Theodicy in the Ancient Near East[1]

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Why does the way of the wicked prosper?
Why do all who are treacherous thrive? (Jer. 12:1)

THESE words of Jeremiah and their converse, the suffering of the innocent, together with the resultant questioning of divine justice, form the theme of this paper. It was no academic question for Jeremiah; it was wrenched from him by the mental and physical anguish which was his lot as a prophet. Although it might become a subject for learned speculation by the sages, it was nevertheless occasioned by the painful experience of men.

Long before Jeremiah directed his question to God others had posed the same problem in the literature of Mesopotamia. Until recently, only two major works dealing with the theme of theodicy were known: the poem entitled "*I Will Praise the Lord of Wisdom*", often called the *Poem of the Righteous Sufferer*, and the *Acrostic Dialogue*, known also as the *Babylonian Theodicy*. These, failing more accurate information, have been regarded as dating from the period between 1200 and 800 B.C.

Another tablet containing a poem similar in content has recently been published.[2] The text is much earlier, however, since it may be ascribed to the reign of Ammiditana (1619–1583 B.C.). Here we may have welcome confirmation of the views of von Soden, amongst others, who has argued that the questioning of traditional religious concepts in Mesopotamia was a result of the catastrophe which overwhelmed the Old Babylonian dynasty, ending in the domination of the land by the Kassites who first appeared about 1675 B.C.[3] In the fragmentary tablet a sufferer intercedes with his god who, moved by his plea, proceeds to heal the afflicted one, saying:

Having been obstructed, the way is open to you;
The path is straight for you and mercy is granted you.
In days to come do not forget your god,
Your creator, when you are prosperous! (Rev., 17–20)

Although the sufferer has declared his innocence, implicit in the words of the deity is the suggestion that he has forgotten his god in times of prosperity.

From other cuneiform sources of the same period we conclude that even before the time of Hammurabi the belief had made its appearance in Mesopotamia that sinners were punished and the righteous rewarded. This is well expressed in the following proverbial sayings culled from the literature:

As for him who slanders and speaks evil,
Shamash awaits him with retribution for it.[4]
Reverence for the gods begets prosperity,
Reverence for the Annunaki increases life.[5]

Soon there followed the corollary that suffering was evidence of sin. Only then do the facts of daily life which are at variance with the basic thesis lead to a questioning of its validity. Thence came the conclusion that the cause for suffering may often be sins committed unwittingly, as the Babylonian penitential psalms continually aver:

> The transgression which I have committed, indeed I do not know;
> The sin which I have perpetrated, indeed I do not know.[6]

In studying the literature which this problem of theodicy has created, we must bear in mind the fact that to the thought of the ancient Near East, determined as it was predominantly by motivations of religion and cult, divine justice never became a matter for philosophical speculation, but rather remained always a religious question. In contradistinction to the occidental world, the problem was stimulated, not by an abstract, speculative interest, but by the concrete circumstances of daily religious living. It was empirical observation that raised doubts as to divine justice.

The second work of Akkadian literature to be noted is the poem which the ancients knew as "*I Will Praise the Lord of Wisdom.*"[7] Cast in the form of a monologue, it runs to four tablets. The central figure, originally a man of wealth and position, appears now as does Job in the Hebrew counterpart, as a man bereft of riches and power, and afflicted with a loathsome disease. Neither prayer nor sacrifice, priest nor magician can afford him relief:

> Misfortune is multiplied; I cannot find justice.
> I cried to the god, but he would not look at me;
> I prayed to the goddess, but she would not raise her head.
> The seer could not determine my future by divination;
> The oracle-priest could not elucidate my case through sacrifice.
> (ii. 3–7)

All his past piety has counted for nought:

> Like one who did not establish a libation for the god,
> Nor remember the goddess at meals;
> Who did not avert his face, nor was filled with humility,
> From whose mouth prayer and supplication were absent;
> Who discarded the god's day, neglected the festival,
> Who became careless, ignoring their rites;
> Who did not teach his people reverence and veneration,
> Not remembering his god, although eating his food,
> Forsaking his goddess and not bringing an offering;
> Like one who became important and forgot his master,
> Taking the weighty oath of his god lightly, I am disdained.
> Yet it was I who took thought for prayer and supplication,
> Supplication being my practice, sacrifice my rule;
> The day of reverencing the gods was my delight,
> The day of homage for the goddess was wealth and riches.
> (ii. 12–26)

