-weary Man with his Soul.*[6] This work of a few hundred lines is also preserved in a papyrus of the Middle Kingdom. There are two formally distinct parts; the first is a dialogue between an unhappy man, perhaps a prospective suicide, and his soul (Egyptian *ba'*) concerning the desirability of death; the second is a collection of four poems in praise of death. Both parts are incompletely preserved and difficult to understand. Moreover, it is not certain that they originally formed a single composition, but, even if they are distinct compositions, they both have some interest for the student of *Job* as at least partial and vague prototypes of the Hebrew poem.

According to Erman, the life-weary man who contemplates suicide is unable to persuade his soul to accompany him in death, because it does not count on being comfortable under the circumstances, and the soul tries to justify its rather calculating decision by appealing to a board of impartial judges. The Dutch scholar, de Buck, thinks that the poem arises from the contrast of two attitudes, one of extreme pessimism, and the other of extreme optimism about life, and that the author, in typical Egyptian fashion, is advocating a compromise between the two extremes. To Weill,

> it remains perfectly certain that at the instant of death the man and the soul which is ready to let him die are in agreement about the fact that death is more or less imminent, and they debate between themselves two theories of death, two ways of considering and imagining it. These two conceptions are those of happy immortality, of which one can assure oneself, and of the total negation of this possibility. And one perceives that the opposition and the philosophic and dogmatic rivalry of these confronted theses are the essential object and spiritual axis of the whole composition.

Here, again, at least one unprejudiced reader must politely demur at laying so heavy a burden of interpretation upon so thin a layer of text. At any rate, there is almost nothing in the first part of the *Dialogue* which compels us to regard it as an anticipation of what is said in the book of *Job* concerning the suffering of the righteous and

6. See Erman, pp. 122-30; Blackman, pp. 86-108. Very helpful are two recent discussions: R. Weill, "Le livre du Désespéré, le sens, l'intention et la composition littéraire de l'ouvrage," *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'Archéologie orientale,* XL (1947), 89-154; A. de Buck, "Inhoud en achtergrond van het gesprek van den levensmoede mit ziyn ziel," *Kernmomenten der antieke beschaving en haar moderne beleving* (Mededeelingen . . . Ex Oriente Lux No. 7, Leiden, 1947), 10-32.

the nature of divine providence. In the appended collection of four poems in praise of death, which is introduced by the statement, "Then I opened my mouth to my soul to answer what it had said," we have a moving treatment of the theme that life is bitter and death is sweet. Moreover, in the life-weary man's lament that his name is abhorred, that "brothers are evil," that the earth is given over to iniquity, and that death is before him "like the fragrance of lotus flowers," we have some faint intimations of the poignancy of *Job,* but hardly more.

That there were many Egyptian poets and thinkers who meditated on the problem of human suffering, we may surmise from the existence of such compositions as this and from other fragmentary remains of Egyptian Wisdom literature, as well as the so-called *Harpers' Laments.* But, so far as we can tell from the fairly well documented *Weltanschauung* of the ancient Egyptians, there was no parallel to the most impressive parts of *Job,* those in which Job confronts a personal God who is the perfect embodiment of that morality, of which in its human form he is the only source.

More clearly related in form and content to the book of *Job* is a Babylonian work probably composed before 1000 B.C. This so-called *Babylonian Theodicy* (also called the *Babylonian Koheleth* by modern scholars; a companion piece, the so-called *Babylonian Job,* is closer in external details to the biblical *Job*) is a dialogue between a disillusioned man and a learned friend who seeks to justify the ways of the gods. The original composition contained twenty-seven strophes of eleven lines each, of which the initial syllables form an acrostic giving the name of the author. Unfortunately, only about half of the poem has been fully preserved; nevertheless, the general sense is much clearer than that of the Egyptian poems referred to above.

According to the convenient though sometimes rather conjectural synopsis furnished by the modern editor, Landsberger,[7] the contents are as follows. The first speaker, who has doubts about the concern of the Babylonian gods for the well-being of their worshippers, turns to a learned man—a theologian we should call him today—for reassurance and consolation. The theologian expresses surprise that his questioner should be plunged into doubt by a temporary setback to

7. See Benno Landsberger, "Die babylonische Theodizee: akrostichisches Zwiegespräch, sog. 'Kohelet,'" *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie,* XLIII (1936), 32-76.

his faith, and tells him that true happiness consists not in the possession of external goods, but in sincere piety. When the doubter objects that the gods do not reward men for performing prescribed acts of ritual (a statement which Landsberger liberally interprets as an indication of disbelief in a "moral order"), the theologian reminds him that wicked and irreligious men must always live in fear of punishment. When the complainant repeats that his piety has been ill rewarded, his learned friend questions the sincerity of his faith. After a break in the tablets covering three strophes, the text resumes with the theologian's complacent assurance, based on his own fortunate experience, that piety is rewarded. To this the doubter impatiently replies that he will seek solitude in order to escape the suffering caused by social contact.

Following another lacuna, the lines of debate shift slightly. The theologian calls attention to the rapid alternation of good luck and bad luck, the transitoriness of worldly prosperity, and the true happiness of pious living. If the complainant has found no comfort in his search for wisdom, it is his own fault, for he lacks true faith. The skeptic argues that there is no justice in a social order which favors the first-born over his brothers. On the contrary, replies the theologian, this very point illustrates the wisdom of the gods, though uninformed men may not understand it. The first-born among men and animals is always inferior in mind or body to those born after him. (Apparently the poet means to imply that the social privileges of the first-born are intended by the gods to be a compensation for his natural inferiority). In reply to the complainant's argument that the rich evildoer is favored over the deserving poor, the theologian can only say that in this point his questioner is right, for that is the way in which the gods made men. Thereupon the skeptic declares himself to be a humble man, and seems to admit that he has been at fault in casting doubt on the wisdom of the gods' treatment of men.

This *Babylonian Theodicy* comes closer than any other extant bit of ancient near-eastern Wisdom writing to the central themes of *Job*,[8] but no modern reader will, I think, be suspected of religious provincialism if he expresses the conviction that the author of the Hebrew

8. See the methodical but somewhat biased treatment of this work and other Babylonian Wisdom poems, such as the *Dialogue Between Slave and Master* and the *Psalm of Lamentation and Thanksgiving*, by Johann Stamm, *Das Leiden des Unschuldigen in Babylon und Israel* (Zürich, 1946).

Wisdom book has touched depths of thought and feeling much more profound than those revealed in the Babylonian poem. In the latter poem, there is no such conflict between a passionate human personality and a powerful divine personality as that which makes the reading of *Job* so moving and chastening. The awesome revelation in *Job* that God has a concern for man's suffering and man's love is far above comparison with the Babylonian theologian's teaching that men must conform to the conventions of ritual and prayer in order to please the gods. Most significant of all the differences between *Job* and the *Babylonian Theodicy* is the absence in the latter of anything like Job's insistent demand that God himself enlighten him as to the cause of human suffering.

So far, we have been exploring (much too hastily) the further background of the intellectual landscape in which the author of *Job* observed and wrote. Although, as I have remarked before, there is no evidence that the Hebrew writer had an exact knowledge of the form and content of such works as have been mentioned, it is instructive to learn that in the cultural milieu of the Israelites (and we must remember the extraordinary receptiveness of the peoples of Semitic culture, especially of the Israelites), there were conscious and artistic expressions of the religious and moral themes that *Job* so magnificently presents.

Moving now from the more remote near-eastern background to the more immediate landscape of Canaanite culture, we find no evidence of the existence among the Phoenicians and other near neighbors of the Israelites of Wisdom literature.[9] We can consider as no more than tentative the theory of Robert H. Pfeiffer that "the thought and language [of *Job*] are characteristically Edomite,"[10] since the few bits of supposedly Edomite literature used by Pfeiffer as a basis of comparison are themselves found in the Hebrew Bible, and are not clearly of Edomite origin. In any case, only the framework of *Job*, the so-

9. W. F. Albright, in "The Role of the Canaanites in the History of Civilization", *Studies in the History of Culture in Honor of Waldo G. Leland* (1942), 11-50, goes so far as to say, "There can no longer be any doubt that the Bible has preserved much of the best in Phoenician literature, especially lyric and gnomic" (p. 50). Even if we were sure of this, we should have to be careful to distinguish between gnomic literature and developed wisdom literature such as we find in *Job*.

10. See Pfeiffer (*op. cit.*) pp. 681-83.

called folk-story, can reasonably be derived from a Canaanite or Edomite source.[11]

So far as the most significant portion of the book is concerned, that portion which reveals the character and thought of Job and God, we must look to earlier Israelite Wisdom literature for orientation. But on this large subject, which in recent times has been the subject of a great number of scholarly studies, we can dwell only long enough to sketch the outlines of the doctrines which the predecessors of the author of *Job* sought to teach.

Here I must pause to remark that it was not the genius of the Hebrews to be as systematic as were the Greeks in the formulation of a religious philosophy. The Hebrews could be systematic in *Halakah,* in the formulation of a social philosophy, and they were not less rational or logical than the Greeks, but they were less objective.

The concept of Wisdom (*ḥokmah* in Hebrew), like most religious and philosophical concepts, underwent a gradual change in Israelite thought that can be discerned at intervals of the successive literary expressions found in the Hebrew Bible. In everyday speech, *ḥokmah* meant worldly wisdom or cleverness or skill in craftsmanship or an understanding of human behavior. Yet these secular meanings were never entirely divorced from the assumption that natural wisdom was a gift of God and ultimately related to divine wisdom. But, in the age of the Prophets, especially those of the Babylonian and Persian periods, partly under the influence of neighboring cultures the word *ḥokmah* took on more elevated meanings. These are, of course, occasionally to be found in the later Psalms and in the prophecies of Second Isaiah, but are best known from their occurrence in those books of the Old Testament and Apocrypha specifically known as Wisdom Literature, namely *Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Sirach,* and *The Wisdom of Solomon.*

Among the related but recognizably distinct later connotations of *ḥokmah,* we find two primary meanings with their several variations. One of these presents *ḥokmah* as an attribute of the pious man who obeys the commands of God found in scriptural law or *Torah,* and is rewarded by having his natural wisdom enriched by the wisdom of

11. Ingenious, but rather too speculative, is the study by Shalom Spiegel, "Noah, Danel and Job: Touching the Canaanite Relics in the Legends of the Jews," *Louis Ginzberg Jubilee Volume* (New York, 1945), I, 305-55.

God. The other presents the Divine Wisdom as a sort of intermediary between God and man, sometimes identified with *Torah*, sometimes identified with the Word of God, sometimes described as a quasi-personal force, mysterious and remote. In this concept of the heavenly Wisdom, the Israelites came as close to the Logos doctrines of Hellenistic-Oriental theology and Greek philosophy as it was possible for such essentially unobjective and unmetaphysical thinkers to come.

The author of *Job*, therefore, seems to take for granted that his readers are acquainted with Israelite doctrines of Wisdom, especially with the theory that the man who obeys the commands of *Torah* and lives righteously will be rewarded in this life with some form of material prosperity as well as spiritual gifts. The poet also seems to be aware that some of his contemporaries were coming to believe that God might reward the righteous and punish the wicked in another life. Though this belief became a cardinal doctrine of Judaism only with the emergence of the Pharisaic group in the Maccabean period, there is reason to suppose that it had begun to take hold of both theologians and unlearned believers some centuries earlier. Among the Canaanites, as among the Egyptians and other peoples of the ancient Near East, the notion had prevailed that the personality survives the death of the body, but among the Israelites this notion had been deliberately discouraged by priests and prophets who feared its pagan associations. Nevertheless, partly as a result of political insecurity, and partly under Persian influence, there began to develop, side by side with the belief in a national restoration, the idea that righteous individuals who suffered in this life would be rewarded in the next. Although, as I have said, this notion became a dogma only in the Maccabean period, the very fact that the authors of *Job* and *Ecclesiastes* reject the idea so repeatedly and insistently seems to indicate that many Jews of the Persian period accepted it.

But the author of *Job* was clearly not satisfied either with the concept of human wisdom as guaranteeing an earthly reward to the pious and law-observant man, or with the more mystical belief that God's wisdom would bring surcease from suffering either in this world or the next. He was looking for something more realistic than the mystical hopes expressed in some of the Psalms and in the eighth chapter of *Proverbs*, and more mystical than the prudential realism of most of the book of *Proverbs*.

