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PREFACE

The title of this book expresses the viewpoint common to all the contributors that Biblical authors were artists of language. Through their verbal artistry - their rhetoric - they have created their meaning. So meaning is ultimately inseparable from art, and those who seek to understand the Biblical literature must be sensitive to the writer's craft.

Among Biblical scholars in recent decades a critical approach that adopts such a viewpoint has often been termed "rhetorical criticism". We call it an "approach" because it is not the method of a new school with a binding and polemical programme. The present studies, samples of this approach, are the work of scholars who adopt a stance that is essentially neutral towards the past praxis of Biblical scholarship and who probe in diverse ways the many dimensions of the Biblical text as literary work.

Another characteristic of the papers presented here is that the primary focus of their interest is the final form of the Biblical text. The received text is not viewed, that is, as a barrier beyond which one must - in order to do Biblical scholarship - necessarily press, nor an end product that should most properly be analysed for evidences of its origins. True though it is that its literary history may at times encompass many centuries, several strata of tradition, and a variety of editorial influences, it is itself - the final text - susceptible of study as a system of meaningful and artistic wholes.

We should note finally that a majority of the papers contained in this volume originated in the Rhetorical Criticism Section of the (American) Society of Biblical Literature, and represent the continuing work of that group.

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Discussions dealing with biblical methods of interpretation have become a veritable confusion of tongues. Not only is the scholar confronted by a host of different labels (such as literary criticism, form criticism, traditio-historical criticism, structuralism, redaction criticism, rhetorical criticism, text-criticism, not to speak of the perhaps equally important interdisciplinary approaches) but the precise definition of each of these is a matter of much controversy, partly because some of the above-mentioned methods necessarily overlap in part.

In this situation, one cannot help but experience a kind of sympathy with a statement by a grand old literatus of another day, Sir Walter Scott:

As to the herd of critics, it is impossible for me to pay much attention to them, for, as they do not understand what I call poetry, we talk in a foreign language to each other. Indeed, many of these gentlemen appear to me to be a sort of tinkers, who, unable to make pots and pans, set up for mendes of them, and, God knows, often make two holes in patching one.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the scope of rhetorical criticism and to propose a setting within the methodological spectrum.
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high-sounding words without content, serving falsification, or somewhat more positively: literary ornamentation, at best minimally related to content. When President Eisenhower said that the Americans wanted "action from the Russians, not rhetoric" he merely illustrated a popular, albeit rather benign, understanding of the term.

Aristotle's definition of rhetoric as "the art of discovering the best possible means of persuasion in regard to any subject whatever" /1/ still merits attention. It is quoted with approval by a modern rhetorician, W. Ross Winterowd /2/, who is critical of traditional systems /3/. An obvious advantage of this definition is that it brings together the formal and the functional aspects.

Further, the four classical divisions of rhetoric, first expounded in the Rhetorica ad Herennium (sometimes attributed to Cicero), published in 86 B.C., have served to categorize the concerns which are appropriate to the method. They are:

1. Invention (inventio) refers to the amassing of material for discourse. As Cicero put it, it refers to the attempt "to find what the orator should say". From a modern perspective, we might label this simple research.

2. Disposition or arrangement (collocutio) deals with structure, the planning and organization of the discourse, both as a whole and in the constituent parts.

3. Style (elocutio) concerns itself with the manner of effective expression, first regarding word choices, but also with the arrangement of larger units; in this it is closely related to arrangement. While Aristotle called for a clear, appropriate style, unadorned with rhetorical flowers (Rhetoric, 3,2), Cicero developed ornement to the point of eccentricity.

4. Memory (memoria) deals with mnemonic techniques for committing speeches to mind, so that one could speak without notes /4/.

After the contributions to the subject by Quintilian /5/ and Cicero /6/, Augustine became the authority on this subject as on so many others during the Middle Ages. The publication of a new edition of Aristotle's Rhetoric in 1619 by Theodore Goulston, complete with a Latin translation, signalled the heightened interest in the subject /7/, though by this time Cicero reigned supreme in rhetoric. Sister Miriam Joseph's book, Shakespeare's Use of the Arts of Language /8/, listing
more than 300 rhetorical figures, shows the intense preoccupation with the subject during the Renaissance /9/.

II

How may rhetoric be related to biblical studies /10/? It may be quite surprising to consider that biblical criticism has virtually neglected this crucial method till quite recently. The significant studies published in Semitics, which have received world-wide attention demonstrate beyond cavil that rhetorical criticism has a notable contribution to make to biblical interpretation.

English literary criticism, under the impact of what is now called the "new rhetoric" /11/, draws a distinction between a narrower and a broader rhetorical criticism; the former follows the traditional concerns of rhetoric, such as the explication of rhetorical devices; the latter tends to incorporate recent developments in literary criticism in the area of linguistics, critical theory and semantics. Because this area is still very much in flux, and common agreement has not yet been established, its precise methodological boundaries must remain undefined. Meanwhile, biblical critics may profit by "listening in", by trying to keep abreast of recent developments in modern language criticism.

Not all aspects of rhetoric are equally relevant to biblical criticism. Aristotle was clearly concerned with spoken discourse; from thought via discourse to persuasion. Rhetoric as an instrumental discipline /12/ served a practical purpose. However, as scholars dealing with a corpus of classical literature (unless we write a new Bible) we are interested in how rhetoric, in terms of rhetorical criticism, may aid our understanding of a traditional text; in other words, for us the movement is from the written literature via (rhetorical) criticism to interpretation (and possible persuasion) /13/.

Whether or not the term was actually used (and it was generally not), rhetorical criticism is hardly new in biblical studies. It has in fact a rather impressive pedigree. Erasmus (1469-1536) needs to be mentioned here as one of the first modern literary critics of the New Testament, first, by his edition of the Greek text /14/, secondly, by his reading of the text in the light of contemporary conditions, but more generally, by his sensitivity to the literary qualities of the biblical story /15/. Another milestone is the work of Bishop
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Robert Lowth of London (1710-1787) De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum (1753). While the rise of historical (source) criticism eclipsed genuinely synchronic methods to a large extent, the work of Hermann Gunkel (1862-1932) resulted in a partial shift of accent from diachronic approaches, though his name is usually associated with Gattungsgeschichte. The best-known work which deals consciously with rhetorical criticism during this period is Eduard König, Stilistik, Rhetorik, Poetik (1900).

There is perhaps an analogy present in Gunkel's gradual moving away from the historical criticism of the documentary hypothesis (Baumgartner refers to Gunkel's opposition to Wellhausen) toward form criticism, and James Muilenburg's calling for rhetorical criticism "beyond form criticism". However, Muilenburg does not reject form criticism any more than Gunkel did source criticism, as may be amply demonstrated from their published work. Muilenburg's SBL Presidential address is significant both for its summation of his own accomplishments in literary criticism and as a kind of manifesto, delivered in an irenic spirit, certainly not exclusivist in any way, but attempting to persuade scholars to shift their accent toward the kind of criticism which takes sufficient cognizance of the text in its particularity.

Muilenburg states that he is above all concerned, in his own words, in "understanding the nature of Hebrew literary composition, in exhibiting the structural patterns that are employed for the fashioning of a literary unit, whether in poetry or in prose, and in discerning the many and various devices by which the predications are formulated and ordered into a unified whole". Thus, he is interested in what might be called macro-structure and micro-structure or structure and texture of pericopes and poems. Muilenburg mentions specifically:

1. The need for literary sensitivity, a plea likewise made by the proponents of the New Criticism and the German Werkinterpretation. This point is reiterated and demonstrated in all of his exegetical work. A primary task is the defining of the limits of literary units: their beginning and end - a concern also expressed by form critics.

2. Descending to the micro-structure, Muilenburg specifically mentions climactic and ballast lines as well as ring composition. He further calls attention to the need to identify rhetorical devices: parallelismus membrorum, strophic structure, particles and repetition. However, unlike
Kessler: Methodology of Rhetorical Criticism

Konig, such devices are to be studied not for their own sake (the temptation to which classical rhetorical criticism is apt to fall prey), but to be regarded as significant building blocks and meaningful components of the structure of the whole. This point has been expressed with the greatest possible emphasis by Meir Weiss:

Daher macht die Dichtung ihren Sinngehalt nur in dieser ihrer konkreten, einmaligen Gestalt offenbar, in dieser Wortprägung, in diesem Satzbau, nur mit diesen syntaktischen Gebilden, in diesem Rhythmus, und allein in diesem besonderen Verhältnis der Teile untereinander und der Teile zum Ganzen, d.h. in dieser ihrer Struktur. D.h. also: Dichtung spricht zu uns nur mit ihrer ganzheitlichen Gestalt /25/.

It is highly dubious that Muilenburg would concur with Weiss's view, or for that matter with the view which Weiss espoused in his answer to a question addressed to him after his Uppsala discourse - that form criticism is irrelevant to biblical criticism.

Perhaps the greatest merit of Muilenburg's inspiring address is that he pointed to a challenging task, hardly commenced, but promising in terms of exegetical usefulness, as his own work has amply demonstrated.

We must now turn to English literary criticism to see how it might illuminate our enterprise. Northrop Frye's fourth essay in his Anatomy of Criticism, entitled "Rhetorical Criticism", is subtitled "theory of genres". Though genre is often regarded as a synonym forGattung, Doty /26/ writes that genre (from Latin genus) refers to large units such as gospel or epistle (in the New Testament), and is therefore broader than Gattung, which is used to label concise occurrences of literary types, or component literary types (Gliedgattungen) /27/ or even pre-literary units. Frye lists only four genres: epos, prose, drama and lyric - a very small number compared to the list of Gattungen proposed by Gunkel, a list which has since grown, and may well keep growing if the stated goals of the form criticism seminars of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL), calling for progressive refinement of literary types, mean the invention of an indefinite number of new labels.

That this is far easier said than done was already demonstrated by Gunkel, who in addition to the major Gattungen such as Hymnen, Klagelieder, Thronbesteigungslieder, etc., and the kleinere Gattungen (Siegeslied, Segenswort, Fluchwort, etc.) had to resort to Mischungen: hymns and songs of thanksgiving contain petitions originating with the lament of
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the individual /28/, whereas popular laments move in the direction of wisdom poetry /29/, etc.

That form criticism has accomplished noteworthy results /30/ during the intervening decades is not to be gainsaid. This does not negate the fact that some basic problems have arisen, which have become acute of late. Müllenburg has put it well: "...form criticism by its very nature is bound to generalize because it is concerned with what is common to all the representatives of a genre, and therefore applies an external measure to the individual pericopes. It does not focus sufficient attention upon what is unique and unrepeatable, upon the particularity of the formulation" /31/.

His caveat is now widely appreciated. In the form criticism seminars of the SBL, for example, a subtle shift from Gattungskritik to the more general direction of "morphology" is in evidence /32/. Moreover, recent scholarship has made it clear that Gunkel’s favourite question "was denn die erste Frage sei bei einem Psalm" (related by his student Walter Baumgartner) /33/ may be relatively simple with the psalms, but far more complex outside the Psalter.

But difficulties with generic classification are not unique to the Bible. For example, is the story of Gilgamesh really an epic ohne weiteres? Or does it share at least some features of wisdom literature? Similar questions have been asked about Beowulf /34/. Jeremiah 50f. are part of a collection of oracles against foreign nations; how may we label this genre? As war poetry? Or is it a sermon addressed to Israel? A handbook of modern literary criticism flatly states that "the concept that there are literary genres...has, since the early nineteenth century, been loosing ground" and suggests that perhaps three "categories" of genres is all that is needed: fiction, drama and lyric /35/.

This seems to agree generally with Frye’s thinking; he clearly does not regard the genres as tightly separated compartments. Thus, he writes about epos and fiction /36/ that they "first take the form of scripture and myth, then of traditional tales, then of narrative and didactic poetry, including the epic proper, and of oratorical prose, then of novels and other written forms" /37/.

Professor Frye’s discussion (in his fourth essay in Anatomy) deals with literature generally, with only sporadic references to the Bible. He does not pretend to offer any solutions to the basic literary problems in the Bible in his Anatomy; neverthe-
less, his comments on the biblical corpus are provocative. The Bible, far from being a random collection of heterogeneous literary fragments, is to be regarded as containing a "definitive myth, a single archetypal structure extending from creation to apocalypse" /38/. Within that unified structure are found a plethora of forms, because of which fact he characterizes such literature as encyclopaedic. Frye suggests that there are several epic frameworks in the Bible, such as the epic of return and the epic of wrath /39/. Biblical critics may prefer to label them dominant motifs. Overall, it is Frye's important contribution to point out the pervasive movements (he names the individual movement from birth to salvation, the sexual from Adam and Eve to the apocalyptic wedding, and the social from the giving of the law to the established kingdom of the law: Zion and the New Testament millennium) /40/ within the biblical cycle. Yet, rhetorical criticism in Frye's treatment is difficult to relate to the central concerns of what this method is understood to mean by biblical scholars, unless one accepts it as a healthy corrective against the ubiquitous fragmentizing tendencies which have plagued our profession /41/. 

III

A rather different road is travelled by modern rhetoricians of the stripe of Winterowd, already referred to. Regarding the four classical divisions of rhetoric /42/ referred to above, biblical criticism is predominantly concerned with the second (disposition or arrangement) and the third (style), that is to say, with the entire range of structure (including texture) and the features which have sometimes been regarded as rhetorical refinements /43/. In other words, the biblical critic can only be expected to interest himself in rhetoric so far as it offers any help in his interpretative endeavours. Winterowd feels rhetoric is flexible enough to accommodate the needs of the reader (as opposed to the needs of the speaker or writer) /44/. He then proceeds to enumerate what he calls a modus operandi, one of the ways "in" to the literature, a procedure for literary criticism along the lines of the new rhetoric /45/.

1. The whole piece - what is said in general, an overview, something like a first impression gained from one's initial exposure.

2. Author. Though the New Criticism has downplayed this aspect, Winterowd avers that the critic ought to be
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interested in his person; in fact biography and writing are mutually interpretative; in other words, biography adds as much to the poem as the poem does to biography. Generally, this may be a useful point, though authorship is always a problem in biblical literature because it is virtually anonymous throughout; thus the critic is left with the necessity of focusing on the nature of the book rather than the personality of its author.

3. Circumstances. "Poetry is not produced in a vacuum. It is always occasional in one sense of the word" /46/. This would roughly correspond to Sitz im Leben, or more generally, setting /47/.

4. Medium. Winterowd quotes with approval Marshall McLuhan's dictum, "the medium is the message". In literary critical terms it means that for example a lament must be taken seriously in its given literary form, that a prophetic oracle must only be compared to other prophetic oracles, etc.

5. Stance is not defined in rhetorical terms but by way of an example. It deals with the particularity (the "flavour") of a pericope rather than with its likeness as representative of a literary type.

6. Form corresponds more precisely with the particularity of a piece. Winterowd remarks: "Not only does the poet control the form; the form also controls the poet" /48/. Biblical critics have learned to come to terms with this bipolarity; they recognize that biblical authors use traditional ways of expression (such as stock or stereotype phraseology or the shape of a particularGattung) as the literary material out of which they create their piece, but they do so with remarkable individuality.

7. Style. Winterowd says virtually nothing about this aspect, in which the New Criticism has been keenly interested, though it is also directly related to rhetorical criticism. It is now claimed by proponents of generative and transformational grammar that they can "clear away a good deal of the mist from stylistic theory, and, second...make possible a corresponding refinement in the practice of stylistic analysis" /49/. Whether this claim will be substantiated remains to be seen, though it does not seem extravagant to suggest that modern rhetorical criticism of the Bible should come to terms with the new English grammar /50/.

8. Metastyle, under which Winterowd arranges diction, metaphor, symbol and miscellaneous figures of thought.
Presumably, the traditional rhetorical figures would find their home under this rubric.

9. Ratio deals with compositional ratios: a quantifying feature. This is where semantics and linguistics would come into their own. A trail-blazer for this approach in biblical studies is Francis I. Andersen, *The Hebrew Verbless Clause in the Pentateuch* /51/. Biblical critics are timidly beginning to look in this direction; it will probably not be too foolhardy to predict that they will do so increasingly.

10. Meaning. By this Winterowd seems to have in mind communication and the effectiveness of it - clearly of paramount concern with rhetoric since its foundational statement by Aristotle. In Winterowd's words: "The rhetorical motive is toward identification. Rhetoric tries not merely to communicate so many things in almost an equal number of words, but to bring about a kind of consubstantiality between speaker, writer and audience" /52/. This is of course the heart of the exegetical enterprise and the difficult problem in classical literature especially. In this light, the function of exegesis consists in continually pushing back the boundary of ignorance.

Winterowd's list, though geared to modern literature, is for the most part germane to the Bible; it spans from the exegete's initial encounter with the text (#1) to "meaning" or interpretation (#10) - the capstone of the literary critical endeavour. Viewed from the diachronic-synchronic perspective we find that, apart from two basic concerns, the overwhelming emphasis is on the analytical or synchronic (non-historical).

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<td>2. Authorship</td>
<td>1. Whole piece</td>
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<td>5. Stance</td>
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<td>7. Style</td>
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<td>8. Metastyle</td>
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<td>9. Ratio</td>
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Though diachronic rubrics are listed, the synchronic outweigh the former significantly in terms of defined approaches. Biblical criticism has a tradition, undoubtedly necessarily so, of a high diachronic interest. Rhetorical criticism may perhaps be seen as dealing with the juncture of diachronic and synchronic methods; it deals minimally with Vorgeschichte, and not with
Nachgeschichte at all. As Brevard Childs /53/ and W. Cantwell Smith /54/ have suggested, this aspect of biblical criticism deserves a far more substantial portion of our efforts than it has received heretofore.

It is here proposed that rhetorical criticism may serve as a suitable rubric for the kind of biblical criticism which deals with the literary analysis of the Massoretic text; thus it is set apart from historical (source) criticism and what Childs has called "canonical criticism" as well as the study of the historical influence of the biblical text in the Jewish and Christian communities.

Rhetorical criticism might include not only the identification and description of classical rhetorical figures (tropes and schemes), but also the widened perspectives of the new rhetoric. Obviously, this calls for an increasingly interdisciplinary approach and more dialogues with literary critics in English and other modern literatures.

Rhetorical criticism seems a more suitable term than structural analysis, not only because we are not limiting ourselves to the analysis of structure, but particularly because it may easily be confused with literary structuralism /55/. This is not to say that the two methods may not be eventually fruitfully related. This is suggested by the fact that both are concerned with structure in the broad sense, and that both are essentially synchronic in approach. Structuralism as a literary critical method is relatively new, particularly in biblical studies; it remains therefore to be seen to what extent it can contribute to exegesis, though the outlook seems promising.

More problematic is the relationship between rhetorical and form criticism. The changing methodological scene, now being transformed at an increasing momentum, has contributed to the problem of defining these methods which are admittedly contiguous and even overlapping. There is some truth in the statement that whereas in Gunkel's day form criticism had to relate itself to source criticism, presently form criticism seeks to define itself vis-à-vis methods which concentrate on the analysis of the text in its given form, such as rhetorical criticism /56/.

Gunkel made a new departure when he dissociated himself from the attempt of writing a history of Hebrew literature; compare for example Eichhorn's introduction /57/, where specific pericopes are given dates and accordingly printed in chronological order. But even Gunkel's substitute program,
Kessler: Methodology of Rhetorical Criticism

namely to construct a Gattungsgeschichte, has at best proved to be problematic. Presently we are witnessing a drastic realignment of the Gunkelian methodological framework to the dismay of such "orthodox" form critics as Henning Graf Reventlow. Undoubtedly the situation has partly been caused by extravagant claims for the method, which subsequent study found necessary to modify or invalidate. The overall result is that form criticism has not only greatly declined in importance, but that many leading scholars now openly disavow their loyalty to the method.

Nevertheless, form criticism has some significant functions to perform even if its precise locus in the methodological spectrum needs to be reconsidered. In this connection, the form criticism seminars of the SBL have been uniquely useful. Scholars associated with these seminars have sounded the warning that Sitz im Leben can no longer be rigidly related to Gattung /58/. Not only the setting, but also the function or intention (Ziel) is emphasized /59/, which is a traditional rhetorical concern.

With the growing emphasis on synchronic methods, both in Germany and the United States, a distinction is now made between Formkritik (morphology) and Gattungskritik (genre criticism). This constitutes an attempt to organize the various concerns understood by the term form criticism, as for example outlined by Martin Buss in an unpublished draft entitled "Terminology for Methods" (1969), as follows:

1. Genre criticism (Gattungskritik).
2. History of types (Gattungsgeschichte).
3. "Not altogether inappropriate, more broadly": style criticism.
4. Idem: history of style, "intermediate in generality".

It should be noted that the first and third of these refer to synchronics, the other to diachronics.

An overview of the methodological map as presently conceived by some leading writers on critical methodologies may add a needed perspective at this point of our discussion.

After the initial concern with the text (basically text criticism and translation) Richter /60/ and Zenger /61/ describe Literarkritik: identification of doubtlets, repetitions, tensions, as well as the attempt to establish coherent sources based on these phenomena; thus, essentially the older literary criticism (source criticism). Presumably, the text is then (in its given shape) subjected to Formkritik (morphology, apparently
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synonymous with Tucker's structural analysis) /62/, syntax, style, structure, Ziel, Horizont are all specifically mentioned. Next comes Gattungskritik (genre criticism). Both Richter and Zenger refer to the need to compare the example at hand with other examples of the same Gattung. Both are also concerned with Sitz im Leben (Zenger) or Funktion (Richter) as well as Sitz in der Literatur (Zenger) or Verhältnis der Gattungen zu einander (Richter). The more thorough-going historical approaches are subsumed under Traditionskritik.

A similiar procedure is followed by Gene Tucker, who outlines the steps of form critical analysis as follows:
1. Structural analysis.
2. Description of genre.
3. Definition of setting(s).
4. Intention purpose, or function.

His discussion of Genesis 32.22-32, which he has chosen as an example, reflects strong diachronic concerns. Thus, under structure Tucker remarks that the story once circulated independently, that it is but loosely set within its literary context and that the transition between the story and what precedes is very rough /63/. This leads to the conclusion that several layers of tradition are indicated /64/. All of this may very well be the case, but it is unfortunate that the reflection of such diachronic perspective results prevents the type of engagement with the text whereby structure is given its full due.

His discussion on genre is likewise strongly historically oriented. The question about the original form of the genre lands us in Gattungsgeschichte. Some genre elements may be identified, which is helpful for interpretation of the pericope, but then we have to consider the broader (literary) contexts.

Tucker's discussion on the setting looks very much like traditio-historical criticism. The genre elements and their precise relationship to the overall genre are not clarified; hence, the difficulty of determining settings for both levels.

Unfortunately, as Tucker himself says, some scholars gravitate toward one method which they prefer and know best, and then proceed to subsume several related approaches under it. Thus Klaus Koch makes the older literary criticism a branch of form criticism /65/. On the other hand, Otto Kaiser includes a host of methodological steps, which properly belong to other methods, under "literary criticism" /66/.

What is clearly needed is a fuller appreciation of all
dimensions of the methodological spectrum, with the realization that biblical studies have inordinately emphasized diachronics at the expense of synchronics, and a willingness to do justice to all useful approaches. As to source criticism, the law of diminishing returns has been operating here for a longer time than we care to admit. The present scene, which, judging by the fact that so many scholars are no longer greatly dedicated to establishment methods, suggesting that we are either still in the doldrums, or else are already in a period of methodological transition, seems to underscore this fact. The methodological closet needs to be tidied; skeletons, rubbish, and just plain dust should be removed to make room for what we really need to produce fruitful exegesis.

And now, to be more specific, something may be said in favour of form criticism limiting its field of operation to the analysis and history of genres, as well as their setting. The present tendency to broaden its tasks can only lead to more confusion. Take the term Formkritik for example. The unsuspecting English reader translates: form criticism. But this is not the same as Gunkel's method, which is termed Gattungskritik. That the label Formkritik (Tucker and others: structural analysis) is now used for the study of structure may suggest increasing interest in synchronic approaches. Why not press into service an older useful term with a long tradition: rhetorical criticism, for an exclusively structural (in the broader senses), synchronic preoccupation of the text. In this manner, diachronics would be represented well by source criticism and/or traditio-historical criticism, synchronic method would be served by rhetorical criticism, and form criticism would pursue the typical Gunkelian concerns with genres, genre elements, their present as well as historical setting, the sociological setting of literary units from the smallest genre element, to the genre, the pericope, tradition blocks, and perhaps even entire biblical books. This would correspond to Zenger's and Richter's Gattungskritik, best known by English-speakers as form criticism. This procedure would be less confusing and be in line with Gunkel's program.

Edwin Good has suggested that the term literary criticism should be used in the new sense, generally as understood in non-biblical criticism, and particularly for what we have termed here rhetorical criticism /67/. It is interesting to note that William Beardslee's Literary Criticism of the New Testament /68/ takes this new direction. On the other hand,
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Norman Habel's Literary Criticism of the Old Testament /69/, in a parallel series, pursues the older literary criticism: source criticism.

In various quarters the call for correlation of methods is heard. It is not only a legitimate, but also a necessary demand. The situation during the first half of this century when one method dominated the scene, tolerating no challenge (see the response Umberto Cassuto received when he dared to attack the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis), and allowing other methods a place only if source criticism were guaranteed continued eminence, must never be allowed to recur /70/. Thus, correlation, if spurred by the desire to give all methods their due, must be accomplished. In the process some new labels may be needed, others may need to be discarded and still others may need to be redefined.

Presently, at best, biblical critics give equal time to synchronic criticism. In this vein, Fohrer speaks of his dual concerns in Old Testament introduction:

1. In the words of Eichhorn, which Fohrer quotes: "to examine and describe the growth of the Old Testament from its earliest beginnings to its conclusions" /71/.

2. The special task in the present situation is "to coordinate and integrate the divergent methods and tendencies...to prevent the independent or mutually hostile development of the various schools ..." /72/.

Fohrer's concerns would have been more compelling if the need for synchronic criticism would have been juxtaposed to Eichhorn's definition of historical criticism; not until then can there be any fruitful co-ordination and integration.

In sum, rhetorical criticism deserves serious consideration as a label for the leading candidate for synchronic criticism, particularly if its definition is attempted along the lines of both classical rhetoric and the new rhetoric. Rhetoric has proven to be a flexible term, which is another advantage for its use. However, beyond the theoretical description of a method, the demonstration of the skill of those utilizing it is the ultimate proof of its quality: the tree is known by its fruits.

NOTES

2 Rhetoric, 14.
3 Modern interest in rhetoric runs along conservative lines (those who limit their interest to classical rhetoric, as e.g. Edward J. Corbett, Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student (New York: Oxford, 1965) and progressive lines (those who seek a broadened setting for rhetoric within literary criticism, e.g. W. Ross Winterowd, Rhetoric).


5 Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, born ca. 35 A.D., author of Institutio oratoria, published ca. 95 A.D.

6 Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 B.C.) wrote several works on rhetoric, the best-known being De Oratore (55 B.C.).

7 From the perspective of biblical criticism, the contributions of Erasmus (1469?-1536) in particular are to be noted.


10 Wolfgang Kayser, Das sprachliche Kunstwerk (14. Auflage; Bern & München: Francke, 1969), representative of the Werkinterpretation method, barely mentions rhetoric, though by the conceptions basic to this paper, he deals with rhetoric throughout.

11 See Winterowd, Rhetoric, chapters 4-6. Winterowd, a disciple of Kenneth Burke, has characterized the genius of his master as "showing the relevance of rhetoric in literature" (Rhetoric, 78f.). I.A. Richards and Francis Christensen are also pioneers of a "new rhetoric". (Cf. John E. Jordan, Questions of Rhetoric [New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1971] 3).

12 Donald C. Bryant, "Rhetoric: its function and scope", in Schwartz, Province of Rhetoric, 35.

13 In addition to rhetoric as instrumental discipline and literary study, Bryant adds philosophical and social aspects (Schwartz, Province of Rhetoric, 36).

14 His publication of the first edition of the Novum Testamentum in 1516 represents a milestone in European religious history. But Erasmus was also keenly interested in rhetoric as a subject; cf. De duplici copia verborum ac rerum
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Commentariis M. Veltkirchii (Basel, 1521) and Opus de conscribendis epistolos (Basel, 1522).

15 See Atkins, English Literary Criticism, 59f.

16 Here we refer generally to the methods which deal with the meaning of the text in its present form, without reference to the provenance of it.

17 These approaches concern themselves with the question: How did the text get into its present form? Thus: source criticism.

18 Leipzig: Theodor Weicher, 1900.


20 Here this is taken as a general term for any kind of critical study of a text, diachronic or synchronic.

21 "Form criticism and beyond", 8.

22 This label was given by John Crowe Ransom, The New Criticism (Norfolk, Connecticut: New Directions, 1941). Other representatives of this "school", who also designated formalistic criticism, are I.A. Richards, and Cleanth Brooks. Cf. Stanley E. Hyman, The Armed Vision (New York: Vintage, 1955), 278ff., Wilbur S. Scott, Five Approaches of Literary Criticism (New York: Collier, 1962) 179-184. The thrust of this school was the focus on the literature in its given form, to the total exclusion of any data external to the piece, such as the author's biography, setting, or provenance. As a modern critic puts it, "the individual poem became hermetically sealed off from life" (Barbara D. Korpan, "Literary Evolution as Style: the 'Intrinsic Historicity' of Northrop Frye and Juri Tynianov", Pacific Coast Philology 2 (1967) 47.


24 O. Eissfeldt, "Die Kleinste literarische Einheit in den Erzählungsbüchern des AT", Kleine Schriften, i (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1962) 143-149. This has been disputed of late however.


Kessler: Methodology of Rhetorical Criticism

28 Einleitung in die Psalmen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1933) 399.
29 Einleitung, 401.
31 "Form criticism and beyond", 5.
35 Barnet, Study of Literature, 91.
36 In his discussion on the genres, Frye defines fiction as "the genre of the printed page" (Anatomy, 248).
37 Anatomy, 250.
38 Anatomy, 315.
39 Anatomy, 317.
40 Anatomy, 316f.
41 Frye has reminded us that biblical literary criticism must move on different levels, all the way from the smallest unit via the biblical books to the Bible as a whole.
42 Actually, there is a fifth one: delivery (pronuntiatio) which deals with vocal utterance and bodily activity. It is obviously also irrelevant to the biblical scholar.
43 With the growing preoccupation with literature in its givenness, rhetorical features tend no longer to be regarded as refinements which the author could have done without. The extreme view, which is probably related to the nature of the Bible qua scripture, is held by Meir Weiss, quoted above, a view which may be inspired by a religious view of the nature of the text. Biblical scholars would generally tend to agree with Frye's milder dictum that "ornamental rhetoric is inseparable from literature itself" (Anatomy, 249).
44 For biblical studies, interest focuses of course on reading and interpretation.
45 Rhetoric, 180-196.
In this case, anglicizing includes liberation from the Gunkelian framework. Whereas the Sitz im Leben is recurrent, appropriate in a particular sociological setting such as the cult, setting may include a unique historical context, occurring once, thus stressing uniqueness and particularity.


Needless to say, this is an oversimplification. Gunkel's relationship to the older literary criticism is ambiguous in the sense that he accepted its source critical results, but transformed the concept of authorship to include a long period of oral tradition. (See his Reden und Aufsätze [Göttingen:
The so-called tradition-historical method owes its existence in part to the impetus provided by Gunkel's work.


62 Tucker, Form Criticism, 12f.

63 Form Criticism, 44.

64 Form Criticism, 46.

65 Was ist Formgeschichte? (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1964) 82f.


67 Edwin M. Good, review of Literary Criticism of the Old Testament, by Norman Habel in JBL 92 (1973) 287ff. Because source criticism is not liable to surrender its hold on this term for quite some time, Good's proposal may not be generally accepted.


70 Cf. the statement by H. Graf Reventlow: "Traditional viewpoints in exegesis have a tough life" ("A Syncretistic Enthronement Hymn in Is. 9,1-6", Ugarit-Forschungen, 3 (1971) 321.


GENESIS 2-3: THE THEME OF INTIMACY AND ALIENATION

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The narrative in Genesis 2-3 is one of the better-known pieces of Western literature, largely because it has the ability to focus the reader's attention on key issues relating to man's existence. The writer has artfully woven his story, using a limited number of characters and objects to present in brief but moving form the story of man's fall. Any attempt to make a complete analysis of this writer's work would be a major undertaking, especially when one considers the complexity of issues such as the role and identity of the serpent, or the form and function of the knowledge that woman so strongly desires. In this study I have a fairly limited goal: to analyze the writer's development of the two-dimensional theme of intimacy and alienation. These are my words, not his, but it is my conviction that they clearly express a major motif the writer has used to focus and integrate his narrative. As I analyze this motif, I will pay special attention to the ways in which the writer leads his audience, by means of numerous literary devices, to experience the shattering of the closely-knit created order and the onslaught of that divisiveness which both writer and reader know to be a part of their everyday life.

Of necessity, this study will fall into two parts. The first will treat the development of the theme of intimacy in Genesis 2. The second will analyze the theme of alienation as it unfolds in Genesis 3.

I

In ch.2 the writer weaves several components into an intimate picture of harmony, with all revolving around man, the first and central element in the created order. These components are: the ground (ḥdmnḥ); the Lord God (yhwḥ yhym); the garden (hgn) and its trees (ktz); the animals; and woman
A study of select verses from this chapter will show in detail how the writer has used various stylistic devices to convey the theme of intimacy.

Verse 7. \(\text{wy} \text{ytsr yhwh} \, l^\text{hym} \, t \, h^\text{dm} \) (then the Lord God molded man). The verb \text{ytsr} (to form, mold) underlines the intimacy between God and man. God does not simply create man or bring him into being; he takes pains with him, just as a potter would in forming a fine vessel. Man is therefore most special.

\(c \, pr \, mn \, h^\text{dmh} \) (dust from the ground). This phrase points to man's close association with the ground; \text{hdmh} is taken from \text{hMmh}. The Hebrew mind viewed the similarity of sounds, as here with the words \text{hdm} and \text{hdmh}, as a key to the interrelatedness of the persons, objects, or concepts embodied in the words. In subsequent verses the writer will develop this association of man with the ground, as when God causes trees to grow out of the ground to provide food for man (2:9,16), or when God forms animals out of the ground as companions for man (2:19). Furthermore, the phrase \(c \, pr \, mn \, h^\text{dmh} \) forms an inclusio with 3:19. Man is formed by God from the dust of the ground (2:7); after man has disrupted creation he must return to the ground as dust (3:19). Significantly, even though \text{hdmh} is used repeatedly in chs. 2 and 3, 2:7 and 3:19 are the only two points where \text{hdm} and \text{cpr} are directly associated with one another. As a result, the statement of consequences in 3:19 harks back directly to the time of beginning, making more poignant man's fall.

\(wypch \, b^\text{lpw} \, nshmt \, chyym \, wyhy \, h^\text{dm} \, lnps\, chyh \) (and he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living creature). In addition to further developing God's closeness to man during the act of creation, these words stress through repetition the gift of life that man has received. In a fashion reminiscent of Hebrew poetry, the writer parallels \text{nshmt chyym} (breath of life) with \text{lnps\, chyh} (living creature). The rest of ch.2 continues to stress the gift of life, life which is created for the benefit of man and in order to provide him with companionship. It is in 3:19 that the gift of life is withdrawn; thus, the life-death sequence forms a further link between 2:7 and 3:19.

Verse 8. The garden is created for man. The writer emphasizes this fact by having God plant it immediately after man receives life, and by having God set the man in the garden immediately after it is planted /1/. \(wysm \, shm \, t \, h^\text{dm} \, l^\text{shr \, ytsr} \) (and there he set the man whom he had formed). It would have been adequate for the writer to say, "And there he set the
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man." He chooses, however, to add the last two words, using the identical verb (ytsr) from v.7, so that he may again stress the close association between man and God.

Verse 9. God causes the trees to grow mn h'dmh (from the ground). Man, who himself was taken from the ground, is able to enjoy through sight and taste the produce God has brought forth for him from the ground. Here man's enjoyment of the trees through sight and taste is part of God's plan. This sets the stage for 3:6, where enjoying the tree in the midst of the garden belongs to the sequence of disruption.

Verse 15. Man's closeness to the garden is again stressed. He lives in harmony with it, having the responsibility of caring for it, even while he enjoys its fruit (v.16). The verb Cb (to till, care for) points back to v.5, where there were as yet no plants, because there was no man to till (Cb) the ground. Now, however, it is appropriate that God has planted trees in the garden: there is a man to care for them.

Verse 18. The writer now turns to the element of creation closest to man. He tells us this not only by using the programmatic clause, "It is not good that man should be alone," but also by means of the phrase Czr kngdw (a companion corresponding to him, a helper like him). The writer also makes his point by means of a word play: although man is part of the created order, in close harmony with God and the garden, for which he cares (Cb: v.15), he is alone (lbd), lacking a close companion, someone to care for him. The fact that a suitable companion is not found immediately, but only after prolonged effort by God, helps to emphasize the closeness to man of the ultimate companion, woman.

Verse 19. Like man, the animals are formed (ytsr) from the ground (h'dmh). The writer thus represents God as attempting to create a companion for man who is as much like him as possible, being formed in the same way and being taken from the same source. This sets up the failure at the end of v.20, where none of the animals proves acceptable as man's companion. In light of this failure, woman, who is the appropriate companion, must be seen to be very close to man.

Verses 19-20. The writer places great stress on the naming of the animals by man. Three times the verb qn (to name) is used, and the noun shm (name) is used twice. The writer does not have God name the animals, because the man must examine each thoroughly and discern for himself a companion. This is stressed by the clause wyb 1 h'dmh lb'wt mh qn lw (and he
brought them unto the man, to see what he would name them). This clause, the two lists naming categories of animals God has created (vv.19 and 20), and the clause wkl 'shr yqr' lw h'dm npsh chyh hw shmw (and whatever the man named each living creature, that was its name), all serve to elongate the process of man's careful scrutinizing of the animals. The writer has chosen to employ this repetition so that the last phrase in v.20 will be even more emphatic: wPdm 1* mts zr kngdw (but there was not found for man a companion like him). Despite God's efforts to make the animals as much like man as possible, the long search is fruitless, and man is still alone. Man's being alone is especially stressed by the repetition of the phrase zr kngdw (a companion like him) from v.18, which described the beginning of the search.

Verse 21. God now causes a deep sleep to fall upon man, because the creation of a companion for man literally requires that God take a part of man himself: wyqch 'cht mtsl ctyw (and he took one of his ribs). The animals, like man, were taken from the ground, but this does not give them the closeness to man which woman will possess. The closing up of the wound with flesh (bsr) enables the writer to anticipate the end of the scene in v.24 where man and woman are described as one flesh.

Verse 22. The writer repeats the phrase "the rib which he had taken from man" in order to stress again the intimate connection between man and woman. wybn (and he built): the writer uses the verb bnh in order to stress the uniqueness of woman's creation; for whereas God formed (ytsr) man and the animals from the ground, he builds up woman from man's rib. While bnh normally means "to build," in this context it carries the connotation of "building up," since from a small part of man God fashions a companion for him.

wyb'h 1 l h'dm (and he brought her to the man). These words echo God's bringing the animals to man in v.19. The writer deliberately parallels the wording in the two scenes so that the reader will keep the former scene in mind, and thereby focus on the contrast between woman, who indeed is man's zr kngdw (companion like him), and the animals, which are not. This phrase also suggests the way in which a father brings to a man his bride (cf. Gen. 29:23), thereby preparing the reader for v.24.

Verse 23. The writer uses this short piece of poetry to bring to a climax the search for man's zr (helper). The demonstrative pronoun z't (this) /2/ is used three times in order to single out woman emphatically as the one who is suited to be man's
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companion. The poetry begins with man exclaiming z't, as if he has been watching a long parade of nominees and now suddenly sees the right one. The next word, hpcm (at last, finally), strengthens the image, declaring man's exasperation over the long wait. The second use of z't, at the beginning of line two, again accentuates woman as she receives a name indicating her closeness to man. The final z't, at the end of the short poem, forms a neat inclusio with the opening word, recalling man's earlier word of joy upon having at last found his companion. It also serves to emphasize for a third time woman's suitability as the writer repeats, in language closely parallel to v.22, the fact that woman is taken from man (mlsh lqchh z't) /3/.

c tsm m c t sm y w bs r m bs ry (bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh). This phrase is often used in the OT to express intimate family ties, as in Gen. 29:14; Judg. 9:2; 2 Sam. 5:1, 19:12-13. In such cases, a common ancestry is assumed. Here, however, woman is literally man's bone and flesh (see the writer's earlier setting of the stage in v.21). The writer knew that the special twist he was putting on the common phrase would seize the attention of his reader and therefore stress even more the intimacy of man and woman /4/. Furthermore, c tsm (bone), because of its vocal similarity to c zr (companion), calls to the reader's attention the fact that woman, who is c tsm of man's c tsm, is also man's c zr.

lz't yq y lshh (for this will be called "woman"). As with the animals, man names the woman, except that in this case he clearly perceives the woman to be his c zr kng dw (companion like him). The writer does not specifically use that phrase here. Rather, he employs a word play between l shh (woman) and lysh (man) to make his point. While there is no etymological relationship between the two words /5/, the phonetic similarity makes a "common sense" case for the closeness between man and woman. Thus, while man's observation of each animal led him to give each a name, so his perception of woman causes him to give her a name closely akin to his.

Verse 24. Again the writer makes his point about woman being one flesh with man. As close as man is to his parents, who have given him life, he will be even closer to his wife, to whom he will cleave (dbg), and with whom he will become one flesh. But in this first instance the relationship is even closer, since the writer is clearly alluding to v.21, where the first woman is taken directly from man /6/. Thus, the theme of alienation in ch.3 becomes even more tragic in light of this special oneness
of the first man and woman.

Beginning with v.24, the word is not simply "woman," but rather "his woman." While the root word in Hebrew, 'shh, is the same as that used in vv.22-23, the sense of the passage makes "his wife" a better translation.

Verse 25. The reference in v.24 to being one flesh does not refer only to sexual relations (nor does it exclude them). In v.25 the sexual overtones are more pronounced. Throughout the OT there is basically a reserved attitude towards nakedness, with it being presumed that one's nakedness is, with only rare exception, to be shielded from the eyes of others. To expose someone's nakedness was to lay them bare before the world, to make them open and vulnerable, in a most thoroughgoing sense (Gen. 42:9,12; Isa. 20; Ezek. 16:22,39; 23:22-35; Hos. 2). It often means to expose one to shame (1 Sam. 20:30; 2 Sam. 10:4-5; Isa. 47:3; Nah. 3:5). Clearly, one's nakedness was seen as a very personal thing, a key to one's innermost self. It is for this reason that the phrase "to expose the nakedness of ... " is often used to refer to sexual intercourse (Lev. 18; 20), wherein two people open themselves to one another in the most complete way possible. Thus, in v.25 man and his wife stand naked before one another, expose themselves completely to one another, and are not ashamed /7/. Their vulnerability causes no anxiety, and their intimacy is complete. This sets the stage for ch.3, where the intimacy is disrupted, as expressed in part through the urgent need of man and woman to cover up their nakedness.

II

As we move into ch.3, the writer dramatically shifts the course of his narrative. The world of harmony and intimacy becomes a world of disruption and alienation. The sudden introduction of the serpent /8/ alerts the reader that he is entering a new stage of the narrative, as does also the format of the opening words, which may be translated "Now the serpent was ...." The word כָּרִים (cunning) also presents a new element, one which is accentuated by the writer's word play between it and the similar - sounding כָּרִיםִים (naked) from the previous verse. The nakedness of man and woman had given expression to their intimacy. Now, however, the cunning of the serpent injects into the created order a disruptive feature which grows until it reaches a climax in vv.12-13. The intimacy of ch.2 dissolves in a rapid sequence of events.
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Verses 1-6. In the encounter between woman and the serpent, the writer subtly but firmly continues to stress the intimacy between man and woman. Throughout vv.1-6, plural verbs are used when the serpent addresses woman, as though man were also being addressed (e.g., v.5 whyym k\lhhym, and you will be like God), plural verbs are used to summarize God's command concerning the fruit of the trees (e.g., v.3 l\tklw, you shall not eat), and woman in speaking of herself and man uses a plural verb (v.2 n\k\l, we may eat). The writer's use of these plural verbs implies that man and woman are one, that they cannot be dealt with or addressed apart from one another. When woman eats the fruit of the forbidden tree, her first act thereafter is to give some to man, and the writer further stresses the intimacy by using the phrase Pyshh cmh (to her husband with her). While the intimacy between man and woman continues to be stressed in the opening verses of ch.3, it will soon dissolve into open animosity between the two (especially in vv.12-13).

But if the intimacy between man and woman continues in vv.1-6, other elements of the intimate world described in ch.2 are already being torn apart. In a series of steps, the serpent moves woman from correcting the serpent's false statement about God's command, to doubting God's truthfulness, craving the forbidden fruit, and desiring to be wise like God. The intimacy with God is being destroyed by the serpent's cunning even before woman eats of the fruit.

Thus, in vv.1-6 the writer has artfully woven together his themes of intimacy and alienation. The intimacy of man and woman, the most complete form of intimacy described in ch.2, temporarily continues as a remnant of the harmonious world of ch.2, even while the disruption between God and his creatures grows at a rapid pace.

The writer has used the verb ydC (to know) to strengthen the image of alienation. It is first used at the beginning of v.5, where the woman is told, "God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened." The tone of this statement is that God is deliberately withholding information, desiring to keep his creatures in their place. Thus, woman is led to doubt God. Furthermore, the writer is using a word play, for at the end of v.5 there is the phrase "knowing good and evil." Both forms of ydC are participles. One might loosely paraphrase the sense of this word play as follows: God knows that ... you will know good and evil (and he doesn't want you to know!). This use of
ydC in v. 5 sets the stage for the knowledge that is actually received in v. 7.

The writer also stresses the divine-human alienation by means of the clause whyytm kHym (and you will be like God) in v. 5. It is noteworthy that, unlike Genesis 1, which stresses the intimacy between God and man by man's being made in the image and likeness of God, Genesis 2-3 stresses this intimacy by means of God's great care in the creation of man and man's companion. Although God forms man and breathes into him the breath of life, man is different from God, and has a clearly-defined place as God's creature (as in 2:16-17, 18, 21-22). Thus, any human desire to be like God places the creature in rebellion against his creator. He becomes estranged from God.

Beginning in v. 5, the writer places great stress on the motif of seeing. Woman is told that their eyes (Cynyk) will be opened if they eat the fruit of the tree (v. 5). She saw (wtr) that the tree was good for food (v. 6), and that it was a delight to the eyes /11/. It is therefore ironical that after the fruit has been eaten (v. 6), man and woman desire that they not be seen. Although the tree was a delight (pwh) to the eyes (v. 6), the "eye opening" experience they have after eating the fruit is anything but delightful, and there now is an attempt to cover up (vv. 7-11). The writer uses this fear of being seen as a key means to express the alienation that destroys the harmony of ch. 2.

The writer has devoted only a bare minimum of words to the act of eating, and even a majority of these words are used to indicate that man and woman take part in the act together.

Verse 7. Here the writer's interweaving of the themes of intimacy and alienation continues. As a result of their eating, both man and woman have their eyes opened. While they experience this together /12/, the knowledge they have gained separates them. They can no longer tolerate being naked in one another's presence. Since, as noted earlier, one's nakedness is a key to one's innermost self, man and woman are pulling apart from one another: their intimacy is no longer complete.

The clause, "Then the eyes of the two of them were opened," is rather surprising, given all the seeing that has taken place in the previous verses. The writer is using this clause to express the dramatic change that has come about as a result of the forbidden act. As a consequence of their rebellion against God, the man and woman see things very differently. The writer has also stressed this change by means of the word play on ydC (to know). While knowing had appeared very attractive in v. 5,
now man and woman know that they are alienated from one another, and they make clothes.

The influence of alienation is not yet complete. There is a remnant of togetherness, as indicated by the plural verbs describing the making of clothes, and by the plural ihm (for themselves).

Verses 8-10. God has been absent since 2:22, his absence being part of a deliberate pattern by the writer. In ch.2 God and man had been quite intimate, but the chapter closes by stressing the complete intimacy of man and woman (vv.23-25), and God recedes into the background. In ch.3 God continues to be absent as the forces of disruption are turned loose. His reappearance in v.8, however, brings the theme of alienation to its climax. Thus, not only does God create the most complete form of intimacy (2:22); he also brings out into the open all the divisive consequences of man's rebellion (3:9-13).

Upon hearing God, man and his wife hide themselves (wytchb') in the midst of the trees of the garden. This act, their mutual hiding from God, is the last remnant of the "togetherness" of man and woman. Hereafter they act as individuals, and the plural verbs of vv.1-8 are absent. Similarly, the phrase "the man and his wife" (h'dm w'shtw) is the last time the two words are used in relation to one another to express intimacy. The complete phrase appears earlier in 2:25, and singly the words "his wife" (lshtw) and "her husband" (lshh) appear in 2:24 and 3:6, respectively. This usage, along with the stress in 2:23-24 on man and woman being one flesh, is in stark contrast to the way man refers to woman in 3:12.

The phrase btwk cts hgn (in the midst of the trees of the garden) points back to v.3. Woman had told the serpent that they were forbidden to eat the fruit of the tree in the midst of the garden (hc hct sht btk hgn). But she and her husband did eat of it. Thus, by using the same words (slightly rearranged) in v.8 the writer again brings to the reader's attention the offense that unleashed the forces of disruption and alienation, and now causes man and woman to hide from the presence of God (mpny yhwh 'lhym), with whom they formerly had been intimate. The writer is also being ironical: man and woman eat of the fruit of the tree in the midst of the garden in order to be like God (v.5); now, as a consequence of their eating, they hide from God in the midst of the trees of the garden /13/. They sin by means of a tree; yet, they must hide among the trees. Thus, they cannot escape what they have done. Indeed, from this point on, every-
where man and woman turn they encounter as symbols of alienation what had formerly been elements of the created world of harmony.

Significantly, in v.9 God does not address man and woman together, but rather calls to man (wyqr' yhwh 'lhym 'l h'dm). To stress further that God is speaking to man alone, the writer adds wy'mr lw (and he said to him), and 'ykh (where are you?), the latter having a second person masculine singular ending /14/. The writer is thus suggesting, as he soon will stress more bluntly (v.12), that man and woman no longer are one.

Man's response (v.10) to God's question emphatically stresses man's aloneness. Verse 8 had begun by stating, "and they heard (wyshmCw) the sound (qwl) of the Lord God walking in the garden (bgn)." In v.10 the words qwl, gn, and the root shmC are repeated, so as to underline the parallelism between vv.8 and 10. This makes the singular form of shmCty (I heard) in v.10 stand out all the more in contrast to the plural form of v.8. Thus, in v.8 man and woman hear together; in v.10 man has become alienated to the point that he now perceives himself to have heard alone. Man's alienation is further underlined by the final verb w'chb* (and I hid myself), which contrasts with the plural wytchb' of v.8. The writer also stresses man's aloneness through the singular verb w'yr' (and I was afraid) and through the phrase ky Cyrm 'nky (because I was naked).

While the contrast between the plural forms of v.8 and the singular forms of v.10 stresses the alienation of man from woman, the writer also emphasizes man's alienation from God. Man hears God's voice in the garden, and is afraid. God heretofore has been very intimate with man, forming him from the dust of the ground, planting the garden for him, forming animals for him from the ground, and building up woman from the rib taken from man's side. All this, however, is now gone, as man fears the very one who has given him life and his world. Man is afraid, "Because I am naked," and he hides himself. As noted earlier, one's nakedness was seen as a key to one's innermost self; as a consequence, being comfortably naked in another's presence was a sign of real intimacy. But now man must cover up, since he fears having God see him as he is.

Verse 11 stresses man's act of rebellion against God, which more than anything else is what he wishes to hide. It was after his eating that man became conscious of his nakedness, of his alienation. The writer uses God's questions to recall that for the reader: "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of
the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The double use of the verb הָלַכְת (to eat) focuses the reader's attention even more sharply on the act, since this is the same verb used three times in v.6 to describe the act /15/. Furthermore, the writer's emphasis on the fact that God commanded man not to eat of the tree helps stress even more man's alienation from God. The writer also continues to underline man's alienation from woman by having God address man with singular verbs and pronouns. Thus, man stands before God completely alone.

Verse 12. The motif of man's alienation from God and from woman reaches its climax in v.12. In previous scenes the intimacy between man and woman has been thoroughly developed, especially through the idea that man and woman are one flesh (2:23-25). Furthermore, when woman's relationship to man has been described, she has consistently been referred to as שָׁתוּ (his wife; 2:24,25; 3:8). Now, however, man coldly passes the blame for his deed to "the woman" (הַשָּׁתִית) /16/: "she gave to me" (וַתִּתֵּן לְנַחֲלָי) /17/. To man she has become an object, not a companion, and the clause שָׁתִית נַחֲלָי נְמָדִית (whom you gave to be with me) points the reader back to an earlier situation of intimacy which no longer exists. The alienation of man from woman is complete.

While God's question in v.11 called for a simple yes or no answer, man refuses to accept responsibility for what he has done. It is not only woman who is blamed, however, as indicated by the words שָׁתִית נַחֲלָי נְמָדִית (whom you gave to be with me) /18/, which closely parallel the immediately following words וַתִּתֵּן לְנַחֲלָי (she gave me). Man is clearly saying that God is to blame, since God gave to man the woman who led him astray. Thus, not only has man ceased to see woman as a companion: he also has ceased to see God as a well-intentioned creator who provides man with all good things. The alienation of man from God is also complete.

As previously noted, הָלַכְת (to eat) is used to point to the act of rebellion, most importantly in the twofold usage in v.11 and in the threefold usage in v.6. In v.12 it again serves this function in the clause וַתִּתֵּן לְנַחֲלָי מָנָה כְּמָדִית (she gave to me from the tree, and I ate), which closely parallels the wording in v.6, וַתִּתֵּן גֵרֶשׁ כְּמָה וַתִּתֵּן לְהַרְעָב (and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate). Furthermore, the double use of נַחֲלָי in v.12 helps recall woman's giving of the fruit to man in v.6, and the use of כְּמָדִית (with me) in v.12 points back to כְּמָה (with her) in v.6. Thus, in v.12 the writer has carefully constructed a
number of links with the description of the act of rebellion in v.6. This is most appropriate, since it is in v.12 that the consequences of the act are most sharply focused.

Finally, man's concluding word, w'kl (and I ate) points once again to man's aloneness, since the verb is in the singular. This directly parallels the aloneness of woman in v.13, where her concluding word is exactly the same.

Verse 13. As was the case with man (v.12), woman refuses to shoulder any blame. She ignores man's claim that she had led him to sin, and instead passes to the serpent the blame for her own deed. Nevertheless, God's question to woman, "What is this that you have done?," underlines the devastating nature of woman's deed. The tone of God's question is, "How could you do such a horrible thing?" /19/. The final word w'kl (and I ate), being in the singular, further stresses woman's aloneness and alienation from man.

Verses 14-19. There are a number of ways in which the writer expresses his motif of alienation in the poetry of these verses:

1. As in the previous section (3:9-13), the principal figures are each addressed separately by God. Their relationship to one another is consistently depicted as one of animosity and separation. There will be enmity and strife between the serpent and woman, and between the serpent's seed and woman's seed (3:15), which means all mankind (cf. 3:20). While man and woman remain together, they no longer are intimate in the way they were previously, since man will rule over his wife (3:16), and the woman will desire her husband (cf. 2:24-25).

2. The serpent is singled out from the cattle and the creatures of the field and cursed (3:14), because of what he has done /20/. The writer has stressed the serpent's role in causing alienation by paralleling ĥwr *th mkl hḥhmḥ wml kl chytx hsdḥ (cursed are you more than all the cattle and all the creatures of the field) with ĥwr mkl chytx hsdḥ (more cunning than all the creatures of the field) from 3:1. Because the serpent was cunning (ĥwr), leading woman to eat of the fruit of the tree, he is now cursed (ĥwr).

3. Man has become alienated from the ground. Although God formed man from the dust of the ground (h'dmh; 2:7), and from the ground created for man the trees of the garden (2:9) and the animals (2:19), man must now cope with a ground that is cursed, that has become his enemy (3:17-19). He must constantly wrestle with it to sustain his life, yet in the end his life must be surrendered to the ground. Thus, although he is one with it in
his creation and in his death, he will throughout his life be alienated from his source. As noted previously (see my comments on 2:7), the writer uses כָּפר (dust) in conjunction with יָדמָה in only two places: 2:7, where God forms man from the dust of the ground and in 3:19, where man's death is described. The writer thus gives the reader a subtle reminder of what could have been, man's ongoing, intimate relationship with God and the ground, even while the writer stresses the devastating consequences of man's rebellion against God.

4. The main verb used to describe man's rebellion against God was יָדַע (to eat: cf. 3:1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13). The writer continues to use this verb in 3:17-19 in order to link the fact of man's rebellion with the consequences that follow. This is most clearly focused in v.17: because man ate of the tree from which God had forbidden him to eat, the ground will henceforth be cursed, causing man to eat in toil all his days (cf. also v.19). He will struggle with it, but it will bring forth thorns and thistles (v.18). Significantly, man will eat כָּשָׁב (the plants of the field): now that he has eaten of the tree in the midst of the garden, all the trees of the garden become unavailable to him.

5. The writer employs a word play between כָּשָׁב (tree) and כָּשָׁב (pain). כָּשָׁב has consistently been used to develop the theme of man's rebellion (3:1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 11, 12). Consequently, כָּשָׁב, with its similar sound, reminds the reader of the human rebellion even while describing woman's pain in childbearing (v.16) and man's toil in raising food (v.17). The offense of man and woman concerning the כָּשָׁב results in their כָּשָׁב.

