with the battles mentioned in 2 Kgs 13:25. According to Miller (1966; 1968), it was Jehu who lost territory to Hazael (cf. 2 Kgs 10:32–33 with 1 Kgs 20:34), and it was Jehu's son (Jehoahaz) who successfully challenged Ben-hadad II. Israel's victories were limited to three due to Jehoahaz's untimely death at the battle at Ramoth-gilead.

In 2 Kgs 14:8–14, Joash's victory over Amaziah of Judah at Bethshemesh is recorded. When Amaziah asked to look Joash "in the face," Joash responded with a fable and a warning (vv 8–10). Amaziah did not listen and engaged Joash's troops at Bethshemesh. Joash's victory cost Judah all the treasures of the temple and palace, a 400-cubit stretch of Jerusalem's walls, and the indignation of hostages (vv 11–14).

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JOB, BOOK OF. A book in the third division of the Hebrew Bible (the "Writings") that recounts the story of Job, a righteous man whose motives for being righteous are tested through a series of personal tragedies and sufferings. When three old friends arrive to condole him, they all engage in a dialogue focusing not only on the cause of Job's personal misfortune but also more generally on the problem of evil. Their dialogue (or, more properly, "dispute"), in which Job sharply questions the nature of divine justice, ends without resolution, whereupon yet another character, the young Elihu, appears to offer his own observations on the nature of Job's predicament. Eventually God appears on the scene to upbraid Job for complaining, and to restore Job's family, property, and health.

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A. Contents

The book of Job consists of a narrative framework and a poetic core. The prose section is divided into a prologue (1:1–2:13) and an epilogue (42:7–17); the poetry is embedded between these two. Together prose and poetry examine the possibility of being good without thought of either reward or punishment and explore the nature of innocent suffering; whether or not it exists, how one ought to act in the presence of misery, and why such injustice occurs. The prose framework deals with loss and eventual restoration without so much as a raised voice, and in its simplicity embraces and makes possible the eruption of volcanic emotions in the poetry.

Emphasizing the historical gap between the time of the hero and the subsequent narrating of the events, the narrative sets the action in (pre-)patriarchal times. Job's possessions, like those of the patriarchs, consist of cattle and servants; not only his three friends but also his enemies (nomadic Sabeans and Chaldeans) come from the greater environment associated with Abraham's wanderings; the monetary unit, *qeśîṭāh* (42:11) belongs to that ancient era (cf. Gen 33:19); Job's life span exceeds that of the patriarchs; and his sacrifice of animals corresponds to the practice prior to official priests. The name Job recalls a folk hero associated in Ezek 14:14, 20 with Noah and Daniel, probably the Dan'el of Canaanite epic texts. Although the meaning of Job's name is uncertain, similar forms are attested from early times in Egypt and Mesopotamia with the meanings "Where is the divine father?" and "Inveterate Foe/Hated One." In accord with the universality typical of early wisdom, the hero seems to have been an Edomite, famous for the wisdom of its inhabitants, and the setting in the land of Uz echoes the noun *ʿēṣāh* (counsel).

The action of the prologue (1:1–2:13) alternates between earth and heaven, the events of the latter hidden from Job. The hero, perfect outwardly and inwardly according to irrefutable testimony (1:3, 8), enjoys the fruits of virtue—until God directs the Adversary's attention to him, eliciting suspicion of Job's motive for being good and provoking a test to determine the truth. Calamity befalls Job without warning, intruding on a serene setting of festivity. Marauding Sabeans strike Job's property, then fire continues the destruction; Chaldeans wield the penultimate stroke, and a fierce windstorm levels the house in which Job's children are eating and drinking. Messengers convey the news, their formulaic expressions heightening the pain. This narrative strategy informs readers of these events at the same time it informs Job (Weiss 1983). Having lost his children and possessions, Job blesses the Lord as source of good and ill (1:21). A second heavenly scene ensues, with God's "I told you so" and the Adversary's insistence that a real test must touch the actual person (2:3–5). God accedes once more, insisting that Job's life

must not be taken. The final scene depicts a sorely afflicted Job, but one who retains his integrity despite his wife's urging to curse God and die (2:9–10). This time Job's confession takes interrogative form, but he does not curse God. Having heard of Job's misfortune, three of Job's friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, journey from their homes in Teman, Shuah, and Naaman respectively to offer comfort in adversity. Twice the narrator enters the story to pronounce the obvious judgment that in all this Job did not sin, adding "with his lips" the second time. The slight alteration suggests, at least to some people, a gulf between outward expression and inward resentment (*Baba Bathra* 16b). A *Leitwort* (leading, or theme, word) in 1:9 and 2:3 (*ḥinnam*, for nothing, without cause) links the prologue with the poetry (cf. 9:17; 22:6).

The poetic dialogue consists of three distinct units: Job versus Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar (chaps. 3–31), Elihu's attack on Job's friends and on Job (chaps. 32–37), and God's lectures to Job (38:1–42:6, with brief responses by Job in 40:3–5 and 42:1–6). Job opens the dispute with a curse, but not against God except indirectly as creator of the birthday Job damns (chap. 3). He invokes uninterrupted darkness on that day, preferring that his mother had remained in a state of perpetual pregnancy or that he had died at birth, finding rest and equality in Sheol. His hidden fear that calamity might befall him had prompted excessive religious scrupulosity in the story (1:5) and erupts again in 3:25. From here on, each friend in turn responds to Job. This alternation of speakers occurs in three cycles, with the order of the friends being Eliphaz (chaps. 4–5, 15, 22), Bildad (chaps. 8, 18, 25), and Zophar (chaps. 11, 20—note that Zophar has no response in the third cycle). Job answers each of them in turn (chaps. 6–7, 9–10, 12–14, 16–17, 19, 21, 23–24, 26–27). Once the friends are reduced to silence, Job contrasts his former happiness (chap. 29) with his present misery (chap. 30) and utters an oath of innocence designed to force God's hand (chap. 31). Unlike most oaths in the Bible, Job's imprecations actually state the penalty that will beset the guilty person. He disavows, among other things, idolatry, lying, adultery, lust, greed, abuse of power, lack of concern for the poor, and misuse of land.

Surprisingly, Job's extreme action yields an unexpected interlocutor (chaps. 32–37), the youthful Elihu, whose name means "He is my God." Having stood by silently while Job's friends tried to answer his arguments, Elihu can contain his words no longer. Lashing out at the comforters-turned-accusers, he then turns against Job with comparable contempt, claiming that God speaks through nocturnal experiences (33:15–16) and disciplines by means of adversity, both to elicit repentance (33:19–30). Citing Job's own words (e.g., 33:33 and 6:25; 33:24 and 6:23; 33:22 and 6:29), Elihu endeavors to overwhelm him with his own "perfect knowledge," a characteristic of his God as well. Elihu denies that one who hates justice will govern, and notes that God's all-encompassing power rules out any need for partiality (34:17–20). Like Zophar, Elihu exalts God to the point of rendering human deeds worthless insofar as God is concerned: good and evil affect human beings but do not touch God in any way. Such thinking naturally issues in majestic praise of the creator (chaps. 36–37), who now speaks from a storm (38:1). God

asks Job question after question, forcing him to recognize that he knows very little about the mysteries of the universe (chaps. 38–39). The heavenly teacher lectures Job on the wonders of nature and calls to mind wild animals who live outside the human domain. God parades these creatures before Job: lion, mountain goat, wild ass, wild ox, ostrich, horse, hawk and eagle (chap. 39).

Not content with Job's initial repentance (40:3–5), God boasts about two special creatures, Behemoth and Leviathan (chaps. 40–41). In introducing them, God seems to concede that human pride and wickedness in general present a challenge even to the creator (40:10–14). Although God transforms the mighty Behemoth and Leviathan into innocuous playthings for the deity's amusement, the puny Job is no match for their strength. Realizing that his earlier Titanism was ludicrous, Job relents (42:1–6). The dispute has not been a total disaster, for Job's secondhand knowledge of God vanishes before the immediacy of sight. Hearing gives way to seeing, which enables Job to gain a proper perspective on his place in the universe. Complaint also acquiesces to profound silence. No longer does Job claim to be the measure of all things.

The epilogue (42:7–17) ties up all loose ends. Having repented, of what is unclear, Job intercedes on behalf of the three friends, at whom God is angry because they did not speak truth about God *as Job did*. A temporal connection between prayer and restoration occurs, and Job returns to his previous state, with one bonus: his three daughters possess unsurpassed beauty, besides an inheritance. Seven times the verb *brk* occurs in the story (1:5, 10, 11, 21; 2:5, 9; 42:12), alternating between the meanings "curse" and "bless" except the last two, which are reversed.