He is constrained to conclude that the will of the gods is inscrutable, and that divine justice does not parallel its human counterpart:

What is acceptable to oneself is abominable to the god,
What is despicable in his mind is acceptable to his god.
Who understands the will of the gods in heaven?
Who comprehends the counsel of the underworld gods?
Where has mankind understood the way of a god? (ii. 34–38)

The remainder of the second tablet is occupied with describing the symptoms of his disease in the most vivid detail. Then, in the third and fourth tablets, when all hope is abandoned, the god Marduk unexpectedly intervenes and in the course of three dreams health is restored to the afflicted one who then makes his way joyfully through the twelve gates of Babylon to the temple of Marduk, where he offers thanksgiving for his deliverance. Here we have no attempt to provide a solution for the problem of the inexplicable and undeserved suffering of a pious man.

The third Babylonian text is a poem of twenty-seven strophes of eleven lines each, arranged in the form of an acrostic.[8] Unlike the preceding work, it is a dialogue, the two participants speaking in alternate strophes. The first speaker has experienced nothing but misfortune in his life and hence denies the existence of divine justice. He describes how he was left an orphan at an early age, to which his pious friend replies that death is the common lot of all men. Piety, however, is the guarantee of a happy life:

He who looks on the face of the god possesses a guardian deity;
The anxious man, who reverences the goddess, heaps up abundance.
(21 f.)

He goes further, and suggests a reason for the suffering of his friend: the lack of piety as demonstrated by his denunciation of the just rule of the gods. This, however, does not satisfy the sufferer, for he sees no relationship between piety and material success. Drawing on the animal world as well as human society for his examples, he declares:

The wild ass, which has uttered [defiance(?)],
Did it give ear [to] the ancient things, the counsel of the god?
The fierce lion, which has repeatedly eaten the best of the flesh,
Did it bring its incense-offerings to appease the wrath of the goddess?
Did the possessor of riches, who has multiplied wealth, really
Allot precious electron to Mami?
Have I withheld food-offerings? I prayed to the god,
I dedicated the offerings of the goddess, but my word [was in vain(?)].
(48–55)

This, his friend asserts, is a shallow view; in the end retribution overtakes them:

Look at the [well-]formed wild ass on the [steppe(?)],
He who has trampled the produce of the fields! An arrow comes back to him.
The enemy of the beasts, the lion to which you referred, look at him now!
(Because of) the wrong which the lion has done a pit stands open for him.

The one who is endowed with wealth, the rich man who has heaped up possessions,
The prince burns him up in the fire before his appointed time.
Did you wish to follow the course which these have pursued?
(Rather) seek continually the gracious mercy of the god!
(59–66)

The sufferer refuses to be convinced, but his friend replies by stressing the inscrutability of divine justice:

The plans of the gods are as [inscrutable(?)] as the midst of the heavens,
The utterance of the god or goddess is not comprehended.
(82 f.)

He further points out how zealously *he* served the gods. Now completely disillusioned, the sufferer declares that he will forsake human society and live as a vagabond and a brigand. His orthodox friend is aghast at the suggestion, but the rebel continues to point out the injustices in society:

The son of the needy and naked (now) puts on [fine clothes(?)];
He who used to dine on vegetables (now) [eats] a noble's banquet;
The son of the honoured and rich (now) [feeds on] the carob;
The possessor of wealth is brought low . . . (182, 185–187)[9]

Education—all the secret lore of the scribe to which he applied himself—was of no avail to bring prosperity to the sufferer. But his pious friend still rings the changes on his conventional belief:

As for him who bears the god's yoke, though scanty, his food is sure.
Search continually for the favourable wind of the gods,
And what you have lost this year you will replace in a moment.
(240–242)

The sceptic turns again to the theme of the prosperity of the wicked, a subject, incidentally, which is not mentioned in either of the preceding poems:

Men extol the word of the renowned, who is experienced in murder,
While they despise the weakling who has done no harm;
They justify the wicked to whom [justice(?)] is taboo,
While they drive out the just man who is mindful of the god's will;
They fill the treasure-house of the violent with costly plating,
While the storehouse of the powerless they empty of food;
They strengthen the mighty whose whole being is sin,
While they destroy the lowly and trample down the weak.
(267–274)