Verse 21. The act of "covering up" had earlier symbolized the first awareness of man and woman that they were alienated from God and from one another (vv.8-11). Now, the permanence of that alienation is stressed. The creator, who had made man and woman naked, in the most perfect form of intimacy, covers their nakedness, thereby acknowledging the ongoing nature of the divisiveness which man and woman have brought upon themselves. The fact that he makes for them garments of skins, as compared to the hastily-sewn aprons of fig leaves they had made for themselves, helps to emphasize the permanence of their need to cover up.

The words יָדַע וְלָשׁוּת (for man and for his wife) hark back to the earlier intimacy described in 2:21-25, but they do so in a melancholy manner. As man and woman's clothing indicates, their relationship to one another will henceforth be quite different from what it was before the fall. The writer emphasizes
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this by repeating wylbshm (and he clothed them) after wyC_s ...
... ktnwt Cwr (and he made ... garments of skins).

Verse 22. Chapter 2 shows man being given specific roles and functions within the created order, with definite bounds being set for man (e.g., 2:16-17). Most notably, although man is intimate with God, he is clearly subordinate to him (as in 2:18,21). In 3:22, however, emphasis is placed on man's attempts to be like God. Thus, man has stepped beyond the bounds set for him as creature, desiring instead to make himself creator.

Verse 23. Man was originally formed from the dust of the ground, and the writer throughout ch.2 (vv.7,9,19) notes the importance of the ground in the creation of man's world. As noted above, in 3:17-19 the writer stresses man's alienation by emphasizing the antagonism between man and the ground which has been brought about by man's act of rebellion. Verse 23 re-emphasizes that point through the words lhdm t'h'dmh 'shr lqch mshm (to till the ground from which he was taken). Thus, the result of man's alienation from God (v.22) is man's alienation from the very ground from which God had formed him.

Verse 24. In v.23 God had sent (shlch) man forth from the garden. Verse 24 repeats this for emphasis, only in stronger terms: wygrsh t'h'dm (and he drove out the man). Man must not have access to the tree of life! /21/ This leads well into the final image of these two chapters. God places the cherubim and
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a flaming sword to guard the way to the tree of life. There is now no turning back. Man has striven to be like God, and will always do so. God must take strong measures to see that man is kept in his place. The fact that God must act so decisively to keep his creatures in line re-emphasizes the radical victory of alienation.

Summary

One of the main themes the writer of Genesis 2-3 has used to tie his story together is the motif of intimacy and alienation. This motif is developed in ch.2 by: the writer's depiction of God's care in forming man from the dust of the ground; God's creation of the garden for man, with its trees growing from the ground and providing man with food; God's forming the animals from the ground in an attempt to create a companion for man; God's creation of a companion for man who is literally a part of man; and the picture of man and woman being one, naked but yet completely at ease in one another's presence. This intimate world of harmony developed in ch.2 is shattered in ch.3. Although man and woman have a set place in the created order, the writer pictures woman striving, at the serpent's urging, to become like God, knowing good and evil. Man and woman act together in eating the fruit of the tree, but their intimacy is beginning to be shattered as the writer portrays them making clothes to cover themselves. Furthermore, their striving to be like God in fact results in their being alienated from him: they hide from him. But this is their last act together. God's probing questions expose the alienation of man and woman not only from God, but also from one another. The use of singular nouns and verbs, along with the tendency of man (and subsequently of woman) to blame everyone but himself, shows that the alienation of the various elements of the created order from one another and from God is complete. The poetry of 3:14-19 gives clear expression to this state of alienation, and appropriately presents the picture of man returning to the ground, from which he was taken at the beginning of the narrative. Finally, the permanence of alienation is stressed both by the clothing God makes to cover man and woman's nakedness and by God's decisive measures to keep man out of the garden and away from the tree of life.
NOTES

1 The creation of the garden for man is further stressed by the repetition in v.15 of the idea that God placed man in the garden, specifically using the verb nwch (to place, to cause to settle).

2 The writer could have used hw's (she) in some or all of the instances where z't is used, but that would have reduced the emphasis on woman provided by the demonstrative pronoun. On the use of z't for emphasis, see Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros (Leiden: Brill, 1958) 250.

3 See also the use of the verb lqch in v.21.


5 E.A. Speiser, Genesis: Introduction, Translation, and Notes (AB; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1964) 18.

6 It is precisely this point which allows the writer to stress in v.24 the fact that man and woman become one flesh.

7 The writer stresses their standing in each other's presence both by using shnyhm (the two of them) and by specifically mentioning each, h'dm w'shtw (the man and his wife).

8 The inverted word order, with the noun hnchsh (the serpent) coming first, places even greater emphasis on the serpent.

9 This despite the fact that woman has not yet been created when man alone receives the command from God in 2:16-17.

10 Interestingly, almost all these plural verbs are second person masculine, even when woman alone is addressed (vv.4-5). The writer thus makes it impossible for the reader to think of woman apart from man in vv.1-6.

11 This wording parallels 2:9, except that in 3:6 there is the additional clause, "and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise." The addition of this clause in 3:6 helps contrast the situation there, where disruption is breaking into the created order, with earlier conditions where the created world was in harmony.

12 As indicated by the phrase cyny shnyhm (the eyes of the two of them). It should further be noted that the verbs throughout v.7 are plural, continuing the pattern of vv.1-6, where the plural verbs indicate the oneness of man and woman.
As noted above, there was great stress on the delight of seeing in vv. 5-6, whereas in vv. 7-11 man and woman cannot bear to be seen, either by God, or by one another.


Note also the usage in vv. 1, 2, 3, and 5.

Prior to 3:12, the writer has used h'shh only in 3:1-6, where he describes the serpent's tempting of the woman.

Note the stress that is placed on hw' (she), both by the fact that it is an added element, not really required in its clause, and by its position at the beginning of the clause, which is opposite to the normal verb-subject word order in Hebrew.

The writer has used the longer spelling, nth, as opposed to the shorter ntt (see Gesenius, 121, 175), so as to make a more perfect parallel to the subsequent ntnh.

See Cassuto, 158.

Note the parallelism of ky çsy t z*t (because you have done this) to mh z*t çsy t (What is this that you have done?) in v. 13.

The word play on shlch in vv. 22 and 23 helps strengthen this point. God sent man forth (wyshlchhw) from the garden (v. 23) so that he would not stretch out (yshlch) his hand to take and eat from the tree of life.
INTRODUCTION

In his fascinating little book on Moses, Martin Buber comments on his method of biblical study as follows:

I have treated the Hebrew text in its formal constituents more seriously than has become the general custom in modern exegesis. In the course of dealing with this text over a period of many years, I have been ever more strongly reaching the conclusion that the form frequently, as one might say, rounds off the content, i.e., that we are often shown something important by means of it. The choice of words in a given section, and in this connection the original meaning of the words and the changes in meaning, as well as the sentence structure to be found on each occasion, have to be carefully studied. In particular, however, a special function is exercised, in my view, by identical sounds, words, and sentences recur, whether in the same passages or in other corresponding ones, our attention is drawn in part to the specific meaning of single motifs, and in part to common analogies and completions of meaning as between them /1/.

My study of Exodus 1-14 is undertaken in the spirit of Buber. I have also tried to adopt a principle enunciated by K.R.R. Gros Louis in an article investigating Genesis 1-11: "To analyze the opening chapters of Genesis as literature we must come as close as possible to performing a very difficult feat. We must attempt to read the accounts of creation as if we had never seen them before" /2/.

My conviction is that careful study of the Exodus text as if we were hearing it for the first time will enable us to explore in depth two important aspects of the text, ignorance of which make it impossible to hear the story correctly. The first of
these I shall call the "story lines" (see Chart 1). In simple terms, the exodus is a story which begins with a people enslaved and proceeds fairly rapidly to a people freed. But a straight horizontal line from beginning to end is not an accurate chart of the whole story, even in its tersest form. Rather, each unit within the whole projects a line (or lines) which is sometimes upward, sometimes downward, at times even backward. The course of these lines must be charted; and if we cannot forget the ending of the story which we already know from Sunday School as we read each unit, we will force the lines into a path which we think they ought to follow rather than pursue the lines indicated by the narrator. And then we can no longer be surprised by the text. Yet the element of surprise in a story is essential, for all good authors hope their readers or hearers will allow them to manipulate them a bit, lead them toward false clues, herd them into blind alleys - in short, surprise them with a story line that moves in different directions before arriving at its concluding point. In addition to the fun of the surprise, however, is the increasing excitement which can be created as a story develops its meaning using those early clues with expanding or changing functions until everything at last becomes clear.

A second product of careful, as-if-for-the-first-time study of the text is the discovery of "key words." First, we may note words within each unit of the narrative (intra-unit key words). These may be unusual words or they may be quite common ones with uncommon meanings or functions in a particular place. Whichever the case, they will be the word(s) apart from which the meaning of the unit cannot be derived; and there must be some functional or associational or theatrical peculiarity involved with their appearance in a unit. Next, our study will also disclose overall patterns of meaning which may be charted by observing key words shared by more than one unit of the narrative (inter-unit key words). These key words may be intra-unit words, but are not necessarily the same.

In order to illustrate these points about story lines and key words I have chosen to focus upon only one small unit (Exodus 1:8-2:25) which heads a much larger portion of material extending at least as far as Exodus 14:31. I realize of course that even this short passage is seldom treated as a unit. Generally, 2:1-10 are accepted on form critical grounds as the primary story to which 1:8-22 have been added as a second expansion /3/. Again, virtually all scholars have judged that
Exodus 2:11-22 should be separated from the three paragraphs which immediately precede /4/. And finally, Exodus 2:23-25 are treated as a "P" comment which is almost wholly unrelated to all except two (1:13-14) of the preceding 37 verses in the story /5/.

Thus, at the outset, it is necessary to make several assertions with respect to the unit being chosen for study. (a) I believe that the rhetorical form of the story itself demands a unit which includes all of Exodus 1:8-2:25. (b) I believe that the general lines presented in this opening unit prepare and to some extent delimit the story lines of the units which follow. (c) I believe that the keywords of the paragraphs in the unit need to be re-examined. (d) I believe that key words introduced in this opening unit indicate the essence of the exodus story. (e) I believe that several of the concepts introduced in this opening unit are not fully explained by the narrative until the final unit (Exodus 13:17-14:31).

I shall proceed now to examine Exodus 1:8-2:25 in depth. First I shall discuss the story lines of the first four paragraphs (A. 1:8-14; B. 1:15-22; C. 2:1-10; D. 2:11-22). Then I shall examine the key words used in these four major paragraphs. I shall conclude with an examination of the final three verses of the unit and a discussion of their relationship to the rest of the story through 14:31.

I. EXODUS 1:8-2:22. STORY LINES

A. 1:8-14

This paragraph begins on a note of despair. The unknowing new king, the gang-foremen, the design to oppress, the burdens, the building projects, all testify to the sharp downward thrusting of the arrow /6/. But immediately following the negative words of despair is the formula expressed in v.12, which indicates that the continued growth and prosperity of the Israelites was in direct proportion to the amount of oppression which they endured. The arrow swings sharply upward, only to be brought plummeting downward by the addition of new information which bespeaks worse oppression yet to come. The word "loathe" (wayyāqutsū, v.12) is plural, indicating the involvement of many Egyptians joining the evil monarch. The root ṣbd is then repeated five times in rapid-fire succession, again the signal of worse oppression than that demanded by the
original decree. And the adverb "ruthlessly" (bprk, repeated, vv.13,14) along with mrr ("makes bitter") and qshh ("hard") completes the picture of a worse ending than that anticipated early in the paragraph. In short, the impression is left that even though one plan might fail, another will be implemented to take its place. Even though the king might devise a plan which really works the opposite effect from what he intended, there will be other oppressors aplenty to see that slavery does not end. The paragraph ends on this downward arrow indicating despair that is only momentarily brightened by the report of v.12a.

B. 1:15-22

Now a new plan is devised by the king, this one involving more than hard work or bad treatment from bosses. The word "kill" crackles like a rifle shot on a still evening. The arrow plunges lower than ever before. But again, hope is raised following the initial decree of the king. This time, the plan is thwarted by two midwives. An unidentified deity is mentioned who honors their courage. Again, the plan which was designed to destroy life fails; the arrow rises. But, exactly as has happened in paragraph "A," hope proves fleeting and is followed by additional kinds of oppression. Verse 22 stipulates that not only two powerless midwives but everyone in the country be legally bound to participate in the slaughter of Hebrew baby boys. Again the paragraph ends on a lower point of despair than that with which it began. Was there no end to the measures which Egypt would enact against the Israelites? Paragraphs "A" and "B" answer resoundingly "no!"

C. 2:1-10

It might appear that this paragraph begins on a more positive note than the two immediately preceding ones. Normally, of course, the phrase "the woman conceived and bore a son" (v.2) is employed to signal great and joyous news. But surely in light of the command given in 1:22, every expectant couple would have prayed that the child soon to be born would be a daughter who could be spared instead of a son (bĕn) who would have to be cast into the Nile River. Accordingly, the announcement here that a "son" had been born means that the very worst has happened.

But again, hope follows despair quickly. Hope comes in the guise of a "daughter." As Ackerman and Cassuto have empha-
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sized correctly, the word "daughter" is of crucial and symbolic significance in this paragraph. Moses is born to a "daughter of Levi," watched over by his parent's "daughter," and finally spared by the "daughter of the Pharaoh." Above all, these actions of the daughter of the evil monarch represent the element of hope by introducing a more powerful ally, one who has political clout, one who can do more for the Israelites than the faithful midwives in the preceding paragraph.

This time hope is longer in duration than before. It appears that something substantive has been done to thwart the evil law of the king, for someone did what the king said could not be done. The king's own daughter spared a Hebrew "son." But despair does come, all too soon. The words in v.10, wayēhî-lāh lēbîn (RSV: "and he became her son"), often a happy phrase in the Hebrew Bible, now carry quite a negative impact. Here they mean that Moses became one of "them," that he joined the enemy, that the one to whom attention and hope had been turned was now on the side of the oppressors. His name, his training, his home, his mother, are all Egyptian. The arrow plunges lower still.

D. 2:11-22

This paragraph opens on a note of hope, thereby exhibiting a stylistic switch from the preceding three paragraphs, which had an ABA1 pattern of despair, hope, despair. The opening of this paragraph with "hope" ("B") would seem to foreshadow a closing with hope, even as the preceding paragraphs had begun and ended with "despair." In other words, one might reasonably expect a BAB1 sequence. The story should go something like this. Moses became an adult and immediately got involved in the fight for freedom (B or ↑); the Pharaoh sought to oppose those efforts (A or ↓); Moses and the Pharaoh engaged in a fierce duel which Moses naturally won; Moses replaced the Pharaoh and ended the slavery along with the reign of terror of the "bad guy" (B' or ↑). In short, "they all lived happily ever after." But of course it is not yet time for the happy ending; this paragraph has a different function in the overall narrative. Immediately the paragraph opens, Moses gets involved. Now an even more powerful ally than the midwives or Pharaoh's daughter herself has joined the opposition to the monarch. The hint of v.10 that Moses had "become one of them" is shown to be untrue after all. Notice the action verbs: wayyētsē' ...
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wayyar ... wayyar ... wayyippen ... wayyar ... wayyak ("and he went out and he looked ... and he saw ... and he looked ... and he saw ... and he killed," vv.11-12). This is the first overt action against Egypt. The midwives merely avoided obeying evil decrees, the royal princess merely exercised human compassion upon a crying baby; but Moses strikes! The story line reaches its highest point of hope so far. But it does not stay up very long. For soon we read almost incomprehensible words. "Moses became frightened." And then in rapid succession, the Pharaoh learns of Moses' action and initiates action to have him killed.

This is negative information, to be sure, but nothing has happened in the story so far which the structural signals have not prepared us to anticipate. Now all that remains is for us to hear something like "and Moses killed Pharaoh and became king in his stead" and we will have our expected ending. Instead, of course, we read something shockingly opposite: the "hero" turns tail and runs away! Note again the sharpness of the verbs which describe the actions of Moses in this moment: wayyibrach mōsheh (cf. 14:5) ... wayyēsheb ... wayyēsheb ... wayyē'el mōsheh lāshebet 'et-hā'īš ("and Moses fled ... and he stayed ... and Moses was content to stay with the man," vv.15-16,21). Even the apparently upbeat sound of the phrase, wayyāqom mōsheh wāyyūšīcān ("and Moses arose and helped them", v.17), surely in keeping with action expected from a hero, is muted by our realization that his heroics are taking place in the minor leagues. Thrashing some country shepherds who terrorize helpless maidens is one thing, but the real bully is still safely far away, still belching forth orders of death, still enslaving the "brothers" with whom Moses had once felt such solidarity. But there is more. Even our faint hopes of finding in Moses the real deliverer are dashed by what follows. First we learn from the daughters that Moses was passing himself off as an Egyptian (v.19), hardly what we expect to learn about our Hebrew freedom fighter. Then we observe that Moses opts rather permanently for the safe and simple life in Midian. And finally, that intriguing word bēn ("son") occurs again. And here, just as it did in the two preceding paragraphs, a bēn demands an arrow shooting sharply downward. This bēn means something symbolic to Moses - the beginning of a new era, a new life, a life of safety and comfort, a life removed from the sights and sounds of injustice and suffering happening in Egypt. Clearly this son, Gershom, lives as a constant reminder to Moses that his old life has ended. The pungent
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sound of ḡēr hāyītī ("I have become a sojourner") drives this home with force /8/. Thus any hint of "heroism" in Moses is ironically circumscribed. He can be a hero (of sorts) in Midian, but not in Egypt where it really would have counted. Now he is driven to abandon any idea he might have entertained of freeing his "brothers." Appropriately, Clements speaks of "no hope of returning to Egypt" /9/. The arrow plunges /10/.

II. EXODUS 1:8-2:22. INTRA-UNIT KEY WORDS

An examination of the first four paragraphs of our text reveals the following words which function as key words within the unit (intra-unit key words).

A. 1:8-14

That the key word to this paragraph is ḫbd ("serve," etc.) has been shown by more than one scholar /11/. The principle of repetition cited by Buber is well attested here: a single sentence in v.14 in fact contains the root ḫbd four times. As will be shown below, this repetition not only singles out the root as the key word of the paragraph in which it appears but it also portends further significance for the root as the story develops.

B. 1:15-22

In this paragraph, relohim ("God") is probably the most significant single word of all. The Pharaoh himself was commonly viewed as a deity; certainly lowly midwives would be expected to fear him greatly and to accept his word as law. In the words of J.A. Wilson, "there was no need to codify law, because the word of the god-king was present to make law" /12/. Yet subtly the text makes clear that the Pharaoh was not really divine because when the midwives feared God, god was thwarted.

C. 2:1-10

Ben forms the inclusio for this paragraph just as it does for the preceding one. In this paragraph it is also the key word. Notice that Moses is referred to six times as a yeled ("child," vv.3,4,8,9,10), once as a naḵar ("boy," v.6), and 14 times by a pronoun such as "it" or "him" or even the demonstrative zeh ("this one") in v.6. In only two places (vv.2,10) is he called a
ben, the kind of child which faces destruction under the orders of the Pharaoh (1:22). Thus, the word ben both opens and closes the paragraph on a note of despair. To return to an earlier point, how can it be said that "the story points expectantly toward the future" /13/? Is it correct to title this paragraph "Birth and Deliverance of the Deliverer" /14/ or to observe that "God's plan for his people rested on the helpless child, floating down the river" /15/? On the contrary, God has not even been mentioned in this paragraph. Moses is spared, to be sure, but he has given no evidence that he will himself become a savior of others. No, the child, the ben who appeared for the moment to be evidence that the cruel decree of the Pharaoh could be skirted at least once, now is adopted by and goes off to live with the very people who are responsible for the trouble in the first place. Nothing else could be implied by the force of the phrase, "He became a ben to her."

D. 2:11-22

This paragraph lacks an inclusio with ben comparable to those of the two preceding paragraphs. Still, because of the position of ben at the end (v.22), as well as its function in relating paragraph "D" to paragraphs "B" and "C," I believe that the term is also the key word for the paragraph.

III. EXODUS 1:8-2:22. INTER-UNIT KEY WORDS

As indicated earlier, this first unit of the exodus story introduces words whose significance only gradually becomes fully apparent as the story proceeds. Accordingly, we now extend the discussion by including a survey of several other units in the exodus story which use words introduced in our four paragraphs. (Note that the inter-unit and the intra-unit key words are not always identical.)

A. 1:8-14

A major concept of the entire exodus narrative is introduced in this paragraph by means of the root cbd. The helpless people called "the sons of Israel" are enslaved by the Egyptians who are led by a cruel Pharaoh. Their slavery, which is introduced here, comes in later units to stand as a symbol of their inability to do anything in their own power to change their situation. They could not liberate themselves; and this is a
theme which is repeated often in subsequent units; indeed, it is a large part of what the following units set out to demonstrate. For example, in 2:23, the cry of Israel min-ha\textsuperscript{cab}b\textsubscript{d}\textsubscript{d} ("from their slavery") will ascend to God even though they are not addressing it particularly to him. In 3:12, the task to be given Moses is that of freeing people who are serving (\textsubscript{c}bd) the Pharaoh in Egypt so that they may serve (\textsubscript{c}bd) God on Mt Sinai instead. In a sense, then, the real issue throughout the narrative is not slavery versus freedom, but merely the identity and character of the master whom Israel must serve. In the words of Nahum Waldman, summarizing an article by Jehudah Ahuviah, "the biblical view is that service to God and servitude to man are antithetical. Without the Lord as protector, they became victims of the Egyptians. When they were redeemed, they entered upon the service of God" /16/.

This point may be illustrated further. Over twenty times in the text following chapter two, reference is made to various people in Egypt who function as the "servants" of the Pharaoh. Conversely, ten times in the famous formula, the would-be master of Israel commands the Pharaoh to release "my people, so that they may serve me." In other words, although Egypt comes to be known as "the house of slavery," although many persons accept the designation of themselves as slaves of the Pharaoh, Yahweh is pictured in the exodus story as one who is determined that his people will not be among their number. Throughout the narrative, the people are consistently portrayed as helpless pawns being moved back and forth by the two larger-than-life chess masters. The story is complicated by the fact that although the Israelites dislike being manipulated by the Pharaoh, they finally arrive at the point of accepting their status as his slaves. (Note 5:15,16 where they call themselves the slaves and the people of the Pharaoh!) They reject efforts to free them as too painful and risky, and view the slavery which they already know to be preferable to freedom as Moses and Yahweh seem to define it (14:12). The point seems to be what a current Bob Dylan hit proclaims: "You've got to serve somebody; it may be the devil or it may be the Lord, but you've got to serve somebody."

In addition to the idea developed around the root \textsubscript{c}bd the word "war" (milch\textsuperscript{ham}m\textsuperscript{am}) introduced in this paragraph also plays an important role in the story as a whole. According to the Pharaoh (1:10), the necessity for enslaving the Israelites arose from the possibility that they would hold improper allegiance to
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the enemy in case of a war. The word "war" does not occur in
the story again until 13:17. This time the God of Israel steers
his people the long way around to avoid the land of the
Philistines for fear the people will change their minds about
leaving when they see "war." Thus one character in the story
fears they will leave Egypt because of war, another fears they
will return to Egypt because of war! The issue of "war" is not
finally settled until chapter 14 when Moses seeks to allay the
fear of the Israelites by promising them that "Yahweh will war
(yillächēm) for them (v.14). Shortly thereafter (v.25), the
Egyptians, unfortunate victims of a power struggle themselves,
acknowledge the fulfillment of Moses' promise, again using the
verb "war" ("for Yahweh fights [nilcham] for them"). In other
words, the fear of the Pharaoh which at first (1:10) appeared to
be so paranoid and completely unfounded, ultimately proves to
be exactly what did happen. A "war" was declared, the
Israelites did in fact line up on the side opposite the Egyptians,
and after the war was over (= after Yahweh finished warring for
his people!), the Israelites did indeed "go up from the land."

B. 1:15-22

In terms of the introduction of concepts to be expanded later
in the narrative, "fear" (yr) must also be judged a key word.
The phrase "But the midwives feared (wattire'na) God" (v.17)
stands in stark contrast to "And Moses was afraid (wayyira)
" in 2:14. The latter sentence pointedly omits a direct object but as
the next verse shows, it was the Pharaoh whom Moses feared,
not God. And even as fear of God becomes the turning point in
1:15-22, the fear of Pharaoh becomes the turning point in
2:11-22. Again we are introduced to a dramatic counterpoint. It
is a question of "Whom shall I fear?" And again the principles in
the drama are God and god. Nowhere is this contrast drawn
more sharply than in chapter 14. Trapped between the sea and
the rapidly approaching Egyptian army, the people of Israel
"feared greatly" (wayyire'0 me'od) as 14:10 puts it, because
they saw "the Egyptians coming after them." As in 2:14, the
specific direct object is omitted, although again the object of
the fear is clear enough from the context. But after the
deriverance at the Sea and after seeing those same ferocious
Egyptians "dead on the beach" (14:30), the fear of the Israelites
received a new object. As 14:31 states it, "the people feared
(wayyire'0) Yahweh" /17/.

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C. 2:1-10

In addition to the frequent employment of plural ben in the phrase ben yisra'el, singular ben also plays a significant role in Exodus 1-14. As paragraph "B" shows, the birth of a son was made a major issue by Pharaoh. Every son born to the Hebrews was to be killed by being cast into the water. As paragraph "C" shows, the orders of the Pharaoh simply had to be carried out, no matter how "beautiful" (tob) a child might be or how lovingly cared for by his parents. This unsparing destruction of "sons" in 1:22 sets the stage for the remarkable saga of the bekor ("first-born") which follows.

Normally, of course, Hebrew bekor stands alone and does not need the word ben to make it a complete phrase /18/. But the ominous passage in Exodus 4:22-23 places the two words in apposition to good effect.

Thus says Yahweh, "Israel is my son, my first-born (beni bekor), and I say to you, 'Let my son go that he may serve me'; if you refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay your son your first-born (binka bekoreka)."

The point is that the same general idea could have been conveyed if the word ben were left out both times. But ben sharpens the focus and recalls 1:22. Because Pharaoh has made ben the issue, Yahweh has no choice but to do battle with him in this way. Yahweh stiffens the ground rules and challenges the Pharaoh to risk not only the life of a nameless, faceless ben out there somewhere but specifically his son and pointedly his heir - which is the real meaning of bekor rather than simply "first-born" /19/. To say it another way, the Pharaoh had taken something joyous and good, the birth of a son, and had made a nightmare out of the whole thing. So Yahweh will take the thing which the Pharaoh surely prizes the most and will turn it into a nightmare for him. The simple word ben points this contrast sharply.

It should also be noted that the phrase "in the midst of the reeds" (betok hassup) is of special importance in the paragraph, giving an ironic twist to the story when the mother of Moses technically complies with the order of the Pharaoh in 1:22 by setting her son in the water. After all, the royal decree did not say one could not use a basket! But beyond this function, the expression betok hassup here cannot be divorced from the five-fold repetition of the phrase "in the midst of the sea"
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(betôk hayyâm) in chapter 14 (vv. 16, 22, 23, 27, 29), especially when we remember that the sea is the sea of reeds, yâm sîp (13:18). In both cases (chapter 2 and chapter 14), the phrase indicates a place in which life was granted when death was to have been expected.

A final phrase introduced in paragraph "C" and seen only later to be significant throughout the story is "at the river's edge" (cal-sêpat hayyâm, 2:3). This is a common phrase which no one would initially suspect to be a carrier of meaning throughout the narrative. Obviously in this early unit, the location of the basket containing the baby Moses implies what the mother hopes will be a place of hiding from the Pharaoh. But later, to open the first plague in the entire plague sequence which features Moses in debate with the Pharaoh over the future of the people of Israel, the phrase "at the river's edge" (7:15) indicates the place where the adult Moses confronts the Egyptian monarch /20/. Then in the concluding scene of the entire narrative, the phrase "at the sea's edge" (cal-sêpat hayyâm, 14:30) describes a place where Yahweh had not only confronted but totally defeated the Pharaoh. This transformation from a place of hiding to a place of confrontation to a place of victory signalled by "at the edge of" (cal-sêpat) parallels the development of the story line in general.

D. 2:11-22

There are four words used in paragraph "D" which are important in subsequent units. The first of these is the root nkh ("strike," "kill") ably discussed by Ackerman. In his words, "it cannot be accidental that this is also the same word which will later describe what God does to Egypt through the plagues (called 'the ten smittings' in Hebrew)" /21/.

The second word is yr' ("fear"), already touched upon earlier. In Ackerman's words, "the midwives had feared God and acted to defy the king. But Moses fears the king and flees for his life" /22/.

The third word which is crucial both here and in later units is Hebrew yshc ("deliver") which we have already noted in 2:17. But it is quite striking that this root never occurs again in the entire exodus narrative until chapter 14. It will be remembered that the saving deed of Moses in 2:17 was actually quite insignificant with respect to the situation of the Hebrews in Egypt. By the time of the second occurrence of yshc, a
radically new dimension must be added. Attempting to encourage and embolden his fearful followers, Moses assures them that they will soon "see the deliverance of [better: "from"] Yahweh" (14:13). His words prove true, and 14:30 picks up his idea in the following statement "Then Yahweh delivered (wayyôshač) Israel on that very day." And this time, the saving was a major event. The Egyptians lay dead, the Israelites marched free, the story ended as it should. The contrast between the deliverance accomplished by Moses and that achieved by Yahweh is sharp and clear. Both were "saviors." But what a difference in the salvation which each provided. By introducing the saving activity of Moses so early in the narrative, the narrator can make us wait more and more anxiously for a savior who can accomplish a real deliverance.

A fourth key word in paragraph "D" is the common word "hand" (yad). In 2:19, the report is made that Moses had rescued the daughters of the Midianite priest "from the hand of the shepherds." This innocent sounding statement actually signals the first of nearly fifty occurrences of the word yad in the first fourteen chapters of Exodus. All except four of these fit into one of three functional groups. (a) Five times yad denotes the power of oppression, wielded first by the harassing shepherds (2:19) and then by the Egyptians (3:8; 5:21; 14:30). At one point in the story (10:25), Moses demands that sacrifices be given to the Israelites (bêyâdênu), as if to show that the tables are being turned so that the oppressed are now making demands - just like oppressors. (b) 23 times, the yad being described is that of Moses (or Aaron) working miracles with or without the "rod." 9:35 describes YHWH as having communicated to Egypt through Moses (bêyad mōsheh). (c) 14 times yad means the power of God, delivering the land of promise to his people (6:8); plaguing Egypt (7:4,5; 9:3,15); or delivering Israel (3:19?, 20; 6:1,1 [note the translation by Childs]; 13:3,9,14,16; 14:31).

Of special significance is the function of yad in 14:31, (wayyârâ yisrâ'el 'et-hayyâd haggêdôlâ ra-sher ĉâsâh yhwh bêmitsrayim). The Hebrew is plain enough in meaning, but quite tricky to render into adequate English. Cassuto remarks simply that "the Bible uses the word hand here in antithesis to the hand of the Egyptians in the preceding verse" /23/. This is partially correct. In fact, I believe, the use of yad in this rather awkward fashion in 14:31 sets the activity of God in antithesis to the basic character of the Egyptian oppressors throughout the story. One thinks naturally here of the phraseology of 3:8,
where Yahweh is quoted as saying, "I have come down to deliver them (Israel) from the hand of (miyyad) the Egyptians." Again we note the struggle for Israel being waged by two potential masters /24/. In the truest sense, the entire story is about how Israel was transferred from the hand of one (Pharaoh) into the hand of the other (Yahweh). Or, one might note that the power of the one is defeated by the superior power of the other by means of (beyad) Moses.

IV. EXODUS 2:23-25. STORY LINES

E. 2:23a

It is necessary now to return to the identification of story lines discussed above for paragraphs "A," "B," "C," and "D." As we saw at the end of paragraph "C," the arrow indicating the story line had dropped to its lowest point yet. Part of "E" of the unit appears to redirect the arrow sharply upward again. The statement that "the king of Egypt died," taken alone or as the final sentence in the story, would convey the highest and most optimistic note yet attained by the narrator. The trouble had all begun with a new king, an unknowing king, a paranoid king, an unreasonable king who committed murder. Throughout the first two chapters, the impression is given that the source of the problem for all the Israelites was none other than the one evil and deranged monarch. Accordingly, the news of his death would make a most appropriate and joyous ending to a otherwise unhappy tale. Structurally the terse statement "the king of Egypt died" (wayyamot melek mitsrayim) serves as the exact counterpoint to the equally terse statement which opens the drama in 1:8, "And there arose a new king over Egypt" (wayyaqom melek ... mitsrayim). The accession of one evil person began it all. His death will surely end it. Hope here reaches its zenith. The arrow rises.

F. 2:23b

Unfortunately, 2:23a is not the end of the story. Instead, 23b immediately plunges as low as the height momentarily attained in 23a. That it was still necessary, following the death of the trouble-maker, for Israel to groan and cry and shriek in agony is chilling evidence that the trouble did not end when it should have. Now we learn that the oppression of Israel involved more than a single evil individual; the fact that the trouble continues
beyond the lifetime of the king means that his attitude to the Hebrews had been widely accepted among the Egyptians. Tellingly, v.23 ends with that most odious of words, "slavery" (כָּבֹדָה). For even worse than the woe of a slave's existence, brightened only by the hope that the tyrant had to die eventually (meaning that there would someday be an end to it all), was the startling realization that someone else was there to carry on the oppression for him. The commands to "all his people" (1:22) were not to be rescinded; they were still in force. He, being dead, yet spoke. The arrow plunges.

G. 2:24-25

As is well known, Exodus 2:23-25 have commonly been assigned by the source critics to the priestly document. Whether this is a valid source assessment or not, such an assignment has had the effect of isolating the verses from everything which precedes (except 1:13-14) as well as from everything which follows until chapter 6:2ff. I suppose there is no reason why 2:23-25 may not be designated "priestly", but I do find it interesting that the wording of the "P" source here dovetails so nicely with the general structure determined so far by "J" and "E" as well as with several JE blocks of material soon to follow. True, "God" could be seen to be an intrusion here, having had only an elusive presence in paragraph "B." True, the God mentioned here in 2:23-25 is distant, transcendent, and mysterious. True, the text uses הֵדְוִי instead of יְהוָה (which "P," it is argued, does not use until chapter six). But the function of vv.24 and 25 could hardly be better suited to the overall scheme of things if the "J" writer himself had written them!

Several points are noteworthy. First, the story line needs an upward arrow again unless slavery is to be the final word. Second, the story needs another character. Greenberg /25/ can speak of Exodus 1-2 as a prelude to the main drama and can assert that, as prelude, the chapters function to introduce all the main characters. But without these last two verses, Greenberg's statement would barely be correct. "God" has been referred to in 1:17,20,21, but has been at most in the background otherwise. Even the salvation of Moses is explained as due to the ingenuity of his mother and the compassion of the Egyptian princess rather than as divinely miraculous in any way at all. It is only with 2:23-25 that God is fully introduced into
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the narrative: we are told that God saw, remembered, heard, and knew. Only with 2:23-25 will the rest of the story begin to make sense. Why, for example, would "God" suddenly appear in Midian to enlist Moses? Verses 24-25 answer that question in advance.

Yet it must be emphasized that there has been little evidence of God acting crucially in the story so far; and even in these final two verses of the unit, the deity who is mentioned seems hardly designed to capture our fancy or deserve our respect. We are not even told that this god cared or felt compassion (cf. 2:6) for the suffering Israelites. It is not really until the next scene (3:1-4:17) that the deity "bestirs itself" /26/; in 2:23-25 the deity is almost casually and at best cryptically mentioned. He is nameless, formless, actionless, undefined in any way. Our curiosity is aroused enough to make us want to read further. But the deity of Exodus 2:24-25 is hardly what the story appears at this point to need.

Still, the statements about God fascinate just because of their lack of definition. And the structure of the four simple clauses employed contribute to the intrigue. Each clause has ʾelōhîm as subject and an active verb; the first three add ʾet and a definite direct object. The fourth sentence is the surprise.

And God heard their groaning,
and God remembered his covenant ... 
and God saw the people of Israel 
and God knew (wayyēdaʾ ʾelōhîm).

Now this fourth sentence has elicited scholarly comment from earliest times. Targum Onqelos paraphrases it radically. The LXX transposes active ydC into a passive /27/ and reads ʾêlêhem instead of ʾelōhîm, thereby avoiding the need for a direct object. Rashi expands the phrase by commenting that it means "he paid attention to them and did not close his eyes" /29/. And modern commentators have been no less concerned to help the narrator tell his story more clearly. There is wide agreement with the opinion expressed by a Jerusalem Bible footnote that "the verse does not yield satisfactory sense; probably the end is missing."

I would like to suggest on the contrary that nothing is missing. Indeed precisely this construction is ideally suited to make the point of the entire prelude. The story opens with the introduction of a human king who did not know, it now ends by introducing a deity who does know. And this contrast will be
repeated again and again as the narrative unfolds. Still, the missing direct object cannot be supplied by reference to anything revealed in the story so far. Instead, we have yet to learn that the missing direct object of 2:25b is what now appears in the text as chapters 3-14.

Chapters 1-2 end mysteriously by noting that although Moses was away from Egypt and the Hebrews were still groaning in their misery, "God knew." There is a pause in the narrative, as it were, then the story re-centers on Moses: "Meanwhile, Moses was tending the flock ..." But what "first-time" listener will not interrupt the narrative immediately with the demand, "What did God know?" And in order to answer that question, the narrator will be forced to proceed with the narrative all the way down to 14:31. There is conscious art to the structure of 2:24-25.

V. EXODUS 2:23-2:25. KEY WORDS

We have examined briefly the impact of the term ἐξολοθρήματι at this point in the narrative. It is necessary also to look more closely at the four verbs which are employed in 2:24-25. Each continues throughout the story as a word of major significance (inter-unit key word).

1. "hear"

The verb "hear" (shm כ) appears three times in the exodus story (chapters 1-14) with the God of Israel as its subject: 2:24a; 3:7; and 6:5. It is noteworthy that the object in each case is the cry uttered by the oppressed Israelites /9/. This anguished cry which he hears is part of the reason for the deity to initiate action on behalf of Israel, as is explicitly stated in 3:7-8: "I have heard their cry ... and I have come down to deliver them."

A second usage of shm כ places Israel as its subject. In these cases, the people are under obligation to "hear" the report of Moses' meeting with God (3:18; 4:1,8,9) or the joyous news that Yahweh had visited his people (4:31). On the other hand, the text also indicates that Israel had trouble "hearing" in the sense of "obeying" what was being heard /32/: 6:9 and 6:12 point to Israel's refusal to "obey."

A third way in which shm כ is used is with the Pharaoh as its subject. Always, in this construction, the emphasis is upon refusal or inability to "hear" and thus to "obey" the commandments of the God of the Hebrews. For example, 5:2 has the
Pharaoh boasting with a rhetorical question, "Who is Yahweh that I should obey his voice?" Moses himself recognizes the difficulty of persuading the Pharaoh to obey Yahweh in 6:12 and 6:30, noting wryly in 6:12 that if Yahweh's own people would not obey, the Pharaoh of Egypt could hardly be expected to do so. But above all, the refusal of the Pharaoh to obey the voice of that other god is attested in the plague cycle. Twice (7:4; 11:9) there is the prediction and six times there is the report that the Pharaoh did not hear (= obey) the words being spoken to him by the messenger of Yahweh (cf. 7:13,16,22; 8:11,15; 9:12).

2. "remember"

The verb zkr has more than one subject in the narrative. First, of course, is the divine subject introduced in 2:24b. This same statement regarding God's remembrance of his "covenant" also occurs in 6:5. But the necessity for Israel also to remember is attested with the root zkr. Thus in 3:15, the name of God /33/ is disclosed to Moses with the rather solemn statement that it (the name) was the "memorial" (zêker) by which God was to be remembered forever. Again, in 12:14, the Passover was cited as a day which was to be perpetually a day of "remembrance" for the Israelites; in 13:3, the day of the exodus event proper is a day which Israel is commanded to "remember." And finally 13:9 specifies the feast of unleavened bread as an event to commemorate with a "reminder" which was to be worn on the forehead.

What happens in the narrative, then, both with "hearing" and "remembering" is that the people of Israel (or the Pharaoh) must come to the point where they are able to share the perspective of the God mentioned in 2:24. God hears and remembers and because of it moves into action to bring about salvation. But part of that salvation is the coming to "obedience" (= hearing) and the responsibility of remembering which is laid upon God's people.

3. "see"

The root r'h occurs far more frequently throughout the exodus story than either shm or zkr. Already by the time of its use in 2:25, it has appeared seven times in the unit. Pharaoh's order to the midwives hinged upon their "seeing" Hebrew women in labor in time to extinguish the life from their sons (1:16). In 2:2, the mother of Moses makes the decision to
hide her son upon "seeing" that he was tōb /34/. In 2:5, the "sight" of the boy-bearing basket arouses the curiosity of the Egyptian princess while in 2:6 the "sight" of a crying infant evokes compassion from her. Three times in rapid succession (2:11,11,12) Moses, now grown, "saw" his oppressed brothers and then the clear coast which made his act of justice possible. But all of these "sightings" do little to alter the final course of the story. The "seers" are all human and their ability to change the course of events limited. This simply means that the stage was set for the statement made in 2:25a. That "God saw" could lead to something exciting. In fact, that God could see was only a part of the solution. For as the story develops, we learn that a big part of the problem is that of perspective. First of all, the God who sees in 2:25a must be seen (3:2,16; 4:1,5) as he had once been seen by (i.e., appeared to) the patriarchs (6:3a). But beyond that, the children of Israel were going to "see" things differently with respect to their situation in Egypt. After the initial appearance of Moses and Aaron before the Pharaoh had resulted in increased trouble for Israel, the promise of God to Moses, was "Now you will see what I will do" (6:1). And this promise finally finds fulfillment in the final unit of the story. The Israelites, advised by Moses to "stand by and see deliverance from Yahweh" (14:13), learned that shortly they would see the Egyptians in a new light. True enough, in 14:30 they did see the Egyptians "dead on the beach." This is described as the prelude to faith in the next verse: "When Israel saw, ... then they believed" (14:31).

4. "know"

Part of the significance of ydכ ("know") has already been discussed above by noting it as the inclusio for the entire unit 1:8-2:25. But this notation is far from exhausting the significance of the term throughout the exodus narrative. To begin with, as scholars have often noted /35/ and as I have emphasized in another paper /36/, the purpose and literary function of the plague stories is also closely tied to the theme of knowledge as signaled by ydכ. Repeatedly, Yahweh promises to send a plague for the purpose of allowing the Pharaoh to get to know him, the point continuing to be that never in the narrative does the Pharaoh know anything and never does the God of Israel not know anything.

Apart from this theme of the knowledge of God versus the
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ignorance of the Pharaoh, however, is the critical fact that the God who knows is not known by those whom he would designate to be his people. Accordingly, the task of making himself known (and seen and heard and remembered!) constantly challenges God throughout the narrative. To return to an earlier point, this probably means that מִדְדַי is used in 2:24-25 precisely because the deity to that point in the story is essentially nameless or unknown. For the story to develop adequately, the one who knows must be known (cf. 6:3b, 7), even as the one who sees must be seen and then must have his saving activity seen by his people /37/ before any substantive change in their situation can be made.

conclusion

In this paper I have tried to show how Exodus 1:8-2:25 functions as a kind of "prelude" to the whole story of Exodus 1-14. This unit sets out important lines along which the story will proceed and indicates key themes which the story will develop. In the course of the discussion, particularly by isolating and exploring key words in the unit, I have tried to demonstrate something of the internal coherence of the exodus story in its present form. As a postscript, several particular observations may be made.

First, analysis of the story lines has shown that Moses is not a hero figure in the usual sense and that attempts to relate the story of his birth to other ancient Near Eastern epics miss the point of the paragraph in its own setting.

Second, it should be noted that the story lines often cross the boundaries commonly set down by source analysis. This is a point which Greenberg has made eloquently /43/ but which needs constantly to be remembered and buttressed if meaningful analysis of the biblical text is to be possible.

Third, I have attempted to refine discussion of key words for some of the paragraphs in the unit under examination. Thus, for paragraph A, for example, בָּדַּר ("serve") is widely agreed upon. But the function of בָּדַּר as an inclusio for both paragraphs B and C has been neglected, as has the fact that the son in 2:2, unlike any other son born in the Bible, represents an unanswered prayer if the context created by 1:22 be remembered.

Fourth, my study has pointed to the close relationship
between the first unit (1:8-2:25) and the final unit (13:17-14:31) in the exodus story. The connection is evident, for example, in the appearance, in these two units only, of the phrase "at the edge of" (Kal-sè-pat) or the roots Ichm ("war," 1:10 and 13:17; 14:14,25), and yshC ("deliver," 2:17 and 14:13,30).

Fifth, the striking pattern noticed in 2:24-25 attests to the tight relationship among all the units in the exodus story as a whole. Nothing is missing at the end of 2:25 except all of 3:1-14:31.

In future studies, I hope to demonstrate the structure of additional units in the exodus story along lines which I have explained in this paper. In particular, I believe the final unit (13:17-14:31) will prove fruitful under this kind of analysis. But I trust that enough has been said to demonstrate the importance of a close, as-if-for-the-first-time study of the biblical text. I trust that I have been able to recapture the viability of the exodus story in its canonical form which remains, after all, the only form we have.

NOTES

3 This was originally the thesis of Gressman. See now Brevard Childs, The Book of Exodus (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974) 8-11.
5 Verse 23b is often assigned to "J."
6 See Chart I on the story lines and Chart II for the words which indicate those lines plus the intra-unit and inter-unit key words.
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See also Isaac M. Kikawada, "Some Proposals for the Definition of Rhetorical Criticism," Semitics 5 (1977) 67-91; and Cassuto, 17.

8 On the word ger ("sojourner"), cf. also Gen. 15:13.
9 Clements, 16.
11 Cf. especially Cassuto, 12, and Ackerman, 83-84.
12 IDB 3, 773.
13 Childs, 19.
14 Schmidt, II (1974), 49.
15 Childs, 19.
16 Waldman's summary is in Religious and Theological Abstracts XXII (Summer, 1979) 2:1018. The article by Ahuviah is, "I Will Bring You Up Out of the Afflictions of Egypt (Ex. 3:17)," in Beth Mikra 23 (1978) 301-303.
17 And note also Exodus 15:11, where Yahweh is acclaimed as being nwr t hl.
18 I count only five exceptions throughout the Hebrew Bible [in addition to Ex. 4:22-23] Gen. 27:32; Deut. 2:15; 1 Sam 8:2; 1 Chr. 8:30; 9:36.
19 See the point made by Douglas A. Fox, "The Ninth Plague: An Exegetical Note," JAAR XLV/2 Supplement (June, 1977) relative to the myth of the Osiris Cult (pp.497-498).
20 Only Ex. 7:15 has precisely this phrase, but 8:20 certainly implies that Mose and the Pharaoh met near the Nile at least one other time.
21 Ackerman, 99.
22 Ackerman, 100.
23 Cassuto, 172.
24 Cf. the discussion of cbd above.
27 Evidently reading nwd on the basis of 2:14.
28 kai egnosthe autois, "and he was made known to them."
29 ntn clyhm lb wlp hclym cynyw.
30 Cf. the discussion of various views by Childs, 28, and Greenberg, 54.
31 nqh in 2:24 and 6:5; zqh in 3:7.
32 There is, of course, no separate word for "obey" in biblical Hebrew. shm means both "hear" and "obey."
33 Either lyh or ywhh according to 3:14-15. See also Charles D. Isbell, "Initial 'Alef-Yod Interchange and Selected Biblical
Isbell: Exodus 1-2 in the Context of Exodus 1-14


34 Either "beautiful" or "healthy." Cf. Childs, 5, 18.
35 See for example, Childs, 136.
37 Cf. 14:31 again and note also 14:4,18.
Chart I
The Story Lines of Exodus 1:8-2:25
### Chart II

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<td>c^bd (5 times)</td>
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<th>D.1</th>
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The letters A, B, C, and D refer to the paragraphs discussed in Exodus 1:8-2:22. The number 1 refers to words which indicate whether the story line is up or down, optimistic or pessimistic. The number 3 refers to inter-unit key words.
A PLAGUE ON BOTH OUR HOUSES:
FORM- AND RHETORICAL-CRITICAL
OBSERVATIONS ON EXODUS 7-11

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In modern Old Testament study, the Pentateuchal narratives have offered some of the most difficult challenges to form- and stylistic critics. The expectations provided by the conventions of oral and literary genres are more skillfully broken in the stories of the Torah than elsewhere in the OT. Some of the narratives seem to stand in an intermediary position between prose and poetry. Many stories still elude a precise designation of their genre, for example, the Joseph story and the story of the Plagues. Stylistic critics also, whether of analytic or synthetic tendencies, are continually challenged by the difficulties of Torah literature. The early confident gains from stylistic observations in the separation of literary documents of the Pentateuch have had to be more modestly restated. Also, the impression of fragmentation within certain stories (like the Flood and the Plagues) due to the presence of several "sources" has been difficult to overcome for rhetorical critics. Rather than abandoning form criticism or rhetorical (stylistic) criticism, however, I would like to propose a new solution to certain problems surrounding the Plagues story, an approach that may enable the cooperation of these two methods in future study of the Pentateuchal narratives. Both Luis Alonso Schökel /1/ and James Muilenburg /2/ have stressed the complementary nature of form criticism and rhetorical criticism, Schökel stating that "both belong together and will develop most copiously if they walk hand in hand."

I. PROBLEMS IN THE PLAGUES STORY

Let us begin with a consideration of certain problems in the Plagues story: the extent and form of the story, its structure,
its development. The first difficulty is the question of the story's limits. Does it begin in Ex. 5 as McCarthy has argued /3/, or in 6:28 (Childs) /4/, or in 7:8 or 7:14? Does it end in ch.10 (Noth) /5/ or 11 or 12? What is the overall mood, genre and Sitz of the story? Is it prophetic legend or a segment of a Passover saga? What is its major theme? Should the story be subtitled "Moses' Dealing with Pharaoh" (McCarthy) /6/, "Yahweh's Plagues" (Dumermuth) /7/, or "The Vindication of the Holy Name" (Greenberg) /8/?

Further, what is the structure of the story? How is the tenth event related to the rest? Are the plagues organised in three groups of three plus one (Greenberg /9/, Cassuto /10/), two groups of five (McCarthy) /11/, or a steadily accelerating sequence of ten /12/? Is there a structuring sub-genre in the story, e.g., the disputation, the oracle of judgment or the private oracle? Is there a narrative pattern which provides a clear structure? Do God, Moses, Aaron, and Pharaoh speak and act in patterned ways?

Finally, how does development take place in the story? Does the vocabulary of hardening or the severity of the plagues display a decisive movement? Do formulae like "that they may know that I am the LORD" or the Messenger Formula undergo change that signals the movement in the story? Do a succession of stylistic devices or sub-motifs like the concessions to Pharaoh or struggle with the magicians show development to a climax?

The present answers to these questions are either negative, or that the complexities do not allow clear answers. For example, Childs' commentary on Exodus wrestles with many of these questions, coming to the form-critical conclusion that there is no one clearly underlying genre, although the story imitates the prophetic legend, and that stylistically it is best not to insist upon any one literary pattern but rather to agree with Greenberg's conclusion that the theme of the revelation of God's nature to all predominates, a sort of rebuttal to Pharaoh's refusal to recognise the Holy Name. Certainly the Plagues story has become a plague upon the houses of both form and rhetorical critics.

While not claiming to solve all these difficulties, I would like to suggest that a study of the narrative patterns for oracle communication in this story does provide certain form-critical and stylistic clues to the questions of overall story form, structure and development of the Plagues story. This study also
provides literary evidence for the role of Moses which Childs has suggested in his analysis of the Sinai tradition in Exodus (19:1-25; 20:18-21,34), Moses the continual mediator of God's will /13/. The ironic way in which the narrator silences this mediator is characteristic of a type of story which I have chosen to call the Story of the Living Oracle. After describing a set of patterns which I think provide structure and development of the plagues story, I will present the Story of the Living Oracle, and then conclude this study by applying this story type to the Plagues Story.

II. PATTERNS FOR NARRATING THE COMMUNICATION OF ORACLES AND MESSAGES IN THE PLAGUES STORY

One of the consistent scenes in the story of the Plagues is YHWH and Moses' communication. YHWH gives Moses either a message or a command which initiates each plague. These are two of the several possible elements used in the narrative patterns for the Plagues story: (i) YHWH announces the plague to Moses (1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10); (ii) Moses announces a plague to Pharaoh (8, 10); (iii) YHWH commands Moses concerning the plague (1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9); (iv) the plague is performed (1-9); (v) Pharaoh asks Moses to intercede (2, 4, 7, 8, 9); (vi) Pharaoh's heart hardens and he refuses to let Israel go (1-10). The plagues are told with the help of between three and six of these elements. The constant three elements are (a) YHWH communicates with Moses; (b) the plague is performed; and (c) Pharaoh's heart remains unmoved. The Eighth and Tenth Plagues are the only ones to have an announcement of the plague to Pharaoh. The Eighth Plague is the only one to be narrated with all six elements, and the Tenth Plague is the only one whose performance is omitted immediately in the text. These observations suggest the need for a new look at the pattern for communication in the Plagues Story.

In a recent study I have delineated several patterns used for narrating message and oracle communication in two hundred and thirty examples in the OT /14/. I have concluded that in the Biblical stories from Genesis to 2 Chronicles there are basically four types of patterns for narrating the communication of messages and oracles. One type employs double scenes (both commissioning and delivery) so that the message or oracle is narrated twice. This first type is infrequent (3%, e.g. 2 Kgs 9:17-18). A second type employs neither commissioning nor
delivery scenes but injects the message as a citation into the story (43%, e.g. 2 Chr 32:9-16). A third type employs only a delivery scene and is used predominantly for oracles (45%, e.g. 1 Kgs 22:5-6, 11,12,15,17,19-23). Neither of these frequent patterns prevails, however, in the Plagues story. Instead of highlighting the prophet in delivery scenes, or merely inserting Moses' oracular message into the story, the author uses a fourth type for oracle communication which highlights the commissioning scene, e.g., Ex 7:14-18:

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Pharaoh is obdurate in refusing to let the people go. Tomorrow morning, when he sets out for the water, go and present yourself by the river banks, holding in your hand the staff that turned into a serpent. Say to him, the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you with the message: Let my people go to worship me in the desert. But as yet you have not listened. The LORD now says: This is how you shall know that I am the LORD. I will strike the water of the river with the staff I hold, and it shall be changed into blood. The fish in the river shall die, and the river itself shall become so polluted that the Egyptians shall be unable to drink its water." (NAB) [Italics mine]

This commissioning pattern emphasizes the privileged communication between God and Moses, as well as unleashing the powerful words of God bristling with impending action. However, this pattern does not present us with a Moses regularly confronting Pharaoh. Instead of M. Buber's prophetic Moses who provides the movement in the story by continually confronting the Egyptian king, God's speaking with Moses determines the rhythm. Ironically God's commands result in only a brief notice of a delivery or no mention of a delivery at all, thus presenting Moses as a "silenced messenger," whose own voice melts into the words of God.

Consequently, where there is a very consistent format of communication which helps to structure the plague stories, it is not Moses announcing each plague to Pharaoh. Rather, each plague is introduced by the formula wayyô'ser yhwh 'el-môsêeh ("and YHWH spoke unto Moses") (7:14; 7:26; 8:12; 8:16; 9:1; 9:8 "and unto Aaron"; 9:13; 10:1; 10:21; 11:1E). That is, each time God speaks to Moses first. Then either Moses is told to go announce the plague to Pharaoh (all the J passages: 7:14; 7:26; 8:16; 9:1; 9:13 - Commissioning pattern; 10:1 - Delivery pattern),
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or Moses and Aaron are told to perform the plague (9:8P; 10:21E), Moses is commanded to tell Aaron to perform it (8:12P [8:16 EVV] - Commissioning pattern), or Moses is told to instruct the people (11:2E). The actual performance of four of the plagues is initiated again by the formula "And the LORD said unto Moses" (with a Commissioning pattern in 7:19P and 8:1P; without in 9:22E and 10:12E). (In the remaining examples the Lord himself swiftly performs the plague and in the Tenth Plague no performance is narrated until 12:29 after the first two sets of Passover regulations.) The P source's conclusory note for the nine plagues at 11:9 is prefaced by: "And the LORD said to Moses.

Each plague begins with a communication between God and Moses. Does Moses then deliver the oracles which YHWH commissioned? Only twice in the ten plagues is such a scene narrated. Usually there is no subsequent reference to a delivery of the announcement or command (Plagues 1 [7:14-18]; 2 [7:26-29]; 3 [7:28-29]; 4 [8:16-19]; 5 [9:1-7]; 7 [9:13-21]) or some further reference indicates obedience (Plagues 1 [7:19-22]; 3 [8:12-15]; 10 [11:1-2; 12:35]).

Perhaps not unexpectedly, the Tenth Plague is structured differently than the rest. The introductory formula is the same (11:1), but the announcement of what the plague will be comes only three verses later. Here (Ex 11:4) the J source resumes with Moses announcing the tenth plague to Pharaoh very much like a prophet before the king. That is, this is the one example where Moses actually comes forth, without any previous commissioning, and begins, "Thus says the LORD" (Delivery pattern). Especially from the point of view of literary structure, Moses' pronouncement at 11:4 carries great force.

This consistent pattern of YHWH's speaking is bolstered by P's closing formula: "But he did not listen to them as YHWH had spoken" (7:13; 7:22; 8:11b [8:15b EVV]; 8:15 [8:19 EVV]; 9:12 weilšāmaC 'alēhem ka'asher dibber yhwh and the somewhat garbled attempt by the redactor of P at 9:35b: "as the Lord had spoken by the hand of Moses"). It is generally characteristic of the P document to have the Lord speaking to Moses, especially to Moses and Aaron together. This and the use of the formula heighten the impression that the Lord is really the source who causes all things to happen, instead of an Israelite wizard.

