I. The Prologue (1:1-2:13)

Job’s Good Life

1:1 There was a man3 in the land of Uz4 whose name was Job. And that man was pure7 and upright,8 one who feared God and turned away from evil.9 1:2 Seven10 sons and three daughters were born to him.11

The name “Job” is mentioned by Ezekiel as one of the greats in the past - Noah, Job, and Daniel (14:14). The suffering of Job was probably well known in the ancient world, and this name was clearly part of that tradition. There is little reason to try to determine the etymology and meaning of the name, since it may not be Hebrew. If it were Hebrew, it might mean something like “persecuted,” although some suggest “aggressor.” If Arabic it might have the significance of “the one who always returns to God.”

The word יָשָׁר (yashar, “upright”) is complementary to “blameless.” The word is “upright, just,” and applies to his relationships with others (Ps 37:37 and 25:21).

The Hebrew construction is literally “a man who feared God,” using בר י’hayah rather than a preterite first. This simply begins the narrative.


2 sn The name “Job” is mentioned by Ezekiel as one of the greats in the past - Noah, Job, and Daniel (14:14). The suffering of Job was probably well known in the ancient world, and this name was clearly part of that tradition. There is little reason to try to determine the etymology and meaning of the name, since it may not be Hebrew. If it were Hebrew, it might mean something like “persecuted,” although some suggest “aggressor.” If Arabic it might have the significance of “the one who always returns to God.”

3 tn The Hebrew construction is literally “a man who feared God,” using בר י’hayah rather than a preterite first. This simply begins the narrative.

4 sn The term Uz occurs several times in the Bible: a son of Aram (Gen 10:23), a son of Nahor (Gen 22:21), and a descendant of Seir (Gen 36:28). If these are the clues to follow, the location would be north of Syria or south near Edom. The book tells how Job’s flocks were exposed to Chaldeans, the tribes between Syria and the Euphrates (1:17), and in another direction to attacks from the Sabeans (1:15). The most prominent man among his friends was from Teman, which was in Edom (2:11). Uz is also connected with Edom in Lamentations 4:21. The most plausible location, then, would be east of Israel and northeast of Edom, in which is now North Arabia. The LXX has “on the borders of Edom and Arabia.” An early Christian tradition placed his home in an area about 40 miles south of Damascus, in Baashan at the southeast foot of Hermon.

5 tn In Hebrew the defining relative clause (“whose name was Job”) is actually an asyndetic verbless noun-clause placed in apposition to the substantive (“a man”); see GKC 486 §155.e.

6 sn The Hebrew construction is literally “a man who feared God,” using בר י’hayah rather than a preterite first. This simply begins the narrative.

7 tn The Hebraic construction is literally “a man who feared God,” using בר י’hayah rather than a preterite first. This simply begins the narrative.

8 sn These two expressions indicate the outcome of Job’s character. “Fearing God” and “turning from evil” also express two correlative ideas in scripture; they signify his true piety. The Hebrew construction is literally “a man who feared God,” using בר י’hayah rather than a preterite first. This simply begins the narrative.

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11 sn The Hebrew construction is literally “a man who feared God,” using בר י’hayah rather than a preterite first. This simply begins the narrative.
13 His possessions\(^2\) included\(^2\) 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys; in addition he had a very great household.\(^3\) Thus he\(^4\) was the greatest of all the people in the east.\(^5\)

14 Now his sons used to go out and hold a feast in the house of each one in turn,\(^8\) and they would send and invite\(^9\) their three\(^10\) sisters to eat and to drink with them. 15 When\(^11\) the days of their feasting were finished,\(^12\) Job would send\(^13\) for them and sanctify\(^14\) them; he would get up early\(^15\) in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to\(^16\) the number of them all. For Job thought, “Perhaps\(^17\) my children\(^18\) have sinned and cursed\(^19\) God in their hearts.” This was Job’s customary practice.\(^20\)

Satan’s Accusation of Job\(^21\)

16 Now the day came when\(^22\) the sons of God\(^23\) came to present themselves sanctified their children.

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\(^1\) The word means “cattle, livestock, possessions” (see also Gen 26:14). Here it includes the livestock, but also the entire substance of his household.

\(^2\) Or “amounted to,” “totalled.” The preterite of הָיָה (hayah, “to be”) is sometimes employed to introduce a total amount or an inventory (see 1 Kings 1:5; Num 3:43).

\(^3\) In the patriarchal society it was normal for the father to act as priest for the family, making the sacrifices as needed. Job here is exceptional in his devotion to the duty. The passage shows the balance between the greatest earthly rejoicing by the family, and the deepest piety and affection of the deepest. The verse begins with the temporal indicator “and it happened” or “and it came to pass,” which need not be translated. The particle חָלַק (chalak), “to make the round” or “complete the rotation,” here it means “to make the round” or “complete the circuit.” The verb is the Hiphil perfect of הָלְכוּ (halak, “they went”) indicates their characteristic action, actions that were frequently repeated (Gen 33:36-36 §112,dd).

\(^4\) Heb “and that man.”

\(^5\) The expression is literally “sons of the east.” The use of the genitive after “sons” in this construction may emphasize their nature (like “sons of belial”); it would refer to them as easterners (like “sons of the south” in contemporary American English). BDB 869 s.v. בְּנֵי בְּנֵי נֵפֶל says “dwellers in the eastland”.

\(^6\) The perfect verb with the 3\(^{\text{rd}}\) person 3\(^{\text{rd}}\) person 3\(^{\text{rd}}\) person singular. The verb is the Hiphil perfect of הָלְכוּ (halak, “they went”) indicates their characteristic action, actions that were frequently repeated (Gen 33:36-36 §112,dd).

\(^7\) Heb “make a feast.”

\(^8\) The word מַעַד (maved, “service of household servants”) indicates that he had a very large body of servants, meaning a very large household.

\(^9\) In the patriarchal society it was normal for the father to act as priest for the family, making the sacrifices as needed. Job here is exceptional in his devotion to the duty. The passage shows the balance between the greatest earthly rejoicing by the family, and the deepest piety and affection of the deepest. The verse begins with the temporal indicator “and it happened” or “and it came to pass,” which need not be translated. The particle חָלַק (chalak), “to make the round” or “complete the rotation,” here it means “to make the round” or “complete the circuit.” The verb is the Hiphil perfect of הָלְכוּ (halak, “they went”) indicates their characteristic action, actions that were frequently repeated (Gen 33:36-36 §112,dd).

\(^10\) The imperfect expresses continual action in past time, i.e., a customary imperfect (GKC 315 §107).

\(^11\) The Hebrew verb is קֶדֶם (qadem, “to call, invite”) followed by the 3\(^{\text{rd}}\) person singular. The verb is the Hiphil perfect of הָלְכוּ (halak, “they went”) indicates their characteristic action, actions that were frequently repeated (Gen 33:36-36 §112,dd).

\(^12\) The imperfect expresses continual action in past time, i.e., a customary imperfect (GKC 315 §107).

\(^13\) The verse begins with the temporal indicator “and it happened” or “and it came to pass,” which need not be translated. The particle כָּן (ken, “then”) with the initial verbal form indicates it is a temporal clause.

\(^14\) The verb is the Hiphil perfect of נָקַף (nakaf, “to feast, to eat, to drink”) indicates the point is that they feasted every day of the week in rotation. “Man” is the genitive; it also has a dislocated preposition. In short, God is using Job to prove Satan’s theory wrong. God is proving the virtue of Job, but Satan challenges the reasons for it. The text draws the curtain of heaven aside for the reader to understand the background of this drama. God exhibits the virtue of Job, but Satan challenges the reasons for it. He receives permission to try to dislodge Job from his integrity. In short, God is using Job to prove Satan’s theory wrong.

\(^15\) Or “purify.”

\(^16\) The “sons of God” in the OT is generally taken to refer to angels. They are not actually “sons” of Elohim; the idiom is a poetic way of describing their nature and relationship to God. The phrase indicates their supernatural nature, and their submission to God as the sovereign Lord. It may be classified as a genitive that expresses how individuals belong to a certain class or type, i.e., the supernatural (GKC 418 §128.v).

before the Lord and Satan also arrived among them. 1:7 The Lord said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” And Satan answered the Lord, “From roving about on the earth, and from walking back and forth across it.” 1:8 So the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a pure and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil.”

1:9 Then Satan answered the Lord, “Is it for nothing that Job fears God? 1:10 Have you not made a hedge around him and his household and all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his livestock have increased in the land. 1:11 But you extended your hand and struck everything he has, and he will no doubt curse you to your face!”

1:12 So the Lord said to Satan, “All right then, everything he has is in your power. Only do not extend your hand against the man himself!” So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. 

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1 tn The preposition סלַפ (‘āl) in this construction after a verb of standing or going means “before” (GKC 383 §119.cc).
2 sn The word means “adversary” or with the article “the adversary” – here the superhuman adversary or Satan. The word with the article means that the meaning of the word should receive prominence. A denominative verb meaning “to act as adversary” occurs. Satan is the great accuser of the saints (see Zech 3 where “Satan was standing there to ‘satanize’ Joshua the priest”; and see Rev 12 which identifies him with the Serpent in Genesis). He came among the angels at this time because he is one of them and has access among them. Even though fallen, Satan has yet to be cast down completely (see Rev 12).
3 tn The imperfect may be classified as progressive imperfect; it indicates action that although just completed is regarded as still lasting into the present (GKC 316 §107.h).
4 tn Heb “answered the Lord and said” (also in v. 9). The words “and said” here and in v. 9 have not been included in the translation for stylistic reasons.
5 tn The verb פָּרַץ (shur) means “to go or rove about” (BDB 100 §12 s.v.). Here the infinitive construct serves as the object of the preposition.
6 tn The Hiphil (here also an infinitive construct after the preposition) of the verb פָּרַץ (halakh) means “to walk to and fro, back and forth, with the sense of investigating or reconnoitering (see e.g. Gen 13:17).
7 sn As the words are spoken by Satan, there is no self-consciousness in them. What they signify is the swiftness and thoroughness of his investigation of humans. The good angels are said to go to and fro in the earth on behalf of the suffering righteous (Zech 1:10, 11; 6:7), but Satan goes seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet 5:8).
8 tn The Hebrew has “have you placed your heart on Job?” This means “direct your mind to” (cf. BDB 963 s.v. לָשֵׂם 2.b).
9 sn The question is undoubtedly rhetorical, for it is designed to make Satan aware of Job as God extols his fine qualities.
10 tn The Hebrew conjunction cổ (ki) need not be translated in this case or it might be taken as emphatic (cf. IBHS 665 §39.3.4d): “Certainly there is no one like him.”
11 tn The same expressions that appeared at the beginning of the chapter appear here in the words of God. In contrast to that narrative report about Job, the emphasis here is on Job’s present character, and so the participle form is translated here as a gnomic or characteristic present (“turns”). It modifies “man” as one who is turning from evil.
12 tn The Hebrew form has the interrogative נ (he) on the adverb פָּרַץ (khinnam, “gratis”), a derivative either of the verb פָּרַץ (khinan, “to be gracious, show favor”), or its related noun פָּרַץ (khen, “grace, favor”). The adverb has the sense of “free; gratis; gratuitously; for nothing; for no reason” (see BDB 336 s.v. פָּרַץ). The idea is that Satan does not disagree that Job is pious, but that Job is loyal to God because of what he receives from God. He will test the sincerity of Job.
13 tn The use of the personal pronoun here emphasizes the subject of the verb: “Have you not put up a hedge.”
14 tn The verb לָשֵׂם (parats) means “to break through.” It has the sense of abundant increase, as in breaking out, overflowing (see also Gen 30:30 and Exod 1:12).
15 tn The particle בֵּין (bulam, “but”) serves to restrict the clause in relation to the preceding clause (IBHS 671-73 §39.3.5e, n. 107).
16 tn The force of the imperatives in this sentence are almost conditional – if God were to do this, then surely Job would respond differently.
17 sn The two imperatives (“stretch out” and “strike”) and the word “hand” all form a bold anthropomorphic sentence. It is as if God would deliver a blow to Job with his fist. But the intended meaning is that God would intervene to destroy Job’s material and physical prosperity.
18 sn The formula used in the expression is the oath formula: “if not to your face he will curse you” meaning “he will surely curse you to your face.” Satan is so sure that the piety is insincere that he can use an oath formula.
19 tn See the comments on Job 1:5. Here too the idea of “renounce” may fit well enough, but the idea of actually cursing God may not be out of the picture if everything Job has is removed. Satan thinks he will denote God.
20 tn The particle הָיָה (hinnach, “behold”) introduces a foundational clause upon which the following volitional clause is based.
21 tn The versions add a verb here: “delivered to” or “abandoned to” the hand of Satan.
22 tn Heb “in your heart.” The idiom means that it is now Satan’s to do with as he pleases.
23 tn The Hebrew word order emphatically holds out Job’s person as the exception: “only upon him do not stretch forth your hand.”
24 tn The Targum to Job adds “with permission” to show that he was granted leave from God’s presence.
25 sn So Satan, having received his permission to test Job’s sincerity, goes out from the Lord’s presence. But Satan is bound by the will of the Most High not to touch Job himself. The sentence gives the impression that Satan’s departure is with a certain eagerness and confidence.
Job’s Integrity in Adversity

1:13 Now the day² came when Job’s³ sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house, 1:14 and a messenger came to Job, saying, “The oxen were plowing⁴ and the donkeys were grazing beside them, 1:15 and the Sabæans⁵ swooped down⁶ and carried them all away, and they killed⁷ the servants with the sword⁸ And I – only I alone⁹ – escaped to tell you!”

1:16 While this one was still speaking, another messenger arrived¹⁰ and said, “The fire of God¹² has fallen from heaven¹³ and has burned up the sheep and the servants – it has consumed them! And I – only I alone – escaped to tell you!”

1:17 While this one was still speaking another messenger arrived and said, “The Chaldeans¹⁴ formed three bands and made a raid¹⁵ on the camels and carried them all away, and they killed the servants with the sword¹⁶ And I – only I alone – escaped to tell you!”

1:18 While this one was still speaking another messenger arrived and said, “Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house, 1:19 and suddenly¹⁷ a great wind¹⁸ swept across¹⁹ the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they died! And I – only I alone – escaped to tell you!”

1:20 Then Job got up²⁰ and tore his robe.²¹ He shaved his head,²² and then he threw himself down with his face to the ground.²³

¹ sn The series of catastrophes and the piety of Job is displayed now in comprehensive terms. Everything that can go wrong, does wrong, and yet, Job, the pious servant of Yahweh, continues to worship him in the midst of the rubble. This section, and the next, will lay the foundation for the great dialogues in the book.

² In the Targum to Job clarifies that it was the first day of the week. The fact that it was in the house of the firstborn is the reason.

³ Heb “his”; the referent (Job) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁴ The use of the verb “to be” with the participle gives emphasis to the continuing action of the in the past (GKC 360 §116.f).

⁵ In the LXX has “the spoilers spoilt them” instead of “the Sabæans swooped down.” The translators might have connected the word to שָׁפָה (shapha, “to take captive”) rather than שָׁפֵת (shaphet), “Sabæan.”

⁶ The word “Sheba” is used to represent its inhabitants, or some of them. The verb is feminine because the name is a place name. The Sabæans were a tribe from the Arabian peninsula. They were traders mostly (6:19). The raid came from the north, suggesting that the attackers were near Edom. The time of the attack seems to be winter since the oxen were plowing.

⁷ The Hebrew is simply “fell” (from נפָל, naphal). To “fall upon” something in war means to attack quickly and suddenly.

⁸ Job’s servants were probably armed and gave resistance, which would be the normal case in that time. This was probably why they were “killed with the sword.”

⁹ The Hebrew is simply “fear” (from עַבֵּד, ’abad). To “fear” something in war means to attack quickly and suddenly.

¹⁰ The LXX has “the spoiler spoilt them” instead of “the Sabæans swooped down.” The translators might have connected the word to שָׁפָה (shapha, “to take captive”) rather than שָׁפֵת (shaphet), “Sabæan.”

¹¹ The sentence could be translated, “Then Job immediately began to tear his robe.”

¹² The “fire of God” would refer to lightning (1 Kgs 18:38; 2 Kgs 1:12; cf. NAB, NCV, TEV). The LXX simply has “fire.” The first blow came from enemies; the second from heaven, which might have confused Job more as to the cause of his troubles. The use of the divine epithet could also be an indication of the superlative degree; see D. W. Thomas, “A Consideration of Some Unusual Ways of Expressing the Superlative in Hebrew,” VT 3 (1953): 209-24.

¹³ Or “from the sky.” The Hebrew word פָּשַׁט (pashat) may be translated “heaven[s]” or “sky” depending on the context.

¹⁴ The name may have been given to the tribes that roamed between the Euphrates and the lands east of the Jordan. These are possibly the nomadic Kaldu who are part of the ethnic Aramaeans. The LXX simply has “horsemen.”

¹⁵ The verb פָּשַׁט (pashat) means “to hurl themselves” upon something (see Judg 9:33, 41). It was a quick, plundering raid to carry off the camels.

¹⁶ "with the edge/mouth of the sword.”

¹⁷ In the use of the particle כִּי (ki), “behold”) in this sentence is deictic, pointing out with excitement the events that happened as if the listener was there.

¹⁸ Both wind and lightning in Is 2:20 were employed by Satan as his tools. God can permit him such control over forces of the weather when it suits the divine purpose, but God retains ultimate control (see 28:23-27; Prov 3:4; Luke 8:24-25).

¹⁹ The word נֶעֲר (ne’er) is simply “from the direction of”; the word נֶעָר (ne’ar) indicates the area the whirlwind came across.

²⁰ The verb הוּאַפַּג (wuyapag, “and he arose”) indicates the intentionality and the rapidity of the actions to follow. It signals the beginning of his response to the terrible news. Therefore, the sentence could be translated, “Then Job immediately began to tear his robe.”

²¹ The custom to tear the robe in a time of mourning, to indicate that the heart was torn (Job 2:13). The “garment, mantle” here is the outer garment frequently worn over the basic tunic. See further D. R. Ap-Thomas, “Notes on Some Terms Relating to Prayer,” VT 6 (1956): 220-24.

²² In mourning one normally put off every adornment that enhanced or embellished the person, including that which nature provided (Jer 7:29; Mic 1:16).

²³ This last verb is the Hiphil of the word הָיָשָׁת (hiyashat), “to prostrate oneself, to cause oneself to be low to the ground.” In the OT it is frequently translated “to worship” because that is usually why the individual would kneel down and then put his or her forehead to the ground at the knees. But the word essentially means “to bow down to the ground.” Here “worship” (although employed by several English translations, cf. KJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV, CEV) conveys more than what is taking place – although Job’s response is certainly worshipful. See G. I. Davies, “A Note on the Etymology of histah‘wah,” VT 29 (1979): 493-95; and J. A. Emerton, “The Etymology of histah‘wah,” OTS (1977): 41-55.
1:21 He said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will return there.” The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. May the name of the Lord be blessed!” 1:22 In all this Job did not sin, nor did he charge God with moral impropriety.

Satan’s Additional Charge

2:1 Again the day came when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also arrived among them to present himself before the Lord. 2:2 And the Lord said to Satan, “Where do you come from?” Satan answered the Lord, “From roving about on the earth, and from walking back and forth across it.” 2:3 Then the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a pure and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil. And he still holds firmly to his integrity, so that you stirred me up to destroy him without reason.”

1 tn The adjective “naked” is functioning here as an adverbial accusative of state, explicative of the state of the subject. While it does include the literal sense of nakedness at birth, Job is also using it symbolically to mean “without possessons.”

2 tc While the first half of the couplet is to be taken literally as referring to his coming into this life, this second part must be interpreted only generally to refer to his departure from this life. It is parallel to 1 Tim 6:7, “For we have brought nothing into this world and so we cannot take a single thing out either.”

3 sn The two verbs are simple perfects. (1) They can be given the nuance of gnomic imperfect, expressing what the sovereign God does. This is the approach taken in the present translation. Alternatively (2) they could be referring specifically to Job’s own experience: “Yahweh gave [definite past, referring to his coming into this good life] and Yahweh has taken away” [present perfect, referring to his great losses]. Many English versions follow the second alternative.

4 sn Some commentators are troubled by the appearance of the word “Yahweh” on the lips of Job, assuming that the narrator inserted his own name for God into the story-telling. Such thinking is based on the assumption that Yahweh was only a national god of Israel, unknown to anyone else in the ancient world. But here is a clear indication that a non-Israelite, Job, knew and believed in Yahweh.

5 tn The last clause is difficult to translate. It simply reads, “and he did not give unseemliness to God.” The word חָנַן (khanan) means “unseemliness” or “unseemliness in a moral sense. The sense is that Job did not charge God with any moral impropriety in his dealings with him. God did nothing worthless or tasteless. The ancient versions saw the word connected with “foolishness” or “stupidity” (חָטֵץ, tefel, “to be tasteless”). It is possible that “foolish” could capture some of what Job meant here. See also M. Dahood, “Hebrew-Ugaritic Lexicography XI,” Bib 55 (1974): 381-93.

6 tc This last purpose clause has been omitted in some Greek versions.

7 tn Heb “answered the Lord and said” (also in v. 4). The words “and said” here and in v. 9 have not been included in the translation for stylistic reasons.

8 tn See the note on this phrase in 1:7.

9 sn The form is the Hiphil participle, “make strong, seize, hold fast.” It is the verbal use here; joined with רָעָה (tavinu, “yet he”) it emphasizes that “he is still holding firmly.” The testing has simply strengthened Job in his integrity.

10 sn This is the same word used to describe Job as “blameless, pure.” Here it carries the idea of “integrity”; Job remained blameless, perfect, unfailing.

11 sn The purpose clause with the preterite is used here to express the logical conclusion or consequence of what was stated previously. This is saying that Job has maintained his integrity, so that now it is clear that Satan moved against him groundlessly (GKC 328 §111.1).

12 sn The verb literally means “to swallow”; it forms an implied comparison in the line, indicating the desire of Satan to ruin him completely. See A. Guillaume, “A Note on the Root bala ’,” JTS 13 (1962): 320-23; and N. M. Sarna, “Epic Substratum in the Prose of Job,” JBL 76 (1957): 13-25, for a discussion of the Ugaritic deity Mot swallowing up the enemy.

13 sn Once again the adverb חַיָּם (khayam, “gratis”) is used. It means “graciously, gratis, free, without cause, for no reason.” The point of the verb כָּנֵע (kanaa, “to be gracious”) and its derivatives is that the action is undeserved. In fact, they would deserve the opposite. Sinners seeking grace deserve punishment. Here, Job deserves reward, not suffering.

14 sn The form is the simple preterite with the וְנָתָן (v’nat’an) consecutive. However, the speech of Satan is in contrast to what God said, even though in narrative sequence.

15 sn The preposition כִּי (ki) designates interest or advantage arising from the idea of protection for (“for the benefit of”); see IBHS 201-2 §11.2.7a.

16 sn The meaning of the expression is obscure. It may come from the idea of sacrificing an animal or another person in order to go free, suggesting the expression that one type of skin that was worth less was surrendered to save the more important life. Satan would then be saying that Job was willing for others to die for him to go free, but not himself. “Skin” would be a synecdoche of the part for the whole (like the idiomatic use of skin today for a person in a narrow escape). The second clause indicates that God has not even scratched the surface because Job has been protected. His “skin” might have been scratched, but not his flesh and bone! But if his life had been put in danger, he would have responded differently.

17 tc The LXX has “make full payment, pay a full price” (LSJ 522 s.v. δικαίωμα).

18 sn Heb “indeed, all that a man has he will give for his life.”

19 sn The “bones and flesh” are idiomatic for the whole person, his physical and his psychical/spiritual being (see further H. W. Wolff, Anthropology of the Old Testament, 26-28).

20 sn This is the same oath formula found in 1:11; see the note there.

21 sn The particle ו (hinno) is literally, “here he is!” God presents Job to Satan, with the restriction on preserving Job’s life.

22 sn The LXX has “I deliver him up to you.”

23 sn Heb “hand.”

24 sn The irony of the passage comes through with this choice of words. The verb חָטֵץ (shamur) means “to keep; to guard; to preserve.” The exception clause casts Satan in the role of a savior – he cannot destroy this life but must protect it.
Job's Integrity in Suffering

2:7 So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord, and he afflicted Job with a malignant ulcer from the sole of his feet to the top of his head. Job took a shard of broken pottery to scrape himself with while he was sitting among the ashes.

2:9 Then his wife said to him, "Are you still holding firmly to your integrity?"

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JOB 2:11

2:11 When Job's three friends heard about all this calamity that had happened to him, each of them came from his own country—Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They met together to come between Satan and Job, pressing the cause for him. However, Job's wife has been demonized falsely. Job did not say that she was a foolish woman, only that she was speaking like one of them (2:10). Also, Job did not exclude her from sharing in his suffering ("should we receive"). He evidently recognized that her words were the result of her personal loss and pain as well as the desire to see her husband's suffering ended. When God gave instructions for the restoration of Job's friends because of their foolish words (42:7-9), no mention is made of any need for Job's wife to be restored.

11 The imperative with the conjunction in this expression serves to express the certainty that will follow as the result or consequence of the previous imperative (GKC 324-25 §110. f).

12 In Heb "he said to her.

13 The word "foolish" (םָдоб, qabalah) has to do with godliness more than silliness (Ps 14:1). To be foolish in this sense is to deny the nature and the work of God in life its proper place. See A. Phillips, "NEBALA – A Term for Serious Disorder Unruly Conduct," VT 25 (1975): 237-41; and W. M. W. Roth, "NBL", VT 10 (1960): 394-403.

14 The verb צָב (qibel) means "to accept, receive." It is attested in the Amarna letters with the meaning "receive meekly, patiently.

15 The adverb צָב (gam, "also, even") is placed here before the first clause, but belongs with the second. It intensifies the idea (see GKC 483 §153). See also C. J. Labuschagne, "The Emphasizing Particle GAM and Its Connotations," Studia Biblica et Orientalia 193-203.

16 In the two verbs in this sentence, Piel imperatives, are deliberative imperatives; they express the reasoning or deliberating in the interrogative sentences.

17 A question need not be introduced by an interrogative particle or adverb. The natural emphasis on the words is enough to indicate it is a question (GKC 473 §150.a).

18 The Hebrew words צָב (gam, "good") and צָב (ra, "evil") have to do with what affects life. That which is good benefits people because it produces, promotes and protects life; that which is evil brings calamity and disaster, it harms, pains, or destroys life.

19 In Heb "sin with his lips," an idiom meaning he did not sin by what he said.


21 tn The versions have some information here that is interrelated. See R. D. Moore, "The Integrity of Job," CBQ 45 (1983): 17-31. The reference of Job's wife to his "integrity" could be a precursor of the conclusion reached by Eilu in 32:2 where he charged Job with justifying himself rather than God.

22 The verb is כָּרַד (garad, "struck, smote"); it can be rendered in this context as "afflicted.

23 tn The general consensus is that Job was afflicted with a leprosy known as elephantiasis, named because the rough skin and the swollen limbs are animal-like. The Hebrew word נָכָה (nakhah, "boil") can indicate an ulcer as well. Leprosy begins with such, but so do other diseases. Leprosy normally begins in the limbs and spreads, but Job was afflicted everywhere at once. It may be some other disease also characterized by such a malignant ulcer. D. J. A. Clines has a thorough bibliography on all the possible diseases linked to this description (Job [WBC], 48). See also HALOT 1460 s.v. נָכָה.

24 tn In Heb "crown."

25 tn The verb גָּרַד (garad) is a hapax legomenon (only occurring here). Modern Hebrew has retained a meaning "to scrape," which is what the cognate Syriac and Arabic indicate. In the Hitpael it would mean "scrape himself."

26 sn The disease required constant attention. The infection and pus had to be scraped away with a piece of broken pottery in order to prevent the spread of the infection. The skin was so disfigured that even his friends did not recognize him (2:12). The book will add that the disease afflicted him inwardly, giving him a foul smell and a loathsome smell (19:17, 20). The sores bred worms; they opened and ran, and closed and ran, and opened and ran, and more than that (7:14). His bones were racked with burning pain (30:30). And he was not able to rise from his place (19:18). The disease was incurable, but it would last for years, leaving the patient longing for death.

27 tn The construction uses the disjunctive וָאַת (vaw) with the independent pronoun with the active participle. The construction connects this clause with what has just been said, making this a circumstantial clause.

28 tn Among the ashes. It is likely that the "ashes" refers to the place outside the city where the rubbish was collected and burnt, i.e., the ash-heap (cf. CEV). This is the understanding of the LXX, which reads "dung-hill outside the city."

29 tn The versions have some information here that is interesting, albeit fanciful. The Targum calls her "Dinah." The LXX renders in this context as "afflicted."
to show sympathy\textsuperscript{1} for him and to console\textsuperscript{2} him. 2:12 But when they gazed intently\textsuperscript{3} from a distance but did not recognize\textsuperscript{4} him, they began to weep loudly. Each of them tore his robes, and they threw dust into the air over their heads.\textsuperscript{5} 2:13 Then they sat down with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights, yet no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his pain\textsuperscript{6} was very great.\textsuperscript{7}

II. Job’s Dialogue With His Friends  (3:1-27:33)\textsuperscript{8}

Job Regrets His Birth

3:1 After this Job opened his mouth\textsuperscript{9} and cursed\textsuperscript{10} the day he was born.\textsuperscript{11} 3:2 Job spoke up\textsuperscript{12} and said:

\begin{itemize}
  \item[1\textsuperscript{tn}] The verb “to show grief” is נָעַד (nuad), and literally signifies “to shake the head.” It may be that his friends came to show the proper sympathy and express the appropriate feelings. They were not ready for what they found.
  \item[2\textsuperscript{tn}] The second infinitive is from זָרַע (zaru), “to comfort, console” in the Piel. This word may be derived from a word with a meaning of sighing deeply.
  \item[3\textsuperscript{tn}] Heb “they lifted up their eyes.” The idiom “to lift up the eyes” (or “to lift up the voice”) is intended to show a special intensity in the effort. Here it would indicate that they were trying to see Job from a great distance away.
  \item[4\textsuperscript{tn}] The Hiphil perfect here should take the nuance of properly sympathizing with one’s grief. (On which see also GKC 316 §107.) The verb “to show sympathy” is provided, but leaves open the question of who said it), it is apparently the narrator. 3:1-26). vv. 1-2 continue the prose style of chapters (chs. 3-41) containing the cycles of speeches.
  \item[5\textsuperscript{tn}] The detailed introduction to the speech with “he opened his mouth” draws the reader’s attention to what was going to be said. As the introduction to the poetic speech that follows (3:3-32), vv. 1-2 continue the prose style of chapters 1-2. Each of the subsequent speeches is introduced by such a prose heading.
  \item[6\textsuperscript{tn}] The verb “cursed” is the Piel preterite from the verb נָהַר (nahar); this means “to be light” in the Qal stem, but here “to treat lightly, with contempt, curse.” See in general H. C. Brichto, The Problem of “Curse” in the Hebrew Bible (UJLMS); and A. C. Thiselton, “The Supposed Power of Words in the Biblical Writings,” JTS 25 (1974): 283-99.
  \item[7\textsuperscript{tn}] Heb “his day” (so KJV, ASV, NAB). The Syriac has “the day on which I was born” (so GKC 486-88 §155.f.i.).
  \item[8\textsuperscript{tn}] The verb is the Niphal imperfect. It may be interpreted “to show grief” or “to comfort, console” in the Piel. This word may be derived from a word with a meaning of sighing deeply.
  \item[9\textsuperscript{tn}] This expression by Job is the negation of the divine decree at creation – “Let there be light,” and that was the first day. Job wishes that the day to perish from view. (For the entire verse, which is more a wish or malediction than a curse, see S. H. Blank, “Perish the Day! A Misdirected Curse (Job 3:3),” Prophecy, Thought, 61-63.
  \item[10\textsuperscript{tn}] The first two words should be treated as a casus pendens (see D. J. A. Clines, Job [WBC], 69), referred to as an extrapolation in recent grammarians.
  \item[11\textsuperscript{tn}] This expression by Job is the negation of the divine decree at creation – “Let there be light,” and that was the first day. Job wishes that his first day be darkness: “As for that day, let there be darkness.” Since only God has this prerogative, Job adds the wish that God on high would not regard that day.
  \item[12\textsuperscript{tn}] The verb פָּרַשׁ (parash) means “to seek, inquire,” and “to address someone, be concerned about something” (cf. Deut 11:12; Jer 30:14,17). Job wants the day to perish from the mind of God.
  \item[13\textsuperscript{tn}] The verb פָּרַשׁ (parash) means “to seek, inquire,” and “to address someone, be concerned about something” (cf. Deut 11:12; Jer 30:14,17). Job wants the day to perish from the mind of God.

13 tn The relative clause is carried by the preposition with the resumptive pronoun: “the day [which] I was born in it” meaning “the day on which I was born” (see GKC 486-88 §155.f.i.).
14 tn The verb is the Niphal imperfect. It may be interpreted in this dependent clause (1) as representing a future event from some point of time in the past – “the day on which I was born” or “would be born” (see GKC 316 §107.k). Or (2) it may simply serve as a preterite indicating action that is in the past.
15 tn The MT simply has “and the night – it said...” By simple juxtaposition with the parallel construction (“on which I was born”) the verb “it said” must be a relative clause explaining “the night.” Rather than supply “in which” and make the verb passive (which is possible since no specific subject is provided, but leaves open the question of who said it), it is preferable to take the verse as a personification. First Job “cursed the day; now he cursed the night that spoke about what it witnessed. See A. Ehrman, “A Note on the Verb ‘amar,” JQR 55 (1964/65): 166-67.
16 tn The word is נָהַר (nahar, “a man”). The word usually distinguishes a man as strong, distinct from children and women. Translations which render this as “boy” (to remove the apparent contradiction of an adult being “conceived” in the womb) miss this point.
17 sn The announcement at birth is to the fact that a male was conceived. The same parallelism between “brought forth/born” and “conceived” may be found in Ps 51:17 HT (51:5 ET). The motifs of the night of conception and the day of birth will be developed by Job. For the entire verse, which is more a wish or malediction than a curse, see S. H. Blank, “Perish the Day! A Misdirected Curse (Job 3:3),” Prophecy, Thought, 61-63.
18 tn The first two words should be treated as a casus pendens (see D. J. A. Clines, Job [WBC], 69), referred to as an extrapolation in recent grammarians.
19 sn This expression by Job is the negation of the divine decree at creation – “Let there be light,” and that was the first day. Job wishes that his first day be darkness: “As for that day, let there be darkness.” Since only God has this prerogative, Job adds the wish that God on high would not regard that day.
3:8 Let those who curse the day curse it, those who are prepared to rouse Leviathan.

3:9 Let its morning stars be darkened; let it wait for daylight but find none; nor let it see the first rays of dawn, because it did not shut the doors of my mother’s womb on me, nor did it hide trouble from my eyes!

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1 sn The translation of צַלְמוּת (salmuwat, “shadow of death”) has been traditionally understood to indicate a dark death shadow (supported in the LXX), but many scholars think it may not represent the best etymological analysis of the word. The word may be connected to an Arabic word which means “to be dark,” and an Akkadian word meaning “black.” It would then have to be repointed throughout its use to צַלְמָוֶת (salmaivat) forming an abstract ending. It would then simply mean “darkness” rather than “shadow of death.”

2 sn Those who curse the day are probably the professional enchanters and magicians who were thought to cast spells on days and overwhelm them with darkness and misfortune. The myths explained eclipses as the dragon throwing its folds around the sun and the moon, thus engulfing or swallowing the day and night. This interpretation matches the parallelism better than the interpretation that says these are merely professional mourners.

3 sn The verb is probably “execute, curse,” from מָכַר (makar). But E. Ulendorff took it from מָאַב (maaOV, “pierce”) and gained a reading “Let the light rays of day pierce it (i.e. the night) apt even to rouse Leviathan!” (Job 3:8, VT 11 [1961]: 350–51).

4 sn The verbal adjective יָאָד (yaad) means “ready, prepared.” Here it has a substantival use similar to that of participles. It is followed by the Polis infinitive construct יָאָד (yaad) (“to execute, to curse”).

5 sn The expression is literally “the eyelids of the morning.” The word [*kamar*] (kamar) probably means everything that makes the day black, such as supernatural events like eclipses. Job wishes that all ominous darknesses would terrify that day. It comes from the word [*karam*] (kamar, “to be black”), related to Akkadian *kamani* (“to overshadow, darken”). The versions seem to have ignored the first letter and connected the word to [*naqav*] (naqav) (“to give a ringing cry” or “shout of joy”).

6 sn The choice of this word for “moons,” [*qamar*] (qamar), is due to the fact that “month” would have been preferred. See J. Segal, “’Eyelids of Morn’: A Biblical Convention,” VT 11 [1961]: 350-51.

7 sn The particles [*hinneh*] (hinneh), [*bo*] (bo), “behold”) in this sentence focuses the reader’s attention on the statement to follow.

8 sn The word [*rekhad*] (yarkhad) probably here has the idea of “barren” rather than “solitary.” See the parallelism in Isa 49:21. In Job it seems to carry the idea of “barren” in 15:34, and “gloomy” in 30:3. Barrenness can lead to gloom.

9 sn The word is from [*ranan*] (ranan, “to give a ringing cry” or “shout of joy”). The sound is loud and shrill.

10 sn The verb is simply [*bo*] (bo, “to enter”). The NIV translates interpretively “be heard in it.” A shout of joy, such as at a birth, that “enters” a day is certainly heard on that day.

11 sn Not everyone is satisfied with the reading of the MT. Gordis thought “day” should be “sea,” and “curse” should be “rousers” (changing ‘*alef*’ to ‘*ayin*; cf. NRSV). This is an unnecessary change, for there is no textual problem in the line (D. J. A. Clines, Job [WBC], 71). Others have taken the reading “sea” as a personification and accepted the rest of the text, gaining the meaning of “those whose magic binds even the sea monster of the deep” (e.g., NEB).

12 sn The verb is probably “execute, curse,” from מָכַר (makar). But E. Ulendorff took it from מָאַב (maaOV, “pierce”) and gained a reading “Let the light rays of day pierce it (i.e. the night) apt even to rouse Leviathan!” (Job 3:8, VT 11 [1961]: 350–51).

13 sn The verbal adjective יָאָד (yaad) means “ready, prepared.” Here it has a substantival use similar to that of participles. It is followed by the Polis infinitive construct יָאָד (yaad) (“to execute, to curse”). The infinite without the preposition serves as the object of the preceding verbal adjective (GKC 350 §114.m).

14 sn Job employs here the mythological figure Leviathan, the monster of the deep or chaos. Job wishes that such a creation of chaos could Ôbe won by the mourners to swallow up that day. See E. Ulendorff, “Job 3:8,” VT 11 [1961]: 350–51.

15 sn In Heb “the stars of its dawn.” The word [*neshef*] (neshef) can mean “twilight” or “dawn.” In this context the morning stars are in mind. Job wishes that the morning stars – that should announce the day – go out.

16 sn The verb “wait, hope” has the idea of eager expectation and preparation. It is used elsewhere of waiting on the Lord with anticipation.

17 sn The absolute state [*ayin*] (’ayin, “there is none”) is here used as a verbal predicate (see GKC 430 §152.k). The connotation literally says “and none.”

18 sn The expression is literally “the eyelids of the morning.” This means the very first rays of dawn (see also Job 41:18). There is some debate whether it refers to “eyelids” or “eye lashes” or “eyeballs.” If the latter, it would signify the flashing eyes of a person. See for the Ugaritic background H. L. Ginsberg, *The Legend of King Karet* (BASORSup), 39; see also J. M. Steadman, “Eyelids of Morn? A Biblical Convention,” HTR 56 (1963): 159-67.

19 sn The subject is still “that night.” Here, at the end of this first section, Job finally expresses the crime of that night – it did not hinder his birth.

20 sn This use of doors for the womb forms an implied comparison; the night should have hindered conception (see Gen 20:18 and 1 Sam 1:5).

21 sn The Hebrew has simply “my belly [= womb].” The suffix on the noun must be objective – it was the womb of Job’s mother in which he lay before his birth. See however N. C. Ha bel, “The Dative Suffix in Job 33:13,” Bib 63 (1982): 258-59, who thinks it is deliberately ambiguous.

22 sn The word [*’amal*] (’amal) means “work, heavy labor, agonizing labor, struggle” with the idea of fatigue and pain.
I would be asleep and then at peace
with kings and counselors of the earth
who built for themselves places now
desolate.

3:14 or with princes who possessed gold,
who filled their palaces with silver.

3:16 Or why was I not buried
like a stillborn infant,
like infants who have never seen the light?

3:17 There[22] the wicked[24] cease
from

3:11 “Why did I not[2] die at birth,
and why did I not expire
as[5] I came out of the womb?

3:12 Why did the knees welcome me,[6]
and why were there[7] two breasts[8]
that I might nurse at them?[9]

3:13 For now[10] I would be lying down
and[11] would be quiet,

1 sn Job follows his initial cry with a series of rhetorical questions. His argument runs along these lines: since he was born (v. 10), the next chance he had of escaping this life of misery would have been to die (v. 11-12). In v. 13-19 Job considers death as falling into a peaceful sleep in a place where there is no trouble. The high frequency of rhetorical questions in series is a characteristic of the book of Job that sets it off from all other portions of the OT. The effect is primarily dramatic, creating a tension that requires resolution. See W. Watson, Classical Hebrew Poetry, 340-41.

2 tn The negative only occurs with the first clause, but it extends its influence to the parallel second clause (GKC 483 §152.z).

3 tn The two verbs in this verse are both prefix conjugations; they are clearly referring to the past and should be classified as preterites. E. Dhorme (ibid. §152) notes that the verb “I came out” is in the perfect tense (thus to mark its priority in time in relation to the other verbs.

4 tn The translation “at birth” is very smooth, but catches the meaning and avoids the tautology in the verse. The line literally reads “from the womb.” The second half of the verse has the verb “I came out/forth” which does double duty for both parallel lines. The second half uses “belly” for the womb.

5 tn The two halves of the verse use the prepositional phrases (“from the womb” and “from the belly I went out”) in the temporal sense of “on emerging from the womb.”

6 tn The verb פָּגֵד (gjd/mn) is the Piel from פָּגַד (qad-), meaning “to come before; to meet; to prevent.” Here it has the idea of going to meet or welcome someone. In spite of various attempts to connect the verb to the idea of adoption rites, it probably simply means the mother’s knees that welcome the child for nursing. See R. de Vaux, Ancient Israel, 42.

7 sn The sufferer is looking back over all the possible chances of death, including when he was born forth, placed on the knees or lap, and breastfed.

8 sn The noun נֵפֶל (nef) has no verb in the second half of the verse. The idea simply has, “and why breasts that I might suck?”

9 sn The commentators mention the parallel construction in the writings of Ashurbanipal: “You were weak, Ashurbanipal, you who sat on the knees of the goddess, queen of Nineveh; of the four teats that were placed near to your mouth, you sucked two and you hid your face in the others” (M. Strick, Assyriologica [VIA], 349).

10 tn Heb “that I might suckle.” The verb is the Qal imperfect of גָּקַע (qaaq, “suckle”). Here the clause is subordinated to the preceding question and so function as a final imperfect.

11 tn The word בָּשָׂע (bss), “now” may have a logical nuance here, almost with the idea of “if that had been the case...” (LBHS 667-68 §39.3.4f). However, the temporal “now” is retained in translation since the imperfect verb following two perfects suggests what Job’s present state would be if he had had the quiet of a still birth” (J. E. Hartley, Job [NICOT], 95, n. 23). Cf. GKC 313 §106.p.

12 tn The copula on the verb indicates a sequence for the imperfect: “and then I would...” In the second half of the verse it is paralleled by “then.”

13 tn The last part uses the impersonal verb “it would be at rest for me.”

14 tn The difficult term חָרוֹאָב (khravat) is translated “desolate [places]).” The LXX confused the word and translated it who gloried in their swords. One would expect a word for monuments, or tombs (T. K. Cheyne emended it to “over-living tombs” [“More Critical Gleanings in Job,” ExpTim 10 (1898/99): 380-83]). But this difficult word is of uncertain etymology and therefore cannot simply be made to mean “royal tombs.” The verb means “be desolate, solitary.” In Isa 48:21 there is the clear sense of a desert. That is the meaning of Assyrian warithu. It may be that like the pyramids of Egypt these tombs would have been built in the desert regions. Or it may describe how they rebuilt ruins for themselves. He would be saying then that instead of lying here in pain and shame if he had died he would be with the great ones of the earth. Otherwise, the word could be interpreted as a metonymy of effect, indicating that the once glorious tomb now is desolate. But this does not fit the context – the verse is talking about the state of the great ones after their death.

15 tn The expression simply has “or with princes gold to them.” The noun is defined by the noun clause serving as a relative clause (GKC 486 §155.e).

16 tn Heb “filled their houses.” There is no reason here to take “houses” to mean tombs; the “houses” refer to the places the princes lived (i.e., palaces). The reference is not to the practice of burying treasures with the dead. It is simply saying that if Job had died he would have been with the rich and famous in death.

17 tn The verb is governed by the interrogative of v. 12 that introduces this series of rhetorical questions.

18 tn The verb is again the prefix conjugation, but the narrative requires a past tense, or preterite.

19 tn Heb “hidden.” The LXX paraphrases: “an untimely birth, proceeding from this mother’s womb.”

20 tn The noun פֵּפָל (pfl, “miscarriage”) is the abortive thing that falls (hence the verb) from the womb before the time is ripe (Ps 58:9). The idiom using the verb “to fall” from the womb means to come into the world (Isa 26:18). The epithet ’יסון (yisn, “hidden”) is appropriate to the verse. The child comes in vain, and disappears into the darkness – it is hidden forever.

21 tn The word בָּשָׂע (bss) normally refers to “nurslings.” Here it must refer to infants in general since it refers to a still-born child.

22 tn The relative clause does not have the relative pronoun; the simple juxtaposition of words indicates that it is modifying the infants.

23 sn The reference seems to be death. Sheol, the place where the infant born stillborn is either buried (the grave) or resides (the place of departed spirits) and thus does not see the light of the sun.

24 tn The wicked are the ungodly, those who are not members of the covenant (normally) and in this context especially those who oppress and torment other people.

25 tn The parallelism uses the perfect verb in the first parallel part, and the imperfect opposite it in the second. Since the verse projects to the grave or Sheol (“there”) where the action is perceived as still continuing or just taking place, both receive an English present tense translation (GKC 312 §106.f).
3:20 “Why does God give light to one who is in misery, and life to those whose soul is bitter,

1 sn Here the noun יַנְשֵׁךְ (yanshekh) refers to the agitation of living as opposed to the peaceful rest of dying. The associated verb יָרָג (yaraq) means “to be agitated, excited.” The expression indicates that they cease from troubling, meaning all the agitation of their own lives.
2 sn The word יַנְשֵׁךְ (yanshekh) means “exhausted, wearied”; it is clarified as a physical exhaustion by the genitive of specification (“with regard to their strength”).
3 tn “There” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied from the context.
4 tn The LXX omits the verb and translates the noun not as prisoners but as “old men” or “men of old time.”
5 tn The verb וַיָּרָגוּ (vayyaro’u) is the Pilpel of יָרָג (yaraq) which means “agitated.” It refers to the normal rest or refreshment of individuals; here it is contrasted with the harsh treatment normally put on prisoners.
7 tn Or “taskmaster.” The same Hebrew word is used for the taskmasters in Exod 3:7.
8 tn The expressions have taken the pronoun in the sense of the verb “to be.” Others give it the sense of “the same thing,” rendering the verse as “small and great, there is no difference there.” GKC 437 §135.
9 tn The LXX renders this as “unafraid,” although the negative has disappeared in some mss to give the reading “and the servant that feared his master.” See I. Mendelsohn, “The Case for the Akkadian Term for ‘Free Proletarian’,” BASOR 83 (1941): 36-39; idem, “New Light on hupasu,” BASOR 139 (1955): 9-11.
10 tn The plural “masters” could be taken here as plural of majesty rather than as referring to numerous masters.
11 sn Since he has survived birth, Job wonders why he could not have died a premature death. He wonders why God gives light and life to those who are in misery. His own condition throws a different light on this. He is aware of the bitterness in v. 19, and so he poses the question first generally, for many would prefer death to misery (20:22); then he comes to the individual, himself, who would prefer death (23). He closes his initial complaint with some depictions of his suffering that afflicts him and gives him no rest (24-26).
12 tn Heb “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.
13 tn The verb is the simple imperfect, expressing the progresive imperfect nuance. But there is no formal subject to the verb, prompting some translations to make it passive in view of the indefinite subject (so, e.g., NAB, NIV, NRSV). Such a passive could be taken as a so-called “divine passive” by which God is the implied agent. Job clearly means God here, but he stops short of naming him (see also the note on “God” earlier in this verse).
14 sn In v. 10 the word was used to describe the labor and sorrow that comes from it; here the one in such misery is called the יָרָג (yaraq, “laborer, sufferer”).
15 sn The second colon now refers to people in general because of the plural construct הַיְנָשֵׁךְ (haya’anshekh), “those bitter of soul/life”). One may recall the use of הַיְנָשֵׁךְ (haya’anshekh, “bitter”) by Naomi to describe her pained experience as a poor widow in Ruth 1:20, or the use of the word to describe the bitter oppression inflicted on Israel by the Egyptians (Exod 1:14). Those who are “bitter of soul” are those whose life is overwhelmed with painful experiences and suffering.
16 sn The verse simply begins with the participle in apposition to the expressions in the previous verse describing those who are bitter. The preposition is added from the context.
17 sn The word מִנָּה (minah) is the Piel of מָנַה (manah) which means “a heap.” If the verb מָנַה (manah) is to be taken as a so-called “divine passive,” the implied agent is Yahweh. Job clearly means God here, a passive could be taken as a so-called “divine passive” by which God is the implied agent. Job clearly means God here, but he stops short of naming him (see also the note on “God” earlier in this verse).
18 sn God is the implied agent. Job clearly means God here, but he stops short of naming him (see also the note on “God” earlier in this verse).
19 sn The parallel verb is now a preterite with a von (v) consecutive: it therefore has the nuance of a characteristic perfect or gnomonic perfect — the English present tense.
20 sn The verb מַנְחַר (manhar) means “to dig” to excavate.” It may have the accusative of the thing that is being sought (Exod 7:24), but here it is followed by a comparative min (m). The verse therefore describes the sufferers who excavate or dig the ground to find death, more than others who seek for treasures.
21 sn Here too the form is the participle in apposition “to him who is in misery” in v. 20. It continues the description of those who are destitute and would be delighted to die.
22 sn There is no reason to force such; the idea of jubilation fits the tenor of the whole verse easily enough.
23 sn God is the implied agent. Job clearly means God here, but he stops short of naming him (see also the note on “God” earlier in this verse).
24 sn God is the implied agent. Job clearly means God here, but he stops short of naming him (see also the note on “God” earlier in this verse).
25 sn The second colon now refers to people in general because of the plural construct הַיְנָשֵׁךְ (haya’anshekh), “those bitter of soul/life”). One may recall the use of הַיְנָשֵׁךְ (haya’anshekh, “bitter”) by Naomi to describe her pained experience as a poor widow in Ruth 1:20, or the use of the word to describe the bitter oppression inflicted on Israel by the Egyptians (Exod 1:14). Those who are “bitter of soul” are those whose life is overwhelmed with painful experiences and suffering.
26 sn The verse simply begins with the participle in apposition to the expressions in the previous verse describing those who are bitter. The preposition is added from the context.
27 sn The word מִנָּה (minah) is the Piel of מָנַה (manah) which means “a heap.” If the verb מָנַה (manah) is to be taken as a so-called “divine passive,” the implied agent is Yahweh. Job clearly means God here, but he stops short of naming him (see also the note on “God” earlier in this verse).
28 sn God is the implied agent. Job clearly means God here, but he stops short of naming him (see also the note on “God” earlier in this verse).
whose way is hidden, and whom God has hedged in; for my singing comes in place of food, and my groanings flow forth like water. For the very thing I dreaded has happened to me, and what I feared has come upon me. I have no ease; I have no quietness; I cannot rest; turmoil has come upon me.

**tn** The LXX translated “to a man whose way is hidden” with the vague paraphrase “death is rest to [such] a man.” The translators apparently combined the reference to “the grave” in the previous verse with “hidden”.

**tn** The verb is the Hiphil of פָּקַח (pakhak, “to hedge in”). The key parallel passage is Job 19:8, which says, “He has blocked [nu; gadar] my way so I cannot pass, and has set darkness over my paths.” To be hedged in is an implied metaphor indicating that the pathway was concealed and enclosed. There is an irony in Job’s choice of words in light of Satan’s accusation in 1:10. It is heightened further when the same verb is employed by God in 38:8 (see F. I. Andersen, *Job* [TOTC], 109).

**tn** For the prepositional את (’atah), the temporal meaning “before” (“my singing comes before I eat”) makes very little sense here. How can I eat if I am not able to? The meaning “in place of” appears to fit better (see 1 Sam 1:16, “count not your maid for a daughter of Belial!”). The line means that Job’s singing, which results from the suffering (metonymy of effect) is his constant, daily food. Parallels like Ps 42:3 which says “my tears have been my bread/food” shows a similar figure.