B. Structure

To some extent the shape of the book depends on one's predisposition, but three different ways of viewing the book commend themselves. Readers may emphasize structure (1) the diction, (2) the dramatic movement, and (3) the individual components in outline form. By discounting brief prosaic introductions and observations, the 1st approach yields two parts, prose and poetry. The 2d perspective uses narrative introductions—and to some extent conclusions—to distinguish three divisions, specifically 1:1–2:10; 2:11–31:40; and 32:1–42:17. The 3d approach divides the book into five discrete sections: chaps. 1–2; 3–31; 32–37; 38:1–42:6; and 42:7–17.

1. On the Basis of Diction. Perhaps the most noticeable feature of the book is its use of a story to enclose a poetic center. This device was widely employed among sages of the ANE to provide a specific historical framework within which to interpret teachings that had broad application, whether philosophical ruminations about innocent suffering and the governance of the universe or collections of aphorisms to enable others to make wise decisions. For example, Ahiqar and Anksheshankh have left significant proverbial sayings for posterity, but in each instance an account of the teacher's personal adversity encloses the collection of maxims. See also AHIQAR. Little effort to connect this prose framework with the poetic teachings is evident, so that both story and poetry stand on their own. Nevertheless, the juxtaposition of the two parts of the book offers a way of understanding the teaching that would

otherwise not occur. Just as a simple frame enhances a painting, delineating its original features and drawing attention away from itself to the art, so these brief biographies give vital data about the hero's words and character.

In a sense, the Joban poetry interrupts the story, which suspends Job's destiny in midair until the poetry has reached its goal; only then does the tale resume and achieve closure. The narrator of the story, who freely intrudes twice to pass independent judgment on the hero (1:22; 2:10), recedes in the poetry so that other voices may be heard. The lyrical poetry of Job, whose threatened ego fights for survival against overwhelming odds, the confident assurances of Eliphaz and his companions, Elihu's brash rebuttal of all four, and the divine interrogation—all this takes place while the narrator creates a story within an earlier story, the folktale. The narrator's resumption of the tale after Job's claim to have seen the deity gives the impression of returning to reality, at least a realm that ordinary people comprehend. *Do ut des* (I give in order to receive) still functions in this land of Uz, for divine anger departs as a result of Job's obedient deed, and God restores Job at this time. Prologue elicits dialogue, and epilogue terminates it. The epilogue does more than end the dialogue, for the force of "anti-wisdom" within the poetry evaporates under the heavy hand of the narrator. Viewpoints collide everywhere, not just in the dialogue. The prose framework and that in the poetic core speak opposing views: the former ultimately seems to affirm the reward of the innocent (Job is at least compensated for his suffering, if not rewarded for his virtue) while the latter proclaims most persuasively that the innocent are not rewarded. To this day no satisfactory harmonization has been found.

2. On the Basis of Dramatic Movement. Introductions at 1:1–5, 2:11–13, and 32:1–5 suggest another way of dividing the book. The first introduces Job and gives essential insights into his character, which will soon be assailed mightily. The second introduction identifies Job's three friends and sets up expectations about their role as comforters, whereas the third introduction describes Elihu's boldness in venturing to address his elders without their consent and justifies his fury at the level of discourse so far. Thus understood, the book of Job becomes a drama consisting of three episodes: God afflicts Job, Job challenges God, God challenges Job. Another way of stating the drama is the hidden conflict, the conflict explored, and the conflict resolved (Habel 1985). This interpretation depends on an understanding of narration through dialogue, so that the fundamental category of the book is said to be prose with the poetic dialogues retarding the movement of plot and heightening the emotional pitch.

This approach encounters difficulties other than the brevity of the first part, since Job's laconic confessions in this section differ from his outpouring of resentment in the second unit, although his two repentant statements in part three balance the shorter confessions nicely. More to the point, the narrator's commendation of Job's conduct (1:22; 2:10) marks two closures, and although section two ends appropriately (31:40, "The words of Job are ended"), the third section concludes reluctantly. God's first speech evokes Job's final words, or so he says (40:4–5), only to give way to a second divine speech and an additional response

from Job (42:2–6). Each indecision necessitates further brief introductions of speakers, but these comments play no role in the suggested structuring of the book. The description of plot development also presents difficulty, for Elihu's speeches hardly contribute to resolving the conflict between Job and God. Actually, the epilogue alone describes the resolution, the divine speeches functioning as disciplinary chastening of the hero.

3. On the Basis of Individual Components. Yet another means of structuring the book derives its clues from the distinctive components in it: (1) a story about Job's affliction, (2) a dispute between him and three friends, (3) the speeches of Elihu, (4) divine speeches punctuated by Job's submission, and (5) a story about Job's restoration. The second division fails to qualify as a consistent dispute, since the 3d cycle breaks off without Zophar's final speech and thereafter Job appears either to address the divine enemy or to enter into nostalgic monologue. This approach does not disparage the dialogue by labeling it an almost interminable retardation of the plot, since the poetic speeches possess value in their own right apart from any progress they may signal toward some unspoken telos. Because the action moves toward a divine pronunciation of Job's innocence in the debate between Job and his friends, the dialogue gives an impression of progress, particularly the emergence of references to the figure of an "advocate" or "redeemer." Emotional changes and high points mark still another kind of movement in the poetry, indicating that progress does occur even when opposing intellectual positions come no closer together than at the beginning.

C. Scholarly Issues

More critical problems surround the book of Job than perhaps any other book of the OT. Many of these problems relate to the structure of the book itself.

Perhaps the most obvious problem concerns the composition of the book, more specifically the relationship of the prose framework to the poetic core (see E below). Even though prose and poetry can be intermixed with great literary effect (e.g., Jonah), a number of apparent inconsistencies are associated with this prose/poetry distinction. The patient Job of the prose framework contrasts with the defiant Job of the poetic core; and the God who is proud of Job and commends him in the prologue/epilogue rebukes him in the dialogue. However, these contrasts can be an understandable function of the plot development. More seriously, the "happy ending" effected by God (42:10–17) seems to undermine the integrity and force of Job's penetrating argument as presented in the dialogue (i.e., that God does not guarantee "happy endings"). Thus, some questions have been raised about the literary relationship between the prose framework and the poetic dialogue: initially the framework was thought to be secondary, although the dominant hypothesis now is that this framework reflects an original folktale that was subsequently embellished by the poetic dialogue.

Indeed, some tension seems to exist between the prose prologue and epilogue. The Satan—whose penetrating questions about the ultimate motives for human righteousness precipitated the "testing" of Job in the prologue—is never mentioned in the epilogue. Moreover, the epilogue does not even return to the issue of the "test."

In the poetic dialogue itself, the most noticeable structural feature is the predictable "round-table" cycle of the debate, with each friend speaking in turn. Yet in the 3d cycle of the debate (esp. chaps. 25–28) this symmetry dissolves: Bildad's 3d speech is surprisingly brief (chap. 25), Zophar has no 3d speech, Job paradoxically seems to express sentiments that previously have been found only on the lips of his three friends (26:5–14), and there are literary clues that several "Job speeches" may have been spliced together (e.g., 27:1; 29:1). Some scholars have attempted to reconstruct a 3d speech for Zophar out of Job's paradoxical statements, while others hold that the hymnic reflections on wisdom (chap. 28) are secondary.

The nature and function of the Elihu speeches (chaps. 32–37) are problematic. Are these speeches secondary or original? Most scholars opt for the former, pointing out that their appearance breaks an otherwise clear pattern: Job never replies to Elihu, and in the epilogue neither God nor the narrator acknowledges his presence and participation in the dialogue (as they do Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar; 42:7–9). Indeed, the speeches seem intrusive—something even Elihu must apologetically admit (32:6–22): they delay the smooth movement from Job's plea that God appear and respond (chap. 31) to God's actual appearance and response (chap. 38). However, Elihu's speeches fail to provide the anticipated "breakthrough solution." Is the resultant sense of disappointment unintended (i.e., does the text of Job preserve the remains of a clumsy author [or secondary redactor?] who, like Elihu, tried unsuccessfully to steer the issue to a clear resolution)? Or does the author have some specific reason for introducing Elihu and having his arguments prove so noticeably inadequate; and if so, what is that reason?

Similarly, the nature and function of the theophany (chaps. 38–40) have presented other problems. Was it original, and why are there *two* divine speeches (38:1ff.; 40:6ff.), each ending with a capitulation by Job? Does Yahweh "contaminate" the test of Job's character by appearing in this manner, or has the test already been decisively resolved? Does Yahweh not attempt to "bully" Job into submission just as Job had cynically predicted (i.e., Yahweh forces the issue back to the question of his power, not his justice)?