III

In the preceding section, we have had a glimpse, admittedly brief and unsatisfying, of the intellectual landscape in which the author of *Job* moved and meditated. Let us now turn to the form and intention of his own work, not with confidence that we shall learn exactly where he got his literary materials and ideas, but merely with the hope that we shall understand a little more clearly what was personal and original in his thinking as opposed to that of his contemporaries. That he was, in fact, an original thinker hardly anyone can doubt who is familiar with the contents of the Hebrew Bible.

The composition of the book of *Job* is an involved problem about which competent scholars still find themselves in partial disagreement. But certain natural divisions or literary units are immediately apparent upon a first reading. The book is introduced and concluded by a prose narrative, the folk-story, as it is usually called, which makes up chapters 1, 2 and 42.

This folk-story tells us that Job, a pious man, lived happily with his family and possessions until Satan (whose name in Hebrew means "accuser" or "adversary") wagered God that Job would give up his piety if he were to lose his children and property. But, in spite of the misfortune visited upon him, Job continues to bless the name of God. When Satan is rebuked by God for suggesting that Job's piety is motivated only by self-interest, Satan coolly suggests that if Job's own body is afflicted, he will curse God. Satan is permitted to make the test, but a second time Job refuses to "sin with his lips" and persists in piously accepting evil as well as good at the hand of God.

Job's suffering brings him a visit of condolence from three of his friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. The content of their remarks is not preserved in the folk-story, but we must suppose from the nature of the separate Dialogue that they attributed his suffering to some disregard of divine law. In the concluding part of the folk-story, God rebukes Job's friends for misinterpreting the cause of his suffering, and commands them to make atonement by sacrifice, while directing Job to pray for them. He then rewards Job for his patience by giving him twice as much as he had before and blessing him with long life and children and children's children to the fourth generation.

Within this narrative setting, which gives no hint of an argument or debate between Job and God, is found the Dialogue in metrical

form. It is introduced by Job's lament in chapter 3 and is concluded by God's speeches "out of the whirlwind" and Job's confession of ignorance and repentance in chapters 38-42. The Dialogue, however, like the whole book, appears to be composite rather than a single literary unit. While there is nothing like unanimity among scholars on the number and extent of the several portions, there is a large measure of agreement that the cycles of speeches by Job and his three friends in chapters 3-31 are distinct from the speeches of Elihu in chapters 32-37, and that the latter have no formal connection with the earlier part of the Dialogue (Elihu's existence being ignored) and are different in language and style. Furthermore, it is obvious that the cycles of speeches in chapters 3-31, as originally written, must have contained eighteen speeches, three by each of the three friends and nine replies by Job, but, in the present form of the text, the last cycle of speeches is incomplete and disarranged. Then, too, the praise of Wisdom in chapter 28 is considered by some scholars to be extraneous to the central portion of the book, as are a good many verses in chapters 38-42 which contain the speech of God. Finally, it should be mentioned that even conservative scholars are prepared to admit the interpolation and rearrangement of occasional verses in that part of the book regarded by all critics as original.

From this brief analysis, it will be seen that our interpretation of the author's meaning must depend, to some extent, upon our determination of how much has been added to the original work of the poet whose style and thought are recognizable in the debate between Job and his friends. One thing, however, is certain, namely, that the heart of the matter which was the poet's chief concern is to be found in Job's lament and speeches and in the first part of God's reply to Job. We shall also do well to remember that Job's replies to the arguments of Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar are addressed to God as much as to his friends. We are therefore justified, I think, in basing our interpretation of Job upon the twenty chapters in which Job and God are the speakers, that is, chapters 3, 6-7, 9-10, 12-14, 16-17, 23-24, 27, 29-31, 38-39, 40 in part and 42 in part.

It will, however, help us to appreciate the poet's originality in style and thought if we first consider the literary and theological problems presented by the folk-story in chapters 1-2 and 42.

That there was a legendary person called Job, we know from the

verses in the fourteenth chapter of the book of *Ezekiel* which name Job together with Noah and Daniel as exemplars of righteousness.[12] But how much of the assumed early story about a righteous man named Job who remained pious in the face of great suffering was known to the author of the Dialogue, and what picturesque details he may have added to it, and whether he used it as merely a decorative setting for his dramatic poem to awaken the curiosity of unphilosophical readers, or took over a popular story with the ironical intention of exposing its superficial and defective morality—these are all questions which may never be fully answered.

The striking figure of the Adversary as a personal enemy of mankind, from his first appearance as Satan in *Job* (or perhaps in *Zechariah* 3:2) to his engaging final appearance as the sophisticated Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust* has led some students of our book to attribute to him more importance than his earliest history warrants. The Satan of the folk-story of *Job*, though he politely sneers at God, is no Mephistopheles matching wits with *der alte Herr*, nor is he the principle of evil evenly matched with the principle of good, as is Angra Mainyu with Ahura Mazda in Iranian mythology. Satan is merely a more personalized form of the shadowy "evil spirits" occasionally mentioned in earlier narratives of the Old Testament as agents of God in testing men's sincerity of belief or action. At any rate, it was the understanding of the author of the Dialogue that God himself and not Satan was the adversary whom Job believed himself to be facing.

Some modern readers have been shocked by the notion that an omnipotent God should so callously bring extreme suffering upon a good man like Job. But two things may be said in depreciation of such shocked concern. In the first place, we should not be ungrateful enough to forget that the moral standards by which we condemn the seeming immorality of some passages in the Old Testament have themselves been taken from other passages of the Old Testament. In spite of their belief in the Mosaic revelation, Israelite theologians, from the time of the early kingdom on, learned to think more wisely and humanely than their predecessors of the Mosaic age. In the second place, as we shall see in a moment, even the most advanced Christian thought has not got far beyond the ancient Israelite idea that God

12. *Ibid.*

has the moral right to demand the utmost sacrifice of his worshipers.

This does not mean that biblical writers were insensitive to the suffering involved in this strict doctrine. We know, for example, that the story in Genesis about Abraham's intended sacrifice of his beloved son Isaac was, in large part, an etiological story designed to explain the substitution of animal for human sacrifices in the Israelite cult. But it is also clear that the writer of this story believed that only a man who is prepared to give to God all that is dear to him is entitled to a divine reward, and that God does not try men beyond their power to endure suffering.

Nevertheless, a contemporary moralist may insist, there is something abhorrent to our feeling in the notion of a God so exacting and jealous in his demand of absolute obedience that he beats a good man like Job to his knees merely to convince a skeptic like Satan that Job really is obedient to his God. Would it not have been more reasonable for God to afflict the numberless wicked and disobedient men? This is not quite the same as the ancient question, why do the wicked prosper, but rather the question, Why does God select innocent and vulnerable people as undeserving victims of his moral experiments?

To this question the author of the folk-story has not given an answer. All that he tells us, at least in what remains of the story, is that truly pious men must accept suffering without reproaching God. But even the most refined and learned speculation of our own time has not given us a wholly satisfying answer, certainly none more satisfying than the answer given by the poet who wrote the Dialogue in *Job*, which I shall try to interpret a little further on.

Of recent moralizings on the problem of divine providence and human suffering, I know of no philosopher or theologian who has spoken more eloquently or movingly than Father Paneloux, a character in Albert Camus' recent novel *La Peste*.[13] Camus describes the physical and moral suffering caused by a plague that is imagined to have struck the city of Oran. A thoughtful priest, Father Paneloux, preaches a traditional sermon in the cathedral to prove to his congregation that the plague is a punishment for their sins. But when the priest himself spends an agonized night by the bedside of a stricken infant and watches him die in torment, he is forced to search for a

13. Albert Camus, *La Peste* (Paris, 1947), pp. 247-48.

more profound explanation. In a second sermon, he revises his theology and speaks in part as follows:

> Le Père disait au même instant que la vertu d'acceptation totale dont il parlait ne pouvait être comprise au sens restreint qu'on lui donnait d'ordinaire, qu'il ne s'agissait pas de la banale résignation, ni même de la difficile humilité. Il s'agissait d'humiliation mais d'une humiliation où l'humilié était consentant. Certes, la souffrance d'un enfant était humiliante pour l'esprit et le coeur. Mais c'est pourquoi il fallait y entrer. Mais c'est pourquoi, et Paneloux assura son auditoire que ce qu'il allait dire n'était pas facile à dire, il fallait la vouloir parce que Dieu la voulait. Ainsi seulement le chrétien n'épargnerait rien et, toutes issues fermées, irait au fond du choix essentiel. Il choisirait de tout croire pour ne pas être reduit à tout nier. . . . On ne pouvait dire: "Cela je le comprends, mais ceci est inacceptable," il fallait sauter au coeur de cet inacceptable qui nous était offert, justement pour que nous fissions notre choix. La souffrance des enfants était notre pain amer, mais sans ce pain notre âme périrait de sa faim spirituelle.

But this means that, while God graciously allows us to satisfy our own spiritual hunger by eating bitter bread, he causes an infant, who knows no spiritual hunger, to eat bread just as bitter. The imaginary sermon is magnificent and forceful, but it does not go beyond the wisdom of the story of Abraham and Isaac or the folk-story of Job.

The bewilderment of senstive believers of our own day at the inexplicable sufferings of the innocent young is poignantly expressed by a Job-like character, Scobie, in a recent novel of the Catholic writer, Graham Greene.[14] As he watches an unconscious child being brought ashore from the boat of a ship sunk at sea during the war, Scobie exclaims

> "It's terrible."
> "What is terrible?"
> "A child like that."
> "Yes. Both parents were lost. But it is all right. She will die."
>
> Scobie watched the bearers go slowly up the hill, their bare feet very gently flapping the ground. He thought: it would need all Father Brûle's ingenuity to explain that. Not that the child would die: that needed no explanation. Even the pagans realized that the love of God might mean an early death, though the reason they ascribed was different, but that the child should have been allowed to survive the forty days and nights in the open boat—that was the mystery, to reconcile that with the love of God.
>
> And yet he could believe in no God who was not human enough to love what he had created.

14. *The Heart of the Matter* (New York, 1948), pp. 124-25.

We have given this much study to the folk-story of Job in order to suggest what was "the root of the matter" to which the author of the Dialogue addressed himself, and to show how little help he could have got from his predecessors and contemporaries in finding an answer to the agonizing question, why do the righteous suffer?

It is now time to turn to the Dialogue to try to learn from the speeches of Job himself what was in his mind and heart, thus treating Job as a real person rather than a character in a story. If we read these chapters separately, without resorting to drastic emendation except where the text is generally regarded as corrupt, we see that there are three principal themes in Job's argument. We also see that Job shows a surprising amount of dramatic as well as logical consistency throughout the alternation of these themes. Sometimes he combines the three themes, sometimes he repeats a theme at intervals with a change of tone. Job confronts God in a variety of attitudes, but always with the same ultimate intention. Sometimes he is suppliant, sometimes plaintive, sometimes righteously indignant, sometimes even defiant. It is natural that each theme should have its appropriate tone, but there is an occasional change of tone within the same theme.

The first of these themes, which is most often found in the earlier speeches, though it is sometimes echoed or implied in later passages, is Job's plea to be released by death from his suffering. A variation of this theme is his regret at ever having been born. The passages (outside the introductory lament) in which this thought is most clearly expressed are the following:

3:11-13

Why did I not die from the womb,
And in coming forth from the belly expire?
Why did the knees receive me,
Or why the breasts that I should suck?
For else[15] I should have lain down and been quiet.
I should have slept and then have had rest.

3:20-23

Why does He give light to the weary,
And life to the bitter of soul,
Who long for death, which comes not,
And search for it more than for treasure,
Who are glad with jubilation
And rejoice when they find the grave?

15. More literally, "now."

6:8-9

Would that my prayer were granted,[16]
And God would give what I hope for!
And that God would consent to crush me,
Would loose His hand and cut me off!

7:15-16

My soul chooses strangling
And death rather than my pains.[17]
Let me go under![18] Not for ever would I live.
Let me be, for my days are fleeting.

10:19

I would be as though I had never been.
From the womb I should have been brought to the grave.

Whether the poet meant us to suppose that Job's longing for death was less urgent as he went on to argue his case, is not easy to determine, but it is natural to conjecture that, if he saw no prospect of vindication, he would prefer the oblivion of death to the ignominy of life.

