

The Book of Job and the Task of Preaching

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Introduction

This article proposes to operate at two levels. At the first level the book of Job will be examined with an eye on its rhetoric. I am using that word in its technical literary critical meaning. Rhetoric is the art of composition; to pursue rhetoric is to ask: "how does literature work?" What devices are used by the author to move the piece of literature forward, to hang the piece together, to cause it to function as literature? There is, of course, nothing especially new in this, at least not in the doing of such analysis. James Muilenberg, for example, championed such work on the Bible some forty or more years ago, and rhetorical analysis of "secular" literature has been carried out for over a century at least. Also, the analyses of biblical literature of the past twenty years has included a significant number of studies which take rhetoric, often called "poetics," as a central category.¹ Thus, in offering an introduction to the rhetoric of Job, I will be doing nothing new.

The analysis at the first level will be focused on the implications of an examination of the rhetoric of the speeches of the friends of Job and of God to Job, speeches which I will argue involve great flights of verbal posturing. With this examination I hope to show not only how the book works as literature, hanging together as a whole, but also hope to offer a rather different set of theological implications. All of this can of course be suggested only in introductory form. At the second level, I want to ask what such a rhetorical analysis of Job has to do with the task of preaching. Since I now attempt to teach preaching, having been trained as a student of the Hebrew Bible, my angle of vision on certain well-mined texts has undergone some changes. It seems abundantly clear to me that the book of Job can be viewed with profit through my new homiletical glasses, albeit my prescription is not yet quite the right one, and I find myself returning to the optometrist almost daily. Viewed homiletically, the following metaphor may prove profitable. Job is the congregation at whom Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, Elihu, and God preach. I suppose a fuller application of this metaphor, than I will here supply, would need to include Job as preacher and his five companions as congregation, but I have chosen herein to explore very tentatively only the former application of the metaphor. Further, I will only offer again introductory comments which I hope will prove suggestive.

And so now to the analysis. I will first examine the primary rhetorical device of the poem of Job, which I take to be irony. During this analysis, the empty rhetoric of the friends and in part the rhetoric of God will be laid bare.

Then the homiletical implications will be drawn. If I read Job rightly, three different rhetorical games are pursued, but only one of these proves meaningful to the "congregation" of Job. This fact may prove helpful to those of us who find ourselves in front of congregations, called by our God to proclaim the word of life in ways which can be heard, appropriated, and lived. Certain kinds of speaking are better heard than other kinds, and the book of Job very interestingly is scriptural witness to that fact.

Job and Irony

"We are all here on earth to help each other, but what the others are here for, God only knows."² This pithy little bit of drollery from W. H. Auden would be recognized by most of us (I hope by all of us!) as a delicious bit of irony. Most of us have been around books and writing long enough to be sensitive to the need on certain occasions to "detect" and to "reconstruct" ironic meanings, as Wayne Booth has so well stated and proved in his classic book, *A Rhetoric of Irony*.³ I will not offer a detailed analysis of why Auden's sentence is richly ironic; we all know what happens when a joke is explained! I imagine we all "get it."

But what about the following?⁴ My friend turns to me and exclaims "Think it'll snow?" No irony here, is there? Oh, I forgot to tell you that he asked this probing question while both of us were standing hip deep in a snow drift, with the visibility down to a tenth of a mile due to an ongoing and quite apparent blizzard. Now, of course, his question is certainly ironic. But why? I can think of at least four steps I need to pass through to gain the certainty of the irony of my friend's question.

First, the question *is* nonsense, given the blizzard; I *must* reject the literal meaning. Second, various alternatives might appear to my mind in response to this rejection. My friend hasn't seen the snow—ridiculous; he is in the drift with me—or he is crazy—he cannot tell snow from peanut butter—no, I know him too well—or, he is kidding. But if he is kidding, his statement is ironic. Third, I must decide about my friend's knowledge or beliefs—he simply *must* know that it really is snowing; he does, I presume, very well know what snow *is*. Fourth, I can now reconstruct the ironic meaning: what his question really meant was "hello, this snow is a mess, I am freezing out here, we could complain, but I'd rather joke about it, how about you?"