Other "historical" questions have centered on the time and circumstance of the writing (see F below) and possible connections with other ANE writings (see G below). The more "philosophical" questions, however, have centered on the various "answers" that are (or are not) given for the "problem of human suffering" (see G below). The quest for such "answers" is an understandable human desire, but it may be unfair to expect the book of Job to answer these questions.

However, if he had wanted to, the author undoubtedly *could* have provided some (perhaps even satisfactory) resolution to the story. If he wished to retain the dialogue, the author could have explicitly addressed its point (or its pointlessness?) and the ambiguity of Job's final reaction, explicitly telling the reader whether or not the test was resolved, and if so, how it was resolved. The author similarly could have had God more explicitly underscore the fact that no human being (neither Job nor the reader) can know or understand why the world operates the way it

does (i.e., have God exercise his "power play" more obviously and directly on the reader). Indeed, to some extent the author seems to permit the plot to devolve toward this insight.

If he eliminated (or ignored) the dialogue altogether, the author *literarily* could have resolved some aspects of the narrative. For example, he could have portrayed a resolute Job who never complained and who made a complete *and unselfish* submission to God. He could even have depicted this Job continually suffering and eventually dying in pain. In this scenario, Satan would lose the wager, but the narrative could have still ended on the upbeat note that God still retained pride in (the now-deceased) Job (assuming the author cannot portray Job being resurrected from the dead). The reader would at least still be left with a moral example (Job), and whatever vague hopes might be associated with the notion of retaining divine favor posthumously.

Or the author could have depicted Job finally and decisively cursing God and having Satan thereby win the wager. Such a scenario conceding the truth of the Satan's claim could have itself constituted not only a profound anthropological lesson into human motivation (that even the best of human intentions *are* colored by self-interest) but also a touching theological lesson about the predicament of God (who, despite the unconditional love shown for humans, can only be loved conditionally for the benefits rendered, not unconditionally for God's sake).

It is of course unfair to expect an ancient author to write a literary piece to provide satisfying answers to the questions raised by subsequent generations of readers. Nevertheless, many readers have wished that the author could have explicitly cited the "Fall" and "Original Sin" (Genesis 3–4) to explain human suffering, more explicitly drawing the conclusion that (for the time being?) the world does not operate according to God's original intent at Creation. Again, some readers have wished that the author could have developed the figure of a more diabolical "Satan," thereby portraying a sort of cosmic dualism that explains suffering as caused by an evil presence actively working to undo God's otherwise harmonious and just creation.

Regardless of how satisfying or unsatisfying they may be to subsequent readers, all these hypothetical resolutions would at least represent clear and deliberate attempts to resolve the profound problem of human suffering. The fact that the author of the finished book seems not to make such an explicit attempt perhaps reveals an awareness of how intractable the problem is. Perhaps the author was content merely to raise the issues, knowing from experience, reflection, and realization that any answer that human beings can articulate and comprehend is necessarily inadequate.

D. Competing Arguments

In a book that features a deity who asks copious questions, it occasions little surprise that the central theme of the book is stated interrogatively: does anyone serve God for nothing (1:9)? Society seems to take for granted the principle of retribution, the reaping of what one sows, despite occasional exceptions. Job's case stretches the belief to the limit, and in doing so the book probes an even profounder mystery: can religious trust survive every

eventuality? The author recognizes that religion cannot endure unless its adherents transcend self-interest and reject all relationships grounded in the hope of reward for service duly rendered or fear of punishment for failing to meet expected standards of belief or practice.

As one might expect, an ambiguous answer rises above the heat of conflict, and the ambiguity penetrates to the very core of the story as well as the poetic dispute. On the surface, it appears that Job utterly rejects every semblance of a magical concept of reality whereby human beings manipulate deity for their benefit. After all, he retains his loyalty to God in the face of extreme adversity, explaining that we ought to accept weal and woe as equally sent by God. Still, the story endorses the principle of reward and retribution in subtle ways (Job is supremely virtuous and rich) as well as not so subtle (Job offers sacrifices to propitiate deity, and God seems to reward Job in the end for faithfulness). Despite its radical challenge to dogma, especially in the undeserved fate of Job's children, the story ultimately bows to tradition.

The center of gravity shifts in the poetic dispute, where the fundamental order of the universe comes under attack. Job questions the moral underpinnings of human existence, for he no longer receives appropriate dividends from above. Ironically, his complaint presupposes the very principle that he denies, else he would have no basis for dispute with God. The question, "Does God rule justly?" alternates with another, "How should a person respond to undeserved suffering?" Like the Mesopotamian *I Will Praise the Lord of Wisdom*, the book of Job functions as a paradigm of an answered lament, a model for those undergoing present suffering. The model consists of four movements: undeserved affliction, complaint, hearkening, restoration (Gese 1958). It gives free rein to the expression of anger, while at the same time urging the individual to submit humbly to the mystery and majesty of creation. The book offers no satisfactory answer to the agonizing query, the shortest question of all, "Why?" Even if the arrangement between God and the Adversary does not really constitute a wager, the idea of testing a faithful servant is only slightly more palpable, at least to modern consciences.

The book of Job addresses more than one question and proposes several competing answers. Presumably, the author's answer, insofar as one option takes precedence over all opposing views, is hidden within the divine speeches. These lectures on the wonders of nature argue for a morality that transcends human values and contend that God governs the universe wisely. The frightening monsters, described in language that conjures up images of crocodiles and hippopotami, posed a threat to order in Egyptian mythology but yielded to divine domestication according to this astonishing text (Keel 1978). The deity's activity in providing for the needs of wild animals and in causing rain to fall beyond the regions of human habitation implies that caprice does not speak the final word. Saadia Gaon makes the argument more explicit: the gift of life satisfies the issue of divine justice, and anything beyond that falls into the category of mercy. Owing their very existence to the creator, human beings have no claim on God.

This line of reasoning comes closest to Eliphaz' insis-

tence that human deeds have no effect on God, who does not even trust holy ones. For Eliphaz, the basic issue becomes clear in a terrifying revelation: "Can a mortal be more righteous than God? Can a man be purer than his Maker?" (4:17). Not content to rest his case on a word from God, he appeals to proverbial wisdom (reaping and sowing) and to ancestral teaching ("We are older than you"). At first gentle toward Job and holding out hope of eventual restoration as a result of submission, Eliphaz becomes increasingly less patient, accusing Job of heinous crimes. In doing so, Eliphaz fails to see the inconsistency with his earlier insistence that God derives no pleasure from human morality.

Although Eliphaz alludes to human existence as drinking iniquity like water, Bildad extends this point to include the birth process itself. He also expresses an exceedingly low estimate of human worth. Matters lack any ambiguity whatsoever for Bildad; Job's children sinned and paid for it, for God does not pervert justice. It follows that Job's repentance will accomplish restoration. Zophar's contribution to the argument skirts the issue of justice altogether: God takes mercy into account, punishing less than people deserve. Moreover, Zophar bears witness to an inner voice that announces the brevity of ill-gotten wages.

Elihu plows the same furrow that Job's three friends have opened, as if youth inevitably do so. Like Eliphaz, he thinks God warns mortals by means of frightening dreams and visions; Elihu also questions the effect of virtue or wickedness on God, concluding that morality concerns human beings only (35:8). Like Bildad, Elihu cannot even imagine the possibility that God rules unjustly. Like Zophar, Elihu thinks favored persons escape penalty for their sins. His arguments lay greater stress on educative discipline and the role of a mediator in moving the deity to compassion.

Job also entertains thoughts about an advocate who will plead his case and press for vindication. This daring concept (9:33) disappears almost as abruptly as it occurs, only to return a second (16:19) and third time (19:25) with greater tenacity. Job remains adamant in his protests of innocence, and this unyielding stance obliges him to attribute fault to God. Failing to obtain a hearing in the divine court, Job concludes that God has abandoned justice altogether. Because Job believes in the unlimited power of God, he naturally assumes that the problem belongs to the realm of will. The deity clearly does not want to execute justice throughout the land, Job charges, and with this concession Job broadens his scope to include the miserable wretches of society who know nothing but deprivation from birth to death. Fleeting thoughts about survival beyond the grave only distress Job, who denies the likelihood itself. He soon realizes that his only hope consists in a formal pronouncement of innocence within a court of law. To this end he pleads with God to write out the crimes for which he now suffers, vowing to parade the charges for all to see. In desperation, he enters into an oath of innocence. Confused to the end, Job forgets that human action has no fused to the end, Job forgets that human action has no control over arbitrary deities—or free ones (Hempel 1961). Readers forget this point too, frequently remarking that such action forced God to respond. Even Israel's sages

knew better; neither curses nor oaths automatically move from word to deed.

