



Evans, John MacLaren (1990) *Elihu and the interpretation of the book of Job*. PhD thesis.

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ELIHU AND THE INTERPRETATION OF THE BOOK OF JOB

by

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THESIS

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
Department of Biblical Studies
University of Glasgow

1990

ABSTRACT

ELIHU AND THE INTERPRETATION OF THE BOOK OF JOB

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University of Glasgow, 1990

Professor R. Davidson

Of the extensive literature relating to the book of Job, only a small portion is devoted to the speeches of Elihu which comprise chapters 32-37. Traditional Biblical scholarship, diachronic in method and scope, has been chiefly interested in their authorship and stages of composition. But a comparatively recent emphasis on holistic methods, employing synchronic analysis of the text in its final literary form and showing a close affinity with modern secular literary criticism, has given the Elihu discourses increased importance as part of the received text of Job.

The main focus of attention in the present study is not the issue of authenticity but the function of the Elihu pericope within the canonical text of the book as a whole. The question of authorship, however, cannot be excluded from the exegetical process, for it vitally affects the assessment of the teaching of Elihu. Accordingly, the first part of this dissertation surveys the arguments which have

been advanced for and against the authenticity of the Elihu section and the widely divergent interpretations of its significance, and then proceeds to an evaluation of various holistic approaches, and the concept of canon as a hermeneutical principle.

In accord with the weight of cumulative evidence and the opinion of the great majority of modern scholars, the adventitiousness of chapters 32-37 is presumed. Critics who affirm the value of the Elihu speeches in the book of Job stress his distinctive contribution to understanding the problem of suffering and his mediatorial role, some noting that his name and genealogy are indicative of a special mediatorial function. The body of the thesis addresses these themes.

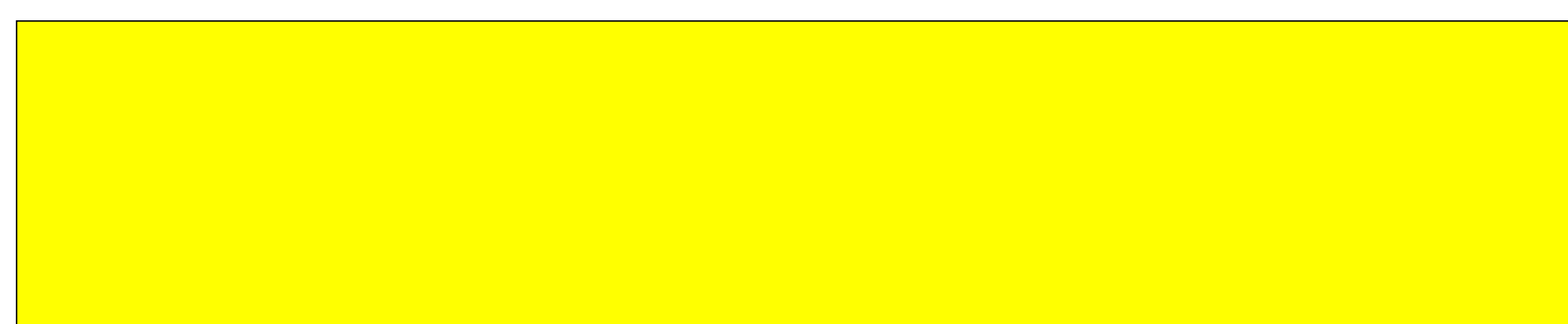
Detailed analysis of a number of passages in 32-37 establishes: (1) that Elihu does not present a solution to the problem of the suffering of the innocent: his view of suffering as punishment for actual sin and intended to communicate to man the necessity of repentance, is not an enunciation of a distinctive conception of divine pedagogy or discipline, but represents essentially the same position as that of the three friends; (2) that neither his name nor his more extensive genealogy is significative of a special mediatorial role; it is probable that they merely fulfil the interpolator's purpose in symbolising the exalted spiritual status of Elihu and thereby legitimising

the belated appearance of a hitherto unacknowledged participant in the debate; (3) that there is no basis for the conception of Elihu as a mediator between God and man; on the contrary, it is evident that he intervenes on behalf of God and against Job; his speeches are principally a polemic against the Divine speeches, to be understood, not as providing a transition to the theophany, but as rendering the appearance of God altogether unnecessary.

In conclusion, it is suggested that a diachronic approach has continuing value in application not only to the book of Job, but to the Old Testament as a whole. A synchronic approach is in danger of assuming an intrinsic unity which in actuality does not exist. In its final form, Job is an amalgam that, far from possessing a theological or a literary, even a dramatic, unity, contains a multiplicity of voices and traditions, of which Elihu is one. To see the book otherwise is to neutralise the dynamic quality or message which has made it so enduring.

DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

This dissertation is my own original work. Apart from the official supervision of Professor R. Davidson, no assistance has been received in its preparation. The sources utilised are as indicated in the Bibliography.

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John MacLaren Evans

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PREFACE

Of the extensive literature relating to the book of Job, only a small portion is devoted to the speeches of Elihu which comprise chapters 32-37. Among the special treatments of the Elihu discourses, concern has focused principally on the question of authenticity. Karl Budde in 1876 sought to establish the genuineness of the speeches on the basis of linguistic analysis, and Martin Boelicke in his dissertation of 1879 on the basis of their coherence with the remainder of the poem as well as their linguistic character. Wenzel Posselt responded to the various arguments against the authenticity of the speeches, but his monograph of 1909 is essentially apologetic and does not offer convincing evidence of their genuineness. In a dissertation published in 1911, H.H. Nichols assumed the adventitiousness of the chapters and argued that they represent the conflation of two originally separate compositions by different authors. W.E. Staples' monograph of 1924 was a linguistic study of the speeches, as a result of which, in contrast to Budde, Boelicke and Posselt, they were judged to be a later insertion.

The question of authenticity has been the chief interest

of traditional Biblical scholarship in relation to the interpretation of the Elihu pericope. In this regard, the view increasingly asserted by modern scholars, namely, that the discourses constitute a later interpolation, has for the most part sufficed to exclude Elihu from interpretations of the meaning and message of the book of Job as a whole. One of the most significant developments in recent Biblical scholarship, however, has been the emphasis on holistic methods of interpretation. Whereas traditional Biblical criticism has been primarily diachronic in scope and concerned with questions of authorship and the various stages in composition, holistic interpretative methods focus on the synchronic aspects of the text in its final literary form. In this context, the speeches of Elihu are significant as part of the received text of the book of Job.

It is obvious that shortcomings exist in both historicist and non-historicist approaches: in historical-critical exegesis, the tendency to seek the original conception of the author without regard for later accretions and to atomise the work at the expense of the whole; in holistic interpretation, the assumption of an intrinsic unity and coherence which may not, in actuality, exist.

The present study has as its subject the interpretation of the speeches of Elihu within the canonical text of Job. The discourses are part of the Biblical canon, and must be viewed in that light. An interpretative perspective

midway between a historical-critical and a holistic approach is adopted, utilising both methods to some extent. Nevertheless, the adventitiousness of the Elihu pericope is presumed, in accord with the weight of cumulative evidence and the opinion of the great majority of modern scholars.

But this is not to indicate that the question of authenticity is irrelevant to the discussion. If the Elihu chapters are to be considered a later addition, the purpose of their interpolation becomes, as J.H. Kroeze comments, all the more important. The question of authorship is necessarily involved in the exegetical process, for in the words of J.A. Baker, "in other Biblical books labelling one passage as primary and another as secondary may make little difference to the general import; in Job such decisions always vitally affect our assessment of the religious message or thought of the authors." Moreover, even if there were two or more authors, is there not meaning to be found in the juxtaposition of materials in the book as it stands? Does the text of Job support the idea of a literary-theological unity? Unity must be shown to exist; it cannot be assumed on an a priori basis, as many literary critics have done. As Sean E. McEvenue warns: "The case for meaning must be decided on literary criteria: one must show that a unit is not just an anthology but is an intended structure with meaning."

This study has been divided into seven chapters. The first presents a survey of the arguments for and against the authenticity of the Elihu speeches, and the second a survey of traditional criticism and modern holistic interpretation of the speeches. Chapter three provides an assessment of the objectives and methods of holistic interpretation. Chapters four and six explore in turn two of the themes in the Elihu section: the efficacy of suffering, and the concept of Elihu as mediator, while chapter five examines the significance of the name and genealogy of Elihu as a prolegomenon to the concept of his mediatorial function. Chapter seven sets forth the author's conclusions concerning the interpretation of the Elihu pericope within the context of the book of Job as a whole.

It will be shown that the book, far from possessing a theological or literary, even a dramatic, unity, contains a multiplicity of voices and traditions. Of these, Elihu, as he criticises the speakers preceding and the Divine address following, is one. To see Job otherwise, it will be suggested, is to neutralise the dynamic quality or message which has made the book so enduring.

There has been no attempt to furnish a verse-by-verse exegesis. The reader is well served in this respect by the various existing commentaries, and in the following pages

the emphasis is on the broader question of interpretation of the six Elihu chapters within the context of the entire book of Job.

Biblical references are to the Hebrew, and for the most part follow the enumeration and text-division of BHS. Unless otherwise noted, quotations of Biblical texts and quotations from foreign-language works represent the translation of this author. Italics are denoted by single underlining; the footnotes indicate whether italics occurring within quotations have been added or are part of the original.

The writer wishes to express sincerest appreciation to his doctoral supervisor, Professor Robert Davidson, Department of Biblical Studies, University of Glasgow.

ABBREVIATIONS

<u>AJSLL</u>	<u>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures</u>
<u>ANET</u>	<u>Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament</u> , ed. J.B. Pritchard
<u>AT</u>	<u>The Old Testament: An American Translation</u>
<u>AV</u>	<u>Authorized Version</u>
Berechiah	<u>A Commentary on the Book of Job</u> , by Berechiah, ed. William Aldis Wright
B-D-B	F. Brown, S.R. Driver, and C.A. Briggs, <u>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</u>
<u>BGAM</u>	R. Gordis, <u>The Book of God and Man</u>
<u>BHK</u>	<u>Biblia Hebraica</u> , ed. R. Kittel
<u>BHS</u>	<u>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</u> , ed. K. Elliger and W. Rudolph
<u>BOJ</u>	R. Gordis, <u>The Book of Job: Commentary, New Translation and Special Studies</u>
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
<u>BZAW</u>	Beihefte zur <u>Zeitschrift für die alttestament- liche Wissenschaft</u>
CAT	S. Terrien, <u>Job</u> (Commentaire de l'Ancien Testament, 13)
CBCNEB	N.C. Habel, <u>The Book of Job</u> (Cambridge Bible Commentary on the New English Bible)

<u>ET</u>	<u>Expository Times</u>
G-B	Gesenius, <u>Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament</u> , rev. Frants Buhl
G-K-C	<u>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</u> , ed. E. Kautzsch, rev. A.E. Cowley
<u>HALAT</u>	L. Koehler, W. Baumgartner, <u>Hebräisches und Aramäisches Lexikon zum Alten Testament</u>
HTR	<u>Harvard Theological Review</u>
<u>IB</u>	<u>Interpreter's Bible</u>
<u>IDB</u>	<u>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</u>
<u>IDBS</u>	<u>IDB Supplementary Volume</u>
<u>INT</u>	<u>Interpretation</u>
<u>JB</u>	<u>Jerusalem Bible</u>
<u>JBL</u>	<u>Journal of Biblical Literature</u>
<u>JE</u>	<u>Jewish Encyclopaedia</u>
<u>JPS</u>	Translation of the <u>Jewish Publication Society of America</u> (1917)
<u>JQR</u>	<u>Jewish Quarterly Review</u>
<u>JR</u>	<u>Journal of Religion</u>
<u>JSOT</u>	<u>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</u>
<u>JTS</u>	<u>Journal of Theological Studies</u>
K-B	L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, <u>Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros</u>
<u>LOT</u>	S.R. Driver, <u>Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament</u>

<u>LXX</u>	The Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
<u>NAB</u>	<u>New American Bible</u>
<u>NEB</u>	<u>New English Bible</u>
<u>NJB</u>	<u>New Jerusalem Bible</u>
<u>NJV</u>	New Jewish Version (Translation of Jewish Publication Society of America: 1982)
Ostervald	<u>La Sainte Bible</u> , trans. J.F. Ostervald
OTL	Old Testament Library
<u>OTS</u>	<u>Oudtestamentische Studiën</u>
<u>RSV</u>	<u>Revised Standard Version</u>
<u>RV</u>	<u>Revised Version</u>
Segond	<u>La Sainte Bible</u> , trans. L. Segond
SVT	Supplements to <u>Vetus Testamentum</u>
Symm.	Symmachus
<u>TDNT</u>	<u>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</u>
<u>TDOT</u>	<u>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</u>
<u>TEV</u>	<u>Today's English Version</u>
Theod.	Theodotion
<u>VT</u>	<u>Vetus Testamentum</u>
<u>Vulg.</u>	Vulgate
<u>ZAW</u>	<u>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</u>

CHAPTER I

THE QUESTION OF AUTHENTICITY

The eighteenth century marked the beginning of the modern era of Biblical criticism, that process by which scholars seek critically to understand and to interpret the literature of the Bible. Though its roots can be traced back to the Renaissance and Reformation, the fundamental principle of free investigation which underlies modern Biblical criticism, that the Bible should be subjected to the same critical study as other literature, derives from the eighteenth century philosophical movement known as the Enlightenment. It was not until this time that the critical study of the Bible emerged as a theological discipline. The spirit of the Enlightenment fostered a more critical theological attitude which brought to bear on the literature of the Bible a series of questions concerning the history, authorship, date and literary integrity of the text.

The consequence of such systematic investigation was the atomisation of the Biblical material, that is to say, a recognition that the literature of the Bible is characterised by a history of composition and transmission. Thus, the modern commentator of the book of Job encounters a wide range of critical problems, not the least of which is that

presented by the Elihu pericope (chapters 32-37).¹ By far the majority of modern scholars are agreed that this section is not part of the original composition of the book.² The principal arguments against the authenticity of these chapters may be presented as follows.

I. Relation to the Structure of the Book

1. Elihu is not mentioned in the Prologue.³

It may be argued that Elihu's non-mention here is

1. H.H. Rowley, "The Book of Job and Its Meaning," From Moses to Qumran (London, 1963), p. 146, identifies Elihu's speeches as "the first of the critical problems" of the book.
2. A survey of interpretation of the Elihu speeches follows in chapter II; see the table, pp. 49ff.
3. Cf. T.K. Cheyne, Job and Solomon, or the Wisdom of the Old Testament (London, 1887), p. 91, but see Cheyne, "Job, Book of," Encyclopaedia Biblica, 2 (London, 1901), col. 2485; Friedrich Delitzsch, Das Buch Hiob (Leipzig, 1902), p. 95; August Dillmann, Hiob (Kurzgefasstes Exegetisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament; 4th ed.; Leipzig, 1891), p. 275; Johann Gottfried Eichhorn, Einleitung in das Alte Testament (Göttingen, 1824), vol. 5, p. 203; Ferdinand Hitzig, Das Buch Hiob (Leipzig, 1874), p. xxxiii; Eduard König, Das Buch Hiob (Gütersloh, 1929), pp. 468-69; A. Kuenen, Historisch-kritische Einleitung in die Bücher des Alten Testaments hinsichtlich ihrer Entstehung und Sammlung, part III.1 (Leipzig, 1894), p. 143; C. Larcher, Le Livre de Job (2d ed.; La Sainte Bible; Paris, 1957), p. 12; Jean Lévêque, Job et Son Dieu: Essai d'Exégèse et de Théologie Biblique (Paris, 1970), vol. 2, p. 537; Johannes Lindblom, La Composition du Livre de Job (Lund, 1945), p. 82; A. Loisy, Le Livre de Job (Amiens, 1892), pp. 30-31; S. Oettli, Das Buch Hiob erläutert für Bibelleser (Calw, 1908), p. 17; Ernest Renan, Le Livre de Job (5th ed.; Paris, 1894), p. 11; William Ewart Staples, The Speeches of Elihu: A Study of Job XXXII-XXXVII (University of Toronto Studies, Philological Series, 8; Toronto, 1924), p. 12; James Strahan, The Book of Job (Edinburgh, 1914), p. 24; Matthias Heinrich Stuhlmann, Hiob: ein religiöses Gedicht (Hamburg, 1804), p. 41; W.M.L. de Wette, A Critical and Historical Introduction to the Canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament (Boston, 1858), vol. 2, p. 558; A. de Wilde, Das Buch Hiob: eingeleitet, übersetzt und erläutert (Oudtestamentische Studiën, 22; Leiden, 1981), p. 2.

insignificant, since he is not involved in the course of the ensuing Dialogue.⁴ Against this idea, König points out that the three friends are introduced simultaneously (2:11), although they do not take part immediately in the discussion.⁵ But does literary convention demand the introduction in the Prologue of all the participants in the drama? Some scholars maintain that there is no reason to mention Elihu in the Prologue, and that when it is necessary to introduce him, the poet has done so.⁶ Beeby and Habel⁷ claim that, by not appearing in the Prologue, Elihu in his role as a

4. S.R. Driver, An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament (hereafter cited as LOT) (Edinburgh, 1913), p. 428; H. Junker, Das Buch Job (Echter-Bibel, 13; Würzburg, 1951), p. 75.
5. König, Das Buch Hiob, pp. 468-69.
6. Rudolphus Cornely, Introductio Specialis in Didacticos et Propheticos Veteris Testamenti Libros (Historica et Critica Introductio in U.T. Libros Sacros, vol. II.2; (Paris, 1887), p. 59; Samuel Cox, A Commentary on the Book of Job (London, 1880), pp. 416-17; Edward J. Kissane, The Book of Job (Dublin, 1939), p. xxxviii; Norbert Peters, Das Buch Job (Exegetisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament, 21; Münster in Westf., 1928), p. 23; Wenzel Posselt, Der Verfasser der Elihu-Reden (Job Kap. 32-37) (Biblische Studien, 14; Freiburg im Bresgau, 1909), p. 51; F. Prat, "(Livre de) Job," Dictionnaire de la Bible, 3 (Paris, 1903), col. 1568; John E. Steinmueller, A Companion to Scripture Studies (New York, 1942), vol. 2, p. 167; P. Paul Szczygiel, Das Buch Job übersetzt und erklärt (Die Heilige Schrift des Alten Testamentes, ed. F. Feldmann and H. Herkenne, vol. V.1; Bonn, 1931), p. 24.
7. H.D. Beeby, "Elihu - Job's Mediator?" South East Asia Journal of Theology, 7 (1965), p. 42; Norman C. Habel, "The Role of Elihu in the Design of the Book of Job," in In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in Honor of G.W. Ahlstrom, ed. W. Boyd Barrick and John R. Spencer (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series, 31; Sheffield, 1984), p. 93. Cf. Louis Dennefeld, "Les Discours d'Elihou," Revue Biblique, 48 (1939), p. 169.

"covenant mediator" or "arbiter" is clearly differentiated from Job's friends. Others see in the lack of an early reference to Elihu evidence of the author's dramatic purpose. If Elihu were introduced at the same time as the friends, the effect of both their entry and his would be spoiled;⁸ his sudden appearance creates greater interest than he would have if introduced previously.⁹ Moreover, if the reader were waiting all the time for Elihu's cue, he might miss much of the tension in the speeches of Job and the friends.¹⁰ An earlier mention of Elihu would anticipate the cessation of the friends' arguments and thus diminish the suspense with which the reader follows the dispute.¹¹

A number of writers, citing 17:9, 18:2-3 and 30:1ff., allege that Elihu is intended to be understood as a bystander, a member of the audience, who will enter the debate later.¹²

8. Norman H. Snaithe, The Book of Job: Its Origin and Purpose (Studies in Biblical Theology, Second Series, 11; London, 1968), p. 73.
9. Friedrich Wilhelm Carl Umbreit, A New Version of the Book of Job, with Expository Notes, vol. 1 (Edinburgh, 1836), p. 18n.
10. H.L. Ellison, From Tragedy to Triumph: The Message of the Book of Job (London, 1958), p. 103.
11. Hans Möller, Sinn und Aufbau des Buches Hiob (Berlin, 1955), pp. 98-99. Cf. Samuel Davidson, The Text of the Old Testament Considered (London, 1856), vol. 2, p. 722.
12. Luis Alonso Schökel, "Toward a Dramatic Reading of the Book of Job," Semeia, 7 (1977), p. 48; Martin Boelicke, Die Elihu-Reden nach ihrem Zusammenhange mit dem übrigen Theil des Buches Hiob und nach ihrem sprachlichen Charakter (Halle, 1879), p. 19ff.; Karl Budde, Das Buch Hiob (Handkommentar zum Alten Testament; Göttingen, 1896), p. xviii; Kissane, op. cit., p. xl; J.H. Kroeze, "Die Elihu-Reden im Buche Hiob," Oudtestamentische Studiën, 2 (1943), p. 157; Möller, op. cit., pp. 97-98; Posselt,

Schlottmann, for example, explains that Elihu is not personally close either to Job or to the friends, and does not arrive with them but on his own. He joins the circle of people who are present, for it is in keeping with oriental custom that, upon the friends' arrival, a number of inhabitants from the nearby town where Job is well-known have also appeared.¹³ Gordis agrees that the author conceives of Elihu as one of the anonymous group of spectators who are permitted to listen while the elders debate but are not expected to participate.¹⁴ Van Hoonacker, on the other hand, declares it "absolutely contrary to the general spirit and character of the poem to allot such great importance to purely hypothetical circumstances of the staging." He finds it impossible to discern in 17:9 and 30:1ff. any reference to the presence of onlookers. Although in 18:2-3 Bildad uses the second person plural, according to MT, this does not justify the assumption that he is addressing an audience as well as Job; in van Hoonacker's view, the second person singular should be restored in accord with LXX.¹⁵

A different explanation is offered by Sawyer, who suggests that the Prologue derives from an ancient folk-tale tradition

op. cit., pp. 51-52; Prat, op. cit., col. 1568. Cf. also Beeby, op. cit., p. 49; Joseph Hontheim, Das Buch Job (Biblische Studien, 9; Freiburg im Breisgau, 1904), p. 13.

13. K. Schlottmann, Das Buch Hiob (Berlin, 1851), pp. 59-60.

14. Robert Gordis, The Book of God and Man (hereafter cited as BGAM) (Chicago and London, 1965), p. 108.

15. A. van Hoonacker, "Une Question Touchant la Composition du Livre de Job," Revue Biblique, 12 (1903), pp. 162-63.

which includes a motif concerning the arrival of three wise men from the east. Thus, in order to preserve this long-standing convention, Elihu, as the fourth person, is purposely excluded from the Prologue.¹⁶ Similarly, Wildeboer describes Elihu as "a quite free creation of the poet, in comparison with the three friends of Job, who were known from tradition"; but he surmises that Elihu's omission in the Prologue may be attributable to the inability of the author to put the finishing touches to his work.¹⁷ Gordis finds another reason in the different stages of the composition: the Prologue has been written in earlier years, and when the poet adds the Elihu speeches later, he feels no need to insert a mention of this speaker in the opening narrative.¹⁸

2. Elihu is not mentioned in the Epilogue.¹⁹

Whereas the lack of an introduction to Elihu in the Prologue can be glossed over in these various ways, it is more

16. John F.A. Sawyer, "The Authorship and Structure of the Book of Job," Studia Biblica 1978 I. Old Testament (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series, 11; Sheffield, 1979), p. 254. Cf. Yehezkel Kaufmann, The Religion of Israel, from Its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile (London, 1960), p. 336.
17. G. Wildeboer, Die Literatur des Alten Testaments (2d ed.; Göttingen, 1905), pp. 383-84.
18. Gordis, BGAM, pp. 111-12.
19. Cf. Cheyne, Job and Solomon, p. 91, and "Job, Book of," Encyclopaedia Biblica, 2, col. 2485; Samuel Davidson, An Introduction to the Old Testament: Critical, Historical, and Theological (London, 1862), vol. 2, p. 206; Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 95; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 275; Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction (Oxford, 1965), p. 457; Johannes Fichtner, "Hiob in der Verkündigung unserer Zeit," Gottes Weisheit: Gesammelte

difficult to ignore his non-mention in the Epilogue. Even Cornill, a staunch defender of the authenticity of the speeches of Elihu, regards as "suspicious" his absence from the Prologue and Epilogue.²⁰ For some critics, the explanation is that Elihu comes into the book of Job after the Epilogue has taken form, and the author does not think it necessary to modify the ending. Gordis adds: "most important of all, Semitic writers were not concerned with a complete congruence of details when combining various traditions into one consecutive whole."²¹ Many critics argue that Elihu receives no mention in the Epilogue because

Studien zum Alten Testament (Stuttgart, 1965), p. 54; Heinrich Gross, Ijob (Die Neue Echter Bibel, 13; Würzburg, 1986), p. 8; Hitzig, op. cit., p. xxxiii; Gustav Hölscher, Das Buch Hiob (Handbuch zum Alten Testament, 17; 2d ed.; Tübingen, 1952), p. 83; Larcher, op. cit., p. 12; Adolphe Lods, Histoire de la Littérature Hébraïque et Juive (Paris, 1950), p. 676; Loisy, op. cit., pp. 30-32; Johannes Meinhold, Einführung in das Alte Testament (3d ed.; Giessen, 1932), pp. 323-24; Oettli, op. cit., p. 17; Renan, op. cit., p. lii; Rowley, op. cit., pp. 146-47, 150; Jean Steinmann, Le Livre de Job (Lectio Divina, 16; Paris, 1955), pp. 287-88; D. Steuernagel, Das Buch Hiob (Die Heilige Schrift des Alten Testaments, ed. E. Kautzsch; Tübingen, 1910), vol. 2, p. 341; Stuhlmann, op. cit., p. 41; J. Vermeylen, Job, Ses Amis et Son Dieu (Leiden, 1986), p. 23; Artur Weiser, Das Buch Hiob (Das Alte Testament Deutsch, 13; 4th ed.; Göttingen, 1963), p. 217; de Wette, op. cit., p. 558.

20. Carl Cornill, Introduction to the Canonical Books of the Old Testament (London, 1907), p. 430. Cf. J.T. Marshall, The Book of Job (Philadelphia, 1904), p. xviii.
21. Gordis, BGAM, pp. 111-12. Cf. Snaithe, op. cit., p. 74; G.H. Bateson Wright, The Book of Job (London, 1883), p. 181.

he has spoken the truth and therefore is not included with the friends in the Divine reproach.²² If this is an accurate assumption, however, why does God not express his approval of Elihu's discourse?

Although Dubarle perceives implicit approval of Elihu in his omission from the Epilogue,²³ and Budde suggests that he is passed over in silence because he represents the poet's own view,²⁴ a number of other writers endeavour to show why reference to him in the Epilogue would be inappropriate. Steinmueller believes that he has uttered nothing worthy of either commendation or rebuke.²⁵ According to Beeby, when God reveals himself, Elihu must disappear; his role as the covenant mediator is fulfilled when God begins to speak.²⁶ Szczygiel observes that the book does not involve a trial against Elihu; the issue is the legal matter of Job against God and the friends, and therefore judgment is passed on

22. Cf. Cornely, op. cit., p. 59; Cox, op. cit., p. 417; Davidson, Text of the Old Testament Considered, vol. 2, p. 722; B.D. Eerdmans, Studies in Job (Leiden, 1939), p. 17; Gordis, BGAM, p. 112; S. Hemraj, "Elihu's 'Missionary' Role in Job 32-37," Biblehashyam, 6, pt. 1 (1980), p. 52; Paul Humbert, "Le Modernisme de Job," Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East, ed. M. Noth and D. Winton Thomas (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, 3; Leiden, 1955), p. 151; Junker, op. cit., p. 75; Peters, op. cit., p. 23; E.F.C. Rosenmüller, Iobus (Scholia in Vetus Testamentum, 5; Lipsiae, 1824), pp. 769-70.
23. A.M. Dubarle, Les Sages d'Israël (Lectio Divina, 1; Paris, 1946), pp. 84-85.
24. Budde, op. cit., p. xviii.
25. Steinmueller, op. cit., p. 167.
26. Beeby, op. cit., p. 42.

them. When judgment is pronounced in a modern court, the judge does not name the colleagues or counsel who have helped him reach a decision. Likewise, God as judge has no reason to mention Elihu, who has spoken as a human arbitrator and God's advocate in the case.²⁷ Posselt, who also points out that God's appearance is for Job and is brought about by Job's problem, notes that God continues the theme begun by Elihu and thus indicates how chapters 32-37 are to be judged.²⁸ Since the Divine discourse is a continuation of Elihu's speeches, Möller argues that it would be degrading to portray God as expressing approbation. Elihu, speaking through the divine spirit, has been legitimised as God's messenger. Is God to verify what has been uttered through his spirit?²⁹ Schlottmann warns that since Elihu has spoken correctly, any reference to him in the Epilogue must be in the form of praise, which would make him the most important person in the whole poem, a position that is not warranted.³⁰ Keil's opinion is that a "eulogistic memorial" of Elihu would be "an offence against the grand simplicity of the poem."³¹ Umbreit offers as the reason for Elihu's non-appearance in the Epilogue the

27. Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 24. Cf. Dennefeld, op. cit., pp. 169-70.

28. Posselt, op. cit., p. 52.

29. Möller, op. cit., pp. 98-99.

30. Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 60.

31. Karl Friedrich Keil, Manual of Historico-Critical Introduction to the Canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament (Edinburgh, 1869), vol. 1, p. 497.

fact that Job has not granted him the dignity of an answer.³²

3. Job himself makes no reply to Elihu.³³

Various authors explain the silence of Job in the aftermath of Elihu's discourse by suggesting that Job is convinced of his errors through Elihu's words of instruction and admonition; he is humbled and accepts the reprimand.³⁴ Since the language of Elihu is not argument but declaration, against which there is no response, Beeby concludes that the only answer possible for Job is repentance.³⁵ Richter, however, claims that the continuation of the drama with the appearance of God negates the possibility of taking Job's silence to denote renunciation of his demand for a confrontation with God.³⁶

Others also doubt that Job has been brought into complete agreement with Elihu, though he may recognize the truth in the latter's statements concerning the disciplinary value of suffering.³⁷ Umbreit declares that "Elihu advances nothing new, and silent contempt is the prater's reward."³⁸ But,

32. Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 18n.

33. Cf. Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 95; Curt Kuhl, "Neuere Literarkritik des Buches Hiob," Theologische Rundschau, 21 (1953), p. 258; Stuhlmann, op. cit., p. 41; de Wette op. cit., p. 558.

34. Budde, op. cit., p. viii; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 32. Cf. Dubarle, op. cit., p. 85; Rosenmüller, op. cit., p. 769; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 25.

35. Beeby, op. cit., pp. 42-43.

36. Heinz Richter, Studien zu Hiob (Berlin, 1959), p. 119.

37. Peters, op. cit., p. 23.

38. Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 18n.

on the basis of the passages 33:29-30 [31-32?], 34:29-30, and 35:4-7, 9, 12, 15, Szczygiel believes that the reader has to assume objections on Job's part.³⁹ Posselt calls attention to the difficulties which prevent Job from voicing these. At the end of Elihu's first speech, Job can only repeat his claim of innocence, which Elihu does not deny; hence it is probable that Job merely waits to hear what else Elihu will say. At the end of the third speech, Job wants to reply, but the "angry young man" is not to be interrupted; then comes the theophany and Job has no chance to answer Elihu.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, if chapters 32-37 are to be regarded as integral to the conception of the poem, the failure of Job to reply to Elihu is surprising, especially in view of his strongly worded responses to the three friends. Undoubtedly, the most satisfactory explanation is that the Elihu speeches are the work of a later writer.

4. The Elihu speeches interrupt the connection between Job's final appeal and the appearance of God.⁴¹

Conversely, Budde's opinion is that the poet does not intend the speech of God to follow directly on Job's words

39. Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 25.

40. Posselt, op. cit., pp. 53-54.

41. Luis Alonso Schökel and J.L. Sicre Diaz, Job: Comentario teológico y literario (Nueva Biblia Española; Madrid, 1983), p. 455; C.J. Ball, The Book of Job (Oxford, 1922), pp. 4-5; George A. Barton, Commentary on the Book of Job (The Bible for Home and School; New York, 1911), pp. 23-24; Julius A. Bewer, The Literature of the Old Testament (3d ed.; New York & London, 1962), pp. 343-44; A. B. Davidson, The Book of Job (The Cambridge Bible for

in chapter 31, for God could hardly answer the very violent challenge of Job in any other manner than by instant destruction.⁴² Möller raises the question: "Is it really so appropriate that God appear on the scene like a ghost evoked by an exorcist?"⁴³ Some authors comment on the purpose served by the Elihu speeches. For Whedbee, it is comic relief: the reader expects the response of God after Job's appeal, but instead Elihu appears.⁴⁴ For Habel, interpreting on the basis of the legal metaphor which characterises the literary structure of the book, Elihu comes on stage as an arbiter in direct response to Job's demand for a public trial

Schools and Colleges; Cambridge, 1884), pp. xlviii-xlix; E.J. Dillon, The Sceptics of the Old Testament (London, 1895), p. 56; Georg Fohrer, Das Buch Hiob (Kommentar zum Alten Testament, 16; Gütersloh, 1963), p. 40; König, op. cit., p. 468; Kuhl, op. cit., p. 259; Lévêque, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 537; Lindblom, op. cit., p. 82; John Edgar McFadyen, The Wisdom Books (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes), also Lamentations and the Song of Songs, in Modern Speech and Rhythmical Form (London, 1919), p. 244; Oettli, op. cit., pp. 16-17; Arthur S. Peake, Job (The Century Bible; Edinburgh, 1905), p. 23; Harry Ranston, The Old Testament Wisdom Books and Their Teaching (London, 1930), p. 115; H. Rongy, "Les discours d'Elihou," Revue Ecclésiastique de Liège, 25 (1934), p. 367; R.B.Y. Scott, The Way of Wisdom in the Old Testament (New York & London, 1971), p. 150; Hermann L. Strack, Einleitung in das Alte Testament (München, 1895), p. 133; Samuel Terrien, "The Book of Job," The Interpreter's Bible, 3 (Nashville, Tenn., 1954), p. 890, and Job (Commentaire de l'Ancien Testament, 13; Neuchâtel, 1963), p. 26; Weiser, op. cit., pp. 217-18. For a contrasting view cf. S. Davidson, Text of the Old Testament Considered, vol. 2, p. 723.

42. Budde, op. cit., p. xxxviii. Contrast Junker, op. cit., p. 75.

43. Möller, op. cit., p. 113.

44. J. William Whedbee, "The Comedy of Job," Semeia, 7 (1977), pp. 18-20.

in 31:35.⁴⁵ Also, a number of writers contend that if the Elihu speeches were deleted from the book of Job, it would become a "fragment."⁴⁶

Kaiser, however, describes Elihu's appearance as "completely out of place";⁴⁷ and Wright, who regards the Elihu chapters as a supplementary insertion by the poet, believes that the speech of God beginning in 38:1 must have followed immediately after 31:35-37 in the original recension of the poem.⁴⁸ Indeed, the reader is conscious at this point of a break in the continuity, an unnatural interruption of the debate.⁴⁹ This impression is strengthened by the introductory words of God in chapter 38: "Who is this that darkens counsel....?" It is difficult to comprehend this rebuke as referring to anyone other than Job, despite the view of Budde and others that the remarks in chapter 38:1ff. appropriately follow the description of the storm in chapter 37.

45. Habel, op. cit., p. 93.

46. Boelicke, op. cit., p. 36. Cf. Hontheim, op. cit., p. 32; J. Knabenbauer, Commentarius in Librum Iob (Cursus Scripturae Sacrae; Paris, 1886), pp. 8-9; Franz A. Lambert, Das Buch Hiob (Berlin, 1919), pp. 22, 24; Posselt, op. cit., p. 54; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 59; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 25.

47. Otto Kaiser, Introduction to the Old Testament (Oxford, 1975), p. 390.

48. Wright, op. cit., p. 181.

49. Johannes Hempel, "Das Theologische Problem des Hiob," in Apoxysmata (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 80-82; Berlin, 1961), p. 171.

Conclusion

Apart from chapters 32-37, there is no mention of Elihu in the book of Job.⁵⁰ Moreover, these chapters appear to have no connection with the rest of the book.⁵¹ Consequently, their excision would pass unnoticed⁵²; in fact, some commentators maintain that their removal would enhance the text.⁵³ Driver describes the discourse of Elihu as "a

50. According to Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 21-22, Elihu is created solely for the purpose of acting as God's messenger, and his sudden appearance and disappearance are intended to indicate the supernatural nature of his intervention; cf. also p. 33. In the view of Ernst Sellin, Introduction to the Old Testament (London, 1923), p. 214, the Elihu speeches were not included in the original recension of the poem, but were inserted later by the original author.
51. Cf. Fohrer, op. cit., p. 40; Johannes Herz, "Formgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Problem des Hiobbuches," Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig, 3 (1953-54), p. 161; Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 32, 34-36, 39; Kuhl, op. cit., p. 258; Lévêque, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 537; Loisy, op. cit., p. 31; Weiser, op. cit., p. 217.
52. Samuel Davidson, Introduction to the Old Testament, vol. 2, pp. 206-07; Dillman, op. cit., p. 275; Georg Heinrich August von Ewald, Commentary on the Book of Job (London, 1882), p. 329; Lindblom, op. cit., p. 83; Rowley, op. cit., p. 147; D.S. Margoliouth, "Job," A Dictionary of the Bible, ed. William Smith and J.M. Fuller (London, 1893), vol. 1, pt. 2, p. 1721; E.F. Sutcliffe, "Job," A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture, ed. B. Orchard, E.F. Sutcliffe, R.C. Fuller and R. Russell (London, 1953), p. 418; Peter Paul Zerafa, The Wisdom of God in the Book of Job (Rome, 1978), p. 41.
53. A. Lefèvre, "Job (Le livre de)," in Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible (Paris, 1949), vol. 4, col. 1080; Adalbert Merx, Das Gedicht von Hiob (Jena, 1871), p. xvii; Staples, op. cit., p. 12.

disturbing element" in the book.⁵⁴ Strahan states that "the dramatic power of the book is heightened" by the omission of the Elihu pericope.⁵⁵ Alonso Schökel expresses the view of a number of authors:

Son obra posterior, de calidad inferior, que turba la unidad original del libro.... [Elihu] es un espontáneo. Piensa que tiene algo importante que decir, y de hecho algo añade; pero a costa de la obra.... Habla y habla, sin encajar en la representación y estropeando la obra.⁵⁶

II. Style

1. Elihu is introduced differently from the other speakers.⁵⁷

There is a sharp contrast between the manner of Elihu's introduction and that of the other speakers. Whereas all three friends are introduced in a single verse (2:11), Elihu requires an entire chapter. Moreover, the exalted image of

54. Driver, LOT, p. 428. Cf. Richter, op. cit., p. 119: "they form an annoying element"; and Fohrer, op. cit., pp. 40-41, who writes that the contribution of the Elihu speeches to the solution of the problem of Job is negated by the latter's speeches in the Dialogue: "Das ergibt einen fast grotesken Gegensatz zum Umfang der Elihureden."

55. Strahan, op. cit., p. 267.

56. Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 456. Italics added.

57. A.B. Davidson, op. cit., p. 50 (in Intro.); Dhorme, op. cit., p. xcix; Fohrer, op. cit., p. 40; Ludwig Hirzel, Hiob (Kurzgefasstes exegetisches Handbuch zum alten Testament; Leipzig, 1852), p. 199; König, op. cit., p. 468; Kuenen, op. cit., p. 143; Kuhl, op. cit., p. 258; Lods, op. cit., p. 677; Loisy, op. cit., pp. 31-32; Peake, op. cit., p. 24; Terrien, "Book of Job," IB, 3, p. 890, and Job (CAT), p. 26.

Elihu and the style of the introduction - tiresome, redundant, overblown - may create an unfortunate impression on the reader.⁵⁸ Budde admits that Elihu's self-introduction deserves reproach, but defends it on the following grounds: (a) the difficulty of introducing a new personage at the end of the Dialogue; (b) the youthfulness of Elihu; (c) the customary oriental long-windedness in such situations; and (d) the recognition that such material does not lend itself naturally to poetic expression.⁵⁹ Cox, who agrees concerning the oriental fondness for lengthy introductions, perceives it in Elihu's case as adding one of the poem's "most effective patches of 'local' colour."⁶⁰

Several writers claim that Elihu's special introduction is appropriate: Wildeboer, because Elihu, unlike the three friends of the tradition, is the poet's creation; Hontheim, because Elihu is introduced as a prophet; and Dennefeld, because it emphasises the importance of the contribution that Elihu will make to the solution of the problem of suffering.⁶¹ Nevertheless, the style of the introduction contributes to an unmistakable ambiguity. How is the figure of Elihu to be

58. Peters, op. cit., p. 25, though a supporter of the authenticity of the Elihu speeches, calls the introduction "aesthetically unfitting."

59. Karl Budde, Beiträge zur Kritik des Buches Hiob (Bonn, 1876), p. 152.

60. Cox, op. cit., pp. 409-11; cf. Staples, op. cit., p. 14.

61. Wildeboer, op. cit., p. 384; Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 33, 38; Dennefeld, op. cit., p. 171. With Dennefeld, cf. Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 23.

comprehended? Is he to be taken seriously, or is he deliberately characterised as a buffoon? Unfortunately, the reader is left in the dark.

2. To the name of Elihu and his place of origin, is added the name of his father.⁶²

In contrast, the author gives simply the name and place of origin of the other speakers. Wildeboer, however, argues that, if Elihu is a quite free creation of the poet as opposed to the three friends who are known from tradition, the more elaborate genealogy is explicable on this basis.⁶³

3. Elihu, unlike the three friends and God, addresses Job by name (33:1, 31; 37:14).⁶⁴

Umbreit, calling the difference in the manner of addressing Job the weakest of all arguments, ascribes it to a peculiarity on the part of Elihu.⁶⁵ Habel considers the difference appropriate for the role of Elihu: witnesses or defendants are regularly summoned by name.⁶⁶ Gordis suggests

62. Cf. inter alia Dhorme, op. cit., p. xcix; Hoonacker, op. cit., p. 163.

63. Wildeboer, op. cit., p. 384.

64. Cf. Dhorme, op. cit., p. ci; Solomon B. Freehof, Book of Job: A Commentary (The Jewish Commentary for Bible Readers; New York, 1958), p. 204; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 83; Helen Hawley Nichols, "The Composition of the Elihu Speeches," American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures, 27 (1910-11), p. 106; Peake, op. cit., p. 24; Renan, op. cit., p. liii; Scott, op. cit., p. 151; Terrien, Job (CAT), pp. 26-27; Vermeylen, op. cit., p. 24; de Wette, op. cit., p. 558.

65. Umbreit, op. cit., p. 18n.

66. Habel, op. cit., p. 94.

that Elihu alone addresses Job by name because as both a younger man and an interloper, he is concerned as to whether he will be able to gain and hold Job's attention.⁶⁷ Budde points out that Elihu must differentiate since he is dealing with the friends and Job, whereas the friends are dealing only with Job.⁶⁸ Admittedly, Elihu's different mode of addressing Job is a rather feeble argument. The suggestion, however, that Elihu as a mediator must refer to Job by name to distinguish him from the other speakers is equally unconvincing.

4. The Elihu discourse betrays an artificial familiarity with the Dialogue.⁶⁹

On a number of occasions, Elihu refers to statements of Job in order to refute the latter's accusations. But he does not merely allude to Job's words; he quotes practically verbatim, as if the completed poem is lying before him.⁷⁰

67. Robert Gordis, The Book of Job: Commentary, New Translation & Special Studies (hereafter cited as BOJ) (More-shet Series, Studies in Jewish History, Literature and Thought, 2; New York, 1978), p. 548.
68. Budde, op. cit., p. xix. Cf. A.B. Davidson, op. cit., p. xlviii; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 32; Möller, op. cit., p. 100; Peters, op. cit., p. 26.
69. Cheyne, Job and Solomon, p. 92; Dhorme, op. cit., pp. ci, cv; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 83; Kuhl, op. cit., p. 259; Lefèvre, op. cit., col. 1080; Lévêque, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 538; Loisy, op. cit., p. 32; Peake, op. cit., p. 24; Ranston, op. cit., p. 117; Scott, op. cit., p. 151; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 224; Terrien, Job, p. 27; Vermeeylen, op. cit., p. 24; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 3.
70. Cf. A.B. Davidson, op. cit., p. xlviii; Dhorme, op. cit., pp. ci-cii; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 276; Freehof, op. cit., p. 204; Nichols, op. cit., p. 106; Terrien, Job, pp. 26-27, and "Book of Job," Interpreter's Bible, 3, p. 890.

Lods comments that "his method calls to mind completely that of the scholastics."⁷¹ Habel deems it fitting to the role of Elihu: the quotation of speeches by a defendant or a witness is appropriate court procedure.⁷² To Gordis, the fact that Elihu cites arguments from the preceding speeches, far from being an argument against his authenticity, is a point in his favour. The use of quotations is characteristic of Biblical and Semitic rhetoric, especially common in Wisdom literature and typical of Job's style. Gordis notes that in each of Job's concluding addresses at the end of the first and second cycles in the Dialogue, and in the brief response after God's second speech (42:2-6), he employs this literary device. That Elihu does the same indicates, therefore, that chapters 32-37 emanate from the same author.⁷³ The majority of scholars, however, regard Elihu's use of quotations as evidence against the genuineness of this section. The impression is created, not of an actual participant in the debate, but of one who has studied the entire poetic Dialogue.

5. Significant differences exist between the Elihu pericope and the rest of the book of Job regarding the use of divine names.⁷⁴

71. Lods, op. cit., p. 677.

72. Habel, op. cit., p. 94.

73. Gordis, BGAM, p. 107, and BOJ, p. 548.

74. Cf. inter alia, Fohrer, op. cit., p. 41; König, op. cit., p. 466; Staples, op. cit., pp. 13, 19; de Wilde, op. cit., pp. 3-4; and see especially Gray in S.R. Driver and G.B. Gray, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job together with a New Translation (The International Critical Commentary; Edinburgh, 1921), p. xliiff.

Specifically, Elihu exhibits a decided preference for לֹא ,⁷⁵ whereas this term, together with אֱלֹהִים and יְדֵי , occurs with relatively equal frequency in the Dialogue. The frequency of occurrence of the various names has been tabulated by Driver-Gray,⁷⁶ and their statistics confirm this judgment: in the Elihu section, the term לֹא occurs nineteen times, while the names אֱלֹהִים and יְדֵי are each attested six times. In the remainder of the book, the figures are 36, 35 and 25 occurrences respectively.

It may be argued, however, that a straightforward numerical count fails to take into consideration the fact that the principle governing the usage of the divine names in the poetic book differs from that of the prose sections. Snaithe, accordingly, surveys chapters 3-41, concentrating on instances where, in each line of a couplet, one divine name occurs in parallelism with another.⁷⁷ The aim of this investigation, focusing on the three names common to the poetic sections of the book,⁷⁸ is to table their frequency on the basis of

75. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. xlii, finds a similar preference for the divine name לֹא in the speeches of Bildad: לֹא occurs six times while the occurrences of יְדֵי and אֱלֹהִים are two and nil respectively. In the view of Zerafa, op. cit., p. 43, Bildad's preference for the divine name לֹא militates against the assumption that a similar preference in the Elihu discourse indicates diversity of authorship. But Gray asserts that the occurrences in Bildad's speeches are insufficient to allow comparison.

76. Driver-Gray, pp. xxxv, xlii.

77. Snaithe, op. cit., pp. 78-79. Cf. Dhorme, op. cit., pp. lxxv-lxxii.

78. The occurrences of אֱלֹהִים are too few to be of any significance (see the table of Driver-Gray, p. xxxv). The term יְדֵי , absent from the Elihu speeches, is found only once in the Dialogue (12:9).

(1) first choice and (2) second choice. In this manner the "unconscious preference" of the writer becomes apparent.

His summary⁷⁹ follows:

	לך		ה'לך		יְיָ	
	1st	2d	1st	2d	1st	2d
Elihu speeches	19	0	6	0	2	4
Remaining poetic chapters	33	2	29	5	14	11

Thus, the usual first choice throughout the entire poetic book is either לך or ה'לך. However, לך is favoured by a ratio of more than three to one over ה'לך in the speeches of Elihu, while occurrences are relatively evenly distributed in the remainder of the book. This, and a similar ratio of nine to three in favour of לך in the miscellaneous chapters 22-28, constitute the only notable differentiations in the otherwise fairly equal distribution of divine names.⁸⁰ In addition, whereas Driver-Gray argue that "the relative infrequency of יְיָ in Elihu's speeches is but another side of a difference between those speeches and the rest of the book,"⁸¹ the table drawn up by Snaithe shows that יְיָ is the characteristic second choice throughout the whole of the poetic book.⁸² Therefore, Snaithe,

79. Snaithe, op. cit., p. 79.

80. Ibid., n. 20. Cf. Dhorme, op. cit., p. lxix.

81. Driver-Gray, p. xliii.

82. Snaithe, op. cit., p. 79, n. 20. Cf. Dhorme, op. cit., p. xcvi: "in the whole of the poetic book (this includes the speeches of Elihu) the use of the divine names conforms to the same laws." Cf. also Rowley, op. cit., p. 24.

defending the genuineness of the Elihu discourse, concludes that an examination of the different terms for God does not indicate plurality of authorship.⁸³ Dhorme, however, who regards the Elihu section as the work of a later writer, states that the use of the various divine names provides no evidence either in support of, or against, the originality of these speeches.⁸⁴ Nevertheless, it seems wise to bear in mind the observation of Gray that "naturally enough even in the Dialogue the relative frequency of the three terms differs in different groups of cc.; but never does the difference in any six consecutive cc. equal that found in the six cc. of Elihu's speech."⁸⁵

6. Elihu prefers the shorter form of the first person singular personal pronoun.⁸⁶

In his choice of the first person singular personal pronoun, Elihu exhibits a distinct propensity for the form

אֲנִי in lieu of the longer אֲנִי־אֵל. The distribution of the two terms, as tabulated by Driver-Gray, may be summarised as follows: in the Dialogue אֲנִי is attested fifteen times, אֲנִי־אֵל eleven times; in the Elihu pericope, אֲנִי occurs

83. Snaithe, op. cit., p. 81.

84. Dhorme, op. cit., pp. ciii-civ. Cf. Kuhl, op. cit., p. 259.

85. Driver-Gray, p. xlii, including table.

86. Cf. Dhorme, op. cit., p. civ; Gordis, BGAM, p. 106; Kissane, op. cit., p. xl; König, op. cit., p. 466; Staples, op. cit., pp. 13, 19; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 4.

nine times and **וַיִּשְׁמַע** twice. Owing to textual uncertainties, the ratio is reduced to 14:9 in the Dialogue and 8:2 in chapters 32-37.⁸⁷ The relatively greater frequency of **וַיִּשְׁמַע** in the speeches of Elihu has been cited as an argument against their authenticity, for the precedence of the shorter form derives from a later stage in the development of the Hebrew language. A detailed analysis of the usage⁸⁸ indicates that the two forms are comparatively interchangeable in the Dialogue, whereas in the Elihu section **וַיִּשְׁמַע** is the characteristic preference of the author. Gray concludes that at least some of the difference between the Dialogue and the Elihu speeches may be "reasonably attributed" to diversity of authorship and a later date of composition of the Elihu chapters. Dhorme agrees: "Here then we have a material index suggesting a later date for the speeches of Elihu by contrast with the poetic dialogue."⁸⁹ In contrast, Kissane attaches little importance to Elihu's choice of the shorter form **וַיִּשְׁמַע**.⁹⁰ But Snaithe, after examining the occurrence of the two terms on the basis of first and second choices, decides that, on the

87. Driver-Gray, pp. xliii-xliv. **וַיִּשְׁמַע** occurs in 40:14 and **וַיִּשְׁמַע** in 42:4. In addition, **וַיִּשְׁמַע** occurs four times in the Prologue, while **וַיִּשְׁמַע** is entirely absent. Driver-Gray attach little importance to these figures; the usages in 40:14 and 42:4 are "too slight," and the four occurrences in the Prologue are repetitious of the same phrase. *Ibid.*, p. xliv.

88. *Ibid.*

89. Dhorme, *op. cit.*, p. civ.

90. Kissane, *op. cit.*, p. xl.

whole, the usage of the two pronouns is evenly distributed between the Elihu pericope and the other sections of the book, except in Job's soliloquies (chapters 3, 29-31).⁹¹

7. Elihu employs fewer archaic forms of prepositions.⁹²

According to Gray, Elihu exhibits distinctly less recourse than the rest of the book to certain rarer forms of particles and prepositions: viz., עַלִּי ; עַדִּי ; אֶלַי ; בְּצִי ;
 יְצִי ; לְצִי ; בְּנִי ; בְּלִי ; לְצִי ; עַלִּיבִי .

Dhorme advises caution with regard to Gray's statistics, claiming that the Elihu portion is of insufficient length in comparison to the Dialogue to serve as the basis for conclusive arguments.⁹³ Snaithe shows that a comparison of archaic forms and ordinary forms of prepositions yields proportions "as nearly equal as any reasonable person could expect," and thus leads to no conclusion as to separate authorship. The style of the author, he points out, is essentially literary; the poet deliberately uses archaic forms not merely in the Elihu speeches but in the whole book: these are part of his

91. Snaithe, op. cit., pp. 81-82, including table. Cf. Zerafa, op. cit., p. 43.

92. See especially Driver-Gray, pp. xlv-xlv, including table. Cf. Fohrer, op. cit., p. 41; König, op. cit., pp. 466-67; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 4. Cf. also Gordis, BGAM, pp. 106, 333, nn. 11, 12.

93. Dhorme, op. cit., p. civ. Cf. Kuhl, op. cit., p. 259: "only a limited importance" may be attached to the different usage of particles and prepositions in the Elihu chapters.

"cultivated archaic literary style."⁹⁴ Nonetheless, Staples concludes, on the basis of a comprehensive statistical analysis of prepositions and particles in chapters 32-37, as compared with the other sections of the book, that the Elihu speeches and the Dialogue emanate from different authors.⁹⁵

8. The language of the Elihu speeches is more Aramaic than that in the rest of the book.⁹⁶

Kautzsch states that, of 32 Aramaic words in the book of Job, 13 are found in Elihu's discourse; the proportion of occurrences is 84 and 31 respectively.⁹⁷ These statistics are questioned by Nöldeke, and in some respects modified by Gray.⁹⁸ The opinion of Steuernagel is that the Elihu

94. Snaithe, op. cit., p. 76, nn. 16, 17; see also table, p. 77, and contrast with Gray's.

95. Staples, op. cit., pp. 13-14, 20-22.

96. Barton, op. cit., p. 25; A.B. Davidson, op. cit., p. xlix; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 276; Dillon, op. cit., p. 56; Driver, LOT, p. 429; Freehof, op. cit., pp. 203-204; Gross, op. cit., p. 8; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 83; König, op. cit., p. 467; Lefèvre, op. cit., col. 1080; Lods, op. cit., p. 677; R.A.F. MacKenzie, "Job," The Jerome Biblical Commentary, ed. Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Roland E. Murphy (London, 1969), vol. 1, p. 528; Meinhold, op. cit., p. 324; Nichols, op. cit., pp. 105-06; Peake, op. cit., p. 24; Ranston, op. cit., p. 116; Staples, op. cit., p. 12; Strahan, op. cit., p. 24; Terrien, Job, p. 27, and "Book of Job," IB, 3, p. 890; Vermeylen, op. cit., p. 24; Weiser, op. cit., p. 217.

97. E. Kautzsch, Die Aramäismen im alten Testament (Halle am Salle, 1907), p. 101.

98. Th. Nöldeke, "Review of E. Kautzsch, Die Aramäismen im alten Testament (Halle, 1902)," Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, 57 (1907), pp. 412-20; Driver-Gray, pp. xlvi-xlvii.

chapters contain at least three times as many Aramaisms as one would expect on the basis of the other sections of the book.⁹⁹ Dennefeld finds 12 Aramaisms in the Elihu pericope as opposed to 26 elsewhere in the book.¹⁰⁰

Szczygiel, agreeing with this count, admits that the Elihu speeches exhibit a higher incidence of Aramaisms than the rest of the book.¹⁰¹ Posselt cites 11 Aramaisms in these speeches and 37 in the remainder of the poem; four are common, and thus the proportion is reduced to 7 and 33.¹⁰² Wright lists 11 and 31 Aramaisms respectively.¹⁰³

Gordis, in response to the prevailing critical interpretation of the Elihu chapters as a later interpolation, urges a reevaluation of the alleged Aramaisms in the Bible, since a fundamental error in methodology lies in the failure to distinguish the different divisions of Biblical Aramaic: (a) words erroneously identified as Aramaisms, that is, words deriving from the North West Semitic vocabulary but occurring only rarely in Hebrew as against frequent attestations in Aramaic; (b) Aramaic loan-words traceable to the influence of Syria during the period of the First Temple; (c) loan-words dating from that era in which Aramaic represented the dominant language in the Near East and became

99. Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 341.

100. Dennefeld, op. cit., p. 172.

101. Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 25. Cf. Steinmueller, op. cit., p. 167.

102. Posselt, op. cit., pp. 101-02. Cf. Peters, op. cit., p. 27.

103. See glossary in Wright, op. cit., pp. 217-38; the Aramaisms are marked with an obelisk.

the spoken language of the Jewish community. Nevertheless, Gordis, too, acknowledges the higher incidence of Aramaisms in the Elihu speeches in comparison with the poem as a whole.¹⁰⁴ An exhaustive study of Aramaisms in the Old Testament has led Wagner to the conclusion that approximately one-third of all Aramaic words and roots and one-fifth of all instances in the book of Job are to be found in chapters 32-37.¹⁰⁵

The conclusion of Snaithe is decidedly different. He argues that if a word conforms to the rules of consonant changes among languages, and if the root is attested in a language other than Aramaic, the word is therefore not an Aramaism. From this point of view he undertakes a detailed examination of the "so-called" Aramaisms in the book, the result of which is to discover "virtually no Aramaisms at all" in the Elihu speeches.¹⁰⁶ In similar vein, Guillaume declares that "there are no Aramaisms at all" in these speeches, and but one dubious instance in the rest of the book.¹⁰⁷

There is disagreement among scholars not only concerning

104. Gordis, BGAM, pp. 106, 334, and BOJ, p. 548. Cf. Dhorme, op. cit., p. cv.

105. Max Wagner, Die Lexikalischen und Grammatikalischen Aramaismen im Alttestamentlichen Hebräisch (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 96; Berlin, 1966), pp. 17ff., 139ff., 142, 145.

106. Snaithe, op. cit., pp. 83, 104-12.

107. A. Guillaume, "The Unity of the Book of Job," The Annual of Leeds University Oriental Society, 4 (1964), p. 27.

what constitutes an Aramaism and the number in the book, but also concerning the significance of the Aramaic element. Some critics place little emphasis on the Aramaic peculiarities of Elihu's discourse,¹⁰⁸ while others find no real distinction between the Aramaic content in it and in the Dialogue.¹⁰⁹ Still others suggest that the Aramaisms reflect the North West Semitic heritage of the material,¹¹⁰ or that when the book was written, Aramaic was beginning to replace Hebrew as the lingua franca.¹¹¹ Dhorme believes that the language of the book as a whole derives from the post-exilic period when Aramaic has penetrated into Israel to a very considerable extent.¹¹²

Moreover, some scholars claim that since Elihu is introduced (32:2) as of Aramaic descent, "the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram" (i.e., Aram? Cf. Genesis 22:21), the author has deliberately characterised him as such by the use of Aramaic words and idioms.¹¹³ But

108. Kuhl, op. cit., p. 259; Julius Ley, Das Buch Hiob (Halle am Salle, 1903), pp. 145-46.

109. Marshall, op. cit., pp. xviii-xix. Cf. Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 38-39, who remarks on the Aramaic colouring which characterises the entire book. Cf. also Peters, op. cit., p. 27; Schlottman, op. cit., p. 61.

110. Habel, op. cit., p. 94.

111. Kissane, op. cit., p. xl.

112. Dhorme, op. cit., p. clxxviii.

113. Cox, op. cit., p. 408. Cf. Francis I. Andersen, Job: An Introduction and Commentary (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries; Leicester, 1976), pp. 51-52; Cornely, op. cit., p. 58; R.K. Harrison, Introduction to the Old Testament (London, 1970), p. 1035; Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 38-39; Keil, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 498-99; Ley, op. cit., pp. 145-46; Möller, op. cit., p. 99.

Nichols dismisses this idea as "artificial and improbable";¹¹⁴ and Cheyne cannot agree that the Aramaisms indicate an artistic refinement on the part of the poet.¹¹⁵ Loisy makes the point that if the Aramaic component of the Elihu speeches is evidence of character portrayal by the author, the same feature should be discernible in the speeches of the friends, who also are not Israelites.¹¹⁶ Pope sums up: "No satisfactory explanation has yet been given for the strong Aramaic colouring of the language of Job."¹¹⁷

9. The language of the Elihu pericope differs from that of the other sections in the use of certain terms.¹¹⁸

In particular the following differences may be noted. In the Elihu speeches the concept "knowledge" is expressed by

- 114. Nichols, op. cit., p. 106.
- 115. Cheyne, Job and Solomon, p. 92. Cf. A.B. Davidson, op. cit., p. 50 (in Intro); Peake, op. cit., p. 24.
- 116. Loisy, op. cit., pp. 33-34.
- 117. Marvin H. Pope, Job: Introduction, Translation and Notes (The Anchor Bible, 15; 3d ed.; Garden City, N.Y., 1973), p. 50 (in Intro). On Aramaisms in the Elihu speeches, see further: Boelicke, op. cit., pp. 41-42; Karl Budde, Beiträge zur Kritik des Buches Hiob (Bonn, 1876), p. 140ff.; Posselt, op. cit., pp. 99-103; Johann Gustav Stickel, Das Buch Hiob, rhytmisch gegliedert und übersetzt, mit exegetischen und kritischen Bemerkungen (Leipzig, 1842), pp. 248-51; Wagner, op. cit., p. 142, and table, p. 145.
- 118. Dillmann, op. cit., pp. 275-76; Gray in Driver-Gray, pp. xli-xlii; Eichhorn, op. cit., p. 202; Georg Heinrich August von Ewald, Commentary on the Book of Job (London, 1882), p. 329; Edgar C.S. Gibson, The Book of Job (Westminster Commentaries; 2d ed.; London, 1905), p. xxvi; Hirzel, op. cit., pp. 198-99; Hitzig, op. cit., pp. xxxvi-xxxvii; Hölcher, op. cit., p. 83; Larcher, op. cit., p. 12; Lindblom, op. cit., p. 82; Meinhold, op. cit., p. 324; Nichols, op. cit., p. 106; Renan,

the words עָלַם (32:6, 10, 17; 36:3, 4 [הָעָלַם]; 37:16) and תַּעֲלֹם (33:3; 34:35; 35:16; 36:12). Only the latter term, however, occurs in other portions of the book (10:7; 13:2; 15:2; 21:22; 38:2; 42:3). לַחֲמֹךְ, "to wait for," occurs in the Piel in the earlier sections (6:11; 14:14; 29:21, 23; 30:26) but only in the Hiphil in chapters 32-37 (32:11, 16). In the Elihu speeches, the signification "to justify" is expressed by the Piel of יָצַח (33:32), in contrast to the Hiphil of the poetic discussion (27:5). הָלַץ, "injustice, unrighteousness, wrong," occurs both in the Dialogue and in the Elihu pericope (5:16; 6:29, 30; 11:14; 13:7; 15:16; 22:23; 24:20; 27:4; cf. 36:23), whereas לָחַץ is confined exclusively to the latter section (34:10, 32). While "life" is expressed in the Dialogue by חַיָּה (3:20; 7:7; 9:21; 10:1, 12; 24:22; cf. 33:30), Elihu prefers the term חַיָּה (33:18, 20, 22, 28; 36:14; cf. 38:39). Elihu also employs נַעֲרָה, "youth, early life," (33:25; 36:14) in place of נַעֲרָה (13:26; 31:18), and אִישׁ אֱמֻנָה, "(man of) integrity," (36:4; 37:16; cf. 12:4) instead of אֱמֻנָה, (1:1, 8; 2:3; 8:20; 9:20, 21, 22). In addition, Elihu prefers the unusual קָדַשׁ, "pure," (33:9) in lieu of the more frequent קָדַשׁ (11:4). Noteworthy, too, is Elihu's use of the

op. cit., p. lii; Staples, op. cit., pp. 19-24; Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 341; Terrien, Job, p. 27; Weiser, op. cit., p. 217; de Wilde, op. cit., pp. 3-4. Cf. also Sellin, op. cit., p. 214, who concludes differently that the Elihu speeches were composed by the original author, but inserted at a later date into the book.

expression אֲנָשֵׁי , "the men of" (34:8, 10, 34, 36) rather than אֲנָשִׁים (11:11; 19:19; 22:15; 31:31). Finally, the verb הִנֵּה is not attested in the Elihu pericope, as against 48 occurrences in the other sections of the book.¹¹⁹

Some scholars emphasize the harmony between the language of Elihu and the rest of the poem.¹²⁰ Gordis takes an intermediate position: Elihu's language is neither identical, nor is it sufficiently different to indicate diverse authorship. Regarding the linguistic peculiarities of the Elihu speeches, he advises caution, for the variations are "relative rather than absolute. It is principally the proportions that have shifted, not the usage any literary composition, particularly a short one, may turn up words lacking in

119. The language of the Elihu pericope has been the subject of detailed examination in: Boelicke, op. cit., pp. 41-57; Budde, Beiträge, p. 65ff. and especially p. 92ff.; Posselt, op. cit., pp. 67-111; Staples, op. cit., pp. 19-24. On additional peculiarities of speech in these chapters, see: Dhorme, op. cit., pp. civ-cv; Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 28, 36-37; König, op. cit., pp. 466-68; Peters, op. cit., p. 29; Terrien, Job, p. 27, and "Book of Job," Interpreter's Bible, vol. 3, pp. 890-91; N.H. Tur-Sinai, The Book of Job: A New Commentary (Jerusalem, 1957), pp. 519-20; and the text-critical notes of Fohrer and Nichols. See also Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., pp. 125-37; and the glossary in Wright, op. cit., pp. 217-38, in which words peculiar to the book of Job are identified with a section mark.

120. Cf. Boelicke, op. cit., pp. 41-57; Budde, Beiträge, pp. 92-123; Guillaume, op. cit., pp. 26-46; Posselt, op. cit., pp. 67-111. Posselt, pp. 82-83, believes the general harmony between the language of the Elihu speeches and that of the remainder of the book indicates only the possibility of unity of authorship. Cf. also Dennefeld, op. cit., p. 172; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 28; Keil, op. cit., pp. 498-99; Peters, op. cit., p. 26; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 26.

another composition by the same author."¹²¹ Likewise, Zerafa stresses that the apparent linguistic peculiarities are merely "minor variations which can be found in any literary composition."¹²²

The occurrences of hapax legomena throughout the book of Job have been investigated by Snaithe, who has found that, as in the previous categories, the Elihu pericope does not differ notably from the other sections.¹²³ Budde, also, after a comprehensive examination, shows in his Beiträge¹²⁴ (1876) that linguistic peculiarities are not present in the Elihu speeches to the extent claimed by some commentators. The differences noted he explains as follows: (1) with the possible exceptions of chapters 29, 31, and 38-39, the section comprising chapters 24-41 is less formally complete than the rest of the poem; circumstances have prevented the poet from adding the necessary refinements;¹²⁵ (2) as the discourses of each of the speakers in the Dialogue are characterised by peculiarities of expression, so Elihu, too, is distinguished;¹²⁶ (3) the purpose of Elihu's discourse

121. Gordis, BOJ, p. 548, and BGAM, p. 107.

122. Zerafa, op. cit., pp. 45-46. Cf. Ley, op. cit., pp. 145-46, who comments that no significance should be placed upon isolated expressions.

123. Snaithe, op. cit., pp. 83-85, including table.

124. Budde, Beiträge, p. 65ff.

125. Ibid., pp. 158-59. Cf. Andersen, op. cit., pp. 51-52; Wildeboer, op. cit., pp. 383-84.

126. Budde, Beiträge, pp. 152-53. Cf. Beeby, op. cit., pp. 49-50; S. Davidson, Text of the Old Testament,

allows less opportunity for the poet to display his literary artistry.¹²⁷

Subsequently, however, Budde's view modified. In his commentary on Job, first published in 1896, he declares:

... der Eindruck immer stärker, dass dennoch ein grosser Unterschied zwischen der Redeweise Elihu's und des Dichters des Buches übrig bleibe.¹²⁸

But he still supports the authenticity of the Elihu pericope, attributing the discrepancy between the two sections of the book to corruption of the text, in particular to interpolation. The following passages he regards as interpolated: 32:2-5, 11-12, 15-17; 33:4, 15b, 33; 34:9, 10a, 25-28, 29c; 35:4; 36:13-14, 17, 25-26, 29-30; 37:13, 15-16.¹²⁹ Several other scholars ascribe the differences in language and style to a deliberate archaising by the poet in order to differentiate Elihu, the representative of a younger generation, from Job and his older friends who employ the language of an earlier date.¹³⁰

vol. 2, pp. 723-24; Dennefeld, op. cit., p. 173; Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 12f., 28; Junker, op. cit., p. 76; Kissane, op. cit., p. xl; Peters, op. cit., p. 26; Posselt, op. cit., p. 99; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 61; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 26.

127. Budde, Beiträge, p. 153. Cf. Beeby, op. cit., pp. 48-49.

128. Budde, Buch Hiob, pp. xix-xx.

129. Ibid., p. 187ff. Cf. Margoliouth, op. cit., p. 1721, who believes that the occasional obscurity and apparent incoherence of Elihu's discourse may be attributable to textual corruptions.

130. Kissane, op. cit., p. xl. Cf. Loisy, op. cit., p. 42; Habel, op. cit., p. 94.

The idea of Budde and others that Elihu's peculiar expressions result from the poet's desire to individualise the various characters in the book is rejected by a number of authors. König terms it "eine unbegründbare Annahme, also eine blosse Voraussetzung,"¹³¹ and S. Davidson observes that "poetry of a high antiquity does not know fine shades of characters. It paints men and life in broad outline. To make each person speak in a particular style is a token of advanced art."¹³²

Also, the view that the language of Elihu is not significantly different from that of the Dialogue is strongly contested. A.B. Davidson points out:

In Elihu's speeches there are not only unknown words, there is an unknown use of known words, as well as a manner of joining familiar words together to form phrases which have no parallel - in short, the author speaks a language which in some parts is not quite that of any other Old Testament writer.¹³³

Driver argues¹³⁴ that, while commentators at times may have exaggerated the linguistic peculiarities of the Elihu pericope, nevertheless these are:

131. König, op. cit., p. 467. Cf. Ewald, op. cit., p. 329; Fohrer, op. cit., p. 41.

132. S. Davidson, Introduction to the Old Testament, vol. 2, pp. 208-09. Cf. Renan, op. cit., p. liii.

133. A.B. Davidson, op. cit., p. xlix.

134. Driver, LOT, p. 429.

not aggregated in other parts of the Book as they are here; and the impression which the reader derives from a perusal of the entire group of speeches is unmistakably different from that which any other six chapters of the Book leave upon him.

Conclusion

In addition to examining the language of the Elihu speeches, it is necessary to consider the overall impression on the reader of their style. A number of critics refer to the loss in them of the splendid artistry which characterises the Dialogue. By comparison, the Elihu discourse is strained, discursive, prosaic and bombastic. The rhythm, verve and colour of the Dialogue are notably lacking. The Elihu poet is manifestly inferior to the poet of the earlier speeches.¹³⁵

Thus, Fried. Delitzsch writes that there is "zwischen dem Gedichte Iob und den Elihu-Reden nach Geist wie Form der nämliche Unterschied wie zwischen dem eines Dichters ersten und fünften Grades."¹³⁶ And Driver states that the style of

135. Cf. Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 455; Ball, op. cit., p. 5; Barton, op. cit., p. 25; Cheyne, "Job," Encyclopaedia Biblica, vol. 2, col. 2485; A.B. Davidson, op. cit., p. xlix; S. Davidson, Introduction to the Old Testament, vol. 2, pp. 207-09; Dillman, op. cit., pp. 275-76; Ewald, op. cit., p. 328; Fichtner, op. cit., p. 54; Freehof, op. cit., pp. 203-04; Hitzig, op. cit., p. xxxvi; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 83; Hoonacker, op. cit., p. 163; Kuenen, op. cit., p. 143; Kuhl, op. cit., pp. 259-260; Larcher, op. cit., p. 12; Lefèvre, op. cit., vol. 4, col. 1080; Ley, op. cit., p. 146; Lindblom, op. cit., p. 82; Lods, op. cit., p. 677; McFadyen, op. cit., p. 244; Nichols, op. cit., p. 106; Strack, op. cit., p. 133; Stuhlmann, op. cit., p. 42; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 3. For an opposing view, see Steuernagel, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 340.

136. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 95.

Elihu is "prolix, laboured, and sometimes tautologous: the power and brilliancy which are so conspicuous in the poem generally are sensibly missing."¹³⁷ Battenwieser labels the style "pompous and diffuse, with much empty repetition"; thirty verses are "taken up with a tiresome and vainglorious introduction."¹³⁸ Renan's opinion is:

Le style d'Elihou est froid, lourd, prétentieux
En passant des paraboles de Job au discours d'Elihou, il se sent transporté brusquement d'un monde à un autre. Ici ... nous sommes en présence d'un des rares morceaux de la littérature hébraïque qu'on peut, du moins pour certaines parties, taxer de faiblesse.¹³⁹

Ley describes "der zur Prosa sich neigenden Ausdrucksweise, die jedoch nichtsdestoweniger dunkel und vieldeutig erscheint."¹⁴⁰ Neiman finds in the Elihu speeches an "air and

137. Driver, LOT, p. 429. Cf. Fohrer, op. cit., p. 41: "weitschweifige und monotone"; MacKenzie, "Job," Jerome Biblical Commentary, vol. 1, p. 528: "severely didactic, argumentative, and somewhat repetitious"; Strahan, op. cit., p. 24: "Though not without passages of considerable beauty, they [the Elihu speeches] are as a whole prolix, rambling, laboured, and involved."
138. Moses Battenwieser, The Book of Job (London, 1922), p. 85. Cf. Pope, op. cit., p. xxvii: "diffuse and pretentious"; Ranston, op. cit., p. 116: "diffuse, tedious, strained, less spontaneous and brilliant."
139. Renan, op. cit., pp. liv-lv.
140. Ley, op. cit., p. 146. Cf. A.B. Davidson, op. cit., p. xlix: the Elihu speeches are "frequently very obscure; and not seldom descend almost to the level of prose"; Peake, op. cit., p. 23: "diffuse and tedious, less spontaneous, and often very obscure"; de Wette, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 558: "far-fetched, dull, tedious and obscure."

tone which add a quality of unpleasantness."¹⁴¹ Dillon pronounces the style "artificial, vague, rambling, prosaic," and decides that Elihu is the work of "some second-rate writer and first-class theologian."¹⁴²

A different view is expressed by Robinson, who finds the style "lofty and sustained, having many of the qualities of the best Hebrew poetry." Nonetheless, he admits that the reader may well find the Elihu pericope not equal to the earlier sections of the book.¹⁴³ Bruce, however, concludes that it is on a par with the speeches of the friends and in some respects surpasses their efforts.¹⁴⁴ McFadyen does not concur, regarding Elihu as "imitative rather than creative."¹⁴⁵

Scholars who acknowledge the inferior style of the Elihu speeches, but who still defend their authenticity, explain variously the differences between these speeches and the remainder of the book. One explanation is that expressed by

141. David Neiman, The Book of Job (Jerusalem, 1972), p. 107.

142. Dillon, op. cit., pp. 56-57. Cf. Loisy, op. cit., p. 32: "lâche, vague et diffus"; Weiser, op. cit., p. 217: "weitschweifige Eintönigkeit."

143. Theodore H. Robinson, The Poetry of the Old Testament (London, 1947), p. 76. Cf. D.N. Freedman, "Orthographic Peculiarities in the Book of Job," Eretz-Israel, 9 (1969), p. 44, citing a letter from W.F. Albright who writes that the Elihu section "shares the characteristics of the rest of the book without equalling the latter in literary skill."

144. W.S. Bruce, The Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament (London, 1928), p. 23. Cf. Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 33-34, who deems the Elihu speeches superior, in terms of beauty and expressiveness, to all other parts of the book except the Divine discourse.

145. McFadyen, op. cit., p. 244.

Cox: the differing style is intended by the author to differentiate the character of Elihu from that of the other speakers.¹⁴⁶ Similarly, Habel comments on the appropriateness of the style of Elihu's discourse to his role as a self-appointed legal official and his characterisation as a brash, verbose youth.¹⁴⁷ A second explanation is that the author affects an inferior style in the Elihu section for conceptual or structural reasons. Posselt claims that, while the problem of the book is solved by Elihu's arguments, the poet has reserved his greatest art for the Divine speeches and has intentionally made chapters 32-37 less poetic, in order to prevent the most important role from devolving upon Elihu.¹⁴⁸ Briggs, too, considers the Elihu speeches, with their obscurity and prolixity, their laboured figures and strained thought, to be a "literary foil" interposed by the author between the soliloquy of Job and the discourse of God.¹⁴⁹

146. Cox, op. cit., pp. 408-09. Cf. Dhorme, op. cit., p. ciii, who writes that the same author may well have sought to distinguish Elihu with a style different from the other speakers: "Otherwise we should be condemning to monotony the most skilful and subtle artist."

147. Habel, op. cit., p. 94. Contrast Loisy, op. cit., p. 34, who rejects the view that the author by an altered style seeks to endow the speakers with various character traits: the style does not change; it is the tone which differs.

148. Posselt, op. cit., pp. 109-11. Cf. Andersen, op. cit., p. 51; Beeby, op. cit., pp. 48-49; Peters, op. cit., p. 25; Prat, op. cit., col. 1568.

149. C.A. Briggs, "Review of A.B. Davidson, The Book of Job (The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges; Cambridge, 1884)," The Presbyterian Review, 6 (1885) p. 353. Cf. Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 16n.

Some commentators, however, prefer to attribute the inferior style of the Elihu chapters to the greater degree of textual corruption suffered by this part of the poem,¹⁵⁰ or to its having been written in a later period of the poet's life. Cornill, for example, who finds the second half of the book generally inferior to the first, suggests that the author has not been able to polish his work.¹⁵¹ Gordis insists that the variations in style are "entirely explicable" if it is assumed that chapters 32-37 emanate from the same author at a later stage of life; the history of literature presents many instances in which an author's style undergoes considerable change over the years: Shakespeare's later plays, James Joyce's last novel, Goethe's Faust.¹⁵² Cheyne, however, declares that assuming later authorship by the original poet is "equivalent to assigning these speeches to a different writer": "my own respect for the poet of Job will not allow me to believe that his taste had so much declined as to insert this inferior poem into his masterpiece."¹⁵³

150. Budde, Buch Hiob, pp. xix-xx; Gordis, BGAM, pp. 107-08, and BOJ, p. 547; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 4.

151. Cornill, op. cit., p. 431. Cf. Budde, Beiträge, pp. 158-59; Peters, op. cit., p. 25.

152. Gordis, BGAM, pp. 110-11, and BOJ, pp. 548-50. Cf. Freedman, op. cit., p. 44, quoting from Albright's letter; Peters, op. cit., p. 25.

153. Cheyne, Job and Solomon, p. 92.

In summary, it is acknowledged that efforts by commentators to defend the authenticity of the Elihu speeches have produced some interesting theories. In the end, however, these appear for the most part a straining after unity and coherence. Budde, for example, is not convincing when he argues that the originality of chapters 32-37 becomes apparent following the deletion of interpolations and corrupt passages, or when he claims that a later writer would hardly have failed to conceal evidence of interpolation.¹⁵⁴ Nor is it entirely plausible to suggest, as Posselt and others have done, that the poet, for one reason or another, has made a studied attempt at an inferior style in the Elihu pericope.

The Elihu chapters, besides lacking connection with the rest of the book, present generally admitted, and significant, differences in language and style, from which it is reasonable to infer different authorship. Although the objections to the authenticity of the Elihu section may be adjudged inconclusive when considered individually, what Nichols calls the "cumulative force of the various arguments,"¹⁵⁵ together with the thorough-going inferiority of the section, has persuaded this writer that it is an adventitious element within the book. The comment of Franz Delitzsch is relevant: "... if these speeches and the other parts of the

154. Budde, Buch Hiob, pp. xvii, xix-xx.

155. Nichols, op. cit., p. 109.

book are said to have been written by one poet, there is an end to all critical judgment in such questions generally."¹⁵⁶

156. Franz Delitzsch, Biblical Commentary on the Book of Job (Edinburgh, 1869), vol. 2, p. 244. Italics in the original.

CHAPTER II

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE ELIHU SPEECHES: A SURVEY

This chapter will include: firstly, a brief survey of pre-critical Jewish and Christian literature pertaining to the Elihu speeches; secondly, a survey of modern, that is, post-Enlightenment, criticism of the speeches; and thirdly, a survey of recent approaches which interpret the book of Job from a holistic point of view.

I

A survey of Jewish and Christian literature prior to the advent of critical Biblical scholarship in the period of the Enlightenment reveals conflicting interpretations of the figure of Elihu in the book of Job.

A. Jewish Exegesis

In the Qumran Targum, the conception of Job as rebel is modified considerably, as indicated by variants from MT which serve to cast aspersions on the three friends and Elihu. Thus, MT: "Beware that you do not say: 'We have found wisdom; God will drive him away, not man'" (32:13) is rendered in the Targum (wherein the verse is preserved only in fragmented form) as: "Perhaps you will say (or, So that you do not say): '[We have found wisdom], but God condemns us (declares us

guilty) and not a m[an]'.¹ In Midrash Rabbah, Rabbi Judah Ha-nasi declares that the words of Job affirm, with greater precision and clarity than the ambiguous discourses of Elihu, the essence of God's greatness as beyond human comprehension (Exodus Rabbah 34:1).²

The Babylonian Talmud includes Elihu with the seven prophets of the Gentiles: Balaam, his father, Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, and Elihu (Baba Bathra 15b), an apparent indication that Elihu, as well as Job and the three friends, was a heathen prophet. It is later maintained, however, that the seven prophets were in fact Israelites who "addressed themselves primarily to the heathen."³ In the Jerusalem Talmud, Rabbi Akiba explicitly identifies Elihu with the heathen prophet Balaam, the enemy of Israel (Jerusalem Sotah 5:20d: "Elihu is Balaam the son of Barachel"),⁴ whereas Rabbi Eleazar contends that Elihu is to be identified with Isaac because of his name Barachel.⁵

In the Testament of Job, an apocryphal work probably

1. Cf. Le Targum de Job de la Grotte XI de Qumrân, éd. et traduit par J. van der Ploeg et A. van der Woude, avec la collaboration de B. Jongeling (Leiden, 1971), pp. 52-53; also The Targum to Job from Qumran Cave XI, ed. M. Sokoloff (Ramat-Gan, 1974), p. 69. Cf. also B. Zuckerman, "Job, Book of," IDBS, p. 480.
2. Cf. Midrash Rabbah, ed. H. Freedman and M. Simon (London, 1939), vol. 3: Exodus, trans. S.M. Lehrman, p. 425.
3. Cf. The Babylonian Talmud, ed. I. Epstein (London, 1935), vol. 21, pt. 1, trans. M. Simon, pp. 74-75.
4. Cf. The Talmud of the Land of Israel, vol. 27: Sotah, trans. J. Neusner (Chicago, 1984), p. 160.
5. Ibid., p. 161.

composed during the first century B.C.E. or C.E., Elihu is represented as imbued with the spirit of Satan, and is subsequently declared by God to be a beast, not a man. Following the appearance of God, Elihu ("the only evil one"), in contrast to the three friends, is not pardoned but is cast into Sheol.⁶

In contrast to such predominantly negative judgments, however, mediaeval Jewish exegetes generally attribute to Elihu a significant role in the resolution of Job's dilemma.⁷ In the opinion of Abraham ibn Ezra (1092-1167), Job has become a rebel, and it is the function of Elihu to prepare the way for his conversion by instructing the rebellious sceptic in the mysterious essence of the divine providence, both in nature and in the human sphere. In ibn Ezra's view, man must endure suffering in silence.⁸ Conversely, Rashi (R. Solomon ben Isaac, 1040-1105) interprets the figure of Job not as a rebel but as imperfectly pious. According to Rashi, a corrective to Job's imperfections is achieved, in part, by Elihu's emphasis on man's insignificance in the cosmos.⁹

6. Cf. "Testament of Job," trans. R.P. Spittler, in The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, vol. 1, ed. J.H. Charlesworth (Garden City, N.Y., 1983), pp. 860ff. Cf. also K. Kohler, "Job, Testament of," JE, 7, p. 201.

7. Cf. the survey of extra-Talmudic Jewish literature from the Testament of Job to approximately 1600 C.E. in N.N. Glatzer, "The Book of Job and Its Interpreters," in Biblical Motifs: Origins and Transformations, ed. A. Altmann (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), pp. 197-220.

8. Ibid., p. 204.

9. Ibid., pp. 201-02.

Maimonides (1135-1204) refers to the speeches of Elihu as "a profound and wonderful discourse," and emphasises in particular the concept of angelic intercession as the distinctive contribution of Elihu. In addition, Elihu's discourse on the observation of nature serves to impress on human minds the essential distinction between productions of human handicraft and works of nature which have been brought into existence by God. Much less therefore is God's rule of the universe to be compared with human rule. Thus, the discourse of Elihu prepares Job for the revelation of God in chapters 38ff.¹⁰

In the view of Gersonides (R. Levi ben Gerson, 1288-1344), the speeches of Elihu are instrumental in resolving Job's dilemma. According to Elihu, Job's sin consists in negating the value of man's adherence to the prescribed ways of God, viz., the divinely established order in the universe which reflects God's justice, equity, goodness and grace. Thus, God cannot be regarded as ineffectual in the dispensation of "good to the good and evil to the evil." Consequently, Elihu justifies Job's suffering as an act of divine providence designed to purge his tendency toward rebellion.¹¹

According to Nahmanides (Moses ben Nahman, 1194-1270?), Elihu convinces Job that the concept of the undeserved

10. Cf. Moses Maimonides, The Guide for the Perplexed, trans. M. Friedlander (London, 1904), pp. 302f.; cf. also Glatzer, op. cit., pp. 211-13.

11. Cf. Glatzer, op. cit., p. 214.

suffering of the righteous cannot be upheld, as Satan exercises no dominion over the soul of human beings (commentary on 2:6).¹² Saadya Gaon (882-942) expresses the view that, in contrast to the three friends, only Elihu correctly interprets Job's suffering as a test and examination of faith. Saadya considers the three discourses of Elihu (chapters 32-35) to be the answer to the three speeches of Job.¹³

The Zohar (the great classical exposition of Kabbalistic mysticism which was compiled in its present form in the Middle Ages, but which includes much older elements) represents Elihu as a descendant of Abraham, and also as a priest and descendant of the prophet Ezekiel, one whose exemplary conduct has earned the honourable designation "man" (Adam; cf. Ezek. 2:1) (Zohar, IV, 166a-166b).¹⁴ In the Zoharic tradition, Elihu becomes the spokesman for the redemptive character of suffering: in a commentary on Job 34:10-11, R. Hiya emphasises divine justice and mercy in the government of the world and declares that the suffering of the righteous is evidence of God's love: "He crushes his body in order to give more power to his soul, so that He may draw him nearer in love." (Zohar, II, 180a-180b).¹⁵

12. Ibid., pp. 205-06.

13. Ibid., p. 210.

14. Cf. Zohar (London, 1934), vol. 4, trans. M. Simon and P. Levertoff, pp. 73f.

15. Ibid., vol. 2, trans. H. Sperling and M. Simon, p. 190.

B. Christian Exegesis

Whereas Augustine (354-430) refers to the language of Elihu as being "as wise as it was modest,"¹⁶ the heretical Theodore of Mopsuestia (c. 350-428), whose opinions concerning Job were cited against him, considers the speeches of Elihu to be more offensive than those of the three friends.¹⁷ Gregory the Great (?540-604) dismisses the Elihu chapters as being of little importance: "in his person is represented a class of teachers, who are faithful, but yet arrogant."¹⁸ Gregory regards Elihu as "a type, who in what he says sets himself up beyond measure, through the sin of pride."¹⁹

Jerome (c. 342-420) and Bede (the Venerable Bede, ?673-735) agree with the Talmudic (Jerusalem) tradition which identifies Elihu with the false prophet Balaam.²⁰ Bede considers Elihu to be a representative of the foes of the Church of Christ, which failed to recognise, and persecuted, the servant of God.²¹

16. Cf. G.G. Bradley, Lectures on the Book of Job (Oxford, 1887), p. 289.

17. Cf. Nichols, op. cit., p. 98.

18. Cf. Gregory the Great, Morals on the Book of Job (Oxford, 1847), vol. 3, p. 5.

19. Ibid., p. 9.

20. Cf. Nichols, op. cit., p. 98; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 238; Bradley, op. cit., p. 289.

21. Cf. Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 238; Bradley, op. cit., p. 289.

II

A survey of critical Biblical scholarship similarly reveals a wide divergence of opinion regarding the significance of the Elihu chapters in the book of Job. The following is an overview of modern interpretation. The purpose is not merely to survey the various arguments for and against the originality of the speeches, but to focus attention on the function of the pericope within the total structure of the book. Strictly speaking, therefore, the question of authenticity is ancillary to this primary objective. As Kroeze remarks, in connection with the predominant view that the speeches are an interpolation:

Eben dadurch wird aber die Frage nach der Bedeutung dieser Worte umso zutreffender. Wenn doch die Elihu-Reden nicht ursprünglich sind, weshalb sind sie dann eingeschaltet worden? Was Elihu sagt, fordert auf jeden Fall eine Erklärung, entweder als ursprünglicher, oder als eingeschalteter Teil.²²

The issue of authenticity, however, cannot be disregarded. On the contrary, the question of authorship, which was

22. Cf. Kroeze, "Die Elihu-Reden im Buche Hiob," Oudtestamentische Studiën, 2 (1943), p. 156. Cf. H.W. Hertzberg, "Der Aufbau des Buches Hiob," in Festschrift für Alfred Bertholet (Tübingen, 1950), p. 251: "Die Frage der Echtheit ist hier wieder eine Zweitrangige; die Bedeutung der Elihureden für den Aufbau des Ganzen bleibt die gleiche, ob ein Mitarbeiter des Dichters oder er selber sie niederschrieb." Cf. also H.W. Hertzberg, Das Buch Hiob übersetzt und ausgelegt (Berlin 1950), pp. 152f.; H. Lamparter, Das Buch der Anfechtung: Das Buch Hiob (4th ed.; Stuttgart, 1972), p. 22.

irrelevant in the pre-critical era, that is, before the Enlightenment, is of crucial significance from an interpretative standpoint. As Baker asserts:

... in other Biblical books labelling one passage as primary and another as secondary may make little difference to the general import; in Job such decisions always vitally affect our assessment of the religious message or thought of the authors.²³

Thus, for convenient reference, a classification "check-list" of those commentators cited in the following survey, and in the subsequent chapters of this dissertation, is presented below.

The Question of Authenticity

Classification of Authors

Column A: Defending authenticity (i.e., the Elihu speeches derive from the same author as the rest of the poem).

Column B: Denying authenticity (i.e., the speeches are a later addition composed by a different author).

Column C: Non-committal.

Asterisk: Signifying that the speeches are a supplementary addition by the original author.

[Note: The following table is not intended as a definitive classification. Category C is broad in scope and includes a number of commentators who perhaps are more properly

23. J. Baker, "Commentaries on Job," Theology, 66 (1963), p. 179.

to be assigned to A or B. For the most part, classification A or B is determined on the basis of an explicit declaration for or against the genuineness of the discourses; in certain instances, however, in the absence of an explicit declaration, classification is based on inference.]

	A	B	C
*Albright	X		
Alonso Schökel		X	
Alter			X
Andersen	X		
Anderson, B.W.		X	
Anderson, H.		X	
Augé		X	
Baab		X	
Baker			X
Ball		X	
Barton, G.		X	
Baumgärtel		X	
Baumgartner		X	
Beeby			X
Bentzen			X
Bewer		X	
Bič	X		
Bickell		X	
Blake		X	

	A	B	C
Bleek		X	
Boelicke	X		
*Box	X		
Bradley			X
Briggs	X		
Bruce	X		
Budde	X		
Buttenwieser		X	
Carstensen		X	
Cheyne		X	
Childs		X	
Cornely	X		
Cornill	X		
Cox	X		
Crook		X	
Davidson, A.B.		X	
Davidson, S. (1856)	X		
Davidson, S. (1862)		X	
Davison		X	
Delitzsch, Franz		X	
Delitzsch, Fried.		X	
Dennefeld	X		
Devine	X		
Dhorme		X	
Dillmann		X	

	A	B	C
Dillon		X	
Driver		X	
Dubarle	X		
Duhm		X	
Eerdmans	X		
Ehrlich		X	
Eichhorn		X	
Eichrodt		X	
Eissfeldt		X	
Ellison	X		
Ewald		X	
Fichtner		X	
Fohrer		X	
*Freedman	X		
Freehof		X	
Gaster	X		
Genung	X		
Gibson, E.C.S.		X	
Gibson, J.C.L.		X	
Good			X
*Gordis	X		
Gottwald		X	
Gray		X	
Green	X		
Gross		X	

	A	B	C
Guillaume	X		
Habel	X		
Hahn	X		
Hanson		X	
Harrelson	X		
Harrison			X
Hempel		X	
Hemraj	X		
Hengstenberg	X		
Henn		X	
Henshaw		X	
Herder	X		
Hertzberg		X	
Herz		X	
Hesse		X	
Hirzel		X	
Hitzig		X	
Hoffmann		X	
Hölscher		X	
Hontheim	X		
Hoonacker		X	
Houtsma		X	
Humbert	X		
Humphreys			X
Irwin		X	

	A	B	C
Janzen	X		
Jastrow		X	
Jepsen		X	
Jeremias	X		
Jones			X
Jordan		X	
*Junker	X		
Kaiser		X	
Kallen			X
Kaufmann	X		
Kautzsch		X	
Keil	X		
Kelly			X
Kissane ²⁴			X
Klostermann		X	
Knabenbauer	X		
Koepp	X		
König		X	
Königsberger	X		
Kraeling		X	

24. Kissane, op. cit., p. xl, expressing the view that the balance of probability suggests the original recension of the book did not include the Elihu pericope, does not exclude the possibility that the speeches were a later addition by the original author. Cf. also Lefèvre, op. cit., col. 1080.

	A	B	C
Kroeze	X		
Kuenen		X	
Kuhl		X	
Lambert	X		
Lamparter			X
Larcher		X	
Laue		X	
Laurin			X
Lefèvre			X
Lévêque		X	
Ley		X	
Lindblom		X	
Lods		X	
Loisy		X	
Lowth	X		
Maag		X	
MacDonald		X	
MacKenzie		X	
Margoliouth		X	
Marshall		X	
McFadyen		X	
McKay	X		
Meinhold		X	
Merx		X	

	A	B	C
Möller	X		
Moulton			X
Murphy			X
Nichols		X	
Oesterley-Robinson, T.H.		X	
Oettli		X	
Peake		X	
Pedersen ²⁵	X		
*Peters	X		
Pfeiffer		X	
Polzin			X
Pope		X	
Posselt	X		
Prat	X		
Rankin		X	
Ranston		X	
Reddy		X	
Reichert			X
Renan ²⁶		X	

25. According to Johannes Pedersen, Israel: Its Life and Culture, trans. Aslaug Möller (1926; reprinted London, 1946), p. 531, the original poem did not contain the Elihu speeches, which are probably merely "a rough draft made by the poet himself."
26. Renan, op. cit., pp. lviif., alludes to the possibility that the Elihu speeches were a later addition by the original author, a hypothesis subsequently disavowed. Cf. his History of the People of Israel, vol. 4: From the Rule of the Persians to That of the Greeks (Boston, 1895), p. 158.

	A	B	C
Richter, H.		X	
Robinson, T.H.		X	
Rongy		X	
Rosenmüller	X		
Rowley		X	
Sandmel		X	
Sawyer	X		
Schlottmann	X		
Schmid		X	
Schofield			X
Scott		X	
*Sellin	X		
Sewall			X
*Sicre Diaz	X		
Siegfried		X	
Skehan		X	
*Snai th	X		
Soggin		X	
Staples		X	
Steinmann		X	
Steinmueller	X		
Steuernagel		X	
Stevenson		X	
Stickel	X		
Stier		X	

	A	B	C
Strack		X	
Strahan		X	
Studer		X	
Stuhlmann		X	
Sutcliffe		X	
*Szczygiel	X		
Terrien		X	
Thilo	X		
Tournay		X	
Tsevat		X	
Tur-Sinai		X	
Umbreit	X		
Vawter		X	
Vermeylen		X	
Volz		X	
Watson		X	
Weiser		X	
Westermann		X	
De Wette		X	
Whedbee			X
De Wilde		X	
Wildeboer	X		
Williams			X
*Wright, G.H.B.	X		

	A	B	C
Young	X		
Zerafa	X		
Zöckler	X		

A great many of the commentators regard the Elihu pericope as superfluous in the book of Job. Rowley declares that "the Elihu speeches could ... be dropped from the book without being missed, and without affecting its structure";²⁷ and Dillmann asserts similarly: "Man kann C. 32-37 herausnehmen, ohne dass irgend eine Lücke entsteht oder auch nur eine Zeile des übrigen Gedichts geändert werden müsste."²⁸ In the view of T.H. Robinson, the Elihu chapters "do not fit easily into the general scheme of the book."²⁹

Many commentators consider that the Elihu section not merely is superfluous, but is an offensive element which mars the plan and outline of the book of Job³⁰: the speeches interrupt the continuity of the poem, and delay the response

27. Rowley, "Book of Job and Its Meaning," in From Moses to Qumran, p. 147; cf. Rowley, Job, p. 12.
28. Dillmann, op. cit., p. 275. Cf. also Gray in Driver-Gray, p. xlvihi; Driver, LOT, p. 428; Peake, Job, p. 24; Kissane, op. cit., p. xxxvii; Lindblom, op. cit., p. 83; Sutcliffe, "Job," Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture, p. 418; S. Davidson, Introduction to the Old Testament (1862), vol. 2, pp. 206-07; Ewald, op. cit., p. 329; W.T. Davison, "Job, Book of," A Dictionary of the Bible, ed. J. Hastings (Edinburgh, 1899), vol. 2, p. 665.
29. T.H. Robinson, Poetry of the Old Testament, p. 77. Cf. also Meinhold, op. cit., p. 324.
30. Cf. Dillmann, op. cit., p. 275; de Wette, op. cit., p. 557; Davison, op. cit., pp. 665-66.

of God in chapters 38ff.³¹ McFadyen laments "the most unfortunate way" in which the discourses are interposed.³² In the opinion of H. Richter, the Elihu pericope represents an "erratic block" in the structure of the book. That is to say, both the Elihu chapters and the Divine speeches constitute distinct "solutions" to the problem of the Dialogue; thus, to affirm one is to negate the other.³³ According to Tur-Sinai, the entire structure of the book culminates in the response of God; the Elihu speeches render the divine reply superfluous.³⁴ A similar view is expressed by Gray, namely, that chapters 32-37 are "destructive of the effect of what follows."³⁵

31. Cf. Driver, LOT, p. 428; Cheyne, Job and Solomon, p. 91; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 40; Merx, op. cit., p. xvii; Lods, op. cit., p. 676; Eissfeldt, Old Testament: An Introduction, p. 457; Lévêque, Job et Son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 537; Lindblom, op. cit., p. 82; Hugh Anderson, "The Book of Job," The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible, ed. Charles M. Layman (London, 1972), p. 249; Meinhold, op. cit., p. 324; Fichtner, op. cit., p. 54.
32. McFadyen, Wisdom Books, p. 244; cf. Bewer, op. cit., p. 343; Scott, Way of Wisdom, p. 150.
33. H. Richter, op. cit., pp. 118-19; cf. Lindblom, op. cit., p. 83.
34. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 454. Cf. van Hoonacker, op. cit., p. 163; Kuenen, op. cit., p. 143; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 275; Renan, Livre de Job, p. li; G. Barton, Commentary on the Book of Job, p. 24; Lods, op. cit., p. 676; König, Buch Hiob, p. 468; Strack, op. cit., p. 133; de Wette, op. cit., p. 558; Meinhold, op. cit., p. 324; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 3; cf. also Ley, op. cit., p. 143.
35. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. xli; cf. Kuhl, "Neuere Literaturkritik des Buches Hiob," Theologische Rundschau, 21 (1953), p. 259; F. Bleek, An Introduction to the Old Testament, trans. from 2d ed. G.H. VENABLES; ed. Edmund Venables (London, 1875), vol. 2, p. 281.

With regard to the content of the chapters, critics have long expressed the opinion that Elihu contributes little, if anything, of significance to the debate.³⁶ Duhm³⁷ refers disparagingly to the "auffallend leeren Reden," while Friedrich Delitzsch states that Elihu offers "nichts als hohle, schwächliche, nichtssagende Phrasen" to the great questions of Job.³⁸ Vawter refers to the Elihu speeches as "pastiche of threadbare arguments already discarded";³⁹ and Rongy observes: "Pour la marche de l'argumentation, les discours d'Élihou sont un hors-d'oeuvre inutile."⁴⁰ MacDonald, noting that Elihu places the greater emphasis on the pedagogical value of adversity, comments: "We can easily imagine Job dealing with the educative advantages to his

36. Cf. Georg Fohrer, "Die Weisheit des Elihu," in Studien zum Buche Hiob (1956-1979) (2d ed.; Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 159; Berlin, 1983), p. 104; Kissane, op. cit., p. xxxix; Lefèvre, op. cit., col. 1080; Renan, Livre de Job, p. li; Bruce Vawter, Job and Jonah: Questioning the Hidden God (New York, 1983), pp. 47, 73; Otto J. Baab, "The Book of Job," Interpretation, 5 (1951), p. 335; Briggs, op. cit., p. 353; McFadyen, Wisdom Books, p. 244; Kuhl, op. cit., p. 260; T.H. Robinson, op. cit., p. 77; P. Cruveilhier, "La conduite de la providence dans la répartition du bonheur ou du malheur en cette vie selon l'auteur du livre de Job et selon la révélation chrétienne," Revue Apologétique, 52 (1931), p. 150, n. 2; Oettli, op. cit., p. 16; A. and M. Hanson, The Book of Job (Torch Bible Commentaries; London, 1953), p. 94; Fridolin Stier, Das Buch Ijob (München, 1954), p. 241; H. Richter, op. cit., p. 119. Cf. also Ewald, op. cit., p. 328.
37. Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. xi.
38. Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 98.
39. Vawter, op. cit., p. 47.
40. Rongy, op. cit., p. 368.

children in being killed."⁴¹

The view is widely held that the standpoint of Elihu is not substantially different from the position defended by the three friends.⁴² Battenwieser expresses succinctly the judgment of many commentators when he writes:

What Elihu presents with such assurance and finality, as drawn from hitherto unexplored depths of wisdom, is but a shallow restatement of the orthodox view of suffering which the friends have defended with incomparably greater skill and effect.⁴³

41. D.B. MacDonald, The Hebrew Literary Genius (Princeton, 1933), p. 28.
42. Cf. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. xli; Driver, LOT, p. 428; Peake, Job, p. 23; A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, pp. xliiff.; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 274; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. xi; Cheyne, "Job, Book of," Encyclopaedia Biblica, 2, col. 2483; Eichhorn, op. cit., p. 204; G.L. Studer, Das Buch Hiob (Bremen, 1881), pp. 165-67; Josef Scharbert, Der Schmerz im Alten Testament (Bonner Biblische Beiträge, 8; Bonn, 1955), p. 174; G. Barton, Commentary on the Book of Job, p. 24; Lods, op. cit., p. 677; Pedersen, op. cit., p. 531; Lindblom, op. cit., p. 85; van Hoonacker, op. cit., p. 163.
43. Battenwieser, op. cit., p. 85; cf. Bewer, op. cit., p. 343; Fohrer, "Weisheit des Elihu," Studien zum Buche Hiob, p. 104; Hitzig, op. cit., p. xxxiv; Ludwig Laue, Die Composition des Buches Hiob (Halle am Salle, 1895), p. 106; H.H. Schmid, Wesen und Geschichte der Weisheit (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 101; Berlin, 1966), pp. 178-79; Sutcliffe, "Job," Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture, p. 419; W.O.E. Oesterley and T.H. Robinson, An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament (London, 1961), p. 173; B. Blake, The Book of Job and the Problem of Suffering (Toronto, 1911), p. 223; Kissane, op. cit., p. xxxix; N.C. Habel, The Book of Job (CBCNEB; London, 1975), p. 169; Ewald, op. cit., p. 328; Cheyne, Job and Solomon, p. 48; J.F. Genung, The Epic of the Inner Life, Being the Book of Job (Boston, 1892), p. 81; Ranston, op. cit., p. 142; Pope, op. cit., p. xxvi; Roland E. Murphy, Wisdom Literature (The Forms of the Old Testament Literature, 13; Grand Rapids, Mich., 1981), p. 42.

Although many critics deem the Elihu speeches to be not without merit, in their present position they are manifestly not relevant to the situation of Job. Thus, Steinmann writes: "Ce qu'il dit est incontestable mais à côté de la question."⁴⁴ Steinmann believes that the discourses were composed by "un commentateur scandalisé," who was possessed of no greater understanding of Job's problem than had Eliphaz, Bildad or Zophar.⁴⁵ Similarly, Westermann comments: "Zwischen dem Ort, an dem der Verfasser der Elihu-Reden spricht, und dem Ort, an dem Hiob redet, klafft ein Abgrund. Elihu kann Hiob gar nicht verstehen."⁴⁶ Lévêque admits that the Elihu speeches contain much of theological importance; nonetheless, they contribute nothing essential to the organisation of the book.⁴⁷ In the view of Ley, the original author "nicht in einer bestimmten abstrakten Lehre die Lösung des Problems gegeben, sondern in der psychologisch

44. Steinmann, op. cit., p. 225. Cf. Edward J. Young, An Introduction to the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1949), p. 330: the words of Elihu are "words of ignorance. What he says seems to be true enough in itself, but it is here beside the point." Cf. Rowley, "The Book of Job and Its Meaning," in From Moses to Qumran, pp. 149-50.

45. Steinmann, op. cit., p. 225.

46. Claus Westermann, Der Aufbau des Buches Hiob (Stuttgart, 1977), p. 141. Italics in the original.

47. Lévêque, Job et Son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 537. Cf. Strahan, op. cit., p. 267 (who otherwise comments favourably on the content of the Elihu pericope): "the dramatic power of the book is heightened by the omission of these speeches."

fortschreitenden Erhebung der Heldenseele des Leidenden."⁴⁸

The poet, according to Ley, would ruin his masterpiece with the opinion of Elihu.⁴⁹

Nor do the Elihu chapters contribute in any fashion to a solution of the problem. Eichhorn considers that Elihu does not advance the discussion in the slightest toward a resolution.⁵⁰ To claim that the discourses of Elihu represent the answer of the original poet, states Dhorme, involves a misconception of the entire meaning of the poem.⁵¹ As Baumgartner points out, it was the very absence of a solution which undoubtedly prompted their interpolation in the first place.⁵²

Convinced, with respect to the content of the Elihu speeches, that they are superfluous to the progression of the debate,⁵³ many commentators eliminate these chapters from the interpretation of the message and meaning of the book of Job. Tsevat, for example, devotes a lengthy article to the "meaning" of the book; Elihu, however, is excluded

48. Ley, op. cit., p. 140. Cf. Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 41.

49. Ley, op. cit., p. 141.

50. Eichhorn, op. cit., pp. 205, 207.

51. Dhorme, op. cit., p. cl; Lindblom, op. cit., p. 85.

52. W. Baumgartner, "The Wisdom Literature," in The Old Testament and Modern Study, ed. H.H. Rowley (Oxford, 1951), p. 218.

53. Cf. Dillmann, op. cit., p. 275; Merx, op. cit., p. xvii; Hanson, op. cit., p. 104.

altogether from consideration.⁵⁴ Davis agrees that Elihu is of little importance: "Our concern is with Job. He is the book."⁵⁵ A.B. Davidson maintains that, although the book would be "decidedly poorer" without the Elihu composition, it contributes nothing new to the discussion and may therefore be disregarded in the interpretation of the general conception of the poem.⁵⁶

To summarise, the negative evaluation of the Elihu pericope is based upon the conclusion that chapters 32-37 are not relevant to the underlying purpose of the book of Job. That is to say, neither in form nor in content are the Elihu discourses integral to the context of the poem. In the view of many commentators, the Elihu section, which reflects a more conventional theological outlook, has been added in order to render the book more acceptable in orthodox circles.⁵⁷ According to Steinmann, it was the intention of the Elihu author to redeem the honour of the

54. Matitiah Tsevat, "The Meaning of the Book of Job," Hebrew Union College Annual, 37 (1966), p. 82.
55. H.G. Davis, "The Message of the Book of Job for Today," The Lutheran Church Quarterly, 6 (1933), p. 133.
56. A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, pp. xxiii, xli.
57. Cf. Fohrer, "Weisheit des Elihu," Studien zum Buche Hiob, p. 95; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 217; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 277; Paul Volz, Hiob und Weisheit: Das Buch Hiob, Sprüche und Jesus Sirach, Prediger (Die Schriften des Alten Testaments, III₂; Göttingen, 1921), p. 90; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 276; G. Barton, Commentary on the Book of Job, p. 26; Strack, op. cit., p. 133; S. Davidson, Introduction to the Old Testament (1862), vol. 2, p. 211; Morris Jastrow, The Book of Job: Its Origin, Growth and Interpretation (Philadelphia, 1920), p. 77.

Jewish Wisdom movement.⁵⁸

In this regard, chapters 32-37 are generally interpreted as an attempt to improve on the inadequacy of the friends' speeches and thus provide a more effectual refutation of Job's allegations,⁵⁹ and by some commentators as a criticism of the Divine speeches in chapters 38ff.⁶⁰ MacDonald, however, suggests that the Elihu section is to be interpreted more as a criticism of the book as a whole than as a criticism of Job,⁶¹ and Loisy considers it a corrective to the

58. Steinmann, op. cit., pp. 276, 288. Cf. Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 218. In the view of Steinmann, p. 288, Elihu "est l'authentique avocat de ceux que choquaient les déclarations de Job. Il est l'auto-portrait innocemment croqué sur le vif de l'un de ceux auxquels l'auteur de Job en voulait par dessus tout: les professeurs de morale sapientielle. En lui-même il n'est pas ridicule. Il ne le devient que par la place qu'il occupe. Si bien que plus il se défend avec chaleur, plus il est conforme à l'image de ceux que Job voulait pourfendre."
59. Cf. A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, pp. xl-xli; Holscher, op. cit., p. 83; Ewald, op. cit., pp. 326-27; Steinmann, op. cit., pp. 209ff.; W.A. Irwin, "The Elihu Speeches in the Criticism of the Book of Job," Journal of Religion, 17 (1937), p. 39 (re chaps. 34-37 only; the first speech in chaps. 32-33, on the contrary, is said to constitute "a real contribution to the thought of the book and to an understanding of the problem of suffering"); Lindblom, op. cit., p. 85; Baab, op. cit., p. 334; Franz Hesse, Hiob (Zürcher Bibelkommentare: Altes Testament, 14; Zürich, 1978), p. 11; Vermeylen, op. cit., pp. 24, 73-74; S. Davidson, Introduction to the Old Testament (1862), vol. 2, p. 211; Strack, op. cit., p. 133; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 3.
60. Cf. Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament (rev. ed.; New York, 1948), p. 673; Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 456; Larcher, op. cit., p. 12; Kaiser, op. cit., p. 390.
61. D.B. MacDonald, "The Original Form of the Legend of Job," Journal of Biblical Literature, 14 (1895), p. 70. Cf. also Peake, Job, pp. 27-30: the Elihu author, intent

original book.⁶² Dhorme, on the other hand, declares that the intention of the later author was to "confute," not to "correct."⁶³ Similarly, Siegfried and Pfeiffer refer to chapters 32-37 as a "polemical" insertion,⁶⁴ while Kautzsch asserts that the Elihu discourses "stand in absolutely irreconcilable opposition to the aim of all the rest of the poem."⁶⁵

In contrast to a negative evaluation of the Elihu speeches, a considerable body of scholarly opinion holds

on refuting the allegations of Job and dissatisfied with the responses of the friends, also disapproves of the Prologue and, in all probability, the Epilogue as well, and seeks, in addition, to criticise the original poet for the impropriety of permitting God to participate in the debate. G. Barton, Commentary on the Book of Job, p. 25, also expresses the view that the Elihu author polemicises against the original poet's permitting God to appear in response to the demands of Job.

62. Loisy, op. cit., p. 43.

63. Dhorme, op. cit., p. cv. Cf. also Weiser, Buch Hiob, pp. 217-18: "Die Reden des Elihu tragen das unverkennbare Gepräge der agonalen Streitgespräche, deren Ziel es ist, den Gegner zu besiegen, indem man ihn durch Reden zum Schweigen bringt."

64. Carl Siegfried, The Book of Job: Critical Edition of the Hebrew Text (The Sacred Books of the Old Testament, 17; Leipzig, 1893), p. 49; cf. also Carl Siegfried, "Job, the Book of: Critical View," Jewish Encyclopaedia, 7 (New York, 1904), p. 199; Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 673; Roger N. Carstensen, "The Persistence of the 'Elihu' Tradition in Later Jewish Writings," Lexington Theological Quarterly, 2 (1967), p. 43.

65. E. Kautzsch, An Outline of the History of the Literature of the Old Testament, trans. John Taylor (London, 1898), p. 161; cf. also Dillon, op. cit., p. 57; Hitzig, op. cit., p. xxxiv; Ley, op. cit., pp. 140ff.

that they represent an impressive and vital component in the structure of the poem. Indeed, it is the judgment of a number of critics that Elihu expresses the viewpoint of the author⁶⁶; Kaufmann suggests that he may be a "reflex" of the poet himself,⁶⁷ and Dennefeld refers to him as "le porte-parole par excellence du poète."⁶⁸ With regard to chapters 32-37, Gottwald declares that they are neither subordinate nor insignificant, as many authors have maintained.⁶⁹ A.B. Davidson, as already noted, believes that the poem would suffer without their contribution.⁷⁰ In the words of Terrien, Elihu "fulfills a psychological, dramatic, artistic and theological function."⁷¹ Driver deems them a valuable addition to the original composition, elaborating particular points which have been neglected in the rest of the poem.⁷² In comparison with the discourses

66. Dubarle, op. cit., p. 86; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. xxxvi; Alfred Jeremias, Das Alte Testament im Lichte des Alten Orients (2d ed.; Leipzig, 1906), p. 552; Rosenmüller, op. cit., pp. 778-79.
67. Kaufmann, Religion of Israel, p. 336.
68. Dennefeld, op. cit., p. 175.
69. Norman K. Gottwald, A Light to the Nations: An Introduction to the Old Testament (New York, 1959), p. 474; cf. Marshall, Book of Job, p. xiv.
70. A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. xli; cf. Minos Devine, The Story of Job: A Sympathetic Study of the Book of Job in the Light of History and Literature (London, 1921), p. 209; Dennefeld, op. cit., p. 180.
71. Samuel Terrien, Job: Poet of Existence (Indianapolis, 1957), p. 190.
72. S.R. Driver, LOT, p. 430.

of Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, Steuernagel rates the Elihu speeches as far superior,⁷³ and Stuhlmann observes that Elihu philosophises in a much more satisfactory manner than do the three friends.⁷⁴ In Keil's view, Elihu utters the "simple truth."⁷⁵

Watson regards the Elihu chapters as in some respects inferior to the rest of the poem; however, they stand as an "honest, reverent and thoughtful contribution to the subject. In some points this speaker comes nearer the truth than Job or any of his friends."⁷⁶ It is Snaithe's opinion that some of the more original concepts in the poem are uttered by Elihu,⁷⁷ while Cornill goes so far as to say: "in the entire range of Holy Writ there are few passages which in profundity of thought and loftiness of feeling can compare with the Elihu-speeches."⁷⁸ Kraeling is more restrained: the discourses of Elihu "would be extremely impressive if it were not for the fact that they collide with the speeches of God."⁷⁹ Irwin considers that while chapters 34-37 merely reiterate the arguments of the friends, the first speech

73. Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 340.

74. Stuhlmann, op. cit., p. 21.

75. Keil, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 497.

76. Robert A. Watson, The Book of Job (The Expositor's Bible; London, 1892), p. 342.

77. Snaithe, Book of Job, p. 90; cf. Bruce, op. cit., p. 23.

78. Cornill, op. cit., p. 428.

79. Emil G. Kraeling, The Book of the Ways of God (London, 1938), p. 138; cf. also pp. 139-40.

of Elihu (chapters 32-33) is "quite underrated": "Indeed, apart from the speeches of Job, it presents the only position in the entire book that can command our full assent." Chapter 33 not only represents a genuine contribution to an understanding of the problem of suffering, but in addition provides documentary evidence of the nature of the original, and now lost, conclusion of the book.⁸⁰ (See below, pages 77-78.)

Apart from its intrinsic merit, a number of commentators attach significance to the Elihu pericope as an early commentary on the poem.⁸¹ Others explain it as a later addition by the original author himself.⁸² In the words of Sellin, it represents "the ripest fruit of his own life of trial."⁸³

80. Irwin, "Elihu Speeches," Journal of Religion, 17 (1937), p. 39.

81. Anderson, "Book of Job," Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible, p. 240; W.B. Stevenson, The Poem of Job: A Literary Study with a New Translation (London, 1947), p. 23; Ball, op. cit., p. 5; Strahan, op. cit., p. 267; W.G. Jordan, The Book of Job: Its Substance and Spirit (New York, 1929), p. 174; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 167; Volz, op. cit., pp. 92ff.; Freehof, op. cit., pp. 206-07; Victor Maag, Hiob: Wandlung und Verarbeitung des Problems in Novelle, Dialogdichtung und Spätfassungen (Göttingen, 1982), pp. 204ff.

82. Cf. Gordis, BGAM, p. 116; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., p. 181; Sellin, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 219; Sellin, Das Problem des Hiobbuches (Leipzig, 1919), p. 28; Peters, op. cit., pp. 25-26; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 26; G.H. Box, Judaism in the Greek Period (The Clarendon Bible: Old Testament, 5; Oxford, 1932), p. 123; Junker, op. cit., p. 76; Snaithe, op. cit., pp. 72-73, 85; Albright, quoted in Freedman, "Orthographic Peculiarities in the Book of Job," Eretz-Israel, 9 (1969), p. 44; Walter Harrelson, Interpreting the Old Testament (New York, 1964), p. 434. Cf. also above, p. 54, n. 24, and p. 56, nn. 25, 26.

83. Sellin, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 219.

An alternative view is advanced by Freedman: namely, that the true value of the Elihu speeches may lie in their having furnished the impetus for the authorship of the discourses of God.⁸⁴ According to this hypothetical reconstruction, the speeches of Elihu and those of God may be understood as alternative solutions to the literary and theological problems presented by the Dialogue and Job's final speech in particular. Freedman suggests that the Elihu chapters may have been a first, unsatisfactory attempt by the poet, portions of which were later incorporated into the Divine speeches. At a subsequent stage, the Elihu pericope was inserted into the poem by an editor.

The conception of the Elihu speeches as integral to the ultimate meaning and message of the book is based on various interpretations relating to (1) the disciplinary value of suffering as a distinctive contribution to the solution of Job's problem; and (2) the mediatorial function of chapters 32-37 in the architectonic structure of the poem.

1. The Disciplinary Value of Suffering

The view is widely held that the significance of Elihu's discourse consists primarily in the doctrine of suffering as a divine pedagogical measure, a concept clearly differentiated from the speeches of Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar.⁸⁵

84. David Noel Freedman, "The Elihu Speeches in the Book of Job," Harvard Theological Review, 61 (1968), pp. 58-59. Cf. also Sicre Diaz in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 54.

85. Cf. Budde, Beiträge, pp. 65ff.; and Buch Hiob, pp. xxv-

Elihu offers "a teleological explanation of the suffering of the righteous."⁸⁶ That is to say, affliction or misfortune has not only a punitive, but a purifying, function. It is intended for the moral betterment of man, namely, to purge the sufferer of the sin of spiritual pride. Its purpose is therefore educative: to expose the presence of hidden, dormant sin. If man recognises this divine pedagogical purpose, suffering becomes a source of blessing to

xxxviii; Cornill, op. cit., pp. 427f.; Szczygiel, op. cit., pp. 23ff.; Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 25-39; Peters, op. cit., pp. 26f.; Möller, op. cit., pp. 100ff.; Boelicke, op. cit., pp. 24-37; Martin Thilo, Das Buch Hiob neu übersetzt und aufgefasst (Bonn, 1925), pp. 135-38; E.W. Hengstenberg, Das Buch Hiob (Leipzig, 1875), pp. 8-9; Cornely, op. cit., pp. 44-45, 59; Knabenbauer, op. cit., pp. 8-10, 368; A. Charue, "Job et le problème des rétributions dans l'Ancien Testament," Collationes Namurcenses, 33 (1939), p. 264; Cox, op. cit., pp. 413-14; Keil, op. cit., p. 498; Humbert, op. cit., p. 157; Stuhlmann, op. cit., p. 22; Dennefeld, op. cit., pp. 170ff.; Staples, op. cit., pp. 12, 14-18; Gordis, BGAM, pp. 113ff.; Gordis, BOJ, pp. 550ff.; Dubarle, op. cit., pp. 85, 87f.; Rosenmüller, op. cit., pp. 21f., 769ff.; Stickel, op. cit., pp. 238ff.; Schlottmann, op. cit., pp. 56ff.; Posselt, op. cit., pp. 46-50; Junker, op. cit., p. 76; Prat, op. cit., col. 1568; Lambert, op. cit., pp. 26-27; Kroeze, op. cit., p. 169; William Henry Green, "The Dramatic Character and Integrity of the Book of Job," The Presbyterian and Reformed Review, 8 (1897), pp. 697ff.; J.T. Marshall, Job and His Comforters (London, 1905), pp. 84-91; Marshall, Book of Job, pp. xiv, xix; Samuel Terrien, Job: Poet of Existence (Indianapolis, 1957), p. 210; Terrien, "Book of Job," IB, 3, pp. 1157-59; Eduard König, "The Problem of Suffering in the Light of the Book of Job," Expository Times, 32 (1920-21), p. 361; König, Buch Hiob, pp. 469-70; Strahan, op. cit., p. 25; Maag, op. cit., pp. 206ff.; E.C.S. Gibson, op. cit., pp. xxvi-xxvii, 176; Blake, op. cit., p. 209; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 306-09; Hertzberg, "Aufbau des Buches Hiob," in Festschrift, pp. 245ff.; Freehof, op. cit., pp. 206f.

86. Cf. Cornill, op. cit., pp. 427-28.

him; if, however, he fails to comprehend the true function of affliction, divine punishment ensues.⁸⁷ Many commentators regard the concept of disciplinary suffering articulated in the Elihu chapters as a distinctive contribution toward a solution of Job's problem.⁸⁸ Samuel Davidson states that "the germ of the solution" is contained in Elihu's discourse.⁸⁹ In the view of Nichols, the theory of Elihu may not suffice as an adequate solution; nonetheless, it derives from a more exalted concept of God than that of the three friends, and is "not to be lightly valued as a contribution to the religious problem."⁹⁰

The interpretation of Möller emphasises the essential correspondence between the Elihu pericope and the context of the Prologue: Elihu serves to guide Job to the solution which is already expressed in the Prologue, namely, the concept of disinterested piety. Elihu, in contrast to the three friends,

87. Ibid. Cf. Devine, op. cit., p. 290.

88. Cf. Szczygiel, op. cit., pp. 23-26; Dennefeld, op. cit., pp. 170ff.; Rosenmüller, op. cit., pp. 22, 769ff.; Stickel, op. cit., pp. 238ff.; Cornely, op. cit., pp. 44-45, 59; Knabenbauer, op. cit., pp. 8-10, 368; Peters, op. cit., pp. 26-27; Gordis, BGAM, pp. 113ff.; Gordis, BOJ, pp. 550ff.; Dubarle, op. cit., pp. 85, 87f.; Thilo, op. cit., pp. 135ff.; Keil, op. cit., p. 498; Schlottmann, op. cit., pp. 55f., 60; Cox, op. cit., pp. 413-14; Green, op. cit., pp. 697ff.; A. Guillaume, "Unity of the Book of Job," pp. 34-35 (cf. Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, with a New Translation, ed. John MacDonald (Supplement II to the Annual of Leeds University Oriental Society; Leiden, 1968), pp. 138-39); Marshall, Book of Job, pp. xiv, xix.

89. S. Davidson, Text of the Old Testament Considered (1856), vol. 2, p. 716; cf. S. Davidson, Introduction to the Old Testament (1862), vol. 2, p. 212.

90. Nichols, op. cit., p. 118.

interprets Job's suffering as a divine pedagogical measure intended to draw attention to the sins of self-righteousness and pride. It is only through misfortune that Job's self-righteousness becomes evident; the suspicion voiced by Satan, that is, that Job's piety has not been unselfishly motivated, is confirmed by the latter's conduct in the course of the dispute with the friends. Thus, Möller asserts:

Der angebliche Gegensatz, dass der Prolog Hiob einzigartige Frömmigkeit zuschreibe, Elihu ihm aber Sünde vorwerfe, löst sich so auf, dass eben die in Hiobs Frömmigkeit enthaltene Selbstgerechtigkeit seine Sünde ist, dass ihm also seine Frömmigkeit zur Sünde geworden ist.

The speeches of Elihu mediate the solution contained in the Prologue - suffering as a test and a trial, and enable Job to comprehend the essence of divine righteousness: man cannot claim righteousness unilaterally; it is bestowed freely by the grace of God.⁹¹

Some critics find in the Elihu speeches the true solution of the author of the book to the problem of the suffering of the righteous.⁹² To Cornill, for example, chapters 32-37

91. Möller, op. cit., pp. 100ff.

92. Cf. Budde, Beiträge, pp. 65ff.; Budde, Buch Hiob, pp. xxxv-xxxviii; Wildeboer, op. cit., p. 383; Hengstenberg, op. cit., pp. 22ff.; Boelicke, op. cit., pp. 24-37, especially pp. 35-36; Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 25f., 39; Posselt, op. cit., pp. 46-50; Prat, op. cit., p. 1568. According to Möller, op. cit., pp. 100-102, 105, 113-14, the speeches of Elihu together with the Prologue provide the key to the solution; and to Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 55, they express the theoretical solution of the enigma, which would be undignified in the mouth of God.

present "the only solution of the problem which the poet, from his Old Testament standpoint, is able to give."⁹³

Conversely, Kroeze comments that while Elihu offers valuable insights into the enigma of human suffering, "eine Lösung geben sie nicht; die kann nicht gegeben werden."⁹⁴ Similarly, Nichols, denying that the original author intended to propose a solution, nevertheless concedes that if an answer is to be sought, it will have to be found in the speeches of Elihu.⁹⁵ The view is expressed by Sellin and Box also that the only solution which the book presents is contained in chapters 32-37.⁹⁶ Staples concurs with this assessment, adding that the Elihu pericope in contrast to the Divine speeches represents a genuine solution to the problem of suffering.⁹⁷ S. Davidson, however, suggests a different interpretation: the solution, insofar as one is given by the author, lies in the speeches of Elihu, the Divine discourses, and the Epilogue.⁹⁸

93. Cornill, op. cit., p. 428.

94. Kroeze, op. cit., p. 169. Italics in the original.

95. Nichols, op. cit., pp. 107-08.

96. Sellin, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 219; Box, op. cit., p. 122.

97. Staples, op. cit., pp. 12, 17. Möller, op. cit., p. 113, also expresses the opinion that the Divine speeches do not provide a genuine solution.

98. S. Davidson, Text of the Old Testament Considered (1856), vol. 2, p. 713. Cf. also Richard G. Moulton, The Book of Job (New York, 1906), p. xxix: the book of Job contains not one, but five different solutions to the mystery of human suffering: i.e., the Prologue, the Dialogue, the Elihu pericope, the Divine speeches, and the Epilogue.

2. The Mediatorial Function of Elihu

The role of Elihu as mediator encompasses a multiplicity of interpretations:

(a) The angel-interpreter (יְהוָה דִּלְיָא) in 33:23-24

Although considerable ambiguity attaches to its precise nature and function,⁹⁹ the angelic mediator apparently functions in a dual capacity: (i) an intermediary on behalf of God, communicating the divine providence to man, that is, interpreting man's suffering and exhorting him to repentance (verse 23); and (ii) an intercessor before God on behalf of man (verse 24).¹⁰⁰

In the view of Snaithe, the conception of the angel-interpreter represents a significant development, and relates directly to the principal issue of the book, namely, the relationship between God and man, and the inherent difficulty in communication between the High God and lowly man. Further, the intermediary who appears in order to establish a personal relationship between the two may be the mediator to whom Job has appealed throughout his speeches.¹⁰¹

The significance of the angel-interpreter is emphasised

99. Cf. Dillmann, op. cit., pp. 288-89; Stier, op. cit., pp. 333-34.

100. Cf. inter alia Kroeze, op. cit., pp. 161-63, 169; Terrien, "Book of Job," IB, 3, pp. 1137-38; Alfred von Rohr Sauer, "Salvation by Grace: The Heart of Job's Theology," Concordia Theological Monthly, 37 (1966), pp. 263f. Hölscher, op. cit., p. 87, describes the conception of the angel-intermediary as "bemerkenswert."

101. Snaithe, Book of Job, pp. 88-90.

also by Irwin, who like Snaithe interprets in connection with Job's expressed wish for a mediator (9:33; 16:19; 19:25ff.), but, conversely, interprets the appearance of the $\Upsilon^{\prime}\text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל}$ as decisively important in the solution to the problem of human suffering.¹⁰² Moreover, according to Irwin, the conception of the $\Upsilon^{\prime}\text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל}$ provides an indication of the original, and now lost, conclusion of the book.¹⁰³ Irwin finds in chapter 33 "documentary evidence," in the form of numerous allusions to, and verbatim quotations from, the Dialogue, that the composition of Elihu's initial discourse is based on an exemplar of Job prior to the disarrangement which characterises chapters 24ff. The author of chapter 33, therefore, had access to the original conclusion of the book. In Irwin's opinion, the speech of Elihu, with its reference to the $\Upsilon^{\prime}\text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל}$ in 33:23, has advanced to a point corresponding to chapters 19 and 23, wherein Job expresses his faith in ultimate redemption through the intervention of the go'el, and the point at which the development of Job's thought, as it is preserved in the present form of the text, is effectively terminated. Thus, the course of the Dialogue, namely, the increasing importance in Job's speeches of the role of the intermediary,

102. W.A. Irwin, "Job," Dictionary of the Bible, ed. James Hastings (2d ed. rev. F.C. Grant and H.H. Rowley; Edinburgh, 1963), p. 504.

103. Irwin, "Elihu Speeches in the Criticism of the Book of Job," Journal of Religion, 17 (1937), pp. 40-47.

implies precisely the conclusion which is revealed in chapter 33: the appearance of the $\gamma^{\prime} \gamma \gamma$, and the subsequent vindication and restoration of the sufferer. The exact nature and contents of the original conclusion, however, remain unknown, although Irwin argues on the basis of the evidence that the solution envisaged by the author of the Dialogue appears to have been "very close if not identical" to that of the Elihu author.

(b) Transition to the theophany in chapters 38ff.

Many commentators believe that the Elihu chapters are intended to prepare for the appearance of God in chapter 38.¹⁰⁴ Of the various interpretations proposed, the following in particular may be noted.

Gordis expresses the opinion that, while the central motif of the book of Job is set forth in the Divine speeches, the Elihu chapters convey a subsidiary, but significant, theme, the educative character of affliction. It is imperative that this important insight is presented separately from the divine discourse; otherwise it would detract from

104. Cf. inter alia Szczygiel, op. cit., pp. 23ff.; A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. xxiii; Dennefeld, op. cit., p. 170; Kroeze, op. cit., pp. 169-70; Dubarle, op. cit., p. 85; Charue, op. cit., p. 263; Hertzberg, "Aufbau des Buches Hiob," in Festschrift, p. 250; Cornill, op. cit., pp. 429-30; Humbert, op. cit., p. 150; Lambert, op. cit., p. 27; Gordis, BGAM, pp. 110ff.; Gordis, BOJ, pp. 550ff.; Beeby, op. cit., p. 38; Keil, op. cit., p. 498; Edgar Jones, The Triumph of Job (London, 1966), p. 73; H.M. Kallen, The Book of Job as a Greek Tragedy (New York, 1959), p. 32; Gottwald, Light to the Nations, p. 474.

the principal answer. Hence the poet has created the character of Elihu. The name "Elihu" is a variation of Eljahu (Elijah); thus Elihu appears as a "forerunner" of God.¹⁰⁵

Other commentators, too, interpret the name "Elihu" as significative of a special mediatorial function. According to Hertzberg, the introduction in 32:2 may indicate that "hier einer das Wort nehmen soll, der in besonderer Nähe zu Gott steht."¹⁰⁶ Hertzberg interprets the name "Elihu" as signifying "That is God," or "God Himself"; thus Elihu appears as God's "advocate" (Anwalt),¹⁰⁷ who wishes to convince Job of the irrationality of his position, and at the same time to present an apologia for the actions of God. Koepp also interprets Elihu as a human advocate (Anwalt) pleading in advance for God. On the basis of the statements of Elihu in 33:4; 36:2, 3, statements which otherwise signify the personified wisdom of God, Koepp concludes that Elihu ("=He is God") "erscheint fast als deren Verkleidung in eine Idealgestalt eines menschlichen Weisen, als Idealvertretung der Weisheitsgrundlage und des gerechtesten Frommen."¹⁰⁸

In the view of Kallen, the figure of Elihu has its

105. Gordis, BGAM, pp. 113-16.

106. Hertzberg, "Aufbau des Buches Hiob," in Festschrift, p. 249.

107. Ibid.; Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 123. Cf. also Lamparter, op. cit., p. 193.

108. Wilhelm Koepp, "Vom Hiobthema und der Zeit als Leiden," Theologische Literaturzeitung, 74 (1949), pp. 391-92.

parallel in the messenger speeches of Greek drama, the essential purpose of which is to restate, for the benefit of the audience, the main points of the drama. Similarly, the Elihu speeches recapitulate partially the preceding debate, although their primary function is to set the stage for the appearance of God. Elihu is therefore a messenger whose role is to proclaim what is yet to come.¹⁰⁹

A number of critics interpret the appearance of Elihu as the logical culmination of Job's expressed desire for a mediator to intervene in the dispute between himself and God (cf. 9:33; 16:19ff.; 19:25; 31:35a). Thus Elihu appears as the arbiter to whom Job has appealed for a decision.¹¹⁰ Szczygiel, for instance, interprets in the context of the juridical framework of the book (cf. also Dennefeld): while God appears as judge, Elihu intervenes, in response to Job's demand for a judicial decision, as arbitrator (Schiedsrichter) and God's advocate (Sachwalter).¹¹¹ Cornill considers that the appearance of Elihu as mediator satisfies the conditions

109. Kallen, op. cit., pp. 31-32.

110. Cf. Dennefeld, op. cit., pp. 168-70, who refers to Job's appeal for an arbiter in 9:33 and 31:35a; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 23; Dubarle, op. cit., p. 85, who cites 9:33; Cornill, op. cit., p. 429, who refers to 9:34-35 and 13:20-21; Beeby, op. cit., p. 45, who lists 9:33; 16:19-22; and 19:21. According to Stier, op. cit., p. 240, the conception of Elihu as mediator (9:33; 16:21) integrates well into the framework of the poem; he comments, however, p. 244: "Es ist nicht unsere Sache, im Streit um ihn als Schiedsmann zu befinden."

111. Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 24.

established by Job in 9:33-35 and 13:20-21 concerning the appearance of God. As a precondition to a fair trial, Job has insisted, in effect, that Yahweh relinquish his divinity, that he cease being God. Therefore, if Yahweh were to accede to the terms laid down by Job, he would appear not as God but as an ordinary man. Thus, in the words of Cornill, "Elihu fulfils the condition which Yahweh, on poetical grounds, is unable to fulfil."¹¹²

Beeby likens the conception of Elihu as mediator to the covenant mediators elsewhere in the Old Testament, such as Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Jeremiah and II Isaiah. In his judgment, the central issue of the book is the presentation of the Israelite faith to the Gentiles. Neither Job nor the three friends are themselves Israelites. Elihu, too, is a non-Israelite, but his name is Hebraic and his lineage boasts some of the most illustrious names from Israel's past (Abraham, Judah and David). Elihu, then, occupies a unique position, on the basis of which to minister to Job: on the one hand, he like Job is a non-Israelite; on the other hand, his celebrated ancestry enables him to present Israel's God to Job. Beeby interprets Elihu as "a covenant mediator in Wisdom dress," and suggests the strong possibility that the go'el of 19:26 is Elihu himself.¹¹³

112. Cornill, op. cit., p. 429; cf. Möller, op. cit., pp. 102-03. Cf. also Green, op. cit., p. 697: it was incompatible with the dignity of God to enter into a dispute with Job; hence the task of justifying God's actions is delegated to Elihu.

113. Beeby, op. cit., pp. 42-45, 50-52.

While Terrien declares that the speeches of Elihu are "comparable to a vestibule of the holy of holies,"¹¹⁴ McKay characterises Elihu as a "proto-charismatic" preparing the way for the healing work of God: "He thus appears, performs his bridging role and then fades from the scene, his sole function being to take up the important threads of the discussion, dispose of some of its misleading implications and reorientate it in the direction of healing. Therefore what Elihu is actually doing while he speaks is about as important as what he is saying." Thus, chapters 32-37 demand a response other than academic: the appeal of the discourses is as much to the heart as to the mind.¹¹⁵

Hemraj views Elihu as fulfilling a significant "missionary" role in the design of the book. The speeches of chapters 32-37 he analyses into two principal divisions: a first negative section, chapters 33-35 (a refutation of Job's self-defence); and a second positive section, chapters 36-37 (persuasion on God's behalf). The appearance of Elihu contributes to the spiritual enlightenment of Job by providing an explanation of the various ways in which God's self-revelation is manifest in the world and within man, and it is this "missionary" role

114. Terrien, "Book of Job," IB, 3, p. 1169; cf. Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 245; Terrien, Job: Poet of Existence, p. 190. Cf. also Rohr Sauer, op. cit., pp. 267ff.

115. J.W. McKay, "Elihu - A Proto-Charismatic?" The Expository Times, 90 (1978-79), pp. 167-71. Italics in the original.

which prepares Job for the decisive encounter with God that follows immediately in chapter 38.¹¹⁶

Some authors interpret the Elihu pericope as a necessary interlude between Job's concluding discourse (chapters 29-31) and the appearance of God (chapters 38ff.). The challenge of Job in chapter 31, Budde contends, could not have led directly to the theophany; in such a circumstance, the appearance of God could have resulted only in the immediate destruction of Job.¹¹⁷ Sellin suggests that the discourses of Elihu serve to temper the severity of the Divine speeches;¹¹⁸ but Lowth indicates that the "lenity and moderation" of Elihu's speech serves as a contrast to the three friends: "As the characters of his detractors were in all respects calculated to inflame the mind of Job, that of this arbitrator is admirably adapted to soothe and compose it: to this point the whole drift of the argument tends, and on this the very purport of it seems to depend."¹¹⁹

A number of scholars emphasise the antithetical relationship between the discourse of Elihu and the response of God. Thus Andersen declares that chapters 32-37 are intentionally weak and turgid in contrast to the Divine speeches, in which

116. Hemraj, op. cit., pp. 63-68, 72ff.

117. Budde, Buch Hiob, p. xxxviii.

118. Sellin, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 219.

119. Robert Lowth, Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews (4th ed. trans. G. Gregory; London, 1839), vol. 2, p. 386.

the author displays his full literary artistry.¹²⁰ Similarly, Herder and Briggs interpret the Elihu chapters as a "foil" to the speech of God.¹²¹ And Gaster comments that Elihu is a "brash young theological student" who receives his comeuppance in the Divine speeches where he is "hoisted with his own petard by having his ratiocinations condemned as mere plebeian mortal arguments!"¹²²

To summarise: in contrast to the view that the Elihu pericope constitutes a worthless addition to the book of Job, a substantial number of scholars affirm its importance, whether for its distinctive concepts of a mediator or the pedagogical function of affliction, or as a suitable transition to the theophany. Moreover, a not inconsiderable number of critics who deny the authenticity of the Elihu speeches nonetheless interpret them as a valuable supplement to the original book. Thus, the view that the speeches were

120. Andersen, op. cit., p. 51. Cf. Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 17n. In the view of Robert Laurin, "The Theological Structure of Job," Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 84 (1972), p. 89, n. 10, the antithesis is conveyed in the Elihu chapters themselves: they prepare for the theophany by contrasting the paucity of the friends' arguments with the strength of the divine response.

121. J.C. Herder, The Spirit of Hebrew Poetry, trans. James Marsh (Burlington, 1833), vol. 1, p. 88; Briggs, op. cit., p. 353.

122. Theodor H. Gaster, Myth, Legend, and Custom in the Old Testament (London, 1969), pp. 784-85. Cf. Heinrich August Hahn, Commentar ueber das Buch Hiob (Berlin, 1850), pp. 17-18; Genung, op. cit., p. 81. Cf. also H.H. Rowley, Job (The Century Bible; London, 1976), p. 209.

a later addition and were composed by a different author does not necessarily result in a diminution of their value.

The modern, critical era of Biblical scholarship, as illustrated in this section, has been characterised by an essentially diachronic approach to the text; thus, irrespective of intrinsic merit, the question of authorship is determinative of function. Recent years, however, have witnessed a fundamental shift in Biblical interpretation: namely, the upsurge in synchronic or holistic approaches to the text. In these, the question of authorship is greatly de-emphasised; literary, not historical, context is determinative of function.

III

The proliferation of a variety of new interpretative approaches, representing a fundamental transition in methodology, has been one of the most significant developments in Biblical scholarship in the past several decades. Heretofore, Biblical research was characterised predominantly by a concern (according to some, a preoccupation) with "historical" methods of criticism. Biblical scholarship was analytic in method and diachronic in scope, involved with questions of historicity and source analysis, the objective of which was to determine the intention of the original author or the original context of a particular passage. Among historical-critical scholars, it was often the practice to eliminate the

speeches of Elihu when considering the interpretation of the book of Job as a whole, insofar as these speeches were judged to be a later addition. But a profound dissatisfaction with the results, or lack of results, of conventional scholarship has led to the emergence of methods of interpretation which exhibit a radical change in hermeneutics from a predominantly historicist perspective to a primarily holistic approach. The critical basis has undergone a transition from a diachronic emphasis to a concern with the synchronic aspects of the text. The Biblical text in its final form occupies centrality of position.*

An important feature of the development of non-historicist interpretation is the conviction that the Bible as a work of literature must be read as literature, with an emphasis on the literary qualities of the text: structures, themes, narrative techniques, poetic forms. Interest in the Bible as literature, however, is not to be regarded as merely a recent phenomenon. In fact, it antedated what has come to be known as traditional Biblical criticism, but the literary appreciation of the text was effectively replaced by "scientific" criticism. The current development represents, then, properly speaking, a renaissance of interest in the literary analysis of the Bible.

This section is a survey, by no means exhaustive, of a

* A discussion of the assumptions, methods and implications of holistic interpretation follows in chapter 3.

number of holistic interpretative approaches to the book of Job. While they will illustrate the non-traditional methods of interpretation that are a comparatively recent trend in Biblical studies, it is nonetheless appropriate to mention at the outset the earlier important work by Richard G. Moulton, The Literary Study of the Bible, originally published in 1895.

Moulton set out to make a "distinctively" literary study, leaving aside questions of history and theology. He began his volume with an examination of the book of Job as a work of literature, which he found to contain "all the leading varieties of literary form": a dialogue in verse within a framework of prose story, possessing dramatic, epic, lyrical and rhetorical effects. The whole book he described as "a philosophical discussion dramatized" on the theme of the mystery of human suffering. The Prologue suggests a first solution: suffering is "Heaven's test of goodness." Eliphaz (4:12-17) presents the view which is maintained throughout the Dialogue by the three friends and which is to be regarded as a second solution: "all Suffering is a judgment upon Sin." Elihu articulates (33:15-30) a third solution to the mystery: suffering is one of the ways in which God "warns and restores men." A fourth solution is furnished in the Divine speech (38-41): "the whole universe is an unfathomed Mystery, in which the Evil is not more mysterious than the Good and the Great." The Epilogue presents a fifth solution: the proper

attitude toward the mystery of suffering, "that the strong faith of Job, which could even reproach God as a friend reproaches a friend, was more acceptable to Him than the servile adoration which sought to twist the truth in order to magnify God."¹²³

Richard B. Sewall, The Vision of Tragedy, affords an interesting contrast to Moulton's study. Like Moulton, Sewall is a professor of English, concerned with analysing works of literature. But, as he traces the tragic vision from Job to the present, he reveals a striking perception of Israelite history and theology, the "cultural situation" from which Job developed. The tragic vision, according to Sewall, is not a systematic view of life, but admits of wide differences and degrees. Yet at its base is the sense of ancient evil, the "permanence and the mystery of human suffering." In addition, the tragic vision is not for those who would become quietist; it impels the man of action to fight against his destiny and state his case before God and his fellows; it impels the artist toward "boundary-situations," or man at the limit of human possibility as was Job on the heap of ashes. The Hebrews, declares Sewall, were a people "possessed of the tragic sense of life":

123. Richard G. Moulton, The Literary Study of The Bible: An Account of the Leading Forms of Literature Represented in The Sacred Writings (rev. ed.; Boston, 1909), pp. vi, 6-7, 20, 22, 24, 33, 41.