As established above, the final redaction of the plague stories does not have as its central theme Moses as bearer of God's word or the realization of God's word in absolute accordance
with what was said earlier - the two main themes of the "prophetic legend" genre. The Samaritan Pentateuch's efforts to "aid" the stories by inserting scenes of delivering oracles push them in this latter direction; but the stories in the Masoretic text unleash the power of God's word in a different fashion.

Thus it is the oracular communication of Yahweh to Moses which always is in the limelight. While at first sight the plague stories appear to have certain elements in common with the prophetic legend, the oracular communication, particularly with the employment of commissioning patterns, leaves the overall impression that everything that happened is the immediate result of God's miraculous power. God wins deliverance for his people by an awesome display of power over death.

Does this situation occur elsewhere in the scripture? Is it accompanied by the same literary patterns for narrating the communication of oracles? Is a mediating function described which is similar to the actions of Moses in the plague story? On the basis of my study of the commissioning pattern in the Deuteronomistic history, I would like to suggest a story type which answers these questions in the affirmative, the story of the living oracle.

III. STORY OF THE LIVING ORACLE

Several times within the OT, the story is told of a leader, prophet or prophetess who knows whether people will live or die. This knowledge is the result of an oracular communication from God, and often the person is consulted in order to learn the answer to the question. The prophet or prophetess also may be asked to pray or to ask for the answer to prayers. At times, the prophet is also shown to be in control of natural processes, and uses his God-given power to tip the scale of life or death. Of course there are many examples of people going to the Lord to "enquire" (KJV; this translates bqr in 2 Kgs 16:15, bqsh in 2 Sam 21:1, shN in Judg 20:27; 1 Sam 10:11; 22:10; 23:2,4; etc., and especially drsh in 1 Sam 9:9; 28:7, 1 Kgs 22:5; 1 Chr 13:3; etc.). The whole process of consultation is usually not narrated, but simply a question is put to the ark or an altar, with the response being prefaced by "and the LORD said." In the story of the Living Oracle, however, a person (prophet or prophetess) is consulted, and he or she responds with an oracle introduced with the Messenger Formula (Samuel, 1 Sam 10:17-19; Micaiah ben Imlah, 1 Kgs 22; Elisha, 2 Kgs 3:11-25; Isaiah, 2 Kgs 19:20-
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35). Sometimes a prophet or prophetess gives subsequent instructions to deliver the oracle to the concerned party (Ahijah, 1 Kgs 14:4-16; Elisha, 2 Kgs 8:10,14; Isaiah, 2 Kgs 19:5-7; and Huldah, 2 Kgs 22:14-20). In a variation of this story that is of most interest here, a leader or prophet receives an oracle from God in answer to a life or death problem posed by the story, whereupon he is commissioned to deliver that oracle to the people or to the king: so Joshua (Josh 7:13-15); Gideon (Jdg 7:2-3); Nathan (2 Sam 7:4-17 // 1 Chr 17:3-15); Gad (2 Sam 24:11-14 // 1 Chr 21:9-15); Shemaiah (1 Kgs 12:22-24 // 2 Chr 11:2-4); Elijah (1 Kgs 21:17-29; 2 Kgs 1); and Isaiah (2 Kgs 20:4-6 // Isa 38:4-8). In the subsequent narration the oracle may be narrated in a varied form (2 Sam 24:11-14; 2 Kgs 1), but more frequently the delivery of these oracles is never narrated in the story. Rather, the oracles are related in the commissioning scene only, with no subsequent reference to delivery.

The mood in this last type of the story of the Living Oracle is one of crisis: should we fight? will we win? how will the king be punished? will the king live? The mood of the Plagues Story is very similar. The dire life and death situation is raised for the Israelites' enemies as well as for the Israelites themselves.

The oracular message in the story of the Living Oracle usually contains the Messenger Formula, and is narrated rarely with the delivery pattern, often with the commissioning pattern. A few times both scenes for commissioning and delivery are narrated. This distribution of patterns is remarkably similar to the Plagues Story, where the predominant pattern is the commissioning one, while at crucial points the delivery pattern is employed (Eighth, Tenth Plagues), and once Moses and Aaron are commissioned with one oracle, but deliver a different one (Ex 3:18; 5:3).

The Living Oracle stories in the Deuteronomistic history are not typical of prophets' stories. Usually a prophet simply goes and stands before his audience and delivers the word of God. In these stories, however, either the prophet is consulted, and then delivers an oracle, or God commissions the oracle, which is not narrated at all, or else narrated in a changed fashion, in the following story.

The presumption about the prophet or prophetic leader in the "living oracle" story is different from that predominating in the Deuteronomistic history. The leader, prophet or prophetess is presumed to be a continual medium of God's will in the "living oracle" story, while God raises up various people to deliver a
specific message in a specific situation in the majority of stories in the Deuteronomistic history. The legitimation of that continuing oracular function is produced by the writer by narrating the commissioning scene in particular.

In his analysis of Moses' role in the Sinai traditions, Brevard Childs has described a prophetic office which is different from that of covenant mediator /15/. Rather, the Jahwist source in particular knows of a prophetic office of the continual mediation of God's will. Childs traces the origin of the tradition to the tent of meeting (Ex 33; Num 12), and posits the tradition being coined by the southern tribes, where eventually the priestly traditions absorbed it. This continual mediation office also includes an intercessory function (Ex 32; Num 14; 16), which was absorbed into the Elohist covenant tradition by the Deuteronomist. In nearly every chapter which Childs discusses as illustrative of this office, I find the commissioning pattern for the narration of the communication of oracles (Ex 33; Num 11; 14). His suggestion of the provenance of this prophetic role in the Jahwist source is further corroborated by the preference I found in my study of the Jahwist document for narrating the communication of oracles and messages with the commissioning scene /16/.

The narration of oracles in the commissioning scene without a scene of any subsequent delivery is also an effective way of silencing the oracular messenger, so that the listener is attuned to the divine power. The marvelous reversals in these stories of the living oracle, including the rescue of Jerusalem from the Assyrians in Hezekiah's days, are enhanced by the direct communication of startling answers to the prophetic characters in the stories. A dreaded crisis is finally resolved through a powerful injection of an oracle into the prophet's own consciousness.

IV. THE PLAGUES STORY AND THE LIVING ORACLE

The story of the Living Oracle provides some suggestions for answers to the questions raised above concerning the Plagues story. The sub-theme is the marvelous display of God's power over death in face of refusal to accept the authority and message of the Living Oracle. The mood of the story is that of horror in the situation of dire calamity for the Israelites and rising terror for the enemy. The story of the living oracle, with the oracles usually narrated in the situation of commissioning,
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clearing the stage for a marvelous reversal by God, is an underlying form which the author employs here. The limits of the story broadly extend from chapters 3 to 12; more narrowly from 7:14 to 11:8.

The structure of the story is provided by the initiating communications by God with Moses. The powerful speech initiates the performance of the Plagues, and sets up the intercession of Moses for Pharaoh. The sub-genres of the story - oracles, messages, commands, marvelous actions, and intercessions - also appear in the occurrences of the story of the Living Oracle in the Deuteronomistic history. The P theme of the Plagues as demonstrations of God's power, and the JE theme of the Plagues as punishment have been forced into a broader structure of the Plagues as vindications of the Living Oracle's power to announce and effect death upon the enemy.

The development of the story takes place in the establishing and breaking of the communication patterns. First the double scene pattern of communication fails (in 5:3 Moses and Aaron do not speak as they have been commanded in 3:18, and the slavery is hardened). Then the commissioning scene pattern fails to "get through" (7:14; 7:26; 8:12; 9:1; 9:13), and communication with the Pharaoh deteriorates to zero (9:8; 10:12). Finally, two delivery scenes (one in the Eighth Plague - prepared for in 10:1; and one in the Tenth Plague - with no preparation) deliver the message of the impending death of the first-born. The hardness of Pharaoh takes on the full dimension of refusal to hear that is already signalled in 7:13. The message does not get through in the story until the Tenth Plague's announcement, the only time in the story when Moses breaks his (literary) silence before Pharaoh in a startling fashion.

The story of the Plagues, then, can be understood as an example of the story of the Living Oracle. It is the overall mood, situation, and communication patterns of this story type which provide the impression of literary unity in this skillfully redacted unit. By emphasizing primarily the commissioning scene, the author legitimates the authority of the continual human oracle, while setting the stage for the marvelous deed to follow. Moses, the continual messenger and intercessor, allows God's marvelous power over life and death to predominate in the midst of human suffering and intransigence, through silent compliance with the Ten Plagues.
NOTES

1 "Die stilistische Analyse bei den Propheten," VTSup 7 (1960), 172.
2 "Form Criticism and Beyond," JBL 87 (1969), 18.
5 Martin Noth, Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1948), 83.
7 F. Dumermuth, "Folkloristisches in der Erzählung von der ägyptischen Plagen," ZAW 76 (1964), 324.
11 "Moses' Dealing ...," 337.
12 The question of how many plagues underlie the story is answered by an ecological reconstruction in Greta Hort's "The Plagues of Egypt" (ZAW 69 [1957], 84-103; 70 [1958], 48-59), and by reconstruction of the J tradition in S.E. Loewenstamm's "The Number of Plagues in Ps. 105" (Biblica 52 [1971], 34-38).
13 The Book of Exodus, 356.
15 The Book of Exodus, 354-358.
16 "Communication of Messages ...," 60-80.
THE "HARDENING OF PHARAOH'S HEART": PLOT, CHARACTER AND THEOLOGY IN EXODUS 1-14

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Concluding his study of Exodus 1-15 and Euripides' play, The Bacchae, David Robertson argues that, unlike the Greek play, Exodus excludes ambiguity and irony in the presentation of its characters (and values) /1/. "Ambiguity obfuscates moral clarity" (p.28) and the values urged by the Exodus story are essentially simple:

"Whether the reader identifies with Moses, as he will naturally do in the course of reading the story, or with Pharaoh, or surveys the whole, he will experience essentially childlike emotions (I love my side, I hate my enemy) and learn essentially childlike lessons (I am good, my enemy is bad, god is on my side, god is not on my side)."

Robertson's comparative reading of the Exodus story is stimulating and his moral evaluation challenging. To read and reflect on his essay was, for me, a rare and refreshing experience. But the more I read and reflect on the story in Exodus 1-14 (or 15) the more I doubt that his conclusion is the right one. So I offer here an alternative view which works, like Robertson's analysis, with the "final form of the text".

My precise starting point is (appropriately for a "final form" paper!) a discussion by Brevard Childs, in his splendid commentary on Exodus, of a familiar feature of the plagues story /2/. Despite the terrible plagues, Pharaoh's heart is "hardened" and he continues to resist Moses' demands. Childs devotes a brief excursus to the subject. Having surveyed the vocabulary of "hardening" (the verbs kbd, hzq qsh) and its use according to the different constituent "sources" of the text (mostly J and P), he concludes as follows (p.174):
...the hardening terminology is closely connected to the giving of signs. In J hardness prevents the signs from revealing the knowledge of God; in P the hardness results in the multiplication of signs as judgment. This means that all attempts to relate hardness to a psychological state or derive it from a theology of divine causality miss the mark.... The motif has been consistently over-interpreted by supposing that it arose from a profoundly theological reflection and seeing it as a problem of freewill and predestination. It is clear that the P source extended the origin of hardening into the plan of God and thus went beyond J. But the polarity between hardening as a decision of Pharaoh and as an effect of God never was seen as a major issue. The occupation with this problem by commentators has contributed to their failure to determine its major role within the passage.

Childs is right to reject attempts to see the hardening as simply a picturesque way of speaking of an inner psychological state, "the inner human reaction of resistance which once begun could no longer be reversed by the individual will"/3/. But I am not so sure that the factor of divine causality is of as little significance in the story as he seems to suggest. With some justification, I think, John Rogerson writes that

In the case of the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, the narrative displays some subtlety, and in its final form there is an apparent contradiction between Pharaoh hardening his own heart (8:32) and God hardening Pharaoh's heart (9:12).... The final narrative ... seeks to express both God's complete control over the destinies of men (that is, God hardened Pharaoh's heart), and the part that can be played by a man in shaping his own destiny and those of others (that is, Pharaoh hardened his own heart). /4/

For Rogerson the element of divine causality remains important for through it is expressed God's power - a theme which he (and others, including Childs) sees at the centre of the whole story /5/. I do agree and shall elaborate my agreement in due course. At the same time he argues that the J legacy in the story - Pharaoh hardens his own heart - also needs to be taken into account.

Divine or human causality? Divine and human causality? The "hardening" seems to me to be vital to the plot; it is part of the
essential chain of cause and effect in the story - without it there would be no plagues story. Hence it seems reasonable to suppose that the cause or source of this key plot element might be of some importance in our understanding of the narrative. Plot implies action, action by characters and actions impinging on characters. Character depiction is thus closely tied up with plot. Questions about the cause or motivation of the hardening will therefore rapidly develop into questions about the characters involved. And in the process themes will emerge that, by the very nature of this story of interaction between God and man, will be theological. So moving between these points of reference - plot, character, theology - let me explore the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, and with it the story in Exodus 1-14 as a whole, a little further.

Pharaoh and the hardening of his heart

Both Pharaohs - of birth and plagues episodes - tend to merge somewhat as characters, perhaps the more easily since they are not given personal names. We are not surprised, therefore, to find the second Pharaoh in chapter 5 simply rejecting out of hand any thought that he should "let Israel go"; even when that letting go is ostensibly only to hold a feast to Yahweh in the wilderness. For the paradigm "Pharaoh" of this phase of Israel's history has already been established as a ruler whose methods of control are ruthless.

In the passage recounting the first rejection of Moses' demands (5:1-9) there is nothing about hardening, whether by God or Pharaoh himself. Pharaoh is simply contemptuous of Moses and seizes the occasion to heap on the agony (bricks without straw). In the wider context, however, we may recall the words of the previous scene (4:21):

When you go back to Egypt [says God to Moses], see that you do before Pharaoh all the miracles which I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go.

Thus we are left uncertain in chapter 5. Is this rejection the first indication of God's prediction coming to pass? Or is it simply Pharaoh being "Pharaoh"?

The ambiguity continues into the early stages of the subsequent "signs" sequence (approaches by Moses and refusals by Pharaoh, from chapter 7 onwards). This series of episodes is prefaced by another word from Yahweh (7:2-4):
You shall speak all that I command you; and Aaron your brother shall tell Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go out of his land. But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, Pharaoh will not listen to you.

Yet in the first of the succeeding interviews (7:6-13), we are told only that "Pharaoh's heart hardened/was hardened (wayyehē'zaq lēb parCōh, 7:13) and he would not listen to them", leaving it possible still, like the response in chapter 5, that the rejection is Pharaoh's own, unprompted decision. On the other hand, the narrator does add the clause "as Yahweh had said", suggesting that Yahweh's announced manipulation has begun.

The same touch of ambiguity recurs in the report of the next sign (the Nile turned to blood, 7:14-25), especially since it includes a clause which could be taken to provide an explanation for why Pharaoh hardened his own heart: "But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts" (a nice touch of humour, made particularly obvious when it is repeated in the next scene - 8:7 [8:3] - with the added observation that "they brought frogs upon the land of Egypt"!). Indeed, the RSV would seem to have understood the clause in just this way, since it places a semi-colon between the two main clauses and translates the linking waw-consecutive by "so": "But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts; so Pharaoh's heart remained hardened (wayyehē'zaq lēb-parCōh), and he would not listen to them" (7:22). Yet, as in the earlier report, the possibility that Yahweh has a hand in this response is brought back into focus by the addition of: "as Yahweh had said".

In the next scene (the frogs, 8:1-15 [Heb.7:26-8:11]) there appears for a moment to be a development. We are told that the frogs came up and covered the land, but that again "the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts" - they, too, brought frogs upon the land. If, on the previous occasion, Pharaoh had been impressed by the ability of his magicians to duplicate the plague, this time (unless his response is itself "duplicity"!) the absurdity of the situation would seem to have dawned on him: frogs upon the land are frogs upon the land, whoever conjures them up. What matters is getting rid of them. Pharaoh weakens for the first time: "Entreat Yahweh to take away the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the
people go to sacrifice to Yahweh" (8:8 [8:4]) /6/. The development, however, is cut short with the removal of the plague: "But when Pharaoh saw [wayyar'] that there was a respite, he hardened [wehakbēd] his heart, and would not listen to them, as Yahweh had said" (8:15 [Heb.8:11]). So in this scene, too, we have the same ingredients as earlier: the main thrust of the report seeming to suggest a humanly motivated rejection on Pharaoh's part, but that thrust tempered with the touch of ambiguity at the very end by the reference back to Yahweh's prediction.

At the next sign (the gnats, 8:16-19 [12-15]), there is also development. This time the magicians capitulate, and they do so both totally (we shall notice that the story proceeds without them) and with a remarkable admission: "This [they say] is the finger of God" (8:19 [15]). The logic of their predicament has been borne in on them. By contrast the unreasonableness of Pharaoh's subsequent rejection ("but Pharaoh's heart was hardened", wayyēhē-zaq lēb-parCōh) begins to emerge unmistakably. Can he really be so blind, so foolish? The possibility that we should be reckoning with Yahweh's intervention accordingly strengthens.

The plague of flies (8:20-32 [16-28]) takes a more pointedly selective form than the previous plagues, distinguishing now between the people of Israel and those of Egypt. Its message to Pharaoh is thus transparent. The discrimination speaks volumes. Moreover, the report hints at further movement in the struggle between Moses and Pharaoh: Pharaoh not only weakens once more and says "Go, sacrifice to your God within the land", but is even prepared to make a subsequent concession to a haggling opponent. Yet with the plague removed, Pharaoh hardens his heart (wayyakbēd parCōh 'et-libbō) "this time also" and refuses to keep his word. Again, therefore, we have a vastly puzzling contrast, this time between the reasonable negotiator (before) and the unreasonable refuser (after). And again we may wonder whether, despite the primary force of "Pharaoh hardened his heart" (and, indeed, the absence this time of any reference back to 4:21 and 7:3), we are being invited to look to Yahweh's intervention to provide some explanation.

The net effect of this report is reinforced by the similar effect of the subsequent one (the plague on the cattle, 9:1-7) which also takes a selective form, distinguishing between the cattle of Israel and those of Egypt. Pharaoh's heart-hardening (wayyikbad lēb parCōh, 9:7), still not explicitly ascribed to
Yahweh, is made to appear even more unreasonable. Finally in the aftermath of the plague of ashes (9:8-12; by this time the magicians themselves are unable even to stand before Moses because of the boils) any ambiguity that might remain about Yahweh's role in the hardening disappears. The concluding formula is varied just that crucial degree. Instead of "but Pharaoh hardened his heart" or "but Pharaoh's heart was hardened" we read "but Yahweh hardened the heart of Pharaoh (wayēhazzēq yhwh 'et-lēb parcōh, 9:12)" , with the familiar conclusion, "and he did not listen to them, as Yahweh had spoken to Moses". What was previously implicit has become explicit. Pharaoh's obstinacy makes sense.

The story continues to develop the incongruity between, on the one hand, Pharaoh's initial responses together with the responses of those around him, and, on the other, his decisions consequent upon his heart being hardened. Thus the realization of the hopelessness of the Egyptian position spreads amongst those around Pharaoh: in the next plague (hail, 9:13-35), given a warning, some of Pharaoh's own servants "fearing the word of Yahweh" take heed and protect their slaves and cattle [7]. Likewise Pharaoh no longer just "weakens". "Weakening" gives place this time to an outright and humiliating acknowledgment of being in the wrong. The confession is striking (9:27-28): "I have sinned this time; Yahweh is in the right and I and my people are in the wrong".

Is this sincere? Moses confidently claims that "I know that you do not yet fear the God Yahweh" (9:30) and on top of that we find the hardening formula expressed in the form, "and [Pharaoh] hardened his heart", complete with "explanatory" clause ("and Pharaoh saw that the rain...had ceased", 9:34-35). Yet Moses is in the position of knowing that more is to come: in that sense Pharaoh indeed does not fully know the fear of Yahweh. And as for the hardening, the formula is immediately placed in the context of Yahweh's causality (10:1): "Then Yahweh said to Moses, 'Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may show these signs of mine among them...'." So there is no need to doubt the sincerity of Pharaoh's confession. What is being demonstrated is that he is now so totally under Yahweh's control that he is unable to sustain any consistency in his responses. His initial responses show him, like those around about, growing in awareness of the true state of affairs. His subsequent turn-abouts are irrational by comparison. He is like a
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schizophrenic. Even his servants begin to despair (10:7): "Let the men go that they may serve Yahweh their god. Do you not understand that Egypt is ruined?" To them, Pharaoh's "hardness" is utterly inexplicable. Only Moses and the reader have the key to the "inexplicable".

On the basis of 8:28 [8:24] and especially 10:10, Moshe Greenberg notes that Pharaoh eventually sees through Moses' request to be allowed to attend a sacrifice in the wilderness /8/:

Pharaoh plainly hints in [chapter 10] verse 10 that he knows whither the Hebrews' demand is tending, namely, toward escape. This is a clearer expression of his apprehension than his warning not to go too far in 8:24, though that betrayed a definite suspicion of Moses' purpose.

David Robertson, too, argues that Pharaoh is early aware of Moses' real objective /9/. Hence, Robertson suggests, the concessions which Pharaoh offers are concessions which he knows will not satisfy Moses' real demand: "Like many a skillful bargainer he appears to give something without really giving anything" /10/.

Herein lies a rather nice irony. For while, in terms of his confrontations with Moses, Pharaoh might appear to be on top of the situation, it so happens that this is no normal negotiation. Here negotiating skills are irrelevant. The concessions in chapters 9 and 10 which "give something without really giving anything" are in fact triggers for further disaster. What is missing, of course, from Pharaoh's response - as he skilfully offers concessions which give nothing away and saddles his opponent with the logic of his own deception (if a sacrifice, why children?) /11/ - is a realistic appreciation of the part the plagues are playing in the "negotiation". It is the brute force of the plagues that makes the niceties of negotiation, of ploy and counter-ploy, irrelevant. "Do you not understand that Egypt is ruined?" demand the servants, bewildered by their king's behaviour. In the face of repeated plagues, Pharaoh's bargaining with Moses is as crazy as his earlier turn-about /12/.

With the plague of locusts (10:1-20) Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron "in haste" - for when "himself" again he recognizes the peril he is in - and once again he confesses sin (10:16). His humbling goes even further. He begs now for forgiveness (10:17). Yahweh, however, intervenes: "But Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart (waye'haazzĕq yhwh 'et-lĕb par'côh), and he did not let the children of Israel go" (10:20). So too, on the next
occasion (the darkness, 10:21-29), his movement through compromise - 10:24: "your children also may go with you; only let your cattle and your herds remain behind"; compare 10:10: "Yahweh be with you, if ever I let you and your children go!" - towards the possibility of turning his confession (10:16) into concrete action is destroyed by God (10:20): "But Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart and he would not let them go"

The threat of death to the first-born fits the same pattern (chapter 11) /14/, except that this time Yahweh has decided the moment of departure has come. It is from Yahweh himself that we learn the fact (11:1), so that the aftermath of this plague is entirely predictable (12:31-2). Pharaoh completes his humbling response by asking, in parting, for their blessing! /15/

There is one "plague" yet to come. The destruction of the Egyptian host and Pharaoh himself at the Sea. In his discussion of the plagues and the Sea of Reeds, Dennis McCarthy remarks /16/: "Pharaoh's readiness to pursue Israel cries for explanation after the event of Exod 12:29 and Pharaoh's response to it". But the explanation is there in the text, on either side of 14:5 where we are told of Pharaoh's crucial and fatal change of mind. Verse 5 is framed by unambiguous declarations of divine causality (14:4,8):

"And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them and I will get glory [kāḇēd - a nice irony!] over Pharaoh and all his host..."

And Yahweh hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt and he pursued the people of Israel as they went forth defiantly.

Pharaoh's destruction is not self-destruction, for Pharaoh is no longer a "self". Yahweh has split his mind, stolen his will. The story of the plagues is not a simple repetition of a formula; it develops /17/.

To summarize so far, we can say that while in the early stages of the story we are invited to see Pharaoh as his own master, hardening his own heart (perhaps the legacy of the J story), as the narrative develops it becomes crystal clear that God is ultimately the only agent of heart-hardening who matters (the P legacy) /18/. "Pharaoh's heart was hardened" thus becomes a kind of shorthand for "Yahweh caused Pharaoh's heart to harden". If Pharaoh may have been directly responsible
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for his attitude at the commencement, by the end of the story he is depicted as acting against his own better judgment, a mere puppet of Yahweh.

Discussing the motif of yad (hand or power) in his analysis of the Exodus story in the present volume Charles Isbell points in the text to a "struggle for Israel being waged by two potential masters. In the truest sense the entire story is about how Israel was transferred from the hand of one (Pharaoh) into the hand of the other (Yahweh)" /19/. Greenberg's rich analysis of the story repeatedly comes back to the theme of "sovereignty" /20/:

Pharaoh was willing to be "God-fearing" within the bounds of his sovereignty; to grant the freedom that Moses was demanding for Israel was tantamount, in Pharaoh's view, to abdicating the throne.

...the core of his intransigence [is] the maintenance of his sovereignty. That is the crux of the matter; that is the offense to the Godhead's kingship; that is what cannot coexist with God's authority. Thus the opposition of Pharaoh is the archetypal opposition of human power, of human authority, to the claims of God.

Certainly the hardening motif is expressive of mastery or control (or power - Rogerson). Yahweh can not only out-magic the mighty wizards of Egypt, he can control the response of Pharaoh to these marvels. He can turn the wisdom of the king to folly, to a ruinous recalcitrance which, moreover, leaves the king starkly isolated in his folly. It is Yahweh who decides when Pharaoh shall know that he, Yahweh, is truly God. It is Yahweh who prompts refusal so that the signs are heaped up as "punishment". In the theme of mastery, the two functions of hardening noted by Childs - to prevent the signs from revealing the knowledge of God, and to multiply the signs as judgment - are subsumed. Yahweh can and does manipulate Pharaoh. Yahweh is truly master.

Isbell goes on to say: "In a sense, then, the real issue throughout the narrative is not slavery vs. freedom, but merely the identity and character of the master whom Israel must serve". This perceptively emphasizes Israel's servant status, but perhaps it overstates its point a little in suggesting that the issue of slavery vs. freedom is not still central. I would rather say that the story nuances the theme of slavery vs. freedom by recognizing that the freedom into which Israel is delivered is in
fact a different kind of servitude /21/. Thus a certain irony underlies this story which tells of freedom gained, slavery overthrown, yet which presents the real struggle for Israel's "release" as being between rival masters. Nor does the ironic perception of "freedom" touch only Israel. We have seen that the hardening motif powerfully expresses Yahweh's manipulative power. From the point where God intervenes, any "struggle" between "masters" is palpably an unequal one. Pharaoh is doomed; he is a puppet before God. The freedom of the master turns out to be no more than that of the slave.

We have already noted that throughout the "negotiation" between Moses and Pharaoh the ostensible issue is not whether Israel is to be allowed to leave Egypt permanently but whether Israel is to be allowed to offer a sacrifice to Yahweh. Here is sophisticated storytelling. Not only does this twist in the narrative introduce a dimension of intrigue into the story - will Moses succeed in tricking Pharaoh into letting his people leave? /22/ - it also, through a play on words (כָּבָד, serve), focuses on the implicit (thematic) issue which is that the Israelites must serve Yahweh and not Pharaoh, that Yahweh, not Pharaoh, is master. Repeatedly the characters use the the phrase "serve (כָּבָד) Yahweh" to refer to the sacrifice, creating thereby some excellent ironies, as when Pharaoh himself urges Israel to "Go, serve Yahweh".

So Pharaoh abdicates as master. His freedom is illusory. What of the other characters in the story? Do any of them act independently, on their own human initiative? Are any of them allowed so to act once Yahweh has intervened? In short, have the human participants anything positive to contribute in this story in which divine direction and miraculous intervention seem to be the hallmarks of the plot? And why does Yahweh act as he does? What motivates him? If he is the master of masters in our story, then what sort of character is he?

Yahweh

His first involvement is in response to the midwives' deception of Pharaoh (1:20), itself motivated by the "fear" of God: he sanctions their deception and gives them families - a reward which ironically undermines the Egyptians' attempt to curtail the Israelite increase /23/ on account of their "fear" of Israel. This action of God may be proleptic - for the story as a whole will lead to the multiplication of Israel's family, and not just to those of the midwives. But it has no direct function in
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the plot. Only with 2:23-25 do we find an unmistakable prelude to crucial divine involvement (the people cry for help /24/, God hears their groaning, remembers his covenant with the patriarchs, sees the people, and knows ... /25/). The call of Moses follows immediately.

Chapter 2:23-25 thus provides the first major clue to Yahweh's motivation: his action is bound up with his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. His action is spelled out in terms of obligation. So, too, in the speeches of chapter 3, even though the "covenant" is not explicitly mentioned. Yahweh's response to the sight of Israel's oppression is couched in covenantal terms and will give effect to the covenantal "plan". Yahweh is the "God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"; he has heard their cry, seen their suffering, and will deliver them out of Egypt into a land flowing with milk and honey (3:6-8,15-17) /26/. Yahweh has seen suffering, affliction and oppression. But if he acts out of simple compassion, we are not told so. Nor is the emphasis of the speech upon the alleviation of the suffering (though the alleviation is, of course, implied). Rather the keynote is the covenantal promise of land, a land of milk and honey, and so perhaps a land in which to flourish /27/. The affliction of Israel spells the end of the promise of land, for they are no longer free to inherit /28/.

In chapter 6 this line of emphasis comes even more clearly into focus. "Covenant" is now defined (6:2-8):

I am Yahweh. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob ... Also I established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan. Also I heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians held in bondage and I remembered my covenant with them ... and I will bring you unto the land which I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Yahweh will take them as a people, will be their God (6:7); he will, in short, honour his covenantal obligation to dispose favourably of these children of the patriarchs.

Yahweh, therefore, is Providence, the Provider of a future, a future that has already been promised in the past. The story could have emphasized the motivating power of pity, compassion, love; rather it singles out plan, promise, obligation. As Isbell emphasizes, the story is about mastery, control.

Yahweh's dealings with Moses are patiently forceful. His culminating anger is followed by silent acquiescence on Moses'
part and again gives clear indication of what is to follow. Yahweh is all-powerful and cannot be resisted without incurring terrible anger. Pharaoh, like Moses, will hold out against reasoned appeal and ignore the message of harmless "signs". But where Moses succumbs as servant to Yahweh in the face of his anger, Pharaoh will continue to object, because compelled to do so, and will be destroyed.

Moses is treated with some patience. Not so Pharaoh. Ironically, however, it will appear that Yahweh is patient with him, for the final retribution will be delayed by the prolonged sequence of plagues, each plague purporting to give him a chance to repent /29/.

Why does God treat Pharaoh like this? Explicitly, he says to Pharaoh (9:14-16) that he will send him plagues, "that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth". Indeed, he goes on, he could have destroyed Pharaoh and Egypt by this time but "for this purpose have I let you live, to show you my power, so that my name may be declared throughout all the earth". This is, as it were, an answer to Pharaoh's (rhetorical) question back in chapter 5 (v.2), "Who is Yahweh, that I should heed his voice and let Israel go?" The answer is that Yahweh is "the one who may bid 'let go' when he chooses"; Yahweh is the master of all masters /30/. The manipulation of Pharaoh provides a practical demonstration of this point. This is not to say that Yahweh's self-glorification is his primary motivation for delivering Israel; but that it is, perhaps, the motivation for his treatment of Pharaoh. It is, of course, an appropriate purpose to express to Pharaoh, for the king is thereby reminded of his proper place in the scheme of things: as he has exalted himself over Israel, so Yahweh has exalted himself over Pharaoh. Pharaoh is but a servant before Yahweh as will be made plain not only to Pharaoh but to all his subjects, and all the earth (14:4,18).

Yahweh delivers Israel, as obliged by his covenant promise to see them in a land which may be called their own. By the simple act of deliverance out of Egypt he re-activates that promise - and demonstrates his mastery; by effecting the deliverance with repeated signs and wonders he elevates the belittling of Pharaoh into an event of cosmic proportions, doubly so in the climactic crossing of the sea where we see the world revert to chaos and then become dry land once again /31/ - and thereby demonstrates his mastery.

It is not only Egypt and the nations who will learn of God's
power. It is also Israel herself. "For I have hardened his heart...", says Yahweh in 10:1-2, "that I may show these signs of mine among them, and that you may tell in the hearing of your son and your son's son how I have made sport of the Egyptians and what signs I have done among them; that you may know that I am Yahweh". The signs and wonders are also calculated to direct Israel to Yahweh /32/, to make unchallengeable Yahweh's claim to be the "God of the fathers".

Early in the story there runs an unease concerning God's identity (3:13; 4:1; 6:1-7):

Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you', and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?"

Then Moses answered, "But behold, they will not believe me or listen to my voice, for they will say, 'Yahweh did not appear to you'".

And God said to Moses, "I am Yahweh. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as El Shaddai, but by my name Yahweh I did not make myself known to them ... Say therefore to the people of Israel, 'I am Yahweh, and I will bring you out ... and I will take you for my people, and I will be your God'".

Yahweh's demonstration of his power over the Egyptians is also bound up with his need to establish himself securely as Israel's God, the god of the covenantal promise, in the eyes of Israel. At this point appears a curious hint of insecurity in God himself, paradoxically as it may appear in the context of this massive demonstration of his mastery. After all, what does it profit God if he "provides" but his people fail to identify their provider? It is a vulnerability of all gods! Yahweh needs Israel, just as Israel needs Yahweh. Thus by his signs and wonders Yahweh seeks to secure his identity /33/.

Chapter 14 ends (verse 31): "And Israel saw the great work which Yahweh did against the Egyptians, and the people feared Yahweh; and they believed in Yahweh and his servant Moses".

Moses

And what of Moses? Is he, like Pharaoh, merely a puppet in God's hands? Following the lead of Childs and others, Ann Vater
has explored the prophetic dimension in our story's presentation of Moses and refined our understanding of it /34/. Out of the four main available patterns of narrating the communication of a message, our author/editor predominantly chooses one which highlights the commissioning scene (as, for example, in 7:14-18).

This commissioning pattern emphasizes the privileged communication between God and Moses .... However, the pattern does not present us with a Moses regularly confronting Pharaoh. Instead of M. Buber's prophetic Moses who provides the movement in the story by confronting the Egyptian king, God's speaking with Moses, which sometimes results in a brief notice of a delivery or no mention of a delivery at all, discloses the "silenced messenger," whose own voice melts into the words of God. /35/

Moses is not so much a prophet as a "living oracle". The play and counterplay is between God and Pharaoh, not Moses and Pharaoh. (The contrast is with figures such as Elijah or Elisha.)

This is a valuable perception, the more so when we nuance it a little and then set it in a broader context. The nuance: Vater observes that it is only in the tenth plague (chapter 11: the destruction of the first born) that Moses "breaks his (literary) silence before Pharaoh" and, like a prophet, "actually comes forth, without any previous commissioning, and begins, 'Thus says the Lord'". It is of course this plague which produces finally the unqualified capitulation of Pharaoh. To be sure, a commissioning may be "understood" here, but in literary terms at least, Moses takes an initiative. And, of course, taking initiative has been significantly absent from the Moses configuration during the plagues narrative.

From this observation we move to our story as a whole (chapters 1-14), and see that the scurry of human initiatives in the action at the beginning - Pharaoh's oppression, the midwives' trick, the saving of Moses by his mother and sister, Moses' killing of the Egyptian, his helping of the daughters of Reuel - this scurry of human initiative comes to an abrupt end at the burning bush. Thereafter Yahweh dictates the action /36/. We have glimpses of individual human action, as when some among Pharaoh's servants take their slaves and cattle into shelter against the predicted hailstorm (9:20), but these do not affect the plot. Pharaoh's initiatives towards compromise or even capitulation are all frustrated by Yahweh and Moses does only as he is directed. Nevertheless we have just noted one
"literary" expression of independence. There is another indication. Aaron, who is a vital prop for Moses at the beginning, gradually loses prominence in the action and virtually disappears. The process of his (literary) withdrawal is subtle so that by the time we come to the crossing of the Sea we are likely to have hardly noticed his disappearance. But he is gone, and Moses stands and speaks alone /37/.

My point is that, although most of the key actions in the story (including the hardening) are shown to be dictated by Yahweh, the narrative also depicts an independence on the part of Moses. He is a man of initiative until the incident at the burning bush. His first, self-prompted initiatives as protector and mediator fail - ironically, since it is his act of protection that is turned against him in his attempt as mediator. On the other hand, his much more mundane courtesy of protection towards the daughters of Reuel brings him success at a domestic level. And in this domestic success Moses echoes that of the midwives in preserving the Hebrew families. No mighty political deeds here, but achievement nonetheless. After the burning bush he becomes a rather characterless instrument in Yahweh's hands, dependent on Aaron for speech and on God for instructions how to act; but by the time he gets to the Sea, much has changed, and a man of initiative has re-emerged. Moses comes into his own as an agent of political change and at the Sea controls the people in masterly fashion. (If the Sea marks the birth of Israel, it also marks the re-birth of Moses!) The people see the approaching Egyptian army and cry out in fear, attacking Moses for bringing them to their deaths in the wilderness. But Moses (without consulting Yahweh) says to the people (14:13-14):

"Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of Yahweh, which he will work for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. Yahweh will fight for you, and you have only to be still".

It is sometimes argued, because of the verse that follows, that there is disorganization in the text here. Verse 15 narrates that "Yahweh said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward ...'; yet there has been no mention of Moses "crying" to God /38/. Certainly there is a cryptic quality to verse 15a as it appears in the present context and it may be the case that a sentence of petition by Moses to Yahweh is missing after verse 14. But attempts to rearrange the existing
order of the verses so as to place Yahweh's response before Moses' speech to the people lack conviction. Moses' direct response to the people, and his own spontaneous utterance of reassurance, comes fittingly at this point in the process of his re-growth as a character. He is a match for the people.

For much of the story, then, Moses is puppet-like - like Pharaoh. The king's willingness to compromise is frustrated by God; Moses's early objections to his commission are likewise frustrated by God. In the event, however, whereas Pharaoh perishes in a manic pursuit propelled by God, Moses survives in servanthood and gives intimations of independence. At the Sea we glimpse a character who can decide for himself, who can live and move and have his own being. He acts in faith but also in freedom. It is his action, not just a reflex of God's. Moses, therefore, is a servant of God, but not a puppet. The consequences of this character development are, of course, important. Such servants may raise their hands against their masters. Freedom and service can never fully be co-terminous. They co-exist in tension. As in the Garden, freedom incubates rebellion. Perhaps, we might say, without rebellion, "freedom in servitude" is an illusion. Looking into the story that follows our story we are not surprised to see a Moses unwilling to be a mere unthinking tool of God, a Moses who protests, who disputes with God in the wilderness /39/.

The people

Nor is it only Moses who will live uneasily in the new servitude. The people of Israel will also be characterized by rebellion in the wilderness. For this they have been condemned by generations of exegetes and there is no doubt that the biblical text itself conveys condemnation for their uncertain faith. Yet I believe our story does not allow mere condemnation as our response. Rather the story illustrates the point that freedom and servitude in faith will always coexist uneasily. God can coopt faith from puppets or risk faith from human beings.

A parallel between Moses and God makes this point nicely. Moses acts for an oppressed Israelite and kills an Egyptian; yet his authority in Israel proves not to have been established thereby - on the contrary his action is turned against him. Who, ask the quarrelling Israelites (2:14), set up Moses as their prince and judge? Yahweh delivers an oppressed Israel and destroys Egypt. We have already noted that from this action he desires recognition as supreme prince and judge, as it were; and at least
momentarily he gains what he desires. Yet no deliverance, no sign, no wonder, is wholly unambiguous. God cannot buy certain recognition by these means. He can treat the people as puppets (as he treats Pharaoh) or he can risk that in freedom the people reject him, despite all. And, of course, just as the quarrelling Israelites are to some extent justified in looking suspiciously at Moses ("Do you mean to kill us as you killed the Egyptian?") so the people will have some warrant for rebelling against God. In 14:11 they shout suspiciously,

"Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, in bringing us out of Egypt? Is not this what we said to you in Egypt, "Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians"? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness".

Their suspicion is entirely on the mark. Their freedom will be to serve God rather than the Egyptians and to die in the wilderness!

**Conclusion**

Let me now return to the beginning of the essay. Childs suggests that the matter of causality in the heart-hardening is a side-track; that those critics, for example, who have seen here a theological dimension of predestination and freewill, have been wrong. I would say, No, they have been right (at least in principle) to sense such a dimension, but wrong to see the question of divine determination in human affairs arising only in connection with Pharaoh's heart-hardening. For the whole story may be seen in these terms - Moses and the people, as well as Pharaoh, exist and act within a framework of divine "causality". With them, too, the question arises, Are they independent agents? Are they manipulated by God? (Have they freewill? Are they "pre-destined"?) The story is about freedom; but freedom turns out to involve varieties of servitude.

Thus Isbell's observation bears repeating: the story is above all one about masters, especially God. No one in the story entirely escapes God's control or its repercussions, whether directly or indirectly. Moses who sits removed in Midian finds himself forced by Yahweh into a direct servitude but is nevertheless allowed to develop a measure of freedom. Pharaoh (Egypt) exalts his own mastery and is cast into a total and mortal servitude. The people of Egypt and Israel are buffeted this way and that in varying indirect roles of servitude.
Superficially the story provides a glorious tableau of deliverance with great signs and wonders, from slavery into freedom. The more one looks into it, however, the more muted that picture appears. The signs and wonders conceal destruction and suffering, deserved and undeserved - an excess of havoc we might be tempted to argue. At God's prompting Moses delivers the people into a wilderness, to die there, though their children will be enabled by this deliverance to build a nation (though again built on the destruction of others). At his own initiative Moses had built himself a family and a quiet life in Midian. Clearly the story lauds his success as political servant of God, the one who brings the people out of the land and across the Sea; yet it does not sneer at his earlier success as a domestic "master". At times those earlier chapters may seem to depict a life in terms of a modest naturalism, a contrast to the unreality of the world of magic, signs and wonders, which so much of the rest of the story inhabits. On the other hand, that life in Midian may itself be seen as a rural idyll, itself "unreal", removed from the "real" world of masters and slaves. It is but a temporary dwelling place. Moses must leave it to achieve a full humanity. There is no ideal world in this story.

God himself is depicted as risking insecurity, because that is the price of allowing his servants a dimension of freedom. An exodus story that saw no murmuring, no rebellion (or potential for rebellion) by Moses and by Israel, would indeed be a fairy tale, a piece of soft romance. But to talk of God and "insecurity" in the same breath is also to see that the gift of human "freedom" (to some if not to others) itself creates external pressures on God which in turn circumscribe his own action. Egypt/Pharaoh must be made an example of, spectacularly, so that Israel, the whole world, may freely come to recognize that Yahweh is indeed master, one who remembers his obligations as well as one who demands "service" (labour!). In short, in his relations with humankind, God's freedom is circumscribed by humankind just as the freedom of humankind is circumscribed by God.

I started this paper with Robertson's essay. The Exodus story, he argued, excluded ambiguity and irony in the presentation of its characters. Its readers, he argued, will experience essentially only childlike emotions and learn essentially childlike lessons. I trust I have indicated some kind of answer to this evaluation. The "simplicity" of the story is deceptive. Robertson himself observes that "it is ironic that the righteous
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Yahweh himself has to harden the tyrannical Pharaoh's heart to keep the series of plagues going", but believes this irony to lie outside the text. On the contrary, I have argued that it is part and parcel of a narrative which explores the ambiguous nature of human "freedom" in a theist world.

Thus, in conclusion, I would say that the exodus story has a number of dimensions. It may function as a paradigm of hope - the story of God bringing new life out of death and oppression, a story to recite in times of great despair. Or it may warn us against becoming as Pharaoh so that through mocking (usurping?) God's rule we risk losing our freedom totally, risk being treated as puppet rather than person. It may encourage us to anticipate the challenge from God to leave Midian for a more glorious servanthood. Or it may move us to thank God that he has passed by, summoned another to great deeds, cancelled out another's freedom, left us in decent, mediocre, obscurity, to respond as best we can to the ripples of his involvement in human life - but avoiding the waves.

Pharaoh never died, and never will die. He always stands at the portal of hell, and when the kings of the nations enter, he makes the power of God known to them at once, in these words: "O ye fools! Why have ye not learnt knowledge from me? I denied the Lord God, and He brought ten plagues upon me, sent me to the bottom of the sea, kept me there for fifty days, released me then, and brought me up. Thus I could not but believe in Him." /41/

NOTES

3 Childs, Exodus, 170. So, too, he resists interpreting the call of Moses in terms of the "internal brooding of a man over the problems of his people and the mounting religious conviction that God wanted him to aid"; rather Moses' call is "a radical break with the past, initiated by God" (my stress) (p.73).
5 Childs, Exodus, 24-25,118,155; cf., e.g., Ronald E.
Alan Hauser, in a private communication, observes that by stipulating "tomorrow" as the time for the removal of the frogs, Pharaoh does not seem to be in much of a hurry. On reflection, however, I think that, on the contrary, "tomorrow" must be understood as allowing the barest minimum time to elapse for the job to be done. To have said "today" would have been to ask the impossible; "tomorrow" is both a concession (after all, Pharaoh does want to get rid of the frogs) and a demand. This understanding of "tomorrow" as essentially indicating remarkable speed would fit with 8:23 [19] where Yahweh undertakes to deliver the next sign "by tomorrow".


10 O.T. and Literary Critic, 24. Childs (Exodus, 135-36, 155-56) observes in some detail the place of "concessions" in the negotiation and the skill of both negotiators.

11 Greenberg (Understanding Exodus, 164) rightly notes the prima facie "reasonableness" of Pharaoh's claim that there is no need to take children if the Israelites are really only going to make sacrifice, points out that the Egyptian is at last ready to "negotiate seriously", and contrasts the provocative posture adopted by Moses.

12 Greenberg, too, observes that Pharaoh's apparently "reasonable" readiness to negotiate is, nonetheless, beside the point, but for a different (though I think not incompatible) reason. Pharaoh's negotiating position still mistakenly assumes his sovereignty, his "rightful authority over Israel", whereas Moses has "challenged the established power-political relationships". As far as Moses (and the reader) is concerned, Pharaoh's only realistic option is capitulation, since Pharaoh's human sovereignty is being
challenged by the supreme sovereignty of God. (Understanding Exodus, 164,166,180-81; and see also on this theme, 127-28.)

13 I am reminded of Yahweh's crucial intervention to destroy the reconciliation apparently effected by Jonathan between Saul and David in 1 Sam 19:1-17. Cf. my The Fate of King Saul: An Interpretation of a Biblical Story (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980) 77-83.

14 While recognizing with Dennis J. McCarthy ("Moses' Dealings with Pharaoh: Ex 7,8-10,27", CBQ 27 [1965] 336-47, see p.340) that there are differences between chapter 11 and the foregoing episodes, as the story now stands the death of the first-born does provide the climax (though still to be capped by chapter 14) to the cycle of plagues in 7:8-10:27; in which case any differences in chapter 11 only serve to mark out its special, climactic function. See further Michael Fishbane's interesting discussion of the (triadic plus one) structure of this material (Text and Texture: Close Readings of Selected Biblical Texts [New York: Schocken Books, 1979] 70-71,74; the essay is called "Exodus 1-4 / The Prologue to the Exodus Cycle", pp.63-76).

15 (Again compare the rejected Saul in 1 Sam 15 - having earlier confessed his "sin" to Samuel.)

Robertson (O.T. and Literary Critic, 25) observes nicely: "This request [for a blessing] is the final in a series of confessions by Pharaoh, and the series taken together describes the course of his acknowledgment of Yahweh as a god to whom worship is properly due. First he requests intercession, then he confesses his sin, and finally he asks for a blessing."


17 Alan Hauser points out to me (private communication) that in this last section of the story Yahweh's purposeful hardening is extended even to the ordinary Egyptians, who earlier had thought Pharaoh to have lost all sense of proportion in his dealings with the Israelites (cf. 9:20 and 10:7): "I will harden Pharaoh's heart ... and the Egyptians shall know that I am Yahweh ... The mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people ... and he pursued the people of Israel ... The Egyptians pursued them ..." (14:4,8,9).

18 Increasingly where expressions occur such as "Pharaoh
hardened his heart" (kbd in hiphil with Pharaoh as subject and libbō as object - Exod 8:11,28; 9:34) or "the heart of Pharaoh was hardened" (hzq in qal with "heart of Pharaoh" as subject) we are forced to read them in the context of a series of explicit attributions of ultimate causality to Yahweh (usually hzq in Piel, Yahweh as subject and "heart of Pharaoh" as object - 4:21; 7:3; 9:12; 10:20,27; 11:10; and cf. 14:17). I note with interest that Calvin came to a similar conclusion - cf. Childs, Exodus, 166.


21 This point is well observed by the commentators (hence the title of George Auzou's book, De la servitude au service [Paris: Orante, 1961]), though perhaps with a tendency to minimize the extent to which Yahweh's mastery itself requires human servitude. Cf., e.g., Goldingay ("The Man of War", 91-92): "[Israel] escapes from the service/servitude of Egypt that she may freely engage in the service of Yahweh.... There is an inextricable link between exodus and Sinai, between freedom from the service of the oppressor and freedom for the service of the liberating God" (my stress); or Plastaras (The God of Exodus, 32) on the ambiguity of the term cūd: "This ambiguity of vocabulary in the Hebrew text is used to underline the basic theme of the exodus story: Israel is delivered from servitude to man in order to be free to serve God". On cūd, see also Greenberg, Understanding Exodus, 128.


24 See further on this cry, Goldingay, "The Man of War", 82.

25 On the difficulty in the text here see Childs, Exodus, 28; cf. the suggestion by Isbell, "Exodus 1-2" above pp.52-53.

26 Fishbane (Text and Texture, 63), observing the thematic significance of the covenantal promise ("the divine
appearances to Moses are also linked to the chain of promises to the patriarchs”) usefully compares Exod 3:16-17 with Gen 50:25. See further his comments on pp.64, 66. The "covenant God" is also a focus for Childs in his discussion of chapter 3 (p.88) and 6:2-13 (p.115).

27 For a contrary view, emphasizing rather compassion as the motivating force for Yahweh, see Greenberg, Understanding Exodus, 53 (quoting Ramban) and pp.99-100.

28 Goldingay ("The Man of War", 84-85), drawing on J.P. Miranda (Marx and the Bible [Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1974] 88-89), argues that a second motivation is simply God's sense of justice: "The act of God at the exodus was an act of justice, whereby the oppressed were released and the oppressors punished". While I would agree that there are (implicit) signs in the narrative that justice is an issue (cf. 3:7,9) it seems to me to be subordinated in the text to the covenantal motivation.

29 Another dimension of the retribution is, of course, that it conveys a measure of poetic justice: kbd ("hardening" of Pharaoh's heart leading to "hard" [grievous] plagues and in turn to Yahweh's "honour") for kbd ("hard" labour); the death of the first-born plus Pharaoh and his host for the death of the Hebrew male babies; and that death in the Sea contrasting ironically with the salvation of Moses from the water. Is this balance or imbalance? The treatment of Pharaoh is appropriate, but is it also over-kill? We are touching now on the troubled question of the morality of violence which is raised early in the story with Moses killing the Egyptian. See further below, pp.87-88 and n.40.

30 Cf., e.g., Greenberg, Understanding Exodus, 169-70; McCarthy, "Moses' Dealings with Pharaoh", 343.


32 Cf. Goldingay, "The Man of War", 92-93; Greenberg, Understanding Exodus, 162.
Conversely, Israel's identity is marked out above all by the Passover ritual, itself a sign and the remembrance of a wonder in which Israel was separated from Egypt (chapters 11-13). See also Nohrnberg, "Moses", 47-49,53-56.


See also Greenberg, Understanding Exodus, 59. On the other hand, having here (and cf. p.36) stressed the human initiatives of these first two chapters, Greenberg argues that, nevertheless, Yahweh's hand is behind these events (pp.34-36 and cf. p.182); cf. also Childs, Exodus, 13. So, too, Ackerman ("The Literary Context of the Moses Birth Story"), who sees in these chapters a "partnership between Hebrew shrewdness [initiative?] and divine providence" (p.112), while noting that the "behind-the-scenes' activity of God" (until the last three verses) "contrasts sharply with the description of divine intervention beginning in Exodus 3 and building to a climax in Chapters 15 and 19" (p.115, and see 90-97, 112-13, 115-119). I agree about the hint of a providential presence (especially in the theme of "increase"), but find it strictly subordinated to the depiction of human initiatives from the midwives' deception onwards.

Thus Robertson's point (O.T. and Literary Critic, 20) that Aaron could "just as well ... be edited out" is only true up to a point. Aaron is not important for the plot, or for himself (e.g. character depiction), but for the depiction of Moses.

On Aaron's role, see further Greenberg, Understanding Exodus, 159-60,172-73. He notes that Aaron and the magicians are "counterparts", both "serving as seconds to the principal antagonists". Cf., too, McCarthy, "Moses' Dealings with Pharaoh", 345.

Thus NEB: "What is the meaning of this clamour?" for mah-ti§aq 'elay. On the text here, see Childs, Exodus, 226.

As well, of course, as acting boldly in concert with God. Cf. Greenberg, Understanding Exodus, 95: "It is noteworthy how Moses' diffidence vanishes later. At first afraid to look at the divine apparition, he will later ask boldly, 'Oh let me
behold your presence!' (33:18), and be singled out of all prophets for beholding the likeness of the Lord' (Num. 12:7). He who was at a loss to deal with an incredulous people until armed with a few petty signs, will later create an unheard of prodigy to crush it (Num. 30). He who is not 'a man of words (debarim)' will, at the end of his life, make some of the finest orations (debarim) in the whole of scripture (Deuteronony)."

40 Childs (Exodus, 44-46) points perceptively to some of the moral ambiguities of Moses' action in killing the Egyptian (cf. the contemporary issue of using physical violence as a means to social change). As noted above (n.26), the discussion could be extended to include Yahweh's violence against Egypt. See also Goldingay, "The Man of War", 89-91, 104-105, 112-113. The negative side to the Hebrews' attack on Moses' intervention against the Egyptian is well expressed by Ackerman, "The Literary Context of the Moses Birth Story", 99-100.

Interpretation of Pentateuchal narratives commonly begins with assumptions about disunity. If, for example, a word or sentence in a pericope appears on the surface to be disruptive or unnecessarily repetitive, the interpreter may simply excise the problem without considering the possibility that the word or phrase may have had a role to play in the rhetoric native to the narrator's own world of narration technique. If the excision should be completed too quickly, the contribution intended by the problem may be completely lost. That loss would, moreover, distort the interpreter's perception of the narrative's function and meaning simply by virtue of the fact. Rhetorical patterns function not only as elements of beauty in ancient art but also as keys for seeing clearly what the narrator wants to say. It is therefore of critical importance in any effort to recover meaning from any example of narrative art to recognize whatever sense of rhetorical unity may be at the heart of the piece.

For past interpreters, Num. 12 constitutes a prime example of literary and traditio-historical disunity in Old Testament narrative. The tradition embodied by the narrative reveals at least three stages of growth. The oldest would have been an account of reproach against Moses for his Cushite marriage /1/. The culpable rebel in this stage appears to be Miriam alone. Thus v.1 begins with a third feminine singular imperfect verb and apparently assumes that Miriam alone was the subject. In accord with a singular subject, the conclusion of the chapter describes the punishment of God for the rebellion as leprosy exacted against Miriam alone (v.10). Aaron appears in the tradition as a part of a second stage. Here he and Miriam together reproach Moses for his audacious behavior as leader of the people and claim for themselves in the process the right of
leadership, expressed as a mediation of God's word to the people (v.2). The disunity between these two stages emerges most sharply in the ambiguous role of Aaron. He apparently joins Miriam in rebellion against Moses. But he stands at a distance simply as an observer when punishment for the rebellion comes from God. The third stage in the tradition's history loads the narration with various accounts of Moses' position before God and his people /2/. In the received text this stage functions as a response to the rebellion. Yet, the response loses contact at key points with both the tradition about a Cushite wife and the one about rebellion over rights of leadership. In what manner is v.3, for example, with its depiction of Moses as the meekest of all people, a fitting response to the challenge against Moses as leader? Not only does Moses' retirement as meek fail to present a response suited to such an aggressive challenge as the one represented by v.2, so it would appear, but it also presents an image of Moses incompatible with other pictures of his leadership (contrast Num. 16).

The disunity of this chapter represents not only a problem in the history of the tradition, however. It also reflects a literary disunity. Thus, Martin Noth observes: "The modest reserve on the part of Moses is particularly stressed in v.3. In any case v.3 is a later addition which disrupts the close connection between v.2b and v.4" /3/. The older literary critics tended to define this disruption as a late redaction of the story without attributing the insertion to a particular source. Baentsch observes simply that "in any case the verse does not belong to the old narrative" /4/. It is possible, however, to see critics who are bolder in their literary constructions. In his comment on v.3, de Vaulx avers that "the redactor, the Elohist, who has narrowly tied down the two accounts compares the claims of the 'nebi'im' of the northern kingdom of the ninth century with the ancient relics of family opposition against Moses" /5/. Yet, Noth refuses to analyze the literary disunity of the chapter in terms of a combination of sources. "The reproach with regard to the Cushite marriage actually comes originally from Miriam, who is the one who is punished for it, whereas the dispute concerning the special place accorded to Moses in matters concerning the receiving of revelation is reported as stemming from 'Aaron and Miriam.' ... The two subjects of the chapter ... are now so closely joined together that it is impossible to pursue a division into separate literary sources ... It must therefore be accepted that in the complex of this chapter, a complex which, from the
literary point of view, can no longer be disentangled, two different strands have been combined' /6/.