But his orthodox companion shows that conventional religion has an answer for this, too, for the gods at creation,

Having bestowed upon men complicated speech,
Bestowed upon them falsehoods and untruths for ever.
As for a rich man, one speaks glowingly of his prosperity:
"He is a king; riches accompany him!"
While the weak man one treats as if he were evil as a thief.
(279–283)

That is to say, with the gift of the power of speech, the gods doomed man to falsehood, to a mistaken view of life. This seems to satisfy our sceptical friend, for at this point he is moved to accept the orthodox view and, humbling himself before the gods, he cries:

> May Ninurta who cast me off establish aid!
> May the goddess who [afflicted me] have mercy!
> (295 f.)

We note that in contrast to the other two poems there is here no intervention by the gods. The aim of this poet is rather to effect a psychological conversion.

When we turn to Egyptian literature, we seek in vain for any discussion of theodicy. The vivid descriptions of the social revolution of the First Intermediate Period (2280–2050 B.C.) contained in the *Admonitions of Ipuwer*[10] or the *Suicide*[11] contain no attack on the divine government, but rather accuse men of perverting *Ma'at*, the divinely ordained order. *The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant*,[12] also from the same period, deals to be sure with the subject of social justice, but no blame is attached to the gods. Most nearly akin to a discussion of the problem is the *Teaching of Amenemhet*,[13] a piece of political propaganda composed by the scribe Kheti for Senwosret I after the assassination of his father Amenemhet I, the founder of the Twelfth Dynasty. In the words placed in the mouth of the deceased king there is indeed something of a revolt against the injustice of the suffering of a righteous man. But there is a significant difference: the fault is man's, not God's! Even this document, therefore, cannot be regarded in any sense as a questioning of theodicy.

Surely there must be some reason for this strange omission in the vast body of Egyptian literary remains, especially when the theme is such a live issue in the Akkadian and Hebrew sources. Two factors may have been responsible for this state of affairs. First of all, we note the fact that in Western Asia, in the words of Jacobsen, "justice as right rather than justice as favor seems to have become the general conception."[14] It was in this area that the great law codes were produced. Now, that Egypt had laws, indeed that written formulations of law were in existence there, no one would deny. But these laws were secret, and access to them could be gained only by the proper authorities. They were the will of the king, and only as he saw fit was justice dispensed to his subjects. In Mesopotamia, on the other hand, the laws were displayed in public, available to all men, that they might know their rights. Even the king must conform to them; why not, then, the gods also?

The second reason is the characteristic Egyptian belief in immortality. When rewards and punishments could be projected into a future life, the problem of seeming injustice in this life was not so vital a concern. Since in Mesopotamia and Palestine no such after-life was envisaged, the problem remained a real one until a comparable belief arose. It is significant, for

instance, that the *Wisdom of Solomon*, with its developed doctrine of immortality, ignores the problem, while Ben Sira, who emphatically repudiates any idea of immortality, is constrained to deal with it, emphasizing either the disciplinary value of suffering (32:14) or else affirming that the inequality is redressed at death, or at least that the reward is to be found in one's children (11:26–28).

We turn, then, to Hebrew literature. Here we find that the problem of theodicy is relatively late. It makes its appearance first as the result of Assyrian domination and the subsequent Babylonian Exile. It gained cogency from the fact that since the eighth century, accompanying the breakdown of the social organization, the clan and family groupings, in the spheres of religion and law the individual and his life step to the foreground.[15] Rewards and punishments could no longer be bestowed on the community as a whole; the consequences of piety or sin must be visited on the lives of individuals.

We can see this clearly in the prophetic literature. Here we have the doctrine of retribution for evil—doom for all, though gradually this is modified to allow the escape of a righteous remnant. Indeed, the evil may be visited upon generations yet unborn. Yahweh was a jealous God, punishing children for the sins of their fathers to the third or fourth generation of those who hate him (Deut. 5:9). The same doctrine, coupled with its obverse, the rewarding of good, is seen in the exilic historiography, governed as it was by the Deuteronomic view that divine justice may be demonstrated in the course of the nation's history. It may be, then, that the suffering of the righteous is the result of the sin of an ancestor.