The Hebraic answer to the question of existence was never unambiguous or utopian; the double vision of tragedy - the snake in the garden, the paradox of man born in the image of God and yet recalcitrant, tending to go wrong - permeates the Scriptures. No case is ever clear-cut, no hero or prophet entirely faultless. The Hebrews were the least sentimental and romantic of peoples. The Old Testament stories are heavy with irony, often of the most sardonic kind.¹²⁴

The tragic vision of the Hebrews was rooted, firstly, in their strong, critical sense, their skepticism. A substantial literature of dissent grew out of their sense of inequity created by the inefficacy of the orthodox doctrine of retribution. A second source of the Hebraic tragic vision was their conception of God as a righteous, just and loving deity, a deity to whom one could appeal in the name of any of these virtues. Here, in Sewall's view, is the key to interpreting Job. While Job's disillusionment is "deeply personal, as from a cosmic breach of faith," the protest of the author of Job, though critical of God, derives not from fear or hate but from love.¹²⁵

With the poet of Job, Sewall suggests, the tragic vision of the Hebrews is "fulfilled in tragic form." To present Job's case, the "single-voiced" lament or diatribe is not

124. Richard B. Sewall, The Vision of Tragedy (new ed.; New Haven, Conn.; 1980), pp. 4-6, 10.

125. Ibid., pp. 10-11.

adequate. His case is not clear; every aspect of his painful dilemma must be given voice. The friends are partly right, and he is partly wrong. He is justified in complaining against his God, and at the same time he is deeply guilty. The dramatic form chosen by the poet in calling into question the providence of God allows for "the sustained tension throughout the thrust-and-parry of ideas, the balancing of points of view in the challenge-and-response of argument" which is the "inner logic, or dialectic, of the tragic form." It is a significant method of expressing a statement about the nature of truth, for in tragedy truth is not portrayed as a harmonious whole, but is "many-faceted, ambiguous, a sum of irreconcilables," whence comes in part its "terror."¹²⁶

Concerning the speeches of Elihu, Sewall observes that although they repeat tediously much of what the three friends have said, and are generally regarded as not the work of the original poet, they have the distinction of dealing not so much with Job's previous sinfulness as with his present pride. Elihu advises that Job must see in God's chastisement not only discipline and a just judgment, but also "delivery." Furthermore, Job must turn from thinking about his affliction to contemplation of the wonders of God's universe. Thus the Elihu speeches prepare for the appearance of God in the whirlwind and constitute a "bridge" between Job's concluding speech (31)

126. Ibid., pp. 13-14.

and the Divine discourse (38-41).¹²⁷

The interpretation of Henn is not in agreement with that of Sewall concerning the tragic form of Job: the book is "nearly, but not quite, a tragedy." As for Elihu, he is arrogant, and merely repeats the stereotyped arguments of the friends. For the reader, disappointed to find that the young man has nothing new to say, it is "some little consolation" to know that the Elihu passage is generally held to be an insertion made later to confirm orthodox doctrine. Henn notes, however, that chapters 32-37 are "far more abstract, less rich in forceful imagery" than the rest of the book, and as such, serve as a "poetic foil" to the first Divine speech.¹²⁸

The literary technique of irony to which Sewall alludes is emphasised by a number of commentators on the book of Job. On the basis of an examination of the theme of irony in the books of the Old Testament, Good concludes that to recognise the pervasiveness of irony is to "make an affirmation about the Old Testament's literary quality": "it is to ask, How do Old Testament writers say what they say?" If these writers express some of their ideas through irony, Good perceives the possibility "that they have said something different from, or more complex than, what we had supposed." But he decides

127. Ibid., pp. 22-23.

128. T.R. Henn, The Bible as Literature (London, 1970), pp. 145, 151.

that the few ironic utterances directed by Elihu toward Job are not, finally, different from those of the friends. Elihu, however, though slow in coming to the point, is worth hearing. Unlike the friends, he seems to understand the divine grace, and he does not correlate the divine transcendence with man's necessary impurity, as Eliphaz has done. Moreover, Elihu's concluding challenge to Job (37:14-20) forms a natural transition to the advent of God in chapter 38.¹²⁹

In the opinion of Robertson, irony "provides the decisive key" to understanding Job. On the basis of the fundamental presupposition that the Old Testament is to be interpreted as "pure" or imaginative literature, and the premise that each part of the received text should be read in the light of the book as a whole, Robertson concludes that "irony pervades the entire book." God himself is made the object of an "ironic joke" by means of the character Elihu. At the end of chapter 31, the reader expects the appearance of God, but in "one of the supreme anticlimaxes in all of literature," Elihu appears instead. He is "an extraordinarily comical figure ... a youthful, high-spirited, pompous, cock-sure reincarnation of the friends." He believes with Eliphaz that Job's suffering is the result of sinful conduct, and therefore urges repentance. He "anticipates" God's moves: like God, he assumes that he is superior to Job and that Job is guilty;

129. Edwin M. Good, Irony in the Old Testament (London, 1965), pp. 9-10, 209-11.

his language is inflated; his description (36:22ff.) of God's wondrous works even anticipates the Divine speech. All this is very laughable from Elihu, and when God speaks and imitates him "in word and gesture and attitude," it becomes very difficult to maintain reverence for the deity.¹³⁰

J.G. Williams views Elihu similarly as a comic figure, indeed, the most comical of all the actors in the drama. Williams' evaluation of chapters 32-37, however, is considerably less severe than Robertson's: Elihu is "somewhat ludicrous, but also sensible for all that."¹³¹

Whedbee sets the book of Job in the genre of comedy. He explains that he is not equating comedy with laughter, but rather focusing on a concept of comedy which has at least two central elements: (1) a perception of incongruity that operates on the level of the ironic, the ludicrous and the ridiculous; and (2) a U-shaped plot, that is, a plot line which ultimately results in a happy ending and the restoration of the hero. Elihu is interpreted by Whedbee as a comic character in the context of the book as a whole. His entrance in chapter 32, when everything previously points to God's appearance, is "an ironic reversal of expectation," and an example of the incongruity in the book. Elihu, like the friends, seems intended by the author to play the role of the

130. David Robertson, The Old Testament and the Literary Critic (Philadelphia, 1977), pp. vii, 34, 47-48, 53-54.

131. James G. Williams, "Comedy, Irony, Intercession: A Few Notes in Response," Semeia, 7 (1977), pp. 135-40.

alazon or buffoon. As the friends are caricatured in their role as "old" sages, so Elihu is caricatured as the "angry young man" who aspires to be the one who will defend the ways of God.¹³²

To Greenberg, the book of Job is characterised throughout by reversal and subversion "in sudden shifts of mood and role and in a rhetoric of sarcasm and irony." Elihu marginally surpasses the friends in affirming that God does speak to man, that not all suffering is punitive, and that contemplation of nature's wonders opens the mind to God's greatness. The unconventional representation of youth outdoing age, according to Greenberg, bespeaks the author of the rest of the poem, whose hallmark is subversion of tradition.¹³³

In the view of Alonso Schökel, the book of Job suffers from rational or dogmatic interpretations which have attempted to imprison it within a coherent and integral doctrine. "A supposed objectivity, neutral and disinterested, is not the best approach to this unique work." Alonso Schökel stresses the dramatic conflict in the book: Job is a drama with little action and much passion, or better, with much intellectual action involving an impassioned debate. When it is read as drama, it becomes intelligible in its unity; it recovers its

132. J. William Whedbee, "The Comedy of Job," Semeia, 7 (1977), pp. 3-5, 18-20.

133. Moshe Greenberg, "Job," in The Literary Guide to the Bible, ed. Robert Alter and Frank Kermode (Cambridge, Mass., 1987), pp. 283, 297.

force of expression and its appeal. But to understand the drama, the reader must enter into the action with his own responses or questions, as does Elihu. He is a character from the audience who, unable to contain himself any longer, jumps on the stage and begins to speak as if he were a member of the cast. He is an intruder in terms of the play's construction, an impulsive volunteer in terms of the cast, a witness to the provocative power of the drama. This, according to Alonso Schökel, is why the book was written: to transform the audience into the cast. Similarly, the reader must enter and participate in the action, whereupon he will find himself under the gaze of God and be subjected to a test through the perennial drama of Job. Alonso Schökel finds a magnificent irony in that the character of God becomes a spectator and a judge of the audience viewed as characters.¹³⁴

Alter's chief interest in the book of Job is not in its drama but in its poetry. He suggests that exploration of the problem of theodicy in Job cannot be separated from the poetic vehicle. The intent of the text is missed by reading it "as a paraphrasable philosophic argument merely embellished or made more arresting by poetic devices." The book is "arguably the greatest achievement of all biblical poetry." Its author attains the full emotional measure by a brilliant use of poetic intensifications. Alter interprets

134. Luis Alonso Schökel, "Toward a Dramatic Reading of the Book of Job," Semeia, 7 (1977), pp. 46-47.

the function of the Elihu pericope as anticipatory and bridging (cf. Robertson and Sewall respectively). The poet responsible for its inclusion is aware of the "culminating function" of the Divine speeches, of which chapters 32-37 are at least in part anticipations. There are "occasional and significant adumbrations" of the Voice from the whirlwind in the discourses of Job and the friends. But of all the extended anticipations, the speeches of Elihu and the Wisdom poem of chapter 28 exhibit the "greatest degree of consonance." Elihu as "an irascible, presumptuous blowhard" is not a likely candidate to be a spokesman for God. The immediate proximity of the Elihu passage to God's speech, however, contributes to the high degree of consonancy. Also, the cosmic images which occur in chapter 36:26-33 and in chapter 37, and which will recur in the speeches of God, constitute a "clear structural bridge" to the Divine address.¹³⁵

In direct contrast to Alter, Polzin interprets the underlying pattern in Job as one of contradictions. Few books in the Old Testament "have discrepancy and contradiction so central to their make-up." The usual approach, the removal of the various inconsistencies in the present text, ultimately destroys the message. In Polzin's opinion, a central theme is the contradiction between what a member of society should

135. Robert Alter, The Art of Biblical Narrative (London, 1981), pp. 76, 87-91.

believe and what he actually experiences. Man is taught that God, who is omnipotent and supremely just, rewards with good fortune those who obey him and punishes with suffering those who disobey. Personal experience, however, contradicts this doctrine. Polzin's analysis of Job focuses on the two most obviously essential characters, God and Job, and treats the book as a dramatic narrative involving four main segments or "movements," each of which centres on the relationship between Job and God and sets up or resolves contradiction between faith and experience. The movements are: (1) God afflicts Job (1-37); (2) God appears to Job (38-42:6); (3) God states that Job has spoken correctly (42:7-9); (4) God restores Job (42:10-17). The framework, then, of the book appears to be "a dialectical working out of a series of contradictions" in four main sequential functional units.¹³⁶

When the rest of the dramatic personae are considered, it is noted that the convictions of everyone are contradicted by someone or something else. For example, God's opinion of Job is opposed by Satan; Job's initial reaction to his misfortune is not to curse God as his wife has urged; Job's introductory speech is rejected by Eliphaz, whose opening discourse is in turn rejected by Job; God speaks out

136. Robert M. Polzin, Biblical Structuralism: Method and Subjectivity in the Study of Ancient Texts (Philadelphia, 1977), pp. 57-72.

of the whirlwind to correct Job, only to portray Job as not in need of correction. As for Elihu, his anger is inflamed against Job because the latter regards himself as righteous rather than God, and against the friends because they have not found an answer and thus have made God appear to be guilty. In short, there is "a pattern of opposition" in the book of Job: everyone is in some manner against someone else, and no position taken remains unchallenged.¹³⁷

In contrast to the distinctively literary, and thus "non-theological," approach of the authors cited above, a number of holistic interpretations may be classified as "literary-theological," that is, an integrated approach in which literary analysis is not divorced from theological exposition.

Habel, in his commentary published in the Old Testament Library series, presents a composite interpretation of Job as an integrated literary and theological work. He believes that "the artistic and the theological are closely interwoven": the meaning is found "in the interplay of literary design and theological idea." Interpreting Job as a "literary totality," Habel suggests that it is modelled on the traditional Biblical narrative and that this model is modified by the extension of the dialogue into lengthy speeches which complicate the action. The result is not a disparate collection of narrative and speech materials with little

137. Ibid., pp. 106-07.

connection, but rather a coherent plot structure developed in three major movements, each with a formal beginning and ending: (1) God afflicts the hero - the hidden conflict (1-2:10); (2) the hero challenges God - the conflict explored (2:11-31:40); (3) God challenges the hero - the conflict resolved (32:1-42:17).¹³⁸

This analysis clearly places the speeches of Elihu within the third movement of the plot as an integral part of the book's structure. Habel recognises the criticisms by scholars of Elihu's lack of originality and failure to make a significant contribution to the problem of suffering, but he argues that the "answer" contained in chapters 32-37 is forensic and dramatic rather than theological. Elihu's entrance, not as one of the friends, but as an arbiter, is a logical response to Job's call for someone to handle his case in court (31:35). As part of the narrative plan, Elihu presents the answer of orthodoxy in apparent resolution of the legal dispute. "The Elihu scene is thus a foil, a deliberate anticlimax," which slows the story and leads the audience to expect an ending which is the opposite of what will actually happen in chapters 38-42.¹³⁹

Habel considers Elihu "the exemplar of the alazon."

A "brash and verbose know-it-all," he carries the orthodoxy

138. Norman C. Habel, The Book of Job (The Old Testament Library; London, 1985), pp. 9, 26-27, 35, 70-73.

139. Ibid., pp. 32-33, 36-37.

of the friends to the absurd, presumes to act as judge in God's place, and is patronising toward Job to whom he feels superior. But unknowingly he exposes his true character (32:18-19) when he applies to himself language which Eliphaz has used (15:2) of a bombastic fool full of hot air.¹⁴⁰

A less severe appraisal of Elihu is given by Habel in an article written at a slightly earlier date. Applying therein Alter's principles of holistic interpretation to the book of Job, Habel underscores its literary unity. Elihu is not "an intrusive afterthought of an inept editor or a late addition of the poet giving his mature 'answer' to the meaning of suffering." Elihu plays the role of the arbiter (mōkīah, 32:12) for whom Job has asked (9:33; cf. 16:21). In this role Elihu summons Job to "present" ('rk) his case and "take his stand" (yṣb, hithpa'el) in court (33:5). The verdict which Elihu pronounces is an appropriate ending to the narrative in an age when direct appearances of God are mere memories from the heroic past; God's surprise response from the whirlwind is an unexpected complication in the plot. It is noteworthy that in this study of Job, Habel does not characterise Elihu as the fool. On the contrary, his view is charitable: Elihu "makes something of a fool of himself (32:6-22). Yet as the speeches continue, he reveals a measure of the theological acumen which challenges ideas of

140. Ibid., pp. 53, 444, 454, 465, 486.

his companions."¹⁴¹

Janzen also stresses careful attention to the literary character of the Biblical text, but emphasises that his commentary on Job does not involve a purely literary reading of the Biblical material. The Interpretation series, to which his volume belongs, is intended to fulfil the needs of students, teachers and clergymen for a contemporary expository commentary. The purpose is to present an interpretation of the books of the Bible which integrates historical-critical research and theological exposition. Janzen explains that the aim of his commentary is not to "exegete" or lead out from the text, but to "eisegete" or lead the reader into the text. With respect to the literary integrity of the text, he believes that the issue ultimately comes to how the book is read: specifically, can Job be read as a whole? And can it be read as a whole "inclusive of much tension and turbulence between its parts, such that the very form of the book itself contains part of its meaning (so that neglect or tampering with the form distorts the meaning)?" In this context, Janzen is convinced that the book can be interpreted as a whole, and that the literary form of the poem, including elements of dissonance and tension among the various parts, conveys in itself an aspect of the book's meaning.¹⁴²

141. Norman C. Habel, "The Narrative Art of Job: Applying the Principles of Robert Alter," JSOT, 27 (1983), pp. 105, 108.

142. J. Gerald Janzen, Job (Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching; Atlanta, Ga., 1985), pp. v, 15, 24. Italics in the original.

Elihu appears as a prophet claiming divine inspiration; in Janzen's view, however, Elihu serves the narrative in a way similar to the snake in the garden (Gen. 3) or the group of prophets against Micaiah (I Kings 22:5-28). The "inspired" speech of Elihu stands immediately alongside the Divine speech from the tempest in order to create a situation in which Job must decide which "revelation" is the authentic word of God. At the same time, the latter part of Elihu's discourse (36:24-37:24) sets the stage for the theophany of God. The speeches of Elihu may also serve as a critique of Israel's prophetic tradition "by re-presenting the simple retributive doctrines of the friends as inspired (prophetic) utterance in the mouth of Elihu, and then by subverting that 'inspired' utterance" through its contrast with the Divine address.¹⁴³

A theological-literary approach is adopted also by Alonso Schökel, as the subtitle to his commentary indicates (in contrast to his article in Semeia, discussed above, pages 94-95). According to Alonso Schökel, chapters 32-37 do not belong to the original work, nor have they been added by the same author; they represent rather a later work of inferior quality, which disturbs the original unity of the book. Alonso Schökel therefore advises reading Job in the first place omitting the Elihu pericope, following which the speeches are to be read in the light of the book. He suggests that a

143. Ibid., pp. 217, 223-25.

reader of the original text, provocative as it was, may have become irritated and composed a refutation: of the friends because of the weakness of their argumentation, and of Job because he has offended God; dissatisfied with the Divine answer as well, this subsequent author has attempted to improve upon it. His literary process is "simple and interesting": from reader he has transformed himself into speaker seeking a proper judgment. It is as if during a dramatic performance a person from the audience joins the characters on the stage, and other spectators will think his entrance a dramatic device. Elihu has no permission from the author or the other characters. He is an intruder; he speaks, thinking that he has something important to say, but what he has to say is at the expense of the work.¹⁴⁴

Sawyer, on the other hand, claims that the Elihu speeches cannot be rejected without destroying the symmetry of the book of Job. He discerns a clear two-part structure to the book: the three cycles of comforters' speeches in the first corresponding to the three sets of speeches, by Job, Elihu and God, in the second. The two parts are separated by chapter 28, which may be a comment by the author, rather like the chorus in a Greek tragedy, in which he looks back on the inadequacy of human wisdom as set forth in Part I, and forward to the divine wisdom of Part II. The two sections

144. Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, Job: Comentario teológico y literario, pp. 456-57.

are placed within the framework of a prologue, including prose narrative and a poetic utterance by Job (3); and an epilogue, including a poetic utterance by Job (42:2-6) and prose narrative. The contrast between Part I which ends in disarray or the failure of human wisdom, and Part II which ends with a description of two of God's most powerful creatures, Behemoth and Leviathan, is "surely deliberate." The symmetrical structure and dramatic unity of the book as a whole confirm Sawyer's belief that it resulted from "creative composition rather than arbitrary compilation." Regarded in this light, the position of the Elihu speeches, midway between Job's soliloquy (29-31) and the climactic Divine speeches, may also be considered significant. Sawyer suggests that the omission of any mention of Elihu in the Prologue, which is often taken as evidence supporting a later addition of the Elihu chapters, may have a quite different explanation. For example, the Prologue bears the marks of long folk-tale tradition, in which one of the stereotyped motifs was the arrival of three wise men from the east. The author may have deliberately omitted a reference to the fourth comforter rather than interfere with the ancient literary convention. In any case, such a small inconsistency does not justify the assumption that the speeches of Elihu are not an integral part of the book.¹⁴⁵

145. Sawyer, "Authorship and Structure of the Book of Job," Studia Biblica 1978 I. Old Testament, pp. 254-57.

The literary and the theological approach to Job is likewise combined in the monograph of Zerafa, who states that the question from an exegetical standpoint is: can the book legitimately be studied and interpreted as a single whole? Zerafa believes that the study should begin with the finished book and then proceed to a consideration of the various literary units. When the whole text is read against the historical and cultural background of the first period after the return from the Exile, it reveals a well-defined theological problem and a peculiar doctrinal viewpoint which perfectly suits its present structure. This does not exclude, of course, a certain amount of development in the pre-literary stage and literary pre-history of the book. If chapter 28 and the Elihu speeches are removed on the ground that they interrupt the smooth and progressive flow of thought, this literary masterpiece is deprived of what is most distinctive in Hebrew thought and diction. Zerafa maintains that Job should be cherished as a brilliant example of the rib-pattern: the book in its present form is made up of multiple clashes between the various characters of the drama and thus "faithfully reflects the author's cultural context where nothing is ever final, and everything remains open to discussion and revision." Zerafa points out that the author has pitted the characters against each other throughout the Dialogue so that they reveal each other's foolishness. Job denounces the three friends, and they in turn reject his accusations; Elihu shows

both Job and the friends to be wrong. "The author is evidently trying to demolish the wisdom edifice, using as instruments the wisdom protagonists themselves."¹⁴⁶

In comparison with the foregoing authors, Childs' approach to Job is distinctively theological. Interpreting the speeches of Elihu from the perspective of their function within the canonical book, Childs concludes that, regardless of the question of their authenticity, they have no independent role. On the contrary, they function as a commentary or supplement to the Divine speeches, shaping the reader's perception of God's response. They shift the theological attention from Job's questions of justice to divine omnipotence and thus offer a view on suffering, creation and the nature of wisdom itself. Elihu utilises the theme of divine discipline in an attempt to force Job out of the theological dilemma of assuming that, if God does not accept his innocence, God is lacking either in justice or in power. Elihu reasserts the integral relationship between wisdom and creation by re-emphasising the sustaining work of creation. The concluding hymn in chapter 37 provides the climactic hermeneutical link between the speeches and the Divine response.¹⁴⁷

It is appropriate, following this examination of a number

146. Zerafa, op. cit., pp. 16-17, 52-53, 59.

147. Brevard S. Childs, Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture (London, 1979), pp. 540-41.

of holistic studies of the Elihu speeches, to undertake an assessment of the aims, methods and suppositions of holistic interpretation.

CHAPTER III

HOLISTIC CRITICISM: AN EVALUATION

In the preceding chapter, various recent approaches to the book of Job were discussed under the heading of "holistic" criticism. The purpose of the present chapter is to explore the theological and hermeneutical implications of a holistic approach to Biblical study as a prolegomenon to a critical analysis of the canonical function of the Elihu pericope. As indicated in chapter two, the various approaches may be classified most conveniently under the rubrics of "theological" and "non-theological" holistic modes of criticism. It is essential, therefore, to reiterate the hermeneutical distinction between a "theological" and a "non-theological" approach: the term "theological" does not imply an excessive, biblicistic hermeneutic, a method of interpretation whereby religious or theological considerations may tend to acquire priority over the linguistic evidence. It denotes simply the contrast between the Bible as "scripture" and the Bible as "literature." It is not tantamount to a denial that the Bible is literature (which, of course, it is) or to a denigration of its value as literature; it is merely a recognition of the function, indeed the primary function, of the Bible as scripture. The term

"theological" presupposes no personal commitment on the part of the interpreter; it implies nothing more than a fundamental recognition of the special function of the Bible as a document of faith and the hermeneutical implications of such for the study of the Biblical material. The present chapter, as indicated, will focus principally on theological holistic modes of interpretation. As the previous chapter has shown, however, a significant aspect of the recent phenomenon of holistic Biblical criticism is the close affinity with certain of the principles of modern secular literary criticism.¹ Thus, a preliminary summary of the salient presuppositions of a literary-critical approach to the Bible may illuminate the points of contrast between "theological" and "non-theological" criticism.

I. The Literary-Critical Approach to the Bible

In The Old Testament and the Literary Critic,² David Robertson outlines the methods, aims and implications of a

1. See above, pp. 87ff.

2. David Robertson, The Old Testament and the Literary Critic (Guides to Biblical Scholarship, Old Testament Series; Philadelphia, 1977). Note the distinction between this volume and Norman Habel's Literary Criticism of the Old Testament, also in the Guides to Biblical Scholarship Series, which is more properly concerned with "source" analysis. By contrast, the approach outlined by Robertson corresponds to the aims and methods of modern secular literary criticism. The following analysis of the literary approach to the Bible draws extensively upon Robertson's work, especially pp. 1-15. Only direct quotations will be cited by page numbers.

literary-critical approach to the study of the Bible.³ The process of literary criticism is defined as the study of "pure," as opposed to "applied," literature. Thus a literary approach to the Bible necessitates a fundamental paradigm change; that is, the Biblical material is interpreted as "pure" or "imaginative" literature as opposed to "applied" literature. "Pure" or "imaginative" denotes literary works which are intended to serve no practical objective; their purpose is non-utilitarian. By contrast, "applied" signifies works of literature which are designedly utilitarian in purpose. Robertson hastens to point out that to read the Bible as "pure" literature is an intentional decision; the Bible itself (which, for the most part, was originally intended as "applied" literature) does not intrinsically demand such an assumption.⁴ Thus a radical paradigm change, for example, reading the Gospels as literature, may rightly be regarded as arbitrary and as a serious misrepresentation of the true meaning.

3. Robertson's focus, as his title indicates, is the Old Testament and not the Christian Bible as a whole. For the New Testament context, see the companion volume by Norman R. Petersen, Literary Criticism for New Testament Critics (Guides to Biblical Scholarship, New Testament Series; Philadelphia, 1978).
4. Cf. the judgment of Edwin M. Good, "Job and the Literary Task: A Response," Soundings, 56 (1973), p. 484: "We will help our students to read and understand Job for themselves better by making them read and understand Shakespeare or Virgil than by making them read and understand Augustine or Moltmann." Whatever the merit of this statement, it is particularly instructive with respect to methodological presuppositions.

This fundamental change in methodology underscores the contrast between literary criticism and traditional Biblical scholarship. Furthermore, in contradistinction to historical-critical exegesis, a literary approach regards a work of literature as a unity for the purpose of interpretation. That is to say, the text in its present form constitutes a whole; and while individual sections may vary in importance, every part of the text is integral to the meaning of the whole. Similarly, the question of authorship is immaterial to the critical process. The literary critic operates on the assumption of a single author.⁵ The fact that a text, for example, the book of Genesis, in its present form, is the end result of a long process of development and consists of originally independent sources is of subsidiary importance.

The literary-critical approach presupposes the literary integrity of the text in question. The critical task is not complete until all of the individual parts of a work of literature have been interpreted meaningfully in relation to the text as a whole. Whenever possible, this involves the principle of synecdoche, according to which a part is

5. In actuality, however, a literary approach does not ipso facto presuppose that the text in question is a unity for the purpose of interpretation; cf. David Daiches, God and the Poets (Oxford, 1984), pp. vi, 21, wherein the author, a literary critic and literary historian, omits the Elihu speeches from the interpretation of the book. Chapters 32-37 are also excluded from consideration in The Book of Job, trans. and intro. by Stephen Mitchell (San Francisco, 1987).

substituted for the whole or the whole for a part. Thus the individual parts of a work of literature exist not only in metaphoric relation to reality, but also in metaphoric relation to one another and to the text as a totality. A comprehensive interpretation of the Joseph story in Genesis involves both a structural and linguistic analysis of chapters 37, 39-50 and a consideration of their relationship to chapters 1-11 (the primeval history) and 12-36 (the stories of Abraham and Isaac), as well as the interposition of chapter 38 which relates the deception of Judah by Tamar. The aim of literary criticism is to perceive the microcosmic character of the Joseph pericope not only in relation to the book of Genesis itself but also in relation to the Bible as a whole.

Insofar as works of literature are essentially metaphoric, it is the nature of literary criticism to be "agglutinative" rather than "analytic." Literary interpretation may involve the process of analysis; however, the ultimate goal is always "assimilative, inclusive." As a result, tensions and dissonances within texts are highlighted, a process which, in the case of the Bible, is unavoidable because much of the material therein is simply non-assimilable. Robertson comments that "such tensions make the structure of literary works complex and ambiguous, giving their verbal texture richness and density."⁶ The rhetorical study of

6. Robertson, op. cit., p. 7.

such features will always be an important aspect of the literary-critical approach to the Bible.

With regard to the methods of literary criticism, Robertson emphasises the "hypothetical and self-referential" character of a work of literature: a literary text is a hypothetical construct, the key to the interpretation of which derives from within the text itself. That is, by means of the conventions which characterise the text in question, it is possible to determine the genre to which it belongs, a process which of necessity involves the study of literature other than the particular entity under consideration. Thus Robertson writes:

To consider the Bible as literature, then, means to incorporate it within the vast body of literature as a whole and to study its relationship with the other parts of that body. To consider a work within the Bible as literature involves determination of genre and interpretation according to the conventions of that genre.⁷

The investigation of genre highlights an important, but problematic, presupposition of literary criticism, namely, the essentially arbitrary process involved in the selection of context for resolving the question of genre. There is no objective literary criterion on the basis of which to choose one context over another. It is the nature of literary criticism that a particular context is not intrinsically

7. Ibid., p. 9.

superior to any other; all contexts enjoy equal validity. As a result, literary study of a Biblical text will produce a multiplicity of interpretations. As context modifies the process of criticism, the interpretation of the book of Job stands in relation to its genre classification, as, for example, an ancient Near Eastern wisdom text or a Greek tragedy, to give but two possibilities, and will vary accordingly. Furthermore, the choice of a particular interpretative context is a literary decision: that is, to interpret the book of Job as a Greek tragedy is not predicated on the assumption that the genre of Greek tragedy served as the historical model for the Joban poet. The choice of such a context derives instead from the judgment that, irrespective of the author's intentions, literary conventions characteristic of Greek tragedy are present also in the book of Job. Thus, the choice of context is a literary and not a historical-critical decision: a truly comprehensive interpretative context includes the entire range of human literature.

The major distinction between literary criticism and traditional Biblical scholarship concerns the question of "truth." The literary critic adopts a distinctly non-theological ethos toward the concept of truth. Thus, a literary interpretation of the Bible does not focus on the question: what "truth" does the Bible convey concerning God and the nature of the relationship between man and God? To the literary critic, "truth" is defined, not in terms of

theological claims, but rather in the sense of "appropriateness": that is, the "truth" of an event or a concept is related only to the context of the literary world of the work in question, irrespective of the degree of correspondence to external realities. From the standpoint of Job, the question of "truth" may be posed in the following way: on the basis of the conventions employed by the writer, which conclusion is most appropriate to the story? Which ending exhibits the greatest degree of consistency with regard to the dramatis personae of the poem? Is the most appropriate conclusion to the book of Job, therefore, chapter 40:5, chapter 42:6, or the prose epilogue, chapter 42:7-17? The concept of "truth" as "appropriateness" connotes an "aesthetic" as opposed to a "factual" sense. Thus, in the last analysis, the concern of literary criticism pertains to "Beauty," rather than to "Truth," for "appropriateness" implies a sensitivity to aesthetic rather than to other considerations.

Robertson emphasises that a literary-critical approach to the Bible does not claim for itself a status superior to other modes of interpretation. Literary criticism offers a different perspective; it does not exclude alternative methods. In conclusion, Robertson acknowledges that a consideration of the Biblical material as pure or imaginative literature is emphatically at variance with an approach which seeks to interpret the Bible material as scripture or applied literature. In this regard, a change in hermeneutical

perspective is essential: the Bible as literature "loses none of its power; rather its power is of a different sort: finite instead of infinite, a power to aid rather than to save."⁸

Implications of Literary Criticism for Biblical Study

Without question, the principal benefit of a literary-critical approach to the study of the Bible is the enriched understanding to be gained from an interpretation of the text as a unified whole. To evaluate critically the literary artistry of the Bible offers a valuable corrective to the hitherto predominating practice of atomisation of the text. As Coggins remarks: "whatever other importance it may have, the Bible is literature, and deserves to be studied and appreciated as such."⁹

Insofar as the Bible is literature, then, a mode of interpretation based upon the principles of literary criticism is eminently praiseworthy. There are, however, major limitations to such an approach:

1) A basic presupposition of modern secular literary criticism, namely, that a text, regardless of the history of its formation, is to be interpreted as a unified whole, illustrates the arbitrariness of literary-critical methodology. As stated above, this is explicitly acknowledged by Robertson;

8. Ibid., p. 15.

9. Richard Coggins, "The Literary Approach to the Bible," Expository Times, 96 (1984), p. 13.

he refers to the "circular character" of literary criticism: "one assumes that a text is a whole and then proceeds to show that indeed it is a whole."¹⁰ The investigation of "applied" literature, however, involves a radically different interpretative context. The existence of tensions and patterns which are fundamentally non-assimilable may have theological implications distinct from aesthetic value as literary or rhetorical devices. One cannot, therefore, proceed on the a priori assumption of holistic integrity, especially with respect to a body of literature composed over a period spanning more than a millennium. Thus, diachronic analysis remains an integral feature of critical scholarship. In this sense, Biblical scholarship is akin to the critical study of much ancient and medieval literature in general.¹¹ But at the same time it is necessary to emphasise that literary criteria have always been an important aspect of Biblical criticism. Objections to the authenticity of the Elihu speeches have traditionally been expressed on literary-stylistic grounds as well as on theological.

2) It is not altogether certain to what extent the ethos of a modern world can be transposed to an ancient cultural setting.¹² The cultural hiatus between the Biblical and the

10. Robertson, op. cit., p. 33.

11. Cf. John Barton, "Classifying Biblical Criticism," Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, 29 (1984), p. 33.

12. See James Barr, Holy Scripture: Canon, Authority, Criticism (Oxford, 1983), pp. 160-61.

modern world cannot be ignored in the matter of interpretation. Thus, a caveat is indicated with respect to modern secular literary criticism and the study of the Bible.

Barton points out that holistic (or synchronic) criticism is a comparatively recent phenomenon of Biblical scholarship and of literary criticism in general.¹³ Assumptions which may prove meaningful therefore in relation to modern literature may, in their application to the Bible, lead to a distortion of meaning. The book of Job provides an interesting case in point: is the position of the Elihu pericope due to redactional activity or happenstance? A literary-critical approach may tend to obfuscate the question of intentionality; what results from such an interpretation is a meaning, but one which may not reflect the actual assumptions of the Biblical writer. The exegetical process therefore necessarily involves the methods of traditional Biblical criticism.

3) Literary criticism, in its emphasis upon the Bible as "pure" literature, is by definition non-theological in orientation. The insights gained from such an approach may result in a greater understanding and appreciation of portions of the Biblical material. It is doubtful, however, if, in view of its central presuppositions, literary criticism is capable of contributing significantly to a theological understanding of the Bible. Barr writes that "there are ...

13. Barton, op. cit., p. 33.

theological questions which just cannot be answered, cannot even be approached or posed, on this basis."¹⁴ The questions of theodicy, the nature of the relationship between God and man, the theme of unmerited suffering - all central issues with regard to the book of Job - are beyond the competence of a uniquely literary approach. At the same time, one must affirm the value of literary criticism as a subdiscipline of Biblical scholarship¹⁵; in the area of theological discourse, however, the value of an exclusively literary approach to the study of the Bible is greatly diminished.

II. The Theological Holistic Approaches to the Bible

In contrast to a literary-critical approach, the interpretation of the Bible within a theological holistic framework involves a fundamentally different methodological presupposition. The Bible is considered not as "pure" or "imaginative" literature but as "applied" literature. The contributions of two scholars in particular - Brevard S. Childs and James A. Sanders - are relevant to a discussion of the theological and hermeneutical issues within such a conceptual framework. The principal proponents of a "canonical" approach to Biblical interpretation, their

14. James Barr, The Bible in the Modern World (London, 1973), p. 74.

15. Cf., for example, two of the most recent commentaries, Habel's Book of Job (Old Testament Library; 1985), and Alonso Schökel's Job: Comentario teológico y literario (1983). As is clearly evident, however, neither is an exclusively literary approach. See above, pp. 98-99, 102.

respective methodologies nonetheless attest profound differences of opinion with respect to the conception of canon and the nature of exegesis. While both writers have expressed grave dissatisfaction regarding the methods and presuppositions of traditional Biblical criticism, their proposals are markedly different. Whereas the approach of Sanders is viewed as a corrective to, and a logical and necessary extension of, Biblical scholarship, that is, the next phase in an evolutionary process which originated in the Enlightenment, the position of Childs represents a decisive break with traditional criticism precisely as it has developed since the period of the Enlightenment. Consequently, the methodological implications of Childs' proposals are exceedingly far-reaching and ipso facto require more extensive examination. Thus it is proposed to begin with a brief outline of the hermeneutical stance of Sanders and then proceed to a more comprehensive analysis of the methodology advocated by Childs.

Sanders: "Canonical Criticism"

In his 1972 book, Torah and Canon, which originated as an attempt to interpret the Bible holistically (in terms of its shape and function as opposed to its unity),¹⁶ Sanders issued a call to canonical criticism, that is, the critical study of the origins and functions of canon.¹⁷ The appeal has been

16. James A. Sanders, Torah and Canon (Philadelphia, 1972), p. ix.

17. Ibid., p. xv.

reiterated by the author over the years. More than a decade was to elapse, however, before the publication in 1984 of Canon and Community,¹⁸ which Sanders intended to serve as a comprehensive guide to the concepts and methods of canonical criticism. As conceived by this writer, canonical criticism is a subdiscipline of Biblical scholarship, a logical extension of historical and literary criticism beyond the scope of form and redaction criticism.¹⁹ The major task of canonical interpretation is a critical evaluation of the nature and function of canon, and the process involved in its formation, in the context of the believing communities throughout Israel's history. Thus Sanders emphasises primarily the canonical process as opposed to the final form of the Biblical literature itself. That is to say, canonical criticism focuses on the role of canon as a hermeneutical process whereby Israel's stable, authoritative traditions were continually adapted and resignified by successive generations in order to function in new historical situations. In this regard, tradition criticism

18. James A. Sanders, Canon and Community: A Guide to Canonical Criticism (Philadelphia, 1984), p. xviii: a work expressly intended as a sequel and a complement to Torah and Canon. A concise exposition of the aims and principles of canonical criticism is offered by Sanders in "Canonical Criticism: An Introduction," Le Canon de l'Ancien Testament: Sa formation et son histoire, éd. Jean-Daniel Kaestli et Otto Wermelinger (Genève, 1984), pp. 341-61.

19. Sanders, Canon and Community, pp. xv-xvi.

and comparative (or intrabiblical) midrash²⁰ are important tools in the attempt to identify all Biblical texts in which an earlier tradition is re-interpreted and contemporised, a process which illustrates the basic character of canon as both stable and adaptable.²¹ The goal of canonical exegesis is to discover how and for what purpose a particular tradition is being re-adapted. What hermeneutical factors are involved in the repetition and resignification by a later community of a text or a tradition in a new context?

A central aspect of the ongoing interpretative process was the search for identity and lifestyle, that is, the quest by the believing communities to define, in ever changing situations, who they were and what they were to do.²² Sanders understands the formation of the canon primarily as a quest for identity and self-understanding at critical junctures in Israel's history, specifically the cataclysmic events of 586 B.C.E. and 70 C.E. He writes: "the canon's authority lay in its life-giving quality in the midst of

20. Ibid., pp. 17-18.

21. Ibid., p. 22. On the stability and adaptability of canon, cf. J.A. Sanders, "Adaptable for Life: The Nature and Function of Canon," in Magnalia Dei: the Mighty Acts of God. Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Memory of G. Ernest Wright, ed. F.M. Cross, Werner E. Lemke, and Patrick D. Miller, Jr. (Garden City, N.Y., 1976), pp. 531-60. See especially pp. 539ff. for a discussion of the concept of adaptability as the basic characteristic of canon.

22. Sanders, Canon and Community, p. 28.

death."²³ Thus, the ancient, authoritative traditions, that is, the basic canon: Law, Prophets and Psalms (as expressed in Luke 24:44), survived the disastrous experience of the Exile in 586 B.C.E. and became the basis for the perpetuation of Israel itself in the form of nascent Judaism. (The fundamental authority of canon - for both Judaism and Christianity - was again confirmed as a result of the catastrophe of 70 C.E.)

In Sanders' view, the key to survival was the Torah story; the post-exilic community was able to survive with identity precisely because it had recourse to a basically stable "story" adaptable to changing historical and sociological situations. Two versions of Israel's story, the Mosaic (Abraham → Conquest) and the Davidic (Abraham → Monarchy), were eventually incorporated into the Pentateuch - Former Prophets complex. There is no evidence, however, that either tradition was ever confined to the Pentateuch. Thus the Torah story, which does not logically culminate in the book of Deuteronomy, represents a momentous resignification of Israel's sacred traditions as a result of the Exile. That which enabled Israel to survive was Torah, which Sanders describes as the "canon within the canon" or the Old Testament "gospel." Torah was the vehicle by which Israel was to survive the transition from a nation to a

23. Sanders, Torah and Canon, p. 120. The following analysis is based on pp. 1-53. Only direct quotations will be cited by page numbers.

community in exile and dispersion. Traditions of conquest and monarchy, which were associated with nationhood, were no longer essential to the identity and lifestyle of a stateless people and were consequently excluded; hence the "artificial" termination of the Torah with the book of Deuteronomy. Thus the disaster of 586 B.C.E. was to have monumental theological, as well as historical, implications. The definitive form and supreme importance of Torah were secured, the effect of which was to prove ultimately decisive in establishing the permanent character of Judaism: from the period of Ezra on, "Torah was Judaism and Judaism was Torah."²⁴

While the canonical approach of Sanders has the obvious merit of focusing attention on the origins and functions of canon, there are nevertheless certain fundamental difficulties in relation to his methodology:

1) It is questionable to what extent the Biblical material can be subsumed within the conceptual framework proposed by Sanders. This is not to minimise the hermeneutical or theological importance of the process of interpretation and resignification of authoritative tradition within Israel.²⁵

24. Ibid., p. 51.

25. On the interpretation or "re-presentation" of tradition by the community, cf. D.A. Knight, "Revelation through Tradition," Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament, ed. D.A. Knight (London, 1977), pp. 163, 167; and on human participation in the developmental process of Israelite tradition, pp. 168, 176-78.

But, given the multiplex nature of both the forms and the traditions of the Biblical literature, it must remain doubtful if concepts such as "identity and lifestyle," "repetition," "resignification" and "stability-adaptability" can be universalised to incorporate the Old Testament as a whole.²⁶ In the first place, one must consider to what extent "authoritative" traditions are to be understood in terms of the normal cultural heritage of the community. It may be more correct in certain instances to speak of the preservation of a genuine tradition as opposed to the resignification of originally ancient material. Thus, while there is no doubt that particular traditions were adapted to a new Sitz im Leben, it is by no means clear that the Biblical literature as a whole reflects this ongoing interpretative process. Against the view that the Bible consists of interpretation as opposed to genuine archaic material, Barr states that the literature for the most part constitutes the legacy of a distant past and is therefore characterised by a kind of "inertia" which secures much of the material against later

26. Cf. Barr, Holy Scripture, p. 157; cf. also Frank W. Spina, "Canonical Criticism: Childs versus Sanders," Interpreting God's Word for Today: An Enquiry into Hermeneutics from a Biblical Theological Perspective, ed. Wayne McCown and James Earl Massey (Wesleyan Theological Perspectives, 2; Anderson, Ind., 1982), p. 188, who inquires whether there is sufficient evidence to support the view that the formation of the canon was attributable solely, or indeed principally, to the quest for identity and lifestyle on the part of the believing communities.

resignification:

A great deal of material was retained, I believe, not because later redactors were able to make changes which would shift its significance into line with their own theological positions and interests, but for the opposite reason, that no one could account for its peculiarities or undertake to edit it into the lineaments of modern ideas, and so, being already holy tradition, it was left as it was.²⁷

This is a crucial point (which will be discussed at greater length later) with very clear implications in regard to the hermeneutical presuppositions of holistic criticism.

Moreover, much of Sanders' analysis of the Biblical material is unconvincing and exhibits a high degree of subjectivity in attempting to contextualise the literature within a particular interpretative framework. For example, the book of Job²⁸ is subsumed within the general hermeneutical principle operative in the formation of the Torah; that is, Job is interpreted according to the same preautochthonous (free and autonomous in one's own land) concerns which were determinative of the peculiar shape of the Torah. Thus Sanders comments: "the Book of Job reflects the sixth-century B.C. renaissance of interest in the Bronze Age, the age of patriarchs. It is an archaizing work."²⁹ This is a

27. Barr, Holy Scripture, p. 95.

28. Sanders, Torah and Canon, pp. 101-08. The Elihu pericope is omitted entirely from Sanders' analysis.

29. Ibid., p. 103.

possible interpretation, but by no means definitive, as a rudimentary survey of scholarly literature will illustrate. With the exception of the Prologue and the Epilogue, such a view is problematic with regard to the main body of the book (chapters 3-31) and the Divine speeches. The principal difficulty with this approach is the conspicuous absence of any reference to Israel's epic traditions. Consider also the following statement: "the question which the Book of Job poses is how to relate the Mosaic-prophetic theology of the God of Israel as a nation to the situation of Israel's dispersion, where covenant responsibility has dramatically shifted to the individual wherever he might be."³⁰ Notwithstanding the importance of the shift in emphasis from the nation to the individual, the interpretation of this transition as an attempt to relate Israel's sacred history to a community in exile and dispersion remains a very doubtful matter. The book of Job is characterised by a total absence of explicit references to Israel's election, the covenant, the temple, the law and other traditional motifs. In light of this omission, Roberts warns against the use of Israel's epic and prophetic traditions as a basis (even a negative basis) for interpretation.³¹ Is there any justification, then, for the statement of Sanders that the author of Job

30. Ibid., p. 107.

31. J.J.M. Roberts, "Job and the Israelite Religious Tradition," ZAW, 89 (1977), p. 111.

expresses the "nether side" of prophetic theology?³²

The arbitrary nature of Sanders' hermeneutic is underlined by the manner in which the difficult question of date of composition is resolved. In the absence of any scholarly consensus on the issue, Sanders nonetheless asserts that "the best of Joban scholarship dates the Book of Job ... in the third or fourth decade of the sixth century B.C."³³ Such a date is of course quite possible, and perhaps even probable. In view, however, of the wide discrepancy which exists concerning the question of date,³⁴ and the lack of discussion of alternative interpretations, Sanders' approach serves to obscure one of the most vexing problems related to Job.

2) Canonical criticism focuses on the dialectic between canon and community; as Sanders emphasises, "neither truly exists without the other."³⁵ But it may legitimately be asked whether the undefined term "community" is not a misnomer which tends to obscure what is in reality a far more complex process than Sanders seems to indicate. The history of canon, as a process extending over many centuries, necessarily involves a multiplicity of communities. Sanders himself emphasises that canon is the product of many

32. Sanders, Torah and Canon, p. 105.

33. Ibid., p. 102.

34. On the dating of Job, see Pfeiffer, op. cit., pp. 675-78.

35. Sanders, Canon and Community, p. xv.

believing communities, but at the same time, if he is understood correctly, seems to conceive of a historically evolving collectivity in terms of a theological construct. The frequent occurrence of the term "community," either by itself or in phrases like "believing community" or "community of faith," appears to imply a theologically holistic entity, a theoretical, united Israel. Thus, for example, the hiatus between the final literary source and canonical closure is interpreted in terms of redactional activity on the part of "the faithful of believing communities."³⁶ But precisely who and what were these communities of faith? Were they basically integrated, that is, unified to the extent of sharing a common theological viewpoint?

The question therefore is, to what extent are we permitted to speak of the "community" as such? Is the concept of "community" to be equally understood throughout all periods of Israel's history, or has it been imposed subsequently? As Blenkinsopp has shown, it is important to recognise the presence of conflicting claims to authority at every stage of the canonical process,³⁷ and hence the existence of a plurality of "communities." If this is in fact the case, there are clear implications with regard to the hermeneutics of canonical criticism. In the words of

36. Ibid., p. 30.

37. Joseph Blenkinsopp, Prophecy and Canon (London, 1977) pp. 3, 142, 148 inter alia.

Blenkinsopp: "to study the formation of the canon is to be made aware that what these writings testify to directly is not the religion of Israel but of different individuals and groups attempting, with varying degrees of success, to make their vision prevail in the wider society."³⁸ Thus, if indeed the canon bears witness to a plurality of opposing authority claims, is it meaningful to speak of an indeterminate "community"?³⁹

To summarise: the hermeneutical approach proposed by Sanders does not, the writer of this dissertation submits, provide a satisfactory interpretative framework with respect to holistic criticism. One may grant a certain general validity to such concepts as "identity and lifestyle," "repetition and resignification" and "stability-adaptability"; it must remain doubtful, however, if any of these concepts truly represents a primary character of canon and can therefore be regarded as a central hermeneutical datum. Furthermore, the vagueness of Sanders' hermeneutic regarding the idea of "community" fails to reflect correctly the dynamics of the canonical process.

Childs: "Canonical Context"

The canonical approach propounded by Childs in a series

38. Ibid., p. 141. Italics in the original.

39. Cf. Norman K. Gottwald, "Social Matrix and Canonical Shape," Theology Today, 42 (1985), p. 314: "It is not sufficient to speak of an undifferentiated 'communal mind or will' as the stimulus to canonical process and the arbiter of canonical closure."

of books and articles accords, in some respects, with the position of Sanders but derives ultimately from a markedly different hermeneutical perspective.⁴⁰ It is the contention of Childs, like Sanders, that the Bible has not been properly interpreted because its function as religious literature has been neglected.⁴¹ The hermeneutical model proposed in the author's Old Testament Introduction is intended to resolve this "sterile impasse" by providing a

40. The literary output of Childs on the importance of a canonical approach to Biblical interpretation is extensive. Cf. especially the following: "Interpretation in Faith: The Theological Responsibility of an Old Testament Commentary," Interpretation, 18 (1964), pp. 432-49; Biblical Theology in Crisis (Philadelphia, 1970); Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary (OTL; London, 1974); "The Old Testament as Scripture of the Church," Concordia Theological Monthly, 43 (1972); "The Sensus Literalis of Scripture: An Ancient and Modern Problem," Beiträge zur alttestamentlichen Theologie (Festschrift für Walther Zimmerli; Göttingen, 1977), pp. 80-93; "The Canonical Shape of the Prophetic Literature," Interpretation, 32 (1978), pp. 46-55; "The Exegetical Significance of Canon for the Study of the Old Testament," Congress Volume, Göttingen 1977 (Supplements to *Vetus Testamentum*, 29; Leiden, 1978), pp. 66-80; Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture (London, 1979); The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction (London, 1984); Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context (London, 1985). For a perceptive analysis of Childs and Sanders, cf. Spina, op. cit., pp. 165-94. On the fundamental differences between the two, cf. ibid., pp. 185-86; and for an assessment of their respective approaches, cf. pp. 187-89. For a canonical perspective distinct from both Childs and Sanders, cf. Gerald T. Sheppard, "Canonization: Hearing the Voice of the Same God through Historically Dissimilar Traditions," Interpretation, 36 (1982), pp. 21-33.

41. Childs, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 16.

framework within which the literature can be understood in its role as authoritative scripture for Israel. The approach which Childs is advocating has been classified by other scholars as "canonical criticism." But Childs himself objects to this practice on the grounds that canonical analysis is thus relegated to the status of yet another historical-critical method, along with source criticism, form criticism, rhetorical criticism, and so on.⁴² The canonical model proposed by Childs is not to be understood as a novel exegetical method; rather, "canonical context" denotes a stance from which the Biblical literature is interpreted as sacred scripture.⁴³

Childs expresses profound misgivings concerning the historical-critical method and its ability to achieve a correct understanding and interpretation of the Biblical literature: (1) The goal of a historical-critical "Introduction" to the Old or New Testament is the atomisation of the Biblical literature into its various stages of composition rather than an assessment of its role as scripture. Consequently, an "enormous hiatus" exists between the reconstructed text and the final canonical form of the literature which functions as authoritative scripture for the community. (2) The historical method generally obfuscates the peculiar dynamics of the canon: "the whole dimension of

42. Ibid., p. 82.

43. Ibid., pp. 16, 82.

resonance within the Bible which issues from a collection with fixed parameters and which affects both the language and its imagery." (3) The historical-critical "Introduction" has for the most part failed to perceive the religious dynamic at the heart of the canon, focusing instead on political, economic or social factors. According to Childs, however, "it is constitutive of Israel's history that the literature formed the identity of the religious community which in turn shaped the literature."⁴⁴ Thus, a predominantly historical approach usually tends to gloss over the peculiar nature of the canonical process.

The method of interpretation adopted by Childs is intended to resolve the stalemate between the canon and the critical study of the Bible by proposing a hermeneutical model commensurate with the canonical literature itself. In contradistinction to the historical-critical method (and in contrast to Sanders), interpretation in a canonical context involves a critical analysis of the peculiar shape and special function of the Hebrew canon as it now exists. The rationale for this approach is that the Biblical literature reflects the historical relationship between God and Israel and it is only the full and final canonical form that testifies to the revelatory process in its entirety. To focus attention on the final canonical form of the text, however, is not to prescind the previous stages in the

44. Ibid., pp. 40-41.

development of the literature. Childs' approach takes seriously the "canonical process": it critically analyses both oral and written stages in the long process of the literature's formation. But the canonical study of the Old Testament is to be distinguished from the traditio-critical approach in the way in which it evaluates the history of the text's development.⁴⁵ To interpret the canon seriously involves the recognition that the historical development of the Biblical text reflects the shaping and reshaping of the successive stages of the literature. Thus the Hebrew Bible as it now stands is the culmination of major hermeneutical activity: an examination of the text reveals a process of interpretative activity in respect to the transmission of both oral and written traditions from one generation to another.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, Childs readily acknowledges that the canon exhibits evidence of non-hermeneutical activity. It is apparent at times that the incorporation of material within the canon did not entail a conscious hermeneutical decision.⁴⁷ Yet the canonical form is of crucial importance, for it is "in its final form that the literature evoked its own dynamic which was only indirectly related to the history of its composition."⁴⁸

45. Ibid., p. 75.

46. Ibid., p. 78.

47. Ibid., p. 79; cf. Childs, "Response to Reviewers of Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture," JSOT, 16 (1980), p. 55.

48. Childs, "Response to Reviewers," JSOT, 16 (1980), p. 55.

This is not to suggest that the canonised texts represent merely the theological position of the final redactor. On the contrary, Childs emphasises that the Hebrew canon reflects the dialectic between tradition and community which characterises the entire canonical process. The crucial importance of the final canonical form is that it is this full text, including all of its heterogeneous elements, which enjoys permanent, normative status.

In view of the centrality of canon in Childs' methodology, it is necessary at this point to elucidate more fully this concept and its application to the Old Testament. One must first emphasise Childs' extension of the term "canon" to encompass a broad range of function. Barr⁴⁹ has noted that, in Childs' understanding, "canon" is a composite term incorporating three distinct elements: (1) the list of books that constitute scripture (Canon 1); (2) the final form of the text (Canon 2); (3) the concept of canon as a holistic interpretative framework (Canon 3). While all three aspects accord with Childs' broad usage of the term, it is the unitary conception of canon as a predominating hermeneutical principle that provides the key to his distinctive approach. Clearly, neither Canon 1 nor Canon 2 can be discussed in any satisfactory manner apart from the context of "canon as a hermeneutical principle." The very idea, however, of canon as a normative exegetical

49. Barr, Holy Scripture, pp. 75ff.

principle raises the fundamental question of the precise nature and authority of canon. It is therefore important to examine Childs' canonical approach within the context of canon in general. The point at issue is whether, in fact, there is any basis for the concept of "canon as an exegetical principle."

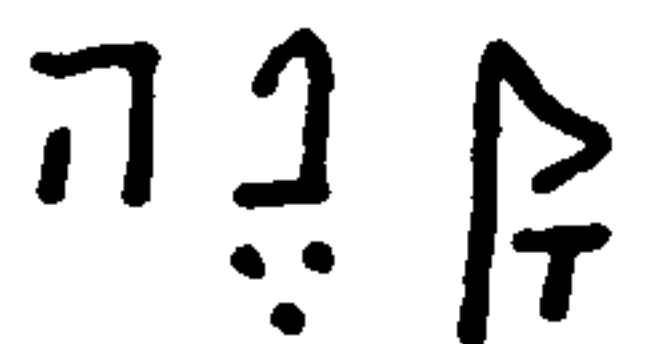
The Concept of Canon

The Greek word **κανών** derives from **κάνη**, a Semitic loan word originally meaning "reed."⁵⁰ The term **κανών** signified in the first place a "straight rod, bar or staff" (from the basic Semitic meaning of "reed") as well as the more general "measuring rod" or "ruler." Subsequently, **κανών** came to be understood metaphorically in the dual sense of (1) a rule, standard or norm; and (2) a list, table or catalogue. For the first three centuries of the Common Era the term **ὁ κανών** denoted generally that which was regarded as normative and binding for true Christianity. It was not until the fourth century C.E. that the title was adopted to designate the list of inspired writings that comprise Holy Scripture.⁵¹ Before the fourth century, then, **κανών** bore the meaning "rule, standard

50. On the term **κανών** see TDNT, 3, pp. 596-602; in p. 596, n. 1, H.W. Beyer emphasises that it cannot be definitely known whether **κανών** derives from the Semitic or is a Greek formulation from **κάνη**.

51. Ibid., 3, p. 601; cf. also Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, p. 232.

or norm," which accords with the New Testament usage of the word (cf. Gal. 6:16; II Cor. 10:13-16), and the sense in which the term was used in the Church where it signified "the rule of the Christian Faith."⁵²

It is important, therefore, to bear in mind that the term "canon" is of Christian, and not Jewish, origin. Nevertheless, Childs maintains that the rabbinic concept of sacred literature that "defiles the hands" or "makes the hands unclean" is comparable to the Christian understanding of canon.⁵³ Thus the term "canon" serves appropriately to designate both the Jewish and the Christian Scriptures. To what extent, however, does the Jewish understanding of canon accord with Childs' conception of an all-controlling hermeneutical standard? In the first place, Barr has pointed out that there appears to be no ancient Hebrew term signifying "canon" (or, for that matter, "scripture" either).⁵⁴ The Hebrew  denotes a "stalk or reed"; derived meanings include a measuring reed (or rod or staff), scales and the arm of a candlestick. Secondly, the once widespread assumption that the Jewish canon was formally and authoritatively closed at the so-called Council of Jamnia⁵⁵ (c. 90 C.E.)

52. TDNT, 3, p. 600.

53. Childs, Introduction to the OT, p. 50.

54. Barr, Holy Scripture, p. 50.

55. Cf. Sid Z. Leiman, The Canonization of Hebrew Scripture: The Talmudic and Midrashic Evidence (Hamden, Conn., 1976), p. 188, n. 489.

has been repudiated by many scholars. Indeed, there is no clear evidence of any binding decision at Jamnia regarding the official closing of the canon. Recent research has shown that the discussions at Jamnia were concerned primarily with the inspired character of particular books, namely Qoheleth and Song of Songs, and that the question of canonicity was not involved.⁵⁶ Moreover, any decision at Jamnia to close the canon officially could not have been regarded as authoritative, for the controversy concerning Qoheleth and the Song of Songs persisted long after the Jamnia period.⁵⁷ According to Christie, the issue of the canon was still unresolved by 200 C.E.⁵⁸

56. Cf. W.M. Christie, "The Jamnia Period in Jewish History," JTS, 26 (1925), pp. 347-64; Jack P. Lewis, "What Do We Mean by Jabneh?" Journal of Bible and Religion, 32 (1964), pp. 125-32; Leiman, op. cit., pp. 123-24; D. Barthélemy, "L'Etat de la Bible juive depuis le début de notre ère jusqu'à la deuxième révolte contre Rome (131-135)," Le Canon de l'Ancien Testament: Sa formation et son histoire, éd. Jean-Daniel Kaestli et Otto Wermelinger (Genève, 1984), p. 25. Lewis, Leiman and Barthélemy express dissatisfaction with terms such as "council" and "synod" when applied to Jamnia. Lewis, op. cit., p. 128, proposes "court," "school," or "assembly" as more appropriate. Leiman, op. cit., p. 195, n. 570, referring to the essentially academic nature of the discussions at Jamnia, suggests the term "academy" instead of "council," noting that many of the decisions are perhaps more appropriately to be regarded as "proceedings" or "deliberations."
57. Cf. Leiman, op. cit., p. 123; Christie, op. cit., p. 356; Lewis, op. cit., p. 131. In the view of Max Weber, The Sociology of Religion, trans. Ephraim Fischhoff (London, 1965), p. 68, the formal closing of the Jewish Scriptures was accomplished by the synod of Jamnia in 90 C.E.; however, they were officially closed "only in principle."
58. Christie, op. cit., p. 356.

If the idea of a conciliar decision must be abandoned, in what context is it meaningful to speak of canonical closure? Barr suggests⁵⁹ a plurality of "canons" (to the extent that the term "canon" is actually appropriate) representing the different beliefs of various groups, with the matter finally being settled, not by means of a formal and authoritative decision,⁶⁰ but through the ascendancy of one denomination and its beliefs, and the consequent decline in power and importance of opposing groups and opinions. Though the evidence in this regard is hardly conclusive, Barr's view may more accurately convey the true nature of the Jewish canon. That is to say, one cannot speak of an official closing of the canon, or indeed of a canon itself, in the sense of a closed collection of sacred writings, before the end of the first century C.E.⁶¹ There is evidence of a pervasive standardisation and stabilisation process of the Hebrew text from the first century B.C.E.⁶²; it is

59. Barr, Holy Scripture, pp. 57-58.

60. Cf. Christie, op. cit., p. 356: "There never seems to have been a formal canonizing of any portion of the Old Testament (any more than of the New) by any judicial authority."

61. Cf. D. Barthélemy, "Text, Hebrew, History of," Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Supplementary Volume (Nashville, Tenn., 1976), p. 880.

62. Cf. Shemaryahu Talmon, "The Old Testament Text," The Cambridge History of the Bible, vol. 1, ed. P.R. Ackroyd and C.F. Evans (Cambridge, 1970), p. 168; F.M. Cross, "The History of the Biblical Text in the Light of Discoveries in the Judaean Desert," HTR, 57 (1964), pp. 281-99. Cf. also Moshe Greenberg, "The Stabilization of the Text of the Hebrew Bible, Reviewed in the Light of the

not legitimate, however, to speak of either a normative text or a normative Judaism in the era preceding 70 C.E.⁶³ It is only in the period following the rebellion against Rome that there emerges a single-minded consolidation process, a "closing of the ranks," and the appearance of a truly normative or orthodox Judaism.⁶⁴ In this connection, witness the decline and eventual disappearance of the Sadducees as a major religious sect. At the same time, the status of the Pharisees becomes increasingly dominant. After the First Revolt, to speak of normative Judaism is to speak of Pharisaic Judaism⁶⁵: the Jewish Bible is essentially the Pharisaic canon.⁶⁶

One of the difficulties with Childs' interpretative approach is that it does not provide an adequate account of the canonisation process.⁶⁷ The entire history of the

Biblical Materials from the Judean Desert," Journal of the American Oriental Society, 76 (1956), p. 165: "It would ... appear that the forerunner of our received text was extant and current during the last pre-Christian centuries."

63. Cf. Barthélemy, "L'Etat de la Bible," pp. 41-42.

64. Cf. Salo W. Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews (2d ed.; New York, 1952), vol. 2, pp. 129-30; Barthélemy, "L'Etat de la Bible," p. 42.

65. Barthélemy, "L'Etat de la Bible," p. 42.

66. Ibid. Barthélemy frequently refers to the "Pharisaic" canon.

67. Cf., for example, Childs, Introduction to the OT, p. 67, where Childs alludes to, but does not discuss, the crucial questions relating to the motivations involved in the canonisation process.

formation of the Hebrew Bible is subsumed under a canonical hermeneutic, the effect of which is to obscure the dynamics involved in the various stages of the process of canonisation. The arbitrary extension of the conception of the term canon to encompass "the setting of boundaries for the literature, the combining of rival traditions and the actualization of earlier traditions to function authoritatively for later generations"⁶⁸ assumes a theological harmonisation which, as the present writer will argue, is based upon a problematic interpretation of the evidence. Childs, however, contends that a canonical approach is to be understood in the context of a Wittgensteinian "language game," that is, an attempt to interpret the Old Testament from the basis of a "rule-of-faith called canon."⁶⁹ Nevertheless, even within the framework of a "rule-of-faith" hermeneutic, Childs has not succeeded in providing a convincing rationale for the supremely normative status of canon.

The Canon of Scripture

The Jewish canon/Christian Old Testament is a fait accompli. As Wright remarks, "history has long since decided the issue."⁷⁰ However, the point at issue is: what

68. Childs, "Response to Reviewers," JSOT, 16 (1980), p. 53.

69. Ibid., p. 52.

70. G. Ernest Wright, The Old Testament and Theology (New York, 1969), p. 167.

is the nature of the authority of canon? There are considerable variations in the lists of inspired writings that comprise the canon of Scripture.⁷¹ At one extreme, the canon of the Samaritans, Sadducees and Karaites, among others, is restricted to five books⁷²; at the other extreme, the canon of the Ethiopian Coptic Church consists of eighty-one books. Despite canonical variations, one may nonetheless ascribe a normative function to the canon. Even if the extent of the canon were to be standardised, it is doubtful if this would make any important difference,⁷³ for the significance of the canon lies in the conception of canon itself as a norm, and the precise number of books which make up the canon is of secondary concern. Quite apart from dissimilarities in canonical lists is the issue of the canon - that is, the canon, in all of its disparate parts, as a uniformly equal totality - as the absolute basis of authority. In reality, this has never been the case. With regard to canonical authority, there has always been, in effect, a "canon within the canon": in Judaism, the importance of the Torah is paramount⁷⁴; in Christianity, of course,

71. On variations in the extent of canon, see Leiman, op. cit., pp. 40-49.

72. See Barthélemy, "L'Etat de la Bible," pp. 9-13, on the various groups who do not extend the canon of Scripture beyond the Torah.

73. Cf. Barr, Holy Scripture, pp. 41-44, 46; G. Ernest Wright, op. cit., p. 168; Samuel Terrien, "The Play of Wisdom: Turning Point in Biblical Theology," Horizons in Biblical Theology, 3 (1981), p. 142, n.1.

74. Cf. Barr, Holy Scripture, pp. 60-61.

the question of canonical authority shifts to the New Testament. Moreover, as Barr emphasises,⁷⁵ in neither Christianity nor Judaism does the canon constitute the sole basis of authority: in Judaism, the Mishnah and Talmud are extra-canonical, as are Church doctrine and theology in Christianity, and yet all exercise a de facto authority surpassing that of many portions of Scripture.

The Final Form of Scripture

The major difficulty in relation to Childs' conception of canon is the emphasis on the final form of scripture as the locus of inspiration. This view, which is crucial to Childs' canonical approach, represents one of the most controversial aspects of his hermeneutic. It is instructive to consider the following passage, quoted in extenso:

The reason for insisting on the final form of scripture lies in the peculiar relationship between text and people of God which is constitutive of the canon. The shape of the biblical text reflects a history of encounter between God and Israel. The canon serves to describe this peculiar relationship and to define the scope of this history by establishing a beginning and end to the process. It assigns a special quality to this particular segment of human history which became normative for all successive generations of this community of faith. The significance of the final form of the biblical text is that it alone bears witness to the full history of revelation. Within the Old Testament

75. Ibid., p. 61.

neither the process of the formation of the literature nor the history of its canonization is assigned an independent integrity. This dimension has often been lost or purposely blurred and is therefore dependent on scholarly reconstruction. The fixing of a canon of scripture implies that the witness to Israel's experience with God lies not in recovering such historical processes, but is testified to in the effect on the biblical text itself. Scripture bears witness to God's activity in history on Israel's behalf, but history per se is not a medium of revelation which is commensurate with a canon. It is only in the final form of the biblical text in which the normative history has reached an end that the full effect of this revelatory history can be perceived.⁷⁶

On the basis of the above quotation, it is evident that the significance of the final form of scripture is not restricted merely to the last stage in the canonisation process. Childs is adamant that the closing of the Hebrew canon was simply the terminus of a long historical process; thus an emphasis on the final form of the text encompasses the entire history of the formation of the canon. Canonical closure is an inseparable part of the canonical process.

This aspect of the canonical approach of Childs calls for closer examination. In particular, it may be questioned if the canonisation process accords with a unitary conception, or if this view represents a subsequent, post-canonical

76. Childs, Introduction to the OT, pp. 75-76.

perspective. For the purpose of this study, the questions may be posed in the following manner: (1) To what extent is it possible to speak of the Hebrew canon as the logical culmination of a lengthy historical process? That is, to what extent is canonical closure, and hence the final form of Scripture, to be understood as the ineluctable termination, the ultimate aim or purpose of the canonical process? (2) What is the significance of the final form of Scripture?

According to Childs' understanding, the formation of the canon is inseparable from a pervasive religious dynamic, a continuity which characterises the entire canonical process.⁷⁷ Childs underscores this element of continuity with reference to the hermeneutical activity involved in all periods of the canonisation process, emphasising that earlier and later decisions are not "qualitatively different."⁷⁸ Such a unitary conception, however, contrasts sharply with Blenkinsopp's thesis of a historical process characterised at all stages by conflicting claims to authority.⁷⁹ Merely broadening the definition of the term canon to include the integration of diverse, and at times irreconcilable, traditions, does not provide an adequate account of the dynamics involved in the evolution of the

77. Childs, "Response to Reviewers," JSOT, 16 (1980), p. 53.

78. Childs, Introduction to the OT, p. 59.

79. Blenkinsopp, op. cit., pp. 3, 142, 148 inter alia.

Biblical literature. In contrast, the canon-centred approach of Terrien seeks to overcome the limitations of Childs' hermeneutic. Terrien proposes an analysis of "canonical dynamics,"⁸⁰ which furnishes a basis for interpretation from within the text, rather than a method imposed from without. Canonical dynamics emphasises the elements of continuity and selectivity in the historical development of the Biblical material, while at the same time fully recognising the "tensility" of the literature. The final, canonical form testifies to a "pluralistic unity of purpose" which, without "shallow harmonizing," has effected the juxtaposition of tensions, conflicts and contradictions as an integral feature of the canon.

Moreover, it may be questioned if the term "canonical process" favoured by Childs is entirely appropriate in relation to the evolution of the Biblical text. To what extent is the formation of the literature to be equally understood at all stages of development as a "canonical" process? In this writer's judgment, Childs' conception of an undifferentiated "canonical" history which, particularly in the post-exilic period, acquired priority over the "literary" history, is intelligible only within a post-

80. Cf. Terrien, "Play of Wisdom," pp. 127, 144 n.9: "Analysis of canonical dynamics" is not characterised by an intrinsic opposition to historical-critical methods of research, as is the canonical approach of Childs.

canonical context.⁸¹ This is not to minimise the element of theological continuity in the growth of the Biblical literature; rather it is to distinguish between the actual historical process and the perspective of an ultimate canonical context, that is, the canon as a closed collection of sacred texts.

At the same time, it may be questioned whether the development of a canon, or indeed a plurality of canons, logically implies a process culminating in the final canonisation of Scripture. That the matter has long since been resolved is not relevant to the discussion; the point is that the development of a canon, that is, a collection of authoritative writings, does not ipso facto presuppose a teleological process culminating in the establishment of a normative canon of Scripture. This is not to suggest an ad hoc decision, but to emphasise that the phenomenon of canonical closure cannot be satisfactorily resolved in the arbitrary manner of Childs' hermeneutic, as the logical Endziel of an undifferentiated canonical process. Clearly, other considerations are involved.