If this chapter appears so completely disjointed, both in tradition history and in the literary structure of the received text, then one must ask whether there is any sense of unity at all within its limits. In what fashion can the chapter be classified as a unit? In answer to this question I propose a hypothesis. I do not deny the complexity of the tradition's history outlined in some detail by Noth. I do not even contest the apparent disunity at points in the literary construct. I propose, however, that a pattern of unity does emerge in the received text and that it overshadows the disjointed facets still preserved from the tradition's past. That pattern can be identified by paying attention to questions of structure and genre in the received text. Thus the hypothesis: The narrative as it has been preserved (by J) is no longer a tale designed primarily to narrate the events of rebellion against Moses by Miriam or by both Miriam and Aaron. To the contrary, that old, now hypothetically reconstructed tale was transformed in the course of its history into a legend /7/. As a legend the narrative now focuses on the virtues of Moses. Although the rebellion tradition lies in the immediate background for the narrative, it is not now the primary subject for narration. Rather, the subject is now the unusual status of Moses among all the people of the world. That hypothesis would mean that while v.3 may be disruptive vis-à-vis the old narrative tradition about a rebellion, it is now the center of the unit. And it provides the necessary key for defining the unity of the pericope.

The virtues of Moses constitute a vital part of the Old Testament tradition about Israel's famous leader. In Ex. 17:8-16, for example, the story of Israel's struggle against the Amalekites, v.12 depicts Moses as a leader with steady hands: wayēhî yādāyw 'emūnā. His steady hands endure all the way to the conclusion for the day's work: ʿad-bōʾ haʾassāmeš. This picture describes Moses' peculiar quality in leading his people in the face of wilderness crises. Moses sticks to his job despite physical difficulties. And his ability to stand by his responsibilities shows his integrity as a leader of the people. Thus, the form of the story sets this unit among the Old Testament legends about the leaders of Israel /8/.
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This picture of Moses' virtues enlarges when Num. 12:1-15 comes into consideration. The immediate point of contact appears not simply in a common interest in the virtues of Moses, but more particularly in repetition of the virtue announced in Ex. 17. Num. 12:7b observes: "He is entrusted with all my house": bêkol-bêtî ne'emăn hû. The apparent image of this verse, though based on a different grammatical form, draws on the same root word and meaning from Ex. 17:12. Moses shows himself a responsible steward in God's house, and his responsibility undergirds the picture of Moses as a person with integrity. The image would be like the one depicting Joseph in Gen. 39:1-6. Joseph, the steward over all the house of Potiphar, shows himself responsible in the administration of his responsibilities, even when his master's wife makes such responsibility very difficult. The Joseph parallel does not use the key word. It is not difficult, however, to find parallels with ne'emăn as a designation of virtue. In 1 Sam. 22:14, the term describes David in a manner that reveals integrity. It is a virtue that should set him above Saul's rampage (compare also 1 Sam. 2:35; 3:20; Isa. 7:9). To be ne'emăn is to be honest in fulfillment of duty (cf. Gen. 42:20).

But how, we might ask, does the unit in Num. 12:1-16 function to give expression to this virtue? And what precisely is the virtue of faithfulness in the house of God? In order to clarify the virtues of Moses as they appear in this unit, we must define the crucial role of v.3.

What is the significance of the attribute cānāw in v.3? "The man Moses was very meek, more than every other person on the face of the earth." The key term cānāw refers to a leading virtue of Moses who exemplifies the virtue better than any other person in the land. It is not, however, clear that the words, "meek", or "humble", do justice as tools for translating the term. If meek means "deficient in spirit and courage," or "submissive," then it does not describe the Moses of this pericope. The virtue of v.7 has nothing to do with humility. There is no way to depict Moses as deficient in spirit when he intercedes for Miriam before God (v.13). What kind of virtue, then, belongs to Moses more than to all other persons who are on the face of the earth? And how does that virtue relate to the description of Moses as responsible in v.7?

My intention here is not to present a full etymology for the term cānāw but rather to build on work already established. The basic thesis is that the word derives from a root, cēw,
connoting responsibility or integrity. The following observations seem to me relevant to that end: (i) Written without a yod, the form of the word now preserved in the MT (Cănăw) is without parallel. This masculine singular noun would suggest derivation from a root ĉnw, with some intimate relationship to the feminine noun ĉănawâ (cf. Isa. 29:19; 32:7; Am. 8:4; etc.) /12/. (ii) A traditional analysis of ĉănaw derives the word from the verb ĉănâ (III), "to be bowed down, afflicted." Support for this derivation lies at hand, not only from the Arabic root ĉnw, but also from the parallel alignment of the plural ĉănawîm with "poor," dallîm (cf. Am. 2:7; etc.). J. Schildenberger opens this connotation a step farther: "The attitude or virtue of ĉănawâ is revealed precisely in the fact that Moses does not defend himself but rather that Yahweh takes over responsibility for Moses' justification" /13/. (iii) Except in a very limited context, however, ĉănaw does not mean "oppressed," nor even "reticent." L. Delekat suggests rather that the word comes from the verb ĉănâ (I), "to answer" /14/. Moreover, the verb connotes "answer" in a very particular way. It suggests the kind of relationship that obtains between a master and his servant. The servant devotes himself in obedience to his master. He complies with his master's designs for his affairs. Ps. 149:4 offers an appropriate parallel: "For the Lord takes pleasure in his people; he adorns the humble (ĉănawîm) with victory. Let the faithful exult in glory." The ĉănawîm parallel the ĉăsidîm. They are not oppressed. They are committed in loyalty to the Lord /15/. The same parallel appears in Sir. 1:27: "For the fear of the Lord is wisdom and instruction, and he delights in fidelity and 'meekness.'"

If ĉănaw derives from such a stem, ĉnw, with denotation of obedient response, the connotations of the word in Num. 12 should follow in unforced sequence. Delekat observes, for example, that the verb ĉănâ can suggest "willfâhrig" or "hôrig" with certain tones of complacency, loss of immediacy in responsibility /16/. This kind of passive quality does not do justice to the pericope. The context highlights rather obedience within the context of personal responsibility. Moses' characteristic quality as ĉănaw is not a strictly inner personal virtue, but comes to expression in his role as servant with responsibility for the Lord's house: bêkol-bêtî ne'emân hû. Thus, if one considers the context of the crucial term ĉănaw, a conclusion lies at hand: To be "meek" is to be responsible for the whole household of the master.
The range of connotation in the word emerges even more clearly when one compares the virtue with "honor," kāḇōḏ. Kāḇōḏ is the honor imposed on a person by his supporters. It implies recognition, public celebration of deeds or character. Prov. 15:33 and 18:12 suggest that ġānāw comes before such public honor. Indeed, public display of honor may spell the destruction of an honored person. But if ġānāw precedes the public display of honor, if the fear of the Lord prepares a person for honor in the same way that ġānāw does, then honor may be embraced as good. ġānāw is therefore the personal honor, the integrity of character that makes public honor well bestowed. Num. 12:3 might thus read: "The man Moses was the most honorable of all persons who are on the face of the earth." This connotation for the masculine noun ġānāw can be confirmed by reference to all other parallel feminine nouns. In every case the noun appears to be more clearly defined if it is taken as a term for honor or integrity. Moreover, in two cases the word ġānāwā creates an impossible combination if the meaning is related to meek or humble. But integrity or honor serves both well. Thus, 2 Sam. 22:36 describes an attribute of God: "You have given me the shield of your salvation, and your 'honor' made me great" (cf. also Ps. 18:36). And in contrast to the RSV emendation, Ps. 45:5 requires such a translation: "In your majesty ride forth victoriously for the cause of truth (ḏeḇar-‘emet) and the honor of right (wēqanwā-šēdeq)."

II

What can be said, then, concerning genre and structure in this pericope? In its final form the unit appears as a legend. A legend builds its narrative in order to emphasize a virtue in the central hero. Typically the story line recedes behind the various points that advance the virtue, while the virtue itself becomes a central datum in the narrative, either by repetition or by structural elevation. In Numbers 12, both v.3 and v.7 depict the same virtue of responsibility in the administration of God's household. Both refer to the quality of Moses' leadership as a man of honor who fulfills the responsibility God gives him. Behind the emphasis on the virtue lies a tale of opposition to Moses. Indeed, the tale itself shows some evidence of growth, for an early account of the opposition because of Moses' marriage to a Cushite woman becomes a story of opposition to
Moses' role as leader of the people and mediator of the divine Word. Miriam and Aaron struggle against Moses' exclusive right to represent the Word of God to the people, and the struggle leads to an appropriate punishment of the rebels in a manner that at the same time affirms the authority of Moses. This tale thus becomes a legend, a vehicle for presenting Moses' virtue.

But what is the relationship between the tradition as tale and the legendary emphasis on Moses' honor? In its final form the pericope appears as a legend. But are the legendary elements simple additions to the text that disrupt the story /18/? It seems to me that the genre distinctions between tale and legend cannot serve as evidence that the legendary elements in vv.3 and 7 are simply disruptive. Legends typically appear as transformations of original tales, but nonetheless as significant stages in the history of the tradition. As a significant stage, the legend demands serious effort in interpretation. But of more importance, the transformation effected by the legend does not spell simple disunity in the pericope. It spells rather a new attempt to advance interpretation of the tradition. The question of unity in the pericope is thus the more pressing.

The working hypothesis for defining the unity of the pericope is that the responsibility as connoted by ġanāw is clearly demonstrated in the event of intercession as described in vv. 9-14. The structure of the pericope supports the viability of the hypothesis. (I) The point of tension in the story appears in vv.1-3. A report of the conflict, vv.1-2, contrasts with the legendary note in v.3. Miriam and Aaron may challenge the position Moses holds. But the storyteller assures his audience that Moses will respond with honor. (II) The second element in the pericope, vv.4-8, heightens the tension by introducing Yahweh as judge. Significantly, the narrative account of the hearing (vv.4-5) merges with an oracle, vv.6-8. And in the oracle is the legendary expansion. Moses administers the house of the Lord. He is ne'emān. (III) The final element of structure in vv.9-15 resolves the tension. The rebellion ends in dire punishment against the rebel. Moses' authority receives a just confirmation (vv.9-10). It is important to note, however, that the resolution of the conflict does not bring the pericope to its close. Rather, announcement of the punishment motivates immediate appeal from Aaron to Moses not to punish the rebels for the rebellion. The appeal comprises both a confession of guilt (v.11b) and a petition (vv.11a,12) and leads to Moses' intercession (cf. Ex. 32:21-24; 30-32). The intercession itself
appears under the narrative verbal form, "Moses cried out to the Lord" (wayyisCaq mōsheh 'el 'adōnāy), and features the stereotypes of supplication: "O God! Heal her!" ('ēl nā' rēpā' nā' lāh). Yet, despite its formal polite structure, it shares in the radical opposition characteristic of the intercession in Ex. 32:31-32. Moses petitions Yahweh to change the course of his action. And the intercession achieves a compromise: in fact, the healing process which forms the content of Moses' petition. Moreover, the intercession with its result must be understood directly in relationship to the virtue of Moses at the center of the legend. The virtue focuses on Moses' integrity of leadership before God. That virtue is described in v.8 as the unique position of Moses which enables him to speak "mouth to mouth" with God. It is precisely the mouth to mouth relationship that facilitates Moses' position as intercessor. And his audacity to address God with such an appeal is the act that exemplifies the virtue. It would appear to me, therefore, that intercession cannot be taken simply as a sign for a prophetic office. Here it appears as a contrast to the prophets.

In its final form, then, the pericope in Num. 12:1-15 appears as a well unified legend. Each element of structure in the unit exhibits a transformation from a focus on opposition to Moses' leadership to a depiction of Moses' virtue as a leader. And the final element shows the unit as a picture of an honorable man, a man whose virtue is exemplified by his intercession for his opponent. The following outline illustrates the pattern of unity:

I. Exposition 1-3
   A. Challenge
      1. Cushite wife, 1
      2. Mosaic leadership, 2
   B. Virtue, 3

II. Complications 4-8
   A. Summons, 4
   B. Theophany, 5
   C. Affirmation of Mosaic Virtue, 6-8
      1. Relationship between God and prophet, 6
      2. Relationship between God and Moses, 7-8a
      3. Accusation, 8b

III. Resolution 9-14
   A. Punishment, 9-10
   B. Appeal for intercession, 11-12
III

What kind of imagery dominates this pericope? The office of intercessor is commonly tied to the prophets /19/. Indeed, some intimate contact between the prophetic office and the Mosaic tradition can be seen. Yet, in just this pericope the virtue of Moses is denied to the prophetic office. The prophet receives the Word of God in a vision or a dream. But Moses enjoys a more personal relationship, the intimacy of direct communication, the responsibility of administration in the house of God. Thus, it is clear that reference to a prophetic office will not adequately account for this unit in the Moses traditions. The same point applies to the definition of the Mosaic tradition in terms of a royal office /20/. It is possible to see the king as a representative of this virtue, as J.R. Porter has shown. Yet, there is no concern in the Mosaic tradition at large, certainly not in this pericope, to define the imagery as royal. There is no limitation of this virtue to the royal office. It would be more likely that the Moses traditions and traditions derived from prophetic or royal offices depend on a common third source, a pattern for depicting particular leadership figures that is not limited to one institution. That pattern, so it seems to me, derives from folklore and can best be described as heroic. The legend that depicts Moses as more honorable than any person on the face of the earth should be understood as a part of the heroic Moses tradition so common in the Pentateuch.

IV

This perspective on Num. 12 has explicit theological consequences that need a hearing. (i) The legendary quality of leadership exemplified by Moses does not call for a deficiency of spirit and courage, a meek, retiring, unassertive leadership. It calls rather for strong, effective, responsible leadership. (ii) That leadership is not a strong, silent type. Rather, it involves articulation of needs among the led. (iii) Loyalty within the scope of such leadership belongs to God. But loyalty to God means loyalty in responsibility to the hero's people. Moses does
not show his obedience to God by a meek acceptance of Miriam's punishment as the obvious will of God. To the contrary, his obedience emerges only when he stands face to face with God and defends his own.

NOTES
1 Martin Noth, Numbers, A Commentary (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968) 93.
2 Noth, p. 93: "From a literary point of view, the present chapter ... presupposes these insertions (about leadership) in ch. 11 ..."
3 Noth, p. 95.
4 Bruno Baentsch, Exodus-Leviticus-Numeri (HKAT 1/2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1903) 512.
5 J. de Vaulx, Les Nombres (Sources Bibliques; Paris: Gabalda et Cie, 1972) 159, italics mine: "Le rédacteur, élohist, qui a étroitement lié les deux récits compare les prétentions des "nebîlm" du royaume du nord au ixè siècle aux vieux souvenirs des oppositions familiales contre Moïse."
6 Noth, pp. 92-93.
7 By legend I mean a narrative specifically structured to emphasize the virtues of the principal figure. See Ron Hals, "Legend: A Case Study in OT Form-Critical Terminology," CBQ 34 (1972) 166-176.
11 The problem appears also in German translations. The terms "demütig" or "sanftmütig" seem inadequate to me. Cf. the comments of Schildenberger, 71-72. George Buchanan Gray, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Numbers (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1903) 123, recognizes the conflict between such a translation and the context: "The word is generally rendered 'meek,' and interpreted to mean 'patient,' 'given to bear wrongs without resistance'; but this is a sense which it bears nowhere else in OT."
12 The Qere in Num. 12:3 reads, however, cănāyw,
Coats: Humility and Honor

suggesting a form of the adjective (cf. כָּנִי, Isa. 49:13). The Qere is nonetheless a problem, since it preserves the waw of the MT. The yod has traditionally been interpreted as a mater lectionis designed to insure pronunciation of the final syllable (Gray, 124).

13 Schildenberger, 72. Translation mine.

15 Albert Gelin, The Poor of Yahweh (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1964). See also Alfred Rahlfs, כָּנִי und כָּנַּאָw in den Psalmen (Leipzig: A. Dries, 1891). Rahlfs recognized an important distinction between the two. For the Psalms, כָּנִי means "in Knechtsstellung befindlich" while כָּנַּאָw would mean "sich in Knechtsstellung versetzend" (73). Specifically, כָּנִי appears as a synonym for 'ebyon, but not כָּנַּאָw (54). This distinction supports the point defended here. כָּנַּאָw describes one whose personal integrity facilitates his work as a servant, not simply a poor or retiring person.
16 Delekat, 42.
18 Bruno Baentsch, 512, observes: "Der milde und demütige Moses gehört doch wohl erst der späteren Zeit an, die ihm mit den Tugenden schmückte, die ihr als die höchsten galten ... Jedenfalls gehört der Vers nicht zum alten Bericht." The issue affects not only the tradition history, but also the definition of structure. Is the verse simply disruptive? Or does it have a substantial role in the whole? Cf. the discussion in Schildenberger, pp.71-72.
"WHOM WILL HE TEACH KNOWLEDGE?":
A LITERARY APPROACH TO ISAIAH 28

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I. INTRODUCTION

It is generally agreed that Is. 28-32 is a collection, and a rather complex one at that, of independent oracles from different situations, joined on the basis of catchword and theme /1/. In approaching Is. 28-32 from a literary perspective, my major concern is not just to show catchword and thematic connections, but to study the effect produced when the material under scrutiny is read as a literary whole. I am interested less in the editorial principles behind the present arrangement of the oracles, and more in the meaning the prophetic words take on in light of their present context. In places I think this meaning is different from the understanding one gains by treating the individual oracles independently. Their context gives them new meaning /2/. Interpretation of the text as it now stands, then, is the subject of this study. Our attention will centre on considerations of such literary matters as the interrelations of certain key themes and motifs, the use of tropes and how they work, the kinds of rhetorical devices employed and the result they produce; in short, on exploration of the relation of form and meaning.

An issue often raised with regard to this kind of analysis of biblical texts is whether or not the observed literary structures and devices are intended by the ancient authors and editors. To pursue this kind of questioning would be, in my opinion, to run the risk of falling into the intentional fallacy /3/. E.D. Hirsch, Jr., makes a valuable observation with regard to conscious and unconscious literary meanings; namely, that when meaning is complicated, an author (or, we might say, editor) cannot possibly at a given moment be paying attention to all its complexities /4/. The question whether or not certain literary
features are deliberate or spontaneous receives a similar evaluation by Cleanth Brooks:

The truth of the matter is that we know very little of the various poets' methods of composition, and that what may seem to us the product of deliberate choice may well have been as "spontaneous" as anything else in the poem ... We shall probably speculate to better advantage - if speculate we must - on the possible significant interrelations of image with image rather than on the possible amount of pen-biting which the interrelations may have cost the author /5/.

While the above citation refers to written literature, and we are dealing in Is. 28-32 with material which most likely grew up in oral tradition; and while both critics are concerned with modern literature, I find their observations applicable to the literary study of Is. 28 presented below /6/.

Whereas it is not the individual oracle or the growth of the tradition which concerns me here, my analysis presupposes form critical and tradition critical investigation, and will, at points, make use of insights gained through these approaches. After subjecting ch. 28 to literary scrutiny, I shall make some general remarks about its larger context, chs. 28-32.

II. ISAIAH 28

Is. 28 begins with an oracle against the Northern Kingdom, Ephraim, and then moves to address the Kingdom of Judah. Most commentators agree that only vv.1-4 apply to Ephraim, and that with v.7 the indictment of Judah begins /7/. We may accept the arguments for this assessment while at the same time observing that from a literary perspective, it is striking that not until v.14 does the name Jerusalem appear. One result of this delay is a certain ambiguity with regard to the referents of vv.7-13. Verses 7f. speak of priest and prophet, and in vv.9-13 "this people" comes under judgment; but which priests, which prophets, and which people are meant? From v.7 on, suspicion may grow that the situation applies to the Southern Kingdom, but only with v.14 is this applicability made explicit. Now that Jerusalem's leaders are directly called to task, they should be able to recognize themselves in the descriptions of vv.7-13. Moreover, a strong similarity between vv.14ff. and vv.1-4 in terms of both form and content serves to show the
Jerusalemites that their situation is not so different from that of their northern neighbors.

Another consequence of the delay of direct reference to Jerusalem is that the addresses to Ephraim and Jerusalem in vv.1 and 14 mark a kind of natural division of the chapter into two major parts, vv.1-13, vv.14-29. Let me say at the outset that I make this structural observation tentatively. Nevertheless, I am struck by the number of parallels which exist between the two parts. In particular, the oracles against Ephraim (vv.1-4) and Jerusalem (vv.14-19) display a remarkable correspondence, which justifies our seeing the former as a lesson and a warning to the subjects of the latter.

Verse 1 addresses the proud crown of Ephraim, a metaphor which suggests Ephraim's leaders. Verse 14 speaks to the rulers of Jerusalem. In each oracle, a similar pattern is followed: (i) rich metaphorical language depicts the condition which calls forth Yhwh's wrath, v.1, vv.14f.; (ii) Yhwh's response, introduced by hinnēh, is described with new imagery and new terminology, vv.2; 16-17a (17a where Yhwh's wéṣaṁtî echoes the Jerusalemites' šamnû presents the only exception); (iii) the oracle returns to the images with which it began to describe the punishment: vv.3f. repeat the metaphors of v.1; vv.17b-18 use the image of vv.14-15.

For both Ephraim and Judah, Yhwh's instrument of punishment is the same. Against Ephraim Yhwh sends one strong and mighty, like a downpour of hail (bārāḏh) and of mighty overflowing waters (mayim kabbīrim shōtēphîm), v.2. Although the Jerusalem leaders imagine through their alliances to have avoided the overflowing scourge (shōt (Q) shōtēph), v.15, Yhwh informs them that, to the contrary, hail (bārāḏh) will sweep away their refuge of falsehood and waters will overflow (mayim yishtōphû) their hiding place, v.17. Destruction pushes beyond the storm imagery. The proud crown of Ephraim will be trampled (tērāmasnâh) under foot, v.3, and the destruction of the Jerusalemites will be like a trampling (le̱emirmâs), v.18.

In vv.5f. mention is made of a remnant, and justice (mishpāṭ) is associated with it. I am doubtful whether vv.16-17a hold out much hope for a remnant /8/, but if so, its presence and its association with justice (mishpāṭ) provide another point of contact between the two parts of the chapter. In any event, the prophet continues, so that as the chapter now stands, salvation is not the final word in either of the two parts. Verses 1-13 conclude with an example of unsuccessful instruction. The
prophet asks whom will Yhwh teach (yôreḥ) knowledge, v.9, but because the people are unwilling to hear (šēmôaḥ), v.12, a lesson will be taught which will destroy them. Verses 14-29 also conclude with instruction; in this case it is left open for the people to decide whether or not they will hear (šımû), v.23. In contrast to the confusion created by the instruction given in vv.9-13, this final lesson in vv.23-29 makes its point with clarity. Yhwh teaches (yôrennû) the farmer, v.26, and no one would dispute the benefits of this instruction. Should not the farmer serve as a model for the Jerusalemites to follow?

Instruction is an essential theme in ch. 28. We shall explore below the development of three motifs in which it finds expression: teaching, hearing, and understanding the message. Suffice it here to say that, like the motif of teaching (vv.9,26), the motif of understanding the message occurs once in each section of ch. 28 (vv.9,19). The motif of hearing receives greater elaboration in the chapter, giving expression to the basic concept that to understand the message (šēmôcāh) one must be willing to hear (šımû) it. We may assume that the message includes the idea of rest and trust in Yhwh, for this is the gist of the message as it appears in each section, vv.12 and 16. In the first part of the chapter, the message is outrightly rejected; in the second, it is significant that no explicit statement about its rejection appears.

Destruction comes about, vv.9-13, because the people reject instruction. A decree of destruction, v.22, precedes the instruction of vv.23-29. The order indicates that perhaps there is yet time to hear and thus avoid the catastrophe. In each instance, destruction is directly associated with the strange and alien action of Yhwh. In vv.11-13, the issue is Yhwh's strange, incomprehensible language; in v.21, Yhwh's strange and alien work. To those unwilling to be instructed, Yhwh's actions will, indeed, be incomprehensible.

The similarities noted above between vv.1-13 and 14-29 do not indicate some sort of static or artificial division of the material within the chapter. On the contrary, one part flows into the next; and it is this movement within the chapter which calls for exploration. Since I do not find in ch. 28 some kind of clear-cut strophic arrangement, the division of this material in the discussion which follows is used purely for convenience. Some of these sections may well have once been individual poems (oracles), but they are now associated in such a way as to give the whole chapter a remarkable unity.
Art and Meaning

Isaiah 28:1-6

1 Alas! proud crown, drunkards of Ephraim, fading flower, its glorious beauty, which is upon the head of the fertile valley, those smitten with wine.

2 Behold, the Lord has one strong and mighty like a torrent of hail, a storm of destruction, like a torrent of mighty waters overflowing he casts down to the earth with (his) hand.

3 Underfoot will be trampled the proud crown, drunkards of Ephraim; and the fading flower, its glorious beauty, which is upon the head of the fertile valley, will be like a first-ripe fig before summer, which, when the one who sees, sees it, as soon as it is in his hand, he swallows it up.

4 In that day, Yhwh of hosts will be (like) a crown of beauty and (like) a diadem of glory to the remnant of his people, and (like) a spirit of justice to the one sitting in judgment, and (like) strength to those turning back battle at the gate.

Is. 28:1-6 represents the densest figurative language in all of chs. 28-32. These few verses describe judgment upon Ephraim (vv.1-4) and promise for a remnant (vv.5f.) using no less than seven similes, which themselves appear among elaborate metaphorical descriptions. Metaphor and simile alternate in the poem. It begins in v.1 with a metaphor describing certain Ephraimites, who by virtue of their drunkenness (itself perhaps symbolic) have brought upon themselves Yhwh's wrath. It moves, v.2, to two similes which describe Yhwh's instrument of punishment in terms of a mighty storm, which, one might expect, will sweep away the unworthy Ephraimites. Contrary to this expectation, v.3 presents a metaphor in which Ephraim's punishment is described as a trampling. Verse 4 continues the description of punishment with an extended simile in which the swiftness and completeness of the destruction are conveyed by comparison to an early fig, eaten as soon as it is seen. In vv.5f. the imagery climaxes in four similes describing Yhwh in various roles as provider of strength and security for a remnant.
Even a casual reader will note that metaphor in these verses is not only dense, it is mixed as well, a fact which has led some interpreters to consider it less than successful /9/. For example, we move from the description of Yhwh's instrument of punishment as a storm (v.2) to the image of a crown trampled "with feet" (v.3). While trampling may serve as a figurative description of the destruction accomplished by a hail storm, it seems difficult to picture an atmospheric condition with feet, Carl Sandburg notwithstanding. Moreover, comparison of a fading flower to an early fig, v.4, strains the imagery. Density of metaphor makes interpretation of the poem difficult, while mixed metaphor defies explanation. Fortunately, our goal is not to explain the imagery here, but rather to comment upon how it works: how is it used and what effects does it produce?

The terms tenor and vehicle will be useful in this analysis to refer respectively to the subject to which the metaphor is applied and to the metaphoric description itself /10/. Let us consider first the tenors. There are three tenors in the poem, corresponding to three important figures in the background of the oracle. The first is marked by a certain vagueness; exactly who or what is meant by the phrase "proud crown, drunkards of Ephraim"? The word "crown" brings to mind Ephraim's leaders, and the image of the head of the fertile valley suggests Samaria (cf. 7:9). The imagery is fluid, for one can also think of Samaria as the crown on the head of the fertile valley, and the drunkards as the citizens of Samaria. The Ephraimites about whom the oracle is uttered are described as a proud crown, but through a series of ironic, sometimes obscure, images, they are shown to be no crown at all.

Whereas the first tenor is somewhat vague, the next tenor is implicit. Yhwh's instrument of punishment is never identified in the poem. We are probably correct in understanding the tenor to be Assyria, if, as most commentators think, this oracle comes from the period between the Syro-Ephraimitic war and the fall of the Northern Kingdom /11/. Assyria is described in a similar manner in Is. 8:6-8. Only the third tenor is explicit. Yhwh is presented as the true crown of the people, in contrast to the transitory crown of the leaders of Ephraim.

The differences with regard to specificity of tenor reveal the concerns of the poem. The most important tenor is explicit; the least, implicit. The clear identification of Yhwh as crown, diadem, spirit of justice, and strength, as well as the fact that these four similes climax the poem, serves to underscore a
fundamental theological tenet of Isaiah, that deliverance or salvation comes only through Yhwh. By not mentioning Assyria by name, the prophet denies Assyria ground for boasting. Elsewhere Isaiah comments upon Assyria's folly in regarding itself as responsible for the conquest of Israel.

Shall the axe vaunt itself
over the one who hews with it,
or the saw magnify itself
against the one who wields it? (10:15)

The Assyrians are simply an instrument of Yhwh, and as far as the poet of 28:1-6 is concerned, specific identification of Yhwh's instrument is irrelevant. As for the Ephraimites, the metaphor "proud crown, drunkards of Ephraim" points to the leaders in Samaria, while at the same time permitting, through its indefiniteness, extension of the indictment to all Ephraimites.

As we turn our attention to the vehicles of the metaphors in vv.1-6, we shall consider at the same time other literary and rhetorical features of the poem. The first two stichoi introduce the intricate imagery which characterizes the poem.

Alas! proud crown
drunkards of Ephraim
fading flower
its glorious beauty ...

We move from imagery of majesty to imagery of drunkenness, to imagery of agriculture and frailty, back to imagery of majesty. Thus the imagery of majesty surrounds the other descriptions of the Ephraimites just as a crown surrounds their head; yet the descriptions which are surrounded belie the claim to honour. Already the crown fits ill. The first stichos of the poem ushers us into the world of ironic metaphor /12/. The term "drunkards" may be taken in a literal sense, or it may be figurative for their confusion and faulty perception of Yhwh's will and their inability to grasp the realities of their political situation (cf. 29:9f.). A double meaning is likely /13/. It is surely ironic that the drunkards of Ephraim are referred to as its source of pride. But proud crown, too, in this context appears ironic, in which case the Ephraimites suffer not only from drunkenness but also from hubris.

Verse 1c shifts from the themes of pride and drunkenness to agricultural imagery, which v.1d then connects through
paronomasia to the imagery of pride. Ephraim's glorious beauty (tsēḇḥî) is a fading flower (tsīts). The participle indicates that Ephraim's degeneration ("fading") is ongoing and not yet complete. Another word play is presented by the term thiph'artô, which contains consonants of the word 'ephrayim in a different order. The transitory and fragile nature of Ephraim's glory is exposed through the image of a fading flower. So much for glory. In v.1e, the agricultural imagery is expanded with the image of the fertile valley. The "head" of the fertile valley would be the most luxuriant part, but (as I read the imagery) what we have at the head of the fertile valley is not, for example, a fruitful field (cf. 29:17; 32:15), but rather a fading flower! Agricultural and drunkenness imagery merge in v.1f. The phrase "those smitten with wine" (yāyin), recalls the drunkards (shikkōrē) of Ephraim, while yāyin at the same time suggests the fruitfulness of the vine. "Smitten (ḥalūmē) with wine," moreover, implies that the drunken Ephraimites are the victims of the very thing they pursue.

A third instance of paronomasia in v.1, gēḇûth and gē, sets up a contrast between the high and the low /14/. It draws attention to Ephraim's pride and anticipates the humbling of the proud crown which we meet in the following verses. This kind of contrast between attitude and physical height or depth receives fuller development in 2:6-22, where pride is associated with things possessing physical height (mountains, hills, towers, walls) and humility with low places (caves, holes, caverns) /15/.

Verse 2 introduces new imagery. The series of related images (torrent, hail, destructive storm, mighty waters which overflow) constitutes the vehicle. As we noted above, the tenor is implicit, and we have here only a description of it with the adjectives "strong" and "mighty." The most important thing about this strong and mighty force is that it belongs to, and thus is under the control of, Yhwh. The verse appears to be chiastic:

a  Behold, one strong and mighty (belongs) to the Lord
b  like a torrent of hail, a storm of destruction
b'  like a torrent of mighty waters overflowing
a'  he casts down to the earth with (his) hand

The subject of a and a' is Yhwh's destructive force, while b and b' present this force as a storm through the use of two similes beginning with kōzerem. Verse 2d (a') is, however, ambiguous. Whereas some interpreters seek to identify the subject of this
verse as either the strong one or Yahweh /16/, and the object as either the flower, crown, or Samaria, I would resist trying to pin down the metaphoric language. It is precisely the ambiguity of the language which allows a variety and complexity of image. Whereas a fading flower might benefit from a gentle shower, a mighty storm would surely beat it quickly to the ground (the image of a mighty downpour against a single, wilting flower is almost ludicrous). A mighty storm could also knock a crown from the head to the ground. The imagery becomes anthropomorphic. The proud crown is cast down from the head (raš) to the ground with the hand (be-yād). Once on the ground, it can be trampled with the feet (beraghlayim), v.3.

Thus far Ephraim has been threatened with storm and trampling; in v.4 the imagery shifts again. The poem returns to agricultural imagery and, at the same time, exchanges the idea of drinking (which describes the sin of the Ephraimites) for the idea of eating (which describes their punishment). The fate of the fading flower of Ephraim's glory will be like that of an early summer fig. Although at first sight the image of an early fig before summer suggests renewal, this is not the case. The simile of the fig is deftly extended with a description which conveys vividly the suddenness which will mark Ephraim's destruction. No sooner is this delicacy seen by someone than it is in his hand and then his mouth. With the palm of the hand (be-khappō), we have the fourth reference to a part of the body in the poem. The description of Ephraim's punishment begins with its flower/crown cast down with the hand and ends with its flower/fig gobbled up from the hand.

Verses 5f. are commonly recognized as a message of hope appended at a later time to the oracle of destruction against Ephraim /17/. With considerable skill, a later editor has added these verses so that they build with vv.1-4 a unified poem. Only after establishing a link with the preceding by picking up three key words (căterēth, tsēbhî, and tiphārāh) does the poet move to something new in v.6. Moreover, these verses exhibit the same reliance on metaphorical language and delight in word play as the rest of the poem /18/. "In that day" in this context applies to the day of destruction for the proud crown of Ephraim. That this day has not yet arrived is clear from the imperfect tense, as well as from vv.7ff. which plunge us back into the real world. Four similes introduced by 1 expound what Yahweh will be in that day to three categories of people.
like (1) a crown of beauty
and like (1) a diadem of glory
and like (1) a spirit of justice
and like (1) strength

to (1) the remnant of his people
to (1) the one sitting in judgment
to [supplying ] those turning back battle at the gate

To the remnant Yhwh will be like a crown of beauty and a diadem of glory. The repetition of cat'ereθh from v.1 draws out the contrast between illusory crown (the leaders of Ephraim) and true crown (Yhwh). Why the combination cat'ereθh tsēbhetic and not cat'ereθh ge'uth to describe Yhwh? I shall offer a tentative suggestion. Perhaps because it is possible to see ge'uth in v.1 as a pejorative term for pride, the poet has taken the three other terms of v.1 which unequivocally suggest honour, cat'ereθh, tsēbhetic, and tiph'ārath, and applied them to Yhwh. And now comes the crowning word play! Yhwh is going to be a crown, but not, as the Ephraimites in v.1, a crown for the head (r'sh) but rather a crown for a remnant (sh'r). This word play, based on reversal of consonants, calls attention to a dramatic change in the situation. The beginning of the poem presents a picture of all of proud Ephraim, with Samaria at its head, but, in the end, what will be left is only a remnant.

Having established continuity with the imagery of the rest of the poem, the editor now moves beyond it. Yhwh will be a spirit of justice (mishpāt) to the one sitting in judgment (hammishpāt) and strength to those turning back battle at the gate. Verse 6a points to internal, v.6b to external, security. This expansion of imagery sets the sin of Ephraim in a new context. Verses 1-4 present drunkenness as the reason for Ephraim's destruction; an implicit reason may be pride. Since Yhwh in v.5 is described as a true crown of glory in contrast to the unworthy crown of the drunkards of Ephraim, we may conclude that what characterizes Yhwh in the role as crown is absent among those who should provide responsible leadership for Ephraim. Establishing justice and providing military defense are precisely the areas in which Ephraim's leaders failed, and the last verse of this poem permits Is. 28:1-6 to underscore this point.
Isaiah 28:7-8

7 These also reel with wine
   and stagger with beer,
   priest and prophet reel with beer,
   they are engulfed by wine;
   they stagger from beer,
   they reel with the vision,
   they stumble in giving a decision;
8 for all tables are full of vomit,
   no place is without filth.

There is no denying the abruptness of the transition between vv.6 and 7. The contrast between the picture of peace and security of vv.5f. and the charge of inebriety against priest and prophet is jarring. The abrupt transition serves to set 28:1-6 apart from what follows. The ramifications of this separation we shall explore below. An abrupt transition may also signal a move to something new. It seems we have left the Ephraimite leaders. But where are we? Perhaps the prophet has turned to the Southern Kingdom, but can we be sure? Notice that the subject is delayed: "these also reel with wine and stagger with beer." Who? The answer comes in the second stichos: priest and prophet. Which ones? These verses do not give an answer.

Verses 7f. present a situation not totally new. The renewal of the charge of drunkenness establishes a link between the Ephraimites of vv.1-4 and the priests and prophets. Both groups represent persons from whom one would expect responsible action. Given the rejection of the Ephraimites, one might ask, who will constitute the remnant of vv.5f.? To whom would one look for special guidance? Priest and prophet. Yet priest and prophet are no better than Ephraimite, and may be even worse. The key word yayin appears once in vv.1-4 and twice in vv.7f.; the root shkr, twice in vv.1-4 and three times in vv.7f. Is greater insobriety implied by the frequency with which these terms reappear (five times as against three)? Clearly the issue of drunkenness receives more attention in vv.7f. But drunkenness is not the only offense attributed to these two groups. Just as the leaders of Ephraim fail in their responsibility of maintaining justice and military security (vv.5f.), so also priest and prophet fail in fulfilling the functions of their office: for the prophet, having a vision; for the priest, rendering a decision /19/. A further catchword connection exists between vv.1-4 and 7f. In the former, something is seen (yir’eh hårō’eh) and
swallowed up (yibhlācennāh), v.4. In the latter, priest and prophet are swallowed up (nibhlećū) by wine and thus cannot see (bārō'ēh) properly: "they reel with the vision," v.7.

A distinguishing feature of these two verses is their creative use of repetition. The words yayin and shēkhār (for alcoholic drink) and shāghū and tācū (for the effect of drinking) are repeated in various combinations, back and forth, in an almost willy-nilly fashion which suggests the staggerings of the drunkards. The repetition also creates effect by arousing the expectation of a certain consequent, only to present a different one /20/. For example, v.7 begins to set up a pattern:

with wine they reel
    and with beer they stagger
    they reel with beer ...

The objects "wine" and "beer" come first in the first two lines for emphasis. To complete the pattern, one would expect "they stagger with wine." But the text gives us something else: "they are swallowed up by wine." Instead of continuing to emphasize how drunk they are, the poet shows us that the thing which they consume, in reality, consumes them. Verse 7e returns to the earlier imagery, "they stagger from beer," and v.7f continues, "they reel ..." But suddenly it is no longer wine or beer with which they reel, but rather something quite different - the vision. Since shāghū may also mean "they err" (cf. RSV) the result is a double meaning eminently suited to the situation. The ambiguity allows us to imagine either that their drunkenness prevents them from carrying out their functions properly or that they are as intoxicated with their own visions as with strong drink. Similar imagery and double meaning complete the picture: they also stumble in giving a decision, pāqū pelīliyyāh (note the alliteration as well as the rhyme, pāqū with shāghū and tācū). Verse 8 puts the finishing touch to the tableau with a graphic illustration of their wretched situation.

Isaiah 28:9-13

9 Whom will he teach knowledge
    and whom will he cause to understand the message?
    Those weaned from milk,
    those taken from the breast?
10 For it would be tsaw lātsāw tsaw lātsāw
    gaw lāqāw gaw lāqāw,
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11 For with stammerings of speech
    and with another tongue
    he will speak to this people,
12 to whom he has said:
    "This is the rest, give rest to the weary;
    and this is the repose," but they were not
    willing to hear /21/.

13 So the word of Yhwh will be to them,
    tsaw lâtsâw tsaw lâtsâw
    qaw lâqâw qaw lâqâw,
    a little here, a little there;
    in order that they may go, and stumble backward,
    and be broken, and snared, and taken.

Verse 9a raises a question of major concern in Is. 28. It forms an inclusion with the agricultural lesson of vv.23-29, where instruction is also the topic. The crucial word "teach" (yôreh) occurs in Is. 28 only here and in v.26. The root šhmC appears here and in the introduction to vv.23-29; between vv. 9-23 it appears three times (vv.12,14,19), taking on additional significance with each repetition. That v.9 is a question rather than a statement leaves open, for the moment, the issue whether or not instruction is possible.

A number of scholars posit that vv.9-13 reflect a dispute between Isaiah and the priests and prophets of vv.7f. It has been suggested, for example, that the priests object that Isaiah is treating them like school children; or they are making fun of Isaiah's speech or his message; or they point to a lesson going on nearby as an analogy to Isaiah's methods of instruction /22/. To varying degrees, such interpretations attribute some of the words in vv.9-13 to the priests and prophets. In the absence of any indication in the text that Isaiah is referring either directly or indirectly to the words of his opponents (e.g. it is clear when he quotes in v.15), assigning parts and providing reconstructions of a dispute seems too precarious. Let us simply take the oracle as it stands /23/.

The "he" of v.9 is not identified. Some commentators who take these verses as part of a disputation think the priests and prophets are speaking of Isaiah. I take the "he" to refer to Yhwh, a reading which finds support in the context of vv.11 and 13. If the close association of v.9 and vv.23-29 is accepted, further support for Yhwh as teacher appears in v.26. According
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to vv.1-6, the leaders of Ephraim are drunk; in vv.7f., the priests and prophets. Who then remains, that Yhwh might teach them the message? Perhaps infants just weaned from milk, who have not yet had the occasion to succumb to wine or beer as the Ephraimites, priests, and prophets have. The suggestion is, of course, absurd, and is meant to draw out the irony of the situation, for if Yhwh were to teach children, what would the message be? Tsaw làtsaw tsaw làtsaw qaw làqāw qaw làqāw (v.10). Baby talk - not, to be sure, the babble of drunkards, but babble just the same. Or is that the meaning of this cryptic verse?

These strange words test the ingenuity of commentators. It seems to me, following as they do the description of the crapulous priests and prophets, that some such interpretation as above makes sense. Since the terms "teach" and "explain the message" may be thought of as referring to the functions of priest and prophet respectively /24/, v.9 reflects ironically upon the incompetence of these two groups. Driver makes the intriguing suggestion that the words tsaw and qaw in v.10 are chosen to echo tsō'āh and qā' of v.8, and thus to suggest the drunken cries and shouts of the revelers /25/. If this be the case, the befuddled speech of the priests and prophets is being compared to the nonsense talk of infants, with the implication that the priests and prophets are about as effective in serving Yhwh as infants would be.

Verse 11 introduces a new frame of reference for the words of v.10. Like v.10 it begins with the deictic particle kî, which here picks up the idea of unintelligible speech and associates it with foreigners /26/. Yhwh will speak to this people in a foreign tongue, and according to v.13, the message will be: tsaw làtsaw tsaw làtsaw qaw làqāw qaw làqāw, a little here, a little there. Van Selms' attempt to give the words meaning by seeking an Akkadian prototype suits v.13, but presents difficulties in v.10 /27/. In fact, a single meaning or translation for the words in these two verses is difficult to obtain. We are obviously dealing with irony and with words which are meant to take on different meanings. If the words are taken to represent unintelligible speech, the point seems to be that in the past (v.12), Yhwh offered a clear message to the people, but they were unwilling to hear. Now, therefore, Yhwh will speak gibberish to them. I find v.13 ambiguous. It may mean that Yhwh will speak unintelligibly through a foreign language (in which case the message would be only too clear!). Or it may express an idea
similar to 6:10, that the divine word would be incomprehensible to them in order to prevent their returning to Yhwh and being delivered.

Another possible meaning of the words in vv.10 and 13 is that they refer to letters of the alphabet /28/. In that case the point would be that just as Yhwh begins at the most elementary level to teach children, so also Yhwh is going to give the people a lesson, the meaning of which is as simple as a, b, c - but the language of the lesson will be a foreign one. According to this interpretation the words of vv.10 and 13a represent the basic significants of meaning, letters, whereas according to the interpretation discussed above, they are meaningless. For the present reader that is a striking example of double meaning. But the outcome is the same in either case: beneficial instruction (v.12) has been rejected, and now the people will be given a lesson in destruction.

We should look briefly at the instruction which the people rejected. In vv.11-13 it is not the priests and prophets who are being reproached, but rather the people. Moreover, we have moved from the harmony conveyed by the phrase "his people" in v.5 to the rejection implied by "this people," v.11. The question of v.9, whom Yhwh will cause to understand the message (šēmōkah), becomes more poignant when we learn that the people are not willing to hear (šēmōa). It seems we now have a negative answer to the question: no one. Verses 11-13 contain a message within a message. Irwin draws attention to the concentric structure of v.12 in which speaking ("to whom he has said") corresponds to listening ("they would not hear"); "this is the rest" matches "this is the repose;" and "give rest to the weary" stands at the centre /29/. If v.12 is chiastic, the emphasis appears to fall on social responsibility. Obtaining rest (hannāchō) depends upon giving rest (hantchū) /30/. Since the people refuse this instruction, Yhwh determines a different lesson, the purpose of which (lemācan) is to destroy rather than to protect. Repetition in vv.13ef emphasizes the completeness of destruction: "that they may go, and stumble backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken." These words convey a different kind of stumbling from that brought about by wine and beer (vv.7f.) - a stumbling caused by the word of Yhwh.

Isaiah 28:14-22

14 Therefore hear the word of Yhwh, you scoffers,
rulers of this people who are in Jerusalem:

A 15 Because you have said,
   "We have made a covenant with death,
    with Sheol we have a vision /31/;
   the overflowing scourge, when it passes through,
    will not come to us;
   for we have made a lie our refuge
    and in falsehood we have hidden ourselves."

B 16 Therefore thus says the Lord Yhwh:
   "Behold, I am founding in Zion a stone,
    a tested stone,
    a precious cornerstone,
    a foundation founded;
    the one who stands firm will not hasten.

B' 17 And I will make justice the line
     and righteousness the plummet;
     and hail will sweep away the refuge of lies;
     and the hiding place waters will overflow.

A' 18 Cancelled will be your covenant with death
     and your vision with Sheol will not rise up;
     the overflowing scourge, when it passes through,
     you will be for it a trampling place.
19 As often as it passes through it will take you;
     for morning by morning it will pass through,
     by day and by night.
     And it will be sheer terror
     to understand the message."

20 For the bed is too short to stretch oneself out,
    and the covering too narrow to wrap oneself up.
21 For like Mount Perazim Yhwh will rise up
    and like the valley of Gibeon he will shake,
    to do his deed, strange is his deed
    and to work his work, alien is his work!
22 And now do not scoff,
    lest your bonds be strengthened;
    for a decree of destruction I have heard
    from the Lord Yhwh of hosts against the whole land.

These verses form an inclusion based on the address to
"scoffers" in vv.14 and 22. Two oracles of Yhwh introduced by
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lākhēn form a chiasmus. The first, vv.14f., reveals what the rulers have said, "rarem (v.15); the second, vv.16-19, reports what Yhwh says, kōh ḍhônāi yhwh (v.16). That the structure of these verses is chiastic is clear, although there is disagreement among interpreters on precise division of the material /32/. I take vv.14-19 as the core of the message and vv.20-22 as an elaboration upon it. According to the division indicated in the translation above, A and B refer to the rulers' words and their arrangements for security; while C, B', and A' refer to Yhwh's words and arrangements to show the ineffectiveness of that security. Yhwh's foundation of true security appears at the center, C. Its position focuses attention upon it, and, as the structure indicates, this action has no counterpart in human endeavors. In B' and A' Yhwh demolishes the false supports established by the Jerusalem rulers. These two sections are longer than the corresponding sections A and B, and the expansion gives increased attention to the destruction which results from trust in self-made shelter rather than in Yhwh. Within this large chiasmus, chiastic structures appear in divisions A, B, B', and A'.

The call to hear in v.14 contains a delightfully ironic pun. In parallelism with "rulers of this people who are in Jerusalem," 14b, one would expect "men of Zion" in 14a. This suggests that latson is a play on tsiyyōn. But the fact that 14a uses a term from the language of wisdom raises the possibility of understanding mōshejā in 14b in wisdom terms also, "proverb-makers of this people." The pun rests on suggested double meaning: men of Zion-rulers; scoffers-proverb-makers. The rulers of "this people" are called to hear (ṣhēq) the word (deḇhar) of Yhwh. The command presents a striking contrast to vv.11f., where Yhwh will speak (yēḏhabber) to this people incomprehensibly because they were not willing to hear (ṣhēmōa).

The words of the Jerusalem scoffers in v.15 are chiastic.

\[\begin{align*}
\text{a} & \quad \text{b} \\
\text{we have made a covenant with death} & \quad \text{we have a vision} \\
\text{b'} & \quad \text{a'} \\
\text{with Sheol} & \quad \text{we have a vision}
\end{align*}\]

They claim on this basis that the shōt (Q) shōtēph (note the alliteration) which overcame their neighbors the Ephraimites (mayīm kabbīrīm shōtēphīm, v.2) will not come "to us." Their reasoning is also chiastic, with the verbs appearing at the
beginning and end and the objects, their places of refuge, in the middle.

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
a & b \\
\text{for we have made} & \text{a lie our refuge} \\
\text{and in falsehood} & \text{we have hidden ourselves}
\end{array}
\]

In v.12 Yhwh offered the people a resting place and a repose, but they refused; in v.15 the leaders of the people claim to have established a refuge of their own. But what is meant by a refuge in falsehood, and what kind of covenant is a covenant with death? It seems to me that we are again in the realm of metaphor, with a tenor which is implicit. The fact that they say they have made a lie their refuge and have hidden themselves in falsehood indicates that this is not a direct quote. Good has called this citation an example of irony by way of attribution; that is, the prophet assigns words to the Jerusalem leaders which, in their mouths, become ironic.

The prophet parodies the communiqué from Judah's state department about a mutual assistance pact with Egypt, which might have said: "We have made a covenant [treaty] with Egypt, with Pharaoh we made an agreement. Assyria's invasion therefore will not trouble us, for we have protection with Egypt and security with Pharaoh." By substituting words, the prophet ironically criticizes the treaty-making ... /33/.

Although we cannot be certain that Egypt and Assyria are meant, that identification seems likely in view of the historical situation. We noted above the striking similarities in the choice of metaphor (hail, overflowing waters, trampling) to describe the punishments of Ephraim and Judah, vv.2f.,17f. These similarities suggest an identity of tenor. Although in both cases the tenor is implicit, Assyria fits both situations and thus seems a likely candidate for the šôṭ šôṭûph. Verse 15 may also contain mythological allusions, in which case the metaphor represents a skillful merging of religious and political considerations /34/.

With v.16 begins the description of Yhwh's response to the leaders of the people who are in Jerusalem. Yhwh's first action is a positive one, the building up of a sure foundation for Zion (C, v.16); the subsequent action, however, is destructive, the tearing down of the Judahites' false refuge (B' and A', vv.17-19). The meaning of v.16 is debated. Whether Yhwh has founded
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(reading the perfect) or is founding (reading a participle) the stone, whether the stone is Zion or is in Zion; whether the stone is tested or is itself an instrument of testing; the meaning of the phrase hammâ'amîn lô' yâchîsh and its relationship to the stone - all these are problematic issues. From my translation it can be seen that I take the founding to be in process and the stone to be in Zion, though I am prepared to be convinced by arguments to the contrary.

Although the precise meaning of the verse is uncertain, the intention of the imagery is, I think, clear. Lindblom has pointed out that the foundation stone is the metaphorical counterpart to the covenant with death /35/. The contrast is between a foundation which will stand firm and a refuge which will be swept away by storm waters and hail. Yhwh has laid a sure foundation, and the one who trusts in it will be like it, standing firm. Such a one will neither rely upon foreign alliances nor fear the onslaught which may come. The verse does not appear to be a guarantee of future salvation, as in vv.5f., but rather to offer the possibility of escaping disaster to the one who trusts in Yhwh. The fact that in the following verses we hear of destruction and not deliverance indicates that the prophet holds out little hope of convincing the leaders to change their policy.

The firmness of Yhwh's foundation stone is emphasized through repetition. The piling up of phrases in v.16 is itself a building process. The juxtaposition of 'âbhen and 'ebhen, mûsâdîh and mûsâdîh, the repetition of initial and final consonants, and the preponderance of alephs and nuns render v.16 particularly assonant.

bgtsiyyôn lâbhen 'ebhen bôchan
 pinnath yigrath mûsâdîh mûsâdîh
 hammâ'amîn lô' yâchîsh

If one follows Irwin in rendering yigrath as "weighty," the firmness and security of Yhwh's stone is emphasized all the more /36/. The description 'ebhen bôchan conveys the double meaning, "tested stone" and "granite stone" /37/. Again the accent falls on the surety of Yhwh's foundation.

In v.17 (B') the metaphor moves from the founding of the stone to the divine measuring instruments of justice and righteousness. "Justice" recalls the justice Yhwh brings to the remnant of the people in v.6; and "line" is a word play on qaw in v.10. In B (v.15) the Judahites established (sâmû) a lie as their refuge; in B' Yhwh establishes (wésâmî) justice as the meas-
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suring line. Against justice, the Judahites' edifice does not measure up. We saw that the leaders' statement about their refuge is chiastic. The devastation of this refuge is recounted in an even more intricate chiasmus of verb-subject-object/object-subject-verb.

Similarly, whereas in A (v.15) the leaders spoke of their covenant with death and vision with Sheol in chiastic order, so too in A' (vv.18f.) Yhwh cancels it with a chiasm.

The leaders had boasted, "The overflowing scourge, when it passes through, will not come to us." But Yhwh retorts, "The overflowing scourge, when it passes through, you will be for it a trampling place." The outcome will be precisely the opposite of that they had devised; and, to make the picture more ironic, they will meet the same fate which befell Ephraim, v.3. A' underscores its point through expansion, v.19: "as often as it passes through" (i.e., there will be more than one onslaught), it will take them. How often will it pass through?

morning by morning it will pass through
by day and by night

The result of this constant attack will be that "it will be sheer terror to understand the message."

Melugin considers the message referred to here as Yhwh's promise of security to those who trust, vv.16-17a. Understanding the message will be terrible because, ironically, one understands its promise that the faithful will stand firm while one is being swept away /38/. We may also take this promise of security for the faithful as the substance of the message elsewhere in the chapter - in the question of v.9, and in the variant of the message of attentive trust in Yhwh in v.12. The corollary of the promise, however, is destruction for those who will not stand firm - for those who refuse to hear the message
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or who try to arrange their own security. Verses 20-22 develop this aspect of the message.

Destruction unfolds in vv.20-22 with two explications introduced by kî. Verse 20 sounds like a proverb, which is fitting in an address to "proverb-makers" (v.14). It points to the inadequacy of the Judahites' arrangements for security through an illustration based upon length and width: the bed is too short, the covering is too narrow. Verse 21 shows why the arrangements are inadequate: Yhwh will fight against the people, like Mount Perazim and like the valley of Gibeon. The inadequacy of the Judahites' preparations, exposed through the imagery of length and width, is contrasted to the scope of Yhwh's action, indicated through that of height and depth (39). The simile in v.21 presents a paradox. Earlier Yhwh had fought for Israel at Perazim and Gibeon (2 Sam 5:17-25; Jos 10:9-14); now Yhwh fights against them. In 2 Sam 5, Perazim receives its name on the basis of a statement made by David, comparing Yhwh's "breaking through" his enemies to a bursting flood. In Jos 10, Yhwh sends hail against the enemies of Israel. The allusions to flood and hail in the Perazim and Gibeon comparison complement the storm imagery in vv.14-19 (40). The action of Yhwh in v.21cd receives attention through the threefold repetition of the roots "ch" and "bd"; the paradoxical nature of this action is highlighted by the fact that the only words not repeated are the synonyms "strange" and "foreign."

The alien character of Yhwh's action recalls Yhwh's alien speech in vv.9-13.

Verse 22, like v.14, contains a direct address to the scoffers. Here they are told not to scoff, lest their bonds be strengthened. What bonds are meant? Irwin proposes the bonds of their covenant with death (41). Thus the irony becomes deadly: dependence on a covenant with death strengthens death's claim on them. Who will do the strengthening (yechzeqû) of the bonds? In view of the points of contact we have already observed between the storm imagery here and that of vv.2f., perhaps we should think of the strong one (chazaq) of v.2.

In v.22cd the prophet speaks of his own experience, "for a decree of destruction I have heard (shamāti)." This is the fifth appearance of the root shmc in Is. 28. The root gives expression to the dominant theme of instruction in the chapter,
and its associations in different contexts produce important variations on that theme. It first occurred in v.9, "Whom will he cause to understand the message" (šēmūcāh)? The question seemed to stem from the fact that the priests and prophets (vv.7f.) as well as the Ephraimites (vv.1-4) were too drunk to be taught. As a question, v.9 held open the possibility that a positive answer might follow. However, the root then occurred in an accusation of the people, "they were not willing to hear" (šēmāaC), and it seemed we had a negative answer to the question. Following the statement that the people would not hear came a command to hear (šimCQ) addressed to the leaders of the people. ShmC then became part of the punishment which the leaders could expect to encounter in the future: it will be a terrible thing to understand the message (šēmūcāh). In v.22 we discover one person out of all these - Ephraimites, priests, prophets, people, Jerusalemite leaders - who has heard (šāmaCt!), the prophet Isaiah. We saw in vv.14-19 that the message is double-edged, security for those who trust in Yhwh, and destruction for those who seek safeguards apart from Yhwh. In v.22 the prophet hears only the latter.