That then is an example of what Booth calls "stable irony." It is this sort of irony which one primarily finds in the book of Job. Stable irony has four characteristics (these I borrow from Booth):⁵

(1) The irony is *intended*. The author deliberately wrote the words with the overt demand to the reader to move through something like the four-step process above. The reader *must* reconstruct to "get it." This criterion rules out of its purview certain examples of what might appear to some of us to be especially delicious ironies. There is a taxicab company in Dallas called "Terminal." I do not think the rather macabre dual meaning of the term was considered when it was chosen. Thus, this irony (oh, yes, it still is one) is not stable. It relies on the particular inclinations (some might say perversities) of the

reader rather than the author.

(2) Stable irony is *covert*, not overt. One will never find a stable ironic statement introduced by the phrase “it is ironic that . . .” The true meaning differs from the literal and must be reconstructed.

(3) Stable irony remains stable; the reader is not invited to destabilize the recovered irony with further reconstruction. A reader *may* certainly do that, but the *intended* irony is what is looked for, not ironies hatched from the reader’s brain, as enjoyable as those might be. For example, in chapter three of Voltaire’s *Candide*, the author writes “When all was over and the rival kings were celebrating their victory with Te Deums in their respective camps . . .,” we catch Voltaire’s intended irony, because we believe, as Voltaire does, that both sides cannot win a war and/or that God cannot give victory to both sides. If we try further to destabilize this irony, we might conclude that Voltaire is ridiculing the readers who *think* he is being ironic when in fact he really *does* believe that God can give victory to both sides in war. But the remainder of *Candide* makes such destabilization absurd.

(4) Stable irony is *finite*. The field of discourse which makes up the irony is rather narrowly circumscribed. Thus, the irony is readily grasped by the reader who is not forced to range over some vast subject territory to “get it.”

I have claimed that *Job*’s rhetoric is characterized by stable irony. Let me share one extensive example with you, taken from the first speech of Eliphaz (chapters 4-5).⁶

The fact that many commentators see Eliphaz in his opening address as “polite” or “friendly” perhaps will make the following analysis surprising. Eliphaz has heard the outburst of Job in his opening poetic speech in chapter 3, and now he responds to it. The essence of that speech, that Job has accused God of granting him an unliveable life (3:20-23) and that God has further hidden the very purpose of that wretched life from him, has surely not been lost on Eliphaz, the visionary theologian (4:12-17). His introductory discourse (4:2-5) conceivably could be seen as gentlemanly in tone, but it could also be boiled down to the phrase, “you can dish it out, but you cannot take it.” Job, the counsellor of the bereaved, has become the bereaved, and Eliphaz now presents himself to Job as counsellor to the bereaved. If the succeeding speech to Job is in fact counselling, in some kind of pastoral sense, I could accept the common judgment that Eliphaz is here in every way the gentleman. That he is far from that I shall now attempt to demonstrate.

- 6 Is not your *worship* your confidence?
your blameless ways your hope?
7 Think now—what innocent one ever perished?
Or where were the upright ever effaced?
8 As I see it, those who plow evil,
And who sow trouble, reap it!
9 By the breath of Eloah they perish;
by a blast of God’s nostrils they end.
10 A roar of the loon; a shout of the young lion,
and the teeth of the cubs are broken.

11 The old lion perishes for lack of prey,
and the lioness' whelps are scattered.
(author's translation)

Immediately, the attentive reader is reminded by the poet of a familiar word from the prologue—"worship" or "fear" (*yare*). In that essential introduction to the character of Job, the narrator has described him as "one who feared (*yare*) God" (1:1). To drive the point home the storyteller then has God say the same thing to the Satan, not once, but twice (1:8; 2:3). Eliphaz begins his supposed counselling by asking a question which the reader knows is precisely and horribly misinformed. Job's "fear" is certainly *not* his confidence. After all, Job's fear of God has ironically brought him to the ash heap; his great goodness has caused his selection as the one to be tested in the wager between Yahweh and the Satan. And a second familiar word in vs. 6b makes the irony more sharp. Eliphaz asks Job whether or not it is true that his "blameless" (*tam*) ways are his hope. The question is of course rhetorical for Eliphaz; *certainly* blameless ways lead to hope. But the reader knows that this is not true for Job. Once again the prologue gives the lie to Eliphaz's easy certainty. The narrator in the book's first verse informs us that Job is *ha'ish tam we yašar* ("a blameless and upright man"); and as in the case of *yare*, God confirms the judgment twice at 1:8 and 2:3, both times employing the identical phrase *tam we yašar*. As every reader knows, Job's confidence is not his "fear of God," nor is his hope his "blameless ways." He will tell Eliphaz what his "hope" (*tiqwah*) is at 6:8-9; that early hope is that God would quickly kill him.