For example, the period following the disastrous conflict with Rome (66-73 C.E.) witnessed a national and

81. On Childs' dichotomy between canonical history and literary history, see the perceptive remarks of D.A. Knight, "Canon and the History of Tradition: A Critique of Brevard S. Childs' Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture," Horizons in Biblical Theology, 2 (1980), p. 144.

spiritual reconstruction, a process of internal consolidation which provided the foundation for the survival of Judaism. This initiative led, among other things, to the demarcation of the limits of the Jewish canon. Thus, while there is evidence of a process of textual standardisation and stabilisation from the first century B.C.E., the establishment in definitive fashion of the Jewish Bible must be interpreted in the context of a larger process of cultural and religious consolidation in the post-70 C.E. period. The setting of canonical boundaries served to exclude those writings deemed to be heretical, that is, associated with the minim (the heretics). That the increasingly acrimonious Judeo-Christian controversy is significant in this regard is evident, for a large number of texts from the period prior to the Bar Kocheba Rebellion equate the term minim with the nosrim (Christians).⁸² According to Baron, the appropriation by the Christians of the Jewish Scriptures hastened the process of canonical closure in the period before the Second Revolt.⁸³ Similarly, Barthélemy refers to "ce contexte de défiance et de rupture" (that is, between official Judaism and the heretical movements of the nosrim and minim) which aids in explaining the attempt to establish definitively the Jewish

82. Cf. Barthélemy, "L'Etat de la Bible," p. 33.

83. Cf. Baron, op. cit., p. 144.

Bible.⁸⁴

It is not necessary at this point to pursue the matter of the schism between the Jewish community and the Christians and other heretical groups⁸⁵; but the issue of the textual process involved in the establishment of a normative canon of Scripture requires further comment. As has been shown, a pervasive standardisation and stabilisation process is evidenced from the first century B.C.E. to the end of the first century C.E. In addition, the list of canonical texts of the eventual Jewish Bible is virtually established in Pharisaic circles at the beginning of the Common Era.⁸⁶ It is also imperative, however, to recognise the diverse character of Judaism, in the period before the First Revolt, with respect to canonical lists and divergent movements. As Barthélemy states:

Il y aurait un certain anachronisme à imaginer comme normative pour tout le judaïsme à l'époque de Jésus la liste canonique d'une école qui ne l'imposera de façon indiscutée qu'un demi-siècle plus tard, à l'occasion de la grande reconstruction nationale et religieuse dont les Pharisiens furent les leaders.⁸⁷

84. Cf. Barthélemy, "L'Etat de la Bible," pp. 30-37.

85. For a discussion of various factors relating to the Judeo-Christian dispute which contributed to the decision to close definitively the Jewish canon, cf. Baron, *op. cit.*, pp. 132, 134ff., 144ff. Baron's views are summarised in Barthélemy, "L'Etat de la Bible," pp. 34-36.

86. Cf. Barthélemy, "L'Etat de la Bible," pp. 37, 41.

87. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

Moreover, it is important not to equate the culmination of the process of standardisation and stabilisation at the end of the first century C.E. with the telos of a canonical process (as the concept is understood by Childs). The actual situation may well suggest quite the opposite interpretation. Barr expresses the view that the final form of the Biblical text testifies to a demonstrable deterioration in the tradition:

One of the reasons why scripture was fixed as such, and separated from other continuing tradition, was, very likely, the sense that tradition was deteriorating To make the community of the canonizing period into the ultimate arbiters of scripture is therefore a dubious step.⁸⁸

The purpose of the foregoing outline has not been to deny the salutary character of canon as a historical fait accompli, or to suggest that canon is to be regarded simply as "an incident, and no more than that."⁸⁹ On the contrary, it is evident that a certain normative quality is to be attributed to the canonised text by virtue of its status as the final literary form.⁹⁰ This is indicated by the dichotomy between pre-canonical and post-canonical tradition. Pre-canonical tradition is actively engaged in the process of shaping tradition - it is a developing tradition.

88. Barr, Holy Scripture, pp. 93-94.

89. Samuel Sandmel, "A Symposium on the Canon of Scripture: 3. On Canon," CBQ, 28 (1966), p. 207, but cf. p. 205.

90. Barr, Bible in the Modern World, pp. 163-64.

The act of canonisation, however, has the effect of permanently transforming the tradition. To a great extent, post-canonical tradition is more in the nature of interpretation of Scripture as opposed to a continuation of the development of tradition.⁹¹ In this respect, therefore, there is a certain validity in the statement of Smend: "The completion of the canon brought to an end that was in many ways artificial and arbitrary a process that was to some extent very much alive, both within the individual writings and their totality."⁹² This is not to imply that canonical closure represents an unnatural development. But, insofar as the significance of the canon is perceived in accordance with the interpretative approach of Childs, the statement of Smend serves as a salutary counterbalance. The point is that the delimiting of the boundaries of Scripture cannot be satisfactorily explained according to a canonical dogmatism which regards the final form as the logical and ineluctable culmination of a teleological process. It is more precise to conceive of the canonisation process on the

91. Ibid.

92. Rudolf Smend, "Questions about the Importance of the Canon in the Old Testament Introduction," JSOT, 16 (1980), p. 47. Cf. also the statements of G. Ernest Wright, op. cit., p. 169: "The fixing of the canon seems to have been almost an artificial cutting off of something alive, evolving, moving, like an organism"; and of Robert B. Laurin, "Tradition and Canon," in Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament, ed. D.A. Knight (London, 1977), p. 261: "Canonization has been untrue to the canonizing process of tradition history."

basis of: (i) the development of a canon, that is, a collection of authoritative writings (canonical literature), but not an absolutely normative corpus of texts; and (ii) the delimitation of the canon of Scripture, a process involving various initiatives and circumstances which have the effect of impinging upon the developing tradition.

What, then, is the exegetical significance of the canonised text? To what extent is it meaningful to regard the final form of Scripture as the locus of revelation? According to Childs, the canon alone testifies to the complete history of revelation between God and Israel. Thus the significance of the final form of Scripture is not to be equated with the unique status or peculiar dynamic which attaches to the final form of any literary text. On the contrary, Childs postulates a canonical process involving intense hermeneutical activity (canonical shaping) which is now incorporated into the Biblical text.⁹³ The effect of this process is that the final form of Scripture is characterised by a "canonical intentionality" which is "coextensive" with the sense of the text.⁹⁴ Thus, the final canonical form assumes a vital hermeneutical function in the shaping of Scripture.⁹⁵

There are two important factors, however, which militate

93. Childs, Introduction to the OT, p. 60.

94. Ibid., p. 79.

95. Ibid., pp. 76-77.

strongly against this conception and suggest that it, too, bears the imprint of a subsequent reconstruction. Firstly, the Biblical material does not intrinsically demand such an assumption: that is, the canon itself is not inherently hermeneutical and does not therefore provide definitive interpretative guidelines.⁹⁶ Moreover, precanonical textual forms present no evidence of hermeneutical activity in accordance with Childs' hypothesis. The fact that, at the beginning of the Common Era, Pharisaic circles are in possession of a strongly stabilised text, and the existence at Qumran of proto MT manuscripts, must not be overemphasised in this connection, for a basically stabilised textual form does not presuppose a process of canonical redaction. Similarly, a process of increasing textual standardisation and stabilisation, beginning in the last centuries of the pre-Common Era, and culminating circa the end of the first century C.E., does not imply pervasive canonical shaping as such. The difficulty with Childs' hypothesis is the attempt to incorporate the Biblical text within an interpretative framework which is quite out of harmony with the actual state of affairs. To what extent, for example, does the Pentateuch reflect the process of canonical shaping? Are there hermeneutical indicators built-in to the structure of the Pentateuch on the basis of which the J and P creation stories may be evaluated? Similarly,

96. Cf. Barr, Holy Scripture, pp. 67-68.

does the canonical text of Isaiah or Qoheleth provide unambiguous hermeneutical assistance?

In light of these considerations, the question naturally arises: to what extent does the book of Job, and the Elihu pericope in particular, bear witness to a process of canonical shaping? Are there any hermeneutical instructions embedded in the text to assist in the interpretative task? For the most part, the final form of Scripture is the product of scribal or redactional activity or fortuitous circumstance,⁹⁷ and not canonical shaping.⁹⁸ In any case, the evidence for canonical redaction must be demonstrated⁹⁹; it is not sufficient merely to assume a profoundly interpretative process the result of which is a hermeneutical "index" co-extensive with the structure of the text. In this respect, the canonical context proposed by Childs remains exceedingly problematical and has the effect of assuming a coherence which is nonexistent. The juxtaposition of various pericopes and themes does not by that very fact imply "canonical intentionality."¹⁰⁰ While

97. Cf. Barr, "Childs' Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture," JSOT, 16 (1980), pp. 17-18; Morton Smith, Palestinian Parties and Politics That Shaped the Old Testament (New York, 1971), pp. 2ff.; Sean McEvenue, "The Old Testament, Scripture or Theology?" Interpretation, 35 (1981), p. 239.

98. Cf. Knight, "Canon and the History of Tradition," HBT, 2 (1980), p. 137.

99. Cf. Barr, Holy Scripture, p. 160; McEvenue, op. cit., p. 238.

100. Ibid.

Childs rightly insists that to regard the Elihu speeches as a secondary expansion does not satisfactorily evaluate their canonical function (a view which represents a valuable corrective to much traditional criticism), nonetheless the a priori assumption of canonical shaping serves to prejudice the exegetical process from the outset.

Secondly, it is apparent that the nature of Biblical authority cannot be narrowly defined in terms of the final form of Scripture. Canonical exegesis is important but it represents only one authoritative stage of meaning. It is characteristic of the growth of the Biblical literature that earlier stages of the text are also regarded as authoritative. Thus, Biblical meaning is multi-layered, as Ackroyd observes: "The whole structure of the biblical canon rests upon the assumption that earlier stages of authoritative writing can be discerned, and that these continue to operate in the eventually modified text-forms which are given a final and fixed shape."¹⁰¹ Thus it may be asserted that revelation properly inheres in all stages of the Biblical literature and not merely in the final form.

A danger in Childs' hermeneutical approach centres on the possible tension between text and context: that is, the tension between the meaning of an individual text and the larger canonical context. This is by no means a minor

101. Peter R. Ackroyd, "Original Text and Canonical Text," USQR, 32 (1976-77), p. 168.

difficulty, but an issue with very clear implications for the exegetical process. The failure to maintain a proper balance between text and context: that is, allowing the canonical context to acquire priority over the peculiar character of the individual text, necessarily diminishes the latter. If it is conceded that a line is to be drawn between "canonical" sense and "literal" sense, the question is, at what point? As will be argued in the present study, to analyse Job according to multiple functions, but at the same time to assume "canonical integrity,"¹⁰² results in a theological harmonisation which effectively neutralises the peculiar dynamics of the book in its present form. This is not to deny the exegetical validity of the larger context of the canon; it is simply to emphasise the danger inherent in a form of canonical obscurantism, wherein the whole acquires an unjustifiable priority over the sum of the parts.

Thus, to conclude the analysis of Childs' "canonical context": it is apparent that, with regard to (1) the canon of Scripture, and (2) the final form of Scripture, there is no justification for the concept of canon as an all-controlling exegetical principle, and, therefore, as the absolute basis of Biblical authority.

102. Cf. Childs, "Response to Reviewers," JSOT, 16 (1980), p. 55.

On the basis of the presentation in this chapter, certain conclusions may be formulated:

1. Hermeneutical distinction between "theological" and "non-theological" holistic methods of interpretation

The first conclusion pertains not to the concept of holistic criticism as such but to the philosophical standpoint of its practitioners. Holistic criticism does not intrinsically demand the separation of "theological" and "non-theological" perspectives. In view of the fact, however, that much of what passes for holistic interpretation represents an explicitly non-theological stance, the dichotomy is meaningful. The preceding analysis has confirmed the hermeneutical distinction between the two methods of interpretation. A theological holistic mode of criticism is based on the recognition of the primary function of the Bible, not as "pure" or "imaginative" literature, but as "applied" literature, or more specifically, Holy Scripture. And it is precisely this normative dimension that involves the interpreter in a quite different set of presuppositions (irrespective of the acceptance or rejection of the truth claims contained therein) in contrast to a consideration of the Bible as pure literature. From a theological viewpoint, therefore, the value of non-theological holistic methods of interpretation will, for the most part, be greatly diminished. Stendahl comments:

It is as Holy Scripture that the Bible is a classic in our culture. Therefore there is something artificial in the idea of "the Bible as literature" I wonder if some of our attempts at literary analysis - be it structuralism or not so new "new criticism" - are not, when all is said and done, a form of apologetics, sophisticated to a degree which obfuscates the apologetic intention even to its practitioners.¹⁰³

2. The Biblical canon: not a unitary collection of authoritative writings

The relatively recent emphasis on synchronic, as opposed to diachronic, analysis of the Biblical text has served to redress an imbalance which has hitherto exerted an undue influence on the critical study of the Bible. As a result, Biblical scholarship cannot return to an era dominated by an excessive preoccupation with the atomisation of the text. Henceforth, greater attention will have to be paid to the dynamics of the text in its final, fixed form, a process which will utilise a wide range of critical techniques (including holistic approaches such as literary criticism, structuralism, canonical criticism, canonical context) in the task of interpretation. Thus canon-centred methods of criticism will figure more prominently

103. Krister Stendahl, "The Bible as a Classic and the Bible as Holy Scripture," Journal of Biblical Literature, 103 (1984), pp. 3-10.

in the future,¹⁰⁴ a circumstance with clear implications in relation to the exegetical process. For example, whether the insertion of the Elihu pericope is attributed to a process of canonical shaping, to redactional activity, or simply to fortuitous circumstance, greatly affects the interpretation of the book of Job. And as McEvenue emphasises: "The case for meaning must be decided on literary criteria: one must show that a unit is not just an anthology but is an intended structure with meaning."¹⁰⁵ In this respect, therefore, it is evident that holistic criticism, as a unitary conception extrinsically imposed, is characterised by a high degree of subjectivity which effectively limits its value for the critical study of the Bible. Above all, the basis of exegesis must be the Biblical text itself and not a system of interpretation imposed from without.

Moreover, exegesis must be decided on an individual basis (taking full cognisance of the peculiar dynamics of the text) and not on the criteria of a priori hypotheses. To subsume the Biblical literature as a whole within an overarching interpretative framework is a misconstrual of

104. Cf. D.J.A. Clines, The Theme of the Pentateuch (JSOT, Supplement Series, 10; Sheffield, 1978), p. 9, who emphasises that "It is a mistake to believe that we can ever manage in Biblical studies without both holistic and atomistic work."

105. McEvenue, op. cit., p. 238. Cf. also Barr, Holy Scripture, p. 160, who also refers to McEvenue.

Scripture and may have the effect, among other things, of harmonising elements which are fundamentally non-assimilable. It must be emphasised that no such principle is expressed in the Old Testament; furthermore, the extraordinary richness and diversity of the Biblical material militates against such a conception.¹⁰⁶ From a theological perspective, therefore, the value of a purely holistic method of interpretation is greatly diminished.

106. It is certainly not intended to exclude in principle canon-oriented methods of interpretation. The analysis of canonical dynamics proposed by Terrien, for example, provides a basis for interpretation from within, and thus recognises, at least in theory, the formal and thematic diversity which characterises the Biblical literature.

CHAPTER IV

THE EFFICACY OF SUFFERING

The view is widely held that the Elihu speeches mark a significant milestone in the progress of the debate respecting the problem of innocent suffering: that is, the theory of suffering elucidated by Elihu represents a substantial advance on the arguments articulated in the Dialogue by Job and his three friends. According to this view, Elihu propounds a distinctive doctrine of suffering as divine discipline, namely, that affliction is not invariably retributive, but may function in a preventive or educative capacity as a safeguard or warning against future sin. Thus suffering may be beneficial to man and is not always to be interpreted as evidence of guilt. On the contrary, the righteous may be afflicted in order to purge or purify them of hidden sins. Suffering, therefore, may be preventive as well as merely punitive.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the discourses of Elihu from the standpoint of the following considerations:

1. Does Elihu in fact formulate a doctrine of disciplinary (that is, preventive) suffering?
2. Is the view of suffering articulated in chapters 32-37

substantially different from that of Job and the three friends?

The first section will consist of an analysis of two key passages within the Elihu pericope: 33:14-30 and 36:2-23.

The second section will present an overview of Old Testament teaching on the subject of suffering with particular emphasis on the theme of affliction as divine discipline.

Finally, the third section will offer an evaluation of the teaching of Elihu with regard to the purpose and significance of suffering.

I

33:14-30

Following his lengthy speech of introduction in chapter 32, Elihu attempts a refutation of the scandalous remarks of Job. The latter has continually affirmed his innocence, insisting that God has afflicted him without just cause. Elihu recapitulates the arguments of Job (33:9ff.) in order to disprove them. In verses 9-11, Elihu rejects Job's declaration that he is without sin as well as his complaint of unjust treatment. The statement of verse 12, "Behold, I tell you, in this you are not in the right, for God is greater than man," accords well with the context of 32:1-3, which are of decisive importance in the interpretation of chapters 32-37, for herein are contained the fundamental presuppositions of Elihu's argumentation: that the righteousness of God is beyond reproach, and that consequently

Job is wrong in insisting upon his own righteousness before God. The principal concern of Elihu is not to justify Job, but rather to defend the absolute justice and righteousness of God. Thus, Elihu occupies essentially the same position as Eliphaz, Zophar and Bildad.¹

In response to Job's accusation that God refuses to answer him (verse 13), Elihu develops his thesis of the nature of divine revelation (verses 14ff.): God communicates to man through dreams and visions (verses 15-18) and through the medium of affliction (verses 19ff.).

- 14 For God speaks in one way, and in two,
but he (man) does not perceive it.
- 15 In a dream, a vision of the night,
when deep sleep falls upon men,
as they slumber on their beds;
- 16 Then he opens (uncovers) the ear of men,
and [terrifies] them with warnings (admonitions);
- 17 In order to turn man [from his] (evil) work,
and to keep man from pride (or and to cut
away pride from man);
- 18 To preserve his soul from the pit,
and his life from perishing by the sword
(or and his life from passing through the
channel or canal [and thus on into Sheol]).

1. Cf. the statement of Gerhard von Rad, Wisdom in Israel, trans. James D. Martin (London, 1972), p. 218, n. 37: "The passage, Job 32:1f., is of particular hermeneutical significance because in this the friends are agreed."

- 19 Or he is chastened with pain on his bed,
and the distress (strife) of his bones is
ceaseless (constant);
- 20 And his very being loathes bread,
and his soul the choicest food;
- 21 His flesh wastes away from sight,
and his bones, [once hidden, are now visible];
- 22 And his soul draws near to the pit,
and his life to the messengers of death (or
the destroyers).
- 23 If there is for him (over him) an angel,
an interpreter (mediator), one of the thousand,
to declare to man what is right for him;
- 24 And (if) he is gracious to him, and says:
"Release (deliver) him from going down to the pit,
I have found a ransom [for his life]";
- 25 Then his flesh becomes fresh with youth,
it is restored as in the days of his youth;
- 26 He prays to God and he accepts (is favourable
to) him,
and he sees his face with (shouts of) joy
(or he comes into his presence with joy),
and he restores to man his righteous state;
- 27 Then he sings to men, and he says:
"I sinned, and perverted what was right,
but it was not requited to me;
- 28 He redeemed my soul from descending to the pit,
and my life sees the light."
- 29 Behold, all of these things God does
twice, even three times, to a man,

30 To turn back his soul from the pit,
and to be lighted with the light of life.

According to Elihu, Job's complaint that God does not respond to his accusations is untrue. On the contrary, the deity communicates in various ways, although man, for the most part, fails to discern the divine revelatory activity (verse 14) in dreams and visions (verses 15-18) and in suffering (verses 19ff.). The text of verse 16b is very ambiguous: $\text{וַיִּסְּלֵם אֱלֹהִים אֶת־עֵינֵיהֶם}$. Many early commentators retain MT and translate: "he seals their instruction (discipline, correction, admonition, warning, chastisement; cf. 36:10a)," ² interpreting וַיִּסְּלֵם on the basis of the root סלם : "to discipline, chasten, correct, admonish." Tur-Sinai translates: "and with their bonds [from the root סלם : "to bind"] he sealeth (their eyes)." ³ Most critics, however, including the majority of more recent commentators,

2. Cf. Vulg.; Targum; AV; RV; JPS; B-D-B, p. 367; Segond; Rosenmüller, op. cit., p. 776; Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 213; Stickel, op. cit., p. 93; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 221; Hirzel, op. cit., pp. 206-07; Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 260; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 194; Hitzig, op. cit., p. 246; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 286; Studer, op. cit., p. 148; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 557; Ewald, op. cit., p. 333; Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 102; König, Buch Hiob, p. 340. Cf. Habel, Book of Job (OTL), pp. 456, 458, following NJV: "And by warning them leaves his signature."
3. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 468; cf. G. Lisowsky, Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten Testament (2d ed.; Stuttgart, 1958), p. 758; Driver, Philological Notes, in Driver-Gray, p. 243. Gray, in Driver-Gray, p. 287, regards this translation as "very improbable."

emend $\Delta\Delta\eta^7$: "he terrifies,"⁴ on the basis of LXX
 $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma \epsilon^{\cdot}\xi\epsilon\phi\acute{o}\beta\eta\sigma\epsilon\nu$. In addition, some critics,
 following LXX in toto, translate: "he terrifies with
 visions" ($\Delta^7\chi^7\gamma^7\gamma^7$),⁵ reminiscent of Job's complaint
 in 7:14: "Then you (that is, God) scare me with dreams,
 and terrify me with visions"; or: "he frightens with
 terrors" ($\Delta^7\chi^7\gamma^7\gamma^7$).⁶

Besides the textual difficulties, the precise meaning of
 the verse is also ambiguous; the central question is whether
 the passage is to be interpreted as signifying physical

4. Cf. Syriac; Aquila; RSV; NEB; K-B, pp. 344-45; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 196; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 220; Peake, Job, p. 283; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, pp. 453-54; Arnold B. Ehrlich, Randglossen zur Hebräischen (Leipzig, 1913), vol. 6, p. 312; Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 238, 347; Peters, op. cit., pp. 370-71; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 173; Johann Georg Ernst Hoffmann, Hiob (Kiel, 1891), p. 96; Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 343; Gordis, BOJ, pp. 362, 375; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., pp. 109, 182; Ley, op. cit., p. 117; Loisy, op. cit., p. 165; Alonso Schökel, p. 465, and Sicre Diaz, p. 467, in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit.; Guillaume, "Unity of the Book of Job," p. 35; Buttenwieser, op. cit., pp. 339, 351; Hesse, op. cit., p. 179; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 308.
5. Cf. JB; NJB; Dhorme, op. cit., pp. 494f.; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 579; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 221; Strahan, op. cit., p. 278; Larcher, op. cit., p. 137; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 212; Pope, op. cit., p. 250; Dennefeld, op. cit., p. 176; Stier, op. cit., p. 161. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 287, renders: "And dismayeth them with admonishments," but suggests, alternatively, p. 288, the translation: "And dismayeth them with what they see."
6. Cf. B. Duhm, Das Buch Hiob (Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament, XVI; Freiburg im Breisgau, 1897), p. 159; Georg Beer, Der Text des Buches Hiob (Marburg, 1897), p. 210; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 80. Nichols, op. cit., p. 156, emending $\Delta^7\chi^7\gamma^7\gamma^7$, translates: "With fearful forms He frighteth him."

suffering: (i) The root **נָדַח** denotes discipline both in the sense of suffering and in the sense of instruction or warning. In regard to the context of verse 16b, while some critics interpret the revelation as correction or chastisement administered to the individual through suffering,⁷ the predominant view among commentators is in favour of disciplinary instruction or warning.⁸ (ii) The alternative MT translation "bond" or "fetters" is interpreted by Gray⁹ in a figurative, as opposed to a literal, sense: that is, "to seal their fetter" means to strengthen their bond to God. Tur-Sinai likewise interprets the fetters as that which bind a man when he is asleep and are sealed by God in order to strengthen them.¹⁰ (iii) Similarly, the translations **וַיִּרְאוּ**: "visions (apparitions)" and **וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ**: "terrors" do not signify physical suffering, however distressing such experiences may be to the individual.¹¹

Against the view that verse 16b alludes to discipline in

7. Cf. Dillmann, op. cit., p. 286; Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 312; Ewald, op. cit., pp. 333-34; Hahn, op. cit., p. 263; Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 343. Cf. also Thilo, op. cit., p. 58: "macht ihm gewiss, dass er ihn züchtigt"; Gustav Bickell, Das Buch Job (Wien, 1894), p. 60: "Und schreckt sie durch Zücht'gung."
8. Cf. inter alia Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 196; Driver, Philological Notes, in Driver-Gray, p. 243; S.R. Driver, The Book of Job in the Revised Version (Oxford, 1906), p. 97; König, Buch Hiob, p. 340; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 557; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 224; A.B. Davidson, op. cit., p. 229.
9. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 287.
10. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 469.
11. Cf. the translation of Jastrow, op. cit., p. 321: "and startles them with sufferings," i.e., nightmares.

the sense of corrective suffering, it must be noted that the idea of affliction is not introduced explicitly until verse 19. Moreover, in the Old Testament, as indeed throughout the ancient Near Eastern world, dreams and visions were regarded as mediums of instruction rather than as vehicles of affliction (cf. Num. 12:6; I Sam. 28:6, 15; Sirach 34:6; cf. also the "vision of the night" described in vivid detail by Eliphaz in Job 4:12ff. and the dream-visions in the book of Enoch, chapters 83-90).¹² In all probability, therefore, in Elihu's discourse dreams and visions function as mediums of disciplinary instruction, and do not entail physical suffering.¹³ In this context, physical suffering is not normally associated with a state of sleep, that is, in the sense of dreams and visions as the means by which God "afflicts" man. On the contrary, suffering the purpose of which is the discipline of the individual presupposes a state of wakefulness. This sense accords well with the context of verses 19ff. where the individual is fully conscious of his suffering. Furthermore, the context of 36:10 supports the interpretation of verse 16b as referring to disciplinary instruction or warning as opposed to physical suffering: in verse 10a, 701y represents

12. On "dreams" in the Old Testament, cf. E.L. Ehrlich, Der Traum im Alten Testament (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 73; Berlin, 1953); cf. also IDB, vol. 1, p. 868; TDOT, vol. 4, pp. 429ff.

13. Cf. E.L. Ehrlich, op. cit., pp. 146-48.

instruction or warning spoken to man, and not correction and chastisement suffered by him.¹⁴

The Hebrew text of 33:17a is not intelligible; MT

הַיָּמִינִים אֲדָמָה לְהַסִּיר translates literally: "in order to turn away (remove) man deed (action)." The majority of commentators emend הַיָּמִינִים : "from his deed"¹⁵ (on the theory of an original prefix הַ and suffix ים), or, less commonly, הַיָּמִינִים.¹⁶ Of central significance is the interpretation of the noun מַעֲשֵׂה : does it connote "evil" conduct, and if so, is the reference to actual or potential sin? Whereas many commentators interpret in a pejorative sense (as in I Sam. 20:19),¹⁷ Budde argues that

14. Cf. Driver, *Philological Notes*, in Driver-Gray, p. 243.
15. Cf. inter alia Syriac; Vulg.; Targum; AV; RV; AT; RSV; JB; NJB; Beer (BHK); Gerleman (BHS); B-D-B, p. 795.
16. Cf. inter alia LXX; NJV; cf. NEB: הַיָּמִינִים.
17. Cf. LXX ἀπὸ ἀδικίας ; Targum מִן מַעֲשֵׂה רָעָה ; NEB: "from reckless conduct"; JB: "from evil-doing"; NAB: "from evil"; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 287; Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 214; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 224: "from mischief"; Driver, *Philological Notes*, in Driver-Gray, p. 243; Driver, *Book of Job in the Revised Version*, p. 97; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 288; Duhm, *Buch Hiob*, p. 159: "vom Unrecht" (cf. Ley, op. cit., p. 117); Peake, *Job*, p. 283; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 558: "from transgression"; Stickel, op. cit., p. 93: "von Unthat"; Bickell, op. cit., p. 60: "von Schuld"; Loisy, op. cit., p. 165: "du péché"; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., p. 110: "from his evil way"; Terrien, *Job* (CAT), p. 221: "de son iniquité"; Hirzel, op. cit., p. 207: "das (böse) Thun"; Studer, op. cit., p. 148: "von Sünden"; Hahn, op. cit., p. 264; Strahan, op. cit., p. 279; Ball, op. cit., p. 80: "from wrong"; Buttenwieser, op. cit., p. 352: "from their evil doing"; Thilo, op. cit., p. 86; König, *Buch Hiob*, p. 340; Gordis, *BOJ*, pp. 362, 375: "from secret misdeeds"; Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 465: "de sus malas acciones"; Sicre Diaz in *ibid.*,

הַשָּׁמַיִם neither here nor elsewhere in the Old Testament signifies "evil conduct."¹⁸ LXX translates ἀπὸ ἀδικίας: "from unrighteousness"; thus, some critics, on the basis of the Greek text, read הַשָּׁמַיִם: "from sin," or "from wrong."¹⁹ Staples, however, cautions that the translation ἀπὸ ἀδικίας "may be a free rendering, explaining the kind of work."²⁰ Nevertheless, LXX may well convey the essential meaning of stich a, for the unrighteousness of Job is fundamental to the argumentation of Elihu (cf. the occurrence of פִּי־יָזַם in 32:1, and of פִּי־יָזַם in 32:2, and the negative connotation with reference to Job). Moreover, the purpose of divine revelation is hardly to be understood as designed to deter man from moral or upright actions or conduct. Thus it is clear from the context that הַשָּׁמַיִם signifies an "evil" action (as הַשָּׁמַיִם in 36:9).

In this regard, Alonso Schökel interprets verse 17 in the sense of "to move away from, to avoid, evil means" and

p. 468; Pope, op. cit., p. 246: "from evil"; de Wilde, op. cit., pp. 308, 314: "von seinen krummen Wegen"; G. Barton, op. cit., p. 257; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 458.

18. Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 196.

19. Cf. Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 159; Loisy, op. cit., p. 165; Bickell, op. cit., p. 60; Ley, op. cit., p. 117; Pope, op. cit., p. 246; cf. also Peake, Job, p. 283; Strahan, op. cit., p. 279; G. Barton, op. cit., p. 257; Ball, op. cit., p. 375.

20. Staples, op. cit., p. 51; Cf. Driver, Philological Notes, in Driver-Gray, p. 243; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 495.

not as referring to actions already committed.²¹ Similarly, Dhorme, transposing $\eta\omega\lambda\lambda$ and $\eta\iota\lambda\iota$ and emending $\eta\iota\lambda\iota$, translates: "to turn man away from pride, He hides from man His action," and explains that "God hides His action from man, namely in order that the latter may not grow proud (to avert man from pride)."²² Ostervald translates: "afin qu'il détourne l'homme de ce qu'il prétend faire," while AV and RV render: "that he may withdraw man from his purpose." In 17b, however, neither MT $\eta\theta\omega\iota$: "he covers, conceals," nor the principal emendation $\pi\theta\omega\iota$: "he cuts away," signifies unambiguously the idea of latent, as opposed to existent, sin. Moreover, the context of verse 27 clearly indicates that the sin referred to is actual and not merely potential. Thus, Strahan remarks, in regard to verse 17: "It does not appear that Elihu anywhere attributes to suffering a preventive as well as a curative design."²³

Verse 19 introduces the second method of divine revelation, the explication of which, in contrast to 16b, is unambiguous: "And he is chastened with pain on his bed, and the distress (strife) of his bones is ceaseless (constant)," translating stich b with the majority of commentators the

21. Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 474. Cf. Thilo, op. cit., p. 58: "von einem Vorhaben."

22. Dhorme, op. cit., pp. 495-96.

23. Strahan, op. cit., p. 279.

Kethibh **יָרָה**, "strife"²⁴ as opposed to the Qere **יָרָה**, "multitude."²⁵ In the present context, the alternate reading "and (while) the multitude of his bones are firm" is improbable. The parallelism of the legal terms **נִצַּח**, "1. to argue with, dispute with; 2. to rebuke, correct" (cf. 5:17), and **יָרָה**, "1. to accuse, complain; 2. to strive, contend," produces a vivid metaphorical image of a man chastened with pain upon his bed, his bones "contending" (that is, involved in a legal controversy) against him (verses 19-21). As Fohrer remarks: "Es ist, als lägen die Glieder des Kranken in einem Krieg gegen-einander, der Tag und Nacht nicht aufhört."²⁶ Reading with the Qere results in the loss of this parallelism, and hence the imagery. From an interpretative standpoint, the

24. Cf. RV; RSV; NEB; NAB. Dhorme, op. cit., pp. 497-98, translates: "And by a continual shaking of his bones," interpreting on the basis of the Assyrian rîbu, from the root râbu: "to be agitated," "to be shaken," "to quiver"; cf. JB; NJB; NJV; Loisy, op. cit., p. 166; Dennefeld, op. cit., p. 177; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 222; Kissane, op. cit., p. 225; Larcher, op. cit., p. 138; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 437; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 579; Stier, op. cit., p. 161. Hölischer, op. cit., p. 80, reading **יָרָה**, translates: "der Schwind seiner Glieder hört nicht auf." Beer, Text des Buches Hiob, p. 211 (cf. BHK), and Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 238, 240, 347, emend **יָרָה** (cf. Prov. 14:30; also Prov. 12:4; Hab. 3:16). Jastrow, op. cit., p. 321, with a slight change of the text, translates: "And by the enduring torture of his bones."
25. Cf. Syriac; Theod.; Vulg.; Targum; AV; RV marg.; JPS. Stich b was omitted from the original Greek text (and accordingly in Bickell, op. cit., p. 60).
26. Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 459. Cf. Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 456: "And by a perpetual trial in his bones."

following may be noted: (1) The subject of disciplinary suffering is first introduced into the poem by Eliphaz in 5:17ff.; and (2) the forensic terminology in 33:19 suggests a judicial process, that is, a legal complaint instituted by an aggrieved party (God) against an aggrieving party (Job).²⁷ The allusion therefore is to actual rather than potential sin.²⁸

Verses 23-24 constitute a notable crux interpretum. The Hebrew text presents major exegetical difficulties, namely, the ambiguity relating to (1) the identity of the $\gamma^{\prime} \text{ל} \gamma \text{א} \text{ל} \gamma$; (2) the precise signification of $\eta \text{ל} \text{א} - \gamma^{\prime} \gamma \text{א} \text{ל}$ and $\gamma^{\prime} \text{ל} \gamma$; (3) the subject of $\gamma^{\prime} \text{ל} \gamma \text{א} \text{ל}$ in 24a: is it God or the angel-interpreter? (4) the nature of the ransom ($\gamma^{\prime} \text{ל} \gamma$) in 24c.

— 23. Whereas $\gamma^{\prime} \text{ל} \gamma$ is translated by the great majority of commentators as "angel,"²⁹ $\gamma^{\prime} \text{ל} \gamma$ is

27. In the view of Lamparter, op. cit., p. 200, the context of vs. 19 does not refer to the specific case of Job.

28. Cf. Ps. 32:3f.

29. Cf. "messenger": AV; Ostervald; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 174; Hirzel, op. cit., p. 208; Hitzig, op. cit., p. 248: "ein Dolmetsch-Bote"; Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 128: "Gottesbote" (cf. Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 217); Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 437; G. Barton, op. cit., p. 258; Ball, op. cit., p. 80; S.H. Hooke, "The Theory and Practice of Substitution," Vetus Testamentum, 2 (1952), p. 14; Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 470. Cf. also NJV: "representative"; Rosenmüller, op. cit., p. 776: "legatus"; Gordis, BOJ, p. 362: "one spokesman for him." $\gamma^{\prime} \text{ל} \gamma$ is deleted by Nichols, op. cit., p. 157; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 198; and Jastrow, op. cit., p. 321.

variously interpreted: "interpreter"³⁰; "mediator"³¹;
 "advocate"³²; "intercessor"³³; "intermediary"³⁴;

30. Cf. AV; RV; Berechiah, p. 221 of the English translation; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 290; Nichols, op. cit., p. 157; A.B. Davidson, op. cit., p. 230; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 198; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 500; Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 217; Hitzig, op. cit., p. 248; Strahan, op. cit., p. 280: "interpreter" or "mediator" (cf. Rowley, Job, p. 214); Kissane, op. cit., p. 221; Dennefeld, op. cit., p. 177; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 437; Cox, op. cit., p. 422; Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, p. 61; Ball, op. cit., p. 80; Moulton, Book of Job, p. xxx; Hooke, op. cit., p. 14.
31. Cf. RSV; NEB; NAB; JB; NJB; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 288; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 160; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 228; Rosenmüller, op. cit., p. 776; Stickel, op. cit., p. 94; Ewald, op. cit., p. 334; Renan, Livre de Job, p. 144; Hahn, op. cit., p. 265; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 559; Hirzel, op. cit., p. 208; Studer, op. cit., p. 148; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., p. 110; Bickell, op. cit., p. 60; König, Buch Hiob, p. 343 (lit. "interpreter," and thus synecdochically "mediator, advocate"; cf. Hölscher, op. cit., p. 80; Larcher, op. cit., p. 138; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 222); Thilo, op. cit., p. 58; Peters, op. cit., p. 378; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 212; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 220; Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 128; Léveque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 579; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 453; Lamparter, op. cit., p. 199; Stier, op. cit., p. 163; Hesse, op. cit., p. 179; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 308; Gross, op. cit., p. 117. Maurice A. Canney, "The Hebrew יָדָבָר," American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures, 40 (1923-24), pp. 136-37, interprets as "free-talker, mediator, advocate, ambassador, diplomat" (cf. H. Neil Richardson, "Some Notes on יָדָבָר and Its Derivatives," Vetus Testamentum, 5 (1955), p. 169, who interprets in the sense of "talk freely").
32. Cf. Targum: אֲדָבָר; NJV; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 195; Ley, op. cit., p. 118; Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 343; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 347; Gordis, BOJ, p. 362; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 456.
33. Cf. JPS; Segond; Loisy, op. cit., p. 166; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 321; Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 466. Sicre Diaz in ibid., p. 469, translates "intercessor," "mediator," or "lawyer, counsel." Hemraj, op. cit., p. 77, translates "intercessor," "mediator," or "paraclete."
34. Cf. Snaithe, Book of Job, p. 89; Ronald J. Williams,

"spokesman."³⁵ For the most part, $\gamma^{\prime} \zeta \gamma$ is understood to signify a supernatural emissary,³⁶ that is, an angel. Conversely, some critics postulate a human mediatorial figure,³⁷ and in particular, an identification with Elihu himself.³⁸

According to Nichols, the term $\tau \chi \zeta \gamma$: "angel" represents a later addition (perhaps influenced by 4:14, 15) which, in addition to disrupting the metre of the verse, is inconsistent with the context: apart from $\tau \chi \zeta \gamma$, nothing else in the passage accords with the interpretation of a supernatural being, and the general tenor of the speech suggests that Elihu regards himself as the Daysman of 9:33 who is to communicate the meaning of Job's suffering. Moreover, Nichols emphasises that $\gamma^{\prime} \zeta \gamma$ elsewhere in the Old

"Theodicy in the Ancient Near East," Canadian Journal of Theology, 2 (1956), p. 24.

35. Cf. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 470; Pope, op. cit., p. 246; James F. Ross, "Job 33:14-30: The Phenomenology of Lament," Journal of Biblical Literature, 94 (1975), p. 40.
36. Cf. inter alia Dillmann, op. cit., p. 288; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 195; Gray, Philological Notes, in Driver-Gray, p. 248; A.B. Davidson, op. cit., p. 230; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 559; Hahn, op. cit., p. 266; Peters, op. cit., pp. 377-78; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 220; Lamparter, op. cit., p. 200; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 459; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 223.
37. Cf. Sutcliffe, "Job." p. 437.
38. Cf. Nichols, op. cit., p. 157; Rosenmüller, op. cit., pp. 807-09; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 174; Dennefeld, op. cit., p. 177; G. Barton, op. cit., p. 258; Moulton, Book of Job, p. xxx; Maag, op. cit., p. 209.

Testament does not designate a supernatural intermediary but rather an ambassador.³⁹

The conception of $\gamma^{\prime} \gamma \gamma$ as signifying a human mediator is convincingly refuted by Dillmann on the basis of the following considerations: (1) the contrast between $\alpha^{\prime} \pi \gamma \gamma$ in verse 22 and $\alpha \tau \alpha \gamma$ in verse 23; (2) the expression $\eta \gamma \alpha - \gamma^{\prime} \gamma \gamma \tau \pi \alpha$, which does not signify "(only) one among a thousand," but "one from the heavenly army" (cf. Ps. 68:18; Dan. 7:10); and (3) the judgment of God in 24b: "Deliver him (from going down to the pit)," which is scarcely comprehensible in the context of an earthly messenger.⁴⁰

In addition to the question of identity, the function of the $\gamma^{\prime} \gamma \gamma \tau \alpha \gamma \gamma$, as expressed in 23c: "To declare (reveal) to man his uprightness," is also ambiguous. The meaning of $\dot{\imath} \gamma \psi^{\prime}$ is uncertain, signifying either (a) "his duty,"⁴¹ that is, to indicate to man what is appropriate or right for him, namely, the way of

39. Nichols, op. cit., pp. 119, 157.

40. Cf. Dillmann, op. cit., pp. 288-89. Cf. also Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 195.

41. Cf. Dillmann, op. cit., p. 288; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 198; Dhorme, op. cit., pp. 500-01; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 453; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, pp. 549, 579; Rosenmüller, op. cit., p. 776; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 559; Hahn, op. cit., pp. 265-66; Larcher, op. cit., p. 138; Kissane, op. cit., pp. 221, 225-26; Dennefeld, op. cit., p. 177; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 212; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 80; Terrien, Job (CAT), pp. 222-23; Sutcliffe, "Job," pp. 437-38.

uprightness (the upright, straight way in opposition to the crooked path) as ordained by God (cf. Prov. 2:20; 4:11; 11:24; 14:2)⁴²; or (b) "his uprightness,"⁴³ that is, to proclaim in favour of the man's uprightness.⁴⁴ In place of MT, a number of commentators emend **יְדֹאָי** : "his discipline (chastisement)" (haplographic omission of **י** following **דָּאָה**) on the basis of LXX **μέμψιν** : "(his) fault."⁴⁵

42. Cf. LXX; RV; RSV; NAB; JB; NJB; Segond; Ostervald; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 290; Driver, Book of Job in the Revised Version, p. 98; Staples, op. cit., p. 30; Renan, Livre de Job, p. 144; Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 218; Loisy, op. cit., p. 166; Hirzel, op. cit., p. 209; A.B. Davidson, op. cit., p. 230; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 228; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 222; Ley, op. cit., p. 118; Tur-Sinai, op. cit., pp. 472-73; Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, p. 61; Stier, op. cit., p. 163; De Wilde, op. cit., p. 308; Gross, op. cit., p. 117. Ewald, op. cit., pp. 334-35, and Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 174, translate "his uprightness," i.e., the way of uprightness which the individual must follow. Cf. also Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 264: "his uprightness," i.e., his obligation or duty (cf. Peters, op. cit., p. 378), namely, to do sincere penance.
43. Cf. Berechiah, p. 221 of the English translation; JPS; Pope, op. cit., p. 246; Gordis, BOJ, p. 362; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., pp. 110, 182; Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 102; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 322; Snaith, Book of Job, pp. 89-90; Hesse, op. cit., p. 179; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 456.
44. Cf. Vulg.; NEB; A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 313 (although deleting 23c as a gloss); König, Buch Hiob, p. 343; Thilo, op. cit., p. 58; Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 343; Kraeling, op. cit., p. 129; Lamparter, op. cit., p. 199. Hontheim, op. cit., p. 240, interprets **יְדֹאָי** as the restored uprightness of man, or the reconciliation of the individual with God. Hitzig, op. cit., p. 248, translates "seinen [i.e., God's] Bescheid," i.e., to declare to man God's uprightness.
45. Cf. Beer, Text des Buches Hiob, p. 212, and BHK;

In the view of most critics, the angel-mediator functions in a dual capacity: (1) interpreting the will of God to man; and (2) interceding with God on man's behalf.⁴⁶ In this context, Stier, interpreting $\gamma^{\prime}\zeta\gamma$ as "mediator," rejects the translation "advocate" as "zu einseitig."⁴⁷ Conversely, many commentators interpret the role of the $\gamma^{\prime}\zeta\gamma$ primarily as that of an intercessor or advocate on behalf (in favour) of man (as the translation of $17\omega^{\prime}$ as "his uprightness" generally indicates): "If there shall be an angel speaking for him, one of the thousands, to proclaim the righteousness of man." (Vulg.); "Yet if an angel, one of thousands, stands by him, a mediator between him and God, to expound what he has done right and to secure mortal man his due;" (NEB); "But if there be one spokesman for him,

Duhm, Buch Hiob, pp. 160-61; Nichols, op. cit., p. 157; Strahan, op. cit., p. 280; G. Barton, op. cit., pp. 258-59. Ball, op. cit., on the basis of LXX, hypothecates, p. 378, the reading $1\gamma\omega^{\prime}\zeta$: "his transgression," and translates, p. 80, "to declare to the man his fault." 23c is deleted by Bickell, op. cit., p. 60, and A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 313, while Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 466, transposes after 26b.

46. Cf. inter alia Dillmann, op. cit., pp. 288-89; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 550; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, pp. 459-60; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 223; Kissane, op. cit., pp. 225-26; Strahan, op. cit., p. 280; Hirzel, op. cit., pp. 208-09; Larcher, op. cit., p. 138; Peters, op. cit., p. 378; Hemraj, op. cit., p. 77; Stier, op. cit., p. 334; MacKenzie, "Job," Jerome Biblical Commentary, vol. 1, p. 529.

47. Stier, op. cit., p. 334.

one advocate among a thousand to vouch for a man's uprightness." (Gordis)⁴⁸; "Wenn dann ein Engel zu seinem Schutze da war, ein Fürsprecher wenigstens von tausend, um betreffs des Menschen dessen Redlichkeit zu melden," (König)⁴⁹; "Geschieht's dann, dass ein Engel für ihn eintritt als Mittler — einer aus viel Tausenden — , um redlich für den Menschen vorzusprechen" (Lamparter)⁵⁰; "Wenn dann ein Engel für ihn da ist, nur ein einziger Fürsprecher unter den Tausend, um für den Menschen Zeugnis von seiner Redlichkeit abzulegen." (Steuernagel)⁵¹; "Da ist bei ihm ein Engel, der eines von tausenden für ihn beantwortet, kund zu thun zu Gunsten des Menschen seine Rechtschaffenheit." (Fried. Delitzsch).⁵² Alonso Schökel, joining $\gamma^{\prime} \gamma \gamma$ with $\gamma^{\prime} \gamma \gamma$, translates "a favourable angel."⁵³ In the opinion of Habel, the $\gamma^{\prime} \gamma \gamma$ functions as a "defense attorney."⁵⁴

A number of commentators interpret the function of the $\gamma^{\prime} \gamma \gamma \gamma^{\prime} \gamma \gamma$ in connection with the Ancient Near

48. Gordis, BOJ, p. 362.

49. König, Buch Hiob, p. 343.

50. Lamparter, op. cit., p. 199.

51. Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 343. On the translation of $\gamma^{\prime} \gamma \gamma$ as "Redlichkeit" (honesty, probity), cf. also Thilo, op. cit., p. 58.

52. Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 102.

53. Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 466.

54. Habel, Book of Job (OTL), pp. 469-70.

Eastern belief in the existence of guardian angels.⁵⁵ In this context, Pope traces the conception of the angel intermediary to the Mesopotamian belief in a personal god who acted on behalf of man in the divine assembly.⁵⁶ In the view of other critics, the angel of verse 23 appears as the counterpart to the Satan (the accusing angel) of the Prologue.⁵⁷ Furthermore, some scholars interpret $\text{יָהּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל}$ in relation to Job's oft-expressed desire for a mediator (cf. 9:33; 16:19-21; 19:25-27) in his dispute with God.⁵⁸

A number of factors, however, militate against the interpretation of $\text{יָהּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל}$ in the context of either (a) a guardian angel or (b) the mediator, or ombudsman, for whom Job has appealed. (1) The concept of angelic mediation on behalf of man, that is, intercession with God for man, does not occur frequently in the Old

55. Cf. Larcher, op. cit., p. 138; Pope, op. cit., p. 251; Irwin, "Job's Redeemer," JBL, 81 (1962), p. 228; Sigmund Mowinckel, "Hiobs gō'ēl und Zeuge im Himmel," BZAW, 41 (1925), pp. 208-09; Kraeling, op. cit., p. 129; Peters, op. cit., p. 378; König, Buch Hiob, p. 343; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 316; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 470.

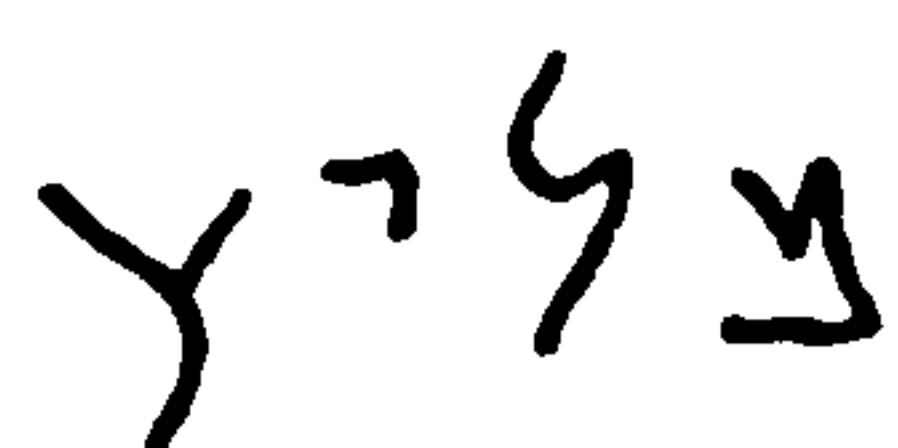
56. Pope, op. cit., p. 251; cf. also Mowinckel, op. cit., pp. 208-09; Irwin, "Job's Redeemer," p. 228; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 470.

57. Cf. inter alia Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 550; Peters, op. cit., p. 378; Th. D. Vriezen, An Outline of Old Testament Theology (2d ed.; Waheningen, Netherlands, 1970), p. 428.

58. Cf. Snaithe, Book of Job, p. 90; Mowinckel, op. cit., pp. 208-10; Irwin, "Job's Redeemer," p. 228; Beeby, op. cit., p. 45; cf. also R.J. Williams, op. cit., p. 24.

Testament.⁵⁹ The conception of an individual guardian angel is perhaps adumbrated in Psalm 91:11-12. But angels generally function as messengers or interpreters of the divine will (cf. Num. 22:35; Josh. 5:14; Judg. 6:11-23; 13:3-5, 13; Zech. 1:9). In the post-exilic book of Zechariah, an angel appears as intercessor on behalf of man (1:12), and as defender (3:1ff.); however, Zechariah 1:12ff. probably allude to the guardian angel of the people, a role fulfilled by Michael and Gabriel in Daniel 10:12ff. and 12:1 (cf. also "the captain of the host of Yahweh" in Josh. 5:13ff.). The phenomenon of angelic intercession on man's behalf, or intercession with God on behalf of man, occurs consistently only in the later, extra-canonical Jewish literature. Judaism of the post-Biblical period is characterised by a growth in angelology, due in part to an increasing sense of God's transcendence and, correspondingly, the necessity for heavenly intermediaries between the deity and man (cf. Tobit 12:12-15).

(2) As the prose introduction (32:1-5) clearly indicates, the primary concern of Elihu is to defend the absolute justice and righteousness of God, not to justify or to vindicate the interests of man. Thus, it is man (Job) who must be reconciled with God, not God with man.

(3)  does not in the Old Testament signify

59. Cf. Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, pp. 549-50; Vriezen, op. cit., p. 428.

"advocate" or "defence counsel" on behalf of man, but merely "interpreter, intermediary,"⁶⁰ a meaning confirmed on the basis of Gen. 42:23. In Isaiah 43:27, the term is applied to the prophets: "Your interpreters" (תִּזְכְּרִי). The angel-intermediary of Job 33:23 therefore fulfils the function of a prophet (cf. Isa. 38), namely, to communicate the divine will (in this case, what is right for Job in God's sight), and thus to serve as an interpreter between God and man.⁶¹

(4) MT וְאֵל : "if" (23a) is contextually difficult. According to Hengstenberg, וְאֵל indicates that "die vermittelnde Thätigkeit des angelus interpres eine unerlässliche Bedingung des Heiles ist."⁶² In the view of Duhm, emending וְאֵל : "Dann [ist über ihm ein Engel],"⁶³ the value of Elihu's teaching is seriously diminished if וְאֵל suggests uncertainty as to whether God delegates an angel in order to save the afflicted person. Ellison, however, asserts that וְאֵל does not express doubt in this

60. Cf. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 472.

61. Cf. Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 161; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 290; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 501; Kissane, op. cit., p. 225. A similar view is expressed by Cox, op. cit., p. 433, with reference to the term תִּזְכְּרִי : "The word here rendered 'angel' expresses the office or function of the angel, and means 'messenger,' 'interpreter,' 'ambassador,' 'teacher,' 'prophet'; it covers any and all, mortal or immortal, whose duty it is to announce and explain and enforce the will of a superior."

62. Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 263.

63. Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 160. Cf. JB; Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 217.

regard.⁶⁴ Snaith translates: "What if there were an angel at his side!"⁶⁵ while Renan interprets: "but [he has found an intercessory angel]." ⁶⁶ Hontheim emends $\overline{\text{N}}\text{X}\overline{\text{N}}$: "gewiss" (as 6:13; 17:16).⁶⁷ König, translating "wenn dann," interprets $\overline{\text{N}}\text{X}$ as meaning "so oft" (cf. 10:14a).⁶⁸ Bickell, reading $\text{X}\overline{\text{S}}\overline{\text{N}}\text{X}$, translates: "Wenn nicht ein Mittler eintritt."⁶⁹ An entirely different interpretation is proposed by Tur-Sinai: verse 23 is not a clause expressing a condition of God's pardon, but refers rather to the response of man to that which is communicated to him by the angel-intermediary. Thus, "the uncertain factor is not whether God sends man such angels, but whether man listens to those numerous messengers, who reveal to him God's $\overline{\text{T}}\overline{\text{U}}^{\text{r}}$, his demand for 'uprightness' on the part of man."⁷⁰ In LXX, the concept of angelic mediation is rejected altogether⁷¹:

If there be a thousand death-bringing angels,
not one of them shall harm him,
if it be in his heart to return to God,

64. Ellison, op. cit., p. 107.
65. Snaith, Book of Job, p. 89.
66. Renan, Livre de Job, p. 144. Second also translates "but" (mais), but retains "if": "but if"
67. Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 238, 347.
68. König, Buch Hiob, p. 343.
69. Bickell, op. cit., p. 60.
70. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., pp. 470, 472-73.
71. Cf. Bittenweiser, op. cit., p. 352.

then he (God) will declare to man his fault (guilt), and show him his folly.

On the basis of the foregoing, it is not improbable that verse 23 is intended as a refutation of Job's repeated desire for a mediator to resolve his dispute with God, and in particular, a negation of the conception of a heavenly intercessor in 16:19-21. It is noteworthy that the term יָדָא also occurs in 16:20, where it denotes the witness or advocate ($\text{יָדָא יְהוָה יְדָא יְהוָה}$: "my intermediary, my friend") "in the high places" who will intercede on Job's behalf, that is, testify to his innocence before God. In the view of Elihu, a heavenly intermediary, if such a figure exists at all, will indeed announce to man "his right," although not in the manner anticipated by Job: "his right" understood, not as "his (past) uprightness," but rather in the sense of "what is right for him to do," that is, the way of uprightness which he must follow.⁷²

According to Curtis, the Elihu author considers it necessary to confute the suggestion of a divine intercessor in 16:19-21, and thus describes the intermediary pejoratively

72. Similarly, in the view of Norman C. Habel, "Only the Jackal Is My Friend: On Friends and Redeemers in Job," Interpretation, 31 (1977), p. 235, the mediator desired by Job would, according to Elihu, "be on God's side, interpreting God's will and leading Job to repentance rather than defending his integrity (33:23-30)." Habel asserts that "heavenly advocates are ultimately God's personal servants, not private redeemers for maltreated earthlings."

as merely an "angel."⁷³ The phrase אֶל־אֶחָד מֵאֲלֹהִים :
"one of the thousand" may therefore represent an expansion
of the rhetorical question posed by Eliphaz in 5:1 ("Call
now; is there any that will answer you? And to which of
the holy ones will you turn?"), that is, referring to the
extreme unlikelihood that even one of the numberless
heavenly hierarchy of angels will be deputed to intercede
with God on Job's behalf.⁷⁴

— 24. The "ransom" (רָנְסוֹן): "ransom, price of a life"; cf. Exod. 21:30; 30:12; Ps. 49:8; Isa. 43:3) in 24c is not identified and has been variously interpreted: (1) the suffering of the individual⁷⁵; (2) the repentance⁷⁶ of

73. John Briggs Curtis, "On Job's Witness in Heaven," JBL, 102 (1983), p. 554, n. 9.
74. Conversely, Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 174, interprets (unconvincingly) the phrase "one of a thousand" as clearly a barb directed against Eliphaz.
75. Cf. Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 218; Terrien, "Book of Job," IB, 3, p. 1138; Roger N. Carstensen, Job: Defense of Honor (New York, 1963), p. 119.
76. Cf. Dillmann, op. cit., p. 289; Driver, Book of Job in the Revised Version, p. 98; Cheyne, "Job, Book of," Encyclopaedia Biblica, 2, col. 2484; Dennefeld, op. cit., p. 177; Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 265; Hoffmann, op. cit., p. 96; Peters, op. cit., p. 379; Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 240, 347, translating 24c: "I have found repentance (Busse)"; Ewald, op. cit., p. 335: the repentance of the sufferer and the intercession of the angel (cf. Marshall, Book of Job, p. 108); Kissane, op. cit., p. 225; Strahan, op. cit., p. 280: either the sick person's affliction or, more probably, his repentance; Dhorme, op. cit., pp. 502-03: suffering and conversion; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 223; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 551; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 460; de Wilde, op. cit., pp. 316-17; Hesse, op. cit., pp. 180-81; Ellison, op. cit., p. 107. In the view of Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 161, the ransom is paid

the afflicted person; (3) atonement⁷⁷; (4) the uprightness of the individual⁷⁸; (5) the intercession of the mediating angel⁷⁹; (6) the forgiving grace of God⁸⁰; (7) a substitute.⁸¹

by the mediator to the angel of death in order to secure the release of the sufferer, i.e., the angel-intermediary must prove the "uprightness" of the individual, "uprightness" being interpreted to signify that the afflicted person "has let himself be taken firmly in hand."

77. Cf. Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 209; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 199; König, Buch Hiob, p. 344; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 195; Hirzel, op. cit., p. 209; Ley, op. cit., p. 118; Thilo, op. cit., pp. 58, 87.
78. Cf. Berechiah, p. 221 of the English translation; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 174; Yehezkel Kaufmann, History of the Religion of Israel, from the Babylonian Captivity to the End of Prophecy, trans. C.W. Efrayimson (New York, 1977), p. 174. Cf. also Jastrow, op. cit., p. 322, interpreting the ransom as the good deeds formerly done by the individual.
79. Cf. Zöckler, op. cit., p. 559; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 231-32. According to Rowley, Job, p. 215, the ransom is that which is offered by the mediator as an expression of his graciousness. Cf. Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 466, translating 24c: "que he encontrado rescate para él." Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 470, interprets the ransom as the pleading of the mediator and his willingness to stand surety for the sufferer on the basis of his past record. In the view of Lamparter, op. cit., p. 200, the ransom is a mystery but may be related to the concept of vicarious suffering, i.e., it may involve some form of sacrifice on the part of the intermediary.
80. According to Hooke, op. cit., p. 14, "this passage is a clear recognition that God can do what man cannot do, he can provide a ransom, a substitute, he can pay the price." Cf. Renan, Livre de Job, p. 144, translating 24c: "I have found satisfaction." Cf. also A.B. Davidson, op. cit., p. 231.
81. Cf. A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 313: "Es wird also für den Betreffenden ein anderer Sünder, für den kein Engel

In support of interpretations (5), (6), and (7), is the Biblical admonition that the ransom of a human life is beyond the capability of man: "No man can ransom another, or give to God the price of his life" (Ps. 49:7). Terrien, emphasising the element of grace in the angelic intercession, describes verses 23-24 as "a whole theology of salvation by grace in miniature."⁸² Ross, analysing 33:14-30 in the context of the phenomenology of lament, interprets the sequence of events in verses 23ff. as crucial: suffering, the appearance of the angel-intermediary, the announcement and acceptance of duty, the angelic intercession, the entreaty by the sufferer, the restoration, and finally, the cultic confession and thanksgiving. Thus, according to Ross, the sufferer's entreaty to God and confession of guilt are the consequence, not the cause, of the divine act of restoration; that is, reconciliation between God and man and the physical restoration of the sufferer precede, rather than follow, the confession of sin on the part of the individual.⁸³ Conversely, however, Gray asserts (in connection with verse 24): "The whole sentence implies that the sick person has confessed and

ein gutes Wort zu sprechen weiss, in den Tod gegeben."

82. Cf. The New Oxford Annotated Bible, with the Apocrypha. Revised Standard Version (New York, 1977), p. 645n. Cf. also Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 222.

83. Ross, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

repented."⁸⁴ A similar view is expressed by Lévêque:

L'intercession de l'Ange implique que Job au préalable se soit rendu à ses arguments, et qu'il ait compris son "devoir" d'homme pécheur. Ainsi, Élihu, depuis le début de son discours, suppose le problème résolu, et dans le sens préconisé déjà par les trois amis.⁸⁵

In all probability, the repentance of Job is assumed, either as a fait accompli or in a proleptic sense.⁸⁶

In the case of (4), it is scarcely possible that the ransom is to be interpreted as the uprightness of the individual (although not impossible, though unlikely, that it represents the former uprightness of the individual), in view of the fact that Elihu clearly regards Job as an unrepentant sinner. And, though Elihu interprets Job's affliction as condign punishment for sin, it is improbable that the ransom is to be equated with the suffering of the individual: the general argumentation of verses 14ff. appears to be designed to elicit a similar acknowledgment of guilt from Job himself. Thus it is reasonable to surmise

84. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 291. Cf. also Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 209; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 161; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 502; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 460; Kissane, op. cit., p. 226.

85. Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 551.

86. In the so-called Sumerian "Job" (cf. Samuel Noah Kramer, "'Man and His God': A Sumerian Variation of the 'Job' Motif," ANET, pp. 589-91), the confession of guilt precedes the deliverance of the sufferer (cf. pp. 590-91, lines 96ff.).

that the ransom (if it is to be identified at all) represents the repentance of the afflicted person.

The account of the deliverance of the sufferer in verse 25 is extremely significant from an interpretative standpoint, as it indicates quite clearly that Elihu links restoration with material prosperity (cf. Ps. 32:3). Thus, the theology of Elihu - redemption understood in a material context - is rooted in traditional Old Testament thought.

Verse 27 is a key passage. The confession in stich b: "I sinned and perverted what was right," is of particular importance with regard to the teleological purpose of suffering: the revelatory activity of God culminates in a confession of guilt on the part of the sufferer (cf. Ps. 32:5). The vocabulary of verses 26f. unmistakably reflects a cultic context⁸⁷; however, the confession of 27b is not to be interpreted merely in the context of ritualized cultic procedure. On the contrary, it is clear from the foregoing that the sin to which Elihu refers is existent and not merely latent. Thus there is no justification for the view that suffering is preventive as well as retributive. Furthermore, the statement in 27c: "but it was not requited to me," does not originate with Elihu; Zophar made a similar pronouncement in his first discourse (cf. 11:6c).

To summarize thus far: (1) The speech of Elihu in 33:14ff. presupposes an inexorable connection between

87. Cf. von Rad, Old Testament Theology, vol. 1, p. 380.

misfortune and a state of sin. Suffering is therefore punitive, not preventive; it is intended as discipline, that is, to bring man to an awareness of his sins.

(2) In the view of Elihu, Job is guilty of actual, and not merely potential, sin.

(3) Neither the concept of disciplinary suffering nor the idea of angelic mediation originates with Elihu, but is introduced in the first speech of Eliphaz (cf. 5:1 and 5:17ff.).

(4) The principal concern of Elihu is to affirm the absolute justice and righteousness of God, and not to justify Job. Thus, it is imperative to avoid attributing undue significance to the theme of redemption "from the pit" as the fulfilment of God's revelatory activity. The motif of averting a premature demise is a distinctly ancillary aspect of Elihu's argumentation.

36:5-21

In the concluding discourse of chapters 36f., Elihu reiterates his defence of the absolute justice and righteousness of God and the pedagogical character of suffering (verses 5-15), with direct application to the individual case of Job (verses 16-21):

5 Behold, God is mighty, but does not despise (any),
(he is) mighty in strength of heart.

6 He does not keep the wicked alive,
but gives the afflicted their right;

- 7 He does not withdraw his eyes from the righteous,
with kings upon the throne, he sets them forever,
and they are exalted.
- 8 And if they are bound in fetters,
and caught in the cords of affliction,
- 9 Then he declares to them their work,
and their transgressions, that they have behaved
arrogantly.
- 10 And he opens their ears to discipline
(instruction, correction),
and commands that they return from evil.
- 11 If they obey, and serve,
they will complete their days in prosperity,
and their years in contentment.
- 12 But if they do not listen, they will perish by
the sword,
and die without knowledge.
- 13 The godless in heart harbour anger;
they do not cry for help when he binds them.
- 14 Their soul dies in youth,
and their life among the temple prostitutes.
- 15 He delivers the sufferer in his suffering,
and he opens their ears in affliction.
- 16-20
- 21 Take heed, do not turn to evil;
for this you have chosen rather than affliction.

Elihu's concluding speech begins with an affirmation of the absolute justice of God's dealings with mankind. The Hebrew text of verse 5 is somewhat awkward and the verb

דַּאֲמִי in stich a lacks an object. The Targum adds
 אֲרִי־טָז: "the righteous" as the complement of דַּאֲמִי.

Gray translates 5a: "God rejecteth not [the perfect],"⁸⁸

while Franz Delitzsch renders the line: "God is mighty,
 and yet doth not act scornfully."⁸⁹ Nichols emends the

text and translates: "Lo, God is mighty in strength;

Rejecteth not the pure of heart."⁹⁰ Tur-Sinai, translating:

"Behold, God is a judge and despiseth not, a judge empowered
 and wise;" interprets the absolute use of דַּאֲמִי without

a complement as signifying that "God is כֹּחַ בִּיָּדָיו

וְחָכְמָה, a judge (בִּיָּדָיו) vested with power (כֹּחַ) and
 wisdom (וְחָכְמָה), who does not despise or make light of his
 duties, who does not spurn justice."⁹¹

Elihu continues his defence of the divine dispensation
 of justice in verses 6-9, contrasting the fate of the
 righteous (6b) with the judgment executed against the
 wicked (6a). It is clearly apparent that 6b: "but gives
 the afflicted their right;" forms the counterpart to 7a:
 "He does not withdraw his eyes from the righteous;"⁹² thus,
 the righteous of 7a are synonymous with the afflicted, or
 the wronged, of the preceding verse. The precise meaning

88. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 310.

89. Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 277.

90. Nichols, op. cit., p. 162; cf. Dhorme, op. cit., p. 539.

91. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 494.

92. Cf. Dhorme, op. cit., p. 540. Cf. also Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 310, transposing 7a to precede 6b, and thus reading: 6a, 7a, 6b, 7b.

of verses 7b-9, however, is uncertain, as two divergent interpretations are possible: (1) the righteous (verse 7) are not altogether without sin; thus affliction is intended primarily for the improvement of the individual and not as punishment for a particular sin; (2) affliction is incontestable evidence of sinfulness. Nevertheless, despite the ambiguity of the text, it is difficult to reconcile the former interpretation with the context of verse 9, which unequivocally equates suffering with existent sin (verse 9 is the apodosis to the condition stated in the preceding verse). It appears, therefore, that Elihu is unable to concede the possibility that a truly righteous individual would be "caught in the cords of affliction"; it is a conception undoubtedly beyond his capabilities as a thinker.⁹³

Verse 10 represents an encapsulation of Elihu's fundamental message to Job, that is, to repent of his sin.

יָשׁוּבוּ? may be translated either "they return," or "they repent"; the verb יָשׁוּב carries both meanings. It is instructive to note that there is no allusion to future transgressions in verse 10; the context clearly stipulates actual sin, that is, sin already committed. As Andersen observes: "The Wisdom teachers recognized that there was

93. Cf. Andersen, op. cit., pp. 260-61. Nichols, op. cit., pp. 162-63, deletes vss. 7b-9; cf. also Edwin Hatch, Essays in Biblical Greek (Oxford, 1889), pp. 236-40, deleting 5b-9.

always room for improvement, even when there were no faults to be eliminated. But Elihu does not concede quite this much to Job."⁹⁴

Verse 15 is interpreted by many critics as containing the essence of Elihu's teaching regarding the disciplinary purpose of suffering, namely, that God delivers the afflicted, not only from or in, but by or through, their suffering. For the most part, stich a is translated accordingly: "he delivers (rescues) the sufferer (afflicted, oppressed) by (or: through) his suffering (affliction, oppression)," interpreting the preposition ל (in ל'l') instrumentally. According to L  v  que,⁹⁵ the translation "by" or "through" is confirmed on the basis of Proverbs 11:8f.:

The righteous will be delivered from (ל'l')
anguish;

... And by knowledge the righteous will be
delivered (ל'ל'ל'ל'l').

Thus, L  v  que asserts: "Nous tenons l   l'une des formules les plus audacieuses de la th  ologie biblique de la souffrance;"⁹⁶ and "La souffrance se voit   lev  e au rang d'un moyen de salut et de r  v  lation."⁹⁷

According to Fried. Delitzsch, however, the preposition

94. Andersen, op. cit., p. 261.

95. L  v  que, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 560.

96. Ibid.

97. Ibid. p. 574.

ל, when constructed with verbs of uprooting and rescuing, signifies "from" (as in 20:20; 27:15; 31:12); thus stich a is rendered: "Er errettet den Bedrückten aus seiner Bedrückung."⁹⁸ Ball, translating "from" (while acknowledging the possibility that MT may signify "by" or "through"), asserts: "the verb לָצַח seems almost to demand מִן ," and suggests that the text may originally have read: "He draweth the poor out of his misery (מִן)."⁹⁹ In the opinion of Irwin, "the exalted insight offered in 15a is highly dubious; perhaps the words mean no more than 'in their affliction.'"¹⁰⁰ Indeed, the translation "by" or "through" does not ipso facto connote a distinction between affliction as the instrument of deliverance and affliction as merely the context of deliverance. In addition, the theme of deliverance from affliction occurs in 33:25 (the restoration of the sufferer) and accords with the apparent context of the textually uncertain sequel in verse 16. Thus, the translation "from"¹⁰¹ or "in"¹⁰² is entirely consistent

98. Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., pp. 110, 145. Cf. also Mitchell Dahood, "Northwest Semitic Philology and Job," in The Bible in Current Catholic Thought, ed. J.L. McKenzie (New York, 1962), p. 71, adding Job 5:19 to the passages cited by Delitzsch.

99. Ball, op. cit., pp. 84, 397.

100. Irwin, "Job," Peake's Commentary on the Bible, p. 404.

101. Cf. Vulg.; Ostervald; NJV; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 471; Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 248; Buttenwieser, op. cit., pp. 140, 272, assigning vs. 15 to a speech of Bildad. Cf. also Houtsma, op. cit., p. 79, reading מִן . Andersen, op. cit., p. 261, favours instrumental "by," but refers to the possibility of translating "from."

102. Cf. AV; RV marg.; Segond; Rosenmüller, op. cit., p. 857;

with the argumentation of Elihu and may convey more accurately the sense of the passage. Moreover, it is instructive to note that verse 15 does not imply a concept of innocent suffering. Thus, the traditional interpretation "He saves ... by their affliction" connotes: by their suffering, individuals are brought to an awareness of their sin (cf. verses 8-10 which are unambiguous in this regard).

The text of verses 16-20 is exceedingly corrupt,¹⁰³ and indeed, many commentators have given them up in despair.¹⁰⁴ Widely divergent interpretations have been proposed, none of which, however, can be considered satisfactory owing to the obscurity of the text.

The precise meaning of verse 21 is also uncertain; in particular the signification of $\pi\zeta - \text{ly}$ in stich b is

Ewald, op. cit., p. 343; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., p. 115; Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 496; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 220; Ernst von Winterfeld, Commentar über das Buch Iob, Erster Teil (Anklam-Leipzig, 1898), p. 64. Cf. also Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Daniel J. Harrington, eds., A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts, Biblica et Orientalia, 34 (Rome, 1978), p. 35 (conjectured translation re the text of the Qumran Targum). Thilo, op. cit., p. 63, translates: "Er rettet die Armen, wenn sie in Not"; while Renan, Livre de Job, p. 157, renders: "Mais Dieu délivre l'homme humble qui souffre." According to Hitzig, op. cit., p. 263, ly does not signify "suffering," but rather "humility"; thus: "Den Frommen rettet seine Frömmigkeit."

