authenticating and each and every fact in the Israelites' possession attests to my plan. I am *the transcendental sine qua non of all intelligible predication!* Now *go!"*

Nor did God respond with something like: "Abraham's descendants are such sign-mongers, such epistemic dunces—noetically thick, and hard of heart! So even though my mere words are self-attesting, I will accommodate the Israelite's epistemic sluggishness with these signs . . ." The response of God to Moses's concern is treated with respect and with epistemological provision befitting the limitations and character of *human* epistemic competence. In particular, God's response beautifully satisfies Isaiah's Principle.

[8]
Transcendental football anyone?
["But Charlie, there's no such thing as a
magical touchdown!"]

Lucy looks blitzed but she assures me that she has followed it all. "The illustrations helped," she says, "and maybe the two IBRI articles you shamelessly plugged will help too. But what I still don't get is why you call Van Til's speculations *transcendental.*"

So I close with a final clarification and a homely analogy intended to show what happens when we commit presuppositions gratuitously—commit them when we ought to be arguing. The crucial point is that profitable and legitimate presupposing functions to afford rational elbow room—*never* as an indirect route to absolute certainty. That is because, in our quest for truth, it is simply impossible to *begin* inquiry by wondering how to make chaotic bare particularity hang together. *Prior* certainty is a necessary condition for presupposing. That is because the particularity of the world about us never greets us as chaotic and unglued (thanks to the causal order). Presupposing makes sense as a *rational* strategy only when we *already* understand a range of data and then go on to ask, "What general condition or conditions would have to obtain in order to account for this data?"

This sort of question is a *transcendental question* and is a species of hypothetical reasoning. The question asks, what hypothesis best