Thus, 4:6 indicates that Eliphaz's platitude is badly off the mark, and because that is true the reader should be alert to words that follow. We do not have long to wait.

The key word for Eliphaz in 4:7-11 is the word "perish" (*'abd*). He uses it three times in these five brief verses: 7a, 9a, 11a: it serves as a refrain for the death of the wicked. Job had used *'abd* emphatically as the very first word of his speech in chapter 3: "Let the day perish (*y'abd*) in which I was born!" The death of Job's birthday, and hence his own disappearance from the pages of history, is the function of the entire outburst of chapter 3. Job wishes he would die, or, better, wishes he had never been born at all; Eliphaz picks up Job's despairing word and makes it a litany for the ultimate fate of all who are wicked. That is clearly no accident; Job's very desire to die is for Eliphaz proof positive that Job is no other than a wicked person. In other words, Job's wish for death will soon be fulfilled, says Eliphaz, for thus it is with all wicked persons.

Thus the basic dialogue technique of the book of Job may be described in that classic phrase—"being hoisted on one's own petard." Words uttered by a speaker are gathered up by succeeding speakers and given new and often sinister contexts. Job has longed for death in chapter 3 and has highlighted the word "perish" in his request. Eliphaz makes just that word his chief term to describe the "fate of the wicked." There can be little doubt that the merciless assault on Job by the friends has just begun, and the assault is based squarely on the rhetorical skills of stable irony.

All four characteristics of the stable irony are richly available in this ex-

ample. The ironies are intended, they are covert, they must remain stable to be heard rightly, and they are certainly finite, restricted to the Joban world of discourse. Further analysis of succeeding speeches would yield multiple examples of this rhetorical device.⁷ As we can readily discern, this example of the Joban rhetoric yields the fact that Eliphaz at least is artificially eloquent; his grandiose speeches are in fact colored with irony directed at Job. The deeper irony for the reader is that it is Eliphaz who is the object of ironic attack, made the more delightful by the fact that his attempts to skewer Job with Job's own words result in Eliphaz being skewered by Eliphaz's own words. It is my contention that this analysis fairly summarizes the entirety of the dialogic relationships between Job and his four friends. And although at times the irony loses some of its covertness (e.g., 8:4; 11:12), it persists as the major rhetorical device of the poet's arsenal. But what has all this to do with preaching?

Homiletics and Job's Friends

The friends' goal in relationship to Job is well matched by their rhetoric. They want conversion; they are old-time evangelists, proclaiming the rightness of one view (theirs) over that of another (Job's). And the goal of irony is the same; it is unabashedly evangelical as well. It is designed to assault a position with the expressed intent of replacing it with another, "better," position. Or if it does not have another one to offer, at least it will ridicule the one its sights are on so as to make its retention by any right-minded people impossible. It is no accident that irony, and its next of kin satire, are always found most prominently at the revolutionary ticks of the clock of history—from the author of *Jonah* to Dryden to Voltaire, from Molière to Dickens to Mark Twain. These authors were reformers, and their ironies cut deeply into the established dogmas of their day.

I have said that Job's friends were old-time evangelists and that in two ways. They state their theological position in great detail and hold it over against what they imagine and/or understand Job's position to be. At the same time, they use the very details of Job's life and words to state their position and to ridicule Job's. "I am right, but at your expense," they say. "We share in general a common experience," they say, "but our understanding of that experience is correct while yours is wrong."

But Job is hardly convinced; in fact their ironic rhetoric drives him further into his own certainties and further away from them. The result of their ironies does help to change Job all right, but hardly in the ways they had hoped. He changes from desiring to die (chapters 3, 7, 11, 14) to the shrill demand to meet God face to face and to find out what is really going on in the universe (chapters 9, 16, 19, 27, 31).