Isaiah 28:23-29

23 Give ear and hear my voice,
  listen and hear my speech.
24 Is it all the time that the plower plows for sowing,
  that he opens and harrows his soil?
25 Does he not, when he has leveled its surface,
  scatter dill and toss cummin,
  and set wheat in rows,
  and barley in plots,
  and spelt at its border /42/?
26 He instructs him properly,
  his God teaches him.
27 For dill is not threshed with a sledge,
  nor is a cart wheel rolled over cummin,
  but with a staff dill is beat out,
  and cummin with a rod.
28 Grain is crushed,
  but not unceasingly;
  one carefully threshes it /43/.
When he drives his cart wheel,
his horses do not crush it.

This also comes from Yhwh of hosts,
he makes wonderful counsel,
he magnifies wisdom.

Is. 28:23-29 is a beautifully crafted poem of two stanzas (vv.23-25; vv.27-28) plus refrain (v.26; v.29), dealing with techniques of sowing and harvesting. It begins with a call to hear in the manner of a wisdom teacher and presents its lesson in parabolic style /44/. The first stanza deals with sowing; the second, with techniques of harvesting. The refrains indicate that knowledge in both areas comes from Yhwh. After calling for the audience's attention in stanza 1, the poet poses two rhetorical questions. Rhetorical questions are a forceful way of making a point. The first calls for a negative answer; the second, a positive one. The first deals with proper timing, and the second speaks of timing in connection with the sowing of dill, cummin, and various grains. Verse 25b is a chiasmus, which my translation above does not reveal.

The refrain, v.26, gives the reason for the farmer's correct procedures: his God teaches him.

The second stanza focuses upon techniques of harvesting. Like the first stanza, it moves from negative observation to positive. It begins with dill and cummin, indicating how the harvesting should not be done (with a sledge and cart wheel) and then how it is done (with a staff). The proper procedure is presented as an inclusio.

In a similar fashion, v.28 deals with grain. The crushing should not be done unceasingly; it should be done carefully. Two terms used in the description of how dill and cummin should not be harvested, v.27ab, are applied to grain in v.28. "Dill is not threshed (yūḏhash) with a sledge"; however, grain is carefully threshed (āḏhōsh yēḏūshennū). The wheel of a cart (cāḡhālāh) is not rolled over cummin, nor does a cart wheel (cēḡhālāṭhō) crush grain. Both stanzas contain the notion of proper timing. Whereas the first stanza begins with it (the plouver does not plow all the time), the second ends with it.
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(grain is not endlessly crushed). Each time emphasis is on an action which ought to take place, but, at the proper time, one should cease and (we must infer this for the second stanza) turn to the next phase.

The refrain of v.29 shows that "this also" is from Yhwh. "This also" may refer to stanza 2; that is, the farmer is not only instructed in sowing but also in harvesting. The point is that Yhwh's instruction is thorough. Yhwh does not teach half a lesson and withhold the necessary counterpart. At the same time, "this also" may refer to the whole lesson of vv.23-29 /45/. Childs suggests that v.29 is an example of what he calls the summary-appraisal form. It "relates organically to the parable, but stands apart as an independent reflection on the wisdom of God" /46/. Thus v.29 may be seen to have three referents, which move from the narrow to the broad: (i) the preceding stanza, (ii) the entire poem, and (iii) the wisdom of Yhwh in general.

Having examined the structure of the parable of the farmer, we shall now inquire about its relationship to its present context. The poem begins with a call to hear (weshimC̄C̄, 2 times), the final occurrences of the root shmC̄ in the chapter. It is also the second use of the root as an imperative, although in this case the audience is not specified. As in the case of the Jerusalem leaders, v.14, the call to hear in v.23 follows a message of destruction (vv.13,22). There it also led to a message of destruction; here the possibility of hearing is left open, and nothing is said about either doom or deliverance. If the people hear the message of the poem, might they thereby avoid decimation?

I find no compelling reasons to take vv.23-29 as a parable or allegory of God's activity in history /47/. Whedbee's contention that the poem is a defense of Yhwh's wisdom is convincing /48/, though I find the confirmation of Yhwh's wisdom more important for the larger context of chs. 28-32 than for the immediate context of ch. 28. The emphasis in vv.23-29 is not only on Yhwh's wisdom but also on Yhwh's teaching. Fohrer's attempt to connect these verses with the preceding, by suggesting that Isaiah is defending himself against the charge that his message is inconsistent, does not seem to me to find enough support from the text. However, Fohrer's observation that the farmer is a divinely taught person is important /49/. As I noted above, the poem in vv.23-29 shares with v.9 an interest in teaching (yrh) and in hearing (shmC̄). I submit that we have
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in vv.23-29 an implied answer to the question about teaching in v.9. Whom will he teach; whom will he cause to understand the message? The answer is, in effect: those who have ears, let them hear (weshimCû, v.23). In v.22, we encountered the first statement to the effect that someone has heard the message, the prophet. In v.26 we learn for the first time of someone who is taught, the farmer. And what is the result? The farmer knows the proper time and the proper means. The implication is that if the people will follow the farmer’s example and hear (v.23), God may teach them also.

Is. 28 concludes with the issue of instruction unresolved. The chapter moves from confusion (confusion caused by drunkenness, incomprehensible language, Yhwh’s strange and alien action) to clarity (the clarity of the final lesson in vv.23-29). Along the way there are allusions to a clear message (v.12, v.16), the rejection of which leads to awesome results. Yhwh creates confusion through alien speech (vv.11-13) and alien work (v.21). Only by hearing the message and being taught can clarity be obtained. From vv.23-29 the benefits of instruction are evident.

There is one point early in the chapter (vv.5f.) where a clear promise of salvation appears. I mentioned above that the abrupt transition between v.6 and v.7 sets vv.1-6 apart from what follows. We also saw above that the similarities in form and content between vv.1-4 and vv.14ff. warrant comparison between Ephraim and Jerusalem. The Judahites have a lesson to learn from the example of the Ephraimites: if they are no better, they will meet the same fate. But the lesson extends beyond v.4. Ephraim will be humbled by storm and trampling, yet there will be a remnant. Who will constitute the remnant? Judah is threatened with similar treatment. Who will hear the message (v.23) and make the decision to stand firm (v.16)? Or, to repeat: who will constitute the remnant?

The chapter begins and ends with metaphoric language. It uses agricultural imagery to describe judgment, vv.1-4, and in vv.23-29, it returns to agricultural imagery to make its final point. In the process, Is. 28 shifts its focus from Ephraim to Judah. While the poem about the farmer in vv.23-29 follows upon the message to the leaders of Jerusalem, it is not aimed specifically at them. Addressing neither Ephraim, with whom the chapter begins, nor Jerusalem, with whom it ends, the poem is an invitation to all.
III. THE LARGER CONTEXT, IS. 28-32

Following the apocalypse of chs. 24-27, Is. 28 is easily distinguishable as the beginning of a collection. Where the collection ends, however, is open to debate. Duhm considers 28-32(33) to constitute a collection /50/; Cornill, 28-32(33) /51/; Kaiser, 28-32 /52/; Fohrer, 28-32 /53/; and Liebreich, 28-35 /54/. I shall confine my remarks to the material organized as a series of five woe sections addressed to Israel in chs. 28-32, although I recognize points of contact with ch. 33, which also begins with ḫôy /55/. The introduction of the collection with ḫôy (28:1) is balanced by its conclusion with ʾāshrē (32:20; a second ʾāshrē saying appears in 30:18). These verses draw a contrast between two groups and represent a movement from judgment to promise.

Since, as scholars agree, the subject of 28:7-32:20 is Jerusalem/Judah, why does an oracle against Ephraim introduce the collection? Many years ago Cornill recognized its transitional function: "Cap. 28 bildet eine sehr angemessene Übergänge von den Reden gegen die Volker [Cap. 13-27] zu der eng zusammengehörigen Gruppe 29-33; indem es anfängt mit Samarien steht es gewissermassen noch mit Einem Fusse in den 'Völkern,' während es im weiteren Verlaufe mit Jerusalem zu dem ausschliesslichen Gegenstand von Cap. 29-33 übergeht" /56/. Not only does ch. 28 serve as a transition, its first six verses also provide a paradigm for the movement within the collection 28-32(33). The abrupt transition which sets 28:1-6 apart from vv.7ff. calls attention to the introductory function of the judgment against Ephraim with its promise of a remnant. Though judgment and promise alternate in 28-32, the essential development both within the collection and of the collection as a whole is from judgment to promise.

Space does not allow discussion of catchword connections within these chapters or of any kind of careful attention to common themes and motifs /57/. Let us focus therefore on the dominant theme of ch. 28, confusion versus clarity, with its attendant motifs of teaching and hearing, instruction and counsel. Not surprisingly, this theme plays an important role in chs. 29-32. As one might expect, a movement from confusion to clarity accompanies the essential movement from judgment to promise. Drunkenness as an aspect of confusion appears only once more in the collection, 29:9, where it is used figuratively. The theme of incomprehensibility is developed in the following
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verses (10-14), with Yhwh acting, as in ch. 28, to create confusion. Instruction and understanding will, however, take place "in that day," vv.18-21, and the description of the security which results is reminiscent of the promise for "that day" in 28:6. Even those who murmur and err in spirit will accept instruction, v.24. The refusal to hear and the rejection of a clear message, both prominent in ch. 28, are taken up again in 30:9-11 and 15-16. As before, this refusal leads to destruction. In 30:20f., however, the situation is reversed, and the people will discover their teacher (môreykhâ) and will hear (tishmaCnâh). Here we have a positive answer to the question about teaching (yôre)h and understanding the message (shemüCâh) in 28:9. Finally, Yhwh's incomprehensible speech and confusing deeds of ch. 28 give way to their opposites in the human realm in 32:1-8, where even the tongue of stammerers will speak distinctly, and noble and wicked deeds will be easily distinguished.

For the people, the way out of confusion is to accept instruction. But if Yhwh acts incomprehensibly, how can one be sure Yhwh's counsel is wise /58/? The collection explores the tension between human and divine counsel and shows a concern to defend the latter. The importance of the theme of counsel is confirmed by its structural prominence in Is. 28-32. The five blocks of material introduced by hûy either begin or end with an expression of this theme (29:15-24 does both). The affirmation in ch. 28 that Yhwh makes wonderful (hiPhîl') counsel (Cetsâh) is echoed in 29:14, "I will again do wonders (îhâphîl') with this people, wondrous and marvelous (haphîl' wâphele')." But the wondrous action here is a variation on the incomprehensibility theme of ch. 28: Yhwh will hide wisdom and understanding (v.14b). The woe section which begins 29:15-24 picks up the motif of hiding with an address to those who hide counsel (Cetsâh). Here the issue is human counsel, which the people think they can conceal from Yhwh. To think they could deceive their creator is absurd; do they suppose Yhwh has no understanding (v.16)? A message of promise follows immediately. In contrast to 29:14, where human wisdom is confounded, 29:24 relates that human understanding will not only be possible, but that it also will be given to those erring in spirit and those who murmur.

With 30:1 Yhwh's wisdom begins to receive less emphasis. This woe section does not, like the previous ones, end with a focus on instruction. It does however, like 29:15 before it, begin with the idea of human counsel (Cetsâh). Its concern is to
show the folly of following a plan (turning to Egypt for aid) which is not Yhwh's. Ch. 31 pursues the theme of turning to Egypt without consulting Yhwh. "Yet he is wise and brings disaster," v.2. This final reference to Yhwh's wisdom makes the point forcefully: Yhwh's enmity toward them may seem incomprehensible to Yhwh's people, but it does not mean that Yhwh acts unwisely. Disaster derives, as we saw in ch. 28, from their refusal to hear - from their pursuit of their own course rather than Yhwh's. The last reference to human counsel appears in 32:1-8. For the first time, it is not in conflict with divine counsel. These verses speak of an ideal time when what people plan (yêtts) will be clearly recognizable for what it is - noble or foolish.

To summarize: like 28:1-6, chs. 28-32 move from judgment to promise. Like ch. 28, the collection in 28-32 displays an essential development from confusion to clarity. And, like 28:23-29, the collection is concerned to demonstrate the wisdom of Yhwh, and it places this demonstration at crucial junctures. Numerous other points of contact among chs. 28-32 could be explored. Detailed literary analysis of Is. 29-32 along the lines of the present investigation of Is. 28 remains for future study, and one hopes such study will contribute to our appreciation of the literary quality of prophetic collections and to our understanding of aesthetic concerns which guided the arrangement of this material.

NOTES
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4 Validity in Interpretation (New Haven: Yale University, 1967) 22.
10 The terminology was introduced by L.A. Richards and is widely accepted; see The Philosophy of Rhetoric (Oxford: University Press, 1965) chs. 5 and 6.
11 Fohrer, Jesaja, 44; H. Donner, Israel unter den Völkern, VTS 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1964) 77; Wildberger, Jesaja, 1046.
12 For discussion of ironic technique in Isaiah, see Good, Irony, 116-30.
14 Good, Irony, 143.
15 See the discussion of these verses in Good, Irony, 139-42.
16 Wildberger, Jesaja, 1048, identifies the strong and mighty one as Assyria, but sees Yhwh as subject of v.2d. Oddly, he claims the feet are not Yhwh's but Assyria's. One might read chōzeq wešōmets in v.2a (cf. BHS), so that Yhwh becomes the subject of v.2. W.H. Irwin, Isaiah 28-33: Translation with Philological Notes, Biblica et Orientalia 30 (Romer Biblical Institute, 1977) 8-9, takes the 1 of l’dny as emphatic and reads the final colon of v.2 with v.3. The result is attractive; each of the first three verses of ch. 28 has a tripartite structure and each begins with an initial h word (and v.4 has waw plus a h word).
Exum: A Literary Approach to Isaiah 28

17 E.g., Duhm, Jesaia, 172; Fohrer, Jesaja, 48; Donner, Israel unter den Völkern, 76; Wildberger, Jesaja, 1050-51.
18 Contra Good, Irony, 159.
21 Reading .TIM with many mss and IQIsa.
22 See the commentators; and cf. the interpretations in Good, Irony, 128-29; and G. Pfeifer, "Entwöhnung und Entwöhnungsfest im Alten Testament: der Schlüssel zu Jesaja 28:7-13?," ZAW 84 (1972) 341-47.
23 Although many commentators take vv.7-13 as a unit, I am not convinced that form critically vv.9-13 belong with vv.7f. There are no repetitions of terms and no mention of priest and prophet in vv.9-13, rather "this people" is the subject of the accusation. The connection is supported by the context, which suggests understanding v.10 in light of drunken babble. If the interpretation discussed below is accepted - that v.10 refers to alphabetic instruction - the connection with vv.7f. is even more problematic in my opinion.
24 Duhm, Jesaia, 174; Kaiser, Isaiah 13-39, 244-45; Wildberger, Jesaja, 1059.
25 "Another Little Drink,'" 55.
26 On the significance of kî as a connective and pointer to what follows, see J. Muilenburg, "The Linguistic and Rhetorical Usages of the Particle kî in the Old Testament," HUCA 32 (1961) 135-60.
30 S.H. Blank, Prophetic Faith in Isaiah (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958) 24; Gottwald, All the Kingdoms, 162.
31 Taking chôzeh as "agreement" with LXX, Vg, and most
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commentators, makes for better parallelism and a smoother reading, but as a solution is almost too easy. Though the result is somewhat obscure, I have retained the translation "vision" here and in v.18 as an anticipation of visions to come, e.g., 29:7 and 11; 30:10. Necromancy or some kind of dealings with the netherworld may be meant; cf. also 29:4. There is also a contrast produced between the vision which will not rise up, thâqûm, v.18, and Yhwh who will rise up, yâqûm, to destroy in v.21.

32 On the structure, see esp. N.W. Lund, "The Presence of Chiasmus in the Old Testament," AJSL 46 (1930) 112-13. My arrangement differs from Lund's in that he reads v.17ab together with v.16 and sees in these verses a further development: C = 16bcde, D = 16f, C' = 17ab. He ends the chiasmus at v.18. While I find Lund's arrangement attractive, I prefer to read 17ab in B' because of the appearance of šâmîdî in B.

33 Irony, 119-20; the citation is from p.120.
34 So Gottwald, All the Kingdoms, 161; on the mythological imagery, cf. Irwin, Isaiah 28-33, 28-29. Note also the play on words, shôṭēph to describe the agent of destruction and mishpâṭ as Yhwh's measuring line.

36 Isaiah 28-33, 31.
38 "The Conventional and the Creative," 309.
39 Irwin, Isaiah 28-33, 36.
40 The point about flood imagery is made by Irwin, Isaiah 28-33, 35-36.
41 Isaiah 28-33, 37.
43 Reading, with Good, Irony, 126, dôsh.
46 Isaiah and the Assyrian Crisis, 130.
47 See Whedbee's criticism of this view, Isaiah and Wisdom.
48 Jesaia, 69-70.
49 Jesaia, xii.
52 Isaiah 13-39, 234-36.
55 For points of contact, see Leibreich, "Compilation of the Book of Isaiah," JQR 46, 268-69; Childs, Isaiah and the Assyrian Crisis, 115-17; cf. the classic treatment of this chapter by H. Gunkel, "Jesaia 33, eine prophetische Liturgie," ZAW N.F. 1 (1924) 177-208.
56 "Die Composition des Buches Jesaja," 100.
57 Though some groundwork has been laid, much remains to be done in these areas; on catchword connections, see esp. Liebreich, "Compilation of the Book of Isaiah," JQR 46, 268-69; 47, 121-22, 132-33; for broader stylistic considerations, see also R. Lack, La Symbolique du Livre d'Isaïe: Essai sur l'image littéraire comme élément de structuration (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1973) 69-73; J. Vermeylen, Du prophète Isaïe à l'apocalyptique, II (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1977) 383-438.
THE CONTRIBUTION OF RHETORICAL CRITICISM TO UNDERSTANDING ISAIAH 51:1-16

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Although one might argue that any chapter of the Hebrew Bible could be chosen as the desired target of the rhetorical critic, when it comes to literary craft, it is not surprising that some chapters outdistance others. For some time I have regarded Isa. 51:1-16 as a most deserving candidate for rhetorical-critical analysis /1/. I therefore welcome this opportunity to focus on the literary characteristics and artistic aspects of that pericope. In this essay I seek to honor three main concerns: (1) to enter into the record a few remarks about the enterprise of rhetorical criticism, (2) to grasp the literary unit of Isa. 51:1-16 in its entirety, and (3) to subject its individual strophes to close rhetorical analysis.

In the first section of this essay I shall briefly deal with the nature and function of rhetorical criticism in such a manner as to endorse the significance of the rhetorical-critical enterprise, to delineate what I take to be many of its primary interests, and to give credit to a few scholars whose direct and indirect comments about rhetorical criticism have helped me to apprehend its potential as a truly viable tool for biblical exegesis. Foremost among them is the late James Muilenburg, whose student I was during his last years at Union Theological Seminary (1959-63) when he was advancing the worth of rhetorical criticism by compelling statement and example.

RHETORICAL CRITICISM: CELEBRATION AND CLARIFICATION

In his oft-cited presidential address delivered at the 1968 annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature /2/, Muilenburg declared that whereas the advances of the twentieth-century scholarship owe much to the insights of form
criticism, too much importance has been attached to the typical and representative. In its handling of individual texts, form criticism was manifesting all too frequently a generalizing tendency which underestimates the significance of the unique and unrepeatable, a deficiency in understanding the movement of the writer's thought. Muilenburg saw in the enterprise of stylistics or aesthetic criticism the needful corrective:

What I am interested in, above all, is in understanding the nature of Hebrew literary composition, in exhibiting the structural patterns that are employed for the fashioning of a literary unit ... and in discerning the many and various devices by which the predications are formulated and ordered into a unified whole. Such an enterprise I should describe as rhetoric and the methodology as rhetorical criticism /3/.

Six years later, B.W. Anderson judged this address to be the "crowning climax" of Muilenburg's career, for in it "he pressed the frontiers of biblical studies into new regions which will be explored further in years to come" /4/.

As one who had been deeply influenced by Gunkel's Gattungsforschung, Muilenburg had no desire to repudiate form criticism. Rather, he sought its supplementation by emphasizing a vast range of structural and stylistic features within mainly poetic texts in the Old Testament in the hope that the Hebrew literary craft might be properly appreciated. He highlighted the significance of inclusio and climactic or ballast lines for helping the rhetorical critic to determine the limits of a given literary unit. He called for the need to perceive the structure and balance of Hebrew poetry and to discern the configuration of its components. He spoke of the importance of chiasmus, acrostic formulations, and especially, the repetition of key words and phrases in strategic collocations. Indeed, Muilenburg claimed that only by the resolute recognition of such phenomena, which exist beyond the spectrum of the genre, is it possible for us to grasp at all adequately the biblical writer's artistry, intent, and meaning.

For Muilenburg, therefore, it was a matter of "form criticism and beyond." Some scholars have held that what he was advocating actually constitutes a supplement to the form-critical task. Others have not felt that "rhetorical criticism" merits a designation of its own since what is involved is an obviously appropriate, but neglected, dimension of form criti-
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cism. Even so, a definitive judgement about the propriety of the "and beyondness" need not be reached in order for us to observe approvingly that in the scholarly examination of Hebrew poetry, stylistic and structural elements are now receiving more attention.

Accordingly, the literary genius of ancient Israel's poets, as they enable the various Gattungen to achieve their particularity, is being freshly appreciated. Moreover, not a few literary terms are surfacing with greater frequency in the discussion of biblical poetry. The following might be mentioned as examples: (1) assonance - the similarity of sound in words or syllables, or the relatively close juxtaposition of like sounds; (2) apostrophe - the addressing of a thing ordinarily personified or a person ordinarily not present for rhetorical ends; (3) chiasmus - the inversion of the order of parallel words or ideas in a bicolon, sentence, or more expansive literary unit in order to secure an ABBA arrangement; (4) inclusio (ring composition) - the repetition or less exact restatement of an opening phrase or idea at the conclusion of a literary unit (often useful in helping the critic to determine the limits of a literary composition); (5) metonymy - a figure of speech in which a word replaces the specific object it is intended to suggest (Mt. Zion for Jerusalem); (6) onomatopoeia - the formation of a word by an imitation of the sound associated with the thing or action designated, and on occasion the use of words whose sound is used for its own effect; (7) parataxis - the coordination of words, phrases, or clauses one after another, without using coordinating connectives that would specify their syntactic relation; (8) paronomasia - a word play involving use of the same word in different senses, including the recurrence of the same word stem in close proximity; (9) pleonasm - the actual or apparent redundancy of expression, or the restatement of a thought by means of synonyms.

At the outset of his presidential address to the 1976 annual meeting of SBL, D.N. Freedman alluded to matters dear to the rhetorical critic when he said of Hebrew poetry, "The form and style, the selection and order of words, all play a vital role in conveying content, meaning, and feeling. In poetry, the medium and message are inseparably intertwined to produce multiple effects at different levels of discourse and evoke a whole range of response: intellectual, emotional, and spiritual" /5/. In his discussion of the forms and structures of Hebrew poetry, Freedman acknowledged that many poems exhibit irregular metrical
and strophic patterns and thus one must not lose sight of their individuality. Today it is not uncommon for articles on Hebrew poetry to concentrate on one specific aspect of stylistics.

Despite many serious attempts to explore the structural features of particular texts and to gain further insight into the stylistics of Hebrew poetry, form critics are still not about to deprecate the role conventional genres must have played in the shaping of individual pericopes. Yet some are maintaining that notwithstanding its limitations, rhetorical criticism with its synchronic emphasis and concern for the unique can further the work of the form critic with his penchant for highlighting diachronic concerns and conventionality. Thus, as a form critic, R.F. Melugin rightly reminds us of the inevitable blending of the typical and the unique within a given text:

The author or speaker used conventional forms of speech, to some degree at least, so that his words would have a frame of reference understandable to his audience ... At the same time, the writer/speaker wanted to do something particular with the inherited speech pattern as he fashioned the individual unit of tradition; invariably each example of a genre is in some sense a unique formulation of the genre. Good exegesis, then, will study both the typical and the unique.

With these remarks as hopefully useful background, let us turn to Isa. 51:1-16 and consider, in our analysis of that composition, some of its more noteworthy literary characteristics and the nature of its artistic achievement.

THE POEM AS A WHOLE

Isa. 51:1-16 is undoubtedly one of the most eloquent and moving literary creations to spring from that prophet-poet of the Babylonian exile whom we commonly designate as Second Isaiah. Resident within the melody of five strophes and an interlude is a message of comfort and expectation addressed to a people who are presently enduring the inconvenience and outrage of Babylonian exile. The words of assurance and eschatological anticipation set forth in this piece are well grounded on a faith thoroughly sensitive to the motifs of history and creation. They are not the product of idle dreaming. Rather, the composition consents to the eventfulness of Heilsgeschichte. Here Second Isaiah's message is intended for the
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faithful who in their faintheartedness need strengthening. These verses convey with considerable imagination and artistry the welcome news that Yahweh's salvation is imminent. In the light of such a promising message, the mood of the faithful members of the Israelite community might shift from despair to hope.

Translation

The following is presented as both a working translation of the text and a ready indication of how the strophic structure of Isa. 51:1-16 has been understood:

Strophe I

Comfort extended to those who seek Yahweh

1 Listen to me, you pursuers of deliverance, you seekers of Yahweh,
Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug;

2 Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah who in pain bore you;
For when he was but one I called him, and I blessed him and made him increase.

3 For Yahweh will comfort Zion, he will comfort all her desolate places,
He will establish her wilderness like Eden, her desert-plain like the garden of Yahweh,
Exultation and joy will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song.

Strophe II

Eternal and victorious salvation is imminent

4 Pay attention to me, my people, and my nation, give ear to me!
For instruction will go forth from me, and my truth as a light to the peoples.

5 Without delay I shall bring near my deliverance, my salvation is going forth and my arms will govern the peoples.
For me the coastlands wait eagerly, and for my arm they hope.

6 Lift up your eyes toward the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath!
For the heavens will be dissipated like smoke, and the earth will wear out like a garment,
Kuntz: Rhetorical Criticism and Isaiah 51:1-16

while its inhabitants will die like locusts.
But my salvation will be eternal,
and my triumph will never be abolished.

Strophe III
The righteous instructed to forego fear and dismay
7 Listen to me, you knowers of righteousness,
a people in whose hearts is my instruction,
Fear not the reproach of mankind,
and at their revilings be not dismayed,
8 For the moth will consume them like a garment,
and the worm will consume them like wool;
But my triumph will be eternal,
and my salvation to all generations.

Historical-eschatological Interlude
An earnest (Qinah) cry for Yahweh to continue intervening in history
9 Awake, awake, be clothed with strength,
O arm of Yahweh,
Awake, as in the days of old,
in the generations of long ago!
Is it not you who are hewing Rahab in pieces,
piercing the sea monster?
10 Is it not you who are drying up Sea,
the waters of the great deep,
establishing the depths of the sea as a way
for the redeemed to pass over?
11 So the ransomed of Yahweh will return,
and they will come to Zion with a joyous cry,
Eternal joy will be upon their heads,
they will attain joy and gladness,
and grief and groaning will flee away.

Strophe IV
Yahweh the creator is the consoler of Israel
12 I, I am your comforter;
who are you that you should fear -
Man and the son of man who will die,
who is made like grass?
13 And have you forgotten Yahweh your maker,
who stretched out the heavens,
And established the earth, that you fear,
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continually all day long,
Due to the fury of the oppressor,
when he is fixed ready to destroy,
and where is the fury of the oppressor?

14 He who is bowed down will quickly be released,
and he will not die into the Pit,
nor will his bread be lacking.

Strophe V
Yahweh the creator purposes to protect and elect Israel

15 For I am Yahweh your God,
who agitates the sea so that its waves roar,
Yahweh of hosts is his name;

16 And I shall put my words in your mouth,
and shall hide you in the shadow of my hand,
Setting up the heavens and establishing the earth,
and saying to Zion, "You are my people."

Form
J.D. Smart rightly remarks that sharply defined themes and readily discernible thought sequence are not especially characteristic of Isa. 51 /8/. Yet form-critically, we accept vv.1-8 as an oracle of comfort which takes a sustained look at Israel's past relation with the deity and eschatologically anticipates the future deliverance which Yahweh will assuredly bring about. In vv.9-16 we confront a communal prayer of lament (vv.9-11) and an oracle of assurance (vv.12-16). The former, with its introductory cry for help and review of Yahweh's past acts of creative redemption, functions as a magnificent historical-eschatological interlude and involves the poet's skillful apostrophizing of Yahweh's arm (v.9). Also a sophisticated use of the language of exhortation is readily evident. The latter, in a somewhat argumentative manner /9/, declares that the prophet's prayer is divinely answered /10/.

Rhetorical realization of the poem's central concern
More than anything else, Isa. 51:1-16 emphasizes that Israel's deliverance is close at hand. Such emphasis is rhetorically realized in at least seven different ways.

First, Yahweh is often presented in the first person. Yahweh himself stands behind the prepositional ḫelay ("to me") in vv.1a,4ab,5d, and 7a, the prepositional meʾitt ("from me") in v.4c, the emphatic first-person pronoun ʾanōkî ("I") employed
twice in v.12a and once more in v.15a, and the numerous nouns possessing first person pronominal suffixes - "Cammî" ("my people"), lê'ummî ("my nation"), and mishpâti ("my truth") in v.4; tsidqî ("my deliverance"), yishî ("my salvation"), and z caractère="ru" "my arms") in v.5; wîshûqátî ("but my salvation") and tsidqâti ("my triumph") in v.6; tôrâtî ("my instruction") in v.7; tsidqatî ("my triumph") and wîshûqâtî ("and my salvation") in v.8; and dèbaray ("my words"), yôdî ("my hand"), and Cammî ("my people") in v.16. Moreover, following the historical-eschatological interlude, we meet three crucial first-person climactic cola. Addressed to the covenant people, they collectively emphasize the sovereign design of the deity: "I, I am your comforter" (v.12a), "For I am Yahweh your God" (v.15a), and "I shall put my words in your mouth" (v.16a). The poet's ready assumption that Yahweh is sovereign over all the world and fully intends to sponsor the deliverance of his people is well served by these first-person expressions.

Use of the divine imperative constitutes a second device whereby Second Isaiah underscores his belief in an imminent salvation. The sovereign Yahweh issues commands to his people. The first word of Strophe I is a divine imperative, shimû ("listen"), which is repeated in v.7a as the opening word of Strophe III. Moreover, the initial word of v.1c as well as in v.2a and v.6b, habbiṭû ("look"), is a command spoken by Yahweh to his faithful people. Similarly, Strophe II commences with a divine imperative, hâqshîbû ("pay attention"), and the first word of v.6 is an imperative, šêî ("lift up"), addressed by Yahweh to his own. Finally, in v.7c with 'al tîrêî ("fear not") and in v.7d with 'al têchâtû ("be not dismayed") we witness the imperative preceded by the emphatic negative. In their totality, these imperatives either evoke Israel's attentiveness with ear (shimû and hâqshîbû) and eye (habbiṭû and šêî) so that she may be ready for the deliverance at hand, or they solicit confidence ('al tîrêî ["fear not"] and 'al têchâtû ["be not dismayed"] which casts out fear and dares to hope in the assured prospects of a future subservient to Yahweh's will.

The prophet-poet's deft use of imagery may be identified as a third device /11/. Especially in the first half of the poem, one image is piled on another. In v.1c the faithful of Israel are called upon to look to Abraham who is the rock (tsûr) from which they have been hewn. At once a new metaphor of like kind is added. Sarah is introduced in v.1d as the quarry (maqqebet bôr) from which those who seek Yahweh and his
deliverance have been dug. Such imagery effectively points to the corporate nature of the elect who have Abraham and Sarah as parents. This body is to be comforted now by Yahweh who will transform Zion into a garden (v.3cd). This will evoke "exultation and joy" and "the voice of song" (v.3ef). Moreover, Yahweh's truth is depicted "as a light" (letpr) in v.4d, and the second mention of the deity's "arm" (z^r5) in v.5 is figurative in function. The transitory aspect of the present heaven and earth and the oncoming transformation is developed in v.6cde through the similies of smoke (c^sh^n), worn out garment (beged tibleh), and dying locusts (reading km^oki as one word) /12/. Similarly, mortal humankind is compared to grass (ch^ts^f) in v.12d. Such striking images and figures of speech both enrich the prophet's central message of imminent deliverance and contribute to its content.

The repetition of key words and phrases constitutes a fourth device for emphasizing impending salvation. In fact, this stylistic feature is common to much of the Hebrew Bible, and often is employed as a literary device in an abundant variety of ways /13/. Here may be noted the presence of habbÎ“tû ("look") in v.1c and its repetition in v.2a, nicham ("comfort") in v.3a and again in v.3b, c^mmî^m ("the peoples") in v.4d and its repetition in v.5c, ^urî ("awake") in v.9a as well as in v.9c, haâîlo ("is it not you who") in both v.9e and v.10a, and ^anî ("lit") twice in v.12a. The stretching out (nth) of the heavens and establishment (ysd) of the earth in v.13bc is reaffirmed in v.16c (where the verbs employed are nth and, once more, ysd). Then the colon in v.4b ("and my nation, give ear to me") repeats in an artful and fresh manner what was just stated in v.4a ("pay attention to me, my people"). The presence of such repetition attests to both the importance and urgency of the word, and as well provides a significant clue for discerning what the poet most wishes to emphasize.

A fifth rhetorical device to be mentioned is Second Isaiah's deft use of contrast. At least four strong contrasts are to be noted in Isa. 51:1-16. First, the poet writes in v.2cd that when Abraham was "but one" (echâd), the deity favored him with call and blessing. From the solitary Abraham and Sarah a mighty nation emerged. Second, an obvious contrast may be noted in v.3cd with its reference to the great reversal that is imminent - the sterile wilderness (midbâr) will be transformed into the garden of Yahweh (gan-YHWH). It will become "like Eden" (kec^den). Third, in both v.6c-g and v.7c-8d, the trium-
phant deliverance of his people that Yahweh resolves to achieve is magnificently set over against the temporal madness of earth's mortals. In fact, that eternal salvation is even set over against the passing of the created order itself. Finally, throughout the poem there resounds the expectation that Israelite despair generated by Babylonian oppression will be displaced by an authentic rejoicing on the part of a people expressing its natural response to the marvelous deliverance that lies in store. The "grief and groaning" (v.11e) of the people will be dramatically set aside. Israel will be virtually overcome by exultation, joy, and gladness (vv.3e,v.11b-d). Indeed, "he who is bowed down will quickly be released" (v.14a). We need not doubt that part of the excitement of the prophet's lyrics is to be found in the contrasts which he so skillfully draws.

In Second Isaiah's employment of rhetorical questions we find a sixth stylistic device contributing to the overall success of the poetry. Though the oracle of comfort (vv.1-8) lacks interrogatives, two rhetorical questions are directed by the poet toward the deity in the historical-eschatological interlude (vv.9ef,10a-d), and three others are spoken by Yahweh to his covenant people in the oracle of assurance which follows (vv.12b,13a,13g). The former move the deity's attention to his great creative and historical deeds in times past in the fervent hope that he will mobilize himself anew for his people. The latter address Israel in the uncomfortable particularity of her present and stir her to rekindle her recently waning faith in divine sovereignty: "Who are you that you should fear?" (v.12b), "Have you forgotten Yahweh your maker?" (v.13a), and closely linked with that inquiry, "Where is the fury of the oppressor?" (v.13g). Such questions, which constitute an integral part of Second Isaiah's dialogic style, collectively make a significant contribution to the drama of the poem.

The last rhetorical device to be enumerated here is Second Isaiah's use of the direct quotation. Like the rhetorical question, it is a means whereby the dialogic style of the poetry may come into its own. While in all of Isa. 51:1-16 there is only one brief quotation, it does appear at the end of the poem in a most strategic collocation: "You are my people" (Cammî ḫattā, v.16d) /14/. The divinely spoken quotation is formally introduced by the ubiquitous lēmôr ("saying"). Clearly, this is to be seen as the very climax of the poem. A key motif is given vivid expression. It is because Israel has been divinely elected that she is to be delivered by the deity who is at once covenant
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Lord and active sovereign over all dimensions of time, be they historical or eschatological. Second Isaiah uses the direct quotation in v.16 in order to throw into bold relief Israel's mission. Through such dialogic expression the poet reminds his audience that those delivered by Yahweh will be used by him for greater purpose. These seven rhetorical devices, therefore, emphasize and enrich the central concern of the poem. Throughout Isa. 51:1-16 the persistent hope resounds that Yahweh's deliverance of his faithful is truly at hand.

Strophic structure

The translation I have provided reveals the outcome of my strophic analysis /15/. This arrangement is primarily informed by an observation of the location of key words within the poem, especially initial imperatives and emphatic first-person singular pronouns. Curiously, the Isaiah manuscript of St Mark's monastery (IQIsa), which virtually ignores the metrical arrangement of the poem, does agree with this strophic structure at one point - the initial word of each of our strophes is also the first word of a line in the IQIsa text. Perhaps the Qumran community did take into account here the commencement and termination of strophes, but this can scarcely be set forth with much confidence.

The first three strophes manifest an identical structure. (1) They begin with an imperative to listen (шимך in both vv.1 and 7, haqshibû in v.4) followed immediately by the emphatic suffixed preposition "to me" (לָהַי) /16/. (2) After the imperative comes the hieros logos, the specific word of divine disclosure, vv.1c-3d in the first, vv.4c-6e in the second, and the briefer vv.7c-8b in the third strophe. (3) Then comes a concluding bicolon sharing in the poem's total affirmation of the joy and power of deliverance itself (vv.3ef,6fg, and 8cd). Together these three strophes form a stirring oracle of comfort, one which declares that Yahweh, who has effectively redeemed his people in the remote past, will do no less in the near future.

Clearly, with v.9 the poet's thought and expression exhibit a dramatic shift. The poet now provides us a daring apostrophe in the form of a prayer of lamentation. Again we meet an initial imperative, but כּוּרְפַי ("awake"), unlike the previous imperatives, is second masculine singular. The object of the imperative is not the faithful Israel, but rather, זֶרֶדֹא יְהַוֶּה ("the arm of Yahweh"). While earlier imperatives in the
poem have been spoken by the sovereign deity who calls his people to attention and confidence, here the poet issues an earnest call on behalf of the faithful for Yahweh to intervene. In vv.9-11 the fervent character of the appeal is indicated both by the threefold  jm in v.9 and the conspicuous Qinah (lament) meter perfectly executed in vv.9 and 10. Indeed, this shift of metrical beat from 3+3 to 3+2 produces a welcome artistic effect. Then in v.11 the poet sets forth the promise that a return to Zion is imminent. This anticipation of the restoration of Yahweh's people is obviously based on the assumption that, by its very nature, divine deliverance is not simply a property of times past. Here the lament form has been modified. A further shift is manifested in v.12 where Yahweh is again the speaker and confidence displaces apprehension as the dominant theme. Since with v.12 the prophet returns to his original stance, it is more attractive to consider vv.9-11 as an interlude than as a strophe. In that way, its singularity stands forth. Both the fourth and fifth strophes begin with the emphatic first-person pronoun  jn. Yahweh is the speaker. One might argue that vv.12-16 constitute one long final strophe, but the affinity between vv.12a and 15a militate against this. In v.12a Israel is told that Yahweh is m'enachemkem ("your comforter"). In v.15a she is instructed that Yahweh is jgleykā ("your God"). Because vv.12a and 15a are basically parallel in structure and witness Yahweh's self-disclosure to the faithful yet weak members of the Israelite community, they may be considered as cola initiating new strophes. Moreover, the thought of v.15a is scarcely congruent with v.14. A special problem does confront us with vv.14-16. In the way the text is set up in BH (1937) it appears as prose. Against BH, but in agreement with Torrey, Westermann, and BHS (1977), I take these lines to be poetic. Accordingly, vv.14 and 15 each contain a tricolon, and v.16 offers a pair of bicola.

RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE INDIVIDUAL STROPHES

Strophe I
Comfort extended to those who seek Yahweh

In his introductory strophe, Second Isaiah is both concerned with Israel's past and future. The first two verses dramatically refer to the divine call to the solitary Abraham. That summons issued in a blessing on its auditor. Similarly, the poet's con-
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temporary "pursuers of deliverance" and "seekers of Yahweh" (v. 1), who are urged to listen (šimq) and look (habbittû) to Abraham, may expect to win God's blessing. Verse 3 assures that such a blessing will obtain its concrete form in God's comforting Zion /19/. With vv. 1a-2a three imperatives lead up to the first deictic kît particle, which indicates what Yahweh did when he called Abraham /20/. The next kît introduces the central thought of the strophe, namely, that Yahweh will comfort Zion (note the twofold use of nichâm). Thereupon the reactio hominum to the actio dei will be that of conspicuous joy and thanksgiving (v. 3ef). As is true of Strophe II and III, the speaker throughout Strophe I appears to be the deity. In v. 2 Yahweh speaks in the first person - that poses no problem. Though vv. 1 and 3 each contain a third-person reference to Yahweh, the context offers a strong note of continuity so as to suggest that in both instances, Yahweh is the speaker. The same situation also obtains in v. 15c; Yahweh is speaking but in the third person. Melugin cogently observes that whereas the declarations of vv. 1-3 manifest an indigenous disputational quality, in v. 3 the language of salvation speech is quite evident. This uniting of genres, he claims, is "undoubtedly the result of Deutero-Isaiah's creativity" /21/.

Verse 1: Having noted the general design and intention of Strophe I, let us inspect some of its terms more closely. Immediately following the opening imperative to listen (šimq) there comes a Qal active masculine construct plural participle from the root rdp meaning "to pursue, chase, persecute." In other contexts, this root has both negative and positive connotations, depending on the nature of the "chase." Often it manifests positive nuances which convey what the God-man relation in Israel is all about. Thus the cohortative of Hos. 6:3 admonishes, "Let us press on (rdp) to know Yahweh." Most helpful here is Deut. 16:20 which offers tsedeq as the accusative of the root rdp: "Justice (tsedeq), only justice, you shall follow (tirdbp) so that you may live and possess the land which Yahweh your God is giving you." In Isa. 51:1 rdp and tsedeq are closely linked in construct fashion. In its capacity to denote vindication or salvation, tsedeq is precisely that which is being sought here, and its reference is clearly eschatological in character /22/. Perhaps tsedeq should be interpreted as a divine attribute. In any case, it points to Yahweh or to the righteous truth which he characteristically speaks, and that truth for Second Isaiah has sturdy futuristic implications. Then as we

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move from v.1a to v.1b we learn that those who pursue righteousness are further defined as the faithful who explicitly seek after (bqsh) Yahweh.

A new imperative is introduced in v.1c: "Look (habbîtu) to the rock from which you were hewn." The verb nbî is employed in a normative manner; it occurs in the HiphCil and is addressed to a human subject. It is often used figuratively to mean "regard" (1 Sam. 16:7), "attend to" (Isa. 22:8), and "consider" (as here). The imperative in this verse presents itself as a direct appeal to the weak yet faithful members of the community that as "historians" they take serious thought of Abraham. The repetition of this imperative in v.2a suggests the same thing. In tsûr chutstasbtem ("the rock from which you were hewn") we encounter the figure of Abraham. Tsûr usually refers to a rocky wall or cliff (Isa. 48:21; Ps. 78:15) or to the deity as a metaphorical indication of his desire and capacity to defend his people (Isa. 17:10; 30:29). Only here is tsûr used in a figure for Abraham, Israel's ancestor par excellence. The second word of the image comes from chtsb ("to hew, cleave"). In v.9 the HiphCil feminine singular participle refers to the hewing of Rahab to pieces, and other active uses of chtsb may be uncovered in Deut. 6:11 (digging cisterns) and Deut. 8:9 (mining). Moving on to v.1d, it is more tempting to consider maqqebet and bôr (together meaning "quarry") as both original to the text, rather than to take the latter as a gloss on the former (in agreement with Torrey and contrary to McKenzie) /23/. These two words constitute a vivid metaphor on Sarah. Maqqebet refers to a hole, excavation, or cistern opening. A hapax in construct state with bôr, this noun is derived from the verb nqâb ("to pierce, bore through"). Bôr ("well, pit, cistern") is used only here as a figure of Sarah, Israel's mother par excellence. The root nqr ("to bore, pick dig") relates directly to the quarry from which Israel was dug, namely, Sarah. These self-consciously employed rhetorical images for Abraham and Sarah persuasively point to Israelite solidarity. The people are at one with their momentous past. Hence, there are authentic grounds for optimism.

Verse 2: Again, a colon of Second Isaiah's poetry is introduced by the imperative habbîtu ("look"). This time the two objects of the verb, Abraham and Sarah, clarify the imagery of v.1, for they are the actual entities implied in the metaphors of that verse. Abraham's and Sarah's offspring will likewise participate in divine blessing. Then, just as v.2a makes
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absolutely clear the meaning of the metaphor in v.1c,v.2b clarifies the picture drawn in v.1d. Sarah is the one who bore Israel. The verb used is chûl (in the Piel conjugation) and it means "to writhe in travail, bring forth." Curiously, this is the only mention of Sarah in the Hebrew Scriptures apart from the Book of Genesis. G.A.F. Knight claims that by alluding to Sarah, Second Isaiah is articulating his faith that just as Yahweh has enlivened the barren mother of Israel, so also he can make new life surge through the now weakened Israelites living in Babylonian exile /24/. It is equally, if not more, important to recognize that by his explicit mention of Sarah, the prophet fulfills a rhetorical purpose. His already well drawn image of Abraham, with its emphatic use of echâd ("but one"), is appreciably enhanced.

With v.2c we meet the first of the five kî particles located in the poem. This initial kî is the word toward which all the imperative clauses move. The faithful of Israel are summoned to listen and look because (kî) Abraham their father was called and blessed when he was merely one. C.C. Torrey, who rightly asserts that the position of echâd is emphatic, declares, "The One God did not choose the Egyptians, or the Phoenicians, or the Persians; he did not elect Rameses II, or Hiram of Tyre, or Nebuchadnezzar; he chose only Abraham and Israel, out of all the world" /25/. This crucial theological observation is rhetorically reinforced by means of contrast, and strong contrast at that. The many of Israel are deliberately set over against the solitary Abraham.

Verse 3: We have already stated that the central thought of Strophe I is contained in v.3ab: "For Yahweh will comfort Zion,/ he will comfort all her desolate places." The deictic kî particle and the twofold use of nicham ("to comfort") invite the conclusion that this bicolon indeed enjoys an emphatic function. As Yahweh has blessed Abraham, so will he console Zion and her ruins. Here Westermann correctly observes that the parallelism between "Zion" and "her desolate places" is ready indication that Zion at the present moment lies in ruins /26/. The root nchm, which is employed six times by Second Isaiah, is found twice in Isa. 51:1-16 /27/. In v.12 its participial function is attested where the deity declares, "I, I am your comforter." In v.3 the verb is directly related to Zion. Such comfort is to be wrought by a thorough transformation of nature; v.3bcd expresses the character of the transformation that God will bring about, and v.3ef depicts the human emotion that will be evoked.
Kuntz: Rhetorical Criticism and Isaiah 51:1-16

within the restored community of Zion. Again, the prophet's rhetoric is artful. Yahweh's impending transformation of Zion is vividly portrayed by two related images. First, the midbâr ("wilderness") will be changed into the likeness of Câden (Eden). This implies that a shift from historical to eschatological time will necessarily incorporate a return to primordial time /28/. Lifeless land will become invitingly inhabitable. Second, v.3d obviously parallels v.3c. The Cârâbâ ("arid place, desert-steep") will become like the gan-YHWH ("garden of Yahweh"). Both here and in Gen. 13:10, the gan-YHWH is a simile for the garden of Eden. Surely in 51:3cd Second Isaiah intends Câden and gan-YHWH to be accepted as equivalents.

In v.3ef the joyous emotions arising from those who inhabit the transformed Zion are enumerated. Sâsôn ("exultation, rejoicing") will be found in Zion's midst. Both here and in v.11d, the noun is buttressed by another noun having similar meaning - šîmchâ /29/. Such rejoicing is concretely expressed within the context of cultic thanksgiving (tôdâ) and song (zîmra).

Strophe II

Eternal and victorious salvation is imminent

A theological and literary intensity characterizes the second strophe, which is the longest of the five. It is throughout a divine oracle spoken to the covenant people in the hope that their faith might be strengthened. The rhetorical capacity of Strophe II has been enthusiastically recognized by Muilenburg: "The imperatives are more urgent, the words of address more inward, the repetitions more impressive, and the imagery more vivid and sublime" /30/. Moreover, in v.4d, "and my truth as a light to the peoples," we discern echoes of the first servant poem (42:1-4). In this strophe, the prophet appears to have two main considerations in mind. First, he insists that Israel's rescue is imminent (vv.4d,5a), and in so doing he focuses on those who wait eagerly for its coming (v.5de). Second, he anticipates in some measure how the eternal salvation will be victoriously achieved (v.6cde).

Verse 4: The strophe opens with a new imperative, haqshîbû. The root qshb ordinarily appears in the HiphCil conjugation and means "to give attention to." The verb is parallel to henezînû (HiphCil form of bn) in v.4b. The latter, meaning "to give ear, listen, hear," is employed almost entirely in poetic passages. The heavens are personified as giving ear in
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Deut. 32:1 and the earth in Isa. 1:2, whereas men give ear in Ps. 49:2 (v.1, Eng.) and Isa. 28:23. In the present context, the imperative is addressed to the Israelite nation. Chiasmus is achieved in v.4ab. Verse 4a opens with an imperative which is followed by preposition and noun, whereas v.4b begins with a noun and is followed by the same preposition and then a verb.

Introduced by the deictic particle kî, the balance of v.4 justifies the imperative, for it discloses why Israel should in fact give ear. Yahweh's instruction and light are about to radiate. Tôrâ ("instruction"), which is also explicitly mentioned in v.7b, is parallel with mishpâṭ ("truth"). As is likewise the case in Isa. 42:4 and Jer. 31:33, tôrâ here refers to Yahweh's instruction in the future, and v.7 at least implies that such instruction is to be interpreted as a coherent body of teaching (see Isa. 42:21,24; Ps. 37:31). Second Isaiah perceives such tôrâ as instruction to be issued by Yahweh in the impending new age. In v.4d mishpâṭ stands parallel to tôrâ; thus, the translation "truth" is not inappropriate. The "instruction" and "truth" will collectively function as a "light" (ôr) for those who confront them, which surely includes the Gentile world that is of considerable interest to this universalistic prophet in the Servant Songs. Indeed, in the first song, 42:1-4, tôrâ and mishpâṭ are linked as they are here. It should also be noted that the repeated use of ʾelay ("to me") in v.4ab is stylistically matched by the intensive use of the first-person suffix in vv.4c-5d.

Verse 5: The concluding word of v.4, ʾargā̀tāc, is problematic. Among the various options, it would seem best to link it with v.5, identify its root as ṛgā̀c, and render it adverbially, "without delay, suddenly," which brings it in accord with the LXX reading. Yahweh promises to bring his yēšâhàc ("deliverance") at once and, as the sovereign deity who governs (špț) all, it is well within his power to do so. The deity emphatically declares, "My arms will govern the peoples" (v.5c). In the light of that sovereignty, the coastlands, and by implication, their inhabitants, wait for Yahweh and hope in his strong arm (v.5de).

Second Isaiah employs two verbs of waiting in this verse. The first is qwh, meaning either "to wait or look eagerly for" (Isa. 59:9,11), or "to lie in wait for" (Ps. 56:7 [v.6, Eng.]; 119:95). Because the verb is parallel to ychā̀l, "to wait eagerly for" commends itself as the meaning here intended. Hope as well as patience are denoted by the second verb of waiting, ychā̀l (v.5e).
Our attention is more forthrightly turned toward the realm of expectation. That in which the coastlands hope is the arm of Yahweh. The feminine noun zerōa may refer in a literal sense to "arm, shoulder," or it may serve as a symbol of strength. It appears that Second Isaiah intentionally employs the noun both ways in the present verse. In v.5c the literal sense is maintained ("my arm will govern the peoples"), but in v.5e the arm becomes a symbolic expression for help or deliverance ("for my arm they hope") /31/. Once more in v.9 the noun functions as a precise designation of Yahweh's arm, the veritable instrument of deliverance and judgement. In fact, the twofold mention of Yahweh's arm in v.5 serves in some measure to prepare the reader for its apostrophized employment in v.9.

Verse 6: Again a verse is introduced by an imperative. This time the faithful are told to lift up (טיהן) their eyes toward the heavens and then look (repeating the familiar habbitū imperative of vv.1 and 2) at the earth beneath. The reason for the imperative is aptly introduced by the deictic ki particle. The transient nature of the present heaven and earth are set over against the deity who in his person and redemptive design is eternal. Again Second Isaiah ushers us into the rhetorical realm of contrast, and again that contrast impresses the reader as the finished product of the poet's craft. Involving the eternality of God (v.6fg) and the temporality of all other things (v.6cde), the contrast is superbly drawn by means of an extended simile: "For the heavens will be dissipated like smoke, / and the earth will wear out like a garment, / while its inhabitants will die like locusts" /32/.

As has already been mentioned, v.6fg, the concluding bicolon of Strophe II, brilliantly attests to the eternity of Yahweh's victorious salvation (yēshū'cā). That noun also appears in v.8d where it manifests three similarities with its use in v.6f: eternal salvation is referred to, the noun is parallel with tsidqâ in an adjacent colon, and yēshū'cā is incorporated in the concluding and climactic line of its strophe. Here Second Isaiah celebrates a righteousness (tsidqâ) which is triumph personified. It is intimately linked with the one God who rules over all things. That righteousness will endure and on that thought an intensely drawn strophe comes to its close.

Strophe III
The righteous instructed to forego fear and dismay
In the present two-verse strophe, the thought of the two
preceeding strophes is carried further. The already persistent note of comfort is extended by means of assuring discourse - "fear not" (הָלָ֣ל תֵּרְעָ֑ם, v.7c) and "be not dismayed" (הָלָ֣ל תֵּכַֽחַתְתּו, v.7d), and again the transitory aspect of mortal life is contrasted with the eternal character of divine purpose.

Verse 7: The opening address closely resembles v.1. The "listen" imperative is repeated, and now the pursuers of righteousness are designated as knowers (יֹדֶהכָּא) of righteousness. Hence, their attachment with תֵּרְעָם is claimed to be all the more intimate. Most likely the knowing which is here attested has concomitantly a past, present, and future quality. Israel's past confrontation with the revealed תֵּרְעָם, her present awareness of Yahweh's claim and power, and her anticipated new knowledge of God to be acquired through a fresh experience of Yahweh's deliverance may all occupy the poet's mind. Moreover, since Second Isaiah uses the noun לָבָּא ("heart"), it is possible that he has come under the influence of Jeremiah's own reflections on the new covenant /33/. In the chiastic bicolon of v.7cd, Israel is enjoined not to fear the "reproach" (כְּרָפָא) of mortal humankind. Within the Hebrew Bible, reproach may be that cast by one individual on another (as here), or it may involve the action of humans against God (so Ps. 74:22 and 79:12). Though the reason for reproach may be explicit, at times it is not. Such is the situation here. Mention of the "revilings" (גַּדְעֵפִּים) in v.7d aptly reinforces the thought of the preceding colon. In the articulations which follow, however, it does become clear why the faithful need not give way to the reproach and revilings of arrogant mortals.

Verse 8: The pattern of issuing an imperative and accompanying it with the kî particle introducing the reason as to why it is uttered has already been highlighted in our analysis of vv.2,4, and 6. Similarly, kî reappears in v.8 where it prefaces the reason justifying the "fear not" and "be not dismayed" imperatives of v.7cd. At best, man is a transient creature. With recourse to vivid imagery, Second Isaiah contrasts man's precarious existence with the eternal triumph of Yahweh who promises his salvation to all generations. Thought of God's eternity already advanced in v.6 is here extended by means of new imagery. Our main task, then, is to clarify the imagery of v.8.

The first colon proclaims that just as the moth (כָּשֵׁה) consumes the garment, so haughty mankind will be devoured. In the Old Testament, the כָּשֵׁה is regularly regarded as a
wasteful consumer (see Isa. 50:9; Ps. 39:12 [v.11, Eng.]; Job 13:28). In fact, the noun is derived from כשׁשׁ (“to become weak, waste away”). In the composition preceding this poem it is said, "they [men] will all wear out like a garment, / the moth will devour them" (50:9). On two occasions the prophet thus proclaims that mortal humankind will be subjected to the same outcome as the garment which is eaten up by the consuming moth. In v.8b a second and similar image appears. The worm/moth (סָּשׁ is a hapax) will devour man like wool /34/.

The concluding bicolon of the strophe (v.8cd) states that in contrast to these images depicting the frail human condition, Yahweh's salvation endures for all time. The absence of any poetic imagery is noteworthy. Since the strophe is short, there would have been room for such. In v.6cde and v.8ab many images are employed for the purpose of highlighting man's transitory situation. Yet in v.6fg and v.8cd, where God's eternity is the prophet's concern, no word pictures are provided. This need not be interpreted as a lapse of imagination on the poet's part, however, since in v.5ce two references have already been made to the effective arm of Yahweh, and v.6fg coupled with v.8cd provide three important and related affirmations about Yahweh's triumph and salvation: (1) it will be eternal (vv.6f,8c); (2) it will never (even momentarily) be abolished (v.6g); and (3) it will be available to all generations (v.8d).

**Historical-eschatological Interlude**

An earnest (Qinah) cry for Yahweh to continue intervening in history

With v.9 we are confronted by a dramatic shift. The many statements of divine assurance now terminate. The words expressed in vv.9-11 are not those of Yahweh to his dispirited people. They are instead the prophet's words to Yahweh (in behalf of his compatriots) entreating him to intervene /35/. The call for divine intervention is actually made to the apostrophized arm of Yahweh, that as it has made itself effectively present in primordial and historical time, it might also participate in the present crisis. Here we would do well to take note of P.R. Ackroyd's insightful comment:

The actualization of the events of creation and redemption in the present situation is here made most plain. The series of participal phrases in vv.9-10 here - often erroneously translated as if they were equivalent to
past tenses - express, as is so often the case also in the hymns of the psalter, the attributes of God whose power is invoked. The sense of the contemporaneity of history is here most obvious /36/.