103. Cf. Gray in Driver-Gray, pp. 312-13; Driver and Gray in ibid., Philological Notes, pp. 276ff.; Dhorme, op. cit., pp. 544-50; Kissane, op. cit., pp. 246-48; Rowley, Job, pp. 229-32; Pope, op. cit., p. 270.

104. Cf. NAB, omitting the verses; A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 323; Kraeling, op. cit., p. 134; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 334. Cf. also Dhorme, op. cit., pp. 544-50, omitting vss. 19-20 and parts of vss. 16-18.

ambiguous. From an interpretative standpoint, the key question is whether 21b denotes (1) a warning against the inclination to turn toward iniquity; or (2) a judgment against sins already committed. The context of the passage may, in isolation, suggest a warning against (future) sin; however, the theme of affliction designed to turn the individual away from his present sinful behaviour is consistent with the argumentation of Elihu (cf. 33:17a). Nevertheless, in view of the ambiguity of stich b, it must be conceded that the interpretation of verse 21 is, in the final analysis, a matter of conjecture.

To summarise: (1) In chapter 36, misfortune is clearly equated with a state of sin. In the view of Elihu, suffering is therefore retributive. There is no evidence that Elihu ascribes a preventive as well as a punitive function to affliction (verse 21 is exceedingly ambiguous in this regard). As in chapter 33, the purpose of suffering is to reveal to man his sinfulness and the need for repentance. (2) It is clearly evident, therefore, that, as in chapter 33, Elihu considers Job guilty of actual, and not merely potential, sin.

II

The problem of human suffering admits of various Biblical interpretations. With respect to the Old Testament the following may be noted:

Robinson¹⁰⁵ summarises six basic principles for the explanation of suffering: (1) retributive (2) disciplinary (3) probationary and evidential (4) revelational (5) sacrificial (6) eschatological.

Scott¹⁰⁶ enumerates a total of eight different interpretations: (1) retributive (2) disciplinary (3) probationary (4) temporary, or only apparent (5) inevitable (6) mysterious (7) haphazard and morally meaningless (8) vicarious.

Sanders¹⁰⁷ also classifies the problem of suffering in the Old Testament on the basis of eight categories: (1) retributive (2) disciplinary (3) revelational (4) probational (5) illusory, or transitory (6) mysterious (7) eschatological (8) meaningless.

The various discrepancies in the above are not relevant for the purpose of this study. The significance lies rather in the uniform agreement regarding the categories of retributive and disciplinary suffering. The critical issue pertaining to the Elihu speeches concerns the principle of disciplinary suffering. In order, however, to clarify the conclusions reached in the first section of this chapter, it is necessary now to consider the concept of corrective

105. H. Wheeler Robinson, Suffering Human and Divine (London, 1940), pp. 51-68.

106. Scott, Way of Wisdom in the Old Testament, pp. 145-47.

107. J.A. Sanders, Suffering as Divine Discipline in the Old Testament and Post-Biblical Judaism, Colgate Rochester Divinity School Bulletin, 28 (Rochester, 1955), p. 1.

suffering within the larger context of suffering interpreted as divine retribution.

The principle by which suffering is chiefly interpreted in the Old Testament is undeniably the doctrine of retribution,¹⁰⁸ according to which God rewards virtue and punishes sin (cf. inter alia Exod. 23:20ff.; 34:7; Lev. 26; Deut. 11:13-15; I Sam. 12:14-15; Isa. 1:19-20; 58:7ff., 13ff.; Jer. 7:5-7; 17:5-8, 19-27; 30:14; Hos. 4:9; Pss. 1; 37:25; 58:10-11; Prov. 12:21; 16:7; 19:23; 21:21; 22:4). The principle of retributive justice is enunciated succinctly by Elihu in 34:11:

For according to the deeds of a man he will reward him,
And according to his ways he causes it to befall him.

A detailed exposition of the doctrine of retribution is given in Deuteronomy 28. The fundamental premise underlying this doctrine is the belief in a moral government of the world administered according to the principle of the absolute justice of God. Good and evil receive their just requital. Prosperity is the recompense of the righteous (cf. Prov. 13:21; Pss. 112; 128), misfortune the lot of the wicked (cf. Pss. 10:6-7(H); 90:7-8; Ezra 9:7; Isa. 1:5; Hos. 2:5-15(H); 8:3; Jer. 30:15; Prov. 13:21). A corollary of the doctrine of retribution, therefore, is that suffering is indicative of culpability. It is not necessary to elaborate at length on the principle of retributive

108. Cf. Robinson, op. cit., p. 56; Sanders, op. cit., p. 1.

suffering, a concept attested throughout the literature of the Old Testament. It is sufficient for the purpose of this study simply to note the causal link between sin and suffering.

In addition to the orthodox doctrine of retribution, a number of texts expound the theme of suffering as divine discipline. According to this principle, suffering and misfortune do not necessarily connote condign punishment for sin. The emphasis lies rather on suffering as divine chastisement, the purpose of which is the moral improvement of the individual. It is proposed at this point to investigate the concept of corrective suffering from the perspective of the relation between affliction and sin. That is to say, to what extent does suffering, as it is interpreted in the Old Testament as divine discipline, presuppose a condition of actual, as opposed to merely latent, sin? In a comprehensive study of the concept of suffering interpreted as divine discipline, Sanders undertakes (a) a lexical examination of the root $\sqrt{707}$; and (b) an analysis of all texts in which suffering is interpreted as divine pedagogy. The approach of Sanders provides an excellent thematic basis from which to evaluate the contribution of the Elihu pericope.

TABLE A

$\sqrt{707}$

Column 1: Divine discipline interpreted as condign punishment for existent, and not merely latent, sin.

Column 2: Divine discipline in which the context of sin is not necessarily presupposed.

Column 3: Secular occurrences of $\sqrt{\gamma\delta}$: that is, the element of divine discipline is absent; the signification is that of general instruction.

Parentheses: Denote textual uncertainty.

1	2	3
Lev. 26:18, 23, 28	Deut. 4:36	Deut. 21:18
Deut. 8:5	Isa. 8:11	22:18
11.2	28:26	I Kings 12:11, 14 =
(Isa. 26:16)	Jer. 35:13	II Chr. 10:11, 14
53:5	Hos. 7:15	Jer. 10:8
Jer. 2:19, 30	Pss. 6:2	Prov. 4:13
5:3	16:7	5:23
6:8	94:10, 12	6:23
7:28	118:18	(7:22)
10:24	Prov. 3:11	9:7
17:23		13:1, 24
30:11, 14		15:33
31:18		16:22
32:33		19:18
46:28		22:15
Ezek. 5:15		23:12
23:48		29:17, 19
Hosea 5:2		31:1
7:12		Job 4:3
10:10		20:3
Zeph. 3:2, 7		40:2

Column 1 continued

Pss. 2:10

38:2

39:12

50:17

Prov. 15:10

Job 5:17

36:10

Note: Excluded from consideration is Job 12:18; emending 7ִּוִּיָּא, "band" ("belt," Pope¹⁰⁹) or 7ִּוִּיָּא, "band, bond" (B-D-B¹¹⁰), in place of MT 7ִּוִּיָּא, "chastening, warning, discipline" (Lisowsky¹¹¹).

It is acknowledged that differences of opinion will inevitably exist regarding certain passages in Table A. For example, the precise interpretation of Isaiah 26:16 is difficult to determine, a situation which undoubtedly reflects a corrupt text. In addition, the variant classification of Proverbs 3:11 (Column 2) and Job 5:17 (column 1) may be questioned, inasmuch as the two passages are very similar. Against this objection, it is argued that whereas the context of Job 5:17 clearly implies the condition of sin, the basis for a similar assumption regarding Proverbs 3:11 is lacking. Similarly, in Psalm 118:18, which denotes the symbolic chastisement of the king as part of a thanksgiving ritual, the context does not signify "actual" sin.

109. Pope, op. cit., p. 89; cf. Vulg.; Targum; Beer (BHK); Driver in Driver-Gray, Philological Notes, pp. 78-9.

110. B-D-B, p. 64.

111. Lisowsky, op. cit., p. 758. Cf. also Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 202ff.

Critical differences notwithstanding, there is sufficient evidence to permit certain conclusions. A comparison of Columns 1 and 2 indicates that a substantial majority of texts presuppose a state of existent, not merely latent, sin. This is not to suggest that the doctrine of $\text{7}\delta\cdot\text{1}\gamma$ necessarily excludes the concept of "innocent" suffering; Column 2 shows that this is not the case. For the most part, however, suffering is connected with sin. Job 36:10, the sole occurrence of the root $\text{7}\delta$ in the Elihu pericope, clearly equates misfortune with a state of sin:

And he uncovers their ears to discipline,
and commands that they turn back from evil.¹¹²

TABLE B

Old Testament Texts Which Interpret Suffering as Divine Discipline

The passages listed in the following table are those selected for analysis by Sanders¹¹³ on the basis of criteria:

(1) is the concept of divine affliction attested in each text? and (2) is the condition of suffering interpreted as educative? While Sanders stresses that comprehensiveness has been his aim, he admits that differences of interpretation may exist regarding the inclusion or exclusion of certain passages.

Note: Although the passages cited are derived from Sanders' study, the system of classification is that of the present writer.

112. See above, p. 193.

113. Sanders, op. cit., pp. 102-04.

- Category 1: Denotes divine discipline which presupposes a condition of actual sin.
- Category 2: The element of actual sin is not necessarily presumed.
- Category 3: Various passages in which the efficacy of divine discipline is interpreted negatively, that is, texts which may affirm the value of suffering as divine pedagogy but which are characterised nonetheless by a certain radical questioning of the purposefulness of affliction.

Category 1

Lev.	26:18, 21, 23, 27, 28	Jer.	10:24
Deut.	4:29-30		11:6-8
	8:5		15:7
	11:2		24:4-7
	13:11		29:12-13
	28		30:11, 14
	30:1-3		31:18
I Sam.	12:6-18		46:28
II Sam.	7:14	Ezek.	4:17
I Kings	8:33-40, 46-51		5:15
II Kings	13:3-4		6:7, 9
Isa.	9:12		16:27-28
	19:22		23:10, 18, 48
	26:16		24:23
	30:20		25:7
	42:25	Hosea	2:8-9, 16-17
	50:10		3:4-5
	53:5		5:2, 15-6:3
	57:17		7:12
Jer.	2:19, 30		10:10
	3:3, 6-10	Amos	4:6-11
	5:3	Zeph.	3:2, 7

Category 1 Continued

Hag.	2:17	Job	5:8-17
Zech.	1:6		11:13-15
Pss.	38:2		13:10
	51:9-10		22:4, 21-30
	64:8-10		33:14-20
	78:31-34		36:7-12
	90:3	Dan.	9:13
	106:44	Neh.	9:26-31
	119:71, 75	II Chr.	33:10-13
Prov.	15:10		

Category 2

Pss.	6:2	Ps.	119:25-26
	90:15	Prov.	3:11-12
	94:10, 12		24:30-34
	118:18	Job	8:5-7

Category 3

Jer.	15:10-11, 15-20	Ps.	73:14
Pss.	22:21	Job	42:16
	39:12	Lam.	3:25-30, 37-40, 55-57

Table B indicates that by far a majority of texts interpret divine discipline within the context of actual sin. Thus the doctrine of divine pedagogy (discipline), as it is developed in the Old Testament, may be summarized as follows: if God afflicts mankind, he does so with a purpose, which is principally to punish sin and to awaken within the sufferer the essentiality of repentance (Category 1). In a comparatively few instances is divine discipline interpreted primarily as a warning or safeguard against

future sin (Category 2). This is not to suggest that a preventive as well as a punitive character is not implicit in the doctrine of divine discipline generally (as indeed it is implicit in the doctrine of retribution); it is simply to emphasise that, insofar as the Old Testament is concerned, suffering which is interpreted as divine discipline is regarded chiefly as a consequence of actual, and not latent, sin. In the case of the Elihu speeches, the evidence is conclusive. It is clear that the classification of these discourses in Category 3 must be rejected as a serious possibility: at no time in chapters 32-37 does Elihu question the purposive activity of God in the suffering of mankind. Similarly, as the textual analysis in part I has shown, the standpoint of Elihu is fundamentally irreconcilable with the criterion of Category 2. The Elihu speeches must therefore be classed in Category 1.

On the basis of Table B, certain questions germane to the present study warrant consideration: (1) With particular reference to the book of Job, is it not the case that Elihu principally interprets suffering as retributive punishment? The analysis in part I, though not absolutely conclusive, clearly points in this direction. The question will be discussed further in part III below. (2) To what extent is the concept of disciplinary suffering to be distinguished from the principle of retributive suffering?

Robinson suggests that the severity of the doctrine of

retribution, with its emphasis on affliction as deserved punishment, is relieved by the complementary principle of disciplinary suffering.¹¹⁴ Divine discipline is an example of God's gracious love and emanates from his compassionate concern for his people. But the doctrine of retribution is based upon a similar presupposition of divine love (cf., for example, Ex. 34:6-7; Deut. 5:10; Jer. 32:18; Joel 2:13). Robinson also writes that the "penal view of suffering naturally admits of extension to the idea of discipline," that is, punishment may be deserved but is intended to be more than retributive.¹¹⁵ Though God smites his people, his purpose is not merely punitive (cf. inter alia Ex. 34:6-7; Isa. 1:18; Pss. 106:7-8; 107:10-20; Prov. 24:16a; Lam. 3:31-33; Ezra 9:9; II Chr. 20:9-10). Sanders asserts that the object of divine discipline is to teach the necessity of repentance.¹¹⁶ The idea of penitence, however, is clearly inherent in the doctrine of retribution (cf. Lev. 26:40-42; Isa. 1:27; Joel 2:12-13). The principle of individual responsibility contained in Ezekiel 18 states explicitly that God desires above all the repentance of his people (cf. vv. 21, 23, 27-28, 32). Thus, as the concepts of retributive suffering

114. Robinson, op. cit., p. 56.

115. H. Wheeler Robinson, The Religious Ideas of the Old Testament (2d ed. rev. L.H. Brockington; London, 1956), p. 170.

116. Sanders, op. cit., p. 4.

and disciplinary suffering are interpreted in the Old Testament, the one seldom wholly excludes the other.

In general, passages which interpret suffering as divine pedagogy convey the twofold sense of retribution and discipline concurrently (see Category 1). In Amos 4:6-11, for example, Israel is urged to abandon her evil ways and to embark on a new life of virtue. In this text suffering is interpreted as deserved punishment of sin and at the same time as a divine warning to Israel to repent, the implication being that if repentance is forthcoming, the final judgment will be forestalled.¹¹⁷

Thus, while the doctrine of divine discipline for the most part equates suffering with blameworthiness (Category 1), it is equally evident that the concept of discipline is implicit in the principle of retribution. This is not to suggest the virtual equation of the two doctrines: there are a number of passages, as Table B indicates, which signify disciplinary suffering but in which the context of sin is not presupposed. Yet the two concepts are not fundamentally dissimilar. And, to the extent that suffering is interpreted as preventive, that is, designed to prevent the manifestation of latent sin, then the two principles are virtually synonymous.

117. Cf. also Isa. 19:22; and Job 5:18 (on this passage, see below, pp. 218ff).

III

On the basis of the foregoing, certain conclusions regarding the teaching of Elihu may be formulated:

1. Defence of God, not Job

The primary concern of Elihu is to defend the absolute justice and righteousness of God, not the interests of Job.

2. Actual, not potential, sin

It is a consistent theme of the Elihu chapters that sin is perceived as existent and not merely potential. This applies to the concept of sin in general, be it a single, non-recurring act or a persistent psychological predisposition (as, for example, "pride"; cf. 33:17; 35:12).

3. Suffering retributive, not preventive

From the standpoint of Elihu, suffering is a consequence of sin and denotes a revelatory process the purpose of which is to expose the presence of sin and to teach the fundamental requisite of repentance (cf. especially 33:17, 27; 36:8-10). Although placing a somewhat greater emphasis than the friends on the disciplinary and educative value of suffering, nowhere does Elihu overtly attribute to pain and travail a preventive as well as a punitive function. In this sense, he adopts a basically retributive view of suffering. As Scharbert observes, Elihu's concept of suffering as a method of purifying (Läuterungsmittel) does not essentially advance beyond the idea of suffering as punishment

(Züchtigungsmittel).¹¹⁸

4. No conception of unmerited suffering

To Elihu, the problem of human suffering is not an enigma. The apparent inequalities of the world, that is, the anomaly of the prosperity of the wicked and the suffering of the righteous, do not constitute a matter for concern. The teaching of Elihu tacitly assumes that suffering is always merited, and thus exhibits no consciousness of innocent suffering. This view is entirely commensurate with a belief in an absolutely just and righteous God who governs the world according to human principles of morality:

Certainly God will not act wickedly,
and Shaddai will not pervert justice. (34:12)

Moreover, can one who hates justice govern? (34:17_a)

Thus the idea of finite man arrogating to himself the right to question radically the divine providence is presumptuous indeed and utterly foreign to the sensibilities of Elihu (cf., for example, Gen. 18:23-32; Num. 16:20-22; Jer. 8:18-9:1; 12:1-2, 4; 20:14, 18; Hab. 1:2-4, 13; Pss. 22:1; 44:23-26; 60:1-3; 94:3-7; Qoh. 7:15; 8:14; 9:2-3). There is no recognition on his part that "the very challenge to faith is a creative element in the development of faith."¹¹⁹ The possibility that radical doubt concerning the divine provi-

118. Scharbert, op. cit., p. 174.

119. Cf. Robert Davidson, "Some Aspects of the Theological Significance of Doubt in the Old Testament," Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute, 7 (1968-69), p. 44.

dence may culminate in a deeper faith is incompatible with his thinking. In the lament of Jeremiah 15:10-21, the affliction of the prophet, that is, the hand of God upon him, is regarded as an oppressive burden (v. 17) which admits of no meaningful explanation (v. 18). The value of suffering as divine discipline is questioned also by the author of Psalm 73 who experiences continued affliction in spite of his rectitude (vv. 13-14); sin is explicitly denied. A similar avowal of innocence is contained in Psalm 44, where the sin of Israel is emphatically rejected as the reason for the nation's defeat in battle (vv. 17-22, 24). From the standpoint of Elihu, however, such radical questioning of the purposive activity of God inherent in creation is to deny the very justice and righteousness of God. Similarly, to interpret negatively the concept of divine discipline is to question the intrinsic purposefulness, not only of God's chastisement, but of God himself.

Whereas the apparent inequalities of life constitute a source of perplexity for some Biblical writers (at times threatening the very foundations of religious belief), Elihu experiences no such crisis of faith. The teaching which he enunciates, namely, that suffering is morally deserved and is intended to communicate the idea of repentance as the duty of man, is held to be a normative principle, an immutable law of the universe permitting no exceptions. In this sense, the viewpoint of Elihu is spiritually

akin to the sentiments expressed in the ultra-orthodox Psalm 36, the author of which, like Elihu, is unmoved by the apparent inequalities of life. The psalm as a whole represents the fundamentally insensitive and inflexible ethos of Elihu:

I was young, and now I am old,
yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken,
or his children begging bread. (Ps. 36:25)

The sentiments here expressed would not be at all out of place in the mouth of the doctrinaire Elihu. Similarly, the prophet Malachi does not address the issue of the evident inequity of retribution (and hence of the justice of God) in the world. The stress upon sin and repentance is in sharp antithesis to any concept of radical questioning of God's apparent indifference to the inequalities of this life. In particular, Malachi 2:17 and 3:13-15 are reminiscent of the dogmatic stance of Elihu.¹²⁰

The view that Elihu presents with such certainty is nothing more than a theoretical construct which remains firmly within the Biblical conception of corporate personality. And precisely herein are exposed the limitations of Elihu's teaching. Insofar as he fails to advance beyond the conception of corporate personality, it is virtually

120. Cf. Jean L  v  que, "La Datation du Livre de Job," Congress Volume, Vienna 1980 (Supplements to *Vetus Testamentum*, 32; Leiden, 1981), p. 212, who comments that a comparison of Mal. 2:17 and 3:14-16 with certain passages in the Elihu pericope reveals "the same theological preoccupations and the same state of mind."

impossible for Elihu to interpret suffering in any manner other than as morally deserved punishment. Accordingly, the statements of Elihu, which are uttered without qualification, are fundamentally inapplicable to the particular case of Job.

- (1) The Prologue portrays Job as one who is "blameless and upright, he feared God and he turned away from evil" (1:1; cf. 1:8; 2:3; cf. also 1:22; 2:10); furthermore, Job repeatedly affirms his moral innocence (cf. 6:10c, 30a; 9:15a, 20, 21; 10:7a; 12:4c; 16:17; 23:11-12; 27:6; 31). But Elihu, from the perspective of his essentially penal view of affliction, is incapable of dissociating Job's calamity from a state of sin.
- (2) What Elihu presents with such finality as a universal solution to the problem of suffering is necessarily limited in its application to the individual case of Job. In this regard, Volz remarks: "Elihu erweitert den persönlichen Fall des Dulders 'Hiob' zur allgemeinen Sache; er will ja nicht den 'Hiob,' sondern seine Zeitgenossen belehren."¹²¹
- (3) The standpoint of Elihu virtually excludes any conception of suffering as a potentially creative force. Contrast the author of Psalm 73 who freely acknowledges that recurring suffering and doubt have

121. Volz, op. cit., p. 91.

threatened to undermine the very basis of his faith; but in time the crisis has been resolved and the psalmist experiences an intimate fellowship with God. The difference between the teaching of Elihu and that of Psalm 73 is the difference between theory or dogma and personal testimony. In the realm of theory, Elihu is able to present a doctrinaire solution to the universal problem of suffering. The psalmist attains, not a solution to the inequalities of life, but an inner peace based on communion with God; the problem of suffering, the reality of which the writer at no time denies, is unresolved: it remains an enigma.

The importance of Psalm 73 in comparison with the Elihu speeches lies in the probability that the psalmist, while expressing sentiments reminiscent of Elihu himself (cf. vv. 15-20), nonetheless attains his present serene faith only as a result of the most intense personal struggle. In addition, the psalm contains no confession of guilt; on the contrary, the psalmist explicitly affirms his innocence (v. 13). That radical doubt may culminate in the experience of intimate communion with God is utterly foreign to Elihu's thinking. And, unlike the psalmist, it is all but certain that Elihu himself has never experienced extreme suffering (as he is portrayed as being both

young and brash, this view is undoubtedly correct).¹²²

Nichols comments "the problem in all its desperate reality he had never faced. Out of theological reflection, not profound experience, is born his answer to the Job problem."¹²³

In addition, it may be noted that the contrast between the "theory" of Elihu and the "personal testimony" of Psalm 73 suggests that chapters 32-37 derive from the hand of an interpolator. If the Elihu discourses represent the later, mature reflections of the original poet, the reader might reasonably expect some editorial guidance in this respect, especially since the Elihu section follows so abruptly upon the Dialogue and otherwise contains no explanation for the appearance of the brash intruder (cf. the form of Psalm 36:25: "I was young, now I am old"). It is not unreasonable to assume that such a revision would be cast in the form of Psalm 73, that is, a candid acknowledgment of former radical doubt which has finally resolved itself in an affirmation of intimate communion with God. The impression, however, is that such an experience is unknown to Elihu. True, he may be characterised by "a very marked piety and excessive reverence"¹²⁴; but the object of

122. Cf. Hitzig, op. cit., p. xxxvii, who expresses the view that the author of the Elihu speeches may have been a younger man without much experience in life.

123. Nichols, op. cit., p. 118.

124. Ibid., p. 149.

his veneration is a distant, inaccessible deity (cf. 36:22: "God is exalted in his power"; the verb לָּאֵלֹהִים translates "to be (inaccessibly) high."¹²⁵ Cf. also Psalm 139:6 where לָּאֵלֹהִים denotes the knowledge of God as too wonderful, too exalted, utterly beyond human attainability). Unlike Job, Elihu exhibits no personal recollection of

the days when Eloah watched over me,
when his lamp shone above my head,
and by his light I walked through darkness;

when I was in the days of my prime,
when the friendship of Eloah was upon my tent,
when Shaddai was still with me. (29:2b-5a)

The God of Elihu is ultimately the God of hearsay; a sense of intimate communion with the divinity (cf. 42:5) is alien to the context of chapters 32-37. Moreover, Elihu's conception of the deity as inaccessible to, and exalted far beyond the comprehension of, man, serves in the final analysis to accentuate the gulf between Job and his creator, and thus to exacerbate his sense of estrangement.

5. Elihu's view not distinguished significantly from that of the three friends

The fundamental presuppositions of Elihu, namely, that suffering is (1) regarded as condign punishment for actual, and not merely latent, sin; and (2) intended to teach the necessity of repentance, accord essentially with the position adopted by the friends, and are superfluous to the

125. B-D-B, p. 960.

progression of the debate. The idea that Job is guilty of moral evil is basic to the friends' argumentation (cf. 11:6c; 15:5, 6, 12, 13, 16; 22:5-9), although, as Stevenson comments with reference to Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar: "No one of the comforters ever said that all suffering is God's punishment for sin, nor did they ever say that misfortunes are always proof of a man's wickedness."¹²⁶ Conversely, Elihu clearly implies as much (see the textual analysis in part I; cf. also 34:29ff.; 35:9-12). In addition, the arguments of the three friends converge on the absolute necessity of Job's repenting of his transgressions (cf. 5:8; 8:5ff.; 11:13; 22:21ff.). On the contribution of the Elihu speeches to the debate, L  v  que refers specifically to the emphasis on the purpose, rather than the cause, of hardship, and secondly, to the proposal of a "teleological" interpretation of suffering.¹²⁷ Nonetheless, he concludes that "de toute   vidence les discours d'Elihu n'apportent aucun   l  ment essentiel    l'  conomie du livre."¹²⁸

It must be remembered that the concept of corrective suffering is not original with Elihu, but is first introduced by Eliphaz:¹²⁹

126. Stevenson, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

127. L  v  que, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 575.

128. Ibid., p. 537.

129. Cf. inter alia Pope, op. cit., p. 269; Peake, Job, p. 23; J.C.L. Gibson, "Eliphaz the Temanite: Portrait of a Hebrew Philosopher," Scottish Journal of Theology, 28 (1975), p. 270.

Behold the blessings of the man whom Eloah corrects;
 Thus, do not reject the discipline of Shaddai;
 For he wounds but he binds up;
 He injures, but his hands heal. (5:17-18)

Kraeling, however, regards 5:17f. as belonging originally to a different recension of the book wherein it nevertheless served a similar purpose, that is, introducing a concept which hitherto had been neglected.¹³⁰ On the other hand, Green asserts: "The correction of which he [Eliphaz] speaks is the token of God's displeasure, not of his grace and love."¹³¹

Marshall, referring to verse 17a, expresses the view that Eliphaz interprets the aim of corrective suffering in terms of material prosperity, whereas Elihu emphasises the concept of moral good as the purpose of divine discipline. He continues: "It has been too easily assumed that Eliphaz took this loftier ethical position, whereas the context shows the contrary It was reserved for Elihu to indicate the moral betterment of the man through trial."¹³² This, however, is an arbitrary judgment, and one not substantiated by the text itself: verse 18 clearly signifies more than mere retribution. As to the contention that Elihu adopts a "loftier ethical position," 33:25 and 36:11-12 indicate that

130. Kraeling, op. cit., p. 140.

131. Green, op. cit., p. 698.

132. Marshall, Book of Job, p. 35. Italics in the original.

he, too, interprets divine discipline in a material context. According to Budde, 5:17ff. and similar passages cannot be regarded as a solution to the dispute because of Eliphaz' assumption that the suffering of Job represents a well-deserved punishment for his sins.¹³³ In sharp contrast to Elihu, however, Eliphaz explicitly affirms Job's integrity (4:3-4, 6). Conversely, passages such as 33:17, 27; 34:7-8, 36-37; 36:8-10 serve to indicate quite clearly that Elihu regards Job as guilty of sin.¹³⁴

According to S. Davidson, the speeches of Elihu set forth the view that suffering is invariably evidence of sin. But, in contrast to the friends, Elihu emphasises the corrective or ameliorative aspects of suffering as opposed to its retributive character. Nonetheless, Davidson asserts that, while Elihu expands the statement of Eliphaz in 5:17, "he does it in a way that shows no compassion for the sufferer. He is cold and disputatious."¹³⁵ From an altogether different standpoint, Vermeylen voices essentially the same opinion: "Élihu, lui, ne cache pas son hostilité: dans sa bouche, on ne trouvera pas la moindre parole de compréhension à l'égard de l'homme en détresse, mais

133. Budde, Beiträge, pp. 46ff.

134. Contra, the view of Staples, op. cit., pp. 12-15, and Möller, op. cit., p. 100, that Elihu, in contrast to the three friends, acknowledges Job's righteousness.

135. S. Davidson, Introduction to the Old Testament (1962), pp. 211-12.

seulement une condamnation implacable et sans appel."¹³⁶

Thus it is difficult to concur with the view that the Elihu speeches represent an advance on the original conception of Eliphaz. A retrospective analysis of 5:17f. results in a more positive evaluation of its content: viz., the remarks of Eliphaz are characterised by a clarity and a conciseness of expression perceptibly lacking in the speeches of Elihu; in this regard, the parallelism of $\pi\omega'$ ("to rebuke, to correct") and $\gamma\delta'$ implies a distinction between punishment as judgment and punishment as discipline.

According to Budde, the concept of disciplinary or purifying suffering elucidated in chapters 32-37 is intended to purge man of the sin of spiritual pride. Thus Job, righteous before the arrival of the friends, degenerates subsequently into a state of sin; that is, in the process of defending his integrity against the reproaches of the friends, Job's blasphemous utterances expose the presence of latent sin (spiritual pride) which has been dormant in his nature from the outset.¹³⁷ In opposition to Budde, however, it must be emphasised that "pride" is mentioned only twice

136. Vermeylen, op. cit., p. 73. In addition, it is instructive to contrast the tone of asperity in Elihu's discourse with the more charitable attitude of the rabbis, recorded in the Babylonian Talmud: "No man is taken to account for what he speaks in his distress; Job spoke as he did because of his dire afflictions." (Baba Bathra 16b)

137. Budde, Buch Hiob, pp. xxxff.

in the speeches of Elihu (33:17; 36:9). In the final analysis, the doctrine of disciplinary suffering remains essentially undeveloped in chapters 32-37.¹³⁸ Dennefeld, for example, while affirming the significance of the concept of corrective suffering as a contribution toward a solution of the problem of the book, nonetheless concedes that the Elihu speeches "ne sont pas très clairs et l'on n'y rencontre pas l'affirmation que Dieu envoie parfois des malheurs pour éprouver et purifier le just sous une forme aussi nette et précise qu'il serait désirable."¹³⁹

The view that the Elihu chapters mark a significant development in the solution of the problem of suffering is elaborated by Gordis, who postulates three further explanations for a delay in retribution, in addition to the disciplinary value of suffering as a safeguard against sin: (1) despotic rulers may enjoy a temporary reprieve from punishment owing to the fact that the suffering they inflict serves the purpose of divine discipline, since the victims of their oppression are themselves sinners (34:29f.); (2) in the case of the tyrants, retribution may be delayed in the hope of their conversion; (3) when the afflicted cry out to God for deliverance and receive no answer, the reason may be that they are motivated by their suffering and not by a

138. Cf. Driver, Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament, p. 431; Hesse, op. cit., p. 19.

139. Dennefeld, op. cit., p. 175.

genuine longing for God (35:9-12). Gordis comments:

"Contentions such as these are incapable of justifying the prosperity of the wicked and the suffering of the righteous. But to the extent that they are true, they reduce the dimensions of the problem of evil."¹⁴⁰ The qualification "to the extent that they are true" exposes a serious flaw in Gordis' argument. No one, including Job himself, would deny the general validity of the doctrine of disciplinary suffering. This, however, is hardly the issue. The book of Job focuses, not on the general applicability of a theoretical construct, but rather on the unmerited suffering of a particular individual, and more important, an individual who is praised by God himself as "blameless and upright," one who "feared God and turned away from evil" (1:1). This fundamental limitation in the teaching of Elihu is at least indirectly affirmed by Terrien when he remarks: "if we pay attention to the original and biblical principle of corporate personality we might well try to appreciate the specific contribution of a later poet i.e. Elihu."¹⁴¹ The danger inherent, however, in the position of Terrien (as well as of Gordis) is that of pre-scinding from consideration the central theme in the book of Job, that is, the problem of individual, innocent suffering.

140. Gordis, BOJ, p. 551. Italics added.

141. Terrien, Job: Poet of Existence, p. 190.

6. The Elihu speeches not a solution to the problem of suffering

Insofar as the Elihu chapters are considered to reveal the solution to the problem of suffering, three points of view may be distinguished:

- (1) The Elihu speeches elaborate a distinctive doctrine of the disciplinary and purificatory value of affliction and thereby represent the genuine solution to the problem of suffering.¹⁴²
- (2) The discourses of Elihu represent not a complete solution, but a partial explanation, that is, the principle of educative suffering is a significant contribution toward a resolution of the problem.¹⁴³
For instance, S. Davidson claims that "the germ of the solution" is contained in Elihu's speech,¹⁴⁴ while Gordis emphasises the moral discipline of affliction as a secondary theme in the book of Job (the major theme being elucidated in the speeches of Yahweh).¹⁴⁵
- (3) It is only in the Elihu pericope that any solution is presented. Nichols, for example, although denying that the original poet offered an

142. See above, chap. 2, pp. 74f.

143. See above, pp. 71ff.

144. S. Davidson, Text of the Old Testament Considered (1856), vol. 2, p. 716; cf. Introduction (1862), vol. 2, p. 212.

145. Gordis, BGAM, p. 115.

explanation, nevertheless acknowledges that if an answer on the efficacy of suffering must be sought, it will have to be found in Elihu's discourse.¹⁴⁶

The foregoing study, however, precludes the interpretation that the Elihu section reveals either the complete solution, or a partial solution, of the problem of suffering as it is presented in the book of Job. That Elihu manifestly does not elucidate a distinctive conception of divine discipline, but occupies essentially the same position as the three interlocutors of Job, leads ineluctably to this conclusion. At the same time, it is recognised that the teaching of Elihu - suffering is indicative of actual, not latent, sin, and is designed to teach the need for repentance - is presented in the form of an all-inclusive moral law admitting of no exceptions. Cornill (who upholds the authenticity of the Elihu section and finds therein the genuine solution of the problem) rejects entirely the possibility that the author does not intend to present a solution; he comments that such a poet "would not deserve to be described as an artist so much as a torturer of humanity."¹⁴⁷ Conversely, Kroeze (like Cornill, an ardent defender of Elihu) concludes that, while chapters 32-37 offer valuable insights into

146. Nichols, op. cit., p. 108.

147. Cornill, op. cit., p. 426. Cf. also Budde, Buch Hiob, p. xxi; Prat, "(Livre de) Job," Dictionnaire de la Bible, 3, col. 1568.

the enigma of human suffering, "eine Lösung geben sie nicht; die kann nicht gegeben werden."¹⁴⁸ And Peake declares:

The most valuable thing the Old Testament has to offer us is not a speculative solution. It is the inner certainty of God, which springs out of fellowship with Him, and, defying all the crushing proofs that the government of the world is unrighteous, holds its faith in Him fast. But it was only the rarest spirits, that could feel so intensely the horror of the facts, and yet could escape into a region where it haunted them no longer.¹⁴⁹

In all probability, the absence of an explanation elsewhere in the book of Job - indeed, conspicuously absent from the Divine speeches - indicates that a "solution" as such was never envisaged by the original author.¹⁵⁰

148. Kroeze, op. cit., p. 169. Italics in the original.

149. A.S. Peake, The Problem of Suffering in the Old Testament (London, 1904), p. 144.

150. Cf. Nichols, op. cit., pp. 107-08; Peake, Job, p. 27; MacDonald, "Original Form of the Legend of Job," Journal of Biblical Literature, 14 (1895), pp. 69-70; Sellin, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 214; Lefèvre, "Job," Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible, 4, cols. 1094-95; Loisy, op. cit., pp. 34-35. Cf. also the statement of Dhorme, op. cit., p. cl: "To claim, as some authors have done, and especially Budde, that the speeches of Elihu embody the solution extolled by the inspired author, is in truth to misunderstand the whole meaning of the book of Job."

CHAPTER V

THE NAME AND GENEALOGY OF ELIHU

As noted in Chapter 1 above, the introduction of Elihu contrasts sharply with that of Job and the three friends. Whereas the latter are introduced simply by name and place of origin, the character Elihu is furnished with a more elaborate genealogy: "Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the clan of Ram."

In the opinion of some critics, the more extensive genealogical data is significative of the special mediatorial function of Elihu. The purpose of this chapter is to attempt to ascertain the importance of the name and genealogy of Elihu, and thus to serve as a prolegomenon to the chapter following on "The Concept of Elihu as Mediator."

I

The Name Elihu: אֱלִיהוּ (32:2, 5, 6; 34:1; 36:1);
אֱלִיהוּ (32:4; 35:1)

While a relatively small number of commentators regard Elihu as the designation of a historical personage, the great majority believe that the name is symbolic and represents

an ideal formulation.¹ An analysis of the formation of the name indicates that Elihu is a theophoric "sentence-name"² composed of three parts: ֵל : "God"; י : "my"; חַי : "he." The literal meaning of Elihu is therefore "He is my God" (or "My God is he").³ The significance of the name, however, is very much a matter of speculation.

1. In the view of Wildeboer, op. cit., p. 384, Elihu may be an actual, as opposed to an ideal, name as the author intended a real person and not a supernatural being; however, the name has been chosen "not without intention." According to George A. Barton, Commentary on the Book of Job, p. 249, interpreting the Elihu chapters as the work of two different authors and representing two separate additions to the original poem, Elihu may have been the name of one or both of the supplementers; yet the genealogy is "suspicious" and the name may therefore be an ideal formulation. Cf. also Kraeling, op. cit., p. 126. Stier, op. cit., p. 330, remarks: "Die 'Personalien' des Elihu mögen erfunden sein. Als Vertreter einer bestimmten Richtung oder einer Generation in der Geschichte der Chokmah aber ist Elihu wie Ijjob und die Drei eine historische Gestalt."
2. On "sentence-names," see Martin Noth, Die Israelitischen Personennamen im Rahmen der Gemeinsemitischen Namengebung (BWANT, 3d Series, No. 10; Stuttgart, 1928), pp. 15ff.
3. Cf. "He is (my) God": Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 447; B-D-B, p. 45; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 570, n. 1. Cf. also "He is God": Hesse, op. cit., p. 176; Lamparter, op. cit., p. 192, n. 4; Oettli, op. cit., p. 97; Koepp, op. cit., p. 391; Augé, op. cit., p. 274; Staples, op. cit., p. 38; "It is God, or rather, Yahweh": Noth, op. cit., p. 143; "He - i.e. Yahweh - is his God": Vermeeylen, op. cit., p. 78; "He (Yahu) is my God": H.H. Guthrie, Jr., "Elihu," in IDB, 2, p. 88; "It is He, God": Miloš Bič, "Le Juste et l'Impie dans le Livre de Job," Volume du Congrès, Genève, 1965 (Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, 15; Leiden, 1966), p. 36; "It is my God" or "It is God": Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 188; "My God is He/The One": McKay, op. cit., p. 167; "My God it is": Nichols, op. cit., p. 151; "That is God" or "God himself": Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 132, and "Aufbau des Buches Hiob," p. 249; "He is my God," i.e. as God He is mine: von Rohr Sauer, op. cit., p. 267. In the view of Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 2, 12, the

(a) The theophoric element ֱלֹ

ֱלֹ is both a common noun and a divine proper name. In the former sense, it denotes the general Semitic term for God. As a divine proper name, 'El is, for the most part, synonymous with Yahweh, the national God of Israel. The formation of the name $(\text{א})\cdot\text{יְהוָה}\cdot\text{ֱלֹ}$ indicates that the theophoric element ֱלֹ has the value of a common noun; in this regard, the presence of יְ "my" proves that ֱלֹ is used in an appellative sense. In contradistinction to the personal names $\text{ֱלֹ}\cdot\text{ֱלֹ}$: "'El is my God" ("My God is 'El")⁴ or $\text{ֱלֹ}\cdot\text{יְהוָה}$, ֱלֹ in the name Elihu signifies "god" or "deity" in a generic sense. Thus Elihu may be represented as an 'el-name, and not an El-name.

(b) The non-theophoric element אֱלֹהִים

The personal pronoun אֱלֹהִים is ambiguous and constitutes the principal difficulty in ascertaining the significance of the name Elihu. The opinion is expressed by a number of commentators that the determinative אֱלֹהִים is a substitute for, that is, is employed in place of, the divine name

signification of Elihu is twofold: (1) "God is he" (Elihu); and (2) "He (Yahweh) is my God." According to Beeby, op. cit., p. 43, the name Elihu can perhaps be paraphrased as "Yahweh is my God," "My god is true."

4. P. van Imschoot, Theology of the Old Testament, trans. Kathryn Sullivan and Fidelis Buck (New York, 1965), vol. 1, p. 9, n. 12, points out that the name can theoretically signify "my god is god."

יהוה .⁵ According to Fohrer, the name possibly contains a confession of El as the highest God. In the context of the Old Testament, however, the reference is unquestionably to Yahweh; thus, the personal pronoun is employed instead of the theophoric element יהוה or יה .⁶ Similarly, Lévêque states that, irrespective of the form of the name Elihu, that is, with or without final ח , the pronoun replaces the theophoric component יה or יהוה .⁷ In the view of Tur-Sinai⁸ and Gordis,⁹ Elihu was originally vocalised as $\text{יהוה} \text{ל} \text{ח}$ (Elijah) and therefore contains the divine name יהוה (Elijah = "Yah is God"). A different idea is advanced by Montgomery, who theorises that the name Yahweh derives, not from the verb "to be," or "to befall," but rather from the pronoun חיה . Citing as evidence two passages, II Kings 2:14 ($\text{חיה} \text{הוא}$) and Jeremiah 5:12 ($\text{חיה} \text{אף}$), in which he believes חיה is to be equated with the name Yahweh, he concludes: "Evidently the pronoun is an avoidance of the Name, but is practically identical

5. Cf. Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 152; Noth, op. cit., p. 143; McKay, op. cit., p. 167; Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 457; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 209; Gordis, BGAM, pp. 115-16; Honthelm, op. cit., p. 12; Beeby, op. cit., p. 43; Vermeulen, op. cit., p. 78. In the view of Augé, op. cit., p. 274, the pronoun hu "with strong probability" designates the divine name Yahweh.
6. Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 447.
7. Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 570, n. 1.
8. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., pp. 456-57.
9. Gordis, BGAM, pp. 115-16.

with it."¹⁰ In the case of the name Elihu (as well as the name Abihu), Montgomery asserts that the pronoun has replaced the divine name Yahweh.

In addition, however, to the ambiguousness of the pronoun אֱלֹהִים , the identification with יהוה may be questioned on the basis of the following: (1) The Elihu pericope is characterised by an apparent disregard for the Israelite national and religious tradition; indeed, with the exception of the references to sacrifice in the Prologue (1:5) and Epilogue (42:8-9), the book of Job as a whole exhibits a pronounced indifference to the covenant, the law, the temple, the promised land, election, the Davidic dynasty, the concept of a chosen people, the Messiah and eschatology. (2) Elihu's discourse is distinguished by a preference for the divine names אֱלֹהִים , אֱלֹהִים and אֱלֹהִים and the complete omission of the divine name יהוה , the proper name of the Israelite national God.¹¹ A similar preference for אֱלֹהִים , אֱלֹהִים and אֱלֹהִים is evident in the Dialogue, from which, with the single exception of 12:9, the name יהוה is notably absent. The sole occurrence of the Tetragrammaton in 12:9 is questioned by a great many commentators who argue that the text should properly

10. James A. Montgomery, "The Hebrew Divine Name and the Personal Pronoun HU," JBL, 63 (1944), pp. 161-63.

11. Cf. the statistics of Gray in Driver-Gray, pp. xxxv-xxxvi, xlii-xliii.

read יהוה .¹² By contrast, the occurrences of the name יהוה are restricted to the Prologue and Epilogue and the Divine speeches. In chapters 1, 2, and 42:7-17, the Tetragrammaton occurs to the complete exclusion of all other divine names; but it is noteworthy that of the five occurrences of the name יהוה in chapters 38-42:6, all are confined to the narrative rubrics (38:1; 40:1, 3, 6; 42:1). Thus in the book of Job the Tetragrammaton occurs only in the prose sections.

It is evident from the foregoing that the pattern of occurrences of divine names, in particular the relation between the avoidance of the Tetragrammaton in the poetical sections and the signification of the name Elihu, warrants further consideration. In addition to אל , אלה , ידי and יהוה , the divine names אלהים and האלהים are attested, although in distinctly fewer instances,¹³ as well as a single occurrence of יהוה (28:28). In the matter of the relationship between the usage of the name יהוה and the occurrences of divine names other than יהוה , it may be stated that insofar as אל , אלה , ידי , אלהים , האלהים and יהוה designate the God of Israel, the implicit reference is therefore to יהוה as the national God of Israel.

12. Cf. inter alia Pope, op. cit., p. 91; Dhorme, op. cit., pp. 173-74.

13. Cf. Gray's statistics in Driver-Gray, p. xxxv.

That יהוה is indeed presupposed throughout the book of Job is, however, not the issue. An over-emphasis on the various non-specific designations for the deity as synonyms for יהוה fails to take into account the significance of the peculiar delineation of occurrences of the different divine names. Thus Eissfeldt, in an examination of the relationship between Yahweh and El, distinguishes three categories according to which the Old Testament occurrences of El as a proper name may be classified: (1) El as a designation of Yahweh; (2) the epithet El appropriated by Yahweh as a proper name to the exclusion of other claimants to the name; (3) El as an entity distinct from, and originally superior to, Yahweh.¹⁴ According to Eissfeldt, in the Dialogue section of the book of Job comprising 3:1-42:5, the name El, as well as the divine names Eloah, Elohim and Shaddai, can designate only Yahweh. The peculiar pattern of occurrences of the divine name, however, and particularly the avoidance of the Tetragrammaton in the poetical sections in favour of general designations for the deity, can hardly be explained on the basis that whatever designation is employed for the deity nonetheless refers only to יהוה .

In the case of the Dialogue, the explanation for the avoidance of the Tetragrammaton may be (a) a general tendency

14. Otto Eissfeldt, "El and Yahweh," Journal of Semitic Studies, 1 (1956), pp. 26ff.

on the part of the poet to archaise; or (b) the circumvention of the name יהוה may indicate that the author represents a divergent religious tradition¹⁵; or (c) the Dialogue originates in a period of Israel's history which has witnessed the resurgence of יהו as a proper name of God. With respect to (a) and (c), the avoiding of the Tetragrammaton undoubtedly reflects the poet's intention to transcend the historical, and specifically Israelite, connotations of the name יהוה . Conversely, (b) is to be explained simply on the basis of the author's non-involvement in the Yahwistic tradition.

The situation is somewhat different insofar as the Elihu speeches are concerned, as (a) a general tendency to archaise is not similarly evident. In view, however, of the apparent indifference to the Israelite historical and religious traditions, it is distinctly possible that (b) the author belongs to a divergent tradition. At the same time, a marked preference for the divine name יהו ¹⁶ may indicate that (c) the Elihu pericope derives from a period in which יהו has been re-established as a proper name of the God of Israel. To be precise, the period from the seventh century forward, and in particular the post-exilic period, witnessed the revivification of יהו as a proper name of God. In

15. Cf. Smith, op. cit., pp. 159-61; Frank M. Cross, " יהו ," in TDOT, 1, p. 259.

16. Cf. Gray in Driver-Gray, pp. xxxv, xlii.

addition to the three explanations above, the omission of the name $\eta\eta\eta$ (and the corresponding disinterestedness in the national and religious traditions) may represent (d) an attempt on the part of an interpolator to integrate his work with the rest of the poem.

Accordingly, in the context of the relation between the avoidance of the Tetragrammaton and the signification of the name Elihu, the following statements may be made. With regard to (b), a divergent religious tradition would necessarily preclude an identification of the determinative $\chi\eta$ with $\eta\eta\eta$. In the case of (c), the revival in the seventh century of $\chi\chi$ as a proper name of the God of Israel coincides with a significant increase in the proportion of proper names compounded with $\chi\chi$. As the tabulations of Gray show, in the earliest (pre-Davidic) period of Israel's history, personal names compounded with $\chi\chi$ are proportionately more numerous than combinations with $\eta\eta$; the proportion of $\chi\chi$ -compounds to compounds with $\eta\eta$ is $2\frac{2}{3};1$.¹⁷ Subsequently, however, from the time of David to the seventh century, the proportion of $\chi\chi$ -compounds decreases significantly. Then, from this point on, compounds with $\chi\chi$ become progressively more numerous in proportion to compounds with $\eta\eta$. In the latter period of the monarchy, the ratio of $\eta\eta$ -compounds to combinations

17. Cf. G. Buchanan Gray, Studies in Hebrew Proper Names (London, 1896), pp. 255-57.

with שׁו is 6:1; in the post-exilic period, the proportion is 4:1.

The revival of שׁו as a proper name of God and the corresponding resurgence of personal names compounded with שׁו are undoubtedly due to (1) the increased sense of the sacredness of יהוה and consequent name prohibition, that is, the inhibition against general and irresponsible utterance of the Tetragrammaton; and (2) a concept of universalism and the conviction that the national God of Israel has outgrown former territorial boundaries and has become the sole universal deity, that is, God in an absolute sense.¹⁸

In the context of the signification of the name Elihu, the tabulations of Gray are decidedly ambivalent. That is to say, while the period from the seventh century forward witnessed a significant increase in personal names compounded with שׁו in proportion to compounds with יה , nonetheless the latter category continues to predominate. On this basis, therefore, it is hazardous to argue either for or against an identification of the pronoun שׁו with יהוה . However, while the increasing reluctance to pronounce the sacred Tetragrammaton may suggest a reference to יהוה in the indeterminate designation שׁו , the universalistic conception of the national God of Israel as the absolute world deity militates against the

18. Cf. Noth, op. cit., pp. 98-99; Cross, op. cit., p. 259.

identification of $\chi 17$ with $\eta 17^1$.

Finally, as to (d), the question whether the interpolation of chapters 32-37 has been accomplished in such a manner as to create a unified composition has elicited widely differing views. On the one hand, Pope refers to the considerable skill with which the discourses have been incorporated into the original poem.¹⁹ The assumption, however, that a later writer would attempt to disguise his interpolation and seek to emulate the work of the original author is rejected by Nichols on the ground that "it is by no means self-evident that a later writer would have taken more pains to unite his work with the original poem. His undertaking bore no stamp of dishonesty in his own eyes and he was not on his guard against the methods of modern criticism. Elihu's author was not an interpolator in the real sense of the word; full of the urgency of his message, he takes no particular thought for the niceties of the dramatic situation."²⁰ In this connection, Gray remarks that aspects which are common to both the Elihu pericope and the remainder of the book are "the natural result of the familiarity of the writer with the book which he was supplementing; so, e.g. he naturally uses the same names for God, but ... with differing relative frequency."

19. Pope, op. cit., p. xxx. Cf. also Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 55.

20. Nichols, op. cit., p. 105.

Nevertheless, Gray emphasises that a considerable proportion of Elihu's discourse diverges from the rest of the book.²¹ In any event, it is questionable to what extent, if at all, the exigencies of interpolation would influence the choice of the name Elihu. Whereas the occurrence in chapters 32-37 of the divine name $\aleph\aleph\aleph$ would indeed constitute a significant divergence in relation to the occurrence of divine names in the Dialogue, the choice of a \aleph -compound in place of the name Elihu would not detract from the efforts of an interpolator to integrate his work with the original poem. Thus, as in (b) and (c), the ambiguity relating to the signification of the determinate $\aleph\aleph$ remains unresolved.

It is evident, then, that the identification of $\aleph\aleph$ with $\aleph\aleph\aleph$ must be regarded at best as an unproven hypothesis. Thus Beeby's assertion that the Elihu author avoids the sacred name of Yahweh, the national god of Israel, "who will reveal himself as Lord in 38:1," is exceedingly tenuous and unconvincing.²² On the contrary, inasmuch as the indeterminateness of $\aleph\aleph$ excludes a particularistic designation, the use of the pronoun undoubtedly indicates the intention of the author to avoid a specifically Israelite connotation. It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that $\aleph\aleph$ signifies God in an absolute sense.²³

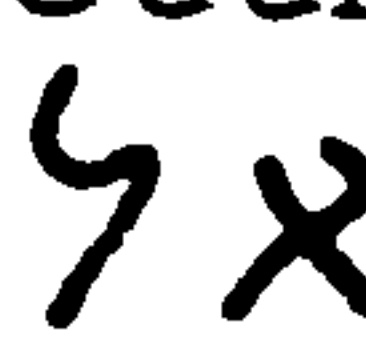
21. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. xli, n. 1.

22. Beeby, op. cit., p. 56.

23. Cf. Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 188; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 310; König, Buch Hiob, p. 326.

Significance of the name Elihu

In a study of Israelite personal names, Noth²⁴ distinguishes two classes of confessional Names: self-confessional (Selbstbekenntnisnamen) and general confessional (allgemeine Bekenntnisnamen). The name Elihu is classified in the latter category. The two classes of names are distinguished in the first instance by the fact that the former denotes a confession which is uttered initially by the name-giver as opposed to the name-bearer. In addition, whereas self-confessional names consist of a specific declaration concerning the relationship of the name-bearer to the divinity, general confessional names:

zunächst nur irgend ein Merkmal der Gottheit zum Ausdruck bringen, freilich so, dass unausgesprochen hinter dem Namen meist doch der Gedanke verborgen liegt, dass die im Bekenntnis hervorgehobene Seite der Gottheit gerade für das Verhältnis des Namen-trägers zu ihr wichtig und bedeutsam ist. Das zeigt sich mit voller Deutlichkeit sogleich bei den Namen, die, wie es auf den ersten Blick scheint, das Allerallgemeinste aussagen, was man von einer Gottheit aussagen kann, nämlich eben dass sie , Gottheit ist.²⁵

Thus, with regard to the name Elihu, what is the particular significance of the very general confessional statement "He is my God"? Is it possible to discern in this confession

24. Cf. n. 2 above.

25. Noth, op. cit., pp. 135, 139-40.

anything of the relationship between the name-bearer and the deity?

In the Elihu pericope, as in the book of Job as a whole, the existence of God is not a matter of contention. A concept of monotheism,²⁶ or at least the existence of the one true God, is presupposed throughout the book. The Elihu speeches emphasise the immutable character of the deity, namely, the absolute transcendence, justice and righteousness of God. It would appear, therefore, that the significance of the name Elihu pertains not to the identification of God as the one true God, as some commentators maintain, but rather to the conception of the one true God as eternally unchanging. Thus, according to König, the significance of the literal meaning of the name Elihu, that is, "He is my God," is not, as Hoffman interprets, "My God is the true (God),"²⁷ but rather "He remains my God and does not change."²⁸

II

The Genealogy of Elihu

- (a) **לְאֵלֵינוּ** - Barachel: "God (i.e. El) blesses";
 "God (has) blessed"; "God should bless";
 "Bless, O God"; "Bless God."²⁹

26. Cf. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. lxix.

27. Hoffmann, op. cit., p. 23.

28. E. König, "Elihu," The Jewish Encyclopedia, 5, p. 120.

29. On the various translations of **לְאֵלֵינוּ**, cf. Staples, op. cit., p. 39; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 279; Fohrer,

While there are extensive parallels in the ancient Near Eastern world,³⁰ the form **לכאל** does not occur elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. Analogous forms, however, are attested in the Biblical onomasticon: **לכאל** - Neh. 3:4, 30; 6:18; I Chron. 3:20; 9:16; 15:23; Zech. 1:1 (= **לכאל**, 1:7); **לכאל** - I Chron. 6:24; 15:17; II Chron. 28:12; **לכאל** - Isa. 8:2. The theophoric element **ל** may be translated either "El" or "God," that is, it may signify an entity distinct from Yahweh, namely El, or it may be employed in an appellative sense as (1) a generic designation for the deity, or (2) a proper name of the God of Israel. But the context of the name **לכאל** provides no basis for an unambiguous reference to El as a deity distinct from Yahweh. On the contrary, **ל** is of indeterminative designation, and as is the case of the pronoun **ל** in the name Elihu, would appear to signify God in an absolute sense. In the view of Duhm, **לכאל** is abbreviated from **לכאל**³¹; however, as the form **לכאל** is distinguished from the Israelite name **לכאל**, the non-traditional form **לכאל** may well represent a deliberate avoidance of the specifically Israelite names **לכאל**, **לכאל**, and

Buch Hiob, p. 447. On the tense of the verbal element, cf. Gray in Driver-Gray, Philological Notes, p. 232; Staples, op. cit., p. 39.

30. Cf. L        , Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 570, n. 2; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 447, n. 2; Staples, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

31. Cf. Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 153.

יה'כרבי', in which the theophoric element (יה') - occurs in place of לך-. Thus, the name לךכרבי appears to indicate the intention of the Elihu author to employ a non-specific, and non-Israelite, designation for God.

- (b) יה'כרבי - the Buzite, from the name כרבי
(cf. Gen. 22:21; I Chron. 5:14; Jer. 25:23; cf. the name כרבי, Ezek. 1:1)

According to the Biblical evidence, Buz denotes:

(1) the brother of Uz and son of Nahor (Gen. 22:21); (2) a Gadite (I Chron. 5:14); (3) a geographical location, namely, a region in northwestern Arabia (Jer. 25:23). Although I Chron. does not seem to be relevant to the genealogy of Elihu, the references to the name Buz in Gen. 22:21 and Jer. 25:23 are regarded by many scholars as significant.

Gen. 22:21

In particular, commentators refer to the consanguinity of Buz and Uz, the eponymous ancestor of the tribe of Job (cf. Job 1:1), as evidence of the close relationship between Elihu and Job.³² In addition, it is regarded as

32. Cf. Gordis, BGAM, p. 115; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 10; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 104; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, pp. 570-71; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 17. Cf. also Nichols, op. cit., p. 151; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 279; Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 132; W.A. Irwin, "Job," Peake's Commentary on the Bible, ed. Matthew Black, with H.H. Rowley as Old Testament editor (London, 1962), p. 403; Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 461;

significant that, as the son of Nahor, Buz is therefore the nephew of Abraham.³³ Especially noteworthy in this regard is the view of Beeby that the purpose of the genealogy in 32:2 is to represent Elihu as a descendant of some of the most illustrious names in Israelite history, that is, Abraham, David and Judah. Beeby considers that the significance of the relationship between Elihu and Abraham derives from the importance of the latter as "Yahweh's first convert, the Father of all faithful,"³⁴ in other words, a man of God, but one who has become so by personal decision and as a convert from paganism. This duality relating to the designation **§11** (that is, while the term is linked with the name of Abraham, it is nonetheless associated with a pagan past) testifies to the role of Elihu as a "covenant mediator in Wisdom dress."

Jer. 25:23

Whereas the reference to Buz in Gen. 22:21, as the genealogy of Gen. 22:20-24 indicates, denotes an Aramean tribe,³⁵ the name also occurs in Jer. 25:23 in connection with Dedan and Tema and denotes an Arabian tribe. In the opinion of Tur-Sinai, Buz is included in the reference to

Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 216. Against this interpretation, cf. Möller, op. cit., p. 103.

33. Beeby, op. cit., pp. 43-45; Eichhorn, op. cit., pp. 202f.

34. Beeby, op. cit., p. 45.

35. In addition to Gen. 22:20-24, cf. Gen. 11:26; 24:10.

Uz in verse 20, a designation which encompasses the Aramean tribes in general.³⁶ The connection with Dedan and Tema in verse 23, however, clearly indicates an Arabian locality: Tema is a city in northwestern Arabia³⁷; Dedan denotes (1) an oasis in north Arabia, and (2) the area surrounding the oasis.³⁸

Dhorme, on the basis of the Assyrian inscriptions of Esarhaddon, identifies Buz with the land of Bâzu, an area adjacent to el-Jauf.³⁹ In the view of Kissane, the reference to Buz in Jer. 25:23 provides evidence that Elihu belonged to a tribe the territory of which bordered on that of Job and the three friends.⁴⁰ But, considering the discrepancy between Gen. 22:21 and Jer. 25:23, the significance of these passages in relation to the term 𐤁𐤅𐤆 in the genealogy of Elihu is very much open to question. Dhorme notes that adjacent to Bâzu is the region of Hazu, which is identical with the Biblical name 𐤇𐤑𐤍 . In the genealogical list of Gen. 22:20-24, 𐤇𐤑𐤍 occurs along with 𐤅𐤓𐤕 and 𐤑𐤓𐤕 as sons of Nahor. Thus, Dhorme

36. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 456.
37. Cf. Oxford Atlas of the Bible, ed. H.G. May (2d ed.; London, 1974), p. 67; cf. also p. 141.
38. Ibid., p. 67; cf. also p. 127.
39. Dhorme, op. cit., p. xxiii; cf. also Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 216, n. 5. Pope, op. cit., p. 242, locates Bazu farther to the east on the Persian Gulf in what is now known as Bahrein. In the opinion of König, "Elihu," in Jewish Encyclopedia, 5, p. 120, the region of Bazu designates a location "probably east of Damascus."
40. Kissane, op. cit., p. 218.

asserts that "the areas of Uṣ and Buz form a link between the Aramaean, Edomite and Arabic regions."⁴¹ Nevertheless, the Aramean context of Gen. 22:21 is fundamentally irreconcilable with the Arabic designation of Jer. 25:23.

Franz Delitzsch and Cox harmonise the two traditions and represent Elihu as an Aramean Arab⁴²; however, Lévêque is probably correct in stating: "Il ne faut pas demander à l'auteur trop de rigueur logique; il lui suffit que le nom de Būz soit un signifiant surdéterminé, renvoyant à la fois à une parente raciale et à une proximité géographique."⁴³

In the opinion of Tur-Sinai, the term **בְּזִי** in the genealogical data indicates the spiritual kinship between Elihu and the prophet Ezekiel, "the son of Buzi"

(**בְּזִי-בְּרִי**, Ezek. 1:3). Because of various affinities between Job 32-37 and the book of Ezekiel, Tur-Sinai claims that the author of the Elihu pericope, although resident in Palestine and not in Babylonia, was nonetheless "in spirit ... altogether the disciple and heir of Ezekiel."⁴⁴ Similarly, Hemraj suggests that **בְּזִי** does not ipso facto signify a geographical or a racial connection between Elihu and Job, but indicates a spiritual affinity between Elihu and

41. Dhorme, op. cit., p. xxiii.

42. Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 207; Cox, op. cit., p. 417.

43. Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 571, n. 3.

44. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. xxxix.

Ezekiel.⁴⁵ According to Königsberger, זִּיְיָ designates Elihu as a fellow countryman of Ezekiel.⁴⁶

Gordis, however, believes that the appellative meaning of the various names in 32:2 is of greater significance than the ethnic and national connotations. The noun זִּיְיָ signifies "contempt, scorn, disdain"; thus, in the genealogy of Elihu, the name denotes one who "heaped scorn (Buz) upon God's ineffective advocates."⁴⁷ In addition, it has been pointed out by Hoffmann that the phrase בְּנֵי בִזְיָהּ זִּיְיָ : "the Buzite of the family" in 32:2 is virtually a repetition of $\text{בְּנֵי בִזְיָהּ - זִּיְיָ}$: "the contempt of families" in 31:34. Hoffman considers that the latter passage suggested a variation on the phrase employing the term זִּיְיָ : "exalted" (cf. $\text{זִּיְיָ} \dots \text{בְּנֵי בִזְיָהּ}$ in 31:34).⁴⁸ On this interpretation, זִּיְיָ would signify "the despised."

On the basis of the foregoing, it is clear that the precise interpretation of the term זִּיְיָ is shrouded in uncertainty. The exegetical significance of the name

45. Henraj, op. cit., p. 54.

46. B. Königsberger, "Beiträge zur Erklärung des Buches Hiob," Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums, 40 (1896), p. 292. In addition, the Zohar identifies Elihu as a descendant of Ezekiel; cf. The Zohar, vol. 4, sect. 166a, p. 73.

47. Cf. Gordis, BOJ, p. 552; and also BGAM, p. 115.

48. Hoffmann, op. cit., p. 94. Cf. also Peake, Job, p. 276, who refers to the similarity in phraseology between 31:34 and 32:2 as "a very curious fact."

must remain, therefore, a matter of conjecture.

(c) **רם** - Ram

The proper noun **רם**, the literal meaning of which is "exalted, high, sublime, illustrious," occurs as the name of an ancestor of David (Ruth 4:19; I Chron. 2:9), and thus a Judahite (Ruth 4:19) or a Jerahmeelite (I Chron. 2:9, 25; in verse 9, Ram is identified as a son of Hezron and a brother of Jerahmeel, and in verse 25 as a son of Jerahmeel). The Jerahmeelites were a tribe of non-Israelite origin. The name occurs in connection with a Semitic tribe which is first encountered in south Judah (I Sam. 27:10; 30:29); it is not until the post-exilic period that Jerahmeel designates a Hebrew (Judahite) tribe (I Chron. 2:3-5, 9, 25-27, 33, 42).⁴⁹ Whereas some commentators regard as insignificant the various extrinsic references to **רם** in relation to Job 32:2,⁵⁰ Beeby emphasises the connection between Elihu and the names of David, Judah and Jerahmeel. According to Beeby's hypothesis, the designation **רם** reveals "roots that were less honorable";⁵¹ that is to say, while associated with the

49. Cf. "Jerahmeel," IDB, 2, p. 822.

50. Cf. Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 447; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 310; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 448. However, in the view of Cheyne, "Job," Encyclopaedia Biblica, 2, col. 2480, Elihu was originally designated "the son of Jerahmeel," that is, the Jerahmeelite, with reference to a legendary Jerahmeelite renowned for his wisdom who appears to be mentioned in I Kings 4:31. According to Cheyne, col. 2480, n. 2, "Barachel" and "Ram" are probably fragments of "Jerahmeel."

51. Beeby, op. cit., pp. 43-45.

names of Judah and David, **דָּוִד** (like Buz) nonetheless exhibits connections with a pagan past. Thus, as in the case of the term **יְהוֹנָדָב**, this duality serves to illustrate the role of Elihu as mediator.

A number of commentators interpret the clan name **דָּוִד** as an abbreviated form:

(1) Some believe that **דָּוִד** is a contraction of **דָּוִדָּא**,⁵² a view which is rejected by other scholars on various grounds.⁵³ In the opinion of Franz Delitzsch and Zöckler, **דָּוִד** is simply a family name and not a racial designation,⁵⁴ whereas Duhm and Strahan maintain that an identification with Aram is excluded by the expression **דָּוִד בְּנֵי אֲרָם** "of the clan (not "of the land") of Ram."⁵⁵ The translation **Συρίας** (Symm.) is regarded by Dhorme as the result of a corruption of **Ραμ** (the general Greek rendering of **דָּוִד**) into **Ἀραμ**,⁵⁶ and by Peters as a "substitution by means of a more familiar name."⁵⁷

52. Cf. Irwin, "Job," Peake's Commentary on the Bible, p. 403; Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 456; and, tentatively, Hontheim, op. cit., p. 10.

53. Cf. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 279; Peake, Job, p. 276; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 278; Cheyne, Job and Solomon, p. 92. Cf. also A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 222, who notes, however, that in II Chron. 22:5 the designation Ramites = Aramites.

54. Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 207; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 553.

55. Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 153; Strahan, op. cit., p. 268.

56. Dhorme, op. cit., p. 473.

57. Peters, op. cit., p. 360.

(2) In the view of Lévêque, Peters, and tentatively Fohrer, אל is to be interpreted as an abbreviation of a theophoric name: "(God is) exalted."⁵⁸ According to Peters, אל derives from such names as אלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל , אלֹהֵי בְרָכָה , אלֹהֵי תִשְׁבָּח , אלֹהֵי תִּי , and in cuneiform script, Abi-râmu and Ahi-râmu.

(3) Gray, disregarding the gentilic signification of אל , expresses the opinion that the term may have been employed on the basis of the appellative meaning "lofty, exalted."⁵⁹ In this context, Hoffmann, as noted earlier, considers the phrase $\text{אלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּצִפְּרָאֵל}$ in 32:2 as representing a variation on $\text{אלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּצִפְּרָאֵל}$ in 31:34, employing the term אל : "exalted."⁶⁰ Budde, on the basis of Hoffmann's suggestion, expresses the view that the appellative meaning of צִפְּרָאֵל : "despise, scorn" may have induced a later writer to add an effective antithesis in the form of the family name אל : "exalted."⁶¹

It is evident, then, that the precise signification of the designation אל is a moot question. The issue, however, may be clarified, at least to some degree, by the following

58. Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 571; Peters, op. cit., p. 360; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 447.

59. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 279.

60. Hoffman, op. cit., p. 94. Nichols, op. cit., p. 152, calls this explanation "somewhat fanciful"; cf. also Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 153.

61. Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 188; cf. also Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 447; Margoliouth, op. cit., p. 1721.

considerations:

(1) In the opinion of some commentators, the clan name **אֵלִי** represents an editorial expansion of the genealogy of Elihu. Nichols, regarding chapters 32-37 as the conflation of two originally independent compositions and comprising the work of two different authors, interprets 32:2-5 as the addition of an editor or combiner.⁶² In this context, it is suggested that the designation "of the tribe of Ram" may represent a fragment of the title of the second Wise Man.⁶³ A not dissimilar view is expressed by Barton who, in agreement with the essential theory of Nichols respecting the composition of chapters 32-37, attributes the designation **אֵלִי** to the introduction of one of the two additions that now form the Elihu discourses.⁶⁴ Jastrow believes that the prose introduction consists of five separate editorial additions;⁶⁵ according to Studer and Kraeling, it is a later redactional elaboration of 32:6-22, which serves as the prologue to the subsequent discourses of Elihu.⁶⁶

It should be noted that, whereas the genealogy of Elihu is reiterated in verse 6, the clan name **אֵלִי** occurs only in

62. Nichols, op. cit., p. 125. Verses 32:2-5 are deleted by Beer, Text des Buches Hiob, p. 205; Budde, Buch Hiob, pp. 187ff.; Hoffmann, op. cit., p. 94.

63. Nichols, op. cit., pp. 126, 151.

64. G.A. Barton, Commentary on the Book of Job. p. 249.

65. Jastrow, op. cit., pp. 314-16.

66. Studer, op. cit., p. 145; Kraeling, op. cit., p. 126.

verse 2. In all other respects, the repetition of the name and genealogical information in verse 6 (including the spelling of $\chi\iota\pi\iota\lambda\chi$ with final χ) is identical. It is not improbable, therefore, that the designation $\alpha\gamma$ is to be regarded as a later expansion of the Elihu material.⁶⁷

(2) The difficulty relating to the exegesis of $\alpha\gamma$ is reflected in the various translations which are attested in the manuscript evidence. For MT $\alpha\gamma$, the LXX translators render: $\rho\alpha\mu$ (Vaticanus, Sinaiticus), $\rho\alpha\mu\alpha$ (Alexandrinus), in addition to which a number of manuscripts translate $\alpha\rho\alpha\mu$; ⁶⁸ cf. $\Sigma\upsilon\rho\iota\alpha\varsigma$ (Symm.). The Syriac text contains "(of the tribe of) Remmon," while the Qumran Targum translators render $\eta\chi\gamma\iota\gamma\mu\gamma\varsigma$. In the Vulgate, $\alpha\gamma$ is translated Ram, and the Targum renders $\alpha\eta\gamma\alpha\beta\chi\pi\delta\gamma\iota\gamma\gamma\gamma$. Following $\alpha\gamma$, the LXX includes the phrase $\tau\eta\varsigma\ \text{Αντιόχου χωρας}$, which is undoubtedly a harmonising insertion in conformity with the Prologue (cf. 1:1).⁶⁹ The different translations indicate substantial uncertainty from a relatively early period as to the precise signification of $\alpha\gamma$, and a tendency to

67. Cf. Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 188; cf. also Houtsma, op. cit., p. 70.

68. Cf. the critical apparatus of Iob. Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum, XI, 4, ed. Joseph Ziegler (Göttingen, 1982), p. 353. In addition, in the LXX of Ruth 4:19, $\alpha\gamma$ is translated $\alpha\rho\rho\alpha\gamma$.