It seems to me that what is missing from the friends' attempts to convert Job is any semblance of a new vision either of divine or human reality. The very fact that their ironies, and his, are stable, predictable, and increasingly caustic, makes any sort of movement from one position to the other quite unlikely and ultimately impossible. They all affirm the same "facts": God is all-powerful; whatever is done in the universe is done by God; God does whatever

God wants to do; no one can stop God or ask God what is happening. Hardened into these mutually shared theological "truths," Job and his friends can only shake their ironic fists at one another and move not at all. Conversion of any genuine kind is impossible without a new and fresh vision of reality. This is precisely what the friends do not offer and is precisely why they are such inadequate and failed evangelists.

Is not much of contemporary homiletics under this same indictment? Without a vision, the people perish, and like the friends we offer little that is fresh to our Jobs, but often shout our stable ironies at a world that thirsts for vision, not assaults on its weakness and confusion. "You are wrong," we say, but we offer little vision by which we might become "right." Are we, like the friends, too busy defending our own theological territories to listen carefully to what our Jobs are *really* asking? Well, maybe God can do better.

Job and the First Speech of God

Hear this dialogue from the second chapter of Charles Williams' 1930 novel, *War in Heaven*.

"I'm afraid," the Vicar said gloomily, "this interest in what they call the occult is growing. It's a result of the lack of true religion in these days and a wrong curiosity."

"Oh, wrong, do you thing?" Mornington asked. "Would you say any kind of curiosity was wrong? What about Job?"

"Job?" the Archdeacon asked.

"Well, sir, I always understood that where Job scored over the three friends was in feeling a natural curiosity why all those unfortunate things happened to him. They simply put up with it, but he, so to speak, asked God what He thought He was doing."

The Vicar shook his head. "He was told he couldn't understand."

"He was taunted with not being able to understand—which isn't quite the same thing," Mornington answered. "As a mere argument there's something lacking, perhaps, in saying to a man who's lost his money and his house and his family and is sitting on the dustbin, all over boils, 'Look at the hippopotamus.'"

"Job seemed to be impressed," the Archdeacon said mildly.

"Yes," Mornington admitted. "He was certainly a perfect fool, in one meaning or other of the words."

I promised above that I could discover three rhetorical games in the book of Job. The first, which is by far the dominant one, I have characterized as that of stable irony. It is the one engaged in by Job and his friends throughout the dialogue. With the entrance of God, the game changes rather sharply.

The stable irony of the friends has become the direct assault of God. In a series of unanswerable questions, the Almighty thoroughly rejects Job's right to ask any questions at all. "Where were you," "Who are you," "What can you do," rails Yahweh (cf. 38:2, 4, 8 etc.), and the response of Job to this unsubtle bombast is as one might expect.

Yes! I am superficial! What can I answer you?
I put my hand over my mouth.
I have spoken once, but I cannot answer.
twice, but not again (40:4-5).

“Shut up,” says Yahweh, and Job shuts up. In the excerpt above from Williams’ novel, *Mornington*, though quoting from God’s *second* speech, has rather sharply raised the rhetorical problem with God’s first speech. If I may paraphrase, using God’s first speech, there is something lacking if all God can say to the desolate Job is “Look at the ostrich.” Or at least, it certainly *appears* to be an argument that is lacking something.

Just what is the problem, the ‘something lacking’ in God’s speech? From the rhetorical viewpoint the upshot of God’s speech is little different from those speeches of the friends, even though it is far more direct, lacking in irony. Job is offered no new vision of God. This fact is made abundantly clear by Job’s predictions of just what God would say and how God would say it, if God would sometime deign to speak to him. This is found in chapter 9. In 9:3, he says that if one wanted to discuss the case with God, “one could not respond to God once in a thousand times.” And he adds in 9:14 “How much less can I answer, or choose my words, I who, though right, *could not answer*.” And in 9:16, “if I summoned, and God answered me, I do not believe that God would listen to my voice.” And lastly at 9:32, “God is not a human being whom I could answer.” A reader could conclude that Job has been proven right by the blustery first speech of God. But rather than resume the ironies of the dialogues, Job wearily and resolutely shuts up and thereby stops the discussion and, so he believes, ends the drama. What else could he do? Without a new vision, he can only acquiesce in the face of a power so much greater than his own, a power he has been aware of and has admitted throughout the dialogue (e.g., 9:4-10; 12:13-25). Rhetorically, we appear not to have advanced a whit from the dialogue’s initial debacle. But there is one more game to play, and this final game may impact the second one in a surprising way.