The second theme, which to me seems the most original and significant one in the book, is Job's accusation, sometimes despairing, sometimes gently ironical, sometimes sarcastically bitter, that God is mercilessly persecuting him, is pressing him like an implacable enemy rather than passing sentence on him with judicial calm. Job is protesting against the monstrousness of the disparity between the divine omnipotence and his own mortal weakness. Here Job, while still partly on the defensive, dares to accuse God of taking an almost sadistic pleasure in causing suffering to man, a suffering out of all proportion to his sinfulness, whatever that may have been.

This theme is illustrated by the following passages:

6:4

For the arrows of the Almighty are in me,
The venom of which my spirit drinks.
The terrors of God are arrayed against me.

16. Lit., "might come."

17. Reading, with many scholars, *'aṣbôtay*, "my pains," instead of Masoretic *'aṣmôtay*, "my bones."

18. Taking *m's* in the sense of *mss*, "to melt away."

7:11-12

As for me, I will not hold my mouth.
I will speak in my anguish of spirit.
I will talk out in my bitterness of soul.
Am I Yam or Tannin[19]
That Thou settest a watch over me?

7:17-19

What is man that Thou shouldst make much of him.
That Thou shouldst give him any thought,
That Thou shouldst visit him every morning
And at every moment try him?
How long wilt Thou not look away from me
Nor let me be till I swallow my spittle?

9:13-18

God does not stay His anger.
Beneath Him lie low Rahab's helpers.
How much less shall I answer Him then?
How shall I choose my words to Him?
Even if I were in the right, I should get no answer[20]
When I supplicate my judge.[21]
If I called Him and He answered me,
I would not believe that He harkens to my voice.
For He crushes me for a trifle[22]
And multiplies my wounds without cause.
He does not let me get my breath,
But gives me my fill of bitterness.

13:20-22

Only two things do not do to me.
Then will I not hide from Thy face.
Remove Thy hand from me,
And let Thy terror not affright me.
Then call, and I will answer,
Or else I will speak, and Thou shalt reply.

19. Mythological creatures, now better known from Ugarit texts. A. V. renders, "Am I a sea or a whale?"

20. Reading, with some ancient versions, *lō' 'e'ānēh*, "I shall not be answered," instead of Masoretic *lō' 'e'ᵉnēh*, "I will not answer".

21. Reading, with some modern scholars, *mᵉšōphᵉṭî*, "my judge" or "my legal adversary," instead of Masoretic *mišpāṭî*, "my judgment."

22. Lit. "for a hair." I follow some ancient versions and modern scholars in reading *śa'ᵃrāh* instead of Masoretic *śᵉ'ārāh* "storm."

13:25
Wilt Thou terrify a driven leaf,
And wilt Thou pursue dry straw?

16:9
In His wrath He has torn me and hated me
And has gnashed His teeth at me.

16:12-14
I was at peace, and He shattered me
And He seized me by the neck and smashed me to bits.
And He set me up as His target.
His arrows are all around me.
He cleaves my reins and shows no mercy.
He spills out my gall on the ground.
He breaks me, breach upon breach.
He runs upon me like a great warrior.

19:6-11
Know, therefore, that God has wronged me,
And has thrown His net about me.
If I cry, Violence!, I shall get no answer.
If I call aloud, there is no judgment.
He has barred my way, I cannot pass.
And on my paths He has set darkness.
My glory from me He has stripped,
And He has taken the crown from my head.
He has broken me down on every side, and I am lost.
And He has uprooted my hope like a tree.
His wrath is kindled against me,
And He counts me as one of His foes.

23:13-16
And if He chooses[23] a thing, who can turn Him back?
And if His soul desires a thing, He does it.
For He attains His end,[24]
And many such things are with Him.
Therefore am I terrified before Him.
I consider, and I am afraid of Him.
For God has made my heart faint,
And the Almighty has terrified me.

23. Reading, with some modern scholars, *bāḥar*, "chooses," instead of Masoretic *b*ᵉ*'eḥād*, "(is) in one."

24. Reading, with some ancient versions, *ḥuqqô*, "his end," instead of Masoretic *ḥuqqî*, "my end."

30:19-21

He has thrown me into the mud,
And I have become like dust and ashes.
I call aloud to Thee but Thou dost not answer me.
I stand[25] but Thou regardest me not.[26]
Thou hast turned into one cruel to me.
With the might of Thy hand Thou pursuest me.

These passages may serve to show how steadfastly and stubbornly the harassed Job accuses God of misusing his divine power to crush a defenseless man who is bewildered by his fury and is unable to understand why God so relentlessly pursues him.

The third principle theme in the speeches of Job is the insistence upon his innocence and integrity, if not complete, at least substantial. Alternating with this assertion is his plea, sometimes a demand, that God bring him to trial and give him an opportunity to speak in his own defense rather than ignore him or condemn him unheard. From several passages in which this theme appears we may select the following:

7:20

If I have sinned, what do I do to Thee,
O keeper of men?

9:2-3

In truth I know that it is so.
For how can a man be just before God?
If he wishes to dispute with him,
He[27] will not answer once in a thousand times.

9:32-35

For He is not a man like me that I should answer Him,
That we should come together in judgment.
There is no arbiter[28] between us
Who might place his hand upon us both.
Let Him take His rod from upon me,
And let not His terror confuse me.
Let me speak and not have to fear Him,
For (else) am I not true to myself.[29]

25. *I.e.*, in prayer or supplication.

26. The "not" is found in only one Hebrew *MS.*, but is supplied by the Vulgate and is required by the context, as most scholars recognize.

27. The context suggests that God, not man, is the subject of this half-verse.

28. The Greek and Syriac versions read, "Would that there were an arbiter."

29. The meaning of this last half-verse is obscure, but the rendering here given is faithful to the Masoretic text.

13:3
But as for me, I would speak to the Almighty,
And to argue with God is my wish.

13:14-15
I will take[30] my flesh in my teeth,
And my life I will put in my hand.[31]
If He kills[32] me, I will not wait patiently,[33]
But will argue my course to His face.

13:22-23
Call, and I will answer,
Or, if I speak, do Thou reply to me.
How many are my sins and transgressions?
My fault and transgression make known to me.

19:7
If I call, Violence!, I get no answer.
I cry out, and there is no judgment.

23:3-5
Would that I knew and might find Him,
And come to His abode.
I would prepare my case before Him,
And my mouth I would fill with arguments.
I would know with what words He would answer me,
And understand what He would say to me.

23:10-12
He knows my going and my standing.[34]
He has tested me, and I have come out like gold.
In His steps my foot has followed.
His way have I kept and not gone aside.
From the commands of His lips I have not departed.
In my breast[35] I have stored the words of His mouth.

30. The words *'al-māh* preceding *'eśśā'*, "I will take," are not found in the Greek version and are, today, generally regarded as a meaningless repetition of the words, *'alay māh*, which conclude the preceding verse.

31. *I.e.*, "I will risk my life."

32. Heb. *qāṭal*, like "kill" in colloquial English, can also mean "to injure."

33. So the consonantal Masoretic text (or *Kethib*), reading *lō' *yaḥel*. The revised, vocalic Masoretic text (or *Qere*) reads *lō *yaḥel*, "I will trust in Him." Some scholars would emend the consonantal text to read *lō' 'āḥīl*, "I will not tremble," citing the parallel in 9:35.

34. Reading, with Syriac, *w^e 'omdī*, "and my standing," for Masoretic *'immadī*, "with me."

35. Reading, with Greek and Vulgate, *b^eḥēqī*, "in my breast," for Masoretic *meḥuqqī*, "from my statute."

27:5-6

Far be it from me to say you are right.
Until I die I will not put away my integrity from me.
To my righteousness I hold fast and will not let it go.
My heart will feel no shame[36] all my days.

From the foregoing passages, we see that the burden of Job's complaint is threefold. First, he pleads to be released from his suffering. Second, he charges that his suffering is inflicted by an all-powerful being relentlessly persecuting a creature much too weak to bear the weight of it. Third, he insists that he has not been given a fair trial or the right to face his divine accuser and judge. Job is convinced that, if he is not sinless, he has, at least, sufficient integrity to answer any charge which God may bring, if he will but bring a charge.

In God's answer to Job lies "the root of the matter." What is the plain meaning (the *peshaṭ*, as the rabbinic commentators would call it) of chapters 38-40 and 42, in which the poet makes God speak to Job out of the whirlwind? Whatever meaning we may have succeeded in reading out of Job's speeches, which, we remember, are addressed primarily to God and only incidentally to his friends, ought to be a dramatic and logical preparation for the divine utterance.[37]

Most of the verses now generally recognized to be part of God's reply are not too obscure or textually difficult in themselves. It is their seeming irrelevance to the speeches of Job that causes most readers perplexity. God seems to ignore the question in the mind of Job as in that of any thoughtful man, Why do the wicked prosper, and the righteous suffer? He gives no direct reply to Job's insistent question, What great wrong have I committed that you punish me so terribly?

Must we, then, assume, with almost all critics, that God is ironical in asking Job whether he has an arm like God's or can thunder with a voice like God's or adorn himself with glory and honor like God? I think not. I cannot believe that our ironical and psychologically acute poet would make the artistic and moral blunder of ascribing irony at this point to a God whom Job has all along described as infinitely greater than himself. Where would the irony be?

36. The meaning of the verb *yeḥ'raph* is uncertain.

37. Unless we agree with Duncan Macdonald, *The Hebrew Literary Genius* (Princeton, 1933), p. 31, in holding that "the whole philosophical attitude to the world and to man of the Speech of the Lord is different from that of the Colloquies."

In what sense does God give Job an answer? And how satisfying is the answer to Job, to the poet, to us? First, I shall try to phrase in the simplest terms what the poet seems to report God as saying. It is that God is so much involved in trying to control the demonic forces of the universe which he has created, rules and cares for, that he has, so to speak, neither time nor inclination to look out especially for Job, let alone persecute him.

Strange as it may seem in so Hebraic a book as *Job*, God is constrained though not defeated by Necessity, even as the Creator God of Plato is constrained by *anankē*.[38] One need not suppose that the author of *Job* was familiar with Greek literature in general or with Plato in particular.[39] His theology seems to stem from his imaginative insight rather than from a philosophical training.

What comfort, then, can God give Job, and what instruction can the poet of *Job* give his troubled readers? What is the meaning of the passage, 40:7-14, that seems to have formed part of the original conclusion of God's reply to Job?

> Gird now thy loins like a man.
> I will question thee and thou shalt tell Me.
> Wilt thou indeed annul My judgment,
> And condemn Me that thou mayest be right?
> Hast thou an arm like God's,
> And canst thou thunder with a voice like His?
> Adorn thyself now with pride and greatness,
> And clothe thyself with honor and splendor.
> Extend the reach of thy anger,
> And when thou seest a proud man, humble him,
> When thou seest a proud man, subdue him,
> And crush the wicked where they stand.

38. See the discussion of Platonic passages in Simone Pétrement, *Le dualisme chez Platon, les Gnostiques et les Manichéens* (Paris, 1947), pp. 39-45. Mlle. Pétrement remarks that Plato does not represent Necessity as hostile to the supreme god. Even in Gnosticism, she believes, the "ruler of the world" is not essentially an enemy of God; "he is the guardian of an inferior order, who is ignorant of the order of the good."

39. With the resemblances and differences between *Job* and the Greek Prometheus myth, and with the problem of Oriental and Greek culture-hero motifs in relation to the story of Job (who is, of course, not a culture-hero), I hope to deal on another occasion. In this connection, I should like to express disagreement with the current tendency to minimize the differences between primitive myth (as defined by Malinowski) and the literary and social myths of more developed societies. On this subject see Abram Kardiner, *The Individual and His Society* (New

Bury them in the earth together,[40]
And bind their persons in a hidden place.
Then I myself will acknowledge to thee
That thine own right hand will save thee.

The poet is saying, I think, that just as God exerts his heroic will to subdue the demonic elements in the universe and to sustain his creation by bringing light to the stars, rain to the sea and land, and food to all living creatures, so man must exert his will to subdue evil and overcome frustration. This is an *imitatio Dei* of a different kind from that preached by most Judeo-Christian and Oriental theologians.[41] It is an exhortation to emulate God's unconquerable will.[42] I hope I shall not be suspected of speaking *ad captum plebis* (which is, perhaps, no great sin) if I say that the author of *Job* was the first Existentialist.

