The prologue of *Job* begins with the verse

There was a man (עַזְיָה) who was in the land of Uz; Job is his name. That man was blameless (תָמָם) and upright (ישׁר), one who feared God (ירא אלהים) and turned away from evil (סֶר מִרְעָה). (1:1)

Upon reading the opening verse of the prologue, readers may perceive that the narrator identifies a man (עַזְיָה) whose name is Job, who lives in the land of Uz as that man (הַיָּשָׁר בֵּית הָוָה) who is blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil.

In asking God, who repeats the narrator's statement in 1:9: “Does Job fear God without reason?,” *hassatan* seems to challenge the narrator's statement in the heavenly scene and due to that discrepancy, readers may also be doubting the narrator's utterance regarding the juxtaposition between a man and perfect piety: How can any man, constrained, as we all are, to live in a specific place with a certain name, be such a perfect (תָמָם) man? Why does the narrator define Job, who is a man and in the land of Uz, as blameless, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil?

The purpose of this chapter is to answer these questions by probing into each voice in the prologue to see how each voice responds to this statement about a man (עַזְיָה) who is perfect (תָמָם). As a polyphonic text, the prologue consists of six scenes: The first (earthly) scene (1:1–5), the second (heavenly) scene (1:6–12), the third (earthly) scene (1:13–22), the fourth (heavenly) scene (2:1–7a), the fifth (earthly) scene (2:7b–10) and the sixth (earthly) scene (2:11–13). Each scene includes two or three voices. The first scene introduces the narrator’s voice and Job’s voice; the second scene includes the narrator’s voice, God’s voice and *hassatan*’s voice; and the third scene has the narrator’s voice, Job’s voice and the messengers’ voices. In the fourth scene, readers hear the same voices as in the second scene: the narrator’s voice, God’s voice and *hassatan*’s voice. The fifth scene introduces Job’s wife and represents the discussion.

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1 As I mentioned in the previous chapter, the translation of the Hebrew verse is from the NRSV, unless otherwise stated.
between Job and his wife. Lastly, in the sixth scene, readers only hear the narrator’s voice introducing Job’s three friends and their responses to Job. By treating each voice equally, this chapter analyzes the function of each voice in each scene with respect to the question of whether or not Job is a completely perfect man.

After the examination, the chapter will claim that the purpose of the narrator’s voice in the introduction in 1:1 is not actually to finalize Job as a completely perfect man, but rather to invite voices to anticipate the finalization of Job as blameless/perfect, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil. Also, the chapter will evince that, alongside the narrator’s voice, characters in the prologue do not have sufficient voice to determine Job adequately as a perfectly pious man and that the prologue in fact exists to unfinalize Job.

Consequently, the chapter will enunciate that the purpose of the prologue is to provoke readers to participate actively in the act of finalizing Job as a man who is perfect, upright, a fearer of God and a shunner of evil by reading questions from various voices in the prologue and expecting more voices yet to come. From the following section, I will examine in detail how each voice in each scene functions to finalize and unfinalize this image of Job.

The First Scene (Earthly Realm: 1:1–5)

In the first scene, readers read/hear two voices: one is the narrator’s voice and the other is Job’s voice. In the scene, readers may read the narrator’s voice as an authoritative voice finalizing Job and his character. However, the narrator’s voice is actually not an authoritative voice finalizing Job, but rather a voice making him an unfinalized character. The narrator as a presider invites both readers’ and other characters’ voices including Job’s voice to characterize Job by displaying Job’s unfinalized character. This

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2 At this point, one may question just how the narrator’s voice and Job’s voice (and other characters’ voices) differ. It is possible that one may think of Job’s voice as the narrator’s voice. However, it is also possible to argue that the two voices are different, since according to Bakhtin the basic unit for communication is an utterance and the boundaries of each utterance are determined by a change of the speaking subject, that is, the speaker. (Bakhtin, Speech Genre and Other Late Essays, 71) According to this concept, the narrator’s voice and Job’s voice are different utterances, because the speaker has changed. Bakhtin views an author’s act of creating a character in a typical novel and particularly in the book of Job as an artistic and aesthetic activity. “For art to exist at all there must be alterity. Moreover, the consciousness of the creator must exist on a qualitatively different level