Job and the Second Speech of God

That the drama has not ended is made certain by the exact repetition of 38:3 at 40:7. This repetition tells the reader that Job’s attempt to stop the discussion by refusing to continue is not the way the drama can or should end. Job has *yet* truly to see God. He has only seen his own ideas of God reaffirmed by the first divine speech. He needs a *new* vision, and that, I believe, is precisely what he gets.

Yahweh does not want this type of forced capitulation offered by Job at 40:4-5. If that is all there is, then Job is horribly right about God and about the nature of the chaotic universe. On the surface at least the second speech seems much like the first; sharp questions to Job which Job cannot hope to answer, questions riddled with sarcasm. But, we need to look more closely. First, we must note that the questions have moved from one level of reality to another, from the natural world to the supernatural world, or better to the primeval

world of disorder and chaos, the world of Behemoth and Leviathan.⁸ Some translations still read the two Hebrew words, "Behemoth" and Leviathan" as "hippopotamus" and "crocodile" (*pace* Williams' character Mornington quoted above). Such a translation badly obscures the poet's intent. The two creatures are well known in Canaanite mythology, where they represent primeval forces of nature and life which are enormously powerful. God, in moving from the natural world of the first speech, to the supernatural world of the second speech reveals to Job something of what it truly is like to be God of this universe, that is *God's* universe, not the one envisioned by Job and his friends. The change in God's rhetorical intent is signaled by the question of 40:9. "Do you have an arm like El, and can you thunder with a divine voice?" I take this line and the following verses 10-14 to mean "If you think you can deal with this universe so well, a universe of danger and difficulty, then *you* try it." The invitation to Job is a direct and harsh one, but it is a real one, unlike the unanswerable questions of the first speech. And, after the invitation, God reveals to Job something of what being God is really like.

In the two lengthy descriptions of the mythological creatures which follow, Job is presented with a portrait of the existence of disorder and chaos, real parts of a world with which God is continually in conflict. "Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook, or press down his tongue with a cord" (41:1; 40:25 Heb)? Job has been crying out against the chaos and darkness of human life, but how much greater is the chaos and darkness with which Yahweh strives? This portrait by no means answers any of Job's questions but it does offer him a new vision, a new perspective of divine reality, and a new understanding of the world created by God. Human suffering is but a part of the chaos which constantly works against God, with which God is in eternal battle. God is engaged in the same struggle as Job, the struggle against chaos, and like Job, God refuses to relinquish the struggle no matter how desperate it may become.

Listen to Habel's formulation of this new vision:

. . . the world is not run according to the moral principle Job and his friends had espoused. Chaos and evil are part of the world; God's role as Ruler is not to annihilate them, but to keep them in check in accordance with the primordial wisdom principle which governs his cosmic design."⁹

The new vision also reinterprets the impact of the first speech of God. Rhetorically, it seemed to be little different from the stable ironic speeches of the friends, offering Job no new vision of God or the world. Now, in the light of the second speech, its effect could be seen to be a description of the universe of God as complex, rather than simple. In God's created order, one finds order to be sure (38:2-18) rather than Job's claims of ultimate chaos (9:22-24); but one also finds incongruity (the foolish ostrich - 39:13-18) and mystery (seemingly wasted rain in the uninhabited desert - 38:26). God's world is hence no easily grasped mechanism wherein good is always rewarded and bad always punished. Such a rigid view can lead only to unthinking acceptance or denial of anomalies on the one hand or to despair at the world's absurdities on the other. In such a world neither the friends nor Job can find peace or hope. "In a world where paradox and incongruity are integral to its design, there is no simplistic

answer to the problem of innocent suffering.”¹⁰

As we have noted above, the second speech moves from the natural world to the supernatural world, from tales of ostriches and eagles to the mythological monsters, Behemoth and Leviathan. Yet, more than that movement has occurred in the second speech. Job now is actually confronted, in an indirect portrayal, with himself. In the figure of Behemoth, “The Beast,” God shows Job a creature “which I made as I made you” (40:15). He is representative of God’s primordial works (so 40:19) who must always be kept under divine control. And in Leviathan, that monster of chaos whom Job demanded to be called forth to overwhelm his birthday and thus destroy the world in his opening speech (3:8), Job is to see both the continuing threats to God’s world represented by these awesome and powerful mysteries *and* his own threat to God, whom Job has seen heretofore as his adversary and enemy. In Job’s understanding of the world, either he is right and God is wrong or *vice versa*; God says this precisely at 40:8. But in *God’s* real world such an alternative is not the only one possible; in God’s world of paradox both Job and God can find their place, and even the friends may enter, as 42:9 suggests. In effect, in this second speech God tells Job part of a new story of God and the world and thereby offers him that new vision which at last can move Job to a new awareness of the reality in which he lives. Now his answer is:

5 I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear,
but now my eye sees you.

6 Therefore I retract my indictment¹¹
and repent of dust and ashes.

Job had heard only of the Yahweh who metes out simple justice in a completely ordered, stable world, the God of his friends, but now he has been confronted with an image of the God who struggles against the chaos from which all suffering and darkness mysteriously come. For his struggle, he is commended by the struggling God, and the friends, who had ceased to struggle, are condemned: “You have not spoken right about me as my servant Job has” (42:7). It is Job, the faithful struggler with chaos, who prays for the restoration of the friends (42:9); it is only *then* that Job’s own fortunes are restored (42:10). That restoration is a sign of hope against the continuing threat of the chaos, but it hardly means that the struggle of Job has ended. The questions of unjust suffering continue. But now Job can ask the questions and engage in the struggle with the memory of the image of the God who struggles with that same chaos, and who bids fair never to be finally defeated by it.

Job has at last become a new creature, because God’s second speech has invited Job into a new world, the new world of God. This, for Job, is the new story of God. In the place of the stable ironies of the friends and what Job took to be the direct assaults of the first speech of God, God turns to the third rhetorical game of the book, the indirection of metaphor and story. God tells Job of God by relating to Job the story of the creation of and the struggle with two mythological creatures. In this way Job is invited into the story world and is allowed to “overhear”¹² the truth rather than be assaulted ironically with it, as the first rhetorical game attempted to do, or be bludgeoned over the head

with it, as he heard the second game, God's first speech, attempting to do. He accepts God's invitation for the new vision that it is and gratefully enters the new world of God's story.

And there is where the preacher can learn much from the rhetoric of *Job*. Job is changed when Job is invited into a story. He is allowed to enter on his own; he is allowed to see the vision. Preachers who rely only on discursive arguments to the total exclusion of the gifts of the story are doomed to suffer the fate of the friends, either to be ignored or only to be argued with. Discursive argument can of course be salutary, but it rarely invites the participants into a new angle of vision. Rarely are we genuinely changed by argument, argument devoid of invitation, of delight, of new vision. Perhaps, we can say, that even God in the book of Job needed to learn this lesson. The apparent assaults of the first speech shut Job up; the story of the second called Job away from this indictment of God, off of the ash-heap of melancholy, and into a new world of wholeness where "friends," who were enemies in reality, could become true friends at last, and where God, first thought to be adversary, is seen to be fellow traveller in a paradoxical world. Is not that a worthy goal of our preaching?

NOTES

¹ Works of this sort are appearing in a flood. Three come to mind as good places to begin for those who would familiarize themselves with this kind of biblical reading. Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. Basic Books, 1981; Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*, Almond Press, 1983; Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, Indiana University Press, 1985.

² Quoted on an unnumbered page of Wayne C. Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony*. University of Chicago, 1974.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ The inspiration for this example comes from Booth, *Ibid.*, 8ff.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 22-24.

⁶ For a more detailed reading, see my unpublished dissertation, *The Function and Significance of the Klage in the Book of Job with Special Reference to the Incidence of Formal and Verbal Irony*, Southern Methodist University, 1975. Norman Habel, *The Book of Job*, Westminster, 1985, 121ff., notes the irony of the speech of Eliphaz, but argues against my claim that Eliphaz is a cruel satirist who himself becomes the object of satire. I obviously do not find his argument persuasive.

⁷ Habel, *Ibid.*, has analyzed the book in great detail with an eye on its stable ironies and has thereby much extended my introductory attempts to provide such an examination of selected portions of Job in my work noted above.

⁸ See; among others, Marvin H. Pope, *Job*, Doubleday, 1973, 320-334.

⁹ Habel, *op. cit.*, 564.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 534.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 576.

¹² See Fred B. Craddock, *Overhearing the Gospel*, Abingdon: Nashville. 1978.