After reviewing the effect of Yahweh's intervention in history (v.10), the poet speaks confidently that the ransomed will be joyously restored to Zion (v.11). Appropriately, vv.9 and 10 are cast in the Qinah meter, but in v.11, with its word of assurance, there is a return to the typical three-beat colon. This three-verse interlude thus commences on a quite urgent note and closes with vivid words expressing full confidence in what Yahweh did, does, and will do.

Verse 9: Three imperatives, "Awake" (Cur方言 twice) and "be clothed (libshi) in strength" introduce the interlude. Thus far, all of the poem's imperatives have moved in a God-to-man direction. Now the situation is reversed. The root lbsh is frequently taken up in highly figurative biblical discourse. For example, Job 7:5 reads, "My flesh is clothed with worms," and in Isa. 49:18 the prophet promises that Jerusalem will be clothed with inhabitants. The figurative significance of the verb is likewise evident here, for we encounter now the fervent appeal that the arm of Yahweh show itself to be endowed with the strength that will enable it to usher in the promised salvation /37/.

In v.9cd the poet, in an entirely general manner, refers to instances in which Yahweh's strong arm has already shown itself to be efficacious. Attention is called to "days of old" and "generations of long ago." The answer to the rhetorical question commencing with v.9e is, "Of course, it is Yahweh who does such things!" In framing this question, the prophet offers a sophisticated allusion to the creation myth, with its presentation of the deity's conflict with the sea monster sometimes known as Tiamat but mentioned here (via West Semitic terminology) as Rahab /38/. Here Rahab is paralleled with tannîn (sea monster). As is true elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, the basic details of the ancient Oriental myth are not delineated. Rather, Second Isaiah seems content simply to allude to the primordial reality of chaos by means of four specific nouns: "Rahab" and "sea monster" (tannîn) in v.9ef, and "Sea" (yâm lacking the definite article) and "the great deep" (tehôm rabbâ) in v.10ab. Second Isaiah is not only pointing to a myth involving the creator deity's fight against chaos (Chaoskampf), however, for
in the same breath he alludes to the Reed Sea incident. Thus, as Gerhard von Rad has emphasized, belief in creation (Schöpfungsglaube) and belief in salvation (Heilsglaube) are two distinct acts falling together before the eyes of the prophet as one universal act of divine deliverance /39/. Second Isaiah is here assuming that Yahweh has full control over all forces of nature, the cosmic sea notwithstanding. He overcomes the sea and makes it serve his own purpose. As a consequence, Yahweh can intervene as Lord over specific historical events as at the Reed Sea.

Verse 10: Again creation and historical motifs are closely knit. The two rhetorical questions in vv.9-10 are identical in both introductory formulation and overall intention. Both begin, hājō'at-hi\(^1\) ("Is it not you who?"). The answer expected is once more, "Certainly, it is Yahweh." Both questions are designed to emphasize the poet's belief in the efficacious creative and historical power of Yahweh. The waters which are here dried up are specified as the waters of the deep (tēhôm), the very word used in Gen. 1:2 to refer to the primordial waters. Still we should remember that tēhôm is used elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible to designate the abyss of any sea or body of water /40/. Ps. 106:9 presents us with the closest parallel: "He [Yahweh] rebuked the Reed Sea, and it was dried up, and he led them through the deep (tēhôm) as through a desert." Yahweh's control over the waters in the Exodus event here recalled by Second Isaiah resulted in his drying up the waters of the great deep. By so doing, Yahweh established a way (derek) for the redeemed to traverse. Obviously the cosmic combat has here been intentionally historicized. The poet has skillfully appropriated popular mythology in order to advance his own message. For Second Isaiah this formative historical event at the Sea of Reeds has a vivid eschatological, as well as past, aspect to it. Moreover, the presence of flood imagery in v.10ab should not go unnoticed. As D.M. Gunn has carefully pointed out, a poet of Second Isaiah's skill is capable of multiple allusion; watery imagery in v.9ef focuses on creation, that in v.10ab on the flood, and that in v.10cd on the Reed Sea crossing, which, as the climax of the three images, anticipates the impending new exodus (v.11) /41/.

Verse 11: This verse stands in an intimate connection with the preceding, and, as well, readily moves our attention to the poem's last two strophes /42/. The final verb of passing over (lācāḇôr) in v.10 is carried over into the initial action of
v.11 embodied in the verb of returning (yeshubun). Moreover, the subject of the verb in v.10, the redeemed (gehuwm) of Yahweh, exists in close relation with the subject of the first verb of v.11, Yahweh's ransomed (peduyâ). Even so, the prophet's eschatological expectation here encompasses a further range of expression than previously: Second Isaiah eagerly anticipates that Yahweh's ransomed will return joyously to Zion. The noun at the end of v.11b, rinnâ, literally means "a ringing cry." It is entirely at home in a verse which, from beginning to end, attests to the joy which Yahweh's redeemed will experience. That exultation will directly motivate their praise of Yahweh for having delivered them. Thus v.11 offers a most fitting eschatological conclusion to the interlude. In its very tonality, the climax provided by this verse closely approximates the concluding cola of the first strophe, and enjoys at least some affinity with the concluding cola of the second and third. Clearly, v.11 functions as a significant "eschatological finale" /43/.

Strophe IV

Yahweh the creator is the consoler of Israel

Though the earnest cry initiated in v.9 is answered by the assuring message of the prophet in v.11, at the outset Strophe IV contains Yahweh's emphatic response to the impassioned appeal begun in v.9. Thus once more Yahweh is the speaker, and the language of this strophe and the next have a disputational aspect that is reminiscent of Strophe I /44/.

This time the customary introductory imperative to listen is wanting. The strophe simply begins with the confident emphatic declaration, "I, I am your comforter." The historical-eschatological interlude opened with the twofold use of ãûrfî ("awake," v.9a), and in like manner this strophe begins with the twice-stated emphatic first-person singular pronoun ãnîkî ("I"). This repetition of the sovereign "I" of the deity aptly presents itself as a direct answer to Second Isaiah's twice-uttered plea, "Awake" /45/.

Accordingly, in this strophe Yahweh announces his concern and ability to comfort, create, and deliver.

Verse 12: At once Second Isaiah's artistic skill is evident in his reinforcement of the thought of Strophe III. Specifically the injunction against fear which is addressed to all faithful Israelites in the plural in v.7c is now directed in the singular to each individual. Though the pronominal suffix of menachem-kem ("your comforter") in v.12a is plural, the pronoun ãat
in v.12b is deliberately singular in order that the immediacy of divine address might be expressed more poignantly. The deity issues this interrogative sentence: "Who are you that you should fear?" Muilenburg cogently asserts that mi ṭat ("Who are you?") is not contemptuous but means "Why?" or "How is it that?" /46/. Humankind (ḵenōš), perhaps related to the oppressor in v.7, will die like grass. Israel has no reason to fear. In large measure, the forthright tenor of the divine message is hereby secured by the poet's intentional recourse to the interrogative pronoun mi. He intuits the importance of this useful rhetorical device.

Verse 13: Through another rhetorical question Second Isaiah now admits to the possibility that the exiles are currently trapped by a fear that has led them to forget their Maker. Whereas v.13bc celebrates the creative capacities of the deity, v.13a focuses briefly but intently on Yahweh as the one who made Israel into a people, and here the prophet's use of the second-person suffix, "Your Maker," is scarcely fortuitous. As in Deut. 26:19 and 32:6, the verb "to make" (qāš) is used to acknowledge Yahweh's having brought the nation Israel into existence. Immediately in v.13b Israel's Maker is presented as the one responsible for having "stretched out" (nth) the heavens. With artistic acumen the poet portrays the spreading in the manner of the action required in pitching a tent. Moreover, in v.13c Israel's Maker is also confessed as the one who "established" (ysd) the earth. In close accord with the prevailing ancient Near Eastern cosmogony, Second Isaiah's imagery assumes that the earth has been fixed on massive pillars.

The balance of v.13 portrays the experience of mortal Israel, who, in her state of having forgotten Yahweh, stands in dread before other mortal powers. In v.13d, tāmīd kol-hayyôm ("continually all day long"), the unmitigated character of the dread is deftly stated. In mipnê ("due to," v.13e) we meet a preposition indicating cause (see Gen. 36:7 and Exod. 3:7). It introduces the reason for the deep dread mentioned in v.13cd - the oppressor is consumed by fury (chēmâ). And that fury is again explicitly mentioned in v.13g. The twice-offered Hiph-Cil participle of tswq in this verse is used somewhat abstractly to denote the oppressor /47/. Though 13efg has at times been assessed as marginal gloss, its rhetoric seems to be in full accord with that of Second Isaiah. Thus in its somewhat ponderous mention of fury and oppression, the poetry might well be intent on symbolizing the consuming destruction
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wrought by the Babylonians against Jerusalem, and doing so for the greater purpose of declaring in faith that such oppression is contingent and transitory. Israel really has no occasion to fear.

Verse 14: Strophe IV terminates with further words of divine assurance. The one who is bowed down under the burden of the Babylonian fetters will soon be released. The PiCéel perfect mihar ("to hasten"), appearing with the verb ptch ("to release"), is really adverbial in function. It promises that release will come quickly. The noun shachat ("pit") may well imply Sheol. Not only is shachat typically used in the Old Testament contexts along with Sheol, but the Akkadian cognate shuttu is a specific name for the abode of the dead. Moreover, in v.14b shachat stands immediately beside the root mwt ("to die"). Presumably the Israelite captives are addressed as those existing near the pit. Against all physical indications to the contrary, they will soon experience release from exile.

It appears from the very construction of this strophe that it is Second Isaiah's deliberate rhetorical design to move from the general to the specific. As the strophe opens with v.12, the deity speaks this word of self-asseveration to the struggling exiles: "I, I am your comforter." As the strophe terminates with v.14, specific kinds of divinely inspired comfort are enumerated - release from bondage, rescue from death, and physical sustenance.

Strophe V

Yahweh the creator purposes to protect and elect Israel

This final strophe provides an artful recapitulation of several themes which have previously been dominant in the poem. These include poetic disclosures that Yahweh is both creator of the universe and the covenant Lord of Israel, that he is sovereign over the sea, has set up the heavens, established the earth, and that he speaks a particular word to Zion. The strophe opens (v.15a) and closes (v.16d) with the same crucial covenantal message which forthrightly declares that Yahweh is Israel's God and Israel is God's people, and this, too, is to be appreciated as one more manifestation of the poet's rhetorical skill. Moreover, Second Isaiah adroitly recaptures the atmosphere of v.1 by representing Yahweh as speaking once more words of second-person address.

Verse 15: The theme of divine assurance, dominant throughout Strophe IV, is carried into Strophe V through the first-person statement, "For I am Yahweh your God." Further

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promises are spoken to the fearful (v.12b). The deity who causes the waves to roar (hmh) manifests himself as precisely the one who is Israel's covenant Lord, and his name YHWH tsēba'ōt ("Yahweh of hosts," v.15c) itself signals his ready capacity to act as sovereign over creation and history.

Verse 16: In the concluding verse of the poem, the theme of Israel's security under sovereign divine protection continues to resound clearly. This is especially the case in v.16b, "And I shall hide you in the shadow of my hand." This shadow image is likewise attested in Isa. 49:2b, in one of the servant songs: "In the shadow (tsēl) of his hand he hid me." Another recurring theme is Yahweh's establishing the heavens and the earth (v.16c), though now a new verb is employed, nṯ ("to plant"). One can, of course, seek conformity with v.13 and emend the verb to nṯh ("to stretch out") /48/. Yet this is really unnecessary, since nṯ may be employed figuratively to represent something which is established. In fact, Second Isaiah has already done just this in 40:24 where he has declared that scarcely are the princes planted (nittāqū) before they are uprooted. Yahweh's capacity as creator and sovereign, and his readiness to continue in close covenantal relation with those whom he protects are celebrated by explanatory infinitives (v.16cd). Their appearance is unexpected, yet they succeed in highlighting Yahweh's cosmic and historical design /49/.

Most importantly, along with restatement something new emerges in this concluding strophe. Yahweh resolves to put his words into Israel's mouth (v.16a) /50/. Israel is here chosen to be the agent of divine revelation. As the new heaven and the new earth unfold, Israel will be found instructing others. As Yahweh's chosen people, she will be mediating his revelation to humankind. If one of the functions of Isa. 51:1-16 is that of arming a dispirited people with firm hope, surely another is that of helping Israel to realize her calling. In no small measure that realization is actualized by the closing words of the deity which present themselves as a quotation manifesting crucial covenantal overtones: "You are my people."

We have thus sought to appreciate one of Second Isaiah's poems for its literary merit as well as for its momentous message. This prophet-poet of sixth-century B.C. Israel enjoyed gifts of literary expression, and they were rigorously employed in his theologically rich proclamations. His intense lyricism vividly conveys his assurance of impending salvation. It has often been lamented that Second Isaiah is all too much an
anonymous figure. Yet a sustained rhetorical-critical study of such a poem as Isa. 51:1-16 does, I believe, move us a little closer to his person. Even more, it engenders in us a fresh appreciation of Second Isaiah's talent as a master of Hebrew stylistics. The poetry he provides us in the passage under consideration bears the markings of a superb craftsman. Given the rich recourse to divine imperatives, the deft use of stirring imagery, the studied repetition of key words and phrases, and still other rhetorical devices at his command, it is entirely understandable that this remarkably courageous and articulate exilic prophet has often been celebrated as one of Israel's greatest poets.

NOTES

1 While some scholars limit their attention to Isa. 51:1-11, we accept Isa. 51:1-16 as a coherent whole. Claus Westermann's reconstruction of the text in his Isaiah 40-66 commentary (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969), 232-244, seems arbitrary. We must not be insensitive to textual disturbances. At the same time, it is difficult to imagine that Westermann's solution can easily stand up under sustained scrutiny, though there are numerous form-critical insights in his discussion. Fredrick Holmgren, "Chiotic Structure in Isaiah 51:1-11," VT 19 (1969), 196, dismisses Westermann's radical textual reconstruction as "subjective" and "unconvincing." On the basis of a chiotic pattern which Holmgren believes he has uncovered, he contends that Isa. 51:1-11 is the proper literary unit. His argument, however, depends on a particular selection of fifty-five italicized words, and that selection is not so very well defined. I find more compelling the analysis of Carroll Stuhlmueller, "Deutero-Isaiah," in R.E. Brown et al. (eds.), The Jerome Biblical Commentary (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968), 377, who comprehends Isa. 51:1-16 as a meaningful unit to which he gives the title, "Strength for the Fainthearted." He detects here "two skillfully wrought poems" (vv.1-8 and 9-16) which reveal the poet's "keen appreciation of Israel's epic literature on creation and the first patriarchs (J tradition)." Similarly, J. Muilenburg, "The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66," in G.A. Buttrick et al. (eds.), The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), vol.5, 589, effectively argues for the thematic unity of Isa. 51:1-16. He judges that theme to be "the comforting of Zion by the repeated assurance that the time of her deliverance is at hand."
Kuntz: Rhetorical Criticism and Isaiah 51:1-16

3 Ibid., 8.
6 Ibid., 10-11.
9 Westermann, op. cit., 240, applies the term "disputation" to vv.12-16.
10 To be sure, Isa. 40-55, like other bodies of Old Testament prophetic literature, must be subjected to sound form-critical analysis if it is to be adequately understood. Noteworthy here are Westermann's work on the text (op. cit.) and the thorough study of R.F. Melugin, The Formation of Isaiah 40-55, BZAW 141 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1976). Even so, I am impressed with the observation of H. Gressmann, "Die literarische Analyse Deuterojesajas," ZAW 34 (1914), 295-296, which, in turn, is endorsed by Muilenburg, "The Book of Isaiah," 385, that by the late seventh century B.C., the use of traditional genres was in considerable flux, that well established forms of speech were being severed from their conventional settings. Clearly, Isa. 40-55 is well stamped with the literary genius of its author. This assessment, however, must not be carried to excess, and here Westermann's method provides a needful corrective. While he upholds Muilenburg's judgement that the individual literary units in Second Isaiah are longer than form critics have ordinarily taken them to be, he does rightly emphasize that they typically involve a thorough interweaving of a variety of genres. Accordingly, it cannot be held that Second Isaiah was impervious to traditional ways of speaking. Rhetorical criticism dares not make light of this poet's imitation of conventional forms of discourse when traces of that imitation are clearly evident in the text.
In fact, Muilenburg, "The Book of Isaiah," 388, considers Second Isaiah's use of imagery to be "the most revealing feature of the poet's style."

Isa. 51:6e with kēmō-kēn is problematic. Assuming that the two words mean "likewise," C.C. Torrey, The Second Isaiah (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), 398, argues that this would be a "natural way of saying that as the heavens and the earth are perishable, just so shall mankind die and disappear." As a pleonastic form of kē, kēmō is common in Hebrew poetry. In the entire Hebrew Bible, however, kēmō-kēn is met only in Isa. 51:6. We are left with uncertainty, yet find persuasive the suggestion of Joseph Reider, "Contributions to the Hebrew Lexicon," ZAW 53 (1935), 270-271, that kēmō-kēn should be read as one word and rendered "like locusts." This translation is also advanced in the critical apparatus of BHS.


L.G. Rignell, A Study of Isaiah Ch. 40-55 (Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup, 1956), 73, maintains that kî in v.4c indicates a quotation, but the case he makes is not particularly convincing.

With good reason, Melugin, The Formation of Isaiah 40-55, 8, holds that the strophic analysis of Old Testament texts "suffers from lack of agreement on the criteria for detecting strophes." This does not, of course, mean that this endeavor is futile. In the case of Second Isaiah, a detection of numerous rhetorical devices contributes more significantly toward the proper delineation of the strophes than Melugin is prepared to admit.

There are good reasons for disregarding habbîṭû at the beginning of v.2 and šēqû at the head of v.6 as imperatives which commence strophes. They are not followed by the emphatic ēlay as is true with the initial imperatives in vv.1a,4a, and 7a. Also they do not follow bold concluding bicola from which the poem derives momentum and strength, as is the case with v.4a following v.3ef and with v.7a coming after v.6fg.

This designation of vv.9-11 as interlude has earlier been advanced by Muilenburg, "The Book of Isaiah," 595.


To be sure, this carries one back to the initial imperative of Isa. 40:1, nachāmû nachāmû cammî ("Comfort, comfort, my people").
Kuntz: Rhetorical Criticism and Isaiah 51:1-16

20 That the particle kî merits special attention of rhetorical critics has been amply argued by James Muilenburg, "The Linguistic and Rhetorical Usages of the Particle kî in the Old Testament," HUCA 32 (1961), 135-160.


25 Torrey, op. cit., 397.

26 Westermann, op. cit., 237.

27 Second Isaiah also uses the root nĉhm in 40:1; 49:13; 51:19, and 52:9.

28 McKenzie, op. cit., 125, writes that Judah's transformation depicted in v.3 is exaggerated, but what else might we expect from such a visionary poet as Second Isaiah who in his craft cultivated an intense lyricism?

29 It might be noted that within the entire body of Second Isaiah's poetry, these two nouns stand in juxtaposition only in 51:3 and 11.


31 In agreement with Torrey, op. cit., 398.

32 Though the literal rendering of kemō-kēn as "in like manner" is in fact upheld by impressive versional evidence (LXX, Targum, Vulgate, and Peshitta), it is highly probable that Second Isaiah sought to construct three equivalent and nicely balanced similies (see our previous remarks in n.12). Certainly the context suggests nothing less.

33 In agreement with Muilenburg, "The Book of Isaiah," 595.

34 Not knowing what to make of Hebrew sās, the LXX translators resorted to simple transliteration: sēs. Cognates appear in Akkadian sāsû and Sumerian ziz.

35 The intercessory aspect of this interlude is recognized and thoughtfully highlighted by Smart, op. cit., 182.


37 On Yahweh's arm, Westermann, op. cit., 241, offers this helpful remark: "We today feel that the expression smacks much more strongly of anthropomorphism than do 'the face of God' or the 'word of God,' although undoubtedly it does not. Instead, it

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throws into relief that activity in history on God's part which
for Deutero-Isaiah and the entire Old Testament alike so
largely decides his divinity."

38 In v.9 Rahab is not an emblematic name of Egypt (as is
the case in Ps. 87:4 and Isa. 30:7), but is rather the mythical sea
monster linked in Job 26:12 with yām.

39 Gerhard von Rad, "The Theological Problem of the Old
Testament Doctrine of Creation," in von Rad, The Problem of
the Hexateuch and Other Essays (London: Oliver and Boyd,
1966), 136. See also Carroll Stuhlmueller, Creative Redemption
posits on grammatical and stylistic grounds that "the lines of
51:9-10 are so closely interwoven as to form a single pattern
and to relate all ideas under a unified theme," namely, that of
Israel's creative redemption.

40 See Gen. 7:11; 8:2; Ps. 104:6; 106:9; Prov. 8:27; Amos 7:4;
and Isa. 63:13.

41 D.M. Gunn, "Deutero-Isaiah and the Flood," JBL 94 (1975),
493-508. Note in particular his discussion of Isa. 51:10 in which
he discerns the flood allusion as a transitional image which
accords completely with the "subtle texture" of the verse (502).
I am in complete agreement with his judgement that multiple
allusion exists in the poetry of Second Isaiah, which "at its best
... shares with other fine poetry an openness to interpretation,
to which quality a certain initial capacity or ambiguity in the
language often contributes significantly" (495).

42 Torrey, op. cit., 399, claims that Second Isaiah
appropriated v.11 from the conclusion of an earlier poem he had
written (35:10). Torrey rightly credits this verse with a
transitional capacity to return us "to the main current of the
poem without any sense of interruption."

43 Following the designation of Muilenburg, "The Book of
Isaiah," 598.


45 In agreement with Antoon Schoors, I am God Your
Saviour: A Form-Critical Study of the Main Genres in Is. 40-55,
VTSup 24 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973), 126, who holds that "lament
and oracle are strongly linked together."

46 Muilenburg, "The Book of Isaiah," 599. However, Knight,
op. cit., 217, suggests that "the question is asked with
astonishment."

47 In an intricate article, "The Oppressor of Isa. 51:13 - Who
was He?" JBL 81 (1962), 25-34, Julian Morgenstern opts for the
Persian Monarch Xerxes (ca. 485 B.C.). His denial that the term mēṣṣîq could refer collectively to the Babylonians is based on too rigid a reading of v. 13. Morgenstern maintains that the Babylonians were too considerate of the exiled Jews for them to have been labeled "oppressors." But what of the shambles they made of Jerusalem, to say nothing of the fact that Hebrew poetry should be read as poetry, and not as some kind of objective, disinterested prose? Surely this observation must remain foremost in our minds as we read the majestic lyrics of Second Isaiah.

48 This, for example, is recommended by Muilenburg, "The Book of Isaiah," 602.

49 In fact, the prefixed lamedh (preposition) occurs no less than four times in the concluding bicolon of the strophe, thus conferring strength upon this final element in the poem.

50 The words (debarîm), however, have already been anticipated in v. 7b with mention of toratî ("my instruction"). Both nouns point to the same reality.
"WHY HAVE YOU ABANDONED ME?"
A RHETORICAL STUDY OF PSALM 22

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Because its opening words occur on the lips of the crucified Jesus (Mark 15:34 // Matt. 27:46), Psalm 22 is a point of intersection for both Testaments. Not surprisingly it has been the object of extensive study from several perspectives /1/. Form-critically, it is obviously a lament; but, as several critics have pointed out, its classification as an individual or communal lament is more difficult to determine, since it has characteristics of both genres. Structurally, the integrity of the psalm has been questioned; some older scholars have considered all of the thanksgiving to be an addition, while several more recent studies have argued for the secondary and non-original character of only vv.28-32. Theologically, its description of the utter abandonment of the psalmist at the beginning of the psalm and the invitation to the dead to join in the universal chorus of praise of God at the end have occasioned comment. Finally, there have been scattered comments in a number of studies that could be called rhetorical-critical, but (to my knowledge) no extended study of the whole psalm from the perspective of rhetorical criticism has been presented. This paper will present such a study. First I offer a translation of the psalm, with notes that give the basis for some of the translation choices made, along with other minor matters; then a commentary on the psalm is provided, stressing rhetorical features and themes which run through the whole psalm - for instance, what I will call the vertical and horizontal perspectives that mark the lament in vv.2-22 /2/, the thanksgiving in vv.23-27, and the universal chorus of praise in vv.28-32. Such common perspectives will give support to the integrity claimed for this dramatic and moving Old Testament lament.
TRANSLATION OF PSALM 22

2 My God my God, why have you abandoned me? Why are you far from my cry, from the words of my groaning?

3 My God, I call out by day, but you do not answer - by night, and there is no respite for me.

4 But you among the holy ones sit enthroned, amid Israel’s praises.

5 In you our fathers trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them.

6 To you they cried out, and they escaped; in you they trusted, and they were not shamed.

7 But I am a worm, not a man, the scorn of mankind, despised by the people.

8 All who see me jeer at me; they stick out their tongues and shake their heads:

9 "He lived for Yahweh - let him deliver him; let him rescue him, if he delights in him."

10 Yet you are the one who drew me forth from the womb, pacifying me on my mother's breast.

11 Upon you was I cast from the womb; from my mother's womb you are my God.

12 Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

13 Many bulls surround me, fierce bulls of Bashan encircle me;

14 they open wide their mouths against me, like a lion that rends and roars.

15 Like water I am poured out; all my strength is dissipated.
My heart has become like wax, melting away within me.

16 My throat is as dry as a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; to the dust of death you bring me down.

17 Indeed, dogs have surrounded me, a pack of evildoers has closed in on me. My hands and my feet are shriveled up;

18 I can count all my bones. They look on and gloat over me -
they divide my garments among themselves; for my clothes they cast lots.

But you, O Yahweh, do not be distant; O my help, come quickly to my aid.

Save my neck from the sword, my only life from the power of the dog.

Save me from the mouth of the lion, from the horns of the wild bulls.

You have answered me!

I will proclaim your name to my brothers; in the midst of the assembly I will praise you.

You who fear Yahweh, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honor him! Stand in awe of him, all you descendants of Israel!

For he has neither despised nor spurned the piety of the afflicted one, nor did he turn his face away from him; when he cried out to him, he listened.

Over and over I will sing my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will fulfill before those who fear him.

The devout will eat and be full; those who seek Yahweh will praise him. May your hearts live forever!

All the ends of the earth will call upon Yahweh's name and return to him; all the clans of the nations shall bow down before him;

For truly Yahweh is king; indeed he is ruler of the nations.

Surely to him shall bow down all the living of the earth; before him shall bow all those who go down to the dust. When a person lives no more,

his descendants will serve Yahweh. Let the generation to come be told of the Lord, and let them proclaim to a people yet to be born the salvation he has surely accomplished.

NOTES TO THE TRANSLATION

2. "From my cry." The reason for the emendation of mshwCty ("from my salvation") to mshwCty ("from my
cry") include the following: the synonymity of mshwCty with the following dbry sh*gty ("words of my groaning"); the occurrence of a verbal form of the same root in v.25 (bshwCw: "when he cried out"), a significant point in a psalm that uses a high degree of repetition of key words. Finally, the contrast between the psalmist's fruitless cry and the fathers' successful one in v.6 (zCqw: "they cried out") employs a standard pair: for shwC // zCq ("cry" // "cry out") cf. Hab. 1:2, Job 35:9, and the collocation in Lam. 3:8; also tsCq // shwC ("cry out" // "cry") in Job 19:7. However, MT's "my salvation" is not impossible; cf. Ps. 18:42: "they cried out (wyshwCw) but there was no one to save (mwshyC) them; to Yahweh and he did not answer them (wl*Cnm)"; Ps. 27:10: wPl tCzbnm ylhy yshC* (*"do not abandon me, O God of my salvation"); Ps. 88:2: ywhh ylhy yshwCty ywm tsCqty blylh ngdk ("O Yahweh, God of my salvation, by day I cry out, by night before you"). However, by reading the yod of yshwCty as a dittography of the final yod of ylhy, and pointing shwCti ("I cry"), we would have another instance of the pair shwC // tsCq (so NAB, which renders Ps. 88:2: "O Lord, my God, by day I cry out; at night I clamor in your presence"). And see the conclusion of this paper for a proposal to read "my salvation" here in Ps. 22:2, to form an inclusion with tsdqtw in 22:32.

"Words of my groaning." The preposition "from" (m) with "my cry" is double-duty, governing dbry sh*gty ("words of my groaning") as well. For sh*r ("groan") in laments, cf. Pss. 32:3, 38:9. Note also the parallels in Job 3:24: "my groans (sh*gty) pour forth like water"; 3:26: "I have no peace or ease"; and cf. Ps. 83:2 for l*dmy // ltsqht ("be not silent" // "be not still").

A good parallel to v.3 is found in Lam. 2:18: "Cry out (tsCq) from the heart to the Lord, O remorseful Zion ... Pour down tears like a river, day and night (ywmm wzlyh). Give yourself no rest; let your eyes not be still (l tdm)."

The meaning of v.4 is not immediately clear, as the variety of translation possibilities shows: (1) the traditional translation, as in RSV, renders the verse "Yet thou art holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel"; (2) NAB reads bzqsh ("in holiness/in the holy place", suggested by Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus) and understands thlwt as a divine epithet ("Glory" = "the Glorious One"; "praise" = "the praiseworthy One," as in Pss. 33:1, 147:1, Deut. 10:21, Jer. 17:14; cf. J.D. Shenkel, "An Interpretation of Psalm 93,5," Bib 46 [1965] 411-12), whence its translation "Yet you are enthroned in the holy place, O Glory of
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Israel"; (3) Dahood, _Psalms_ I (AB 16; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966) 138-39, understands the adjective qdwsh as a metonym for God's throne, thus: "While you sit upon the holy throne, the Glory of Israel"; (4) another possibility, so far not proposed, would be to understand qdwsh ... ysr*l as a broken construct chain with ywshb thlwt interposed: "You are the Holy One of Israel, enthroned with praise" (on this poetic technique, cf. D.N. Freedman, "The Broken Construct Chain," _Bib_ 53 [1972] 334-36); (5) if qdwsh is a collective here, as it may be in Exod. 15:11 and Ps. 93:5, a possibility suggested by LXX en hagiois, then the verse might be rendered "You are enthroned among the holy ones (members of God's heavenly council)" with thlwt ysr*l meaning "the Glory of Israel," as above in (2), or "amid Israel's praises." On balance, I prefer this last and so would translate "But you among the holy ones sit enthroned, amid the praises of Israel."

6. Cf. such parallels as Deut. 26:7: wntsCq *l yhwh *lhy btyynw ("we cried out to Yahweh, the God of our fathers"); Josh. 24:6-7: wtsy* *t bwtym mmtsrym ... wytsCq *l yhwh ("I brought your fathers out of Egypt ... they cried out to Yahweh"); 1 Sam. 12:8: wyzCq btykm *l yhwh ("your fathers cried out to Yahweh").

9. "He lived." For gl with this meaning, cf. Dahood, _Psalms_ I, 139. However, in support of translating gl *l as "trust in, rely on," note Ps. 37:5 where, as my student Mark Futato pointed out to me, gwl *l yhwh drkk (RSV: "commit your way to the Lord") is in parallelism with btch *lyw ("trust in him"). Finally, one wonders if gl *l could be a corruption of g*l ("redeem"), with some such translation as "let Yahweh the go'el (redeemer) deliver him ... " Cf. Ps. 18:20 = 2 Sam 22:20 where chits ("rescue"), a synonym of g*l, occurs in a similar context: ychitsny ky chpts by ("he rescues me because he delights in me").

10-11. Note the assonance and word-play in mbtn ("from the womb") and mbtchy ("pacifying me"), as well as in mrchm ("from the womb") and trchq ("be distant") in v.12, where similarity in sound is in counterpoint to opposition in meaning (intimacy vs. distance). A. Ceresko, "The Function of Chiasmus in Hebrew Poetry," _CBQ_ 40 (1978) 10, has pointed out the chiasitic arrangement of eight of the elements in vv.10-11:
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A ByText ("you")
B  Bychy ("who drew me forth")
C  Bymbtn ("from the womb")
D  ByCI ("upon") - ByCI shdy  Bymy ("on my mother's breast")
C  Bymbtn ("from the womb")
B  Byly ("my God")
A ByText ("you")

Cf. the parallels in Ps. 71:5-6: "For you are my hope, O Lord; my trust (bymbchya), O Yahweh, from my youth. On you (byly) I depend from birth (bymbtn); from my mother's womb (byby chy ymy) you (ByText) are my strength"; and in Job 31:18: "For from my youth he [God] has reared me like a father, guiding me even from my mother's womb (bymbtn ymy)."

12. Cf. Ps. 38:22: B  ByCzybnby ywhh  Byly  By1 trchq  Bymny chwshh  ByCzyrty  Bydy  BytshwCty ("do not abandon me, Yahweh; my God, be not far from me; hasten to help me, O Lord, my salvation").

14. "They stick out their tongues." Cf. Lam. 2:16, 3:46: bytsw byclyk pyhm ("they open wide their mouths against you").

15-16. The translation presumes the emendation of kchy ("my force") to chky ("my throat"), a matter of a simple inversion of two letters, and an enclitic mem in lshwn-n dbq ("my tongue sticks"); so Dahood, Psalms I, 140). "All my strength is dissipated" is adopted (instead of the more common "all my bones are out of joint") following the proposal of T. Collins, "The Physiology of Tears in the Old Testament: Part II," CBQ 33 (1971) 191-94, who translates the whole as follows:

I am poured out like water,
all my strength is dissipated.
My heart has become like wax,
melting with the flowing of my intestines.
My force is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue cleaves to my jaws.

He retains MT kchy ("my force"), suggesting that the phrase whtrpw kl Ctsmwty ("all my strength is dissipated") is expressing the same idea as ybsh kchy ("my force is dried up"); he cites Ps. 31:11, where we find kchy // Ctsmy ("force" // "bones") in a context similar to Ps. 22:15-16. If Collins is correct, we find a neat chiasmus of nouns:
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>tsmwty</th>
<th>(&quot;my strength&quot;)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lby</td>
<td>(&quot;my heart&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mcy</td>
<td>(&quot;my intestines&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kchy</td>
<td>(&quot;my force&quot;)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(For lby // mcy ["heart" // "intestines"] cf. Jer. 4:19. And cf. lby // kchy ["my heart" // "my force"] cf. Ps. 38:11.) Finally note how the images of fluidity in v.15 ("like water ... poured out ... like wax melting away") change to images of desiccation in v.16 ("dry as a potsherd ... dust of death"), perhaps to form a merism expressing the overwhelming distress of the psalmist.

16. "You bring me down." Dahood, Psalms I, 140, proposes analyzing tshptny ("you bring me down") as a "third-person feminine collective with a plural subject" (translated "they put me"), presumably because of the seemingly abrupt shift from the third plural to the second singular. However, the presence of so many second person singular verbs in the poem makes this unlikely. The change from the third person "they" (vv.13-14) to first person "I" (vv.15-16a) to second person "you" (v.16b) is similar to the change of persons in the following verses: "they" (with sbbwny ["they surround me"] again - v.17), "I" (v.18), "they" (v.18-19), "you" (singular - vv.20-21).

17. k'ry ydy wrgly, literally, "like a lion my hands and my feet." This phrase is the most refractory in the whole psalm. For the variety of solutions proposed, see the standard commentaries. I have accepted provisionally the translation advanced by J.J.M. Roberts, "A New Root for an Old Crux, Ps. XXII 17c," VT 23 (1973) 246-52, who presents convincing comparative data for this analysis. Also possible is the translation of M. Dahood, "The Verb 'arah, 'to pick clean', in Ps. XXII 17," VT 24 (1974) 370-71: "Because they picked clean my hands and my feet, I can number all my bones" (so also R. Tournay, VT 23 [1973] 111-12). Finally, note the similarities between vv.13-14, 17-18, and 21-23:

13-14: sbbwny prym rbym ... 'ryh
many bulls surround me ... (like) a lion"

17-18: sbbwny klbym ... k'ry ydy ... 'spr
"dogs have surrounded me ... like a lion my hands ... I can count"

21-23: myd klbym ... mpy 'ryh ... 'spr
"from the power of the dog ... from the mouth of the lion ... I will proclaim"

One wonders, on the basis of the synonymous pair klbym // k'ry
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("like a lion") in Num. 23:24 and 24:9 (in reverse order), if klbym ("dogs") in the previous verse, which differs from klby ("like a lion") in only one consonant, did not trigger somehow the misunderstanding of kry (the verb "shrink up" or "pick clean") as "like a lion." Certainly the similarities of vv.17-18 to 13-14 and 21-23 noted above could have contributed to the confusion. And cf. also Isa. 38:13: kry kn yshbr ctsmwty ("like a lion he breaks all my bones").

21. "From the power of the dog." Dahood's proposal of "from the blade of the ax" for myd klb (Psalms I, 141) would disturb the chiasmus of animal designations in vv.13-14, 17, and 21-22 (see commentary below). Further, in the parallel passage from Ps. 35:17, an animal designation stands in the same position: hshyb npshy msh\relay? mkyr\relay? (read msh\relay?) mkpyrmychydty ("save me from the roaring beasts, from the lions my only life"). This parallel is especially significant in view of the considerable number of parallels between Pss. 22 and 35:

22. "You have answered me." Forming an inclusion with wlt\relay? ("and you do not answer") in v.3 that brackets the lament, cnytny ("you have answered me") stands as the psalmist's response to a salvation oracle pronounced by some cultic official. Cf. for discussion H.-J. Kraus, Psalmen (BKAT XV/1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978) 329-30. This position, based on Begrich's famous article "Das priesterliche Heilsorakel," ZAW 52 (1934) 81-92 (= Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament [Theologische Bücherei 21; München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1964] 217-31), has been challenged by R. Kilian, "Ps 22 und das priesterliche Heilsorakel," BZ 12 (1968) 172-85.
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Begrich's position, however, still commands assent from the majority of interpreters; cf. recently J.H. Reumann, "Psalm 22 at the Cross," Int 28 (1974) 43-44.

23-24. Besides the line-to-line parallelism, there may be a chiasmus in these verses, thus:

A  יָשָׂר שָׂמַק לְחִי "I will proclaim your name to my brothers"
B  בֵּית קֹחֲלַת "In the midst of the assembly I will praise you"
B  יִרְיָה יָהֵウェָה הַליָּהוֹו "You who fear Yahweh, praise him"
A  כַּל זַרְצִי יִכְּנַב קְבּוּדְוָהוֹו "All you descendants of Jacob, honor him"

The BB lines share the verb הַלַּל ("praise"); the AA lines share two of the familial relationships (brothers and descendants) that are characteristic of this poem, as well as the commonly associated שמ ("name") and קְבּוּד ("honor," "glorious"): Deut. 28:58: הַשָּם הַקְוַדְוָהוֹו הַחֲנַר ("the glorious and fearsome name"); Ps. 72:19, Neh. 9:5: שמ קְבעַד/קְבעַדְוָהוֹו ("his/your glorious name"); Pss. 29:2, 66:2, 96:8 (= 1 Chron 16:29): קְבעַד שמ ("glory of his name"). In Ps. 86:9,12, שמ is the object of פֶּאֶל קְבּוּד ("honor"), as in Ps. 22:24. And cf. Ps. 96:3 where קְבעַד ("glory") is the object of פֶּאֶל "sprw bgwym" קְבעַד ("proclaim"") as is שמ in 22:22: סְפֶּר בְּגָ anv קְבעַד בּלוֹקְל הֲכָּמָyֶם פְּלַּוְַנְו ("proclaim among the nations his glory, among all peoples his marvels").

24. Note the ABBA chiasmus of v.24, in which the last element of the chiasmus noted above is in turn the first element of the following:

A  כַּל זַרְצִי יִכְּנַב קְבּוּד "all the descendants of Jacob"
B  קְבעַדְוָהוֹו "honor him"
B  וֹגַרְשׁוֹת מְמַנְו "stand in awe of him"
A  כַּל זַרְצִי יִסְרָי "all descendants of Israel"

For גוֹר ("fear, stand in awe"), cf. Ps. 33:8; for קְבעַד ("honor // fear") cf. Isa. 25:3.

25. "The piety of the afflicted one." This is a departure from the traditional "the misery of the afflicted" or the like. Dahood felt the problem of the tautology and suggested for כְּנַוְַט the reading כְּנַי, "the song of the afflicted" (Psalms I, 142). But a better solution, adopted in this paper, is to understand כְּנַט as "piety, devotion" or the like. Cf. H. Tawil, "Some Literary Elements in the Opening Sections of the
Hadad, Zakir, and Nērab II Inscriptions in the Light of East and West Semitic Royal Inscriptions," Orientalia 43 (1974) 51-55, who demonstrates that ħnh in Old Aramaic šš ħnh in the Zakir inscription is the West Semitic equivalent of Akkadian (w)ashrum šd should be translated as "pious, devout." Tawil sees in the adjective ħnwym in 22:27 the Hebrew equivalent (hence our translation "devout"); but the occurrence of the noun ħnw in 22:25, meaning "religious piety," makes excellent sense as well. This noun may also occur in Ps 132:1: "Remember, O Yahweh, for David kl ħnw tw ("all his devotion, piety"); so D.R. Hillers, "Ritual Procession of the Ark and Ps. 132," CBQ 30 (1968) 53-54; M. Weinfeld, "The Covenant of Grant in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East," JAOS 90 (1970) 187. I am indebted to Dr Michael L. Barré for the suggestion and the references above.

26. mtk. I accept here Dahood's interpretation: "One hundred times (= "over and over") I will repeat to you my (song of) praise in the great assembly" (Psalms I, 142). Cf. also M. Dahood, Orientalia 45 (1976) 346.

"In the great congregation." Note similar expressions in Pss. 26:12, 40:10-11, 107:10, 149:1; and see Ps. 109:30: wbtwkr ryym 'hlnw ("and in the midst of the great throng I will praise him"). For another arrangement of v.26, see M. Dahood, Psalms III (AB 17A; Garden City: Doubleday, 1970) 105.

27. Note the parallel in Ps. 69:33: "Let the pious (ħnwym) see it and be glad; you who seek God, let your hearts revive" (drshy 'lhyym wychy lbbkm).

28. yzkwrw. The traditional translation ("all the ends of the earth shall remember") does not seem particularly appropriate here, given the absence of any object to the verb. This difficulty has been felt by several commentators (see the comments of Kraus and Kissane in their commentaries). E. Lipinski, "L'hymne à Yahvé Roi au Psaume 22,28-32," Bib 50 (1969) 155-56, suggests (improbably, in my view) that vv.28-32, an originally independent hymn, was inserted between yzkwrw in v.28 and its object in v.32, ky ħš. Taking lćd ("forever") as adverbial modifier of yzkwrw, he would restore the text before the assumed insertion to lćd yzkwrw ky ħš ("May they remember forever what Yahweh has done"). Such alteration of the text does not inspire confidence in the results. I would suggest another possibility. In view of the idiom zk (hiphil) bshm ("call upon the name of"), I have understood yzkwrw alone as equivalent to that idiom (cf. šhm, "name" in v.23).
understand yzkrw as a denominative from zeker, "name", which one finds in parallelism with shm in Exod. 3:15, Isa. 26:8, Ps. 135:13, Job 18:17, Prov. 10:7. Also compare Hos. 12:6. (wyhwh 'Ihy htsbtwt yhwh zkrw = "Yahweh the God of hosts, Yahweh is his name") to the similar expressions in Amos 5:27, 5:9, and 9:6 with shm in place of zkr; and zkr qdshw ("his holy name") in Pss 30:5, 97:2 is the equivalent of the common shm qdshw ("his holy name"). Cf. B. Childs, Memory and Tradition in Israel (SBT 37; London: SCM, 1962) 70-71.

"Before him." This translation presumes the usual emendation of Ipnyk ("before you") to Ipnyw ("before him"), on the basis of the LXX, Syriac, and Juxta Hebraeos. Significantly, even Dahood translates "to him," although he is more cautious in the note (Psalms I, 143). Lipinski, "L'hymne à Yahvé Roi," 162-63, argues for the retention of Ipnyk on stylistic grounds. I have chosen the emendation to the third-person form, all the more likely in my view since the kap could be a dittography from the immediately following kl ("all").

29. Following Dahood, Psalms I, 143, with slight changes, I understand hmlwkh ("king") as the predicate of a nominal sentence, and wmshl ("indeed ... ruler") as containing an emphatic waw balancing the emphatic lamed of lyhwh ("Truly Yahweh"). Subsequently to the publication of the first volume of his Psalms commentary, Dahood (in Orientalia 45 [1976] 352) proposed reading k Iw ("also to him") of v.30 with the preceding phrase in v.29, translating "Indeed to Yahweh belongs kingship, and rule [vocalizing as abstract moshel] over the nations is also his." This reading produces an ABC // CAB chiasmus:

A ky ("For")
B lyhwh ("truly Yahweh")
C hmlwkh ("is king")
C wmshl bgwym ("and rule over the nations")
A k ("also")
B lw ("his")

If k lw ("surely to him") were transferred from v.30 to the end of v.29, as Dahood suggests, then Ipnyw ("before him") in v.30 would be a double-duty complement to both lines, thus:

All the living of the earth shall bow down
before him (Ipnyw)
shall bow all those who go down to the dust.

On balance, I prefer Dahood's earlier analysis; I would under-
stand v.29 as the counterpart of another nominal sentence at the beginning of the poem (v.4: "But you among the holy ones sit enthroned, amid Israel's praises"). Both clauses express Yahweh's heavenly ("among the holy ones") and earthly ("over the nations") rule ("sit enthroned"; "is king"), forming an inclusion.

30. "All the living of the earth." For this translation of kl

"When a person lives no more." This is the suggestion of C.
Krahmalkov, Psalm 22,28-32," Bib 50 (1969) 389-92, for the
difficult phrase wnpshw l' chyh.

"His descendants." The determination of zrc ("seed, descendants") as "his descendants" comes from the context, particularly from the 3rd person sing. masc. suffix of npshw ("his soul" = "someone, a person"), which may be double-duty.

32. "The salvation he has surely accomplished." I under-
stand csh ("has ... accomplished") as the verb of a relative
clause (like ybV in the same verse: a generation [which] shall
come) modifying tsdqtw ("his salvation, vindication"), and with
emphatic ky ("surely"): the salvation he has surely accom-
plished".

COMMENTARY

Section I: vv.2-12

Vv.2-3 serve as an overture to Psalm 22, announcing themes
and perspectives that will recur throughout the poem. The
fundamental theme of the poem, contained in the word rchq ("far, distant") in v.2 and in the repeated plea l trchq ("be not
far") in vv.12 and 20, is the psalmist's experience of the
distance of God. To express the full force of this experience,
the poet employs a merism: the absence of God in space and
time. To use a visual metaphor, we might think of two axes: (1) the vertical (or cosmological) axis of separation from the
transcendent God in a spatial sense, expressed in rchq ("far"); (2) the horizontal (or historical) axis of separation from God as
the psalmist moves through time (v.3: ywmm ... wlylh, "by day ...
by night"), crying out continually, to no avail (v.3: wlp tcnh,
"for you do not answer"). In cosmos and history, in space and
time, in the totality of his experience, the psalmist finds only
the distance, the absence of God /3/.

The spatial and temporal axes announced in vv.2-3 are taken
up and elaborated in the following vv.4 (spatial) and 5-6, 10-11
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(temporal). In v.4 ("But you among the holy ones sit enthroned, amid Israel's praises"), a scene reminiscent of Isaiah 6, the transcendent God is seen enthroned among the members of his heavenly court; and as in Isaiah 6, the psalmist's sense of distance, alienation, and separation is profound /4/. But the second element of the colon (thlwt ysr*!; "the praises of Israel") suggests that the praise of God by the holy ones, the members of his court in heaven, is mirrored by the praise of God by Israel on earth (a sense caught well in the NEB translation: "And yet thou art enthroned in holiness, thou art he whose praises Israel sings"). R. Clifford has seen a similar shift of perspective in Psalm 89: "Psalm 89 gives us two scenes of acclamation of Yahweh by reason of his victory: a celebration in heaven among the divine beings (vv.6-15) and a celebration on earth among his people (vv.16-19)" /5/. If this analysis is correct, then "the praises of Israel," a theme to be taken up in the thanksgiving section of the poem (vv.23-26), is the first gleam of light in the darkness and emptiness of vv.2-4.

As v.4 considered the distance in space of God, enthroned far off in heavenly realms, subsequent verses consider the dimension of time: the remote past of the fathers (vv.5-6) and the immediate past of the psalmist (vv.10-11), his birth and his infancy. The poet moves naturally from Israel's praise of God in v.4 to the fathers who called upon him and trusted him (btch, "trust," occurs three times in vv.5-6). Vv.10-11, dealing with the psalmist's birth and infancy, are linked to vv.5-6 not only by the temporal theme, but by the key word mbtychy (v.10: "pacifying me") and other connections that make for a smooth transition: the poet moves from parent (v.5: btynw, "our fathers"); v.10: my, "my mother") /6/ to child (v.10: mbtn ... mrchm, both "from the womb"), from the community to an individual, from the distant past of the national ancestors (vv.5-6) to the recent past of the psalmist's birth (vv.10-11). P. Trible has made the following comment on vv.10-11: "In this poetry the divine and the maternal intertwine. Yahweh takes the baby from the womb and places it upon the breasts of the mother. In turn the tranquillity of the breasts becomes a symbol of divine care" /7/. This movement from Yahweh who draws the infant from the womb to Yahweh who cares for the child with maternal love is like the inclusion we will discuss below, wherein the poet moves from ly ly ("My God, my God") in v.2 to ly th ("you are my God") in v.11.

Enclosed by the past-time frame of vv.5-6 and 10-11 are
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vv.7-9, dealing with the present condition of the psalmist. The language of these verses is traditional, as can be seen when comparing them to two other laments, Isa. 37:22 (= 2 Kgs 19:21) and Ps. 44:14-15:

Ps. 22:7 chrpt *dm Isa. 37:23 chrpt Ps. 44:14 chrph
wbzwy Cm 37:22 bzh lk
22:8 ylCgw ly 44:14
ynyCw r*sh lCgh lk
r*sh hnyCh
Ps. 22:7 "the scorn of mankind,
despised by the people"
22:8 "They jeer at me ...
and shake their heads"
Isa. 37:23 "scorn, disgrace"
Isa. 37:22 "she despises you"
"she jeers at you"
"she shakes her head"
Ps. 44:14 "scorn, disgrace"
"jeering, taunt"
44:15 "a shaking of the head" /8/

In addition to the language, the theme of the mockery of the psalmist's distress by onlookers (v.8: kl r*y, "all who see me") is also traditional; cf. Ps. 109:25 (w'ny hhyt chrph lhmr yrwny ynyCwn r*shm: "I am an object of scorn to them; when they see me they shake their heads") and Ps. 35:15-16,19-21. But this traditional element is used in a novel way. In the form-critical thesis advanced by Begrich and accepted by many, a Heilsorakel (oracle of salvation) is traditionally pronounced at the conclusion of the lament, an oracle in which the person uttering the lament is assured by a cultic prophet or priest that God has heard his plea and will deliver him (Pss. 12:6, 35:3). It is this Heilsorakel which leads to the thanksgiving that ends the lament. In v.9, however, the words the psalmist hears are not the oracular assurance of divine help, but the mocking words of the onlookers: "He lived for Yahweh - let him deliver him; let him rescue him if he delights in him" /9/. The effect of this is to allow the lament to be expanded and elongated until the oracular assurance actually does come, in Cnytnty ("you have answered me") in v.22.

Abandoned by the saving God and without human support, his lament answered only by mockery, the psalmist experiences a profound sense of dehumanization, expressed starkly in v.7: "I
am a worm, not a man" /10/. The concluding plea of v.12 is Janus-like: not only does it form an inclusion with v.2: that ends the first section; it is also part of the structure of section II, as we shall see below.

The first section of the poem ends with two inclusions: that formed by rchwg (v.2 "far") and 1 trchq (v.12: "be not far") just mentioned, and 3ly th ("you are my God") of v.11 recalling 3ly 3ly ("My God, my God"), the opening words of the psalm in v.2. The poet has enveloped this first section of the poem in vv.2-12 by the first of these inclusions /11/, which surrounds the psalmist's plea as the psalmist's enemies surround him in the next section (vv.13-22: sbbw, "they surround me" in vv.13 and 17). But counterposed to this inclusion of the distance of God is the second, which shows that the psalmist is also enveloped by the care of a God whom the poet can address from beginning to end as "my God," even in deepest distress.

Structurally, it is interesting to note that Section I contains 22 or 23 cola of poetry. What Hillers says of Lamentations 5 may be relevant here: "Chapter 5 is not an acrostic, but has exactly twenty-two lines and thus conforms to the alphabet to a lesser degree. Other biblical poems with twenty-two lines exist - Pss. 33, 38, 103 - and it is reasonable to suppose that in all these cases the number of the lines is chosen intentionally, though none are acrostic" /12/.

To sum up: the picture drawn in Ps. 22:2-12 is of a remote God enthroned on high, far from the lament of the psalmist. Time and space are experienced as empty of God, the God in whom the fathers trusted, the saving God of Israel's sacral traditions. The presence of the trustworthy God in the past of the community and of the psalmist makes his absence in the present all the more poignant. Still, he is "my God," the object of Israel's praises.

Section II: vv.13-22

Section II, containing almost the same number of cola as Section I (24), is joined to the first section by a series of links. First, by the repetition of the root shg, the "roaring" (sh'gty) of the psalmist's prayer at the beginning of Section I (v.2) is drowned out by the roar (wsh^g) of his enemies at the beginning of Section II (v.14). Another link is created by the shifting of perspective from the "I" of the psalmist in his misery to the "you" of God: in vv.2-4 ("My God, why have you abandoned me? ... my God, I call out ... but you do not answer ... you sit
enthroned ..."), vv.5-6 ("in you our fathers trusted ... you delivered them ... to you ... in you"), vv.7-11 ("But I am a worm ... (they) jeer at me ... Yet you ... upon you was I cast ... you are my God"). In the alternating focus of vv.2-11, the poet moves from his present distress to God's kingly care for the fathers, from his dehumanizing loneliness to God's care for him in his infancy, ending finally with the cry of faith "you are my God!" /13/.

In vv.15-16, the same shift in perspective occurs, but without the relief brought by the consciousness of God's past care. Here the response to "like water I am poured out" is the low point of the poem, where the poet confronts not the saving and the rescuing, but the death-dealing God: "to the dust of death you bring me down."

Finally, we have noted already the refrain-like conclusion of both sections: "... you are my God. Do not be far from me" (vv.11-12) and "But you, O Yahweh, do not be distant. O my help ..." (v.20). But there is a subtle change as well. In v.12, the plea "do not be far from me" concludes with the phrase ky 'yn czr ("for there is no one to help"); in v.20 the mood changes in a positive, hopeful direction, when God is addressed as "my help" (ylwty) and in the concluding czrty chwshh ("come quickly to my aid"). The psalmist can now consider the possibility of divine aid and appeal for it, a possibility denied in v.12 ("no one to help").

Structure is an important element of Section II, as J.J.M. Roberts has shown in his remarks on vv.13-18. Against those who would transpose vv.17c-18a to a position between 16ab and 16c (since these verses all concern the psalmist's condition), Roberts points out that "vss.17-18a reflect the same progression of thought found in vss.13-16 - the psalmist moves from the enemies who surround him to his own physical condition" /14/.

There is an even more elaborate structure present in this section. The enemies of the psalmist, who are his chief concern in Section II, are described with a variety of animal names that cluster at the beginning and end of the section. Their arrangement is chiastic /15/:
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"Be not far from me ... for there is no one to help"
A (v.12) prym rbym ... byry bshn ("many bulls ... fierce bulls of Bashan")

B (v.14) t'ryh ("lion")
C (v.17) klbym ("dogs")

"Be not distant ... come quickly to my aid"
B (v.22) t'ryh ("lion")
A (v.22) rmym ("wild bulls")

This chiastic arrangement is a good example of how structure can mirror and reinforce meaning. The reversal of the animal names in vv.21-22 prepares for the coming reversal of the poet's situation (from lament to thanksgiving) in vv.23-32.

As mentioned above, the function of v.12 is twofold: to conclude by inclusion Section I, and to introduce the first set of animal designations in the chiasmus presented above.

The final link that knits together Sections I and II is the inclusion of wP tCnh ("but you do not answer") in v.3 and Cnytny ("you have answered me") in v.22. If previously the roars of the psalmist's enemies were loud enough to drown out the prayer of the psalmist, the situation now is decisively changed: God has finally broken through his silence (wP tCnh) and answered the psalmist's lament.

Section III: vv.23-32

The final section of the poem has been the object of considerable study and controversy. Some (e.g. Duhm, Kautzsch, Bertholet, Schmidt) judged it to be an originally independent piece added to vv.2-22, an opinion that is deservedly out of favor now, given the form-critical evaluation of the praise and thanksgiving section as integral to the lament form.

Another possibility to be considered is the proposal of several that, while vv.23-27 are part of the original Psalm 22, vv.28-32 are an addition to it. In this section, I shall attempt to demonstrate that a good case can be made for vv.28-32 as an integral part of the rhetorical unity that is Psalm 22.

The poem began with an expression of radical alienation: on the one hand, the remote, transcendent God; on the other, the psalmist, crying out day and night, with no response from the distant God. This experience of the absence of God in space and
time was taken up in the following verses, which pictured God enthroned in his far-off heavenly court (a spatial image), and contrasted the bleak present of the psalmist with the gracious past (a temporal image).

Space and time, the vertical and horizontal perspectives, also unify this final section of the poem. Now space and time are no longer experienced as empty, but resound with the praise of God who has answered the psalmist's lament. In v.23, the psalmist praises God in the presence of his brothers (Pchy) who in this section replace the mocking onlookers (vv.8-9) and his fierce enemies (vv.13-14,17-19). His reintegration into the community, the theme of this section, puts an end to the dehumanizing solitude that the poet experienced (vv.7-9). The psalmist can now join his voice to the chorus of Israel's praise, first mentioned in v.4, which now in v.26 becomes "my praise" (thlty), just as the God of Israel's fathers could consistently be addressed as "my God" (vv.2,3,11 - also "my help" in v.20).