69. Cf. König, Buch Hiob, p. 326; but cf. also the remarks of Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 153.

substitute the problematic name with a more familiar designation.⁷⁰

While it is possible that אָר (a) derives from Ruth 4:19; I Chron. 2:9, 25; (b) is a contraction of Aram; (c) is an abbreviation of a proper name; or (d) has been inserted for the purpose of establishing a close genealogical relationship between Elihu and Job, it is perhaps more plausible to theorise that the significance of the term relates to the appellative meaning "exalted, high, sublime, illustrious." It is questionable, however, whether the addition of אָר was intended to preclude a possible misinterpretation of the name אֶלְיָהוּ. The form of the adjective אֶלְיָהוּ (א), "(the) Buzite," is clearly distinguished from the noun אֶלְיָהוּ in general, and the context of 31:34 in particular.⁷¹ Moreover, when interpreted in context, the similarity between אֶלְיָהוּ תַּתְּפַח וַיִּשְׁמַח (32:2) and תַּתְּפַח וַיִּשְׁמַח אֶלְיָהוּ (31:34) is incidental. The latter phrase expresses a compound idea: "the contempt of families"; conversely, the expression "the Buzite of the family" conveys no meaningful sense apart from the subsequent designation אָר. It may be surmised, therefore, that the appellative meaning "exalted, high, sublime,

70. Cf. Targum de Job de la Grotte XI de Qumrân, p. 51. As a possible interpretation, the editors refer to the city of אֶלְיָהוּ (II Kings 23:26), in which the mother of King Jehoiakim originally resided.

71. Cf. Lévéque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 570, n. 3.

illustrious" is intended to symbolise the exalted spiritual status of Elihu and, in this case, **אֱלִי** may be interpreted as an etymologising addition the purpose of which is to represent Elihu as an able defender of God.

Significance of the Name and Genealogy

A number of critics believe that the name and elaborate genealogy of 32:2 are meant to symbolise the mediatorial role of Elihu in the design of the book. According to Möller, Elihu is characterised as "the bearer of genuine divine revelation."⁷² In the opinion of Hertzberg, the introduction of Elihu signifies one "der im besonderer Nähe zu Gott steht."⁷³ Lambert asserts: "Der bedeutungsvolle Name besagt somit, dass sein Träger das vom Segen Gottes erzeugte Göttliche im Menschen, sein höheres Selbst ist, ein Edles, das in einer missachteten Stätte wohnt."⁷⁴ Hontheim's view is that the name

אֱלִי signifies: "God is he," that is, Elihu.

Thus the poet characterises Elihu as a representative of God and as one who speaks as a prophet through God.

In addition, **אֱלִי** signifies "He (Yahweh) is my God"; thus Elihu, the representative of supernatural wisdom, is conceived by the author as the antithesis to

72. Möller, op. cit., p. 97.

73. Hertzberg, "Aufbau des Buches Hiob," p. 249.

74. Lambert, op. cit., p. 26.

Eliphaz ("the gold is my God"), the representative of natural wisdom.⁷⁵

The significance of the name and genealogy of 32:2 in symbolising the role of Elihu as mediator is emphasised in particular by Beeby and Gordis. According to Beeby, Elihu is a fellow countryman of Job and thus a non-Israelite; at the same time, however, the genealogy serves to establish the relationship between Elihu and some of the most illustrious names in the history of Israel. In this manner, therefore, Elihu is able to fulfil the role of a covenant mediator. The function of a mediator is to be associated with both parties and yet be wholly identified with neither; in other words, the role of mediator must be characterised by a "strange duality." In Beeby's hypothesis, "the careful presentation of Elihu's ancestors was to provide the necessary duality."⁷⁶ Gordis, to whom the ethnic and national connotations of the various names are less significant than their appellative meaning, harmonises the genealogical data thus: Elihu, as the scion of an eminent family (Ram), is the true defender of God (Elihu=Yahweh is my God), exalting him (Barachel) and scornful (Buz) of God's ineffectual spokesmen.⁷⁷ In view,

75. Hontheim, op. cit., p. 12. Contrast Duhm, Buch Hiob, pp. 152-53: the name $\times 1 \pi ' \zeta \times$ suggests the name of Eliphaz, and "mit Recht, da er dem Eliphaz das Beste abborgt, was er vorbringt."

76. Beeby, op. cit., p. 44.

77. Gordis, BOJ, p. 552.

however, of the ambiguity of the genealogical data, in particular the uncertainty concerning the interpretation of רָם בֶּן רָם and רָם , a harmonistic exegesis as proposed by Beeby and Gordis must be seriously questioned.⁷⁸

Rosenmüller suggests that the name and genealogy in 32:2 conceals, or alludes to, the identity of the author of the book. That is, the poet, in conclusion, speaks in the person of Elihu, giving his own view of the matter debated (as in the custom of Oriental poems), and in addition immortalises his own name in the character of Elihu.⁷⁹ While it is not impossible that the name and genealogy are genuinely autobiographical, this Oriental custom is not attested elsewhere in the Old Testament literature.⁸⁰ Moreover, the details of the genealogy are, as Barton observes, "suspicious" and thus appear to represent an ideal formulation.⁸¹

78. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 279, respecting the interpretation of רָם בֶּן רָם and רָם : "In any case it is unwise to treat Ram as an abbreviation of Aram in order to make both descriptions of Elihu Aramaic, or Buzite as equivalent to Bo'azite ($\text{רָם בֶּן רָם} = \text{רָם בֶּן רָם}$: cp. Ruth 4:21) to make them both Jewish." According to J. Derenbourg (cf. B-D-B, p. 100), $\text{רָם בֶּן רָם} = \text{רָם בֶּן רָם}$ from רָם בֶּן רָם . On this interpretation, cf. Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 188.

79. Rosenmüller, op. cit., pp. 778-79. Cf. Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 56. In the view of Houtsma, op. cit., p. 70, Elihu perhaps represents the name of the later author responsible for the interpolation of chapters 32-37.

80. Cf. Nichols, op. cit., p. 151; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 207.

81. Cf. Lamparter, op. cit., p. 192, n. 4: "Der Name ist ein Programm"; cf. Hesse, op. cit., p. 176.

In summary, the most probable hypothesis, in view of the weight of evidence against the originality of chapters 32-37, is that the name and genealogy merely fulfil the purpose of the interpolator in symbolising the exalted spiritual status of Elihu, and thereby serve to legitimise the belated appearance of a hitherto unacknowledged participant in the debate.⁸²

82. Cf. Nichols, op. cit., p. 152: "We may probably conclude that the introduction gives us nothing of significance beyond a suggestion of the purpose of Elihu's author." Cf. also L  v  que, Job et son Dieu, pp. 570-71; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 310; Guthrie, op. cit., p. 88.

CHAPTER VI

THE CONCEPT OF ELIHU AS MEDIATOR

The purpose of this chapter is to examine in detail a number of passages in chapters 32-37 of the book of Job which, in the opinion of the present writer, effectively contradict the concept of Elihu as mediator; and, more important, which suggest conversely that the speeches of Elihu are to be interpreted as a direct polemic against the discourses of God immediately following.

1. Prose Prologue 32:1-5

In the canonical text of Job, the prose introduction to chapters 32-37 fulfils the necessary function of providing an effective transition from the concluding speech of Job (chapters 29-31) to the sudden and unforeseen intervention of Elihu (32:6ff.). It is impossible to say with certainty whether the text of 32:1-5 in its final literary form represents a unitary composition or whether the various repetitions indicate a lengthy historical process. It is, however, a central thesis of this dissertation that the prose prologue, in addition to its purely transitional role, is a formal critical introduction and represents a comprehensive hermeneutical framework which provides the key to (a) the pedagogy of Elihu; and (b) the interpretation of chapters 32-37 in the

final redaction of the book.¹

- 1 And these three men ceased to reply to Job,
because he was righteous in his (own) eyes.
- 2 And Elihu, the son of Barachel, the Buzite, from
the clan of Ram, became angry; he became angry
with Job because he considered himself to be
righteous before God;
- 3 And against his three friends he became angry,
because they had not found an answer and yet
had condemned Job.
- 4 And Elihu had waited before speaking to Job,
because they were older than he;
- 5 But when Elihu saw that there was no answer in
the mouth of the three men, he became angry.

Textual Notes

Verse 1: The great majority of commentators translate according to MT $\text{וְלֹא־עָנְּוּ בְּעֵינָיו}$ "in his eyes." A variant reading $\text{וְלֹא־עָנְּוּ בְּעֵינֵיהֶם}$ "in their eyes"² is attested in LXX ($\epsilon\upsilon\alpha\rho\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon$ $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\upsilon$; cf. Symm. $\epsilon\pi' \alpha\upsilon\tau\omega\upsilon$), the Syriac, and one

1. On the hermeneutical significance of 32:1-5 in relation to the interpretation of the Elihu speeches in the canonical text of Job, see the following chapter.
2. Cf. Dhorme, op. cit., p. 472; A. Klostermann, "Hiob," Realencyklopädie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche, ed. Albert Hauck (3d ed.; Leipzig, 1900), vol. 8, pp. 106-07; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 78; Houtsma, op. cit., p. 70; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 314; Kissane, op. cit., p. 215; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 210; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 436; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 167; Stier, op. cit., p. 155. MacKenzie, "Job," Jerome Biblical Commentary, vol. 1, p. 528, writes: "It is not necessarily the intention of the author of the dialogue, but it gives a logical reason for their ceasing to argue, the critic seems to suppose it by making Elihu distribute blame impartially to Job and to the friends, and it fits better with v. 3." Nichols, op. cit., p. 152, believes the reading "in their eyes" probably adopted to accord with vss. 2-5.

Hebrew manuscript. In the view of Dhorme, the translation "in his eyes" does not explain the silence of the friends following Job's oath of innocence (chapters 29-31), whereas the reading "in their eyes" indicates an acknowledgment on their part of the righteousness of Job.³ Gray, however, argues that the latter translation would require $\eta\eta$ in place of MT $\chi\eta$.⁴ Moreover, there is no basis whatsoever for the supposition that the three friends have at last conceded the righteousness of Job's position. In fact, quite the reverse appears to be the case: as the Dialogue draws to a close, the speeches of Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar have become increasingly indurate and antagonistic.⁵

Verse 2: MT $\text{וַיִּשְׁקֹף וַיִּשְׁקֹף וַיִּשְׁקֹף}$ is interpreted (a) in a comparative sense; (b) in an adversative sense; or (c) in an existential sense.

(a) A number of commentators⁶ translate: "he considered

3. Dhorme, op. cit., p. 472. Cf. also Beer, Text des Buches Hiob, p. 205; MacKenzie, "Job," p. 528; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 436; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 167.
4. Gray in Driver-Gray, Philological Notes, p. 232. Cf. also Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 446; Gordis, BOJ, p. 366.
5. Cf. Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 446; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 309.
6. Cf. NEB; Andersen, op. cit., p. 245; Ball, op. cit., p. 78; Bickell, op. cit., p. 58; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 153; Ewald, op. cit., p. 330; Gordis, BOJ, p. 360; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), pp. 440-41; Hengstenberg, Buch Hiob, Pt. 2, p. 242; König, Buch Hiob, pp. 326-27; Kroeze, op. cit., p. 157; Lamparter, op. cit., p. 191; Rosenmüller, op. cit., pp. 773, 779-80. Cf. also James L. Crenshaw, "Wisdom and Authority: Sapiential Rhetoric and Its Warrants," Congress Volume, Vienna 1980 (SVT, 32; Leiden, 1981), p. 19, n. 32.

himself to be more righteous than God." Among the Versions, the comparative sense is also attested in the Syriac: "better than God."⁷ In the view of Duhm,⁸ the existence of preformative לְּ indicates that אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה is to be translated in a comparative sense. But according to Gesenius-Kautzsch, whereas the comparative is normally expressed in Hebrew by means of the preposition לְּ , this is not so with respect to the phrase יְהוָה יְהוָה , which "expresses not a comparison, but only a relation existing between one person and another."⁹ The translation "more righteous than God" is defended, too, on the basis of Jer. 3:11: "Israel has justified herself more than (appears righteous in comparison with) Judah." The reference in this passage, however, is to a comparison between two accused parties (cf. Ezek. 16:51, 52), while the context of Job 32:2 is altogether different: namely, the relationship of an individual to God. In this instance, the occurrence of the preposition לְּ is parallel to 4:17 and 35:2, and expresses a relationship between an accused person and God,¹⁰ or as Dhorme observes, between an accused person and the Judge.¹¹ Similarly, Dillmann remarks that "Gottes

7. Cf. also the Targum: אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה .

8. Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 153.

9. Wilhelm Gesenius, Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar, ed. E. Kautzsch (2d English ed.; rev. from 28th German ed. (1909) by A.E. Cowley; Oxford, 1910), p. 430, Sect. 133b².

10. Cf. Terrien, "Book of Job," IB, 3, p. 1130.

11. Dhorme, op. cit., p. 473.

regierende Gerechtigkeit u. des Menschen Gehorsamsgerechtigkeit überhaupt unvergleichbar sind."¹² Moreover, it is significant that Job himself never maintains he is "more righteous" than God.

(b) The majority of critics translate אֶת־יְהוָה in an adversative sense: "against God";¹³ rather than God";¹⁴ "at the expense of God."¹⁵ Among German commentators, the adversative sense is rendered "gegen"¹⁶ or, for the most part, "gegenüber."¹⁷ The various translations, however, do

12. Dillmann, op. cit., p. 279.

13. Cf. NJV; TEV; A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 222; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 315; Larcher, op. cit., p. 133; L        , Job et son Dieu, p. 576; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 210; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 215; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., p. 107. Cf. also JB and NJB: "He fumed with rage against Job for thinking that he was right and God was wrong"; TEV: "because Job was justifying himself and blaming God."

14. Cf. RSV; NAB; JPS; AV; RV; B-D-B, p. 842; Cox, op. cit., p. 417, but see n. 15 below; Crook, op. cit., p. 183; Driver-Gray, p. 278; Philological Notes, p. 232; Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, p. 59; Kissane, op. cit., p. 215; Nichols, op. cit., p. 152; Pope, op. cit., p. 240; Rowley, Job, p. 207; Staples, op. cit., p. 24; Strahan, op. cit., pp. 268-69; Tur-Sinai, op. cit., pp. 455-56.

15. Cf. Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 206; Loisy, op. cit., p. 163; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 104. Cf. also Cox, op. cit., p. 417: "rather than, i.e., at the expense of."

16. Cf. Hitzig, op. cit., p. 239; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 344.

17. Cf. Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 188; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 446; G-K-C, p. 430, Sect. 133b²; HALAT, vol. 3, pp. 941-42; Hesse, op. cit., p. 176; H        , op. cit., p. 78; K-B, p. 794, but see n. 22 below; Ley, op. cit., p. 114; Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 341; Stier, op. cit., p. 329; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 167; Thilo, op. cit., p. 55; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 218; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 306. Cf. also Hirzel, op. cit., p. 201: "wegen seines Gerechterekl  rens sich selbst vor Gott, d.h. weil er Gott gegen  ber sein Recht, seine Unschuld behauptete" (italics in original), but cf. n. 44 below.

not differ substantially from interpretation (a), insofar as a comparison between the righteousness of Job and the righteousness of God is clearly implied. In the view of König, the translation "against (gegenüber) God" is simply "eine unklare Verhüllung" of the comparative sense.¹⁸

(c) In addition to interpretations (a) and (b), the preposition **לפני** may be translated "before" in 32:2, as in 4:17a:¹⁹

Is a man righteous (just) before God (**לפני ה' אלהים**)?

In this passage, the great majority of commentators interpret **לפני ה'** in an existential sense: "before God."²⁰ As in 32:2,

18. König, Buch Hiob, p. 327.

19. Cf. also Num. 32:22: **והייתם נקימים לפני ה' ופני ישראל**, "and you will be guiltless before Yahweh and before Israel"; Jer. 51:5: **לפני ה' אחד**, "before the Holy One of Israel."

20. Cf. LXX; RSV; RV marg.; JPS: G-B, p. 434; G-K-C, p. 315, Sect. 107f, and p. 475, Sect 150h (but cf. p. 430, Sect. 133b², where 4:17 is cited in connection with the translation of **לפני ה' כנגדו** as "in the right as against"); G.A.Barton, op. cit., p. 81; Crenshaw, "Wisdom and Authority," p. 19, but cf. n. 32; A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 33; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 93; Driver-Gray, p. 46; E.C.S. Gibson, op. cit., p. 22; Gordis, BGAM, p. 240, and BOJ, pp. 42, 50; Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, p. 21; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 113; Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 26; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 18; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 298; Kissane, op. cit., p. 22; Lamparter, op. cit., p. 51; Maag, op. cit., p. 140; Walter L. Michel, Job in the Light of Northwest Semitic (Rome, 1987), vol. 1, p. 80; Peake, Job, p. 81; Pope, op. cit., pp. 35, 37; Rowley, Job, p. 49; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 104; Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 302; Stier, op. cit., p. 25; Strahan, op. cit., p. 64; Terrien, "Book of Job," IB, 3, pp. 939-40; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 45; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 103; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 331. Cf. also "in the presence of God": JB; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 52. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., pp. 84-85,

however, it is also possible to translate (1) on the basis of comparative **לְפָנַי**: "more righteous (just) than God"²¹; or (2) in an adversative sense: "against (in comparison to) God."²² In the sense of (1), while the translation "more righteous than God" is grammatically possible, it is singularly ill-suited to the context of the passage, for at this early stage of the debate, there is no question of Job

translates "Can man have justice from God?" and states his view that the context of the passage refers to the attitude of God toward man, and not to the question of whether man is just before (or more than) God. With this interpretation, however, it would appear that Tur-Sinai has created an artificial distinction, for, as Zöckler, op. cit., p. 331, observes, the preposition **לְפָנַי** in 4:17 signifies "from the side of God," i.e., from God's standpoint, or simply "before God"; cf. also G-B, p. 434: the meaning "from the side" develops also the denotation "before" (vor). Similarly, Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 23, translates "seitens Gottes," i.e., to be just on the part of God, from God's side or standpoint, against (gegenüber) God (p. 143). In addition, cf. Driver, Philological Notes, p. 25: "**לְפָנַי**: 'from,' 'on the part of,' i.e. according to the judgment proceeding from"; also NJB: "Can a mortal seem upright to God?"; NJV: "Can mortals be acquitted by God?"; TEV: "in the sight of God"; Ball, op. cit., "righteous with Eloah" (p. 39), i.e., before God, in the judgment or estimation of God (p. 140); Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 28: "von Eloah, d.h. seinem Urteil, aus"; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 424: "in the eyes of God."

21. Cf. NEB; AV; RV; RSV marg.; TEV marg.; Ostervald; B-D-B, p. 842, but cf. Driver in Driver-Gray, p. 579: "shall man be just at God's hands?"; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 212; Neiman, op. cit., p. 35; Stevenson, op. cit., p. 2: "Can mortals prevail over God?" Against the translation of the preposition **לְפָנַי** in a comparative sense, cf. Dhorme, op. cit., p. 52; Driver in Driver-Gray, pp. 46-47; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 28; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 116.
22. Cf. NAB; Vulg.: "Dei conparatione"; A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., vol. 6, p. 194; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 128: "gegenüber"; HALAT, vol. 3, p. 941: "gegenüber"; K-B, p. 794: "gegenüber," but note the English translation "before"; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 53.

considering himself to be more righteous than God.²³ Moreover, the interpretation of לפני in a comparative sense may be questioned on purely theological grounds. As Fried. Delitzsch remarks, the idea of mortal man declaring himself to be more righteous than God "ohnehin einen unmöglichen Gedanken darstellen würde."²⁴ With regard to (2), Lévêque argues that 4:17a signifies: "comment un homme peut-il avoir la prétention de s'attribuer la ṣedāqāh en la déniaut à Dieu?"²⁵; hence the translation: "to be right against God." In Lévêque's view, the interpretation "before God" not only overlooks the parallel passages Gen. 7:1 and Ps. 143:2,²⁶ but weakens the text from the theological standpoint. Also, the translation "before" would "supposer que Dieu a déjà rendu son jugement, en déclarant juste son ami Job, or celui-ci, en IV, 17, appelle encore vainement son juge."²⁷ Stevenson, who interprets the verb פָּטַל on the basis of the secondary meaning "to be in the right (against)," or "to

23. Cf. Andersen, op. cit., p. 114; Ball, op. cit., p. 140; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 52; E.C.S. Gibson, op. cit., p. 22; Peake, Job, p. 81; Rowley, Job, p. 49; Strahan, op. cit., p. 64. Cf. also the comment of Barton, op. cit., p. 81: "The thought that man could be more just than God is too absurd ever to have suggested itself to the orthodox Elihu."

24. Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 143.

25. Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 277. Italics in original.

26. Lévêque presumably objects to the translation of the preposition לפני as "before" on the basis of the construction לפניו in Gen. 7:1 and Ps. 143:2. But cf. G-B, p. 434: לפניו may signify "before" as in the expression לפניו .

27. Ibid.

triumph (over)," notes that the primary signification of $\beta\tau\chi$: "to be good or righteous," would "imply a general doctrine of human depravity, which would have no special relevance to Job's position and is not applied by his comforters to establish any conclusion regarding his character or past conduct."²⁸

However, against the interpretation of $\pi\iota\gamma\chi\iota$ in an adversative sense, the following may be stated: (1) The context of 4:18-21 supports the translation "before God"²⁹; that is, as the angels of the heavenly hierarchy are not altogether trustworthy in the judgment or estimation of God, how much less can man expect to be considered righteous or just? Verses 18ff. are thus intended to convince Job that before (in the presence of, in the sight of) God, no one can be regarded as righteous.³⁰ (2) The vision described in 4:12ff. is represented as having appeared to Eliphaz at some time in the past and therefore has no direct connection with the present complaint of Job.³¹ (3) The translation "before God" constitutes a more suitable parallel to the context of

28. Stevenson, op. cit., pp. 2, 90.

29. Cf. A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 33; Ball, op. cit., p. 140; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 52; Driver in Driver-Gray, pp. 46-47; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 331.

30. Conversely, the translation of Stevenson, op. cit., p. 90, is predicated on the assumption that the subject of the verbs in v. 18 is man, not God, a view which he believes is supported by 5:1 and which renders the verse more intelligible than the interpretation that God does not trust his angels.

31. Cf. A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 33; Rowley, Job, p. 49.

the second line of 4:17:

Or before his maker (אֱלֹהֵי יָצָא) is a man pure?

(4) The signification "before God" occurs in 9:2b and 25:4a (a duplicate of 9:2b) where the phrase אֵל אִתּוֹ has replaced אֵל אִתּוֹ, the preposition אֵל signifying "with," "before," "in the presence of":

And how is a man to be righteous (just) before (or with) God (אֵל-אִתּוֹ)?

Whereas the Hebrew text of 9:2b is identical to 25:4a, the two passages are generally translated in parallel. As in 4:17, the great majority of critics translate אֵל-אִתּוֹ in the sense of "before" or "with" God.³² Comparatively few

32. Re "before God": cf. LXX: "παρὰ κυρίῳ" (9:2b), and "ἐναντὶ κυρίου" (25:4a); RSV; NAB (9:2b only); NJB (9:2b only); RV marg.; NJV (25:4a only); Ostervald; K-B, p. 794; HALAT, vol. 3, p. 941; Andersen, *op. cit.*, pp. 144, 215; Blommerde, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-58; A.B. Davidson, *Book of Job*, p. 181 (25:4a only); Fried. Delitzsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 33, 71; Dhorme, *op. cit.*, pp. 126, 369; Gordis, *BGAM*, pp. 248, 275, and *BOJ*, pp. 96, 274; Habel, *Book of Job* (OTL), p. 364 (25:4a only); Hertzberg, *Buch Hiob*, p. 98 (25:4a only); Hölscher, *op. cit.*, pp. 26, 60; Kissane, *op. cit.*, pp. 48, 195; Lamparter, *op. cit.*, pp. 70, 149; Pope, *op. cit.*, pp. 68, 180; Steinmann, *op. cit.*, p. 172 (25:4a only); Weiser, *Buch Hiob*, pp. 69, 186; Zöckler, *op. cit.*, p. 373 (9:2b only). Cf. also "in the judgment, or estimation, of": B-D-B, p. 768; "just, or righteous, with God": AV; RV; JPS; Ball, *op. cit.*, pp. 46, 69; A.B. Davidson, *Book of Job*, p. 66 (9:2b only); Franz Delitzsch, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 147, and vol. 2, p. 44; Driver in Driver-Gray, p. 84 (in the sense "in the estimation of"); Duhm, *Buch Hiob*, pp. 50, 128; Guillaume, *Studies in the Book of Job*, pp. 27, 50; Hertzberg, *Buch Hiob*, p. 42 (9:2b only); Tur-Sinai, *op. cit.*, pp. 154, 374; Zöckler, *op. cit.*, p. 508 (25:4a only); "just beside God": Driver in Driver-Gray, p. 216 (25:4a only); "in God's sight": NEB; NAB; TEV (all 25:4a only). In addition, cf. JB: "Could any man ever think himself innocent, when confronted by God?"; NJB: "Could anyone think God regards him as virtuous?"

interpret in an adversative sense.³³ Of the translations surveyed, Dahood alone proposes interpreting 9:2b in the sense of comparative **אֲנִי** : "more just than El."³⁴

The precise signification of 9:2b is admittedly vague. Stevenson translates "but how can mortals be right against God?", interpreting the text as indicating that man cannot show himself to be superior to God, that is, man cannot triumph over God.³⁵ According to Dhorme, Job in 9:2b reverts to the statement of Eliphaz in 4:17, and the passage is therefore to be translated "And how can a man be just before God?"³⁶ In the view of Peake, however, the scope of Job's question is considerably beyond that of 4:17:

Job accepts the general principle that God will treat the righteous according to his righteousness. But that is irrelevant to the real issue, which turns on the question, What constitutes righteousness? To be righteous means no more than to be in the right, and what is to prevent the Almighty from declaring the wicked to be in the right, or the innocent to be in the wrong? He sets the standard of righteousness,

33. Re "against God": cf. NEB; JB; NJV; TEV; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 178; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 122; Stevenson, op. cit., p. 4 (all 9:2b only); Jastrow, op. cit., pp. 226, 287; "gegenüber": Fohrer, Buch Hiob, pp. 195, 374; de Wilde, op. cit., pp. 137, 245. Cf. also Vulg.: "conpositus Deo" (9:2b; cf. Michel, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 200: "compared with"); "conparatus Deo" (25:4a).
34. Cited by Michel, op. cit., p. 202, on the basis of a private communication from Dahood.
35. Stevenson, op. cit., pp. 15, 91.
36. Dhorme, op. cit., p. 126.

and if He is Himself immoral, the blameless may be branded as guilty, and against omnipotence can get no redress; there is no higher court of appeal. How then can man be "righteous" before God if He is determined to put him in the wrong? Job here touches on the problem whether a thing is right because God declares it to be so, or whether He declares it right because it is so. He sees clearly that there is no necessity in the nature of things that omnipotence should be righteous. The Friends had not disentangled the two conceptions Job is not endorsing Eliphaz's assertion that man must seem unclean to the infinite purity of God. Far from it this purity seems very dubious to him.³⁷

As it stands, then, the text of 9:2b is decidedly ambiguous: it is not clear, as A.B. Davidson observes,³⁸ whether the passage is to be interpreted in the light of the subsequent verse, that is, how is man to establish his righteousness in the face of the overwhelming power of God?; or whether Job here refers to the previous speech of Bildad and in particular the question in 8:3: "Does God pervert justice?" If the latter, the meaning of 9:2b is, to quote Davidson: "Of course [God perverts justice] - but how shall man have right with God? God's power makes right."³⁹ But in view of the ambiguity of the text, it may well be, as Driver suggests, that the replacement of יָצַד with אָצַד

37. Peake, Job, pp. 111-12.

38. A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 66.

39. Ibid.

is intended to signify the twofold meaning: (i) "How can a man be just in the estimation of God?" (וְעִם : with, as in I Sam. 2:26; II Sam. 6:22); and (ii) "How can man have right (in a contest) with God?" (For the latter denotation of וְעִם, cf. Job 9:3, 14; 10:17b; 16:21; Ps. 94:16.)⁴⁰

Whereas the text of 25:4a is an exact duplicate of 9:2b, 25:4b-6 represents a variation of the words of Eliphaz in 4:17b-19 and 15:14b-16. In the view of Stevenson, 25:4 refers not to the moral imperfection of man, but rather to the helplessness of man before God.⁴¹ In this regard, it is noteworthy that Stevenson deletes 15:15-16 on the grounds that (i) the concept of "human depravity" expressed therein is attested nowhere else in the arguments of the three friends; (ii) the subject of the initial verb in verse 15 must be understood as God, who is not referred to in the preceding line, and who is not the subject of the same verb in 4:18; (iii) verse 15 may be interpreted as a combination of 4:18a and 25:5b effected by someone who has misunderstood the signification 4:18a.⁴² Thus, verses 15-16 represent an interpolation and "awkwardly impose a wrong interpretation upon ver. 14."⁴³

40. Driver in Driver-Gray, p. 84. Cf. Gordis, BOJ, p. 102.

41. Stevenson, op. cit., p. 90.

42. Ibid., p. 91.

43. Ibid.

Against this interpretation, however, it may be stated that (i) in addition to the aforementioned passages (4:17-19; 9:2b; 25:4-6) the inherent sinfulness of man is acknowledged by Eliphaz (5:6-7) and Job (14:1, 4); (ii) it is by no means evident that the subject of **יֵיבֹאֵל** in 4:18 is not God; moreover, the context of the passage indicates that verses 14b-16 constitute a variation of 4:17b-19. On these bases, it is extremely questionable, with regard to Stevenson's argument (iii) above, whether verses 15-16 represent a misconception of 4:18a.

In contrast to interpretations (a) and (b), the translation of **עָלֵינוּ** in 32:2 in an existential sense signifies not a comparison but a relationship between an individual and the deity which is expressed in the form of an assertion of righteousness before God. The reading "before God"⁴⁴ is adopted by LXX: **ἐναντίον κυρίου**; and the Vulgate: "coram Deo." Strahan and König object to this translation as grammatically incorrect, arguing that the

44. Cf. Douay Version; Ostervald; Buttenwieser, op. cit., p. 347; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 472; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 279; Gross, op. cit., p. 113; Hahn, op. cit., p. 256; Hirzel, op. cit., p. 201, but cf. n. 17 above; Renan, op. cit., p. 137; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 192; Studer, op. cit., p. 144; Umbreit, op. cit., p. 201; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 553. Cf. also NEB marg.: "had justified himself with God" (on this translation, see Habel, Book of Job (CBCNEB), p. 171; cf. also p. 29). Cf. in addition, Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 99: "weil er sich für gerecht seitens Gottes erklärte." König, Buch Hiob, p. 327, describes the translation of Delitzsch as "ein Widerspruch in sich selbst"; on this interpretation, however, cf. n. 20 above.

Hebrew text would require the construction לְפָנַי הָאֱלֹהִים in place of MT לְפָנַי.⁴⁵ Conversely, Terrien asserts that in the book of Job in general the preposition לְפָנַי in conjunction with the Divine name signifies "before" or "in the presence of."⁴⁶ In the opinion of Peake, a comparison with 4:17 is inapposite: that is, in view of Job's complaints and accusations against God in the interval, the statement of Elihu in 32:2 represents a different stage in the progression of the debate.⁴⁷ But it is precisely as a consequence of the failure of the friends to refute Job's protestation of innocence (cf. 32:1, 3) that Elihu is constrained to intervene in the debate.⁴⁸ Throughout the Dialogue, Job has never wavered in the conviction of his innocence before God (cf. 27:2-6; 31). While it may well be that Job considers himself to be righteous "against" or "rather than" God, or even "more righteous" than God, the fundamental issue of his asseveration of righteousness "before" God has not been resolved:

45. Cf. König, Buch Hiob, p. 327; Strahan, op. cit., pp. 268-69. On the interpretation of the preposition לְפָנַי in the sense of "before," as in לְפָנַי, cf. n. 26 above.

46. Cf. Terrien, "Book of Job," IB, 3, p. 1130, and Job (CAT), p. 216, n. 6, but note the translation "against (contre) God."

47. Peake, Job, p. 276.

48. Cf. the contrasting viewpoint of Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 188, against the translation "before God": "Damit würde in schiefer Weise statt des schwebenden Rechtshandels seine sittliche Reinheit in Betracht gezogen, und zugleich wäre Elihu's Zorn gegen Hiob durch den gleichen Umstand erregt, der nach v. 1 die Freunde veranlasst den Streit aufzugeben."

33:9 I am pure (ṭṣ), without transgression;
 I am clean (ṣṭ), and there is no iniquity in me.
 (Quotation of Job; cf. 9:21; 10:7; 16:17;
 23:10-12; 27:4-6; 31)

34:5 For Job has said: "I am righteous (ʾṭṣṭṣ),
 and God denies me (lit.: has taken away my)
justice (ʾḥḏḏḏ);

6 Notwithstanding my right (ʾḥḏḏḏ), I lie
 (i.e., am considered a liar);
 my wound is incurable (although I am) without
transgression."
 (Quotation of Job; cf. 9:21-22; 13:21; 27:2)

35:2 Do you think this is just?
 You say: "(It is) my righteousness (i.e., my
 right: ʾṭṣṭṣ) before God."⁴⁹
 (Rhetorical question, inferred of Job; cf.
 13:18; 27:4-6)

49. The apparent ambiguity of the preposition ṭṣ is reflected in the various interpretations of ṭṣ in 35:2b. Cf. (a) ṭṣ comparative: AV; RV; Vulg.; Ibn Ezra and Gersonides (cited in Freehof, op. cit., p. 220); Ostervald; G.A. Barton, op. cit., p. 269; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 267; Ewald, op. cit., p. 340; Gordis, BOJ, p. 398, and BGAM, p. 292; Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, p. 64; Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 287; König, Buch Hiob, p. 361; Marshall, Book of Job, pp. 111-12; Peters, op. cit., p. 396; Rosenmüller, op. cit., p. 847; Staples, op. cit., p. 32; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., p. 113; cf. also Crook, op. cit., p. 189: "my vindication above God's"; (b) "against God": NEB; NJV; Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 496; Bickell, op. cit., p. 62; A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 241; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 168; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 486; Hitzig, op. cit., p. 257; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 328; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 584; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 184; Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 488; "gegenüber": Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 470; Thilo, op. cit., p. 61; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 328; "rather than God": NAB; Sutcliffe, "Job," Catholic Commentary, p. 438; cf. also Loisy, op. cit., p. 170;

Altogether, then, the evidence seems to indicate that $\text{וְאֵלֹהִים הֵי אֲנִי}$ is to be interpreted in an existential sense and that it refers to Job's self-assertion of the basic integrity of his life, of his innocence "before" or "in the presence of" God. If this interpretation is indeed correct, the hermeneutical implications with regard to the pedagogical intentions of the author are significant, for it indicates quite clearly that Elihu, like the three friends, regards Job not as an innocent sufferer but as an unrepentant sinner.

Verse 3: $\text{וְלֹא מָצְאוּ תֹכֵחַ וְעַתָּה יָדְעוּ אֲנִי כִּי אֵלֹהִים הֵי אֲנִי}$: on the basis of MT, various translations have been proposed:

- (a) "because they had not found an answer and yet had condemned Job" (interpreting וְעַתָּה in $\text{וְעַתָּה יָדְעוּ אֲנִי}$)

"juste aux dépens de Dieu"; (c) "before God": LXX; Rashi (cited in Freehof, op. cit., p. 220); RSV; JPS; AT; JB; NJB; Segond; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 304; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 210; Battenwieser, op. cit., pp. 138, 269; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 300; A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 318; G-B, p. 434; Hahn, op. cit., p. 279; Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 141; Hesse, op. cit., p. 184; Hirzel, op. cit., p. 218; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 84; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 351; Lamparter, op. cit., p. 209; Larcher, op. cit., p. 144; Ley, op. cit., p. 124; Peake, Job, p. 295; Renan, op. cit., p. 152; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 198; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 217; Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 345; Stier, op. cit., p. 173; Studer, op. cit., p. 156; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 232; Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 237; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 229; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 573; in addition, Kissane, op. cit., p. 237, and Nichols, op. cit., p. 159, translate "before" but allow for the possibility of interpreting "more just than"; cf. also "in the sight of God": Dhorme, op. cit., p. 530 (cf. TEV); "just with El": Ball, op. cit., p. 83 (or "before El," p. 390); "seitens Gottes": Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 108; "It is my right from God": Pope, op. cit., p. 262.

as waw-adversative⁵⁰);

(b) "because they had not found an answer (by which)
to condemn Job" (interpreting ׀ as waw-
explicative⁵¹);

(c) "because they had not found an answer and had not
condemned Job"⁵² (in Biblical Hebrew syntax, the

50. Cf. LXX καὶ ἔθετο αὐτὸν εἶναι ἄσεβῆ ;
"and they made him to be ungodly" (the translation "and
yet had justified [Job]," with the variant reading
εὐσεβῆ "godly, pious" in place of ἄσεβῆ "godless,"
is attested in some Greek manuscripts and is quoted in
the margin of the Syro-hexaplar); cf. also Vulg.: "sed
tantummodo condemnassent Iob"; Berechiah, p. 92 of the
Hebrew text, p. 215 of the English translation; RSV;
JPS; G-K-C, p. 327, Sect. 111e; Luther; Calvin, p. 214;
Ostervald; Segond; G.A. Barton, op. cit., pp. 249-50;
Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 189: "und so den Hiob zum Frevler
machten"; Cox, op. cit., p. 417; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit.,
vol. 2, p. 206; Ewald, op. cit., p. 330; Guillaume,
Studies in the Book of Job, p. 59; Hengstenberg, op. cit.,
p. 243: "und darum Hiob beschuldigten"; Hertzberg, Buch
Hiob, p. 128; Hirzel, op. cit., p. 202; Hitzig, op. cit.,
p. 240; Kroese, op. cit., pp. 158-59; Lamparter, op. cit.,
p. 191; Loisy, op. cit., p. 163; Rosenmüller, op. cit.,
p. 773; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 192; Tur-Sinai, op. cit.,
pp. 457-58; Umbreit, op. cit., p. 202: "because they had
condemned Job without finding a correct answer" (cf. also
Bickell, op. cit., p. 58; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., p. 107);
Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 218; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 553.
51. Cf. Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 99; Gross, op. cit.,
p. 113; Hahn, op. cit., p. 256; Hontheim, op. cit.,
p. 344; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 315, but deletes as a gloss;
Ley, op. cit., p. 114; Studer, op. cit., p. 144; Rowley,
Job, p. 208: "and so (i.e., by finding an answer) shown
Job to be in the wrong"; A.B. Davidson, Book of Job,
p. 223: "had not found an answer and condemned, i.e. found
no answer wherewith to condemn Job" (cf. Blommerde, op.
cit., p. 117; Driver, Book of Job in the Revised Version,
p. 93; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 104; cf. also Nichols,
op. cit., p. 152, presumably as in Davidson, but the
translation is given without explanatory comment).
52. Cf. NAB; NEB marg.; Andersen, op. cit., p. 246, although
interpreting ׀ as a tiqqune sopherim; Dillmann,
op. cit., p. 279; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 279, and
Philological Notes, p. 232; König, Buch Hiob, p. 327;
Renan, op. cit., p. 137; Thilo, op. cit., p. 55.

negative expressed in a sentence or clause may, without being repeated, be retained in a subsequent sentence or clause⁵³).

Many commentators read $\text{וְהָיָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ}$ for MT וְהָיָה and translate "and had condemned God."⁵⁴ According to this interpretation, וְהָיָה represents a tigqune sopherim (וְהָיָה וְהָיָה), a scribal emendation in place of the original reading וְהָיָה . In the opinion of Ehrlich,⁵⁵

53. The grammatical principle is enunciated in G-K-C, p. 483, Sect. 152z, and A.B. Davidson, Hebrew Syntax (3d ed.; Edinburgh, 1901), p. 175, Rem. 6, although neither work interprets 32:3 in this sense: the former translates as in (a) (see n. 50 above), the latter as in (b) (cf. Davidson, Hebrew Syntax, p. 71, Sect. 48a).
54. Cf. Rashi (quoted in W. Emery Barnes, "Ancient Corrections in the Text of the Old Testament (Tikkun Sopherim)," JTS, vol. 1 (1900), p. 412); Beer (BHK); Gerleman (BHS): NEB; JPS; JB; AT; TEV; Alonso Schökel, p. 459, and Sicre Diaz, p. 460, in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit.; Andersen, op. cit., p. 246; Augé, op. cit., p. 274; Ball, op. cit., p. 78; Battenwieser, op. cit., pp. 337, 347; Crook, op. cit., p. 183; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 473; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 153; A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 307; Ellison, op. cit., p. 104; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 446; Christian D. Ginsburg, Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible (London, 1897; reprinted New York, 1966), p. 361; Gordis, BOJ, p. 360, and BGAM, p. 287; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 441; Hanson, op. cit., p. 95; Hesse, op. cit., p. 176; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 78; Houtsma, op. cit., p. 70; Kissane, op. cit., p. 215; Larcher, op. cit., p. 133; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 576; MacKenzie, "Job," Jerome Biblical Commentary, vol. 1, p. 529; Peters, op. cit., pp. 357-58; Pope, op. cit., p. 240; Snaithe, Book of Job, pp. 86-87; Staples, op. cit., p. 27; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 210; Stier, op. cit., p. 330; Strahan, op. cit., p. 269; Sutcliffe, "Job," Catholic Commentary, p. 436; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 168; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 215; Westermann, op. cit., p. 134; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 306.
55. A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 307.

the translation "God" is indicated by the text, which would otherwise contain the expression $\dot{\text{אֵל}}$, not אֱלֹהִים (as לַעֲלֹם in 3a, as opposed to לַעֲלֹם אֱלֹהִים).

According to Fohrer, the Jewish tradition of tigqune sopherim in connection with Job 32:3 is "zuverlässig und sachlich zutreffend."⁵⁶ In the view of McKane, the signification of MT, viz. that the anger of Elihu is aroused by the unsatisfactory responses of the friends and their condemnation of Job, is not "noticeably defective," although Elihu's solicitude is somewhat unanticipated after the assertion in verse 2 that he was angry with Job because the latter considered himself to be more righteous than God. McKane believes, therefore, that there is some exegetical basis for the assumption that MT לַעֲלֹם represents a scribal correction.⁵⁷ However, while the cessation of the friends' argumentation may consequently be regarded as tantamount to a condemnation of God,⁵⁸ there is no evidence to substantiate the hypothesis

56. Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 446.

57. William McKane, "Observations on the TIKKUNĒ SÔ^{pe}RĪM," On Language, Culture, and Religion: In Honor of Eugene A. Nida, ed. Matthew Black & William Smalley (The Hague, 1974), p. 63. McKane's interpretation of vs. 3 is problematic in assuming that the friends' condemnation of Job arouses concern on the part of Elihu. Rather, the underlying sense of the passage appears to be, as Reichert, op. cit., p. 166, observes, that Elihu does not rebuke the friends for condemning Job, but is angered by their inability to refute convincingly his arguments.

58. Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 189, retains MT but observes nonetheless that the translation "and thus placed God in the wrong" provides "eine vortreffliche Zusammenfassung der Sachlage."

that וְהָיָה represents the original reading. The Versions do not presuppose a Vorlage distinct from MT. Moreover, although 32:3 is listed among the various classifications of tikkune sopherim in Midrash Tanhuma, a first edition of which was published in 1522,⁵⁹ and, with one exception, is attested in all subsequent lists,⁶⁰ it is evident from the foregoing that there is no historical consensus on this question among commentators.

Among earlier exegetes,⁶¹ Rashi interprets וְהָיָה as a scribal emendation and proposes as the correct reading: "and they passed by their silence a condemnatory judgement in reference to the Omnipresent."⁶² Conversely, Luther, Calvin⁶³ and de Rossi⁶⁴ interpret in accordance with MT; and Ibn Ezra comments: "And it is written that it is an instance

59. The name Tanhuma does not refer to a single homiletic Midrash but signifies rather a family or particular type of Midrashim. Of the various Midrashim in the Tanhuma tradition, the first edition of one such collection was published in 1522. But while Midrash Tanhuma comprises many early traditions, references to anti-Karaite polemics serve to establish a terminus a quo of 800 A.D. for the redaction of the earliest of the extant material. Cf. Carmel McCarthy, The Tikkune Sopherim and Other Theological Corrections in the Masoretic Text of the Old Testament (Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis, 36; Fribourg, 1981), p. 33.

60. Cf. table in ibid., p. 55; cf. also p. 115.

61. Cf. Barnes, op. cit., pp. 394-96, 400-01.

62. Cited in ibid., p. 412.

63. John Calvin, Sermons from Job, trans. Leroy Nixon (Grand Rapids, Mich., 1952), p. 214.

64. De Rossi, op. cit., p. 129.

of tikkun sopherim, but they who say so, know that which has been hidden from me."⁶⁵ The same divergence of opinion exists among modern commentators. On the basis of detailed examinations of the tiggune sopherim in MT, Barnes at the turn of the century, and more recently McCarthy, have concluded that there is no evidence in favour of the original reading "God"; the purported emendation, therefore, is not an authentic tiggun, but a later theological correction.⁶⁶

Furthermore, the assumption of a scribal emendation conflicts with, and detracts from, the twofold purpose of Elihu's discourse in 32:6-37:24: (i) the vindication of God's righteousness; and (ii) the condemnation of Job. At issue is not simply Job's mistaken conception of God, but also his conduct: Elihu is angry with Job because he considers himself to be righteous before God. Thus, neither the textual evidence nor the subsequent argumentation of Elihu supports the interpretation of **לל'X** as a tiggune sopherim.

65. Cited in Barnes, op. cit., p. 412.

66. Cf. ibid., pp. 412-13; McCarthy, op. cit., pp. 115-20. According to Barnes, p. 402: "The tikkun tradition belongs rather to Midrash than to Masorah, i.e. its true bearing is on exegesis, not on textual criticism; the tikkunē sopherim are interpretations not readings" (italics in original); cf. also Barnes, p. 413: "The tikkun tradition is not Masoretic (i.e. textual), but Midrashic (i.e. exegetical or, more accurately, homiletic)." Similarly, Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 457, n. 1, comments that the 18 Emendations of the Scribes "are not actual evidence of alterations of the text, but mere conjectures as to the intention of the original writer."

The hermeneutical framework of the prose introduction, then, may be delineated as follows:

- Vs. 1: Failure of the three friends to continue the debate against Job;
- 2a: Biographical information;
- 2b-3: Summary of argumentation of Elihu;
- 4: Explanation of silence heretofore;
- 5: Explanation of intervention.

While it remains impossible to state with certainty that the prologue in its present form represents a unitary composition, nonetheless, as Kraeling observes, "It must be conceded that we here have in prose an excellent criticism of the previous dialogue, and a clear-cut appreciation of the purpose of the Elihu interpolation it has summarized in advance certain conclusions to be drawn from Elihu's own words."⁶⁷ In this regard, vss. 2b-3 are of particular significance from an interpretative standpoint:

He [i.e., Elihu] became angry with Job because he considered himself to be righteous before God; and against his three friends he became angry, because they had not found an answer and [yet] had condemned Job.

It is clearly evident that Elihu intervenes on behalf of God and against Job. This is further illustrated by the various repetitions in the prologue: (i) four times the reader is informed that the anger of Elihu has "flared up,"

67. Kraeling, op. cit., p. 126.

the cessation of the friends' argument is mentioned three times, and twice it is mentioned that Job is righteous in his own eyes; (ii) the repetition of the verb **הָיָה** and of the phrase **אֲשֶׁר יָדַעְתִּי כִּי כֹסֵף** in verses 1 and 5 forms an inclusio and indicates the connection between the failure of the friends to refute Job's arguments and the intervention of Elihu.

2. Introductory Speech of Elihu 32:6-22

Whereas the prose introduction represents a prolegomenon to the subsequent discourses of Elihu, the section comprising 32:6-22 is a speech of introduction which presents, in Elihu's own words, the justification for his sudden and unexpected intervention. In the present form of the text, the apologia of Elihu is interpreted by many critics as manifestly prolix, discursive, and tediously repetitious. On this basis, a number of commentators express the view that the purpose of 32:6-22 is the introduction of Elihu as a humorous figure; they see the prolixity of the introductory speech as an indication of the author's intent to ridicule the character of Elihu. Thus Skehan remarks:

Even within the Elihu chapters (32-37) this speech is unique; it offers 19 lines of verse in which, by way of introducing himself, the speaker says almost nothing at all, and with a seeming maximum of repetition. The character it creates for Elihu is so complete a caricature (in view of the substance and charm verifiable for instance in 33, or in

36:22-37:24) that one may perhaps more readily see in it the author of the dialogue poking fun at a son or a favorite pupil whose best efforts (chs. 33-37) he has decided to incorporate within his book, than any other situation⁶⁸

The poem is therefore a formal rhetorical exercise, with a caricature of its ostensible protagonist inherent in its hesitations and its outbursts; if it has more words and more structure than the contents would seem to deserve, this is quite deliberate.⁶⁹

According to Habel, a conflict exists between the prose prologue and the introductory speech with regard to the portrayal of Elihu: whereas he is depicted in the former as a passionate youth, in the latter he is represented, according to his own perception, as a wise and patient individual. Thus, an "ironic gap" exists between the audience perception of a brash youth and the self-introduction of Elihu in which he unwittingly characterises himself as a fool.⁷⁰ Similarly, Andersen refers to the deliberate intention of the author to create a pompous character in Elihu.⁷¹ In addition, Rowley comments: "It is hard to escape the feeling that whoever added the Elihu speeches to the book intended him to look somewhat ridiculous, or he would not have made him so wordy, so self-important, and so unoriginal."⁷² In the view of

68. Skehan, op. cit., p. 85.

69. Ibid., p. 87.

70. Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 444.

71. Andersen, op. cit., p. 247.

72. Rowley, Job, p. 209.

Terrien, Elihu's "protestations d'impartialité et de respect pour le créateur ont un son de caricature un peu lourde."⁷³

Terrien also observes: "The ludicrous boastfulness of his introductory remarks may have been introduced as a comical element, to relieve tragic tension."⁷⁴ And in response to Pope's statement that, while the rhetoric of Elihu's introductory speech may be regarded as "ridiculously pompous and verbose," there is nonetheless no ground for the supposition that this represents the intention of the author,⁷⁵ Whedbee remarks that the "burden of proof is on Pope to show the evidence for his assertion."⁷⁶

Because the text of 32:6-22 is seen to be marked by disarrangement and unnecessary repetitions,⁷⁷ various proposals for eliminating and reappportioning verses have been advanced in an effort to render the speech less awkward and more aesthetically appropriate. Fried. Delitzsch and Hertzberg delete verses 15 and 16,⁷⁸ while Hatch eliminates

73. Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 219.

74. See Terrien's explanatory notes to Job in The New Oxford Annotated Bible, with the Apocrypha (Revised Standard Version; New York, 1977), p. 644. Cf. Humphreys, op. cit., p. 198.

75. Pope, op. cit., p. 244.

76. Whedbee, op. cit., p. 35, n. 11.

77. Contrast Skehan, op. cit., pp. 85-87, who expresses the view that the text of ch. 32 in its present form exhibits a formal structure which, with few exceptions, has been correctly transmitted.

78. Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 100; Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, pp. 129, 132.

verses 11-17 entirely⁷⁹ (verses 11c, 12, 15, 16 and part of 17 were omitted from the original Greek text). Budde deletes verses 11-12 and 15-17, and transposes verses 13-14 between verses 9 and 10.⁸⁰ Duhm omits verse 10 with the exception of **135**, and transposes verses 15-17 between verses 9 and 11.⁸¹ Various scholars propose more extensive rearrangement of the text: de Wilde deletes verse 10 and adopts the following sequence: 6-9, 15-17, 11-14, 18-22⁸²; Strahan, omitting 10a and interpreting 17b as a duplicate of 10b, transposes 11c and 12a and places 15-17 after verse 9⁸³; Houtsma deletes 10b, 11a and **175X** in 11b, 12a and 15, and suggests the following verse order: 6-9, 16, 12bc, 10a, 11bc, 13-14, 17-22⁸⁴; Bittenwieser reads 6-9, 15-16, 10a, 17 (=10b), 11-14, 18-22,⁸⁵ while Augé offers the following reconstruction: 6-9, 10 (a fragment), 15-17, 11ab, 12a, 11c, 12b-14, 18-22.⁸⁶ According to Nichols, G.A. Barton, Jastrow and Crook, the text of 32:6-22 is a conflation of two originally separate introductions. Nichols considers that verses 6-10 and 18-22 belong to the original discourses of Elihu, while

79. Edwin Hatch, Essays in Biblical Greek (Oxford, 1889), p. 227.

80. Budde, Buch Hiob, pp. 190ff.

81. Duhm, Buch Hiob, pp. 154-55; cf. Hölscher, op. cit., p. 78.

82. De Wilde, op. cit., pp. 306-07.

83. Strahan, op. cit., p. 271.

84. Houtsma, op. cit., p. 71.

85. Bittenwieser, op. cit., pp. 347-48.

86. Augé, op. cit., pp. 275ff.

verses 11-16 are to be attributed to a Second Wise Man, and that verse 17, a duplicate of verse 10, has been inserted to provide a connection between verses 11-16 and 18-22.⁸⁷ The rearrangement scheme of Barton differs from that of Nichols only to the extent that verse 17a is included with verses 11-16 as the second of the two introductions which were eventually combined.⁸⁸ According to Jastrow, verses 6b-10 and 11-17 constitute two independent introductions, while verses 18-22 are a later interpolation by a commentator.⁸⁹ Crook interprets verses 11-17a, with verses 1-6a, as the introduction of the "Elder Elihu," and verses 6b-10, and 17b-22, as the introduction of the "Younger Elihu."⁹⁰

The rearrangement of verses and the elimination of repetitions, however, mitigate only partially the generally prolix character of the speech. Moreover, the conception of Elihu as a deliberate caricature on the part of the author may be questioned on the basis of several considerations.

(a) From a literary standpoint, the introduction of a comical figure, for the purpose of providing relief from the tragic tension inherent in the poem, would be more appropriate at an earlier stage. A humorous interlude at this juncture is a discordant element, interrupting the dramatic progression

87. Nichols, op. cit., p. 152.

88. G.A. Barton, op. cit., p. 29.

89. Jastrow, op. cit., p. 316.

90. Crook, op. cit., pp. 182, 186-87.

of the poem and relegating the Divine speeches to the position of the anticlimax. (b) The conception of Elihu as an intentional caricature is quite out of harmony with the evident sincerity of chapters 33-37.⁹¹ Such a conception, Cheyne declares, "lowers the character of the original writer": "So reverent and devout a speaker as Elihu is ill rewarded by being treated as a literary and theological foil."⁹² A.B. Davidson sums up:

There are some things in his manner of introducing himself and in the way in which he speaks of his own arguments, which seem to offend against modesty and almost shock our sense of decorum. We must not, however, apply Western standards of taste to the East. There was nothing further from the intention of the author of these chapters than to make Elihu play a ridiculous part. This speaker is meant to offer what the writer judged a weighty contribution to the discussion, and to the vindication of the ways of God to man.⁹³

(c) If the Elihu pericope is judged to be a later interpolation, then in all probability the verbosity of 32:6-22 is attributable to the manifest inferiority (and perhaps also to

91. Cf. Beeby, op. cit., p. 45; Bleek, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 282; Crook, op. cit., p. 187; S. Davidson, Introduction to the Old Testament, vol. 2, p. 212; Kuenen, op. cit., p. 142; Peake, Job, pp. 21-22; Ranston, op. cit., pp. 117, 147.

92. Cheyne, Job and Solomon, p. 93.

93. A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 226. Cf. Steinmann, op. cit., p. 287: Elihu "à une telle conscience d'être la voix de l'Esprit divin, il l'affirme avec une telle emphase, un gongorisme si satisfait de lui-même, qu'il en devient presque ridicule."

the comparative youthfulness⁹⁴ and inexperience) of a different author, the bathetic style of a less gifted writer.⁹⁵ Or, on the contrary, the rhetoric of Elihu may represent an affected literary style on the part of the interpolator, which unintentionally strikes the reader as somewhat pompous and verbose.⁹⁶ (d) Inasmuch as chapters 32-37 are to be considered a later insertion by a different author, a comprehensive speech of introduction is essential in order not only to explain the unexpected appearance of Elihu, but also to justify the interpolation of supplementary material at such a critical juncture in the poem.

It is the opinion of the present writer that 32:6-22, in addition to giving the explanation for Elihu's intervention, reveals the intention of the author to polemicise against the discourses of God. In this context, three passages warrant special consideration: (i) verse 8; (ii) verse 13; and (iii) verses 18-20.

(i) Verse 8: In contrast to the traditional belief in wisdom as the exclusive privilege of age and experience

94. Mummadi Prakasa Reddy, "The Book of Job - A Reconstruction," ZAW, 90 (1978), p. 88, n. 156.
95. Cf. A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 226; cf. also Hölscher, op. cit., p. 78: "der stubengelehrte Elihu."
96. Cf. von Rad, Wisdom in Israel, p. 316, who refers to a transition in Wisdom literary style from "classical" to "baroque" or "mannered," and suggests that the "polished rhetoric" of Elihu is to be so considered. But this does not preclude the deliberate characterisation of Elihu as a pompous figure. Cf. ibid., p. 218, n. 36, wherein von Rad questions whether the author of chs. 32-37 has sought to caricature Elihu.

(cf. 8:8ff.; 12:12; 15:10, 18; cf. also I Kings 12:6; Sir. 6:34; 8:9; 25:5; 39:1), Elihu declares:

But it is the spirit (**π 17**) [of God] in man,
and the breath (**π 17**) of Shaddai which
gives understanding.

The term **π 17** denotes, on the one hand, the source of all life, the vital breath of God without which all physical life would perish (cf. Gen. 7:22; Num. 16:22; 27:16; Isa. 42:5; 44:3; Ps. 104:29; Job 27:3; 33:4; 34:14). In addition, **π 17** may refer to a special divine endowment, an inspired wisdom granted by God to only a few persons (cf. Exod. 28:3; 31:3; 35:31; Num. 11:17, 25; 27:15-18; Deut. 34:9; Isa. 11:2; 40:13). In the opinion of some critics, the reference to **π 17** in verse 8 signifies merely the vital principle which is imparted to all men.⁹⁷ According to Habel, Elihu believes that the spirit of wisdom is in all human beings, that is, the "breath of Shaddai" (cf. Gen. 2:7; Job 33:4) which animates man is not to be equated with mere breath, but is rather that force which confers insight and understanding.⁹⁸ Many commentators, however, interpret Elihu's statement as

97. Cf. Andersen, op. cit., p. 246; A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, pp. 223-24; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 476; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 280; Driver, Book of Job in the Revised Version, p. 94; Kissane, op. cit., pp. 218-19; Reichert, op. cit., p. 167; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 168. Cf. also Battenwieser, op. cit., p. 347: "it is the mind in man."
98. Habel, Book of Job (OTL), pp. 450-51. Habel, p. 444, refers to the indwelling spirit as "Lady Wisdom," a somewhat puzzling designation in view of the fact that the personification of wisdom, as expressed in Proverbs and Sirach, is a concept quite alien to the book of Job.

signifying a special divine inspiration.⁹⁹

In the view of Strahan, the phrase "there is a spirit in man" denotes simply the breath of life which animates all men, but the verse following indicates that certain individuals may be the recipients of a special inspiration.¹⁰⁰ Peake remarks that while the text apparently equates the breath of God with the spirit of wisdom which resides in all human beings and which is the source of all life, nevertheless the interpretation required by the argument of the passage is that of a divine inspiration.¹⁰¹ In Terrien's view, **117** does not signify the spirit of man, but the spirit of God in man. Whereas Job and the three friends associate the spirit of God with the transcendent character of the deity (4:9; 26:13), Elihu conceives of the divine spirit in relation to creation (33:4; 34:12-15; cf. Gen. 1:2;

99. Jerusalem Bible (London, 1966), p. 765, textual note "e"; Hans Bardtke, "Prophetische Züge im Buche Hiob," in Das Ferne und Nahe Wort, Festschrift Leonhard Rost (BZAW, 105; Berlin, 1967), p. 4; G.A. Barton, op. cit., pp. 250-51; Ewald, op. cit., p. 330; Hanson, op. cit., p. 95; Hesse, op. cit., p. 177; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 85; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 238; P. van Imschoot, "Sagesse et Esprit dans l'Ancien Testament," Revue Biblique, 47 (1938), pp. 33-34; Janzen, op. cit., p. 218; Kroeze, op. cit., p. 159; Larcher, op. cit., p. 134; Lévesque, Job et son Dieu, vol. 2, p. 545; MacKenzie, "Job," p. 529; Pope, op. cit., p. 247 (re the parallel verse 33:4); von Rad, Wisdom in Israel, p. 55; Stier, op. cit., p. 242; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 221; R.N. Whybray, The Intellectual Tradition in the Old Testament (BZAW, 135; Berlin, 1974), p. 66; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 311.

100. Strahan, op. cit., p. 270. Cf. ibid., p. 274: "Elihu's prolix and somewhat turgid exordium amounts to a claim of inspiration."

101. Peake, Job, p. 277.

2:7) and to prophetic revelation (32:18ff.; cf. Num. 27:18; II Kings 2:15; Isa. 29:10; Mic. 2:11).¹⁰² According to Fohrer, Elihu alludes to a special divine inspiration which is distinguished not only from experiential and traditional wisdom, but also from that special wisdom which represents the gift of God, that is, a special granting of grace by God which occurs only on an ad hoc basis (cf. the divine revelation of Eliphaz, 4:12-21; cf. also Gen. 41:16, 38; Exod. 28:3; 31:3; Deut. 34:9; I Kings 3:28; 5:9). Fohrer believes that Elihu considers himself to be the recipient of a special "knowledge" (32:6, 10, 17); the rare word **יְדָעָה** denotes for the most part either God's own knowledge (37:16; I Sam. 2:3; Ps. 73:11) or that knowledge which is granted by him (Isa. 28:9; Jer. 3:15). Thus Elihu, having received a "share" (**שָׁרָה**, 32:17) of the divine wisdom, attributes to himself the direct inspiration of a prophet.¹⁰³

Whereas a number of critics interpret **רוּחַ** in the context of prophetic inspiration,¹⁰⁴ or inspired, "charismatic" wisdom,¹⁰⁵ Schlottmann argues that the reference to the "spirit" and the "breath of God" does not denote physical and spiritual vitality emanating from the deity, but rather signifies the

102. Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 217, n. 4.

103. Fohrer, "Die Weisheit des Elihu," Studien zum Buche Hiob, pp. 107-09; cf. Fohrer, Buch Hiob, pp. 450-51.

104. Cf. Bardtke, op. cit., p. 4; MacKenzie, "Job," p. 529. Cf. also Targum: **רוּחַ יְהוָה** **רוּחַ**.

105. Cf. Larcher, op. cit., p. 134; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 545; Pope, op. cit., p. 247 (and see n. 99 above).

"innerliche Mittheilung des höheren gottlichen Geistes, wie sich dieselbe im alten Bunde vorzugsweise in der prophetischen Erleuchtung kund gab."¹⁰⁶ Umbreit interprets the passage on the basis of the "higher understanding" of the breath and spirit of God, that is, "the wonderful and creative power of new ideas or genius."¹⁰⁷ Some commentators read "the spirit of God is in man," emending לֵא-פִי in place of MT אִי-פִי .¹⁰⁸ In this connection, Ball expresses the view that a parallel to Shaddai in the second line of the verse is required.¹⁰⁹ Beer suggests that אִי may be a corruption of הִי .¹¹⁰ This interpretation, however, must be regarded as improbable in view of the fact that the Tetragrammaton is notably absent from the Elihu pericope, as indeed from the poetic sections of Job as a whole. In Gray's opinion, the substitution of לֵא for אִי produces an intelligible sentence but "an irrelevant assertion."¹¹¹ Nevertheless, the expression אִי-פִי is somewhat awkward and the text may be defective. According to Nichols,¹¹²

106. Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 413.

107. Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 203.

108. Cf. Symm.: πνεῦμα Θεοῦ ; cf. also Ball, op. cit., p. 78; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 190; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 78; Houtsma, op. cit., p. 71; Loisy, op. cit., p. 163; MacKenzie, "Job," p. 529; Nichols, op. cit., p. 153; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 210; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 437; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 217; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 306.

109. Ball, op. cit., p. 369.

110. Cf. BHK; Houtsma, op. cit., p. 71.

111. Gray in Driver-Gray, Philological Notes, p. 234.

112. Nichols, op. cit., p. 153.

MT represents a later correction which was influenced perhaps by a desire to avoid the suggestion that the "spirit of God" is in man. Duhm emends the text to read וְיָנִיחַ אֱלֹהִים (or better וְיָנִיחַ אֱלֹהִים) in place of וְיָנִיחַ אֱלֹהִים, and translates "But the spirit inspires man."¹¹³

While it cannot be ascertained with certainty whether the reference to the "spirit" of God denotes an inspired wisdom as opposed to merely the animating vitality common to all human beings, the issue may be essentially irrelevant. As Gray comments, the two concepts "are not two essentially different things, but the same spirit in less or greater measure, working for and achieving different ends."¹¹⁴ It is clear nonetheless that Elihu considers himself in possession of a wisdom superior to that of the three interlocutors of Job. Crenshaw, in a study of the wisdom literature and the authority inherent in sapiential rhetoric, distinguishes three categories which constitute "warrants for authority":¹¹⁵

(a) ethos: the legacy of inherited tradition and individual appropriation of the acquired tradition (cf. Job 4:8; 5:27; 8:8-10; 12:12, 20, 25; 13:1-2; 15:7, 10, 18); (b) pathos: the various types of persuasion employed by a speaker in order to influence an audience (cf. 4:12-17; 20:3; 32:8; 33:14-18); (c) logos: the cogency of the speech itself

113. Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 154.

114. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 280.

115. Crenshaw, "Wisdom and Authority," pp. 17-21.

(cf. 6:5-6; 7:8-10; 11:12; 12:7-9). In Crenshaw's judgment, the statement of Elihu in 32:8 falls within the category of pathos; and Crenshaw observes that "it is difficult to ascertain whether the allusion points beyond the individual or not, for the reference contains just enough ambiguity to function as personal reinforcement."

In the first analysis, verse 8 constitutes therefore a rebuke of the friends and serves to legitimatise Elihu's subsequent argumentation. In the event, however, that the term **נִיחָם** is interpreted as signifying a special inspiration, the words of Elihu represent not only a censure of the three friends but also a criticism of the Divine speeches which immediately follow. That is to say, as the recipient of an inspired wisdom, Elihu appears as a divinely ordained spokesman in place of God himself, thereby undermining the speeches of God (see further in (iii) below). There is perhaps an additional explanation: the claim of a special divine inspiration may paradoxically represent an attempt on the part of the interpolator to preclude adverse criticism as a consequence of the displacement of the discourses of God.

(ii) Verse 13:

Beware that you do not say: "We have found wisdom;
God will drive him away, not man."

LXX translates: *Εὗρομεν σοφίαν κυρίῳ προσθέμενοι*, an incorrect rendering, or perhaps a failure to comprehend the Hebrew text. MT is variously interpreted: (a) "We have

discovered in Job a superior wisdom which God alone can refute";¹¹⁶ (b) "We have attained wisdom, but only God, not man, can refute Job," that is, as a result of the obstinacy of Job, it is folly to attempt to refute his arguments on the basis of the superior knowledge of the friends;¹¹⁷ (c) "We have found wisdom" (i.e., we are wise because God has instructed us; therefore) "let God refute Job, not man."¹¹⁸ The meaning of the passage appears to be that Elihu is attacking the complacency of the friends in believing that only through the intervention of God will Job be silenced. On the contrary, as Elihu asserts in the following verse, it is presumptuous to assume that a satisfactory response to Job

116. Cf. Ball, op. cit., p. 370; G.A. Barton, op. cit., p. 251; A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 224; Driver, Book of Job in the Revised Version, p. 95; Ehrlich, op. cit., vol. 6, p. 308; Ewald, op. cit., p. 331; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 281; Hesse, op. cit., p. 178; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 238; Ley, op. cit., p. 115; Reichert, op. cit., p. 168; Renan, op. cit., p. 139; Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 342; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 437; Thilo, op. cit., p. 56; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 311; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., p. 108; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 554. Loisy, op. cit., p. 164, translates: "Ne dites pas: 'Il a trouvé la sagesse; Dieu peut le vaincre et non l'homme.'" Cf. Bickell, op. cit., p. 58.
117. Cf. Berechiah, p. 216 in the English translation; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 451; Gordis, BOJ, pp. 368-69; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 218, n. 4; Battenwieser, op. cit., p. 348; Kissane, op. cit., p. 219; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 105; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 414; Strahan, op. cit., p. 271. According to Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 191: "besiegt ist er [Job] längst, aber es bedarf noch eines Machtwortes oder heilsamen Schreckens, damit er das Feld räume." But Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 155, comments that this interpretation "macht den Elihu noch kindlicher, als er schon ohnehin ist."
118. Cf. JB; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 479; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 48; Larcher, op. cit., p. 135; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 210.

is beyond the capability of human wisdom. Elihu regards himself as eminently qualified to refute Job and to defend the divine providence.

However, whereas the great majority of commentators see 13a and b as a criticism of the friends' failure to confute the arguments of Job, some scholars interpret b not as a quotation attributed to the friends but as a refutation of the statement in a.¹¹⁹ But this interpretation is to be rejected altogether, for the very presence of Elihu's speeches delays the response of God.¹²⁰ In the view of Duhm, Ley and Barton, verse 13 is a direct polemic against the discourse of God.¹²¹ In this regard, if chapters 32-37 are to be interpreted as fulfilling a proper mediatorial role in the conception of the poem, it is strange for Elihu to declare that there is no necessity for God to appear in response to Job. In view of the virtual certainty that the Divine speeches,

119. Cf. NEB; AV; RV marg.; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 221; and apparently also G. Richter, op. cit., p. 69, who translates, but without explanation: "Damit ihr nun aber nicht denkt: Wir sind auf weisheit gestossen (nämlich in den Worten Hiobs), so wird nunmehr Gottihn aus dem Felde schlagen, nicht ein Mensch (d.h. ich)." According to Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 205, the divine name ^{שׁ} represents perhaps a play on the name Elihu. Habel, Book of Job (CBCNEB), p. 173, interprets 13b in the sense that God will rebuke the friends for their inadequate efforts. Cf. also the Qumran Targum, which preserves the verse only in fragmented form: "but God condemns us and not a m[an]" (cf. Le Targum de Job de la Grotte XI de Qumrân, ed. van der Ploeg, p. 53; also The Targum to Job from Qumran Cave XI, ed. M. Sokoloff, p. 69).

120. Cf. Andersen, op. cit., p. 247.

121. Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 155; Ley, op. cit., p. 142; G.A. Barton, op. cit., p. 251.

prior to the interpolation of the Elihu pericope, directly followed the concluding discourse of Job, the reference to God is a suspicious circumstance, and suggests strongly that verse 13 is to be interpreted as a criticism of 38:1ff.

(iii) Verses 18-20:

- 18 For I am full of words,
the spirit (נִיָּו) in my belly constrains me;
19 Lo, my belly is like unopened wine(-skins),
like new wine(-skins), it will burst open.
20 I must speak, that there may be relief for me;
I must open my lips and answer.

In the view of Habel, verses 17-22 constitute "the full expose of Elihu as a fool."¹²² Referring to the words of Eliphaz in 15:2: "Should a wise man answer with a 'mind of wind,' and bloat his belly with an east wind?",¹²³ Habel remarks:¹²⁴

The poet, with wry humour, has Elihu describe his condition in precisely these terms Unwittingly Elihu characterizes himself as a windbag and a constipated fool by appropriating the sarcastic language chosen by Eliphaz to taunt Job. The inner compulsion to speak, which was experienced by Jeremiah as the fire of God's word burning within (Jer. 20:9), is transformed by Elihu into a need to relieve himself

122. Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 444.

123. Habel's translation in ibid.

124. Ibid., pp. 444-45. Cf. the interpretation of verses 18-22 by Jastrow, op. cit., p. 319: a later ironical insertion by someone sympathising with the original poem and intending to ridicule Elihu as "one who talks merely to relieve his mind. What he says would, according to this commentator, be mere escaping gas."

of the wind building up in his belly (v. 20). "To relieve" (rwh) is an obvious wordplay on "wind" (rūah). Perhaps the innuendo of this wordplay is captured in the English expression "to pass wind."