York, 1939), pp. 105-7, and Robert Bierstedt, "The Limitations of Anthropological Methods in Sociology," *The American Journal of Sociology*, LIV (1948), 22-30.

40. The verb *ṭāman*, "to bury," used here, is also used in Ex.2:12, which tells how Moses "buried in the sand" the cruel Egyptian whom he had slain in righteous anger. I believe that the author of *Job* had this passage in mind.

41. As illustrated by the passages cited in such recent works as Aldous Huxley's *Perennial Philosophy* and several articles by the late Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.

42. A separate paper would be required to discuss the essential differences between the Hebrew God and Zeus. Here I venture only to remark that, while Zeus and the other Greek gods are visible and knowable, they are humanly remote and seen, as it were, through glass. Yahweh is hidden in a mist or a cloud or a whirlwind, but he is known as a person. Moreover, Yahweh is a jealous God, but he is never envious. Zeus and his fellow-gods are not given to the passion of jealousy, but they are notoriously envious of man (*phthoneroi*).

All Men's Book

A New Introduction to Job

By Robert Gordis

Foreword

"A NOBLE Book; all men's Book! It is our first, oldest statement of the never-ending Problem,—man's destiny, and God's ways with him here in this earth. And all in such free flowing outlines; grand in its sincerity, in its simplicity; in its epic melody, and repose of reconcilement. There is the seeing eye, the mildly understanding heart . . . Sublime sorrow, sublime reconciliation; oldest choral melody as of the heart of mankind,—so soft, and great; as the summer midnight, as the world with its seas and stars! There is nothing written, I think, in the Bible or out of it, of equal literary merit."[1] Thus ran Carlyle's sweeping tribute to the *Book of Job*.

Similarly, a distinguished Oriental scholar of our century, Morris Jastrow, declared that just as every actor, however humble, nurses a secret hope to play Hamlet, so every Biblical scholar has the ambition to write on *Job*.

But interest in the Book is by no means limited to specialists. The narrative of God's wager with Satan in the opening chapters was utilized by Goethe for the Prologue to *Faust*. William Blake found scope for his unique artistic genius in his strangely moving "Illustrations for the Book of Job." After the First World War, H. G. Wells used the framework of the dialogue of *Job* as a model for his treatment of the same basic problem in his novel, *The Undying Fire*. Indeed, the influence of *Job* on the literature and art of the Western world can be documented at very great length. Its very phrases and idioms have entered the warp and woof of

Hardy readers who seek the further instruction of the Author's learned notes will find them all at the end of this paper.—Ed.

the English language—even into its colloquialisms, as in the phrase "by the skin of his teeth."

Job is, however, much more than a work of literary imagination. Its basic significance lies in its undying contribution to man's ceaseless effort to penetrate the riddle of existence. It addresses itself to the most agonizing mystery in the world—the problem of evil and human suffering.

On its literary form, which is without parallel elsewhere, only a word need be said.[2] Within the framework of a prose narrative we have a long dialogue in which logic and passion, emotion and thought are fused by the hand of a master genius. This dialogue cannot be described as lyric poetry, for it contains the conflicting utterances of varied protagonists. Yet, unlike the *Dialogues* of Plato, it contains no deeply reasoned, close-knit arguments expressed in prose. Nor does it qualify as a drama, even as a Greek drama[3]; there is neither incident described nor character developed within the body of the book. It is as unique in form as it is profound in content.

I. Background of the Book

IN spite of its universal significance, the *Book of Job* can be understood only against the background of the time and culture from which it rose.

Composed in the early years of the Second Commonwealth —roughly between the sixth and fourth centuries, before the Christian era[4]—it represented the culmination of a long, many-sided and fruitful intellectual activity in ancient Israel. The prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel, who first foretold and then were fated to witness the destruction of the Temple and the loss of the Jewish State (586 B.C.E.), both make reference to the three basic strands of spiritual life in ancient Israel.[5] Jeremiah speaks of "the instruction of the priest, the counsel of the wise, and the word of the prophet." Ezekiel declares that, in the day of doom, men "shall seek a vision of the prophet, and instruction shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the elders."[6]

The first and most central type of spiritual leadership in ancient

Israel was *Torah* (instruction or law), supplied by the priest (*kohen*), the custodian of *Torah*. Fundamentally, as the expert in ritual, the priest officiated at the Temple sacrifices. But he did much more. He acted as judge, medical expert and diviner. The authority of the priest derived from the divine revelation at Sinai under Moses, when the Torah was given to Israel.[7] After the Babylonian Exile and the building of the Second Temple (516 B.C.E.) the priest—for reasons that are highly significant for the character of Judaism but cannot detain us here—continued to be the officiant at the ritual but lost his post of primacy as the authority on the *Torah*. His place was taken by a democratic, non-hierarchical leadership of *Sopherim,* generally but inadequately rendered "scribes," a term meaning "Masters of the Book (of the Law)." These *Sopherim,* spiritual progenitors of the Rabbis of the Mishna and the Talmud, became the expounders of the Law which, under their interpretation, grew and developed to keep pace with the needs and insights of a new age.[8]

The second kind of spiritual activity in pre-exilic Israel was supplied by the prophet, who proclaimed the Vision (*hazon*), or the Word (*dabar*) of the Lord. Lacking both the station and the emoluments of the priesthood, the prophet was supported by voluntary gifts from those who saw in him a direct communicant with the Deity. For the prophet declared that his utterances were not his own but his God's; they were stamped by the formula, "Thus saith the Lord."

The book of *Jeremiah,* for example, contains many deeply moving passages in which the prophet rebels against his tragic lot as a man of strife and contention to all the earth, but finds that he cannot be silent because God's word is "as a fire pent up in my bones, that cannot be contained."[9]

There were various levels among the prophets. Simple fortune-tellers were consulted by the common folk. Court prophets largely served as convenient instruments of royal policy. Both types reflected conventional ideas and prejudices. But there were also great-souled seers who served no master but their God and conscience. They were not professionals. They could be neither bribed nor silenced. Fired by a vision of the Kingdom of God in

which injustice would give way to brotherhood and oppression yield to freedom and peace, they weighed the society of their times against their ideals and found it wanting. These rebels against the political, social, economic and religious *status quo* had relatively little influence in their own lifetime. Indeed, they were generally regarded as enemies of the people, "troublers of Israel." Nonetheless, they did not hesitate to stigmatize their far more acceptable and successful "colleagues" as "false prophets." And it is from the standpoint of the "true prophets" that the pages of the Bible were written.

The Babylonian exile, which led to the transfer of authority from the priest to the scholar, had a far-reaching effect on the institution of prophecy. After the Return from Babylon, prophecy declined and ultimately ceased, having performed its historic mission. But its greatest themes and expressions were preserved in what the entire people now recognized as sacred Scripture. Only in a derivative and debased form did one current of prophecy remain creative, producing the mystic "Apocalyptic" literature.[10]

The third strand of intellectual activity in ancient Israel was *Hokmah*, cultivated by the sage (*hakam*) or elder (*zaken*).[11] It was far more inclusive than the honorific and abstract term "wisdom" would indicate. Basically, Wisdom was concerned with all the practical arts and skills of ancient life: not only the conduct of government and such crafts as architecture, tapestry weaving and sailing the sea, but also the composition and rendering of poetry and music, and even the interpretation of dreams and the practice of magic.

Beyond these techniques, Wisdom was an intellectual discipline, concerned above all with the education of upper-class youth. The *hakam* was a teacher who sought to inculcate in his pupils the virtues of hard work, zeal, prudence, sexual moderation, sobriety, loyalty to authority and religious conformity—all the elements of a morality making for worldly success. When necessary, *Hokmah* literature did not hesitate to urge less positive virtues on its youthful charges, such as holding one's tongue and distributing largesse, as aids in making one's way. In brief, this practical Wisdom

literature represented a hard-headed, matter-of-fact, "safe-and-sane" approach to the problems of living.

Unlike the Torah of the priests or the Visions of the prophets, the Wisdom of the pedagogues laid no claim to being divine revelation. To be sure, some of its fervent disciples did seek to give Wisdom a status of equal dignity by declaring that *Hokmah* was a plaything of God at the time of creation, or the architect's plan by which He had fashioned the world.[12] Such poetic flights were to be expected in ancient society, where religion permeated every aspect of life. These mystical imaginings aside, however, the claim of *Hokmah* to validity rested on its pragmatic truth. The application of human reason and careful observation to all the problems of life "worked"; it brought men success and happiness. Hence Wisdom may be described as the most secular branch of Hebrew thought.

In Jewish tradition, King Solomon is the symbol of Wisdom, and to him are attributed the books of *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes*, as well as the *Song of Songs*. Though this tradition cannot now be taken literally, neither can it be airily dismissed. It is seen to reflect the established historical fact that the intensive cultivation of Wisdom in Israel goes back to King Solomon's reign, when wide international contacts and internal prosperity contributed to the flowering of culture.

Actually, Hebrew Wisdom was part of a vast intellectual activity that had been cultivated for centuries throughout the lands of the Fertile Crescent—Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Babylonia—and for similar purposes, namely, the preparation of youth for success in government, agriculture and commerce. These branches of Oriental Wisdom were older than Biblical *Hokmah*, those nations having attained political and cultural maturity long before Israel. Naturally there are many adumbrations of Biblical Wisdom in Oriental literature, many parallels which have been noted by scholars, sometimes with more enthusiasm than caution.[13] However, none of the extant remains of Babylonian and Egyptian Wisdom reaches the level of Hebrew *Hokmah*.

Its characteristic literary form was the *mashal* (literally, "resemblance")—a term meaning at once "proverb" and "parable."

Early examples of the *mashal* are to be found in the ironic parable of Jotham, which brands the king a parasite and tyrant in society; in the sad words of the "wise woman" of Tekoa, who comments on the brevity of life and man's inability to undo the past; and in the contemptuous reply of Jehoash, king of Israel, to the challenge of his neighbor Amaziah of Judah.[14] The principal literary documents of Wisdom, however, are to be found in the book of *Proverbs,* which entered the Bible, and in the later book of *Ben Sira,* or *Ecclesiasticus,* which remained outside the canon.

While, as before noted, the Babylonian Exile and the Return witnessed the decline and disappearance of prophecy, and ushered in a new phase of oral interpretation of the Torah, it was in this period that Wisdom reached its Golden Age. The exalted hopes of a Restoration had been realized on a very disappointing scale in the tiny Second Commonwealth. The Jewish community in Palestine suffered under a succession of foreign masters, Persian, Greek, Egyptian and Syrian; and fared even worse under the native Jewish rulers of the Hasmonean dynasty, who paved the way for the Roman conquest and the ultimate destruction of national independence.

It was the decline of faith in the fortunes of the nation, coupled with the growth of interest in the individual and his destiny, that stimulated the development of Wisdom. Wisdom was concerned not with the group but with the individual; with the actual present rather than a longed-for future. Wisdom's eminently practical goals for success in the here and now appealed, above all, to those groups in society who were least dissatisfied with the *status quo*—the government officials, the rich merchants, the great landowners whose soil was tilled by tenant farmers. These groups, even the high-priestly families among them, whose prestige and income derived from their position in the hierarchy of the Temple, were concerned less with the will of God than with the way of the world. Their goal in education was the training of their youth for successful careers. Their needs were admirably met by the Wisdom teachers who arose, principally if not exclusively, in Jerusalem, the capital city. Allowing for the differences in religion and culture, they resembled the Sophists in classical Hellas, who performed a

similar function for the upper-class youth of Greek society, teaching them the practical skills needed for government and business.[15] From these teachers of a workable morality emanated the short maxims of the books of *Proverbs* and the longer essays in *Ben Sira,* who makes explicit reference to the *bet hamidrash,* or "academy."

Among them, however, were some whose restless minds refused to be satisfied with these practical goals of what may be termed the lower Wisdom. They sought to penetrate to the great abiding issues: the meaning of life, the purpose of creation, the nature of death, the mystery of evil. In grappling with these ultimate problems they were unwilling to rely on tradition and conventional ideas. They insisted rather on using the same instruments of observation and common sense they were accustomed to utilize everywhere else. Like so many rationalists since their day, however, they soon found the unaided human reason incapable of solving these issues. Some, no doubt, finally made their peace with the traditional religion of their time. But others, more tough-minded, refused to take on faith what their reason could not demonstrate. Hence their writings reveal various degrees and types of skepticism and heterodoxy. Several of these devotees of the higher or speculative Wisdom were able to transmute the frustration and pain of their quest into some of the world's greatest masterpieces, notably *Job* and *Koheleth.*

Koheleth, or Ecclesiastes, the skeptical observer of life and man's pretensions, was keenly aware of the problem of injustice in society, and reacted far more strongly against it than one might have imagined.[16] Primarily, however, his malaise is intellectual in origin. He is troubled by man's inability to discover the ultimate truth—the real meaning of life and the purposes of creation.