The recalling of "the praises of Israel" (v.4) leads the poet to speak of the descendants of Jacob/Israel. In a reoccurrence of the vertical-horizontal perspectives, the mention of descendants (zrc, v.24) brings to mind the vertical axis of parent and child (fathers in v.5, mother in vv.10-11 - the psalmist as a child in vv.10-11, descendants of Jacob/Israel in vv.24,31) and the horizontal axis of brothers (v.23) /22/.

The poet continues by inviting an ever-widening circle to join him in praising God, using spatial images: from his brothers, the God-fearing descendants of Israel, to the ends of the earth and all the families of nations. The structure may be chiastic:

vv.23-24: brothers descendants of Israel
v.28 ends of the earth families of nations

"Brothers" widens out to "all the families of nations"; Israel, a geographical as well as a personal designation, widens out to its corresponding element "all the ends of the earth" /23/. Whether chiastic or not, the movement is from Israel to the Gentiles, who are now invited to join in Israel's praise of God.

The praise of God resounding through space in vv.23-28, from Israel to the ends of the earth, has its temporal counterpart in vv.30-32 /24/. The psalmist who prayed day and night to no avail (v.3) now invites past, present, and future to join him in praise and worship. In the interpretation of these verses I follow the proposal advanced by O. Keel-Leu /25/. He understands the problematic dshny in v.30 to refer not to the dead (as is
assumed in the frequent emendation to yshny, "those sleeping [in the earth]"), but to the living, those in vigorous good health. In his view, vv.30-32 contain a three-part merism: kl dshny 'rts (v.30: "all the living of the earth"), those in full possession of life; kl ywrty Cpr (v.30: "all those who go down to the dust"), those on the point of death, or those already dead; and their descendants (v.31: zrc), those who come after them "when someone lives no more" (v.30), taking the place of the dead /26/. Based on his analysis, I would suggest the following translation of v.30-31a:

Surely to him shall bow down all the living of the earth; before him shall bow all those who go down to the dust.
When someone lives no more, his descendants will serve Yahweh.

This understanding of v.30 as a merism has several advantages: First, it supplies a meaning for dshny appropriate to the context without emendation; second, it preserves MT npshw ... zrc ("someone ... descendants") also without emendation; and third, it employs the horizontal-vertical perspectives that occur elsewhere in this psalm. "All the ends of the earth" in v.28, invited to join in the chorus of praise of God, is a notion on the cosmological, horizontal plane, while in v.30 those in full possession of life, those dead, and their descendants after them (the generation to come, and those yet to be born), are present, past, and future, three points along a vertical, temporal axis /27/, a merism meaning that all time (perhaps recalling ywm wlylh, "continuously" of v.3), is summoned to join "all the ends of the earth" in worship.

There are two elaborate chiastic structures in Section III that merit attention. The first extends from v.23 to v.27a:

A (v.23) btwk qhl "in the midst of the assembly"
B (v.23) hllk "I will praise you"
  C (v.24) yr'y yhwh "who fear Yahweh"
B (v.24) hlhw "praise him"
D (v.24) kl zrc ycqb "all descendants of Jacob"
D (v.24) kl zrc ysr" "all descendants of Israel"
B (v.26) thlty "my praise"
A (v.26) bqhl rb "in the great congregation"
  C (v.26) ngd yr'yw "before those that fear him"
B (v.27) yhlw "they will praise"

The descendants of Jacob/Israel, among whom is the psalmist,
are surrounded by his praise ("I will praise you ... my praise") and that of all those who seek Yahweh and fear him, in sharp contrast to the terrifying enemies of the psalmist who surrounded him (vv.13,17), and who are now replaced by the "brothers" (v.23) of the psalmist, the descendants of Jacob/Israel. And again, in contrast to the earlier alienation and aloneness of the psalmist, he is now able to utter publicly his praise "in the great congregation."

The second, in vv.27b-30, is a superb example of extended chiasmus, where the central assertion of Yahweh's kingship is placed in the center of the structure:

A (v.27) \textit{ychy lbbkm lCd}  
("may your hearts live forever")

B (v.28) \textit{yzkrw wyshbw 'l yhwh kl 'psy 'rts}  
("all the ends of the earth will call upon Yahweh's name and return to him")

C (v.28) \textit{wyshtchww lpnyw kl mshpchwt gwym}  
("all the clans of the nations shall bow down before him")

D (v.29) \textit{ky lyhwh hmlwkh wmshl bgwym}  
("for truly Yahweh is king; indeed he is ruler of the nations")

C (v.30) \textit{»k lw yshtchww kl dshny lrts}  
("surely to him shall bow down all the living of the earth")

B (v.30) \textit{lpnyw ykrCw kl ywrldy çpr}  
("before him shall bow all those who go down to the dust")

A (v.30) \textit{wnpshw kl chyh}  
("when someone lives no more")

AA are joined by the repetition of \textit{ychy/chyh} ("live") and the virtually synonymous (or complementary) \textit{lbb} ("heart") and \textit{npsh} ("soul" = "someone") /28/. BB share a similar concept regarding the relationship to Yahweh expressed in a series of imperfect verbs (\textit{yzkrw} = "they will call" in v.28; \textit{wyshbw} = "they will return" in v.28; \textit{ykrCw} = "they will bow" in v.30), a prepositional phrase (\textit{l} yhwh = "to Yahweh" ["to him" in our translation] in v.28; \textit{lpnyw} = "before him" in v.30), and a similarly constructed subject (kl 'psy 'rts = "all the ends of the earth" in v.28; kl ywrldy çpr = "all those who go down to the dust" in v.30) in which we find the standard formulaic pair 'rts \textit{çpr} ("earth" // "dust") /29/. In CC the verb \textit{(w)yshtchww
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("they shall bow down") occurs in each, along with a prepositional phrase (Ipnyw = "before him" in v.28; lw = "to him" in v.30) and a similarly constructed subject (kl mshpchwt gwym = "all the clans of the nations" in v.28; kl dshny rts = "all the living of the earth" in v.30). In the center (D) is placed a statement of God's sovereignty over all.

Finally, at the end of Section III, yspr ("let [the generation to come] be told") in v.31 recalls 'spr ("I will proclaim") in v.23, forming an inclusion at the limits of the section. We have noted above similar inclusions in Section I ("my God, my God ... far from my cry" in v.2; "you are my God; do not be far from me" in vv.11-12) and in Section II (the series of animal names in vv.13-14,17, repeated chiastically in vv.21-22). In addition to these section-marking inclusions, there are several that are found near the beginning and end of the whole poem, thus bringing the totality to a satisfying conclusion. For instance, the nominal sentence in v.29 ("for truly Yahweh is king; indeed he is ruler of the nations") may form an inclusion with the nominal sentence in v.4 ("but you among the holy ones sit enthroned, amid Israel's praises") which also focuses on God's sovereignty and the praise that it inspires. And note how the similarity of statement is in counterpoint to the shift in tone: from the remoteness and distance of the divine king in v.4 in the context of the lament, to a triumphal affirmation of God's majesty and universal rule in the thanksgiving (v.29). Note the similar shifts in tone from wbzwy Cm ("despised by the people") in v.7 to wP bzh ("he has not despised") in v.25, and from rchwq mshw Cty ("far from my cry") in v.2 to wbshw Cw ylyw shmC ("when he cried out to him, he listened") in v.25. And there may be an inclusion that supports the MT reading of myshw Cty in v.2 ("far from my salvation"), against the common emendation to mshw Cty ("far from my cry"). Given the number of places where ysh C, yshw Ch, or tshw Ch are found in parallelism with tsdq(h) /30/, the poet may have intended that the psalm move from the God initially perceived as "far from my salvation" at the beginning of the poem (v.2) to the God finally praised by all for having brought it to pass ("let them proclaim ... his salvation [tsdqtw] that he has surely accomplished") at the end (v.32).

Having discussed the inclusions that round off the poem by linking beginning and end, we have reached the end of our consideration of Psalm 22. This is not because we have exhausted all possibilities for analysis and appreciation; to cite
but one area only dealt with in passing references, the aural dimension of the poem might be a fruitful topic for investigation, and certainly a topic integral to the appreciation of the poet's skill. But I hope that enough has been said to support the proposition that this carefully constructed and developed psalm demonstrates the high degree of artistry of which the Hebrew poets are capable. Let me close with some words of a scholar who has long been interested in the artistic dimension of Hebrew poetry. Although he was speaking of the poetry of Jeremiah, it could apply equally well to the work of other Old Testament poets:

Finally, many who have been patient enough to work through the details of the analysis given here respond with the judgment that it is too subtle; that one cannot expect ancient man to have paid so much attention to key words, to the balance of phonemes, or whatever; that no ancient collector could have been conscious of anything so intricate. But surely it is evident that there can be a great gap between structure that is sensed by a poet or artist, or by one who enjoys a work of art, on the one hand, and the systematic analysis of the structure by a critic, on the other /31/.

NOTES


2 V.1 of the psalm is the psalm title "For the leader: according to 'The hind of the dawn'. A psalm of David" (NAB).

3 For another instance of this sort of change from a spatial to a temporal perspective, cf. the comments of R. Alter, "Biblical Narrative," Commentary 61 (May 1976) 65-66, on the Balaam oracles (emphasis added): "... Balaam, in a climactic
series of visions, will see Israel sprawling out below him in a vast spatial perspective (e.g. [Num.] 23:9: 'I see them from the cliff-tops; I espy them from the heights') which, in the last of his prophecies, becomes a temporal perspective of foreseeing (24:17: 'I see it but it is not yet; I behold it but it won't be soon')."


6 P. Beauchamp, Psaumes Nuit et Jour (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1980) 222, makes the following observation on the transition from "our fathers" to "my mother": "Il [the psalmist] évoque 'nos pères' avec les grands textes bibliques. Mais il dit 'ma mère', ce qui le distingue du peuple. Il éprouve donc les dangers et les angoisses qui lui sont strictement particuliers, car l'angoisse de naître n'est partagée avec personne ... Ce Psaume résiste donc à la classification qui sépare les plaintes collectives et les plaintes individuelles ... ce Psaume est individuel et collectif."

8 Cf. also \( \text{lg} \) // \( \text{bwz} \) ("mock // despise") in Ps. 123:4, Prov. 30:17, Neh 2:19.


11 The irony of \( \text{grwb} \) `\( \text{tsrh} \)` \( \text{ly} \) ("trouble is near") with \( \text{?l} \) `\( \text{trchq} \)` \( \text{mmny} \) ("do not be far from me") in v.12 is seen by comparison with the traditional and common use of \( \text{grb} \) ("near") in describing the nearness of the saving God; cf. Ps. 145:18: \( \text{grwb} \) `\( \text{ywhh} \)` \( \text{kl} \)` \( \text{qr'yw} \)` `\( \text{lk} \)` `\( \text{shr} \)` `\( \text{yqr'hw} \)` `\( \text{b'mt} \)` ("The Lord is near to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth"); Ps. 34:19: `\( \text{grwb} \)` `\( \text{ywhh} \)` `\( \text{ywhshy} \)` ("Yahweh is near // he saves"). And note how \( \text{ky} \)` `\( \text{yn} \)` `\( \text{cZr} \)` ("and there is no one to help") in v.12 calls to mind Ps. 72:12: "For he shall rescue the poor man when he cries out (\( \text{mshwCw} \)), and the afflicted one [or: the devout] when he has no one to help (\( \text{wCny} \)` `\( \text{w'yn} \)` `\( \text{cZr} \)`), and Job 29:12: "For I rescued the poor (\( \text{Cny} \)) who cried out, and the orphan with no one to help him (\( \text{wCZr} \)` `\( \text{lw} \)) ."

12 D.R. Hillers, Lamenations (AB 7A; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972) xxiv-xxv.

13 Botterweck, "Warum," 65: "Wie auf die erste Klage an das göttliche 'Du' (2-3) ein Zuversichtsbekenntnis im Gedenken an Gottes Heilshandeln in der Väterzeit (2-3, 4-6), so folgt auf die zweite Klage über das elende 'Ich' (7-9) ein Vertrauensbekennen in Rekurs auf die eigenen Erfahrung mit Gott.
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(10-11)...

15 After noticing this chiastic structure I discovered that N.H. Ridderbos, "The Psalms: style-figures and structure," OTS 13 (1963) 56, has also noted it. The same is true of the "space-time" dimension pointed out by Beauchamp (n.22) and Schmid (n.24) and the "vertical-horizontal" perspectives of which Keel-Leu speaks (n.27). These too had occurred to me, and found some degree of confirmation when they were pointed out by others.
16 For the change of pryrm ("bulls") and byrym ("fierce bulls") to synonymous rmym in A, cf. Isa. 34:7, where rmym // wprym cm byrym ("bulls // bulls with fierce bulls").
18 Schmid, "Psalm 22," 122: "Der Einschnitt [between vv.22 and 23] ist so tief, dass manche Ausleger meinten, hier seien zwei ursprünglich selbständige Psalmen zu einem einzigen zusammengfügt." It should be added that Schmid himself does not share this view.
21 Even if vv.28-32 were not originally part of the psalm, they could still be part of the final rhetorical unity. On this cf. S. Talmon, "The Textual Study of the Bible - A New Outlook," in F.M. Cross and S. Talmon, eds., Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1975) 381: "...in ancient literature no hard and fast lines can be drawn between authors' conventions of style and tradents' and copyists' rules of reproduction and transmission. It may be said that in ancient Israel, and probably in other ancient Near Eastern cultures, especially in Mesopotamia, the professional scribe seldom if ever was a slavish copyist of the material
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which he handled. He rather should be considered a minor partner in the creative literary process." Granted the importance of Talmon's view, I believe that the evidence points more strongly to Ps. 22:2-32 as an original unity.

22 Beauchamp, Psalms, 230: "Il faut l'annoncer aux frères à travers l'espace, et aux fils à travers le temps."

23 When one sees the connection between vv.23-24 and 28, one might ask if the poet here intended a reference to the blessings promised to the patriarch Jacob/Israel in Gen 28:14: wnbrkw bk kl mshpcht h'dmh wbzrCk ("all the families of the earth shall find blessing in you and in your descendants"). This is followed immediately (v.15) by the divine promise whnh 'ny Cmk ("Behold, I am with you"), which would be an appropriate assurance of the divine presence to be alluded to in Psalm 22, which began by lamenting God's absence but now praises God for his gracious and saving presence.

24 Schmid, "Psalm 22," 135: "In das Lob, das bisher nur in der Gemeinde laut wurde, wird nun die ganze Welt einbezogen, räumlich all Enden der Erde (V. 28), und zeitlich neben den Lebenden auch die bereits Gestorbenen und die noch nicht Geborenen (29-32)."


26 In the more traditional rendering of these verses dshny would be emended to yshny ("sleeping"; although see Dahood, Psalms I, 143, who proposes arriving at this conclusion without emendment), npshw to npshy ("my soul" = "I") and zrC to zrCy ("my descendants"; notice that immediately following yCbddnw would make the loss of y by haplography a possibility). On these emendations, see Textual Notes on the New American Bible (Paterson, NJ: St. Anthony's Guild, 1970) 381. Thus kl yshny lts // kl ywrdy Cpr would both synonymously refer to the dead (in the past), npshy and zrCy to the psalmist and his children in the present, and ldwr ybTw ... lCm nwld to the unborn, those to come in the future. Hence the translation of NAB:

To him shall bow down all who sleep in the earth;
Before him shall bend all who go down into the dust. 
And to him my soul shall live; 
my descendants shall serve him.

Let the coming generation be told of the Lord, 
that they may proclaim to a people yet to be born 
the justice he has shown.


27 Keel-Leu, "Nochmals Psalm 22,28-32," 410-11: "Das Verständnis der 'Markigen' und der 'zum Staube Hinabsteigenden' als Elements eines Merismus wird durch die Beobachtung festgestellt, dass כּוֹדֵם das Totenreich als eine 'Welt des Hinfälligen, Vergänglichen' charakterisiert. Während der כּוֹדֵם ein יִשְׂרָאֵל (vgl. Ri 3,29) ist, ist der תָּנַב כּוֹדֵם ein גּוֹר 'ים 'ל 'יִשְׂרָאֵל ohne Kraft' (Ps. 88,5). Vs. 28 sagt, dass alle Völkerfamilien (sozusagen die Horizontale) Jahwe verehren, vs. 30, dass alle von denen die in Vollbesitz des Lebens sind, bis zu jenen, die im Begriffe stehen, es zu verlassen (also sozusagen die Vertikale) vor Jahwe niederfallen." This analysis is adopted by J. Krasovec, *Der Merismus im Bibliisch-Hebräischen und Nordwestsemitischen* (BibOr 33; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1977) 93. Lipinski proposes yet another analysis of these lines in his study of Ps. 22:28-32.

28 As in the synonymous or complementary bkl _lb_(b) _wbkl npsh (_"with all one's heart and all one's soul") in Deut. 4:29,6:5,10:12, 11:13, 13:4, 26:16, 30:2, 6, 10 and elsewhere (see BDB 523a); and note _lb_(b) // npsh ("heart // soul") in Pss. 13:3 and 84:3.


30 Cf. Isa. 46:13: qrby _tsdqty _l_ trchq _wtshwCy _l_trchr ("I bring near my deliverance, it is not far off; and my salvation will not tarry"), 56:1: ky _qrwbh yshwCy _lbw2 _wtsdqty _lhglwt ("for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed") and elsewhere (Isa. 45:8, 59:11, 62:1, 63:1, etc.) for instances of _tsdq(h) // yshCy, yshwCy, tshwCy.

What I am offering here is a rhetorical analysis of rhetoric, that is, an application of certain methods of rhetorical criticism in the broadest sense to rhetoric in a narrower sense (declaratory speech designed to persuade). I hope to show that awareness of rhetorical devices can lead to large-scale exegetical gains, and, at the least, can help to preserve the interpreter from major errors /1/.

It would be a very considerable undertaking to argue in detail for the coherence of the speeches of Job's three interlocutors, and the distinctive viewpoints each represents. The concern of this paper is more limited: it is first to treat three rhetorical elements in their speeches that are relevant to the questions of their coherence and of their distinctiveness, and secondly to set out some general arguments for their coherence and their distinctiveness.

I

1. Tonality. The mood, or tone, of each of the speakers in each of their speeches is fundamental to interpretation. Perception of tonality depends partly on the subjective impression of the reader, and certainly cannot be determined in advance of engagement with the whole of the speech, or indeed of the three speeches, of the friend. Clues to tonality are sometimes given rather unmistakably by the exordium and conclusion of a speech; e.g. Eliphaz in ch.4 begins: "Are we to speak to you a word? You cannot bear it. But neither can we bear to hold back our words", and in ch.5 he concludes: "Hear, and know for your own good". The tone in this speech thus appears to be deferential, positive, sympathetic.

But exordium and conclusion tones can be misleading: the first speeches of both Bildad and Zophar each end with a similar
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contrast between the fate of the righteous and that of the wicked, the final verse marking a downbeat note in each case (8:22; 11:20). We might infer from the similarity that the tonality of the two speeches is identical; but in fact it is different, since in Bildad's speech the final contrast proceeds from an unconditional affirmative, "He will yet fill your mouth with laughter" (8:21), whereas in Zophar's speech it proceeds from a hypothetical "If you set your heart aright ... surely then ... you will lie down with no one to frighten you" (11:13,15,19). Similarly, in the second cycle, all the friends' speeches conclude with a lengthy elaboration of the fate of the wicked (Eliphaz, 15:20-35; Bildad, 18:5-21; Zophar, 20:5-29), but the significance of these depictions varies considerably, as we will see below.

Some further clues in the text to the tonality of the speech - beyond those of exordium and conclusion - must be sought.

2. Nodal Sentences. In most of the speeches there appear one or two sentences, usually addressed to Job directly, which further define the tonality of the speech as well as pinpointing the content of the speech's argument.

Eliphaz's first speech provides two good examples. In 4:6, "Is not your piety your source of confidence? Does not your blameless life give you hope?", Eliphaz's mood may be felt to be mildly reproachful or wholly encouraging, but certainly not hostile, sarcastic, or dismissive. Unless he says "piety" and "blameless life" with a sneer - which the rest of the speech gives us no reason to suppose - he is essentially affirming Job in speaking without qualification of his "piety" (yir'āh) and his "blameless life" (tōm dē-rākim). To be sure, the previous verse has - at first hearing - a rather ambiguous tonality: "Now, when it meets with you, you cannot bear it! It strikes at you, and you are dismayed" (v.5). By itself, it could be heard as a rather aggressive assessment of Job's impatience; but in the shadow of the clear tonality of v.6, it can only be heard as sympathy, even if expressed with a mild and unhurtful irony.

A second nodal sentence may be found in 5:8: "As for me, I would seek God; it is to God that I would commit my suit". Here Eliphaz puts himself in Job's shoes and suggests what he would do in the same situation. It is not exactly non-directive counselling, but it is certainly non-authoritarian. Eliphaz does not command, threaten, cajole or humiliate Job in any way, but enters into his situation with all the imagination and sympathy he can muster. The facts that he is far from recognising Job's
real situation, that patience is for Job the "hard thing" (as Hopkins' sonnet has it /2/), that the author of the book may be, via Eliphaz, mocking the incapacity of theoretical wisdom to handle the realities of human experience /3/, are all beside the point. This remains a crucial sentence for perceiving Eliphaz's mood and message.

Other nodal sentences in the friends' speeches, which cannot be examined in detail here, can be identified in the following: of Bildad: 8:4-6; 18:4; 25:4; of Zophar: 11:4-6; 20:4-5; [27:13-14]; of Eliphaz: 15:4-5; 22:21,30.

3. Topoi. All the speeches of the book use stylised descriptions or accounts, which I propose to call topoi. E.C. Kingsbury /4/, in another context, defined topoi as "general rhetorical patterns which may be used as building blocks for literary structures", a somewhat loose definition, but in line with what I have in mind. William J. Urbrock's Harvard dissertation discussed twelve such topoi (which he called "themes") in Job /5/. Such topoi frequently form the bulk of a speech (as they do in the second cycle of speeches), and account for the discursiveness of the book that many modern readers find tiresome. More significant exegetically is the fact that the function of a topos is often far from its obvious significance when considered out of context. A topos on a particular subject may serve quite different purposes in different speeches according to the tonality and argument of the speech.

The first speech of Eliphaz again offers us a useful example. In 4:8-9 (or 4:8-11, if the destruction of the lions is a symbol of the destruction of the wicked) we have a brief topos on the fate of the wicked. Some commentators, like Dhorme /6/ and Weiser /7/, find Eliphaz to be intentionally insulting Job by assuming him to be the cause of his own misfortune. Any reader, indeed, must wonder why, in a speech that has set out to be reassuring, the retribution of the wicked and their destruction by God should find a place. But in the light of the tonality of the speech, and especially of the nodal v.6, it becomes impossible to view this description as any kind of criticism or warning. On the contrary, precisely because Eliphaz's intention is encouraging, this topos depicts a fate that is the opposite of what is in store for Job. Job is among the righteous (v.6); the innocent and upright are not cut off, that is, die in their prime (v.7); the wicked, on the other hand, are suddenly brought to an end (vv.8-9). Precisely because Job is righteous he need have no
fear that he is about to die; he can have hope. This interpretation is confirmed by Eliphaz's words of encouragement in 5:18-26, which assures Job that he will not die until he has reached a ripe old age (5:26). In this context, the function of the topos is plain; in other cases it must be admitted that its function is not so obvious.

In Eliphaz's second speech (15:1-35) there is a lengthier topos on the miserable life and the fearsome fate of the wicked (vv.17-35). Some have argued that Eliphaz has by now become convinced that Job is an evildoer, and have read this topos as Eliphaz's prognostication of the fate in store for Job /8/. It is true that in this speech Eliphaz takes a firmer line with Job: he reproaches him for so letting his tongue run away with him that, with his multitude of windy words, Job has ceased to behave like the wise man he really is (v.2). And even though this sentence may be more a recognition of the tempestuousness of Job's speech than a reproach of his language in demanding vindication from God and in speaking of God's destructive power (cf. 12:13-25), Job has without question been irreligious ("doing away with the fear of God", v.4); indeed, Job's mouth, tongue and lips have been leading him into sin ("Your mouth increases your wrongdoing", v.6) /9/. The same point, that Job is not being wise in letting his tongue lead him into sin, is reiterated in the second strophe of the speech (vv.7-16): Job has not the wisdom of Adam (v.7), nor that of the prophets (v.8a), nor even that of his older friends (vv.9-10). It is through lack of wisdom, Eliphaz is charitable enough to think, that Job is venting his anger (v.13; cf. NEB) against God.

But as for the relevance of the life and destiny of the wicked, which is the subject of the topos that occupies the second half of his speech, although Eliphaz insists (as in 4:17-19) that no man can be perfectly righteous and therefore must expect some suffering (vv.14-16), he is clearly maintaining that Job is not one of the truly wicked, and so this topos concerns what does not apply to him. Job has not, like the wicked, "writhed in pain all his days" (v.20), nor does he "conceive mischief and bring forth evil" (v.35). He does not belong to "the company of the godless" (v.34), and if he "bids defiance to the Almighty" (v.25) that only shows that he is making a serious mistake and forgetting where his loyalty lies. First appearances to the contrary, then, this topos does not function as a judgement upon Job's character but as an elaborate sketch of the kind of person Job is not, but is in danger of becoming.
In the case of Zophar's second speech (20:1-29), however, a topos on the same subject probably has quite a different intention. Zophar's attitude towards Job has been established by the nodal sentences of 11:5-6: Job is a secret sinner from whom God exacts less than his guilt deserves. Zophar's disquisitions on the brevity of the happiness of the wicked (20:4-11), on the "fate-producing deed" (20:12-22), and on the sudden end of the wicked (20:23-29) all apply directly to Job. Far from being an encouragement to Job, this portrayal of the end of the wicked is not even a warning: it is a prediction.

The topoi do not therefore offer, of themselves, insight into their function in the arguments of Job's friends, but must rather be interpreted from the matter that lies outside them. This is not a very surprising conclusion to reach in the case of such traditional or stock material, but it is remarkable what an important role the topoi play in some commentators' analysis of the Joban arguments. Especially if the commentator adopts the principle of synopsis, i.e. compression of the content of each speech to a few lines of prose /10/, the topoi come to hold a disproportionate and often misleading place in the interlocutors' argument.

4. Verb Modality. Another aspect of Hebrew rhetoric that is frequently ignored is the range of modalities covered by the indicative form of the Hebrew verb in the "imperfect" /11/. Combined with the range of temporal senses the imperfect has (future, present, past continuous; and perhaps also it is sometimes identical with "preterite" or "point" tense) is the series of modal implications it may convey, such as we would represent in English by the modal auxiliaries "may", "should", "can", "would", and so on. The student of the rhetoric of these speeches cannot assume that the speaker affirms everything he expresses with an "imperfect" verb (and most verbs in these speeches are "imperfeccts"). Rhetoric thrives on the modulation of possibility, obligation, probability, and reality, and trades in hypotheticals and exhortatives. In the poetry of these speeches, most of these nuances are not explicit linguistically, and may only be grasped by the sensitised reader.

Simply to illustrate the point, and to remark on how a rather straightforward example of a modal use of a verb directly affects the argument of a speech, I direct attention to a short passage in Eliphaz's first speech concerning "those who dwell in houses of clay" (4:19), viz. humankind generally. Of them he
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says, if we read his speech in the RSV:

Between morning and evening they are destroyed;
    they perish for ever without any regarding it.
If their tent-cord is plucked up within them,
    do they not die, and that without wisdom?

Translations and commentaries alike universally assume that Eliphaz is speaking of humankind in general /12/. It seems far more likely, however, that verbs in these sentences are to be read modally. They are not statements of general actuality but of particular possibility. Verse 20 means, not that all human lives are ephemeral, but that humankind is so fragile that a person may be destroyed (yakkattu, "pulverized") between a dawn and a dusk. All people do not expire so rapidly, for some suffer lingering deaths. Nor do all die between dawn and dusk, for some - to be prosaic - die between dusk and dawn (cf. a Babylonian text, "he who in the evening was alive is dead in the morning" /13/).

Plainly also it is untrue that humans in general perish "without anyone setting it to heart" (if that is how mibbe'lt meshim is to be translated); what serves Eliphaz's point about the fragility of human beings as "dwellers in houses of clay" (v.19) is that they can be of such slight account that they may die without their passing being noticed. Likewise, it can hardly be imagined that Eliphaz maintains that humankind as a whole (himself included!) invariably dies "without wisdom"; rather he argues the insubstantiality of the human frame from the fact that it is possible for a person to live and die without ever gaining the wisdom that he, as one of the wise, regards as essential for a truly human life.

By understanding the verbs of these sentences modally, that is, in this case, as equivalent to "may be destroyed ... may perish ... may die", we not only restore the emphasis of Eliphaz to the fragility of human existence, rather than its brevity, and relieve him of the responsibility of wildly untrue generalizations, but also help to re-create coherence in the speech. For if these verses are taken as general statements about humankind, Eliphaz will have destroyed, by the time he reaches the mid-point of his speech, the premise from which he began, and on the basis of which alone he can offer consolation to Job; namely that humankind is divided into two camps, the innocent and the wicked (vv.7-8), that each camp receives its proper reward (v.8), and that Job unquestionably belongs to the former
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camp (vv.3-4,6). It is always possible, of course, that the speech lacks coherence, but such is an unhappy conclusion to which we may finally be driven only when we have allowed for the possibility of modal interpretations /14/.

The foregoing are elements of rhetoric that can, if we make due allowance for them, influence our analysis of the arguments in the book of Job.

II

My concern in this section of the paper is a more ambitious one. It is to affirm: (A) the coherence of the speeches of Job's three friends; and (B) the distinctive viewpoints of the three friends. For convenience, I shall discriminate in (A) between coherence within a single speech (A1: micro-coherence) and coherence throughout the whole body of the speeches of each of the friends in turn (A2: macro-coherence). I shall interpose between my claims for micro- and macro-coherence the evidence for (B), the distinctive viewpoints of the individual speakers.

A1. Micro-coherence. It is customary to despair of the possibility of discovering coherence, even on the scale of the single speech, within the book of Job. G. von Rad, for example, concluded that Eliphaz's first speech (chs.4-5), "does not in any sense consist of a fairly unified sequence of thought, but is a series of entities of very different kinds, each of which has its own structure of thought and thesis within itself. Eliphaz offers Job at least five different and remarkably slightly connected propositions to ponder" /15/.

As against such a position, we may allow that it is not necessary to affirm the logical validity of an argument in order to maintain its coherence. We may, for example, deny that in 4:18-21, part of which we have examined above, a logic operates which is valid by standards either of the author's day or of our own: for, at least in our judgement, it does not follow that men are more untrustworthy than angels just because they "dwell in houses of clay" whereas angels presumably do not. But the coherence of these verses is beyond question: they are linked by an a maiore ad minus argumentation that is superficially, at least, plausible.

Granted such an understanding of "coherence", especially if the subordinate role of topoi and the dominating role of nodal
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sentences is taken into account, and if allowance is made for the range of verb modality (which may, for example, transform what is apparently an assertion into a statement of possibility), I would claim that coherence within each speech always emerges - except perhaps toward the end of the third cycle of speeches. The arguments of the nine speeches of the friends may thus be briefly stated:

1. In the first cycle, Eliphaz's speech (chs.4-5) starts from the fundamental position that the innocent are never "cut off". Job is an innocent man and therefore can expect to continue living (4:6). That general point made, Eliphaz can proceed to nuance the concept of "innocence". In fact, he argues, perfect innocence, "purity" or "righteousness" (4:17), is not to be found among men, so even the most innocent, like Job, must expect to suffer deservedly on occasion. Job is suffering on this occasion, so the only practical advice Eliphaz can give to Job is to be patient (commit his case to God, 5:8), since his suffering is bound to be soon over.

2. The first speech of Bildad (ch.8) is no less coherent. Like all the friends, he believes that suffering is punishment, and that the death of Job's children is proof of that (8:4 "Your children have sinned against him; so he has abandoned them to the power of their own transgression"; the "if" [Cim] of "if your children have sinned" is not hypothetical, as NEB has rightly recognised). God does not pervert justice (8:3); so if there is suffering, there has been sin. Job himself, however, has not been struck dead, so the possibility is still open that he is innocent of any sin deserving of death. Bildad therefore affirms that if Job is "pure and upright" he will be delivered from his affliction. The comparatively cheerful note on which Bildad concludes (8:21-22) leaves open the question of Job's innocence, and the topos of 8:8-19 on the theme "no effect without a cause" (the death of the wicked [vv.13-19] being a prime example of this truth) serves only to reinforce Bildad's fundamental position: justice is not perverted.

3. In Zophar's speech in the first cycle (ch.11), the argument is again plain. Starting from the same presupposition as the other friends, that suffering is deserved, he concentrates wholly upon the fact that Job is suffering. This can only mean that he is a sinner; and since Job has failed to acknowledge his sinfulness, claiming that he is "clean in God's eyes" (11:4), it follows that Job is a secret sinner. In fact, Zophar argues, if the truth were known it would no doubt be apparent that God
exacts of Job less than his guilt deserves (v.6c)! The logic of Zophar's argument is on this point rather shaky, but the coherence of his rhetoric is beyond question /16/. Zophar's reference to the wisdom of God (v.6) leads him into a digressive topos on that theme (vv.7-12), but the thread of his speech is picked up again at v.13 where he, like all the friends, offers direct practical advice to Job: Job must, in a word, repent (v.14). The lot of the repentant and therefore righteous man is contrasted with that of the wicked in a concluding topos (vv.15-20).

4. In the second cycle, Eliphaz's speech (ch.15) takes cognizance of Job's responses and asserts that Job is not speaking like a wise man but allowing his tongue to run away with him (15:2-6; v.5 should probably be translated "your mouth makes you guilty of great wrongdoing, and your tongue chooses guileful words"). Indeed, it is lack of adequate wisdom that is Job's chief fault (vv.7-16): he has not the wisdom of Adam (v.7) nor of the friends themselves (vv.8-9). If he were wise, he would know that no man - nor any angel - is wholly innocent, and that a certain amount of suffering can only be expected (vv.14-16). Nevertheless, Job is not wicked, and the topos on the wicked and their fate (vv.17-35) is a description of precisely what Job is not. He is therefore not destined for ultimate disaster or continued suffering.

5. Bildad's second speech (ch.18) is almost entirely devoted to a topos on the fate of the wicked, and as such is thoroughly coherent. What he means by it as far as Job is concerned cannot be discerned from the speech itself, but must be assessed in the context of all three of his speeches.

6. Zophar's second speech (ch.20) is even more thoroughly preoccupied with an extended topos on the fate of the wicked, developing three themes: the brevity of the rejoicing of the wicked (vv.4-11), the self-destructive nature of sin (vv.12-22), and the sudden end of the wicked (vv.23-29). Its content is not essentially different from the speeches of Eliphaz and Bildad, but, as with theirs, its function must be understood in the context of his other speeches.

7. In the third cycle, Eliphaz (ch.22) eschews extensive topos material and delivers a three-pronged address to Job. In its first movement (vv.2-11), he asks, "Is not your wickedness great?" (v.5); it must be, for only guilt explains suffering, and, presumably, only great guilt can explain great suffering. In the second movement (vv.12-20), since Job admits to great suffering but
not to great guilt, it follows that the guilt must be hidden (we note that Eliphaz is being pushed towards Zophar's position). In the third movement (vv.21-30), Eliphaz's continuing conviction of Job's essential innocence surfaces again, and the most convincing picture of the restoration Job can rightly hope for is painted (we note that Eliphaz retreats from the logic of Job's suffering to the logic of Job's character).

8. Bildad's third speech (ch.25), as it stands, simply rehearses the by now conventional idea that nothing in the created order, and especially not man, can show any kind of "cleanliness" (vv.4f.). If some disturbance to the text has occurred in the course of transmission, and if 26:5-14 also is rightly to be attached to this third speech of Bildad /17/, the speech continues with a topos upon the creatorial wisdom and power of God (the two attributes are frequently virtually equated in Job). God's unsearchable wisdom in company with his irresistible power (cf. 26:14) is the guarantee that "uncleanliness" in the world of nature and man will be detected and dealt with by God.

9. Zophar's third speech does not, of course, appear in the present form of the text (and we could therefore immediately forego an attempt to display its coherence). Suppose, however, that it has been erroneously incorporated (not by the final editor, but in the course of transmission) into Job's tenth speech (27:1-28:28) and that it consisted of 27:13-28:28 (so Hoffmann /18/). It should occasion no surprise that a speech from Zophar should dwell upon "the portion of a wicked man with God" (27:13-27), to be followed immediately by a disquisition on the secret wisdom of God (28:1-28), since these two themes have been combined in Zophar's first speech (ch.11). The argument, not so clearly stated as in ch.11, will be the same: the fate of the wicked is lodged with God (Cjm 'el, "with God", 27:13), because God alone is the master of the knowledge required to dispense justice among human beings (28:23-28). Even the profound and intricate knowledge acquired by humankind (28:1-11) gives them no sure hold upon real "wisdom", hid as it is "from the eyes of all living" (28:21). The best wisdom humanity can have is to acknowledge the omniscient Yahweh and keep his commandments (28:28). A less bold reconstruction of Zophar's third speech, that allocates 27:7-23 together with 24:18-24 to it /19/, will have even less difficulty in discerning coherence in the speech; for the preoccupation of the speech will be with the "portion" of the wicked, a topos simply prefaced by a few sentences of exordium (27:7-12).
Only a closer analysis can demonstrate the validity of the general argument presented here; but enough has perhaps been said to suggest that in each of the speeches of the three friends a high degree of coherence is to be found.

B. Distinctive Viewpoints. Students of the book of Job have frequently attempted to discriminate between the friends on psychological grounds. Thus, Arthur Quiller-Couch, a literary critic of a former era, observed: "I find Eliphaz more of personage than the other two; grander in the volume of the mind, securer in wisdom; as I find Zophar rather noticeably a mean-minded greybeard, and Bildad a man of the stand-no-nonsense kind" /20/. A British acquaintance confides that he has always seen Eliphaz as a smooth southerner from the Home Counties, Bildad as a provincial Midlander, and Zophar as a blunt Yorkshireman. Robert Gordis finds Eliphaz "the most dignified and urbane of the Friends ... the profoundest spirit among them"; Bildad is purely "a traditionalist who contributes little more to the discussion than a restatement of accepted views"; while Zophar, "probably the youngest, possesses the brashness and dogmatism associated with youth" /21/. There may be a modicum of truth in some of these distinctions, but what one really wants to see - and what one looks for in vain among the commentaries - is a set of notations of the distinctiveness, logical or theological, in their various arguments. Only genuinely distinctive argumentation would fully justify the introduction of three interlocutors into the body of the book. If they all have the same point to make, the book is indeed long-winded and flabby; but if, as I argue, the friends each take a distinctive position vis-à-vis Job in spite of sharing the most fundamental presuppositions, their presence is not only not gratuitous but positively essential for the exploration of the problem raised by the book.

What I see as their distinctive viewpoints has already become partly visible in outlining the coherence of each of their speeches. But to put it directly, I can do no better than quote some sentences that are somewhat buried away in a corner of Marvin Pope's commentary, in which alone I have found, in embryonic form at least, a presentation of the friends' distinctive viewpoints which jibes with my own. "Eliphaz appears to concede that Job's piety and conduct have been exemplary. Job, thus, should have confidence and hope that God will deal with
him accordingly ... To concede that Job was innocent would wreck [Bildad's and Zophar's] argument completely. What Bildad says is conditional: if Job were innocent, God would restore him. Zophar is sure that God must have something against Job and could make it known if he cared to speak about it" /22/. I should wish to nuance Pope's presentations a little: Eliphaz does not only appear to concede Job's piety to be exemplary; he actually assumes it and argues from it. And Zophar's point is not precisely that God could make known, if he cared to, what it is that he has against Job, but that no matter whether or not God divulges what he knows to be Job's sin, he is certainly punishing Job for it (God knows which men are worthless and marks them down for punishment, 11:11).

The distinctiveness of the friends' arguments can be expressed in two further ways: first, Eliphaz argues from the piety of Job in order to offer consolation; Bildad argues from the contrast between the fates of Job and Job's children in order to offer warning; Zophar argues from the suffering of Job in order to denounce Job. Secondly, as becomes clear from the friends' directives to Job, Eliphaz's intention is to encourage Job to patience and hope (5:8; 4:6), Bildad's intention is to urge Job to search his heart before God in order to ensure that he is not guilty of crimes such as those for which his children have died (8:5-6); Zophar's intention is to summon Job to repentance for sins that he clearly has already committed (11:6c).

It may be added, parenthetically, that the position of Elihu represents yet another variation on the same fundamental supposition of the causal nexus between sin and suffering: viz., suffering may be discipline, though not in the way the other friends have viewed it; for it may be not the penalty for sin already committed, but a warning, given in advance, to keep a man back from sin (33:19-28) /23/. In advancing this view Elihu correctly proclaims himself opposed both to the three friends and to Job (32:6-12; 33:5,12).

A2. Macro-coherence. The coherence of the stance taken by each of the friends throughout his set of three speeches (macro-coherence) has already been to some extent established by the analysis given above of the argument of each individual speech. What we have to remark upon here is that the macro-coherence of each of the three arguments depends upon our recognising the stance adopted in the first cycle as determinative for the whole of the particular friend's utterances.
From that position, we may go on to allow the content of the second and third cycles of speeches, largely consisting of topos material, to be interpreted according to the previously announced intention of the speaker. As for the second cycle, I have noted above (under 1.3) how Eliphaz’s affirmation of Job’s piety in the first cycle (chs.4-5) requires us to read his description of the fate of the wicked in the second cycle (ch.15) as a depiction of what Job’s fate is certainly not. Likewise, Bildad’s exhortation to Job in his first cycle speech (ch.8) to search his heart and take warning from the fate of his children becomes the hermeneutical clue for the reading of his second cycle speech (ch.18): the fate of the wicked is a possibility that confronts Job, but may yet be avoided by him. In similar fashion, the first cycle speech of Zophar (ch.11), asserting that Job’s present suffering proves him to be a sinner (albeit a secret sinner), demands that his second cycle speech (ch.20) be understood as descriptive of the future he sees in store for Job—assuming, of course, that Zophar’s plea for Job’s repentance (11:13f.) is ignored.

As for the third cycle of speeches, the same principle applies, that the topos material is to be interpreted in the light of the speaker’s stance distinctively spelled out in the first cycle. The most striking, and perhaps the only significant, apparent exception to this generalisation is the speech of Eliphaz in the third cycle (ch.22), and for this reason it deserves our special attention. In two respects Eliphaz’s argument in this speech is in full accord with his position in his first speech (chs.4-5): he believes that Job will be delivered "through the cleanness of [his] hands" (22:30), and his advice is to "come to terms with God" (v.21, NEB) and "be at peace". In another respect, however, he seems to be wholly at variance with his former position: he seems to accuse Job of untold wickedness ("no end to your iniquities", v.5), mainly in the nature of social injustice: "you have exacted pledges of your brothers for nothing ... withheld bread from the hungry ... sent widows away empty" (vv.6-9). These are the most specific, most harsh, and most unjust words spoken against Job in the whole book, and it is strange to find them on the lips of Eliphaz, out of all the friends.

Of course it is possible to maintain that there has been a change in Eliphaz’s attitude, and to argue that Eliphaz has lost patience with Job, and in his exasperation has charged Job with crimes that he could not possibly have believed Job had
committed when he addressed him in chs.4-5. Most commentators, indeed, take Eliphaz's accusations at their face value, but there is one indication that Eliphaz's strictures may be read somewhat differently. That is the fact that in all the cases Eliphaz mentions it is the neglect of some social duty that Job is charged with. Eliphaz believes, as do all the friends, that Job is suffering for some cause - brief though the suffering may be (4:5); and since the cause cannot be found in any wrong that Job has done, for he seems to have done none, his sin must lie in what he has failed to do. To say that Job has stripped the poor of their clothing need not mean that he has actively done any such thing, but rather that he must have failed to offer clothing to some needy person; and so on. (In the same way, the psalmist who reproaches God for having "forsaken" him [Ps. 22:2] does not mean that God has actively departed from him, but that he has failed to come to his help; hence the psalmist's plea is not "return to me", but "hasten to my help", v.20). Doubtless, since Job is not absolutely perfect (nor omniscient), there will be certain members of Job's community untouched by his social concern; in hyperbolic fashion Eliphaz pictures their plight as Job's wilful fault. Only in this way can he explain why "snares are round about" Job and why his "light is darkened" (vv.10-11).

From this perspective the meaning of 22:2-4 becomes plain. When Eliphaz asks, "Is it any pleasure to the Almighty if you make your ways blameless?" (v.3), he does not disparage righteousness or the fear of God. He is rather saying that it is not for Job's righteousness - which Eliphaz fully recognises - that God "enters into judgment" with him (v.4), but for leaving undone those things that ought to have been done (vv.6-9). They must be sins of omission rather than sins of commission (which admittedly his language describes, prima facie) that are Job's "great wickedness" (v.5); for Eliphaz has no other way of explaining Job's suffering. It is true that he has moved somewhat beyond the position he had adopted in chs.4-5, where he first affirmed Job's piety, and then allowed that the righteous are not perfectly so. Now he will specify in what ways he conceives Job to have been open to reproach. But this is only a development of his original position, and no doubt need be cast on the overall coherence of Eliphaz's attitude and argument.

Less taxing is the question of the relation of the third cycle speeches of Bildad (? and Zophar) to their general position outlined in their opening speeches. If we adhere to the Massoretic assignment of ch.25 alone to Bildad, his insistence upon the
"uncleanness" of all created beings harmonises with his original affirmation that since God does not pervert justice (8:3) sin must inevitably be punished. If we extend Bildad's speech by the addition of 26:5-14, we may see in these verses further illustration of the incontrovertible justice of the Almighty. And if Zophar's third speech is to be salvaged from the material of chs.27 and 28, we find only further illustration of the twin themes of the all-seeing wisdom of God (cf. 11:7-11) and the doom of the wicked foreseen and prepared by that selfsame wisdom (cf. 11:20) which we have observed in Zophar's initial speech.

The intentions of this paper have been to show that the arguments of Job's three friends, though sharing the presupposition of a causal nexus between sin and suffering, are distinct from one another; that every speech exhibits coherence, and that each set of speeches delivered by each friend maintains the same position throughout the course of the dialogue; and that the detection and display both of coherence and distinctiveness are materially assisted by the recognition of certain rhetorical features characteristic of such speeches.

A final implication of the present study is that the author of Job does not portray any development in the position, theology, or argument of Job's friends: their minds are set in familiar patterns. By contrast - though this must be the subject of another paper - Job's mind is confused, flexible, experimental, and his argument constantly in course of development. Even in their style of argumentation, the friends provide a static stylised background against which the tortured but adventurous hero of the book excites our imagination and sympathy.

NOTES
1 A preliminary form of this paper was read to the Rhetorical Criticism Section of the Society of Biblical Literature in New York, November, 1979.
2 "Patience, hard thing! the hard thing but to pray,/ But bid for, Patience is" (Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins, selected by W.H. Gardner [1953], 62).
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7 A. Weiser, Das Buch Hiob (ATD, 1963), 48.
10 This is a particular feature of H.H. Rowley's commentary (Job [NCB], 1970); see for example pp.175f. on Zophar's second speech.
11 Cf. E. König, Historisch-Comparative Syntax der Hebräischen Sprache (1897), 70-97.
13 Cited by Dhorme, Job, 55.
14 For a more extended treatment of this passage, see D.J.A. Clines, "Verb Modality and the Interpretation of Job IV 20-21", VT 30 (1980), 354-57.
17 So Rowley, Job, 213ff., citing many others of the same opinion.
18 G. Hoffmann, Hiob (1891), ad loc.
19 See Rowley, Job, 222.
22 Pope, Job, 36.
23 If this reading of Elihu's argument is correct, 33:27, a confession of sin accompanying the sufferer's thanksgiving for deliverance, must refer to sin contemplated (cf. v.17) but not executed.
THE LITERARY STRUCTURE OF LUKE 1-2

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Luke 1-2 is structured literarily around the visits of the Angel of the Lord. The actual birth of Jesus, which is so frequently the main concern of modern readers, is treated by Luke only as a detail within the framework of a much larger narrative.

Luke establishes continuity with the Old Testament by narrating an epiphany which fulfills the prophetic promises to Israel and creates the long awaited messianic age. The narrative focuses upon the incursion of the divine into time and space for the accomplishment of creative or original acts. The reader's attention is focused on the decisive acts of God in creating the world long promised to Israel. The hero's life and character are subordinated to this central concern.

I. Luke's Declaration of Purpose (1: 1-4)

The fulfillment motif is introduced by Luke immediately. He informs us that "many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things which have been accomplished among us" (1:1). The passive voice points to God as the agent of the actions narrated. This is confirmed by the stories which follow.

The speeches of Gabriel delivered to Zechariah and Mary concern the fulfillment of God's promise of a king. Centuries of Jewish suffering and aspiration are gathered up and vindicated by the angel's words to Mary: "the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever" (1:32-33). The eschatological joy of Israel can be heard in Mary's declaration to Elizabeth: "He has helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his posterity forever" (1:54-55). Zechariah praises God for the fulfillment of prophecy (1:67-72) /1/. "The acceptable year of the Lord" promised by Isaiah 61:2,
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and later announced by Jesus as the opening words of his public ministry (4:19), has arrived. It is the subject of the Lucan narrative.

The fulfillment motif dominates the words and actions of the main characters. The angel's words to Zechariah - "You did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their time" (1:20) - have a double reference: (1) to Zechariah's immediate doubt of the announcement that the eschatological fulfillment is at hand and (2) to Israel's doubt that the words of prophecy would be fulfilled at all. The time of God's word and the time as it lives in human expectation and impatience are different; but, at last, the prophecies' time is at hand. Zechariah is chosen as the priest to receive the eschatological announcement because of his unflagging obedience to the Law (1:6). Men would have expected such an announcement to have come to one of greater priestly position.

The aged Simeon is honoured by being the one to welcome the Messiah into the Temple because he "was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel" (2:25). Anna, the devout prophetess, carries the presentation "to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem" (2:38). Mary is called blessed because she "believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord". The Magnificat praises God for fulfilling the word of promise. For Luke, Jesus is clearly the sign of the time of fulfillment.

Luke's introduction is carefully formulated to convey that he is chronicling revelation, i.e., those significant moments in the early Christian experience of Jesus where God is rendered transparent in human affairs. One cannot, however, presume that such events were transparent to all. Acts 10:34-42 makes it clear that "true history" has to be revealed. Peter declares:

God raised him on the third day and made him manifest; not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses ....

And he commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that he is the one ordained by God ....

Luke is careful to establish his own authority as a narrator of fulfillment by proposing to order his narrative strictly in keeping with the testimony of those "who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word" (1:2-3).

Luke writes so that the arche, the moment of origin, can be accessible to Theophilus. Theophilus has been taught about
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despite these matters, but he has not yet gained access to the Presence
which created the age of fulfillment and to which the testimony
of the eyewitnesses points. Luke will narrate the sacred drama
of the arche so that Theophilus may find it actualized in his
own experience. Only thus can he come to "know the truth
concerning the things of which [he] has been informed" (1:4).
Luke's purpose is in keeping with the traditional function of
narrative in Jewish ceremonies of remembrance such as
Passover.

Like Matthew, Mark, and John, Luke is concerned with the
creative moment of God's act in Jesus /2/. This moment
created the eyewitnesses as servants of the Word. Luke knows
that the witness of those created by and for the arche, the
eyewitnesses to whom God rendered his own acts transparent
and humanly comprehensible, cannot be abandoned without
reducing the gospel to trivia. He, like the writers who preceded
him, must make present this witness. Innovation is impossible.
Luke is concerned simply to establish the proper experience of
continuity between the witness to the ministers of the Word and
Theophilus, the one beloved of God.

The introduction helps us to clarify Luke's relationship to his
sources. Luke's reference to the many who have compiled
narratives and to his own competence to narrate the original
events in proper order make it clear that he is working within a
tradition and imply that he is correcting an earlier narrative or
narratives so that Theophilus may have an "orderly account"
(1:3).

At the very least, Luke is saying that the present narrative is
his rendering of a tradition already rendered by others. Writing
the first gospel was probably a traumatic breach with the oral,
apostolic word; but that issue is settled. Luke does not wish to
reopen it. He writes in the wake of an earlier writer, or writers,
and views this as an action properly continuous with the
tradition arising from the arche. It would be proper to assume
that Luke is being very careful to compose his narrative under
the guidance of oral tradition /3/, lest he evoke opposition to
the still novel idea of writing a gospel. It is unlikely that Luke
is merely "linking" traditions to which he has no living
continuity. It is probable that he is functioning like a story
teller /4/ who must now transfer the power of the oral art to
the written record, so that there may be a re-presentation of
the sacred drama of God's acts in creating the age of
redemption.

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II. The Literary Structure of Luke 1:5-2:52

The birth of Jesus is only incidentally narrated by Luke. It is the presupposition of a larger drama in which the angel of the Lord appears revealing the arche of the new age. Three appearances determine the basic literary structure of the two chapters:

1. An angel visits Zechariah to announce the coming of the new Elijah (1:5-25);
2. An angel visits Mary to announce the coming of the Christ (1:26-38), resulting in Mary's visit to Elizabeth (1:39-56);
3. An angel visits the shepherds to announce the advent of the King (2:1-14), resulting in their visit to pay homage to the child (2:15-20).

The remaining narrative material is clearly subordinated to these three appearances:

1. The fulfillment of the angel's word to Zechariah (1:57-80);
2. The response of the faithful in Jerusalem attendant upon the fulfillment of the Law by Mary (2:21-40);
3. The King comes of age proclaiming God as his true father (2:41-52).

(A) Luke 2:1-20

This scene is structured around the visit of an angel of the Lord (2:8-14) to announce the birth of the long awaited Messiah to Israel and the response of the shepherds to the angel's implied command (2:15-20). Verses 1-7 simply set the stage with adequate background for the comprehension of this announcement. In 2:1-3 the creational acts of God are linked with world history, as in Luke 1:5 and 3:1-2. The event of the taxation puts Joseph in movement from Galilee to Bethlehem, setting the stage for the Messiah to appear, as prophecied, in the City of David. Verses 6-7 detail the birth in indirect narration singling out the swaddling clothes and the manger bed for mention, thus preparing the way for the angel to announce a sign by which the King may be recognized. The center of this literary unit is the announcement of the King's advent and the new relationship between God and man which it occasions (2:10-14).

As in 1:5-25 and 1:26-38, the angel of the Lord appears. Fear is the initial response of the participants. The angel speaks to
allay the fear by giving a joyous message, portions of which are in poetic form. This announcement is not just for Israel but "to all the people" (2:10). The shepherds are implicitly expected to seek this Savior-King. No explicit command is given; only a sign for recognition of the child. The climax is the song of the angelic choir: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!" (2:14). The new day from on high anticipated by Zechariah in 1:78 has dawned. The shepherd-king David from Bethlehem, at long last, has a worthy heir.

A sub-scene develops (2:15-20) as the shepherds obey without question. Seeking out the new "Shepherd", they find matters as spoken by the angel. The narrative accents both their response and the way in which this event transcends their individual lives: "And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child" (2:17). They are heralds of a new age. The divine proclamation thus produces wonder among the people, Mary's pondering, and the shepherd's praise of God. The announcement of the new relation between heaven and earth is central. Mystery and rejoicing are the key themes of this unit. Luke 1-2 is structured around the activity of an angel of the Lord in announcing the fulfillment of God's word.

(B) Luke 1:5-23; 57-80

Following the preface, Luke dramatizes the acts of God in announcing and establishing the new age. We see the appearance of the angel of the Lord to announce the coming of the new Elijah (1:1-25). This announcement is both an answer to the prayer of Zechariah and Elizabeth for a child and an anticipation of the event which will "cause many to rejoice" at John's birth (1:14). The poetry of 1:14-17 is a revelation of the End and of messianic joy.

Verses 5-10 give the background necessary for understanding the angel's appearance. The couple are Law-abiding but childless. Zechariah is chosen to serve as priest by the ordinary means. The people are gathered at the usual hour. By contrast, the most unusual action then takes place. The angel appears (v.11) by the altar. Zechariah is seized by fear (v.12). The angel commands him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer is heard ..." (v.13). The revelation given by the angel is a proof that God does not forsake his Law-abiding servants but in fact fulfills his promises.

Zechariah is portrayed in tones reminiscent of an Old
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Testament prophet, or of Moses, as he challenges the angel's authority with a blunt "How shall I know this?" (1:18). Like the great figures of the Old Testament, he dares to challenge the Lord. Moses had dared to declare: "Oh, my Lord, send, I pray, some other person" (Ex 4:13). Jonah dared flee. When Ezra was approached in II Esdras by the Angel of the Lord, Uriel, he was asked: "Your understanding has utterly failed regarding this world, and do you think you can comprehend the way of the Most High?" (II Esdras 4:1-2). Unflinchingly, Ezra replies: "Yes, my Lord" (4:3). Zechariah is portrayed as a figure of equal dignity and strength. The same comic element is also present as is typically found in portrayals of Jewish heroes. Who is Zechariah to challenge Gabriel who stands by the throne of God? The rebuff of Zechariah's challenge sets up further development of the action in a sub-scene.

Zechariah is stricken dumb. This patiently obedient servant of God has evidenced disbelief at the very apex of his experience with God. His sentence is pronounced: "Behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things come to pass, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time" (1:20). The hero is thus humbled into ordinary manhood, the fulfillment theme is underscored, and the groundwork is laid for further development of the action in a later sub-scene (1:57-80). The fulfillment of the angel's word to Zechariah will simultaneously be the fulfillment of God's word to Israel, who like Zechariah has dared at times to question God's promises.