Habel's interpretation, however, may be questioned on several grounds. Firstly, it is instructive to note that Bildad and Zophar, and indeed Job as well, express themselves in language similar to the words of Eliphaz in 15:2:

8:2 How long will you speak these things,
and (how long will) the words of your mouth be
(like) a great wind (רִיחַ גָּדוֹל)? (Bildad)

11:2 Is a multitude of words not to be answered,
and a man full of talk to be justified? (Zophar)

15:2 Does a wise man answer with windy knowledge
(דַּבָּרֵי רֵיחַ),
and fill himself (i.e., his belly) with the
sirocco? (Eliphaz)

16:3 Shall windy words (דַּבָּרֵי רֵיחַ) have an end?
Or what provokes you that you answer? (Job)

The term רֵיחַ in 8:2, 15:2, and 16:3 (the word does not occur in 11:2) is translated by the majority of scholars as "wind." Conversely, the rendering "spirit" is generally attested in 32:18 (in accord with the occurrence of רֵיחַ in verse 8). Whereas the translation "wind" in 15:2 corresponds to the context of 8:2 and 16:3, it is ill-suited to the signification of 32:18.¹²⁵ In addition, the phrase רֵיחַ בִּטְנִי

125. Re the translation of רֵיחַ in 32:18 as "wind": cf. NEB; Pope, op. cit., p. 241; Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, p. 60: "breath in my belly"; Larcher, op. cit.,

does not refer to wind in the belly; in accordance with the Hebrew conception of the belly as the receptacle of the mind and intellectual faculties,¹²⁶ it signifies an irrepressible inner force, an afflatus, which compels Elihu to speak.¹²⁷ It is noteworthy that Zophar has earlier experienced a similar compulsion to speak and has expressed himself in language not essentially dissimilar to that of Elihu:

20:2-3 Therefore my thoughts disturb me,
and my emotions within me;
I hear censure which shames me,
and the spirit of my understanding
(רוח אנני אנני אנני) answers me.¹²⁸

p. 135: "un souffle intérieur" (cf. Steinmann, op. cit., p. 211); however, Larcher notes the relationship between the terminology of vs. 18 and the conception of vs. 8. JB translates: "For I am filled with words, choked by a rush of them within me"; but note NJB: "forced to speak by a spirit within me."

126. Cf. Ball, op. cit., pp. 370-71: "Grotesque as this may seem to us, we must remember that antiquity knew absolutely nothing about the physiology of man. If even an Aristotle could regard the brain as a cold mass intended to act as a counterpoise to the excessive heat of the heart, we can hardly be astonished at the crudeness of Hebrew notions on the subject." Ball notes, in addition, that similar ideas have prevailed among the Chinese.
127. On vss. 18-20 as the genuine expression of an inner compulsion to speak, cf. Snaithe, Book of Job, pp. 87-88; McKay, op. cit., p. 171, n. 10; Beeby, op. cit., p. 44, who compares Elihu to the covenant mediators of the O.T., and remarks: "They possess always a deep sense of vocation, an inability not to speak on occasion and obedience to the message given. All this and much more has Elihu (cf. 32:18-22)."
128. There are a number of textual uncertainties associated with this passage. Cf. BHK; BHS; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 176, and Driver and Gray, Philological Notes, pp. 134-35; Dhorme, op. cit., pp. 289-91.

In this respect, the language of verses 32:18-20 is strikingly reminiscent of the prophetic experience of divine inspiration. Thus, a comparison with Jer. 20:9 is entirely apposite:

There is in my heart as it were a burning fire
shut up in my bones,

And I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.

It is also interesting to note, in connection with the conception of Elihu as a deliberate caricature, that Jeremiah is transformed into an object of ridicule by the inner compulsion to speak:¹²⁹

Jer. 20:7c I have become an object of derision
all the day;
everyone mocks me.

8b For the word of God has become for me
a reproach and a derision all the day.

Thus, against the conception of Elihu as an intended caricature on the part of the author,¹³⁰ the reference to the

129. According to Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 454, the wine motif (32:19-20) may suggest that the prolixity and bold speech of Elihu indicate he is a drunken fool (cf. Prov. 9:2, 5; Jer. 13:12-13; 23:9; Acts 2:4, 13). But this interpretation is not particularly convincing: in the case of Acts 2:4, 13, the context clearly shows that the "other tongues" are not to be attributed to drunkenness, but (as Peter emphasises, vs. 15) to be understood as a manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the form of the gift of tongues. The analogy of vss. 18-20 with Jer. 20:9 is far more appropriate.

130. Against the conception of Elihu as an object of ridicule, cf. Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 464: "El lector lo acusará probablemente de hinchazón retórica. En cambio, el autor de esta parte no ironiza con su personaje, como hace el autor del libro con los amigos."

divine afflatus in Job:18-20 serves to legitimatise the interpolation of chapters 32-37 by placing the wisdom of Elihu on a higher level than that of the three friends. But, most important from the hermeneutical standpoint, it implies ipso facto a devaluation of the subsequent speeches of God.

Certain conclusions may now be formulated with respect to the purpose of 32:6-22: (a) There is no justification for the conception of Elihu as a comical figure. Contrary to Whedbee,¹³¹ the burden of proof lies with the commentator who wishes to show that Elihu is to be interpreted as an intentional caricature. The speech of introduction may be verbose, but Elihu's words are more than mere persiflage. As Kraeling observes, the introductory discourse is "an unconscious self-portrayal,"¹³² not a deliberate caricature. Similarly, Fohrer describes the speech as constituting "a self-introduction of a wise man into the dispute"; it exhibits three distinct themes: "I want to speak" (6-10); "I can speak" (11-14); "I have to speak" (15-22).¹³³ (b) Nor is there any exegetical basis for the assumption of an ironic gap between the prose prologue and 32:6ff., that is, the conflict between the "anger" of Elihu in 32:1-5 and his characterisation in the introductory discourse as a hotheaded and brash fool. The anger of the prose introduction is not to be equated with

131. See note 76 above.

132. Kraeling, op. cit., p. 127.

133. Fohrer, Buch Hiob, pp. 449-52.

impetuosity or rashness or hot-temperedness, but rather reflects the righteous indignation of Elihu and zeal for his divine vocation. Moreover, inasmuch as the righteousness of God is a self-evident truth, no "conflict" can be said to exist between the representation of Elihu in the prose introduction and the statement of impartiality in verse 21. The concept of an ironic disjuncture appears rather artificial and much too hypothetical, a reading into the text of a modern hermeneutical perspective. (c) As in the prologue, the speech of introduction is clearly tendentious in emphasising that Elihu intervenes on behalf of God. (d) In addition to a criticism of the preceding Dialogue, the exordium of Elihu indicates a polemical intent with regard to the Divine speeches. This is particularly evident in verse 13, and is intimated in the claim of inspiration in verses 18-20.

3. Chapters 33-35

In the canonical text of Job, the discourses comprising chapters 33-35 form a distinctive unit within the Elihu composition. Although not of uniform length, and in contrast to chapters 32 and 36-37, the three speeches exhibit a common, well-defined structure.¹³⁴

Chapter 33 First Speech of Elihu

33:1-7	Introduction (Summons to Job)
8-11	<u>QUOTATION</u> of Job's theses
8	Preliminary statement

134. Cf. the outline of Murphy, Wisdom Literature, pp. 40-41.

- 9 Quotation: Job's claims of innocence
(cf. 9:21; 10:7; 16:17; 23:10-12;
27:4-6; 31:1-40)
- 10-11 Quotation: Job's accusation of perse-
cution by God (cf. 10:13-17; 13:24,
26-27; 19:6-12; 30:21-23)
- 33:12-30 REFUTATION of Job's theses: God communicates
with man in various ways: (i) in dreams and
visions (vss. 15-18); (ii) by means of physical
affliction (vss. 19-22); (iii) through angelic
visitation (vss. 23-24).
- 31-33 Conclusion (Exhortation to Job)

Chapter 34 Second Speech of Elihu

- 34:1-4 Introduction (Summons to the wise, vss. 2-4)
- 5-6,9 QUOTATION of Job's theses
- 5-6 Quotation: Job's criticism of the
injustice of God (cf. 9:21-22; 13:22;
27:2)
- 7-8 Apostrophe to Job
- 9 Quotation: Job's claim that piety and
virtue are of no avail (cf. 9:22;
21:7-15)
- 10-33 REFUTATION of Job's theses: It is inconceivable
that God acts wickedly and persecutes man. As
creator and ruler of the world (vss. 13-15),
God is omniscient and supremely just in his
dealings with mortal man (vss. 10b-12; 16-28).
Because God is omniscient, there is no neces-
sity to appoint a specific time for man to
appear before him in judgment (vs. 23). Thus,
man has no cause to condemn the divine justice,
even in the event of the apparent inactivity
of God (vss. 29-30).
- 34-37 Conclusion (Expostulation re Job)

Chapter 35 Third Speech of Elihu

- 35:1 Introduction
- 2-3 QUOTATION of Job's theses
- 2 Quotation: Job's claim to be in the
right (cf. 13:18; 27:4-6)
- 3 Quotation: Job's claim that, despite his
innocence, he is regarded as a sinner
(cf. 9:22-23, 30-31; 19:7; 24:1; cf.
also 21:15)

35:4-14 REFUTATION of Job's theses: God is exalted above man and therefore derives neither benefit nor detriment from human righteousness and wickedness; man's virtue and transgression concern only himself and his fellow men (vss. 4-8). If God does not heed the cries of the oppressed, it is because of their sinful "pride" (vss. 9-14).

15-16 Conclusion (Expostulation re Job)

From an interpretative standpoint, the structure of chapters 33-35 (i.e., Quotation - Refutation - Concluding Expostulation) indicates clearly the disputatious and polemical character of the speeches with regard to the preceding Dialogue.¹³⁵ It is proposed, however, in the following section to demonstrate, on the basis of a number of key passages, that the refutation speeches of Elihu are to be interpreted not merely as a criticism of the Dialogue but as a polemic against the subsequent discourses of God.

(i) 33:1-7

Following the speech of introduction in 32:6-22 in which Elihu asserts his right to intervene in the proceedings, he turns his attention in chapter 33 from the three friends and speaks directly to Job for the first time. In the canonical text of Job, verses 1-7 serve as a preamble to the refutation speeches of 33:8ff.

135. Cf. Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 217; Murphy, Wisdom Literature, p. 42; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 41; Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 456; Kraeling, op. cit., p. 126; Dhorme, op. cit., p. lxxix. Westermann, op. cit., p. 134, refers to the Elihu chapters as "literary polemic." Whybray, Intellectual Freedom, p. 66, comments that the speeches possess "much more the character of a disputation than the rest of the book."

According to Jastrow, 33:2-7 constitute an addition by the "ironical commentator" who also has inserted 32:18-22, and are intended to emphasise the "empty boasts of Elihu and his 'big' talk which issues in banalities."¹³⁶ Concerning verse 7a, Umbreit remarks: "Elihu conceives a terrible majesty to be inherent in his fancied authority of genius."¹³⁷ Habel interprets verses 4-7 as evidence of the deliberate characterisation of Elihu as a brash fool (שׁוֹרֵר).¹³⁸

Conversely, Beeby expresses the view that the text signifies the "supra-human" quality of Elihu. The statement in verses 6-7, wherein Elihu stresses his humanity and insists that Job has no reason to be fearful in his presence, is necessary only if Elihu's previous words and the perception he is intended to convey are "such that his humanity is in doubt and he appears as some semi-divine being." Beeby writes: "Now we can see that the intention of the author was to depict him as human, but so full of authority and divine wisdom that his humanity was rightly in doubt."¹³⁹ That Elihu is in some sense characterised as a supra-human figure has also been suggested by Ewald, who states that the author has endowed Elihu with "more than merely the highest human wisdom."¹⁴⁰ According to

136. Jastrow, op. cit., p. 319.

137. Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 209-10.

138. Habel, "Role of Elihu in the Design of the Book of Job," p. 92.

139. Beeby, op. cit., p. 47.

140. Ewald, op. cit., p. 327.

Ewald, the words of Elihu testify to his unique spiritual importance and mission, that of intervening in the place of God.¹⁴¹ The mediatorial significance of Elihu is clearly conveyed as well in the AV translation of 6a: "Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead" (cf. RV marg.).

Berechiah interprets: "I shall be for thee unto God, in behalf of God, to be an umpire between thee and him."¹⁴² Similarly, Rashi translates: "I am like thy mouth toward God," that is, "Since thy mouth hath asked to argue with one who will not terrify thee (xiii.21), behold I am in place of the Holy One, blessed be He, and on His behalf to speak His words."¹⁴³

The conception of Elihu, however, neither as a deliberate caricature nor as a divinely appointed mediator can be substantiated on exegetical grounds. Verses 4, 6-7 are of particular hermeneutical significance in this regard:

- 33:4 The spirit of God has made me,
And the breath of Shaddai gives me life.
- 6 Behold, I am like you in relation to God;
I have also been formed out of clay.
- 7 Behold, my terror will not make you afraid;
And my [hand] will not be heavy upon you.

Verses 6-7 do not present major interpretative difficulties. The AV translation of 6a, noted above, is clearly a misinterpretation, and moreover, does not accord with the context of

141. Ibid., p. 322.

142. Berechiah, p. 142 in the English translation.

143. Cited in Reichert, op. cit., p. 170.

stich b or the following verse. For the most part, commentators interpret either "I am toward (in relation to) God as you are,"¹⁴⁴ or "I am, like you, (a creature) of God."¹⁴⁵ Some critics translate "I am not God," or "not a god," emending **לֹא אֱלֹהִים** in place of MT **לֹא אֱלֹהִים** (aleph omitted by haplography).¹⁴⁶

The various translations of 6a provide a suitable parallel to the second line of the verse, a reference to Job's statement in 10:9, which, in the present context, serves to establish Elihu on an equal footing with Job. Verse 7 is a direct allusion to Job's often-expressed fear of intimidation by the divinity of God: in 9:34-35 and 13:20-22, Job has called upon God to remove his "rod" and his "terror," thus enabling Job to "speak without fear." In 7b, the expression **לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים** (פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים : lit. "pressure") is variously interpreted:

144. Cf. inter alia RSV; RV; JPS; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 284; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 488; Nichols, op. cit., p. 154; Gordis, BOJ, p. 362; Ewald, op. cit., p. 332; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., p. 109; Hirzel, op. cit., p. 205; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 319. Cf. also NEB: "In God's sight I am just what you are."
145. Cf. inter alia Vulg.: "et me sicut et te fecit Deus"; Peake, Job, p. 280; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 217; Kissane, op. cit., p. 220; Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 209; Hahn, op. cit., p. 261; Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 464; Pope, op. cit., p. 245; Rosenmüller, op. cit., p. 775; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 455. LXX omits **לֹא אֱלֹהִים** and renders: "ἐκ πηλοῦ διαρτίσαι σὺ ὡς καὶ ἐγὼ".
146. Cf. inter alia Symm.; JB; NJB; A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 311; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 171; Larcher, op. cit., p. 136; Ball, op. cit., p. 79; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 437; cf. also Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 220: "Je suis ton semblable! Je ne suis pas comme Dieu!"

"my pressure";¹⁴⁷ "my hand";¹⁴⁸ "my burden."¹⁴⁹ The translation "hand" is particularly appropriate to the context of the passage, in view of Job's assertions that the "hand of God" has afflicted him (19:21; 23:2; cf. 13:21 wherein Job requests that God withdraw his "hand"). The meaning conveyed by verses 6-7 therefore is that Elihu and Job stand in the same relation before God (or are equally dependent upon God); thus Job has no reason to fear intimidation in the presence of Elihu.

The precise signification of verse 4, however, is considerably more difficult to ascertain. For the most part, the text is interpreted as (a) referring to the common origin of man (in relation to the context of verse 6), or (b) signifying a special divine inspiration (in connection with the context of 32:8). Among the commentators supporting interpretation (a), Tur-Sinai considers verse 4 an introduction to the ideas

147. Cf. inter alia RV; RSV; JPS; NEB; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 217; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 452; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 219; Kissane, op. cit., p. 220; Pope, op. cit., p. 245; Gordis, BOJ, p. 362; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 80.

148 Cf. inter alia LXX; JB; NJB; Nichols, op. cit., p. 155; Peake, Job, p. 281; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 489; G.A. Barton, op. cit., p. 254; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 220; Ley, op. cit., p. 116: "meine Faust"; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 437; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., p. 109; Ball, op. cit., p. 79: "my palm"; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 308; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 455.

149. Cf. inter alia the Targum; Staples, op. cit., p. 29; Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 209-10; Ewald, op. cit., p. 332; Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, p. 117: "weight or burden." In addition to the foregoing translations, cf. Syriac: "my care"; NAB: "my presence"; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 211: "ma violence"; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 284, and Philological Notes, p. 240: "my urgency"; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 319: "my authority."

which are expressed in verses 6 and 7, and thus proposes transferring the latter before verse 5.¹⁵⁰ According to Franz Delitzsch and Gray, verse 6 refers only to the material aspect of man's nature, while verse 4 emphasises the creative and sustaining power of God's spirit.¹⁵¹ A number of authors transpose verse 4 to follow 6,¹⁵² but Gray objects that the thought of verse 4 will then be out of place.¹⁵³ Nevertheless, there is some exegetical sense in the proposed alteration of the text, for in emphasising the dual nature of man, that is, creatureliness and spirituality, the sequence of verses 6, 4 parallels the similar passage in Gen. 2:7:

Behold, I am like you (lit.: like your mouth) before God;
I too have been formed from clay.
The spirit of God has made me,
And the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

Alternatively, a number of critics interpret verse 4 as referring to a special divine endowment.¹⁵⁴ In this

150. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 465.

151. Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 218; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 284.

152. Cf. JB; NJB; Peake, Job, p. 280; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 489; Strahan, op. cit., p. 276; Houtsma, op. cit., p. 72; MacKenzie, "Job," Jerome Biblical Commentary, p. 529; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 211; G.A. Barton, op. cit., p. 254; Larcher, op. cit., p. 136; Ball, op. cit., p. 372; de Wilde, op. cit., pp. 307, 313.

153. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 284.

154. Cf. Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 222; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 106; Rowley, Job, p. 211; Pope, op. cit., p. 247. According to A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 227, the reference is to common reason; however, in his zeal to defend God, Elihu believes that the spirit of God has endowed him with a superior wisdom. Other commentators

interpretation (b), whereas verses 6-7 are intended to reassure Job that there is no need to be fearful in the presence of Elihu, verse 4 serves to legitimatise the subsequent speeches by indicating, in contrast to (a), the importance of Elihu as a divinely appointed spokesman.

Whether (a) or (b) is judged to be the correct interpretation, however, the exegetical significance of 33:4, 6-7 does not support the conception of Elihu as the mediator sought by Job. The function of 33:1-7 as a preamble to the refutation speeches of 33:8ff., and the polemical character of chapters 32-37 as a whole, militate against the mediatorial conception of Elihu. As Marshall points out (against the interpretation of Elihu as the desiderated "daysman" of 9:33): "Elihu never assumes the function of mediator but begins at once to denounce Job."¹⁵⁵ In view of the very great probability that chapters 32-37 are a later addition by a different author, Elihu is made to appear not as a mediator between Job and God, but as a substitute for the deity,¹⁵⁶ who, indeed, makes the divine

regard the term **נִפְחַח** as denoting merely the vital breath which animates all humanity (interpreting as in Gen. 2:7): cf. Peake, Job, p. 280; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 193; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 556; Strahan, op. cit., p. 276; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 283; Gordis, BOJ, p. 372; Reichert, op. cit., p. 170; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 313; Stier, op. cit., p. 331; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 464. Andersen, op. cit., p. 248, expresses uncertainty on this issue. Some critics delete vs. 4: cf. Nichols, op. cit., p. 154; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 193; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 157; Bittenwieser, op. cit., p. 350; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 80; while Kissane, op. cit., p. 216, transposes before 32:14.

155. Marshall, Book of Job, p. 106.

156. Cf. Strahan, op. cit., p. 276.

appearance unnecessary. Moreover, the fact that the Elihu pericope interrupts the response of God suggests a devaluation of the Divine speeches and a criticism of the poet who has inserted chapters 38ff.¹⁵⁷

(ii) 33:23-24

If there is for him (over him) an angel,
an interpreter (mediator), one of the thousand,
to declare to man what is right for him (i.e.,
what is right in God's sight);

and (if) he is gracious to him, and says:

"Release (deliver) him from going down to the pit,
I have found a ransom for his life."¹⁵⁸

In the opinion of a number of commentators, the concept of the $\Upsilon^{\prime}\Upsilon\gamma \quad \Upsilon\chi\Upsilon\gamma$ represents a notable contribution to the solution of the problem of suffering, and plays a vital role in the eventual redemption and restoration of Job,¹⁵⁹ perhaps fulfilling Job's expressed desire for a mediator (9:33; 16:19; 19:25ff.).¹⁶⁰ According to Snaithe's conception that the central issue of the book of Job is the relation between God and man, that is, the difficulty in communication between the High God and lowly man, the

157. Cf. Peake, Job, p. 281; Strahan, op. cit., p. 276.

158. For a detailed discussion of the exegetical difficulties of 33:23-24, see the preceding chapter, pp. 173ff.

159. Cf. Irwin, "Job," Peake's Commentary on the Bible, pp. 403-04; Kroeze, op. cit., pp. 161-62; Ronald J. Williams, "Theodicy in the Ancient Near East," Canadian Journal of Theology, 2 (1956), p. 24.

160. Cf. Irwin, "Job's Redeemer," JBL, 81 (1962), p. 228; Kroeze, op. cit., pp. 161-62; Snaithe, Book of Job, p. 90; Beeby, op. cit., p. 45.

appearance of an intermediary is a significant development in establishing a personal relationship between the two.¹⁶¹ The intervention of a (divine) mediator, however, and the account of the restoration and reconciliation of the afflicted individual (verses 24-28), serve to render the appearance of God in 38:1ff. superfluous. Moreover, the argumentation of verses 14-30 as a whole, in elucidating the various ways in which the revelatory activity of God is communicated to man, suggests an alternative response to Job and makes the Divine speeches unnecessary. This interpretation is indirectly corroborated by the hypothesis of Irwin, according to which the reconstruction of the lost conclusion of the Dialogue on the basis of chapter 33 provides "objective evidence" of the omission of the Divine speeches from the original poem.¹⁶² In the view of Curtis, the purpose of verses 23-28 is to confute Job's reference to a divine intercessor in 16:19.¹⁶³ In this case, the concept of the $\gamma' \gamma \gamma \quad \tau \times \gamma \gamma$ represents a fortiori a direct polemic against the Divine speeches.

(iii) 34:23

For he does not appoint a time
for man to go before God in judgement.

The Hebrew of 23a is problematic and was omitted from the original Greek text. On the basis of MT, various translations

161. Snaithe, Book of Job, pp. 88-90.

162. Irwin, "Job," Peake's Commentary on the Bible, p. 404.

163. John Briggs Curtis, "On Job's Witness in Heaven," JBL, 102 (1983), p. 554, n. 9.

have been proposed: "For he needeth not further to consider a man" (RV);¹⁶⁴ "Denn er achtet nicht (erst) noch auf einen Menschen" (Dillmann);¹⁶⁵ "For he needeth not long to regard a man" (Umbreit, Fra. Delitzsch);¹⁶⁶ "Denn er braucht auf einen Mann nicht lang zu Fahnden" (Hitzig);¹⁶⁷ "Nicht so ist's, dass Gott zunächst einen Fall untersucht" (Thilo);¹⁶⁸ "Dieu n'a pas besoin de regarder l'homme deux fois" (Renan);¹⁶⁹ "nicht richtet er auf den Menschen dauernd seinen Einfluss" (König);¹⁷⁰ "nicht wird er länger auf einen Mann sein Absehen richten" (Fried. Delitzsch);¹⁷¹ "For he need not further lay it upon man" (Tur-Sinai);¹⁷² "Car il n'impose point à l'homme une trop grande charge" (Ostervald); "For he will not lay upon man more than right" (AV).¹⁷³ G. Richter, emending the text, translates: "Geschweige denn, dass jemand einen Zeugen zu stellen braucht."¹⁷⁴ For the most part, however, the line is

164. Cf. A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 237.

165. Dillmann, op. cit., p. 295.

166. Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 229; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 255; cf. Segond; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 197; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 571.

167. Hitzig, op. cit., p. 253; cf. Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 225.

168. Thilo, op. cit., p. 60; cf. Ewald, op. cit., p. 338.

169. Renan, op. cit., p. 149; cf. Loisy, op. cit., p. 168; Studer, op. cit., p. 152.

170. König, Buch Hiob, p. 355.

171. Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 105.

172. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 482; cf. LXX: ὅτι οὐκ ἐπ' ἄνδρα θάσει ἐτι.

173. Cf. the translation of Rashi, cited in Reichert, op. cit., p. 179: "For He doth not impose upon a man more (than his guilt deserves)."

174. G. Richter, op. cit., p. 73.

rendered: "For he sets no definite time for a person (to appear before God in judgment)," following Wright's emendation of **תַּיִם** in place of MT **תֵּינָא**.¹⁷⁵ The meaning of the verse, then, is that the absolute justice and impartiality of the deity preclude the necessity of man entering into judgment with God. There is no reason to doubt that

וּבְיוֹמֵי הַיָּדֹנָיִם signifies a legal context, that is, a day in court, and does not refer to the "Day of Judgment."¹⁷⁶

While some commentators interpret in connection with Job's

175. Cf. RSV; JPS; NEB; NAB: "he forewarns no man of his time"; NJV; K-B, p. 686; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., pp. 112, 183; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 299; Driver, Philological Notes, p. 259; Peake, Job, p. 291; Nichols, op. cit., p. 178: "he hath appointed no place"; Staples, op. cit., p. 32; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 205; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 166; Beer, BHK, and Text des Buches Hiob, p. 218; Gerleman, BHS; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 520; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 463; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 582; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 229; Strahan, op. cit., p. 289; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 244; Peters, op. cit., p. 384; Ball, op. cit., p. 386, interpreting either **תֵּינָא** "a time" or **תַּיִם** "a set time"; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 82; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 336; Kissane, op. cit., p. 229; A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 316; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 307; König, Buch Hiob, p. 357; Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, p. 63; Pope, op. cit., p. 255; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 110, reading **תֵּינָא**; Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 137; Lamparter, op. cit., p. 206; Hesse, op. cit., p. 182. Cf. also JB: "He serves no writ on men"; cf. NJB; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 216; Larcher, op. cit., p. 142. Gordis, BOJ, p. 390, adopting the reading **תַּיִם** and emending **אִיִּשׁ** in place of MT **אִישׁ**, translates: "It is not for man to set the time"; cf. Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 180; Ley, op. cit., p. 122; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 474; Vulg.: "neque enim ultra in hominis potestate est (ut veniat ad Deum in iudicium)"; Battenwieser, op. cit., p. 139: "For not to man hath He given the right (to approach God to demand a tribunal)" (according to the reconstructed text of Battenwieser, 34:23 belongs to a speech of Bildad); Luther: "Denn es wird niemand gestattet das er mit Gott rechte."

176. Cf. Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 166.

complaint in 24:1 that God does not establish a definite time of judgment,¹⁷⁷ the verse is probably intended to refute specifically Job's repeated demand for a hearing with God.¹⁷⁸ While the exact signification is admittedly unclear, the latter interpretation accords with the context of verses 5-6:

For Job has said: "I am righteous,
and God denies me justice;

Notwithstanding my right, I am (considered) a liar;
my wound is incurable (although I am) without
transgression."

Moreover, it is not unlikely that verse 23 represents a direct polemic against the speeches of God. That is to say, in view of the adventitiousness of the Elihu composition, the emphasis on the absolute justice of God (verses 10b-12; 16-28) - an emphasis notably absent in chapters 38-41 - strongly suggests a corrective to, and hence a criticism of, the Divine speeches. In this connection, the obvious inconsistency between the subsequent appearance of God and the connotation of verse 23 (a negation of the appearance of God) militates against the conception of the Elihu pericope as a transition to the discourses of God, suggesting conversely a repudiation of the discourses and an alternative response to the original poem.

177. Cf. MacKenzie, "Job," Jerome Biblical Commentary, p. 530; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 110.

178. Cf. Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 228; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 166; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 323; Hesse, op. cit., p. 184.

(iv) 34:29ab

And (if) he is quiet, who can condemn?

and (if) he hides the face, who can see him?

MT וְיָשִׁיב פָּנָיו וְיִשְׁפֹּט is interpreted variously: "When God acquits who can condemn?" (Wright);¹⁷⁹ "And he justifieth - and who can condemn?" (Tur-Sinai);¹⁸⁰ "Schafft er denn Ordnung, wer will ihn verdammen?" (Thilo);¹⁸¹ "He striketh to the earth, And who shall dare to call him to account?" (Umbreit).¹⁸² But for the most part, וְיָשִׁיב is interpreted on the basis of the verb וְיָשִׁיב: "to be quiet, undisturbed." The verb is translated either intransitively: "If God is quiet (that is, remains inactive in the face of injustice and does not intervene either to punish the wicked or to provide succour to the oppressed), who can condemn him?";¹⁸³ or transitively: "If God gives quietness, who can

179. G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., p. 112; cf. Renan, op. cit., p. 150: "Qui peut trouver à redire, quand Dieu pardonne?"

180. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 484; cf. Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, p. 63: "If he declares a man just."

181. Thilo, op. cit., p. 60.

182. Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 231. Cf. A.S. Yahuda, "Hapax Legomena im Alten Testament," JQR, 15 (1902-03), p. 713, emending וְיָשִׁיב and translating "casts down, causes to fall."

183. Cf. RSV; NEB; NAB; NJV; K-B, p. 1008; Samuel E. Balentine, The Hidden God: The Hiding of the Face of God in the Old Testament (Oxford, 1983), p. 69; Peake, Job, p. 292; Nichols, op. cit., p. 179; Staples, op. cit., p. 32; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 226; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 206; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 167; A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 317; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 463; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 523; Ewald, op. cit., p. 339; Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 106; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 111; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 197; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 583;

condemn him?" (that is, if God grants respite from tyrannical rule, he is not to be accused of injustice).¹⁸⁴ In either interpretation, it is apparent that the parallel reference to the silence of God and to the "hidden face" of God contrasts sharply with the emphasis on the absolute justice and righteousness of God in verses 10b-28.¹⁸⁵ The difficulty of interpreting 29ab, however, is aggravated by the ambiguity of verses 28-33 as a whole and by the uncertain connection with verses 10b-27. Verses 28-33 were omitted from the original Greek translation and may be a

Studer, op. cit., p. 153; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 350; Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 345; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 229; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 82; Ball, op. cit., p. 388; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 182; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 326; Strahan, op. cit., p. 290; Kissane, op. cit., p. 229; Buttenwieser, op. cit., p. 139 (assigning to Bildad); Peters, op. cit., p. 384; Ley, op. cit., p. 122; Pope, op. cit., p. 255; König, Buch Hiob, p. 357; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 216; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 438; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 320; Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 137; Lamparter, op. cit., p. 207; Hesse, op. cit., p. 182. Cf. also NJB: "But if he is still silent and no one can move him"; JB: "Yet he is unmoved, and nothing can touch him"; G. Richter, op. cit., p. 74: "Wenn Er aber verzieht, wer darf Ihn tadeln?"

184. Cf. LXX; Vulg.; AV; RV; JPS; Midrash Leviticus Rabbah, V.1 (cf. Midrash Rabbah, ed. H. Freedman and M. Simon, vol. 4, p. 60); Berechiah, p. 230 in the English translation; Luther; Segond; Ostervald; B-D-B, p. 1053; Driver, Book of Job in the Revised Version, p. 102; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 300; A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 238; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 258; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 572; Gordis, BOJ, p. 384; Hitzig, op. cit., p. 255; Loisy, op. cit., p. 169; Cox, op. cit., p. 440. Cf. also Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 474: "When he silences, who could prove him wrong?"; TEV: "If God decided to do nothing at all, no one could criticize him."

185. Cf. Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 206.

supplementary addition,¹⁸⁶ probably a commentary on 10b-27 intended to modify the severity of Elihu's position and to suggest that the apparent inactivity of God in certain circumstances accords with his providential will. In this regard, 29ab (and the explanation of 29c-33) expresses not only a rebuke of Job's accusations of divine injustice but an implicit criticism of the speeches of God. In the event that verses 29-33 are a supplementary addition, the reference to God remaining silent and "hiding his face" is inconsistent with the divine appearance in 38:1ff., and may be interpreted, as in the case of verse 23, not simply as a corrective to chapters 38-41, but as an alternative response to the original poem.

4. Chapters 36-37: The Concluding Discourse of Elihu

Chapters 36-37 present a new phase in Elihu's oration as indicated by the different structure and by the variant introduction in verse 1: $\text{לֹא־יִשְׁכַּח עֲלֵיךְ אֱלֹהִים} \quad \text{וְלֹא־יִשְׁכַּח עֲלֵיךְ אֱלֹהִים} \quad \text{וְלֹא־יִשְׁכַּח עֲלֵיךְ אֱלֹהִים}$ (compare the introductory formulae in 34:1; 35:1; also compare 32:6). From an interpretative standpoint, however, the concluding speech is characterised by the same polemical and disputatious quality which is attested in chapters 33-35:

(a) 36:1-21: a reiteration of the absolute justice of God and the pedagogical character of suffering (verses 1-15), with

186. Cf. Bickell, op. cit., p. 62; Nichols, op. cit., p. 179; G.A. Barton, op. cit., pp. 265-66; Habel, Book of Job (CBCNEB), pp. 185-86.

direct application to the individual case of Job (verses 16-21); (b) 36:22-37:24: a panorama of various atmospheric phenomena as a testimony to the greatness and incomprehensibility of God and to his providential concern for creation.

(a) The polemical character of 36:1-21 is clearly evident on the basis of the rhetorical exordium:

2 Wait for me a little and I will declare to you;
For there are yet words (to say) for God.

3 I will bring my knowledge from afar,
And I will ascribe righteousness to my Maker.

4 For truly my words are not false;
One who is perfect in knowledge is with you.

It is apparent in verses 2b and 3b that Elihu speaks on behalf of God. That Elihu regards himself as a spokesman for God is explicitly stated in 2b: "there are yet words to say for God." As Fohrer observes, the emphasis is on "for God."¹⁸⁷ While $\overline{\text{אִי}} \overline{\text{ל}} \overline{\text{אֵל}} \overline{\text{אֵל}}$ is generally translated "for" or "on behalf of" God,¹⁸⁸ some critics interpret so as to characterise Elihu even more explicitly as a spokesman for the divinity. Thus NEB renders: "there is still something more to be said on God's side"; and Blommerde translates: "I have

187. Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 476.

188. Cf. Ewald, op. cit., p. 342: "For I have yet to speak of God." LXX translates: "ἐτι γὰρ ἐν ἐμοί ἐστὶν λέξαις." The reading ἐν ἐμοί is undoubtedly a theological correction (cf. Dhorme, op. cit., p. 538) motivated by the desire to avoid anthropomorphism. Cf. Ball, op. cit., p. 394: "For Elihu hath yet more to say," interpreting $\overline{\text{אִי}} \overline{\text{ל}} \overline{\text{אֵל}} \overline{\text{אֵל}}$ as a possible scribal error for $\overline{\text{אֵל}} \overline{\text{ל}} \overline{\text{אִי}} \overline{\text{ל}} \overline{\text{אֵל}} \overline{\text{אֵל}}$.

still words from God."¹⁸⁹ Tur-Sinai and Friedrich Delitzsch go farther, translating "God hath still more to say."¹⁹⁰

From a hermeneutical point of view, the statements in 2b and 3b accord precisely with the prose prologue in regard to the purpose of the Elihu interpolation (cf. especially 32:2).

The rhetorical context of verses 3a and 4 reinforces Elihu's claim to speak on behalf of God. The expression **𐤀𐤏𐤍 𐤔𐤓𐤕** in 3a is admittedly ambiguous. On the one hand, Dhorme translates: "I will give wide scope to my knowledge." In his opinion, the occurrence of **𐤀𐤏𐤍 𐤔𐤓𐤕** in 39:29, where it signifies "into the distance," proves that the expression in 3a "denotes the term of the movement and not its point of departure."¹⁹¹ Similarly, Thilo interprets: "will weit ausholen";¹⁹² and Steinmann: "Je veux faire montre de toute ma science."¹⁹³ Tur-Sinai translates: "I will carry my knowledge far away," that is, "I will utter my discourse, which will be heard far away";¹⁹⁴ while Ball interprets: "I will lift my thought to him that is far away," or "I will

189. Blommerde, op. cit., p. 124; cf. Hölscher, op. cit., p. 84; Andersen, op. cit., p. 259: "concerning [or from] God."

190. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 492; cf. Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 109.

191. Dhorme, op. cit., p. 538.

192. Thilo, op. cit., p. 62.

193. Steinmann, op. cit., p. 218.

194. Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 494. Cf. NJV; Berechiah, p. 239 in the English translation; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 188; Peters, op. cit., p. 403; Ewald, op. cit., p. 342; Kissane, op. cit., pp. 242, 245;

bring forward my knowledge for God."¹⁹⁵ Jastrow offers an alternative translation: "I must prolong my discourse."¹⁹⁶

For the most part, however, פִּי מֵרָחוֹק is translated "from afar,"¹⁹⁷ and is interpreted as signifying either (i) the divine origin of Elihu's knowledge,¹⁹⁸ or (ii) the depth and extent of this knowledge. In the latter context,

Hölscher, op. cit., pp. 84-85; Stier, op. cit., p. 175. According to Ibn Ezra, cited in Reichert, op. cit., p. 185, פִּי מֵרָחוֹק signifies "from God" Who is far off above, but may also be interpreted as meaning that Elihu will lift up his knowledge (i.e., his voice of knowledge) and it will be heard afar.

195. Ball, op. cit., p. 394.

196. Jastrow, op. cit., p. 331; cf. A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 321: "Ich muss wohl meinen Vortrag weiter ausdehnen."

197. Cf. LXX; AV; RV; JPS; AT; RSV; NAB; B-D-B, p. 583; G-B, p. 435; K-B, p. 885; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 309, and Philological Notes, p. 272; Nichols, op. cit., p. 161; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 277; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 213; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 304; Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 244; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 581; Staples, op. cit., p. 34; Hitzig, op. cit., p. 261; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 198; Hahn, op. cit., p. 283; Bickell, op. cit., p. 63; Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 346; König, Buch Hiob, p. 368; Renan, op. cit., p. 155; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 231; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 471; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 546; Pope, op. cit., p. 266; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 332; Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 145; Blommerde, op. cit., p. 125; Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, p. 65; Lamparter, op. cit., p. 214; Hesse, op. cit., p. 188. Cf. also "from a distance": Ostervald; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 171; Loisy, op. cit., p. 171; Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 295; "from a great distance": Larcher, op. cit., p. 145.

198. Cf. Ibn Ezra, quoted in Reichert, op. cit., p. 185, but see n. 194 above; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 476; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 546; Andersen, op. cit., p. 259; Blommerde, op. cit., p. 125; Hesse, op. cit., p. 188; Pope, op. cit., p. 268. Hontheim, op. cit., p. 352, translates "Ich hole mein Wissen hoch her," but explains (pp. 254-55) that the sense intended is "from afar," i.e., from God himself.

the line is interpreted variously: "I will glean my knowledge from far afield" (Habel);¹⁹⁹ "repetam scientiam meam a principio" (Vulg.); "I draw my knowledge from the distant past," that is, from traditional lore (Buttenwieser).²⁰⁰

The expression "from afar" is interpreted by some commentators to mean "comprehensively": that is, a comprehensive treatment of the subject (Driver);²⁰¹ a comprehensive survey of the universe (Peake),²⁰² or of all God's known works (Barton);²⁰³ a wide survey of history and nature (Strahan).²⁰⁴

Kraeling interprets the expression as signifying that Elihu's insight derives from highly learned areas of thought or as indicating his knowledge of the international wisdom literature.²⁰⁵ De Wilde suggests that Elihu is alluding to his own extensive knowledge concerning human life (verses 5-14) and

199. Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 494; cf. JB: "I will range far afield for my arguments"; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 234: "J'irai chercher ma science au loin" (cf. Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, Job, p. 504); NEB: "I will search far and wide to support my conclusions"; Gordis, BOJ, p. 406: "I will marshal my knowledge from every quarter"; Ley, op. cit., p. 127: "aus der Tiefe fernher."

200. Buttenwieser, op. cit., p. 350. Cf. Bemidbar Rabbah, II.8: "from afar," i.e., from a distant past (cf. Midrash Rabbah, ed. H. Friedman and M. Simon, vol. 5.1, p. 31).

201. Driver, Book of Job in the Revised Version, p. 105; cf. A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 246.

202. Peake, Job, p. 298.

203. G.A. Barton, op. cit., p. 273.

204. Strahan, op. cit., p. 299; cf. Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 277.

205. Kraeling, op. cit., pp. 133-34; cf. Fried. Delitzsch, p. 109: "Ich bin der Träger einer fernen Weisheit."

creation (36:26-37:18),²⁰⁶ while Umbreit interprets "from afar" as signifying that Elihu is seeking after "remarkable expressions."²⁰⁷ On this interpretation, then, **רִחְוָה** denotes the derivation of Elihu's knowledge, that is, the extent and diversity from which his insight is gained, as opposed to the wide dissemination of his knowledge.

It is evident, on the basis of the foregoing, that the precise signification of **רִחְוָה** is a matter of conjecture. Although some commentators interpret as a reference to the divine origin of Elihu's knowledge, it must be concluded that the ambiguity of the expression precludes absolute certainty. The issue, however, is largely irrelevant, for the intention of the author of verse 3a is apparent: namely, to represent Elihu as a man of superior insight. The noun **רִחְוָה** occurs in the Old Testament only in the discourses of Elihu and appears intended to differentiate clearly from the more common designation **חָכְמָה**.²⁰⁸ In addition to 36:3, **רִחְוָה** occurs in the introductory speech of 32:6ff., where it similarly denotes the superior knowledge of Elihu (32:6, 10, 17) in contrast to the wisdom of the three friends. It is noteworthy that the only other occurrence of **רִחְוָה** (in 37:16) signifies that knowledge which is the exclusive possession

206. De Wilde, op. cit., p. 334. Similarly, Rowley, Job, p. 227, interprets "from afar" as referring to the range of Elihu's knowledge.

207. Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 244.

208. Cf. Botterweck, TDOT, 5, p. 479; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 450.

of God. On the other hand, the form **לֵט** is, for the most part, attested elsewhere in chapters 32-37 only in a negative sense: 34:35; 35:16; 36:12; cf., however, 33:3. The apparent exception in 33:3 may perhaps be explained by the intention in 36:3 to distinguish clearly, through the use of **לֵט** instead of **לֵט**, the superior knowledge obtained "from afar." Moreover, the preference for the term **לֵט** may represent a deliberate contrast to the usage of the common form **לֵט** in the speeches of Job: 10:7 (where it denotes knowledge imputed to God by Job); 13:2 (knowledge claimed by Job); 21:14 (knowledge of the wicked); 21:22 (in a sardonic context: "Can anyone teach God knowledge?"); and in the second speech of Eliphaz: 15:2 (where it signifies "windy, that is, false, knowledge").

The feminine form **לֵטָה** occurs in verse 4b in the expression **לֵטָהּ מִלֵּטָהּ**, a passage which has engendered a plethora of interpretations: "perfect in knowledge";²⁰⁹

209. Cf. Vulg.; AV; RV; AT; RSV; NAB; K-B, pp. 215, 1032; Nichols, op. cit., p. 162; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 309; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 277; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 305; Ewald, op. cit., p. 342; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 188; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 539; Hitzig, op. cit., p. 261; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 231; Kissane, op. cit., p. 242; Battenwieser, op. cit., p. 350; Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 346; Ley, op. cit., p. 127; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 471; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 586; Augé, op. cit., p. 306; Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, p. 65; Hesse, op. cit., p. 186. Cf. Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 213: "Ein Mann vollkommener Einsichten." G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., pp. 115, 118, transposes **לֵטָהּ מִלֵּטָהּ** to vs. 5 and translates: "Perfect in knowledge, lo God is almighty" (**לֵטָהּ** is omitted as a gloss).

"faultless in knowledge";²¹⁰ "perfect of utterance";²¹¹
 "perfect in reasoning";²¹² "ein Vollkundiger";²¹³ "ein im
 Erkennen Unsträflicher";²¹⁴ "Ein Mann vollkommener Wissen-
 schaft";²¹⁵ "ein Meister des Wissens";²¹⁶ "einer, der's
 wirklich weiss";²¹⁷ "one whose conclusions are sound";²¹⁸
 "an enlightened man";²¹⁹ "klarerer Erkenntnis";²²⁰ "ein redlich
 Denkender."²²¹ LXX, which is characterised by incorrect
 division of clauses in verses 3-5, renders 4b: $\alpha\delta\acute{\iota}\kappa\omega\varsigma$
 $\sigma\upsilon\nu\acute{\iota}\epsilon\iota\varsigma$, interpreting $\chi\varsigma$ before $\delta\alpha\lambda$ and transferring
 $\tau\alpha\upsilon$ to the following verse. Ball suggests that $\delta\alpha\lambda$

210. Zöckler, op. cit., p. 581.

211. Pope, op. cit., p. 266.

212. Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 494.

213. Stier, op. cit., p. 175. Cf. Bickell, op. cit., p. 63:
 "ein Einsichtsvoller."

214. Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 198. Cf. König, Buch Hiob,
 p. 368: "ein Vollkommener in bezug auf Erkenntnisweite."

215. Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 171.

216. Hölscher, op. cit., p. 84. Cf. Steinmann, op. cit.,
 p. 218: "un parfait savant"; Renan, op. cit., p. 155:
 "un homme d'une science accomplie" (cf. Loisy, op. cit.,
 p. 171; Larcher, op. cit., p. 145); de Wilde, op. cit.,
 p. 332: "ein Mann gründlichen Wissens"; Alonso Schökel
 and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 504: "un sabio consumado."

217. Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 145. Cf. TEV: "a truly wise
 man."

218. NEB; cf. NJV; NJB.

219. JB.

220. Thilo, op. cit., p. 62.

221. Hirzel, op. cit., p. 222. Cf. Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2,
 p. 244: "one that meaneth honestly"; Peters, op. cit.,
 p. 403: "ein Mann von Einsicht, redlich"; Ostervald:
 "intègre dans ses sentiments" (cf. JPS; Segond); Hahn,
op. cit., p. 283: "ohne Falsch, redlich."

perhaps should be emended to ^יתְּנֵא (or תְּנֵא!) and thus translates: "(And) I (will) declare knowledge with thee."²²² Some commentators interpret תְּנֵא as an allusion to God, and not Elihu.²²³ Accordingly, Terrien translates: "que le Dieu de la science parfaite soit avec toi!",²²⁴ while Hontheim renders תְּנֵא as "der Allweise."²²⁵

The majority of scholars interpret verse 4b as signifying either extent or profundity of knowledge;²²⁶ or absolute truth or omniscience.²²⁷ Alternatively, some understand תְּנֵא תְּנֵא merely as referring to honesty or moral purity.²²⁸

222. Ball, op. cit., p. 394.

223. Cf. Ibn Ezra, cited in Reichert, op. cit., p. 185; K-B, p. 215; Terrien, "Book of Job, IB, vol. 3, p. 1155; and Job (CAT), p. 234, n. 1; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 255; Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 174; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 188. Against this interpretation, cf. Rashi, cited in Reichert, op. cit., p. 185; B-D-B, p. 395; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 305; Driver, Book of Job in the Revised Version, p. 106; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 309; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 539; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 113; Gordis, BOJ, p. 412; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 332. According to Nichols, op. cit., p. 162, the reference may be to God, but the context suggests otherwise.

224. Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 234.

225. Hontheim, op. cit., p. 352; cf. Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 109.

226. Cf. inter alia König, Buch Hiob, p. 368; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 581; Strahan, op. cit., p. 299; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 277; Andersen, op. cit., p. 260.

227. Cf. inter alia A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 246; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 539; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 476; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 113; Stier, op. cit., p. 338.

228. Cf. inter alia JPS; Ostervald; Segond; Hahn, op. cit., p. 283; Hirzel, op. cit., p. 222; Peters, op. cit., p. 403; Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 494.

Thus Gordis, against the view that Elihu claims perfect knowledge for himself as inconsistent with the context of 36:26, renders 4b: "a truthful man is speaking with you," that is, "one perfect, wholehearted in thought, integer, sincere in ideas."²²⁹ According to Rowley, אִי־יָיִן denotes "complete," as in the testimony of God in 2:3 concerning the wholeness of Job's character.²³⁰ Staples translates: "One that is sound in knowledge is with thee," that is, in the sense of an "honest man," as in Ps. 101:2; Prov. 11:20.²³¹ Conversely, several commentators interpret verse 4b as ironical.²³²

While the signification of אִי־יָיִן as honesty or moral perfection may be suggested by the statement of Elihu in 33:3,²³³ several factors support extent or profundity of knowledge as the correct interpretation: (i) The noun אִי־יָיִן elsewhere in the Old Testament denotes either the omniscience of God (I Sam. 2:3; Ps. 73:11) or the knowledge which derives from God (Isa. 11:9; 28:9; Jer. 3:15).²³⁴

229. Gordis, BOJ, pp. 406, 412.

230. Rowley, Job, p. 227.

231. Staples, op. cit., pp. 34, 69-70. Kissane, op. cit., pp. 242, 245, translates "perfect in knowledge," that is, the knowledge of Elihu is sound and his words are sincere.

232. Cf. A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 321, and, tentatively, Andersen, op. cit., p. 260. Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 234, n. 1, interprets 4b as containing an inaugural wish similar to angelic salutations which, in this context, creates a humorous effect.

233. Cf. Kissane, op. cit., p. 245.

234. Cf. Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 450.

(ii) The use of the plural form in verse 4_b would appear intended to indicate both the origin and the extent of Elihu's knowledge.²³⁵ Dhorme comments: "The plural of **יָדָעַתְּ** denotes Knowledge, with a capital letter!"²³⁶

(iii) The virtually identical expression **יָדָעַתְּ יָדָעַתְּ** occurs in 37:16 and signifies "perfect in knowledge."

With regard to the significance of the rhetorical exordium, Habel interprets verses 2-4 as evidence of the deliberate characterisation of Elihu as a brash fool.²³⁷ Hertzberg, on the other hand, writes: "Elihu tritt hier besonders sichtbar als der Anwalt Gottes auf";²³⁸ and according to Hontheim, Elihu is represented as a supernatural, enlightened figure, that is, a prophet.²³⁹ In response to Habel, however, the supposition of an intentional caricature on the part of the author is demonstrably inconsistent with the sincerity of the subsequent speech of Elihu and, indeed, of chapters 32-37 as a whole. There is no reason to doubt that the extravagant self-praise of verses 2-4 fulfils the apologetic purpose of

235. Cf. Botterweck, op. cit., p. 479; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 450.

236. Dhorme, op. cit., p. 539. Cf. Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 476.

237. Habel, "The Role of Elihu," in In the Shelter of Elyon, p. 92. Cf. Stier, op. cit., p. 338: "Ironisiert der Autor Elihu und seinesgleichen oder nimmt er allen Ernstes das theologische non plus ultra für sich in Anspruch?" Against the ironical conception of 36:1-4, cf. Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 188; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 539; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 476.

238. Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 148.

239. Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

the poet to distinguish Elihu clearly as a spokesman for God. At the same time, in connection with the interpretations of Hertzberg and Hontheim, the exegesis of verses 2-4 strongly implies a polemical intention against the Divine speeches:²⁴⁰

(i) Elihu is represented as **תָּמִיד אֱלֹהִים**, the form of which differs only superficially from the epithet applied to God in 37:16 (**אֱלֹהִים תָּמִיד**); (ii) The designation of Elihu as "perfect in knowledge" creates a dissonance in relation to the subsequent appearance of God and thus serves to call into question the purpose of Elihu's concluding discourse in relation to the speeches of God. In view of the fact that the discourse of 36:5ff. immediately precedes the theophany in 38:1, the rhetorical introduction, verse 4b in particular, necessarily detracts from the divine response and strongly suggests that Elihu interposes, not merely as a spokesman for, but as a substitute for, God.

(b) The hymn extolling the incomprehensible wisdom and greatness of God in 36:22-37:24 is interpreted by many commentators as a prelude to the theophany in 38:1ff.²⁴¹ According

240. On the hermeneutical significance of 36:1-4, cf. the chapter following, pp. 344ff.

241. Cf. inter alia Budde, Buch Hiob, pp. xviii, 218-19; Posselt, op. cit., pp. 55-58; Boelicke, op. cit., pp. 33-34, 37; Zöckler, op. cit., pp. 580-81; Weiser, Buch Hiob, pp. 234, 236; Stuhlmann, op. cit., p. 44; Dillmann, op. cit., p. 314; Cox, op. cit., pp. 414-15; Hitzig, op. cit., p. 267; Cornill, op. cit., pp. 429-30; Lambert, op. cit., pp. 27-28; Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 24, 34; Ball, op. cit., p. 7; Cornely, op. cit., p. 59; Peters, op. cit., p. 24; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 115; Lamparter, op. cit., p. 218; Hemraj, op. cit., p. 67; Andersen,

to Terrien, the survey of the marvels of nature celebrates the work of God successively in autumn (36:26-37:3), in winter (37:4-13), and in summer (37:14-24), and thus prepares for the appearance of the deity in the autumnal new year (38:1ff.).²⁴² As Lévêque observes, however, it is questionable whether the panorama of natural phenomena exhibits a distinct literary structure or logical thematic development on the basis of which it is possible to discern the cyclical succession of seasons.²⁴³ On the contrary, the various statements do not appear to be intended to convey precise, clearly defined concepts as such, but rather to be interpreted cumulatively as a totality. Despite similarities in style to the Divine speeches, it must be seriously questioned whether there is any exegetical basis for the interpretation of 36:21-37:24 as a transition to the theophany in 38:1.

From a hermeneutical standpoint, the peroration of Elihu's discourse (37:19-24) is of crucial significance:

- 19 Tell us what we are to say to him;
We cannot state our case because of darkness.
- 20 Should it be told to him that I wish to speak?
Does a man ask to be swallowed up?
- 21 And now they cannot look upon the light,
(when) it is bright in the skies;

op. cit., p. 258; de Wilde, op. cit., pp. 338, 343-44;

Pope, op. cit., p. 290; Reddy, op. cit., p. 91.

242. Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 239ff.

243. Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 566.

And a wind has passed and cleared them.

22 Out of the north comes [brightness];
Upon God is awesome majesty.

23 The Almighty, we cannot find him;
(He is) exalted in power and judgment (justice),
And great righteousness; he does not [answer].

24 Therefore men should fear him;
He does not regard all the wise in heart.

Although the text of Elihu's peroration is admittedly ambiguous and, in certain places, probably corrupt (particularly verses 21 and 23),²⁴⁴ the essence, if not the precise details, of the argumentation is apparently clear and may be delineated as follows: — 19-20. In 19a, Elihu challenges Job to declare his case against God, that is, with what words he intends to debate God. In the context of the preceding hymn extolling the wondrous works of the deity, 19a is obviously a rhetorical question, an ironic rebuke of Job's oft-expressed desire to argue his case in the presence of the divinity. That is, God is exalted above man; thus Job cannot hope to appear before the divinity because of the ignorance (**תְּוִי**, lit.: "darkness")²⁴⁵ and lack of understanding of

244. On the interpretative difficulties of the text, cf. Driver-Gray, p. 322ff., and Philological Notes, p. 295ff.

245. The term **תְּוִי** is generally interpreted as signifying ignorance or lack of understanding; cf. A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 256; Driver, Book of Job in the Revised Version, p. 112; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 321; Nichols, op. cit., p. 173; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 178; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., p. 118; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 592; Segond; Renan, op. cit., p. 163; Hirzel, op. cit., p. 233; G.A. Barton, op. cit., p. 286; Kraeling, op. cit., p. 137; Reichert, op. cit., p. 194; Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, p. 128;

man in relation to the incomparable wisdom and greatness of God. A second rhetorical question follows in verse 20 and connects with 19b: because of the exaltedness of God and the ignorance of man, Job's demand for a hearing would be tantamount to seeking his own destruction,²⁴⁶ a reference

Pope, op. cit., p. 279; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 86. According to Berechiah, p. 250 in the English translation, "darkness" is to be equated with God's "hiding place" and his "surrounding"; while Kissane, op. cit., p. 257, interprets as referring to the darkness which envelops God, or the darkness of ignorance (cf. Rowley, Job, p. 239). In the view of Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 266, the sense of the preceding verse may indicate "the bewildering blinding of the eyes, when they are turned in a bold controversy with the Almighty towards the sunny heavens." Conversely, Gordis, BOJ, p. 431, interprets **תִּוְּן** literally as referring to the darkness of the storm which continues in the verses following (cf. A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 328). LXX renders 19b: "**καὶ παυσώμεθα πολλὰ λέγοντες**"; cf. Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 590: "nous n'argumenterons plus, nous retiendrons notre bouche"; Ball, op. cit., p. 86: "And from marshalling words we will refrain!"; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 244: "A cause de nos ténèbres, nous ne l'attaquerons pas." Fohrer, Buch Hiob, pp. 483-84, and de Wilde, op. cit., p. 340, translate "Sprachlosigkeit," emending **תִּוְּן** in place of MT. Verse 19b is left untranslated by JB and Larcher, op. cit., p. 151.

246. The verb **וַיִּגַּד** in 20b is for the most part interpreted on the basis of **וַיִּגַּד**: "to swallow up, engulf," thus signifying, in a figurative sense, destruction or annihilation; cf. inter alia Vulg.; AV; RV; JPS; NAB; B-D-B, p. 118; Ostervald; Segond; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 321; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 225; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 301; Ewald, op. cit., p. 348; Renan, op. cit., p. 163; Staples, op. cit., p. 37; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 234; Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 516; Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, p. 68; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 342; Hitzig, op. cit., p. 272; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 201; Loisy, op. cit., p. 175; Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 348; Ley, op. cit., p. 131; König, Buch Hiob, p. 391; Peters, op. cit., p. 423; Studer, op. cit., p. 162; Pope, op. cit., p. 279. A number of critics, however, translate according to **וַיִּגַּד II**: "to be communicated to, to inform, to make known"; cf. JB; NJB; K-B, p. 131; Dhorme, op. cit., pp. 570-71; Fohrer,

not only to the omnipotence of God, but also to the divine omniscience which excludes the possibility that God will condescend to justify his actions.

— 21-22. A number of commentators interpret verses 21-22 as alluding to a theophany and thus preparing for the appearance of God in 38:1.²⁴⁷ This interpretation, however,

Buch Hiob, pp. 483-84; Gordis, BOJ, p. 410 (but cf. p. 432 and see reference to BGAM below); Lamparter, op. cit., p. 222; Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 506; Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 148; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 439; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 224; Larcher, op. cit., p. 151; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 86; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 590; Hesse, op. cit., p. 191. Cf. NEB: "Can any man dictate to God when he is to speak? or command him to make proclamation?" (Cf. de Wilde, op. cit., p. 340.) Also, some commentators interpret on the basis of מִלֵּי III: "to confuse, to be confused"; cf. NJV; Nichols, op. cit., p. 173; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), pp. 497, 501. Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 178, interpreting מִלֵּי as לִלְבֵּי: "to confuse, confound," emends vs. 20: "Giebts einen Tadler für ihn, wenn er redet, Oder sagt ein Mann, dass er verwirrt sei?", i.e., "Is there a rebuker (reading לִלְבֵּי as in 40:2 in place of לִלְבֵּי) for him (i.e., God) when he (God) speaks, or does a man say that he (i.e., God, according to Driver-Gray, p. 322; Philological Notes, p. 295) is confused?" (Cf. Gordis, BGAM, p. 296: "will He be confused?") In addition to the foregoing, Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 114, translates 20b: "oder giebt jemand zu, dass er mundtot gemacht wird?" Buttenwieser, op. cit., p. 144, interpreting vs. 20 as belonging to a speech of Job, translates: "When He ordaineth that one be destroyed, could a writ or a recorder plead my case, so that I might approach and silence Him, as I should a human being?" LXX renders vs. 20: μή Βίβλος ἢ γραμματεὺς μοι παρέστηκε ἵνα ἄνθρωπον ἐστὶ κὼς κατασιωπήσω. A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 329, interpreting vs. 20 in the context of the storm, translates: "Wird sie — die Wolke — verscheucht auf mein Geheiss, oder kann irgendeiner befehlen, dass sie Zerstiebe?"

247. Cf. Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 225; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 303; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 485; Gordis, BGAM, pp. 108-09; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 243; Hitzig, op. cit.,

may be regarded as doubtful on the basis of several considerations. — 21. The text of verse 21 is exceedingly problematical²⁴⁸ and may be interpreted either (i) consequentially: "And now, men cannot look upon the light, when it is bright in the skies, and (when) the wind has passed and cleared them,"²⁴⁹ interpreting stich a as the main clause; or (ii)

pp. 272-73; Peters, op. cit., p. 425f.; Hontheim, op. cit., pp. 24, 260; Ball, op. cit., pp. 7, 413; Cornely, op. cit., p. 59; Stier, op. cit., pp. 344-45; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 349; Hemraj, op. cit., p. 67.

248. Cf. Dillmann, op. cit., pp. 318-19; Gray in Driver-Gray, pp. 322-23. In LXX, πᾶσιν δὲ οὐχ ὁρατὸν τὸ φῶς (21a) is a paraphrase of stich a of the Hebrew text. τὸ φῶς ἐστὶν ἐν τοῖς παλαιώμασιν (21b, derived from Theodotion), ὥσπερ τὸ παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ γεφῶν (21c), represents a double translation of חַיָּה בְּיָדָיו. LXX omits 21c of the Hebrew text: cf. Bickell, op. cit., p. 64; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 483; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 591; Hesse, op. cit., p. 191. Jastrow, op. cit., p. 341, deletes 21b (cf. Ley, op. cit., p. 131). Some commentators transfer vs. 21 after vs. 18: cf. Staples, op. cit., p. 36; Pope, op. cit., p. 279; Strahan, op. cit., pp. 310-11; Lamparter, op. cit., p. 222; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 224 (inserting 21b between 22a and 22b). Duhm, Buch Hiob, pp. 178-79, proposes extensive rearrangement of the text: vss. 19-20, 18, 21ac, 22a, 21b, 22b (cf. Augé, op. cit., pp. 319-20). Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 148, transposes 22a between 21a and 21bc. According to some critics, vs. 22a is to be connected with 21c: cf. Andersen, op. cit., p. 268; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 202; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 355; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 439; Kissane, op. cit., p. 250 (transposing 21-22a before 37:9); G. Richter, op. cit., p. 82; Buttenwieser, op. cit., pp. 143-44 (transferring חַיָּה בְּיָדָיו to 21c).
249. Cf. RSV; RV marg.; Segond; Driver, Book of Job in the Revised Version, p. 112; Nichols, op. cit., p. 173; A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, pp. 256-57; Peake, Job, p. 310; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 234; Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 201; Studer, op. cit., p. 162; G.A. Barton, op. cit., p. 287; Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 591; Reichert, op. cit., p. 194; Gordis, BGAM, p. 296 (but not BOJ: see below); Pope, op. cit., p. 279; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 497.

temporally: "And now, men see not the light, which is bright (or "obscure"²⁵⁰) in the skies (or "clouds"), but a wind passes and clear them,"²⁵¹ understanding stich c as the main clause. On the basis of interpretation (i), the text is understood by some critics to mean: if man cannot gaze at the brilliant light of the sun when the clouds have dissipated and the skies overhead have cleared and brightened, how much less is it possible to behold the awesome majesty of God (verse 22).²⁵² On the basis of interpretation (ii), the passage is understood figuratively by some commentators to signify: as the sun, which is at present obscured by the clouds, will again become visible when the skies have cleared, so God, exalted far above man and therefore hidden from him, may nonetheless

250. The root **נִהַי**, which in Aramaic and Arabic signifies "to shine," "to be bright," "to be clear," conveys a similar but opposite meaning in Syriac: "to be dark, obscure" (cf. Driver-Gray, *Philological Notes*, pp. 295-96).

251. Cf. AV; RV; JPS; AT; NEB; NAB; JB; NJB; NJV; Staples, op. cit., p. 36; Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 225; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 302; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 322; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 571; Zöckler, op. cit., p. 592; Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 267; Renan, op. cit., p. 164; G.H.B. Wright, op. cit., p. 118; Fried. Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 114; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 244; König, Buch Hiob, p. 391; Peters, op. cit., p. 423; Hahn, op. cit., p. 299; Thilo, op. cit., p. 65; Hitzig, op. cit., p. 272; Larcher, op. cit., p. 151; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 439; Guillaume, Studies in the Book of Job, p. 68; Lamparter, op. cit., p. 222; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 340. The translation of Vulg. interprets stichs b and c as the main clauses: "subito aer cogitur in nubes et ventus transiens fugabit eas" (cf. Gordis, BOJ, p. 433).

252. Cf. Nichols, op. cit., p. 173; Dillmann, op. cit., pp. 318-19; Driver, Book of Job in the Revised Version, p. 112; Ewald, op. cit., p. 348. Cf. also Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 485; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 234; but see n. 253 below.

manifest his presence at any moment (verse 22). In this context, verse 21 is regarded as alluding to the imminent appearance of God.²⁵³

On the latter interpretation, however, the contrast, that is, the transition from the darkness of the storm to the brilliance of the sunshine, would be more naturally expressed in stich c by the imperfect, as opposed to the perfect tense (הִתְהַלַּל).²⁵⁴ In addition, this interpretation is inconsistent with the general theme of verses 19-24, namely, the unfathomableness and unapproachableness of God, and is contradicted by what follows.²⁵⁵ Notwithstanding Gray's objection

253. Cf. Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 225; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 303; Peters, op. cit., pp. 425-26; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 260; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 243; Hitzig, op. cit., p. 272; Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 528; Gordis, BGAM, pp. 108-09; Ball, op. cit., p. 413; Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 152; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 348; Cornely, op. cit., p. 59; Hemraj, op. cit., p. 67. Cf. also Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, pp. 568-69, and Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 485 (although deleting stich c). The commentary of Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 237, is ambiguous on this question.
254. Cf. Peake, Job, p. 310; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 323. Posselt, op. cit., p. 57, interprets הִתְהַלַּל וַיִּתְהַלַּל as a conditional clause and translates according to Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 57: "Und jetzt zwar sieht man nicht das Sonnenlicht, das glanzvoll in den Ätherhöhen steht; doch fährt ein Wind darüber hin, klärt er sie auf." Cf. also Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 179, who transfers stich b after 22a, and interprets 21ac as conditional. Gordis, BOJ, p. 433, regarding stich a as a circumstantial clause and stichs b and c as the main clauses, translates: "And now, after men had seen no light, the skies brighten, for the wind has passed and cleared them" (cf. A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 329).
255. Cf. A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 257; Peake, Job, p. 310; Rowley, Job, p. 239.

that the translation "and when the wind has passed" etc. renders stich c "obviously otiose,"²⁵⁶ the interpretation of verse 21 consequentially is more suitable to the context.

— 22. The precise signification of verse 22 is also uncertain. The text is ambiguous; in addition, the relationship of stich a to stich b, and the connection of verse 22 with the preceding and following verses, are not clearly apparent. Despite the obscurity of verse 21ff., it seems probable, on the basis of the canonical text, that 22a is a continuation of 21c. Accordingly, verses 21-22a form a double distich,²⁵⁷ with $\overline{\text{נ}}\overline{\text{ר}}\overline{\text{ז}}$, "brightness" (22a) (or MT $\overline{\text{ז}}\overline{\text{ר}}\overline{\text{ז}}$, "gold"), as a poetic parallel to $\overline{\text{נ}}\overline{\text{ר}}$, "light" (21a). Conversely, Habel interprets $\overline{\text{ז}}\overline{\text{ר}}\overline{\text{ז}}$ as a parallel to $\overline{\text{נ}}\overline{\text{ר}}\overline{\text{ז}}$, "majesty" (22b).²⁵⁸ However, the parallelism of $\overline{\text{נ}}\overline{\text{ר}}\overline{\text{ז}}$ (22b) and $\overline{\text{נ}}\overline{\text{ר}}\overline{\text{ז}}$ (23a) suggests that 22b is to be connected with 23a (22b-23 thus forming a double distich) as the introduction of Elihu's concluding doxology.²⁵⁹

Verse 22a is interpreted by some commentators as referring to the approach of God in radiant splendour from the

256. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 322.

257. Cf. n. 248 above.

258. Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 501.

259. Cf. Nichols, op. cit., p. 174; Staples, op. cit., p. 37; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 179; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 572; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 355; Peters, op. cit., pp. 423, 426f.; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 202; Andersen, op. cit., p. 268; Houtsma, op. cit., p. 86; Kissane, op. cit., pp. 256, 258; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 439; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 224; de Wilde, op. cit., pp. 349-50; Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 517; G. Richter, op. cit., p. 82; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 86.

north.²⁶⁰ Lamparter transposes verse 22 after verse 24 in order to provide a transition to the divine speeches, and translates stich b: "Es naht Gott in hoheitsvollem Glanz."²⁶¹ Kraeling suggests that verse 22 possibly represents a variant termination of Elihu's discourse, and has perhaps been composed as a transition to the theophany in chapter 38.²⁶² Ley, on the other hand, argues that the portrayal of the clear and bright sky in verses 21-22 contrasts with the appearance of God "out of the storm" in 38:1.²⁶³ Verses 21-22, however, contain noteworthy parallels with theophanic descriptions elsewhere in the Old Testament: "a storm wind came out of the north, a great cloud with flashing fire [and brilliant light all around it] and, in the midst, like gleaming bronze" (Ezek. 1:4); "Like the bow that appears in the cloud on the day of rain, such was the brightness to be seen round about. Such was the vision of the likeness of the glory of Yahweh" (Ezek. 1:28; cf. Ezek. 1:27; 8:2; Exod. 16:10; 19:16; Pss. 18:11-13; 50:2; 97:2; 104:2; Isa. 19:1; Nahum 1:3; Hab. 3:4; on the "north" as the domicile of God, cf. Isa. 14:13; also Ps. 48:3).

260. Cf. Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 225; Peters, op. cit., pp. 426-427; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 260; Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 202; Sutcliffe, "Job," p. 439; Ball, op. cit., p. 413; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 349; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 117; Gordis, BGAM, pp. 108-09; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 243; Stier, op. cit., p. 344. Sicre Diaz in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 515, interprets **לְנֶגֶד** as "los rayos dorados de la teofanía."

261. Lamparter, op. cit., p. 223.

262. Kraeling, op. cit., p. 138.

263. Ley, op. cit., p. 143; cf. Cheyne, "Job, Book of," Encyclopaedia Biblica, 2, col. 2480.

Alternatively, if verses 21-22 are interpreted, not temporally of the present, but consequentially, then of course the words of Elihu are to be understood hypothetically as elucidating a universal truth and consequently not indicative of the prevailing atmospheric conditions. Thus, no conflict can be said to exist between verses 21-22 and the description of the appearance of God in 38:1.

However, while the language of verses 21-22 is strongly suggestive of a theophany, the interpretation of the text as preparatory to chapter 38 is inconsistent with the context of Elihu's peroration, which stresses the unsearchableness and unapproachableness of God, and is contradicted by verses 23-24. Furthermore, it is a central feature of the argumentation of chapters 32-37 that the appearance of God is altogether unnecessary. Thus it is preferable to interpret verse 22a as a continuation of the description in verse 21. Accordingly, verse 22b is understood either (i) as expressing the antithesis: that is, if man cannot look at the brilliant light of the sun when the wind has swept away the clouds, how then can he behold the majesty of God;²⁶⁴ or (ii) as introducing the doxology which concludes Elihu's discourse.²⁶⁵

264. Cf. inter alia Driver, Book of Job in the Revised Version, p. 112; A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 257; Peake, Job, p. 311; Königsberger, op. cit., pp. 437-38; Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 267; Ewald, op. cit., p. 348. Cf. also Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 485, although interpreting verses 21-22 as alluding to the theophany.

265. Cf. n. 259 above.

— 23-24. Franz Delitzsch interprets verse 23 as completing the thought expressed in verse 22: whereas gold is accessible in the distant regions of the north, God remains impenetrable, beyond the comprehension of man; nonetheless, one can at all times be assured of the rightness and goodness of God's actions.²⁶⁶ Budde explains the apparent contradiction between 23a and the depiction of the theophany in verse 22 on the basis of the necessity to distinguish, on the one hand, between the attainment of God on the part of man, and, on the other, the voluntary self-revelation of God.²⁶⁷ In the view of Lévêque, the theophanic context of verses 21-22 serves the paranetic purpose of the Elihu author: that is, if Job cannot tolerate the brightness of the sun, will he continue to maintain his arguments and claims before the redoubtable mystery of God, the Inaccessible whose appearance is imminent?²⁶⁸

Verse 23 is generally understood as signifying that, although God is beyond human comprehension, he remains supremely just and righteous in his actions toward man (cf. the statement of Zophar in 11:7). $\text{לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה אֱלֹהִים כְּעֹשֶׂה אָדָם}$ in stich c is, for the most part, interpreted on the basis of לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה : "to do violence to, to oppress; to be bowed down, afflicted"; and thus translated: "he does not oppress," "he does not afflict," or, reading לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה in connection with $\text{וְלֹא יִכְרַח אֱלֹהִים אֶת אָדָם}$, "he

266. Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 305.

