

Job

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

*Job's Good Life*¹

1:1² There was a man³ in the land of Uz⁴

¹ sn See N. C. Habel, "The Narrative Art of Job," *JSOT* 27 (1983): 101-11; J. J. Owens, "Prologue and Epilogue," *Rev-Exp* 68 (1971): 457-67; and R. Polzin, "The Framework of the Book of Job," *Int* 31 (1974): 182-200.

² sn The book of Job is one of the major books of wisdom literature in the Bible. But it is a different kind of wisdom. Whereas the book of Proverbs is a collection of the short wisdom sayings, Job is a thorough analysis of the relationship between suffering and divine justice put in a dramatic poetic form. There are a number of treatises on this subject in the ancient Near East, but none of them are as thorough and masterful as Job. See J. Gray, "The Book of Job in the Context of Near Eastern Literature," *ZAW* 82 (1970): 251-69; S. N. Kramer, "Man and His God, A Sumerian Variation on the 'Job' Motif," *VT* 3 (1953): 170-82. While the book has fascinated readers for ages, it is a difficult book, difficult to translate and difficult to study. Most of it is written in poetic parallelism. But it is often very cryptic, it is written with unusual grammatical constructions, and it makes use of a large number of very rare words. All this has led some scholars to question if it was originally written in Hebrew or some other related Semitic dialect or language first. There is no indication of who the author was. It is even possible that the work may have been refined over the years, but there is no evidence for this either. The book uses a variety of genres (laments, hymns, proverbs, and oracles) in the various speeches of the participants. This all adds to the richness of the material. And while it is a poetic drama using cycles of speeches, there is no reason to doubt that the events represented here do not go back to a real situation and preserve the various arguments. Several indications in the book would place Job's dates in the time of the patriarchs. But the composition of the book, or at least its final form, may very well come from the first millennium, maybe in the time of the flowering of wisdom literature with Solomon. We have no way of knowing when the book was written, or when its revision was completed. But dating it late in the intertestamental period is ruled out by the appearance of translations and copies of it, notably bits of a Targum of Job in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Among the general works and commentaries, see A. Hurvitz, "The Date of the Prose Tale of Job Linguistically Reconsidered," *HTR* 67 (1974): 17-34; R. H. Pfeiffer, "The Priority of Job over Isaiah 40-55," *JBL* 46 (1927): 202ff. The book presents many valuable ideas on the subject of the suffering of the righteous. Ultimately it teaches that one must submit to the wisdom of the Creator. But it also indicates that the shallow answers of Job's friends do not do justice to the issue. Their arguments that suffering is due to sin are true to a point, but they did not apply to Job. His protests sound angry and belligerent, but he held tenaciously to his integrity. His experience shows that it is possible to live a pure life and yet still suffer. He finally turns his plea to God, demanding a hearing. This he receives, of course, only to hear that God is sovereignly ruling the universe. Job can only submit to him. In the end God does not abandon his sufferer. For additional material, see G. L. Archer, *The Book of Job*; H. H. Rowley, "The Book of Job and Its Meaning," *BRL* 41 (1958/59): 167-207; J. A. Baker, *The Book of Job*; C. L. Feinberg, "The Book of Job," *BSac* 91 (1934): 78-86; R. Polzin and D. Robertson, "Studies in the Book of Job," *Semeia* 7 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977).

³ tn The Hebrew construction is literally "a man was," using *איש הָיָה* (*ish 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

whose⁵ name was Job.⁶ 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

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 Sabaeans (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 what 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 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."

⁷ tn The word *תָּם* (*tam*) has been translated "perfect" (so KJV, ASV). The verbal root *תָּמַם* (*tamam*) means "to be blameless, complete." The word is found in Gen 25:27 where it describes Jacob as "even-tempered." It also occurs in Ps 64:5 (64:4 ET) and Prov 29:10. The meaning is that a person or a thing is complete, perfect, flawless. It does not mean that he was sinless, but that he was wholeheartedly trying to please God, that he had integrity and was blameless before God.

⁸ tn The word *יָשָׁר* (*yashar*, "upright") is complementary to "blameless." The idea is "upright, just," and applies to his relationships with others (Ps 37:37 and 25:21).

⁹ 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 – he had reverential fear of the LORD, meaning he was a truly devoted worshiper who shunned evil.

¹⁰ sn The numbers used in the chapter, seven, three, and five, carry the symbolism in the Bible of perfection and completeness (see J. J. Davis, *Biblical Numerology*). Job's "seven sons" are listed first because in the East sons were considered more valuable than daughters (recall Ruth, who is "better than seven sons" [Ruth 4:15]).

¹¹ tn The verb begins the sentence: "and there were born." This use of the preterite with *vav* (ו) consecutive, especially after the verb *הָיָה* (*hayah*, "to be"), is explanatory: there was a man...and there was born to him... (IBHS 551-52 §33.2.2b).

1:3 His possessions¹ included² 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys; in addition he had a very great household.³ Thus he⁴ was the greatest of all the people in the east.⁵

1:4 Now his sons used to go⁶ and hold⁷ a feast in the house of each one in turn,⁸ and they would send and invite⁹ their three¹⁰ sisters to eat and to drink with them. 1:5 When¹¹ the days of their feasting were finished,¹² Job would send¹³ for them and sanctify¹⁴ them; he would get up early¹⁵ in the morning and offer burnt

offerings according to¹⁶ the number of them all. For Job thought, “Perhaps¹⁷ my children¹⁸ have sinned and cursed¹⁹ God in their hearts.” This was Job’s customary practice.²⁰

Satan’s Accusation of Job²¹

1:6 Now the day came when²² the sons of God²³ came to present themselves

¹ **tn** 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 **tn** Or “amounted to,” “totaled.” The preterite of הָיָה (*hayah*, “to be”) is sometimes employed to introduce a total amount or an inventory (see Exod 1:5; Num 3:43).

³ **tn** The word עֲבָדָה (*‘avuddah*, “service of household servants”) indicates that he had a very large body of servants, meaning a very large household.

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and that man.”

⁵ **tn** 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. דֹּבְרֵי says “dwellers in the east.”

⁶ **tn** The perfect verb with the *vav* (וַ) וְהָלְכוּ (*v^ohal^okhu*, “they went”) indicates their characteristic action, actions that were frequently repeated (GKC 335-36 §112.dd).

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “make a feast.”

⁸ **tn** The sense is cryptic; it literally says “house – a man – his day.” The word “house” is an adverbial accusative of place: “in the house.” “Man” is the genitive; it also has a distributive sense: “in the house of each man.” And “his day” is an adverbial accusative: “on his day.” The point is that they feasted every day of the week in rotation.

⁹ **tn** The use of קָרָא (*qara*’, “to call, invite”) followed by the ל (*lamed*) usually has the force of “to summon.” Here the meaning would not be so commanding, but would refer to an invitation (see also 1 Kgs 1:19, 25, 26).

¹⁰ **tn** Normally cardinal numerals tend to disagree in gender with the numbered noun. In v. 2 “three daughters” consists of the masculine numeral followed by the feminine noun. However, here “three sisters” consists of the feminine numeral followed by the feminine noun. The distinction appears to be that the normal disagreement between numeral and noun when the intent is merely to fix the number (3 daughters as opposed to 2 or 4 daughters). However, when a particular, previously known group is indicated, the numeral tends to agree with the noun in gender. A similar case occurs in Gen 3:13 (“three wives” of Noah’s sons).

¹¹ **tn** The verse begins with the temporal indicator “and it happened” or “and it came to pass,” which need not be translated. The particle כִּי (*ki*, “when”) with the initial verbal form indicates it is a temporal clause.

¹² **tn** The verb is the Hiphil perfect of נָקַף (*naqaf*, “go around”), here it means “to make the round” or “complete the circuit” (BDB 668-69 s.v. II נָקַף Hiphil). It indicates that when the feasting had made its circuit of the seven sons, then Job would sanctify them.

¹³ **tn** The form is a preterite with *vav* (וַ) consecutive. The same emphasis on repeated or frequent action continues here in this verse. The idea here is that Job would send for them, because the sanctification of them would have consisted of washings and changes of garments as well as the sacrifices (see Gen 35:2; 1 Sam 16:5).

¹⁴ **tn** Or “purify.”

¹⁵ **tn** The first verb could also be joined with the next to form a verbal hendiadys: “he would rise early and he would sacrifice” would then simply be “he would sacrifice early in the morning” (see M. Delcor, “Quelques cas de survivances du vocabulaire nomade en hébreu biblique,” *VT* 25 [1975]: 307-22). This section serves to explain in more detail how Job

sanctified his children.

sn 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 father.

¹⁶ **tn** The text does not have “according to”; the noun “number” is an accusative that defines the extent of his actions (GKC 373-74 §118.e, h).

¹⁷ **tn** The clause stands as an accusative to the verb, here as the direct object introduced with “perhaps” (*IBHS* 645-46 §38.8d).

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “sons,” but since the three daughters are specifically mentioned in v. 4, “children” has been used in the translation. In this patriarchal culture, however, it is possible that only the sons are in view.

¹⁹ **tn** The Hebrew verb is בָּרַךְ (*barakh*), which means “to bless.” Here is a case where the writer or a scribe has substituted the word “curse” with the word “bless” to avoid having the expression “curse God.” For similar euphemisms in the ancient world, see K. A. Kitchen, *Ancient Orient and Old Testament*, 166. It is therefore difficult to know exactly what Job feared they might have done. The opposite of “bless” would be “curse,” which normally would convey disowning or removing from blessing. Some commentators try to offer a definition of “curse” from the root in the text, and noting that “curse” is too strong, come to something like “renounce.” The idea of blaspheming is probably not meant; rather, in their festivities they may have said things that renounced God or their interest in him. Job feared this momentary turning away from God in their festivities, perhaps as they thought their good life was more important than their religion.

²⁰ **tn** The imperfect expresses continual action in past time, i.e., a customary imperfect (GKC 315 §107.e).

²¹ **sn** The text draws the curtain of heaven aside for the reader to understand the background of this drama. God extols 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.

²² **tn** The beginning Hebrew expression “and there was – the day” indicates that “there came a day when” or more simply “the day came when.” It emphasizes the particular day. The succeeding clause is then introduced with a preterite with the *vav* (וַ) consecutive (see E. Dhorme, *Job*, 5).

²³ **sn** 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). In the pagan literature, especially of Ugarit, “the sons of God” refers to the lesser gods or deities of the pantheon. See H. W. Robinson, “The Council of Yahweh,” *JTS* 45 (1943): 151-57; G. Cooke, “The Sons of (the) God(s),” *ZAW* 76 (1964): 22-47; M. Tsevat, “God and the Gods in the Assembly,” *HUCA* 40-41 (1969/70): 123-37.

before⁴ the LORD – and Satan² also arrived among them. **1:7** The LORD said to Satan, “Where have you come from?”³ And Satan answered the LORD,⁴ “From roving about⁵ on the earth, and from walking back and forth across it.”⁶ **1:8** So the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered⁷ my servant Job? There⁸ is no one like him on the earth, a pure and upright man, one who fears God and turns away⁹ from evil.”

1:9 Then Satan answered the LORD, “Is it for nothing that Job fears God?”¹⁰ **1:10** Have

you¹¹ not made a hedge¹² around him and his household and all that he has on every side? You have blessed¹³ the work of his hands, and his livestock¹⁴ have increased¹⁵ in the land. **1:11** But¹⁶ extend your hand and strike¹⁷ everything he has, and he will no doubt¹⁸ curse you¹⁹ to your face!”

1:12 So the LORD said to Satan, “All right then,²⁰ everything he has is²¹ in your power.²² Only do not extend your hand against the man himself!”²³ So Satan went out²⁴ from the presence of the LORD.²⁵

¹ **tn** The preposition על (*‘al*) 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 שׁוּב (*shut*) means “to go or rove about” (BDB 1001-2 s.v.). Here the infinitive construct serves as the object of the preposition.

⁶ **tn** The Hitpael (here also an infinitive construct after the preposition) of the verb הָלַךְ (*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-condemnation 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. שׁוּב 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.

⁸ **tn** The Hebrew conjunction כִּי (*ki*) need not be translated in this case or it might be taken as emphatic (cf. *IBHS* 665 §39.3.4e): “Certainly there is no one like him.”

⁹ **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 *asa* gnomic or characteristic present (“turns”). It modifies “man” as one who is turning from evil.

¹⁰ **tn** The Hebrew form has the interrogative הֲ (*he*) on the adverb כִּינָם (*khinnam*, “gratis”), a derivative either of the verb כָּחַן (*khanan*, “to be gracious, show favor”), or its related noun כֶּהֵן (*khen*, “grace, favor”). The adverb has the sense of “free; gratis; gratuitously; for nothing; for no reason” (see BDB 336 s.v. כָּחַן). 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.

¹¹ **tn** The use of the independent personal pronoun here emphasizes the subject of the verb: “Have you not put up a hedge.”

¹² **tn** The verb שָׁחַךְ (*sukh*) means “to hedge or fence up, about” something (BDB 962 s.v. שָׁחַךְ). The original idea seems to have been to surround with a wall of thorns for the purpose of protection (E. Dhorme, *Job*, 7). The verb is an implied comparison between making a hedge and protecting someone.

¹³ **sn** Here the verb “bless” is used in one of its very common meanings. The verb means “to enrich,” often with the sense of enabling or empowering things for growth or fruitfulness. See further C. Westermann, *Blessing in the Bible and the Life of the Church* (OBT).

¹⁴ **tn** Or “substance.” The herds of livestock may be taken by metonymy of part for whole to represent possessions or prosperity in general.

¹⁵ **tn** The verb פָּרַץ (*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).

¹⁶ **tn** The particle אֲוִיָּה (*‘ulam*, “but”) serves to restrict the clause in relation to the preceding clause (*IBHS* 671-73 §39.3.5e, n. 107).

¹⁷ **tn** The force of the imperatives in this sentence are almost conditional – if God were to do this, then surely Job would respond differently.

¹⁸ **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 denounce God.

²⁰ **tn** The particle הִנֵּה (*hinneh*, “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 hand.” 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

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 Sabeans⁵ swooped down⁶ and carried them all away, and they killed⁷ the servants with the sword!⁸ And I – only I alone⁹ – escaped to tell you!"

1:16 While this one was still speaking,¹⁰ another messenger arrived¹¹ 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 sword!¹⁶ 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 goes 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 **tn** 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 **tn** *Heb* "his"; the referent (Job) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁴ **tn** The use of the verb "to be" with the participle gives emphasis to the continuing of the action in the past (GKC 360 §116.r).

⁵ **tn** The LXX has "the spoilers spoiled them" instead of "the Sabeans swooped down." The translators might have connected the word to שָׁבָה (*shavah*, "to take captive") rather than שָׁבָא (*shava*, "Sabeans"), or they may have understood the name as general reference to all types of Bedouin invaders from southern Arabia (*HALOT* 1381 s.v. שָׁבָא 2.c).

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

⁶ **tn** The Hebrew is simply "fell" (from נָפַל, *nafal*). To "fall upon" something in war means to attack quickly and suddenly.

⁷ **sn** 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."

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "the edge/mouth of the sword"; see T. J. Meek, "Archaeology and a Point of Hebrew Syntax," *BASOR* 122 (1951): 31-33.

⁹ **tn** The pleonasm in the verse emphasize the emotional excitement of the messenger.

¹⁰ **tn** The particle עוֹד (*od*, "still") is used with the participle to express the past circumstances when something else happened (*IBHS* 625-26 §37.6d).

¹¹ **tn** The Hebrew expression is literally "yet/this/speaking/and this/ arrived." The sentence uses the two demonstratives as a contrasting pair. It means "this one was still speaking when that one arrived" (*IBHS* 308-9 §17.3c). The word "messenger" has been supplied in the translation in vv. 16, 17, and 18 for clarity and for stylistic reasons.

¹² **sn** 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 **tn** Or "from the sky." The Hebrew word שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*) may be translated "heaven[s]" or "sky" depending on the context.

¹⁴ **sn** 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 *Kaidu* who are part of the ethnic Aramaeans. The LXX simply has "horsemen."

¹⁵ **tn** 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 **tn** *Heb* "with the edge/mouth of the sword."

¹⁷ **tn** The use of the participle הִינֵה (*hinneh*, "behold") in this sentence is deictic, pointing out with excitement the events that happened as if the listener was there.