**tn** The verb describes the “roaring” of a lion (Job 4:10), but it is used for the loud groaning or cries of those in distress (Pss 22:1; 32:3). This second colon is paraphrased in the LXX to say, “I weep being beset with terror.” The idea of “pouring forth water” while groaning can be represented by “I weep.” The word weeping being beset with terror.” The idea of “pouring forth water” while groaning can be represented by “I weep.” The word weeping being beset with terror.”

**tn** The construction uses the cognate accusative with the verb יָסָר (yasar) “to correct,” or “the preexisting thing I dreaded” (לִפְלִין לִפְלִין, pakhad pakhadhi). The verb יָסָר (pakhad) has the sense of “dread” and the noun the meaning “thing dreaded.” The structure of the sentence with the perfect verb followed by the preterite indicates that the first action preceded the second – he feared something but then it happened. Some commentaries suggest reading this as a conditional clause followed by the preterit in tense translation: “If I fear a thing, it happens to me” (see A. B. Davidson, *Job*, 24). The reason for this change is that it is hard for some to think that in his prime Job had such fears. He did have a pure trust and confidence in the Lord (16:19, 29:18f). But on the other hand, he did make sacrifices for his sons because he thought they might sin. There is evidence to suggest that he was aware that calamity could strike, and this is not necessarily incompatible with trust.

**tn** The verb אָסָה (’asa) is Aramaic and is equivalent to the Hebrew verb אָסָה (’asah, “come, happen”).

**tn** The final verb is אָסָה (’asa, “has come”). It appears to be an imperfect, but since it is parallel to the preterite of the first colon it should be given that nuances here. Of course, if the other view of the verse is taken, then this would simply be translated as “comes,” and the preceding preterite also given an English present tense translation.

**tn** The LXX “peace” bases its rendering on שלָם (shalah) and not שלָם (shalah), which retains the original וּנְשָׂא (v. 1). The verb means “to be quiet, to be at ease.”

**tn** The verb is literally “and I do/can not rest.” A potential perfect nuance fits this passage well. The word מִלָּה (milah, “rest”) is a later development, and the pre-existing verb שָׂמָה (shama) has the sense that the same noun is contrasted to רָגָז (rogaz, “torment, agitation” [v. 26 and 17]).

**tn** The last clause simply has “and trouble came.” Job is essentially saying that since the trouble has come upon him there is not a moment of rest and relief.

**sn** The speech of Eliphaz can be broken down into three main sections. In 4:1-11 he wonders that Job who had comforted so many people in trouble, and who was so pious, should fall into such despair, forgetting the great truth that righteousness never perishes under affliction – calamity only destroys the wicked. Then in 4:12-5:7 Eliphaz tries to warn Job about complaining against God because only the ungodly reject the dealings of God and by their impatience bring down his wrath upon them. Finally in 5:8-27 Eliphaz appeals to Job to follow a different course, to seek after God, for God only smites to heal or to correct, to draw people to himself and away from evil. See fullerton, *Job* (1975): 308-11.

**tn** The verb לְאָשֵׁר (le’asher, “has intended”) is Aramaic and is equivalent to the Hebrew לְאָשֵׁר (le’asher, “who is able?”) in the Piel means “to correct,” or “the preexisting thing I dreaded.” The structure of the sentence with the perfect verb followed by the preterite indicates that the first action preceded the second – he feared something but then it happened. Some commentaries suggest reading this as a conditional clause followed by the preterit in tense translation: “If I fear a thing, it happens to me” (see A. B. Davidson, *Job*, 4). The reason for this change is that it is hard for some to think that in his prime Job had such fears. He did have a pure trust and confidence in the Lord (16:19, 29:18f). But on the other hand, he did make sacrifices for his sons because he thought they might sin. There is evidence to suggest that he was aware that calamity could strike, and this is not necessarily incompatible with trust.

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who stumbled, and you have strengthened the knees that gave way.

4:5 But now the same thing comes to you, and you are discouraged; it strikes you, and you are terrified.

4:6 Is not your piety your confidence, and your blameless ways your hope?

4:7 Call to mind now: Who, being innocent, ever perished? And where were upright people ever destroyed?

4:8 Even as I have seen, those who

plow iniquity, and those who sow trouble reap the same.

4:9 By the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of his anger they are consumed.

4:10 There is the roaring of the lion and the growling of the young lion, but the teeth of the young lions are broken.

It has no specific sighting in mind, but refers to each time he has seen the wicked do this. The figure is an implied metaphor. Plowing suggests the idea of deliberately preparing (or cultivating) life for evil. This describes those who are fundamentally wicked.

The LXX renders this with a plural “barren places.”

The LXX in the place of “breath” has “word” or “command,” probably to limit the anthropomorphism. The word מִיִּנְשָׁמָה (minnishamah) comprising מִנ (min) + נְשָׁמָה (neshamah), the construct of הנשמה (neshamah); “from/at the breath of.” The “breath of God” occurs frequently in Scripture. In Gen 2:7 it imparts life, but here it destroys it. The figure probably does indicate a divine decree from God (e.g., “depart from me”) – so the LXX may have been simply interpreting.

The statement is saying that if some die by misfortune it is because divine retribution or anger has come upon them. This is not necessarily the case, as the NT declares (see Luke 13:1-5).

The word נֵאָה (naakh) is now parallel to הנשמה (neshamah); both can mean “breath” or “wind.” To avoid using “breath” for both lines, “blast” has been employed here. The word is followed by the construct of הנשמה (neshamah), which could be translated “his anger” or “his nostril.” If “nostril” is retained, then it is a very bold anthropomorphism to indicate the fuming wrath of God. It is close to the picture of the hot wind coming off the desert to scorch the plants (see Hos 13:15).

There is has been supplied to make a smoother translation out of the clauses.

Eliphaz takes up a new image here to make the point that the wicked are destroyed – the breaking up and scattering of a den of lions. There are several words for “lion” used in this section. D. J. A. Clines observes that it is probably impossible to distinguish them (Job [WBC], 109, 110, which records some bibliography of those who have tried to work on the etymologies and meanings). The first is אריה (ar’eh) the generic term for “lion.” It is followed by שֵׁךְ (shakkal), which, like דַּשֶּׁנ (dashen) or דַּשֵּׁנ (dashen), a “young lion.” Some have thought that the שֵׁךְ (shakkal) is a lion-like animal, perhaps a panther or leopard. KBL takes it by metathesis from Arabic “young one.” The LXX for this verse has “the strength of the lion, and the voice of the lioness and the exulting cry of serpents are quenched.”

Heb “voice.”

The verb belongs to the subject “teeth” in this last colon, but it is used by zeugma (a figure of speech in which one word is made to refer to two or more other words, but has to be understood differently in the different contexts) of the three subjects (see H. H. Rowley, Job [NCBC], 46-47).
4:11 The mighty lion is slain for lack of prey, and the cubs of the lioness are scattered.

4:12 “Now a word was secretly brought to me, and my ear caught a whisper of it. In the trouble of my thoughts of the dreams in the night when a deep sleep falls on men, a trembling gripped me — and a terror! — and made all my bones shake.

4:13 “As a result of this, a trembling gripped me. I was more afraid of what I saw than of what I hoped to see. The images of my head turned away, and theTZIMIM of my heart trembled. I asked, ‘Why are you frightened and disturbed?’

4:14 It stands still, but I cannot recognize its appearance; an image is before my eyes, and I hear a murmuring voice.

4:15 Then a breath of air passes by my face; it makes the hair of my flesh stand up. It stands still, but I cannot recognize its appearance; an image is before my eyes, and I hear a murmuring voice.

4:16 It is a mortal man righteous before God?

4:17 Is there any truth in your words? None of these things have fallen upon me, but I have been placed at the end of the colon.

4:18 ‘There is one who despises me — I have nothing to do with him.

4:19 ‘While I was at ease in my couch and my sleep was sweet, the voice of the vision startled me, so that I got up in order to hear it.

4:20 ‘The LXX of this verse offers special problems. It reads, ‘I arose and my ear caught a breath and a voice.’

4:21 ‘The imperfect verb in this verse is to be classified as potential imperfection. Eliphaz is unable to recognize the figure standing before him.

4:22 ‘The word for man here is first singular, but in all his frailty, his mortality. This is paralleled with בְּשֵׁם (‘enosh), stressing man in all his frailty, his mortality. This is paralleled with בְּשֵׁם (‘enosh), stressing man in all his frailty, his mortality.

4:23 ‘The LXX has the first person of the verb: ‘I arose and my ear caught a breath and a voice.’

4:24 ‘The imperfect verb in this verse also express obvious truths known at all times (GKC 315 §107 f).

4:25 ‘The word for man here is יִשָּׁר (‘ish), meaning more righteous than God. He is stating that no man is righteous or pure before God the Creator.

4:26 ‘The LXX has the first person of the verb: ‘I arose and my ear caught a breath and a voice.’

4:27 ‘The word for man here is יִשָּׁר (‘ish), meaning more righteous than God. He is stating that no man is righteous or pure before God the Creator. See also Jer 51:5 where the preposition should be rendered ‘before’ [the Holy One].

13 tn The word מָנַק (manak) can be “spirit” or “breath.” The implication here is that it was something that Eliphaz felt when he saw things in v. 16. The LXX translators are divided on whether this is an apparition, a spirit, or a breath. The verb can be used in either the masculine or the feminine, and so the gender of the verb does not favor the meaning “spirit.” In fact, in Isa 21:1 the same verb פְּעָל (p’aal, “pass on, through”) is used with the subject being a strong wind or hurricane “blowing across.” It may be that such a wind has caused Eliphaz’s hair to stand on end here.

14 tn The verbs in this verse are imperfects. In the last verse the verbs were perfects when Eliphaz reported the fear that seized him. In this continuation of the report the description becomes vivid with the change in verbs, as if the experience were in progress.

15 tn The subject of this verb is also יִשָּׁר (‘ish), since it can assume either gender. The “hair of my flesh” is the complement and not the subject; therefore the Piel is to be retained and not changed to a Qal as some suggest (and compare with Ps 119:120).

16 tn The LXX has the first person of the verb: “I arose and perceived it not; I looked and there was no form before my eyes, but I only heard a breath and a voice.”

17 tn The imperfect verb is to be classified as potential imperfection. Eliphaz is unable to recognize the figure standing before him.

18 sn The colon reads “a silence and a voice I hear.” Some have rendered it “there is a silence, and then I hear.” The verb בְּשֵׁם (‘enosh), stressing man in all his frailty, his mortality. This is paralleled with בְּשֵׁם (‘enosh), stressing man in all his frailty, his mortality.

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21 tn The imperfect verb in this interrogative sentence could also be interpreted with a potential nuance: “Can a man be righteous?”

22 tn The classification of מִן (min) as a comparative in this verse (NIV, “more righteous than God”) is also possible. KJV, ASV, and NCV do not state the most probable. The idea of someone being more righteous than God is too strong to be reasonable. Job will not do that — but he will imply that God is unjust. In addition, Eliphaz had this vision before hearing of Job’s trouble and so is not addressing the idea that Job is making himself more righteous than God. He is stating that no man is righteous before God. Verses 18-21 will show that no one can claim righteousness before God. In 9:2 and 25:4 the preposition “with” is used. See also Jer 51:5 where the preposition should be rendered “before” [the Holy One].
Or a man pure before his Creator\textsuperscript{12} before morning and evening,\textsuperscript{13} they perish forever\textsuperscript{14} without anyone regarding it.\textsuperscript{15}

4:20 They are destroyed\textsuperscript{12} between morning and evening.\textsuperscript{13} they perish forever\textsuperscript{14} without anyone regarding it.\textsuperscript{15}

4:21 Is not their excess wealth\textsuperscript{16} taken away from them?\textsuperscript{17} They die,\textsuperscript{18} yet without attaining wisdom.\textsuperscript{19}

1 sn In Job 15:14 and 25:4 the verb יִשְׁקָה (yiskēh, from יָשָׁק [zākāh], “be clean”) is paralleled with בָּשָׁם (bāshām, from בָּשָׁמָה [nādeq], “be righteous”).

2 tn The double question here merely repeats the same question with different words (see GKC 475 §150.h). The second member could just as well have been connected with ו (vav).

3 tn The particle ו (wen) introduces a conditional clause here, although the older translations used “behold.” The clause forms the foundation for the point made in the next verse, an argument by analogy – if this be true, then how much more/less the other.

4 tn Heb “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

5 tn The verb יִשְׁקָה (yiskēh, “a moth”) is the Hiphil imperfect of the root לְשָׁק (lāshāq), “to be pure before their Maker.” However, the Moth’ (Job 4:19),” is תֹּקָקָה (toqkēh), “bird’s nest”; and J. A. Rimbach, “‘Crushed before a moth,” VT 30 (1980): 354-57.

6 tn Or “from morning to evening.” The expression “from morning to evening” is probably not a merism, but rather describes the time between the morning and the evening, as in Isa 38:12: “from day to night you make an end of me.”

7 sn The second colon expresses the consequence of this day-long reducing to ashes – they perish forever (see 20:7 and 24:20).

8 tn This rendering is based on the interpretation that מִבְּלִי (mebāli’im) uses the Hiphil participle of בָּלִי (bāli’), “set” with an understood object “heart” to gain the idiom of “without one who set.” This would lead to “without one who saves they perish forever” (E. Dhome, Job, 55).

9 sn The word יִשְׁתַּקְו (yishṭāqav, “to be crushed”) connotes the sense of “like.” That is the most natural meaning of the equivalent word יִצְדַּק (yitsḏaq, “be righteous”).

10 tn The imperfect verb is in the plural, suggesting “they crush.” But since there is no subject expressed, the verb may be given an impersonal subject, or more simply, treated as a passive (see GKC 460 §144.g).

11 sn The prepositional compound בִּיסַמ (bīsim) normally has the sense of “beside,” but it has been used already in 3:2 in the sense of “like.” This is the most natural meaning of this line. Otherwise, the interpretation must offer some explanation of a comparison between how quickly a moth and a human can be crushed. There are suggestions for different readings here; see for example G. R. Driver, “Linguistic and Textual Problems: Jeremiah,” JQR 28 (1937/38): 97-129 for a change to “before”; and J. A. Rimbach, “Crushed before the Moth” (Job 4:19), JBL 100 (1981): 244-46, for a change of the verb to “they are pure before their Maker.” However, these are unnecessary emendations.

12 sn The form יִצְקַקְו (yītsqāqav) is the Hophal imperfect of the root לְשָׁק (lāshāq, “to be pounded, pulverized, reduced to ashes”) (Jer 46:5; Mic 1:7). It follows the Aramaic formation (see GKC 182 §67). This line appears to form a parallelism with “they are crushed like a moth,” the third unit of the last verse, but it has its own parallel idea in this verse. See D. J. A. Clines, “Verb Motivation and the Interpretation of Job 4:20, 21,” VT 30 (1980): 354-57.

13 sn Their excess wealth is taken away from them.

14 sn They die. This clear verb interprets all the images in these verses – they die. When the house of clay collapses, or when their excess perishes – their life is over.

15 tn Heb “and without wisdom.” The word “attaining” is supplied in the translation as a clarification.

16 sn The expression without attaining wisdom is parallel to the previous without anyone regarding it. Both verses describe how easily humans perish; there is no concern for it, nor any sense to it. Humans die without attaining wisdom which can solve the mystery of human life.
5:1 “Call now! Is there anyone who will answer you?”

To which of the holy ones will you turn?

5:2 For wrath kills the foolish person, and anger slays the silly one.

5:3 I myself have seen the fool taking root, but suddenly I cursed his place of residence.

5:4 His children are far from safety, and they are crushed at the place where judgment is rendered.

nor is there anyone to deliver them.

5:5 The hungry eat up his harvest, and take it even from behind the thorns, and the thirsty swallow up their fortune.

1 tn Some commentators transpose this verse with the following paragraph, placing it after v. 7 (see E. D horrible, Job, 62). But the reasons for this are based on the perceived development of the argument and are not that compelling.

2 sn The imperative is here a challenge for Job. If he makes his appeal against God, who is there who will listen? The rhetorical questions are intended to indicate that no one will respond, not even the angels. Job would do better to realize that he is guilty and his only hope is in God.

3 sn The LXX has rendered “holy ones” as “holy angels” (cf. TEV, CTV, NLT). The LXX has interpreted the verb in the colo too freely: “if you will see.”

4 sn The point being made is that the angels do not represent the cries of people to God as if mediating for them. But if Job appealed to any of them to take his case against God, there would be no response whatsoever for that.

5 sn One of the reasons that commentators transpose v. 1 is that the verb (ki, “for”) here seems to follow 4:21 better. If people die without wisdom, it is folly that kills them. But the verse also makes sense after 5:1. He is saying that complaining against God will not bring deliverance (v. 1), but rather, by such impatience the fool will bring greater calamity on himself.

6 sn The two words for “foolish person” are common in wisdom literature. The first, הָעִיל (’eqqov), is the fool who is a senseless person; the נַפָּה (poteh) is the naive and silly person, the simpleton, the one who is easily led astray. The direct object is introduced with the preposition גֶּל (lamed) in this verse (see GKC 366 §117.n).

7 sn The two parallel nouns are similar; their related verbs are also paralleled in Deut 32:16 with the idea of “vex” and “impatient.” The first word מַצְפֻּנִים (tsammim) refers to the inner irritation and anger one feels, whereas the second word מַצְפֻּנִים (qin’ah) refers to the outward expression of the anger. In Job 6:2, Job will respond “O that my impatience [ka’as] were weighed...”

8 tn The use of the pronoun here adds emphasis to the subject of the sentence (see GKC 437 §135.a).

9 tn This word is הָעִיל (’eqv), the same word for the “senseless man” in the preceding verse. Eliphaz is citing an example of his principle here: he saw such a fool for a brief moment while appearing to prosper (i.e., taking root).

10 sn A. B. Davidson argues that the verse does not mean that Eliphaz cursed his place during his prosperity. This line is metonymical (giving the effect). God judged the fool and his place was ruined; consequently, Eliphaz pronounced it accursed of God (see A. B. Davidson, Job, 36). Many emend the verb slightly to read “and it was suddenly cursed” (קָיָּם [yuqak] instead of בֹּשָׁה [ya qay]; see H. H. Rowley, Job [NCBC], 51).

11 tn The imperfect verbs in this verse describe the condition of the accursed situation. Some commentators follow the LXX and take these as jussives, making this verse the curse that the man pronounced upon the fool. Rashi adds “This is the maladjustment with which I have cursed him.” That would make the speaker the one calling down the judgment on the fool rather than responding by observation how God destroyed the habitation of the fool.

12 tn The verb יָדַלֵק (yiddalkk’u) could be taken as the passive voice, or in the reciprocal sense (“crush one another”) or reflexive (“crush themselves”). The context favors the idea that the children of the foolish person will be destroyed because there is no one who will deliver them.

13 sn The hungry are other people, possibly the hungry poor to whom the wealthy have refused to give bread (22:7). The sons are so helpless that even the poor take their property.

14 sn The MT reads “whose harvest the hungry eat up.” Some commentators want to follow the LXX and render יִשְׁכַּב (“his harvest”) to יָשִּׁכְב (yitskhub), “what they have reaped”; cf. NAB. The reference here is to the image of taking root in v. 3; whatever took root – the prosperity of his life – will not belong to him or his sons to enjoy. If the emendation is accepted, then the reference would be immediately to the “sons” in the preceding verse.

15 sn The line is difficult; the Hebrew text reads literally “and unto from thorns he takes it.” The idea seems to be that even from within an enclosed hedge of thorns other people will take the harvest. Many commentators either delete the line altogether or try to repoint it to make more sense out of it. G. R. Driver had taken the preposition יָשִּׁכְב (el, “towards”) as the subject. But suddenly I cursed his place of residence.

16 sn The MT reads “whose harvest the hungry eat up.” Some commentators want to follow the LXX and repoint יָשִּׁכְב (el, “towards”) as יָשִּׁכִּב (el, “strong man”) and the noun צָמִים (tzimbim, “thorns”) connected to Aramaic יָשִּׁכְב (yitskhub, “basket”); he read it as “a strong man snatches it from the baskets” (G. R. Driver, “On Job 5:5,” T 12 [1956]: 485-86). E. Dhorme (Job 1986) changed the word slightly to יָשִּׁכְב (yitskhub = matspunum, “hiding places”), instead of יָשִּׁכְב (misitshim, “out of the thorns”), to get the translation “and unto hiding places he carries it.” This fits the use of the verb יָשִּׁכְב (laqakh, “to take”) with the preposition יָשִּׁכְב (el, “towards”) meaning “carry” to someplace. There is no need to make any material difficulty to the subject of the line.

17 sn The verb has been given many different renderings, some more radical than others: “engulf,” “draws,” “gathers,” “swallow” (see H. H. Rowley, Job [NCBC], 53). The idea of “swallow” is found in Job 20:15. The general sense of the line is clear, in spite of the difficulties of determining the exact meaning of the verb.

20 tn The LXX has several variations for the line. It reads something like the following: “for what they have collected the just shall eat, but they shall not be delivered out of calamities; let their strength be utterly exhausted.” The LXX may have gotten the idea of the “righteous” as those who suffer from hunger, and the thirsty swallow up their fortune. The Targum to Job interprets it with “shield” and adds “warriors” as the subject.
For evil does not come up from the dust,\\ndnor does trouble spring up from the ground.

5:7 But people are born to trouble, as surely as the sparks fly upward. \\

Blessings for the One Who Seeks God

5:8 But as for me, I would seek God, and to God I would set forth my case.

1 sn The previous discussion shows how trouble rises, namely, from the rebelliousness of the fool. Here Eliphaz simply summarizes the points made with this general principle—trouble does not come from outside man, nor does it come as a part of the natural order, but rather it comes from the evil nature of man.

2 tn Heb “man [is].” Because “man” is used in a generic sense for humanity here, the generic “people” has been used in the translation.

3 tn There is a slight difficulty here in that vv. 6 and 7 seem to be saying the opposite thing. Many commentators, therefore, emend the t ’npl (v ulad, “is born”) to an active participle b npl (yaled, “begets, beget”) to place the source of trouble in man himself. But the LXX seems to retain the passive idea: “man is born to trouble.” The contrast between the two verses does not seem too difficult, for it still could represent that trouble’s source is within the man.

4 tn For the Hebrew b yllad, “sons of the flame,” the present translation has the rendering “sparks.” E. Dorph (Job, 62) thinks it refers to some kind of bird, but renders it “sons of the lightning” because the eagle was associated with lightning in ancient interpretations. Sparks, he argues, do not soar high above the earth. Other suggestions include lightning, the Phoenixian god of lightning (Pope), t he fire of passion (Buttenwieser), angels (Peake), or demons (Targum Job). None of these are convincing; the idea of sparks flying upward fits the translation well and makes clear sense in the passage.

5 tn The simple translation of the last two words is “fly high” or “soar aloft” which would suit the idea of an eagle. But, as H. H. Rowley (Job [NCBC], 54) concludes, the argument to identify the expression preceding this with eagles is far-fetched.

6 tn The LXX has the name of a bird here: “the vulture’s young seek the high places.” The Targum to Job has “sons of demons” or “the sparks which shoot from coals of fire.”

7 sn Eliphaz affirms that if he were in Job’s place he would take refuge in God, but Job has to acknowledge that he has offended God and accept this suffering as his chastisement. Job eventually will submit to God in the end, but not in the way that Eliphaz presumes here, for Job does not agree that the sufferings are judgments from God.

8 tn The word δικαστήριον (dikasterion) is a strong adversative “but.” This forms the contrast with what has been said previously and so marks a new section.

9 sn The independent personal pronoun here adds emphasis to the subject of the verb, again strengthening the contrast with what Job is doing (see R. J. Williams, Hebrew Syntax, 22, §106).

10 tn The imperfect verbs in this verse express not so much what Eliphaz does as what he would do if he were in Job’s place (even though in 13:3 we have the affirmation). The use fits the category of the imperfect used in conditional clauses (see GKC 319 §107.x).

11 tn The verb γίνομαι (ginomai, “to seek”) followed by the preposition ἐπί (epi, “towards”) has the meaning of addressing oneself to (God). See 8:19 and 40:10.

12 tn The Hebrew employs כָּל (cal) in the first line and בְּנֵי-רֶשֶׁף (b yne reshef) in the second for “God”, but the LXX uses κύριος (kurios, “Lord”) in both places in this verse. However, in the second colon it also has “Lord of all.” This is replaced in the Greek version of Aquila by παντοκράτωρ (pantokrator, translated literally “Almighty”). On the basis of this information, H. M. Orlinsky suggests that the second name for God in the verses should be “Shaddai” (JQR 25 [1934/35]: 271).

13 tn The Hebrew simply has “my word,” but in this expression that uses בָּשָׂם (basham) with the meaning of “lay before” or “expose a cause” in a legal sense, “case” or “cause” would be a better translation.

14 tn Heb “who does.” It is common for such doxologies to begin with participles; they follow the pattern of the psalms in this style. Because of the length of the sentence in Hebrew and the conventions of English style, a new sentence was started here in the translation.

15 tn The Hebrew has רַעַשׁ, רְשׁוֹת (ruaš, ruin), literally, “and no investigation.” The use of the conjunction on the expression follows a form of the circumstantial clause construction, and so the entire expression describes the great works as “unsearchable.”

16 sn The preposition in πρῶτος (pros, “until there was no”) is stereotypical; it conveys the sense of having no number (see Job 9:10; Ps 38:10; 103:10).

17 sn H. H. Rowley (Job [NCBC], 54) notes that the verse fits Eliphaz’s approach very well, for he has good understanding of the truth, but has difficulty in making the correct conclusions from it.

18 tn Heb “who gives.” The particle continues the doxology here. But the article is necessary because of the distance between this verse and the reference to God.

19 tn In both halves of the verse the literal rendering would be “upon the face of the earth” and “upon the face of the fields.”

20 sn The second participle is simply coordinated to the first and therefore does not need the definite article repeated (see GKC 404 §126.b).

21 tn The Hebrew term קְרוּס (k rous) basically means “outside,” or what is outside. It could refer to streets if what is meant is outside the house, but it refers to fields here (parallel to the more general word) because it is outside the village. See Ps 144:13 for the use of the expression for “countryside.” The LXX gives a much wider interpretation: “what is under heaven.”

22 tn Heb “setting.” The infinitive construct clause is here taken as explaining the nature of God, and so parallel to the preceding descriptions. If read simply as a purpose clause after the previous verse, it would suggest that the purpose of watering the earth was to raise the humble (cf. NASB, “And sends water on the fields, // So that He sets on high those marvelous things without investigation.”)

23 tn The word σκότος (skotos) refers to “those who are down.” This refers to the lowly and despised of the earth. They are the opposite of the “proud” (see Ps 138:6). Here there is a deliberate contrast between “lowly” and “on high.”

24 sn The meaning of the word is “to be dark, dirty”; therefore, it refers to the ash-sprinkled head of the mourner (H. H. Rowley, Job [NCBC], 54). The custom was to darken one’s face in sorrow (see Job 2:12; Ps 35:14; 38:7).

25 sn The perfect verb may be translated “be set on high; be raised up.” E. Dhorme (Job, 64) notes that the perfect is parallel to the infinitive of the first colon, and so he renders it in the same way as the infinitive, comparing the construction to that of 28:25.
5:12 He frustrates⁴ the plans⁵ of the crafty⁶ so that⁦ their hands cannot accomplish what they had planned.⁹
5:13 He catches⁸ the wise in their own craftiness,⁷ and the counsel of the cunning⁹ is brought to a quick end.⁹
5:14 They meet with darkness in the daytime,⁰ and grope about in the noontime as if it were night.¹²
5:15 So he saves¹³ from the sword that comes from their mouth,¹⁴ even¹⁵ the poor from the hand of the powerful.
5:16 Thus the poor have hope, and iniquity¹⁶ shuts its mouth.¹⁷
5:17 “Therefore,¹⁸ blessed¹⁹ is the man whom God corrects,²⁰ so do not despise the discipline²¹ of the Almighty.²²

¹³ tn The verb, the Hiphil preterite of יָשַׁע (yasha, ‘and he saves’), indicates that by frustrating the plans of the wicked God saves the poor. So the vav (v) consecutive shows the result in the sequence of the verses.
¹⁴ tn The juxtaposition of “from the sword from their mouth” poses translation difficulties. Some MSS do not have the preposition “on their mouth,” but render the expression as a construct: “from the sword of their mouth.” This would mean their tongue, and by metonymy, what they say. The expression “from their mouth” corresponds well with “from the hand” in the next colon. And as E. Dhoyme (Job, 67) notes, what is missing is a parallel in the first part with “the poor” in the second. So he follows Cappel in repointing “from the sword” as a Hophal participle, יָשַׁע (yash‘a‘), meaning “the ruined.” If a change is required, this has the benefit of only changing the pointing. The difficulty with this is that the word “desolate, ruined” is not used for people, but only to cities, lands, or mountains. The sense of the verse can be supported from the present pointing: “from the sword [which comes] from their mouth;” the second phrase could also be in apposition, meaning, “from the sword, i.e., from their mouth.”
¹⁵ tn If the word “poor” is to do double duty, i.e., serving as the object of the verb “saves” in the first colon as well as the second, then the conjunction should be explanatory.
¹⁶ tn Other translations render this “injustice” (NIV, NRSV, CEV) or “unrighteousness” (NASB).
¹⁷ tn The verse summarizes the result of God’s intervention in human affairs, according to Eliphaz’ idea that even-handed justice prevails. Ps 107:42 parallels v. 16b.
¹⁸ tn The particle “therefore” links this section to the preceding: it points this out as the logical consequence of the previous discussion, and more generally, as the essence of Job’s suffering.
¹⁹ tn The word יָשָׁר (yash‘ar, “blessed”) is often rendered “happy.” But “happy” relates to what happens. “Blessed” is a reference to the heavenly bliss of the one who is right with God.
²⁰ tn The construction is an implied relative clause. The literal rendering would simply be “the man God corrects him.” The suffix on the verb is a resumptive pronoun, completing the object of the verb “corrects” in the first colon as well as the second, hence the conjunction should be explanatory.
²¹ tn The name Shaddai occurs 31 times in the book. This name occurs 31 times in the book. This name is also in Gen 1:1, 2:9; 28:13, 35:1, 38:1, 47:3, 50:15.
²² sn The name Shaddai occurs 31 times in the book. This is its first occurrence. It is often rendered “Almighty” because of the LXX and some of the early fathers. The etymology and meaning of the word otherwise remains uncertain, in spite of attempts to connect it to “mountains” or “breasts.”
5:18 For wounds, but he also bandages; he strikes, but his hands also heal.
5:19 He will deliver you from six calamities; yes, in seven no evil will touch you.
5:20 In time of famine he will redeem you from death, and in time of war from the power of the sword.
5:21 You will be protected from malicious gossip, and will not be afraid of the destruction when it comes.
5:22 You will laugh at destruction and famine;

and need to be afraid of the beasts of the earth.
5:23 For you will have a pact with the stones of the field, and the wild animals will be at peace with you.
5:24 And you will know that your home will be secure, and when you inspect your domains, you will not be missing anything.
5:25 You will also know that your children will be numerous, and your descendants like the grass of the earth.
5:26 You will come to your grave in a full age.

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1 sn Verses 18-23 give the reasons why someone should accept the chastening of God – the hand that wounds is the same hand that heals. But, of course, the lines do not apply to Job because his suffering is not due to divine chastening.
2 tn The addition of the independent pronoun here makes the subject emphatic, as if to say, “For it is he who makes...”
3 tn The imperfect verbs in this verse describe the characteristic activities of God; the classification as habitual imperfect fits the idea and is to be rendered with the English present tense.
4 tn The verb is the Hiphil imperfect of הָנָב (natsal, “deliver”). These verbs might have been treated as habitual imperfects if it were not for the use of the numerical images – “six calamities...in seven.” So the nuance is specific future instead.
5 tn The use of a numerical ladder as we have here – “six // seven” is frequent in wisdom literature to show completeness. See Prov 6:16; Amos 1:3, Mic 6:5. A number that seems to be seven is frequently used to show completeness, and in time of war from the power of the sword.
6 sn Targum Job here sees an allusion to the famine of Egypt and the war with Amalek.
7 tn Heb “from the hand of the sword.” This is idiomatic for “the power of the sword.” The expression is also metaphorical, meaning from the effect of the sword, which is death.
8 tn The Hebrew verb essentially means “you will be hidden.” In the Niphal the verb means “to be hidden, to be in a hiding place,” and protected (Ps 31:20).
9 tn Heb “from the lash [i.e., whip] of the tongue.” Sir 26:9 “from the lash of the tongue” or “the blow of the tongue.” The expression indicates that a malicious gossip is more painful than a blow.
10 sn The Targum saw here a reference to Balaam and the devastation brought on by the Midianites.
11 tn The word here is וָשׁוֹד (shod); it means “destruction,” but some commentators conjecture alternate readings: וָחָל (shokh, “desolation”); or וָשֹׁד (shad, “demon”). One argument for maintaining וָשׁוֹד (shod) is that it fits the assonance within the verse וָשׁוֹד וָשׁוֹד (shot...shad).
12 tn The repetition of “destruction” and “famine” here has prompted some scholars to delete the whole verse. Others try to emend the text. The LXX renders them as “the unrighteous and the lawless.” But there is no difficulty in having the repetition of the words as found in the MT.
13 tn The word translated “in a full age” has been given an array of meanings: “health; integrity”; “like a new blade of corn”; “in your strength [or vigor].” The numerical value of the letters in the word שְׁלֵם (shlem, “old age”) was 2, 30, and 8, or 60. This led some of the commentators to say that at 60 one would enter the ripe old age (E. Dhorme, Job, 73).
As stacks of grain are harvested in their season.

5:27 Look, we have investigated this, so it is true. Hear it, and apply it for your own good.\(^3\)

Job Replies to Eliphaz

6:1 Then Job responded: 4

6:2 “Oh, if only my grief could be weighed, and my misfortune laid on the scales too!\(^5\)

6:3 But because it is heavier than the sand of the sea, that is why my words have been wild.\(^6\)

\(^1\) to make a better parallelism, some commentators have replaced the imperative with another finite verb, “we have found it.”

\(^2\) The preposition with the suffix (referred to as the ethical dative) strengthens the imperative. An emphatic personal pronoun also precedes the imperative. The resulting force would be something like “and you had better apply it for your own good!”

\(^3\) With this the speech by Eliphaz comes to a close. His two mistakes with it are: (1) that the tone was too cold and (2) the argument did not fit Job’s case (see further, A. B. Davidson, Job, 42).

\(^4\) Heb “answered and said.”

\(^5\) The conjunction (ba, “if, if only”) introduces the wish – an unrealizable wish – with the Niphal imperfect.

\(^6\) Job pairs נָעַה (ku‘aš, “my grief”) and רָעָה (luyyašti, “my misfortune”). The second word refers to Job’s whole demeanor that he shows his friends – the impatient and vexed expression of his grief. The word for “misfortune” is a Kethib-Qere reading. The two words have essentially the same meaning; they derive from the verb נָעַה (ku‘ah, “to fall”) and so mean a misfortune.

\(^7\) The Qal infinitive absolute is here used to intensify the Niphal imperfect (see GKC 344-45 §113.w). The infinitive absolute intensifies the wish as well as the idea of weighing.

\(^8\) The third person plural verb is used here; it expresses the idea of weighing: but for the references to these suggestions, see D. J. A. Clines, Job [WBC], 158. H. H. Rowley (Job [NCBC], 59), nonequivalence, follows the suggestion of Driver that connects it to a root meaning “wear me down.” This change of meaning requires no change in the Hebrew text. The image is of a beleaguering army; the host is made up of all the terrors from God. The reference is to the terrifying and perplexing thoughts that assail Job (A. B. Davidson, Job, 44).

\(^9\) E. Dhorme (Job, 76) notes that נָעַה (ki ‘ataḥh) has no more force than “but”; and that the construction is the same as in 17:4; 20:13-14; 23:14-15. The initial clause is causative, and the second half of the verse gives the consequence (“because... that is why”). Others take 3a as the apodosis of v. 2, and translate it “now it would be heavier...” (see A. B. Davidson, Job, 43).

\(^10\) E. Dhorme (Job, 76) notes that נָעַה (ki ‘ataḥh) has no more force than “but”; and that the construction is the same as in 17:4; 20:13-14; 23:14-15. The initial clause is causative, and the second half of the verse gives the consequence (“because... that is why”). Others take 3a as the apodosis of v. 2, and translate it “now it would be heavier...” (see A. B. Davidson, Job, 43).

\(^11\) The point of the comparison with the sand of the sea is that the sand is immeasurable. So the grief of Job cannot be measured.

\(^12\) The verb נָעַה (ku‘aš) is traced by E. Dhorme (Job, 76) to a root נָעָה (lu‘ah), cognate to an Arabic root meaning “to chatter.” He shows how modern Hebrew has a meaning for the word “to stammer out.” But that does not really fit Job’s outbursts. The idea in the context is rather that of speaking wildly, rashly, or charged with grief. This would trace the word to a hollow or gnaminate word and link it to Arabic “talk wildly” (see D. J. A. Clines, Job [WBC], 158). In the older works the verb was taken from a gnaminate root meaning “to suck” or “to swallow” (cf. KJV), but that yields a very difficult sense to the line.

6:4 For the arrows\(^13\) of the Almighty\(^14\) are within me; my spirit\(^15\) drinks their poison;\(^16\) God’s sudden terrors\(^17\) are arrayed\(^18\) against me.

Complaints Reflect Suffering

6:5 “Does the wild donkey\(^19\) bray\(^20\) when it is near grass?\(^21\) Or does the ox low near its fodder?\(^23\)

\(^13\) Job uses an implied comparison here to describe his misfortune – it is as if God had shot poisoned arrows into him (see E. Dhorme, Job, 76-77 for a treatment of poisoned arrows in the ancient world).

\(^14\) Job here clearly states that his problems have come from the Almighty, which is what Eliphaz said. But whereas Eliphaz said Job provoked the trouble by his sin, Job is perplexed because he does not think he did.

\(^15\) Most commentators take “my spirit” as the subject of the participle “drinks” (except the NEB, which follows the older versions to say that the poison “drinks up” or “soaks in”) the spirit.” The image of the poisoned arrow represents the calamity or misfortune from God, which is taken in by Job’s spirit and enervates him.

\(^16\) The LXX translators knew that a liquid should be used with the verb “drink,” but they took the line to be “whose violent drinks up my blood.” For the rest of the verse they came up with, “whenever I am going to speak they pierce me.”

\(^17\) The word translated “sudden terrors” is found only here and in Ps 88:16 (17). G. R. Driver notes that the idea of suddenness is present in the root, and so renders this word as “sudden assaults” (“Problems in the Hebrew text of Job,” VTSup 3 [1955]: 73).

\(^18\) The verb נָעַה (arakhk) means “to set in battle array.” The suffix on the verb is dative (see GKC 369 §117.x). Many suggestions have been made for changing this word. These seem unnecessary since the MT pointing yields a good meaning: but for the references to these suggestions, see D. J. A. Clines, Job [WBC], 158. H. H. Rowley (Job [NCBC], 59), nonequivalence, follows the suggestion of Driver that connects it to a root meaning “wear me down.” This change of meaning requires no change in the Hebrew text. The image is of a beleaguering army; the host is made up of all the terrors from God. The reference is to the terrifying and perplexing thoughts that assail Job (A. B. Davidson, Job, 44).

\(^19\) There have been suggestions to identify this animal as something other than a wild donkey, but the traditional interpretation has been confirmed (see P. Humbert, “En marge du dictionnaire hébraique,” ZAW 62 [1950]: 199-207).

\(^20\) The verb נָהַק (nahaq, “bray”) occurs in Arabic and Aramaic and only in Job 30:7 in Hebrew, where it refers to unfortunat people in the wilderness who utter cries like the hungry wild donkey.

\(^21\) In this brief section Job indicates that it would be wiser to seek the reason for the crying than to complain of the cry. The wild donkey will bray when it finds no food (see Jer 14:6).

\(^22\) The construction forms a double question (כִּי... הָיָּתִי, “my grief”) and applies it for your own good!

\(^23\) The LXX captures the meaning of the verse, but renders it in a more expansive way.

\(^24\) This word occurs here and in Isa 30:24. In contrast to the grass that grows on the fields for the wild donkey, this is fodder prepared for the domesticated animals.
6:7 have refused to touch such things; they are like loathsome food to me.

6:8 “Oh that my request would be real-ized, and that God would grant me what I long for!

6:9 And that God would be willing to crush me.

6:10 Then I would yet have my comfort, I would rejoice, in spite of pitiful pain, for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One.

6:11 What is my strength, that I should wait?
and what is my end, 4 that I should prolong my life? 6:12 Is my strength like that of stones?  2 or is my flesh made of bronze?  3 6:13 Is not my power to help myself nothing, and has not every resource4 been driven from me? 

Disappointing Friends

6:14 “To the one in despair, kindness5 should come from his friend6 even if7 he forsakes the fear of the Almighty. 

6:15 My brothers8 have been as treacherous9 as a seasonal stream, and as the riverbeds of the intermittent streams11 that flow away. 12 6:16 They13 are dark14 because of ice; snow is piled15 up over them.16 6:17 When they are scorched,17 they dry up, when it is hot, they vanish18 from their place. 

1 tn The word translated “my end” is צָרַב (tsarab). It refers to the termination of his life. In Ps 39:5 it is parallel to “the measure of my days.” In the sense, Job is asking what future he has. To him, the “end” of his affliction can only be death. 
2 sn The questions imply negative answers. Job is saying that it would take great strength to hold up under these afflictions, but he is only flesh and bone. The sufferings have almost completely overwhelmed him. To endure all of this to the end he would need a strength he does not have. 
3 tn For the use of the particle סֵכָּה (tsékah) in this kind of interro-gative phrase, see GKC 475:15. Is there strength? 
4 tn The word means something like “recovery,” or the powers of recovery; it was used in Job 5:12. In 11:6 it applies to a condition of the mind, such as mental resource. Job is thinking not so much of relief or rescue from his troubles, but of strength to bear them. 
5 tn In this context כִּיסֶא (kisreq) could be taken as “loyalty” (“friend/one who is forsaking the fear of the Almighty should be shown to the despairing, even to the one who forsakes…”). Several commentators prefer to change the first word כִּיסֶא (kisreq) to the preceding noun: it can have the sense of “they” or “which.” The parallel sense then can be continued with a finite verb (see GKC 404 §126.b). 
6 tn The Hebrew of this verse is extremely difficult, and while there are many suggestions, none of them has gained a consensus. The first colon simply has “to the despairing // from his friend // kindness.” Several commentators prefer to change the first word כִּיסֶא (kisreq) (lammass, “to the one in despair”) to some sort of verb; several adopt the reading “the one who withholds his mercy from his friend forsakes…” The root of the first half of the verse seems to be that one should expect kindness (or loyalty) from a friend in times of suffering. 
7 tn The relationship of the second colon to the first is difficult. The line just reads literally “and the fear of the Almighty he forsakes.” The ה (hay) could be interpreted in several different ways: “else he will forsake…” “although he forsakes…” “even the one who forsakes…” or “even if he forsakes…” – the reading adopted here. If the first colon receives the reading “His friend has scorned compassion,” then this clause would simply be coordinated with “and forsakes the fear of the Almighty.” The sense of the verse seems to say that kindness/loyalty should be shown to the despairing, even to the one who is forsaking the fear of the Lord, meaning, saying outright: “if he has been doing this.” 
8 sn Here the brothers are all his relatives as well as these intimate friends of Job. In contrast to what a friend should do (show kindness/loyalty), these friends have provided no support whatsoever. 
9 tn The verb זָרַב (zav), “dealt treacherously” has been translated “dealt deceitfully,” but it is a very strong word. It means “to act treacherously” (or deceitfully). The deception is the treachery, because the deception is not innocent – it is in the place of a great need. The imagery will compare it to the brook that may or may not have water. If one finds no water when one expected it and needed it, there is deception and treachery. The LXX softens it considerably: “not regarded by me.” 
10 sn The Hebrew term used here is צָרַב (tsarab); this word differs from words for rivers or streams in that it describes a brook with an intermittent flow of water. A brook where the waters are not flowing is called a deceitful brook (Jer 15:18; Mic 1:14); one where the waters flow is called faithful (Isa 33:16). 
11 tn Heb “and as a stream bed of brooks/torrents.” The word צֵאר (tsar) is the river bed or stream bed where the water flows. What is more disconcerting than finding a well-known torrent whose bed is dry when one expects it to be gushing with water (E. Dhorme, Job, 86)? 
12 tn The verb is rather simple – צָרַב (tsarab). But some translate it “pass away” or “flow away,” and others “overflow.” The rainy season they are deep and flowing, or “overflow” their banks. This is a natural sense to the verb, and since the next verse focuses on this, some follow this interpretation (H. H. Rowley, Job [NBBC], 15). But this idea does not parallel the first part of v. 15. So it makes better sense to render it “flow away” and see the reference to the summer dry spells when one wants the water but is disappointed. 
13 tn The participle צָרַב (tsarab), often rendered “which are black,” would better be translated “dark,” for it refers to the turbid waters filled with melting ice or melting snow, or to the frozen surface of the water, but not waters that are muddied. 
14 sn The LXX prefers to render it “(absence of) favor” where the Hebrew indicates “being dark.” 
15 tn The article on the participle joins this statement to the preceding noun: it can have the sense of “they” or “which.” The parallel sense then can be continued with a finite verb (see GKC 404 §126.b). 
16 tn The verb צָרַב (tsarab) has been translated “is hid” or “hides itself.” But this does not work easily in the sentence, containing that the form we have was chosen for alliterative value with the prepositional phrase before it. 
17 tn The LXX paraphrases the whole verse: “They who used to reverence me now come against me like snow or congealed ice.” 
18 tn The verb צָרַב (tsarab), “burnt, scorched”) occurs only here. A good number of interpretations take the root as a by-form of צָר (zar), which means in the Niphal “to be burnt” (Ezek 21:3). The expression then would mean “in the time they are burnt,” a reference to the scorching heat of the summer (“when the great heat comes”) and the rivers dry up. Qimchi connected it to the Arabic “canal,” and this has led to the suggestion by E. Dhorme (Job, 88) that the root צָר (zar) would mean “to flow.” In the Piel it would be “to cause to flow,” and in the passive “to be made to flow,” or “melt.” This is attractive, but it does require the understanding (or supplying) of “ice/snow” as the subject. G. R. Driver took the same meaning but translated it “when they (the streams) pour down in torrents, they (straightway) die down” (ZAW 65 [1953]: 216-17). Both interpretations capture the sense of the brooks drying up. 
19 tn The verb יַתְעַלֶּם (yatalm) literally means “they are extinguished” or “they vanish” (cf. 18:5-6; 21:17). The LXX, perhaps confusing the word with the verb יָד (yada, “to know”) has “and it is not known what it was.”
6:18 Caravans\(^5\) turn aside from their routes; they go\(^6\) into the wasteland\(^3\) and perish.\(^4\) 6:19 The caravans of Tema\(^8\) looked intently\(^6\) for these streams; they arrived there\(^11\), but were disappointed.

6:20 They were distressed,\(^9\) because each one had been\(^10\) so confident; they arrived there,\(^11\) but were disappointed.

6:21 For now\(^22\) you have become like these streams that are no help;\(^23\) you see a terror,\(^4\) and are afraid.

Friends' Fears

6:22 “Have I\(^19\) ever said, ‘Give me something, and from your fortune\(^24\) make gifts\(^18\) in my favor’? 6:23 Or ‘Deliver me\(^20\) from the enemy’s power, and from the hand of tyrants\(^21\) ransom\(^22\) me’?\(^12\)

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\(^{12}\) There is a textual problem in this line, an issue of Ketib-Qere. Some read the form with the Qere as the prepositional with a suffix referring to “the river,” with the idea “you are like this river.” Others read the form with the ketib as the negative “not,” meaning “for now you are nothing.” The LXX and the Syriac read the word as “to me.” RSV follows this and changes סָוָה (‘sa’o) to ס (ken, “thus”). However, such an emendation is unnecessary since ס (‘s) itself can be legitimately employed as an emphatic particle. In that case, the translation would be, “Indeed, now you are like the streams.” The simplest reading is “for now you have become [like] it.” The meaning seems clear enough in the context that the friends, like the river, proved to be of no use. But D. J. A. Clines (Job [WBC], 161) points out that the difficulty with this is that all references so far to the rivers have been in the plural.

\(^{13}\) The perfect of תִּבְנִים (hawwih) could be translated as either “are” or “have been” rather than “have become” (cf. Jowion 2:373 §113.3, p with regard to stative verbs). “Like it” refers to the intermittent stream which promises water but does not deliver. The LXX has a paraphrase: “But you also have come to me without pity.”

\(^{22}\) The verb רַבִּי (hakhi) literally says “Is it because....”

\(^{23}\) For the next two verses Job lashes out in sarcasm against his friends. If he had asked for charity, for their wealth, he would have expected their cold response. But all he wanted was sympathy and understanding (H. H. Rowley, Job [NCBC], 63).

\(^{21}\) The word רָבִי (koakh) basically means “strength, force,” but like the synonym תִּבְנִים (hawwih), it can also mean “wealth, fortune.” E. Dhorme notes that to the Semitic mind, riches bring power (Job, 90).

\(^{22}\) Or “bride.” The verb דַּבְדַּב (shakkad) means “give a bride (shokhad, “bride”).” The significance is simply “make a gift” (especially in the sense of corrupting an official [Ezek 16:33]). For the spelling of the form in view of the guttural, see GKC 169 §64.a.

\(^{19}\) The verse now gives the ultimate reason why Job might have urged his friends to make a gift — if it were possible. The LXX, avoiding the direct speech in the preceding verse and the clauses made the verse the purpose statement — “to deliver from enemies...”

\(^{11}\) In Ps 68:24 this word has the meaning of “processions;” here that procession is of traveling merchants forming convoys or caravans.

\(^{10}\) The verb בָּשָׁד (bashad) basically means “to be ashamed”; however, it has a wider range of meaning such as “disappointed” or “distressed.” The longer sentence in the context is because of their confidence that they knew what they were doing. The verb is strengthened here with the parallel רָבָּתִי (khafir, “to be confounded, disappointed”).

\(^{11}\) The perfect verb has the nuance of past perfect here, for their confidence preceded their disappointment. Note the contrast, using these verbs, in Ps 22:8: “they trusted in you and were not disappointed [i.e., disappointed].”

\(^{11}\) The LXX misread the prepositional phrase as the noun “their cities;” it gives the line as “They too that trust in cities and riches shall come to shame.”

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\(^{2}\) This is the usual rendering of the Hebrew תֹּהוּ (‘orkhot, “way, path”). It would mean that the course of the wadi would wind down and be lost in the sand. Many commentators either reprint the text to תֹּהוּ (‘orkhut) when in construct (as in Isa 21:13), or simply redefine the existing word to mean “caravans” as in the next verse, and translate something like “caravans deviate from their route.” D. J. A. Clines (Job [WBC], 160-61) allows that “caravans” will be introduced in the next verse, but urges retention of the usual sense here. The two verses together will yield the same idea in either case – the river dries up and caravans looking for water deviate from their course looking for it.

\(^{4}\) The verb literally means “to go up,” but here no real ascent is intended, only that they go inland looking for the water. The streams wind out into the desert and dry up in the sand and the heat. A. B. Davidson (Job, 47) notes the difficulty with the interpretation of this verse as a reference to caravans is that Ibn Ezra says that it is not usual for caravans to leave their path and wander inland in search of water.

\(^{5}\) The word נָבַט (nabet) was used in Genesis for “waste,” meaning without shape or structure. Here the term refers to the trackless, unending wilderness (cf. 12:24).

\(^{6}\) If the term “paths” (referring to the brook) is the subject, then this verb would mean it would die in the desert; if caravanners are intended, then when they find no water they perish. The point in the argument would be the same in either case. Job is saying that his friends are like this water, and he like the caravans were looking for refreshment, but found only that the brook had dried up.

\(^{7}\) Tema is the area of the oasis SE of the head of the Gulf of Aqaba; Sheba is in South Arabia. In Job 1:15 the Sabeanse were raiders; here they are traveling merchants.

\(^{8}\) The verb קִוּוּ (qivvu) means “to gaze intently;” the look is more intentional, more of a close scrutiny. It forms a fine parallel to the idea of “hope” in the second part. The NIV translates the second verb קִוּוּ (qivvu) as “look in hope.” In the previous verbs the imperfect form was used, expressing what generally happens (so the English present tense was used). Here the verb usage changes to the perfect form. It seems that Job is narrating a typical incident now – they looked, but were disappointed.

\(^{9}\) The two words “for these streams” are supplied from context to complete the thought and make the connection with the preceding context.

\(^{10}\) In Ps 68:24 this word has the meaning of “processions;” here that procession is of traveling merchants forming convoys or caravans.