On the other hand, the author of *Job,* possessing perhaps a greater fund of feeling, was roused to indignation, not by man's intellectual limitations in a world he had not made, but rather by man's suffering in a world in which he had not asked to be born. A work of grand proportions, which may well have occupied his lifetime, was the notable result.[17] Therein he attempted to grapple with the central problem of religious faith, over which psalmist and prophet and poet alike had wrestled for centuries. Why do

the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer? Why is there evil in a world created by a good God?

II. The Traditional Tale of Job

LIKE the great Greek dramatists, like Shakespeare, Milton and Goethe, the author of *Job* did not invent his own plot. He chose instead, to serve his purpose, the familiar tale of a righteous man named Job.[18] *A priori,* one would expect the traditional story of Job to have undergone a long development. But only recently has it become possible to reconstruct with some assurance the stages in the evolution of the tale before its final form in our book.

The sixth-century prophet Ezekiel, in one of his stern calls to repentance, warns his generation its iniquity is so great that, were the three righteous men Noah, Daniel and Job then alive, their righteousness would avail to save them personally but not their children from the general catastrophe. "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God. . . . As I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters; they only shall be delivered, but the land shall be desolate."[19]

The reference to Noah was, of course, always clear. Noah was a "righteous man in his generation" whose virtue avails to save not only his life but his wife's and children's when the Flood descends.[20]

But the reference to Daniel in *Ezekiel* always proved troublesome to the commentators. For in the Biblical book bearing his name, Daniel is a wise interpreter of dreams, and there is no suggestion anywhere about his saving his children.[21] The key to the puzzle was unlocked only recently. In Ras-es-Shamra, a village in Syria, there were discovered the remains of an extensive literature going back to the middle of the second millennium B.C.E. It was written in Ugaritic, a North-West Semitic dialect akin to Hebrew; and in this literature is the epic of Aqhat, first published in 1936.[22]

The assembling of the narrative from scattered tablets, with unfortunate breaks at several crucial points, has been a major enterprise of Oriental scholarship in the last decade. Now the out-

lines of the story are tolerably clear. It tells the tale of a king of Hermon named *Dan'el* who rules an elaborate court with his wife *Dnty*. Virtuous and hospitable as they are, they are sad because they have no son. The poem begins with Dan'el's prayers and rituals of supplication. Finally their prayers are answered, and a male child is born to them who is named Aqhat. The boy receives a gift of a bow from the god Ktr, the craftsman-god of Ugarit. The bow, however, arouses the envy of the war goddess 'Anat, who offers to pay for it, either in precious ore or through the gift of immortality. When all these offers are rejected, the wrathful goddess has the lad slain by an assassin, Ytpn. This murder may perhaps have been avenged; but Dan'el, the father, is heartbroken. Carefully and lovingly he inters his son's remains. This, and other indications, would seem to imply that Aqhat is finally recalled to life and restored to his family.

In spite of its fragmentary character, the Ugaritic epic holds the key to the passage in *Ezekiel*. For it is now clear that Dan'el, not the Biblical Daniel, belongs in the company of Noah, as one who was able to save his son from death.

On the basis of the *Ezekiel* passage, thus illuminated by the Ugaritic parallel, we may now reconstruct the oldest form of the *Job* narrative, though only in its broadest outlines. As it was familiar to Ezekiel's contemporaries of the sixth century B.C.E., the tale doubtless told how the patriarch Job, because of his piety, had been able to save his children from death like Noah, or, failing that, had brought them back from the nether world like Dan'el. In this stage of the story Satan could have played no part, since the figure of the prosecuting attorney in the heavenly court, who later became the Adversary, did not enter Jewish thought until later. The Satan episode must belong to the Persian period, when Jews came into contact with the Zoroastrian dualistic doctrine of Ahriman, the god of darkness and evil, and Ahura-Mazda, the god of light and goodness.

The next phase in the development of the story is more familiar to us, because it is imbedded in the prose chapters of *Job*, the so-called Prologue and Epilogue.[23] The tale opens on earth. Job

is a patriarch whose life is marked by integrity and piety, enjoying prosperity and universal respect and the companionship of his entire family. The scene shifts to heaven. Satan, the prosecuting angel, standing in the presence of God, charges that Job's piety is dictated entirely by his prosperity. God enters into a wager to test the depth and sincerity of Job's piety by giving Satan permission to bring heavy calamities upon Job. The scene shifts back to earth. A series of disasters, alternately natural and man-made, come upon Job's family and possessions; his flocks are carried off and his children destroyed. But Job does not complain against his Maker. The fourth scene is again in heaven. God questions Satan on the results of the experiment, and Satan proves a hardy adversary. Still unprepared to concede the disinterested character of Job's virtue, he cites a familiar proverb: "Skin for skin, everything a man has he will give to save his life." Only if Job's own person suffer will the test be complete. God gives Satan permission to inflict disease on Job. The fifth and concluding scene again takes place on earth. Job has been smitten with leprosy, and only his wife remains at his side. Unable to bear the sight of his agony, she urges Job to curse God and die; but Job reproves her rather curtly: "Thou speakest like one of the impious women. Shall we receive only good from God's hand and not accept the evil?" And Job permits no sinful words to cross his lips.

It was a little less than kind of St. Augustine to describe Job's wife as *adiutrix diaboli*, the assistant of Satan. Actually, as the Midrash recognizes, her reaction is dictated out of her love and loyalty to her husband, a theme touchingly elaborated in the aprocryphal *Testament of Job*, which relates that she sells her hair to support her husband. Thus far the story in the Prologue.

What other incidents, if any, followed in the original story we cannot tell, but Job's restoration is not too long delayed. In the Epilogue, his kinsmen and friends assemble to comfort him and bring him gifts of money and golden ornaments. God blesses Job, who is restored to double his previous prosperity and is blessed with seven[24] sons and three daughters famous for their beauty. Job is privileged to see four generations of his family, dying at the ripe old age of 140.

This folk tale, with its well-wrought delineation of character, its subtle touches of irony, its five scenes alternating between heaven and earth, and the vigor of the narrative, is a masterpiece of story-telling art. Here is no naive unsophisticated folk tale. It is rather the work of a literary craftsman of the first order, who has retold a familiar tale in his own way. Probably he is identical with the author of the poetic Dialogue, who saw in this tale an excellent framework for the great theme with which he was concerned. As is characteristic of Oriental literature, he was not overly concerned with harmonizing all the details of the familiar folk tale with his own poetical work, and so various differences of style and content remain which testify to the independent origins of the prose and the Dialogue.[25]

Having decided to use the familiar folk tale for his purpose, the poet finds it necessary to effect a transition from the prose Prologue to the poetic Dialogue and from the Dialogue to the prose Epilogue once more. This he achieves by adding two brief jointures.[26] In the first section, he introduces the protagonists of the discussion. While Job is sitting among the ashes, he is visited by three friends who begin to comfort him and end by infuriating him. Following the poetic Dialogue, the author has added the second jointure. That this section does not belong to the original folk tale but originates with the poet is clear from the fact that the Lord upbraids the friends: "The Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite: 'My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends; for ye have not spoken of Me the thing that is right, as My servant Job hath'" (42:7). This phrase, which is repeated in verse 8—"for ye have not spoken of Me the thing that is right, as My servant Job hath"—can emanate only from one whose sympathies are with Job, rather than with the friends who have tried to defend God, but have done so inadequately, unconvincingly. For this poet, as for countless other sensitive seekers of the truth, "there lives more faith in honest doubt than in half the creeds."[27]

With the prose tale as the background the poet now turns to his theme—the problem of evil in a world governed by a good God. Nothing but the briefest survey can here be attempted of the basic ideas of the Dialogue. Only the text itself can communicate the

mounting passion and emotional drive of the speeches, the growing bitterness and heartbreak of Job as he sees himself misunderstood and alone, confronted by the ever more blatant hostility of the friends. All their conventional theories of sin and punishment founder on the rock of Job's unwavering insistence on his innocence. Here is no cold analysis of logical propositions. Here rather is a dramatic interplay of human emotions. Faith and unbelief, hope, despair and hope resurgent—all battle in Job's breast for mastery; while the friends, beginning with a few conventional expressions of sympathy for Job's lot, prove more and more ineffectual in comforting Job or convincing him of their views.

The author's own sympathies are clearly with Job; it is he whose speeches are not only the longest but the most eloquent. The literary conscience and skill of the poet, however, compel him to do justice to the friends' standpoint as well. The regnant views of traditional theology have never been more effectively expressed than in the speeches of Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar. Similarly, in *The Merchant of Venice,* Shakespeare's conscious sympathies lay with Antonio, but he could not help putting into Shylock's mouth words that penetrate to the bitter soul of the persecuted and despised Jew.

III. The Dialogue of Job and His Friends

THE poetic section of the *Book of Job* begins with a deeply moving soliloquy by Job himself.[28] His friends are gathered round him in silence. The much-tried patriarch breaks out in a lament, cursing the day of his birth. As yet he has uttered no complaint against his Maker, contenting himself with a description of the peace that would have waited for him in the grave.

In an effort to console him, Eliphaz, the oldest and most respected of the friends, begins a reply. With tact and consideration he reminds Job of the universally accepted doctrine that justice prevails in God's world, and therefore no innocent man is ever destroyed, while, on the contrary, the sowers of iniquity reap the fruit of their doings. Eliphaz makes a few significant additions to the conventional doctrine of reward and punishment. Often the

sinner's just penalty is visited upon his children, a view highly congenial to the ancient concept of the solidarity of the family. Moreover, suffering often acts as a discipline and is therefore a mark of God's love. Finally, all men are sinful; in fact, sin is not God's creation, but man's doing. It therefore behooves Job to be patient and wait for restoration. For all its urbanity, the address of Eliphaz contains nevertheless the implication that Job must be a sinner, since suffering is the result of sin.

Job has no theory to propose as a substitute, merely his consciousness that he is suffering without cause. He does not claim to be perfect, but insists he is not a willful sinner. The conventional ideas he confronts with the testimony of his own experience, which he will not deny, whatever the consequences. But his attacks upon the disloyalty of his friends, his pathetic description of his physical pain and mental anguish, his indignant rejection of the theology of the friends, serve all the more to convince them that he is a sinner. For do not arrogance and the assumption of innocence by man, with the implied right and capacity to pass judgment on God, constitute the height of impiety?

Bildad paints a picture of the destruction of the wicked and the ultimate restoration of the righteous, and he hymns the power of God. Job does not deny God's power; it is His justice he calls into question.

Zophar, probably the youngest and least discreet of the friends, summons Job to repent of his secret sins. Then, with matchless irony, Job turns again upon his friends who, in their security and ease, can afford to indulge in artificial arguments far removed from the painful realities of life. In a passage long misunderstood,[29] he parodies their speeches on the greatness of God and concludes that their defense of God, dishonest and biased as it is, will not likely win His favor. Job flees from God to God, convinced that behind the God of reality is the God of ideal. He appeals for God's mercy, a quick and painless death. For a moment he considers the idea of resurrection, which would perhaps justify suffering the pain of the present in the hope of a happy future; but sorrowfully he rejects the possibility. Death comes to all, knowledge and sentience die, and man's career of agony ends in nothingness.

Thus ends the First Cycle of speeches.