¹⁸ **sn** Both wind and lightning (v. 16) were employed by Satan as his tools. God can permit him such control over factors 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 **tn** The word מֵעֵבֶר (*me'ever*) is simply "from the direction of"; the word עֵבֶר (*ever*) indicates the area the whirlwind came across.

²⁰ **tn** The verb וַיָּקָם (*vayyaqom*, "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 **sn** It was the custom to tear the robe in a time of mourning, to indicate that the heart was torn (*Joel* 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 **sn** 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 **tn** This last verb is the Hishtaphel of the word הָרָה (*khavah*; BDB 1005 s.v. שָׁהָה); it means "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 *hishah'wah*," *VT* 29 (1979): 493-95; and J. A. Emerton, "The Etymology of *hishah'wah*," *OTS* (1977): 41-55.

1:21 He said, “Naked¹ I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will return there.² The LORD gives, and the LORD takes away.³ May the name of the LORD⁴ be blessed!” 1:22 In all this Job did not sin, nor did he charge God with moral impropriety.⁵

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.⁶ 2:2 And the LORD said to Satan, “Where do you come from?” Satan answered the LORD,⁷ “From roving about on the earth, and from walking back and forth across it.”⁸ 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 firmly⁹ to his

integrity,¹⁰ so that¹¹ you stirred me up to destroy him¹² without reason.”¹³

2:4 But¹⁴ Satan answered the LORD, “Skin for¹⁵ skin!¹⁶ Indeed, a man will give up¹⁷ all that he has to save his life!¹⁸ 2:5 But extend your hand and strike his bone and his flesh,¹⁹ and he will no doubt²⁰ curse you to your face!”

2:6 So the LORD said to Satan, “All right,²¹ he is²² in your power;²³ only preserve²⁴ his life.”

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 possessions.”

² **sn** 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 **tn** The two verbs are simple perfects. (1) They can be given the nuance of gnomic imperfect, expressing what the sovereign God always 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 תִּפְלוּהוּ (*tiflah*) means “unsavoriness” 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” (תִּפְלוּ, *tifel*, “to be tasteless”). It is possible that “folly” would capture some of what Job meant here. See also M. Dahood, “Hebrew-Ugaritic Lexicography XII,” *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 **tn** The form is the Hiphil participle, “make strong, seize, hold fast.” It is the verbal use here; joined with יָצַדְתָּ (*odennu*, “yet he”) it emphasizes that “he is still holding firmly.” The testing has simply strengthened Job in his integrity.

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

¹¹ **tn** The *vav* (ו) with the preterite is used here to express the logical conclusion or consequence of what was stated previously. God 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 **tn** 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 תָּחִינָם (*khinnam*, “gratis”) is used. It means “graciously, gratis, free, without cause, for no reason.” Here the sense has to be gratuitously, for no reason.” The point of the verb תָּחִינָם (*khanan*, “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 **tn** The form is the simply preterite with the *vav* (ו) consecutive. However, the speech of Satan is in contrast to what God said, even though in narrative sequence.

¹⁵ **tn** The preposition בְּיָדֶיךָ (*b’ad*) 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. ἐκτίψω).

¹⁸ **tn** *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 **tn** The particle הִנְנוּ (*hinno*) is literally, “here he is!” God presents Job to Satan, with the restriction on preserving Job’s life.

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

²³ **tn** *Heb* “hand.”

²⁴ **sn** The irony of the passage comes through with this choice of words. The verb שָׁמַר (*shamar*) means “to keep; to guard; to preserve.” The exceptive 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 afflicted¹ Job with a malignant ulcer² from the sole of his feet to the top of his head.³ 2:8 Job took a shard of broken pottery to scrape⁴ himself⁵ with while he was sitting⁶ among the ashes.⁷

2:9 Then⁸ his wife said to him, "Are you still holding firmly to your integrity?"⁹ Curse¹⁰

¹ tn The verb is נָכַח (*nakhah*, "struck, smote"); it can be rendered in this context as "afflicted."

² sn The general consensus is that Job was afflicted with a leprosy known as elephantiasis, named because of the rough skin and the swollen limbs are animal-like. The Hebrew word שָׁחִין (*shakhin*, "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. שָׁחִין.

³ tn Heb "crown."

⁴ 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."

⁵ 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 breath and a loathsome smell (19:17, 20). The sores bred worms; they opened and ran, and closed and tightened (16:8). He was tormented with dreams (7:14). He felt like he was choking (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.

⁶ tn The construction uses the disjunctive *vav* (ו) with the independent pronoun with the active participle. The construction connects this clause with what has just been said, making this a circumstantial clause.

⁷ sn *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."

⁸ tn The versions have some information here that is interesting, albeit fanciful. The Targum calls her "Dinah." The LXX has "when a long time had passed." But the whole rendering of the LXX is paraphrastic: "How long will you hold out, saying, 'Behold, I wait yet a little while, expecting the hope of my deliverance?' for behold, your memorial is abolished from the earth, even your sons and daughters, the pangs and pains of my womb which I bore in vain with sorrows, and you yourself sit down to spend the night in the open air among the corruption of worms, and I am a wanderer and a servant from place to place and house to house, waiting for the setting sun, that I may rest from my labors and pains that now beset me, but say some word against the Lord and die."

⁹ sn 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 Elihu in 32:2 where he charged Job with justifying himself rather than God.

¹⁰ tn The verb is literally בָּרַךְ (*barakh*, "bless"). As in the earlier uses, the meaning probably has more to do with renouncing God than of speaking a curse. The actual word may be taken as a theological euphemism for the verb קִלְלָה (*qillel*, "curse"). If Job's wife had meant that he was trying to justify himself rather than God, "bless God" might be translated "speak well of God," the resolution accepted by God in 42:7-8 following Job's double confession of having spoken wrongly of God (40:3-5; 42:1-6).

sn The church fathers were quick to see here again the role of the wife in the temptation – she acts as the intermediary

God, and die!"¹¹ 2:10 But he replied,¹² "You're talking like one of the godless"¹³ women would do! Should we receive¹⁴ what is good from God, and not also¹⁵ receive¹⁶ what is evil?"¹⁷ In all this Job did not sin by what he said.¹⁸

The Visit of Job's Friends¹⁹

2:11 When Job's three friends heard about all this calamity that had happened to him, each of them came from his own country²⁰ – Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite.²¹ They met together²² 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 tn 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 §110.7).

¹² tn Heb "he said to her."

¹³ tn The word "foolish" (נָבָל, *naval*) has to do with godlessness 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 Disorderly Unruly Conduct," *VT* 25 (1975): 237-41; and W. M. W. Roth, "NBL," *VT* 10 (1960): 394-409.

¹⁴ tn The verb קָבַל (*qibbel*) means "to accept, receive." It is attested in the Amarna letters with the meaning "receive meekly, patiently."

¹⁵ tn The adverb גַּם (*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 Semitica*, 193-203.

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

¹⁷ tn 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 tn The Hebrew words טוֹב (*tov*, "good") and רָע (*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 tn Heb "sin with his lips," an idiom meaning he did not sin by what he said.

²⁰ sn See N. C. Habel, "'Only the Jackal is My Friend,' On Friends and Redeemers in Job," *Int* 31 (1977): 227-36.

²¹ tn Heb "a man from his place"; this is the distributive use, meaning "each man came from his place."

²² sn Commentators have tried to analyze the meanings of the names of the friends and their locations. Not only has this proven to be difficult (Teman is the only place that is known), it is not necessary for the study of the book. The names are probably not symbolic of the things they say.

²³ tn The verb can mean that they "agreed together," but it also (and more likely) means that they came together at a meeting point to go visit Job together.

to show sympathy¹ for him and to console² him. **2:12** But when they gazed intently³ from a distance but did not recognize⁴ him, they began to weep loudly. Each of them tore his robes, and they threw dust into the air over their heads.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 pain⁶ was very great.⁷

II. Job's Dialogue With His Friends (3:1-27:33)⁸

Job Regrets His Birth

3:1 After this Job opened his mouth⁹ and cursed¹⁰ the day he was born.¹¹ **3:2** Job spoke up¹² and said:

1 tn The verb "to show grief" is נָדַד (*nud*), 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.

2 tn The second infinitive is from נָחַם (*nakhham*, "to comfort, console" in the Piel). This word may be derived from a word with a meaning of sighing deeply.

3 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.

4 tn The Hiphil perfect here should take the nuance of potential perfect – they were not able to recognize him. In other words, this does not mean that they did not know it was Job, only that he did not look anything like the Job they knew.

5 tn Heb "they tossed dust skyward over their heads."

6 tn The word כָּאֵב (*k'e'ev*) means "pain" – both mental and physical pain. The translation of "grief" captures only part of its emphasis.

7 sn The three friends went into a more severe form of mourning, one that is usually reserved for a death. E. Dhorme says it is a display of grief in its most intense form (*Job*, 23); for one of them to speak before the sufferer spoke would have been wrong.

8 sn The previous chapters (1-2) were prose narrative, this chapter, however, commences the poetic section of the book (chs. 3-41) containing the cycles of speeches.

9 sn The detailed introduction to the speech with "he opened his mouth" draws the readers attention to what was going to be said. As the introduction to the poetic speech that follows (3:3-26), vv. 1-2 continue the prose style of chapters 1-2. Each of the subsequent speeches is introduced by such a prose heading.

10 tn The verb "cursed" is the Piel preterite from the verb קָלַל (*qalal*); 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* (JBLMS); and A. C. Thiselton, "The Supposed Power of Words in the Biblical Writings," *JTS* 25 (1974): 283-99.

11 tn Heb "his day" (so KJV, ASV, NAB). The Syriac has "the day on which he was born." The context makes it clear that Job meant the day of his birth. But some have tried to offer a different interpretation, such as his destiny or his predicament. For this reason the Syriac clarified the meaning for their readers in much the same way as the present translation does by rendering "his day" as "the day he was born." On the Syriac translation of the book of Job, see Heidi M. Szpek, *Translation Technique in the Peshitta to Job* (SBLDS).

12 tn The text has וַיֵּן (*vayya'an*), literally, "and he answered." The LXX simply has "saying" for the entire verse. The Syriac, Targum, and Greek A have what the MT has. "[Someone] answered and said" is phraseology characteristic of all the speeches in Job beginning with Satan in 1:9. Only in 40:1 is it employed when God is speaking. No other portion of the OT employs this phraseology as often or as consistently.

3:3 "Let the day on which¹³ I was born¹⁴ perish, and the night that said,¹⁵ 'A man¹⁶ has been conceived!'¹⁷ **3:4** That day¹⁸ – let it be darkness;¹⁹ let not God on high regard²⁰ it, nor let light shine²¹ on it! **3:5** Let darkness and the deepest

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 נָבַר (*geber*, "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 51:7 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)," *Prophetic 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 extraposition 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.

20 tn The verb דָּרַשׁ (*darash*) 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.

21 tn The verb is the Hiphil of יָפַע (*yafu*), which means here "cause to shine." The subject is the term נְהָרָה (*n'sharah*, "light"), a *hapax legomenon* which is from the verb נָהַר (*nahar*, "to gleam" [see Isa 60:5]).

shadow¹ claim it;²
 let a cloud settle on it;
 let whatever blackens the day³ terrify it!
 3:6 That night – let darkness seize⁴ it;
 let it not be included⁵ among the days of
 the year;
 let it not enter among the number of the
 months!⁶
 3:7 Indeed,⁷ let that night be barren;⁸
 let no shout of joy⁹ penetrate¹⁰ it!

3:8 Let those who curse the day¹¹ curse it¹² –
 those who are prepared to rouse¹³ Leviathan.¹⁴
 3:9 Let its morning stars¹⁵ be darkened;
 let it wait¹⁶ for daylight but find none,¹⁷
 nor let it see the first rays¹⁸ of dawn,
 3:10 because it¹⁹ did not shut the doors²⁰
 of my mother's womb on me,²¹
 nor did it hide trouble²² from my eyes!

1 sn The translation of צִלְמוֹת (*tsalmavet*, “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 uses to צִלְמוֹת (*tsalmut*) forming an abstract ending. It would then simply mean “darkness” rather than “shadow of death.” Or the word can be understood as an idiomatic expression meaning “gloom” that is deeper than חֹשֶׁךְ (*khoshekh*; see HALOT 1029 s.v. צִלְמוֹת). Since “darkness” has already been used in the line, the two together could possibly form a nominal hendiadys: “Let the deepest darkness....” There is a significant amount of literature on this; one may begin with W. L. Michel, “SLMWT, ‘Deep Darkness’ or ‘Shadow of Death?’” *BR* 29 (1984): 5-20.

2 tn The verb is גָּאֵל (*ga'al*, “redeem, claim”). Some have suggested that the verb is actually the homonym “pollute.” This is the reading in the Targum, Syriac, Vulgate, and Rashi, who quotes from Mal 1:7, 12. See A. R. Johnson, “The Primary Meaning of *ga'al*,” *VTSup* 1 (1953): 67-77.

3 tn The expression “the blackness of the day” (בְּמִירֵי יוֹם, *kimire yom*) probably means everything that makes the day black, such as supernatural events like eclipses. Job wishes that all ominous darkneses would terrify that day. It comes from the word כָּבַד (*kamar*, “to be black”), related to Akkadian *kamaru* (“to overshadow, darken”). The versions seem to have ignored the first letter and connected the word to כָּרַר (*marar*, “be bitter”).

4 tn The verb is simply לָקַח (*laqakh*, “to take”). Here it conveys a strong sense of seizing something and not letting it go.

5 tn The pointing of the verb is meant to connect it with the root כָּדַד (*khadah*, “rejoice”). But the letters in the text were correctly understood by the versions to be from יָחַד (*yakhad*, “to be combined, added”). See G. Rendsburg, “Double Polysomy in Genesis 49:6 and Job 3:6,” *CBQ* 44 (1982): 48-51.

6 sn The choice of this word for “months,” יָרְחִים (*yrakhim*) instead of חֳדָשִׁים (*khodashim*) is due to the fact that “month” here is not a reference for which an exact calendar date is essential (in which case חֳדָשִׁים [*khodesh*] would have been preferred). See J. Segal, “*yrh*” in the Gezer ‘Calendar,” *JSS* 7 (1962): 220, n. 4. Twelve times in the OT יָרַח (*verakh*) means “month” (Exod 2:2; Deut 21:13; 33:14; 1 Kgs 6:37, 38; 8:2; 2 Kgs 15:13; Zech 11:8; Job 3:6; 7:3; 29:2; 39:2).

7 tn The participle הִנֵּה (*hinneh*, “behold”) in this sentence focuses the reader's attention on the statement to follow.

8 tn The word גַּלְמוֹד (*galmud*) probably has here 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 tn The word is from רָנַן (*ranan*, “to give a ringing cry” or “shout of joy”). The sound is loud and shrill.

10 tn The verb is simply בָּוֵא (*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 tn Not everyone is satisfied with the reading of the MT. Gordis thought “day” should be “sea,” and “cursers” 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 sense of “those whose magic binds even the sea monster of the deep” (e.g., NEB).

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 the night. This interpretation matches the parallelism better than the interpretation that says these are merely professional mourners.

12 tn The verb is probably “execrate, curse,” from קָבַב (*qavav*). But E. Ullendorff took it from נָקַב (*naqav*, “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 tn The verbal adjective עָתִיד (*atid*) means “ready, prepared.” Here it has a substantival use similar to that of participles. It is followed by the Polel infinitive construct (orer). The infinitive 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 be summoned by the mourners to swallow up that day. See E. Ullendorff, “Job 3:8,” *VT* 11 (1961): 350-51.

15 tn *Heb* “the stars of its dawn.” The word נֶשֶׁף (*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 tn The verb “wait, hope” has the idea of eager expectation and preparation. It is used elsewhere of waiting on the Lord with anticipation.

17 tn The absolute state אֵין (*ayin*, “there is none”) is here used as a verbal predicate (see GKC 480 §152.k). The concise expression 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 “eyelashes” 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 Keret* (BASORSUP), 39; see also J. M. Steadman, “Eyelids of Morn’: A Biblical Convention,” *HTR* 56 (1963): 159-67.

19 tn 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 tn 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. Habel, “The Dative Suffix in Job 33:13,” *Bib* 63 (1982): 258-59, who thinks it is deliberately ambiguous.

22 tn The word אָמַל (*amal*) means “work, heavy labor, agonizing labor, struggle” with the idea of fatigue and pain.