\(^{11}\) The verb בָּשָׁד (bashad) basically means “to be ashamed”; however, it has a wider range of meaning such as “disappointed” or “distressed.” The feeling of shame or distress is because of their confidence that they knew what they were doing. The verb is strengthened here with the parallel רָבָּתִי (khafir, “to be confounded, disappointed”).

\(^{12}\) The perfect verb has the nuance of past perfect here, for their confidence preceded their disappointment. Note the contrast, using these verbs, in Ps 22:8: “they trusted in you and were not disappointed [i.e., disappointed].”

\(^{13}\) The LXX misread the prepositional phrase as the noun “their cities;” it gives the line as “They too that trust in cities and riches shall come to shame.”
6:24 “Teach⁵⁸ me and I, for my part,⁶⁹ will be silent; explain to me⁶⁸ how I have been mis-taken.⁴
6:25 How painful⁶⁸ are honest words! But⁶⁸ what does your reprooft⁶⁷ prove?⁹⁸
6:26 Do you intend to criticize mere words, and treat⁶⁸ the words of a despairing man as wind?
6:27 Yes, you would gambleⁱ⁰ for the father-less,

and auction off²¹⁴ your friend.

Other Explanation

6:28 “Now then, be good enough to look¹² at me;¹³ and I will not¹⁴ lie to your face!
6:29 Relent,¹⁵ let there be no falsehood;¹⁶ re-consider,¹⁷ for my righteousness is in-tact!¹⁸
6:30 Is there any falsehood¹⁹ on my lips? Can my mouth²⁰ not discern evil things?²¹

¹⁵ The Hebrew verb šōḇ (šōḇ) is from הָשִּׁב (šōḇ), which is found in 40:30 with יָשִׁב (yashīḇ), to mean “to speculate” on an object. The form is usually taken to mean “to barter for,” which would be an expression showing great callousness to a friend (NIV). NEB has “hurl yourselves,” perhaps following the LXX “rush against,” but G. R. Driver thinks that meaning is very precarious. As for the translation, “to speculate about (or ‘over’) a friend” could be understood to mean “engage in speculation concerning,” so the translation “auction off” has been used instead.

¹⁶ The second verb, the imperative “turn,” is subordinat-ed to the first imperative even though there is no vav present (see GKC 385-87 §120.a, g).

²¹ The Hebrew verb žē’ (žē’) would literally be “re-turn.” It has here the sense of “to begin again; to adopt an other course,” that is, proceed on another supposition other than my guilt (A. B. Davidson, Job, 49). The LXX takes the word from yashīḇ (yashīḇ, “sit, dwell”) reading “sit down now.”

²¹ The Hebrew verb žē’ (žē’) is sometimes translated “iniqu-ity.” The word can mean “perversion, wickedness, injustice” (cf. 16:11). But here he means in regard to words. Unjust or wicked words would be words that are false and destroy.

²¹ The verb here is also žē’ (žē’), although there is a Ketib-Dere reading, See R. Gordis, “Some Unrecognized Meanings of the Root Shub,” JBL 52 (1933): 153-62.

²¹ The text has simply “yet my right is in it.” A. B. Davidson, Job, 49, 50) thinks this means that in his plea against God, Job has right on his side. It may mean this; it simply says my righteousness is yet in it.” If the “in it” does not refer to Job’s cause, then it would simply mean “is present.” It would have very little difference either way.

²¹ The text here is repeated from the last verse. Here the focus is clearly on wickedness or injustice spoken.

²¹ These words make a fitting transition to ch. 7, which forms a renewed cry of despair from Job. Job still feels himself innocent, but in the hands of cruel fate which is out to destroy him.

⁵⁸ The verb “teach” or “instruct” is the Hiphil רָבָד (rāḇāḏ), from the verb רָבַד (āḇāḏ), the basic idea of “point, direct” lies behind this meaning. The verb is cognate to the noun רֶפֶס (rēphēṣ, “instruction, teaching, law”).

⁶⁷ The independent personal pronoun makes the subject of the verb emphatic: “and I will be silent.”

⁶⁸ The verb is מֵרָבֵשׁ (mērāḇesh, “to cause someone to understand”); with the לִבְּבָן (lēḇḇān) following, it has the sense of “explain to me.”

⁶⁹ The verb בִּדָּעַת (bidāʿah, “to understand”) has the sense of “wandering, get lost.” This verb means “to dispute, quarrel, argue,” (see GKC 484-85 §113.b) here introduces the antithesis (GKC 484-85 §120.a, b).


⁷ⁱ The text has simply “yet my right is in it.” A. B. Davidson, Job, 49, 50) thinks this means that in his plea against God, Job has right on his side. It may mean this; it simply says my righteousness is yet in it.” If the “in it” does not refer to Job’s cause, then it would simply mean “is present.” It would have very little difference either way.

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⁷⁴ The Hebrew verb בֵּשַׁב (bēṣāḇ) literally would be “be silent.” It has here the sense of “to begin again; to adopt an other course,” that is, proceed on another supposition other than my guilt (A. B. Davidson, Job, 49). The LXX takes the word from yashāḇ (yashāḇ, “sit, dwell”) reading “sit down now.”

⁷⁵ The Hebrew verb בֵּשַׁב (bēṣāḇ) is sometimes translated “iniquity.” The word can mean “perversion, wickedness, injustice” (cf. 16:11). But here he means in regard to words. Unjust or wicked words would be words that are false and destroy.

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⁸⁶ The Hebrew verb בֵּשַׁב (bēṣāḇ) is sometimes translated “iniquity.” The word can mean “perversion, wickedness, injustice” (cf. 16:11). But here he means in regard to words. Unjust or wicked words would be words that are false and destroy.

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⁹³ The verb here is also בֵּשַׁב (bēṣāḇ), although there is a Ketib-Dere reading, See R. Gordis, “Some Unrecognized Meanings of the Root Shub,” JBL 52 (1933): 153-62.
The Brevity of Life

7:1 “Does not humanity have hard service on earth? Are not their days also like the days of a hired man?  
7:2 Like a servant longing for the evening shadow, and like a hired man looking for his wages,  
7:3 thus I have been made to inherit months of futility, and nights of sorrow have been summed up to me.

11 In this verse the form גּוּשׁ (gush) is used as a noun, meaning “ashes” or “dust.” It is then used to signify the total loss of life and worth, as if the whole being were reduced to dust. This is the idea of the Hebrew word גּוּשׁ (gush), which is used in Job 8:21. The word is also used in the LXX, where it is translated “ashes.” In the context, it seems to refer to the complete destruction of life and existence.

7:4 If I lie down, I say, “When will I arise?” and the night stretches on until the day dawns.

7:5 My body is clothed with worms and dirty scabs; my skin is broken and festering.

12 This is the main clause, and not part of the previous conditional clause; it is introduced by the conjunction ב (im) (see GKC 336 §112.gg).

13 The verb מָדַד (midad) normally means “to measure,” and here in the Piel it has been given the sense of “to extend.” But this is not well attested and not widely accepted. There are many conjectural emendations of the verse, but none seems completely satisfactory. One may mention the view of Gray, who changes מָדַד (midad, Piel of מִדֵּי) to מַד (mid, comprising the preposition מ [min] plus the noun מ [day], meaning “as often as”); “as often as evening comes.” Dhorme, following the LXX to some extent, adds the word “day” after “when/if” and replaces מָדַד (midad) with מֵא (maa, “when”).

14 The LXX, however, may be based more on a recollection of Deut 28:67. One can make just as strong a case for the reading adopted here, that the night seems to drag on (so also NIV).

15 The Hebrew term מָדַד (midad, “tossing”) refers to the restless tossing and turning of the sick man at night on his bed. The word is a hapax legomenon derived from the verb מָד (med, “to flee; to wander; to be restless”). The plural form here sums up the several parts of the actions (GKC 460 §144.f). E. Dhorme (Job, 99) argues that because it applies to both his waking hours and his sleepless nights, it may have more of the sense of wanderings of the mind. There is no doubt truth to the fact that the mind wanders in all this suffering, some kind that causes the rotting of the flesh. One may recall that both Antiochus Epiphanes (2 Macc 9:9) and Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:23) were devoured by such worms in their diseases.

16 The implied comparison is vivid: the dirty scabs cover his entire body like a garment – so he is clothed with them.

17 The word for “worms” (רִמָּה, rimmah, a collective noun), is usually connected with rotten food (Exod 16:24), or the grave (Isa 14:11). Job’s disease is a malignant ulcer of some kind that causes the rotting of the flesh. One may recall that both Antiochus Epiphanes (2 Macc 9:9) and Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:23) were devoured by such worms in their diseases.

18 The text has “clouds of dust.” The word מָדַד (med, “cloud”) is a hapax legomenon from מָד (med, “cloud”). Driver suggests the word has a medical sense, like “pustules” (G. R. Driver, “Problems in the Hebrew text of Job,” VTSup 3 [1955]: 73) or “scabs” (JB, NEB, NAB, NIV). Driver thinks “cloud of dust” is wrong; he reprints “dust” to make a new verb “to cover.”

19 The meaning of רָגַע (raga) is also debated here. D. A. Clines (Job [WBC], 163) does not think the word can mean “cracked” because scabs show evidence of the sores healing. But E. Dhorme (Job, 101) argues that the usage of the word shows the idea of “splitting, separating, making a break,” or the like. Here then it would mean “my skin splits” and as a result festers. This need not be a reference to the scabs, but to new places. Or it could mean that the scabbing never heals, but is always splitting open.
7:6 My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle and they come to an end without hope.  
7:7 Remember that my life is but a breath, that my eyes will never again see happiness.  
7:8 The eye of him who sees me now will see me no more; your eyes will look for me, but I will be gone.  
7:9 As a cloud is dispersed and then disappears, so the one who goes down to the grave does not come up again.

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sn The first five verses described the painfulness of his malady, his life; now, in vv. 6-10 he will focus on the brevity of his life, and its extinction with death. He introduces the subject with “my days,” a metonymy for his whole life and everything done on those days. He does not mean individual days—they drag on endlessly.

tn The verb שְׁכַלְתָּה (qalal) means “to be light” (40:4), and then by extension “to be swift; to be rapid” (Job 4:13; Hab 1:8).

tn The shuttle is the part which runs through the meshes of the web. In Judg 16:14 it is a loom (see BDB 71 s.v. חָלָק), but here it must be the shuttle. Hezekiah uses the imagery of the weaver, the loom, and the shuttle for the brevity of life (see Isa 38:12). The LXX used, “My life is lighter than a word.”

tn The text includes a wonderful wordplay on this word. The noun is תִּקְוָה (tikva, “hope”). But it can also have the meaning of one of its cognate nouns, תִּקְוַת (qav, “thread, cord,” as in Job 7:19; see BDB 71 s.v. תִּקְוַת), so the one who goes down to the grave makes the most sense, for Job is simply talking about death. In each case the precise meaning has to be determined. Here the context must be “the grave,” but “if” might work better to introduce the conditional clause and set the stage, so they would not think it possible for Job to have bodily resurrection in view. (See notes on ch. 14 and 19:25-27.)

tn M. Dahood suggests the meaning is the same as “his abode” (“Hebrew-Ugaritic Lexicography V,” Bib 48 [1967]: 421-38).

tn The verb means “to recognize” by seeing. “His place,” the place where he was living, is the subject of the verb. This personification is intended simply to say that the place where he lived will not have him any more. The line is very similar to Ps 103:16b—when the wind blows the flower away, its place knows it no more.

tn “Also I” has been rendered frequently as “therefore,” introducing a conclusion. BDB 168-69 s.v. לוע לוע lists Ps 52:7 [5] as a parallel, but it also could be explained as an adversative. The first clause introduces the conclusion, while the second expresses it as a protest.

tn “Mouth” could be translated “whale” as well as the more mythological “dragon” or “monster of the deep” (see E. Dhorme, Job, 105). To the Hebrews this was part of God’s creation in Gen 1; in the pagan world it was a force to be reckoned with, and so the reference would be pol lematic. The sea is a symbol of the tumultuous elements of creation; in the more created, refers to the powerful forces of chaos—Leviathan, Tannin, and Rahab. They required special attention.

tn The imperfect verb here receives the classification of obligatory imperfect. Job wonders if he is such a threat to God that God must do this.

tn The word יִמְלָמוּר (miqlamar) means “guard; barrier.” M. Dahood suggested “muzzle” based on Ugaritic, but that has proven to be untenable (“Mismar, ‘Muzzle,’ in Job 7:12,” JBL 80 [1961]: 270-71).

tn The particle זָ קִים (zikim) could also be translated “when,” but “if” might work better to introduce the conditional clause and parallel the earlier reasoning of Job in v. 4 (using זָ קִים, ‘im). See GKC 336-37 §112.hh.

tn The verb literally means “say,” but here the connotation must be “think” or “say to oneself”—“when I think my bed…”

sn Sleep is the recourse of the troubled and unhappy. Here “bed” is metonymical for sleep. Job expects sleep to give him the comfort that his friends have not.

tn The verb means “to lift up; to take away” (נִשָּׂא, nasa’). When followed by the preposition אֵ (heh) with the complement of the verb, the idea is “to bear a part; to take a share,” or “to share in the burden” (cf. Num 11:7). The idea then would be that the sleep would ease the complaint. It would not end the illness, but the complaining for a while.

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7:14 then you scare me\(^4\) with dreams and terrify\(^6\) me with visions, 7:15 so that I\(^9\) would prefer\(^8\) strangling, and\(^7\) death\(^9\) more\(^10\) than life. 7:16 I loathe\(^2\) it. I do not want to live forever;

leave me alone,\(^13\) for my days are a vapor!\(^14\)

**Insignificance of Humans**

7:17 “What is mankind\(^6\) that you make so much of them,\(^6\) and that you pay attention\(^7\) to them? 7:18 And that you visit\(^8\) them every morning, and try\(^9\) them every moment?\(^20\) 7:19 Will you never\(^21\) look away from me,\(^22\) will you not let me alone\(^23\) long enough to swallow my spit? 7:20 If\(^24\) I have sinned – what have I done to you,\(^25\) O watcher of men?\(^26\)

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\(^{1n}\) The Piel of נפש (nafsh) occurs only here and in Jer 51:56 (where it is doubtful). The meaning is clearly “startle, scare.” The perfect verb with the מ (mav) is fitting in the apodosis of the conditional sentence.

\(^{2n}\) Here Job is boldly saying that it is God who is behind the horrible dreams that he is having at night.

\(^{3n}\) The Piel of ה tarea (h’ara), “terrorly” is one of the characteristic words in the book of Job; it occurs in 3:5; 9:34; 13:11, 21; 15:24; 18:11; and 33:7.

\(^{4n}\) The prepositions ב (bet) and מ (min) interchange here; they express the instrument of causality. See N. Sarna, “The Interchange of the Prepositions bet and min in Biblical Hebrew,” JBL 78 (1959): 310-16. Emphasis on the instruments of terror in this verse is highlighted by the use of chiasm in which the prepositional phrases comprise the central elements (תב/ב). Verse 18 contains another example.

\(^{5n}\) The word נפש (nafsh) is often translated “soul.” But since Hebrew thought does not make such a distinction between body and soul, it is usually better to translate it with “person.” When a suffix is added to the word, then that pronoun would serve as the better translation, as here with “my soul” - מ (meaning with every fiber of my being).

\(^{6n}\) The verb בחון (bakhar, “choose”) followed by the preposition ב (b) can have the sense of “prefer.”

\(^{7n}\) The meaning of the term נפש (nafshan, “strangling”), a hapax legomenon, is clear enough; the verb נפש (knoonah) in the Piel means “to strangle” (Nah 2:13), and in the Niphal “to strangulate oneself” (2 Sam 17:23). This word has been suggested to translate “sufferings.”

\(^{8n}\) The conjunction “and” is supplied in the translation.

\(^{9n}\) The comparative מינ (min) after the verb choose will here have the idea of preferring something before another (see GKC §429-30 §133b).

\(^{10n}\) The word נפשות (me’atsenotah) means “more than my bones” (= life or being). The line is poetic; “bones” is often used in scripture metonymically for the whole living person, so there is no need here for conjectural emendation. Nevertheless, there have been several suggestions made. The simplest and most appealing for those who desire a change is the repointing to נפשות (me’asotah), “my sufferings,” adopted by NAB, JB, Moffatt, Driver-Gray, E. Dhorme, H. H. Rowley, and others. Driver obtains this idea by positing a new word based on Arabic without changing the letters; it means “great” – but he has to supply the word “sufferings.”

\(^{11n}\) E. Dhorme (Job, 107-8) thinks the idea of loathing or despising is problematic since there is no immediate object. He notes that the verb נפש (mu’as, “loathe”) is parallel to פ adres (masas, “melt”) in the sense of “flow, drip” (Job 42:6). This would give the idea “I am fading away” or “I grow weaker,” or as Dhorme chooses, “I am pining away.”

\(^{12n}\) There is no object for the verb in the text. But the most likely object would be “my life” from the last verse, especially since in this verse Job will talk about not living forever. Some have thought the object should be “death,” meaning that Job despised death more than the pains. But that is a forced meaning; besides, as H. H. Rowley points out, the word here means to despise something, to reject it. Job wanted death.
Why have you set me as your target?
Have I become a burden to you?
And why do you not pardon my transgression, and take away my iniquity?
For now I will lie down in the dust, and you will seek me diligently, but I will be gone."

Bildad’s First Speech to Job

8:1 Then Bildad the Shuhite spoke up and said:
8:2 “How long will you speak these things, seeing that the words of your mouth are like a great wind?*
8:3 Does God pervert justice?

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1 tn This word is a hapax legomenon from the verb יָעִיר (page, “meet, encounter”); it would describe what is hit or struck (as nouns of this pattern can indicate the place of the action) – the target.
2 tn In the prepositional phrase שָׁחַר (‘alay) the results of a scribal change is found (these changes were called tiquine sopherin, “corrections of the scribes” made to avoid using impure language for God). The Heb. prepositional phrase would have been יָעַקָּח, “to you,” as in the LXX. But it offended the Jews to think of Job’s being burdensome to God. Job’s sin could have repercussions on him, but not on God.
3 tn The LXX has, “for now I will depart to the earth.”
4 tn The verb יָעַקָּח (shakhar) in the Piel has been translated “to seek early in the morning” because of the possible link with the word “dawn.” But the verb more properly means “to seek diligently” (by implication).
5 sn This speech of Bildad ignores Job’s attack on his friends and focuses rather on Job’s comments about God’s justice. Bildad cannot even imagine saying that God is unjust. The only conclusion open to him is that Job’s family brought the sentence well. The verse is saying that sin carries its own punishment, and so God merely delivered the young people over to it.
6 tn Heb “into the hand of their rebellion.” The word “hand” often signifies “power.” The rebellious acts have the power to destroy, and so that is what happened – according to Bildad. Bildad’s point is that Job should learn from what happened to his family.
7 sn The verb יָעִיר (ya’ir, “rouse, stir up”) is a strong anthropomorphism. The LXX connected it etymologically to “early” and read, “Be early in prayer to the Lord Almighty.”
8 tn The second colon of the verse simply says “and a strong wind the words of your mouth.” The simplest way to treat it is to make it an independent nominal sentence: “the words of your mouth are a strong wind.” Some have made it parallel to the first by apposition, understanding “how long” to do double duty. The line beginning with the 1 (vav) can also be subordinated as a circumstantial clause, as here.
9 tn The word יָעַקָּח (kabhir, “great”) implies both abundance and greatness. Here the word modifies “wind”; the point of the analogy is that Job’s words are full of sound but without solid content.
10 tn See, however, G. R. Driver’s translation, “the breath of one who is mighty are the words of your mouth” (“Hebrew Studies,” JRAS 1948: 170).
11 sn The first word is יָשֵׁפָת (nishpah, “justice”). It can mean an act of judgment, place of judgment, or what is just, that is, the outcome of the decision. It basically describes an umpire’s decision. The parallel word is יָשֵׁת (iyyad, “righteousness,” or “what is right”). The basic idea here is that which conforms to the standard, what is right. See S. H. Scholnick, “The Meaning of Mishpat in the Book of Job,” JBL 101 (1982): 521-29.
12 sn Some commentators think that the second verb should be changed in order to avoid the repetition of the same word and to reflect the different words in the versions. The suggestion is to read יָעִיר (ya’ir, “rouse, stir up”) instead; this would mean “to cause someone to deviate,” for the root means “to bend.” The change is completely unwarranted; the LXX probably chose different words for stylistic reasons (see D. J. A. Clines, Job [WBC], 198). The repetition in the Hebrew text is a common type; it strengthens the enormity of the charge Job seems to be making.
13 sn The AV and RV take the protasis down to the middle of v. 6. The LXX changes the “if” at the beginning of v. 5 to “then” and makes that verse the apodosis. If the apodosis comes in the second half of v. 4, then v. 4 would be a complete sentence (H. H. Rowley, Job [NCBC], 71; A. B. Davidson, Job, 60). The particle אָּבו (‘av) has the sense of “since” in this second. The verb יָעִיר (shakhar) means “to expel; to thrust out” normally; here the sense of “deliver up” or “deliver over” fits the sentence well. The verse is saying that sin carries its own punishment, and so God merely delivered the young people over to it.
14 tn The verb is a Piel preterite with a מִיַּא (1) consecutive. The מִ (vav) need not be translated if the second half of the verse is the apodosis of the first – since they sinned...he did this. The verb יָשֵׁפָת (nishpah) “meets” to expel; to thrust out normally; here the sense of “deliver up” or “deliver over” fits the sentence well. The verse is saying that sin carries its own punishment, and so God merely delivered the young people over to it.
15 tn Or “innocent” (i.e., acquitted).
16 tn Many commentators delete this colon as a moralizing gloss on v. 5, but the phrase makes good sense and simply serves as another condition. Besides, the expression is in the LXX.
17 sn The verb יָשֵׁפָת (nishpah) “to make; to seek; to seek earnestly” (see 7:21). With the preposition אֶל (el) the verb may carry the nuance of “to address; to have recourse to” (see E. Dhorme, Job, 114). The LXX connected it etymologically to “early” and read, “Be early in prayer to the Lord Almighty.”
18 sn The verb יָשֵׁפָת (nishpah) means “to make supplication; to seek favor; to seek grace,” (from Hiphil). Bildad is saying that there is only one way for Job to escape the same fate as his children – he must implore God’s mercy. Job’s speech had spoken about God’s seeking him and not finding him, but Bildad is speaking of the importance of Job’s seeking God.
19 sn A verb form needs to be supplied here. Bildad is not saying to Job, “If you are pure (as you say you are).” Bildad is convinced that Job is a sinner. Therefore, “If you become pure” makes more sense here.
20 tn "But" is supplied to show the contrast between this verse and the preceding line.
21 tn The verb יָשֵׁפָת (nishpah) means “to seek; to seek earnestly” (see 7:21). With the preposition אֶל (el) the verb may carry the nuance of “to address; to have recourse to” (see E. Dhorme, Job, 114). The LXX connected it etymologically to “early” and read, “Be early in prayer to the Lord Almighty.”
22 sn The verb יָשֵׁפָת (nishpah) “rouse, stir up”) is a strong anthropomorphism. The LXX has “he will answer your prayer” (which is probably only the LXX’s effort to avoid the anthropomorphism [D. J. A. Clines, Job (WBC), 198]). A reading of “watch over you” has been adopted because of parallel texts (see H. L. Ginsberg, “Two North Canaanite Letters from Ugarit,” BASOR 72 [1938]: 18-19; and H. N. Richardson, “A Ugarteic Letter of a King to His Mother,” JBL 66 [1947]: 321-24). Others suggest “his light will shine on you” or “he will bestow health on you.” But the idea of “awake” is common enough in the Bible to be retained here.
and will restore your righteous abode.

8:7 Your beginning will seem so small, since your future will flourish.

8:8 "For inquire now of the former generation, and pay attention to the findings of their ancestors; for we were born yesterday and do not have knowledge, since our days on earth are but a shadow."

8:10 Will they not instruct you and speak to you, and bring forth words from their understanding?

8:11 Can the papyrus plant grow tall where there is no marsh? Can reeds flourish without water?

8:12 While they are still beginning to flower and not ripe for cutting, they can wither away faster than any grass!

8:13 Such is the destiny of all who forget God; the hope of the godless perishes,
tile,1 whose security is a spider’s web.2
8:15 He leans against his house but it does not hold up;3 he takes hold4 of it but it does not stand.5
8:16 He is a well-watered plant6 in6 the sun, its shoots spread7 over its garden.8
8:17 It wraps its roots around a heap of stones9 and it looks10 for a place among stones.12
8:18 If he is uprooted13 from his place, then that place14 will disown him, saying,15 ‘I have never seen you!’
8:19 Indeed, this is the joy of his way,16 and out of the earth17 others spring up.18
8:20 “Surely, God does not reject a blameless man,19 nor does he grasp the hand20

1 tn The idea is that the plant grows, looking for a place to grow among the stones. Some trees grow so tightly around the rocks and stones that they are impossible to uproot. The rocky ground where it grows forms “a house of stones.” The LXX supports an emendation from yppw to yppw (‘Kshezeh, “it looks”) to yppw (khvwh, “it lives”). Others have tried to emend the text in a variety of ways: “cleaves” (Budde), “soaks” (Gordis), “was opposite” (Driver), or “run against” (NEB, probably based on G. R. Driver). If one were to make a change, the reading with the LXX would be the easiest to defend, but there is no substantial reason to do that. The meaning is about the same without such a change.

2 sn The second half of the verse is very clear. What the godless person relies on for security is as fragile as a spider’s web – he may as well have nothing. The people of the Middle East view the spider’s web as the frailest of all “houses.” The figure now changes to a plant that is flourish

3 tn The verb yppw (‘amad, “to stand”) is almost synonymous with the parallel yppw (yum, “to rise; to stand”). The distinction is that the former means “to remain standing” (so it is translated here “hold up”), and the latter “rise, stand up.”

4 sn The idea is that he grasps hold of the house not to hold it up, but to stand himself up or support himself. But it cannot support him. This idea applies to both the spider’s web and the false security of the pagan.

5 tn The figure now changes to a plant that is flourishing and spreading and then suddenly cut off. The word yppw (ru’ot) means “to moist; to be watered.” The word occurs in Arabic, Aramaic, and Akkadian, but only twice in the Bible: here as the adjective and in 24:8 as the verb.

6 tn The Hebrew is yppw (liftme, “before”). Does this mean “in the presence of the sun,” i.e., under a sweltering sun, or “before” the sun rises? It seems more natural to take yppw (liftme) as “in the presence of” or “under.”

7 tn Heb “its shoot goes out.”

8 tc Some have emended this phrase to obtain “over the roofs.” The LXX has “out of his corruption.” H. M. Orlin has shown that this reading arose from an internal LXX change, saprias having replaced prasias, “garden” (JQR 26 [1935/36]: 134-35).

9 tn Cheyne reads “spring” or “well” rather than “heap.” However, this does not fit the parallelism very well, and so he emends the second half as well. Nevertheless the Hebrew text needs no emending here.

10 tn The expression “of stones” is added for clarification of what the heap would be. It refers to the object around which the roots would grow. The parallelism with “house of stones” makes this reading highly probable.
of the evildoers.

8:21 He will yet fill your mouth with laughter, and your lips with gladness.

8:22 Those who hate you will be clothed with shame, and the tent of the wicked will be no more.

Job’s Reply to Bildad

9:1 Then Job answered:

9:2 “Truly, I know that this is so. But how can a human be just before God?2

9:3 If someone wishes to contend22 with him, he cannot answer him one time in a thousand.

9:4 He is wise in heart14 and mighty in strength16 who has resisted17 him and remained safe.18

9:5 He who removes mountains suddenly, who overturns them in his anger;20


2 tn The word עַד (’ad, “until”) would give the reading “until he fills your mouth with laughter,” subordinating the verse to the preceding with some difficulty in interpretation. It would be better that, ch. 8 will not reject the blameless man until he filled Job with joy. Almost all commentators and modern versions change the pointing to עָד (’ad, “yet”), forming a hope for the future blessing of joy for Job.

3 sn “Laughter” (and likewise “gladness”) will here be metaphors of effect or adjunct, being put in place of the reason for the joy – restoration. These verses show several points of similarity with the style of the book of Psalms. “Those who hate you” and the “evil-doers” are fairly common words to describe the ungodly in the Psalms. “Those who hate you” are enemies of the righteous man because of the parallelism in the verse. By this line Bildad is showing Job that he and his friends are not among those who are his enemies, and that Job himself is really among the righteous. It is an appealing way to end the discourse. See further G. W. Anderson, “Enemies and Evil-doers in the Book of Psalms,” BJRL 48 (1965/66): 18-29.

4 tn “Shame” is compared to a garment that can be worn. The “shame” envisioned here is much more than embarrassment or disgrace – it is utter destruction. For parallels in the Book of Psalms, see Pss 35:26; 132:18; 109:29.

5 sn This speech of Job in response to Bildad falls into two large sections, chs. 9 and 10. In ch. 9 he argues that God’s power and majesty prevent him from establishing his integrity in his complaint to God. And in ch. 10 Job tries to discover in God’s plan the secret of his afflictions. The speech seems to continue what Job was saying to Eliphaz more than it addressed Bildad. See K. Fullerton, “On Job 9 and 10,” JTL 53 (1934): 321-41, 49.

6 tn The adverb עָנָן (’annan, “in truth”) is characteristic of the book of Job (12:2; 19:4; 34:12; 36:4). The friends make commonplace statements, general truths, and Job responds with “truly I know this is so.” Job knows as much about these themes as his friends do.

7 sn The interrogative is used to express what is an impossibility.

8 tn The attempt to define עַמִּיץ (’ammit) as “weak” or “mortal” man is not compelling. Such interpretations are based on etymological links without the clear support of usage (an issue discussed by J. Barr, Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament). This seems to be a poetic word for “human” (the only nonpoetic use is in 2 Chr 14:10).

9 tn The preposition is בְּ (bê, “with, before, in the presence of”). This is more specific than בִּ (bî) in 4:17.

10 tn The point of Job’s rhetorical question is that man cannot be justified as against God, because God is too powerful and too clever – he controls the universe. He is discussing now the question that Eliphaz raised in 4:17. Peake observes that Job is raising the question of whether something is right because God says it is right, or that God declares it right because it is right.

11 tn Some commentators take God to be the subject of this verb, but it is more likely that it refers to the mortals who tries to challenge God in a controversy. The verb is used of Job in 13:3.

12 tn The verb יָדַע (’ydâ`), “to know” in a strong sense, is a common one; it has the idea of “contention; dispute; legal dispute or controversy; go to law.” With the preposition בְּ (bê) the idea must be “to contend with” or “to dispute with.” The preposition reflects the prepositional phrase “with God” in v. 2, supporting the view that man is the subject.

13 tn This use of the imperfect as potential imperfect assumes that the human is the subject, that in a dispute with God he could not answer one of God’s questions (for which see the conclusion of the book when God questions Job). On the other hand, if the interpretation were that God does not answer the demands of mortals, then a simple progressive imperfect would be required. In support of this is the frustration of Job that God does not answer him.

14 tn The genitive phrase translated “in heart” would be a genitive of specification, specifying that the wisdom of God is in his intelligent decisions.

15 sn The heart is the seat of intelligence and understanding, the faculty of decision making.

16 sn The words עָנָן (’annan) and כָּוֵע (koua/k), are synonyms, the first meaning “sturdy; mighty; robust,” and the second “strength.” It too can be interpreted as a genitive of specification – God is mighty with respect to his power. But that comes close to expressing a superlative idea (like “song of songs” or “anger of his wrath”).

17 sn The first half of the verse simply has “wise of heart and mighty of strength.” The entire line is a casus pendens that will refer to the suffix on וַיִּשֶּׁלֶם (vîyîsholûm) in the second colon. So the question is “Who has resisted the one who is wise of heart and mighty of strength?” Again, the rhetorical question is affirming that no one has done this.

18 sn The verb בָּשַׁם (bâsham, “to be hard”). It is frequently found with the word for “neck,” describing people as “stiff-necked,” i.e., stubborn, unbending. So the idea of resisting God fits well. The fact that this word occurs in Exodus with the idea of hardening the heart against God may indicate that there is an allusion to Pharaoh here.

19 sn The use of חֶסֶם (shalem) in the Qal is rare. It has been translated “remain safe” by E. Dhorme, “survived” by the NEB, “remained unscathed” by the NAB and NIV, or “succeeded” by KJV, G. R. Driver.

20 sn The verb שָׁלֵם (shâlôm), “to be safe,” “to do well.” It generally means “to be safe,” “to do well,” “to be sound,” “to be right,” “to be whole” (e.g., Genesis 49:26). Here it means “suddenly.” This would be interpreted from the MT as it stands; it would imply “before they knew anything,” thus “suddenly.” (Gray, Dhorme, Butterswiser, et. al.). D. W. Thomas connects the meaning to another verb based on Arabic and translates it “so that they are no longer still” (“Additional Notes on the Root yada’a in Hebrew,” JTS 15 [1964]: 54-57). A. J. Emerton works with a possible root דָּבָה (dabâ’/daba’) meaning “be still” (“A Consideration of Some Alleged Meanings of yada’a in Hebrew,” JJS 15 [1970]: 145-80).
9:6 he who shakes the earth out of its place
so that its pillars tremble;  
9:7 he who commands the sun and it does not shine
and seals up the stars;  
9:8 he alone spreads out the heavens,  
and treads on the waves of the sea;  
9:9 he makes the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades,  
and the constellations of the southern sky;  
9:10 he does great and unsearchable things.

The Impossibility of Facing God in Court

9:14 “How much less, then, can I
answer him\(^4\) and choose my words\(^2\) to argue\(^3\) with\(^4\) him!\(^5\)

9:15 Although\(^6\) I am innocent,\(^7\) I could not answer him;\(^8\) I could only plead\(^9\) with my judge\(^10\) for mercy.

9:16 If I summoned him, and he answered me,\(^11\) I would not believe\(^12\) that he would be listening to my voice –

19:17 he who\(^13\) crushes\(^14\) me with a tempest, and multiplies my wounds for no reason.\(^15\)

9:18 He does not allow\(^16\) me to recover\(^17\) my breath, for he fills me with bitterness.

9:19 If it is a matter of strength,\(^19\) most certainly\(^20\) he is the strong one! And if it is a matter of justice, he will say, ‘Who will summon me?’\(^21\)

9:20 Although I am innocent,\(^22\) my mouth\(^23\) would condemn me;\(^24\) although I am blameless,

\(^4\) tn The imperfect verb here is to be taken with the nuance of a potential imperfect. The idea of “answer him” has a legal context, i.e., answering God in a court of law. If God is relentless in his anger toward greater powers, then Job realizes it is futile for him.

\(^5\) sn In a legal controversy with God it would be essential to choose the correct words very carefully (humanly speaking), but the calmness and presence of mind to do that would be shattered by the overwhelming terror of God’s presence.

\(^6\) tn The verb is supplied in this line.

\(^7\) tn The preposition \( \text{אִם} \) (‘im, “with”) carries the idea of “in contest with” in a number of passages (compare vv. 2, 3, 16:21).

\(^8\) tn The LXX goes a different way after changing the first person to the third: “Oh then that he would hearken to me, or judge my cause.”

\(^9\) tn The line begins with \( \text{נָתַן} \) (‘athan, “which”), which is omitted in the LXX and the Syriac. The particle \( \text{אֶת} \) (‘et) can introduce a concessive clause (GKC 495 §159) or a condition (GKC 498 §160). The idea here seems to be “even if I were...”

\(^10\) tn The verb \( \text{כָּחַנָן} \) (‘akhannan) is the Hiphil imperfect of the verb “answer.” As the text stands, Job is saying that he cannot answer or could not answer (contend with) God if given a chance. Some commentators think a Niphal fits better here: “I am not answered,” meaning God does not reply to him. This has the LXX, the Syriac, and Theodotion in support of it. The advantage would be to avoid the repetition of the same word from v. 14. But others rightly reject this, because all Job is saying here is that he would be too overwhelmed by God to answer him in court. The LXX change to a passive is understandable in that it would be seeking a different idea in this verse and without vocalization might have assumed a passive voice here.

\(^11\) tn The verb \( \text{נָתַן} \) (‘athan) is the Hiphil imperfect of the verb “answer.” As the text stands, Job is saying that he cannot answer or could not answer (contend with) God if given a chance.

\(^12\) tn The word \( \text{שׁוּפֵנִי} \) (‘shufeni) is the same verb that is used in Gen 3:15 for the wounding of the serpent. The Tar-gum to Job, the LXX, and the Vulgate all translate it “to crush; to pond; or to bruise.” The difficulty for many exegetes is that this is to be done “with a tempest.” The Syriac and Targum Job see a different vocalization and read “with a hair.” The text as it stands is understandable and so no change is needed. The fact that the word “tempest” is written with a different sibilant in other places in Job is not greatly significant in this consideration.

\(^13\) tn The relative pronoun indicates that this next section is modifying God, the Judge. Job does not believe that God would respond or listen to him, because this is the one who is crushing him.

\(^14\) tn The verb \( \text{כָּחַנָן} \) (‘akhannan) is adverbial, meaning “gratuitously, without a cause, for no reason, undeservedly.” See its use in 2:4.

\(^15\) tn The verb \( \text{מְשֹׁפְטִי} \) (‘meshoofi, “judge”) essentially means “to give,” but followed by the infinitive (without the \( \text{לְ} \) (‘el) here) it means “to permit; to allow.”

\(^16\) tn The Hiphil of the verb means “to bring back”; with the object “my breath,” it means “get my breath” or simply “breathe.” The infinitive is here functioning as the object of the verb (see GKC 350 §114).

\(^17\) tn The meaning of the word is “to satiate; to fill,” as in “drink to the full, be satisfied.” Job is satiated – in the negative sense – with bitterness, There is no room for more.

\(^18\) tn The MT has only “if of strength.”

\(^19\) tn “Most certainly” translates the particle \( \text{וְ} \) (‘vay)” (hinnah).

\(^20\) tn The question could be taken as “who will summon me?” (see Jer 48:19 and 50:44). This does not make immediate sense. Some have simply changed the suffix to “who will summon him.” If the MT is retained, then supplying something like “he will say” could make the last clause fit the whole passage. Another option is to take it as “Who will reveal it to me?” – i.e., Job could be questioning his friends’ qualifications for being God’s emissaries to bring God’s charges against him (cf. KJV, NKJV; and see 10:2 where Job uses the same verb in the Hiphil to request that God reveal what his sin has been that has led to his suffering).

\(^21\) sn Job is saying that whether it is a trial of strength or an appeal to justice, he is unable to go against God.

\(^22\) tn The idea is the same as that expressed in v. 15, although here the imperfect verb is used and not the perfect. Once again with the concessive clause (although I am right) Job knows that in a legal dispute he would be confused and would end up arguing against himself.

\(^23\) sn Some commentators wish to change this to “his mouth,” meaning God’s response to Job’s complaints. But the MT is far more expressive, and “my mouth” fits the context in which Job is saying that even though he is innocent, if he spoke in a court setting in the presence of God he would be overwhelmed, confused, and no doubt condemn himself.

\(^24\) tn The verb has the declarative sense in the Hiphil, “to declare guilty [or wicked]” or “to condemn.”
it would declare me perverse.  
9:21 I am blameless.  
I do not know myself.  
I despise my life.

Accusation of God’s Justice

9:22 “It is all one! That is why I say,  
‘He destroys the blameless and the guilty.’  
9:23 If a scourgent sudden death,  
he mocks at the despaire of the inno
cent.  
9:24 If a land has been given  
into the hand of a wicked man,

Renewed Complaint

9:25 “My days are swifter than a runner.  
They speed by without seeing happiness.  
9:26 They glide by like reedboats,  
like an eagle that swoops down on its prey.

9:27 If I say, ‘I will forget my complaint,  
I will change my expression and be cheerful, 
I will be completely silent.

1 sn Job returns to the thought of the brevity of his life (7:6). But now the figure is the swift runner instead of the weaver’s shuttle.  
2 sn Heb “they flee.”  
3 sn The point of these verses is to show – rather boldly – that God does not distinguish between the innocent and the guilty.  
4 sn This bold anthropomorphism means that by his treat
ment of the despair of the innocent, God is in essence mocking them.  
5 sn The term מַסַּת (maṣṣat), a haphaz legomenon, was translated “trial” in the older versions, but it is not from מַסָּה (masah, “to tempt; to test; to try”); instead it is from מַסָּה (masas, “to flow”). It is used in the Niphal of speak to the heart “melting” in suffering. So the idea behind this image is that of despair. This is the view that most interpreters adopt; it requires no change of the text whatsoever.  
6 sn Job uses this word to refute Eliphaz; cf. 4:7.  
7 sn Some would render this “earth,” meaning the whole earth, and having the verse be a general principle for all mankind. But Job may have in mind the more specific issue of individual land.  
8 sn The details of the verse are not easy to explain, but the meaning of the whole verse seems to be about the miscarriage of justice in the courts and the failure of God to do anything about it.
9:28 I dread all my sufferings, for I know that you do not hold me blameless.
9:29 If I am guilty, why then weary myself in vain?
9:30 If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands clean with lye, then you plunge me into a slimy pit, and my own clothes abhor me.
9:32 For he is not a human being like I am, that I might answer him, that we might come together in judgment.
9:33 Nor is there an arbiter between us,

An Appeal for Revelation

10:1 “Am I wrong because of my life; I will complain without restraint? I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
10:2 I will say to God, ‘Do not condemn me; judge’, which is concerned with legal and nonlegal disputes. The verbal forms can be used to describe the beginning of a dispute, the disputation in progress, or the settling of it (here, and in Isa 1:18).

The relative pronoun is understood in this clause.

17 The suffix of declarative sentences retains its volutative sense: let something be so, and this must happen as a consequence (see GKC 323 §109).
18 The old translation of “daysman” came from a Latin expression describing the fixing of a day for arbitration.
19 The verse probably continues the description from the last verse, and so a relative pronoun may be supplied here as well.
20 According to some, the reference of this suffix would be to God. The arbiter would remove the rod of God from Job.
21 The “rod” is a symbol of the power of God to decree whatever judgments and afflictions fall upon people.
22 “His terror” is metonymical; it refers to the awesome majesty of God that overthrows Job and causes him to be afraid.
23 There is no conjunction with this cohortative, but the implication from the context is that if God’s rod were withdrawn, if the terror were removed, then Job would speak up without fear.
24 The last half of the verse is rather cryptic: “but not so I with me.” NIV renders it “but as it now stands with me, I can not.” This is very smooth and interpretative. Others transpose the two halves of the verse to read, “Since it is not so, I with me” (NAB); “I do not see myself like that at all” (JB).
25 The Hebrew has רָשָׁע (raša‘) instead; usually rendered “my soul.”
26 The verb is pointed as a Qal form but is originally a Niphal from יָפַט (yappat). Some wish to connect the word to Akkadian cognates for a meaning “I am in anguish,” but the meaning “I am weary” fits the passage well.
27 The verb בָּז (baz) means “to abandon.” It may have an extended meaning of “to let go” or “to let slip.” But the expression “abandon to myself” means to abandon all restraint and give free course to the complaint.
28 The negated jussive is the form Jussive of רָשָׁע (raša‘); its meaning then would be literally “do not declare me guilty.” The negated jussive stresses the immediacy of the request.
Motivations of God

10:4 “Do you have eyes of flesh, or do you see as a human being sees?”

10:5 Are your days like the days of a mortal, or your years like the years of a mortal?

10:6 That you must search out my iniquity, and inquire about my sin,

10:7 although you know that I am not guilty,

and that there is no one who can deliver out of your hand?

Contradictions in God’s Dealings

10:8 “Your hands have shaped me and made me, but now you destroy me completely.

10:9 Remember that you have made me as with the clay;

10:10 Did you not pour me out like milk,
and curdle\textsuperscript{2} me like cheese?\textsuperscript{12}

10:11 You clothed\textsuperscript{8} me with skin and flesh and knit me together\textsuperscript{4} with bones and sinews.

10:12 You gave me\textsuperscript{9} life and favor,\textsuperscript{6} and your intervention\textsuperscript{9} watched over my spirit.

10:13 “But these things\textsuperscript{8} you have concealed in your heart; I know that this\textsuperscript{9} is with you:\textsuperscript{10}

10:14 If I sinned, then you would watch me and you would not acquit me of my iniquity.

10:15 If I am guilty,\textsuperscript{11} woe\textsuperscript{13} to me, and if I am innocent, I cannot lift my head;\textsuperscript{13}

I am full of shame,\textsuperscript{14} and satiated with my affliction.\textsuperscript{15}

10:16 If I lift myself up,\textsuperscript{16} you hunt me as a fierce lion,\textsuperscript{17} and again\textsuperscript{18} you display your power\textsuperscript{19} against me.

10:17 You bring new witnesses\textsuperscript{20} against me, and increase your anger against me; relief troops\textsuperscript{21} come against me.
An Appeal for Relief

10:18 "Why then did you bring me out from the womb? I should have died and no eye would have seen me!
10:19 I should have been as though I had never existed;
10:20 I should have been carried right from the womb to the grave!
10:21 Are not my days few; cease, then, and leave me alone, that I may find a little comfort.
10:22 to the land of darkness and the deepest shadow;
10:23 to the land of utter darkness, like the deepest darkness, and the deepest shadow and disorder,

where even the light is like darkness." 12

Zophar's First Speech to Job

11:1 Then Zophar the Naamathite spoke up and said:
11:2 "Should not this abundance of words be answered, or should this talkative man be vindicated? 19
11:3 Will your idle talk reduce people to silence, and will no one rebuke you when you mock? 22
11:4 For you have said, 'My teaching is flawless, and I am pure in your sight.'
11:5 But if only God would speak, 24

[Notes and references]

11 tn The Hebrew word literally means "it shines"; the feminine verb implies a subject like "the light" (but see GKC 459 §144.c).
12 tn The verse multiplies images for the darkness in death. Several commentators omit "as darkness, deep darkness," (קְּרִינַת צַלְמָוֶת) instead of קְרִינַת צַלְמָוֶת (yamay vakhadal). Many commentators and the RSV, NAB, and NRSV accept this reading. The Kethib is an imperfect or jussive, "let it cease/it will cease." The Qere is more intelligible for some interpreters — "cease" (as in 7:16). For a discussion of the readings, see D. W. Thomas, "Some Observations on the Hebrew Root hadal," VTSup 4 (1957): 14). But the text is not impossible as it stands.
13 tn Zophar begins with a strong rebuke of Job with a wish that God would speak (2-6); he then reflects for a few verses on the unsearchable wisdom of God (7-12); and finally, he advises Job that the way to restoration is repentance (13-20).
14 tc The LXX, Targum Job, Symmachus, and Vulgate all ascribe to the text: "and leave me alone, that I may find a little comfort.
15 tn There is no article or demonstrative with the word; it has been added here simply to make a smoother connection between the chapters.
16 tn The Niphal verb יִהֵנֹה (ye unh, "he answered") would normally require a personal subject, but "abundance" functions as the subject in this sentence. The nuance of the imperfect is obligatory.
17 tn The word is supplied here also for clarification.
18 tn The bound construction "man of lips" means "a boasting man or "proud talker" (attributive genitive; see GKC 417 §128.f). Zophar is saying that Job pours out this stream of words, but he is still not right.
19 tn The word is literally "be right, righteous." The idea of being right has appeared before for this word (cf. 9:15). The point here is that just because Job talks a lot does not mean he is right or will be shown to be right through it all.
20 tn The word means "chatter, prattings, boastings" (see Isa 16:6; Jer 48:30).
21 tn The form יָמַע (makhlim, "humiliating, mocking") is the Hiphil participle. The verb יָמַע (kalam) has the meaning "cover with shame, insult" (Job 20:3).
22 tn The construction shows the participle to be in the circumstantial clause: "will you mock — and [with] no one rebuking."
23 tn The word translated "teaching" is related etymologically to the Hebrew word "receive," but that does not restrict the teaching to what is received.
24 tn The wish formula יֶתֶן (mi yitten, "who will give"; see GKC 477 §151.d) is followed here by an infinitive (Exod 16:3; 2 Sam 19:1).
if only he would open his lips against you,"4

11:6 and reveal to you the secrets of wisdom—
for true wisdom has two sides2 —
so that you would know4 that God has forgiven some of your sins.4

11:7 "Can you discover5 the essence6 of God?
Can you find out the perfection of the Almighty?8

11:8 It is higher9 than the heavens — what can you do?
It is deeper than Sheol10 — what can you know?

11:9 Its measure is longer than the earth,
and broader than the sea.

11:10 If he comes by23 and confines12 you13 and convenes a court,24
then who can prevent14 him?
11:11 For he16 knows deceitful17 men;
when he sees evil, will he not18 consider it?19

11:12 But an empty man will become wise,
when a wild donkey’s colt is born a human being.20

4 tn Job had expressed his eagerness to challenge God; Zophar here wishes that God would take up that challenge.
2 tn The text seems to be saying “that it (wisdom) is double in understanding” — though it is different than Job conceived it — it far exceeded all perception. But some commentators have thought this still too difficult, and so have replaced the word כפלהי (khiflayim, “two sides”) with כפל אים (khifla’im, “like wonders,” or, more simply, “wonders” without the preposition). But it is still a little strange to talk about God’s wisdom being like wonders. Others have had more radical changes in the text; J. J. Stoker (for sound wisdom is his. And know that double [punishment] shall God exact of you” (Job 11:6), VT 35 (1985): 229-30).
3 tn The verb is the imperative with a vav (nun). Following the jussive, this clause would be subordinated to the preceding (see GKC 325 §110.J).
4 tn Heb “God causes to be forgotten for you part of your iniquity.” The meaning is that God was exactly less punishment from Job than Job deserved, for Job could not remember all his sins. This statement is fitting for Zophar, who is the cruelest of Job’s friends (see H. H. Rowley, Job [NBCBC], 88).
5 tn Others in an attempt to improve the text make too many unwarranted changes. Some would read הבנה (vish’ilakh’a, “he asks of you”) instead of הבנה (vasscheh fka, “he causes to be forgotten for you”). This would mean that God demands an account of Job’s sins.
6 tn The pronoun “you” is not in the Hebrew text but has been supplied in the translation.
7 tn The word means “search; investigation,” but it here means “what is discovered in the search” (so a metonymy of essence).
8 tn The Hebrew says “heights of heaven, what can you measure?” (NIV “comes along” in the sense of “if it should so happen”). Many accept the emendation to הבנה (vakhko), “he seizes,” (cf. Gordis, Driver), but there is not much support for these.
9 tn The verb יזחף (yakhaf) is literally “passes by/through” (NIV “comes along” in the sense of “if it should so happen”). Many accept the emendation to הבנה (vakhko), “he seizes,” (cf. Gordis, Driver), but there is not much support for these.
10 tn The abstract הֶבֶל (habel) is literally “shadows” (cf. Job 14:20; 19:4, 25; 38:13; 42:12; 1:16; 38:11; Job 44:9). This is a difficult word, and so here in this context it probably means something like “to shut in; to confine.” But this is a difficult meaning, and the sentence in context is cryptic. E. J. Sone (Job 162) thinks this word and the next have to be antithetical, and so he suggests from a meaning “to keep confined” the idea of keeping a matter secret; and with the next verb, “to convene an assembly,” he offers “to divulge it.”
11 tn The pronoun “you” is not in the Hebrew text but has been supplied in the translation.
12 tn The abstract הֵקַל (qahal, “an assembly”) has the idea of “to convene an assembly.” In this context there would be the legal sense of convening a court, i.e., calling Job to account (D. J. A. Clines, Job [WBC], 255). See E. Ullendorff, “The Meaning of QHLT,” VT 12 (1962): 215; he defines the verb also as “argue, rebuke.”
13 tn The verb means “turn him back.” Zophar uses Job’s own words (see 9:12).
14 tn The pronoun is emphatic implying that Zophar indicates that God indeed knows Job’s sin even if Job does not.
15 tn The expression is literally “men of emptiness” (see Ps 26:4). These are false men, for ישים (shenim) can mean “vain, empty, or false, deceitful.”
16 tn E. Dhorme (Job, 162) reads the prepositional phrase “to him” rather than the negative; he translates the line as “he sees iniquity and observes it closely.”
17 tn Some commentators do not take this last clause as a question, but simply as a statement, namely, that when God sees evil he does not need to ponder or consider it — he knows it instantly. In that case it would be a circumstantial clause: “without considering it.” D. J. A. Clines lists quite an array of other interpretations for the line (Job [WBC], 255); for example, “and he is himself unobserved”; taking the word ל (lo) as an emphatic; taking the negative as a noun, “considering them as nothing”; and others that change the verb to “they do not understand it.” But none of these are compelling; they offer no major improvement.
18 tn As A. B. Davidson (Job, 84) says, the one thing will happen when the other happens — which is never. The word יבש (naviv) means “hollow; wither;” and become wise (22.; yilanev) will be “get heart” (not to “lock heart” as Driver suggested). Many commentators do not like the last line of the verse, and so offer even more emendations. E. F. Sutcliffe wanted to change ילע (pereh, “donkey”) to ילע (pered, “stallion”), rendering “a withers wight may get wit when a mule is born a stallion” ("Notes on Job, textual and exegetical," Bib 30 [1949]: 70-71); and others approached the verse by changing the verb from יתלע (yilanev, “is born”) to יתלע (yilanev, “is taught”), resulting in “a hollow man may get understanding, and a wild donkey’s colt may be taught [tamed]” (cf. NAB).
Job 11:13 “As for you, if you prove faithful, and if you stretch out your hands toward him, and do not let evil reside in your tents.