In the Second Cycle changes are rung on the same ideas, but with greater vehemence.[30] And few additional ideas emerge. Eliphaz emphasizes that there is even more to the punishment of the wicked than his ultimate destruction, whether in his own person or in that of his offspring. During the very period of his ostensible prosperity he lives in trepidation, never knowing when the blow will fall. Job, on the other hand, insists that, though his unjustified suffering does arouse universal pity, righteous men will not be deflected from the good life because of his sad fate. Thus Job boldly cuts the nexus in utilitarian morality between virtue and prosperity, and makes righteousness its own justification. He calls upon the earth not to cover his blood or absorb his cry. In fact, he wants his words to be engraved permanently upon a monumental inscription to await his ultimate vindication, because he is convinced that God, His witness, is in the heavens and that his "Redeemer liveth, even though he be the last to arise upon earth."[31]

The Second Cycle is concluded by Job again with a powerful refutation of the friends' arguments. As against the comfortable doctrine that the wicked are destroyed, Job paints a picture of the actual case—well-being and honor enjoyed by the malefactors. He cites four of the friends' contentions and riddles them with logic.[32] That the sinner will ultimately be punished, or that his children will pay the penalty, is unsatisfactory and therefore unjust. He himself should be brought to book—and immediately. That God is beyond man's comprehension Job cannot deny; but still he insists on calling attention to the disparity between the lot of the righteous man, whose days are embittered by trouble, and the destiny of the sinner, who enjoys life to the full, while awaiting them both is the same silent death. As for the contention that the house of the wicked is suddenly destroyed, Job invites his friends to ask any passer-by to point out the proud mansions of the evil-doers. Far from coming to an ignominious end, the wealthy malefactor caps his career with an elaborate funeral!

The Third Cycle has been gravely disarranged, and a good deal of the original material has been lost.[33] Imbedded in this

section is an independent lyrical poem, "The Hymn to Wisdom."[34] Its basic theme is the inaccessibility of Wisdom to the human understanding. Men may dig for precious stones in the remote corners of the earth, revealing many hidden things; but Wisdom *par excellence,* the secret of the universe, is with God alone. For man all that remains is reverence for God and the avoidance of evil.

There are good grounds for assuming that this hymn, though not part of *Job,* came from the author or his school.[35] Perhaps it was an early effort to deal with the theme that the author later expanded into the book of *Job,* like Goethe's *Faust Fragments* which preceded the drama.

To a large degree, though not without lacunae, the Third Cycle can be restored.[36] A few new notes are struck in the ever blunter argument. Now Eliphaz accuses Job of being an out-and-out sinner, who has taken refuge in God's distance from man and therefore expects to avoid retribution. Observe that the heretic in ancient Israel, like the Epicurean school in Greece, did not deny the existence of God but rather His interference in human affairs. Eliphaz relentlessly presses Job to repent, even promises his restoration to Divine favor, so that as of yore he will be able to intercede for other sinners.[37] Bildad somewhat academically reemphasizes the imperfection of all men. Job insists again upon his innocence, picturing the absolute faith in God's government by which he had formerly lived.[38] Zophar declares once more that the prosperity of the wicked is an illusion; it is but a process of garnering wealth for the enjoyment of the righteous.

This speech of Zophar's, Job does not dignify by a reply. The friends and their arguments fade from his consciousness. He ends as he began, with a soliloquy, his last great utterance. At the outset, Job recalls the high estate of dignity and honor he once occupied, and the universal esteem he once commanded. Then on to his magnificent climax—his "Confession of Integrity."[39] This classic statement may be described as the code of the Jewish gentleman. It is significant that, with the exception of a brief reference to the worship of heavenly bodies, the code is exclusively moral and not ritualistic in character. Job recounts his personal morality with regard to women, his fair-dealing with slaves whose basic

human equality he affirms, and his consideration for the poor, the widow and the orphan. He has never grown arrogant because of his wealth or rejoiced in the discomfiture of his foes, nor has he ever been ashamed to confess his errors because of the scorn of the mob.

The impact of this "Confession of Integrity" is heightened by the form in which it is couched—a series of rhetorical questions, in which Job denies wrong-doing, alternating with passionate oaths, in which Job calls down condign punishment upon himself if he has been guilty of a breach.[40]

Job's final words are a plea to God to answer him and at least thus compensate him for his agony. The grandeur of Job's opening lament is matched by the dignity of his closing affirmation.

IV. The Speeches of Elihu

ENDED are Job's words, and the friends are left without a reply. But a young man named Elihu ben Barakhel breaks into the august silence. Aware of his effrontery in invading the discussions of his elders, he insists, with some braggadocio, that it is not the number of a man's years, but the spirit within him, that determines his wisdom and his right to speak. Elihu's complaint is directed at least as much against the friends as against Job himself, for with the brashness of youth he proclaims that their defense of God's ways has been inadequate. He presents his ideas in impassioned language, often obscure to us today.

Job has contended that God avoids answering him. Elihu declares that God does communicate with His creatures. Through dreams and illness He reminds men of His presence and thus saves them from falling into sin. That God persecutes Job is the rankest blasphemy—each man gets his just reward. As for the argument that righteousness and sin both meet the same fate, Elihu answers that, to be sure, God is not affected by man's actions, but man is. Finally, he emphasizes that affliction is an instrument used by God to strengthen man's faith and recall him to virtue. And, as signs of an approaching storm appear in the north, Elihu emphasizes that God's power, which Job has conceded, is matched by

God's justice. He is both "mighty in strength and great in righteousness."[41]

The authenticity of these Elihu chapters has been widely doubted by modern scholars. They have called attention, first, to striking variations in the style and vocabulary, which is particularly rich in Aramaisms. Moreover, there is the fact that neither in the Prologue nor in the Epilogue does Elihu appear. Lastly, it has been argued that Elihu contributes nothing new to the discussion.

On the other hand, it is possible to meet these objections and defend the authenticity of the chapters. Elihu's absence in the Prologue is not so strange, in view of his being confessedly an interloper and a stripling to boot. The stylistic variations can be attributed to the fact that Elihu represents a younger and less dignified generation.[42] Perhaps, too, the Elihu speeches were added by our author at a later period. Similarly, Goethe's *Urfaust* goes back to the poet's *Sturm und Drang* period, the third decade of his life; the First Part of *Faust* did not appear until more than thirty years later, in 1808; and the Second Part was completed shortly before his death in 1832; and in the long process the poet's conception of his theme underwent a profound transformation. Something like that may well have been the case with the author of *Job*.

As for the argument that Elihu contributes nothing new: if that were granted, it would raise the question why his speeches were introduced altogether. As a matter of fact, they do have their place in the architecture of the book.

For there is one idea which is emphasized in Elihu's words, which with a single brief exception[43] had not been previously referred to—the doctrine that suffering frequently comes upon man as a discipline, as a warning to prevent him from a sinking into sin. It is conceivable that the author of the book looked on this idea as true, though certainly not the whole truth regarding the problem of evil. Obviously the doctrine could not be placed in the mouth of Job, who denies that there is any justice in suffering. Nor would the author place it in the mouths of the friends, for their ideas he wishes to reject.[44] Finally, were this idea included in the subsequent God-speeches, it would weaken the force of the

principal answer. By creating a character like Elihu, who opposes the attitude of the friends as well as that of Job, the author is able to express this secondary idea, giving it due place in his world-view.

V. The God-Speeches

AFTER Elihu, the Lord answers Job out of the whirlwind.[45] These speeches of God belong to the supreme nature poetry of our literature. Can Job comprehend, let alone govern, the secrets of creation? Earth and sea, cloud and darkness and dawn, snow and hail, rain and thunder, snow and ice, and the stars above—all these wonders are beyond Job. Nor do these exhaust God's power. With a vividness born of deep love and careful observation, the poet pictures the beasts, remote from man, yet precious to their Maker, the mountain goat, the wild ass, the buffalo, the ostrich, the horse, the hawk, all testifying to the glory of God. For all their variety, these creatures have one element in common—they are not under the sway of man, or even intended for his use.

Job is overwhelmed and confesses his weakness. But God ignores Job's surrender, and with torrential force continues to hurl His challenge at His human opponent.[46] Were Job able to destroy evil in the world, even God would be prepared to relinquish His throne to him—a moving acknowledgment by God that the world-order is not perfect! Then follow exultant descriptions of massive beasts—*behemot,* the hippopotamus, and *leviathan,* the crocodile. Far as they are from being conventionally beautiful, these ponderous creatures arouse the triumphant ecstasy of the poet. Their choice is not accidental. The author here rises above the anthropocentric point of view which, however natural for man, distorts his comprehension of the world. The monstrosities fashioned by God's hand constitute a revelation of the limitless range of God's creative thought.[47]

Job finally yields—overwhelmed, not by the mere might of God which he had conceded long ago, but by the majesty and order revealed in His power. With Job's surrender the Dialogue comes to an end.

VI. The Epilogue

THE first portion of the Epilogue (42:7-10), which connects the poetry and the prose, as has already been noted, emanates from the author of the poetic Dialogue, whose sympathies are with Job. After Job's confession, the Lord declares that He is wroth with the three friends because "they have not spoken the truth about Me." Only after Job intercedes for them are they forgiven, and Job himself is given double his possessions in the past.

The second section of the Epilogue (42:17 ff.) takes up the strand of the folk tale which has been interrupted at chapter 2, verse 10. Job's friends and relatives come to comfort him and contribute gifts to aid in his restoration. The Lord's blessing descends upon Job; and wealth, family, and long life are his portion.

VII. The *Book of Job* and the Problem of Suffering

THE motives of the author in writing his book should be clear from our discussion. He is opposed to the conventional theory of suffering, as taught by the religion of his day. Being, however, a gifted poet as well as an honest thinker, he does full justice to this traditional view in the eloquent speeches of the friends. Those addresses are far more than a foil to Job; they remain the classic statement of the conception of human suffering as maintained by traditional theism. Basically, the doctrine flows from the conception of a just God, Who is unlimited in power. In His world it must follow that righteousness leads to happiness, and sin brings its penalty.

This is the burden of the prophetic teaching. The prophets applied this view to the destiny of the nation as a whole. In Hosea's words, "They sow the wind, and shall reap the whirlwind"; or, as formulated by Isaiah, "Declare to the righteous that it is well with him. For men eat the fruit of their deeds. But woe to the wicked for it goes ill with him, for the recompense of his hands will be done to him."[45] This doctrine served as the foundation of the prophetic conception of history, underpinning the prophets' denunciation of the *status quo,* and later their message of hope

and restoration after the destruction of the Temple and the State.[49]

After the Return, however, interest shifted from the group to the individual personality. Not so much the prosperity of the nation as the well-being of the individual now occupied the forefront of attention. Traditional religion of the Second Commonwealth transferred the prophets' idea of reward and punishment to the individual—a process which, to be sure, had been initiated before the Exile by the prophets themselves. Jeremiah and Ezekiel, in their endeavors to rekindle hope in the despairing hearts of their people, had taught that each man's weal or woe depends upon his own virtues or vices.[50] But when matter-of-fact observers applied this doctrine to the actual life about them, they saw that experience contradicted it at every turn.

Tradition finds it much easier to supplement, modify and reinterpret older elements than to discard them when they prove inadequate. This characteristic is strikingly exemplified in the history of the doctrine of reward and punishment in normative Judaism, from the Biblical epoch down to the Hassidic age. Layer upon layer was added to older ideas, while little was surrendered.

Traditional Hebrew thought began with the older Semitic doctrine of family responsibility. When God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children, it may seem unjust to us from the standpoint of the individual affected; but *sub specie aeternitatis* it may well be just, since the individual is only a link in the chain of the family, which is judged as a unit. This doctrine of group responsibility operates not only "vertically," through time, but also "horizontally," across space. Each individual is linked not only with his ancestors and his descendants in the unit of a *family*, but also with his contemporaries with whom he constitutes the unit of a *generation*. Thus a righteous individual may sometimes be in position to save an evil generation.[51] By the same token, the innocent may sometimes suffer for the sins of his age.

Increasingly, however, the individual, with his personal hopes and fears, could not be denied. Nonetheless, the traditional doctrine was not abandoned. Instead, qualifications were introduced to explain "exceptions" to the law of retribution. Thus it came to be held that the prosperity of the wicked and the suffering of the

righteous alike are only temporary; ultimately, justice is done and the balance redressed. Moreover, even during the period of his prosperity the wicked man is not free to enjoy his good fortune because, like the sword of Damocles, the threat of punishment is always suspended over him. In at least one important passage, the theme is stressed that man and not God is the source of sin, and therefore everyone must expect retribution for his actions. Hence, the conviction that suffering can be minimized by the practice of justice is a fundamental element of Biblical religion. A different nuance is expressed several times in *Job*: man, by his very nature, is imperfect; how then can he expect to avoid sin or its consequences?