*Job Wishes He Had Died at Birth*¹³

3:11 “Why did I not² die³ at birth,⁴
and why did I not expire
as⁵ I came out of the womb?
3:12 Why did the knees welcome me,⁶
and why were there⁷ two breasts⁸
that I might nurse at them?⁹
3:13 For now¹⁰ I would be lying down
and¹¹ would be quiet,¹²

I would be asleep and then at peace¹³
3:14 with kings and counselors of the
earth
who built for themselves places now
desolate,¹⁴
3:15 or with princes who possessed gold,¹⁵
who filled their palaces¹⁶ with silver.
3:16 Or why¹⁷ was¹⁸ I not buried¹⁹
like a stillborn infant,²⁰
like infants²¹ who have never seen the
light?²²
3:17 There²³ the wicked²⁴ cease²⁵ from

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 be still born (vv. 11-12, 16). In vv. 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 (*Job*, 32) notes that the verb “I came out” is in the perfect 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 קָדְמוּנִי (qidd'muni) is the Piel from קָדַם (qadam), 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 idea to the father or to adoption rites, it probably simply means the mother’s knees that welcome the child for nursing. See R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 42.

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

⁷ **tn** There is no verb in the second half of the verse. The idea simply has, “and why breasts that I might suck?”

⁸ **sn** The commentaries 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. Streck, *Ashurbanipal* [VAB], 348).

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “that I might suckle.” The verb is the Qal imperfect of יָנַק (yanaq, “suckle”). Here the clause is subordinated to the preceding question and so function as a final imperfect.

¹⁰ **tn** The word עַתָּה (‘atah, “now”) may have a logical nuance here, almost with the idea of “if that had been the case...” (IBHS 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.

¹¹ **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.”

¹² **tn** The text uses a combination of the perfect (lie down/sleep) and imperfect (quiet/rest). The particle עַתָּה (‘atah, “now”) gives to the perfect verb its conditional nuance. It presents actions in the past that are not actually accomplished but seen as possible (GKC 313 §106.p).

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

¹⁴ **tn** The difficult term חֲרוֹבוֹת (khoravot) 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 “everlasting 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 *huribu*. 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 his mother’s womb.”

²⁰ **tn** The noun נֶפֶל (nefel, “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 תַּמּוּן (tamun, “hidden”) is appropriate to the verse. The child comes in vain, and disappears into the darkness – it is hidden forever.

²¹ **tn** The word עֵלְלִים (‘ol’lim) 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, or Sheol, the place where the infant who is stillborn is either buried (the grave) or resides (the place of departed spirits) and thus does not see the light of the sun.

²⁴ **sn** 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.l).

turmoil,¹
and there the weary² are at rest.
3:18 There³ the prisoners⁴ relax⁵ together;⁶
they do not hear the voice of the oppres-
sor.⁷
3:19 Small and great are⁸ there,
and the slave is free⁹ from his master.¹⁰

Longing for Death¹¹

3:20 “Why does God¹² give¹³ light to one
who is in misery,¹⁴
and life to those¹⁵ whose soul is bitter,

1 tn Here the noun רָגַז (*ragez*) refers to the agitation of living as opposed to the peaceful rest of dying. The associated verb רָגַז (*ragaz*) means “to be agitated, excited.” The expression indicates that they cease from troubling, meaning all the agitation of their own lives.

2 tn The word יָגִיעַ (*yagia*) 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 שָׁאֲנָנוּ (*sha’ananu*) is the Pilpel of שָׁאֵן (*sha’an*) which means “to rest.” It refers to the normal rest or refreshment of individuals; here it is contrasted with the harsh treatment normally put on prisoners.

6 sn See further J. C. de Moor, “Lexical Remarks Concerning *yahad* and *yahdaw*,” VT 7 (1957): 350-55.

7 tn Or “taskmaster.” The same Hebrew word is used for the taskmasters in Exod 3:7.

8 tn The versions 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.a, n. 1, follows this idea with a meaning of “the same.”

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 Canaanite Term for ‘Free Proletarian,’” BASOR 83 (1941): 36-39; idem, “New Light on *hupsu*,” BASOR 139 (1955): 9-11.

10 tn The plural “masters” could be taken here as a 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 gloom over life, 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 progressive 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).

sn In vv. 11, 12, and 16 there was the first series of questions in which Job himself was in question. Now the questions are more general for all mankind – why should the sufferers in general have been afflicted with life?

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 אָמֵל (*amel*, “laborer, sufferer”).

15 tn The second colon now refers to people in general because of the plural construct אֵינֶשׁ נַפְשׁוֹ (*mare nafesh*, “those bitter of soul/life”). One may recall the use of בְּרַחַח (*marah*, “bitter”) by Naomi to describe her pained experience as a poor

3:21 to¹⁶ those who wait¹⁷ for death that¹⁸
does not come,
and search for it¹⁹
more than for hidden treasures,
3:22 who rejoice²⁰ even to jubilation,²¹
and are exultant²² when²³ they find the
grave?²⁴
3:23 Why is light given²⁵ to a man²⁶

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 tn 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 tn The verb is the Piel participle of יָחַבַּה (*khakhah*, “to wait for” someone; Yahweh is the object in Isa 8:17; 64:3; Ps 33:20). Here death is the supreme hope of the miserable and the suffering.

18 tn The verse simply has the form אֵין (‘*en*, “there is not”) with a pronominal suffix and a conjunction – “and there is not it” or “and it is not.” The LXX and the Vulgate add a verb to explain this form: “and obtain it not.”

19 tn The parallel verb is now a preterite with a *vav* (ו) consecutive; it therefore has the nuance of a characteristic perfect or gnomic perfect – the English present tense.

sn The verb חָפַח (*khafar*) 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* (מִן). The verse therefore describes the sufferers who excavate or dig the ground to find death, more than others who seek for treasure.

20 tn 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.

21 tn The Syriac has “and gather themselves together,” possibly reading גִּיל (*gil*, “rejoicing”) as גַּל (*gal*, “heap”). Some have tried to emend the text to make the word mean “heap” or “mound,” as in a funerary mound. While one could argue for a heap of stones as a funerary mound, the passage has already spoken of digging a grave, which would be quite different. And while such a change would make a neater parallelism in the verse, there is no reason to force such; the idea of “jubilation” fits the tenor of the whole verse easily enough and there is no reason to change it. A similar expression is found in Hos 9:1, which says, “rejoice not, O Israel, with jubilation.” Here the idea then is that these sufferers would rejoice “to the point of jubilation” at death.

22 tn This sentence also parallels an imperfect verb with the substantival participle of the first colon. It is translated as an English present tense.

23 tn The particle could be “when” or “because” in this verse.

24 sn The expression “when they find a grave” means when they finally die. The verse describes the relief and rest that the sufferer will obtain when the long-awaited death is reached.

25 tn This first part of the verse, “Why is light given,” is supplied from the context. In the Hebrew text the verse simply begins with “to a man....” It is also in apposition to the construction in v. 20. But after so many qualifying clauses and phrases, a restatement of the subject (light, from v. 20) is required.

26 sn After speaking of people in general (in the plural in vv. 21 and 22), Job returns to himself specifically (in the singular, using the same word אִישׁ [*gever*, “a man”] that he employed of himself in v. 3). He is the man whose way is hidden. The clear path of his former life has been broken off, or as the next clause says, hedged in so that he is confined to a life of suffering. The statement includes the spiritual perplexities that this involves. It is like saying that God is leading him in darkness and he can no longer see where he is going.

whose way is hidden,¹
and whom God has hedged in?²
3:24 For my sighing comes in place of³
my food,⁴
and my groanings⁵ flow forth like water.⁶
3:25 For the very thing I dreaded⁷ has
happened⁸ to me,
and what I feared has come upon me.⁹
3:26 I have no ease,¹⁰ I have no quietness;
I cannot rest;¹¹ turmoil has come upon
me.¹²

*Eliphaz Begins to Speak*¹³

4:1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:¹⁴
4:2 "If someone¹⁵ should attempt¹⁶ a word
with you,
will you be impatient?¹⁷
But who can refrain from speaking¹⁸?
4:3 Look,¹⁹ you have instructed²⁰ many;
you have strengthened²¹ feeble hands.²²
4:4 Your words have supported²³ those

¹ 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"

² tn The verb is the Hiphil of סָכַח (*sakhakh*, "to hedge in"). The key parallel passage is Job 19:8, which says, "He has blocked [גָּדַר, *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 is 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).

³ tn For the prepositional לִפְנֵי (*lifne*), the temporal meaning "before" ("my sighing comes before I eat") makes very little sense here (as the versions have it). The meaning "in place of, for" fits better (see 1 Sam 1:16, "count not your handmaid for a daughter of Belial").

⁴ sn The line means that Job's sighing, 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.

⁵ tn The word normally 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).

⁶ tn 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 "fear, terror" anticipates the next verse.

⁷ tn The construction uses the cognate accusative with the verb: "the fear I feared," or "the dread thing I dreaded" (פָּחַד פִּחְדִּי, *pakhad pakhadi*). The verb פָּחַד (*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 present 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, 29:18ff). 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.

⁸ tn The verb אָתָּה (*'atah*) is Aramaic and is equivalent to the Hebrew verb בָּיֵא (*bo'*, "come, happen").

⁹ tn The final verb is בָּאָה (*yavo'*, "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 nuance 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.

¹⁰ tn The LXX "peace" bases its rendering on שָׁלוֹם (*shalam*) and not שָׁלוֹה (*shalah*), which retains the original *vav* (ו). The verb means "to be quiet, to be at ease."

¹¹ tn The verb is literally "and I do/can not rest." A potential perfect nuance fits this passage well. The word רוּחַ (*ruakh*, "rest") implies "rest" in every sense, especially in contrast to רוּגָה (*rogez*, "turmoil, agitation" [vv. 26 and 17]).

¹² 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.

¹³ 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 the righteous never perish 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 resent 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 K. Fullerton, "Double Entendre in the First Speech of Eliphaz," *JBL* 49 (1930): 320-74; J. C. L. Gibson, "Eliphaz the Temanite: A Portrait of a Hebrew Philosopher," *SJT* 28 (1975): 259-72; and J. Lust, "A Stormy Vision: Some Remarks on Job 4:12-16," *Bijdr* 36 (1975): 308-11.

¹⁴ tn Heb "answered and said."

¹⁵ tn The verb has no expressed subject, and so may be translated with "one" or "someone."

¹⁶ tn The Piel perfect is difficult here. It would normally be translated "has one tried (words with you)?" Most commentaries posit a conditional clause, however.

¹⁷ tn The verb means "to be weary." But it can have the extended sense of being either exhausted or impatient (see v. 5). A. B. Davidson (*Job*, 29) takes it in the sense of "will it be too much for you?" There is nothing in the sentence that indicates this should be an interrogative clause; it is simply an imperfect. But in view of the juxtaposition of the first part, this seems to make good sense. E. Dhorme (*Job*, 42) has "Shall we address you? You are dejected."

¹⁸ tn The construction uses a noun with the preposition: "and to refrain with words – who is able?" The Aramaic plural of "words" (מִלִּין, *millin*) occurs 13 times in Job, with the Hebrew plural ten times. The commentaries show that Eliphaz's speech had a distinctly Aramaic coloring to it.

¹⁹ tn The deictic particle הִנֵּה (*hinneh*, "behold") summons attention; it has the sense of "consider, look."

²⁰ tn The verb יָסַר (*yasar*) in the Piel means "to correct," whether by words with the sense of teach, or by chastening with the sense of punish, discipline. The double meaning of "teach" and "discipline" is also found with the noun מוּסָר (*musar*).

²¹ tn The parallelism again uses a perfect verb in the first colon and an imperfect in the second, but since the sense of the line is clearly what Job has done in the past, the second verb may be treated as a preterite, or a customary imperfect – what Job repeatedly did in the past (GKC 315 §107.e). The words in this verse may have double meanings. The word יָסַר (*yasar*, "teach, discipline") may have the idea of instruction and correction, but also the connotation of strength (see Y. Hoffmann, "The Use of Equivocal Words in the First Speech of Eliphaz [Job IV-V]," *VT* 30 (1980): 114-19).

²² tn The "feeble hands" are literally "hands hanging down." This is a sign of weakness, helplessness, or despondency (see 2 Sam 4:1; Isa 13:7).

²³ tn Both verbs in this line are imperfects, and probably carry the same nuance as the last verb in v. 3, namely, either customary imperfect or preterite. The customary has the aspect of stressing that this was what Job used to do.

who stumbled,¹
 and you have strengthened the knees
 that gave way.²
4:5 But now the same thing³ comes to
 you,
 and you are discouraged,⁴
 it strikes you,
 and you are terrified.⁵
4:6 Is not your piety⁶ your confidence,⁷
 and your blameless ways your hope?⁸
4:7 Call to mind now:⁹
 Who,¹⁰ being innocent, ever perished?¹¹
 And where were upright people¹² ever
 destroyed?¹³
4:8 Even as I have seen,¹⁴ those who

plow¹⁵ iniquity¹⁶
 and those who sow trouble reap the
 same.¹⁷
4:9 By the breath¹⁸ of God they perish,¹⁹
 and by the blast²⁰ of his anger they are
 consumed.
4:10 There is²¹ the roaring of the lion²²
 and the growling²³ of the young lion,
 but the teeth of the young lions are bro-
 ken.²⁴

1 tn The form is the singular active participle, interpreted here collectively. The verb is used of knees that give way (Isa 35:3; Ps 109:24).

2 tn The expression is often translated as “feeble knees,” but it literally says “the bowing [or “tottering”] knees.” The figure is one who may be under a heavy load whose knees begin to shake and buckle (see also Heb 12:12).

sn Job had been successful at helping others not be crushed by the weight of trouble and misfortune. It is easier to help others than to preserve a proper perspective when one’s self is afflicted (E. Dhorme, *Job*, 44).

3 tn The sentence has no subject, but the context demands that the subject be the same kind of trouble that has come upon people that Job has helped.

4 tn This is the same verb used in v. 2, meaning “to be exhausted” or “impatient.” Here with the *vav* (ו) consecutive the verb describes Job’s state of mind that is a consequence of the trouble coming on him. In this sentence the form is given a present tense translation (see GKC 329 §111.t).

5 tn This final verb in the verse is vivid; it means “to terrify, dismay” (here the Niphal preterite). Job will go on to speak about all the terrors that come on him.

6 tn The word *יִרְאָה* (*yir’ah*, “fear”) in this passage refers to Job’s fear of the LORD, his reverential devotion to God. H. H. Rowley (*Job* [NCBC], 46) says that on the lips of Eliphaz the word almost means “your religion.” He refers to Moffatt’s translation, “Let your religion reassure you.”

7 tn The word *כִּסְלֵתְךָ* (*kislatēkhā*, “your confidence”) is rendered in the LXX by “founded in folly.” The word *כֶּסֶל* (*kesel*) is “confidence” (see 8:14) and elsewhere “folly.” Since it is parallel to “your hope” it must mean confidence here.

8 tn This second half of the verse simply has “your hope and the integrity of your ways.” The expression “the perfection of your ways” is parallel to “your fear,” and “your hope” is parallel to “your confidence.” This sentence is an example of *casus pendens* or extraposition: “as for your hope, it is the integrity of your ways” (see GKC 458 §143.d).

sn Eliphaz is not being sarcastic to Job. He knows that Job is a God-fearing man who lives out his faith in life. But he also knows that Job should apply to himself the same things he tells others.

9 sn Eliphaz will put his thesis forward first negatively and then positively (vv. 8ff). He will argue that the suffering of the righteous is disciplinary and not for their destruction. He next will argue that it is the wicked who deserve judgment.

10 tn The use of the independent personal pronoun is emphatic, almost as an enclitic to emphasize interrogatives: “who indeed....” (GKC 442 §136.c).

11 tn The perfect verb in this line has the nuance of the past tense to express the unique past – the uniqueness of the action is expressed with “ever” (“who has ever perished”).

12 tn The adjective is used here substantively. Without the article the word stresses the meaning of “uprightness.” Job will use “innocent” and “upright” together in 17:8.

13 tn The Niphal means “to be hidden” (see the Piel in 6:10; 15:18; and 27:11); the connotation here is “destroyed” or “annihilated.”

14 tn The perfect verb here represents the indefinite past.

It has no specific sighting in mind, but refers to each time he has seen the wicked do this.

15 sn 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.

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

17 tn Heb “reap it.”