E. Composition

A noticeable lack of coherence within the book implies that more than one author contributed to its final form. Differences between framework and core suggest that the author of the poetry used a popular folktale to pose the religious problem to be examined in the dispute. The depiction of the hero differs sharply in the two parts, a model of patience in the story, a defiant rebel in the poetry. The names for God differ, Yahweh in the prose, El, Eloah, Shaddai in the dispute (with one exception). The story endorses the principle of reward and retribution, despite Job's temporary misfortune, but neither Job nor God subscribes to the theory. Job rejects it outright and God ignores it completely. The epilogue has God condemn the friends for speaking lies about the creator and praise Job for telling the truth, whereas the divine speeches adopt quite a different attitude toward Job's attempt to justify himself at God's expense.

Confusion also exists within the poetic section. The 3d cycle of speeches breaks off prematurely with no response by Zophar; furthermore, Job's arguments at this point become wholly out of character. He seems to surrender to the friends' understanding of things, which contradicts everything he has said previously and makes nonsense of what follows. Various rearrangements of chaps. 24–27 restore Zophar's last speech; perhaps Job's final remarks to the friends were so blasphemous that later readers replaced them with Zophar's sentiments. Chapter 29 presents a problem, for it interprets the argument and offers a feeble rationale for religion. The poem pronounces wisdom off limits for humans (Job seeks God, not wisdom!) but then concedes that God has made it accessible to everyone who is religious and moral, a conclusion Job only reaches after God's speeches. Furthermore, wisdom has two different meanings; practical knowledge in the dialogue, the nature of the universe in the poem. Elihu appears without advance warning and cites previous material with great familiarity. He may represent the later Jewish community's dissatisfaction with the divine speeches. Both God and the narrator in the epilogue ignore Elihu, as does Job. Moreover, the oath in chap. 31 arouses expectation of a divine visitor, which Elihu delays interminably. The divine speeches also seem to suggest supplementation. The primary problem extends beyond particular sections that differ markedly from the rest, especially the descriptions of horse and ostrich, to the simple fact that God speaks twice and elicits two submissions from Job. The second speech has struck many readers as excessive browbeating.

Literary unity within the dialogue has its defenders, who offer various justifications for rejecting a theory of textual accretion. The breakdown of the 3d cycle is a subtle way of declaring Job the victor (but why does Job endorse their view of retribution?). Job 28 functions as an interlude, retarding the action of the drama and assuaging human emotions. Elihu serves as an ironic foil to the deity, and the citation of earlier speeches constitutes instances of literary anticipation or foreshadowing. Variety in style and vocabulary is a mark of literary craft, and God's two

speeches address Job's dual charges. Stylistic affinities between the hymn on wisdom's inaccessibility and the Elihu narratives, on the one hand, and the rest of the poetry, on the other hand, have led some interpreters to posit common authorship over a long period of time. The silence about Elihu in the epilogue baffles critics of all persuasions.

The folktale may have developed by stages, with the wife and friends playing somewhat different roles from the ones in the present book (Vermeylen 1986). The three friends may once have functioned in the way the Adversary does now. Inasmuch as these verses featuring "the Satan" can be omitted without serious loss, the story in all essentials probably existed long before the addition of the motif of a heavenly adversary. The story manifests exquisite style, causing one interpreter to question the appropriateness of using the term folktale (Good 1988) and leading another to postulate an epic substratum (Sarna 1957).

F. Date and Language

Although the book is set in pre-Mosaic times, the actual time of composition is much later. Linguistic evidence seems to indicate a date in the 6th century or later (Hurvitz 1974), despite the complete silence about the national calamity in 587 B.C.E. Specific indicators for dating the book are exceedingly rare. Job's powerful outcry about the desirability of incising his testimony on a rock with lead inlay may allude to the Behistun Rock on which the Persian King Darius proclaimed his accomplishments to all passers-by. Mention of caravans from Teman and Sheba (6:19) and the nomenclature of officials (kings, counselors, princes) in 3:14–15 corresponds to Persian hierarchy. The use of the definite article *ha-* with *Šaṭan* suggests a stage in the development of the figure prior to the Chronicler and parallel to Zechariah. The abundance of Aramaisms, while problematic, may indicate a date in the late 6th or 5th century. The relationship between Job and comparable laments or lyrical texts in Jeremiah and Deutero-Isaiah is difficult to assess, but priority may go to the latter books. Similarities between Job and theological probings within the Psalter (37, 49, 73) certainly exist, but the uncertain dates of these psalms render them dubious witnesses about the actual date of the book of Job. The possible allusion to Job in Qoheleth 6:10–11 may echo familiarity with the folktale, and the recently discovered Targum of Job from Qumran, dating from the 2d or 3d century B.C.E., suggests a considerably earlier date for the book of Job.

An attempt to provide a specific historical setting for the book in Teman lacks cogency. According to this hypothesis, the book was written between 552 and 542 B.C.E., when Nabonidus conquered Tema and marauding soldiers took Job's possessions, forcing him to ransom his life (Guillaume 1968). Likewise, an effort to understand the book as a paracultic tragedy intended for use at the New Year Festival (Terrien) has failed to persuade many readers. Two astonishing features of the book remain unresolved: why did the author choose an Edomite for its hero, and why did the analogy between Job's affliction and Israel's defeat by Babylon and enforced exile not affect the depiction of the hero? Given the hostile sentiments toward Edom in prophetic texts from the exilic and postexilic period, the identification of the perfectly righteous man as an Edom-

ite, made explicit in an appendix to the book in the LXX, seems strange until one recognizes the universalism of wisdom literature. Moreover, having set the story in (pre-)patriarchal times, the author could not have introduced an Israelite, for the nation did not appear on the historical scene until centuries later.

Two other factors, sometimes thought to indicate a late date for Job, alter the situation little: the emergence of monotheism and monogamy. The heavenly Adversary can act only insofar as God allows it to do so, and the divine speeches also insist on the creator's authority over the entire cosmos. Such "modified monotheism" still employs mythic language about antagonists over whom the creator exercises control. Moreover, Job imagines the possibility of a mediator's forcing a guilty deity to acknowledge Job's innocence. One hesitates to label such thinking "monotheism," although it resolutely refuses to exonerate God by positing a rival deity. The noteworthy assumption that a wealthy man like Job in patriarchal times had only one wife may suggest that monogamy had become the rule rather than the exception when the author composed the folktale.

The language of the book contains more rare words than any other biblical work, Hosea being its nearest rival. The linguistic forms have caused interpreters to posit theories of composition in another language, primarily Aramaic. Much clarity of language and syntax comes from Northwest Semitic, so that theories of translation into Hebrew from another language seem superfluous. Nevertheless, the rare dialect of the book often defies understanding, and the frequent references to obscure animals and natural objects do not help matters. A single example illustrates the problem. In 4:10–11 five different words for lion stretch modern translators' wits to the breaking point.

G. Related Works in the Ancient World

Belief in the moral governance of the universe was widespread in the ancient world. Gradually this conviction gave rise to confidence that certain actions ensured well-being most of the time. By behaving in specific ways, individuals controlled the gods, who also benefitted from human attention to the cult and to ethics. During periods of social turmoil, doubt about the deity's benevolence became prevalent and produced literary texts resembling the book of Job in some ways. From Egypt come three works of this nature: *The Admonitions of Ipuwer*, *The Dispute Between a Man and His Ba*, and *The Eloquent Peasant* (*ANET*, 441–44, 405–10), all dating from the 12th Dynasty (1990–1785 B.C.E.).

A section of *The Admonitions of Ipuwer* cites conventional belief ("He [God] is the herdsman of all; there is no evil in his heart. His herds are few, but he spends the days herding them") only to lament the wickedness that the deity allowed to stand. Because of social upheaval, the author denies the existence of a providential deity guiding human affairs. He asks: "Where is he today? Is he asleep?" and insists that "his power is not seen." Although the god possesses authority, knowledge, and truth, "turmoil is what possesses authority, knowledge, and truth, "turmoil is what you let happen in the land, and the noise of strife." Death naturally follows, and the poet entertains the possibility that the divine herdsman loves death. *The Dispute Between a Man and His Ba* (*ANET*, 405–7) describes a miserable

person who tries to persuade his soul to join him in a pact to commit suicide, primarily because his name reeks and he lacks companions who act virtuously. The man longs for death, which is "like a sick man's recovery," "like the fragrance of myrrh (and lotus)," "like a well-trodden way," "like the clearing of the sky," "like a man's longing to see his home." *The Eloquent Peasant* (*ANET*, 407–10) complains bitterly to a government official, Rensi, son of Meru, about a lesser functionary who robbed him. Because of his rhetoric, the peasant is imprisoned and encouraged to plead his case; unknown to him, scribes record his speeches for the entertainment of the court. The peasant speaks nine petitions, becoming more exasperated over time and threatening to appeal to Anubis. When servants come from Rensi to reward the peasant, he mistakes their purpose and welcomes death with the words: "A thirsty man's approach to water, an infant's mouth reaching for milk, thus is a longed-for death seen coming, thus does his death arrive at last." Like the book of Job, these texts have prose frameworks enclosing poetic complaints.