11:14 if iniquity is in your hand – put it far away, and will not fear.

11:16 For you will forget your trouble; you will remember it like water that has flowed away.

11:17 And life will be brighter than the noonday; though there be darkness, it will be like the morning.

11:18 And you will be secure, because there is hope; you will be protected and will take your rest in safety.

11:19 You will lie down with no one to make you afraid, and many will seek your favor.

11:20 But the eyes of the wicked fail, and escape eludes them; their one hope is to breathe their last.

Job's Reply to Zophar

12:1 Then Job answered:

12:2 “Without a doubt you are the people, connotation of “arise” in comparison with the noonday, and in contrast with the darkness, supports the interpretation.

16:tn The form in the MT is the 3fsg imperfect verb, “[though] it be dark.” Most commentators revocalize the word to make it a noun (ךָעִיַּה, č’uyah), giving the meaning “the darkness of your life” will be like the morning.” The contrast is with Job 10:22; here the darkness will shine like the morning.

17:tn The Hebrew verb means “[to dig],” but this does not provide a good meaning for the verse. A. B. Davidson offers an interpretation of “search,” suggesting that before retiring at night Job would search and find everything in order. Some offer a better solution, namely, redefining the word on the basis of Arabic ḫubarah (to protect) and repointing it to the noun (ךָּחָפָר, “you will be protected”). Other attempts to make sense of the line have involved the same process, but they are less convincing (for some of the more plausible proposals, see D. J. A. Clines, Job [WBC], 257).

18:tn The clause that reads “and there is no one making you afraid,” is functioning circumstantially here (see 5:4; 10:7).

19:tn Heb “they will stroke your face,” a picture drawn from the domestic scene of a child stroking the face of the parent. The verb is a Piel, meaning “stroke, make soft.” It is used in the Bible of seeking favor from God (supplication), but it may on the human level also mean seeking to sway people by flattery. See further D. R. Ap-Thomas, “Notes on Some Terms Relating to Prayer,” VT 6 (1956): 225–41.

20:tn The verb הָּקִל (kalakh) means “to fail, cease, fade away.” The fading of the light, i.e., loss of sight, loss of life’s vitality, indicates imminent death.

21:tn Heb “a place of escape” (with this noun pattern). There is no place to escape to because they all perish.

22:tn The word is to be interpreted as a metonymy; it represents what is hoped for.

23:tn Heb “the breathing out of the soul”; cf. KJV, ASV “the giving up of the ghost.” The line is simply saying that the brightest hope that the wicked have is death.

24:sn This long speech of Job falls into three parts: in 12:2–25 Job expresses his resentment at his friends’ attitude of superiority and acknowledges the wisdom of God; then, in 13:1–28 Job expresses his determination to reason with God, expresses his scorn for his friends’ advice, and demands to know what his sins are; and finally, in 14:1–22 Job laments the brevity of life and the finality of death.

25:tn The expression “you are the people” is a way of saying that the friends hold the popular opinion – they represent it. The line is sarcastic. Commentators do not think the parallelism is served well by this, and so offer changes for “people.” Some have suggested “you are complete” (based on Arabic), “you are the strong one” (based on Ugaritic), etc. J. A. Davies tried to solve the difficulty by making the second clause in the verse a paraenetic relative clause: “you are the people with whom wisdom will die” (‘Note on Job 12:2,” VT 25 [1975]: 670–71).
and wisdom will die with you.\(^1\) 12:3 I also have understanding\(^2\) as well as you;
I am not inferior to you.\(^3\) Who does not know such things as these?\(^4\)
12:4 I am\(^5\) a laughingstock\(^6\) to my friends,\(^7\) I, who called on God and whom he an-
swered\(^8\) –
a righteous and blameless\(^9\) man is a laughingstock!
12:5 For calamity,\(^10\) there is derision (according to the ideas of the fortunate\(^11\)) –
a fate\(^12\) for those whose feet slip!

Knowledge of God’s Wisdom\(^16\)

12:6 But\(^13\) the tents of robbers are peace-
ful, and those who provoke God are confi-
dent\(^14\) –
who carry their god in their hands.\(^15\)

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\(^{1}\) sn The sarcasm of Job admits their claim to wisdom, as if no one has it besides them. But the rest of his speech will show that they do not have a monopoly on it.

\(^{2}\) tn The word is literally “heart,” meaning a mind or understanding.

\(^{3}\) tn Because this line is repeated in 13:2, many commentators delete it from this verse (as does the LXX). The Syriac translates יִנָּה (‘inan) as “little,” and the Vulgate “inferior.” Job is saying that he does not fall behind them in understanding.

\(^{4}\) tn Heb “With whom are not such things as these?” The point is that everyone knows the things that have been saying – they are commonplace.

\(^{5}\) tn Some are troubled by the disharmony with “I am” and “to his friend.” Even though the difficulty is not insurmount-
able, some have emended the text. Some simply changed the verb to “he is,” which was not very compelling. C. D. Isbell argued that יִיָּהֶה (‘iyeh, “I am”) is an orthographic variant of יִיָּהַת (‘iyahat, “he will”) – “a person who does not know these things would be a laughingstock” (JANESCU 37 [1978]: 227-36). G. R. Driver suggests the meaning of the MT is something like “(One that is) a mockery to my friend I am to be.”

\(^{6}\) tn The word simply means “laughter,” but it can also mean the object of laughter (see Jer 20:7). The LXX jumps from one “laughter” to the next, eliminating everything in between, presumably due to haplography.

\(^{7}\) tn Heb “his friend.” A number of English versions (e.g., NASB, NIV, NRSV, NLT) take this collectively, “to my friends.”

\(^{8}\) tn Heb “one calling to God and he answered him.” H. H. Rowley (Job [NCBC], 93) contends that because Job has been saying that God is not answering him, these words must be part of the derisive words of his friends.

\(^{9}\) tn The two words, רֹעֲשׂ הָאָדָם (tashiq tamim), could be under-
stood as a heendays (= “blamelessly just”) following W. G. E. Watson (Classical Hebrew Poetry, 327).

\(^{10}\) tn The first word, נָכָה (nakhah), could be rendered “a torch of scorn,” but this gives no satisfying meaning. The לָמַד (lamed) is often taken as an otose letter, and the noun נָכָה (nakhah) is “misfortune, calamity” (cf. Job 30:24; 31:29). But many one-words נָכָה (nakhah) are translated “to complain,” not “to speak,” and one would expect animals as the object here.

\(^{11}\) tn The noun מַעַק (maq) means “to think.” A blow (Schultens, Dhomme, Gordis), “thrust” or “kick” (HALOT 698 s.v. נקב). The plural is used to suggest the supreme degree of arrogant confidence (E. Dhorme, Job, 171).

\(^{12}\) sn The line is perhaps best understood as describing one who thinks he is invested with the power of God.

\(^{13}\) As J. E. Hartley (Job [NICOT], 216) observes, in this section Job argues that respected tradition “must not be ac-
cepted uncritically.”

\(^{14}\) tn The singular verb is used here with the plural collective subject (RC 464 §145.e).

\(^{15}\) tn The word in the MT means “to complain;” not simply “to speak,” and one would expect animals as the object here in parallel to the last verse. So several commentators have replaced the word with words for animals or reptiles – totally different words (cf. NAB, “reptiles”). The RSV and NRSV have here the word “plants” (see 30:4; 7; and Gen 21:15).

\(^{16}\) tn Some commentators have trouble with the name “Yahweh” in this verse, which is not the pattern in the poetic sec-
ction of Job. Three mss of Kennicott and two of de Rossi have “God.” If this is so the reminiscence of Isaiah 41:20 led the copist to introduce the tetragrammaton. But one could argue equally that the few mss with “God” were the copists’ attempt to correct the text in accord with usage elsewhere.

\(^{17}\) sn The expression “has done this” probably refers to ev-
erything that has been discussed, namely, the way that God in his wisdom rules over the world, but specifically it refers to the infliction of suffering in the world.

\(^{18}\) tn The construction with the relative clause includes a resumptive pronoun referring to God: “who in his hand” = “in whose hand.”

\(^{19}\) tn The two words נָפֶשׁ (nafesh) and מַעַּק (maq) are syn-
onymous in general. They could be translated “soul” and “spirit,” but “soul” is not precise for נָפֶשׁ (nafesh), and so “life” is to be preferred. Since that is the case for the first half of the verse, “breath” will be preferable in the second part.

\(^{20}\) sn Human life is made of “flesh” and “spirit.” So here the line reads “and the spirit of all flesh of man. If the text had simply said “all flesh,” that would have applied to any flesh in which there is the breath of life (see Gen 6:17; 7:15). But to limit this to human beings requires the qualification with “man.”
12:11 Does not the ear test words, as\(^1\) the tongue\(^2\) tastes food?\(^3\)

12:12 Is not wisdom found among the aged?\(^4\)

Does not long life bring understanding?

12:13 “With God\(^5\) are wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his.\(^6\)

12:14 If\(^7\) he tears down, it cannot be rebuilt;

if he imprisons a person, there is no escape.\(^8\)

12:15 If he holds back the waters, then they dry up;\(^9\)

if he releases them,\(^10\) they destroy\(^11\) the land.

12:16 With him are strength and prudence;\(^12\)

both the one who goes astray\(^13\) and the one who misleads are his.

12:17 He\(^14\) leads counselors away stripped\(^15\) and makes judges\(^16\) into fools.\(^18\)

12:18 He loosens\(^19\) the bonds\(^20\) of kings and binds a loincloth\(^21\) around their waist.

12:19 He leads priests away stripped\(^22\) and overthrows\(^23\) the potentates.\(^24\)

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\(^1\) tn The \(vav\) introduces the comparison here (see 5:7; 11:12); see GKC 499 §161.a.

\(^2\) tn Heb “the palate.”

\(^3\) tn The final preposition with its suffix is to be understood as a pleonastic dativus ethicus and not translated (see GKC 439 §135.i).

\(^4\) sn in the rest of the chapter Job turns his attention away from creation to the wisdom of ancient men. In Job 13:1 when Job looks back to this part, he refers to both the eye and the ear. In v. 13-25 Job refers to many catastrophes which he could not have seen, but must have heard about.

\(^5\) tn The statement in the Hebrew Bible simply has “among the aged” – wisdom.” Since this seems to be more the idea of the friends than of Job, scholars have variously tried to rearrange it. Some have proposed that Job is citing his friends: “With the old men, you say, is wisdom” (Budde, Gray, Hitzig). Others have simply made it a question (Weiser). But others take \(n\) (\(vav\)) from the previous verse and make it the negative here, to say, “wisdom is not....” But Job will draw on the friends than of Job, scholars have variously tried to rear.

\(^6\) sn A. B. Davidson (Job, 91) says, “These attributes of God’s [sic] confound and bring to nought everything bearing the same name among men.”

\(^7\) tn The use of \(n\) (\(n\), equivalent to \(n\), \(hinneh\), “behold”) introduces a hypothetical condition.

\(^8\) tn The verse employs antithetical ideas: “tear down” and “build up,” “imprison” and “escape.” The Niphal verbs in the sentences are potential imperatives. All of this is to say that humans cannot reverse the will of God.

\(^9\) tc The LXX has a clarification: “he will dry the earth.”

\(^10\) sn The verse is focusing on the two extremes of drought and flood. Both are described as being under the power of God.

\(^11\) tn The verb \(s\) (\(shalal\)) means “to overthrow; to destroy; to overwhelm.” It was in use in Job 9:5 for “overturning” mountains. The word is used in Genesis for the destruction of Sodom.

\(^12\) tn The word \(\text{tushiyyah}\) (\(tushiyyah\)) is here rendered “prudence.” Some object that God’s power is intended here, and so a word for power and not wisdom should be included. But vv. 13 mentioned wisdom. The point is that it is God’s efficient wisdom that leads to success. One could interpret this as a metonymy of cause, the intended meaning being victory or success.

\(^13\) tn The Hebrew text uses a wordplay here: \(s\) (\(shogeg\)) is “the one going astray,” i.e., the one who is unable to guard and guide his life. The second word is \(s\) (\(washiq\)), from a different but historically related root \(\text{shiq}\), which here in the Hiphil means “the one who misleads, causes to go astray.” These two words are designed to include everybody – all are under the wisdom of God.

\(^14\) tn The personal pronoun normally present as the subject of the participle is frequently omitted (see GKC 381 §119.s).

\(^15\) tn GKC 361-62 §116.x notes that almost as a rule a participle beginning a sentence is continued with a finite verb with or without a \(vav\) (\(vav\)). Here the participle (“leads”) is followed by an imperfect (“makes fools”) after a \(vav\).

\(^16\) tn The word \(\text{shalal}\) (\(shalal\), from the root \(\text{shalal}\), “to plunder; to strip”), is an adjective expressing the state (and is in the singular, as if to say, “in the state of one naked” [GKC 375 §118.o]). The word is found in military contexts (see Mic 1:8). It refers to the carrying away of people in nakedness and shame by enemies who plunder (see also Isa 8:1-4). They will go away as slaves and captives, deprived of their outer garments. Some (cf. NAB) suggest “barefoot,” based on the LXX of Mic 1:8, but the meaning of that is uncertain. G. R. Driver wanted to derive the word from an Arabic root “to be mad; to be giddy,” forming a better parallel.

\(^17\) sn The judges, like the counselors, are nobles in the cities. God may reverse their lot, either by captivity or by shame, and they cannot resist his power.

\(^18\) tn Some translate this “makes mad” as in Isa 44:25, but this gives the wrong connotation today; more likely shows them to be fools.

\(^19\) tn The verb may be classified as a gnomic perfect, or possibly a potential perfect – “he can loosen.” The Piel means “to untie; to unbind” (Job 30:11; 38:31; 39:5).

\(^20\) tc There is a potential textual difficulty here. The MT has \(\text{tusiyya}\) (\(tusiyya\), “discipline”), which might have replaced \(\text{moser}\) (\(moser\), “bond, chain”) from \(\text{esar}\) (\(esar\), “to bind”). Or \(\text{moser}\) might be an unusual form of \(\text{haza}\) (an option noted in HALOT 557 s.v. **haza**). The line is saying that if the kings are bound, God can set them free, and in the second half, if they are free, he can bind them. Others take the view that this word “bond” refers to the power kings have over others, meaning that God can reduce kings to slavery.

\(^21\) tn Some commentators want to change \(\text{esar}\) (\(esar\), “girdle”) to \(\text{esar}\) (\(esar\), “bond”) because binding the loins with a girdle was an expression for strength. But H. H. Rowley notes that binding the king’s loins this way would mean so that he would do servitude, menial tasks. Such a reference would certainly indicate troubled times.

\(^22\) tc Except for “priests,” the phraseology is identical to v. 17a.

\(^23\) tn The verb has to be defined by its context: it can mean “satisfy” (Exod 23:8), “make tortuous” (Prov 19:3), or “plunge” into misfortune (Prov 21:12). God overthrows those who seem to be solid.

\(^24\) tn The original meaning of \(\text{eytan}\) (\(eytan\)) is “perpetual.” It is usually an epithet for a torrent that is always flowing. It carries the connotations of permanence and stability; here applied to people in society, it refers to one whose power and influence does not change. These are the pillars of society.
12:20 He deprives the trusted advisers\(^2\) of speech\(^2\) and takes away the discernment\(^3\) of elders.

12:21 He pours contempt on noblemen and disarms\(^4\) the powerful.\(^5\)

12:22 He reveals the deep things of darkness, and brings deep shadows\(^6\) into the light.

12:23 He makes nations great,\(^7\) and destroys them; he extends the boundaries of nations and disperses\(^8\) them.\(^9\)

12:24 He deprives the leaders of the earth of their understanding;\(^11\) he makes them wander in a trackless desert waste.\(^12\)

12:25 They grope about in darkness\(^13\) without light; he makes them stagger\(^14\) like drunkards.

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\(^1\) The Niphil particle of the verb is traditionally rendered "the faithful" in the Bible. The Rabbis rather fancifully took the word from נֶאֶר (nē'emān, "oracle, utterance") and so transformed it "the wise, who are eloquent, fluent in words." But that would make this the only place in the Bible where this form came from that root or any other root besides נָאֵר ("confirm, support"). But to say that God takes away the speech of the truthful or the faithful would be very difficult. It has to refer to reliable men, because it is parallel to the elders or old men. The NIV has "trusted advisers," which fits well with kings and judges and priests.

\(^2\) The text has הָנִיחַ (nakhah) from נָהַק (nakhak), the causative meaning of "rest," or "abandon" (Driver, Gray, Gordis). Moreover, it never has a negative connotation. Some vocalize it הָנִיחַ (nakhah) "he humbles the brow of the trusted ones." But that would make this the only place in the Bible where this form came from that root or any other root besides נָאֵר ("confirm, support").

\(^3\) The word נָאָר (na'or) is well-attested, and the form נָאָר (na'or) is a normal adjective formation. So a translation like "mighty" (KJV, NIV) or "powerful" is acceptable, and further emendations are unnecessary.

\(^4\) The Hebrew word is traditionally rendered "shadow of death" (so KJV, ASV); see comments at Job 3:3.

\(^5\) The verb is the same that was in v. 24, "He makes them stagger" (the Hiphil of נָחָה (nakhah)). But in this passage some commentators emend the text to a Niphal of the verb and put it in the plural, to get the reading "they reel to and fro." But even if the verse closes the chapter and there is no further need for a word of divine causation, the Hiphil sense works well here—causing people to wander like a drunken man would be the same as making them stagger.

\(^6\) The text has נָהַק (nakhak) from נָהַק (nakhak), the causative meaning of "rest," or "abandon" (Driver, Gray, Gordis). Moreover, it never has a negative connotation. Some vocalize it נָהַק (nakhak) "he humbles the brow of the trusted ones." But that would make this the only place in the Bible where this form came from that root or any other root besides נָאֵר ("confirm, support").

\(^7\) The expression in Hebrew uses מֵקִים (mekhem), "he makes them stagger" (the Hiphil of מֵקִים (mekhem)). But in this passage some commentators emend the text to a Niphal of the verb and put it in the plural, to get the reading "they reel to and fro." But even if the verse closes the chapter and there is no further need for a word of divine causation, the Hiphil sense works well here—causing people to wander like a drunken man would be the same as making them stagger.
13:6 “Listen now to my argument,^1 and be attentive to my lips’^2 contentions.\footnote{1 sn Job first will argue with his friends. His cause that he will plead with God begins in v. 13. The same root אֲיַחֵל (ayakhel, “argue, plead”) is used here as in v. 3b (see note).} Will you speak wickedly^3 on God’s behalf?^4

Will you speak deceitfully for him?^5 13:8 Will you show him partiality^6? Will you argue the case^7 for God? 13:9 Would it turn out well if he would examine^8 you? Or as one deceives^9 a man would you deceive him? 13:10 He would certainly rebuke^9 you if you secretly^10 showed partiality!^11 13:11 Would not his splendor^12 terrify^12 you and the fear he inspires^13 fall on you? 13:12 Your maxims^14 are proverbs of ashes;^15

\footnote{2 tn The Hebrew word רִיב (riv, “disputes, contentions”) continues the imagery of presenting a legal case. The term is used of legal disputations and litigation. See, also, v. 19a.} The same root אֲיַחֵל (ayakhel) means “perversion; injustice; iniquity; falsehood.” Here it is parallel to רָע (ra’), “falsehood.” E. Dhorme (‘ayakhel, “pass out the word with the preposition אל (al, “upon”) to express the advent of misfortune, namely, something coming against him.”) in its mouth risks losing it. Other commentators do not think this is satisfactory, but they are unable to suggest anything better.

The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a). The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a).
13:16 Moreover, this will become my deliverance, for no godless person would come before him.2
13:17 Listen carefully to my words; let your ears be attentive to my explanation.3
13:18 See now,4 I have prepared my case;5 I know that I am right.6
13:19 Who7 will contend with me? If anyone can, I will be silent and die.10
13:20 Only in two things spare me,11 O God,12 and then I will not hide from your face:
13:21 Remove8 your hand13 far from me and stop making me afraid with your terror.15
13:22 Then call,16 and I will answer,
or I will speak, and you respond to me.
13:23 How many are my9 iniquities and sins?
Show me my transgression and my sin.18
13:24 Why do you hide your face19 and regard me as your enemy?
13:25 Do you wish to torment20 a wind-blown21 leaf and chase after dry chaff?22
13:26 For you write down23 bitter things against me and cause me to inherit the sins of my youth.24
13:27 And you put my feet in the stocks25 and you watch all my movements;26

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1 sn The fact that Job will dare to come before God and make his case is evidence – to Job at least – that he is innocent.
2 tn The infinitive absolute intensifies the imperative, which serves here with the force of an immediate call to attention. In accordance with GKC §113.n, the construction could be translated, “Keep listening” (so ESV).
3 tn The verb has to be supplied in this line, for the MT has “and my explanation in your ears.” In the verse, both “word” and “explanation” are Aramaisms (the latter appearing in Dan 5:12 for the explanation of riddles).
4 tn The particle הָיְנָה (hinneh) functions almost as an imperative here, calling attention to what follows: “look” (archaic: behold).
5 tn The verb לְדוּ (la’du) means “to set in order, set in array (as a battle), prepare” in the sense here of arrange and organize a lawsuit.
6 tn The pronoun is added because this is what the verse means.
7 tn The word מְשַׁלֶּה (mishlehu) usually means “judgment; decision.” Here it means “lawsuit” (and so a metonymy of effect gave rise to this usage; see Num 27:5; 2 Sam 15:4).
8 tn The pronoun is emphatic before the verb: “I know that it is I who am right.” The verb means “to be right; to be righteous.” Some have translated it “vindicated,” looking at the parallelism here in the sense of “write down a formal charge.”
9 tn The meaning is that of writing down a formal charge, to make someone invisible or aloof (see 34:29). In either case, if God covers his face it is because he considers Job an enemy – at least this is what Job thinks.
10 sn Job is confident that he will be vindicated. But if someone were to show up and have proof of sin against him, he would be silent and die (literally “keep silent and expire”).
11 tn The line reads “do not do two things.”
12 tn “God” is supplied to the verse, for the address is now to him. Job wishes to enter into dispute with God, but he first appeals that God not take advantage of him with his awesome power.
13 tn The imperative מַדְיָה (madiyah, “remove”); GKC §29.q, from מָדַע (mad’ā), “far, far away” means “take away [far away]; to remove.”
14 sn This is common, but bold, anthropomorphism. The fact that the word used is נָדַף (naddaf) rather than נָדַע (nadda‘), “hand,” with the sense of power) may stress Job’s feeling of being trapped or confined (see also Ps 139:5, 7).
15 tn See Job 9:34.
16 tn The imperatives in the verse function like the future tense in view of their use for instruction or advice. The chias tic arrangement of the verb forms is interesting: imperative + imperfect, imperfect + imperative. The imperative is used for God, but the imperfect is used when Job is the subject. Job is calling for the court to convene – he will be either the defendant or the prosecutor.
you put marks on the soles of my feet.  

13:28 So I 2 waste away like something rotten, 3 like a garment eaten by moths.

The Brevity of Life

14:1 “Man, born of woman, 4 lives but a few days, 5 and they are full of trouble. 6
14:2 He grows up like a flower and then withers away; 8
14:3 Do you fix your eye 10 on such a one? 12
And do you bring me 12 before you for judgment?
14:4 Who can make a clean thing come from an unclean? 14

The Inevitability of Death

14:7 “But there is hope for a tree: 22
If it is cut down, it will sprout again, and its new shoots will not fail.
14:8 Although its roots may grow old in the ground

The text clearly has “me” as the accusative, but many

13:28 The Brevity of Life

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The examination here simply implies something impossible - man is unable to attain purity.

14:5 Since man’s days are determined, 16 the number of his months is under your control; 17
you have set his limit 18 and he cannot pass it.
14:6 Look away from him and let him desist, 19 until he fulfills 20 his time like a hired man.
and its stump begins to die in the soil, and put forth a new plant. But man dies and is powerless, and he expires and is no more. Then they will not awake until the heavens are no more.

The Possibility of Another Life

14:13 “O that you would hide me in Sheol, and conceal me till your anger has passed! O that you would set me a time, and then remember me! If a man dies, will he live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait until my release comes.


The LXX removes the interrogative and makes the statement affirmative, i.e., that man will live again. This reading is taken by H. Gard (“The Possibility of Another Life according to the Greek Translator of the Book of Job,” JBL 73 [1954]: 137-38). D. J. Clines follows this, putting both of the expressions in the wish clause: “If a man dies and could live again…” (Job [WBC], 332). If that is the way it is translated, then the verbs in the second half of the verse and in the next verse would all be part of the apoposis, and should be translated “would.” The interpretation would not greatly differ; it would be saying that if there was life after death, Job would long for his release – his death. If the traditional view is taken and the question was raised whether there was life after death (the implication of the question being that there is), then Job would still be longing for his release – his death. If the traditional view is taken, the question was raised whether there was life after death. In this case, prayer “remember me” is a prayer for God to act upon his covenant promises.

The Hebrew word צִאֵל (tsayel) may be rendered “I will/would wait” or “I will/would hope.” The word describes eager expectation and longing hope.

The verb קָדוֹר (qādar) means more than simply “to remember.” In many cases, including this one, it means “to act on what is remembered,” i.e., deliver or rescue (see Genesis 8:1, “and God remembered Noah”). In this sense, a prayer “remember me” is a prayer for God to act upon his covenant promises.

Job 14:14

14:14 If a man dies, will he live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait until my release comes.
14:15 You will call and I will answer you; you will long for the creature you have made.\(^4\)

The Present Condition

14:16 "Surely now you count my steps; then you would not mark my sin.\(^8\)
14:17 My offenses would be sealed up\(^9\) in a bag: you would cover over my sin.
14:18 But as\(^12\) a mountain falls away and crumbles\(^13\) and as a rock will be removed from its place,
14:19 as water wears away stones, and torrents\(^14\) wash away the soil,\(^15\) so you destroy man’s hope.\(^16\)
14:20 You overpower him once for all,\(^17\) and he departs; you change his appearance and send him away.
14:21 If\(^19\) his sons are honored,\(^20\) he does not know it;\(^21\) if they are brought low, he does not see it.
14:22 Only his flesh has pain for himself,\(^23\) and he mourns for himself.\(^24\)

Eliphaz’s Second Speech

15:1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:

14 tn Heb “the overflowings of it”’; the word הָשִּׁקְוַי (š’ık’kóyá) in the text is changed by just about everyone. The idea of “its overflowings” or more properly “its aftergrows” (Lev 25:5; 2 Kgs 19:25; etc.) does not fit here at all. Burde suggested reading הָשִּׁקְו (š’k’kó), which is cognate to Arabic sahih, “torrential rain, rainstorm” – that which sweeps away the soil. The word הָשִּׁק (š’k) in Hebrew might have a wider usage than the effects of rain.
15 tn Heb “[the] dust of [the] earth.”
16 sn The meaning for Job is that death shatters all of man’s hopes for the continuation of life.
17 sn D. W. Thomas took מַעֲטָה (ma’sukáh) here to have a superlative meaning: “You prevail utterly against him” (”Use of netsach as a superlative in Hebrew,” JSS 1 [1956]: 107). Death would be God’s complete victory over him.
18 tn The subject of the participle is most likely God in this context. Some take it to be man, saying “his face changes.” Others emend the text to read an imperfect verb, but this is not necessary.
19 tn The clause may be interpreted as a conditional clause, with the second clause beginning with the conjunction serving as the apodosis.
20 tn There is no expressed subject for the verb “they honor,” and so it may be taken as a passive.
21 sn Death is separation from the living, from the land of the living. And ignorance of what goes on in this life, good or bad, is part of death. See also Ecc 9:5-6, which makes a similar point.
22 tn The verb is בַּיָּן (bi’yan, “to perceive; to discern”). The parallelism between “know” and “perceive” stress the point that in death a man does not realize what is happening here in the present life.
23 tn The prepositional phrases using הָלָי (‘al’ay, “for him/self”) express the object of the suffering. It is for himself that the dead man “grieves.” So this has to be joined with הָלָי (‘akh), yielding “only for himself.” Then, “flesh” and “soul/person” form the parallelism for the subjects of the verbs.
24 sn In this verse Job is expressing the common view of life beyond death, namely, that in Sheol there is no contact with the living, only separation, but in Sheol there is a conscious awareness of the dreary existence.
25 sn The first round of speeches, Eliphaz had emphasized the moral perfection of God, Bildad his unwavering justice, and Zophar his omniscience. Since this did not bring the expected response from Job, the friends see him as a menace to true religion, and so they intensify their approach. Eliphaz, as dignified as ever, rebukes Job for his arrogance and warns about the judgment the wicked bring on themselves. The speech of Eliphaz falls into three parts: the rebuke of Job for his irreverence (2:6); the analysis of Job’s presumption about wisdom (7:16), and his warning about the fate of the wicked (17:35).
15:2 "Does a wise man answer with blustering knowledge, or fill his belly with the east wind?"
15:3 Does he argue with useless talk, with words that have no value in them?
15:4 But you even break off piety, and hinder meditation before God.
15:5 Your sin inspires your mouth; you choose the language of the crafty.
15:6 Your own mouth condemns you, not I; your own lips testify against you.
15:7 "Were you the first man ever born? Were you brought forth before the hills?
15:8 Do you listen in on God’s secret council? Do you limit wisdom to yourself?

15:9 What do you know that we don’t know? What do you understand that we don’t understand?
15:10 The gray-haired and the aged are on our side; men far older than your father.
15:11 Are God’s consolations too trivial for you, or a word spoken in gentleness to you?
15:12 Why has your heart carried you away, and why do your eyes flash?
15:13 When you turn your rage against God and allow such words to escape from your mouth?
15:14 What is man that he should be pure, or one born of woman, that he should be righteous?
15:15 If God places no trust in his holy ones,
if even the heavens⁴ are not pure in his eyes,
15:16 how much less man, who is abomi
able and corrupt,⁴ who drinks in evil like water!¹³

15:17 "I will explain to you; listen to me, and what⁴ I have seen, I will declare,⁵
15:18 what wise men declare, hiding nothing, from the tradition of their ancestors,⁷
15:19 to whom alone the land was given when no foreigner passed among them.⁸
15:20 All his days⁹ the wicked man suffers torment,¹⁰ through\text{the} number of the years that¹⁴ are stored up for the tyrant.¹⁴
15:21 Terrifying sounds fill his ears; in a time of peace marauders¹⁴ attack him.
15:22 He does not expect¹⁵ to escape from darkness;¹⁶
15:23 he wanders about – food for vultures;¹⁸ he knows that the day of darkness is at hand.¹⁹

¹ sn The question here is whether the reference is to mate\rial "heavens" (as in Exod 24:10 and Job 25:5), or to heavenly beings. The latter seems preferable in this context.
² tn The two descriptions here used are "abominable," meaning "disgusting" (a Niphal participle with the value of a Latin participle [see GKC 356-57 §116.e]), and "corrupt" (a Niphal participle which occurs only in Pss 14:3; and 53:4), all ways in a moral sense. On the significance of the first description, see P. Humbert, "Le substantif 

⁴ sn Man commits evil with the same ease and facility as he drinks in water – freely and in large quantities.
⁵ tn The demonstrative pronoun is used here as a nominative, to introduce an independent relative clause (see GKC 447 §138.h).
⁶ tn Here the vav (י) apodosis follows with the conjunctive (see GKC 458 §143.d).
⁷ tn Heb "their fathers." Some commentators change one letter and follow the reading of the LXX: "and their fathers.
⁸ sn Eliphaz probably thinks that Edom was the proverbial home of wisdom, and so the reference here would be to his own people. If, as many interpret, the biblical writer is using these accounts to put Yahwistic ideas into the discussion, then the reference would be to Canaan at the time of the fa
torment, (" Some Hebrew Words," JTS 29 (1927/28): 390-96). The question here is whether the reference is to mate\rial "heavens" (as in Exod 24:10 and Job 25:5), or to heavenly beings. The latter seems preferable in this context.

¹² tn This has been translated with the idea of "oppressor" in Job 6:23; 27:13.
¹³ tn The word "fill" is not in the Hebrew text, but has been supplied in the translation.
¹⁴ tn The word יָרָה (shoded) means "a robber; a plunderer" (see Job 12:6). With the verb bo' the sentence means that the robber pours out; or comes against him (see GKC 373 §118.f). H. H. Rowley observes that the text does not say that he is under attack, but that the sound of fears is in his ears, i.e., that he is terrified by thoughts of this.
¹⁵ tn This is the meaning of the Hiphil imperfect negated: "he does not believe" or "he has no confidence." It is followed by the infinitive construct functioning as the direct object – he does not expect to return (to escape) from darkness.
¹⁶ tn The meaning of this line is questioned. In question, H. H. Rowley (Job [NCBC], 111) thinks it could mean that he is afraid he will not wake up from the night, or he dreads misfortune, thinking it will be final for him.
¹⁷ tn Heb "he was watched [or waited for] by the sword." G. R. Driver reads it, "he is marked down for the sword" ("Problems in the Hebrew Text of Job," VTSup 3 [1955]: 78). Ewald suggested "laid up for the sword." Ball has "looks for the sword." The MT has a passive participle from יָרָה (yarah), "to observe, watch") which can be retained in the text; the meaning of the form can then be understood as the result of the inspection (E. Dhorme, Job, 217).
¹⁸ tn The MT has "he wanders about for food – where is it?" The LXX has "he has been appointed for food for vultures," reading יָאֵי (ayah, "vulture") for יָאֵי (ayeh, "where is it?"). This would carry on the thought of the passage – he sees himself destined for the sword and food for vultures. Many commentators follow this reading while making a number of smaller changes in יָאֵי (yarah, "wandering") such as יָרָה (yarah, "given"), יָאֵי (yohad, "is appointed"), יָאֵי (yada, "is known"), or something similar. The latter involves no major change in consonants. While the MT "wandering" may not be as elegant as some of the other suggestions, it is not impossible. But there is no reading of this verse that does not involve some change. The LXX has "and he has been appointed for food for vultures."
¹⁹ tn This line is fraught with difficulties (perceived or real), which prompt numerous suggestions. The reading of the MT is "he knows that a day of darkness is fixed in his hand," i.e., is certain. Many commentators move "day of darkness" to the next verse, following the LXX. Then, suggestions have been of\ffered for יְה (nakkon, "ready"), such as יְה (neker, "disaster") and for יְה (nawal, "in his hand") a number of ideas _- יְה (nawal, "in his hand") a number of ideas - "light (", "hand") no idea") or יְ (nawal, "his disaster"). Wright takes this last view and renders it "he knows that misfortune is imminent," leaving the "day of darkness" to the next verse.

¹¹ tn It is necessary, with Rashi, to understand the relative pronoun before the verb "they are stored up/reserved."
15:24 Distress and anguish² terrify him; they prevail against him like a king ready to launch an attack,²
15:25 for he stretches out his hand against God,³
and vaunts himself⁴ against the Almighty, ¹⁵:26 defiantly charging against him⁵ with a thick, strong shield.⁰¹⁰
15:27 Because he covered his face with fat,⁷
and made⁸ his hips bulge with fat,⁹
15:28 he lived in ruined towns¹⁰ and in houses where¹¹ no one lives, where they are ready to crumble into heaps.¹²
15:29 He will not grow rich, and his wealth will not endure, nor will his possessions¹³ spread over the land.

15:30 He will not escape the darkness;¹⁴ a flame will wither his shoots and he will depart by the breath of God’s mouth.¹⁵
15:31 Let him not trust in what is worthless,¹⁶ deceiving himself; for worthlessness will be his reward.¹⁷
15:32 Before his time¹⁸ he will be paid in full,¹⁹

¹ In "day and darkness" are added to this line, then this verse is made into a tri-colon – the main reason for transferring it away from the last verse. But the newly proposed reading follows the LXX structure precisely, as if that were the approved construction. The Hebrew of MT has "distress and anguish terrify him."
² This last colon is deleted by some, moved to v. 26 by others, and the NEB puts it in brackets. The last word (translated here as "launch an attack") occurs only here. HALOT 472 s.v. יִמְנֹל ("to launch") links it to an Arabic root kadara, "to rush down," as with a bird of prey. J. Reider defines it as "perturbation" from the same root ("Etymological Studies in Biblical Hebrew," VT 2 [1952]: 127).
³ The Hebrew has "they are made ready for houses." The term מִנְלָם ("manal") is a hapax legomenon, explained by the Arabic fa’ima, "to be fat." Pope renders this "blubber." Cf. KJV "and maketh collops of fat on his flanks." RSV takes this to mean "with a stiff neck." Several commentators change מִנְלָם to מְנֹלָם ("manol") also as a hapax legomenon, although almost always interpreted to mean "possession" (with Arabic manal) and repointed as פִּימָה ("pimah"). Dahood further changes "earth" to the netherworld, and interprets it to mean "his possessions will not go down to the netherworld" ("Value of Ugaritic for Textual Criticism," Bib 40 [1959]: 164-66). Others suggest it means "ear of grain," either from the same root or from a root פָּר ("ear of grain") or a hapax legomenon in Deut 23:26 HT (23:25 ET).
⁴ Some editions and commentators delete the first line of this verse, arguing that it is simply a paraphrase of v. 22a, and that it interrupts the comparison with a tree that falls (although that comparison only starts next).
⁵ This last line in the verse is the difficult one. The MT has "he shall depart by the breath of his mouth." If this reading stands, then it must be understood that it is the breath of God’s mouth that is intended. In place of "his mouth" the LXX has "flower" (reading פִּרְחָו "pinho, properly, "his fruit") instead of יָסוּר ("piv"), and "fail" instead of "depart." Modern commentators and a number of English versions (e.g., RSV, NRSV, TEV) alter יָסוּר ("piv", "depart") to something like יָסוּר ("pronounced, "to drive away"), or the like, to get "will be swept away." The result is a reading "and his blossom will be swept away by the wind." The LXX may have read the Hebrew exactly, but harmonized it with v. 33 (see H. Heater, A Septuagint Translation Technique in the Book of Job [CBQMS]: 61-62).
⁶ The word, although difficult in its form, is "vanity," i.e., that which is worthless. E. Dohme (Job, 224) thinks that the word יָסוּר ("slan") conceals the word יָסוּר ("sho’o," "his stature"). But Dohme recognizes most of the forms יָסוּר ("int.ah," "deceived") to יָסוּר ("meda, know") to arrive at "we know that it is vanity." The last two words of the verse are then moved to the next. The LXX has "let him not think that he shall endure, for his end shall be vanity." This word is found in Job 20:18 with the sense of "trading." It can mean the exchange of goods or the profit from them. Some commentators change יָסוּר ("pimah, his reward") because they wish to put it with the next verse as the LXX seems to have done (although the LXX does not represent this). Suggestions include יָסוּר ("his palm tree") and יָסוּר ("vine shoot"). A number of writers simply delete all of v. 31. H. H. Rowley (Job [NCBC], 115) suggests the best reading (assuming one was going to make changes) would be, "Let him not trust in his stature, deceiving himself, for it is vanity." And then put "his palm tree" with the next verse, he thinks that achieves the proper balance.
⁷ In Heb "with the thickness of the bosses of his shield." The bosses are the convex sides of the bucklers, turned against the foe. This is a defiant attack on God.
⁸ This verse tells us that he is not in any condition to fight, because he is bloated and fat from luxurious living.
⁹ In D. W. Thomas defends a meaning "cover" for the verb נֵדַע ("asah"). See Translating Hebrew "asah," BT 17 [1966]: 190-93.
¹⁰ The term נֵדַע ("pimah), a hapax legomenon, is explained by the Arabic fa’ima, "to be fat." Pope renders this "blubber." Cf. KJV "and maketh collops of fat on his flanks." KJV has "flower" (reading פִּרְחָו "pinho, properly, "his fruit") instead of יָסוּר ("piv"), and "fail" instead of "depart." Modern commentators and a number of English versions (e.g., RSV, NRSV, TEV) alter יָסוּר ("piv", "depart") to something like יָסוּר ("pronounced, "to drive away"), or the like, to get "will be swept away." The result is a reading "and his blossom will be swept away by the wind." The LXX may have read the Hebrew exactly, but harmonized it with v. 33 (see H. Heater, A Septuagint Translation Technique in the Book of Job [CBQMS]: 61-62).
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¹² In Heb "before his day."
¹³ Those who put the last colon of v. 31 with v. 32 also have to change the verb יָסוּר ("pimah", "will be fulfilled"). E. Dohme (Job, 225) says, "a mere glance at the use of יָמוָל...abundantly proves that the original text had timmal (G. Syr., Vulg) which became timmalla through the accidental transposition of the 'alep of bavsi...in verse 31...". This, of course, is possible, if all the other changes up to now are granted. But the meaning of a word elsewhere in no way assures it should be the word here. The LXX has "his harvest shall perish before the time," which could translate any number of words that might have been in the underlying Hebrew text. Moreover, the use of such a metaphor is not out of place. In the absence of parallelism does not demand that the same metaphor appear in both lines.
and his branches will not flourish.  

15:33 Like a vine he will let his sour grapes fall,  

and like an olive tree he will shed his blossoms.  

15:34 For the company of the godless is barren,  

and fire consumes the tents of those who accept bribes.  

15:35 They conceive trouble and bring forth evil;  

their belly prepares deception.”

Job’s Reply to Eliphaz

16:1 Then Job replied:  

16:2 “I have heard many things like these before,  

What miserable comforters are you all!  

16:3 Will there be an end to your windy words?  

Or what provokes you that you answer?”

1 tn Now, in the second half of the verse, the metaphor of a tree with branches begins.

2 tn The verb means “to treat violently” or “to wrong.” It indicates that the vine did not nourish the grapes well enough for them to grow, and so they dry up and drop off.

3 sn The point is that like the tree the wicked man shows signs of life but produces nothing valuable. The olive tree will have blossoms in the years that it produces no olives, and so eventually drops the blossoms.

4 tn The LXX renders this line: “for death is the witness of an ungodly man.” “Death” represents “barren/sterile,” and “witness” represents “assembly.”

5 sn This may refer to the fire that struck Job (cf. 1:16).

6 tn Heb “the tents of bribery.” The word “bribery” can mean a “gift,” but most often in the sense of a bribe in court. It indicates that the wealth and the possessions that the wicked man has gained may have been gained unjustly.

7 tn Infinitives absolute are used in this verse in the place of finite verbs. They lend a greater vividness to the description, stressing the basic meaning of the words.

8 tn At the start of the speech Eliphaz said Job’s belly was filled with the wind; now it is there that he prepares deception. This inclusio frames the speech.

9 sn In the next two chapters we have Job’s second reply to Eliphaz. Job now feels abandoned by God and by his friends, and so complains that this all intensifies his sufferings. But he still holds to his innocence as he continues his appeal to God as his witness. There are four sections to this speech: in vv. 2-5 he dismisses the consolation his friends offered; in vv. 6-17 he laments that he is abandoned by God and man; in 16:8-17:9 he makes his appeal to God in heaven as a witness; and finally, in 10:16 he anticipates death.

10 tn The expression uses the Piel participle in construct: בַּעֲלַת נַעֲמָה יָמָלָה (mrn’ahame’amal, “comforters of trouble”), i.e., comforters who increase trouble instead of relieving it. D. W. Thomas translates this “breathers out of trouble” (“A Note on the Hebrew Root naham.” ExP Tim 44 [1932/33]: 192).

11 tn Disjunctive questions are introduced with the sign of the interrogative; the second part is introduced with ו (o, see GKC 475 §150.g).

12 tn In v. 3 the second person singular is employed rather than the plural as in vv. 2 and 4. The singular might be an indication that the words of v. 3 were directed at Eliphaz specifically.

13 tn Heb “words of wind.”

14 tn The Hiphil of מִרְעָן (marut) does not occur anywhere else. The word means “to compel; to force” (see 6:25).

15 tn The LXX seems to have gone a different way: “What, is there any reason in vain words, or what will hinder you from answering?”

16 tn For the use of the cohortative in the apodosis of conditional sentences, see GKC 322 §109.f.

17 tn The conjunction ו (lu) is used to introduce the optative, a condition that is incapable of fulfillment (see GKC 494-95 §159.f).

18 tn This verb הַקִּיקוּר (qikkur, “to bind”). There are several suggestions for this word. J. Finkelstein proposed a second root, a homonym, meaning “to make a sound,” and so here “to harangue” (“Hebrew habar and Semitic HBR,” JBL 75 [1956]: 328-31; also see O. Loretz, “HBR in Job 16:4,” CBQ 23 [1961]: 293-94, who renders it “I could make noisy speeches”). Other suggestions have been for new meanings based on cognate studies, such as “to make beautiful” (i.e., make polished speeches).

19 sn The action is a sign of mockery (see Ps 22:7/8; Isa 37:22; Matt 27:39).

20 tn “But” has been added in the translation to strengthen the contrast.

21 tn The Piel of מָעַט (‘amats) means “to strengthen, fortify.”

22 tn Heb “my mouth.”

23 tn The verb פִּסָּק (isksokh) means “to restrain; to withhold.” There is no object, so many make it first person subject, “I will not restrain.” The LXX and the Syriac have a different person — “I would not restrain.” G. R. Driver, arguing that the verb is intransitive here, made it “the solace of my lips would not [added] be withheld” (see JTS 34 [1933]: 380). D. J. A. Clines says that what is definitive is the use of the verb in the next line, where it clearly means “soothed, assuaged.”

24 tn “But” is supplied in the translation to strengthen the contrast.

25 tn The Niphal of לִפֶּשֶׁה (vkelashakh) means “to be soothed; to be assuaged.”

26 tn Some argue that מָעַה (mah) in the text is the Arabic ma, the simple negative. This would then mean “it does not depart far from me.” The interrogative used rhetorically amounts to the same thing, however, so the suggestion is not necessary.

27 tn In poetic discourse there is often an abrupt change from person to another. See GKC 462 §144.p. Some take the subject of this verb to be God, others the pain (“surely now it has worn me out”).

28 tn The verb פָּקַד (qamot) which is used only here and in 22:16; it means “to seize; to grasp.” By God’s seizing him, Job means his afflictions.

29 tn The subject is “my calamity.”

30 tn The verb is used in Ps 109:24 to mean “to be lean;” and so “leanness” is accepted here for the noun by most. Otherwise the word is “lie, deceit.” Accordingly, some take it here as “my slanderer” or “my liar” (gives evidence against me).
and testifies against me.

16:9 His 4 anger has torn me 2 and persecuted me; he has gnashed at me with his teeth; my adversary locks 3 eyes on me.

16:10 People 6 have opened their mouths against me, they have struck my cheek in scorn; 4 they unite 7 together against me.

16:11 God abandons me to evil 9 men, 9 and throws 8 me into the hands of wicked men.

16:12 I was in peace, and he has shattered me. 11 He has seized me by the neck and crushed me. 12 He has made me his target;

16:13 his archers 23 surround me.

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1 The referent of these pronouns in v. 9 ("his anger...he has gnashed...his teeth...his eyes") is best taken as God.

2 The figure used now is that of a wild beast. God's affliction of Job is compared to the attack of such an animal. Cf. Amos 1:11.

3 The verb יִירְטֵנִי (yirteni) is taken from ייתמן (ma'aleh), "to enter," and in this stem, "to pick up; to press together." The term has a military connotation, such as "to mobilize" (see D. W. Thomas, "mil'w in Jeremiah 4:5 : a military term," JJS 3 (1952): 47-52). Job sees himself surrounded by enemies who persecute him and mock him.

4 The colon reads, "they have opened against me with [the preposition is instrumental] their mouth." The gestures here follow the animal imagery; they reflect destructive opposition and attack (see Ps 22:13 among others).

5 This is an "insult" or a "reproach.

6 The verb יִתְמַלָּאוּן (yitmalawn) is taken from ימתלע (malaj), "to be full," and in this stem, "to pick up; to press together.

7 The term has a military connotation, such as "to mobilize" (see D. W. Thomas, "mi'lw in Jeremiah 4:5 : a military term," JJS 3 (1952): 47-52). Job sees himself surrounded by enemies who persecute him and mock him.

8 The word יַרְטַם (yirtam) means "to throw; to hurl." E. Dhor (Amos 1:11) has "he batters me down, breach upon breach." The language is hyperbolic; Job is saying that the sackcloth he has put on in his lamentable state is now stuck to his skin as if he had stitched it into the skin. It is now a habitual garment that he never takes off.

9 The Poel יִתְמַלָּא (yitelma) from יתמן (malah, "to enter") has here the meaning of "to thrust in." The activity is the opposite of "raising high the horn," a picture of dignity and victory.

10 The verb יִתְמַלָּא (yitelma) does not derive from the root יָמָל (yamal) as would the pointing in the MT, but from יָמָל (yamal), cognate to Arabic warrata, "to throw; to hurl.

11 The verb יָרַט (yirt) means "to shake." In the Hiphil it means "to break; to shatter" (5:12; 15:4). The Piel Pilpel, now from יָרַט (parar), with a similar meaning to the other verb, it means "to dash into pieces; and even scatter the pieces. The LXX translates this line, "he took me by the hair of the head and plucked it out." This meaning of "his archers" is supported for יָרָט (rabboyn) in view of Jer 50:29. The LXX, Syriac, Vulgate, Targum Job, followed by several translations and commentators prefer "arrows." They see this as a more appropriate figure without raising the question of who the archers might be (see 6:4). The point is an unnecessary distinction, for the figure is an illustration of the affliction that God has brought on him.

Without pity 14 he pierces 25 my kidneys and pours out my gall 26 on the ground.

16:14 He breaks through against me, time and time again; 17 he rushes 28 against me like a warrior.

16:15 I have sewed sackcloth on my skin, 19 and buried my horn 21 in the dust; 16:16 my face is reddened 22 because of weeping, 23 and on my eyelids there is a deep darkness. 24

16:17 although 25 there is no violence in my hands and my prayer is pure.
An Appeal to God as Witness

16:18 “O earth, do not cover my blood, nor let there be a secret place for my cry.

16:19 Even now my witness is in heaven; my advocate is on high.

16:20 My intercessor is my friend as my eyes pour out tears to God;

16:21 and he contends with God on behalf of man as a man pleads for his friend.

16:22 For the years that lie ahead are few, and then I will go on the way of no return.

17:1 My spirit is broken, my days have faded out, the grave awaits me.

17:2 Surely mockery is with me; my eyes must dwell on their hostility.

17:3 Make then my pledge with you. Who else will put up security for me?

17:4 Because you have closed their minds to understanding, therefore you will not exalt them.

1 sn Job knows that he will die, and that his death, signified here by blood on the ground, will cry out for vindication.

2 tn The word is simply “a place,” but in the context it surely means a hidden place, a secret spot that would never be discovered (see 18:21).

3 sn The witness in heaven must be God, to whom the cries and prayers come. Job’s dilemma is serious, but common to the human experience: the hostility of God toward him is baffling, but he is conscious of his innocence and can call on God to be his witness.

4 tn The parallelism now uses the Aramaic word “my advocate” – the one who testifies on my behalf. The word again appears in Gen 31:47 for Laban’s naming of the “heap of witness” in Aramaic – “Sadahutah.”

5 tn The first two words of this verse are problematic: ואֵלֶי יָאֵשׁ (יָאֵשׁ רַעְיָא, “my scorners are my friends”). The word יָאֵשׁ (ayesh), from or related to the word for “scornor” (יתר, yithar) in wisdom literature especially, can also mean “mediator” (Job 33:23). “Interpreter” (Gen 42:23). This gives the idea that “mess” has to do with the way words are used. It may be that the word here should have the singular suffix and be taken as “my spokesman.” This may not be from the same root as “scorn” (see N. H. Richardson, “Some Notes on LXX and Its Derivatives,” VT 5 (1955): 434-36). This is the view of the NIV, NJPS, JB, NAB, as well as a number of commentators. The idea of “my friends are scorners” is out of place in this section, unless taken as a parenthesis. Other suggestions are not convincing. The DB 5:23 “May my prayer come to the Lord, and before him may my eye shed tears.” Some have tried to change the Hebrew to fit this. The word “my friends” also calls for some attention. Instead of a plural noun suffix, most would see it as a singular, a slight vocalic change. But others think it is not the word “friend.” D. J. A. Clines accepts the view that it is not “friends” but “thoughts” (רֹעִי, ro’i). E. Dhorme takes it as “clamor,” from יָאֵשׁ (ro’i) and so interprets “my claimant word has reached God.” J. B. Curtis tries “My intercessor is my shepherd,” from יָאֵשׁ (ro’i). See “On Job’s Witness in Heaven,” JBL 102 (1983): 549-62.

6 tn The Hebrew verb means “to drip; to stream; to flow;” the expression is cryptic, but understandable: “my eye flows to be his witness.”