(C) Luke 1:26-56

Structurally the narration of the angel's visit to Mary is parallel to the visit to Zechariah. (1) The necessary minimum of background detail is given in 1:26-27 (par 1:5-10); (2) The angelic greeting, 1:28 (par absent), prompting a troubled response in 1:29 (par 1:12); the response of the angel allaying the fear coupled with the announcement of a revelation cast largely in poetic form, 1:30-33 (par 1:13-17); (3) A question forming the human response, 1:34 (par 1:18); (4) The angelic answer, 1:35-37 (par 1:19-20); (5) Mary's eventual submission to the word of the angel, 1:38 (contrasting with Zechariah's lack of trust).

This narrative is also continued by a sub-scene. Mary's submission to the angel, and thus to God, becomes an issue in her visit to Elizabeth. It is motivated by 1:36 where the angel informs her of Elizabeth's situation. Elizabeth, on the other hand, is already familiar with Mary's response to the angel
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(v.45). An issue which transcends Mary's and Elizabeth's private and personal fates is reflected in the question with which Elizabeth greets Mary: "And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (v.43). It is the center of the sub-scene. It is simply the question of how Jesus, the King, relates to John, the one who prepares the way. Normally servants visit the king.

Why this surprising departure from convention? The Magnificat forms Mary's answer. God's King, like God himself, reverses the expected pattern of power. Those of low degree are raised up /5/.

The accounts of the angelic visitation to Zechariah and to Mary are very similar in structure, but they are also very different in detail.

God announces the new Elijah in the Temple during the ordinary course of Temple service. John will be born of parents who walk perfectly in the Torah (1:6). What could be more appropriate? The announcement to Mary introduces a vivid contrast. The Messiah is announced in Galilee - a province long regarded as hostile to true religion /6/. The tension implied here is only slightly relieved by the angel's announcement that the lowly Galilean maiden has "found favor with God".

Zechariah is stricken with a godly fear upon seeing the angel by the altar. Mary is troubled differently from Zechariah. She is greeted with a greeting fit for royalty: "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" (1:29). What sort of greeting is this? The answer is clear. The one who is engaged to a son of David (1:27) will bear the final Son of David. The long awaited King will appear and "reign over the house of Jacob forever" (1:32-33). That he will be the "Son of the Most High" comes as no surprise. So was every Davidic King over whom the ancient words of Psalm 2 were spoken at coronation. Luke's literary structure has prepared the reader for the announcement of the Messiah. The Messiah is expected to follow Elijah (1:17). What is startling is that a Galilean maiden is greeted as if she were a royal personage.

Like Zechariah, Mary raises a common sense objection: "How can this be, since I have no husband?" (1:34). Unlike Zechariah's question: "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years" (1:18), Mary's question is empirical nonsense. What more natural expectation for a young Jewish woman already engaged than that a soon to be conceived child would be by her betrothed? Mary's question is a literary
necessity. Without it, and the question of parentage it raises, the angel cannot spring the ultimate surprise - which also explains the royal greeting: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you" (1:35). This child will be directly the Son of God, a perfect King with an enduring Kingdom. The announcement comes with an unimaginable shock. Not since the days of the Nephilim, and the consequent limitation of man's life to a mere 120 years, has there been intercourse between Heaven and Earth (Gen. 6:1-4). One greater than the mighty men of old, who were begotten of the daughters of men and angels, is appearing. Of his days there will be no end.

Without question, as if accepting a proposal of marriage, and with royal simplicity, Mary replies: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word". This will be celebrated by Elizabeth, who says in the Spirit: "And blessed is she who believed that there would be fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord" (1:45). Mary's reply creates an archetypal pattern: "Henceforth all generations will call me blessed" (1:48).

This scene moves so smoothly that it is easy to overlook a crucial shift in interest. The angel commands Mary to name the child she bears Jesus /7/. Very subtly the focus of the story is shifted away from the angel's command to name the child to Mary's virginity - "How can this be, since I have no husband?" (1:34). This question totally disregards the introduction of her as "a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; the virgin's name was Mary" (1:27). It disregards the historical context as well; for what is more natural than for a betrothed Jewish virgin to expect children in the near future? But the story is not concerned with normal births. This child is to be of divine paternity. Without Mary's question, the miraculous "how" of this birth could not be introduced as the climax of the story. Mary's question is governed by literary necessity /8/.

The literary shaping of the scene creates the need for a later reference to the naming of the child. The act of naming is a necessary narrative element because of the direct command to name, but the naming is found neither in this scene nor its continuation in the visit to Elizabeth. It is not part of the scene involving the announcement of the birth to the shepherds. This suspended literary pattern is abruptly completed in 2:21, lest Mary appear to be disobedient. Following the conclusion of the
Visit of the Shepherds, it is said: "And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the Angel before he was conceived in the womb". Verse 21 is, as it were, a tag added to an already completed drama. It belatedly corrects the narration of this scene and serves also to introduce the next scene: the presentation of the child in the Temple.

(D) Luke 2:22-52

The startling news of a Messiah who is biologically the Son of God (1:35) immediately raises a question for the sensitive reader: "Can God violate his Torah?" /9/. As if in response to such an interlocutor both 2:21 and the next scene repeat the motif of fulfillment of the Torah. Mary has obeyed the angel. The Law is being followed with regard to circumcision (v.21) - even though circumcision is a father's occasion and Luke is concentrating on the mother's fulfillment of her legal responsibilities (vv.22-24) /10/. Verse 22 notes that all is "according to the Law of Moses" and verse 23 announces, lest one miss the point, in a parenthesis: "as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord"."

One cannot miss the allusion to Lev. 12:1-4,6,8, which specify the legal responsibilities of women at childbirth. Indeed, verse 24 quotes from Lev. 12:8 as "the Law of the Lord". With this child, the Law is followed to the letter. This reference to the woman's legal responsibility following childbirth provides the motive for Mary's visit to the Temple. It is within the framework of this visit that the strong emphasis on Simeon and Anna develops. This reference insures that the role of Mary does not get displaced by the attention given to Simeon and Anna. Simeon's speech to Mary (2:34-35) serves to reassert the awareness that this is a story about Mary.

From the accent placed on Luke 2:24, we are served notice that Mary is poor, a fact in keeping with her song-reply to Elizabeth in 1:46ff. with its repeated references to those poor and of low degree.

Simeon is now introduced. He, like Zechariah and Elizabeth, is "righteous and devout" - yet another allusion to the Law and its fulfillment (2:25). His character is confirmed by the fact that he actively expects God's promise to materialize. He is "looking for the consolation of Israel" which has been announced by the songs of Mary and Zechariah. Simeon's reward is that God grants him to see the Messiah before he dies. This forms
the immediate background for the action of this scene. Under the guidance of the Spirit, Simeon comes to the Temple intercepting Mary as she comes to perform her legal obligations. Nothing is said of his identity or function. It is possible that he is a priest, but the narrative presents him as an obedient servant of God whose feet are directed by the Spirit to this interception of Mary's path. He appears as one of the "poor" of Israel. Likewise, no description is given of Mary's performance of her Temple duties. These are merely recalled by the conclusion: "And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee" (2:39).

Simeon appears in the story as a righteous man whose patience in awaiting the Lord's own time is rewarded. Whether he is old or young is not stated, only his willingness to die now that that the personal promise of God, made to him, has been fulfilled. Simeon is, however, more than a mere individual. He is a type of a faithful Israel. His song accentuates the role of promise-fulfillment as his personal situation soars into a figure of all men; "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for a glory to thy people Israel" (2:29-32). The earlier themes of peace, fulfillment, light-Messiah, and all people come together as Simeon offers an interpretation of this creational event. Israel's poor, servant existence has at times made it a mockery among men. Power and politics have seemed to take the victory from those of simplicity and godliness. This is only appearance. In this child - the Light, the Messiah - Israel's life is vindicated. He is a glory to Israel (Isa. 42:6; 49:6). Under him all men shall see clearly God's pattern. He is for revelation and light.

There is more. The pattern of power earlier described by Mary to Elizabeth is again introduced: "This child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against ... that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed" (vv.34-35). Not all within Israel are poor and godly. The role of the King will be to effect a judgement. The reversal already begun will include a surprising reversal within the leadership of Israel. For the first time, our drama turns to a darker note. The child is "for a sign that is spoken against!" The proud and the powerful will reject him. This is ironic. The King is not visible with the trappings of power respected among men. He comes with God's power. Thus he functions as a sign. Can men see
beyond the concrete reality of the servant to the invisible presence of the King? Hearts will be revealed!

Unexpectedly we encounter a sub-scene in the Temple. The role of Mary as one who comes to be purified fades. The response to Simeon comes from Anna, a prophetess (2:36-38). We are given her background. Her character is reflected in her marital situation. She was widowed at an early age, living only seven years from the time of "her virginity" with her husband. Subsequently, "she did not depart from the Temple, worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day" (2:37). At the age of 84, she becomes the witness to Simeon's prophetic interpretation of the Lord's faithfulness and of the child's role and destiny. The prophetess thanks God and speaks not to everyone but simply to those prepared to listen - "to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem" (2:38). The mystery of the King is hidden among the poor and the faithful who have patiently awaited the day of fulfillment.

This aside having ended, we discover that the role of Mary is accentuated solely by the act itself: "And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth" (2:39).

The scene has established the fact of Mary's obedience to the Law by her visit to the Temple, but this act is dwarfed by the roles of the "holy man" and "holy woman" who are from among the "poor" of Israel. The work of the Spirit intersects the scene and shifts attention away from the institutional acts undertaken. This is the result of the action of God, the true father. God here functions much as did Zechariah in the equivalent scene in chapter 1. Through Simeon, he reveals to Mary, and to all by implication, the role of the child; just as Zechariah's speech, under the guidance of the spirit, interpreted the significance of John's birth. A scene which began by focusing attention on the mother's role has unexpectedly developed along lines which emphasize the child's paternity.

The sub-theme of fatherhood now emerges into full view. A second Temple scene concludes the chapter, 2:41-52. The expected pattern of family loyalty is contradicted. The devout family is in Jerusalem at Passover when the child reaches the age of accountability. The child disappears. He is not among the family kin, as expected. Having discovered him, the anguished mother questions: "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously" (2:48). The child's reply is ironic: "How is it that you sought me? Did
you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" (2:49).

What audacity! A Jewish child putting down his parents! We can believe that "they did not understand the saying" (2:50). Perhaps we here see that even Mary's heart is pierced in the presence of the sign who reveals the heart. The child is truly beyond the boundaries of blood kinship. Having put down even his greatly honored mother, the child submits to Mary and Joseph as a matter of choice and not of necessity. His Otherness emerges in the haunting words of conclusion: "And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart" (2:51).

The child of God, prefiguring his latter life and his servant role, submits to those who are merely his servants. The reference to Mary pondering these strange events hints that the reader should recall the beginning of the drama:

And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God" (1:35).

III. Conclusion

We may now summarize and draw several conclusions regarding the literary integrity of Luke 1-2. The central structure is provided by the three visits of the angel of the Lord (Gabriel):

1. The Visit to Zechariah (1:5-25)
2. The Visit to Mary (1:26-38)
3. The Visit to the Shepherds (2:1-20).

The births of John and Jesus, Mary's visit to Elizabeth, the Shepherd's visit, and the events transpiring in the Temple represent the completion of the events set in motion by the angelic announcements.

The theme of fatherhood forms a sub-plot linking the fulfillment of the laws on circumcision and purification with the question raised by Mary in 1:35: "How can this be, since I have no husband?" This then is strongly tied to the fulfillment motif in the songs of Mary and Zechariah. It is the ultimate confirmation that God had indeed "visited and redeemed his people" (1:68) as it was promised to Israel's "father Abraham" (1:54-55,
72-73). The work of the Spirit promised to John (1:15), to Mary (1:35), and evidenced through Zechariah's prophecy and Simeon's timely visit to the Temple culminates in the words of the one whose "Father's house" is the Temple (2:49). His is no ordinary parentage. The scene of the child's coming of age is the point towards which the drama has been moving (2:41-51). The fulfillment of the Angel's words cannot be doubted.

The events of the "nativity" narrative are closely intertwined with each other and with the structure of the whole gospel. They introduce and develop themes which are central to the later development of the book. The theme of the fulfillment of promise is the keynote of Jesus' first public appearance (4:16-22) and it is the heart of the last speeches to the disciples (24:27, 44-53). The theme that those who walk in the way of the Law receive the promise although they be few in number and among the poor is the key issue in Jesus' reception in Nazareth (4:24-27). It is at issue in every conflict between Jesus and the leaders of Israel. Continually Jesus is spoken against by the religiously powerful and affirmed unexpectedly by the outcast (7:1-23; 18:9-14). The Messiah who is a glory to Israel and a revelation to the Gentiles commissions his disciples to go to the nations of the earth (24:47) - recalling the angel's promise: "He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there will be no end" (1:33). All the nations shall look to Jerusalem and its Davidic king for salvation.

Luke's narrative is only secondarily concerned with the actual birth of Jesus. Certainly the concept of "birth story" would not have the same significance for him that it would bear for a modern, humanistic reader.

Luke narrates an epiphany which fulfills the most ancient promises and deepest hopes of Israel. He seeks to root the creative events in his time to the ancient story of Israel. It is perhaps best to characterize Luke 1-2 as the advent of the consolation of Jerusalem.

NOTES
1 The words spoken by Zechariah (1:67-72), Mary (1:54-55), and Simeon (Lk. 2:29-35) anticipate the words of the Messiah as he reveals himself in the Nazareth synagogue: "the spirit of the Lord is upon me ..." 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing!' (4:18-21).
2 Mk. 1:1 and John 1:1 make similar use of the term arche. In the New Testament, arche is used to refer to the Initial
creation of the world (Heb. 1:10; Matt. 19:4,8; 24:21; 2 Pet. 3:4),
to the appearance of Jesus (John 15:27; 16:4), or to the origin of
Kittel, Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart:
Kohlhammer, 1957), 477-481. For a discussion of
Matthew's linking of the gospel to the arche, see C.T. Davis,
3 Albert Lord, "The Gospels as Oral Traditional Literature," The Relationships Among the Gospels: An Interdisciplinary
Dialogue (San Antonio: Trinity, 1978), 33-91, should be
consulted for a discussion of oral tradition and the "birth
stories" and of evidences of oral compositional techniques in
4 For further discussion of the literary methods appropriate
to this study see my detailed discussion in Speaking of Jesus
5 Throughout Luke this reversal in the use of power is
accentuated. As the King goes to suffer, he reminds the
disciples: "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over
them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors.
But not so with you; rather let the greatest among you become
as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves" (22:25-26).
6 See especially John 1:46, also 7:41 and Matt. 4:12-16.
7 A similar command is given Joseph in Matt. 1:18-25.
8 The Lucan theme of the reversal of the expected norms of
power is developed by means of the questions of Zechariah and
Mary. The heroic Judean priest's last moment slips into
obstinacy (1:18), humbles him, and serves the purpose of the
narrative by setting the stage for the narration of John's
naming (1:57-80). In 22:24-34, we see a similar portrayal of
Peter. Jesus is revealed as the suffering servant for whom
worldly standards of power do not matter (22:24-27). Peter is
heroic and desires to meet any challenge of Satan. Ironically,
Jesus predicts that only after his humiliation will he return to
be a leader (22:31-34).
The humble Galilean maiden's question (1:34), by contrast,
sets the stage for her exaltation by the angel in the main scene
and by Elizabeth in the sub-scene. She is, however, humbled in
the final sub-scene in the Temple (2:41-52). These heroes are
not allowed to become more than human no matter how exalted
their actions may be at the given moment. They are like the
Suffering Servant King whose divinity does not prevent his
humiliation on the cross.

9 The reader would also perceive that Mary is the property of Joseph and that God's approach to Mary would be a violation of Joseph's rights under the Torah. In Matt. 1:18-25, this problem is made very explicit in the narrative. See Davis, *Speaking of Jesus*, 144-149.

10 It would be out of place to emphasize the circumcision given the lack of a human father, but to omit reference to it would be out of the question. The true father is yet hidden from the universal view. The stronger literary pattern is the fulfillment of the mother's role. The father's scene will come in 2:41-52 when the child comes of age and declares God to be his true father. The child's role in the Temple is not unlike that of the apostles in Acts 10:34-42 who are chosen to be witnesses to the acts of God.
Introduction

Attempts to solve apparent problems in Johannine patterns by extensive rearrangement of units have more recently given way to a quite different approach. Studies such as those of R. Brown trace the Fourth Gospel to a Johannine "school" and see within the book evidence for several stages of development /1/. Both of these approaches are in marked contrast to the conclusions of C.H. Dodd, who thus summarized his analysis of chs. 1-12:

"The Book of Signs, we conclude, exhibits a design and structure which respond sensitively to the development of the highly original ideas of the author. It constitutes a great argument, in which any substantial alteration of the existing order and sequence would disturb the strong and subtle unity which it presents, and which I take to be characteristic of the creative mind to which we owe the composition of the Fourth Gospel" /2/.

Dodd sees these chapters as consisting of seven episodes so constructed that each of them contains the whole theme of the Gospel. Though each is relatively complete and independent, they are connected by "a subtle system of cross-reference and correspondences, in which recurrent symbols and catchwords play a part" /3/.

The present paper takes this a step further and proposes that the marks of unity may be stated not only in thematic terms but also in reference to a specific literary pattern and tradition. Its thesis is that the Gospel, as a literary whole, is meticulously constructed on the basis of symmetrical design and balanced units. Such patterns, analogous to the parallelism of members in Hebrew poetry, may be found throughout the OT,
as has been demonstrated, for example, in the several essays of the Muilenburg Festschrift /4/. Studies in Ruth, Esther, and Judith have set forth the structure of an entire book in terms of symmetrical design, suggesting broad use of such patterning in post-exilic narrative /5/. N.W. Lund was a pioneer in relating such structures to the NT /6/. A detailed study by A. Vanhoye analyzes Hebrews in these terms /7/.

This paper will demonstrate that the Fourth Gospel, as heir to this tradition, employs the following devices to achieve literary symmetry:

1. a balancing of incident against incident and theme against theme in paired complementary units;
2. triadic (with some quadratic) arrangements of paired units in consecutive (a,a' - b,b' - c,c'), sequential (a,b,c - a',b',c'), or chiastic order (a-b-c-b'-a'): a pattern consisting of two overlapping triads - a,a' and b,b' being the paired units);
3. parallel sequences within complementary units;
4. word or formula repetitions to mark units;
5. a close balance as to length between complementary units.

I. THE CHRISTOLOGICAL STATEMENTS

The basic division of the Gospel is taken as five-fold:

I. chs. 1-5 - from the opening of the Gospel to the healing of the paralytic at the pool (the 1st and 2nd episodes of Dodd);
II. chs. 6-8 - the events in Galilee at Passover and those in Jerusalem at Tabernacles (Dodd's 3rd and 4th episodes);
III. chs. 9-12 - the healing of the man born blind and the raising of Lazarus (Dodd's 5th, 6th, and 7th episodes);
IV. chs. 13-17 - the dialogues at supper;
V. chs. 18-21 - the passion and resurrection narratives.

With such division, the most obvious pattern is the pairing, when sections II and III are halved, of actions outside Jerusalem with events within the city, and the double nature of section IV when the dialogues are divided at the close of ch. 14 (see the outline, pp.249f.). We shall return to these and the series of pairs in sections I and V.

Let us first briefly examine the units found at the close of each section but the last - 5:19-47; 8:31-59; 12:23-50; 17:1-26 - together with the prologue to the Gospel, 1:1-18. These vary considerably in literary mode. The prologue is a statement by
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the evangelist, the next is the dominical proclamation following
the healing at Bethesda, the third is the dialogue concerning
Abraham. The fourth, which begins with Jesus' words after his
royal entry into Jerusalem, uses in each of its three divisions
one of these modes (dialogue, 12:23-36; statement by the evan-
gelist, 37-43; dominical proclamation, 44-50). The last is the
prayer to the Father. However, if the five are placed in parallel
they show a uniformity in structure and theme that can hardly
be coincidental. Structurally, not only are they each triadic in
form, but they are also similar in length, except for the pro-
logue which is half as long.

More important are the thematic parallels. These may be
outlined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st division:</th>
<th>2nd division:</th>
<th>3rd division:</th>
<th>lines /8/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Holy One</td>
<td>Witnesses to</td>
<td>The Effect of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of God</td>
<td>His Coming</td>
<td>His Coming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) i. 1:1-18</td>
<td>John, the pre-</td>
<td>Promise</td>
<td>[32]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cursor 6-8</td>
<td>9-13,14-18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) ii. 5:19-</td>
<td>The Son of man</td>
<td>Rejection</td>
<td>[64]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>who will execute judgment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) iii. 8:31-</td>
<td>The Son who frees</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>[67]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>from sin 31-36</td>
<td>vs. the father of lies 37-45</td>
<td>from death 46-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b') iv. 12:23-50</td>
<td>The Son of man who will die and be lifted up</td>
<td>Judgment</td>
<td>[64]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>who frees men from sin and from death</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a') v. 17:1-26</td>
<td>The Son glorified</td>
<td>His disciples</td>
<td>Fulfillment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of the five units has similar triadic development of
theme. (But note the thematic mingling in the first and third
divisions of the central unit, 8:31-59.) The passages in the first
division, the Holy One of God, present quite a complete christ-
ology of the Lord's person: the pre-existent Word who came
among us (i) and now reigns in glory (v); the Son of man who was
lifed on the cross (iv) and will return as judge (ii); the one who
frees men from sin and from death (iii). [This double aspect of
(iii) accounts for the thematic mingling of person and effect in
its first and third divisions - freeing from sin treated in the
first and freeing from death in the third.] The central division
in each statement speaks of a witness to his coming. In the
third an effect of his coming is presented. Thus to the christology of his person is added an outline of the means through which he is revealed to men and the effects of his work among them. These five units will hereafter be referred to as "christological statements" (c.s.) and designated by lower case roman numerals, i - v.

There is an over-all chiastic pattern (a-b-c-b-a) linking c.s.i to c.s.v and c.s.ii to c.s.iv. In the first division (The Holy One of God) the One who "was in the beginning with God" (c.s.i) speaks of the "glory which I had with thee before the world was made" (c.s.v). In c.s.ii and iv the Son of man figures are matched.

In the second division (Witnesses to his Coming) mention of John in c.s.i is balanced by mention of the disciples in c.s.v - a pairing found throughout the narrative sections (see below). The witness of his works, the Father, and the Scriptures is balanced by the now-fulfilled prophecies of Isaiah concerning the witnesses who fail (c.s.ii and iv).

"Promise" is set over against "fulfillment" (c.s.i and v) and "rejection" against "judgment" (c.s.ii and iv) in the third division (The Effect of his Coming). In addition, c.s.ii speaks of Moses and c.s.iv of Isaiah; between them, at the center of the chiasmus, is c.s.iii with its dialogue concerning Abraham.

The identification of these christological statements suggests that John, like Matthew, has two interwoven elements. In the First Gospel narrative sections alternate with teaching sections. In John the christological statements open the Gospel and separate the narrative sections. They thus have a structural role similar to that of Matthew's collections of sayings and parables.

There are, of course, christological passages in the narrative sections as well (just as there are "teachings" in the narrative sections of Matthew), each contributing to the development of its section - see below, for example, the outline of parallelisms between chs. 6-7:1 and 7:1-8:30 (p.241). The Johannine units for which "christological statement" is used as a technical term are marked by (1) their similar triadic structure; (2) their position as prologue or at the juncture of narrative sections; and (3) their full and balanced presentation of Johannine christology when taken as a whole.

It would seem that in shifting from narrative section to christological statement the writer has in each instance chosen a mode which is both congruous with the preceding material and also apt for the particular aspect of christology to be pres-
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...
II. THE STRUCTURE OF THE NARRATIVE SECTIONS I - V: THE PAIRED UNITS

The five narrative sections are composed of paired complementary units (see the outline, pp.249f.). The most obvious are in section II, where the first half concerns events in Galilee at Passover (6:1-71) and the second those in Jerusalem at Tabernacles (7:1-8:30), and in section III, which pairs the healing of the man born blind and Jesus' words at the feast of Dedication (9:1-10:42) with the healing of Lazarus and events before and during Jesus' entry before Passover (11:1-12:22). In section IV, the dialogues at supper are divided at mid-point, the close of ch. 14, "Rise, let us go hence" (ch. 13-16).

The first and last sections, on the other hand, are each composed of four shorter pairs. In section I, these pairs are:

1. the witness of John to the men of Jerusalem concluding with the proclamation of Jesus' baptism (1:19-34), and the testimony of the Galilean disciples (1:35-51);
2. the wedding feast in Cana (2:1-12), and the cleansing of the temple at Passover (2:13-25);
3. the dialogue with Nicodemus followed by more on John's ministry (3:1-4:3), and the dialogue with the Samaritan woman concluding with the Samaritan response and the comments on the disciples' ministry (4:4-44);
4. the healing of the official's son (4:45-54), and the healing of the paralytic (5:1-18).

The pairs in section V are:

1. the betrayal in the garden (18:1-14), and the court scene with Peter's denial (18:15-32);
2. the two scenes before Pilate (18:33-19:7 and 19:8-16);
3. the crucifixion (19:17-37) and the burial-resurrection scenes (19:38-20:31);

That these units may be thus arranged in complementary pairs may be demonstrated not only through general thematic parallelisms but also by specific word and formula repetition.

A. Characteristics common to sections I, II, and III

Certain definite characteristics mark the complementary units in the pairs of the first three narrative sections. These include geographic contrast, correspondence in length of text, and parallels in subject matter.
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1. Geographic contrast

Geographic contrast is found throughout these sections. If one unit centers in (J) Jerusalem (or concerns John the Baptist in Judea or addressing men of Jerusalem), its complement centers in (C) the countryside (Galilee, Samaria, Bethany, etc.). This geographic balancing may be outlined thus with paired units connected by dashes:

[c.s.i, 1:1-18]
I. (J) 1:19-34 — (C)1:35-51
   (C)2:1-12 — (J)2:13-25
   (J)3:1-4:3 — (C)4:4-44
   (C)4:45-54 — (J)5:1-18
   [c.s.ii, 5:19-47]
II. (C)6:1-71 — (J)7:1-8:30
   [c.s.iii, 8:31-59]
III. (C)9:1-10:42 — (J)11:1-12:22
   [c.s.iv, 12:23-50]

2. Length of paired units

A unit and its complement are of about the same length. (An approximation is made through counting the lines in the Nestle-Aland text). The correspondence is especially close within the longest pair of I and the extended pairs of II and III:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lines</th>
<th>lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(J)3:1-4:3</td>
<td>[88] — (C)4:4-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C)6:1-71</td>
<td>[157] — (J)7:1-8:30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Characteristics in subject matter

a. A named feast in one unit is balanced by another named feast in its complement:

(C)wedding feast 2:1-12 — (J)1st Passover 2:13-25
(C)2nd Passover 6:1-71 — (J)Tabernacles 7:1-8:30
(J)Dedication 10:22-42 — (C to J) entry before 3rd Passover 12:1-22

Even the unnamed feast (5:1) has in its complement, "So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him having seen all that he had done at the feast, for they too had gone to the feast" (4:45).
b. Healing signs are paired:
(C) official's son 4:45-54 — (J) paralytic 5:1-18
(J) man born blind 9:1-41 — (C to J) Lazarus 11:1-46

c. Other signs, in Galilee, are balanced by pronouncements in Jerusalem indicating signs to come:
(C) water to wine 2:1-12 — (J) true temple signified 2:13-25
(C) feeding of 5000, — (J) signs to come: his departure, walking on water 6:1-71 coming of the Spirit 7:1-8:30

d. Mention of John the Baptist in one unit is always followed by specific mention of the disciples in the complement:
(J) John: men of Jer. 1:19-34 — (C) Galilean disciples 1:35-51
(J) John's ministry closes — (C) disciples' ministry opens 3:22-4:3 4:27-44
The final reference to John (10:40-42) has in its parallel the encounter of Philip and Andrew with the Greeks (12:20-22).
e. When other individuals are given prominent treatment, the person in one unit will be strongly contrasted to the person in its complement:
(C) official's son 4:45-54 — (J) friendless paralytic 5:1-18
(J) Nicodemus, pious Pharisee 3:1-21 — (C) sinful Samaritan woman 4:4-26
(J) a beggar, blind from birth 9:1-41 — (C) the beloved Lazarus 11:1-46

In a variant on this characteristic, where Caiaphas says to the chief priests and Pharisees gathered in council, "It is expedient for you that one man should die for the people..." (11:47-57), in its complement are found the words of the Good Shepherd, "I lay down my life for the sheep..." (10:7-21).

Each of the pairs in the first three sections is marked by at least one of these characteristics in subject matter in addition to the geographic contrast and the similarity in length of its units. Incident is balanced against incident, theme against theme.

B. Section I

The four pairs of complementary units in the first section have the following balance (square brackets enclose the number of lines in Nestle-Aland):
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I. Jesus: the source and giver of life

A. The coming of the Christ 1:19-34; 35-51
   1. (J) John: men of Jer. [35] 2. (C) Galilean disciples [41]
   B. His authority manifested 2:1-12; 13-23
      1. (C) Wedding feast [26] 2. (J) Passover: temple [29]
   C. Baptismal dialogues & baptismal ministry
      1. (J) 3:1-21, 3:22-4:3 2. (C) 4:4-26, 27-44
         b. John's ministry closes; b. Disciples' ministry opens;
            Jesus' ministry proclaimed [38] Samaritan response to
            Jesus [37]
   D. Gifts of new life: healing signs 4:45-54; 5:1-18

In addition to the parallels noted above, the pairs of section I have complementary verbal patterns. For example, the incidents in the first pair take place on four days - two in the first member of the pair and two in the second - the divisions being marked by the phrase "the next day" (1:29, 35, 43). Note the following complements:

A. The coming of the Christ
   1. (J) 1:19-34
      (first day)
      20...He confessed...I am not the Christ...23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness...as the prophet Isaiah said...
      (second day)
      29...Behold, the Lamb of God...32 I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven and it remained on him...
   2. (C) 1:35-51
      (third day)
      36...Behold, the Lamb of God...41...We have found the Messiah (which means Christ).
      (fourth day)
      45...We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote...51...you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

The verbal complements in the other paired units of section I, though not as striking as those in the extended pairs of sections II, III, and IV (see below), enhance the subject balance between the members. References to signs in Cana and to feasts in Jerusalem tie the shorter pairs B and D to each other.

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B. His authority manifested

1. (C) Wedding feast 2:1-12
   [1 On the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee...]
2. (J) Passover: temple 2:13-25
   [13 The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.]

(R. Brown, among others, considers the "third day" to be, by our reckoning, the second after the events at the close of ch. 1/9/. If water-to-wine points to new life through Christ when "his hour has come" there may be an intended parallel to Jesus' answer in 2:19, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up".)

11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee... and his disciples believed in him.

23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover feast, many believed in his name when they saw his signs which he did...

C. Baptismal dialogues & ministry

1. Jerusalem & Judea
   a. Nicodemus 3:1-21
   5...unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God...
   21 But he who does what is true comes to the light...
   b. John's ministry closes; Jesus' ministry proclaimed 3:22-4:3
   28...I am not the Christ...
   30 He must increase, but I must decrease
   33 he who receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true...36 He who believes in the Son has eternal life...

2. Samaria
   a. Samaritan woman 4:4-26
   14...the water that I shall give him will become a spring of water welling up to eternal life.
   24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.
   b. Disciples' ministry opens; Samaritan response to Jesus 4:27-44
   29...Can this be the Christ?
   38...others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.
   42...It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.

D. Gifts of new life: healing signs

1. (C) Official's son 4:45-54
2. (J) Paralytic 5:1-18
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45...having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast, for they too had gone to the feast.
46 So he came again to Cana in Galilee where he had made the water wine.

(In these healing narratives there are no specific parallels except in terminology common to such. It is rather curious, however, that the first healing occurs at the seventh hour, 4:52, and the second on the seventh day, 5:9.)

54 This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.

C. Divisions within the extended pairs, section II, III and IV

1. Section II (6:1-71; 7:1-8:30)

The extended pair of II has, in addition to the parallels between its members described above, a certain design within itself. In each of its members there are two thematically linked divisions of similar length followed by a third shorter division:

II. Jesus, sustainer of life amidst the hostility of the world - signs present and signs to come (Jesus and Moses)

1. (C) Signs at Passover - manna 2. (J) Tabernacles & signs to come - law
c. The Holy One of God 6:60-71 [26] c. "I am he" 8:21-30 [23]

[157] [155]

Theme and structure join in balanced presentation. The four longer divisions are marked, for example, by similar endings; the concluding shrotter ones by a strong messianic statement:
1. (C) Passover - manna
   a. "...Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give you; for on him has God the Father set his seal." (6:26-27).
   b. "...This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever." This he said in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. (6:58-59)

   c. "...What if you were to see the Son of man ascending where he was before?" (Peter's confession) "...you are the Holy One of God." (6:62,69)

2. Section III (9:1-10:42; 11:1-12:22)
   In the extended pair of III, the three divisions in one member have their complements in the other:

   III. Jesus: light and life, the penultimate signs
   1. Jerusalem
   b. Door & Shepherd 10:7-21 [34] b. False shepherds 11:47-57
   c. Feast of Dedication 10:22-42 c. Entry before Passover 12:1-22 [179] [170]

Continuity within each member of the pair is marked by repeated themes. In the first these are "works (of the Father)" (9:4; 10:25,32-33,37-38) and the overlapping series "blind" (throughout 9:1-41 and again at 10:21) and "sheep/shepherd" (in
10:2-4, 7-16 frequently and again at 10:26-27). C.H. Dodd treats ch. 11 (Lazarus) and ch. 12 (entry) as separate episodes /10/. However, the repeated references in the latter to Lazarus "raised from the dead" (12:1-2, 9-10, 17) suggest that 12:1-22 should be read in conjunction with ch. 11. This places the events preceding Passover parallel to those at the feast of Dedication in the proposed structure.

Some of the parallels between the members in each of their three divisions are:

9:1-10:6; 10:7-21, 22-42

a. "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him." (9:3)

"We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night comes when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." (9:4-5)

"...if any one walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." (11:9-10)

b. "...because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me... believe the works..." (10:36-38)

c. "...even the king of Israel!" (12:13)

But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" (11:37)

b. "...It is expedient for you that one man should die for the people..." (11:50)

c. "...and they told Jesus. (12:22)

John at first baptized... (cf. Andrew went with Phillip and they told Jesus. (12:22)

Man was true." (10:40-41)
Each of the members opens with Jesus correcting the disciples' misunderstanding of an affliction, followed by a reference to light (9:3-5; 11:4,9-10). The evangelist invites a comparison of the two signs by reference within the Lazarus episode to the healing of the blind man (11:37).

In the second division, Jesus' words on the good shepherd are paralleled by the high priest's statement that it is expedient that one man should die for the people (10:11-15; 11:49-51). Each member closes with "the Jews" questioning among themselves concerning Jesus (10:19-21; 11:55-57); the third divisions open with mention of a feast in each member (10:22 - Dedication; 12:1 - Passover).

The final verses in each member, taken together, recall in a striking manner the very first pair of narratives in the Gospel (1:19-34; 35-51). In 10:40-41 the place in which John first baptized and his words concerning Jesus are recalled. In its parallel, 12:21-22, Philip and Andrew, the two disciples who called others to Jesus (1:40,43), now bring word of Greeks who seek him. In 10:36 Jesus used the title "Son of God"; in 12:13 the crowd hails him as "king of Israel." These are precisely the titles placed on Nathanael's lips in 1:49.

3. Section IV (chs. 13-14, 15-16)

The pairs in IV and V have no geographic distinctions - everything now centers in Jerusalem. Section IV consists of one extended pair, chs. 13-14, 15-16, with the point between being the words "Rise, let us go hence" (14:31). Each member may be separated into three divisions:

IV. Abiding love & the Counselor: example & promise

1. Jesus and the disciples 2. The disciples and the world
   a. Jesus washes their feet; a. Metaphor of vine &
      his example 13:1-20 branches; example of his love
        [46] 15:1-16 [36]
   b. Judas' departure b. The world's hatred
   c. Dialogue on Jesus' c. Dialogue on Jesus'
      departure 13:33-14:31 departure 16:1-33 [74] [134]

The example of Jesus' love as he washes his disciples' feet followed by Judas' departure has as its complement the metaphor of the vine and the branches followed by Jesus' words on
the world's hatred of himself and his disciples. Two sayings of Jesus in ch. 15 refer specifically to sentences in ch. 13:

13:1-20,21-32
...10 Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed does not need to wash...but he is clean all over; and you are clean...
...16 Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master..."

Others are closely parallel:
17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.
18...I know whom I have chosen ...

These passages conclude, respectively, with the witness of the Father and the Son (13:31-32) and the witness of the disciples and the Spirit (15:26-27):

31 When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of man glorified; 32 if God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once."

26 But when the Counselor comes whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me; 27 and you also are witnesses, because you have been with me from the beginning.

In the third division of each member, dialogue centers on Jesus' announcement of his departure. His pronouncements and his replies prepare the disciples for the signs to come. These exchanges (five in 13:33-14:31 and three in ch. 16) follow a consistent pattern of proclamation-response-amplification (see appended note A). The relationship between the two series may be diagrammed as follows:

13:33-14:31
a. 13:33-38...Where I am going you cannot come...
love one another as I have

\[ \alpha \]

16:1-33
c. 16:1-15...the hour is coming...they have not known the Father or me
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 początki 14:1-6 Let not your hearts be troubled, believe in God, believe also in me...I am the way...

b. 14:7-14...He who has seen me has seen the Father...whatever you ask in my name I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

b'. 14:15-24 (programmatic to ch.16)
[a] 15-17...Counselor...Spirit of truth...
[b] 18-20...a little while...you will see me...
[y] 21...he who loves me will be loved by my Father...

c. 14:25-31...Counselor the Holy Spirit...remembrance...my peace I give to you...let not your hearts be troubled...ruler of this world...that the world may know that I love the Father.

(...remember...sorrow has filled your hearts...Counselor...ruler of this world...Spirit of truth)

b. 16:16-24 A little while and you will see me no more; again a little while and you will see me...you have asked nothing in my name; ask and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

a. 16:25-33...the hour is coming...the Father loves you because you have loved me...The hour is coming, indeed has come...you will leave me alone...that in me you have peace...be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

(See appended note A for a more detailed analysis).

Each exchange turns on or concludes with an effect of Jesus' departure. The inverted (chiastic) parallelism of other themes in the exchanges is diagrammed above: (a) love and rejection; (b) seeing and asking; (c) the Counselor and the ruler of this world. In addition, 14:15-24 is programmatic to the presentation of themes in ch. 16: [a] the Counselor and the Spirit of truth; [b] a little while...; [y] the Father's love.
D. Section V

Section V (chs. 18-21) has pairs of shorter length, similar in this respect to the first narrative section. The scenes in the garden and the court (18:1-14; 15-32) make up the first pair; the two appearances before Pilate, the second (18:33-19:7; 19:8-16). The third, which includes the crucifixion and resurrection narratives (19:17-37; 19:38-20:31), is marked by the twin endings 19:35-37 and 20:30-31. Ch. 21 makes the fourth pair (1-14; 15-22), closing with an ascription (23-25).

In V the complementary units are not as closely balanced as to length as they are in sections I to III. However, subject parallelism is more fully developed. Space precludes a detailed presentation, but the following outline illustrates the argument in brief. Note also the parallel passages at the close of each of the first three divisions.

V. Death and Resurrection

A. Jesus, abandoned by disciples and rejected by authorities
   1. The garden [32]
      18:1-3 The meeting place (disciples)
   2. The court [46]
      18:15-18 Peter in the court
      4-9 Confrontation (adversaries)
      10-11 Peter & Malchus (disciples)
      12-24 To Annas (words fulfilled)
   "It was Caiaphas who had given was expedient that one man
   counsel to the Jews that it should die for the people." to show by what death
   was to fulfill the word which Jesus had spoken
   "This was to fulfill the was to die."
   "This was to fulfill the

B. Jesus before Pilate
   1. The first judgment [42]
      18:33-38a Kingship (dialogues with Pilate)
      38b-40 Barabbas (rejected for another) 12 Caesar
      19:1-5 Purple robe (displayed) 13-14 Your King!
      6-7 The demands (condemned) 15-16 Demands heeded
   "Crucify him" "Crucify him"

C. Obedience and triumph
   1. Execution
      a. The cross [32]
   2. Burial and Resurrection
      a. The tomb [57]

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19:17-22 Crucifixion (departure) 19:38-42 Burial
23-25a Garments parted (vesture) 20:1-10 Empty tomb & linen cloths
25b-27 Mother & disciples (mourners) 11-18 Mary at the tomb

19:28-30 spirit given up (spirit) 20:19-23 Spirit bestowed
31-34 Water & blood (wounds) 24-29 Wounds shown
35-37 "...that you also may believe." 30-31 "...that believing you may have life in his name."

D. The figures of the church: third appearance

Ascription 21:23-25

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E. Chiasmus

In addition to the parallelism within the pairs of each section, there are indications of chiastic symmetry among the sections.

I. Section I and V

The first and last sections are almost identical in length. Each has four pairs of complementary units; the lengths of the pairs in I parallel the lengths of those in V. Certain parallels may be seen in the subject matter:

I V

[76] A. Coming of Christ hailed: [78] A. Jesus, abandoned & rejected:
John, men of Jer.; disciples; Jer. authorities; disciples
1:19-51 18:1-32

[55] B. Authority manifested water to wine; temple cleansed 2:1-24 [65] B. Dialogues with Pilate on kingship & power; displayed as a king
18:33-19:16


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2. Sections II and IV

There are some specific parallels in subject matter between II and IV. The feeding of the 5000 and the words on the bread of life (ch. 6) have direct relevance to the last supper (ch. 13). In 13:33 Jesus quotes, "As I said to the Jews now I say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come,'" words spoken before in 7:34 and 8:21. So, too, the enigmatic saying about the Spirit in 7:37-39 is made explicit in the promise of the Counselor in chs. 14 and 16. In II his hour had not yet come (7:30; 8:20); in IV the hour has come (13:1; 16:32).

3. Section III

At the center of the chiasmus stand the two members of III, the extended pair concerning light and life:

9:1-10:42 11:1-12:22
(J)Man born blind; Dedication (C-J)Lazarus; entry before Passover

Between them, at the mid-point of the Gospel, comes the final reference to John the Baptist:

"And many came to him; and they said, 'John did no sign, but everything John said about this man was true.' And many believed on him there" (10:41-42).

F. Structure

This analysis of the structure of the Fourth Gospel in terms of a specific literary tradition marked by symmetrical design and balanced units has presented an outline of the thematic, verbal, and quantitative elements which suggest that it does fall within that tradition. It has been argued that the structure of the Johannine Gospel follows a regular pattern of paired complementary units which themselves appear to be arranged in an over-all chiastic scheme. The sections are separated by a series of structurally similar christological statements which also fall into a chiastic pattern. The structure of the Gospel may be represented thus (with underlined letters representing the christological statements):

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A subject outline of the Gospel in terms of the christological statements and the complementary pairs further illustrates the basic patterns:

**THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN**

Christological statement i: The pre-existent Son 1:1-18

I. Jesus: the source and giver of life

A. The coming of the Christ

1. John: men of Jer. 1:19-34
2. Galilean disciples 1:35-51

B. His authority manifested

1. Wedding feast 2:1-12

C. Baptismal dialogues & ministry

1. Jerusalem & Judea
   a. Nicodemus 3:1-21
   b. John's ministry closes; Jesus' ministry proclaimed 3:22-4:3
2. Samaria
   a. Samaritan woman 4:4-26
   b. Disciples' ministry opens; the Samaritan response to Jesus 4:27-44

D. Gifts of new life: healing signs

1. Official's son 4:45-54
2. Paralytic 5:1-18

Christological statement ii: The Son of man, judge of all 5:19-47

II. Jesus: sustainer of life amidst the hostility of the world

1. Passover - manna
   b. Living bread 6:28-59
   c. The Holy One of God 6:60-71
2. Tabernacles - law
   a. Teachings & threats 7:1-30
   b. Signs to come; departure & Spirit 7:31-8:20
   c. "I am he" 8:21-30
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Christological statement iii: The Son who frees from sin &
death 8:31-59

III. Jesus: light & life, the penultimate signs
  1. Jerusalem
    a. Man born blind 9:1-10:6
    b. Door & Shepherd 10:7-21
    c. Feast of Dedication 10:22-42
  2. Countryside to Jerusalem
    a. Lazarus 11:1-46
    b. False shepherds: the
council 11:47-57
    c. Entry before Passover 12:1-22

Christological statement iv: The Son of man, lifted up 12:23-50

IV. Example & promise: abiding love & the Counselor
  1. Jesus & the disciples
    a. Washing of feet 13:1-20
    b. Judas' departure 13:21-32
  2. The disciples & the world
    a. Vine & branches 15:1-16
    b. The world's hatred 15:17-27
    c. Dialogue 16:1-33

Christological statement v: The Son glorified ch. 17

V. Death & resurrection
  A. Jesus, abandoned & rejected
    1. The garden 18:1-14
    2. The court 18:15-32
  B. Jesus before Pilate
    1. The first judgment 18:33-19:7
    2. The second judgment 19:8-16
  C. Obedience & triumph
    1. Execution
      a. The cross 19:17-27
      b. Death 19:28-37
    2. Burial & resurrection
      a. The tomb 19:38-20:18
      b. The Risen Lord & the
disciples 20:19-31
  D. The figures of the Church: the third appearance
    1. The drag-net 21:1-14
    2. Shepherd & flock 21:15-25

III. IMPLICATIONS

A. Origin

Identification in the Fourth Gospel of a precise and detailed
pattern following a tradition well-attested in the OT has at
least two implications concerning the origin of the Gospel. The
first reinforces a conclusion concerning Judean background al-
ready drawn from the analysis of the Dead Sea scrolls. R.
Brown has observed, "We now realize that John's peculiar
terminology...has parallels in a Palestinian tradition which
flourished before the Christian era" /12/. This also holds true
for literary structure. The patterns suggested in this paper

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reflect a Semitic tradition which may be observed in biblical literature from the Pentateuch to the post-exilic narratives.

The second implication has to do with the theory that there were several stages in the composition of the Gospel. In R. Brown's proposal, there are five such stages, the first two of which concern the existence of traditional material and its development in Johannine thought-forms. Only in stage 3 is there a consecutive Gospel as a distinct work. This is re-edited to meet contemporary problems in the 4th stage; the 5th stage is that of the final redactor /13/.

The precise and detailed pattern suggested above would seem to preclude a final redaction through patch-work editing. It is possible that the material when first organized into a coherent whole was in large measure the Gospel as we have it today. Or perhaps a later redactor carefully reshaped an earlier form into the balanced pattern the Gospel now presents (as Matthew, if the four-document hypothesis is correct, reshaped Mark and Q). Further editing would have been relatively minor since it did not destroy the detailed structure of the Book. Some of the problems (for example, the seeming duplication in ch. 16 of material in ch. 14) which have suggested piecemeal redaction are, in fact, met by the theory of balanced pairs. The use of such pairs reflects a particular literary tradition and is not the result of editorial insertion of later material. (There might possibly have been a stage when the narrative sections, except perhaps for ch. 21, formed a distinct book to which the christological statements were later added, but the two elements complement each other so well that this seems unlikely.)

B. Theology

C.H. Dodd expressed the unity of the Gospel in terms of intricate and subtle links between episodes so ordered that they represent a progression of thought concerning eternal life from birth, through victory of life over death, to the transmutation of death into glory /14/. If the Gospel is as precisely patterned as suggested in this paper, a similar precision may well be found in the presentation of its theology. A proposal as to possible theological implications of the patterning will, in a brief sketch, close the paper and suggest a rationale for the structure.

It has been noted above that the christological statements set forth in concise form (1) a developed theology of the Son's person, together with surveys of (2) the witnesses to his coming, and of (3) the effects of his presence among men. The narrative
sections include elaborations on these concepts, especially those of (2) and (3).

However, a central thought behind each of the sections seems to turn on some specific element in Christian life. In each, the evangelist has blended his vision of the life and words of Jesus with his own apprehension of the effect these have had and still have on the disciple - a dual reference to the life of Christ and to the life of the community. Arguments for and against interpreting this in terms of a sacramental orientation have been summarized and a mediating position suggested in R. Brown's article "The Johannine Sacramentary" /15/. He follows O. Cullmann and others in "seeing any sacramental reference as the second of a two-fold meaning present in the words and works of Jesus" and subjects the suggested elements of sacramental symbolism to careful scrutiny /16/.

The Christian experience embodied in the Gospel is, however, broader than that. The Gospel's first narrative section points to the coming of Christ with authority. Baptism became the focal point of an individual's acceptance of that authority, hence the specific symbolism of water in the units of Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, and the marriage in Cana. (The signs in these units meet R. Brown's criteria for authentic baptismal symbolism /17/.) The Spirit's descent at Jesus' own baptism makes clear that this authority is from the Father. Its manifestation concerns not only rebirth but also that cleansing and healing so needed by man and temple. The second of the healing signs (the paralytic, unable to receive the healing gift through his own strength) prepares, through the sabbath controversy, for the conflicts in the next section. Section II concerns feeding and promise in the context of open hostility and threats of death. Blood has the double implication of man's enmity and of nurture through sacrifice. In the fourth section, Jesus' love, set forth in example and command, is contrasted with the rejection both he and his disciples will face. With his departure, he will send the Spirit to dwell in them and teach them, bringing to remembrance all he has said:

I. (Water) Jesus, the source and giver of life, 1:19-5:18.
   - John baptizing; recognition; water to wine; temple cleansed; Nicodemus; the Samaritan woman; baptismal ministry; healing signs of new life.

II. (Blood) Jesus, sustainer of life amidst the hostility of
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the world, 6:1-8:30.

Feeding of 5000; "I am the Bread of life"; "My flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed"; signs to come; growing hostility and threats of death.

IV. (Spirit) Abiding love & the Counselor: example & promise, chs. 13-16.

The first Epistle of John probably refers to the same concepts and uses the term 'witnesses' (martyrountes), seemingly witnesses within the experience of each Christian:

This is he who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the witness, because the Spirit is the truth. There are three witnesses, the Spirit, the water and the blood; and these three agree...He who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself." (5:6-10a)

The same are perhaps behind the reference in Hebrews to:

"...those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tested the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come." (6:4-5)

Paul, too, writing to the church in Corinth reminds his readers of what they have received and are receiving through baptism (I Cor 6:11; 12:12-13), eucharist (I Cor 10:16; 11:23-26), and the Spirit (I Cor 2:10-13; 12:3-13). In his epistles he directly links each of these with Christ's death and resurrection (for example, baptism, Rom 6:1-11; eucharist, I Cor 11:26; Spirit, Rom 8:9-11). This is, of course, the theme of the final section in the Fourth Gospel.

V. Death and resurrection, the fulfillment of all prophecies and promises, chs. 18-21.

Through the self-offering and resurrection of Christ made present through baptism, eucharist, and the Spirit, the Christian enters into light and life. In the central section of the Gospel the narratives of the man born blind and of Lazarus are vivid exemplars of the promise:

III. Light and life: the penultimate signs, 9:1-12:22

John presents the life of Christ in relation to what happens in
the experience of each Christian. The revelation concerning the Holy One of God is sealed by the witnesses working within. In a true sense the Gospel is sacramental in approach, though the term can be misleading. The emphasis is not so much on sacraments as liturgy as on elements in the Christian life of which the liturgical sacraments became focal points. And this experience includes guidance by the Spirit as well as the acts of baptism and eucharistic participation. The Christian has been born anew of water and the Spirit (3:3,5); he has life in Jesus for he eats the flesh of the Son of man and drinks his blood (6:54); and the Spirit guides him into all truth (16:13).

At the close of the prologue to the Gospel, John writes:

"And from his fulness have we all received, grace upon grace, for the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (1:16-17)

These terms typify the two elements in the symmetrical structure of the Gospel: truth, the revelation of Jesus, the Christ, the Holy One of God, as presented in the christological statements; grace, the power of God working in men by Water, Blood, and Spirit, given through the Lord's death and resurrection as presented in the narrative sections. Signs and narratives, dialogues and discourses, develop the themes:

"...these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name." (20:31)

APPENDED NOTE A - John 13:33-14:31; 16

J.M. Reese in his article "Literary structure of Jn 13:31-14:31; 16:5-6,16-33" has suggested that these verses be considered as a series of six exchanges, each following the pattern of revelation-question-clarification /18/. He holds that some of the material in the passages is a later addition but questions the theory that ch. 16 is a variant of ch. 14. In taking 13:31 and 16:40 as the openings of the two sections he follows the division proposed by G. Johnston.

I agree that ch. 16 is not a variant of ch. 14. Rather, I find ch. 16 to be a deliberate parallel, parallelism being a structural feature central to the literary form of the entire Gospel. In fact, the parallelism in this section of the Gospel begins with
13:1 and 15:1 respectively, as demonstrated above. In the analysis here proposed the third part of chs. 13-14 begins at 13:33 and that of chs. 15-16 at 16:1.

Reese's three-fold pattern of exchanges is instructive, but I differ from him in several details. First, I see no need to posit extensive additions to an original core /19/. Parallelism and development of theme give sufficient purpose to supposedly extraneous passages. Second, I divide the material into eight exchanges (five in 13:31-14:31 and three in ch. 16) rather than the six in Reese's analysis. One minor matter: I believe the terms proclamation-response-amplification are somewhat more accurate than revelation-question-clarification. For, example, the "response" in two of the exchanges is not a question by the disciples but Jesus' statement of what their inner response has been (sorrow, 16:6) or should have been (joy, 14:28). Jesus' conclusion in each exchange does not always clarify but does amplify his original proclamation.

Each exchange turns on or concludes with an effect of Jesus' departure:

(1 & 2) 13:33-38; 14:1-6. The disciples cannot follow him now but will later. Their strength is not sufficient in itself but Jesus is their Way and goes to prepare a place for them.

(3) 14:7-14. In him they have seen the Father. If they believe his words or works, Jesus, having departed, will do through them greater works than they have yet known.

(4) 14:15-24. The three proclamations which open this exchange (15-17, 18-20, 21) prepare for the three exchanges of ch. 16: Jesus' departure means that (a) the Counselor, the Spirit of truth, will be with them; (b) they will see him again; (c) and the Father himself will love them. In the amplification (23-24) Jesus promises that he and his Father will dwell in them.

(5) 14:25-31. They should rejoice in his departure because he goes to the Father. "I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe."

(6) 16:1-15. When the evangelist returns to the exchanges he develops the themes in the order given in the proclamations of 14:15-21. In the synoptics (Mark 13:9-13 and parallels) the guidance of the Spirit is closely tied to the disciples' suffering for the Gospel's sake. Thus it is probably correct to begin the exchange at 16:1 rather than at the more usual division point 16:4b. Jesus' departure means that they, too, will suffer, but it also means that they will receive the Counselor, the Spirit of truth.
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(7) 16:16-24. If he goes he will come again to them and their sorrow will be turned into everlasting joy.

(8) 16:25-33. Jesus came from the Father and now goes to the Father. Those who love him and believe will themselves be loved by the Father. The disciples profess their belief, but Jesus, returning to a theme of the first exchange (13:33-38), foretells their desertion. Yet, through him they have peace and through him the world has been overcome.

The Pattern

Proclamation
In the first exchange (13:33-38) Jesus' proclamation is two-fold: (1) repetition of his word to the Jews on his departure and (2) the new commandment. They are complementary: though the disciples cannot follow him, the example of his love remains to guide them and to identify them. There is another double proclamation at the close of ch. 14: (1) the disciples will be guided by the Counselor and (2) a peace not of this world will be given them (14:25-26, 27).

Of the remaining six exchanges, five open with a single proclamation. In the one exception the proclamation is three-fold, each part developed more fully in one of the exchanges of ch. 16 (14:14-21 - see (4) above and b' in the thematic diagram, pp.244f.).

Response
The response in each of the first four exchanges of 13:33-14:31 comes from a single disciple: Peter, Thomas, Philip, and then Judas, each directly question a proclamation of their Lord. In the final exchange of ch. 14 and the first of ch.16 Jesus himself expresses the response or desired response of his followers. In 14:28-29 he states that if they loved him they would rejoice; he reveals to them what will take place in order that when it occurs they will believe. In 16:4-6 he tells them what will happen so they will remember, though now sorrow has filled their hearts. The responses in the two concluding exchanges of ch. 16 come from the disciples as a group (16:17-19,29-30), and each repeats the proclamation which precedes it.

Amplification
In five of the exchanges each response is followed by a single amplification. In the three where it is two-fold, the parts are complementary: 14:10-11,12-13 Jesus' works - the disciples' works; 16:7-11,12-15 Counselor - Spirit of truth; 16:20-23a,
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23b-24 "your sorrow will turn into joy" - "ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full."

NOTES

1 R.E. Brown, The Gospel according to John I-XII (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966), xxiv-xxxix. (On theories of accidental displacements see pp. xxvi-xxviii.)


3 Ibid. 386.


6 N.W. Lund, Chiasmus in the NT (Chapel Hill 1942).


8 Length of units will be indicated (in square brackets) by the number of lines in the Nestle-Aland text, Novum Testamentum Graece (Stuttgart 1963). This provides as convenient a means as any for demonstrating the quantitative balance utilized, as a literary nicety, by the evangelist. (When lines are not full, an estimate is made to approximate the equivalent in full lines.)

9 Brown, John I-XII, 97, 105-107, has a good account of the discussions concerning the time frame of chs. 1-2.

10 Dodd, Interpretation, 368-371.

11 See, for example, the discussion in R.E. Brown, "The Eucharist and Baptism in John," New Testament Essays (Garden City: Doubleday 1968) 114-120.


13 Brown, John I-XII, xxxiv-xxxix.

14 Dodd, Interpretation, 388.


16 Ibid. 87.

17 Ibid. 106.

18 CBQ 34 (1972) 321-331.

19 Ibid. 323.
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