18 tn The LXX in the place of “breath” has “word” or “command,” probably to limit the anthropomorphism. The word is *נִשְׁמַת* (*nishmat*) comprising *נִשְׁמָה* (*nishmah*) + *נִשְׁמָה* (*nishmah*), the construct of *נִשְׁמָה* [*nishmah*]: “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.

19 sn 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).

20 tn The word *רוּחַ* (*ruakh*) is now parallel to *נִשְׁמָה* (*nishmah*); both can mean “breath” or “wind.” To avoid using “breath” for both lines, “blast” has been employed here. The word is followed by *אָפִי* (*’afī*) 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).

21 tn “There is” has been supplied to make a smoother translation out of the clauses.

22 sn 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 *אַרְיֵה* (*’aryeh*) the generic term for “lion.” It is followed by *שַׁחַל* (*shakhal*) which, like *כִּפּוּר* (*kēfir*), is a “young lion.” Some have thought that the *שַׁחַל* (*shakhal*) 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.”

23 tn Heb “voice.”

24 tn 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 lion¹ perishes² for lack of prey, and the cubs of the lioness³ are scattered.

Ungodly Complainers Provoke God's Wrath

4:12 "Now a word was secretly⁴ brought⁵ to me,

and my ear caught⁶ a whisper⁷ of it.

4:13 In the troubling thoughts⁸ of the dreams⁹ in the night

when a deep sleep¹⁰ falls on men,

4:14 a trembling¹¹ gripped me – and a terror! –

and made all my bones shake.¹²

¹ **tn** The word לַיִשׁ (*layish*) traditionally rendered "strong lion," occurs only here and in Prov 30:30 and Isa 30:6. It has cognates in several of the Semitic languages, and so seems to indicate lion as king of the beasts.

² **tn** The form of the verb is the Qal active participle; it stresses the characteristic action of the verb as if a standard universal truth.

³ **tn** The text literally has "sons of the lioness."

⁴ **tn** The LXX of this verse offers special problems. It reads, "But if there had been any truth in your words, none of these evils would have fallen upon you; shall not my ear receive excellent [information] from him?" The major error involves a dittography from the word for "secret," yielding "truth."

⁵ **tn** The verb גָּנַב (*ganav*) means "to steal." The Pual form in this verse is probably to be taken as a preterite since it requires a past tense translation: "it was stolen for me" meaning it was brought to me stealthily (see 2 Sam 19:3).

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "received."

⁷ **tn** The word שִׁמְשֵׁם (*shemets*, "whisper") is found only here and in Job 26:14. A cognate form שִׁמְסָה (*shimtsah*) is found in Exod 32:25 with the sense of "a whisper." In postbiblical Hebrew the word comes to mean "a little." The point is that Eliphaz caught just a bit, just a whisper of it, and will recount it to Job.

⁸ **tn** Here too the word is rare. The form שִׁעֲפִים (*s^eippim*, "disquietings") occurs only here and in 20:2. The form שִׁרְעָפִים (*sar^eappim*, "disquieting thoughts"), possibly related by dissimilation, occurs in Pss 94:19 and 139:23. There seems to be a connection with שִׁעֲפִים (*s^eippim*) in 1 Kgs 18:21 with the meaning "divided opinion"; this is related to the idea of קִעְפָּה (*s^eippah*, "bough"). H. H. Rowley (*Job* [NCBC], 47) concludes that the point is that like branches the thoughts lead off into different and bewildering places. E. Dhorme (*Job*, 50) links the word to an Arabic root ("to be passionately smitten") for the idea of "intimate thoughts." The idea here and in Ps 139 has more to do with anxious, troubling, disquieting thoughts, as in a nightmare.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "visions" of the night.

¹⁰ **tn** The word תַּרְדֵּמָה (*tardemah*) is a "deep sleep." It is used in the creation account when the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam; and it is used in the story of Jonah when the prophet was asleep during the storm. The LXX interprets it to mean "fear," rendering the whole verse "but terror falls upon men with dread and a sound in the night."

¹¹ **tn** The two words פָּחַד (*pakhad*, "trembling") and יִעָדָה (*s^eadah*, "terror") strengthen each other as synonyms (see also Ps 55:6). The subject of the verb קָרָא (*qara*, "befall, encounter") is פָּחַד (*pakhad*, "trembling"); its compound subject has been placed at the end of the colon.

¹² **tn** The subject of the Hiphil verb הִפְחִיד (*hifkhid*, "dread") is פָּחַד (*pakhad*, "trembling"), which is why it is in the singular. The cognate verb intensifies and applies the meaning of the noun. BDB 808 s.v. פָּחַד Hiph translates it "fill my bones with dread." In that sense "bones" would have to be a metonymy of subject representing the framework of the body, so that the meaning is that his whole being was filled with trembling.

4:15 Then a breath of air¹³ passes¹⁴ by my face;

it makes¹⁵ the hair of my flesh stand up.

4:16 It stands still,¹⁶

but I cannot recognize¹⁷ its appearance;

an image is before my eyes,

and I hear a murmuring voice.¹⁸

4:17 "Is¹⁹ a mortal man²⁰ righteous²¹ before²² God?"

¹³ **tn** The word רוּחַ (*ruakh*) can be "spirit" or "breath." The implication here is that it was something that Eliphaz felt – what he saw follows in v. 16. The commentators are divided on whether this is an apparition, a spirit, or a breath. The word 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 חָלַף (*khalaf*, "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. D. J. A. Clines (*Job* [WBC], 111) also concludes it means "wind," noting that in Job a spirit or spirits would be called רְפָאִים (*r^efa'im*, אֱלֹהִים (*elohim*) or אוֹב (*ov*)).

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 רוּחַ (*ruakh*, "spirit"), 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 **tc** 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 imperfect. 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 חָמַם (*damam*) does mean "remain silent" (Job 29:21; 31:34) and then also "cease." The noun חָמָה (*d^emamah*, "calm") refers to the calm after the storm in Ps 107:29. Joined with the true object of the verb, "voice," it probably means something like stillness or murmuring or whispering here. It is joined to "voice" with a conjunction, indicating that it is a hendiads, "murmur and a voice" or a "murmuring voice."

¹⁹ **tn** The imperfect verbs in this verse express obvious truths known at all times (GKC 315 §107.f).

²⁰ **tn** The word for man here is first אָנוּשׁ (*enosh*), stressing man in all his frailty, his mortality. This is paralleled with גֵּבֶר (*geber*), a word that would stress more of the strength or might of man. The verse is not making a great contrast between the two, but it is rhetorical question merely stating that no human being of any kind is righteous or pure before God the Creator. See H. Kosmala, "The Term *geber* in the OT and in the Scrolls," *VTSup* 17 (1969): 159-69; and E. Jacob, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 156-57.

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"; cf. also KJV, ASV, NCV) does not seem 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 pure¹ before his Creator?²
4:18 If³ God⁴ puts no trust in⁵ his servants⁶
 and attributes⁷ folly⁸ to his angels,
4:19 how much more to those who live in
 houses of clay,⁹
 whose foundation is in the dust,
 who are crushed¹⁰ like¹¹ a moth?

4:20 They are destroyed¹² between morning
 and evening;¹³
 they perish forever¹⁴ without anyone regard-
 ing it.¹⁵
4:21 Is not their excess wealth¹⁶ taken
 away from them?¹⁷
 They die,¹⁸ yet without attaining wis-
 dom.¹⁹

¹ sn In Job 15:14 and 25:4 the verb יִזְכֶּה (*yizkeh*, from זָכַח [*zakah*, “be clean”]) is paralleled with יִצְדַּק (*yitsdaq*, from צָדַק [*tsadeq*, “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 הֵן (*hen*) 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 יָאֲמִין (*ya’amin*), a Hiphil imperfect from אָמַן (*aman*) followed by the preposition ב (bet), means “trust in.”

⁶ sn The servants here must be angels in view of the parallelism. The Targum to Job interpreted them to be the prophets. In the book we have already read about the “sons of God” who take their stand as servants before the LORD (1:6; 2:1). And Ps 104:4 identifies the angels as servants (using שָׂרֵת *sharret*, *sharret*).

⁷ tn The verb שִׁים (*sim*, “set”) with the preposition ב (bet) has the sense of “impute” or “attribute something to someone.”

⁸ tn The word תֹּהוֹלָה (*toholah*) is a *hapax legomenon*, and so has created some confusion in the various translations. It seems to mean “error; folly.” The word is translated “perverse-ness” in the LXX, but Symmachus connects it with the word for “madness.” Some commentators have reprinted the word to תְּהִילָה (*ehillah*, “praise”) making the line read: “he finds no [cause for] praise in his angels.” Others suggest תִּפְלָה (*tipflah*, “offensiveness, silliness”) a bigger change; this matches the idiom in Job 24:12. But if the etymology of the word is הלֵל (*halal*, “to be mad”) then that change is not necessary. The feminine noun “madness” still leaves the meaning of the line a little uncertain: “[if] he does not impute madness to his angels.” The point of the verse is that God finds flaws in his angels and does not put his trust in them.

⁹ sn Those who live in houses of clay are human beings, for the human body was made of clay (Job 10:9; 33:6; and Isa 64:7). In 2 Cor 4:7 the body is an “earthen vessel” – a clay pot. The verse continues the analogy: houses have foundations, and the house of clay is founded on dust, and will return to dust (Gen 3:19; Ps 103:14). The reasoning is that if God finds defects in angels, he will surely find them in humans who are inferior to the angels because they are but dust. In fact, they are easily crushed like the moth.

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 tn The prepositional compound לִפְנֵי (*lifne*) normally has the sense of “before,” but it has been used already in 3:24 in the sense of “like.” That 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 “bird’s nest”; 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 tn The form יִכָּתוּ (*yukkatu*) is the Hophal imperfect of the root כָּתַת (*kaat*, “to be pounded, pulverized, reduced to ashes” [Jer 46:5; Mic 1:7]). It follows the Aramaic formation (see GKC 182 §67.y). 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 Modality and the Interpretation of Job 4:20, 21,” *VT* 30 (1980): 354-57.

¹³ 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.”

¹⁴ sn The second colon expresses the consequence of this day-long reducing to ashes – they perish forever! (see 20:7 and 14:20).

¹⁵ tn This rendering is based on the interpretation that מְבִילֵי מִשִׁים (*mibb’li mesim*) uses the Hiphil participle of שִׁים (*sim*, “set”) with an understood object “heart” to gain the idiom of “taking to heart, considering, regarding it” – hence, “without anyone regarding it.” Some commentators have attempted to resolve the difficulty by emending the text, a procedure that has no more support than positing the ellipses. One suggested emendation does have the LXX in its favor, namely, a reading of מוֹשִׁיָּה (*moshia*’, “one who saves”) in place of מְבִילֵי (*mesim*, “one who sets”). This would lead to “without one who saves they perish forever” (E. Dhorme, *Job*, 55).

¹⁶ tn The word יָתֵר (*yeter*, here with the suffix, יִתְרָם [*yitram*]) can mean “what remains” or “rope.” Of the variety of translations, the most frequently used idea seems to be “their rope,” meaning their tent cord. This would indicate that their life was compared to a tent – perfectly reasonable in a passage that has already used the image “houses of clay.” The difficulty is that the verb נָסָה (*nasa*’) means more properly “to tear up; to uproot.” and not “to cut off.” A similar idea is found in Isa 38:12, but there the image is explicitly that of cutting the life off from the loom. Some have posited that the original must have said their tent peg was pulled up” as in Isa 33:20 (A. B. Davidson, *Job*, 34; cf. NAB). But perhaps the idea of “what remains” would be easier to defend here. Besides, it is used in 22:20. The wealth of an individual is what has been acquired and usually is left over when he dies. Here it would mean that the superfluous wealth would be snatched away. The preposition ב (bet) would carry the meaning “from” with this verb.

¹⁷ tc The text of the LXX does not seem to be connected to the Hebrew of v. 21a. It reads something like “for he blows on them and they are withered” (see Isa 40:24b). The Targum to Job has “Is it not by their lack of righteousness that they have been deprived of all support?”

tn On the interpretation of the preposition in this construction, see N. Sarna, “The Interchange of the Preposition *bet* and *min* in Biblical Hebrew,” *JBL* 78 (1959): 310-16.

¹⁸ 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.

¹⁹ tn Heb “and without wisdom.” The word “attaining” is supplied in the translation as a clarification.

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!¹ Is there anyone who will answer you?²
To which of the holy ones³ will you turn?⁴
5:2 For⁵ wrath kills the foolish person,⁶
and anger⁷ slays the silly one.
5:3 I myself⁸ have seen the fool⁹ taking root,
but suddenly I cursed his place of residence.¹⁰
5:4 His children are far¹¹ from safety,

and they are crushed¹² at the place where judgment is rendered,¹³
nor is there anyone to deliver them.¹⁴
5:5 The hungry¹⁵ eat up his harvest,¹⁶
and take it even from behind the thorns,¹⁷
and the thirsty¹⁸ swallow up¹⁹ their fortune.²⁰

1 tn Some commentators transpose this verse with the following paragraph, placing it after v. 7 (see E. Dhorme, *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.

2 tn The participle with the suffix could be given a more immediate translation to accompany the imperative: “Call now! Is anyone listening to you?”

3 tn The LXX has rendered “holy ones” as “holy angels” (cf. TEV, CEV, NLT). The LXX has interpreted the verb in the colon 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 tn One of the reasons that commentators transpose v. 1 is that the כִּי (*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 tn The two words for “foolish person” are common in wisdom literature. The first, אָוִיל (*‘evil*), is the fool who is a senseless person; the second, פֹּתֵחַ (*poteh*), is the naive and silly person, the simpleton, the one who is easily led astray. The direct object is introduced with the preposition ל (*lamed*) in this verse (see GKC 366 §117.n).

7 tn The two parallel nouns are similar; their related verbs are also paralleled in Deut 32:16 with the idea of “vex” and “irritate.” The first word כָּאֵס (*ka’as*) refers to the inner irritation and anger one feels, whereas the second word קָיָאָה (*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 אָוִיל (*‘evil*), the same word for the “senseless man” in the preceding verse. Eliphaz is citing an example of his principle just given – he saw such a fool for a brief while appearing to prosper (i.e., taking root).

10 tn 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” (יָכַבּ [*vayyukhav*] instead of וְיָכַבּ [*va’eqqov*]; 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 malediction 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 יָדַקּוּ (*yiddakk’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 tn Heb “in the gate.” The city gate was the place of both business and justice. The sense here seems to fit the usage of gates as the place of legal disputes, so the phrase “at the place of judgment” has been used in the translation.

14 tn The text simply says “and there is no deliverer.” The entire clause could be subordinated to the preceding clause, and rendered simply “without a deliverer.”

15 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.

16 tn The MT reads “whose harvest the hungry eat up.” Some commentators want to follow the LXX and reposit קָצִיר רַר (*q^lsiro*, “his harvest”) to קָצִירוּ (*qats’ru*, “[what] they have reaped”; cf. NAB). The reference as it stands in the MT seems to be 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.

17 tn The line is difficult; the Hebrew text reads literally “and unto from thorns he takes it.” The idea seems to be that even unto from within an enclosed hedge of thorns other people will take the harvest. Many commentators either delete the line altogether or try to reposit it to make more sense out of it. G. R. Driver had taken the preposition אֶל (*‘el*, “towards”) as the noun אֵל (*‘el*, “strong man”) and the noun צַנִּים (*tsinnim*, “thorns”) connected to Aramaic צִנָּה (*tsinnah*, “basket”); he read it as “a strong man snatches it from the baskets” (G. R. Driver, “on Job 5:5,” *TZ* 12 [1956]: 485-86). E. Dhorme (*Job*, 60) changed the word slightly to מַצְפֻּנִים (*matspunim*, “hiding places”), instead of מִצְנִים (*mitsinnim*, “out of the thorns”), to get the translation “and unto hiding places he carries it.” This fits the use of the verb לָקַח (*laqakh*, “to take”) with the preposition אֶל (*‘el*, “towards”) meaning “carry to” someplace. There seems to be no easy solution to the difficulty of the line.

18 tn The word צַמִּים (*tsammim*) has been traditionally rendered “robbers.” But it has been connected by some of the ancient versions to the word for “thirst,” making a nice parallel with “hungry.” This would likely be pointed צַמְמִים (*ts^hme’im*).

19 tn The verb has been given many different renderings, some more radical than others: “engulf,” “draws,” “gather,” “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. Instead of “thorns” the LXX has the idea of “trouble.” The Targum to Job interprets it with “shield” and adds “warriors” as the subject.