7 sn This is the simple translation of the expression “son of man” in Job. But some commentators wish to change the word בֶן (ben, “son”) to רֹעִי (ro’i, “between”). It would then be “[as] between a man and [for] his friend.” Even though a few have this reading, it is to be rejected. But see J. Barr, “Some Notes on ben” in Classical Hebrew,” JSS 23 (1978): 1-22.

8 tn The verb is supplied from the parallel clause.

9 tn The meaning of הָוָה הָרֵעָה (havah ro’ah) is unclear, and the expressions offer no help. If the MT is correct, it would probably be connected to הָוָה (marah, “to be rebellious”) and the derived form something like “hostility; provocation.” But some commentators suggest it should be related to הָוָה (marorot, “bitter things”). Others have changed both the noun and the verb to obtain something like “my eye is weary of their contentiousness” (Holscher), or mine eyes are weary by your stream of peevish complaints” (G. R. Driver, “Problems in the Hebrew text of Job,” VTSup 3 (1955): 78). There is no alternative suggestion that is compelling.

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11 tn The verb expression “I will not return” serves here to modify the journey that he will take. It is “the road [of] I will not return.”

12 tn The verb הָוָה (havah, “to act badly”) in the Piel means “to ruin.” The Pual translation with “my spirit” as the subject means “broken” in the sense of finished (not in the sense of humbled as in Ps 53).

13 tn The verb הָוָה (havah, equivalent of AramaicLLU柔 [la’uq]) means “to be extinguished.” It only occurs here in the Hebrew.

14 tn The plural “graves” could be simply an intensification, a plural of extension (see GKC 397 §124.c), or a reference to the graveyard. Coverdale had: “I am hardie at deathe dores.” The Hebrew expression simply reads “graves for me.” It probably means that that he is the object of derision. But many commentators either change the word to “mockers” (Tur-Sinai, NEB), or argue that the form in the text is a form of the participle (Gordis).

15 tn The noun is the abstract noun, “mockery.” It indicates that he is the object of derision. But many commentators either change the word to “mockers” (Tur-Sinai, NEB), or argue that the form in the text is a form of the participle (Gordis).

16 tn E. Dhorme (Job, 243) interprets the preposition to mean “aimed at me.”

17 sn The meaning of הָוָה הָרֵעָה (havah ro’ah) is unclear, and the versions offer no help. If the MT is correct, it would probably be connected to הָוָה (marah, “to be rebellious”) and the derived form something like “hostility; provocation.” But some commentators suggest it should be related to הָוָה (marorot, “bitter things”). Others have changed both the noun and the verb to obtain something like “my eye is weary of their contentiousness” (Holscher), or mine eyes are weary by your stream of peevish complaints” (G. R. Driver, “Problems in the Hebrew text of Job,” VTSup 3 (1955): 78). There is no alternative suggestion that is compelling.

18 tn The MT has two imperatives: “Lay down, pledge me, with me.” Most commentators think that the second imperative should be a noun, and take it to say, “Lay my pledge with/beside you.” A. B. Davidson (Job, 126) suggests that the first verb means “give a pledge,” and so the two similar verbs would be emphatic: “Give a pledge, be my surety.” Other than such a change (which would involve changing the vowels) one would have to interpret similarly by seeing the imperatives as a kind of henidias, with the main emphasis being on the second imperative, “make a pledge.”

19 sn The idiom is “to strike the hand.” Here the wording is a little different, “Who is he that will strike himself into my hand?”

20 tn This half-verse gives the reason for the next half-verse.

21 sn The pronoun refers to Job’s friends. They have not pledged security for him because God has hidden or sealed off their understanding.

22 tn The object “them” is supplied. This is the simplest reading of the line, taking the verb as an active Polel. Some suggest that the subject is “their hand” and the verb is to be translated “is not raised.” This would carry through the thought of the last verse, but it is not necessary to the point.
17:5 If a man denounces his friends for personal gain, the eyes of his children will fail.

17:6 He has made me a byword to people, I am the one in whose face they spit.

17:7 My eyes have grown dim with grief; my whole frame is but a shadow.

17:8 Upright men are appalled at this; the innocent man is troubled with the godless.

17:9 But the righteous man holds to his way, and the one with clean hands grows stronger.

Anticipation of Death

17:10 “But turn, all of you, and come now to the one who has some hope, and listen to what I say.

I will not find a wise man among you.

17:11 My days have passed, my plans are shattered, even the desires of my heart.

17:12 These men change night into day; they say, ‘The light is near in the face of darkness.’

17:13 If I hope for the grave to be my home, if I spread out my bed in darkness, if I cry to corruption, ‘You are my father,’ and to the worm, ‘My Mother,’ or ‘My sister,’

17:15 where then is my hope? And my hope, who sees it?

1 tn Heb “for a portion.” This verse is rather obscure. The words are not that difficult, but the sense of them in this context is. Some take the idea to mean “he denounces his friends for a portion,” and others have a totally different idea of “he invites his friends to share with him.” The former fits the context better, indicating that Job’s friends speak out against him for some personal gain. The second half of the verse then promises that his children will suffer loss for this attempt at gain. The line is surely proverbial. A number of other interpretations can be found in the commentaries.

2 tn The verb is the third person, and so God is likely the subject. The LXX has “you have made me.” So most commentators clarify the verb in some such way. However, without an expressed subject it can also be taken as a passive.

3 tn The word “byword” is related to the word translated “proverb” in the Hebrew (yetsar, masha’d). Job’s case is so well known that he is synonymous with afflictions and with abuse by people.

4 tn The word nari (yofet) is a hapax legomenon. The expression is “and a spitting in/to the face I have become,” i.e., “I have become one in whose face people spit.” Various suggestions have been made, including a link to Tophet, but they are weak. The verse as it exists in the MT is fine, and fits the context well.

5 tn See the usage of this verb in Gen 27:1 and Deut 34:7. Usually it is age that causes the failing eyesight, but here it is the grief.

6 tn The word yetsar (y’tsyrin), here with a suffix, occurs only here in the Bible. The word is related to yetsar (y’tsar, “to form, fashion”). And so Targum Job has “my forms,” and the Vulgate “my members.” The Syriac uses “thoughts” to reflect yetsar (vaters). Some have followed this to interpret, “all my thoughts have dissolved into shadows.” But the parallel with “eye” would suggest “form.” The plural “my forms, all of them” would refer to the whole body.

7 tn This verb yasham (shamam, “appalled”) is the one found in Isa 52:14, translated there “astonished.”

8 tn The verb means “to rouse oneself to excitement.” It naturally means “to be agitated; to be stirred up.”

9 tn The last two words are the imperfect verb yarash (vosif) which means “he adds,” and the abstract noun “energy, strength.” This noun is not found elsewhere; its Piel verb occurs in Job 4:4 and 16:5; “he increases strength.”

10 tn The form says “all of them.” Several editors would change it to “all of you,” but the lack of concord is not surprising; the vocative elsewhere uses the third person (see Mic 1:2; see also GKC 441 §135.r).

11 tn The first verb, the jussive, means “to return”; the second verb, the imperative, means “to come.” The two could be taken as a hendiadys, the first verb becoming adverbial: “to come again.”

12 tn Instead of the exact correspondence between coordinate verbs, other combinations occur — here we have a justive and an imperative (see GKC 386 §120.e).

13 tn This term usually means “plans; devices” in a bad sense, although it can be used of God’s plans (see e.g., Zech 8:15).

14 tn Although not in the Hebrew text, “even” is supplied in the translation, because this line is in apposition to the preceding.

15 tn This word has been linked to the root yarash (yarash, “to inherit”) yielding a meaning “the possessions of my heart.” But it is actually to be connected to yarash (yarash, “to desire”) cognate to the Akkadian eresu, “desire.” The LXX has “limbs,” which may come from an Aramaic word for “ropes.” An emendation based on the LXX would be risky.

16 tn The verse simply has the plural, “they change.” But since this verse seems to be a description of his friends, a clarification of the referent in the translation is helpful.

17 tn The same verb yim (sim, “set”) is used this way in Isa 5:20: “...who change darkness into light.”

18 tn The rest of the verse makes better sense if it is interpreted as what his friends say.

19 tn This expression is open to alternative translations: (1) It could mean that they say in the face of darkness, “Light is near.” (2) It could also mean “The light is near the darkness” or “The light is nearer than the darkness.”

20 tn The clause begins with nasi (‘im) which here has more of the sense of “since.” E. Dhorme (Job, 253) takes a rather rare use of the word to get “Can I hope again” (see also GKC 475 §150.f for the caveat).

21 tn This is understood because the conditional clauses seem to run to the apodosis in v. 5.

22 tn The word nasi (yakhvat) may be the word “corruption” from a root nasi (mash, “to destroy”) or a word “pit” from shakhat (shakkh, “to sink down”). The same problem surfaces in Ps 16:10, where it is parallel to “Shelah.” E. F. Sutcliffe, The Old Testament and the Future Life, 78ff., defends the meaning “corruption.” But many commentators here take it to mean “the grave” in harmony with “Shelah.” But in this verse “worms” would suggest “corruption” is better.

23 tn The adverb piku (“for”, “then”) plays an enclitic role here (see Job 4:7).
17:16 Will it go down to the barred gates of death? Will we descend together into the dust?

Bildad’s Second Speech

18:1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:

18:2 “How long until you make an end of words?
You must consider, and then we can talk.
18:3 Why should we be regarded as beasts, and considered stupid in your sight?

1 sn It is natural to assume that this verse continues the interrogative clause of the preceding verse.
2 tn The plural form of the verb probably refers to the two words, or the two senses of the word in the preceding verse. Hope and what it produces will perish with Job.
3 tn The Hebrew word פַּדָּד (baddim) describes the “bars” or “bolts” of Sheol, referring (by synecdoche) to the “gates of Sheol.” The LXX has “with me to Sheol,” and many adopt that as “by my side.”
4 tn The conjunction { (im) confirms the interrogative interpretation.
5 tn The translation follows the LXX and the Syriac versions with a change of vocalization in the MT. The MT has the noun “rest,” yielding, “will our rest be together in the dust?” The verb נִקָּח (vakhath) in Aramaic means “to go down; to descend.” If that is the preferred reading – and it almost is universally accepted here – then it would be spelled נַקָּח (nekhath). In either case the point of the verse is clearly describing death and going to the grave.
6 sn Bildad attacks Job with less subtlety than Eliphaz. He seems, in rapid narrative to connect the words; in such cases a preposition is on the following noun.
7 tn The verb is plural, and so most commentators make it singular. But it seems from the context that Bildad is addressing all of them, and not just Job.
8 tn The construction is נִתְמִינוּ נַקָּח (qintse lÿmillin), which is often taken to be “end of words,” as if the word was from יָכָה (yit), “end”). But a plural of יָכָה is not found in the OT. Some will link the word to Arabic qanasa, “to hunt; to give chase.” To explain the verb this way is possible, but not altogether certain. E. Dhorme (Job, 257) objects that this does not fit the speech of Bildad (as well as it might Job’s). He finds a cognate qinsu, “fetters, shackles,” and reads “how long will you put shackles on words.” But G. R. Driver had pointed out that this cognate does not exist ("Problems in the Hebrew text of Job," VTSup 3 (1955): 72-93). So it would be preferable to take the reading “ends” and explain the ה (nun) as from a Aramaic by-form. This is supported by 110gsJob that uses לָכָה (lokhah, “end”). On the construction, GKC 421 §130.a explains this as a use of the construct in rapid narrative to connect the words; in such cases a preposition is on the following noun.
9 tn The imperfect verb, again plural, would be here taken in the nuance of instruction, or a modal nuance of obligation. So Bildad is telling his listeners to be intelligent. This would be rather cutting in the discourse.
10 tn Heb “afterward.”
11 tn The verb נְמָסָס (niminus) has been explained from different roots. Some take it from מָס (tame, “to be unclean”), and translate it “Why should we be unclean in your eyes?” Most would connect it to נָמָש (namash, “to stop up”), meaning “to be stupid” in the Niphel. Another suggestion is to follow the LXX and read from דָּמָשָׁה (damashah, “to be reduced to silence”). Others take it from דָּמָה (damah) with a meaning “to be like.” But what is missing is the term of comparison – like what? Various suggestions have been made, but all are simply conjectures.
12 tn The construction uses the participle and then 3rd person suffixes: “O tearing of himself in his anger.” But it is clearly referring to Job, and so the direct second person pronouns should be used to make that clear. The LXX is an approximation or paraphrase here: “Anger has possessed you, for what if you should die – would under heaven be desolate, or shall the mountains be overthrown from their foundations?”
14 sn Bildad is asking if Job thinks the whole moral order of the world should be interrupted for his sake, that he may escape the punishment for wickedness.
15 tn Hebrew גַּם (gim, “also; moreover”), in view of what has just been said.
16 sn The lamp or the light can have a number of uses in the Bible. Here it is probably an implied metaphor for prosperity and happiness, for the good life itself.
17 tn The expression is literally “the flame of his fire,” but the pronominal suffix qualifies the entire bound construction. The two words together intensify the idea of the flame.
18 tn The LXX interprets a little more precisely: “his lamp shall be put out with him.”
19 sn This thesis of Bildad will be questioned by Job in 21:17 – how often is the lamp of the wicked snuffed out?
20 tn Heb “the steps of his vigor,” the genitive being the attribute.
21 tn The verb נִטְמִינוּ (niminus) means “to be cramped; to be straitened; to be hemmed in.” The trouble has hemmed him in, so that he cannot walk with the full, vigorous steps he had before. The LXX has “Let the meanest of men spoil his goods.”
22 tn The LXX has “causes him to stumble,” which many commentators accept, but this involves the transposition of the three letters. The verb is נִטְמִין (nimin), “to be unclean,” not נִטְמִין (nimin), “to be like.”
23 sn See Ps 25:15.
24 tn The word נִטְמִין (niminus) is used in scripture for the snare of the fowler – thus a bird trap. But its plural seems to refer to nets in general (see Job 22:10).
a snare<sup>2</sup> grips him.

18:10 A rope is hidden for him<sup>2</sup> on the ground
and a trap for him<sup>3</sup> lies on the path.

18:11 Terrors<sup>4</sup> frighten him on all sides
and dog<sup>6</sup> his every step.

18:12 Calamity is<sup>5</sup> hungry for him,<sup>7</sup>
and misfortune is ready at his side.<sup>8</sup>

18:13 It eats away parts of his skin;<sup>9</sup>
the most terrible death<sup>10</sup> devours his limbs.

18:14 He is dragged from the security of his tent,<sup>11</sup>
and marched off<sup>12</sup> to the king<sup>13</sup> of terrors.

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<sup>2</sup> tn This word does not occur elsewhere. But another word from the same root means “plait of hair,” and so this term has something to do with a net like a trellis or lattice.

<sup>3</sup> tn Heb “his rope.” The suffix must be a genitive expressing that the trap was for him, to trap him, and so an objective genitive.

<sup>4</sup> sn Bildad is referring here to all the things that afflict a person and cause terror. It would then be a metonymy of effect, the cause being the afflictions.

<sup>5</sup> tn The verb נָעַפָּד (naphad) in the Hiphil has the meaning “to pursue” and “to scatter.” It is followed by the expression “at his feet.” So the idea is easily derived: they chase him at his feet. But some commentators have other proposals. The most far-fetched is that of Ehrlich and Driver (ZAW 24 [1953]: 259-60) which has “and compel him to urinate on his feet,” one of many similar readings the NEB accepted from Driver.

<sup>6</sup> tn The jussive is occasionally used without its normal sense and only as an imperfect (see GKC 323 §109.k).

<sup>7</sup> tn There are a number of suggestions for נָעַפָּד (naphad). Some take it as “vigor”: thus “his strength is hungry.” Others take it as “iniquity”: thus “his iniquity/trouble is hungry.”

<sup>8</sup> tn The expression means that misfortune is right there to destroy him whenever there is the opportunity.

<sup>9</sup> tn The “limbs of his skin” makes no sense, unless a poetic meaning of “parts” (or perhaps “layers”) is taken. The parallelism has “his skin” in the first colon, and “his limbs” in the second. One plausible suggestion is to take נֶכֶד (nekhed, “limbs of”) in the first part to be נֶכֶד (nekhed, “by a disease”); Dhomme, Wright, RSV). The verb has to be made passive, however. The versions have different things: The LXX has “let the branches of his feet be eaten”; the Syriac has “his limbs will be swallowed up by force”; the Vulgate reads “let it devour the beauty of his skin”; and Targum Job has “it will devour the beauty of his skin.”

<sup>10</sup> tn The “firstborn of death” is the strongest child of death (Gen 49:3), or the deadliest death (like the “firstborn of the poor, the poorest.” The phrase means the most terrible death (A. B. Davidson, Job, 1:34).

<sup>11</sup> tn “from his tent, his security,” The apposition serves to modify the tent as his security.

<sup>12</sup> tn The verb is the Hiphil of נָעַפָּד (naphad, “to lead away”). The problem is that the form is either a third feminine (Rashi thought it was referring to Job’s wife) or the second person. There is a good deal of debate over the possibility of the prefix ת- being a variant for the third masculine form. The evidence in Ugaritic and Akkadian is mixed, stronger for the plural than the singular. Gesenius has some samples where the third feminine form might also be used for the passive if there is no expressed subject (see GKC 459 §144.b), but the evidence is not strong. The simplest choices are to change the prefix to a מ (mod), or argue that the מ (mod) can be masculine, or follow Gesenius.

<sup>13</sup> tn This is a reference to death, the king of all terrors. Other identifications are made in the commentators: Mot, the Ugaritic god of death; Nergal of the Babylonians; Molech of the Canaanites, the one to whom people sent emissaries.

18:15 Fire resides in his tent;<sup>14</sup> over his residence burning sulfur is scattered.

18:16 Below his roots dry up, and his branches wither above.

18:17 His memory perishes from the earth, he has no name in the land.<sup>15</sup>

18:18 He is driven<sup>16</sup> from light into darkness
and is banished from the world.

18:19 He has neither children nor descendants<sup>17</sup> among his people, no survivor in those places he once stayed.<sup>18</sup>

18:20 People of the west<sup>19</sup> are appalled at his fate,<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> tn This line is difficult as well. The verb, again a third feminine form, says “it dwells in his tent.” But the next part (יִהְיֶה, “night,” or “midnight”) refers to something that is not his. “The best that can be made of the MT is “There shall live in his tent they that are not his” (referring to persons and animals; see J. E. Hartley, Job [NICOT], 279). G. R. Driver and G. B. Gray (Job [ICC], 2:161) refer that which is naughted of his to weedy and wild animals. M. Dahood suggested a reading יִהְיֶה (yihye) and a connection to Akkadian nablu, “fire” (cf. Ugaritic nbl). The interchange of מ and נ is not a problem, and the parallelism with the next line makes good sense (“Some Northwest Semitic words in Job,” Bib 38 [1957]: 312ff.). Others suggest an emendation to get “night-hag” or “vampire.” This suggestion, as well as Driver’s “mixed herbs,” are linked to the idea of exorcism. But if a change is to be made, Dahood’s is the most compelling.

<sup>15</sup> tn Heb “outside.” Cf. ESV, “in the street,” referring to absence from his community’s memory.

<sup>16</sup> tn The verbs in this verse are plural; without the expressed subject they should be taken in the passive sense.

<sup>17</sup> tn The two words יִיָּנָה (yahanah, “offspring”) and יִנָּה (nana, “posterity”) are always together and form an alliteration. This is hard to capture in English, but some have tried: Moffatt had “son and scion,” and Tur-Sinau had “breed or brood.” But the words are best simply translated as “lineage and posterity” or as in the NIV “offspring or descendants.”

<sup>18</sup> tn Heb “in his sojournings.” The verb יָשָׁר (yashar) means “to reside; to sojourn” temporarily, without land rights. Even this word has been selected to stress the temporary nature of his stay on earth.

<sup>19</sup> tn The word עֶקֶדָה (akkadah) means “those [men] coming after.” And the next word, עֶקֶדָה (akkadah), means “those [men] coming before.” Some commentators have tried to see here references to people who lived before and people who lived after, but that does not explain their being appalled at the fate of the wicked. So the normal way this is taken is in connection to the geography, notably the seas – “the hinder sea” refers to the Mediterranean, the West, and “the front sea” refers to the Red Sea, namely, the East. The versions understood this as temporal: “the last gleaned for him, and wonder seized the first” (LXX).

<sup>20</sup> tn Heb “his day.”
people of the east are seized with horror, saying, 18:21 Surely such is the residence of an evil man; and this is the place of one who has not known God.”

1 tn The expression has “they seize horror.” The RSV renders this “horror seizes them.” The same idiom is found in Job 21:6: “laid hold on shuddering.” The idiom would solve the grammatical problem and not change the meaning greatly, but it would change the parallelism.

2 tn The word “saying” is supplied in the translation to mark and introduce the following as a quotation of these people who are seized with horror. The alternative is to take v. 21 as Bildad’s own summary statement (cf. G. R. Driver and G. B. Gray, Job [ICC], 2:162; J. E. Hartley, Job [NICOT], 280).

3 tn The term is in the plural, “the tabernacles”; it should be taken as a plural of local extension (see GKC 397 §124.b).

4 tn The word “place” is in construct; the clause following it replaces the genitive: “this is the place of – he has not known God.”

5 sn Job is completely stunned by Bildad’s speech, and feels totally deserted by God and his friends. Yet from his despair a new hope emerges with a stronger faith. Even though he knows he will die in his innocence, he knows that God will vindicate him and that he will be conscious of the vindication. There are four parts to this reply: Job’s impatience with the speeches of his friends (2-6), God’s abandonment of Job and his attack (7-12), Job’s forsaken state and appeal to his friends (13-22), and Job’s confidence that he will be vindicated (23-29).

6 tn Heb “torment my soul,” with “soul” representing the self or individual. The MT has a verb from קָמ (qam), “to afflict; to torment.” This is supported by the versions. But the LXX has “to tire” which is apparently from קָט (keta), “to wander; to err.” The form in the MT is unusual because it preserves the final (original) נ of the cube in the Hiphil (see GKC 2.14 §75.gg). So this unusual form has been preserved, and is the correct reading. A modal nuance for the imperfect fits best here: “How long do you intend to do this?”

7 tn The MT has קָט (katta), “to crush” in the Piel. The LXX, however, has a more general word which means “to destroy.”

8 tn The LXX adds to the verse: “only know that the Lord has dealt with me thus.”

9 sn The number “ten” is a general expression to convey that this has been done often (see Gen 31:7; Num 14:22).

10 tn The Hiphil of the verb גָּדַר (gadar) means “outrage; insult; shame.” The verbs in this verse are prefixed conjugations, and may be interpreted as pretenses if the reference is to the past time. But since the action is still going on, progressive imperfects work well.

11 tn The second half of the verse uses two verbs, the one dependent on the other. It could be translated “you are not ashamed to attack me” (see GKC 385-86 §120.c), or “you attack me shamelessly.” The verb חָכַר (hakhar) poses some difficulties for both the ancient versions and the modern commentators. The verb seems to be cognate to Arabic hakara, “to oppress; to ill-treat.” This would mean that there has been a transformation of ח (khet) to ח (kheth). Three Hebrew verbs actually have the ה (kheth). This has been widely accepted; other suggestions are irrelevant.

12 tn Job has held to his innocence, so the only way that he could say “I have erred” (שָׁגָה, shagah) is in a hypothetical clause like this.

13 tn There is a long addition in the LXX: “in having spoken words which it is not right to speak, and my words err, and are unreasonable.”

14 tn The word נָשָׁג (nashag) is a hapax legomenon. It is derived from נָשָׁג (nasag), “to wander; to err” with root paralleling נָשָׁג (nasag) and נָשָׁג (nasag). What Job is saying is that even if it were true that he had erred, it did not injure them – it was solely his concern.

15 tn The introductory particles repeat בָּנָה (‘amman, “indeed”) but now with הב (‘im, “it”). It could be interpreted to mean “is it not true,” or as here in another conditional clause.

16 tn The verb is the Hiphil of גָּד (gad), it can mean “to make great” or as an internal causative “to make oneself great” or “to assume a lofty attitude, to be insolent.” There is no reason to assume another root here with the meaning of “quarrel” (as Gordis does).

17 sn Job’s friends have been using his shame, his humiliation in all his sufferings, as proof against him in their case.

18 tn The imperative is used here to introduce a solemn affirmation. This verse proves that Job was in no way acknowledging sin in v. 4. Here Job is declaring that God has wronged him, and in so doing, perverted justice.

19 tn The Piel of גָּד (gad) means “to warp justice” (see 8:3), or here, to do wrong to someone (see Ps 119:78). The statement is chosen to refute the question that Bildad asked in his first speech.

20 tn The verb גָּדַל (naagad) means “to turn; to make a circle; to encircle.” It means that God has encircled or engulfed Job with his net.

21 tn The word יָמָס (ymass) is usually connected with יָמָס (yamad, “to hunt”). So is taken to mean “a net.” Gordis and Habel, however, interpret it to mean “siegeworks” thrown up around a city – but that would require changing the ב (bela) to ב (bela) (cf. NLT, “I am like a city under siege”). The LXX, though, has “bulwark.” Besides, the previous speech used several words for “net.”

22 tn The particle is used here as in 9:11 (see GKC 497 §159.w).

23 tn The LXX has “I laugh at reproach.”

24 tn The same idea is expressed in Jer 20:8 and Hab 1:2. The cry is a cry for help, that he has been wronged, that there is no justice.

25 tn The Niphal is simply “I am not answered” See Prov 21:13b.

26 tn The verb גָּדַל (gad) means “to wall up; to fence up; to block.” God has blocked Job’s way so that he cannot get through. See the note on 3:23. Cf. Lam 3:7.

27 sn Some commentators take the word to be גָּדֵל (gadol), related to an Arabic word for “thorn hedge.”
Job's Forsaken State

19:13 “He has put my relatives far from me; my acquaintances only turn away from me.

19:14 My kinsmen have failed me; my friends have forgotten me.

19:15 My guests and my servant girls consider me a stranger;
I am a foreigner in their eyes.

19:16 I summon my servant, but he does not respond, even though I implore him with my own mouth.

19:17 My breath is repulsive to my wife; I am loathsome to my brothers.

19:18 Even youngsters have scorned me; when I get up, they scoff at me.

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13 tn The Pual participle is used for those “known” to him, or with whom he is “familiar,” whereas יָדוּר (qarav; “near”) is used for a relative.

14 tn Many commentators add the first part of v. 15 to this verse, because it is too loaded and this is too short. That gives the reading “My kinsmen and my familiar friends have disappeared, they have forgotten me (15) the guests I entertained.” There is not much support for this, nor is there much reason for it.

15 tn The Hebrew נִכְרָר (gare beti, “the guests of my house”) refers to those who sojourned in my house — not residents, but guests.

16 tn The form of the verb is a feminine plural, which would seem to lend support to the proposed change of the lines (see last note to v. 14). But the form may be feminine primarily because of the immediate reference. On the other side, the suffix of “their guests” is a masculine plural. So the evidence lies on both sides.

17 tn This word נַכְרָר (nokhrin) is the person from another race, from a strange land, the foreigner. The previous word, יָדוּר (qer), is a more general word for someone who is staying in the land but is not a citizen, a sojourner.

18 tn The verb נָסַע (qarav) followed by the ה (lamed) preposition means “to summon.” Contrast Ps 123:2.

20 tn Heb הָפִּיךְ (hafich) or הָפִּיךְ (hafich) “plead for grace” or “plead for mercy” (ESV).

21 tn The verb נָזָר (zur) “rise” is probably fairly literal. When Job painfully tries to get up and walk, the little boys make fun of him.

22 tn In the Hebrew סַנְעָרִים (san’arim) “the sons of my belly” (= body). This would normally mean “my sons.” But they are all dead. And there is no suggestion that Job had other sons. The word “my belly” will have to be understood as “my womb,” i.e., the womb I came from. Instead of “brothers,” the sense could be “siblings” (both brothers and sisters; G. R. Driver and G. B. Gray, Job [ICC], 2:168).

23 tn The use of the verb “rise” is probably fairly literal. When Job painfully tries to get up and walk, the little boys make fun of him.

24 tn The verb נָסַע (qarav) followed by the preposition ב (bet) indicates speaking against someone, namely, scoffing or railing against someone (see Ps 50:20; 78:19). Some commentators find another root with the meaning “to turn one’s back on; to turn aside from.” The argument is rendered weak philologically because it requires a definition “from” for the preposition bet. See among others I. Eitan, “Studies in Hebrew Roots,” JQR 14 (1923-24): 31-52 (especially 38-41).
19:19 All my closest friends detest me; and those whom I love have turned against me.
19:20 My bones stick to my skin and my flesh, I have escaped alive with only the skin of my teeth.
19:21 Have pity on me, my friends, have pity on me, for the hand of God has struck me.
19:22 Why do you pursue me like God does? Will you never be satiated with my flesh?

Job's Assurance of Vindication
19:23 "O that my words were written down, O that they were written on a scroll,

Job 19:19-23

1 sn There is some question concerning the use of the lead. It surely cannot be a second description of the tool, for a lead tool would be of no use in chiseling words into a rock. It was Rashi's idea, followed by Dillmann and Duhm, that lead was run into the cut-out letters. The suggestion that they wrote on lead tablets does not seem to fit the verse (cf. NIV). See further A. Baker, "The Strange Case of Job's Chisel," CBQ 31 (1969): 370-79.

2 tn Heb "men of my confidence," or "men of my council," i.e., intimate friends, confidants.

3 tn The pronoun παρά (zech) here functions in the place of a nominative (see GKC 447 §138.h).

4 tn This is what he proposes in the second line to read "and I have gnawed my bone with my teeth" (transferring "bone" from the first half and omitting "skin"). There are numerous other renderings of this; some of the more notable are: "I escape, my bones in my skin and my flesh stick to my skin and my flesh, I am left with only the skin of my teeth." (Merx); "my teeth fall out" (Duhm); "my teeth fall from my gums" (Pope); "my bones protrude in sharp points" (Kisaane). A. B. Davidson retains "the skin of my teeth," meaning "gums." This is about the last thing that Job has, or he would not be able to speak. For a detailed study of this verse, D. J. A. Clines devotes two full pages of textual notes (Job WBC, 430-31). He concludes with "My bones hang from my skin and my flesh, I am left with only the skin of my teeth."

5 tn Or "I am left."

6 tn The word "alive" is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied in the translation for clarity.

7 sn Strahan comments, "The whole tragedy of the book is packed into these extraordinary words."

8 sn The idiom of eating the pieces of someone means "slander" in Aramaic (see Dan 3:8), Arabic and Akkadian.

9 tn The optative is again expressed with the interrogative clause "Who will give that they be written?" Job wishes that his words be preserved long after his death.

10 tn While the sense of this line is unclear, there is a small problem in its translation. The last word is indeed צכר (zecher, "book"), usually understood here to mean "scroll." But the verb that follows it in the verse is יָלַע (yalaq), from יָלַע (klaaq, "to engrave; to carve"). While the meaning is clearly that Job wants his words to be retained, the idea of engraving in a book, although not impossible, is unusual. And so many have suggested that the Akkadian word 𒌷𒈭 (sipaaru, "copper; brass") is what is meant here (see Isa 30:8; Judg 5:14). The consonants are the same, and the vowel pattern is close to the original vowel pattern of this segholate noun. Writing on copper or bronze sheets has been attested from the 12th to the 2nd centuries, notably in the copper scroll, which would allow the translation "scroll" in our text (for more bibliography see D. J. A. Clines, Job WBC, 432). But H. S. Gehman and others have suggested that in Phoenician our word can mean "inscription" (SEFER, an inscription, in the book of Job, JBL 63 [1944]; 303-7), making the proposed substitution unnecessary.
yet in my flesh\textsuperscript{4} I will see God,\textsuperscript{5}
19:27 whom I will see for myself,\textsuperscript{3} and whom my own eyes will behold, and not another.\textsuperscript{4}
My heart\textsuperscript{6} grows faint within me.\textsuperscript{6}
19:28 If you say, ‘How we will pursue him, since the root of the trouble is found in him!’\textsuperscript{7}

\textsuperscript{4} The Hebrew phrase is “and from my flesh.” This could mean “without my flesh,” i.e., separated from my flesh, or “from my flesh,” i.e., in or with my flesh. The former view is taken by those who think Job’s vindication will come in this life, and who find the idea of a resurrection unlikely to be in Job’s mind. The latter view is taken by those who interpret the preceding line as meaning death and the next verse underscoring that it will be his eye that will see. This would indicate that Job’s faith rises to an unparalleled level at this point.

\textsuperscript{5} The MT reads “in me.” If that is retained, then the question would be in the first colon, and the reasoning of the second colon would be Job’s. But over 100 MSS have “in him,” and so this reading is accepted by most editors. The verse is a little difficult, but it seems to form a warning by Job that God’s appearance which will vindicate Job will bring judgment on those who persecute him and charge him falsely.

\textsuperscript{6} The word “wrath” probably refers to divine wrath for the wicked. Many commentators change this word to read “they,” or more precisely, “these things.”

\textsuperscript{7} The verse is so difficult, and any convincing reconstruction is so unlikely, that it seems best not to attempt it.” His words have gone unheeded, even by himself, and rightly so. There seem to be two general interpretations, the details of some words notwithstanding. An honest assessment of the evidence would have to provide both interpretations, albeit still arguing for one. Here Job says he will see God. This at the least means that he will witness his vindication, which it seems clear from the other complaints of Job will occur after his death (it is his blood that must be vindicated). But in what way, exactly, Job will see God is not clarified. In this verse the verb that is used is often used of prophetic visions, but in the next verse the plain word for seeing – with his eye – is used. The fulfillment will be more precise than Job may have understood. Rowley does conclude: “Though there is no full grasping of a belief in a worthwhile Afterlife with God, this passage is a notable landmark in the program toward such a belief.” The difficulty is that Job expects to die – he would like to be vindicated in the other complaints of Job will occur after his death (it is his blood that must be vindicated). But in what way, exactly, Job will see God is not clarified. In this verse the verb that is used is often used of prophetic visions, but in the next verse the plain word for seeing – with his eye – is used. The fulfillment will be more precise than Job may have understood. Rowley does conclude: “Though there is no full grasping of a belief in a worthwhile Afterlife with God, this passage is a notable landmark in the program toward such a belief.” The difficulty is that Job expects to die – he would like to be vindicated in this life, but is resolved that he will die. (1) Some commentators think that vv. 25 and 26 follow the wish for vindication now; (2) others (traditionally) see it as in the next life. Some of the other interpretations that take a different line are less impressive, such as Kissane’s, “did I but see God…were I to see God, I will see him for myself!” This at the least means that he will witness his vindication, which it seems clear from the other complaints of Job will occur after his death (it is his blood that must be vindicated). But in what way, exactly, Job will see God is not clarified. In this verse the verb that is used is often used of prophetic visions, but in the next verse the plain word for seeing – with his eye – is used. The fulfillment will be more precise than Job may have understood. Rowley does conclude: “Though there is no full grasping of a belief in a worthwhile Afterlife with God, this passage is a notable landmark in the program toward such a belief.” The difficulty is that Job expects to die – he would like to be vindicated in this life, but is resolved that he will die. (1) Some commentators think that vv. 25 and 26 follow the wish for vindication now; (2) others (traditionally) see it as in the next life. Some of the other interpretations that take a different line are less impressive, such as Kissane’s, “did I but see God…were I to see God, I will see him for myself!”

\textsuperscript{8} The ordinary meaning of the root \textsuperscript{9} is “to hasten,” “to hurry” (but Job 2:23 is an archaic use) or “to take, bring me back,” i.e., prompt me to make another speech. The text makes good sense as it is, and there is no reason to change the reading to make a closer parallel with the second half – indeed, the second part explains the first.

\textsuperscript{9} The word is normally taken from the root “to hasten,” and rendered “because of my haste within me.” But K&D 11:37-4 proposed another root, and similarly, but closer to the text, E. Dhorme (Job, 289-90) found an Arabic word with the meaning “feeling, sensation.” He argues that from this idea developed the meanings in the cognates of “thoughts” as well. Similarly, Gordis translates it “my feeling pain.” See also Eccl 2:25.

\textsuperscript{10} The idea is not that difficult, and so the many proposals to restructure it “out of my understanding a spirit answers me.”
Surely you know that it has been from old, ever since humankind was placed on the earth, that the elation of the wicked is brief, the joy of the godless lasts but a moment.

Even though his stature reaches to the heavens and his head touches the clouds, he will perish forever, like his own excrement; those who used to see him will say, ‘Where is he?’

Like a dream he flies away, never again to be found, and like a vision of the night he is put to flight.

People who had seen him will not see him again, and the place where he was will recognize him no longer.

His sons must recompense the poor; his own hands must return his wealth.

His bones were full of his youthful vigor, but that vigor will lie down with him in the dust.

"If evil is sweet in his mouth and he hides it under his tongue, and does not let it go, and holds it fast in his mouth, it becomes the venom of serpents within him. The wealth that he consumed he vomits up, God will make him throw it out of his stomach.

He sucks the poison of serpents; the fangs of a viper kill him.

2 tn The MT has “Do you not know?” The question can be interpreted as a rhetorical question affirming that Job must know this. The question serves to express the conviction that the contents are well-known to the audience (see GKC 474 §150.e).

2 tn Heb “from the putting of man on earth.” The infinitive is the object of the preposition, which is here temporal. If “man” is taken as the subjective genitive, then the verb would be given a passive translation. Here “man” is a generic, referring to “mankind” or “the human race.”

3 tn The expression in the text is “quite near.” This indicates that it is easily attained, and that its end is near.

4 tn For the discussion of נַחֲנֶשׁ (khanev, “godless”) see Job 8:13.

5 tn The phrase is “until a moment,” meaning it is short-lived. But see J. Barr, “Hebrew ad, especially at Job 1:18 and Neh 7:3,” JJS 27 (1982): 177-88.

6 tn The word נָשָׂא (nashâ`) has been connected with the verb נָשַׁא (nashâ`); “to lift up”), and so interpreted here as “pride.” The form is parallel to “head” in the next part, and so here it refers to his stature, the part that rises up and is crowned. But the verse does describe the pride of such a person, with his head in the heavens.

7 tn There have been attempts to change the word here to “like a whirlwind,” or something similar. But many argue that there is no reason to remove a coarse expression from Zophar.

8 tn Heb “and they do not find him.” The verb has no expressed subject, and so here is equivalent to a passive. The clause itself is taken adverbially in the sentence.

9 tn Heb “the eye that had seen him.” Here a part of the person (the eye, the instrument of vision) is put by metonymy for the entire person.

10 tn The early versions confused the root of this verb, taking it from יָרַשׁ (yarsâ`) and not from יָרַשׁ (yarsâ`) meaning “to compensate; to restore” wealth their father had gained by impoverishing others. This fits the parallelism well, but not the whole context that well.

11 tn Some commentators are surprised to see “his hands” here, thinking the passage talks about his death. Budde changed it to “his children,” by altering one letter. R. Gordis argued that “hand” can mean offspring, and so translated it that way without changing anything in the text (“A note on YAD,” JBL 62 [1943]: 343).

12 tn “Bones” is often used metonymically for the whole person, the bones being the framework, meaning everything inside, as well as the body itself.

13 tn This line means that he dies prematurely – at the height of his youthful vigor.

14 tn The conjunction אֲנִי (‘imi) introduces clauses that are conditional or concessive. With the imperfect verb in the protasis it indicates what is possible in the present or future. See GKC 496 §159.q.

15 sn The wicked person holds on to evil as long as he can, savoring the taste or the pleasure of it.

16 sn Heb “in the middle of his palate.”

17 tn The perfect verb in the apodosis might express the suddenness of the change (see S. R. Driver, Tenses in Hebrew, 204), or it might be a constative perfect looking at the action as a whole without reference to inception, progress, or completion (see IBHS 480-81 §30.1d). The Niphal perfect simply means “is turned” or “turns”; “sour” is supplied in the translation to clarify what is meant.

18 tn The word is “in his loins” or “within him.” Some translate more specifically “bowels.”

19 sn Some commentators suggest that the ancients believed that serpents secreted poison in the gall bladder, or that the poison came from the gall bladder of serpents. In any case, there is poison (from the root “bitter”) in the system of the wicked person; it may simply be saying it is that type of poison.

20 tn Heb “swallowed.”

21 tn The choice of words is excellent. The verb בִּפשׁ (bîRESH) means either “to inherit” or “to disinherit; to dispossess.” In the context makes the figure clear that God is administering the emetic to make the wicked throw up the wealth (thus, “God will make him throw it out…”), but since wealth is the subject there is a disinheritance meant here.

22 tn The word is a homonym for the word “head,” which has led to some confusion in the early versions.

23 sn To take the possessions of another person is hereby compared to sucking poison from a serpent – it will kill eventually.

24 tn Heb “tongue.”

25 sn Some have thought this verse is a gloss on v. 14 and should be deleted. But the word for “viper” (צַעַק, ‘qâQ) is a rare word, occurring only here and in Isa 30:6 and 59:5. It is unlikely that a rarer word would be used in a gloss. But the point is similar to v. 14 – the wealth that was greedily sucked
20:17 He will not look on the streams, the rivers, which are the torrents of honey and butter.

20:18 He gives back the ill-gotten gain without assimilating it; he will not enjoy the wealth from his commerce.

20:19 For he has oppressed the poor and abandoned them; he has seized a house which he did not build.

20:20 For he knows no satisfaction in his appetite; he does not let anything he desires escape.

means “to cause to escape; to rescue.” Some translate this verb as “it is impossible to escape”; this may work, but is uncertain. Others translate the verb in the sense of saving something else: N. Sarna says, “Of his most cherished possessions he will save nothing.”

20:21 “Nothing is left for him to devour; that is why his prosperity does not last.”

20:22 In the fullness of his sufficiency, distress overtakes him. The full force of misery will come upon him.

20:23 “While he is filling his belly, God sends his burning anger against him, and rains down his blows upon him.

20:24 If he flees from an iron weapon, then an arrow from a bronze bow pierces him.

in by the wicked proves to be their undoing. Either this is totally irrelevant to Job’s case, a general discussion, or the man is raising questions about how Job got his wealth.

The word עָזַב (‘azav) simply means “streams” or “channels.” Because the word is used elsewhere for “streams of oil” (cf. 29:6), and that makes a good parallelism here, some supply “oil” (cf. NAB, NLT). But the second colon of the verse is probably in apposition to the first. The verb “see” followed by the preposition bet, “to look on; to look over,” means “to enjoy as a possession,” an activity of the victor.

The construct nouns here have caused a certain amount of revision. It says “rivers of, torrents of.” The first has been emended by Klostermann to עָזַב (‘azab) (‘itsahar, “oil”) and connected to the first colon. Older editors argued for a עָזַב (‘azab) that meant “oil” but that was not convincing. On the other hand, there is support for having more than one construct together serving as apposition (see GKC 422 §130.e). If the word “abandoned” in the last colon is a construct, that would mean three of them, but that one need not be construct. The reading would be “He will not see the streams, [that is] the rivers [which are] the torrents of honey and butter.” It is unusual, but workable.

This word is often translated “curds.” It is curdled milk, possibly a type of butter.

The idea is the fruit of his evil work. The word מָנָה (manah) occurs only here: it must mean ill-gotten gains. The verb is in 10:3.

And he does not swallow.” In the context this means “consume” for his own pleasure and prosperity. The verbal clause is here taken adverbially.

The expression is “according to the wealth of his exchange.” This means he cannot enjoy whatever he gained in his business deals. Some have וַיִּשְׁמָצָהּ (‘yishmatsa) preposition, making the translation easier, but this is evidence of a scribal correction.

The verb indicates that after he oppressed the poor he abandoned them to their fate. But there have been several attempts to improve on the text. Several have repointed the word בְּעֹז (‘boz) (‘ozab) (‘itsahar, “oil”) and connected to the first colon. Older editors argued for a עָזַב (‘azab) that meant “oil” but that was not convincing. On the other hand, there is support for having more than one construct together serving as apposition (see GKC 422 §130.e). If the word “abandoned” in the last colon is a construct, that would mean three of them, but that one need not be construct. The reading would be “He will not see the streams, [that is] the rivers [which are] the torrents of honey and butter.” It is unusual, but workable.

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20:25 When he pulls it out and it comes out of his back, the gleaming point out of his liver, terrors come over him.

20:26 Total darkness waits to receive his treasures; a fire which has not been kindled will consume him and devour what is left in his tent.

20:27 The heavens reveal his iniquity; the earth rises up against him.

20:28 A flood will carry off his house, rushing waters on the day of God's wrath.

20:29 Such is the lot God allots the wicked, and the heritage of his appointment from God."

Job's Reply to Zophar

21:1 Then Job answered:
21:2 “Listen carefully to my words; let this be the consolation you offer me. If so, why should I not be impatient? If so, why should I not be impatient? Why should I not be impatient? Put your hands over your mouths. But in this context it means “to endure; to tolerate” (see Job 14:11), but the consolation he wants from them is that they will not mock him, but that they will accept his complaints as genuine. The suffix being a subjective genitive. The consolation from you.”

21:3 Bear with me and I will speak, and after I have spoken you may mock. If so, why should I not be impatient? Look at me and be appalled; put your hands over your mouths. For, when I think about this, I am terrified and my body feels a shudder.

The Wicked Prosper

21:7 “Why do the wicked go on living, grow old, even increase in power? Their children are firmly established in their presence, and the godless suffer (17-22), he shows how death levels every-
21:8 What would we gain if we were to pray* to him?* 17
21:16 But their prosperity is not of their own doing. 18
The counsel of the wicked is far from me!* 19

How Often Do the Wicked Suffer?

21:17 "How often* 20 is the lamp of the wicked extinguished? How often does their* 21 misfortune come upon them? How often does God apportion pain* 22 to them, 23 in his anger? 21:18 How often* 24 are they like straw before the wind, and like chaff swept away* 25 by a whirlwind?

21:19 You may say, 26 ‘God stores up a man’s* 27 punishment for his children!’ 28

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1 tn The word שalom (shalom, “peace, safety”) is here a substantive after a plural subject (see GKC 452 §141.c, n.3).
2 tn Heb “no rod of God.” The words “punishment from” have been supplied in the translation to make the metaphor understandable for the modern reader by stating the purpose of the rod.
3 sn In 9:34 Job was complaining that there was no umpire to remove God’s rod from him, but here he observes no such rod is on the wicked.
4 tn Heb “his bull,” but it is meant to signify the bulls of the wicked.
5 tn The verb used here means “to impregnate,” and not to be confused with the verb יקח (‘avar, “to pass over”).
6 tn The use of the verb הב (gu‘ar) in this place is interesting. It means “to rebuke; to abhor; to loathe.” In the causative stem it means “to occasion impurity” or “to reject as loathsome.” The rabbinic interpretation is that it does not emit semen in vain, and so the meaning is it does not fail to breed (see E. Dhorme, Job, 311; R. Gordis, Job, 229).
7 sn The implication of this statement is that their well-being is from God, which is the problem Job is raising in the chapter. A number of commentators make it a question, interpreting it to mean that the wicked enjoy prosperity as if it is their right. Some emend the text to say “his hands” — Gordis reads it, “Indeed, our prosperity is not in his hands.”
8 tn Even though their life seems so good in contrast to his own plight, Job cannot and will not embrace their principles — “far be from me their counsel.”
9 tn The interrogative “How often” occurs only with the first colon; it is supplied for smoother reading in the next two.
10 tn The pronominal suffix is objective; it re-enforces the object of the preposition, “upon them.” The verb in the clause is הב (bo) followed by ימ (‘al), “in his anger.”
11 sn These words are supplied. The verse records an idea that Job suspected they might have, namely, that if the wicked die well God will make their children pay for the sins (see Job 5:4; 20:10; as well as Exod 20:5).
12 sn Contrast Ps 25:4, which affirms that walking in God’s ways means to obey God’s will — the Torah.
13 tn The absence of the preposition before the complement adds greater vividness to the statement: “and knowing your ways — we do not desire.”
14 sn The text simply has יוהו (‘ono, “his iniquity”), but by usage, “the punishment for the iniquity.”
Instead let him repay the man himself so that he may know it!

21:20 Let his own eyes see his destruction, let him drink of the anger of the Almighty.

21:21 For what is his interest in his home after his death, when the number of his months has been broken off?

21:22 Can anyone teach God knowledge, since he judges those that are on high?

Death Levels Everything

21:23 “One man dies in his full vigor, completely secure and prosperous, his body well nourished,

21:24 his body. The Hebrew has “to water” here and “to be watered thoroughly.” The picture in the line is that of health and vigor.

21:25 And another man dies in bitterness of soul, never having tasted anything good.

21:26 Together they lie down in the dust, and worms cover over them both.

Futile Words, Deceptive Answers

21:27 “Yes, I know what you are thinking, the schemes by which you would wrong me.

21:28 For you say, ‘Where now is the nobleman’s house, and where are the tents in which the wicked lived?’

21:29 Have you never questioned those who travel the roads? Do you not recognize their accounts?

21:30 That the evil man is spared from the day of his misfortune, that he is delivered from the day of God’s wrath?

21:31 No one denounces his conduct to his face; to capture the sense of the line.

14 The verb (shaqah) in the Piel has the meaning of storing things to their normal, making whole, and so reward, repay (if for sins), or recompense in general.

2 The text simply has “let him repay [to] him.”

3 The imperfect verb after the jussive carries the meaning of a purpose clause, and so taken as a final imperfect: “in order that he may know [or realize].”

6 The rare word (khutsatsu) is probably a cognate of hassa in Arabic, meaning “to cut off.” There is also an Akkadian word “to cut in two” and “to break.” These fit the context here rather well. The other Hebrew words that are connected to the root (khutsatsu) do not offer any help.

8 The imperfect verb in this question should be given the modal nuance of potential imperfect. The question is rhetorical – it is affirming that no one can teach God.

9 The verb (atan) has the precise meaning of “to be exalted”). This is probably connected to Arabic (rum), “to be high; to be exalted”). This is probably connected to Arabic kaid, “fraud, trickery,” or “warfare.” The word in the Piel has the meaning of reparation (if for sins), or recompense in general.

13 The line has “in the bone of his perfection.” The word occurs only here. The word (shalam) in the sense of perfection and strengths.

16 The text literally has “let him repay [to] him.” This is to be subordinated as a circumstantial clause. See GKC 456 §142.d.

18 The verb (ramim) is a plural masculine participle of (num, “to be high; to be exalted”). This is probably a reference to the angels. But M. Dahood restores an older order that he may know [or realize].”

22 The text has “to be watered thoroughly.” The picture in the line is that of health and vigor.

23 The text simply has “let him repay [to] him.”

24 The verb means “to be led forth.” To be “led forth in joy” is gone.”

25 The rare word (khatsav) is from the noun for “violence.” He proposes a meaning, “to think; to reckon; to plan!”)

27 The verb means “to water” and here “to be watered thoroughly.” The picture in the line is that of health and vigor.

28 The expression “this (v. 23)...and this” (v. 25) means “one...the other.”

29 No one points out the account of the wicked; they tell how he is spared. E. Dhorme (Job, 321) distinguishes the verb (khumus) from the noun for “violence.” He proposes a meaning, “to think; to imagine; and the ideas you imagined about me.”