It was Ezekiel who proclaimed the doctrine that rewards and punishments are apportioned justly to the individual according as he be righteous or wicked (ch. 18). This is in keeping with the rise of individualism to which we have already referred. Such a view now becomes axiomatic and is enshrined, as in Mesopotamia, in the popular speech, in the short, pithy sayings, many of which are preserved in the Book of Proverbs:

> No harm befalls the righteous,
> But the wicked are full of trouble. (12:21)
> Calamity dogs sinners,
> But well-being rewards the righteous. (13:21)

This view is likewise reflected in the historical writings of the later Chronicler, where retribution and reward are now seen to be meted out during the life of each king individually. It is most instructive to examine the parallel accounts in the earlier and later histories with this fact in mind.

After Jeremiah's heart-rending query with which this paper began, many voices were raised in protest at the patent falsity of such an assumption. Yet champions of the orthodox position were not lacking. Three psalms are devoted to the subject. The first is Psalm 37, an alphabetic acrostic poem of twenty-two couplets. The argument is pure orthodoxy: in spite of all

appearances, the wicked who in their prosperity and power have oppressed the righteous will soon be done away with, while the pious will prosper:

> Fret not yourself because of evildoers,
> Be not incensed because of wrongdoers,
> For they will quickly wither like grass,
> And fade away like the green herb. (vv. 1 f.)

> I have been young, and now am old,
> But I have not seen the righteous forsaken;
> For those whom he blesses shall possess the land,
> But those whom he curses shall be cut off.
> (vv. 25, 22)[16]
> I saw the wicked exultant,
> Towering aloft like the cedars of Lebanon;
> I passed by and lo, he was no more!
> When I sought him he was not to be found.
> (vv. 35 f.)[17]

The same erroneous view is shared by the author of Psalm 49. This poem of three quatrains is a scathing denunciation of the wealthy:

> Why should I fear in days of trouble,
> When the guilt of my persecutors surrounds me—
> Those who trust in their wealth,
> And boast of the abundance of their riches?
> Alas! No man can buy himself off,
> Nor pay a ransom to God,
> That he may live for ever and ever,
> Never seeing the pit. (vv. 2–10)[18]

Note the repudiation of any idea of immortality. A later glossator penned a marginal note in prose (v. 9):

> The ransom of his life is too costly; he must cease
> from that for ever![19]

The poem continues:

> This is the fate of the self-confident,
> The end of those who boast with their lips;
> Like sheep they have been appointed to Sheol,
> Death shepherds them and rules them,
> In the grave is their resting-place,
> In the midst of Sheol is their dwelling.
> Fear not when a man grows rich,
> When the glory of his house increases.
> (vv. 14–17)[20]

Again a later, pious reader, who was offended by this denial of immortality and determined to proclaim his own assurance, wrote another prose note:

> Yet God will ransom my soul from the power of
> Sheol, for he will take me! (v. 16).

The poem concludes:

> Truly, when he dies he will take nothing away,
> His glory will not go down after him;
> Though while he lives he congratulates himself:
> "Men praise you because it goes well with you,"
> He will go to the generation of his fathers,
> And will nevermore see light!
> Man is (but) an unreasoning brute,
> He is like the beasts that perish! (vv. 18–21)[21]

The burden of the poet, then, is merely that the wicked "can't take it with them!"

In Psalm 73, however, we breathe a rarer atmosphere. In this poem of eight triads the writer abandons the superficiality of the other poets. He is equally convinced of the justice of God, but seeks with more success to reconcile the discordant facts of experience:

> Truly God is good to the upright,
> The Lord to the pure in heart!
> My feet had almost given way,
> My steps had well nigh slipped;
> For I was incensed at < the wealth of > the boasters,
> As I beheld the prosperity of the wicked.
> (vv. 1–3)[22]

He is driven to question the value of his piety:

> Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure,
> And washed my hands in innocence!
> I have been smitten all day,
> And chastening was mine every morning;
> I thought, "I will thus relate,
> 'Thou hast been false to the generation of thy children!'"
> (vv. 13–15)[23]

But on entering the sanctuary the psalmist reaches a new pinnacle of faith:

> As a dream after awakening, they are no more;
> When thou arousest, thou wilt disregard their forms;
> But I, I am with thee continually,
> Thou hast grasped me by thy right hand,
> With thy counsel thou leadest me after thee,
> Taking me by the hand.
>
> Whom have I in the heavens < but thee> ?
> I have no delight on earth save thee;
> My flesh and my heart fail,
> But God is my portion eternally;
> For lo, those far from thee will perish,
> Thou destroyest all who are apostates from thee.
> (vv. 20, 23–27)[24]

The minutiae of textual criticism have been banished to the footnotes. Suffice it to say that I do not believe that the Hebrew text supports the interpretation that our writer is putting forth a doctrine of immortality. Rather do I regard him as speaking of a spiritual fellowship with God in this life that is full compensation for all the suffering he may have encountered.