5:6 For evil does not come up from the dust,¹
nor does trouble spring up from the ground,
5:7 for people² are born³ to trouble,
as surely as the sparks⁴ fly⁵ upward.⁶

Blessings for the One Who Seeks God⁷

5:8 “But⁸ as for me,⁹ I would seek¹⁰ God,¹¹
and to God¹² I would set forth my case.¹³

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 the Niphal יולדו (*yullad*, “is born”) to an active participle יולד (*yoled*, “begets”) 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 imply that trouble’s source is within the man.

4 tn For the Hebrew בְּנֵי־רֶשֶׁף (*bēne reshef*, “sons of the flame”) the present translation has the rendering “sparks.” E. Dhorme (*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 Resheph, the Phoenician god of lightning (Pope), the 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], 53) 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 advises here, for Job does not agree that the sufferings are judgments from God.

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

9 tn 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 31.9 §107.x).

11 tn The verb דָּרַשׁ (*darash*, “to seek”) followed by the preposition אֶל (*el*, “towards”) has the meaning of addressing oneself to (God). See 8:19 and 40:10.

12 tn The Hebrew employs אֵל (*el*) in the first line and אֱלֹהִים (*elohim*) 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*, traditionally translated “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 expres-

5:9 He does¹⁴ great and unsearchable¹⁵
things,
marvelous things without¹⁶ number;¹⁷
5:10 he gives¹⁸ rain on the earth,¹⁹
and sends²⁰ water on the fields;²¹
5:11 he sets²² the lowly²³ on high,
that those who mourn²⁴ are raised²⁵ to
safety.

sion that uses שִׁים (*sim*) with the meaning of “lay before” or “expound 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 וְאֵין חֶקֶר (v^{en kheqer}), 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 tn The preposition אֲדַעֲנָה (*ad’ en*, “until there was no”) is stereotypical; it conveys the sense of having no number (see Job 9:10; Ps 40:13).

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 participle continues the doxology here. But the article is necessary because of the distance between this verse and the reference to God.

sn *He gives rain.* The use of the verb “gives” underscores the idea that rain is a gift from God. This would be more keenly felt in the Middle East where water is scarce.

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 tn 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 חוּצוֹת (*khutsot*) 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 who are lowly”). A. B. Davidson (*Job*, 39) makes a case for this interpretation, saying that God’s gifts in nature have the wider purpose of blessing man, but he prefers to see the line as another benevolence, parallel to v. 10, and so suggests a translation “setting up” rather than “to set up.”

23 tn The word שְׁפִלִים (*sh^hfalim*) 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 tn 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 tn 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 plans² of the crafty³ so that⁴ their hands cannot accomplish what they had planned!⁵
 5:13 He catches⁶ the wise in their own craftiness,⁷ and the counsel of the cunning⁸ is brought to a quick end.⁹
 5:14 They meet with darkness in the daytime,¹⁰ and grope about¹¹ 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”

¹ **tn** The Hiphil form מַפְרֵד (*mefer*) is the participle from פָּרַד (*parar*, “to annul; to frustrate; to break”). It continues the doxological descriptions of God, but because of the numerous verses in this section, it may be clearer to start a new sentence with this form (rather than translating it “who...”).

² **tn** The word is related to the verb “to think; to plan; to devise,” and so can mean “thoughts; plans; imagination.” Here it refers to the plan of the crafty that must be frustrated (see also Isa 44:25 for the contrast).

³ **tn** The word תְּרוּמִים (*arumim*) means “crafty” or “shrewd.” It describes the shrewdness of some to achieve their ends (see Gen 3:1, where the serpent is more cunning than all the creatures, that is, he knows where the dangers are and will attempt to bring down the innocent). In the next verse it describes the clever plans of the wise – those who are wise in their own sight.

⁴ **tn** The consecutive clause showing result or purpose is simply introduced with the *vav* and the imperfect/jussive (see GKC 504-5 §166.a).

⁵ **tn** The word תוֹשִׁיָּיָה (*tushiyah*) is a technical word from wisdom literature. It has either the idea of the faculty of foresight, or of prudence in general (see 12:6; 26:3). It can be parallel in the texts to “wisdom,” “counsel,” “help,” or “strength.” Here it refers to what has been planned ahead of time.

⁶ **tn** The participles continue the description of God. Here he captures or ensnares the wise in their wickedly clever plans. See also Ps 7:16, where the wicked are caught in the pit they have dug – they are only wise in their own eyes.

⁷ **tn** This is the only quotation from the book of Job in the NT (although Rom 11:35 seems to reflect 41:11, and Phil 1:19 is similar to 13:6). Paul cites it in 1 Cor 3:19.

⁸ **tn** The etymology of נִפְתָּלִים (*niftalim*) suggests a meaning of “twisted” (see Prov 8:8) in the sense of tortuous. See Gen 30:8; Ps 18:26 [27].

⁹ **tn** The Niphal of מָהַר (*mahar*) means “to be hasty; to be irresponsible.” The meaning in the line may be understood in this sense: The counsel of the wily is hastened, that is, precipitated before it is ripe, i.e., frustrated (A. B. Davidson, *Job*, 39).

¹⁰ **tn** **sn** God so confuses the crafty that they are unable to fulfill their plans – it is as if they encounter darkness in broad daylight. This is like the Syrians in 2 Kgs 6:18-23.

¹¹ **tn** The verb מַשְׁחָשׂ (*mashash*) expresses the idea of groping about in the darkness. This is part of the fulfillment of Deut 28:29, which says, “and you shall grope at noontime as the blind grope in darkness.” This image is also in Isa 59:10.

¹² **tn** **sn** The verse provides a picture of the frustration and bewilderment in the crafty who cannot accomplish their ends because God thwarts them.

¹³ **tn** The verb, the Hiphil preterite of יָשָׁע (*yasha*, “and he saves”) indicates that by frustrating the plans of the wicked God saves the poor. So the *vav* (ו) 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. Dhorme (*Job*, 67) notes, what is missing is a parallel in the first part with “the poor” in the second. So he follows Cappel in repositing “from the sword” as a Hophal participle, מוֹחָרָב (*mokhorav*), 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 אֲשֵׁרֶה (*ashre*, “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 use of the relative clause. The verb יָכַח (*yakhakh*) is a legal term; it always has some sense of a charge, dispute, or conflict. Its usages show that it may describe a strife breaking out, a charge or quarrel in progress, or the settling of a dispute (Isa 1:18). The derived noun can mean “reproach; recrimination; charge” (13:6; 23:4). Here the emphasis is on the consequence of the charge brought, namely, the correction.

²¹ **tn** The noun מוֹסָר (*musar*) is parallel to the idea of the first colon. It means “discipline, correction” (from יָסַר, *yasar*). Prov 3:11 says almost the same thing as this line.

²² **tn** **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 For¹ he² wounds,³ but he also bandages;
 he strikes, but his hands also heal.
 5:19 He will deliver you⁴ from six calamities;
 yes, in seven⁵ no evil will touch you.
 5:20 In time of famine⁶ he will redeem you from death,
 and in time of war from the power of the sword.⁷
 5:21 You will be protected⁸ from malicious gossip,⁹
 and will not be afraid of the destruction¹⁰ when it comes.
 5:22 You will laugh at destruction and famine¹¹

and need not¹² be afraid of the beasts of the earth.
 5:23 For you will have a pact with the stones¹³ of the field,
 and the wild animals¹⁴ will be at peace¹⁵ with you.
 5:24 And¹⁶ you will know¹⁷ that your home¹⁸
 will be secure,¹⁹
 and when you inspect²⁰ your domains, you will not be missing²¹ anything.
 5:25 You will also know that your children²² will be numerous,
 and your descendants²³ like the grass of the earth.
 5:26 You will come to your grave in a full age,²⁴

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 נָצַל (*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 5:5. A number that seems to be sufficient for the point is increased by one, as if to say there is always one more. By using this Eliphaz simply means “in all troubles” (see H. H. Rowley, *Job* [NCBC], 56).

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 metonymical, 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 and 51:2 show usages of these kinds of expressions: “the lash of the tongue” or “the blow of the tongue.” The expression indicates that a malicious gossip is more painful than a blow.

sn The Targum saw here a reference to Balaam and the devastation brought on by the Midianites.

10 tn The word here is שָׂדֵה (*shod*); it means “destruction,” but some commentators conjecture alternate readings: שְׂוֹאָה (*sho’ah*, “desolation”); שֵׁד (*shed*, “demon”). One argument for maintaining שָׂדֵה (*shod*) is that it fits the assonance within the verse שָׂדֵה ... לְשׂוֹן ... שֵׁד ... לַשּׁוֹן...*lashon...shod*.

11 tn To 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.

tn The word for “famine” is an Aramaic word found again in 30:3. The book of Job has a number of Aramaisms that are used to form an alternative parallel expression (see notes on “witness” in 16:19).

12 tn The negated jussive is used here to express the conviction that something cannot or should not happen (GKC 322 §109.e).

13 tn *Heb* “your covenant is with the stones of the field.” The line has been variously interpreted and translated. It is omitted in the LXX. It seems to mean there is a deep sympathy between man and nature. Some think it means that the boundaries will not be violated by enemies; Rashi thought it represented some species of beings, like genii of the field, and so read אֲדָנִי (*adone*, “lords”) אֲבָנֵי (*avne*, “stones”). Ball takes the word as בְּנֵי (*b’ne*, “sons”), as in “sons of the field,” to get the idea that the reference is to the beasts. E. Dhorme (*Job*, 71) rejects these ideas as too contrived; he says to have a pact with the stones of the field simply means the stones will not come and spoil the ground, making it less fertile.

14 tn *Heb* “the beasts of the field.”

15 tn This is the only occurrence of the Hophal of the verb שָׁלַם (*shalem*, “to make or have peace” with someone). Compare Isa 11:6-9 and Ps 91:13. The verb form is the perfect; here it is the perfect consecutive following a noun clause (see GKC 494 §159.g).

16 sn Verses 19-23 described the immunity from evil and trouble that Job would enjoy – if he were restored to peace with God. Now, v. 24 describes the safety and peace of the homestead and his possessions if he were right with God.

17 tn The verb is again the perfect, but in sequence to the previous structure so that it is rendered as a future. This would be the case if Job were right with God.

18 tn *Heb* “tent.”

19 tn The word שְׁלוֹמִים (*shalom*) means “peace; safety; security; wholeness.” The same use appears in 1 Sam 25:6; 2 Sam 20:9.

20 tn The verb is בָּקַד (*paqad*, “to visit”). The idea here is “to gather together; to look over; to investigate,” or possibly even “to number” as it is used in the book of Numbers. The verb is the perfect with the vav consecutive; it may be subordinated to the imperfect verb that follows to form a temporal clause.

21 tn The verb is usually rendered “to sin,” but in this context the more specific primary meaning of “to miss the mark” or “to fail to find something.” Neither Job’s tent nor his possessions will be lost.

22 tn *Heb* “your seed.”

23 tn The word means “your shoots” and is parallel to “your seed” in the first colon. It refers here (as in Isa 34:1 and 42:5) to the produce of the earth. Some commentators suggest that Eliphaz seems to have forgotten or was insensitive to Job’s loss of his children; H. H. Rowley (*Job* [NCBC], 57) says his conventional theology is untouched by human feeling.

24 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 בְּיָמֶיךָ (*b’khalakh*, “in old age”) was 2, 20, 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,¹ and apply it for your own² good.”³

Job Replies to Eliphaz

6:1 Then Job responded:⁴

6:2 “Oh,⁵ if only my grief⁶ could be weighed,⁷ and my misfortune laid⁸ on the scales too!⁹

6:3 But because it is heavier¹⁰ than the sand¹¹ of the sea, that is why my words have been wild.¹²

¹ **tn** To make a better parallelism, some commentators have replaced the imperative with another finite verb, “we have found it.”

² **tn** 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 **sn** 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 **tn** *Heb* “answered and said.”

⁵ **tn** The conjunction לו (*lu*, “if, if only”) introduces the wish – an unrealizable wish – with the Niphal imperfect.

⁶ **tn** Job pairs בְּגִיבִי (*ka’si*, “my grief”) and הַיָּיָתִי (*hayyati*, “my misfortune”). The first word, used in Job 4:2, refers to Job’s whole demeanor that he shows his friends – the impatient and vexed expression of his grief. The second word expresses his misfortune, the cause of his grief. Job wants these placed together in the balances so that his friends could see the misfortune is greater than the grief. The word for “misfortune” is a *Kethib-Qere* reading. The two words have essentially the same meaning; they derive from the verb הָוָה (*havah*, “to fall”) and so mean a misfortune.

⁷ **tn** 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 **tn** The third person plural verb is used here; it expresses an indefinite subject and is treated as a passive (see GKC 460 §144.g).

⁹ **tn** The adverb normally means “together,” but it can also mean “similarly, too.” In this verse it may not mean that the two things are to be weighed together, but that the whole calamity should be put on the scales (see A. B. Davidson, *Job*, 43).

¹⁰ **tn** E. Dhorme (*Job*, 76) notes that כִּי־עֲטָה (*ki’attah*) has no more force than “but”; and that the construction is the same as in 17:4; 20:19-21; 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 “for now it would be heavier...” (see A. B. Davidson, *Job*, 43).

¹¹ **sn** 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 **tn** The verb לָעַו (*la’u*) is traced by E. Dhorme (*Job*, 76) to a root לָעַה (*la’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 geminate 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 geminate root meaning “to suck” or “to swallow” (cf. KJV), but that yields a very difficult sense to

6:4 For the arrows¹³ of the Almighty¹⁴ are within me; my spirit¹⁵ drinks their poison;¹⁶ God’s sudden terrors¹⁷ are arrayed¹⁸ against me.

Complaints Reflect Suffering

6:5 “Does the wild donkey¹⁹ bray²⁰ when it is near grass?²¹

Or²² does the ox low near its fodder?²³

the line.

¹³ **sn** 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 **sn** 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 **tn** 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 **tn** The LXX translators knew that a liquid should be used with the verb “drink,” but they took the line to be “whose violence drinks up my blood.” For the rest of the verse they came up with, “whenever I am going to speak they pierce me.”

¹⁷ **tn** 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 **tn** The verb עָרַךְ (*arakh*) 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), nonetheless, 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 **tn** 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 hébraïque,” *ZAW* 62 [1950]: 199-207).

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

²¹ **sn** 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 **tn** The construction forms a double question (הֲ...וְ, *ha...’im*) but not to express mutually exclusive questions in this instance. Instead, it is used to repeat the same question in different words (see GKC 475 §150.h).

²³ **tc** The LXX captures the meaning of the verse, but renders it in a more expansive way.

tn 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.

6:6 Can food that is tasteless¹ be eaten without salt?
Or is there any taste in the white² of an egg?
6:7³ have refused⁴ to touch such things,⁵ they are like loathsome food to me.⁶

A Cry for Death

6:8 “Oh that⁷ my request would be realized,⁸
and that God would grant me what I long for!⁹
6:9 And that God would be willing¹⁰ to crush me,

that he would let loose¹¹ his hand and¹² kill me.¹³
6:10 Then I would yet have my comfort,¹⁴ then¹⁵ I would rejoice,¹⁶ in spite of pitiless pain,¹⁷ for¹⁸ I have not concealed the words¹⁹ of the Holy One.²⁰
6:11 What is my strength, that I should wait?²¹

¹ **tn** Heb “a tasteless thing”; the word “food” is supplied from the context.

² **tn** Some commentators are not satisfied with the translation “white of an egg”; they prefer something connected to “slime of purslane” (H. H. Rowley, *Job* [NCBC], 59; cf. NRSV “juice of mallows”). This meaning is based on the Syriac and Arabic version of Sa’adia. The meaning “white of the egg” comes from the rabbinic interpretation of “slime of the yolk.” Others carry the idea further and interpret it to mean “saliva of dreams” or after the LXX “in dream words.” H. H. Rowley does not think that the exact edible object can be identified. The idea of the slimy glaring white around the yolk of an egg seems to fit best. This is another illustration of something that is tasteless or insipid.

³ **tn** The traditional rendering of נַפְשִׁי (*nafshi*) is “my soul.” But since נֶפֶשׁ (*nefesh*) means the whole person, body and soul, it is best to translate it with its suffix simply as an emphatic pronoun.

⁴ **tn** For the explanation of the perfect verb with its completed action in the past and its remaining effects, see GKC 311 §106.g.