30 The question implies the answer will be “vanished” or “gone.”

31 The text has “where is the tent, the dwellings of the wicked?”

32 The verb means “to be led forth.” To be “led forth in the day of trouble” means to be delivered.
Eliphaz's Third Speech

22:1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:
22:2 "Is it to God that a strong man is of benefit? Is it to him that even a wise man is profitable? Is it of any special benefit to the Almighty that you should be righteous, or is it any gain to him that you make your ways blameless?
22:4 Is it because of your piety that he rebukes you and goes to judgment with you? Is not your wickedness great and is there no end to your iniquity?
22:6 "For you took pledges from your brothers for no reason, and you stripped the clothing from the naked. You gave the weary no water to drink and from the hungry you withheld food. Although you were a powerful man, owning land, an honored man living on it, you sent widows away empty-handed, and the arms of the orphans you crushed. That is why snares surround you, and why sudden fear terrifies you, why it is so dark you cannot see,

1 tn The expression “and he has done” is taken here to mean “what he has done.”
2 tn Heb “Who declares his way to his face? // Who repays him for what he has done?” These rhetorical questions, which expect a negative answer (“No one!”) have been translated as indicative statements to bring out their force clearly.
3 tn The verb says “he will watch.” The subject is unspecified, so the translation is passive.
4 tn The Hebrew word refers to the tumulus, the burial mound that is erected on the spot where the person is buried.
5 tn The clods are those that are used to make a mound over the body. And, for a burial in the valley, see Deut 34:6. The verse here sees him as participating in his funeral and enjoying it. Nothing seems to go wrong with the wicked.
6 tn The word הַמַּעַל (ma'al) is used for “treachery; deception; fraud.” Here Job is saying that their way of interpreting reality is dangerous unfaithful.
7 sn The third and final cycle of speeches now begins with Eliphaz’ final speech. Eliphas will here underscore the argument that man’s ills are brought about by sin; he will then deduce from Job’s sufferings the sins he must have committed and the sinful attitude he has about God. The speech has four parts: Job’s suffering is proof of his sin (2-5), Job’s sufferings demonstrate the kinds of sin Job committed (6-11), Job’s attitude about God (12-20), and the final appeal and promise to Job (21-30).
8 tn Some do not take this to be parallel to the first colon, taking this line as a statement, but the parallel expressions here suggest the question is repeated.
9 sn The word כָּבַל (kabal) in this passage has the nuance of “special benefit; favor.” It does not just express the desire for something or the interest in it, but the profit one derives from it.
10 tn The verb תַּתֵּם (tattem) is the Hiphil imperfect of תָּתֵם (tanam, “be complete, finished”), following the Aramaic form of the geminate verb with a doubling of the first letter.
11 tn The word “your fear” or “your piety” refers to Job’s reverence — it is his fear of God (thus a subjective genitive). When “fear” is used of religion, it includes faith and adoration on the positive side, fear and obedience on the negative.
12 sn Of course the point is that God does not charge Job because he is righteous; the point is he must be unrighteous.
13 sn The adjective רֵבָה (ravah) normally has the idea of “great” in quantity (“abundant,” ESV) rather than “great” in quality.
14 sn The verb כָּבָל (kabal) means “to take pledges.” In this verse Eliphaz says that Job not only took as pledge things the poor need, like clothing, but he did it for no reason.
15 tn The “naked” here refers to people who are poorly clothed. Otherwise, a reading like the NIV would be necessary: “you stripped the clothes...[leaving them] naked.” So either he made them naked by stripping their garments off, or they were already in rags.
16 sn The term אָיֵף (ayef) can be translated “weary,” “faint,” “exhausted,” or “tired.” Here it may refer to the fainting because of thirst — that would make a good parallel to the second part.
17 tn The idiom is “a man of arm” (= “powerful”; see Ps 10:15). This is in comparison to the next line, “man of face” (= “dignity; high rank”; see Isa 3:5).
18 sn Heb “and a man of arm, to whom [was] land.” The line is in contrast to the preceding one, and so the vav here introduces a concessive clause.
19 sn The expression is unusual: “the one lifted up of face.” This is the “honored one,” the one to whom the dignity will be given.
20 tn Many commentators simply delete the verse or move it elsewhere. Most take it as a general reference to Job, perhaps in apposition to the preceding verse.
21 sn The “arms of the orphans” are their helps or rights on which they depended for support.
22 sn The verb in the text is Pual: הקְדָעָה (q’duka‘), “was [were] crushed.” GKC 388 §121.b would explain “arms” as the complement of a passive imperfect. But if that is too difficult, then a change to Piel imperfect, second person, will solve the difficulty. In fact, the second person all through the section, and the reading in all the versions, the versions may have simply assumed the easier reading, however.
23 tn Heb “or dark you cannot see.” Some commentators and the RSV follow the LXX in reading πν (‘, “or”) as ὃν (or, “light”) and translate it “The light has become dark” or “Your light has become dark.” A. B. Davidson suggests the reading “Or seest thou not the darkness.” This would mean Job does not understand the true meaning of the darkness and the calamities.
and why a flood of water covers you.

22:12 “Is not God on high in heaven?\(^1\) And see the lofty stars,\(^2\) how high they are!

22:13 But you have said, ‘What does God know? Does he judge through such deep darkness?\(^3\)

22:14 Thick clouds are a veil for him, so he does not see us,\(^4\) as he goes back and forth in the vault of heaven.\(^5\)

22:15 Will you keep to the old path\(^6\) that evil men have walked —

22:16 men\(^7\) who were carried off\(^8\) before their time,\(^9\) when the flood\(^10\) was poured out\(^11\) on their foundations.\(^12\)

22:17 They were saying to God, ‘Turn away from us,’ and ‘What can the Almighty do to us?’\(^13\)

17 tn The pronoun is added for this emphasis; it has “but he” before the verb.

18 tc See Job 10:3.

19 tc The LXX has “from him,” and this is followed by several commentators. But the MT is to be retained, for Eliphaz is recalling what Job said, in order to say that the prosperity to which Job alluded was only the prelude to a disaster he denied (H. H. Rowley, Job [NCBC], 156).

20 tn The line is talking about the rejoicing of the righteous when judgment falls on the wicked. An object (“destruction”) has to be supplied here to clarify this (see Pss 52:6 [8]; 69:32 [33]; 107:42).

21 tn In Ps 2:4 it was God who mocked the wicked by judging them.

22 tc The word translated “our enemies” is found only here. The word means “hostility,” but used here as a collective for those who are hostile — “enemies.” Some commentators follow the LXX and read “possessions,” explaining its meaning and derivation in different ways. Gordis simply takes the word in the text and affirms that this is the meaning. On the other hand, to get this, E. Dohme (Job, 336) repoints נהרי (hskn) of the MT to נָהַר (nahar), arguing that נָהַר (nahar) means “what exists [or has substance]” (although that is used of animals). He translates; “have not their possessions been destroyed.”

23 tn The verb סֵס (qama) basically means “to seize; to tie together to make a bundle.” So the Pual will mean “to be bundled away; to be carried off.”

24 tc The clause has “and [it was] not the time.” It may be used adverbially here.

25 tn The word is נָהַר (nahar), “river” or “current”); it is taken here in its broadest sense of the waters on the earth that formed the current of the flood (Gen 7:6; 10).

26 tn This verb סָסָט (astsaq) means “to pour out; to shed; to spill; to flow.” The Pual means “to be poured out” (as in Lev 21:10 and Ps 45:3).

27 tn This word is then to be taken as an adverbial accusative of place. Another way to look at this verse is what A. B. Davidson (Job, 165) proposes “whose foundation was poured away and became a flood.” This would mean that that on which they stood sank away.

28 tn The form in the text is “to them.” The LXX and the Syriac versions have “to us.”

22:18 But it was he\(^17\) who filled their houses with good things — yet the counsel of the wicked\(^18\) was far from me.\(^19\)

22:19 The righteous see their destruction\(^20\) and rejoice;

22:20 Surely our enemies\(^21\) are destroyed, and fire consumes their wealth.’

22:21 “Reconcile yourself\(^22\) with God, and be at peace with him; in this way your prosperity will be good.

22:22 Accept instruction\(^23\) from his mouth and store up his words.\(^24\)
22:24 and throw your gold 2 in the dust — your gold 3 of Ophir among the rocks in the ravines —
22:25 then the Almighty himself will be your gold,
and the choicest silver for you.
22:26 Surely then you will delight yourself 4 in the Almighty,
and will lift up your face toward God.
22:27 You will pray to him and he will hear you,
and you will fulfill your vows to him.
22:28 Whatever you decide 5 on a matter, it will be established for you,
and light will shine on your ways.
22:29 When people are brought low 6 and you say "Lift them up!" 7 then he will deliver the downcast; 8
22:30 he will deliver even someone who is not innocent. 9

1 tc The form is the imperative. Eliphaz is telling Job to get rid of his gold as evidence of his repentance. Many commentators think that this is too improbable for Eliphaz to have said, and that Job has lost everything anyway, and so they make proposals for the text. Most would follow Theodotion and the Syriac to read רשקא (v’shatta, “and you will esteem…”). This would mean that he is promising Job restoration of his wealth.
2 tn Heb “place.”
3 tn The word for “gold” is the rare רשקא (betser), which may be derived from a cognate of Arabicbarasa, “to see; to examine.” If this is the case, the word here would refer to refined gold. The word also forms a fine wordplay with יבשא (b’rssar, “in the rock”).
4 tn The Hebrew text simply has “Ophir,” a metonymy for the gold that comes from there.
5 tn The form for “gold” here is plural, which could be a plural of extension. The LXX and Latin versions have “The Almighty will be your helper against your enemies.”
6 tn E. Dhorme (Job, 339) connects this word with an Arabic root meaning “to be elevated, steep.” From that he gets “heaps of silver.”
7 tn He is saying the same verb as in Ps 37:4. G. R. Driver suggests the word comes from another root that means “abandon oneself to, depend on” (“Problems in the Hebrew text of Job,” VTSup 3 [1955]: 84).
8 tn The words “to him” are not in the Hebrew text, but are implied.
9 tn The word is רשק (guzar, “to cut”), in the sense of deciding a matter.
10 tn The word רשק (gerah) means “loftiness; pride.” Here it simply says “up,” or “pride.” The rest is paraphrased. Of the many suggestions, the following provide a sampling: “It is because of pride” (ESV), “he abases pride” (H. H. Rowley); “[he abases] the lofty and the proud” (Beer); “[he abases] the word of pride” (Duham); “[he abases] the haughtiness of pride” (Fohrer and others); “[he abases] the one who speaks proudly” (Weiser); “[he abases] the one who boasts in pride” (Kissane); and “God [abases] pride” (Budde, Gray).
11 tn Or “humble”; Heb “the lowly of eyes.”
12 tc The Hebrew has רשקא:ם (r’naq), which could be taken as “island of the innocent” (so Ibn-Ezra), or “him that is not innocent” (so Rashi). But some have changed וק (’q) to קרא (ish, “the innocent man”). Others differ: A. Guillaume links רשקא (’q) to Arabic ‘ayya “whosoever,” and so leaves the text alone. M. Dadoh secures the same idea from Ugaritic, but reads it רשקא (c).
13 tc The MT has “he will escape [or be delivered].” Theodotion has the second person, “you will be delivered.”
14 tc Job answers Eliphaz, but not until he introduces new ideas for his own case with God. His speech unfolds in three parts: Job’s longing to meet God (23:2-7), the inaccessibility and power of God (23:8-17), the indifference of God (24:1-25).
15 tc The MT reads here רשקא (m’tri, “rebellious”). The word is related to the verb רשק (marah, “to revolt”). Many commentators follow the Vulgate, Targum Job, and the Syriac to read רשק (mar, “bitter”). The LXX offers no help here.
16 tc The MT (followed by the Vulgate and Targum) has “my hand is heavy on my groaning.” This would mean “my stroke is heavier than my groaning” (an improbable view from Targum Job). A better suggestion is that Job tries to suppress his groans but the hand with which he suppresses them is too heavy (H. H. Rowley, Job [NCBC], 159). Budde, E. Dhorme, J. E. Hartley, and F. I. Andersen all maintain the MT as the more difficult reading. F. I. Andersen (Job [TOTC], 208) indicates that the * (i) suffix could be an example of an unusual third masculine singular. Both the LXX and the Syriac versions have “his hand,” and many modern commentators follow this, along with the present translation. In this case the referent of “his” would be God, whose hand is heavy upon Job in spite of Job’s groaning.
17 tc The preposition can take this meaning; it could also be translated simply “upon.” R. Gordis (Job, 260) reads the preposition “more than,” saying that Job had been defiant (he takes that with which God’s hand had been far worse.
18 tc In the optative here is again expressed with the verbal clause, “who will give [that] I knew…”
19 tn The form in Hebrew is רשקא:‛א (v’emtsa‘ahu), simply “and I will find him.” But in the optative clause this verb is subordinate to the preceding verb: “O that I knew where [and] I might find him.” It is not unusual to have the perfect verb followed by the imperfect in such coordinate clauses (see GKC 386 §120.e). This could also be translated making the second verb a complementary infinitive: “knew how to find him.”
20 tc H. H. Rowley (Job [NCBC], 159) quotes Strahan without reference: “It is the chief distinction between Job and his friends that he desires to meet God and they do not.”
21 tc Or “his place of judgment.” The word is from קינע (kun, “to prepare; to arrange”) in the Polel and the Hiphil conjugations. The noun refers to a prepared place, a throne, a seat, or a sanctuary. A. B. Davidson (Job, 169) and others take the word to mean “judgment seat” or “tribunal” in this context.
22 tc The word מינת (misiput) is normally “judgment; decision.” But in these contexts it refers to the legal case that Job will bring before God. With the verb מינת (marah, “to set in order; to lay out”) the whole image of drawing up a lawsuit is complete.
and fill my mouth with arguments. 23:5 I would know with what words I would answer me, and understand what he would say to me. 23:6 Would he contend with me with great power? No, he would only pay attention to me. 23:7 There is an upright person who could present his case before him, and I would be delivered forever from my judge.

The Inaccessibility and Power of God

23:8 “If I go to the east, he is not there, and to the west, yet I do not perceive him. 23:9 In the north when he is at work, I do not see him; when he turns to the south, I see no trace of him. 23:10 But he knows the pathway that I take. If he tested me, I would come forth like gold. 23:11 My feet have followed his steps closely; I have kept to his way and have not turned aside.

14 tn The last clause, “and I have not turned aside,” functions adverbially in the sentence. The form אַתֶּה (‘ateteh), the Hiphil of נָתַת (natah, “stretch out”), is a perfect form of נָּסַח (‘nassakh), “the way of my life.”
15 tn According to HALOT (1978: 131), אָט (‘at) is a pausal form of אַתֶּה (‘ateteh). The Hiphil of נָתַת (natah) is an adverbial form of נָתַת (natah), “stretch out.”
16 tn The form in the MT (ניקוּעַ, mkokqua) means “more than my portion” or “more than my law.” An expanded meaning results in “more than my necessary food” (see Ps 119:11; cf. KJV, NASB, ESV). HALOT 346 s.v. אָט 1 indicates that אָט (qoq) has the meaning of “portion” and is here a reference to “what is appointed for me.” The LXX and the Latin versions, along with many commentators, have נִקְוּעַ (‘qokuq, “in my bosom”).
17 tn Heb “cause him to return.”
18 tn Or “his soul.”
19 tn The text has “his decree,” which means “the decree [plan] for/against me.” The suffix is objective, equivalent to a dative of disadvantage. The Syriac and the Vulgate actually have “his decree.” R. Gordis (Job, 262) translates it “he is one, i.e., unchangeable, fixed, determined.” The preposition ב (bet) is a bet essentiae – “and he is as one,” or “he is one” (see GKC 379 §119.i).
20 tn Heb “and many such [things] are with him.”
21 tn The text is saying that many similar situations are under God’s rule of the world – his plans are infinite.
22 tn The verb כִּפּוּר (kipur) means “to be silent” and because of the thick darkness that covered my face.
The Apparent Indifference of God

24:1  "Why are times not appointed by the Almighty? Why do those who know him not see his days?

24:2 Men move boundary stones; they seize the flock and pasture them.

24:3 They drive away the orphan’s donkey; they take the widow’s ox as a pledge. They labor. Some commentators simply omit these words.

24:4 They turn the needy from the pathway, and the poor of the land hide themselves together.

24:5 Like wild donkeys in the desert they go out to their labor, seeking diligently for food; the wasteland provides food for them and for their children.

24:6 They reap fodder in the field, and glean in the vineyard of the wicked.

1 tn The preposition תת (min) is used to express the cause (see GKC 389 §21.f).
2 tc The LXX reads "Why are times hidden from the Almighty?" as if to say that God is not interested in the events on the earth. The MT reading is saying that God fails to set the times for judgment and vindication and makes good sense as it stands.
3 tn The line is short: "they move boundary stones." Some commentators have supplied a subject, such as "wicked men." The reason for its being wicked men is that to move the boundary stone was to encroach dishonestly on the lands of others (Deut 19:14; 27:17).
4 tc The LXX reads "and their shepherd." Many commentators accept this reading. But the MT says that they graze the flocks that they have stolen. The difficulty with the MT reading is that there is no suffix on the final verb — but that is not an insurmountable difference.
5 sn Because of the violence and oppression of the wicked, the poor and needy, the widows and orphans, all are deprived of their rights and forced out of the ways and into hiding just to survive.
6 tc The verse begins with כו (hen), but the LXX, Vulgate, and Syriac all have "like." R. Gordis (Job, 265) takes כו (hen) as a pronoun "they" and supplies the comparative. The sense of the verse is clear in either case.
7 tn That is, "the poor."
8 tc The MT has "in the working/labor of them," or "when they labor." Some commentators simply omit these words. Dhorme retains them and moves them to go with תַּשָּׁבֶת (aramah), which he takes to mean "evening"; this gives a clause, "although they work until the evening." Then, with many others, he takes כו (lo) to be a negative and finishes the verse with "no food for the children." Others make fewer changes in the text, and as a result do not come out with such a hopeless picture — there is some food found. The point is that they spend their time foraging for food, and they find just enough to survive, but it is a day-long activity. For Job, this shows how unrighteous the administration of the world actually is.
9 tn The verb is not included in the Hebrew text but is supplied in the translation.
10 tc The word תְּפַלָּה (t’l’la) means "his fodder." It is unclear to what this refers. If the suffix is taken as a collective, then it can be translated "they gather/reap their fodder." The early versions all have "they reap in a field which is not his" (taking it as תְּפַלָּה, t’l’la). A conjectural emendation would change the word to תְּפַלָּיָה (b’l’l’ya), "in the night"). But there is no reason to suppose the meaning of this verb is uncertain. In the first line "reap" is used, and that would be the work of a hired man (and certainly not done at night). The meaning of this second verb is uncertain; it has been taken to mean "glean," which would be the task of the poor.
11 tn The verb is not included in the Hebrew text but is supplied in the translation.
12 tc The verb with no expressed subject is here again taken in the passive: "they snatch" becomes "[child] is snatched."
13 tn This word is usually defined as "violence; ruin." But elsewhere it does mean "breast" (Isa 60:16; 66:11), and that is certainly what it means here.
14 tc The MT has a very brief and strange reading: "they take as a pledge upon the poor." This could be taken as "they take a pledge against the poor" (ESV). Kamphausen suggests that instead of תְּפַלָּה (’l, "sucking"). This is supported by the parallelism. "They take as pledge" is also made passive here.
15 sn The point should not be missed — amidst abundant harvests, carrying sheaves about, they are still going hungry.
16 tc The Hebrew term תְּפַלָּה (t’l’la), which may be translated "terraces" or "olive rows." But that would not be the proper place to have a press to press the olives and make oil. E. Dhorme (Job, 360-61) proposes on the analogy of an Arabic word that this should be read as "millstones" (which he would also write in the dual). But the argument does not come from a clean cognate, but from a possible development of words. The meaning of "olive rows" works well enough.
17 tn The final verb, a preterite with the מ (m) consecutive, is here interpreted as a circumstantial clause.
18 tc The MT as pointed reads "from the city the dying go out." But God charges no one with wrongdoing.
19 tc Hebrew "the souls of the wounded," which here refers to the wounded themselves.
20 tc The MT has the noun תְּפַלָּה (t’l’la) which means "folly; tastelessness" (cf. 1:22). The verb, which normally means "to place; to put," would then be rendered "to impute; to charge." This is certainly a workable translation in the context. Many commentators have emended the text, changing the noun to בַּלַּיְלָה (ballaylah, "in the night"). This word is usually defined as "violence; ruin." But elsewhere it does mean "breast" (Isa 60:16; 66:11), and that is certainly what it means here.
21 tc The MT has the noun תְּפַלָּה (t’l’la) which means "folly; tastelessness" (cf. 1:22). The verb, which normally means "to place; to put," would then be rendered "to impute; to charge." This is certainly a workable translation in the context. Many commentators have emended the text, changing the noun to בַּלַּיְלָה (ballaylah, "in the night"). This word is usually defined as "violence; ruin." But elsewhere it does mean "breast" (Isa 60:16; 66:11), and that is certainly what it means here.
22 tn Hebrew "They are among those who."
JOB 24:14

24:14 Before daybreak⁴ the murderer rises up; he kills the poor and the needy; in the night he is² like a thief.⁵

24:15 And the eye of the adulterer watches for the twilight, thinking⁴ ‘No eye can see me,’ and covers his face with a mask.

24:16 In the dark the robber⁶ breaks into houses,⁦ but by day they shut themselves in;⁦ they do not know the light.⁸

24:17 For all of them,⁹ the morning is to them like deep darkness; they are friends with the terrors of darkness.

24:18⁵⁰ “You say,¹¹ ‘He is foam¹² on the face of the waters;¹³ their portion of the land is cursed so that no one goes to their vineyard."¹⁴

24:19 The drought as well as the heat carry away the melted snow;¹⁵ so the grave¹⁶ takes away those who have sinned.¹⁷

1 tn The text simply has לָאוֹר (la‘or, “at light” or “at daybreak”), probably meaning just at the time of dawn.

2 tn In a few cases the jussive is used without any real sense of the jussive being present (see GKC 323 §109.k).

3 sn The point is that he is like a thief in that he works during the night, just before the daybreak, when the advantage is all his and the victim is most vulnerable.

4 tn Heb “saying.”

5 tn The phrase “the robber” has been supplied in the English translation for clarification.

6 tc This is not the idea of the adulterer, but of the thief. So some commentators reverse the order and put this verse after v. 14.

7 tc The verb חַתְמו (ḥattam, “to seal”). The LXX seems to have read something like חָתַם (ḥātam, “to crush”). The LXX seems to have read something like חָתַם (ḥātam, “to crush”).

8 tc Some commentators join this very short colon to the beginning of v. 17: “they do not know the light. For together...” becomes “for together they have not known the light.”

9 tn Heb “together.”

10 tc Many commentators find vv. 18-24 difficult on the lips of Job, and so identify this unit as a misplaced part of the speech of Zophar. They describe the enormities of the wicked. But a case can also be made for retaining it in this section. Gordis thinks it could be taken as a quotation by Job of his friends’ ideas.

11 tn The verb “say” is not in the text; it is supplied here to indicate that this is a different section.

12 tn Or “is swift.”

13 sn The wicked person is described here as a spray or foam on the waters, built up in the agitation of the waters but dying away swiftly.

14 sn The text reads, “he does not turn by the way of the vineyards.” This means that since the land is cursed, he/one does not go there. Bickell emended “the way of the vineyards” to “the treader of the vineyard” (see RSV, NRSV). This would mean that “no wine-presser would turn towards” their vineyards.

15 tn Heb “the waters of the snow.”

16 tn Or “so Sheth.”

17 tn This is the meaning of the verse, which in Hebrew only has “The grave/they have sinned.”

18 tn Here “womb” is synecdoche, representing one’s mother.

19 tc The form in the text is the active participle, “feed; graze; shepherd.” The idea of “prey” is not natural to it. R. Gordis (Job, 270) argues that third he (־ה) verbs are often by-forms of geminate verbs, and so the meaning here is more akin to קַנֵע (qan‘, “to crush”). The LXX seems to have read something like קַנֵע (qan‘, “crushed”)

20 tn Heb “the childless [woman], she does not give birth.” The verbal clause is intended to serve as a modifier here for the woman. See on subordinate verbal clauses GKC 490 §156.d.f.

21 tn God has to be the subject of this clause. None is stated in the Hebrew text, but “God” has been supplied in the translation for clarity.

22 tn Heb “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity. See the note on the word “life” at the end of the line.

23 tc This line has been given a number of interpretations due to its cryptic form. The verb קִזַּח (qizqah) means “he rises up.” It probably is meant to have God as the subject, and be subordinated as a temporal clause to what follows. The words “against him” are not in the Hebrew text, but have been supplied in the translation to specify the object and indicate that “rise up” is meant in a hostile sense. The following verb נָשַׁל (nasal, “to cause to fall”) is hard to explain since the verse is not the context for a magical incantation.

24 tn Heb “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

25 tn The expression נָשָׁלָה (nashalāh, “in security”) precedes the verb that it qualifies – God “allows him to take root in security.”

26 tn Heb “his eyes are on.”

27 sn The meaning of the verse is that God may allow the wicked to rest in comfort and security, but all the time he is watching them closely with the idea of bringing judgment on them.

28 tn The Hebrew throughout this section (vv. 18-24) interchanges the singular and the plural. Here again we have “they are exalted...but he is not.” The verse is clear nonetheless: the wicked rise high, and then suddenly they are gone.

29 tn The text is Hophal of the rare verb מַקַּחַק (makkahk), which seems to mean “to bend; to collapse.” The text would read “they are made to collapse like all others.” There is no reason here to change “like others” just because the MT is banal. But many do, following the LXX with “like mallows.” The LXX was making a translation according to sense. R. Gordis (Job, 271) prefers “like grass.”
and gathered in, and like a head of grain they are cut off.”

24:25 “If this is not so, who can prove me a liar and reduce my words to nothing?”

Bildad’s Third Speech

25:1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:
25:2 “Dominion and awesome might belong to God; he establishes peace in his heights.
25:3 Can his armies be numbered?
25:4 On whom does his light not rise?
25:5 How then can a human being be righteous before God?
25:6 If even the moon is not bright, and the stars are not pure as far as he is concerned,
25:7 how much less a mortal man, who is but a maggot –

1 tn The verb כָּפַץ (qafats) actually means “to shut in,” which does not provide exactly the idea of being gathered, not directly at least. But a change to כָּפַת (qataf, “bluck”) while attractive, is not necessary.
2 sn This marks the end of the disputed section, taken here to be a quotation by Job of their sentiments.
3 tn In the word הָרְפָאִים (har’fa’im) one should see the introductions and the commentaries.
4 tn The word הָרָם (hamshel) is a Hiphil infinitive absolute used as a noun. It describes the rulership or domain that God has, that which gives power and authority.
5 tn The word כָּפַת (qataf) literally means “fear; dread,” but in the sense of what causes the fear or the dread.
6 tn In Heb “are” with him.”
7 sn The line says that God “makes peace in his heights.” The “heights” are usually interpreted to mean the highest heaven. There may be a reference here to combat in the spiritual world between angels and Satan. The context will show that God holds a heavenly host at his disposal, and nothing in heaven or on earth can shatter his peace. “Peace” here could also signify the whole order he establishes.
8 tn Job is replying to Bildad and Job 27:7-23 to Zophar. Those sections will be noted as they emerge. For the sake of outlining, the following sections will be marked off: Job’s scorn for Bildad (26:2-4); a better picture of God’s greatness (26:5-14); Job’s protestation of innocence (27:2-6); and a picture of the condition of the wicked (27:7-23).
9 tn The interrogative clause is used here as an exclamation, and sarcastic at that. Job is saying “you have in no way helped the powerless.” The verb uses the singular form, for Job is replying to Bildad.
10 sn These two chapters will be taken together under this title, although most commentators would assign Job 26:5-14 to Bildad and Job 27:7-23 to Zophar. Those sections will be noted as they emerge. For the sake of outlining, the following sections will be marked off: Job’s scorn for Bildad (26:2-4); a better picture of God’s greatness (26:5-14); Job’s protestation of innocence (27:2-6); and a picture of the condition of the wicked (27:7-23).
11 sn These two chapters will be taken together under this title, although most commentators would assign Job 26:5-14 to Bildad and Job 27:7-23 to Zophar. Those sections will be noted as they emerge. For the sake of outlining, the following sections will be marked off: Job’s scorn for Bildad (26:2-4); a better picture of God’s greatness (26:5-14); Job’s protestation of innocence (27:2-6); and a picture of the condition of the wicked (27:7-23).
12 tn The “powerless” is expressed here by the negative before the word for “strength; power” – “him who has no power” (see GKC 482 §152, u.).
13 tn In Heb “arm [with] no strength.” Here too the negative expression is serving as a relative clause to modify “arm,” the symbol of strength and power, which by metonymy stands for the whole person. “Man of arm” denoted the strong in 22:8.
14 sn The phrase בְּאָרֹן (loryn) means “to abundance” or “in a large quantity.” It is also used ironically like all these expressions. This makes very good sense, but some wish to see a closer parallel and so offer emendations. Reiske and Kissane thought “to the tender” for the word. But the timbre are not the same as the ignorant and unwise. So Graetz supplied “to the boorish” by reading הָרְפָאִים (har’fa’im). G. R. Driver did the same with less of a change: הָרְפָאִים (har’fa’im; HTR 29 [1936]: 172).
15 tn The verse begins with the preposition and the interrogative: הָרְפָאִים (mea, “with who[se help]?”). Others take it as the accusative particle introducing the indirect object: “for whom did you utter...?” (see GKC 371 §117.s). Both are possible.
16 tn In Heb “has gone out from you.”
17 tn This is the section, Job 26:5-14, that many conclude makes better sense coming from the friend. But if it is attributed to Job, then he is showing he can surpass them in his treatise of the greatness of God.
18 tn The text has הָרְפָאִים (har’fa’im, “the shades”), referring to the “dead,” or the elite among the dead (see Isa 14:9; 26:14; Ps 88:10 [11]). For further discussion, start with A. R. Johnson, The Vitality of the Individual, 88ff.
19 tn The verb is a Polal from הָרְפָא (har’fa’a), “the shades”), referring to the “dead,” or the elite among the dead (see Isa 14:9; 26:14; Ps 88:10 [11]). For further discussion, start with A. R. Johnson, The Vitality of the Individual, 88ff.
20 tn The verb is a Polal from הָרְפָא (har’fa’a), “the shades”), referring to the “dead,” or the elite among the dead (see Isa 14:9; 26:14; Ps 88:10 [11]). For further discussion, start with A. R. Johnson, The Vitality of the Individual, 88ff.
21 tn The text has הָרְפָאִים (har’fa’im, “the shades”), referring to the “dead,” or the elite among the dead (see Isa 14:9; 26:14; Ps 88:10 [11]). For further discussion, start with A. R. Johnson, The Vitality of the Individual, 88ff.
26:6 The underworld is naked before God; the place of destruction lies uncovered. He spreads out the northern skies over empty space; he suspends the earth on nothing.

26:7 He locks the waters in his clouds, and the clouds do not burst with the weight of them.

26:9 He conceals the face of the full moon, shrouding it with his clouds.

26:10 He marks out the horizon on the surface of the waters as a boundary between light and darkness.

26:11 The pillars of the heavens tremble and are amazed at his rebuke.

26:12 By his power he stills the sea; by his wisdom he cut Rahab the great sea monster to pieces.

26:13 By his breath the skies became fair; his hand pierced the fleeing serpent.

26:14 Indeed, these are but the outer fringes of his ways! How faint is the whisper we hear of him! But who can understand the thunder of his power?

A Protest of Innocence

27:1 And Job took up his discourse again:

27:2 "As surely as God lives, who has denied me justice, the Almighty, who has made my life bitter—

27:3 for while my spirit is still in me, and the breath from God is in my nostrils,

27:4 my lips will not speak wickedness, and my tongue will whisper no deceit.

27:5 I will never declare that you three are in the right;
until I die, I will not set aside my integrity! 27:6 I will maintain my righteousness and never let it go; my conscience will not reproach me as long as I live.2

The Condition of the Wicked

27:7 "May my enemy be like the wicked,3 my adversary like the unrighteous.4 For what hope does the godless have when he is cut off;6 when God takes away his life?7 Does God listen to his cry when distress overtakes him? 27:10 Will he find delight8 in the Almighty? Will he call out to God at all times? 27:11 I will teach you9 about the power of God; What is on the Almighty’s mind14 I will not conceal. 27:12 If you yourselves have all seen this, Why in the world12 do you continue this meaningless talk?13 27:13 This is the portion of the wicked man allotted by God,14 the inheritance that evildoers receive from the Almighty. 27:14 If his children increase – it is for the sword!15

His offspring never have enough to eat.16 27:15 Those who survive him are buried by the plague,17 and their widows do not mourn for them. 27:16 If he piles up silver like dust and stores up clothing like mounds of clay, 27:17 what he stores up19 a righteous man will wear, and an innocent man will inherit his silver. 27:18 The house he builds is as fragile as a moth’s cocoon,20 like a hut21 that a watchman has made. 27:19 He goes to bed wealthy, but will do so no more.22 When he opens his eyes, it is all gone.23 27:20 Terrors overwhelm him like a flood,24 at night a whirlwind carries him off. 27:21 The east wind carries him away, and he is gone; it sweeps him out of his place.

Compare Ps 92:8 where the last two words also constitute the apodosis.

16 tn Heb “will not be satisfied with bread/food.” 17 tn The text says “will be buried in/by death.” A number of passages in the Bible use “death” to mean the plague that kills (see Jer 15:2; Isa 28:3; and BDB 89 s.v. 2.a). In this sense it is like the English expression for the plague, “the Black Death.”

18 tc The LXX has “their widows” to match the plural, and most commentators harmonize in the same way.

19 tc The text simply repeats the verb from the last clause. It could be treated as a separate short clause: “He may store it up, but the righteous will wear it. But it also could be understood as the object of the following verb, [what] he stores up the righteous will wear.” The LXX simply has, “All these things shall the righteous gain.”

20 tc Heb הָעַשׁ (ha’ash, “like a moth”), but this leaves room for clarification. Some commentators wanted to change it to “bird’s nest” or just “nest” (cf. NRSV) to make the parallelism; see Job 8:14. But the word is not found. The LXX has a double expression, “as moths, as a spider.” So several take it as the spider’s web, which is certainly unsubstantial (cf. NAB, NASB, NLT; see Job 8:14).

21 tn The Hebrew word is the word for “booth,” as in the Feast of Booths. The word describes something that is flimsy; so may be retained here. Besides, not all parallel structures are synonymous.

22 tc The verb is the Niphal הָעַשׁ (ha’ash), from עָשָׂף (’asaf, “to gather”). So, “he lies down rich, but he is not gathered.” This does not make much sense. It would mean “he will not be gathered for burial,” but that does not belong here. Many commentators accept the variant עָשַׁף (’asaf, “will [not] add”). This is what the LXX and the Syriac have. This leads to the interpretive translation that “he will do so no longer.”

23 tc Heb “and he is not.” One view is that this must mean that he dies, not that his wealth is gone. R. Gordis (Job, 295) says the first part should be made impersonal: “when one opens one’s eyes, the wicked is no longer there.” E. Dhorme (Job, 396) has it more simply: “He has opened his eyes, and it is for the last time.” But the other view is that the wealth goes overnight. In support of this is the introduction into the verse of the wealthy. The RSV, NRSV, ESV, and NLT take it that “wealth is gone.”

24 tc Many commentators want a word parallel to “in the night.” And so we are offered בָּשֹׁם (bashom, “in the day”) for בָּשָׁם (basham, “like waters”) as well as a number of others. But “waters” sometimes stand for major calamities, and so may be retained here. Besides, not all parallel structures are synonymous.

2 sn Of course, he means like his enemy when he is judged, not when he is thriving in prosperity and luxury.

3 sn The form is the Hitpolel participle from יָשָׂף (yash, “to cut off”). It could be translated “transiently” or intrinsically – the latter is better here (“when he is cut off”). Since the next line speaks of prayer, some have thought this verse should be about prayer. Mandelkern, in his concordance (p. 228b), suggested the verb should be “when he prays” (reading יָשָׁף [yasha] in place of יַשַּׁף [yifga]).

4 sn Heb my heart.”

5 sn The prepositional phrase “from my days” probably means “from the days of my birth,” or “all my life.”

6 sn Of course, he means like his enemy when he is judged, not when he is thriving in prosperity and luxury.

7 sn The LXX made a free paraphrase: “No, but let my enemies rise up against me as the destruction of transgressors.”

8 sn The verb יָשָׁף (yifga) means “to cut off.” It could be translated “transiently” or intrinsically – the latter is better here (“when he is cut off”). Since the next line speaks of prayer, some have thought this verse should be about prayer. Mandelkern, in his concordance (p. 228b), suggested the verb should be “when he prays” (reading יָשָׁף [yasha] in place of יַשַּׁף [yifga]).

9 sn The object suffix is in the plural, which gives some support to the idea Job is speaking to them.

10 sn Heb “the hand of.”

11 sn Heb “what is” with Shaddai.

12 sn The interrogative uses the demonstrative pronoun in its emphatic position: “Why in the world...?” (IBHS 312-13 §17.4.c).

13 sn The text has the noun “vain thing; breath; vapor,” and then a denominative verb from the same root: “to become vain with a vain thing,” or “to do in vain a vain thing.” This is an example of the internal object, or a cognate accusative (see GKC 367 §117.a). The LXX has “you all know that you are going to vanity.”

14 sn The expression “allotted by God” interprets the simple prepositional phrase in the text: “with/from God.”

15 sn R. Gordis (Job, 294) identifies this as a breviloquence.
27:22 It hurls itself against him without pity as he flees headlong from its power.
27:23 It claps its hands at him in derision and hisses him away from his place.

III. Job’s Search for Wisdom (28:1-28)

No Known Road to Wisdom

28:1 “Surely there is a mine for silver, and a place where gold is refined.
28:2 Iron is taken from the ground, and rock is poured out as copper.
28:3 Man puts an end to the darkness; he searches the farthest recesses for the ore in the deepest darkness.

1 sn The verb is once again functioning in an adverbial sense. The text has “it hurls itself against him and shows no mercy.”
2 tn If the same subject is to be carried through here, it is the wind. That would make this a bold personification, perhaps suggesting the force of the wind. Others argue that it is unlikely that the wind claps its hands. They suggest taking the verb with an indefinite subject: “he claps” means “one claps.” The idea is that of people rejoicing when the wicked are gone. But the parallelism is against this unless the second line is changed as well. R. Gordis (Job, 296) has “men will clap their hands...men will whistle upon him.”
3 tn Or “hisses at him from its place” (ESV).
4 As the book is now arranged, this chapter forms an additional speech by Job, although some argue that it comes from the pen of the author of the book. The mood of the chapter is not despair, but wisdom; it anticipates the divine speeches in the whole of the book.
5 tn The word מִמְצָא (mimmatsa), “melted,” comes from מָצָא (matsa), “to melt.” The word מִמְצַק (mimmatsaq)’, “refined,” comes from מַצָּק (matsaq), “to pour out” (as an imperfect from participle is smelted” (from מָצַק [matsaq], “to melt”)): “copper is smelted from the ore” (ESV) or “from the stone, copper is poured out” (as an imperfect from מָצַק [matsaq]): But the rock becomes the metal in the process. So according to R. Gordis (Job, 304) the translation should be: “the rock is poured out as copper.” E. Dhorme (Job, 400), however, defines the form in the text as “hard,” and simply has it “hard stone becomes copper.”
6 tn The text appears at first to be saying that by opening up a mine shaft, or by taking lights down below, the miner dispels the darkness. But the clause might be more general, meaning that man goes deep into the earth as if it were day.
7 tn The verse ends with “the stone of darkness and deep darkness.” The genitive would be location, describing the place where the stones are found.
8:4 Far from where people live he sinks a shaft, in places travelers have long forgotten, far from other people he dangles and sways.
8:5 The earth, from which food comes, is overturned below as though by fire; a hidden path, no bird of prey knows — no falcon’s eye has spotted it.
8:6 a place whose stones are sapphires, and which contains dust of gold; a strange people who have been forgotten cut shafts (see JSL 3 [1935]: 162). L. Waterman had “the people of the lamp” (“Note on Job 28:4,” JBL 71 [1952]: 167ff). And there are others. Since there is really no compelling argument in favor of one of these alternative interpretations, the MT should be preserved until shown to be wrong.
8:13 sn Heb “forgotten by the foot.” This means that there are people walking above on the ground, and the places below, these mines, are not noticed by the pedestrians above.
8:14 sn This is a description of the mining procedures. Dangling suspended from a rope would be a necessary part of the job of going up and down the shafts.
8:15 sn The verse has been properly understood, on the whole, as comparing the earth above and all its produce with the upheaval down below.
8:16 tn It is probably best to take “place” in construct to the rest of the colon, with an understood relative clause: “a place, the rocks of which are sapphires.”
8:17 sn The modern stone known as sapphire is thought not to have been used until Roman times, and so some other stone is probably meant here, perhaps lapis lazuli.
8:18 sn This kind of bird mentioned here is debated. The LXX has “vulture,” and some commentators follow that. The emphasis on the sight favors the view that it is the falcon.
8:19 sn The sons of pride.” In Job 41:26 the expression refers to carnivorous wild beasts.
No Price Can Buy Wisdom

28:12 “But wisdom – where can it be found?
Where is the place of understanding?
28:13 Mankind does not know its place;
it cannot be found in the land of the living.
28:14 The deep⁴ says, ‘It is not with me.’
And the sea says, ‘It is not with me.’
28:15 Fine gold cannot be given in exchange for it,
nor can its price be weighed out in silver.
28:16 It cannot be measured out for purchase¹⁰ with the gold of Ophir,
with precious onyx¹¹ or sapphires.
28:17 Neither gold nor crystal¹² can be compared with it,
nor can a vase¹³ of gold match its worth.
28:18 Of coral and jasper no mention will be made;
the price¹⁴ of wisdom is more than pearls.¹⁵
28:19 The topaz of Cush¹⁶ cannot be compared with it;
it cannot be purchased with pure gold.

God Alone Has Wisdom

28:20 “But wisdom – where does it come from?²⁷
Where is the place of understanding?
28:21 For¹⁸ it has been hidden from the eyes of every living creature,
and from the birds of the sky it has been concealed.
28:22 Destruction¹⁹ and Death say,
‘With our ears we have heard a rumor about where it can be found.’²⁰
28:23 God understands the way to it,
and he alone knows its place.
28:24 For he looks to the ends of the earth
and observes everything under the heavens.
28:25 When he made²¹ the force of the wind

¹ tn The Hebrew verb is simply “to stretch out; to send” (שָׁלָخ, shalakh). With ידו (yado, “his hand”) the idea is that of laying one’s hand on the rock, i.e., getting to work on the hardest of rocks.

² tn The Hebrew כִּהְיָם (mishoresh) means “from/at [their] root or base.” In mining, people have gone below ground, under the mountains, and overturned rock and dirt. It is also interesting that here in a small way humans do what God does – overturn mountains (cf. 9:5).

³ tn Or “tunnels.” The word is בֹּקֶשׁ (boqesh), the word for “rivers” and in the singular, the Nile River. Here it refers to tunnels or channels through the rocks.

⁴ tn Heb “his eye sees.”

⁵ tn The translation “searched” follows the LXX and Vulgate; the MT reads “binds up” or “dams up.” This latter translation might refer to the damming of water that might seep into a mine (HALOT 2809 s.v. מָבָלְקָה, cf. ESV, NJPS, NASB, REB, NLT).

⁶ tn The older translations had “he binds the streams from weeping,” i.e., from trickling (יַּהוָּם, yahôam), but the Ugaritic parallel has changed the understanding, reading “toward the spring of the rivers” (‘מַבְּכִי, mibbîki). Earlier than that discovery, the versions had taken the word as a noun as well. Some commentators had suggested repointing the Hebrew. Some chose ובָא (mibbâ’ā), “sources.” Now there is much Ugaritic support for the reading (see G. M. Landes, BASOR 144 [1956]: 32f.; and H. L. Ginsberg, “The Ugaritic texts and textual criticism,” JBL 62 [1943]: 111).

⁷ tn The LXX has “its way, apparently reading יַּהוָּם (yahôam) in place of יַּהוָּנה (yêhôânnâ, “place”). This is adopted by most modern commentators. But R. Gordis (Job, 308) shows that this change is not necessary, for יַּהוָּם (yêhôânnâ) in the Bible means “order; row; disposition,” and here “place.” An alternate meaning would be “worth” (NIV, ESV).

⁸ sn The יַּהוָּם (yêhôam) is the “deep” of Gen 1:2; the abyss or primordial sea. It was always understood to be a place of darkness and danger. As remote as it is, it asserts that wisdom is not found there (personification). So here we have the abyss and the sea, then death and destruction – but they are not the places that wisdom resides.

⁹ tn The יִתְנָה (yîtnâh) is taken here to mean “with” in the light of the parallel preposition.

¹⁰ tn The word actually means “weighed,” that is, lifted up on the scale and weighed, in order to purchase.

¹¹ tn The exact identification of these stones is uncertain. Many recent English translations, however, have “onyx” and “sapphires.”

¹² tn The word is from יִצְוָח (tsîwakh, “clear”). It describes a transparent substance, and so “glass” is an appropriate translation. In the ancient world it was precious and so expensive.

¹³ tn The MT has “vase,” but the versions have a plural here, suggesting jewels of gold.

¹⁴ tn The הַמֶּשֶׁך (mashēk) comes from a root meaning “to grasp; to seize; to hold,” and so the derived noun means “grasping; acquiring; taking possession,” and therefore, “price” (see the discussion in R. Gordis, Job, 309). Gray renders it “acquisition” (so A. Cohen, AJSL 40 [1923/24]: 175).

¹⁵ tn In Lam 4:7 these are described as red, and so have been identified as rubies (so NIV) or corals.

¹⁶ tn Or “Ethiopia.” In ancient times this referred to the region of the upper Nile, rather than modern Ethiopia (formerly known as Abyssinia).

¹⁷ tn The refrain is repeated, except now the verb is אַלְכָּם (ûlîḵâm, “come”).

¹⁸ tn The waw on the verb is unexpressed in the LXX. It should not be overlooked, for it introduces a subordinate clause of condition (R. Gordis, Job, 310).

¹⁹ tn Heb “Abaddon.”

²⁰ tn Heb “heard a report of it,” which means a report of its location, thus “where it can be found.”

²¹ tn Heb “he gave weight to the wind.” The form is the infinitive construct with the ל (lâmâ) preposition. Some have emended it to change the preposition to the temporal ל (lel) on the basis of some of the versions (e.g., Latin and Syriac) that have “who made.” This is workable, for the infinitive would then take on the finite tense of the previous verbs. An infinitive of purpose does not work well, for that would be saying God looked everywhere in order to give wind its proper weight (see R. Gordis, Job, 310).
and measured the waters with a gauge. 28:26 When he imposed a limit to the rain, and a path for the thunderstorm, 28:27 then he looked at wisdom and assessed its value; 28:28 he established it and examined it closely. 28:29 And he said to mankind, ‘The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding.”

IV. Job’s Concluding Soliloquy (29:1-31:40)

Job Recalls His Former Condition

29:1 Then Job continued his speech:

29:2 “O that I could be as I was in the months now gone, 29:3 when God watched over me, 29:4 just as I was in my most productive time, when God’s intimate friendship was

1 tn The verb is the Piel perfect, meaning “to estimate the measure” of something. In the verse, the perfect verb continues the function of the infinitive preceding it, as if it had a (wan) prefixed to it. Whatever usage that infinitive had, this verb is to continue it (see GKC 352 §114.r).
2 tn Or “decree.”
3 tn Or “thunderbolt,” i.e., lightning. Heb “the roaring of voices/sounds,” which describes the nature of the storm.
4 tn Heb “it,” the referent (wisdom) has been specified in the translation for clarity.
5 tn The verb (safar) in the Piel basically means “to tell; to declare; to show,” or “to count; to number.” Many commentators offer different suggestions for the translation. “Declared” (as in the RSV, NASB, and NRSV) would be the simplest— but to whom did God declare it? Besides “appraised” (which is the view of Pope, Dorhme, and others (cf. NAB, NJV), J. Reid has “Egetic” (pss” (Yahweh), and the preposition “in” in biblical Hebrew), VT 2 (1952): 127). Strahan has “studied,” and Kissane has “reckoned.” The difficulty is that the line has a series of verbs, which seem to build to a climax, but without more details it is hard to know how to translate them when they have such a range of meaning.
6 tc The verb (kaven) means “to establish; to prepare” in this sense. There are other uses that have the form from (bin, “discern”), giving “he discerned it,” making more of a parallel with the first colon. But the weight of the evidence supports the traditional MT reading.
7 tn The verb (khawar) means “to examine; to search out.” Some of the language used here is anthropomorphic, for the sovereign does not have to research or investigate wisdom. The point is that it is as if he did this human activity, meaning that as in the results of such a search God knows everything about wisdom.
8 tc A number of medieval Hebrew manuscripts have YHWH (“Lord”); BHS has (adonay, “Lord”). As J. E. Hartley (Job NICOT), 383 points out, this is the only occurrence of (adonay, “Lord”) in the book of Job, creating doubt for retaining it. Normally, YHWH is avoided in the book. “Fear of” (irat, yirat) is followed by (shadday, “Almighty”) in 6:14—the only other occurrence of this term for “fear” in construct with a divine title.
9 tc Many commentators delete this verse because (1) many read the divine name Yahweh (translated “Lord”) here, and (2) it is not consistent with the argument that precedes it. But as H. J. Rowley (Job NCCB), 185 points out, there is inconsistency in this reasoning, for many of the critics have already said that this chapter is an interpolation. Following that line of thought, then, one would not expect it to conform to the rest of the book in this matter of the divine name. And concerning the second difficulty, the point of this chapter is that wisdom is beyond human comprehension and control. It belongs to God alone. So the conclusion that the fear of the Lord is wisdom is under-represented.
10 sn Now that the debate with his friends is over, Job concludes with a soliloquy, just as he had begun with one. Here he does not take into account his friends or their arguments. The speech has three main sections: Job’s review of his former circumstances (29:1-25); Job’s present misery (30:1-31); and Job’s vindication of his life (31:1-40).
11 tn The verse uses a verbal hendiadys: “and he added (ri, vyvənə),...to raise (həd, st’a) his speech.” The expression means that he continued, or he spoke again.
12 tn The optative is here expressed with (miyitnim, “who will give me”), meaning, “O that I [could be]...” (see GKC 477 §151.b).
13 tn The preposition (ka) is used here in an expression describing the state desired, especially in the former time (see GKC 376 §118.u).
14 tn The expression is literally “months of before [or of old; or past],” The word (qaləm) is intended here to be temporal and not spatial; it means days that preceded the present.
15 tn The construct state (days) of governs the independent sentence that follows (see GKC 422 §130.d): “as the days of...God used to watch over me.”
16 tn The imperfect verb here has a customary nuance— “when God would watch over me” (back then), or “when God used to watch over me.”
17 tn This clause is in apposition to the preceding (see GKC 426 §131.o). It offers a clarification.
18 tn The form (hāhillo) is unusual; it should be parsed as a Hiphil infinitive construct with the elision of the (he). The proper spelling would have been with a (patsakh) under the preposition, reflecting (hāhillo). If it were Qal, it would just mean “when his light shone.”
19 sn Lamp and light are symbols of God’s blessings of life and all the prosperous and good things it includes.
20 tn Here too the imperfect verb is customary— it describes action that was continuous, but in a past time.
21 tn The accusative (“darkness”) is here an adverbial accusative of place, namely, “in the darkness,” or because he did not have to research or investigate wisdom. The point is that it is as if he did this human activity, meaning that as in the results of such a search God knows everything about wisdom.
22 sn The word (khour) denotes the time when the harvest is gathered in because the fruit is ripe. Since this is the autumn, many translate that way here— but “autumn” has a different connotation now. The text is pointing to a time when the righteous reaps what he has sown, and can enjoy the benefits. The translation “most productive time” seems to capture the point better than “autumn” or even “prime.”
23 tc The word (yok) in this verse is an infinitive construct, prefixed with the temporal preposition and followed by a subjective genitive. It forms a temporal clause. There is some disagreement about the form and its meaning. The confusion in the versions shows that they were paraphrasing to get the general sense. In the Bible the derived noun (deq, yəsāwa) means (a) a circle of close friends; (b) intimacy. Others follow the LXX and the Syriac with a meaning of “protect,” based on a change from (dakor) to (ka) and assuming the root was (sakhkh). This would mean, “when
experienced in my tent,
29:5 when the Almighty was still with me
and my children were around me;
29:6 when my steps were bathed with butter
and the rock poured out for me streams of olive oil!
29:7 When I went out to the city gate
and secured my seat in the public square,
29:8 the young men would see me and
step aside,
and the old men would get up and remain standing;
29:9 the chief men refrained from talking
and covered their mouths with their hands;
29:10 the voices of the nobles fell silent,
and their tongues stuck to the roof of
their mouths.

God protected my tent” (cf. NAB), D. W. Thomas tries to justify
this meaning without changing the text (“The Interpretation of BSOD in Job 29:4,” JBL 65 [1946]: 63-66).

The verb means “to hide; to withdraw.” The young men
would see me and step aside, a sign of respect.

The MT reads literally, “and the rock was poured out
for me streams of olive oil.”

The area referred to here should not be thought of in terms of modern western dimensions.

The verb means “to throw; to cast.” The verb means “to throw; to cast away.” But in the context
this meaning without changing the text (“The Interpretation of BSOD in Job 29:4,” JBL 65 [1946]: 63-66).

Job’s Benevolence

29:11 “As soon as the ear heard these things, it blessed me,
and when the eye saw them, it bore witness to me,
29:12 for I rescued the poor who cried out for help,
and the orphan who had no one to assist him;
29:13 the blessing of the dying man
descended on me.

and I made the widow’s heart rejoice;
29:14 I put on righteousness and it clothed me,
my just dealing was like a robe and a turban;
29:15 I was eyes for the blind
and feet for the lame;
29:16 I was a father to the needy,
and I investigated the case of the person I did not know;
29:17 I broke the fangs of the wicked,
and made him drop his prey from his teeth.

Job’s Confidence

29:18 “Then I thought, ‘I will die in my own home,’
and lived in their own homes. The figure cannot be pushed too far. But the verse apparently has caused enormous problems, because the versions offer a variety of readings and free paraphrases. The LXX has “My age shall grow old as the stem of a palm tree, I shall live and like the palm tree increase my days.” The Vulgate has, “In my old age” instead of “in my nest” (Pope, Dhorme; see also M. Dahood, “Nest and phoenix in Job 29:18,” Bib 48 (1967): 542-44. But the MT yields an acceptable sense here.