From Mesopotamia come at least four texts that explore the problem of unjust suffering: *Man and his God*, *I Will Praise the Lord of Wisdom*, *The Babylonian Theodicy*, and *A Dialogue Between a Master and his Slave*. In the Sumerian *Man and his God* (2d millennium; *ANET*, 589–91), a sufferer complains to the gods but confesses guilt and is restored. He accuses the deity, here called a "righteous shepherd," of becoming angry, thereby encouraging human enemies to conspire against the sufferer without fear of divine retaliation. Appealing to the intimate relationship of father and son, the sufferer asks how long the deity will leave him unprotected. Nevertheless, he surrenders all right to protest divine conduct and subscribes to conventional wisdom: "Never has a sinless child been born to its mother; a sinless workman has not existed from of old." *I Will Praise the Lord of Wisdom* (*ANET*, 434–37) discovers a solution in the inscrutability of the gods and the necessity for human beings to perform proper cultic acts. The sufferer believes in divine compassion ("I will praise the Lord of wisdom . . . whose heart is merciful . . . whose gentle hand sustains the dying . . .") despite his own wretched state. Contrasting his earlier prestige with his present dishonor, he complains about inability to discover the face of the one to whom he prays. Circumstances compel him to conclude that the gods may have a different value system from the one constructed by human beings. This concession leads him to ask: "Who can know the will of the gods in heaven? Who can understand the plans of the underworld gods? Where have humans learned the way of a god?"

The Babylonian Theodicy (ca. 1100 B.C.E.; *ANET*, 601–4) resembles Job in that a sufferer engages in a dispute with a learned friend. An acrostic poem of 27 stanzas with 11 lines each, this dispute entertains the possibility of divine culpability ("Narru king of the gods, who created mankind, and majestic Zulummar, who pinched off the clay kind, and goddess Mami, the queen who fashioned for them, and goddess Mami, the queen who fashioned them, gave twisted speech to the human race. With lies, and not truth, they endowed them forever"). The sufferer and his friend complains of having been orphaned early, and his friend reminds him that we all die. When told that wild asses trample fields and lions kill, the friend points out that the

wild animals pay with their lives and that the plan of the gods is remote. The sufferer insists that his good deeds have not brought favorable response from the gods, and this remark arouses the friend's anger over such blasphemy. The friend does concede that the one who bears the god's yoke may have sparse food, but this situation can change for the better in a moment. The sufferer lingers on the notion that morality yields no profit. In the end, the complainant prays that the shepherd (i.e., god) who abandoned him will yet "pasture his flock as a god should."

The Dialogue Between a Master and his Slave (*ANET*, 437–38) resembles Ecclesiastes more than the book of Job, but some features of the Dialogue echo the conditions underlying Job's distress. A master determines to pursue a course of action and his servant, the proverbial aye-sayer, encourages him. The master changes his mind and the slave defends this decision. Nothing commends itself to the master—not dining, marrying, hunting, philanthropy, or anything else—except suicide, better still, murdering the slave. This poor wretch, caught in his rhetoric, seems to say that the master would gladly join him in death within three days.

The Canaanite epic of Keret (*ANET*, 142–49) bears some resemblance to the book of Job. The hero loses his wife and sons but eventually finds favor with the gods and acquires a new wife and additional children. More remote parallels such as Prometheus Bound have been compared with Job, but differences stand out (Prometheus was a Titan, not a human being, and he suffered the wrath of Zeus through wilful conduct). An Indian tale about a discussion among the gods over the existence of pure goodness among earthly creatures singles out a certain Harischandra, whom the god Shiva submits to a test that demonstrates his incredible virtue.

The author of the book of Job may have known about the Mesopotamian (and Egyptian?) prototypes, but the biblical text cannot be explained solely on the basis of earlier parallels. These explorations of the governance of the universe and unjust suffering may have provided an intellectual stimulus, but the biblical author has produced something that stands alone as *sui generis*. Still, structural similarities (framework enclosing poetic disputes) and common ideas place the biblical work in the wider context of intellectual and religious foment. This observation also extends to specific units within the book of Job, for example, the oath of innocence in chap. 31, for which Egyptian execration oaths offer a close parallel (Fohrer *Job* KAT).

The claim that the book of Job is *sui generis* does not imply originality for everything in Job. In fact, striking similarities exist between elements within this book and other biblical material: the laments in Jeremiah (chaps. 3 and 20) and in the Psalms, hymnic passages in Amos (4:13; 5:8–9; 9:5–6) and Deutero-Isaiah, the book of Ruth, prophetic lawsuits, and proverbial wisdom. Sometimes the author seems to offer a parody of biblical texts (e.g., Job 3 and Genesis 1; Job 7:17–21 and Psalm 8). Occasionally Job shares expressions in common with another textual unit (e.g., 38:5 with Ps 30:4, "Surely you know"; and 13:20 with Prov 30:7, "Two things"—but the connection between these texts is unclear).

The book of Job is usually discussed in connection with Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Sirach, Wisdom of Solomon, and a

few Psalms (e.g., 37, 49, 73). Modern scholars call these works "wisdom literature" and consider their closest parallels to be in Egypt and Mesopotamia rather than in the rest of the biblical canon. In some ways Job resists inclusion in this corpus, primarily because of the dominance of the lament genre and the theophany. Nevertheless, it seems best to designate the book "wisdom" and to recognize that, like Sirach some years later, the author of Job begins to widen the scope of traditions accessible to the sages.

On the basis of the texts to which modern critics have given the title wisdom literature, four quite distinct types are discernible: proverbial sayings, religious or philosophical reflections in discourse form, nature wisdom, and mantic revelation. The book of Job lacks the last of these types. Collections of aphorisms from the 3d millennium to the 3d century B.C.E. have survived in Egypt, and Mesopotamian proverbs date from the 3d and 2d millennium. The philosophical probings from both areas rival the proverbial sayings in antiquity. The book of Job unites these two types of wisdom—the brief saying and reflective discourse—while restricting nature wisdom to a discrete unit, specifically chaps. 38–40. In general, the aphorisms present a positive view of reality, resting on belief in a reliable order and in the capacity of the human intellect to control one's actions and thus to promote well-being.

On the other hand, the intellectual reflection about the problem of suffering and the meaning of life is markedly less optimistic. The former type of thinking, by means of aphorisms, has a decidedly practical purpose, although its utilitarianism possessed a profound religious grounding: because right conduct sustained the order of the universe, the gods reward appropriate behavior. The reflective discourses question such certainty as found in these brief aphorisms, comprising a sort of "anti-wisdom." The sages therefore demonstrate unusual willingness to examine their presuppositions and to criticize themselves. The author of Psalm 37 affirms traditional belief in the face of all evidence that seems to indicate otherwise, but Psalm 49 takes human frailty much more seriously, and Psalm 73 probes deeply into the nature of the relationships between worshipper and deity. Here the assurance that God is good to the upright appears dubious when taking into account the prosperity of evildoers, until the psalmist goes to the holy place and reflects on the destiny of the evil ones. Then the intimacy with God becomes a source of unsurpassed joy and divine presence more precious than anything else in all creation.

Although the nature wisdom in the book of Job resembles lists of flora and fauna from onomastica in ancient Egypt—where encyclopedic knowledge of different subjects seems to have served to train young courtiers (von Rad 1972)—decisive differences make the identification of Job 38–40 as lists highly doubtful (Fox 1986). Ancient sages study nature as a means of learning more about human beings through analogy, for the wise assume that the same laws govern the universe, animals, and humans.