267. Budde, Buch Hiob, p. 226.

268. Lévêque, Job et son Dieu, p. 569.

does not pervert (the course of) justice." On this interpretation, 23bc may represent a refutation of Job's assertion in 9:20-24 that God acts unjustly toward the innocent (cf. 36:5).

Conversely, LXX interprets the verb $\pi\lambda\upsilon$ on the basis of $\pi\lambda\upsilon$: "to answer, reply," reading $\pi\lambda\upsilon$ ²⁶⁹ and translating: $\text{οὐκ οἶεῖ ἑπακούειν αὐτόν}$. Accordingly, a number of commentators translate "he does not answer"; that is, God does not justify his actions to man.²⁷⁰ Against this interpretation, Driver comments that "the thought is inadequately expressed, besides being alien to the context,"²⁷¹ while Dillmann asserts that the reading "he does not answer" conflicts with 33:14ff. and 38:1.²⁷²

As the present chapter has shown, however, the Elihu interpolation is to be interpreted not only, and not primarily, as a repudiation of Job's complaints against the deity, but as a criticism of God's answer in 38:1ff. It is apparent that,

269. Cf. Syriac; Vulg.: "enarrari non potest."

270. Cf. NAB; Luther; Segond; Beer, Text des Buches Hiob, p. 236; Hoffmann, op. cit., p. 104; Rosenmüller, op. cit., p. 860; Hirzel, op. cit., p. 234; Renan, op. cit., p. 164; Loisy, op. cit., p. 175; Bickell, op. cit., p. 64; Hontheim, op. cit., p. 355; A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 329; Buttenwieser, op. cit., pp. 144, 282-83; Eerdmans, op. cit., p. 13; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 497. Nichols, op. cit., p. 174, translates "He afflicteth not," but allows for the possibility that the text is to be pointed $\pi\lambda\upsilon$: "he answereth not" (cf. Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 268; Hemraj, op. cit., p. 67). Stich c is deleted by Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 483; Steuernagel, op. cit., p. 349; Hesse, op. cit., p. 191.

271. Driver, Philological Notes, p. 297.

272. Dillmann, op. cit., p. 320; cf. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 324.

in the view of the later author, the very appearance of God is altogether unnecessary. The Elihu chapters have been composed for the purpose of providing a more appropriate response to the allegations of Job. Moreover, in 33:14ff., God himself does not "answer" Job; rather, Elihu, describing the various methods of divine communication with man, speaks "for" or "on behalf of" God. While the Hebrew text may be pointed either as MT הִשְׁמִיט (oppresses, afflicts), or הִשְׁמַיֵּט (answers), the translation "he does not oppress (afflict)" seems inconsistent with Elihu's earlier pronouncements (cf. 36:8, 13, 15).²⁷³ By contrast, the reading "he does not answer" (cf. הִשְׁמַיֵּט אֵל ; 35:12) accords with the central theme of Elihu's peroration, viz. the exaltedness and unapproachableness of God, and forms a more suitable parallel to $\text{לֹא יִשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אִם יִשְׁמַע}$ in stich a.²⁷⁴ In this regard, verse 23 presents an implicit rebuke of 23:2-3, 8-9, wherein Job has complained of his inability to "find" God, and has declared that, if given the opportunity (that is, to present his case before the divinity), he will demand an "answer" (verse 5), that is, demand that God justify his actions toward him. In any event, quite apart from the ambiguity of הִשְׁמִיט , the context of verse 23a is contradicted by the appearance of God in chapter 38.

273. Cf. Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 501.

274. Cf. Beer, Text des Buches Hiob, p. 236; Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 268; Bittenwieser, op. cit., p. 283.

The conclusion of Elihu's discourse (verse 24) connects awkwardly with the Divine speeches; on the basis of MT, 24**b** is clearly irreconcilable with the subsequent manifestation of God. Whereas Fohrer deletes the verse as an addition corresponding to 28:28,²⁷⁵ Szczygiel, in order to provide a transition to the theophany, omits the negative $\chi\zeta$ and translates stich **b**: "er sieht nach allen, die weisen Herzens sind."²⁷⁶ A number of commentators, following LXX, translate: "all that are wise of heart fear him,"²⁷⁷ interpreting כֹּל־חֲכָמֵי־לֵב as the subject, rendering $\chi\zeta$ as יִרְאֶה , and reading יִרְאֶה־לֵב in connection with יִרְאֶה , "to fear." According to Staples, verse 24**b** thus provides an excellent transition to the speech of God.²⁷⁸ This interpretation, however, is irreconcilably opposed to the general argumentation of verses 19ff., and indicates perhaps that the reading "they fear (or revere) him" in stich **b** represents either a harmonisation of the text in order to connect with 38:1, or the misreading of יִרְאֶה־לֵב in connection with the root יִרְאֶה , "to fear" (as in the similarly sounding יִרְאֶה־לֵב in stich **a**) instead of יִרְאֶה , "to see, to look at." Alternatively, some critics, while interpreting

275. Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 484.

276. Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 203.

277. Cf. Syriac; JB; NJB; Andersen, op. cit., p. 268; Gordis, BOJ, p. 431; Houtsma, op. cit., p. 86; Larcher, op. cit., p. 151; Terrien, Job (CAT), p. 244; Battenwieser, op. cit., p. 141. Cf. NEB: "all who are wise look to him"; cf. also de Wilde, op. cit., p. 341.

278. Staples, op. cit., p. 84.

כל-חכמי-לב as the subject of stich b, otherwise retain MT: "the wise of heart cannot see him."²⁷⁹

But for the most part, 24b is translated on the basis of MT, according to which Peake, Strahan and Duhm interpret the passage as a final criticism (a "parting thrust," in the words of Peake) of the poet for representing God as condescending to appear before Job.²⁸⁰ The negative affirmation of the divine providence in 23a[c], 24b is significant: man cannot attain to God, and God does not concern himself with those who consider themselves wise. The use of the negative accentuates the inconsistency between Elihu's peroration and the appearance of the deity in the immediately following verse. Indeed, the context of verses 23-24 serves virtually to exclude the possibility that God will reveal his presence,²⁸¹ and is thus an indication of the polemical intention of the Elihu author with regard to the Divine speeches.

It is evident, then, that verses 19-24 do not form a transition to chapter 38. On the contrary, they militate decisively against the appearance of God in 38:1. The emphasis on the unfathomableness and unapproachableness of the deity, the central motif of Elihu's concluding verses, precludes God's deigning to justify his actions before man. The verses

279. Cf. NAB; NJV; Kissane, op. cit., pp. 256, 258; Ball, op. cit., p. 86; Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 497.

280. Cf. Peake, Job, p. 312; Strahan, op. cit., p. 311; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 180.

281. Cf. A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 329.

show the polemical intent of the author not only against Job, but principally against the Divine speeches.

Accordingly, the section comprising 36:22-37:24, which interprets various natural phenomena in connection with the absolute righteousness and justice of God (an emphasis conspicuously absent from the magnificent survey of the plant and animal world in chapters 38 and 39), serves to express a concluding apologia for God, and not a prelude to the theophany in 38:1ff.

. . . .

On the basis of the "internal" evidence in the Elihu pericope, which has been the subject of examination in this chapter, the following conclusions may be drawn.

Firstly, Elihu is not a comical figure, and thus the Elihu speeches are not intended as a humorous interlude. It would be difficult to reconcile the concept of Elihu as a caricature with the manifest sincerity of chapters 33-37.

Secondly, there is no basis for the conception of Elihu as a mediator, or referee, between God and Job. On the contrary, it is evident from the character of the prose prologue, the speech of introduction (32:6ff), the refutation discourses of chapters 33-35, and the concluding apologia of chapters 36-37, that Elihu intervenes on behalf of God and against Job. It is noteworthy that Elihu's anger against the three friends (as stated in the prose introduction) results not from their

arguments as such, but from their failure to refute convincingly the arguments of Job, Otherwise Elihu occupies essentially the same position as Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, although he regards himself as the recipient of a superior wisdom.

Thirdly, and most important from an interpretative standpoint, the Elihu speeches, while a criticism of the Dialogue and a repudiation of Job's complaints, are principally a polemic against the Divine speeches. Furthermore, as is suggested by 32:13, 33:1-7, 33:23, 34:23, 36:1-4, 37:19-24, the speeches are not to be interpreted merely as a corrective to the Divine speeches; they are intended to render the appearance of God altogether unnecessary. As Ley points out, with reference to the non-recognition ("Nichtanerkennung") of the Divine speeches by the Elihu author, Elihu takes the trouble in each speech to hint that a response from God to Job is impossible.²⁸² The Elihu section, therefore, cannot be understood as providing a transition to the theophany.

The chapter following will focus, not on the internal evidence or content of the Elihu speeches, but on the question of context: namely, their function in the final redaction of the poem.

282. Ley, op. cit., pp. 142-43, citing also 35:5 and 36:25.

CHAPTER VII

ELIHU AND THE INTERPRETATION OF THE BOOK OF JOB

In order to delineate the place of Elihu in the interpretation of the book of Job, this final chapter, building on the idea of a polemic as developed in chapter 6, will examine: firstly, the relationship between the speeches of Elihu and the Divine speeches, focusing on two aspects (a) the relation between the prose prologue (32:1-5) and the Divine speeches, and (b) the relation between chapters 36-37 and the Divine speeches; secondly, the relationship between the Elihu speeches and the Epilogue; and thirdly, the function of the Elihu pericope in the canonical text of Job. In conclusion, it will be suggested that historical criticism, as opposed to the non-historical criticism which is prevalent today, has continuing value in application not merely to the book of Job but to the Old Testament as a whole.

I. The Relationship between the Elihu Pericope and the Divine Speeches

A. The Prose Prologue (32:1-5)

As noted in chapter 6, it is a central thesis of this dissertation that in addition to furnishing a necessary transition from the concluding speech of Job (chapters 29-31)

to the discourses of 32:6ff., the prose introduction serves to thematise the discourses of Elihu and, more important, provides the key to the interpretation of chapters 32-37 in the final redaction of the book. As further noted, verses 2b-3 are of particular hermeneutical significance:

He [i.e., Elihu] became angry with Job because he considered himself to be righteous (**יָדָעַתִּי**) before God; and against his three friends he became angry, because they had not found an answer and [yet] had condemned (**וְלֹא מָצְאוּ תַּעֲנוּתַי**) Job.

From an interpretative standpoint, this passage is of crucial importance in relation to the subsequent divine speeches, for in 40:8 God inquires of Job:

Would you annul my judgment (**וְיָצִיטֵנִי**)?

Would you condemn me (**וְיִשְׁפֹּטֵנִי**) that you might be justified (**וְיִצְדַּק**)?

Here as in the Elihu speeches, Job is reproached for insisting upon his own righteousness before God. Verse 40:8 is a key passage, for it articulates succinctly the central theme of the book of Job,¹ namely, the nature of the relationship between God and man, as exemplified in the Hebrew term **יָדָעַתִּי**, which is commonly (and somewhat inaccurately) translated in English as "righteous."

The importance of the idea of **יָדָעַתִּי** in the Old Testament cannot be overstated; as von Rad observes:

There is absolutely no concept in the Old Testament

1. Cf. Good, Irony in the Old Testament, p. 238, who refers to 40:8 as "the key question of the entire book."

with so central a significance for all the relationships of human life as that of **הַרְטָצָה**. It is the standard not only for man's relationship to God, but also for his relationships to his fellows

הַרְטָצָה can be described without more ado as the highest value in life, that upon which all life rests when it is properly ordered.²

Cremer defines the essence of **רְטָצָה** thus: "Every relationship brings with it certain claims upon conduct, and the satisfaction of these claims, which issue from the relationship and in which alone the relationship can persist, is described by our term **רְטָצָה**."³ The term **רְטָצָה** thus denotes a standard or norm according to which conduct and character, whether of God, man, or an inanimate entity, are to be judged and to which they ought to conform. A righteous individual, therefore, is one who acts in accordance with the particular demands of a relationship. As the application of the term indicates, however, the concept of **רְטָצָה** in the Old Testament is somewhat complex and encompasses various connotations. It is in this context that the divergent conceptions of **רְטָצָה** in the book of Job must be interpreted.

1. The Elihu Speeches

Interpreting his misfortune as evidence that he is guilty in the eyes of God, Job protests his innocence, his

2. Von Rad, Old Testament Theology, vol. 1, p. 370.
3. H. Cremer, Biblisch-theologisches Wörterbuch (7th ed.; Gotha, 1893), pp. 273-75, cited in von Rad, Old Testament Theology, vol. 1, p. 371, n. 5.

righteousness (cf. 6:29; 9:15, 20; 12:4; 27:5, 6; 29:14; 31:6; cf. also Exod. 23:7f.; Deut. 25:1; I Sam. 24:18; II Sam. 15:4; I Ki. 8:32; Isa. 5:23; 29:21; Amos 2:6; 5:12; Prov. 17:15, 26; 18:5, 17; 24:24). The concept of **רַחֲמִים** in the Old Testament frequently signifies a "just claim," a "right" (cf. Isa. 59:4; Jer. 51:10; Pss. 7:9; 17:1; 18:21, 25); similarly Job expresses confidence in his eventual vindication (cf. 13:18). Elihu, however, rejects Job's declaration of righteousness on two grounds: (a) God is supremely righteous and his government of the world is inexorably just (cf. 34:10ff.; 36:7; 37:23; cf. also 8:3; Isa. 10:22; 28:17; Jer. 11:20; Zeph. 3:5; Pss. 7:10; 11:7; II Chron. 12:6); (b) Job is an unrepentant sinner and, in order to obtain forgiveness and restoration, must confess his sin and experience a change of heart. Thus, in 33:26, Elihu urges Job to make supplication to God:

Then man prays to God, and he accepts (is favourable to) him,
and he sees his face with joy,
and he [God] restores unto man his righteousness.⁴

In this passage, **רַחֲמִים** signifies a saving attribute of God.⁵

4. Alternatively, some commentators, interpreting man, and not God, as the subject of the verb in stich c, emend the text to read: "and he recounts to men his salvation," i.e., proclaims God's "righteousness"; cf. inter alia Beer, BHK; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 292. This interpretation, however, also presupposes the restoration of the sufferer to a state of righteousness by God.

5. There are numerous passages in the Old Testament in which **רַחֲמִים** refers to the redemptive activity of God: cf. Judg. 5:11; I Sam. 12:7; Isa. 1:27; 24:16; 41:10; 42:6,

Job's declaration of righteousness, that is, his claim to be "in the right," is therefore meaningless: PTX is conferred by God, he freely bestows it; man cannot claim righteousness unilaterally. As Lofthouse asserts: the PTX is he who is in the right, but God is he who puts man in the right.⁶

2. The Divine Speeches

It is only in the section comprising 40:8-14 that the Divine speeches give any response to the specific allegations of Job; it is only here that the Divine speeches really focus on Job. The passage contains the essence of the divine reply: in maintaining his own righteousness, Job necessarily impugns the righteousness of God (vs. 8); unless he is able to assume responsibility for the administration of justice in the world, Job has no cause to challenge the divine providence (vss. 9-14). Job's individual situation is not discussed; his quest for justice is simply irrelevant, for the divine response has raised the issue to a different level where the question is not of justice, but of the relation between God and man. In the relationship between Creator and creature, the latter has no legal claim on the former.

The divine response in 40:9-14 illustrates a central

21; 45:8, 13, 24-25; 46:13; 51:5; 54:14, 17; 58:8; 62:1; Jer. 23:5; Micah 6:5; 7:9; Zech. 8:8; Mal. 3:20; Pss. 22:32; 24:6; 31:2; 35:24, 28; 36:7, 11; 40:10, 11; 48:11; 50:6; 51:16; 71:15-16, 19; 89:17; 97:2, 6; 103:6, 17; Prov. 8:18; Dan. 9:16.

6. W.F. Lofthouse, "The Righteousness of Jahveh," Expository Times, 50 (1938-39), p. 345.

feature of the concept of **פְּתִיחַ** in the Old Testament: it is not an absolute ideal ethical standard, but rather signifies "the specific relationship in which the partner had at the time to prove himself true."⁷ Significantly, the Divine speeches nowhere affirm that God himself is righteous, and 40:9-14 do not imply that the divine government of the world is just.

Therein lies a crucial distinction between the Divine speeches and the discourses of Elihu, and such an "answer" can hardly have been acceptable to the zealous orthodoxy of Elihu. A defence of the absolute justice and righteousness of God underlies the entire Elihu pericope. Indeed, as 32:2 emphatically states, Elihu is angry at Job because the latter has considered himself to be righteous before God. Elihu's statement in 32:2 thus reveals an implicit criticism of the Divine speeches. In all probability, this statement therefore represents a direct response to 40:8,⁸ and is a reformulation of the ironical question of God which has been inserted programmatically at the outset of Elihu's discourse, and which serves thereby to establish the speeches in 32:6ff. as an alternative answer to that contained in chapters 38ff. (See

7. Von Rad, Old Testament Theology, vol. 1, p. 371.

8. The parallelism of **פְּתִיחַ** and **עֲוֹן** in 40:8 and 32:3 may have led certain commentators to conclude that MT **וַיְהִי** (32:3) represents a tigqune sopherim and consequently that the text originally read "and had condemned God." According to Zöckler, op. cit., p. 553, the interpretation of **וַיְהִי** as a tigqun is refuted by 40:8, in which Job, and not the friends, is rebuked for having condemned God.

further, pp. 369ff., 374ff.)

B. Chapters 36-37

As has been emphasised,⁹ it is evident that chapters 36 and 37 are a new phase in Elihu's discourse. This is indicated by the variant introduction of 36:1, the rhetorical exordium of 36:2-4, and the different structure of the speech as a whole in relation to chapters 33-35. Further, it has been noted that the description of atmospheric phenomena in 36:26-37:24 is regarded by many commentators as anticipating the discourse of God. Correspondingly, the expression **מִן הַטֶּהוֹם** : "from (out of) the storm" in 38:1 is interpreted by some critics as an allusion to the phenomena described in 36:27ff.¹⁰ McKay expresses the view that without the speeches of Elihu, there would be no "whirlwind" from which God replies to Job.¹¹

Dhorme, however, comments with reference to 36:29-37:4:

The storm described by Elihu is not introduced in order to prepare the way for a theophany, but as one of the extraordinary phenomena which manifest the power of God. It is mingled with other manifestations, and above all it does not end the description,

9. See chap. 6, p. 315, n. 9.

10. Cf. Zöckler, op. cit., p. 601; Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 312; Peters, op. cit., p. 433; Cox, op. cit., pp. 414-15; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 117; de Wilde, op. cit., p. 358; Ball, op. cit., p. 414. According to Pope, op. cit., p. 290, the storm in 38:1 appears to be anticipated in 37:2, "and critics who accept or reject the Elihu speeches both appeal to this point in support of their opposite views." In the opinion of Rowley, Job, p. 241, the whirlwind of 38:1 is not the storm described by Elihu.

11. McKay, op. cit., p. 171, n. 14.

which would be necessary if it were intended to form a transition between the speeches of Elihu and those of Yahweh.¹²

On the other hand, the language of 37:21-22 is strongly suggestive of a theophany; but it is not clear, as has been discussed in the previous chapter,¹³ whether the text is to be interpreted temporally of the present, or consequentially. In the case of the former, some scholars delete **וַיְהִי עוֹרָם**, maintaining that the expression is an addition by a commentator who has mistakenly comprehended the description of verses 21-22 as a present occurrence.¹⁴ In the latter case, the words of Elihu are to be understood hypothetically and not as indicative of the prevailing atmospheric conditions. It is possible that **וַיְהִי עוֹרָם** has been added by the Elihu author in order to connect chapter 37 to the Divine speeches.¹⁵ In all probability, however, the definite article is to be interpreted generically and denotes simply "the storm" as a normal accompaniment of a theophany¹⁶ (cf. I Kings 19:11; Ezek. 1-4;

12. Dhorme, op. cit., p. 574.

13. See chap. 6, pp. 75ff.

14. Cf. A.B. Ehrlich, op. cit., pp. 329-30; Hölscher, op. cit., p. 88. Cf. also Jastrow, op. cit., p. 343. Against this interpretation, cf. de Wilde, op. cit., pp. 358-59.

15. Cf., however, Peake, Job, p. 313.

16. Cf. Dillmann, op. cit., p. 323; König, Buch Hiob, p. 397 (who expresses the opinion that the article denotes the "absolute knowledge"); Strahan, op. cit., p. 316. According to Franz Delitzsch, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 312, the article is generic but refers to the storm described in the Elihu chapters. In the view of A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 261, the article does not necessarily refer to the storm described by Elihu but is to be interpreted generically as signifying: thus Yahweh spoke, namely, out of the storm.

Nahum 1:3; Zech. 9:14¹⁷). Thus, as Strahan asserts, it would not be incorrect to render "out of a storm."¹⁸

Moreover, it is significant that in 38:2 God speaks directly to Job, ignoring Elihu: an indication that chapters 32-37 were absent from the original conception of the poem.¹⁹ But the issue is rather beside the point, for, as the previous chapter has shown, the concluding discourse of Elihu is characterised by a distinct polemic against the Divine speeches. The rhetorical introduction of 36:2-4 strongly implies that Elihu interposes not merely as a spokesman, but as a substitute, for God, while the peroration of 37:19-24 virtually excludes the possibility that God will appear.

In addition to a polemical intent, the text in its present form exhibits various indications of editorial or redactoral activity which suggest the overt thematisation of Elihu's concluding discourse as an alternative "answer" to that contained in chapters 38-42.

17. On the various atmospheric phenomena of the "storm" as associated with a theophany, cf. Exod. 14:21; 15:8, 10; 19:16, 18-19; Josh. 10:11; Pss. 18:8-14; 29:3ff.; 50:3; 68:8-9; 97:2-5.
18. Strahan, op. cit., p. 316.
19. Cf. Gray in Driver-Gray, p. xli. According to McKay, op. cit., p. 171, n. 14, the Divine speeches are "virtually a continuation" of the discourses of Elihu; thus v. 38:2 does not necessarily imply that Job was the last speaker before the appearance of God. Cf., however, Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 498; Dhorme, op. cit., p. 575. That a gap exists between 37:24 and the speech of God in 38:1 is evident in LXX, where the translator has added: "After Elihu had finished speaking," and emended the text to read "spoke," i.e., the Lord spoke to Job, instead of MT "answered" (cf. König, Buch Hiob, p. 397).

1. 36:2-37:24

The concluding speech of Elihu consists of two distinct divisions: 36:2-21, and 36:22-37:24. The section comprising 36:22ff., that is, the survey of natural phenomena, contains notable parallels to the speech of God in chapter 38, and is interpreted by some critics as an indication of the intention of the Elihu author to emulate, and thus to anticipate, the Divine response.²⁰ But, notwithstanding the obvious similarities in the various descriptions and in the interrogative style of chapter 38, it is noteworthy, as Staples points out, that none of the material in chapter 39 is paralleled in the Elihu composition.²¹ Parallelisms do exist elsewhere in the book of Job: passages similar to 36:22ff. and the Divine speeches are attested in 5:8-16; 9:5-10; 12:7-12; 26:5-14; 28; 35:11.²²

Andersen expresses the view that the two divisions of Elihu's final discourse are "so distinct in tone and content as to give the impression that they are independent compositions and could have been separate speeches."²³ Thus, it

20. Cf. Ewald, op. cit., p. 345; Studer, op. cit., pp. 164-65; Strahan, op. cit., p. 306; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 117; Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 523; Habel, Book of Job (CBCNEB), p. 198.
21. Staples, op. cit., pp. 11-12. Staples, however, hypothesises that the Divine speeches did not exist at the time of the insertion of the Elihu composition.
22. Cf. Andersen, op. cit., p. 266, n. 2, who remarks that the Divine speeches "are thus a crescendo of themes already announced" (*italics in the original*).
23. Ibid., p. 258.

is quite possible that the text represents the conflation of two originally separate complexes of material. Irrespective, however, of the originating context, and despite similarities in style and content to the discourse of God, the introduction (36:2-4) and peroration (37:19-24) provide an interpretative framework which serves to thematise the speech as a criticism of chapters 38ff. In this regard, the three preceding verses, 35:15-36:1, are crucial.

2. 35:15-36:1

In the existing recension of the text, the section comprising 35:15-36:1 exhibits what appear to be indications of editorial restructuring. The formula of introduction in 36:1, differing, as has been noted, from that in 32:6, 34:1, and 35:1, may signify an editorial insertion.²⁴ The verses 35:15-16 present numerous exegetical difficulties,²⁵ not the least of which is the great probability of textual disorder.

24. Cf. Nichols, op. cit., p. 161; Duhm, Buch Hiob, p. 170; Bickell, op. cit., p. 63; G.A. Barton, op. cit., p. 272; Jastrow, op. cit., p. 331; MacKenzie, "Job," Jerome Biblical Commentary, vol. 1, p. 530; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, pp. 471-72; Kraeling, op. cit., p. 133; Hesse, op. cit., pp. 186-87; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 218; Murphy, Wisdom Literature, p. 41; Jordan, op. cit., p. 183. Lamparter, op. cit., pp. 214, n. 5, and 218, transposes 36:1 before 36:22. According to Gordis, BOJ, p. 412, the variant introductory formula of 36:1 does not indicate diversity of authorship, but rather signifies that Elihu's lengthy discourse is not yet complete (cf. p. 287 re 27:1). In the view of Dillmann, op. cit., p. 304, the reading **וְעַל**, instead of **וְעַל** (32:6; 34:1; 35:1), is explainable by the fact that in chap. 35 Job is not challenged to speak.
25. On the textual difficulties of 35:15-16, cf. especially Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 308; Driver and Gray, Philological Notes, pp. 269-71; A.B. Davidson, Book of Job, p. 244.

According to Nichols and Barton, the verses properly belong after 34:27 and before 34:34.²⁶ Duhm transposes verse 16 before verse 10 and deletes 36:1, thus connecting verse 15 with 36:2.²⁷ The verses were absent from the original Greek text (and, accordingly, omitted by Bickell and Hatch²⁸) and are deleted by Hölscher and Steinmann.²⁹ While it is possible, as Nichols observes,³⁰ that the LXX translator arbitrarily omitted the passage, there are nonetheless several factors which suggest a later expansion of the text:

- i) The subject of **כִּי אֵיךְ** in verse 15 is missing;³¹
- ii) Job is referred to in the third person³² (as in chapter 34), in marked contrast to 35:1-14; 36:1ff.; iii) The introductory **וְעַתָּה**, "and now," may indicate that verse 15 is not in its proper place.³³ The expression **עַתָּה** serves frequently in the Old Testament to introduce a new thought or section,³⁴ and in the present context may

26. Cf. Nichols, op. cit., pp. 123-24, 180; G.A. Barton, op. cit., p. 272.

27. Duhm, Buch Hiob, pp. 169-70.

28. Cf. Bickell, op. cit., p. 62; Hatch, op. cit., p. 235.

29. Hölscher, op. cit., p. 84; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 218.

30. Nichols, op. cit., p. 124.

31. According to Dhorme, op. cit., p. 536, the verb **תִּאָמַר** of the preceding verse is understood after **כִּי**; cf. Ley, op. cit., pp. 125-26, n. 2.

32. Cf. Nichols, op. cit., p. 124. In the view of Kraeling, op. cit., p. 133, the use of the third person "does not seem unnatural here."

33. Cf. Nichols, op. cit., p. 180.

34. Cf. K-B, p. 747.

be an editorial link. According to Hemraj, verses 15-16 represent "additional wisdom material."³⁵ Jastrow interprets the passage as a later amplification of verse 13.³⁶ Nichols, who holds that the verses do not properly follow after 35:14, points out that 36:2 presents a natural continuation of 35:14.³⁷ Similarly, Lamparter, transposing 36:1 before 36:22, interprets 35:1-36:21 as a single continuous speech.³⁸ According to Dhorme, 36:2ff. form the sequel of the speech which is addressed to Job in 35:15f.³⁹

As noted earlier, however, 36:1ff. mark a new phase in Elihu's oration: 36:2-4 clearly function as a rhetorical introduction,⁴⁰ not as the continuation of, or sequel to, the speech of Elihu in chapter 35.⁴¹ Whatever their

35. Hemraj, op. cit., pp. 63, 65.

36. Jastrow, op. cit., p. 330.

37. Nichols, op. cit., p. 123; cf. Hölscher, op. cit., p. 84; Steinmann, op. cit., p. 218.

38. Lamparter, op. cit., p. 214, n. 5.

39. Dhorme, op. cit., p. 537.

40. Cf. Hemraj, op. cit., pp. 63, 66; Marshall, Book of Job, p. 113; Gray in Driver-Gray, p. 277: "with 36² a fresh main part of the speech begins," i.e., chaps. 32-37 consist of a single speech divided into four sections by means of the introductory formulae in 34:1, 35:1 and 36:1. Cf. also Stier, op. cit., p. 338: "Die Zusammengehörigkeit von 35,14 und 36,2 leuchtet mir nicht ein, zumal die Verse 2 und 3 eher an Redeanfänge gemahnen." According to Houtsma, op. cit., p. 79, 36:2-4 were originally intended to introduce a second speech of God which is no longer extant or perhaps was never composed.

41. The significance of chaps. 36-37 as a new phase in Elihu's discourse is also emphasised by Hemraj, op. cit., p. 63: in his analysis of the "inner structure" of chaps. 32-37, he distinguishes two major divisions: a negative section (chaps. 33-35), and a positive section (chaps. 36-37).

originating context, chapters 36-37 stand in the canonical text as a well-defined redactional unit within the Elihu pericope. In Hölscher's view, "Die Einfügung von 35:15-16 hat wohl ihren Ursprung in der Tendenz, den Schlussteil der Elihu-Reden c. 36 bis 37 als selbständige Rede zu markieren."⁴²

In the opinion, then, of the present writer, the importance of 35:15-16 is as a link or transition: the two verses represent an editorial addition for the purpose of setting off Elihu's concluding discourse in chapters 36-37 as a separate and distinctive sub-division in the Elihu corpus. The phrase **בבלי-דעת בלין**, "words without knowledge," in verse 16b occurs in slightly different form in 38:2: **בבלין בלי-דעת**, and it is not improbable that 35:16b is a pre-emptive addition by the author/redactor/compiler designed to diminish the divine response.

II. The Relationship between the Elihu Pericope and the Epilogue (42:7-17)

The prose narrative which forms the conclusion to the book of Job consists of two sections: (i) verses 7-9; and (ii) verses 10-17. In the first section, Job is declared to have been right in his utterances concerning God; conversely, the three friends are rebuked for having spoken incorrectly. The latter however, escape punishment by God, as Job is directed to intercede on their behalf. In the second section,

42. Hölscher, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

Job himself is restored; indeed, his fortune is restored to him twofold. It is noteworthy that neither section contains any reference to Elihu. The omission is interpreted by many critics as evidence of the adventitiousness of chapters 32-37.⁴³

On the other hand, a number of scholars offer explanations for the author's failure to mention Elihu in the Epilogue. To recapitulate, it may be that Elihu entered the book of Job after the Epilogue was written; as Gordis points out, a Semitic writer when combining different traditions did not attempt "a complete congruence of details."⁴⁴ Or perhaps Elihu is left out of the Epilogue because, having spoken correctly, he does not share with the friends in the Divine reproof.⁴⁵ That there is likewise no expression of God's commendation of Elihu is explained variously: the lack of reference implies approval;⁴⁶ Elihu has said nothing deserving either reproach or approbation;⁴⁷ his role, whether of covenant mediator,⁴⁸ or God's advocate,⁴⁹ or God's messenger,⁵⁰

43. Cf. above, Chapter 1, p. 6.

44. Gordis, BGAM, pp. 111-12. Cf. Snaithe, op. cit., p. 74; G.H.B. Wright, Book of Job, p. 181.

45. Cf. above, pp. 7-8 and n. 22, p. 8.

46. Dubarle, op. cit., pp. 84-85. Cf. Budde, Buch Hiob p. xviii.

47. Steinmueller, op. cit., p. 167.

48. Beeby, op. cit., p. 42.

49. Szczygiel, op. cit., p. 24. Cf. Dennefeld, op. cit., pp. 169-70.

50. Möller, op. cit., pp. 98-99.

has been fulfilled and therefore it is not appropriate to mention Elihu in the Epilogue when God himself speaks; a eulogy of Elihu would give him the unwarranted position of the most important person in the book,⁵¹ and it would destroy the poem's "grand simplicity."⁵²

The foregoing interpretations are, without exception, based on a conception of the book of Job as a unitary composition. From an exegetical standpoint, however, the various hypotheses are not reconcilable with the textual evidence. The context of the Epilogue, in which Job is praised by God for having spoken truthfully and the three friends are rebuked for having spoken incorrectly, is absolutely at variance with the prologue of 32:1-5 wherein the statements of Job incur the anger of Elihu and the friends are criticised for their failure to confute the contentions of Job.⁵³ But according to Humbert, 42:7 must be interpreted on the basis of the discourses of God and Job's subsequent recantation and

51. Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 60.

52. Keil, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 497. On the inappropriateness of a reference to Elihu in the Epilogue, see also Posselt, op. cit., p. 52; Umbreit, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 18n.

53. A number of Hebrew manuscripts attest the reading **יָדַעַל**: "against my servant (Job)," both here and in the following verse, in place of MT **יָדַעַל**: "as my servant" (for a list of the various manuscripts, see de Rossi, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 138). Accordingly, the clause is translated: "for you have not spoken the truth concerning me (or to me) against my servant Job." The variant reading undoubtedly reflects an orthodox standpoint which could not countenance the notion that Job and not the friends had spoken correctly of God (cf. Hertzberg, Buch Hiob, p. 174; Gordis, BOJ, p. 494).

repentance (40:2-5; 42:1-5): "la bénédiction finale apparaît au fond comme une grâce accordée à celui qui s'est tu et a fait acte de contrition."⁵⁴ Against Humbert, however, it must be asserted that the reference to Eliphaz and his two companions proves conclusively that 42:7-9 presupposes the context of the Dialogue and cannot be interpreted solely in relation to the Divine speeches and Job's consequent repentance.⁵⁵

Moreover, the assumption that the lack of reference to Elihu indicates divine acceptance of his theology is based upon a faulty premise. One could argue with equal, if not greater, justification that the non-appearance of Elihu in the Epilogue signifies tacit condemnation. Indeed, if the friends are rebuked for having spoken incorrectly concerning the deity, wherein is Elihu to be judged less blameworthy? Conversely, if the non-mention of Elihu indicates divine approval of his speeches, in what way are the friends to be considered more reprehensible? The argument ex silentio singularly lacks persuasiveness,⁵⁶ especially in view of the weight of evidence against the authenticity of chapters 32-37.

54. Humbert, op. cit., p. 158.

55. In the view of Kraeling, op. cit., p. 168, 42:7a originally followed a speech of God in prose which addressed Job "in an entirely commendatory fashion" and which was removed and replaced by the addition of chaps. 38-42:6.

56. Cf. inter alia Loisy, op. cit., p. 32; Fohrer, Buch Hiob, p. 537.

If Elihu's non-appearance is to be construed as a sign of divine approbation, or reproof, it is reasonable to expect some indication of authorial intention in this matter.⁵⁷ As it is, the interpreter remains at a loss to comprehend the function of the Elihu speeches from the perspective of the Epilogue. The conclusion therefore appears inescapable that the omission of the name of Elihu from the Epilogue is due to the supplementary character of chapters 32-37.

It is noticeable, however, that the judgment expressed concerning the friends in 42:7 reveals analogies with the prologue to the Elihu pericope. The occurrence in verse 7 of the verb **הָרַח** : "to become angry; to burn with anger," and the noun **אֵרָא** : "anger," in the statement "My anger is kindled against you and against your two friends," is an imitation of the parallel usage in the prose introduction to the Elihu speeches:

32:2 (And Elihu) became angry, he became angry with Job because he considered himself to be righteous before God;

32:3 And against his three friends he became angry, because they had not found an answer and [yet] had condemned Job;

32:5 But when Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of the three men, he became angry.

Since, as has been shown, the context of the prose prologue

57. Cf. inter alia Meinhold, op. cit., p. 324; Lods, op. cit., p. 676.

to the speeches of Elihu is irreconcilably at variance with that of 42:7-9, of central exegetical importance therefore is the question of anteriority, that is, whether the Epilogue antedates the prose introduction, or vice versa.

Opinion among commentators is sharply divided on the literary origin of the Prologue and Epilogue of the book of Job.⁵⁸ According to a majority of critics, the prose narrative was either (a) composed by the original author as the basis for the Dialogue, or (b) derived from a traditional folktale (or Volksbuch) and utilized by the author as the literary framework for the Dialogue. Conversely, some scholars interpret the Prologue and Epilogue as a later redactoral addition to the poem. To complicate the issue further, some commentators reject the unity of the Epilogue, interpreting as a supplementary addition the section comprising 42:7-10.⁵⁹

In the canonical text of Job, 42:7ff. are connected directly with the speeches of God: "(And it was) after Yahweh had spoken these words to Job" (verse 7a). If verses 7-10 are judged to be a later addition, it is a reasonable hypothesis that, in view of the lack of connection between

58. On this question, cf. Terrien, "Book of Job," IB, 3, p. 884; Rowley, "Book of Job and Its Meaning," From Moses to Qumran, p. 151.

59. Cf. Albrecht Alt, "Zur Vorgeschichte des Buches Hiob," ZAW, 55 (1937), pp. 265-68; Gordis, BOJ, pp. 573-74. Conversely, Bittenwieser, op. cit., p. 67ff., interprets 42:7-9, 11 as the original conclusion to the poem and 42:10, 12-17 as a later addition.

42:11ff. and the context of the Dialogue, the jointure was inserted as a transition to the conclusion of the prose narrative, and was composed either by (a) the original author,⁶⁰ or by (b) an interpolator; at the same time, it is not impossible that (c) the Epilogue originally followed the poetic Dialogue.⁶¹

In the case of (c), there can, of course, be no question in regard to the anteriority of 42:7ff. In the case of (a), the priority of the jointure is indicated, for as the present study has demonstrated, the Elihu pericope is in large measure a criticism of the Divine speeches. (Thus the possibility that chapters 38-42 were not part of the original recension of the poem, and therefore emanated from a different author altogether, or represented perhaps a later addition by the poet of the Dialogue,⁶² is, in this matter, essentially inconsequential.) The case of (b), a possible editorial insertion, cannot be excluded. However, it is improbable that verses 7-10 were a late redactoral addition: if they were, the context, and the repetition of $\eta\eta\pi$ and $\eta\chi$, suggest that they not only functioned as a transition, but served as well to controvert the standpoint of chapters 32-37, in which case, as has been noted, a reference to Elihu would

60. Gordis, BOJ, p. 574.

61. According to Jastrow, op. cit., pp. 74, 365, the original book of Job consisted of chaps. 1-27 and 42:7b-9, 7a being interpreted as an editorial link.

62. Cf. Dhorme, op. cit., p. xcvi.

be anticipated. Conversely, the book of Job in its present form, particularly the facts that Elihu is mentioned nowhere else in the book and that chapters 32-37 can be omitted without affecting in the slightest the structure of the poem, would seem to indicate that the various stages in the literary development of the poem culminated in the interpolation of the Elihu corpus.

Augé, however, proposes a different interpretation: the author of the Elihu speeches was also the redactor, or "framer," of the book of Job in its present form, responsible for the addition of the Prologue and Epilogue, as well as the descriptions of Behemoth and Leviathan (40:15-41:26) and various minor interpolations throughout the Dialogue.

According to Augé:

... l'autor dels discursos d'Eliú ens hauria donat una nova edició, corregida i augmentada, del *Diàleg ad usum Delphini*. Que les dues parts del llibre no eren ben coherents entre elles, és un detall que no devia preocupar-lo massa la narració oferia una prova palmària de la seva teoria favorita sobre la retribució - raó per la qual l'hauria escollida per a "enquadrar" el *Diàleg* d'una manera adequada.⁶³

But Augé's interpretation remains, at best, a theory which cannot be demonstrated, and indeed must be regarded as extremely improbable in view of the fact that the context of 42:7-10 is incontrovertibly opposed to the standpoint of the Elihu speeches.

63. Augé, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-30. Italics in the original.

In all probability, then, the Epilogue achieved its present form prior to the addition of chapters 32-37.⁶⁴ It is therefore reasonable to postulate that the repetition of **ןןן** and **ןך**, a distinctive feature of the prose introduction in chapter 32, serves to thematise the discourses of Elihu as not only a criticism of the Dialogue and the Divine speeches, but also a repudiation of the conclusion of the poem wherein Job, and not the friends, is commended for having spoken truthfully concerning God.

EXCURSUS: The Theories of van Hoonacker and Freedman

Van Hoonacker believes that the author who added the Elihu speeches to the book of Job did not know the Divine speeches and the Epilogue, that is, in their present form in chapters 38ff. He gives four reasons for this belief: (1) if the author had known the Divine speeches, he would not have found strange the silence of the three friends after chapter 31; (2) Elihu regards Job as not only lacking wisdom, but as an ungodly man; he would not have been so severe toward Job had he been aware of the latter's repentance and God's commendation; (3) Elihu does not admit that God might grant Job's wish for a direct discussion, and considers Job foolish to hope for it and his complaint against God's refusal an outrage; (4) Elihu thinks that there are still arguments for a man to use to refute Job.⁶⁵

64. Cf. Snaithe, Book of Job, p. 5.

65. Van Hoonacker, op. cit., pp. 164-65, 188.

Van Hoonacker's hypothesis is that the text of the book of Job originally consisted of the Prologue and Dialogue. Then one author added the speeches of Elihu in order to correct the errors which the first writer had ascribed to Job, while another author, to whom the person of Job was "more congenial," added the theophany, the questioning of Job, and Job's repentance and reward. Lastly, the two enlarged editions were blended together to form the present book.⁶⁶

Van Hoonacker's theory, however, may be disputed on the basis of the following considerations: (1) a number of passages in Elihu's discourse (most notably 32:13; 34:23; cf. also 37:23_c-24) present a direct polemic against the Divine speeches; (2) the Elihu speeches are characterised by the deliberate "non-recognition" of chapters 38ff.: that is, Elihu is concerned in each speech to suggest that a response from God is impossible and altogether unnecessary (cf. 32:13; 33:1-7; 33:23; 34:23, 29; 36:1-4; 37:19-24); (3) the prose prologue (32:1-5), as well as the introductions of 33:1-7 and 36:1-4, serve to thematise the Elihu pericope as an alternative response to that contained in chapters 38ff.; (4) the section comprising 35:15-37:24, Elihu's concluding speech, appears to stand in deliberate juxtaposition to the discourses of God; (5) the central theme of chapters 32-37, namely the affirmation of the absolute justice and

66. Ibid., pp. 188-89.

righteousness of God, is notably absent from chapters 38-42, an indication of the intention of the Elihu author to provide an alternative, and a more acceptable, answer to the allegations of Job than that which is contained in the speeches of God; (6) the repetition of $\pi\gamma\pi$ and $\eta\chi$ in the prose introduction, exhibiting obvious analogies to 42:7, indicates a repudiation of the conclusion of the poem, wherein Job, as opposed to the three friends, is praised for having spoken truthfully of the deity.

According to the hypothesis of Freedman, the Elihu pericope consists of three, or possibly four, separate speeches, each of which was intended by the author to be inserted at strategic intervals in the Dialogue. More specifically, each of Elihu's discourses was designed to refute or counterbalance, and to be placed in juxtaposition with, a particular speech or assertion of Job.⁶⁷ The hypothetical reconstruction of Freedman may be summarised as follows: (1) Elihu's first discourse (chapters 32-33) situated after Job's speech in chapters 12-14; (2) Elihu's second discourse (chapter 34) following Job's remarks in chapter 27; (3) Elihu's third discourse (chapter 35) following Job's speech in chapter 21, or simply continuing the second discourse (chapter 34), in which case following (2); (4) Elihu's fourth discourse (chapters 36-37) in its present position, following Job's concluding speech, and prior to the Divine speeches, or in any event before the Epilogue.⁶⁸

67. Freedman, "Elihu Speeches in the Book of Job," p. 52.

68. Ibid., pp. 53-54, 57-58.

In the view of Freedman, the Elihu speeches were composed as part of a projected general reorganization of the book of Job. The Elihu pericope and the Divine speeches may have been alternative solutions to the problems posed by the Dialogue, and, in particular, Job's concluding discourse. The author initially wrote the speeches of Elihu, but was dissatisfied with the results. Subsequently, however, portions of the Elihu composition were utilized as a basis for the Divine speeches, which provided an appropriate conclusion to the Dialogue. The Elihu material was ultimately inserted in the poem in its present position by an editor.⁶⁹

A number of important objections may be raised against Freedman's hypothetical reconstruction: (1) the numerous correlations between the Elihu pericope and the Dialogue are not probative: such affinities are to be anticipated in a composition by a later author intent on refuting specific assertions of Job, and based on a perusal of an already completed manuscript; (2) the proposition that the Elihu section was intended by the (original?) author (Freedman is noncommittal on the question of authorship) as part of a general restructuring of the poem, an attempt to resolve the literary and theological problems presented by the Dialogue, may be seriously questioned in the light of Freedman's own acknowledgement that, in relation to the speeches of the three friends, Elihu "adds little and overlaps a

69. Ibid., pp. 58-59.

lot";⁷⁰ (3) though chapters 36-37 exhibit striking affinities with the Divine speeches, especially chapter 38, Freedman refers to the possibility that Elihu's concluding discourse may have been intended to displace the speeches of God, or alternatively, that the latter was intended to displace the former.⁷¹ At the same time, Freedman asserts the difficulty in imagining that the discourses of Elihu were composed as an improvement upon the Divine speeches.⁷² In his view, the fourth speech of Elihu serves essentially the same purpose as chapters 38ff., that is, to counter-balance the concluding discourse of Job.⁷³ As has been noted, however, the central theme of chapters 36-37, indeed, of the Elihu pericope as a whole - namely, the absolute justice and righteousness of God - is conspicuously absent from the speeches of God. Furthermore, though manifesting notable parallels to the Divine speeches, chapters 36-37 appear to have been deliberately structured as a critical response to chapters 38ff.

III. The Function of the Elihu Pericope in the Book of Job

On the basis of the foregoing study, the canonical structure of the Elihu speeches may be analysed as follows:

70. Ibid., p. 58.

71. Ibid., p. 57.

72. Ibid., p. 58.

73. Ibid., pp. 57-58.

A.	32:1-5	Prose prologue
B.	32:6-22	Introductory speech of Elihu
C.	33:1-35:14	"Refutation" speeches
D.	35:15-16	Editorial link
E.	36:1-37:24	Concluding discourse
Interpretative Framework	1.	36:2-4 Rhetorical exordium
	2.	36:5-21
	3.	36:22-37:18
	4.	37:19-24 Peroration

Concluding speech
of Elihu

A. 32:1-5

In addition to providing a necessary transition from the concluding speech of Job (chapters 29-31) to the discourses of 32:6ff., the prose introduction serves to thematise the speeches of Elihu:

- (1) Elihu's anger at the three friends (verse 3) derives from their failure to refute convincingly the arguments of Job (cf. verse 5);
- (2) it is clearly evident that Elihu intervenes on behalf of God and against Job (verse 2b);
- (3) 32:2b represents an implicit criticism of the Divine speeches, a reformulation of the ironical question of God in 40:8 (a succinct articulation of the central theme of the book of Job) which thematises the speeches of Elihu in 32:6ff. as an alternative response to that contained in chapters 38ff.;
- (4) the repetition of **הָרָא** : "to become angry" and **הָרָא** :

"anger" (cf. verses 2, 3 and 5) exhibits obvious analogies with 42:7_b. However, the context of the Epilogue, wherein Job, and not the friends, is commended for having spoken truthfully concerning God (cf. 42:7-9), is incontrovertibly opposed to the standpoint of the prose introduction to the Elihu chapters, an indication that the repetition of **ןןן** and **ןך** was intended by the Elihu author/redactor as a repudiation of the conclusion of the poem.

B. 32:6-22

The introductory speech of 32:6ff. serves several purposes: (1) it presents, in Elihu's own words, the justification for his sudden and unforeseen intervention. The rhetoric and prolixity which characterise the discourse are not an indication of the deliberate intention of the author to caricature the figure of Elihu, but constitute rather an apologia, an attempt on the part of a later writer to justify the addition of supplementary material at such a critical juncture in the debate. In this regard, the appeal to inspiration in verses 8, 18-20 serves to legitimatise the insertion of chapters 32-37 by placing the wisdom of Elihu on a higher level than that of the friends; (2) in addition to providing an explanation for the intervention of Elihu, 32:6ff. reveals clearly the intention of the author to polemicise against the discourses of God: (i) 32:13 represents a direct polemic against the Divine speeches; (ii) as the recipient of an inspired wisdom, Elihu appears as a

divinely ordained spokesman in place of God himself, thereby effectively undermining the divine response in 38:1ff.;

(3) paradoxically, the appeal to inspiration may also imply an attempt to preclude adverse criticism as a consequence of the displacement of the Divine speeches.

C. 33:1-35:14

(1) The structure of chapters 33-35, QUOTATION - REFUTATION - EXPOSTULATION, exhibits clearly the disputatious and polemical character of the speeches of Elihu with respect to the preceding Dialogue.

(2) In addition, chapters 33-35 reveal a distinct polemicism toward the discourses of God: (i) in the preamble (33:1-7) to the refutation speeches of 33:8ff., the appeal to inspiration (cf. verse 4) signifies the importance of Elihu as a divinely appointed spokesman. Thus Elihu is characterised, not as a mediator between Job and God, but as a substitute for the deity who renders the theophany unnecessary; (ii) the intervention in 33:23f. of a (divine) mediator ($\text{יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל}$) also serves to render the appearance of God in 38:1ff. superfluous; (iii) 34:23 is a refutation of Job's repeated demand for a hearing with God and a direct polemic against the Divine speeches; (iv) 34:29ab is a rebuke of Job's accusations of divine injustice and, more important, a criticism of the Divine speeches: the reference to God remaining silent and "hiding his face" is inconsistent with the theophany in 38:1ff.

D. 35:15-16

(1) These two verses are a supplementary addition seemingly intended to set off the concluding discourse of chapters 36-37 as a separate and distinctive sub-division in the Elihu pericope.

(2) The phrase "words without knowledge" in verse 16_b occurs in slightly different form in 38:2 and may represent a pre-emptive addition designed to diminish the Divine response.

E. 36:1-37:24

(1) Chapters 36 and 37 mark a new phase in Elihu's oration as indicated by the difference of their structure from that of chapters 33-35 and by the variant introduction in 36:1 (cf. 32:6; 34:1; 35:1).

(2) The structure of chapters 36 and 37 shows evidence of redactoral activity which suggests the overt thematisation of Elihu's concluding speech as a criticism of the Divine response in chapters 38ff.: (i) the exordium of 36:2-4 fulfils the apologetic purpose of the author to distinguish Elihu as a spokesman for God. On the basis of verses 2_b and 3_a, it is evident that Elihu speaks on behalf of God. Verse 3_a reveals the author's intent to present Elihu as a man of superior insight. Thus the rhetorical introduction (cf. especially verse 4_b) strongly suggests that Elihu intervenes not merely as a spokesman, but as a substitute, for God;

(ii) the peroration of 37:19-24 virtually excludes the possibility that God will appear in response to Job's demand for a hearing. Verse 19a gives an ironic rebuke of Job's oft-expressed desire to argue his case in the presence of God, while in the following verse Elihu declares that Job's demand for a hearing would be tantamount to seeking his own destruction, a reference not only to the omnipotence of God, but also to the divine omniscience which eliminates the possibility that God will condescend to justify his actions to mortal man. Furthermore, the context of verses 23a and 24b is irreconcilable with the subsequent theophany, an indication of the polemical intent of the Elihu author regarding the Divine speeches. Thus the rhetorical exordium and peroration form an interpretative framework which militates decisively against the appearance of God in chapter 38, and shows the deliberate juxtaposition of Elihu's concluding discourse with the Divine speeches as an alternative response.⁷⁴

It is clearly evident, therefore, that the Elihu pericope (a) constitutes a separate and distinctive sub-division in the structure of the Joban poem, and (b) is intended to fulfil a critical purpose in relation to the book as a whole. In regard to (a), the intrusive character of the speeches is

74. Cf. Kraeling, op. cit., p. 204: "The fourth speech is a self-admitted supplement, and has seemingly been given its present shape to provide an impressive finale that would vie with the parallel recension, containing the divine speeches in their final expanded and impressive form."

indicated by the lack of connection with the rest of the poem, namely the non-mention of Elihu elsewhere in the book and the fact that chapters 32-37 in their entirety can be omitted without any sense of loss and without affecting the structure of the poem. The discourses of Elihu are thus properly speaking not an interpolation, but rather a supplement.⁷⁵ And whereas the peculiar character of the Elihu chapters as a separate and self-contained entity in the canonical text is undoubtedly attributable, on the one hand, to the great probability that their insertion represents the final stage in the composition of the book, their character is also not improbably an indication of the later author's intention to distinguish the Elihu corpus clearly from the original book of Job and its subsequent additions.

As to (b), chapters 32-37, while a criticism of the Dialogue and a repudiation of Job's complaints, are principally polemic against the speeches of God.⁷⁶ Moreover, as

75. Cf. Cheyne, "Book of Job," Encyclopaedia Biblica, vol. 2, col. 2483; also Dhorme, op. cit., p. cv, n. 5; Hoffmann, op. cit., p. 23.
76. Cf. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 673; Peake, Job, p. 29; Alonso Schökel, in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 456; MacKenzie, "Job," Jerome Biblical Commentary, vol. 1, p. 528; Childs, IOTS, p. 541; Hugh Anderson, "The Book of Job," The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible, ed. Charles M. Layman (London and Glasgow, 1972), p. 249. Conversely, Gordis, BGAM, p. 109, asserts: "There is ... no evidence whatsoever that he [Elihu] challenges the conclusion of the God speeches, either subtly or openly." Gordis further asserts, p. 110, that if the Elihu speeches are to be considered a refutation of the discourses of God, they should have followed, not preceded, them. From

shown by various passages (cf. 32:13; 33:1-7, 23; 34:23, 29; 36:1-4; 37:19-24), the discourses of Elihu are not intended merely as a corrective to the Divine speeches, but rather to render the appearance of God altogether unnecessary. In particular, the concluding speech in chapters 36-37 has evidently been composed expressly as an alternative response to the discourses of God in chapters 38ff.

In addition, the prologue (32:1-5) thematises the Elihu pericope not only as a criticism of the Dialogue and the Divine speeches, but as a repudiation of the Epilogue, wherein Job is praised by God. It is noteworthy that verses 1-5 are in prose, the only extended prose section in the book of Job apart from the Prologue (1:1-2:13) and Epilogue (42:7-17).⁷⁷ It has been a central thesis of this dissertation that the prose prologue provides the key to the interpretation of the speeches of Elihu in the final redaction of the poem:

an altogether different standpoint, Tur-Sinai, op. cit., p. 519, arrives at the same conclusion: "Elihu ... polemizes against them [the three friends] as well as against Job, and but for the plan of the book, which required his words to be placed before those of God, he would surely have polemized against the words of the Deity (XXXVIII-XLI) as well." See, however, below.

77. The Elihu prologue, while written in prose, is nonetheless characterised by the poetical mode of accentuation. On this aspect of the text, cf. Norman H. Snaith, "The Introductions to the Speeches in the Book of Job - Are They in Prose or in Verse?" Textus, 8 (1973), p. 137: whereas there is no accent in 32:1-6a which is prose as opposed to verse, there are some accents which are definitely verse and not prose. On this basis, Snaith questions whether the prologue is, in actuality, written in prose as opposed to verse.

namely, a critique of the book as a whole.⁷⁸

It must be concluded that the criticism of the Elihu author extends implicitly to the Prologue of the book (Chapters 1 and 2) as well, the context of which is absolutely at variance with the standpoint of chapters 32-37, that is, the sinfulness of Job and the exalted conception of the absolute justice and righteousness of God. It is inconceivable that the representation of Job as a blameless and upright individual and the idea of God as afflicting such an individual in order to test his righteousness would not offend the pious sensibilities of the Elihu author.⁷⁹

The addition of the Elihu pericope following Job's concluding discourse functions hermeneutically to shape the

78. Cf. MacDonald, "Original Form of the Legend of Job," JBL, 14 (1895), p. 70; Franz Delitzsch, "Hiob," in Herzog's Real-Encyklopädie, cited in A.B. Davidson, op. cit., p. lii. (This edition of Herzog is not available to the present writer.) Contrast Gordis, BGAM, p. 110, who asserts that there is no evidence of any intent in the Elihu speeches to counter the main conception of the poem.
79. Davidson, op. cit., pp. li-lii, expresses the view that "if Elihu spoke like the three friends in ignorance of the Prologue and the cause of Job's calamities which it reveals, his position is natural. But if he was a reader of the Book, the way in which he completely ignores the Prologue with its view of affliction and substitutes a theory radically different is extraordinary." Conversely, Peake, Job, p. 28, argues that artistic propriety requires a later author to represent his characters as similarly ignorant of the context of the Prologue. Davidson, op. cit., p. lii, nonetheless observes that, in the event the Elihu speeches were an insertion, the censure of the later poet would extend to the book in its entirety, including the Prologue.

reader's response to chapters 38-42. If the Elihu speeches followed, rather than preceded, the discourses of chapters 38ff., they would be relegated to the position of an after-thought. Also, it is not improbable that the impiety of having an additional speaker follow upon the words of God prevented the insertion of the Elihu composition after the Divine speeches. In their present position, the speeches of Elihu fulfil the apologetic purpose of the later author, namely, the displacement of the Divine response and the reorientation of the conclusion of the poem.

Thus the Elihu pericope represents a pre-emptive addition to the book of Job; and, as it stands, the point of view of the later author appears to triumph in the end. Since he is neither contradicted nor condemned by anyone, the view of Elihu triumphs by default.⁸⁰

It necessarily follows that the book of Job in its present form cannot be interpreted as a literary unity. Moreover, the process which has culminated in the canonical text must be described as an arbitrary compilation rather than, in any meaningful sense, a creative composition.⁸¹

80. Cf. Vermeylen, op. cit., p. 24; Weiser, Buch Hiob, p. 218; G.A. Barton, Commentary on the Book of Job, p. 26.

81. Contrast Sawyer, "Authorship and Structure of the Book of Job," Studia Biblica 1978 I. Old Testament, pp. 253-55, who proposes a redefinition of the term "author" in connection with the book of Job, arguing that the poet was not a mere compiler, but rather an original and creative artist. Sawyer attributes the non-mention of Elihu in the Prologue to the author's intention "to preserve a

The discourses of Elihu are manifestly intrusive, and constitute a heterogeneous component in the structure of the book, their purpose being to confute, and not to correct, the viewpoint of the original poem.⁸² Alonso Schökel comments on their distinctly supplementary character:

Elihú se erige en crítico de la obra, y al hacerlo es criticado por ella. No leamos el libro de Job a la luz de estos seis capítulos añadidos, sino estos capítulos a la luz del libro de Job.⁸³

The book of Job in its final form, therefore, represents a process of compilation, in accordance with the Biblical literature in general and the ancient literary mode of composition.

Moreover, it is by no means certain that the Elihu chapters themselves are a unitary composition. A number of commentators interpret the speeches of Elihu as the work of two or more supplementers. On this question, the theory of

literary convention at the expense of a minor inconsistency": the reference to the three friends exhibits parallels to the tradition of the arrival of the three wise men from the east, and rather than disturb this ancient literary convention, the author purposely omits any mention of a fourth personage. This interpretation, however, is singularly unconvincing; it is far more plausible, in view of the weight of evidence against the authenticity of chapters 32-37, to attribute the lack of reference to Elihu in the Prologue to the supplementary character of the speeches.

82. Cf. Dhorme, op. cit., p. cv.

83. Alonso Schökel in Alonso Schökel and Sicre Diaz, op. cit., p. 457.

Nichols, in particular, is cogently argued.⁸⁴ It is inconceivable that the radical nature of Job's accusations and bold defiance of God could have failed to provoke a critical reaction in orthodox theological circles. The possibility of diversity of authorship, then, cannot be discounted. It is entirely possible that the speeches of Elihu in their present form were the work of more than one writer, perhaps even a school of writers. At the same time, chapters 32-37,

84. According to Nichols, op. cit., pp. 152ff., the Elihu chapters represent a combination of a criticism and a supplement of the original poem composed by two Wise Men: 1. the Original Elihu Speeches [parentheses denote later interpolations]: 32:1, 6-10, 18-22; 33:1-3, (4), 5-33; 35:2-14; 36:2-5, (7b-9, 10b-13), 10a, 6a, 12 LXX, 14-15, 6b, 7a, (16-17), 18-25, (26), 27a, 28b, 33; 37:1 (36:27b-28a, 29-32; 37:2-4, 6b), (5a omitted), 5b, 6a, 7-10, (11-12ab), 12c, (13), 14-24; 2. the Words of a Second Wise Man: 34:1; 32:11-16; 34:2-15 (10a omitted), (16 omitted), 17-24, (25 omitted), 26-27, (28-33); 35:15, (16); 34:34-37. The prose introduction (32:2-5) is an addition by an editor or combiner. The theory of Nichols, for the most part, was adopted by G.A. Barton, Commentary, p. 29; the exception is the prose introduction, in which Barton attributes 32:2a, 3a, to the second interpolator; 32:2b, 3b, 4-5, to an editor. According to Crook, op. cit., pp. 182ff., the Elihu speeches were composed by at least two writers: 1. the Elder Elihu: 32:1-6a, 11-17a; 34; 2. the Younger Elihu: 32:6b-10, 17b-22; 33; 35-37. In the view of Irwin, "Job," Peake's Commentary on the Bible, p. 405, the Elihu pericope consists of four separate additions to the book: chapters 32-33; 34; 35; 36-37, the last expanded by a later commentator. In particular, Jastrow, op. cit., pp. 314ff., emphasises the composite character of the Elihu discourses: chapter 32 consists entirely of a series of introductions: vss. 1-5 (representing five editorial comments, each of independent origin), 6-10, 11-17, 18-22; the remaining chapters consist of four speeches, each composed by a separate author: 1. 33:1, 8-30; 2. 34:1-15, 21, 28-29, 31-37; 3. 35; 4. 36:1-23, 26; 27:23-24; and three inserted poems: 1. 34:16-20, 24-27; 2. 36:24-25, 27-30, 32-33; 3. 37:14-20.

in their canonical form, themselves contain no sharply divergent viewpoints. Indeed, the various speeches are characterised by an essential concinnity. The issue, however, is not fundamentally germane to the interpretation of the Elihu pericope in the final redaction of the poem, which is the subject of the present study. For this purpose, it is sufficient to determine that the Elihu speeches were not composed by the original author.

IV. The Importance of a Diachronic Approach

In seeking in this dissertation to elucidate the function of the speeches of Elihu in the book of Job, the approach has been essentially diachronic. The adventitiousness of the speeches has been assumed, since the various arguments against their genuineness, as set forth in chapter one, appear incontrovertible. This writer concludes that chapters 32-37 are a supplementary addition by a different author, and are intended as a critique of the book as a whole.

It is an important consideration that the interpretation by the majority of scholars of the Elihu speeches as a supplementary addition did not derive originally from an a priori assumption of divergent authorship; rather, it was the attempt to interpret the book synchronically which led critics to the conclusion that the speeches were a later insertion. In the context of Old Testament interpretation in general, it is an equally important consideration that

the initial impulse of modern critical scholarship in the period of the Enlightenment was not the formulation of hypotheses concerning the historical dimensions of the Biblical writings, but the attempt to interpret the texts from a synchronic perspective, an approach which led commentators to an awareness of inconsistencies and non-assimilable elements in the compilative character of the literature.

In the case of the book of Job, the question of authenticity is of critical importance, as Baker has recognised: "in other Biblical books, labelling one passage as primary and another as secondary may make little difference to the general import; in Job such decisions always vitally affect our assessment of the religious message or thought of the author."⁸⁵ The question of authenticity therefore significantly affects the interpretation of the Elihu pericope in the overall context of the book.

It is not denied that the final form of the text is characterised by an integrity of its own. Indeed, irrespective of authorship, the Elihu speeches are part of the canonical literature and must be interpreted as such. Thus the recent emphasis on the importance of the text in its final literary form provides a valuable corrective to the analytical approach which has often served to exclude the speeches from the overall interpretation of the book.

85. Baker, "Commentaries on Job," Theology, 66 (1963), p. 179. See above, chapter 2, p. 49.

It is a central conclusion of the present study, however, that synchronic analysis cannot assume priority over diachronic analysis:

1. Authority and meaning inhere in all levels, the earlier stages as well as the canonical form, of the Biblical text.⁸⁶
2. The meaning of a particular text must be shown to exist. "The case for meaning must be decided on literary criteria: one must show that a unit is not just an anthology but is an intended structure with meaning."⁸⁷ It is an important consideration that the Biblical writings are characterised, as Blenkinsopp emphasises, by "conflicting claims to authority" which exist in a state of "unresolved tension or unstable equilibrium."⁸⁸

A diachronic approach is not at variance with a "canonical" perspective. Ideally, the two exist in complementarity: a recognition of the depth-dimension or historical stages of the text serves to establish parameters which are crucial to the interpretation of the text in its canonical form. Thus the question of authenticity, that is, the

86. Ackroyd, "Original Text and Canonical Text," Union Seminary Quarterly Review, 32 (1976-77), p. 168.
Cf. above, chapter 3, p. 155.

87. McEvenue, op. cit., p. 238. Italics in the original.
Cf. above, chapter 3, p. 159.

88. Blenkinsopp, op. cit., pp. 3, 94.

question whether a particular text is an original composition or a redactional unit, constitutes a vital hermeneutical datum and is essential to the interpretative process.

In a synchronic approach to the Biblical text, literary context, not historical context, is determinative. In this case the exegetical question is not: "Is the book of Job coherent?", but rather: "What kind of coherence does the book exhibit?" Thus the question of authenticity is of distinctly secondary importance. In fact, in the context of a purely literary approach, the text is interpreted as a unified composition irrespective of the question of authority. As Robertson asserts: "one assumes that a text is a [unified] whole and then proceeds to show that indeed it is a [unified] whole."⁸⁹

To date, the most comprehensive holistic approach to the book of Job remains the commentary by Norman C. Habel in the Old Testament Library series, published in 1985.⁹⁰ Habel views the book in its present form as an integrated "literary and theological work,"⁹¹ and from this standpoint, the interpretation of the function of the Elihu chapters diverges sharply from the conclusions of this study.

89. Robertson, Old Testament and the Literary Critic, p. 33.

90. Cf. also Habel's more detailed study of the role of the Elihu speeches in Job, published a year earlier: "Role of Elihu in the Design of the Book of Job," in In the Shelter of Elyon.

91. Habel, Book of Job (OTL), p. 21.

The exegetical approach of Habel is succinctly expressed in the following statement:

The approach of most interpreters has been to focus on the content rather than the context of Elihu's arguments, his thought rather than his function in the structure of the Joban narrative. They have tended to ask the question, "What is Elihu saying that is new or profound?", rather than, "What is Elihu doing that is significant in the design of the book?" Theological rather than literary considerations have usually prevailed.⁹²

The hermeneutical presuppositions of Habel, however, are based on a faulty premise. The question of context does not ipso facto exclude the issue of authorship and the exegetic implications thereof: as already noted, the question whether a particular text is an original composition or a supplementary addition by a different author is of crucial significance from an interpretative point of view. Thus, the question posed by Habel, "What is Elihu doing that is significant in the design of the book?", elicits an altogether different response on the basis of a diachronic approach. As this dissertation (chapter 6 in particular) has shown, neither Habel's interpretation of the book of Job as an integrated literary and theological work, nor his conception of the Elihu speeches as a foil, a deliberate ironic anticlimax which sets the stage for the surprise appearance of God and the consequent expose of Elihu as an

92. Habel, "Role of Elihu," in In the Shelter of Elyon, p. 81.

alazon, is reconcilable with either the content or the context of the Elihu composition.

In contrast to the approach of Habel, it is instructive to recall the assertion of L. Alonso Schökel that the book of Job is not to be read in light of the Elihu chapters, but vice versa, and thus it is necessary to read the book initially without chapters 32-37.⁹³ In the view of Alonso Schökel, the Elihu speeches were the first commentary to the book of Job, a refutation of the arguments of the three friends as well as of Job, and a criticism of the discourses of God.

It is also instructive to contrast the interpretation of Habel with that of Brevard Childs, who proposes in his Introduction to the Old Testament a distinctive canonical approach, but who reaches the conclusion that the Elihu pericope functions as "a supplement and commentary to the divine response."⁹⁴ There are a number of problematical aspects associated with Childs' work: (1) it is difficult to ascertain precisely wherein his interpretation of the Elihu speeches is distinguishable from traditional non-synchronic exegesis; (2) the interpretation of chapters 32-37 as supplementary and subordinate to the discourses of God is basically inconsistent with the canonical approach propounded,

93. See the commentary on Job by Alonso Schökel and J.L. Sicre Diaz, published in 1983, and subtitled "a theological and literary commentary," pp. 456-57.

94. Childs, IOTS, p. 541.

in which the analysis of the books of the Old Testament clearly de-emphasises the historical dimension of the text⁹⁵; (3) while the addition of the Elihu speeches serves to "shape" the text of Job, both thematically (Elihu's point of view appears to triumph in the end) and structurally (in all probability, the insertion of chapters 32-37 provides the book with its final form), the ideas of "canonical shaping" and "canonical intentionality," which are central to Childs' hermeneutic, represent a retrospective, post-canonical conception.

In summary, the present study has illustrated the value of a diachronic approach to the interpretation of the Elihu pericope in the canonical text of Job. In its final form, the text of Job is an amalgam, as opposed to a unitary composition. Moreover, there is no evidence that the canonical book is intended to be interpreted as a literary and theological unity. The hermeneutical implications of the foregoing cannot be minimised: whether the book is viewed

95. Cf. the comprehensive review of IOTS by Walther Zimmerli, "Review of Brevard S. Childs, Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture," Vetus Testamentum, 31 (1981), pp. 235-44. Childs' interpretation of the Elihu chapters as "a supplement and commentary to the divine response," described by Zimmerli, op. cit., p. 239, as "einer durchaus erwägenswerten Weise," is contrasted with Childs' analysis of Ezekiel (IOTS, pp. 357ff.) in which the historical dimension is clearly devalued. Zimmerli observes, op. cit., p. 240, that Childs' subordination of the speeches of Elihu to the divine response implies the existence of a "canon within the canon."

as an amalgam or as a unitary composition profoundly influences the interpretative process. Conversely, a synchronic, non-analytical approach is in danger of vitiating or neutralising the peculiar dynamics of Job, by obscuring the diversity of the text and assuming a coherence which is non-existent. It is essential that literary accretions, such as the Elihu composition, be recognised as accretions.

Finally, the relatively recent trend away from a predominantly historical, to a predominantly literary, approach has significant implications for the interpretation of the Bible in a religio-cultural context. The perception that the Biblical literature does not present a single, unitary point of view, but contains "conflicting claims to authority" in "unresolved tension or unstable equilibrium," can be of the utmost importance in bridging the gap between Biblical scholarship and the church.⁹⁶ It is surely more satisfying from a religious standpoint to understand Job as a critique of rationalistic theological presuppositions which has inevitably called forth a critical response, perhaps a multitude of responses, than to view the book as a unitary composition in which narrow orthodoxy, as embodied in the speeches of Elihu, ultimately prevails. Those who

96. It is interesting to note that in the commentary on Job by J.C.L. Gibson in the Daily Study Bible series (published in 1985, the same year as Habel's Job in the OTL series), the Elihu chapters appear as a supplement at the end of the commentary.

believe that the book must offer a resolution to the problem of suffering as experienced by Job will find an answer in the speeches of Elihu, the Divine response, the Epilogue, or perhaps in chapter 28, while deeper, more reflective minds will continue to struggle with the problem, discovering in the figure of Job a kindred spirit.

It has been observed that the best traditions produce the best rebels; and the inclusion in the canon of rebellion, scepticism, pessimism and doubt, existing as in the book of Job in "creative tension" with the more orthodox, pious and devotional material, has made for a more vibrant tradition. The diachronic approach, in recognising the existence of "creative tension" as constitutive of the Biblical writings, has implications in relation to the character of the Bible not only as the sacred canon of the believing community, but also as a literary classic which has played a profound role morally, intellectually and artistically in the history of Western society and thought.

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