⁵ **tn** The phrase “such things” is not in the Hebrew text but has been supplied.

⁶ **tn** The second colon of the verse is difficult. The word דָּוַי (*davai*) means “sickness of” and yields a meaning “like the sickness of my food.” This could take the derived sense of דָּוַי (*davah*) and mean “impure” or “corrupt” food. The LXX has “for I loathe my food as the smell of a lion” and so some commentators emend “they” (which has no clear antecedent) to mean “I loathe it [like the sickness of my food].” Others have more freely emended the text to “my palate loathes my food” (McNeile) or “my bowels resound with suffering” (I. Eitan, “An unknown meaning of *RAHAMIM*,” *JBL* 53 [1934]: 271). Pope has “they are putrid as my flesh [= my meat].” D. J. A. Clines (*Job* [WBC], 159) prefers the suggestion in *BHS*, “it [my soul] loathes them as my food.” E. Dhorme (*Job*, 80) repeats the second word of the colon to get כְּבֹדִי (*k’vodi*, “my glory”): “my heart [glory] loathes/is sickened by my bread.”

⁷ **tn** The Hebrew expresses the desire (desiderative clause) with “who will give?” (see GKC 477 §151.d).

⁸ **tn** The verb בּוֹיָא (*boi*, “go”) has the sense of “to be realized; to come to pass; to be fulfilled.” The optative “Who will give [that] my request be realized?” is “O that my request would be realized.”

⁹ **tn** The text has תִּקְוָתִי (*tiqvati*, “hope”). There is no reason to change the text to “my desire” (as Driver and others do) if the word is interpreted metonymically – it means “what I hope for.” What Job hopes for and asks for is death.

¹⁰ **sn** See further W. Riggans, “Job 6:8-10: Short Comments,” *ExpTim* 99 (1987): 45-46.

¹¹ **tn** The verb יָאֵל (*ya’al*) in the Hiphil means “to be willing, to consent, to decide.” It is here the jussive followed by the dependent verb with a (י) *yav*: “that God would be willing and would crush me” means “to crush me.” Gesenius, however, says that the conjunction introduces coordination rather than subordination; he says the principal idea is introduced in the second verb, the first verb containing the definition of the manner of the action (see GKC 386 §120.d).

¹¹ **tn** The verb is used for loosening shoe straps in Isa 58:6, and of setting prisoners free in Pss 105:20 and 146:7. Job thinks that God’s hand has been restrained for some reason, and so desires that God be free to destroy him.

¹² **tn** The final verb is an imperfect (or jussive) following the jussive (of נָתַר, *natar*); it thus expresses the result (“and then” or “so that”) or the purpose (“in order that”). Job longs for death, but it must come from God.

¹³ **tn** Heb “and cut me off.” The LXX reads this verse as “Let the Lord begin and wound me, but let him not utterly destroy me.” E. Dhorme (*Job*, 81) says the LXX is a paraphrase based on a pun with “free hand.” Targum Job has, “God has begun to make me poor; may he free his hand and make me rich,” apparently basing the reading on a metaphorical interpretation.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “and it will/may be yet my comfort.” The comfort or consolation that he seeks, that he wishes for, is death. The next colon in the verse simply intensifies this thought, for he affirms if that should happen he would rejoice, in spite of what death involves. The LXX, apparently confusing letters (reading יָרִי [“ir,” “city”] instead of יָרֵי [“od,” “yet”]), which then led to the mistake in the next colon, חֵלֶהָ [*khelehah*, “its wall”] for חֵלָהָ [*khalah*, “suffering”]), has “Let the grave be my city, upon the walls of which I have leaped.”

¹⁵ **tn** In the apodosis of conditional clauses (which must be supplied from the context preceding), the cohortative expresses the consequence (see GKC 320 §108.d).

¹⁶ **tn** The Piel verb סָקַד (*siked*) is a *hapax legomenon*. BDB 698 s.v. סָקַד gives the meaning “to spring [i.e., jump] for joy,” which would certainly fit the passage. Others have emended the text, but unnecessarily. The LXX “I jumped” and Targum Job’s “exult” support the sense in the dictionaries, although the jumping is for joy and not over a wall (as the LXX has). D. J. A. Clines (*Job* [WBC], 159) follows Driver in thinking this is untenable, choosing a meaning “recoiled in pain” for the line.

¹⁷ **tn** The word חֵלָהָ (*khalah*) also occurs only here, but is connected to the verb חָלַל / חָלַל (*khil / khul*, “to writhe in pain”). E. Dhorme says that by extension the meaning denotes the cause of this trembling or writhing – terrifying pain. The final clause, לֹא יָחֲמוֹל (*lo’ yakhmol*, “it has no pity”), serves as a kind of epithet, modifying “pain” in general. If that pain has no pity or compassion, it is a ruthless pain (E. Dhorme, *Job*, 82).

¹⁸ **tn** The כִּי (*ki*, “for”) functions here to explain “my comfort” in the first colon; the second colon simply strengthens the first.

¹⁹ **tn** The “words” are the divine decrees of God’s providence, the decisions that he makes in his dealings with people. Job cannot conceal these – he knows what they are. What Job seems to mean by this clause in this verse is that there is nothing that would hinder his joy of dying for he has not denied or disobeyed God’s plan.

²⁰ **tn** Several commentators delete the colon as having no meaning in the verse, and because (in their view) it is probably the addition of an interpolator who wants to make Job sound more pious. But Job is at least consoling himself that he is innocent, and at the most anticipating a worth-while afterlife (see H. H. Rowley, *Job* [NCBC], 60).

²¹ **sn** Now, in vv. 11-13, Job proceeds to describe his hopeless condition. In so doing, he is continuing his defense of his despair and lament. The section begins with these rhetorical questions in which Job affirms that he does not have the strength to wait for the blessings that Eliphaz is talking about.

and what is my end,¹
that I should prolong my life?
6:12 Is my strength like that of stones?²
or is my flesh made of bronze?
6:13 Is³ 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 Al-
mighty.
6:15 My brothers⁸ have been as treacher-
ous⁹ as a seasonal stream,¹⁰

1 tn The word translated “my end” is קִוְּסִי (*qūsi*). It refers to the termination of his life. In Ps 39:5 it is parallel to “the measure of my days.” In a 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 אִם (*im*) in this kind of interrogative clause, see GKC 475 §150.g, note.

4 tn The word means something like “recovery,” or the powers of recovery; it was used in Job 5:12. In 1.1:6 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 חֶסֶד (*khesed*) could be taken as “loyalty” (“loyalty should be shown by his friend”).

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 לְאִם (*lammas*, “to the one in despair”) to some sort of verb; several adopt the reading “the one who withholds/ he withholds mercy from his friend forsakes....” The point 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 *v* (*vav*) 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 be simply 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 outrageous things, like Job has been doing.

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 בָּגַדוּ (*bag'edu*, “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: “have not regarded me.”

10 tn The Hebrew term used here is נַחַל (*nakhal*); 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;

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.

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 אֲפִיק (*'afiq*) 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 – יַעֲבֹרוּ (*ya'avuru*). But some translate it “pass away” or “flow away,” and others “overflow.” In 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* [NCBC], 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 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).

14 tn The participle הַקְּרִימִים (*haqqod'rim*), 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. The versions failed to note that this referred to the waters introduced in v. 15.

15 tn The verb יִתְהַלֵּם (*yit'alle*) has been translated “is hid” or “hides itself.” But this does not work easily in the sentence with the preposition “upon them.” Torczyner suggested “pile up” from an Aramaic root עָלַם (*'alam*), and E. Dhorme (*Job*, 87) defends it without changing the text, contending that the form we have was chosen for alliterative value with the prepositional phrase before it.

16 tn The LXX paraphrases the whole verse: “They who used to reverence me now come against me like snow or congealed ice.”

17 tn The verb יִזְרְעוּ (*yiz'oru*, “burnt, scorched”) occurs only here. A good number of interpretations take the root as a by-form of צָרַב (*tsarav*) 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 זָרַב (*zarav*) 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.

18 tn The verb נִידְּוּ (*nid'akhu*) literally means “they are extinguished” or “they vanish” (cf. 18:5-6; 21:17). The LXX, perhaps confusing the word with the verb יָדַע (*yada'*, “to know”) has “and it is not known what it was.”

6:18 Caravans¹ turn aside from their routes;
they go² into the wasteland³ and perish.⁴
6:19 The caravans of Tema⁵ looked intently⁶ for these streams;⁷
the traveling merchants⁸ of Sheba hoped for them.
6:20 They were distressed,⁹
because each one had been¹⁰ so confident;
they arrived there,¹¹ but were disappointed.

6:21 For now¹² you have become like these streams that are no help;¹³
you see a terror,¹⁴ and are afraid.

Friends' Fears

6:22 "Have I¹⁵ ever said,¹⁶ 'Give me something,
and from your fortune¹⁷ make gifts¹⁸ in my favor?'
6:23 Or 'Deliver me¹⁹ from the enemy's power,²⁰
and from the hand of tyrants²¹ ransom²² me?'

1 tn This is the usual rendering of the Hebrew אֲרִיזוֹת (*orkhot*, "way, path"). It would mean that the course of the wadi would wind down and be lost in the sand. Many commentators either repeat the text to אֲרִיזוֹת (*or'khot*) 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 the water deviate from their course looking for it.

2 tn The verb literally means "to go up," but here no real ascent is intended for the wasteland. It means 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.

3 tn The word תוֹהוּ (*tohu*) was used in Genesis for "waste," meaning without shape or structure. Here the term refers to the trackless, unending wilderness (cf. 12:24).

4 sn If the term "paths" (referring to the brook) is the subject, then this verb would mean it dies in the desert; if caravaneers 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 caravaneer was looking for refreshment, but found only that the brook had dried up.

5 sn 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 Sabeans were raiders; here they are traveling merchants.

6 tn The verb נָבֵט (*navat*) means "to gaze intently"; the looking 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.

7 tn The words "for these streams" are supplied from context to complete the thought and make the connection with the preceding context.

8 tn In Ps 68:24 this word has the meaning of "processions"; here that procession is of traveling merchants forming convoys or caravans.

9 tn The verb בוֹשׁ (*bosh*) 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 כָּפַר (*khafar*, "to be confounded, disappointed").

10 tn The perfect verb has the nuance of past perfect here, for their confidence preceded their disappointment. Note the contrast, using these verbs, in Ps 22:6: "they trusted in you and they were not put to shame [i.e., disappointed]."

11 tn 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."

12 tn There is a textual problem in this line, an issue of *Kethib-Qere*. Some read the form with the *Qere* as the preposition with a suffix referring to "the river," with the idea "you are like it." Others would read the form with the *Kethib* 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 *ki* (*ki*, "for") to *ken* (*ken*, "thus"). However, such an emendation is unnecessary since *ki* itself can be legitimately employed as an emphatic particle. In that case, the translation would be, "Indeed, now you are" in the sense of "At this time you certainly are behaving like those 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 tn The perfect of הָיָה (*hayah*) could be translated as either "are" or "have been" rather than "have become" (cf. Joüon 2:373 §113.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."

14 tn The word חֵתָה (*khatah*) is a *hapax legomenon*. The word חָתָה (*khat*) means "terror" in 41:25. The construct form חֵתָה (*khittat*) is found in Gen 35:5; and חֵתִית (*khittit*) is found in Ezek 26:17, 32:23). The Akkadian cognate means "terror." It probably means that in Job's suffering they recognized some dreaded thing from God and were afraid to speak any sympathy toward him.

15 tn The Hebrew חָכִי (*hakh*) literally says "Is it because...."

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

17 tn The word כֹּחַ (*koakh*) basically means "strength, force," but like the synonym חַיִל (*khayil*), it can also mean "wealth, fortune." E. Dhorme notes that to the Semitic mind, riches bring power (*Job*, 90).

18 tn Or "bribes." The verb שִׁחַדוּ (*shikhadu*) means "give 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 tn 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 this, does make this verse the purpose statement – "to deliver from enemies...."

20 tn Heb "hand," as in the second half of the verse.

21 tn חֲרָשִׁים (*aritsim*) are tyrants, the people who inspire fear (*Job* 15:20; 27:13); the root verb חָרַשׁ (*arats*) means "to terrify" (*Job* 13:25).

22 tn The verb now is the imperfect; since it is parallel to the imperative in the first half of the verse it is imperfect of instruction, much like English uses the future for instruction. The verb פָּדָה (*padah*) means "to ransom, redeem," often in contexts where payment is made.

No Sin Discovered

6:24 “Teach⁴ me and I, for my part,² will be silent; explain to me³ how I have been mistaken.⁴
 6:25 How painful⁵ are honest words! But⁶ what does your reproof⁷ prove?⁸
 6:26 Do you intend to criticize mere words, and treat⁹ the words of a despairing man as wind?
 6:27 Yes, you would gamble¹⁰ for the fatherless,

and auction off¹¹ 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 reconsider,¹⁷ for my righteousness is intact!¹⁸
 6:30 Is there any falsehood¹⁹ on my lips? Can my mouth²⁰ not discern evil things?²¹

¹ **tn** The verb “teach” or “instruct” is the Hiphil הורינוי (*horu-ni*), from the verb ירה (*yarah*); the basic idea of “point, direct” lies behind this meaning. The verb is cognate to the noun תורה (*torah*, “instruction, teaching, law”).

² **tn** The independent personal pronoun makes the subject of the verb emphatic: “and I will be silent.”

³ **tn** The verb is הבינו (*havinu*, “to cause someone to understand”); with the ל (*lamed*) following, it has the sense of “explain to me.”

⁴ **tn** The verb שָׁגָה (*shagah*) has the sense of “wandering, getting lost, being mistaken.”

⁵ **tn** The word נִמְרָצוּ (*nimratsu*, “[they] painful are”) may be connected to מָרַץ (*marats*, “to be ill”). This would give the idea of “how distressing,” or “painful” in this stem. G. R. Driver (*JTS* 29 [1927/28]: 390-96) connected it to an Akkadian cognate “to be ill” and rendered it “bitter.” It has also been linked with מָרַס (*maras*), meaning “to be hard, strong,” giving the idea of “how persuasive” (see N. S. Doniach and W. E. Barnes, “Job 4:25: The Root *Maras*,” *JTS* [1929/30]: 291-92). There seems more support for the meaning “to be ill” (cf. Mal 2:10). Others follow Targum Job “how pleasant [to my palate are your words]”; E. Dhorme (*Job*, 92) follows this without changing the text but noting that the word has an interchange of letter with מָלַץ (*malats*) for מָרַץ (*marats*).

⁶ **tn** The ו (*vav*) here introduces the antithesis (GKC 484-85 §154.a).

⁷ **tn** The infinitive הוֹכְחָה (*hokheakh*, “reproof,” from יָכַח [*yakhakh*], “prove”) becomes the subject of the verb from the same root, יִכְחִיחַ (*yokhiakh*), and so serves as a noun (see GKC 340 §113.b). This verb means “to dispute, quarrel, argue, contend” (see BDB 406-7 s.v. יָכַח). Job is saying, “What does reproof from you prove?”

⁸ **tn** The LXX again paraphrases this line: “But as it seems, the words of a true man are vain, because I do not ask strength of you.” But the rest of the versions are equally divided on the verse.

⁹ **tn** This, in the context, is probably the meaning, although the Hebrew simply has the line after the first half of the verse read: “and as/to wind the words of a despairing man.” The line could be translated “and the words of a despairing man, [which are] as wind.” But this translation follows the same approach as RSV, NIV, and NAB, which take the idiom of the verb (“think, imagine”) with the preposition on “wind” to mean “reckon as wind” – “and treat the words of a despairing man as wind.”

¹⁰ **tn** The word “lots” is not in the text; the verb is simply תַּפְּלוּ (*tappilu*, “you cast”). But the word “lots” is also omitted in 1 Sam 14:42. Some commentators follow the LXX and repeat the word and divide the object of the preposition to read “and fall upon the blameless one.” Fohrer deletes the verse. Peake transfers it to come after v. 23. Even though it does not follow quite as well here, it nonetheless makes sense as a strong invective against their lack of sympathy, and the lack of connection could be the result of emotional speech. He is saying they are the kind of people who would cast lots over the child of a debtor, who, after the death of the father, would be sold to slavery.

¹¹ **tn** The verb תִּכְרוּ (*tikhru*) is from כָּרַח (*karah*), which is found in 40:30 with אַל (*al*), 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.