Because undeserved suffering posed an immense intellectual and religious problem for the sages, they sought arduously for a satisfactory answer. Their most common understanding, the *retributive*, is grounded in the order of the universe and the will of its creator. A second explanation, the *disciplinary*, derives from the context of the family,

where well-intentioned parents punish their children as an act of love, hoping thus to shape character and to protect the young ones from harm. In time, the school also endorses this method of controlling the actions of youth. A third approach to suffering, the *probative*, bears impressive witness to the disinterested nature of religion. God tests human hearts to ascertain whether or not religion is pure, and in doing so replaces human self-interest with the centrality of holiness. A fourth interpretation, the *eschatological*, contrasts present discomfort with future restoration, indicating that hope springs eternal in the human breast. A fifth suggestion, the *redemptive*, derives from the sacrificial system and the idea that the spilling of blood alone makes atonement. A sixth response, the *revelatory*, takes suffering as an occasion for divine disclosure of previously hidden truth, both human pride and the mystery of the living God. A seventh understanding of suffering, the *ineffable*, is a humble admission of ignorance before unspeakable mystery, one so profound that a self-revealing deity in the book of Job remains silent about the reason for Job's suffering and fails to affirm meaning behind such agony. An eighth explanation for suffering, the *incidental*, implies that an indifferent deity stands by and thereby encourages evil, which seems trivial to the High God who fashioned mortals to be subject to suffering as the human condition. All these understandings of suffering in one way or another find expression in the book of Job.

H. Canon and Text

As in the case of Qoheleth (Ecclesiastes), the disturbing thoughts of Job did not prevent its acceptance in the biblical canon. An occasional rabbinic dissent against the historicity of the character Job has survived (*Baba Bathra* 15a), and one Christian thinker, Theodore of Mopsuestia, questioned the book's sacred authority. The sequence of writings varied at first, Job being placed between Psalms and Proverbs in the Talmud and in Codex Alexandrinus, but preceding Psalms and Proverbs in Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, Jerome, Rufinus, and the Apostolic Canons. Jewish tradition designates the two different sequences by the acrostic abbreviations *'mt* ("truth") for Job (*'iyob*), Proverbs (*mišlê*), and Psalms (*tehillîm*), and *t'm* ("twin") for Psalms, Job, and Proverbs. The Council of Trent fixed the order with Job in the initial position.

Textual problems abound in the book, and the much shorter Greek versions seldom resolve the difficulties. Often merely a paraphrase, the Greek text sometimes elucidates a theological bias in the present MT, for example the repointing of a negative particle in 13:15 to affirm trust in God even when faced with the prospect of death at the deity's hand (Pope, *Job* AB, 95–96). The Syriac Peshitta assists in clarifying obscure meanings of the Hebrew text. Enough of the Targum from Qumran has survived to confirm the same disorder in chaps. 24–27 as that in the Hebrew. One surprising feature of the Targum is its termination at 42:11 instead of 42:17. See also JOB, TARGUMS OF. Jerome's Latin translation of the Hebrew text of Job was influenced by the Greek translations of Aquila, Theodotion, Symmachus, and the Alexandrian version as mediated by Origen's Hexapla.

I. History of Interpretation

The *Testament of Job*, the oldest surviving interpretation of the book of Job, probably comes from Alexandria in the 1st century B.C.E. See also JOB, TESTAMENT OF. One of many such "last words" of a famous person, it is characterized by zeal against idols, extensive speculation about Satan, cosmological dualism, interest in women, burial customs, magic, merkabah mysticism, angelic glossolalia, and patience. The *Testament of Job* differs considerably from the biblical story. The essential variations are that (1) Job destroys Satan's idol, incurring wrath, but an angel reveals Satan's identity to Job; (2) Job's possessions and good works are magnified in haggadic fashion; (3) Job's devoted wife, Sitis, begs for bread and eventually sells her hair to enable them to survive; (4) Satan concedes defeat in wrestling with Job; (5) Baldad poses "difficult questions" and Zophar offers royal physicians, but Job relies on the one who created physicians; (6) Sitis refuses to die until she knows that her children receive proper burial, and Job assures her that their creator and king has already taken them up; (7) God condemns the friends for not speaking truth *about Job;* (8) Job's daughters inherit magical items, enabling them to speak ecstatically; and (9) chariots take Job into heaven.

Unlike the Epistle of James (5:11), early opinions about Job's character did not always emphasize his patient endurance. The *Abot de Rabbi-Nathan* accuses Job of sinning with his heart and in this way defends divine justice. Rashi faults Job for talking too much. According to Glatzer (1966), later interpreters went beyond calling Job a saint or an imperfectly pious man to quite different categories: a rebel (Ibn Ezra, Nachmanides), a dualist (Sforno), a pious man searching for truth (Saadia Gaon), one who lacked the love of God (Maimonides), an Aristotelian denier of providence (Gersonides), one who confused the work of God and Satan (Simeon ben Semah Duran), a determinist (Joseph Albo), one who failed to pacify Satan, a scapegoat, and isolationist (the Zohar), one who suffered as a sign of divine love (the Zohar, Moses ben Hayyim). In Jewish legend, God turned Job over to Samael (Satan) to keep him occupied while the Jewish people escaping from Egypt crossed the Red Sea, then God rescued Job from the enemy power at the last moment.

The early church stressed Job's suffering as a lesson in living and had readings from Job in the liturgy of the dead. Gregory the Great wrote thirty-five books of Sermons on Job, and Augustine read the book as an example of divine grace. Thomas Aquinas saw the book of Job as the starting point for discussing the metaphysical problem of divine providence (Damico and Yaffe 1989). Calvin wrote 159 sermons on Job, mostly polemical defenses of providence (Dekker 1952). This early Christian concentration on the suffering hero of faith gave way in the 17th and 18th centuries to an emphasis on Job as a rebel. For instance, Voltaire saw Job as a representative of the universal human condition (Hausen 1972).

Modern critics continue the tendency to understand Job in the light of prevailing intellectual or religious sentiments. For Carl Jung, psychological insights provide the key to understanding Job. Jung emphasizes the importance of a marriage between an unreflective but powerful deity, Job's afflicter, and *Hokmāh* (wisdom), who taught

God that the Cross, not abusive force, was the answer to Job. Jack Kahn draws on modern psychiatry to understand the grief process through which Job passed. Two literary treatments of Job have greatly influenced Western thinking about the problem of evil, Goethe's *Faust* and Archibald MacLeish's *J.B.* An anthropological approach to the book of Job emphasizes the people's desire to establish order by sacrificing Job as a scapegoat (Girard 1987), and a liberation theologian stresses Job's identification with the causes of the poor (Gutiérrez 1987). A philosopher explains Job's offense as ingratitude, a bitterness of spirit that harbors resentment toward God for allowing affliction to strike a heavy blow against Job's security (Wilcox 1989). Artists depict Job's suffering in the light of Greek mythology (William Blake) and the Holocaust (Hans Fronius). A Yiddish interpreter uses Goethe's *Faust* as a lens through which to view Job positively (Chaim Zhitlowsky 1919); a contemporary novelist likens the Jewish fate under Hitler to Job's affliction (Elie Wiesel) and is opposed by a humanist who contrasts Job's survival with the victims of Auschwitz and Dachau (Rubenstein). Some existentialist writers seem to have used Job as an example of the human situation (Camus, Kafka), and at least one Marxist philosopher thinks of Job as an exemplary rebel against theism and abusive power that religion fosters in the western world (Ernst Bloch).

The current fascination with literary theory has produced several different understandings of the book of Job. In one instance, readings are offered from the perspective of feminism, vegetarianism, materialism, and NT ideology (Clines 1989). An older reading of the book as drama has been revitalized (Alonso-Schökel 1977), and a shift from viewing Job as tragedy to comedy has occurred. In this view, Job's final restoration qualifies the book as a comedy in the classical sense of the word (Whedbee 1970). Attention has come to the ways modern interpreters silence the shrill voice of dissent, whether in the revised Roman Catholic liturgy (Rouillard 1983) or in the act of interpretation itself (Tilley 1989). In providing a fresh translation, a contemporary poet (Stephen Mitchell) has taken great license and removed the sting of Job's *cri de coeur* by omitting crucial verses.