The word “glory,” meaning his high respect and honor. Hoffmann proposed to read כִּידוֹן (qidan, “strength”) instead, meaning “my glory,” meaning his high respect and honor. Others suggest כִּידוֹנָי (qinni, “my nest”). It has support from the LXX.

Job’s Reputation

29:21 “People listened to me and waited silently; they kept silent for my advice.
29:22 After I had spoken, they did not respond; my words fell on them drop by drop.
29:23 They waited for me as people wait for the rain, and they opened their mouths

The meaning, according to Gordis, is that they did nothing to provoke Job’s displeasure.

Job’s Present Misery

30:1 “But now they mock me, those who are younger than I, whose fathers I disdained too much to put with my sheep dogs. Moreover, the strength of their hands – what use was it to me?

Men whose strength had perished:

9 tn The z (kal’u) preposition is to be supplied by analogy with the preceding phrase. This leaves a double proposition, “as for” (but see Job 29:2).

10 tn The connection of this clause with the verse is difficult. The line simply reads: “[if] I would smile at them, they would not believe.” Obviously something has to be supplied to make sense out of this. The view adopted here makes the most sense, namely, that when he smiled at people, they could hardly believe their good fortune. Other interpretations are strained, such as Kissane’s, “If I laughed at them, they believed not,” meaning, people rejected the views that Job laughed at.

11 tn The meaning, according to Gordis, is that they did nothing to provoke Job’s displeasure.

12 tn All of these imperfектs describe what Job used to do, and so they all fit the category of customary imperfect.

13 tn Heb “their way.”

14 tn The text simply has “and I sat [as their] head.” The adverbial accusative explains his role, especially under the image of being seated. He directed the deliberations as a king directs an army.

15 tc Most commentators think this last phrase is odd here, and so they either delete it altogether, or emend it to fit the idea of the verse. Ewald, however, thought it appropriate as a transition to the next section, reminding his friends that unlike him, they were miserable comforters. Herz made the few changes in the text to get the reading “where I led them, they were willing to go” (ZAW 20 [1900]: 153). The two key words in the MT are יְנַחֵם אֲבֵלִים (avelim yinnakhem, ‘he [one who] comforts mourners’). Following Herz, E. Dhomme (Job, 422) has changed these to יִנַּחֵם אֲבֵלִים (avelim yinnakhut). R. Gordis has “like one leading a camel train” (Job, 324). But Kissane also retains the line as a summary of the chapter, noting its presence in the LXX.

16 tn Heb “smaller than I for days.”

17 tn Heb “who I disdained their fathers to set...,” meaning “whose fathers I disdained to set.” The relative clause modifies the young fellows who mock; it explains that Job did not think highly enough of them to put them with the dogs. The next verse will explain why.

18 sn Job is mocked by young fellows who come from low extraction. They mocked their elders and their betters. The scorn is strong here – dogs were despised as scavengers.

19 tn The reference is to the fathers of the scorners, who are here regarded as weak and worthless.

20 tn The word כּוֹל (koh) only occurs in Job 5:26, but the Arabic cognate gives its meaning “strength.” Others suggest כֹּל (kol, “old age”), כָּלַח (kalakh, “all freshness”), כָּלֹּכָה (kol-leakh, “all freshness”), and the like. But there is no reason for such emendation. 
30:3 gaunt⁴ with want and hunger, they would gnaw⁵ the parched land, in former time desolate and waste.³
30:4 By the brush⁶ they would gather herbs from the salt marshes,⁶ and the root of the broom tree was their food.
30:5 They were banished from the community⁴ – people⁥ shouted at them like they would shout at thieves⁹ – so that they had to live⁰ in the dry stream beds,¹¹ in the holes of the ground, and among the rocks.
30:7 They brayed¹² like animals among the bushes and were huddled together¹³ under the nettles.
30:8 Sons of senseless and nameless people,¹⁴ they were driven out of the land with whips.¹⁵

Job’s Indignities

30:9 “And now I have become their taunt song; I have become a byword¹⁶ among them.
30:10 They detest me and maintain their distance;¹⁷ they do not hesitate to spit in my face.
30:11 Because God has untied¹⁸ my tent cord and afflicted me, people throw off all restraint in my presence.¹⁹
30:12 On my right the young rabble²⁰ rise up; they drive me from place to place,²¹ and build up siege ramps²² against me.²³
30:13 They destroy²⁴ my path; they succeed in destroying me²⁵ without anyone assisting²⁶ them.
30:14 They come in as through a wide breach;

¹ This word, גִּלָּעָד (gilgalud), describes something as lowly, desolate, bare, gaunt like a rock.
² tn The form is the plural participle with the definite article – “who gnaw.” The article, joined to the participle, joins on a new statement concerning a preceding noun (see GKC 404 §126b).
³ tn The MT has “yesterday desolate and waste.” The word “yesterday” (יָמֻשׁ, emesh) is strange here. Among the proposals for יָמֻשׁ (yamash), Duhm suggested יְמַשֶּׁשׁו (yemashshu, “they grope”), which would require darkness; Pope renders “by night,” instead of “yesterday,” which evades the difficulty; and Fohrer suggested with more reason יְמַשֶּׁשׁו (yemeshh], “a desolate and waste land.” R. Gordis (Job, 331) suggests יָמֻשָּׁה (yamushah), “they wander off.”
⁴ tn Or “the leaves of bushes” (ESV), a possibility dating back to Saadia and discussed by G. R. Driver and G. B. Gray (Job [ICC], 2:209) in their philological notes.
⁵ tn Here too the form is the participle with the article.
⁶ tn Heb “gather mallow,” a plant which grows in salt marshes.
⁷ tn The word יָגְדָה (yagda) is an Aramaic term meaning “midst,” indicating “midst [of society].” But there is also a Phoenician word that means “community” (DISO 48).
⁸ tn The form simply is the plural verb, but it means those who drove them from society.
⁹ tn The text merely says “as thieves,” but it obviously compares the poor to the thieves.
¹⁰ tn This use of the infinitive construct expresses that they were compelled to do something (see GKC 348-49 §114.h, k).
¹¹ tn The adjectives followed by a partitive genitive take on the emphasis of a superlative: “in the most horrible of valleys” (see GKC 431 §133.h).
¹² tn The verb נָלָע (nalaq) means “to bray.” It has cognates in Arabic, Aramaic, and Ugaritic, so there is no need for emendation here. It is the sign of an animal’s hunger. In the translation the words “like animals” are supplied to clarify the metaphor for the modern reader.
¹³ tn The Pual of the verb נָלָע (nalaq, “to join”) also brings out the passivity of these people – “they were huddled together” (E. Dohme, Job, 434).
¹⁴ tn The “sons of the senseless” (גֵּו, Gev) means they were mentally and morally base and defective; and “sons of no-name” means without honor and respect, worthless (because not named).
¹⁵ tn Heb “they were whipped from the land” (cf. ESV) or “they were cast out from the land” (HALOT 697 s.v. גלעָד). J. E. Hartley (Job [NICOT], 397) follows Gordis suggests that the meaning is “brought lower than the ground.”
¹⁶ tn The idea is that Job has become proverbial, people think of misfortune and sin when they think of him. The statement uses the ordinary word for “word” (מִילָה, millah), but in this context it means more: “proverb; byword.”
¹⁷ tn Heb “they are far from me.”
¹⁸ tn In the verb פָּתַח (patakh) means “to untie [or undo]” a rope or bonds. In this verse יִתְרִי (yitri, the Ketib, LXX, and Vulgate) would mean “his rope” (see רָכֳּב [rakab] in Judg 16:7–9). The Qere would be יִתְרָה (yitra, “my rope [or cord]”), meaning “me.” The word could mean “rope,” “cord,” or “bowstring.” If the reading “my cord” is accepted, the cord would be something like “my tent cord” (as in Job 29:20), more than K&D 12:147 “cord of life.” This has been followed in the present translation. If it were “my bowstring,” it would give the sense of disablement. If “his cord” is taken, it would signify that the restraint that God had in afflicting Job was loosened nothing was held back.
¹⁹ tn People throw off all restraint in my presence means that when people saw how God afflicted Job, robbing him of his influence and power, then they turned on him with unrestrained insolence (H. H. Rowley, Job [NBC], 193).
²⁰ tn This Hebrew word occurs only here. The word פֶּרֶק (pirkakh, “young rabble”) is a quadrilateral, from פֶּרֶק (parukh, “to bud”) The derivative פֶּרֶקֵר (pirkar) in the Bible refers to a young bird. In Arabic farhun means both “young bird” and “base man.” Perhaps “young rabble” is the best meaning here (see R. Gordis, Job, 333).
²¹ tn Heb “they cast off my feet” or “they send my feet away.” Many delete the line as troubling and superfluous. E. Dohme (Job, 438) forces the lines to say “they draw my feet into a net.”
²² tn Heb “paths of their destruction” or “their destructive paths.”
²³ sn See Job 19:12.
²⁴ tn This word נָעֲשָׁה (nashah) is found nowhere else. It is probably a variant of the verb in Job 19:10. R. Gordis (Job, 333–34) notes the Arabic noun natsah (“thorns”), suggesting a denominate idea “they have placed thorns in my path.” Most take it to mean they ruin the way of escape.
²⁵ sn The MT has “they further my misfortune.” The line is difficult, with slight textual problems. The verb יָעְלָה (yala) means “to profit,” and so “to succeed” or “to set forward.” Good sense can be made from the MT as it stands, and many suggested changes are suspect.
²⁶ tn The sense of “restraining” for “helping” was proposed by Dillmann and supported by G. R. Driver (see AJSL 52 [1935/36]: 163).
amid the crash they come rolling in. 2
30:15 Terrors are turned loose on me; they drive away my honor like the wind, and like a cloud my deliverance has passed away.

Job’s Despondency
30:16 ‘And now my soul pours itself out within me; days of suffering take hold of me.
30:17 Night pierces my bones; my gnawing pains never cease.
30:18 With great power God grasps my clothing; he binds me like the collar of my tunic.
30:19 He has flung me into the mud, and I have come to resemble dust and ashes.
30:20 I cry out to you, but you do not answer me;

The Contrast With the Past
30:24 ‘Surely one does not stretch out his hand against a broken man when he cries for help in his distress.
30:25 Have I not wept for the unfortunates?

Was not my soul grieved for the poor?
30:26 But when I hoped for good, trouble came; when I expected light, then darkness came.

1 tn The MT has “under the crash,” with the idea that they rush in while the stones are falling around them (which is continuing the figure of the military attack). G. R. Driver took the expression to mean in a temporal sense “at the moment of the crash” (AJSL 52 [1935/36]; 163-64). Guillaume, drawing from Arabic, has “where the gap is made.”
2 tn The verb, the Hitpael of חָלַל (chalal), means “they roll themselves.” This could mean “they roll themselves under the ruins” (Dhorme), “they roll on like a storm” (Gordis), or “they roll on” as in waves of enemy attackers (see H. H. Rowley). This particular verb form is found only here (but see Amos 5:24).
3 tn The passive singular verb (Hophal) is used with a plural subject (see GKC 388 §121.b).
4 tc This translation assumes that “terrors” (in the plural) is the subject. Others emend the text in accordance with the LXX, which has, “my hope is gone like the wind.”
5 tn This line can either mean that Job is wasting away (i.e., his life is being poured out), or it can mean that he is grieving. The second half of the verse gives the subordinate clause of condition for this.
6 tn The subject of the verb “pierces” can be the night (personified), or it could be God (understood), leaving “night” to be an adverbial accusative of time – “at night he pierces.”
7 tc The MT concludes this half-verse with “unto me.” That phrase is not in the LXX, and so many commentators delete it as making the line turgid. The NASB and NIV take it as “gnawing pains”; cf. NRSV “the pain that gnaws me.” Some suggest worms in the sores. The NASB and NIV take it as “gnawing pains”; cf. NRSV “the pain that gnaws me.” Some suggest worms in the sores.
8 tn Heb “my gnawers,” which is open to several interpretations. The NASB and NIV take it as “gnawing pains”; cf. NRSV “the pain that gnaws me.” Some suggest worms in the sores (7:5). The LXX has “my nerves,” a view accepted by many commentators.
9 tn Heb “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.
10 tc This whole verse is difficult. The first problem is that this verb in the MT means “is disguised [or disfigured],” indicating that Job’s clothes hang loose on him. But many take the view that the verb is a phonetic variant of חָזַח (khazah, “to bind; to seize”) and that the Hitpael form is a corruption of the third and second person because of the interchange between them in the passage (R. Gordis, Job, 335). The commentators list a number of conjectural emendations, but the image in the verse is probably that God seizes Job by the garment and throws him down.
11 tn The phrase “like the collar” is difficult, primarily because their tunics did not have collars. A translation of “neck” would suit better. Some change the preposition to ל (lamed), getting a translation “by the neck of my tunic.”
12 tc The implication from the sentence is that this is a cry to God for help. The sudden change from third person (v. 19) to second person (v. 20) is indicative of the intense emotion of the sufferer.
13 sn The verb is simple, but the interpretation difficult. In this verse it probably means he stands up in prayer (Jer 15:1), but it could mean that he raises his case to God. Others suggest a more figurative sense, like the English expression “stand pat,” meaning “remain silent” (see Job 29:8).
14 tn If the idea of prayer is meant, then a pejorative sense to the verb is required. Some supply a negative and translate “you do not pay heed to me.” This is supported by one Hebrew ms and the Vulgate. The Syriac has the whole colon read with God as the subject, “you stand and look at me.”
15 tn The idiom uses the Niphal verb “you are turned” with “to cruelty.” See Job 41:20b, as well as Isa 63:10.
16 tc The LXX reads this verb as “you scourged/whipped me.” But there is no reason to adopt this change.
17 sn Here Job changes the metaphor again, to the driving storm. God has sent his storms, and Job is blown away.
18 tn The verb means “to melt.” The imagery would suggest softening the ground with the showers (see Ps 65:10 [11]). The translation “toss...about” comes from the Arabic cognate that is used for the surging of the sea.
19 tc The Qere is פָּשַׁע (pashuah, “counsel”), which makes no sense here. The Kethib is a variant orthography for פָּשַׁו (pashu’ah, “storm”).
20 tc The imperfect verb would be a progressive imperfect, it is future, but it is also already underway.
21 tc Here is another very difficult verse, as is attested by the differences among commentators and translations. The MT has “surely not against a ruinous heap will he [God] put forth his [God’s] hand.” But A. B. Davidson takes Job as the subject, reading “does not one stretch out his hand in his fall?” The RSV suggests a man walking in the ruins and using his hand for support. Dillmann changed it to “drowning man” to say “does not a drowning man stretch out his hand?” Beer has “have I not given a helping hand to the poor?” Dhorme has, “I did not strike the poor man with my hand.” Kissane follows this but retains the verb form, “one does not strike the poor man with his hand.”
22 tc The second colon is also difficult; it reads, “if in his destruction to them he cries.” E. Dhorme (Job, 425-26) explains how he thinks “to them” came about, and he restores “to me.” This is the major difficulty in the line, and Dhorme’s suggestion is the simplest resolution.
23 sn Heb “for the hard of day.”
30:27 My heart is in turmoil; the days of my affliction confront me. 30:28 I go about blackened, but not by the sun; in the assembly I stand up and cry for help.

30:29 I have become a brother to jackals and a companion of ostriches. 30:30 My skin has turned dark on me, my body is hot with fever. 30:31 My harp is used for mourning and my flute for the sound of weeping.

Job Vindicates Himself

31:1 “I made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I entertain thoughts against a virgin? 31:2 What then would be one’s lot from God above, one’s heritage from the Almighty on high?

31:3 Is it not misfortune for the unjust, and disaster for those who work iniquity? 31:4 Does he not see my ways and count all my steps? 31:5 If I have walked in falsehood, and if my foot has hastened to deceive –

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1 tn Heb “my loins.” “my bowels” (archaic), “my innermost being.” The latter option is reflected in the translation; some translations take the inner turmoil to be literal (NIV: “The churning inside me never stops”).

2 tn Heb “bolts.”

3 tn The last clause reads “and they [it] are not quiet” or “do not cease.” The clause then serves adverbially for the sentence “unceasingly.”

4 tn The construction uses the word פֶּתַח (“governer”) followed by the Piel perfect of פְּתַח (“I go about”). The adjective “blackened” refers to Job’s skin that has been marred by the disease. Adjectives are often used before verbs to describe some bodily condition (see GKC 374-75 §118.n).

5 sn The point of this figure is that Job’s cries of lament are like the howls and screeches of these animals, not that he is consuming them for food.

6 tn The MT has “become dark from upon me,” prompting some editions to supply the verb “falls from me” (RSV, NRSV), or “peels” (NIV).

7 tn The word “my bones” may be taken as a metonymy of my loins.

8 tn The word מְאוּמ (mekor) also means “heat.” The heat in this line is not that of the sun, but obviously a fever.

9 tn The verb פֶּתַח (“to serve the purpose of”) forms a fitting genitive for the scales used in trade or justice. The “scales of righteousness” are scales that conform to the standard (see the illustration in Deut 25:13-15). They must be honest scales to make just decisions.

10 tn The idea of cutting a covenant for something may suggest a covenant that is imposed, except that this construction elsewhere argues against it (see 2 Chr 29:29-10).

11 sn This half-verse is the effect of the covenant. The interrogative לַעֲבוֹד (luvah, “to be”) followed by the preposition וּ (lamed) means “to serve the purpose of” (see Gen 1:14ff., 17:7, etc.).

12 tn The idea of cutting a covenant for something may suggest a covenant that is imposed, except that this construction elsewhere argues against it (see 2 Chr 29:29-10).

13 tn The normal approach is to take this as the proatis, and then have it resumed in v. 7 after a parenthesis in v. 6. But some take v. 6 as the apodosis and a new proatis in v. 7.

14 tn The “it” is understood by the use of the consective verb.

15 sn The verbs “walk” and “hasten” (referring in the verse to the foot) are used metaphorically for the manner of life Job lived.

16 tn “God” is undoubtedly the understood subject of this jussive. However, “him” is retained in the translation at this point to avoid redundancy since “God” occurs in the second half of the verse.

17 tn The word צֶדֶק (tsedeq, “righteousness”) forms a fitting genitive for the scales used in trade or justice. The “scales of righteousness” are scales that conform to the standard (see the illustration in Deut 25:13-15). They must be honest scales to make just decisions.

18 tn The verb is צֶדֶק (tsedeq, “and then he [God will know]”). The verb could also be subordinated to the preceding jussive, “so that God may know.” The meaning of “to know” here has more the idea of “to come to know; to discover.”

19 sn The meaning is “been led by what my eyes see.”

20 tn The word מָעָן (ma‘an) could be taken in one of two ways. One reading is to represent מָעָן (ma‘an, “blemish,” see the Masorah); the other is for מָעָן (ma‘an, “anything,” see the versions and the Ketubbot). Either reading fits the passage.

21 tn The cohortative is often found in the apodosis of the conditional clause (see GKC 320 §108.f).

22 tn The word means “what sprouts up” (from אֱלֹהָ (alta) with the sense of “sprout forth”). It could refer metaphorically to children (and so Kisane and Pope), as well as in its literal sense of crops. The latter fits here perfectly.

23 tn Gordis notes that the word מַעֲנ (ma‘an, “door”) has sexual connotations in rabbinic literature, based on Prov 7:6ff. (see b. Ketubbot 9b). See also the use in Song 4:12 using a synonym.

24 tn Targum Job interpreted the verb צֶדֶק (tsedeq, “ground”) in a sexual sense, and this has influenced other versions and commentaries. But the literal sense fits well in this line. The idea is that she would be a slave for someone else. The second line of the verse then might build on this to explain what kind of a slave – a concubine (see A. B. Davidson, Job, 215).

25 tn Heb “bow down over her,” an idiom for sexual relations.

26 sn The idea is that if Job were guilty of adultery it would be an offense against the other woman’s husband, and so by talionist justice another man’s adultery with Job’s wife would be an offense against him. He is not wishing something on his wife; rather, he is simply looking at what would be offenses in kind.
31:11 For I would have committed an iniquity to be judged, and it would uproot all my harvest.

31:12 For it is a fire that devours even to Destruction, and by reason of his majesty and from my mother’s womb I guided the widow.

31:13 If I have seen anyone about to perish for lack of clothing, or a poor man without a coat, whose heart did not bless me as he warmed himself with the fleece of my sheep, I would have raised my hand to vote against the orphan, and my female servants or caused the eyes of the widow to fail, and did not share any of it with orphans  — but from my youth I raised the orphan like a father, and by reason of his majesty I was powerless.

31:14 Then what will I do when God confronts me in judgment, when he intervenes, how will I respond to him?

31:15 Did not the one who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same one form us in the womb?

31:16 If I have refused to give the poor what they desired, or caused the eyes of the widow to fail, or my male servants and did not share any of it with orphans — but from my youth I raised the orphan like a father, and by reason of his majesty I was powerless.

31:17 If I ate my morsel of bread myself, and he received his share of thanks — which prove his kindness, and my arm did not rise up in judgment; his majesty is nonethless clear.

31:18 Or, if I have put my confidence in gold or said to pure gold, the terror of God was mighty upon me. But the point is that if he has raised his arm against the oppressed it should be ripped off at the joint. The MT has “let fall my shoulder…”

31:19 For the fear of God was burdensome. I. Eitan suggested “For the terror of God restrained me.”

31:20 The terror of God was mighty upon me. Two unknown verbs: etymological studies, “Two unknown verbs: etymological studies,” JBL 42 [1923]: 22-28. But the M.T. makes clear sense as it stands.

31:21 Ths, the expression “raised my hand” refers to a threatening manner or gesture in the court rather than a threat of physical violence in the street. Thus the words “to vote” are supplied in the translation to indicate the setting.

31:22 The verb “gate,” referring to the city gate where judicial decisions were rendered in the culture of the time. The translation uses the word “court” to indicate this to the modern reader, who might not associate a city gate complex with judicial functions.

31:23 For the calamity from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his majesty I was powerless.

13 tn The expression “from my mother’s womb” is obviously hyperbolic. It is a way of saying “all his life.”

14 tn Heb “I guided her,” referring to the widow mentioned in v. 16.

15 tn The MT has simply “if his loins did not bless me.” In the conditional clause this is another protasis. It means, “if I saw someone dying and if he did not thank me for clothing them,” It is Job’s way of saying that whenever he saw a need he met it, and he received his share of thanks — which prove his kindness. G. R. Driver has it “without his loins having blessed me,” taking “ff…not” as an Aramaism, meaning “except” (AJSL 52 [1935/36]: 164f).

16 tn This clause is interpreted here as a subordinate clause to the first half of the verse. It could also be a separate clause: “was he not warmed…?”

17 tn The expression “raised my hand” refers to a threatening manner or gesture in the court rather than a threat of physical violence in the street. Thus the words “to vote” are supplied in the translation to indicate the setting.

18 tn Heb “gate,” referring to the city gate where judicial decisions were rendered in the culture of the time. The translation uses the word “court” to indicate this to the modern reader, who might not associate a city gate complex with judicial functions.

19 sn Here is the apodosis, the imprecation Job pronounces on himself if he has done any of these things just listed.

20 tn The point is that if he has raised his arm against the oppressed it should be ripped off at the joint. The MT has “let fall my shoulder…”

21 sn The word נָשָׂא (‘nash’), “to raise; to lift high,” here “shoulder joint.” All the commentaries try to explain how “reed” became “socket; joint.” This is the only place that it is used in such a sense. Whatever the exact explanation — and there seems to be no convincing view — the point of the verse is nonetheless clear.

22 tc The LXX has “For the terror of God restrained me.” Several commentators changed it to “came upon me.” Driver had “The terror of God was burdensome.” I. Eitan suggested “The terror of God was mighty upon me” (“Two unknown verbs: etymological studies,” JBL 42 [1923]: 22-28). But the MT makes clear sense as it stands.

23 tn The form is נָשָׂא trope: the preposition is causative. The form, from the verb נָשָׂא (‘nasha’, “to raise; to lift high”), refers to God’s exalted person, his majesty (see Job 13:11).
‘You are my security!’
31:25 if I have rejoiced because of the extent of my wealth, or because of the great wealth my hand had gained,
31:26 if I looked at the sun when it was shining, and the moon advancing as a precious thing,
31:27 so that my heart was secretly enticed, and my hand threw them a kiss from my mouth,
31:28 then this also would be iniquity to be judged, for I would have been false to God above.
31:29 If I have rejoiced over the misfortune of my enemy or exulted because calamity found him –
31:30 have not even permitted my mouth to sin by asking for his life through a curse –
31:31 if the members of my household have never said.
let the Almighty answer me!
If only I had an indictment⁴
that my accuser had written.²
31:36 Surely⁵ I would wear it proudly⁶ on
my shoulder,
I would bind⁷ it on me like a crown;
31:37 I would give him an accounting of
my steps;
like a prince I would approach him.

Job’s Final Solemn Oath⁶
31:38 “If my land cried out against me⁷ and
all its furrows wept together,
31:39 if I have eaten its produce without
paying,⁸
or caused the death⁹ of its owners,¹⁰
31:40 then let thorns sprout up in place of
wheat,
and in place of barley, weeds!”¹¹
The words of Job are ended.

V. The Speeches of Elihu (32:1-37:24)

Elihu’s First Speech²²

32:1 So these three men refused to answer¹³
Job further, because he was righteous in his¹⁴ own
eyes. 32:2 Then Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite, of
the family of Ram, became very angry.¹⁵ He was
angry¹⁶ with Job for justifying¹⁷ himself rather
than God.¹⁸ 32:3 With Job’s¹⁹ three friends he was
also angry, because they could not find²⁰ an
answer, and so declared Job guilty.²¹ 32:4 Now Elihu
had waited before speaking²² to Job, because the

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1 tn Heb “a scroll,” in the context referring to a scroll containing the accusations of Job’s legal adversary (see the next line).
2 tn The last line is very difficult; it simply says, “a scroll [that] my [legal] adversary had written.” The simplest way to handle this is to see it as a continuation of the optative (RSV).
3 tn The clause begins with the positive oath formula, אִם־לֹא (‘im-lo).
4 tn The word “proudly” is not in the Hebrew text, but is implied (note the following line).
5 tn This verb is only found in Prov 6:21. But E. Dhorme (Job, 470) suggests that (with metathesis) we have a derivative מַעֲדַנּוֹת (ma‘adanot, “bonds; ties”) in 38:31.
6 sn Many commentators place vv. 38-40b at the end of v. 34, so that there is no return to these conditional clauses after his final appeal.
7 sn Some commentators have suggested that the meaning behind this is that Job might not have kept the year of release (Deut 15:1), and the law against mixing seed (Lev 19:19). But the context will make clear that the case considered is obtaining the land without paying for it and causing the death of its lawful owner (see H. H. Rowley, Job [NCBC], 206). Similar to this would be the case of Naboth’s vineyard.
8 tn Heb “without silver.”
9 tc The versions have the verb “grieved” here. The Hebrew verb means “to breathe out,” but the form is Hiphil. This verb in that stem could mean something of a contemptuous gesture, like “sniff” in Mal 1:13. But with נפש (nefesh) in Job 11:20 it means “to cause death,” i.e., “to cause to breathe out; to expire.” This is likely the meaning here, although it is possible that it only meant “to cause suffering” to the people.
10 tn There is some debate over the meaning of בְּדָבְּרָם (b’dabb’ram), usually translated “its owners.” Dahood, following others (albeit without their emendations), thought it referred to “laborers” (see M. Dahood, Bib 41 [1960]: 303; idem, Bib 43 [1962]: 362).
11 tc The word נפש (bo’shah, from נפש [ba’as], “to have a foul smell!”) must refer to foul smelling weeds.
12 sn There are now four speeches from another friend of Job, Elihu. But Job does not reply to any of these, nor does the Lord. The speeches show a knowledge of the debate that has gone on, but they take a different approach entirely. Elihu’s approach is that suffering is a discipline from God, to teach his people. In other words, Job was suffering to vindicate God’s confidence in him. His speeches are an interesting part of the book, but they are too irrelevant to Job’s actual case. In the first speech, there is a short introduction (32:1-5), and then the speech proper with these sections: Elihu will speak because his youth is wiser (32:6-14), and his friends arguments failed (31:13-22); he calls for Job’s attention (33:1-7), claims Job’s case is wrong (33:8-13), and Job’s argument that God does not answer is false (33:14-28), and then makes an appeal to Job (33:29-33). It becomes evident that Elihu correctly identified Job’s determination to maintain his integrity at God’s expense as the primary problem in at least the latter stages of the dialogues (32:1-3; 34:37; 35:16; cf. 38:2; 40:8; 43:14). Elihu was respectful of Job’s position (33:14), but remained uninfected by their error (32:14). He sought to maintain impartiality (32:21-22) and to offer true wisdom (33:33), believed like Job that a mediator existed (33:23-24), and desired Job’s vindication (33:32). In addition, Elihu focused on vindicating God’s actions (34:12; 35:10-11; 36:2-3, 22-26) and announced the coming theophany (37:1-5, 22). It appears that he was not included in the divine condemnation of Job’s friends (42:7-9) and was excluded from Job’s prayer of intercession (42:8-10) – both perhaps implying divine approval of his behavior and words.
13 tn The form is the infinitive construct (“answer”) functioning as the object of the preposition; the phrase forms the complement of the verb “they ceased to answer” (= “they refused to answer your words”).
14 tc The LXX, Syriac, and Symmachus have “in their eyes,” This is adopted by some commentators, but it does not fit the argument.
15 tn The verse begins with אִם־לֹא (‘im-lo), “because he justified himself”). It is the argument that God does not answer is false (33:14-28), and desired Job’s vindication (33:32). In addition, Elihu focused on vindicating God’s actions (34:12; 35:10-11; 36:2-3, 22-26) and announced the coming theophany (37:1-5, 22). It appears that he was not included in the divine condemnation of Job’s friends (42:7-9) and was excluded from Job’s prayer of intercession (42:8-10) – both perhaps implying divine approval of his behavior and words.
16 tn The second comment about Elihu’s anger comes right before the statement of its cause. Now the perfect verb is used: “he was angry.”
17 tn The explanation is the causal clause בְּדָבְּרָם (b’dabb’ram), “he justified himself”). It is the preposition with the Piel infinitive construct with a suffixed subjective genitive.
18 tc The LXX and Latin versions soften the expression slightly by saying “before God.”
19 tn Heb “his”; the referent (Job) has been specified in the translation to indicate whose friends they were.
20 tn The perfect verb should be given the category of potential perfect here.
21 tc This is one of the eighteen “corrections of the scribes” (tiqqune sopherim); it originally read, “and they declared God [in the wrong].” The thought was that in abandoning the debate they had conceded Job’s point.
22 tc This reading requires repointing the word הָבָשָׁה (hash’ah, “words”) to בְּבָשָׁהְ(b’dab’ram, “while they spoke [with Job]”), if the MT is retained, it would mean “he waited for Job with words,” which while understandable is awkward.
Elihu Claims Wisdom

“|I am young, but you are elderly; that is why I was fearful, and afraid to explain to you what I know. | If I said to myself, ‘Age should speak, and length of years should make wisdom known.’
|But it is a spirit in people, the breath of the Almighty, that makes them understand. | It is not the aged who are wise, nor old men who understand what is right.
|Therefore I say, ‘Listen to me. I, even I, will explain what I know.’
|Look, I waited for you to speak; I listened closely to your wise thoughts while you were searching for words.
|Now I was paying you close attention yet there was no one proving Job wrong.

Job’s Friends Failed to Answer

“They are dismayed and cannot answer any more; they have nothing left to say.”

And I have waited. But because they do not speak, here calling attention to the thought that is now presented.

The Piel infinitive with the preposition (‘from explaining’) the complement: ‘to explain.’ The phrase is the complement: ‘explain’ what Elihu feared.

The imperfect here is to be classified as an obligatory imperfet.

Heb “abundance of years.”

This is the word (n’shemah, “breath”); according to Gen 2:7 it was breathed into Adam to make him a living person (‘soul’). With that divine impartation came this spiritual understanding. Some commentators identify the (nakh) in the first line as the Spirit of God; this “breath” would then be the human spirit. Whether Elihu knew that much, however, is hard to prove.

The MT has “the great” or “the many,” meaning great in years according to the parallelism.

In most Hebrew this is imperative is singular and, so addressed to Job. But two Hebrews and the versions have the plural. Elihu was probably addressing all of them.

Heb “for your words.”

The word means “understanding.” It refers to the faculty of perception and comprehension, but it also can refer to what that produces, especially when it is in the plural (see Ps 49:4). See R. Gordis, Job, 368. Others translate it “reasonings,” “arguments,” etc.

The verb again is from (hinah, “to perceive; to understand”); in this stem it means to “pay close attention.”

The particle (hinneh, “behind”) has a deictic force
because they stand there and answer no more, 32:17 I too will answer my part, I too will explain what I know.

32:18 For I am full of words, and the spirit within me constrains me. 32:19 Inside I am like wine which has no outlet, like new wineskins ready to burst!

32:20 I will speak, so that I may find relief; I will open my lips, so that I may answer.

32:21 I will not show partiality to anyone, nor will I confer a title on any man. 32:22 For I do not know how to give honorary titles, if I did, my Creator would quickly do away with me.

Elihu Invites Job’s Attention

33:1 “But now, O Job, listen to my words, and hear everything I have to say! 33:2 See now, I have opened my mouth; my tongue in my mouth has spoken.

33:3 My words come from the uprightness of my heart; and my lips will utter knowledge sincerely. 33:4 The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

33:5 Reply to me, if you can; set your arguments in order before me and take your stand! 33:6 Look, I am just like you in relation to God; I too have been molded from clay.

33:7 Therefore no fear of me should terrify you, nor should my pressure be heavy on you.

Elihu Rejects Job’s Plea of Innocence

33:8 “Indeed, you have said in my hearing:

33:9 (I heard the sound of the words!): 33:10 ‘I am pure, without transgression, I am clean and have no iniquity.

33:11 Yet God finds occasions and sentences.”

1 tn Heb “the spirit of my belly.”

2 tc The verb יִבָּקֵע (yibbaq) means “to constrain; to urge; to press.” It is used in Judg 14:17; 16:16 with the sense of wearing someone down with repeated entreaties. Elihu cannot withhold himself any longer.

3 tc Heb “in my belly I am like wine that is not opened” (a Naphal imperfect), meaning sealed up with no place to escape. More literally, “and the knowledge of my lips they will not come out”.

4 tc The Hebrew text has כְּאֹבוֹת חֲדָשִׁים (k’covot khadashim), traditionally rendered “like new wineskins.” But here only does the phrase have this meaning. The LXX has “smiths” for “new,” thus “like smiths’ bellows.” A. Guillaume connects the phrase with a Syriac sense of “the wind from the bellows.”

5 tc The cohortative expresses Elihu’s resolve to speak.

6 tc The idiom is “I will not lift up the face of a man.” Elihu is not going to show any favoritism, but speak his mind.

7 tc The verb means “to confer an honorary title; to give a mark of distinction,” but it is often translated with the verb “flatter.” Elihu will not take sides, he will not use pompous titles.

8 tc The construction uses a perfect verb followed by the imperfect. This is a form of subordination equivalent to a complementary infinitive (see GKC 385-86 §120.c).

9 tc The words “if I did” are supplied in the translation to make sense out of the two clauses.

10 tc In Heb “quickly carry me away.”

11 tc Heb “give ear,” the Hiphil denominative verb from “ear.”

12 tc Heb “hear all my words.”

13 tc The perfect verbs in this verse should be classified as perfects of resolve: “I have decided to open...speak.”

14 sn H. H. Rowley (Job [NCCB], 210) says, “The self-importance of Elihu is boundless, and he is the master of banality.”

15 He adds that whoever wrote these speeches this way clearly intended to expose the character rather than exalt him.

16 tc This expression is unusual; R. Gordis (Job, 371) says it can be translated, “the purity of my heart [is reflected] in my words,” but that is far-fetched and awkward. So there have been suggestions for emending יושר (yasher, “uprightness”). Kisse’s maker of the most sense if a change is desired: “shall reveal” (an Arabic sense of yasher), although Holscher interpreted “shall affirm” (yasher, with a Syriac sense). Dhorme has “my heart will repeat” (אשורי, yashur), but this is doubtful. If Kisse’s view is taken, it would say, “my heart will reveal my words.” Some commentators would join “and knowledge” to this colon, and read “words of knowledge” – but that requires even more emendations.

17 tc Some commentators want to put this verse after v. 6, while others omit the verse entirely. Elihu is claiming here that he is inspired by God.

18 tc The noun יְשֻׁר (yosher) is the Piel imperfect of the verb “to live.” It can mean “gives me life,” but it can also mean “quickens me; enlivens me.”

19 tc The Hebrew text does not contain the term “arguments,” but this verb has been used already for preparing or arranging a defense.

20 tc The verb means “nipped off,” as a potter breaks off a piece of clay when molding a vessel.

21 tc The noun means “my pressure; my burden” in the light of the verb יָכָף (yakaf, “to press on; to grip tightly”). In the parallel passages the text used “hand” and “rod” in the hand to terrify. The LXX has “hand” here for this word. But simply changing it to “hand” is ruled out because the verb is masculine.


23 tc Heb “in my ears.”


25 tc The word is a hapax legomenon; hap is from הָפָךְ (hafach, “to press on; to grip tightly”). It is used in Hosea in expressions like “to wash” the head. Cognates in Syriac and Akkadian support the meaning “to wash; to clean.”


27 tc Heb “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

28 tc The Hebrew means “frustrations” or “resentments.” The RSV has “displeasure,” NIV “faults,” and NRSV “occasions.” Rashi chose the word found in Judg 14:4 – with metathesis – meaning “pretexts” (פשע, ḥa’anot); this is followed by NAB, NASB.
he regards me as his enemy!

33:11 He puts my feet in shackles; he watches closely all my paths,

33:12 Now in this, you are not right – I answer you, for God is greater than a human being.

33:13 Why do you contend against him, that he does not answer all a person’s words?

Elihu Disagrees With Job’s View of God

33:14 “For God speaks, the first time in one way, the second time in another, though a person does not perceive it.

33:15 In a dream, a night vision, when deep sleep falls on people as they sleep in their beds.

33:16 Then he gives a revelation to people, and terrifies them with warnings,

33:17 to turn a person from his sin, and to cover a person’s pride.

33:18 He spares a person’s life from corruption, his very life from crossing over

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1 sn See Job 13:27.
2 sn The meaning of this verb is “this is my answer to you.”
3 sn The LXX has “he that is above men is eternal.” Elihu is saying that God is far above Job’s petty problems.
4 tc The MT has “all his words.” This must refer to “man” in the previous verse. But many wish to change it to “my words,” since it would be summarizing Job’s complaint to God.
5 sn The Syriac and the Vulgate have “and he does not repeat it,” a reading of the text as it is, according to E. Dhorme (Job, 403). But his argument is based on another root with this meaning – a root which does not exist (see L. Dennefeld, RB 48 (1939): 175). The verse is saying that God does speak to man.
6 sn The idiom is “he uncovers the ear of men.” This expression means “inform” in Ruth 4:4; 1 Sam 20:2, etc. When God is the subject it means “make a revelation” (see 1 Sam 9:15; 2 Sam 7:27).
7 tc to Heb “and seals their bonds.” The form of the present translation, “and terrifies them with warnings,” is derived only by emendation. Aquila, the Vulgate, Syriac, and Targum Job have “their correction” for “their bond,” which is what the KJV used. But the LXX, Aquila, and the Syriac have “terrifies” for the verb. This involves a change in pointing from נפש (nephesh) to נפש (nephesh). The LXX has “appearances of fear” instead of “bonds.” The point of the verse seems to be that by terrifying dreams God makes people aware of their ways.
8 sn The MT simply has נפש (nephesh, “deed”). The LXX has “from his iniquity” which would have been נפש (nephesh) (m’Avlah). The two letters may have dropped out by haplography. The MT is workable, but would have to mean “[evil] deeds.”
9 tc Here too the sense of the MT is difficult to recover. Some translations took it to mean that God hides pride from man. Many commentators changed נפש (nephesh, “covers”) to נפש (shelakh, “he cuts away”), or נפש (y’khallath, “he puts an end to”). The various emendations are not all that convincing.
10 tc A number of interpreters and translations take this as “the pit” (see Job 17:14; cf. NAB, NASB, NIV, NRSV).
11 tc Here is another difficult line. The verb normally means “to pass through; to pass over,” and so this word would normally mean “from passing through [or over].” The word נפש (shelakh) does at times refer to a weapon, but most commentators look for a parallel with “the pit [or corruption].” One suggestion is נפש (sh’olath, “to Sheol”), proposed by Duhm.
‘Spare⁵ him from going down to the place of corruption, I have found a ransom for him,’⁶
33:25 then his flesh is restored⁷ like a youth’s;
he returns to the days of his youthful vigor.⁸
33:26 He entreats God, and God⁹ delights in him,
he sees God’s face⁶ with rejoicing, and God⁵ restores to him his righteousness.⁸
33:27 That person sings⁹ to others,¹⁰ saying:
‘I have sinned and falsified what is right, but I was not punished according to what I deserved.¹¹
33:28 He redeemed my life¹² from going down to the place of corruption, and my life sees the light!’

Elihu’s Appeal to Job¹³
33:29 “Indeed, God does all these things,
twice, three times, in his dealings¹⁴ with a person,
33:30 to turn back his life from the place of corruption, that he may be enlightened with the light of life.
33:31 Pay attention, Job — listen to me; be silent, and I will speak.
33:32 If you have any words,¹⁵ reply to me; speak, for I want to justify you.¹⁶
33:33 If not, you listen to me; be silent, and I will teach you wisdom.”

Elihu’s Second Speech¹⁷
34:1 Elihu answered:
34:2 “Listen to my words, you wise men; hear¹⁸ me, you learned men.¹⁹
34:3 For the ear assesses²⁰ words as the mouth²¹ tastes food.
34:4 Let us evaluate²² for ourselves what is right;²³
let us come to know among ourselves what is good.
34:5 For Job says, ‘I am innocent,’²⁴ but God turns away my right.
34:6 Concerning my right, should I lie?²⁵
My wound²⁶ is incurable, although I am without transgression.²⁷
34:7 What man is like Job, who²⁸ drinks derision²⁹ like water!

¹ tc The verb is either taken as an anomalous form of שָׁפָה (pada), “to rescue; to redeem,” or “to exempt him”), or it is emended to some similar word, like פָּרַע (para, “to let loose,” so Wright).
² sn This verse and v. 28 should be compared with Ps 49:7-9, 15 (8-10, 16 HT) where the same basic vocabulary and concepts are employed.
³ tc The word פָּרַע (natafash) is found nowhere else. One suggestion is that it should be פָּרַע (vintav, “to become fresh”), connected to הָעַשׁ (vintav, “to be well watered [or moist]”). It is also possible that it was a combination of פָּרַע (vintav, “to be well watered”) and פָּשׁ (afash, “to grow fat”). But these are all guesses in the commentaries.
⁴ tn The word describes the period when the man is healthy and vigorous, ripe for what life brings his way.
⁵ tn Heb “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.
⁶ tn Heb “his face”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.
⁷ sn This is usually taken to mean that as a worshiper this in
⁸ tc Many commentators think this line is superfluous and so delete it. The RSV changed the verb to “he recounts,” making the idea that the man publishes the news of his victory or salvation (taking “righteousness” as a metonymy of cause).
⁹ tc The verb יָשֵׁיר (yashir) is unusual. The typical view is to change it to יָשְׁר (yashir, “he sings”), but that may seem out of harmony with a confession. Dhomse suggests a root יָשָׁר (shur, “to be right”), but this is a doubtful root. J. Reider reads it יָשֵׁר (yashir) and links it to an Arabic word “confesses” (ZAW 24 [1953]: 275).
¹⁰ tn Heb “to men.”
¹¹ tn The verb שָׁבַע (shavah) has the impersonal meaning here, “it has not been required to me.” The meaning is that the sinner has not been treated in accordance with his deeds: “I was not punished according to what I deserved.”
¹² sn Elihu will repeat these instructions for Job to listen, over and over in painful repetition. See note on the heading to 32:1.
¹³ sn Elihu means “choose after careful examination.”
¹⁴ tn The phrase “in his dealings” is not in the Hebrew text, but has been supplied in the translation for clarification.
¹⁵ tn Heb “if there are words.”
¹⁶ tn The infinitive construct serves as the complement or object of “I desire.” It could be rendered “to justify you” or “your justification,” namely, “that you be justified.”
¹⁷ sn This speech of Elihu focuses on defending God. It can be divided into these sections: Job is irreligious (2-9), God is just (10-15), God is impartial and omniscient (16-30), Job is foolish to rebel (31-37).
¹⁸ tn Heb “give ear to me.”
¹⁹ tn The Hebrew word means “the men who know,” and without a complement it means “to possess knowledge.”
²⁰ tn Or “examine; tests; tries; discerns.”
²¹ tn Or “paleate”; the Hebrew term refers to the tongue or to the mouth in general.
²² sn Elihu means “choose after careful examination.”
²³ tn The word is מִשְׁפָּט (mishpat) again, with the sense of what is right or just.
²⁴ tn Heb “righteous,” but in this context it means to be innocent or in the right.
²⁵ tn The verb is the Piel imperfect of קָזָב (kazav), meaning “lie.” It could be a question: “Should I lie [against my right?]” — when I am innocent. If it is reponited to the Pual, then it can be “I am made to lie,” or “I am deceived.” Taking it as a question makes good sense here, and so emendations are unnecessary.
²⁶ tn The Hebrew text has only “my arrow.” Some commentators emend that word slightly to get “my wound.” But the idea could be derived from “arrows” as well, the wounds caused by the arrows. The arrows are symbolic of God’s afflication.
²⁷ tn Heb “without transgression,” but this is parallel to the first part where the claim is innocence.
²⁸ tn Heb “he drinks,” but coming after the question this clause may be subordinated.
²⁹ tn The scorn or derision mentioned here is not against Job, but against God. Job scorns God so much, he must love
34:8 He goes about in company with evildoers, he goes along with wicked men.

34:9 For he says, "It does not profit a man when he makes his delight with God."  

God is Not Unjust

34:10 "Therefore, listen to me, you men of understanding. Far be it from God to do wickedness, from the Almighty to do evil.

34:11 For he repays a person for his work, and according to the conduct of a person, he causes the consequences to find him.

34:12 Indeed, in truth, God does not act wickedly, and the Almighty does not pervert justice.

34:13 Who entrusted to him the earth? And who put him over the whole world?

34:14 If God were to set his heart on it, and gather in his spirit and his breath, all flesh would perish together and human beings would return to dust.

God Is Impartial and Omniscient

34:16 "If you have understanding, listen to this, hear what I have to say.

34:17 Do you really think that one who hates justice can govern? And will you declare guilty the supremely righteous? One, 34:18 who says to a king, 'Worthless man and to nobles, 'Wicked men,' 34:19 who shows no partiality to princes, and does not take note of the rich more than the poor, because all of them are the work of his hands?

34:20 In a moment they die, in the middle of the night; people are shaken and they pass away. The mighty are removed effortlessly.

34:21 For his eyes are on the ways of an individual, he observes all a person's steps.

34:22 There is no darkness, and no deep darkness,
where evildoers can hide themselves.\(^1\)

34:23 For he does not still consider a person,\(^2\) that he should come before God in judgment.

34:24 He shatters the great without inquiry,\(^3\) and sets up others in their place.

34:25 Therefore, he knows their deeds, he overthrows them\(^4\) in the night\(^5\) and they are crushed.

34:26 He strikes them for their wickedness,\(^6\) in a place where people can see,\(^7\) because they have turned away from following him, and have not understood\(^8\) any of his ways,

34:28 so that they caused\(^9\) the cry of the poor to come before him, so that he hears\(^10\) the cry of the needy.

34:29 But if God is quiet, who can condemn him?\(^11\) If he hides his face, then who can see him?

Yet\(^12\) he is over the individual and the nation alike.\(^13\)

34:30 so that the godless man should not rule, and not lay snares for the people.\(^15\)

Job Is Foolish to Rebel

34:31 “Has anyone said to God, ‘I have endured chastisement’\(^16\) but I will not act wrongly any more.\n
34:32 Teach me what I cannot see.\(^17\) If I have done evil, I will do so no more.’\(^1\)

34:33 Is it your opinion\(^18\) that God\(^19\) should recompense it, because you reject this?\(^20\) But you must choose, and not I, so tell us what you know.

34:34 Men of understanding say to me – any wise man listening to me says –

34:35 that\(^21\) Job speaks without knowledge and his words are without understanding.\(^22\)

34:36 But\(^23\) Job will be tested to the end, because his answers are like those of wicked men.

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\(^1\) tn The construction of this colon uses the Niphal infinitive construct from רֹעֵד (ro’ed, “to be hidden; to hide”). The resumptive adverb makes this a relative clause in its usage: “where the evildoers can hide themselves.”

\(^2\) tn Heb “for he does not put upon man yet.” This has been given a wide variety of interpretations, all of which involve a lot of additional thoughts. The word רֹעֵד (ro’ed, “to be hidden; to hide”) has been replaced with מָסַר (masar, “an appointed time,” Reiske and Wright), with the מָסַר (maseer) having dropped out by haplography. This makes good sense. If the MT is retained, the best interpretation would be that God does not any more consider (from “place upon the heart”) man, that he might appear in judgment.

\(^3\) tn Heb “with[ ]no investigation.”

\(^4\) tn The direct object “them” is implied and has been supplied in the translation for clarity.

\(^5\) tn The Hebrew term “night” is an accusative of time.\(^8\)

\(^6\) tn Heb “under wicked men,” or “under wickednesses.” J. C. Greenfield shows that the preposition can mean “among” as well (“Prepositions B Tachat in Jes 57:5,” ZAW 32 [1961]: 227). That would allow “among wicked men.” It could also be “instead of” or even “in return for [their wickedness]” which is what the RSV does.

\(^7\) tn The text simply uses בָּשָׂר (bo’), “in the place where there are[ ]seers,” i.e., spectators.

\(^8\) tn The verb מָסַר (masar) means “to be prudent; to be successful.” From this is derived the idea of “be wise in understanding God’s will,” and “be successful because of prudence” – i.e., successful with God.

\(^9\) tn The verse begins with the infinitive construct of מָסַר (bo’), “go,” showing the result of their impious actions.

\(^10\) tn The verb here is an imperfect; the clause is circumstantial to the preceding clause, showing either the result, or the concomitant action.

\(^11\) tn Heb “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

\(^12\) tn There is no object on the verb, and the meaning is perhaps lost. The best guess is that Elihu is saying Job has rejected his teaching.

\(^13\) Adding “that” in the translation clarifies Elihu’s indirect citation of the wise individuals’ words.

\(^14\) tn The Hiphil infinitive construct is here functioning as a substantive. The word means “prudence; understanding.”

\(^15\) tn The MT reads בָּשָׂר (bo’), “my father,” which makes no sense. Some follow the KJV and emend the word to make a verb “I desire” or use the noun “my desire of it.” Others follow an Arabic word meaning “entreat, I pray” (cf. ESV, “Would that Job were tried”). The LXX and the Syriac versions have “but” and “surely” respectively. Since this is the only text support, albeit weak, it may be the best choice. In this sense Elihu would be saying that because of Job’s attitude God will continue to test him.
Elihu’s Third Speech

35:1 Then Elihu answered:

35:2 “Do you think this to be just:

when you say, ‘My right before God.’  

35:3 But you say, ‘What will it profit you,’ and, ‘What do I gain by not sinning?’

35:4 ‘Will reply to you,

and to your friends with you.

35:5 Gaze at the heavens and see;

consider the clouds, which are higher than you.

35:6 If you sin, how does it affect God?  

If your transgressions are many,

what does it do to him?

35:7 If you are righteous, what do you give to God,

or what does he receive from your hand?

35:8 Your wickedness affects only a person like yourself,

and your righteousness only other people.

1 Although frequently translated “rebellion,” the basic meaning of this Hebrew term is “transgression.”

2 In this reading stands, it would mean that Job shows contempt, meaning that he mocks them and accuses God. It is a bold touch, but workable. Of the many suggested emendations, Dhomse alters some of the vowels and obtains a reading “casts doubt among us,” and then takes “transgression” from the first colon for the complement. Some commentators simply delete the line.

3 This short speech falls into two sections: Elihu refutes Job’s claim that goodness avails nothing (35:2-8), asserting that when the cry of the afflicted goes unanswered they have not learned their lesson (35:9-16).

4 The line could be read as “do you reckon this for justice? Here “to be” is understood.

5 The word “when” is not in the Hebrew text, but is implied.

6 The brief line could be interpreted in a number of ways. The MT simply has “my right from God.” It could be “I am right before God,” “I am more just/right than God” (identifying the preposition as a comparative min (מִן); cf. J. E. Hartley, Job [NICOT, 463], “I will be right before God,” or “My just cause against God.”

7 The referent of “you” is usually understood to be God.

8 The Hebrew text merely says, “What do I gain from my sin?” But Job has claimed that he has not sinned, and so this has to be elliptical: “more than if I had sinned” (H. H. Rowley, Job [NCBC], 225) says, “It is a pity to rob Elihu of a poetical line when he creates one.”