¹² **tn** The second verb, the imperative “turn,” is subordinated to the first imperative even though there is no *vav* present (see GKC 385-87 §120.a, g).

¹³ **tn** The line has “and now, be pleased, turn to me [i.e., face me].” The LXX reverses the idea, “And now, having looked upon your countenances, I will not lie.” The expression “turn to me” means essentially to turn the eyes toward someone to look at him.

¹⁴ **tn** The construction uses אֵין (*im*) as in a negative oath to mark the strong negative. He is underscoring his sincerity here. See M. R. Lehmann, “Biblical Oaths,” *ZAW* 81 (1969): 74-92.

¹⁵ **tn** The Hebrew verb שָׁבוּ (*shuvu*) would literally be “return.” It has here the sense of “to begin again; to adopt another course,” that is, proceed on another supposition other than my guilt (A. B. Davidson, *Job*, 49). The LXX takes the word from יָשָׁב (*yashav*, “sit, dwell”) reading “sit down now.”

¹⁶ **tn** The word אַוְלָה (*avlah*) 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.

¹⁷ **tn** The verb here is also שָׁבוּ (*shuvu*), although there is a *Kethib-Qere* reading. See R. Gordis, “Some Unrecognized Meanings of the Root *Shub*,” *JBL* 52 (1933): 153-62.

¹⁸ **tn** 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.

¹⁹ **tn** The word אַוְלָה (*avlah*) is repeated from the last verse. Here the focus is clearly on wickedness or injustice spoken.

²⁰ **tn** 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.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “my palate.” Here “palate” is used not so much for the organ of speech (by metonymy) as of discernment. In other words, what he says indicates what he thinks.

²² **tn** The final word, הַוָּוֹת (*havvot*) is usually understood as “calamities.” He would be asking if he could not discern his misfortune. But some argue that the word has to be understood in the parallelism to “wickedness” of words (D. J. A. Clines, *Job* [WBC], 162). Gordis connects it to Mic 7:3 and Ps 5:10 [9] where the meaning “deceit, falsehood” is found. The LXX has “and does not my throat meditate understanding?”

The Brevity of Life

7:1 “Does not humanity have hard service¹ on earth?
Are not their days also
like the days of a hired man?²
7:2 Like a servant³ longing for the evening shadow,⁴
and like a hired man looking⁵ for his wages,⁶
7:3 thus⁷ I have been made to inherit⁸
months of futility,⁹
and nights of sorrow¹⁰
have been appointed¹¹ to me.

7:4 If I lie down, I say,¹² ‘When will I arise?’¹³
and the night stretches on¹⁴
and I toss and turn restlessly¹⁴
until the day dawns.
7:5 My body¹⁵ is clothed¹⁶ with worms¹⁷
and dirty scabs;¹⁸
my skin is broken¹⁹ and festering.

1 tn The word צָבָא (*tsava*) is actually “army”; it can be used for the hard service of military service as well as other toil. As a military term it would include the fixed period of duty (the time) and the hard work (toil). Job here is considering the lot of all humans, not just himself.

2 tn The Hebrew term שָׂכִיר (*sakhir*) is a hired man, either a man who works for wages, or a mercenary soldier (Jer 46:21). The latter sense may be what is intended here in view of the parallelism, although the next verse seems much broader.

3 tn This term עֶבֶד (*eved*) is the servant or the slave. He is compelled to work through the day in the heat, but he longs for evening when he can rest from the slavery.

4 tn The expression יִשְׁאֵף צֶלַע (*yish'af tsel*, “longing for the evening shadow”) could also be taken as a relative clause (without the relative pronoun): “as a servant [who] longs for the evening shadow” (see GKC 487 §155.g). In either case, the expressions in v. 2 emphasize the point of the comparison, which will be summed up in v. 3.

5 tn The two verbs in this verse stress the eager expectation and waiting. The first, שָׁאָף (*sha'af*), means “to long for; to desire”; and the second, קָוָה (*qavah*), has the idea of “to hope for; to look for; to wait.” The words would give the sense that the servant or hired man had the longing on his mind all day.

6 tn The word פָּעַל (*po'al*) means “work.” But here the word should be taken as a metonymy, meaning the pay for the work that he has done (compare Jer 22:13).

7 tn “Thus” indicates a summary of vv. 1 and 2: like the soldier, the mercenary, and the slave, Job has labored through life and looks forward to death.

8 tn The form is the Hophal perfect of נָחַל (*nakhal*): “I have been made to inherit,” or more simply, “I have inherited.” The form occurs only here. The LXX must have confused the letters or sounds, α ναυ for the η (ναυ), for it reads “I have endured.” As a passive the form technically has two accusatives (see GKC 388 §121.c). Job’s point is that his sufferings have been laid on him by another, and so he has inherited them.

9 tn The word is שָׁוָה (*shav*), “vanity, deception, nothingness, futility”). His whole life – marked here in months to show its brevity – has been futile. E. Dhorme (*Job*, 98) suggests the meaning “disillusionment,” explaining that it marks the deceptive nature of mortal life. The word describes life as hollow, insubstantial.

10 tn “Sorrow” is עָמַל (*amal*), used in 3:10. It denotes anxious toil, labor, troublesome effort. It may be that the verse expresses the idea that the nights are when the pains of his disease are felt the most. The months are completely wasted; the nights are agonizing.

11 tn The verb is literally “they have appointed”; the form with no expressed subject is to be interpreted as a passive (GKC 460 §144.g). It is therefore not necessary to repeat the verb to make it passive. The word means “to number; to count,” and so “to determine; to allocate.”

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

13 tn The verb מָדַד (*madad*) 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 most plausible one might mention the view of Gray, who changes מָדַד (*mid-dad*, Piel of מָדַד) to מָדַד (Piel of מָדַד), comprising the preposition מִן [*min*] plus the noun יָד [*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 (*mid-dad*) with מָתַי (*matay*, “when”) to read “If I lie down, I say, ‘When comes the morning?’ If I rise up, I say, ‘How long till evening?’” 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).

14 tn The Hebrew term נִדְדִים (*nēdudim*, “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 נָדַד (*nadad*, “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, but there is no need to go beyond the contextually clear idea of the restlessness of the night.

15 tn Heb “my flesh.”

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

17 tn The word for “worms” (רִמְמָה, *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 tn The text has “clods of dust.” The word גִּישׁ (*gish*, “dirty scabs”) is a *hapax legomenon* from גָּשׁ (*gush*, “clod”). 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 “clods of dust” is wrong; he reprints “dust” to make a new verb “to cover,” cognate to Arabic, and reads “my flesh is clothed with worms, and scab covers my skin.” This refers to the dirty scabs that crusted over the sores all over his body. The LXX links this with the second half of the verse: “And my body has been covered with loathsome worms, and I waste away, scraping off clods of dirt from my eruption.”

19 tn The meaning of רָגַע (*raga*) is also debated here. D. J. 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*, 100) 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 days¹ are swifter² than a weaver's shuttle³ and they come to an end without hope.⁴
 7:7 Remember⁵ that my life is but a breath,
 that⁶ my eyes will never again⁷ see happiness.
 7:8 The eye of him who sees me now will see me no more;⁸
 your eyes will look for me, but I will be gone.⁹
 7:9 As¹⁰ a cloud is dispersed and then disappears,¹¹
 so the one who goes down to the grave¹² does not come up again.¹³

¹ **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.

² **tn** The verb קָלַל (*qalal*) means "to be light" (40:4), and then by extension "to be swift; to be rapid" (Jer 4:13; Hab 1:8).

³ **sn** 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. אָרִי), 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."

⁴ **tn** The text includes a wonderful wordplay on this word. The noun is תִּיקְוָה (*tiqvah*, "hope"). But it can also have the meaning of one of its cognate nouns, קָו (*qav*, "thread, cord," as in Josh 2:18,21). He is saying that his life is coming to an end for lack of thread/for lack of hope (see further E. Dhorme, *Job*, 101).

⁵ **sn** Job is probably turning here to God, as is clear from v. 11 on. The NIV supplies the word "God" for clarification. It was God who breathed breath into man's nostrils (Gen 2:7), and so God is called to remember that man is but a breath.

⁶ **tn** The word "that" is supplied in the translation.

⁷ **tn** The verb with the infinitive serves as a verbal hendiadys: "return to see" means "see again."

⁸ **sn** The meaning of the verse is that God will relent, but it will be too late. God now sees him with a hostile eye; when he looks for him, or looks upon him in friendliness, it will be too late.

⁹ **tn** This verse is omitted in the LXX and so by several commentators. But the verb שָׁוַר (*shur*, "turn, return") is so characteristic of Job (10 times) that the verse seems appropriate here.

¹⁰ **tn** The comparison is implied; "as" is therefore supplied in the translation.

¹¹ **tn** The two verbs כָּלַח (*kalah*) and הָלַךְ (*halakh*) mean "to come to an end" and "to go" respectively. The picture is of the cloud that breaks up, comes to an end, is dispersed so that it is no longer a cloud; it then fades away or vanishes. This line forms a good simile for the situation of a man who comes to his end and disappears.

¹² **tn** The noun שְׁאוֹל (*she'ol*) can mean "the grave," "death," or "Sheol" – the realm of departed spirits. In Job this is a land from which there is no return (10:21 and here). It is a place of darkness and gloom (10:21-22), a place where the dead lie hidden (14:13); as a place appointed for all no matter what their standing on earth might have been (30:23). In each case the precise meaning has to be determined. Here the grave makes the most sense, for Job is simply talking about death.

¹³ **sn** It is not correct to try to draw theological implications from this statement or the preceding verse (Rashi said Job was denying the resurrection). Job is simply stating that when people die they are gone – they do not return to this present life on earth. Most commentators and theologians believe that theological knowledge was very limited at such an early

7:10 He returns no more to his house, nor does his place of residence¹⁴ know him¹⁵ any more.

Job Remonstrates with God

7:11 "Therefore,¹⁶ I will not refrain my mouth;¹⁷ I will speak in the anguish of my spirit; I will complain¹⁸ in the bitterness of my soul.
 7:12 Am I the sea, or the creature of the deep,¹⁹ that you must put²⁰ me under guard?²¹
 7:13 If²² I say,²³ "My bed will comfort me,²⁴ my couch will ease²⁵ my complaint,"

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.)

¹⁴ **tn** M. Dahood suggests the meaning is the same as "his abode" ("Hebrew-Ugaritic Lexicography V," *Bib* 48 [1967]: 421-38).

¹⁵ **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.

¹⁶ **tn** "Also I" has been rendered frequently as "therefore," introducing a conclusion. BDB 168-69 s.v. אֲנִי lists Ps 52:7 [5] as a parallel, but it also could be explained as an adversative.

¹⁷ **sn** "Mouth" here is metonymical for what he says – he will not withhold his complaints. Peake notes that in this section Job comes very close to doing what Satan said he would do. If he does not curse God to his face, he certainly does cast off restraints to his lament. But here Job excuses himself in advance of the lament.

¹⁸ **tn** The verb is not limited to mental musing; it is used for pouring out a complaint or a lament (see S. Mowinckel, "The Verb *s'ph* and the Nouns *s'ph*, *siha*," *ST* 15 [1961]: 1-10).

¹⁹ **tn** The word תַּיִן (*tannin*) 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 polemical. The sea is a symbol of the tumultuous elements of creation; in the sea were creatures that symbolized the powerful forces of chaos – Leviathan, Tannin, and Rahab. They required special attention.

²⁰ **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.

²¹ **tn** The word מִשְׁמָר (*mishmar*) means "guard; barrier." M. Dahood suggested "muzzle" based on Ugaritic, but that has proven to be untenable ("Mismar, 'Muzzle,'" *JBL* 80 [1961]: 270-71).

²² **tn** The particle כִּי (*ki*) could also be translated "when," but "if" might work better to introduce the conditional clause and to parallel the earlier reasoning of Job in v. 4 (using אִם, 'im). See GKC 336-37 §112.11.

²³ **tn** The verb literally means "say," but here the connotation must be "think" or "say to oneself" – "when I think my bed...."

²⁴ **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.

²⁵ **tn** The verb means "to lift up; to take away" (נָסָה, *nasa*). When followed by the preposition ב (*bet*) 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.

7:14 then you scare me¹ with dreams
and terrify² me with³ visions,
7:15 so that I⁴ would prefer⁵ strangling,⁶
and⁷ death⁸ more⁹ than life.¹⁰
7:16 I loathe¹¹ it;¹² 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 mankind¹⁵ that you make so
much of them,¹⁶
and that you pay attention¹⁷ to them?
7:18 And that you visit¹⁸ them every
morning,
and try¹⁹ them every moment?²⁰
7:19 Will you never²¹ look away from
me,²²
will you not let me alone?²³
long enough to swallow my spittle?
7:20 If²⁴ I have sinned – what have I done
to you,²⁵
O watcher of men?²⁶

1 tn The Piel of הרתת (*khatar*) occurs only here and in Jer 51:56 (where it is doubtful). The meaning is clearly “startle, scare.” The perfect verb with the ו (*vav*) is fitting in the apodosis of the conditional sentence.

sn Here Job is boldly saying that it is God who is behind the horrible dreams that he is having at night.

2 tn The Piel of בנתת (*ba'at*, “terrify”) 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.

3 tn The prepositions ב (*bet*) and מן (*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 (ab/ב' a'). Verse 18 contains another example.

4 tn The word נפש (*nefesh*) 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” = “I” (meaning with every fiber of my being).

5 tn The verb בחר (*bakhar*, “choose”) followed by the preposition ב (*bet*) can have the sense of “prefer.”

6 tn The meaning of the term מַחְנָאק (*makhanaq*, “strangling”), a *hapax legomenon*, is clear enough; the verb חָנַק (*khanaq*) in the Piel means “to strangle” (Nah 2:13), and in the Niphal “to strangle oneself” (2 Sam 17:23). This word has tempted some commentators to take נפש (*nefesh*) in a very restricted sense of “throat.”

7 tn The conjunction “and” is supplied in the translation. “Death” could also be taken in apposition to “strangling,” providing the outcome of the strangling.

8 tn This is one of the few words recognizable in the LXX: “You will separate life from my spirit, and yet keep my bones from death.”

9 tn The comparative *min* (מִן) after the verb “choose” will here have the idea of preferring something before another (see GKC 429-30 §133.b).

10 tn The word מַעֲצוֹתַי (*me'atsmotay*) 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 repositing to מַעֲצוֹתַי (*me'atsvotay*, “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.”

11 tn 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 מָאָס (*ma'as*, “loathe”) is parallel to מָסַח (*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.”

12 tn 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.

13 tn Heb “cease from me.” This construction means essentially “leave me in peace.”

14 tn This word הֶבֶל (*hevel*) is difficult to translate. It means “breath; puff of air; vapor” and then figuratively, “vanity.” Job is saying that his life is but a breath – it is brief and fleeting. Compare Ps 144:4 for a similar idea.

15 tn The verse is a rhetorical question; it is intended to mean that man is too little for God to be making so much over him in all this.

16 tn The Piel verb is a factitive meaning “to magnify.” The English word “magnify” might not be the best translation here, for God, according to Job, is focusing inordinately on him. It means to magnify in thought, appreciate, think highly of. God, Job argues, is making too much of mankind by devoting so much bad attention on them.

17 tn The expression “set your heart on” means “concentrate your mind on” or “pay attention to.”

18 tn The verb בָּקַד (*paqad*) is a very common one in the Bible; while it is frequently translated “visit,” the “visit” is never comparable to a social call. When God “visits” people it always means a divine intervention for blessing or cursing – but the visit always changes the destiny of the one visited. Here Job is amazed that God Almighty would be so involved in the life of mere human beings.

19 tn Now the verb “to test” is introduced and gives further explanation to the purpose of the “visit” in the parallel line (see the same parallelism in Ps 17:3). The verb בָּחַן (*bakhan*) has to do with passing things through the fire or the crucible to purify the metal (see Job 23:10; Zech 13:3); metaphorically it means “to examine carefully” and “to purify by testing.”

20 sn The amazing thing is the regularity of the testing. Job is at first amazed that God would visit him, but even more is he amazed that God is testing him every moment. The employment of a chiasm with the two temporal adverbial phrases as the central elements emphasizes the regularity.

21 tn Heb “according to what [= how long] will you not look away from me.”

22 tn The verb שָׁחָה (*sha'ah*, “to look”) with the preposition מִן (*min*) means “to look away from; to avert one’s gaze.” Job wonders if God would not look away from him even briefly, for the constant vigilance is killing him.