These ideas form indeed the principal content of the friends' speeches in *Job*. As orthodox religion continued to feel that these answers did not suffice, it ultimately elaborated the concept of life after death with judgment beyond the grave. It is noteworthy that the friends make no reference to the idea. Job himself does refer to this new faith springing up in his day, but sorrowfully finds himself unable to accept it.[52]

Yet even when other-worldly conceptions of retribution became universal, the validity of older ideas of theodicy was retained. In John Donne's classic formulation: ". . . No man is an iland, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine; if a Clod be washed away by the Sea, Europe is the lesse, as well as if a promontorie were, as well as if a Mannor of thy friends or of thine owne were. Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankinde; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee. . . ."

Though the author of *Job* presents the traditional point of view with all the eloquence and power at his command, he is deeply conscious of its inadequacy. His spokesman, the patriarch, attacks this accepted theodicy, not on the grounds of abstract logic, but in terms of personal experience, his unshakable consciousness of integrity. It is characteristic of Jewish thought that in spite of all the calamities that came upon him, Job does not yield to atheism. Job cannot deny the evidence of his senses—his bitter suffering is a challenge to the justice of God. But neither can he surrender

the promptings of his heart—in his darkest hour he retains the faith that behind the tragic reality of a cruel God stands the ideal God who will ultimately vindicate him. More than once Job stands poised on the threshold of dualism; but the basic Jewish concept of the Divine Unity prevents him from making a dichotomy between the God of might and the God of justice.

If Job is essentially the critic who refutes the accepted pattern of religious thought, he makes one positive contribution as well. Impaled on the tragic dilemma of a righteous man's suffering in a world created by a righteous God, Job is nevertheless unwilling to surrender his ideal of rectitude. Though virtue has brought him no reward, "the righteous cleaves to his path and the innocent increases his strength" (17:9). The Mishna quite correctly concludes that Job served God not from "fear" but from "love."[53] The truly ethical life is motivated not by the desire for reward, but by its own inherent satisfactions.

The author's positive views on suffering, as already indicated, are stated in two sections of the book.

Elihu stresses the idea that suffering frequently serves as a source of moral discipline, and is thus a spur to higher ethical attainment.

The principal answer, however, is reserved for the climax, the speeches of "the Lord out of the whirlwind." Job cannot fathom the mystery of nature. How then can he hope to penetrate the secrets of man's fate?

That is not all. For the vivid and joyous description of nature in these chapters testifies that nature is more than a mystery; it is a cosmos, a thing of beauty. The implication is not lost upon Job. Just as there is order and harmony in the natural world, so there is order and meaning in the moral sphere. Man who cannot fathom the meaning of the natural order is yet made aware of its beauty and harmony. Similarly, if he cannot expect to comprehend the moral order, he yet must believe that there is rationality and justice within it. After all legitimate explanations of suffering are taken into account, a mystery still remains. The analogy of the natural order gives the believer in God the grounds for facing the mystery

with a courage born of faith in the essential rightness of things.[54] What cannot be comprehended through reason must be embraced in love. As Kant pointed out, if it is arrogant to defend God, it is even more arrogant to assail Him.[55] For the author of *Job,* as for Judaism always, God is one and indivisible. As nature is instinct with morality, so the moral order is rooted in the universe.

One other significant contribution to religion emerges from the *Book of Job.* For the poet, the harmony of the universe is important not only as an idea but as an experience, not only logically but esthetically. When man steeps himself in the beauty of the world, his troubles grow petty and dissolve within the larger plan, like the tiny dabs of oil in a masterpiece of painting. The beauty of the world becomes an anodyne to man's suffering.

The author of *Job* is an artist to whom we may apply the words of Havelock Ellis : "Instead of imitating these philosophers who with analyses and syntheses worry over the goal of life and the justification of the world, and the meaning of the strange and painful phenomenon called Existence, the artist takes up some fragment of that existence, transfigures it, shows it: There! And therewith the spectator is filled with enthusiastic joy, and the transcendent Adventure of Existence is justified. . . All the pain and the madness, even the ugliness and the commonplace of the world, he converts into shining jewels. By revealing the spectacular character of reality he restores the serenity of its innocence. We see the face of the world as of a lovely woman smiling through her tears."[56]

Artist and poet, the author of *Job* is no theologian with a neatly articulated, all-inclusive system. He does not pretend to have discovered the final solution to the problem of evil. He recognizes instead the residuum of the Unknown in the world. For this reason, and because of its literary greatness, the book will never grow out of date. It will be read, pondered and loved as long as men possess moral as well as intellectual integrity, and some men, at least, refuse to surrender either to self-deception or to immorality. It will always help men to face life with reverence before the mystery of the world and with joy at its beauty.

Notes

[1]Thomas Carlyle, in *Heroes and Hero-Worship*—Lecture II: "The Hero as Prophet."

[2]The so-called "Egyptian Job" and "Babylonian Job" are fragments of poems of lamentation bewailing personal misfortunes by men who were scrupulous in the observance of ritual obligations. They bear little resemblance to the Biblical *Job* either in content or in form. Cf. Driver-Gray, *International Critical Commentary on Job* (New York, 1921), vol. 1, pp. xxxi ff.

[3]A view propounded by H. M. Kallen, *The Book of Job as a Greek Tragedy* (New York, 1918).

[4]In the absence of clear-cut historical allusions, scholars differ as to the date of the book. It is assigned to the period before Deutero-Isaiah by Kuenen; to the 6th century B.C.E. by Kittel and G. Hoffman; to the 5th century by Moore, Driver-Gray, Dhorme, Buttenwieser, Budde; to the 4th by Eissfeldt, Finkelstein, Meinhold, Steuernegel, Volz; and to the 3rd by Cornhill and Holzmann. For a careful discussion of the internal and external criteria for dating the book, cf. Driver-Gray, *ICC on Job*, vol. 1, pp. LXV ff., and other standard commentaries. Basically, the book reflects the attitudes of Wisdom literature, which reached its apogee in the first half of the Second Commonwealth period.

The *terminus a quo* is determined by these facts: (1) the book takes monotheism for granted without argument, thus post-dating Deutero-Isaiah; (2) it reflects an early stage in the development of the Satan idea (Satan in chapters 1, 2; *Zec.* 3:1, 2 occurs with the definite article as "the Adversary": he is not yet completely an independent personality, as in Satan without the article (*I Chr.* 21:1); (3) it is aware of the new ideas about life after death (14:14) but does not accept them; (4) it reflects city life and monogamy, characteristics of later periods.

The terminus *non post quem* is determined by the existence of a Greek translation, the Elihu chapters included, by the year 100 B.C.E., a reference to Elihu being found in a citation from Alexander Polyhistor (80-40 B.C.E.); and by an apparent reference to Job in *Ben Sira* 49:10, written about 190 B.C.E., though this is more doubtful.

[5]On the three strands, cf. Max L. Margolis's *The Hebrew Scriptures in the Making* (Philadelphia, 1922). The stages of development of each type are discussed in the writer's monograph, "The Bible as a Cultural Monument," in the forthcoming *Jews and Judaism*, edited by Prof. Louis Finkelstein.

[6]*Jeremiah* 18:18; *Ezekiel* 7:26.

[7]The extent of the Mosaic Law, and the history of its transmission, both oral and written, is of course a primary theme of the Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch. Recent scholars are considerably more disposed to accept many of the Pentateuchal traditions and laws as very ancient, such as the Decalogue (*Exodus* 20) and the "Book of the Covenant" (*Exodus* 21-24). This new

respect for the credibility of tradition, greatly stimulated by archaeological discoveries and recent research, may well lead to a complete reconstruction of Biblical criticism. In large measure, the process is already under way.

[8]Cf. such histories of Jewish law as I. H. Weiss, classic *Dor Dor Vedorshav*, 5 vols. (1871-91), and the more recent work of Ch. Tschernowitz, *Toledot Hahalakah*, 3 vols. (New York, 1934); as well as briefer treatments like S. Zucrow, *The Adjustment of Jewish Law to Life* (New York, 1935), and the writer's "The Nature of Jewish Tradition" in *The Jewish Frontier* (Nov. 1947).

[9]Cf., e.g., *Jeremiah* 20:7-12, 14-18; 15:10, 11; 11:18-20; 12:4-6.

[10]Out of the extensive literature on the prophets we may cite, from the older period, W. Robertson-Smith, *The Prophets of Israel* (Edinburgh, 1895, 2nd ed.) and, from more recent literature, such varied treatments as J. Hoschander, *Priests and Prophets* (New York, 1938); M. Buber, *Torat Haneviim* (Tel Aviv, 1941); J. Morgenstern, *Amos Studies*, Part III: "Historical Antecedents of Amos' Prophecy" (1941); R.B.Y. Scott, *The Relevance of the Prophets* (New York, 1944); I. G. Matthews, *The Pilgrimage of Israel's Faith* (New York, 1948).

[11]Cf. O. S. Rankin, *The Wisdom Literature of Israel* (Edinburgh, 1936); D. B. Macdonald, *The Hebrew Philosophical Genius* (Princeton, 1936); and the writer's Hebrew "Introduction to Wisdom Literature" in *Sefer Hashanah Liyehude Amerikah 5691* (New York, 1942) pp. 117-48, as well as his *The Wisdom of Ecclesiastes* (New York, 1945). Part of the introductory essay in the last-cited book, as well as the whole translation, appeared first in THE MENORAH JOURNAL for Summer 1943.

[12]Cf. *Proverbs* 8:1 ff., 22 ff., 9:1 ff.; *Ben Sira* 1:8 ff. and *passim*, and J. Coert Rylaarsdam in *Revelation in Jewish Wisdom Literature* (Chicago, 1947).

[13]Among the more valuable studies, cf. J. Fichtner, *Die Altorientalische Weisheitsliteratur in ihre israelitischjuedischer Auspraegung* (Giessen, 1933), and P. Humbert, *Recherches sur les Sources egyptiennes de la Litterature sapientiale d'Israel* (Neuchatel, 1929).

[14]Cf. *Judges* 7; *II Samuel* 14:14; *II Kings* 14:9.

[15]Cf. the writer's study, "The Social Background of Wisdom Literature," in *Hebrew Union College Annual*, 1944, pp. 117-148 *passim*.

[16]Cf., e.g., *Ecclesiastes* 4:1 ff. An effort to reconstruct Koheleth's spiritual development may be found in *The Wisdom of Ecclesiastes*, chapter 2.

[17]On the length of time in composing the book, see below on the Elihu chapters.

[18]That the locale of the book and of its protagonists is not Israelite is not strange. Literary works often choose a foreign scene. The Homeric epics arose not among the Achaeans, who are its heroes, but among the Ionians and the Aeolians. The Niebelung-cycle developed not among the Burgundians but among the Franks (cf. Kraeling, *The Book of the Ways of God*, p. 15). Pfeiffer's theory of the Edomite origin of *Job* and other parts of the Bible (Source S=Seir, cf. his Introduction pp. 159-67, 678-83) has not been generally accepted, since virtually nothing is known of Edomite religion or literature.

Ibn Ezra's remark (in his *Commentary on Job* 2:11) that the work may be a translation of the Arabic is likewise unacceptable. On the theory that some Biblical books are translations of non-extant books written in languages other than Hebrew, see our comments in *Jewish Quarterly Review*, vol. 37, 1946, pp. 69f. The author of *Job* was a man of broad general culture, widely traveled. Pfeiffer calls him the most erudite ancient before Plato. But such unconscious usages as "Jordan" for "river" in 40:23, the references to many Biblical laws, the thoroughgoing monotheism of outlook, and countless Biblical reminiscences (cf. Dhorme, *Le Livre de Job*, pp. CXVI ff.), as well as its congruity with the intellectual development of post-exilic Hebrew Wisdom, and the fact that it was admitted to the canon of Hebrew Scripture, all testify that it is not foreign in origin, but rather an authentic Jewish work of universal import.

[19]*Ezekiel* 14:14, 16; cf. also verses 18, 20.

[20]*Genesis* 6:9, 18.

[21]A number of perspicacious commentators, like the medieval David Kimhi (*ad loc.*), noted the difference in the orthography of the name Daniel. In the Biblical book of the same name, it is written with *Yodh*, *d-n-y'-l;* in *Ezekiel*, without it, *d-n-'l*. The significance has only now become apparent. Not even in the incident of Daniel in the den of lions is there a reference to children (*Daniel* 6).

