

LECTURE TWO

ferred to, as though one were to say: *a godly man, divine visions, godlike wrestlings.*

To sum up: the name *'Elōbīm* will come under consideration only in those instances in which it might have been possible to substitute the Tetragrammaton, without any other alteration of the form of the sentence. A case in point is the opening verse of the Book of Genesis: *In the beginning 'Elōhīm created the heavens and the earth*, for it was possible to write instead: *In the beginning YHWH created the heavens and the earth.*

Following this rule, let us now examine the position in each of the various categories of Biblical literature. We shall begin with the Prophets.

In the *prophetic* writings, the name *'Elōbīm* is never used at all in place of YHWH. The name of Israel's God in the books of the Prophets is always and only YHWH. An exception is provided by the Book of Jonah, where *'Elōbīm* occurs a number of times as the proper name of the God of Israel, but this is an exception that proves the rule; for although Jonah is included in the section of the Prophets in the classification of the Biblical books, it belongs, from the viewpoint of its content, not to the prophetic but to the narrative literature. Another exception to this rule we find in the second part of the Book of Isaiah, which frequently uses, in place of the Tetragrammaton, a word that was originally a common noun — not, indeed, the name *'Elōbīm* but *'El*. But of this I shall speak in tomorrow's lecture.

In the *legal* literature, that is, in all the sections of the Pentateuch and of Ezekiel appertaining to the precepts, only YHWH occurs as the personal name of God.

The *poetic* writings, with the exception of such poems as belong to the category of Wisdom Literature or have been influenced by it (like those I am about to mention now), also have no proper name for God other than the Tetragrammaton.

In the wisdom literature, the position is altogether different. In the poetic portion of the Book of Job the name YHWH does not occur except once (xii 9); but the text in this passage is uncertain, for a number of MSS read *'Elōbīm* instead. This verse apart, there occur regularly in place of the Tetragrammaton names that were originally appellatives, to wit, *'El*, *'Elōah*, *'Elōbīm*, or the name