Specialists in Hebrew Bible continue to wrestle with the meaning of key texts in the book of Job, particularly 19:23–27 and 42:6. Confronted with several possible translations (and probable textual confusion in 19:23–27), interpreters concede the impossibility of certainty. A parallel in the Canaanite epic of Baal and Anat may explain Job's daring thought that extends the concept of a *gō'ēl* to the realm of the gods, but the matter is complicated by the two previous allusions to an umpire (*môkîaḥ*, 9:33) and a witness (*'ēdî // sahadî*, 16:19, 21). Such foreshadowing occurs throughout the book of Job: 9:17 and 38:1–42:6; 11:5–6 and 38:1–42:6; 13:7–12 and 42:7–9; 22:30 and 42:10; 9:32–35 and 32–37 (ironically); 8:6–7 and 42:10–17 (Habel 1985). Moreover, the ambiguity of Job's remarks in 19:23–26 leaves unclear Job's personal circumstances at the time of seeing God. Does Job expect vindication before death, or is his expectation considerably more bold? With respect to the missing object in 42:6, the suggestions are varied: Job repents of his finitude, he rejects (drops) his anticipated lawsuit, he falls down to the earth in shame, he

only pretends to repent, knowing how to manipulate an unjust ruler, he rejects God, he recants his earlier words. Less likely, the verb *m's* is understood reflexively (I loathe myself, I melt away, I abase myself).

One conclusion seems to force itself on readers: the author of the book does not believe that the natural order is moral (Tsevat 1966). The God whom Job worships and accuses of injustice transcends morality. Consequently, this book does not present a comforting deity nor a particularly accommodating universe. Perhaps that attitude is appropriate in an examination of the possibility of disinterested goodness. Nevertheless, the evocative power of this book "crashes into the abyss of radical aloneness" (Susman 1969) and arouses high praise in many readers, for example: "Here, in our view, is the most sublime monument in literature, not only of written language, nor of philosophy and poetry, but the most sublime monument of the human soul. Here is the great eternal drama with three actors who embody everything: but what actors! God, humankind, and Destiny" (Alphonse de Lamartine, cited in Hausen 1972: 145).

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JAMES L. CRENSHAW

JOB, TARGUMS OF.

There are two mss of targums (Aramaic translations) to the book of Job among the Dead Sea Scrolls found at Wadi Qumran: a substantial text found in Cave 11, consisting of about 20 percent of the book in 38 fragmentary cols (11QtgJob); and two small ms fragments from Cave 4, essentially comprising about a dozen fragmentary lines from two cols (4QtgJob). The ms do not overlap; the Cave 4 fragments preserve text from chaps. 3–5, while the Cave 11 material preserves intermittent text from 17:14 to the end of the book. Because of the lack of common text and, even more, because the Cave 4 Targum is so little preserved, it is an open question as to whether these two texts preserve the same or distinct Aramaic versions of Job. In any case, neither of these targums appears to show any direct relationship to the standard targum found in the Rabbinical Bible and available, for example, in the edition of Lagarde (cf. Fitzmyer 1974).

The larger targum from Cave 11 was published by van der Ploeg, van der Woude and Jongeling in 1971, and there followed an edition by Sokoloff in 1974, which is now considered the standard reference on the text. Major studies of 11QtgJob include Beyer 1984: 280–298; Jongeling et al 1976: 1–73; and Sokoloff 1974). The targum fragments from Cave 4 were published by Milik in 1977 (DJD vol. 6).

These two targums, especially the Cave 11 targum, are of considerable importance for the study of the book of Job, for the study of targumic traditions, and for the study of Aramaic during the Hellenistic and Roman periods. They constitute the earliest mss of Job translations in existence and 11QtgJob is the earliest known ms of Job of any significant length. It is also the only lengthy targum known from so early a period. (There exists another Qumran targum, a translation of Leviticus, but like 4QtgJob it is fragmentary.) Paleographical considerations suggest that both existing Qumran Job targum mss were copied during the 1st century C.E. The original editors proposed that 11QtgJob was actually composed in the latter half of the 2d century B.C.E.; more recently a later date has been proposed, namely, the 1st century B.C.E. (Kaufman 1973; Zuckerman 1987).

By and large, the Cave 11 Targum seems to adhere to its Heb *Vorlage* quite closely, certainly far more closely than targums of the Palestinian tradition preserved by the early rabbis. (The Cave 4 targum seems to be fairly literal as well, although it is simply too small to allow for reasonable judgment as to characteristics of this sort.) Where there appear on occasion to be editorial alterations in 11QtgJob, they tend to be focused upon avoiding implicit disrespect for the Deity, upgrading the image of Job, and perhaps downgrading the image of the friends, especially Elihu (cf. Tuinstra 1970; Zuckerman 1980). In this respect the sentiments of the translator seem to fall somewhat in line with

the view of Job found in the pseudepigraphical *Testament of Job*.

The targum also appears to preserve the famous rereading of the phrase in Job 13:15, *lw ʾyhl*, traditionally translated, ("though He [i.e., God] slay me, yet will I trust in Him") instead of *lʾ ʾyhl* ("if He slays me, I have no hope"). Although a direct translation of Job 13:15 is not preserved in the existing 11QtgJob, the phrase appears to be quoted in 11QtgJob 25:7 = Job 34:31. The translator also shows some indication of exemplifying the rabbinical rule of scriptural interpretation, exposition by means of another similar passage (Zuckerman 1978).

It may be more than simply a coincidence that two out of the three clearly targumic texts found among the Dead Sea Scrolls are targums of Job. Moreover, in the most prominent discussion of targums in the early rabbinical literature (*t. Šhabb.* 13:2; cf. *b. Šhabb.* 115a; *j. Šhabb.* 16:1), the particular targum under discussion is also a targum of Job. In that instance, Rabban Gamaliel (80–110 C.E.) is said to have been reading a targum of Job, which reminded R. Halafta that Gamaliel's grandfather, Gamaliel the Elder (30–70 C.E.) had once been brought a targum which he subsequently ordered to be hidden. In this latter instance the targum in question was, once again, a targum of Job.

We can only wonder why a good deal of the specific evidence we have of written targums from the period of the early rabbis centers upon targums of Job? One probable reason is that the Hebrew of Job, even at this early time, must have been recognized as being notoriously difficult to read and comprehend. Hence, if any biblical text cried out for a popular translation so that it would be more widely accessible in the vernacular of the day, Aramaic, it would certainly have been Job. Moreover, it would not only be because of the difficult nature of the language that targumic renditions of Job were called for. In all likelihood the controversial issues raised in Job were also deemed to require special handling, especially in more popular translations that would make Job more broadly available to the Jewish community in rabbinical times. We might suspect that it was in translations of this nature that various small adjustments were often made in order to conform the text to pietistic standards.

On the other hand, it is also quite likely that more straightforward renderings of Job were made in targumic form. After all, 11QtgJob and 4QtgJob, insofar as they are preserved, are fairly accurate renderings which contain relatively limited editorial adjustments. In fact, it may even be partly for this reason that Gamaliel the Elder wished to hide away the targum that was brought before him. That is, he may have deemed the targum too correct to be exposed to the uninitiated (note in this respect *b. Meg.* 3a). It is also likely that Gamaliel did not like the idea that any biblical text should be committed to writing in the vulgar language of the time and that this also prompted his suppression of the targum brought to his attention.

Regardless, it does seem fairly reasonable to assume that when the rabbis thought of a biblical targum around the beginning of the Common Era, the stereotypical example would seem to have been a targum of Job. And this at least supports the assumption that the Job known to the popular

audience of that time was likely Job in translation as opposed to Job in the hard-to-read original Hebrew.

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BRUCE ZUCKERMAN

JOB, TESTAMENT OF.

Slightly shorter than the NT book of Romans, the *Testament of Job* embellishes the biblical story of Job in praise of the virtue of patience *(hypomonē)*. The prosaic and occasionally humorous composition shows characteristics of similar works such as the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* and the *Testaments of Abra-*

ham, Isaac, and *Jacob.* Though listed among non-canonical works in the 6th-century Gelasian Decree (5.6.4), the *Testament of Job* is otherwise unmentioned until the 19th century, when its first modern edition was edited by Cardinal Mai (1833), who took the work to be Christian. Migne's French translation, a quarter century later (1858), provided the first translation into a modern European language.

Flanked by a prologue (*Testament of Job* 1) and an epilogue (chaps. 51–53), the bulk of the *Testament* (chaps. 2–50) engages Job first with a revealing angel (chaps. 2–5), then with Satan (chaps. 6–27), next with the three kings ("friends" in the biblical book of Job; chaps. 28–45), and finally with his three daughters (chaps. 46–50). Five poetic passages appear at *T. Job* 25:1–8; 32:1–12; 33:3–9; 43:1–17; and 53:2–4. The *Testament of Job* locates the cause of Job's illness in his destruction of an idol's temple. Job's wife Sitis—and indeed female slaves, widows, and daughters—all figure prominently in this curious text. Jewish burial interests abound. But the principal moral point of the work is captured in the sentence, "Patience is better than anything" (27:7).