9 The emphatic pronoun calls attention to Elihu who will answer these questions.

10 The Hebrew text adds, “with words,” but since this is obvious, for stylistic reasons it has not been included in the translation.

11 The preposition is taken here as a comparative min (מִן). The line could also read “that are high above you.” This idea has appeared in the speech of Eliphaz (22:12), Zophar (11:17ff.), and even Job (9:8ff.).

12 The preposition “him” (also in v. 7) the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

13 See Job 7:20.

14 The phrase “affects only” is supplied in the translation of this nominal sentence.

15 Heb “and to [or for] a son of man, your righteousnessness.”

16 The word “people” is supplied, because the sentence only has the masculine plural verb.

17 The final noun is an abstract plural, “oppression.” There is no reason to change it to “oppressors” to fit the early versions. The expression is literally “multitude of oppression.”

18 Heb “the arm,” a metaphor for strength or power.

19 Or “of the many” (see HALOT 1172 s.v. כִּי 6a).

20 There have been several attempts to emend the line, none of which are particularly helpful or interesting. H. H. Rowley (Job [NCBC], 225) says, “It is a pity to rob Elihu of a poetical line when he creates one.”

21 The form in the text, the Piel participle from הָעָלַף (עָלַף, “teach”) is written in a contracted form; the full form is עָלָף (עָלָף). Some would render this “teaches us the many.”

22 Some would render this “teaches us by the beasts.” But Elihu is stressing the unique privilege humans have.

23 The adverb שָׁמְרָנ (שָׁמְרָנ, “there”), connects this verse to v. 11. “There” can be locative or temporal – and here it is temporal (“‘then’”)

24 Heb “surely – vanity, he does not hear.” The cry is an empty cry, not a prayer to God. Dhomse translates it, “It is a pure waste of words.”

25 The point is that if God does not listen to those who do not turn to him, how much less likely is he to turn to one who complains against him.

26 The expression “and now” introduces a new complaint of Elihu – in addition to the preceding. Here the verb of v. 14, “you say,” is understood after the temporal ki (כִּי).

27 The verb פָּקַד (פקד) means “to visit” (also “to appoint; to muster; to number”). When God visits, it means that he intervenes in one’s life for blessing or cursing (punishing, destroying).

28 The word פָּשַׁי (פשיי) is a hapat legomenon. K&D 12:275 derived it from an Arabic word meaning “belch,” leading to the idea of “overflow.” BDB 832 s.v. defines it as “fool.” Several define it as “transgression” on the basis of the versions (Theodotion, Symmachus, Vulgate). The RSV took it as “greatly heeded,” but that is not exactly “greatly know,” when the text beyond that requires “not know at all.” The NIV has “he does not take the least notice of wickedness.”
Elihu’s Fourth Speech

36:1 Elihu said further:

36:2 “Be patient with me a little longer and I will instruct you, for I still have words to speak on God’s behalf.

36:3 With my knowledge I will speak comprehensively, and to my Creator I will ascribe righteousness.

36:4 For in truth, my words are not false; it is one complete knowledge who is with you.

36:5 Indeed, God is mighty; and he does not despise people.

36:6 He does not allow the wicked to live, but he gives justice to the poor.

36:7 He does not take his eyes off the righteous; but with kings on the throne he seats the righteous and exalts them forever.

36:8 But if they are bound in chains and held captive by the cords of affliction,

36:9 then he reveals to them what they have done, and their transgressions, that they were behaving proudly.

36:10 And he reveals this for correction, and says that they must turn from evil.

36:11 If they obey and serve him, they live out their days in prosperity and their years in pleasantness.

36:12 But if they refuse to listen, they pass over the river of death, and expire without knowledge.

36:13 The godless at heart nourish anger; they do not cry out even when he binds them.

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1 tn The word הֶבֶל (hevel) means “vanity; futility; to no purpose.”

2 sn This very lengthy speech can be broken down into the following sections: the discipline of suffering (36:2–25), the work and wisdom of God (36:26–37:24).

3 tn The use of בַּר (ruyoxox) is with the hendiadys construction: “and he added and said,” meaning “and he said again, further.”

4 tn The verb קָטַר (kattar) is the Piel imperative; in Hebrew the word means “to surround” and is related to the noun for crown. But in Syriac it means “to wait.” This section of the book of Job will have a few Aramaic words.

5 tn The Hebrew text simply has “for yet for God words.”

6 tn Heb “I will carry my knowledge to-from afar.” The expression means that he will give a wide range to knowledge, that he will speak comprehensively.

7 tn This line gives the essence of all of Elihu’s speech – to give or ascribe righteousness to God against the charges of Job. D remorse translates this “I will justify my Maker,” and that it is workable if it carries the meaning of “declaring to be right.”

8 tn The object “people” is not in the Hebrew text but is implied.

9 tn The text simply repeats “mighty.”

10 sn The last two words are simply כֹּחַ לֵב (koakh lev, “strong in heart”), meaning something like “strong firm” in his decisions.

11 tn There are several problems in this verse: the repetition of “mighty,” the lack of an object for “despise,” and the meaning of “strength of heart.” Many commentators reduce the verse to a single line, reading something like “Lo, God does not reject the pure in heart” (Kissane). D remorse and Pope follow Nichols with: “Lo, God is mighty in strength, and rejects not the pure in heart.” This reading moved “mighty” to the first line and took the second to be בַּר (bar, “pure”).

12 tn Or “he does not keep the wicked alive.”

13 sn This is a similar expression to the one in Job 33:18, where the suggestion was made by many that it means crossing over the canal or river of death. Some retain the earlier interpretation of “perish by the sword” (cf. NIV).

14 tc Many commentators accept the change of “his eyes” to “his right” (reading רָאִי [rali] for רָאִו [reav]). There is no compelling reason for the change; it makes the line common-place.

15 tn Heb “them”; the referent (the righteous) has been repeated from the first part of the verse for clarity.

16 tn Heb “he seats them forever and exalts them.” The last verb can be understood as expressing a logical consequence of the preceding action (cf. GKC 328 §111.f.); “he seats them forever so that he exalts them.” Or the two verbs can be taken as an adverbial hendiadys whereby the first modifies the second adverbially: “he exalts them by seating them forever” or “when he seats them forever” (cf. GKC 326 §111.d). Some interpret this verse to say that God seats kings on the throne, making a change in subject in the middle of the verse. But it makes better sense to see the righteous as the subject matter throughout – they are not only protected, but are exalted.

17 tn D remorse thinks that the verse is still talking about kings, who may be in captivity. But this diverts attention from Elihu’s emphasis on the righteous.

18 tn The verb נָגַד (nagad) means “to declare; to tell.” Here it is clear that God is making known the sins that caused the enslavement or captivity, so “reveal” makes a good interpretive translation.

19 tn Heb “their work.”

20 tn The idiom once again is “he uncovers their ear.”

21 tn The revelation is in the preceding verse, and so a pronoun must be added to make the reference clear.

22 tn The verb דִּינוֹ (dino, “to turn; to return”) is one of the two major words in the OT for “repent” – to return from evil. Here the imperfect should be obligatory – they must do it.

23 tc Some commentators delete this last line for metrical considerations. But there is no textual evidence for the deletion; it is simply the attempt by some to make the meter rigid.

24 tn This is a similar expression to the one in Job 33:18, where the suggestion was made by many that it means crossing over the canal or river of death. Some retain the earlier interpretation of “perish by the sword” (cf. NV).

25 tn The expression “godless [or hypocrite] in heart” is an intensification of the description. It conveys that they are intentionally godless. See Matt 23:28.

26 tn Heb “they put anger.” This is usually interpreted to mean they lay up anger, or put anger in their hearts.
36:14 They die in their youth, and their life ends among the male cultic prostitutes.²
36:15 He delivers the afflicted by³ their afflictions, he reveals himself to them⁴ by their suffering.
36:16 And surely, he drew you⁵ from the mouth of distress, to a wide place, unrestricted,⁶ and to the comfort⁷ of your table filled with rich food.⁸
36:17 But now you are preoccupied with the judgment due the wicked, judgment and justice take hold of you.
36:18 Be careful that¹⁰ no one entices you with riches; do not let a large bribe¹¹ turn you aside.
36:19 Would your wealth¹² sustain you, so that you would not be in distress,¹³ even all your mighty efforts?¹⁴
36:20 Do not long for the cover of night to drag people away from their homes.¹⁵

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¹ The text expresses this with “their soul dies.”
² Heb “among the male prostitutes” who were at the temple – the “holy ones,” with “holy” being used in that sense of “separated to that form of temple service.” So uncleanness and shame are some of the connotations of the reference. Some modern translations give the general sense only: “their life ends in shame” (NRSV); “die...after wasting their lives in immoral living” (NLT).
³ The preposition (bet) in these two lines is not location but instrument, not “in” but “by means of.” The affliction and the oppression serve as a warning for sin, and therefore a means of salvation.
⁴ Heb “his.”
⁵ Heb “he uncovers their ear.”
⁶ The Hebrew verb means “to entice; to lure; to allure; to seduce.”
⁷ Heb “to descend.” But his conclusion is that it is a dittography after “under it.” (p. 545).
⁸ Normally “tested” would be the translation for the Niphal of נקחת (nakhat). Although the Qal is employed here, the context favors “tested” rather than “chose.”
⁹ The word actually means “to spread,” but with light it is by these that he judges, the thunderings of his pavilion.
¹⁰ The first expression is idiomatic: the text says, “be careful that you extol” serving as an object of the verb.
¹¹ The last part has the verbal construction, “and we do not know.” This clause is to be used adverbially: “beyond our knowledge!”
¹² The word is “light,” but taken to mean “lightning.”
¹³ The form in the MT is “your cry (for help).” See J. E. Hartley (Job (NICOT), 472-73) and E. Dhorme (Job, 547-48) on the difficulties.
¹⁴ Heb “his.”
¹⁵ The word means “to entice; to lure; to allure; to seduce.”
¹⁶ Heb “sustain you.”
¹⁷ The word נמר (moreh) is the Hiphil participle from ירתח (yaruh). It is related to the noun ירחת (yaruh, “what is taught”), “the law.”
¹⁸ The expression is “that you extol,” serving as an object of the verb.
¹⁹ The last part has the verbal construction, “and we do not know.” This clause is to be used adverbially: “beyond our understanding.”
²⁰ The verb means “to filter; to refine.”
²¹ The word is “light,” but taken to mean “lightning.” Theodotion had “mist” here, and so most commentators follow that because it is more appropriate to the verb and the context.
²² “belonging to you,” meaning “your people.” This reads: “Oppress not them that belong not to you, that your kinsmen may mount up in their place.”
²³ Heb “his.”
²⁴ The form in the MT is “your cry (for help).” See J. E. Hartley (Job (NICOT), 472-73) and E. Dhorme (Job, 547-48) on the difficulties.
²⁵ The text expresses this with “their soul dies.” This reads: “Oppress not them that belong not to you, that your kinsmen may mount up in their place.”
²⁶ Normally “tested” would be the translation for the Niphal of נקחת (nakhat). Although the Qal is employed here, the context favors “tested” rather than “chose.”
²⁷ The word נמר (moreh) is the Hiphil participle from ירתח (yaruh). It is related to the noun ירחת (yaruh, “what is taught”), “the law.”
²⁸ The expression is “that you extol,” serving as an object of the verb.
²⁹ The last part has the verbal construction, “and we do not know.” This clause is to be used adverbially: “beyond our understanding.”
³⁰ The verb means “to filter; to refine,” and so a plural subject with the drops of water as the subject will not work. So many read the singular, “he distills.”
³¹ This word יָצַך (ed) occurs also in Gen 2:6. The suggestion has been that instead of a mist it represents an underground watercourse that wells up to water the ground.
³² Heb “his booth.”
³³ The word actually means “to spread,” but with lightning as the object, “to scatter” appears to fit the context better.
³⁴ The word is “light,” but taken to mean “lightning.” Theodotion had “mist” here, and so most commentators follow that because it is more appropriate to the verb and the context.
³⁵ Heb “roots.”
³⁶ The verb יזד (yadin, “he judges”), Houbigant proposed יזרע (yaruh, “he nourishes”). This has found wide acceptance among commentators (cf. NAB). G. R. Driver retained the MT but gave a meaning “enriches” to the verb (“Problems in the Hebrew text of Job,” VTSup 3 [1955]: 88ff.).
36:32 With his hands he covers the lightning, and directs it against its target.

36:33 His thunder announces the coming storm, the cattle also, concerning the storm’s approach.

37:1 At this also my heart pounds and leaps from its place.

37:2 Listen carefully to the thunder of his voice, to the rumbling that proceeds from his mouth.

37:3 Under the whole heaven he lets it go, even his lightning to the far corners of the earth.

37:4 After that a voice roars; he thunders with an exalted voice, and he does not hold back his lightning bolts when his voice is heard.

37:5 God thunders with his voice in marvelous ways; he does great things beyond our understanding.

37:6 For to the snow he says, ‘Fall to earth,’ and to the torrential rains, ‘Pour down.’

1 tn R. Gordis (Job, 4:22) prefers to link this word with the later Hebrew word for ‘arch’ not ‘hands.’

2 tn Because the image might mean that God grabs the lightning and hurls it like a javelin (cf. NLT), some commentators want to change ‘covers’ to other verbs. Dhomé has ‘lifts’ (סער; [issa]) for שלע (kissah). This fits the idea of God directing the lightning bolts.

3 tn Peake knew of over thirty interpretations for this verse. The MT literally says, ‘He declares his purpose [or his shout] against iniquity.’ Gordis translates it: ‘His thunderlap proclaims his presence, and the storm his mighty wrath.’ Many more could be added to the list.

4 tn The imperative is followed by the infinitive absolute from the same root to express the intensity of the verb.

5 tn The word is the usual word for ‘to meditate; to murmur; to groan;’ here it refers to the low building of the thunder as it rumbles in the sky. The thunder is the voice of God (see Ps 68:8).

6 tn Heb ‘wings,’ and then figuratively for the extremities of garments, of land, etc.

7 tn The verb simply has the pronominal suffix, ‘them.’ The idea must be that when God brings in all the thunderings he does not hold back his lightning bolts either.

8 tn The form is the Niphal participle, ‘wonders,’ from the verb פלא (pala; ‘to be wonderful; to be extraordinary’). Some commentators suppress the repeated verb ‘thunders,’ and supply other verbs like ‘shows’ or ‘works,’ enabling them to make ‘wonders’ the object of the verb rather than leaving it in an adverbial role. But as H. H. Rowley (Job [NCBC], 236) notes, no change is needed, for one is not surprised to find repetition in Eliphaz’s words.

9 tn Heb ‘and we do not know.’

10 tn The verb actually means ‘be’ (found here in the Aramaic form). The verb ‘to be’ can mean ‘to happen, to fall, to come about.’

11 tn Heb ‘and [to the] shower of rain and shower of rains, be strong.’ Many think the repetition grew up by variant readings: several Hebrews delete the second pair, and so many editors do. But the repetition may have served to stress the idea that the rains were heavy.

12 tn R. Gordis, 429) suggests man is the subject – let him find what it is for, i.e., the fate appropriate for him. Others emended the text to get ‘hail’ (NAB) or ‘lightning,’ or even ‘the Creator.’ For these, see the various commentaries. There is no reason to change the reading of the MT when it makes perfectly good sense.

13 tn The words ‘the clouds’ are supplied from v. 11; the sentence itself actually starts: ‘and it goes round,’ referring to the cloud.

14 tn Heb ‘that it may do.’

15 tn Heb ‘rod,’ i.e., a rod used for punishment.

16 tn This is interpretive: Heb ‘he makes find it.’ The lightning could be what is intended here, for it finds its mark. But R. Gordis (Job, 4:29) suggests man is the subject – let him find what it is for, i.e., the fate appropriate for him.

17 tn The verb is ניס (bassum, from נשים [sim, ‘set’]), so the idea is how God lays [or sets] [a command] for them. The suffix is proleptic, to be clarified in the second colon.

18 tn D. W. Thomas suggested a meaning of ‘rest’ for the verb, based on Arabic. He then reads אךנה (enasha) for man, and supplies a ר (mem) to ‘his work’ to get ‘that every man might rest from his work [in the fields].’

19 tn The ‘driving winds’ reflects the Hebrew ‘from the scatterers.’ This refers to the north winds that bring the cold air and the ice and snow and hard rains.

20 tn The word ‘moisture’ is drawn from יר (nir) as a contraction for יר (nir). Others emended the text to get ‘hail’ (NAB) or ‘lightning,’ or even ‘the Creator.’ For these, see the various commentaries. There is no reason to change the reading of the MT when it makes perfectly good sense.

21 tn This is interpretive; Heb ‘he makes find it.’ The lightning could be what is intended here, for it finds its mark. But R. Gordis (Job, 4:29) suggests man is the subject – let him find what it is for, i.e., the fate appropriate for him.

22 tn The verb is ניס (bassum, from נשים [sim, ‘set’]), so the idea is how God lays [or sets] [a command] for them. The suffix is proleptic, to be clarified in the second colon.

23 tn Dhomé reads this ‘and how his stormcloud makes lightning to flash forth?’

24 tn As indicated by HALOT 618 s.v. נפיל, the concept of ‘balancing’ probably refers to ‘floating’ or ‘suspension’ (cf. NIV’s ‘how the clouds hang poised’ and J. E. Hartley, Job [NLCOT], 481-82, n. 2).
of the clouds, that wondrous activity of him who is perfect in knowledge?

37:17 You, whose garments are hot when the earth is still because of the south wind,

37:18 will you, with him, spread out⁸ the clouds, solid as a mirror of molten metal?

37:19 Tell us what we should⁹ say to him. We cannot prepare a case because of the darkness.

37:20 Should he be informed that I want⁴ to speak? If a man speaks, surely he would be swallowed up!

37:21 But now, the sun⁵ cannot be looked at⁶ – it is bright in the skies – after a wind passed and swept the clouds away.

37:22 From the north he comes in golden splendor⁹ around God is awesome majesty.

37:23 As for the Almighty,⁹ we cannot attain to him! He is great in power, but justice¹⁰ and abundant righteousness he does not oppress.

37:24 Therefore people fear him, for he does not regard all the wise in heart.”¹¹

VI. The Divine Speeches (38:1–42:6)

The Lord’s First Speech

38:1 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind: ⁴³

38:2 “Who is this⁴⁴ who darkens counsel with words without knowledge?

38:3 Get ready for a difficult task like a man;

I will question you and you will inform me!

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⁹ tn The name “Almighty” is here a casus pendens, isolating the name at the front of the sentence and resuming it with a pronoun.

¹⁰ tn The MT places the major disjunctive accent (the atnach) under “power,” indicating that “and justice” as a disjunctive clause starting the second half of the verse (with ESV, NASB, NIV, NLT). Ignoring the Masoretic accent, NRSV has “he is great in power and justice.”

¹¹ sn The phrase “wise of heart” was used in Job 9:4 in a negative sense.

¹² sn This is the culmination of it all, the revelation of the Lord to Job. Most interpreters see here the style and content of the author of the book, a return to the beginning of the book. Here the Lord speaks to Job and displays his sovereign power and glory. Job has lived through the suffering – without cursing God. He has held to his integrity, and nowhere regretted it. But he was unaware of the real reason for the suffering, and will remain unaware throughout these speeches. God intervenes to resolve the spiritual issues that surfaced. Job was not punished for sin. And Job’s suffering had not cut him off from God. In the end the point is that Job cannot have the knowledge to make the assessments he made. It is wiser to bow in submission and adoration of God than to try to judge him. The first speech of God has these sections: the challenge (38:1–3), the surpassing mysteries of earth and sky beyond Job’s understanding (4:38), and the mysteries of animal and bird life that surpassed his understanding (38:39–39:30).

¹³ sn This is not the storm described by Elihu – in fact, the Lord ignores Elihu. The storm is a common accomplishment for a theophany (see Ezek 1:4; Nah 1:3; Zech 9:14).

¹⁴ tn The demonstrative pronoun is used here to emphasize the interrogative pronoun (see GKC 442 §136.c).

¹⁵ sn The referent of “counsel” here is not the debate between Job and the friends, but the purposes of God (see Ps 33:10; Prov 19:21; Isa 19:17). Dhorme translates it “Providence.”

¹⁶ tn Heb “Gird up your loins.” This idiom basically describes taking the hem of the long garment or robe and pulling it up between the legs and tucking it into the front of the belt, allowing easier and freer movement of the legs. “Girding the loins” meant the preparation for some difficult task (Jer 1:17), or for battle (Isa 5:27), or for running (1 Kgs 18:46). C. Gordon suggests that it includes belt-wrestling, a form of hand-to-hand mortal combat (“Belt-wrestling in the Bible World,” HUCA 23 [1950/51]: 136).
God’s questions to Job

38:4 “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you possess understanding!
38:5 Who set its measurements – if you know or who stretched a measuring line across it?
38:6 On what bases were its bases set, or who laid its cornerstone?
38:7 When the morning stars sang in chorus, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?
38:8 Who shut up the sea when it burst forth, coming out of the womb, when I made the storm clouds its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band,
38:9 when I prescribed its limits, 38:10 when I ordered it, and said, ‘This far you may go, and no farther,’ 38:11 when I said, ‘To here you may come, and no farther,’
38:12 Have you ever in your life commanded the morning, or made the dawn know its place, 38:13 that it might seize the corners of the earth, and shake the wicked out of it?
38:14 The earth takes shape like clay under a seal; its features are dyed like a garment.
38:15 Then from the wicked the light is withheld, and the arm raised in violence is broken.

1 tn The construction is the infinitive construct in a temporal clause, using the preposition and the subjective genitive suffix.
2 tn The verb is the imperative; it has no object “me” in the text.
3 tn The particle ṣ (KI) is here taken for a conditional clause, “if you know” (see GKC 498 §159.d). Others take it as “surely” with a biting irony.
4 tn For the interrogative serving as a genitive, see GKC 442 §136.b.
5 sn The world was conceived of as having bases and pillars, but these poetic descriptions should not be pressed too far (e.g., see Ps 24:2, which may be worded as much for its polemics against Canaanite mythology as anything).
6 sn The expression “morning stars” (Heb “stars of the morning”) is here placed in parallelism to the angels, “the sons of God.” It may refer to the angels under the imagery of the stars, or, as some prefer, it may poetically include all creation. There is a parallel also with the foundation of the temple which was accompanied by song (see Ezra 3:10,11). But then the account of the building of the original tabernacle was designed to mirror creation (see M. Fishbane, Biblical Text and Texture).
7 tn The construction, an adverbial clause of time, uses the infinitive from the consecutive preterite.
8 tn Heb “together.” This is Dhomre’s suggestion for expressing how they sang together.
9 tn See Job 1:6.
10 tn The MT has “and he shut up.” The Vulgate has “Who?” and so many commentaries and editions adopt this reading, if not from the Vulgate, then from the sense of the sequence in the text itself.
11 tn The line uses two expressions, first the temporal clause with מֵי (quiakh, “when it burst forth”) and then the finite verb וָשָׁם (vaise, “go out”) to mark the concomitance of the two actions.
12 tn The temporal clause here uses the infinitive from מָסַר (sim, “to place; to put; to make”). It underscores the sovereign placing of things.
13 tn This noun is found only here. The verb is in Ezek 16:4, and a related noun is in Ezek 30:21.
14 tc The MT has “and I broke,” which cannot mean “set, prescribed” or the like. The LXX and the Vulgate have such a meaning, suggesting a verb μετράω (ishayth, “plan, prescribe”). A. Guillaume finds an Arabic word with a meaning “measured it by span by my decree.” Would God give himself a decree? R. Gordis simply argues that the basic meaning “break” develops the connotation of “decide, determine” (2 Sam 5:24; Job 14:3; Dan 11:36).
15 sn The verb is the Piel of יֵצֵא (yitsabba, “to place; to put; to make”). It underscores the sovereign control of “me.”
16 tn The imperfect verb receives the permission nuance here.
17 tn The text has הֵצֵא (tosif, “and you may not add”), which is often used idiomatically (as in verbal hendiadys constructions).
18 tn The MT literally says, “here he will put on the pride of your waves.” The verb has no expressed subject and so is made a passive voice. The particle לָכוּ (lehu), “withheld,” “halted; stopped” all serve to paraphrase such an expression. The LXX has “broken” at this point, suggesting the verse perhaps might have been confused – but “breaking the pride” of the waves would mean controlling them. Some commentators have followed this, exchanging the verb in v. 11 with this one.
19 tn The Hebrew idiom is “have you from your days?” It means “never in your life” (see 1 Sam 25:28; 1 Kgs 1:6).
20 tn The verb is the Piel of יֵצֵא (yitsabba, “to know”) with a double accusative.
21 sn The poetic image is that darkness or night is like a blanket that covers the earth, and at dawn it is taken by the edges and shaken out. Since the wicked function under the cover of night, they are included in the shaking when the dawn comes up.
22 sn The verse needs to be understood in the context: as the light shines in the dawn, the features of the earth take on a recognizable shape or form. The language is phenomenological.
23 tn Heb “they”; the referent (the objects or features on the earth) has been specified in the translation for clarity.
24 tc The MT reads “they stand up like a garment” (NASB, NIV) or “its features stand out like a garment” (ESV). The reference could be either to embroidered decoration on a garment or to the folds of a garment (REB: “until all things stand out like the folds of a cloak”); cf. J. E. Hartley, Job [NICOT], 497, “the early light of the earth appears as a beautiful garment, exquisite in design and glorious in color”). Since this is thought to be an odd statement, some suggest with Ehrlich that the text be changed to נָעַה (nawah), “is dyed [like a garment]”). This reference would be to the colors appearing on the earth’s surface under daylight. The present translation follows the emendation.
25 sn The Hebrew phrase “the raised arm.” The words “in violence” are not in the Hebrew text, but are supplied in the translation to clarify the metaphor.
26 sn What is active at night, the violence symbolized by the raised arm, is broken with the dawn. G. R. Driver thought the whole verse referred to stars, and that the arm is the navigator’s term for the line of stars (“Two astronomical passages in
38:16 Have you gone to the springs that fill the sea,\(^1\) or walked about in the recesses of the deep?

38:17 Have you seen the gates of deepest darkness?

38:18 Have you considered the vast expanses of the earth?

Tell me, if you know it all!

38:19 "In what direction\(^4\) does light reside, and darkness, where is its place, and the number of your days is great!"

38:20 Have you entered the storehouse\(^7\) of the snow, or seen the armory\(^8\) of the hail, which I reserve for the time of trouble, for the day of war and battle?\(^9\)

38:21 You know, for you were born before them;\(^6\) and the gates of death been revealed to you?\(^2\)

38:22 Have you considered the vast expanses of the earth?

38:24 In what direction is lightning\(^10\) dispersed, or the east winds scattered over the earth?

38:25 Who carves out a channel for the heavy rains, and a path for the rumble of thunder, to cause it to rain on an uninhabited land,\(^11\) a desert where there are no human beings,\(^12\) to satisfy a devastated and desolate land, and to cause it to sprout with vegetation?\(^13\)

38:28 Does the rain have a father, or who has fathered the drops of the dew?

38:29 From whose womb does the ice emerge, and the frost from the sky,\(^14\) who gives birth to it,

38:30 when the waters become hard\(^15\) like stone, when the surface of the deep is frozen solid?

38:31 Can you tie the bands\(^16\) of the Pleiades, or release the cords of Orion?

38:32 Can you lead out the constellations\(^17\) in their seasons, or guide the Bear with its cubs?

38:33 Do you know the laws of the heavens, or can you set up their rule over the earth?

38:34 Can you raise your voice to the clouds so that a flood of water covers you?\(^19\)

38:35 Can you send out lightning bolts, and they go? Will they say to you, ‘Here we are’?\(^20\)

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\(^1\) In Heb “the springs of the sea.” The words “that fill” are supplied in the translation to clarify the meaning of the phrase.

\(^2\) In Heb “uncovered to you.”

\(^3\) Some still retain the traditional phrase “shadow of death” in the English translation (cf. NIV). The reference is to the entrance to Sheol (see Job 10:21).

\(^4\) The interrogative with derekh\(^*\) (derakh) means “in what road” or “in what direction.”

\(^5\) The suffixes are singular (“that you may take it to its border...to its home”), referring to either the light or the darkness. Because either is referred to, the translation has employed plurals, since singulars would imply that only the second item, “darkness,” was the referent. Plurals are also employed by NAB and NIV.

\(^6\) The imperfect verb after the adverb az\(^*\) (az), “then”) function as a preterite: “you were born.” The line is sarcastic.

\(^7\) Snow and ice are thought of as being in store, brought out by God for specific purposes, such as times of battle (see Josh 10:11; Exod 9:2ff.; Isa 28:17; Isa 30:30; and Ps 18:12 [13]).

\(^8\) The same Hebrew term (otsar, ‘otsar), has been transliterated “storehouse” in the first line and “armory” in the second. This has been done for stylistic variation, but also because “hail,” as one of God’s “weapons” (cf. the following verse) suggests military imagery; in this context the word refers to God’s “ammunition dump” where he stockpiles hail.

\(^9\) The terms translated war and battle are different Hebrew words, but both may be translated “war” or “battle” depending on the context.

\(^10\) Because the parallel with “light” and “east wind” is not tight, Hoffmann proposed “ed instead, “mist.” This has been adopted by many. G. R. Driver suggests “parching heat” (“Problems in the Hebrew text of Job,” VTSup 3 [1955]: 91-92).

\(^11\) In Heb “on a land, no man.”

\(^12\) In Heb “a desert, no man in it.”

\(^13\) In Heb “to cause to sprout a source of vegetation.” The word mosis\(^*\) (motos) is rendered “mine” in Job 28:1. The suggestion with the least changes is Wright’s: mosis (moses, “thirsty”). But others choose mishoom (mishoom, “from the steppe”).

\(^14\) Or “heavens.” The Hebrew term shamayim (shamayim) may be translated “heaven(s)” or “sky” depending on the context.

\(^15\) Several suggest that the verb is not from mishoom (khava, “to hide”) but from a homonym; “to congeal.” This may be too difficult to support, however.

\(^16\) This word is found here and in 1 Sam 15:32. Dhor me suggests, with others, that there has been a metathesis (a reversal of consonants), and it is the same word found in Job 31:36 (“bind”). G. R. Driver takes it as “cluster” without changing the text (“Two astronomical passages in the Old Testament,” JTS 7 [1956]: 3).

\(^17\) The word mazzarot (mazzarot) is taken by some to refer to the constellations (see 2 Kgs 23:5), and by others as connected to the word for “crown,” and so “corona.”

\(^18\) See Jb 9:13.

\(^19\) The LXX has “answer you,” and some editors have adopted this. However, the reading of the MT makes better sense in the verse.

\(^20\) This verse is difficult because of the two words, heseh, rendered here “heart” and sekhvi, here “mind.” They have been translated a number of ways: “meteor” and “celestial appearance”; the stars “Procyon” and “Sirius” “inward part” and “mind”; even as birds, “bit” and “cock.” One expects them to have something to do with nature—clouds and the like. The RSV accordingly took them to mean “me-
or has imparted understanding to the mind? 38:37 Who by wisdom can count the clouds, and who can tip over the waters of heaven, 38:38 when the dust hardens into a mass, and the clumps of earth stick together?

38:39 “Do you hunt prey for the lioness, and satisfy the appetites of the lions, 38:40 when they crouch in their dens, when they wait in ambush in the thickets? 38:41 Who prepares prey for the raven, when its young cry out to God and wander about for lack of food?

39:1 “Are you acquainted with the way the mountain goats give birth? Do you watch as the wild deer give birth to their young? 39:2 Do you count the months they must fulfill, and do you know the time they give birth? 39:3 They crouch, they bear their young, they bring forth the offspring they have carried.

39:4 Their young grow strong, and grow up in the open, they go off, and do not return to them. 39:5 Who let the wild donkey go free? Who released the bonds of the donkey, and who by wisdom imparted its understanding?

39:6 to whom I appointed the steppe for its home, the salt wastes as its dwelling place?

39:7 It scorns the tumult in the town; it does not hear the shouts of a driver. 39:8 It ranges the hills as its pasture, and searches after every green plant.

39:9 Is the wild ox willing to be your servant? Will it spend the night at your feeding trough? 39:10 Can you bind the wild ox to a furrow with its rope, will it till the valleys, following after you? 39:11 Will you rely on it because its strength is great? Will you commit your labor to it? 39:12 Can you count on it to bring in your grain, and gather the grain to your threshing floor? 39:13 Or “ibex.” 20:21

The word means “to flow” or “to cast” (as in casting metals). So the noun developed the sense of “hard,” as in the giving birth of.”

The word means “to cause to lie down.”

The word actually means “to cause to lie down.”

The idea is that of the open countryside. The Aramaicism is found only here.
39:14 For she leaves her eggs on the ground, and lets them be warmed on the soil. 39:15 She forgets that a foot might crush them, or that a wild animal might trample them. 39:16 She is harsh with her young, as if they were not hers; she is unconcerned about the uselessness of her labor. 39:17 For God deprived her of wisdom, and did not impart understanding to her. 39:18 But as soon as she springs up, she laughs at the horse and its rider.

39:19 “Do you give the horse its strength? Do you clothe its neck with a mane? Do you make it leap like a locust? Its proud neighing is terrifying! 39:20 It paws the ground in the valley, exulting mightily, it goes out to meet the weapons. 39:22 It laughs at fear and is not dismayed;

 Job’s Reply to God’s Challenge

40:1 Then the Lord answered Job: 40:2 “Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him?”

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11 tn This may be the scimitar (see G. Molin, “What is a kidney?” JJS 1 [1956]: 334-37).
12 tn “Swallow the ground” is a metaphor for the horse’s running. Gray renders the line: “quivering and excited he dashes into the fray.”
13 The use of עָרָן (‘aran) in the Hiphil in this place is unique. Such a form would normally mean “to believe.” But its basic etymological meaning comes through here. The verb means “to be firm; to be reliable; to be dependable.” The causative here would mean “to make firm” or “to stand firm.”
14 tn This word occurs only here. It is connected to “pinions” in v. 13. Dhorme suggests “clad with feathers,” but the line suggests more the use of the wings.
15 tn Heb “your mouth.”
16 tn Heb “upon the tooth of a rock.”
17 tn The word could be taken as the predicate, but because of the conjunction it seems to be adding another description of the place of its nest.
18 tn The word means “search,” but can be used for a wide range of matters, including spying.
19 tn Heb “food.”
20 tn The word חֲלָלִים (khalalim) designates someone who is fatally wounded, literally the “pierced one,” meaning anyone or thing that dies a violent death.
21 tn The form רֹב (rov) is the infinitive absolute from the verb רָב (riv, “contend”). Dhorme wishes to repoint it to make it the active participle, the “one who argues with the Almighty.”
22 tn The verb יָסֻר (yissur) is found only here, but comes from a common root meaning “to correct; to reprove.” Several suggestions have been made to improve on the MT. Dhorme read it יָסֵר (yaser) in the sense of “to turn aside; to yield.” Erich read this emendation as “to come to an end.” But the MT could be read as “to correct; to instruct.”
Let the person who accuses God give him an answer!"

40:3 Then Job answered the Lord:
40:4 "Indeed, I am completely unworthy1 – how could I reply to you? I put2 my hand over my mouth to silence myself.3
40:5 I have spoken once, but I cannot answer; twice, but I will say no more."4

The Lord’s Second Speech5

40:6 Then the Lord answered Job from the whirlwind:
40:7 "Get ready for a difficult task6 like a man.
I will question you and you will inform me!
40:8 Would you indeed annul7 my justice? Would you declare me guilty so that you might be right?
40:9 Do you have an arm as powerful as God’s,8 and can you thunder with a voice like his?
40:10 Adorn yourself, then, with majesty and excellency, and clothe yourself with glory and honor!
40:11 Scatter abroad9 the abundance10 of your anger.
Look at every proud man11 and bring him low;
40:12 Look at every proud man and abuse him;
crush the wicked on the spot!12
40:13 Hide them in the dust13 together, imprison14 them15 in the grave.16
40:14 Then I myself will acknowledge22 to you that your own right hand can save you.18

The Description of Behemoth19

40:15 “Look now at Behemoth,20 which I made as21 I made you; it eats grass like the ox.
40:16 Look22 at its strength in its loins, and its power in the muscles of its belly.
40:17 It makes its tail stiff23 like a cedar, the sinews of its thighs are tightly wound.
40:18 Its bones are tubes of bronze, its limbs like bars of iron.

1 tn The word קַלֹּתִי (qalloti) means “to be light; to be of small account; to be unimportant.” From this comes the meaning “contemptible,” which in the causative stem would mean “to treat with contempt; to curse.” Dhomé tries to make the sentence a conditional clause and suggests this meaning: “If I have been thoughtless.” There is really no “if” in Job’s mind.
2 tn The perfect verb here should be classified as an instantaneous perfect; the action is simultaneous with the words.
3 tn The words “to silence myself” are supplied in the translation for clarity.
4 tn Heb “I will not add.”
5 sn The speech can be divided into three parts: the invitation to Job to assume the throne and rule the world (40:7-14), the description of Leviathan (40:15-24), and the description of Leviathan (41:1-34).
6 tn See note on “task” in 38:3.
7 tn The verb צָרַר (parar) means “to annul; to break; to frustrate.” It was one thing for Job to claim his own integrity, but it was another matter altogether to nullify God’s righteousness in the process.
8 tn Heb “do you have an arm like God?” The words “as powerful as” have been supplied in the translation to clarify the metaphor.
9 tn The verb was used for scattering lightning (Job 37:11). God is challenging Job to unleash his power and judge wickedness in the world.
10 tn Heb “the overflows.”
11 tn The word was just used in the positive sense of excellence or majesty; now the exalted nature of the person refers to self-exaltation, or pride.
12 tn The expression translated “on the spot” is the prepositional phrase περὶ τοῦ (peirí tou, “under them”). “Under them” means in their place. But it can also mean “where someone stands, on the spot” (see Exod 16:29; Jos 6:5; Judg 7:21, etc.).
13 tn The word “dust” can mean “ground” here, or more likely, “grave.”
14 tn The verb קָסַר (khasar) means “to bind.” In Arabic the word means “to bind” in the sense of “to imprison,” and that fits here.
15 tn Heb “their faces.”
16 tn The word is “secret place,” the place where he is to hide them, i.e., the grave. The text uses the word “secret place” as a metonymy for the grave.
17 tn The verb is usually translated “praise,” but with the sense of a public declaration or acknowledgment. It is from יָדָה (yadah, in the Hiphil, as here, “give thanks, laud”).
18 tn The imperfect verb has the nuance of potential imperfect: “can save; is able to save.”
19 sn The next ten verses are devoted to a portrayal of Behemoth (the name means “beast” in Hebrew). It does not fit any of the present material very well, and so many think the section is a later addition. Its style is more like that of a textbook. Moreover, if the animal is a real animal (the usual suggestion is the hippopotamus), then the location of such an animal is Egypt and not Palestine. Some have identified these creatures Behemoth and Leviathan as mythological creatures (Gunkel, Pope). Others point out that these creatures could have been dinosaurs (P. J. Maarten, NIDOTTE, 2:780; H. M. Morris, The Remarkable Record of Job, 115-22). Most would say they are real animals, but probably mythologized by the pagans. So the pagan reader would receive an additional impact from this point about God’s sovereignty over all nature.
20 sn By form the word is the feminine plural of the Hebrew word for “beast.” Here it is an abstract word – a title.
21 tn Heb “with you.” The meaning could be temporal (“when I made you”) – perhaps a reference to the sixth day of creation (Gen 1:24).
22 tn In both of these verses קִנָּה (kinah, “behold”) has the deictic force (the word is from Greek δείκνυμι, deiknumi, “to show”). It calls attention to something by pointing it out. The expression goes with the sudden look, the raised eye, the pointing hand – “O look!”
23 tn The verb קָסַר (khasar) occurs only here. It may have the meaning “to make stiff; to make taut” (Arabic). The LXX and the Syriac versions support this with “erects.” But there is another Arabic word that could be cognate, meaning “arch, bend.” This would give the idea of the tail swaying. The other reading seems to make better sense here. However, “stiff” presents a serious problem with the view that the animal is the hippopotamus.
The Description of Leviathan

41:1 (40:25) “Can you pull in Leviathan
with a hook,
and tie down its tongue with a rope?
41:2 Can you put a cord through its nose, or pierce its jaw with a hook?

41:3 Will it make numerous supplications to you, will it speak to you with tender words?
41:4 Will it make a pact with you, so you could take it as your slave for life?
41:5 Can you play with it, like a bird, or tie it on a leash for your girls?
41:6 Will partners bargain for it? Will they divide it up among the merchants?
41:7 Can you fill its hide with harpoons or its head with fishing spears?
41:8 If you lay your hand on it, you will remember the fight, and you will never do it again!
41:9 (41:1) See, his expectation is wrong; he is laid low even at the sight of it.

1 tn Heb “the ways of God.”
2 sn This may be a reference to Gen 1:24, where the first of the animal creation was the cattle – בִּפְלֵמוּא (b’phlemu).
3 tn The literal reading of the MT is “let the one who made him draw near [with] his sword.” The sword is apparently a reference to the teeth or tusks of the animal, which cut vegetation like a sword. But the idea of a weapon is easier to see, and so the people who favor the mythological background see here a reference to God’s slaying the Beast. There are again many suggestions on how to read the line. The RV probably has the safest: “He that made him has furnished him with his sword.” The sword is apparently a reference to the teeth or tusks of the animal, which cut vegetables, shade.
4 tn The suffix is singular, but must refer to the trees’ shade.
5 tn The word כָּרַה (karah) probably refers to food. Many take it as an abbreviated form of כָּרָה (k’rah, “produce of the field”). The vegetation that is produced on the low hills is what is meant.
6 tn Or “he remains calm.”
7 tn The idea would be either (1) catch it while it is watching, or (2) in some way disabling its eyes before the attack. But others change the reading: Ball suggested “with hooks,” and this has been adopted by some modern English versions (e.g., NRSV).
8 tn In Ehrlrich altered the MT slightly to get “with thorns,” a suggestion he thought he was sufficient to confront Leviathan soon finds his hope – his expectation – false (a derivative from the verb צָחַב [kazab, “lie”] is used for a mirage).
9 tn There is an interrogative particle in this line, which most commentators ignore. But others freely emend the MT. Gunkel, following the mythological approach, has “his appearance casts down even a god.” Cheyne likewise has: “even divine beings the fear of him brings low” (JQR 9 [1896:97]: 579). Pope has, “Were not the gods cast down at the sight of him?” There is no need to bring in this mythological element.
41:10 Is it not fierce when it is awakened? Who is he, then, who can stand before it?  
41:11 (Who has confronted me that I should repay?):  
Everything under heaven belongs to me!  
41:12 I will not keep silent about its limbs, and the extent of its might, and the grace of its arrangement.  
41:13 Who can uncover its outer covering?  
Who can penetrate to the inside of its armor?  
41:14 Who can open the doors of its mouth?  
Its teeth all around are fearsome.  
41:15 Its back has rows of shields, shut up closely together as with a seal;  
41:16 each one is so close to the next that no air can come between them.  
41:17 They lock tightly together, one to the next;  
they cling together and cannot be separated.

41:18 Its snorting throws out flashes of light;  
its eyes are like the red glow of dawn.  
41:19 Out of its mouth go flames, sparks of fire shoot forth!  
41:20 Smoke streams from its nostrils as from a boiling pot over burning rushes.  
41:21 Its breath sets coals ablaze and a flame shoots from its mouth.  
41:22 Strength lodges in its neck, and despair runs before it.  
41:23 The folds of its flesh are tightly joined;  
they are firm on it, immovable.  
41:24 Its heart is hard as rock, hard as a lower millstone.  
41:25 When it rises up, the mighty are terrified, at its thrashing about they withdraw.  
41:26 Whoever strikes it with a sword will have no effect, nor with the spear, arrow, or dart.  
41:27 It regards iron as straw and bronze as rotten wood.

1 sn The description is of the animal, not the hunter (or fisherman). Leviathan is so fierce that no one can take him on alone.  
2 tc MT has “before me” and can best be rendered as “Who then is he that can stand before me?” (ESV, NASB, NIV, NLT, NJB). The following verse (11) favors the MT since both express the lesson to be learned from Leviathan: If a man cannot stand up to Leviathan, how can he stand up to its creator? The translation above has chosen to read the text as “before him” (cf. NRSV, NJB).  
3 tn The verb הָגָדָה (gadāh) means “to come to meet; to come before; to confront” to the face.  
4 sn The verse seems an intrusion (and so E. Dohme, H. H. Rowley, and many others change the pronouns to make it refer to the animal), but what the text is saying is that it is more dangerous to confront God than to confront this animal.  
5 tn This line also focuses on the sovereign God rather than Leviathan, H. H. Rowley, however, wants to change גַּרְבִּיךָ (‘gar bīkh, “there is no comparison”) to גָּדַדְךָ (gadādḵ, “not”) has the early parallelism: the quiet face of his garment, referring to the outer garment or covering. Some take it to be the front as opposed to the back.  
6 tc MT has גַּוּוֹ (gavvo, “his pride”), but the LXX, Aquila, and the Vulgate all read גַּו (gavo, “his back”). Almost all modern English versions follow the variant reading, speaking about “his [or its] back.”  
7 tn Heb “the face of his garment,” referring to the outer garment or covering. Some take it to be the front as opposed to the back.  
8 tc The word הָגָדָה (gadāh) has often been rendered “bride” (cf. ESV), but that leaves a number of unanswered questions. The LXX reads γαῖαν (gaĭan), with the transposition of letters, but that is not usual for a coat of armor. If the metathesis stands, there is also support from the cognate Akkadian.
9 “not”) has a better parallelism: “the face of his garment,” referring to the outer garment or covering. Some take it to be the front as opposed to the back.
10 tc The MT has גַּו (gavvo, “his pride”), but the LXX, Aquila, and the Vulgate all read גַּו (gavo, “his back”). Almost all modern English versions follow the variant reading, speaking about “his [or its] back.”  
11 Instead of גַּו (gavo, “his pride”), the LXX has גַּו (gavo, “stone”), to say that the seal was rock hard.  
12 tn Heb “a man with his brother.”  
13 “not”) has a better parallelism: “the face of his garment,” referring to the outer garment or covering. Some take it to be the front as opposed to the back.
14 tn Heb “the eyelids,” but it represents the early beams of the dawn as the cover of night lifts.
15 sn For the animal, the image is that of pent-up breath with water in a hot steam jet coming from its mouth, like a stream of fire in the rays of the sun. The language is hyperbolic, probably to reflect the pagan ideas of the dragon of the deep in a polemical way—they feared it as a fire breathing monster, but in reality it might have been a steamy crocodile.  
16 tn The word “burning” is supplied. The Syriac and Vulgate have “a seething and boiling pot” (reading בָּשָׂא [bâšâ] for בְּשָׁא [bĕšâ]). This view is widely accepted.  
17 tn This word, פְּנֵי (pĕvi) is a hapax legomenon. But the verbal root means “to languish; to pine.” A related noun talks of dejection and despair in Deut 28:65. So here “despair” as a translation is preferable to “terror.”  
18 tn Heb “fallings.”  
19 tn The last clause says “it cannot be moved.” But this part will function adverbially in the sentence.  
20 tn The description of his heart being “hard” means that he is cruel and fearless. The word for “hard” is the word וַיְהַלְכוּ (yehalḵû, “they walked”) found in Gen 15:13 is used of the Hebrews walking through the desert and is translated “they endured” or “they stood up” (NIV, NASB, ESV, NLT). Here it is rendered “they walked” (NIV, NASB) or “they endured” (ESV, NLT, NCV). In Job 38:4 MT has “they walked,” and the LXX has “they journeyed.” Almost all modern English versions have “they walked” (NIV, NASB, ESV, NLT).  
21 sn For the animal, the image is that of pent-up breath with water in a hot steam jet coming from its mouth, like a stream of fire in the rays of the sun. The language is hyperbolic, probably to reflect the pagan ideas of the dragon of the deep in a polemical way—they feared it as a fire breathing monster, but in reality it might have been a steamy crocodile.  
22 tn This verse has created all kinds of problems for the commentators. The first part is workable: “when he raises himself up, the mighty [the gods] are terrified.” The mythological approach would render בָּשָׂא (bâšâ) as “gods.” But the last two words, which could be rendered “at the breaking [crashing, or breakers] they fail,” receive much attention. E. Dohme (Job, 639) suggests “majesty” for “raising up” and “billows” for בָּשָׂא (bâšâ), and gets a better parallelism: “the billows are afraid of his majesty, and the waves draw back.” But H. H. Rowley (Job [NCBC], 263) does not think this is relevant to the context, which is talking about the creature’s defense against attack. The RV works well for the first part, but the second part need some change; so Rowley adopts “in their dire consternation they are beside themselves.”  
23 tn This is the clearest reading, following A. B. Davidson, Job, 285. The versions took different readings of the construction.  
24 tn The verb בָּשָׂא (bâšâ) stands with בְּשָׁא (bĕšâ), “not”) has a better parallelism: “the face of his garment,” referring to the outer garment or covering. Some take it to be the front as opposed to the back.
Heb 4:9

**Job’s Confession**

4:2: Then Job answered the Lord:

4:2:2 “I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted; 4:2:3 you asked, 7

4:2:2 “Who is this who darkens counsel without knowledge?” But 8 I have declared without understanding 9 things too wonderful for me to know. 10

4:2:4 You said, 11 ‘Pay attention, and I will speak; I will question you, and you will answer me.’

4:2:5 I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye has seen you. 12

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1 tn The verb is plural, but since there is no expressed subject it is translated as a passive here.

2 tn Heb “under him.”

3 tn Here only the word “sharp” is present, but in passages like Isa 41:15 it is joined with “threshing sledge.” Here and in Amos 1:3 and Isa 28:27 the word stands alone, but represents the “sledge.”

4 sn The idea is either that the sea is stirred up like the foam from beating the ingredients together, or it is the musk-smell that is the point of comparison.

5 tn Heb “one who was made.”

6 tn The word תֶּבֶן (tekhen) is simply “but,” as in Job 31:37.

7 tn The expression “you asked” is added here to clarify the presence of the line to follow. Many commentators delete it as a gloss from Job 38:2. If it is retained, then Job has to be recalling God’s question before he answers it.

8 tn The word רָצָה (qadhah) is simply “but,” as in Job 31:37.

9 tn Heb “and I do not understand.” The expression serves here in an adverbial capacity. It also could be subordinated as a complement: “I have declared [things that] I do not understand.”

10 tn The last clause is “and I do not know.” This is also subordinated to become a dependent clause.

11 tn This phrase, “you said,” is supplied in the translation to introduce the recollection of God’s words.

12 sn This statement does not imply there was a vision. He is simply saying that this experience of God was real and personal. In the past his knowledge of God was what he had heard – hearsay. This was real.

13 tn Or “despise what I said.” There is no object on the verb; Job could be despising himself or the things he said (see L. J. Kuyper, “Repentance of Job,” VT 9 [1959]: 91-94).

14 tn Heb “the Lord.” The title has been replaced by the pronoun (“he”) in the translation for stylistic reasons.

15 tn Heb “is kindled.”

16 tn The form יָנַע (y’konah) is from יָנַע (kun, “to be firm; to be fixed; to be established”). Here it means “the right thing” or “truth.” The Akkadian word kunu (from יָנַע, kun) connotes justice and truth.

17 tn The imperatives in this verse are plural, so all three had to do this together.

18 tn The verb “pray” is the Hitpael from the root מָלֵל (malal). That root has the main idea of arbitration; so in this stem it means “to seek arbitration [for oneself],” or “to pray,” or “to intercede.”

19 tn Heb “I will lift up his face,” meaning, “I will regard him.”

20 tn This clause is a result clause, using the negated infinitive construct.

21 tn The word “folly” can also be taken in the sense of “disgrace.” If the latter is chosen, the word serves as the direct object. If the former, then it is an adverbial accusative.

22 sn The difference between what they said and what Job said, therefore, has to do with truth. Job was honest, spoke the truth, poured out his complaints, but never blasphemed God. For his words God said he told the truth. He did so with incomplete understanding, and with all the impatience and frustration one might expect. Now the friends, however, did not tell what was right about God. They were not honest; rather, they were self-righteous and condescending. They were saying what they thought should be said, but it was wrong.

23 tn The expression “had respect for Job” means God answered his prayer.
42:10 So the Lord restored what Job had lost after he prayed for his friends, and the Lord doubled all that had belonged to Job. 42:11 So they came to him, all his brothers and sisters and all who had known him before, and they dined with him in his house. They comforted him and consoled him for all the trouble the Lord had brought on him, and each one gave him a piece of silver and a gold ring.

42:12 So the Lord blessed the second part of Job’s life more than the first. He had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys. 42:13 And he also had seven sons and three daughters. 42:14 The first daughter he named Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third Keren-Happuch. 42:15 Nowhere in all the land could women be found who were as beautiful as Job’s daughters, and their father granted them an inheritance alongside their brothers.

42:16 After this Job lived 140 years; he saw his children and their children to the fourth generation. 42:17 And so Job died, old and full of days.