We must hasten on, finally, to the greatest of all expositions of theodicy, the Book of Job. That the book as we have it is a complete unity would be maintained by few scholars today. We recognize the existence of an old prose folk-tale, preserved in the first two chapters. With this may perhaps be associated the prose epilogue (42:7–16). Whether the author of the Dialogue was himself responsible for prefacing his poem with this ancient account or not, we may rest assured that he assumed on the part of his readers a knowledge of some such story. The solution of the problem which is offered by this prose tale is, of course, that the suffering which befell Job was a test of his integrity, to demonstrate the fact of disinterested piety.

The next section which is denied to the original poetic work by the majority of scholars is that containing the Speeches of Elihu (chs. 32–37). The reasons for this are well known and need not delay us now.[25] The same measure of agreement will not be found, however, with regard to the Yahweh Speeches (chs. 38–42:6). Here I must side with those scholars who regard this section too as a later addition. It presents a very different Job from the figure delineated in the Dialogue. Whereas in the latter Job maintains his integrity to the bitter end, we see him in the Yahweh Speeches repenting "in dust and ashes;" while in the Dialogue Job longs to meet God in open debate, when he does finally stand before his Maker in these speeches, there is no hint of an argument. Indeed, the central problem of the Dialogue is left untouched. We are offered in these chapters nothing less than a detailed and eloquent exposition of the very point of view advanced by Job's friends: God is almighty and frail man must humbly submit to his will. Then, when all this has been said, Yahweh turns to Eliphaz and says, "My anger is kindled against you and your two friends, because you have not spoken the truth about me as my servant Job has" (42:7)! What amazing logic this is, indeed! Surely this is unworthy of so daring and skilled a poet as the author of the Dialogue.

We are left, then, with the Dialogue itself. And even here some spurious material is to be found. Chapter 28, that magnificent hymn in praise of Wisdom, is generally regarded as a later addition. But I submit that chapters 29–31, as more than one scholar has maintained, are likewise secondary. Here Job is not a desert sheikh, but a city-dweller of noble estate. The author has sought to make Job conform to traditional religious thinking and forsake completely his original position. Here "the keen and questioning seeker of the early chapters", as Dr. Bovey has observed, "is presented to us as an unattractive snob, well satisfied with his own good works."[26]

Turning to the Dialogue, we find Eliphaz opening the debate (ch. 4) by describing the mystical vision by which he received a special revelation of the transcendence of God. Job reports in chapters 9 and 10 that if God be so omnipotent man is posed with a problem: "I know quite well that this is so—but how can mortal man be righteous with God?" (9:2). For Job the doctrine of God's supreme power, far from being an answer, creates a problem. If the view of the friends be right, then God is merely omnipotent Caprice:

> It is all one—therefore I say
> He destroys both the blameless and the wicked;
> If his scourge slays instantly,
> He mocks at the despair of the innocent;
> The earth is delivered into the power of the wicked,
> As he covers the faces of its judges. (9:22–24)[27]

It is at this point in the argument that Job hits on the bold idea that if he could meet God face to face and argue his case with him he might be vindicated. This forces him to the recognition of the necessity for an impartial third party to the debate, if God's omnipotence is not to crush him:

> If only there were an umpire between us,
> That he might lay his hand on us both!
> That he might turn aside his rod from upon me,
> And that fear of him might not terrify me;
> That I might speak and not fear him,
> For I am not so with myself. (9:33–35)[28]

In his next speech (chs. 12–14) Job continues to insist that God is capricious. Defiantly he challenges God:

> Only two things do not do to me—
> Then I will not hide myself from thee:
> Remove thy hand from upon me,
> And let not the dread of thee terrify me!
> Then call, and I will answer;
> Or let me speak, and do thou reply to me. (13:20–23)

But he is bewildered when no reply is forthcoming. His next speech, in reply to Eliphaz (chs. 16–17), returns to the concept of a third party:

> O earth, cover not my blood,
> That there be no place for my cry!
> Even now my witness is in the heavens,
> He who testifies for me is on high.
>
> My intermediary approaches God,
> Before him my envoy intercedes,
> That he might defend a man with God,
> Like a man for his friend. (16:18–21)[29]

By a natural transition the umpire or judge has become an advocate—counsel for the defence!