The text exits in 4 Gk mss dated from the 11th to the 16th centuries. In addition 3 mss, only one of which is complete, survive from a translation into Old Church Slavonic done around the 11th century (three other Old Church Slavonic mss may exist: Schaller 1979: 317, n. 134). Since 1968, fragments of a 5th century Coptic version (P. Köln 3221) have been known. The impending publication of these will make possible the publication of a critical edition of the text of the *Testament of Job.*

The *Testament of Job* clearly draws from the LXX (Schaller 1980), especially Job 29–31. Septuagintal phrases, and in a few cases apparent direct quotations, have been taken into the *Testament.* Scholars are divided on the unity of the book, but a strong case in its favor has been made by Schaller (1979: 304–6).

The origin and purpose of the work have been variously assessed. M. R. James (1897), who first extensively studied the *Testament,* proposed a Jewish Christian origin in Egypt. K. Kohler (1898) conjectured, mainly from the hymnic sections of the document, an origin among the Therapeutae—a Jewish contemplative sect described by Philo in *De contemplativa.* Spitta (1907) concluded the writing to be pre-Christian but unrelated to the Essenes or to the Therapeutae. Later scholarship has come to favor the Jewish origins of the *Testament of Job* (Rahnenführer 1971; Schaller 1979). Similarities to Jewish merkabah mysticism—speculations about the divine chariot—have been noticed (Urbach 1967; Kee 1974). Jacobs (1970) views the *Testament* as a sample of Jewish martyrdom literature, while Rahnenführer (1971) sees the text as a piece of Jewish missionary propaganda. A proposal has been made that an original Jewish testament was edited by 2d-century Montanists to argue precedent for female prophecy (Spittler 1971), but this view has not found wide acceptance.

It seems best to regard the text as one of unclear origin within sectarian Judaism, mingling interests in magic, merkabah mysticism, standard Jewish features such as burial proprieties and opposition to idolatry along with the care of the poor and female prophetic utterance. Neither a

specific origin nor a date more precise than 100 B.C.E.–200 C.E. can be determined.

Two eras in modern times reflect scholarly interest in the *Testament of Job.* A 15-year period at the turn of the century (1897–1911) yielded the first modern edition of the text (James 1897), the first English translation (Kohler 1898), and the first major study (Spitta 1907). With the publication by Philonenko (1958) of a French translation, with introduction and notes, a generation of renewed study began. This period gained impetus from S. Brock's publication (1967) of a new edition of the text, saw the emergence of several doctoral dissertations (Carstensen 1960; Spittler 1971; Nicholls 1982), and witnessed additional translations into German (Schaller 1979; before him, Riessler 1928), English (Spittler, *OTP* 1: 829–68; Thornhill 1984), modern Hebrew (Hartom 1965). During the thirty year period of 1958–1988, the *Testament of Job* increasingly appeared in introductions to pseudepigraphic literature and achieved deserved recognition as an exemplar of the mingled diversity of Hellenistic Judaic spirituality.

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JOBAB (PERSON) [Heb *yôbāb*]. Five individuals in the Bible bear this name. The name has been compared with the Sabaean tribal name *yhybb,* probably to be vocalized *yuhaybab,* by J. Halevy and E. Glaser (1890: 303, see Jobab no. 1 below). The difference between the Sabaean name and its Heb rendering (one would perhaps expect Heb *yēbāb*) may be explained by the fact that the form of the foreign name was assimilated to the NW Sem name *yôbāb* (see *IPN,* 226, n. 3). The identification of the biblical *yôbāb* with the Gk *Iōbaritai* mentioned by Ptol. (*Geog.* 6.7.24), first proposed by S. Bochart (*Geographia sacra* 1: 190), is not acceptable. On the one hand, the Gk rendering would have to be altered in an inadmissible way to *Iōbabitae;* on the other hand, that tribal name mentioned in SE Arabia beside the Gk *Sachalitai* (= Sabaean *s*'kln) is to be identified with the legendary place name Wabār in the sands of the large Arabian desert. According to its formation, the name *yhybb* is an imperfect form of the causative stem, since it is found occasionally in Sabaean names of tribes or clans (e.g. *yhblh, yhshm,* etc.). The meaning of the name is not known, since it remains uncertain whether the root *ybb* is to be connected with Ar *yabāb,* "waste, deserted."

1. The last of thirteen sons of Joktan (Gen 10:29; 1 Chr 1:23). This name occurs in the so-called "Table of Nations" (Genesis 10) where it is a tribal rather than personal name associated with the progenitor of Arabic tribes, Joktan (Westermann 1984: 526). The Sabaean tribe with a similar name (*yhybb*) was one of the three old tribal federations of the ancient country of Sum'ay in the central highland of Yemen. This tribe or its tribal leaders are mentioned in several inscriptions from the same region (CIS IV 37.6; RES 4176.5, 8, 9; 4231.2; Gl 1378.2). The text of RES 4176 was engraved into a large rock near the mountain of Riyām in Arhab during the first quarter of the 3d cent. B.C. and contains the statute of the god Ta'lab for his worshippers from Sum'ay. In these regulations it was ordained that the leader of the tribe *Yuhaybab* was placed in charge of the property of the god and that he had to organize a banquet for the pilgrims during the annual pilgrimage to the sanctuary of Ta'lab.

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W. W. MÜLLER

2. The son of Zerah from Bozrah, and the king who ruled in Edom after Bela (Gen 36:33–34 = 1 Chr 1:44–45). The name occurs in parallel lists (Gen 36:29–39 = 1 Chr 1:43–50) which utilize a formula found elsewhere in the Bible (1 Kgs 16:22; 2 Kgs 1:17; 8:15; 12:22; 13:24)

to recount the succession of kings (in Edom and Israel). The formula is "King X reigned. He died and King Y reigned in his stead." The LXX associates this Jobab with the main character of the book of Job in its enlargement of the final chapter of the book (see Pope *Job* AB, 354).

3. The king of Madon summoned by Jabin king of Hazor to fight against the invading Israelites (Josh 11:1). He is also counted among the kings defeated by Joshua W of the Jordan (Josh 12:29), although in this list he is not mentioned by name.

4. The first son born in Moab to Shaharaim and his wife Hodesh (1 Chr 8:9). The name appears twice in this genealogy of Benjamin (1 Chronicles 8); once as a son (v 9), and the other time as a grandson of Shaharaim (v 18, see below). As with several names that recur in the Chronicler's genealogies (cf. e.g. CALEB, GERA), it is difficult to identify each Jobab.

5. A son of the Benjaminite Elpaal, son of Shaharaim and his wife Hushim (1 Chr 8:18). After Shaharaim sent Hushim and another wife, Baara, away he had offspring by Hodesh in Moab. Elpaal's sons appear in two sections (1 Chr 8:12–15, 17–18), and Jobab is the last son in the second segment.

MARK J. FRETZ

JOCHEBED (PERSON) [Heb *yôkebed*]. A Levite woman, wife of Amram, mother of Aaron, Moses, and Miriam (Num 26:59). Jochebed is mentioned by name only in the Levitical genealogies of Exodus 6 and Numbers 26 (cf. Exôd 2:1–10). The writer of Exod 6:20 introduces her as Amram's wife and aunt (*dōdātô;* RSV "his father's sister") and mother of Aaron and Moses. Num 26:59 omits the information that she was Amram's aunt, describing her instead as "the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt." Numbers 26 adds that she was mother of Miriam as well as Moses and Aaron.

Exod 6:20 describes Jochebed as Amram's *dōdātô,* a word which means "uncle's wife" in Lev 20:20 (cf. Lev 18:14). The RSV of Exod 6:20 translates *dōdātô* as "father's sister," probably on the basis of Num 26:59, which calls Jochebed "the daughter of Levi," that is, sister of Amram's father, Kohath. However the relationship is to be understood, the marriage of Amram and Jochebed seems to run contrary to priestly laws which prohibit sexual relations between a man and his "uncle's wife" (Lev 18:14; 20:20) and between a man and his "father's sister" (Lev 18:12). This may be the reason that the LXX of Exod 6:20 presents Jochebed as Amram's cousin, "daughter of his father's brother." In referring to Jochebed as "the daughter of Levi," the genealogist of Num 26:59 underscores the relationship between the family of Jacob and later generations of Israelites. See Burns (1987: 85–90).

In including Jochebed as the first of three women in the family line of Aaron, the genealogist of Exod 6:20–25 reflects the postexilic community's interest in the pedigree of priests' mothers and wives. See Johnson (1969: 87–99). Although Jochebed is the only wife and mother to be included in the genealogy of Numbers 26, her appearance there, together with her ancestral lineage, likewise establishes the full legitimacy of Aaron as priest in the family of Levi. In fact, according to Num 26:59 Aaron (who is the