[22]Published by Ch. Virolleaud, *La Légende Phoenicienne de Danel* (Paris, 1936). For the extensive literature until 1945, cf. S. Spiegel, "Noah, Dan'el and Job" in *Louis Ginzberg Jubilee Volume I*, p. 310, n.1., whose reconstruction of the plot of the Dan'el epic is fundamental (pp. 310-18).

[23]The Prologue consists of chapters 1 and 2; the Epilogue is to be found in chapter 42:7-17. However, the two passages 2:11-13 and 47:7-10 do not belong to this original stage of the tale, but were added by the poet himself. See below in the text for details.

[24]Or "fourteen," depending on how the rare form of the numeral *shiv'anah* is interpreted. The 140 years of Job's life and the four generations of his descendants that he beheld (42:16) represent double the normal and lend plausibility to the view that the numeral in question is a dual, equal to "twice-seven."

[25]The principal differences are these: (a) In the prose, God is pictured in anthropomorphic terms, as a ruler on a throne; in the poetry, He is an exalted abstract Being. (b) In the prose, the Divine name used is JHVH, the national name of the God of Israel; in the poetry, the abstract names for the Deity used are exclusively *El*, *Eloah*, *Elohim* and *Shaddai*. There are only two exceptions where JHVH is used in the poetry. In 12:9 it is used in a common phrase borrowed from *Isaiah* 41:20; and in the superscriptions in 38:1 and 40:1 it introduces "JHVH from the whirlwind," perhaps because of the ancient tradition of the theophanies of JHVH with the storm (*Exodus* 19; *Deuteronomy* 33; *Judges* 5; *Habbakuk* 3; etc.). In addition *Adonai*, "The Lord," occurs in the independent poem "Hymn to Wisdom" (28:28) in the common phrase "fear of the Lord." (c) In the prose, Job's suffering is due to

the wager of God and Satan; in the poetry, Satan does not appear at all and the entire debate revolves around the mystery of Job's suffering. (d) In the prose, Job is bereaved of his entire family, except his wife, and sits in isolation on the dung-heap; in the poetry, Job pictures himself as the butt of scorn and hatred by his household and acquaintances, who are presented as all about him (cf. 16:9; 19:13-16; 30:1). (e) In the prose, Job is the epitome of patience and resignation; in the poetry, his is the voice of flaming revolt.

[26]The first jointure is 2:11-13; the second, 47:7-10.

[27]Various attempts have been made to reconstruct the pre-history of the Job tale. Macdonald, Duhm and Alt, followed by E. Kraeling, *op. cit.*, p. 169, have suggested that the prose is a folk tale in which originally the friends urged Job to blaspheme his Maker, hence the Lord's castigation of them as "not speaking what is right" (42:7, 8). Aside from the fact that there would be no need for the friends in the tale, since Job's wife performs the same function (2:9), the phrase cited as evidence actually disproves it. The word *nekhonah*, "right, correct, true" (cf. *Genesis* 41:32, *Psalms* 51:12; 57:8; 78:37; 108:2; especially *Deuteronomy* 13:15; 17:14) is a synonym of *'emet*, "true." It could be used in the negative to describe an unsatisfactory defense of God, but is much too weak for blasphemy—for that the word is *nebhālah*, "disgrace, contumely" (*Genesis* 34:7; *Deuteronomy* 22:21), the root of which is used of the denial of God in *Job* 2:9 and *Psalms* 14:1=53:1; 74:22.

Alt has suggested also that we have two prose tales, one in chapter 1 and 42:11-17; the other in chapter 2 and 42:7-10. This theory has several drawbacks. (1) It destroys the dramatic architecture of the five scenes of the tale in chapters 1-2. (2) It leaves the first account hanging in the air. (3) The story beginning with chapter 2 opens abruptly without introduction, so that it must be assumed that part of it is lost. (4) The role of the friends remains superfluous and God's description of their speech, as we have noted, inappropriate. Alt's merit lies in having noted that 42:7-10 is quite distinct from 42:11-17.

All the facts are accounted for by the view here presented, which agrees in most essentials with R. H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York, 1941), p. 669. The folk tale, reworked by the author of the Dialogue, consists of chapters 1, 2, and 42:11-17. To make it serve as the framework of the Dialogue, the poet added two connecting sections, one introducing the friends (2:11-13), the other passing judgment upon their conventional defense of God (42:7-10). As evidence that this material is interpolated, we may cite the striking resemblance in theme and language between 42:11, the original continuation of the tale (*"And all his brothers*, and all his sons and all his former acquaintances *came* and ate bread with him in his home and *they consoled him and comforted him*") and 2:11, the insertion of the poet (*"And Job's friends* heard of the trouble that had come upon him and they *came each man* from his place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamatite and they met together to *come to console him and comfort him*").

[28]The First Cycle (3-14) begins with Job's soliloquy in chapter 3, followed by Eliphaz 4, 5; Job 6, 7; Bildad 8; Job 9, 10; Zophar 11; and concludes with Job's final, longest and most eloquent reply (12-14).

[29]On the use of quotations, which is the key to chapters 12, 21, 27 and 42:1-6, and which obviates the need for wholesale deletion in these and many other passages, cf. "Quotations in Wisdom Literature," *Jewish Quarterly Review,* 1939, vol. 30, pp. 123-47, and the considerably more extended treatment of the subject in "Quotations as a Literary Usage in Biblical, Oriental and Rabbinic Literature," in *Hebrew Union College Annual,* 1949.

[30]The Second Cycle (15-21) begins with Eliphaz 15; followed by Job 16, 17; Bildad 18; Job 19; Zophar 20; and ends with Job 21.

[31]Job's defiance is expressed in 16:18, his faith in 19:23 ff.; his assertion of the good life as an end in itself is in 17:8-9.

[32]The citations of the friends' arguments are to be found in chapter 21, verses 19a, 22, 28, and 30. See references in Note 29 for details.

[33]For a full discussion of the Third Cycle, now to be found in chapters 22-31, cf. Driver-Gray, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. XXVIII-XL. The principal evidence for the dislocation: (1) Bildad's speech (25) is too short; (2) Job's speech (26-31) is manifestly too long and, what is more, contains a great deal of material not appropriate to his point of view (as e.g., 26:5-14; 27:13-23); (3) Zophar's third speech is completely lacking.

[34]That this poem, chapter 28 in our present book of *Job,* is an independent "Hymn to Wisdom, the Inaccessible" is clear from the following facts: (1) It is lyrical and not argumentative in character. (2) It contains a refrain, "Wisdom, where may it be found, and where is the place of understanding?" (28: 12, 20). Its basic theme is that the ultimate Wisdom is beyond man, and what remains for man is religion and morality. In its present position this Hymn is not merely an interruption; it is actually an anti-climax anticipating the theme of the God-speeches.

On the basis of the presence of chapter 28 in the book, its finished literary form, the wide range of technical knowledge it displays and the similarity of its point of view to the God-speeches (38-41), the poem can plausibly be attributed to the author of *Job* or to a member of his school.

[35]See the preceding note.

[36]For a conspectus of the various efforts at restoration by different scholars see R. H. Pfeiffer, *op. cit.*, p. 671. Our own reconstruction, based on Graetz and Elzas, is admittedly tentative, as all such efforts must be, but requires a minimum of manipulation of the material in the Masoretic text. It is as follows: Eliphaz 22; Job 23, 24; Bildad 25:1-6, 26:5-14; Job 25:1-4, 27:2-12; Zophar 23:14-23, 13 (manifestly incomplete); Job 29-31.

[37]This concept, expressed in 22:29 ff., may be described as "horizontal responsibility" binding the members of a single generation together as against the "vertical responsibility" of succeeding generations of a family. See Note 51 below.

[38]On the proper interpretation of this passage, 27:2-12, which has suffered

considerable excision at the hands of scholars, see the paper cited in Note 29, in *HUCA*, 1949.

[39]The soliloquy is in chapter 29-31, the last chapter constituting the "Confession of Integrity."

[40]It has often been assumed that the conjunction *'im* which occurs throughout the chapter must always introduce an oath couched in the form of a condition. This schematic approach necessitates considerable deletions and transpositions of material, since the alleged conclusion of the condition actually occurs only four or five times and is lacking ten times. Cf., e.g., Yellin, Duhm, Hoelscher, Torczyner. Actually, the conjunction is used in several ways: (a) to introduce an oath (verses 7, 9, 21, 38, 39); (b) as equivalent to *ha'im*, the mark of a question (verses 5, 13, 16, 24, 25, 26, 29, 31, 33); and (c) in its usual meaning of "if" in a conditional sentence (verse 19). The repetition of the vocable gives the chapter great power; the variation in its meaning avoids monotony.

[41]The Elihu speeches are in chapters 32-37. The highlights of his arguments are to be found in chapters 33: 14 ff.; 34: 10 ff.; 35: 9-13; 36: 15-21; 37:23.

[42]The variations are relative rather than absolute. Elihu uses divine names like *Shaddai* and *Eloah* less than the friends, and *El* more; the rarer forms of the preposition are less common in Elihu, Aramaisms more so. On the stylistic variations cf. Driver-Gray, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. XL ff.

[43]The exception is one verse in Eliphaz's first speech, 5:17: "Happy is the man whom the Lord chastises; the reproof of the Almighty do not despise."

[44]Cf. 42:7, 8, the implications of which have been discussed above.

[45]The first speech of the Lord consists of chapters 38 and 39 and verse 40:2. The correct chapter division within this speech should have come after 38:37, the first half dealing with inanimate nature, the second with living creatures.

[46]Job's brief reply is in 40:3-5, God's second speech is in 40:6-41:28. Here, too, our present chapter division is wrong, since 41:1 ff. continues the description of *leviathan*, begun in 40:25. The second God-speech falls into the following sections: (a) the difficulty of establishing a just world order (40:6-11), description of (b) the hippopotamus (40:15-24), and (c) the crocodile (40:25-41:26).

[47]This consideration (on which cf. E. Kraeling, *op. cit.*, p. 159) suffices to set aside the objections raised, partly on technical grounds, to the authenticity of several sections of the God-speeches: (a) the ostrich (39:13-18); (b) the hippopotamus (40:15-24); and (c) the crocodile (40:25-41:26). The first section is lacking in the Septuagint, the other two are not couched in the question-form of the First Speech. But the Septuagint on *Job* has been notoriously abridged, probably because of the difficulty of the text and the repetitious character of the poetry. Nor is there any real reason for assuming that the poet must monotonously use the question-form for the length of all four chapters (38-41). The contrary is far more likely. Scholars are in disagree-

ment on how many of these sections are to be deleted. Cf. Pfeiffer, *op. cit.*, pp. 673 and 674, Note 7, and Dhorme, *ad loc.*, for details.

[48]*Hosea* 8:7; *Isaiah* 3:10, 11.

[49]In addition to the literature cited in Note 10, cf. G. Ernest Wright, *The Challenge of Israel's Faith* (Chicago, 1944), and Raymond Calkins, *The Modern Message of the Minor Prophets* (New York, 1947).

[50]*Jeremiah* 31:26-33; *Ezekiel* 18.

[51]Cf. *Genesis* 19; *Job* 22:29-30; Talmud Babli, *Mo'ed Katan* 16b: "Said the Holy One, Blessed be He, 'I rule over man, but who rules over me? The Saint; for when I issue a decree, he sets it aside.'" Cf. H. W. Robinson, "The Hebrew Conception of Corporate Responsibility," in *Beihefte ZATW*, vol. 6, 1936, pp. 49-62; A. R. Johnson, *The One and The Many in the Israelite Conception of God* (Cardiff, Wales, 1942), pp. 6-17; R. Gordis, "Corporate Personality in Job," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, vol. 4, 1945, pp. 54 f.

[52]Cf. 14:7, 11, 14. On the other hand, it is an error to refer 19:26 to the doctrine of personal immortality.

[53]*Sotah* 5:5. For a classic statement in traditional Judaism of this concept of disinterested virtue, see Maimonides' *Commentary on the Mishna Sanhedrin*, "Introduction to Helek," printed in all standard Talmud editions.

[54]In Midrash *Genesis Rabbah* 3, 2, Rab Huna said: "The secret (*sod*) of the world you cannot fathom: the order (*seder*) of the world how much more so!"

[55]In "On the Failure of All Philosophical Attempts in the Matter of Theodicy."

[56]*The Dance of Life.*