So we come to the difficult passage in Job's next speech (ch. 19) in

which he returns to the concept of the third party, the intermediary. Some years ago I ventured to suggest the original form of these verses, since which time I have been gratified to discover that I was anticipated in the main lines of this reconstruction by Mowinckel, who also recognizes in the *gō'ēl* the third party of chapters 9 and 16, and not God himself.[30] Job's triumphant affirmation runs:

> I know that my vindicator lives,
> He who testifies for me will stand upon the dust;
> Afterwards he will raise me up as my witness,
> My emancipator will see God. (19:25 f.)[31]

To Prof. W. A. Irwin must go the credit for having observed the value of the first Elihu speech (chs. 32–33) for reconstructing the mutilated conclusion of the Dialogue.[32] Here we encounter the *mēlīṣ*, or intermediary (33:23), and we note how this figure is described as the superhuman agent of Job's subsequent restoration. We recall too that it is likewise a heavenly messenger despatched by the god Marduk through whom comes the restoration of the afflicted one in the Babylonian *Poem of the Righteous Sufferer.*

In these words of Job we have an echo of a passage from the Ugaritic Baal epic, well known to Hebrew writers:

> In a dream, O gracious one, compassionate El,
> In a vision, creator of creatures,
> The heavens rained oil,
> The valleys ran with honey;
> So I know that triumphant Baal lives,
> That the prince, lord of the earth, exists![33]

The author of the Dialogue conceives of the ancient Baal-Hadad of earlier Canaanite religion as one of the divine or semi-divine members of the heavenly conclave or council which is mentioned in Psalm 82:1:[34]

> God, taking his stand in the divine assembly,
> Gives judgment in the midst of the gods.

To this august body, consisting of "divine beings" (Job 1:6, 2:1) or "holy ones" (Ps. 89:6, 8), belonged the Satan of the Prologue, as well as the evil spirit referred to in I Kings 22:21. There is here, of course, no suggestion of polytheism. The incorporation of earlier deities into the angelic hierarchy is not without parallel elsewhere.

Who better than Baal, one who had himself suffered, but through whose passion there came fertility and life for men, could serve as the intermediary for whom Job longed? It was this message which commanded such a following in the Mystery Religions of the Greco-Roman world and which presents itself as a striking precursor of the Christian gospel of Jesus, the suffering and triumphant Saviour. In the light of so heterodox a concept, it is not difficult to understand why the crucial passages in chapters 16 and 19 have been intentionally mutilated, or why the text of chapters 25–27

has been left in such hopeless disorder by the destruction of the original conclusion of the Dialogue.

Space forbids us to consider in detail one aspect of the problem which is well nigh peculiar to Hebrew literature. This is the concept of vicarious suffering which finds its noblest expression in the Servant Songs of the unknown prophet whose writings are preserved in the later chapters of the Book of Isaiah. The fact that suffering is woven into the very fabric of our universe and that it may be instrumental in bringing about God's gracious purpose for his people, reaches its ultimate manifestation in the Cross of Calvary.

NOTES

1. The Presidential Address delivered at the annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies on May 21, 1953, at Queen's Theological College, Kingston, Ont.

2. J. Nougayrol, "Une version ancienne du 'Juste souffrant' ", *Revue Biblique*, 59 (1952), 239–250.

3. W. von Soden, "Religion und Sittlichkeit nach den Anschauungen der Babylonier", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 89 (1935), 143 ff. A still earlier discussion of theodicy has recently been published by S. N. Kramer, " 'Man and His God': a Sumerian Variation on the 'Job' Motif", *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum*, 3 (1955), 170 ff.

4. *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, 38 (1916), 136, ll. 29 f.

5. R. F. Harper, *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters*, VI (London, 1902), No. 614, rev. 8 f.

6. H. C. Rawlinson, *The Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, IV (London, 1891), p. 10, obv. 42–45.

7. *Babyloniaca*, 7 (1923), 131 ff.; J. B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, 1950) [abv. *ANET*], pp. 434 ff.; see now *Anatolian Studies*, 4 (1954), 65 ff.

8. B. Landsberger, "Die babylonische Theodizee", *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, 43 (1936), 32 ff.; *ANET*, pp. 439 ff.

9. Cf. *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*, 6 (1952), 3 f.

10. *ANET*, pp. 441 ff.

11. *ANET*, pp. 405 ff.

12. *ANET*, pp. 407 ff.

13. *ANET*, pp. 418 f.

14. H. Frankfort et al., *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man* (Chicago, 1946), p. 208.

15. Cf. A. Causse, *Du groupe ethnique à la communauté religieuse* (Paris, 1937).

16. Del. v. 25c as a gloss.

17. Read with Gk. *'allīṣ* and *miṯ'allê ḵĕ'ɛrɛz hal-lĕbōnōn* and *wō-'ɛ'ĕḇor*.

18. In v. 8 del. *pōḏō* as dittography; for *'ōḥ*, "alas!" cf. Ezek. 6: 11, 21: 20.

19. Read *naṗšô* with Gk.

20. In v. 14 read *'aḥărūṯōm* with Targ.

21. In v. 20 read *yōḇô* and *yir'ê* with Gk. and Syr.

22. In v. 1 read *yōšōr* and del. *'ēl* (dittography); at the end read *'<d>ny* for *wa'ănī* of v. 2. In v. 3 perhaps insert *ḥêl* after prep. (haplography).

23. In v. 14 read *wĕṯôḵaḥaṯ lī* (haplography). In v. 15 del. *'im* (dittography) which is impossible in a past unreal condition (cf. Gesenius-Kautzsch, *Hebrew Grammar* [Oxford, 1898], § 159m); read also *bō ḡaḏṯō* with some Gk. MSS as an intentional correction to remove a blasphemous statement; read *kĕmō-hēnnō* with Gk. and Vulg.

24. Vv. 21 f. belong after v. 16. In v. 20 for *'ăḏōnōy* read *'ênōm*, and for *bō'ĭr* read *bĕ'ūrĕḵō* (Gk. and Vulg. rd. suffix). In v. 24 *kōḇōḏ* cannot mean "to glory," but only

"gloriously" (as Gk. and Vulg.); however, the original text was probably *'aḥărêḵō bĕyōḏ*. In v. 25 some such word as *zūlōṯĕḵō* was probably lost. In v. 26 del. *ṣūr lĕḇōḇī* as a variant or gloss.

25. For a brief and authoritative introduction to these problems see Samuel Terrien's commentary in *The Interpreter's Bible*, III (New York, 1954), pp. 877 ff.

26. *Hibbert Journal*, 36 (1937/8), 360.

27. Del. v. 24c as a gloss.

28. In v. 33 for *lô* read *lū* with 13 MSS, Gk. and Syr.

29. The original text of vv. 20 f. was discussed by the writer in a paper read to the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies in May, 1946, when the following tentative reconstruction was offered for v. 20: *mĕlīṣī yigga' 'el-'ĕlōāh, ūlĕpōnōw yĕpallel ṣīrī*.

30. S. Mowinckel, "Hiobs gō'ēl und Zeuge im Himmel", *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 41 (1925), 207 ff.; so also Irwin (cf. fn. 32) and most recently Terrien, *op. cit.*

31. The text of these vv. was examined by the writer in a paper to the same Society in May, 1952. For *'aḥărōn* in v. 25 read *šōḥăḏī* (cf. 16: 19b), and in v. 26 read *'ēḏī* (cf. 16: 19a) *yizqōp 'ōṯī, ūmĕšōrī yeḥĕzê*; note that Gk. read *ūmišŠadday* for *ūmibbĕšōrī* (Κύριος is likewise a translation of *šadday* in 6: 14, 22: 3, 26), giving us the consonantal text for *ūmĕšōrī*, since *ḏ* and *r* are identical in the early script.

32. *Journal of Religion*, 17 (1937), 37 ff.; cf. also his valuable article *ibid.*, 13 (1933), 150 ff.

33. *ANET*, p. 140; C. H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Handbook*, II (Rome, 1947), text 49, iii, 4–9.

34. Cf. also Ps. 89: 6, 8; Jer. 23: 18; Job 15: 8.