23 tn The Hiphil of רָפָה (*rafah*) means “to leave someone alone.”

24 tn The simple perfect verb can be used in a conditional sentence without a conditional particle present (see GKC 494 §159.h).

25 sn Job is not here saying that he has sinned; rather, he is posing the hypothetical condition – if he had sinned, what would that do to God? In other words, he has not really injured God.

26 sn In the Bible God is often described as watching over people to protect them from danger (see Deut 32:10; Ps 31:23). However, here it is a hostile sense, for God may detect sin and bring it to judgment.

Why have you set me as your target?¹
 Have I become a burden to you?²
7:21 And why do you not pardon my
 transgression,
 and take away my iniquity?
 For now I will lie down in the dust,³
 and you will seek me diligently,⁴
 but I will be gone.”

*Bildad's First Speech to Job*⁵

8:1 Then Bildad the Shuhite spoke up and said:

8:2 “How long will you speak these things,⁶
 seeing⁷ that the words of your mouth
 are like a great⁸ wind?⁹
8:3 Does God pervert¹⁰ justice?¹¹

¹ **tn** This word is a *hapax legomenon* from the verb פָּגַע (*paga*’, “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 עָלַי (*alay*) the results of a scribal change is found (these changes were called *tiqqune sopherim*, “corrections of the scribes” made to avoid using improper language about God). The prepositional phrase would have been עֵינְךָ (*alekha*, “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 had repercussions on him, but not on God.

³ **tn** The LXX has, “for now I will depart to the earth.”

⁴ **tn** The verb שָׁחַר (*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 this on themselves, and so the only recourse is for Job to humble himself and make supplication to God. To make his point, Bildad will appeal to the wisdom of the ancients, for his theology is traditional. The speech has three parts: vv. 2-7 form his affirmation of the justice of God; vv. 8-19 are his appeal to the wisdom of the ancients, and vv. 20-22 are his summation. See N. C. Habel, “Appeal to Ancient Tradition as a Literary Form,” *ZAW* 88 (1976): 253-72; W. A. Irwin, “The First Speech of Bildad,” *ZAW* 51 (1953): 205-16.

⁶ **sn** “These things” refers to all of Job’s speech, the general drift of which seems to Bildad to question the justice of God.

⁷ **tn** The second colon of the verse simply says “and a strong wind the words of your mouth.” The simplest way to treat this 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 *vav* (vav) can also be subordinated as a circumstantial clause, as here.

⁸ **tn** The word כַּבִּיר (*kabbir*, “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.

⁹ **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).

¹⁰ **tn** The Piel verb יָעוּת (*avevet*) means “to bend; to cause to swerve from the norm; to deviate; to pervert.” The LXX renders the first colon as “will the Lord be unjust when he judges?”

¹¹ **tn** The first word is מִשְׁפָּט (*mishpat*, “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 יָסֵדֵק (*isdeq*, “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

Or does the Almighty pervert¹² what is right?

8:4 If¹³ your children sinned against him, he gave them over¹⁴ to the penalty¹⁵ of their sin.

8:5 But¹⁶ if you will look¹⁷ to God, and make your supplication¹⁸ to the Almighty,

8:6 if you become¹⁹ pure²⁰ and upright,²¹ even now he will rouse himself²² for you,

of *Mishpat* in the Book of Job,” *JBL* 101 (1982): 521-29.

¹² **tn** 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 יָעוּת (*y’avevet*) 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 **tn** 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 אֲנִי (*imi*) has the sense of “since” in this section.

¹⁴ **tn** The verb is a Piel preterite with a *vav* (vav) consecutive. The *vav* (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 יָעוּת (*shilleakh*) 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.

¹⁵ **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.

¹⁶ **tn** “But” is supplied to show the contrast between this verse and the preceding line.

¹⁷ **tn** The verb שָׁחַר (*shakhar*) 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.”

¹⁸ **tn** The verb יָתַח (*titkhannan*) means “to make supplication; to seek favor; to seek grace” (from יָחַן, *khanan*). 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 **tn** 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** Or “innocent” (i.e., acquitted).

²¹ **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.

²² **tn** The verb יָעוּר (*yai’ur*, “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,” *BA-SOR* 72 [1938]: 18-19; and H. N. Richardson, “A Ugaritic 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 restore¹ your righteous abode.²
8:7 Your beginning³ will seem so small,
since your future will flourish.⁴

8:8 “For inquire now of the former⁵ generation,
and pay attention⁶ to the findings⁷
of their ancestors;⁸
8:9 For we were born yesterday⁹ and do
not have knowledge,
since our days on earth are but a shadow.¹⁰

8:10 Will they not¹¹ instruct you and¹²
speak to you,
and bring forth words¹³
from their understanding?¹⁴
8:11 Can the papyrus plant grow tall¹⁵
where there is no marsh?
Can reeds flourish¹⁶ without water?
8:12 While they are still beginning to
flower¹⁷
and not ripe for cutting,¹⁸
they can wither away¹⁹
faster²⁰ than any grass!²¹
8:13 Such is the destiny²² of all who forget
God;
the hope of the godless²³ perishes,
8:14 whose²⁴ trust²⁵ is in something fu-

¹ **tn** The Piel of שָׁלַם (*shalam*) means “to make good; to repay; to restore something to its wholeness; to reestablish.” The best understanding here would be “restore [Job] to his place.” Some take the verb in the sense of “reward [Job himself] with a righteous habitation.”

² **tn** The construct בַּיַּת (*bayit*) is feminine; only the masculine occurs in Hebrew. But the meaning “abode of your righteousness” is clear enough. The righteousness of Job is pictured as inhabiting an estate, or it pictures the place where Job lives as a righteous man. A translation “rightful habitation” would mean “the habitation that you deserve” – if you are righteous.

³ **tn** The reference to “your beginning” is a reference to Job’s former estate of wealth and peace. The reference to “latter end” is a reference to conditions still in the future. What Job had before will seem so small in comparison to what lies ahead.

⁴ **tn** The verb has the idea of “to grow”; here it must mean “to flourish; to grow considerably” or the like. The statement is not so much a prophecy; rather Bildad is saying that “if Job had recourse to God, then....” This will be fulfilled, of course, at the end of the book.

⁵ **sn** Bildad is not calling for Job to trace through the learning of antiquity, but of the most recent former generation. Hebrews were fond of recalling what the “fathers” had taught, for each generation recalled what their fathers had taught.

⁶ **tn** The verb כִּוְּן (*khonen*, from כָּוַן, *kun*) normally would indicate “prepare yourself” or “fix” one’s heart on something, i.e., give attention to it. The verb with the לְ (*lamed*) preposition after it does mean “to think on” or “to meditate” (Isa 51:13). But some commentators wish to change the כָּ (*kaf*) to a בֵּ (*bet*) in the verb to get “to consider” (from בִּיַּן, *bin*). However, M. Dahood shows a connection between בָּן (*knn*) and שִׁיַּל (*shi’l*) in Ugaritic (“Hebrew-Ugaritic Lexicography,” *Bib* 46 [1965]: 329).

⁷ **tn** The Hebrew has “the search of their fathers,” but the word is probably intended to mean what that observation or search yielded (so “search” is a metonymy of cause).

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “fathers.”

⁹ **tn** The Hebrew has “we are of yesterday,” the adverb functioning as a predicate. Bildad’s point is that they have not had time to acquire great knowledge because they are recent.

¹⁰ **tn** E. Dhorme (*Job*, 116) observes that the shadow is the symbol of ephemeral things (14:2; 17:7; Ps 144:4). The shadow passes away quickly (116).

¹¹ **tn** The sentence begins emphatically: “Is it not they.”

¹² **tn** The “and” is not present in the line. The second clause seems to be in apposition to the first, explaining it more thoroughly: “Is it not they [who] will instruct you, [who] will speak to you.”

¹³ **tn** The noun may have been left indeterminate for the sake of emphasis (GKC 401-2 §125.c), meaning “important words.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “from their heart.”

¹⁵ **sn** H. H. Rowley observes the use of the words for plants that grow in Egypt and suspects that Bildad either knew Egypt or knew that much wisdom came from Egypt. The first word refers to papyrus, which grows to a height of six feet (so the verb means “to grow tall; to grow high”). The second word refers to the reed grass that grows on the banks of the river (see Gen 41:2, 18).

¹⁶ **tn** The two verbs, גָּאָה (*ga’ah*) and סָגָה (*sagah*), have almost the same meanings of “flourish, grow, become tall.”

¹⁷ **tn** The word has been traditionally translated “greenness” (so KJV, ASV), but some modern commentators argue for “in flower.” The word is found only in Song 6:11 (where it may be translated “blossoms”). From the same root is אָבִיב (*aviv*, “fresh young ears of barley”). Here the word refers to the plant that is still in its early stages of flowering. It should not be translated to suggest the plant is flowering (cf. NRSV), but translating as if the plant is green (so NASB) is also problematic.

¹⁸ **sn** The idea is that as the plant begins to flower, but before it is to be cut down, there is no sign of withering or decay in it. But if the water is withdrawn, it will wither sooner than any other herb. The point Bildad will make of this is that when people rebel against God and his grace is withheld, they perish more swiftly than the water read.

¹⁹ **tn** The imperfect verb here is the modal use of potential, “can wither away” if the water is not there.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “before.”

²¹ **tn** The LXX interprets the line: “does not any herb wither before it has received moisture?”

²² **tn** The word אֲרָחוֹת (*orkhot*) means “ways” or “paths” in the sense of tracks of destiny or fate. The word דַּרְכֵי (*derekh*, “way, road, path”) is used in a similar way (Isa 40:27; Ps 37:5). However, many commentators emend the text to read אַחֲרֵית (*akharit*, “end”) in harmony with the LXX. But Prov 1:19 (if not emended as well) confirms the primary meaning here without changing the text (see D. J. A. Clines, *Job* [WBC], 199).

²³ **tn** The word קְהָנִים (*khanef*) is often translated “hypocrite.” But the root verb means “to be profane,” and this would be done by idolatry or bloodshed. It describes an irreligious person, a godless person. In Dan 11:32 the word seems to mean “make someone pagan.” The word in this verse is parallel to “those who forget God.”

²⁴ **tn** The relative pronoun introduces the verse as a relative clause, working with the “godless person” of the preceding verse. The relative pronoun is joined to the resumptive pronoun in the translation: “who + his trust” = “whose trust.”

²⁵ **tn** The noun כֶּסֶל (*kesel*) in this half of the verse must correspond to “his security” in the second half. The meaning

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.
8:16 He is a well-watered plant⁵ in⁶ the
 sun,
 its shoots spread⁷ over its garden.⁸
8:17 It wraps its roots around a heap⁹ of
 stones¹⁰

must be "his trust" (see 4:6). The two words will again be parallel in 31:24.

1 tn The word *vaqot* (vaqot) is not known anywhere else; here it looks like it should be a noun to parallel "spider's house" in the next colon. But scholars have tried to identify it as a verb, perhaps an imperfect of *vaq* (vaq, BDB 876 s.v.), or related to an Arabic *qatta*, "to cut." Some versions have "break in sunder" (KJV, RV); others "cut off" (RSV). Apart from verbs, some commentators follow Sa' adia's Arabic translation "sun cords," meaning "gossamer." Accordingly, there are emendations like "threads," "threads of summer," "spider threads," and the like. D. J. A. Clines agrees with those who conclude that emendations based on Sa' adia's translation lack a sound philological basis. E. Dhorme "somewhat timidly" suggests *yalqut* (yalqut), the shepherd's bag or scrip (1 Sam 17:40). He suggests that an empty bag would be a symbol of something unstable and futile. It seems impossible to determine exactly what the word meant. One can only conclude that it means something like "fragile" or "futile." The LXX is of no help: "for his house shall be without inhabitants."

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."

3 tn The verb *amad* ("amad, "to stand") is almost synonymous with the parallel *qum* ("qum, "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 grabs hold of the house, not to hold it up, but to hold 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 *ratav* (ratav) means "to be 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 *lifne* ("lifne, "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 *lifne* ("lifne) 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. Orlinsky 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.

and it looks¹¹ for a place among stones.¹²
8:18 If he is uprooted¹³ from his place,
 then that place¹⁴ will disown him, say-
 ing,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 blame-
 less man,¹⁹
 nor does he grasp the hand²⁰

11 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 *khezeh* ("khezeh, "it looks") to *yikhyeh* ("yikhyeh, "it lives"). Others have tried to emend the text in a variety of ways: "pushes" (Budde), "cleave" (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.

12 sn The idea seems to be that the stones around which the roots of the tree wrap themselves suggest strength and security for the tree, but uprooting comes to it nevertheless (v. 18). The point is that the wicked may appear to be living in security and flourishing, yet can be quickly destroyed (H. H. Rowley, *Job* [NCBC], 74).

13 tc Ball reads *el* ("el, "God") instead of *im* ("im, "if"): "God destroys it" – but there is no reason for this. The idea would be implied in the context. A. B. Davidson rightly points out that who destroys it is not important, but the fact that it is destroyed.

tn The Hebrew has "if one destroys it"; the indefinite subject allows for a passive interpretation. The verb means "swallow" in the Qal, but in the Piel it means "to engulf; to destroy; to ruin" (2:3; 10:8). It could here be rendered "removed from its place" (the place where it is rooted); since the picture is that of complete destruction, "uprooted" would be a good rendering.

14 tn Heb "it"; the referent ("his place" in the preceding line) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

sn The place where the plant once grew will deny ever knowing it. Such is the completeness of the uprooting that there is not a trace left.

15 tn Here "saying" is supplied in the translation.

16 tn This line is difficult. If the MT stands as it is, the expression must be ironic. It would be saying that the joy (all the security and prosperity) of its way (its life) is short-lived – that is the way its joy goes. Most commentators are not satisfied with this. Dhorme, for one, changes *m'sos* ("m'sos, "joy") to *m'sos* ("m'sos, "rotting"), and gets "behold him lie rotting on the path." The sibilants can interchange this way. But Dhorme thinks the MT was written the way it was because the word was thought to be "joy," when it should have been the other way. The word "way" then becomes an accusative of place. The suggestion is rather compelling and would certainly fit the context. The difficulty is that a root *sas* ("sas, "to rot") has to be proposed. E. Dhorme does this by drawing on Arabic *sas*, "to be eaten by moths or worms," thus "worm-eaten; decaying; rotting." Cf. NIV "its life withers away"; also NAB "there he lies rotting beside the road."

17 tn Heb "dust."

18 sn As with the tree, so with the godless man – his place will soon be taken by another.

19 sn This is the description that the book gave to Job at the outset, a description that he deserved according to God's revelation. The theme "God will not reject the blameless man" becomes Job's main point (see 9:20,21; 10:3).

20 sn The idiom "to grasp the hand" of someone means to support or help the person.

of the evildoers.

8:21 He will yet¹ fill your mouth with laughter,² and your lips with gladness.

8:22 Those who hate you³ will be clothed with shame,⁴ and the tent of the wicked will be no more.”

*Job's Reply to Bildad*⁵

9:1 Then Job answered:

9:2 “Truly,⁶ I know that this is so.

But how⁷ can a human⁸ be just before⁹ God?¹⁰

9:3 If someone wishes¹¹ to contend¹² with

him, he cannot answer¹³ him one time in a thousand.

9:4 He is wise in heart¹⁴ and mighty¹⁵ in strength¹⁶ – who has resisted¹⁷ him and remained safe?¹⁸

9:5 He who removes mountains suddenly,¹⁹ who overturns them in his anger,²⁰

1 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 saying that God will not reject the blameless man until he filled Job with joy. Almost all commentators and modern versions change the pointing to עוּד (*od*, “yet”), forming a hope for the future blessing of joy for Job.

2 sn “Laughter” (and likewise “gladness”) will here be metonymies of effect or adjunct, being put in place of the reason for the joy – restoration.

3 sn 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 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 addresses Bildad. See K. Fullerton, “On Job 9 and 10,” *JBL* 53 (1934): 321-49.

6 tn The adverb אֲמֵנָם (*omnam*, “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 אָנָשׁ (*enosh*) 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 אִם (*im*, “with, before, in the presence of”). This is more specific than מִן (*min*) in 4:17.

10 sn 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 mortal who tries to challenge God in a controversy. The verb is used of Job in 13:3.

12 tn The verb רִיב (*riv*) is a common one; it has the idea of

“contention; dispute; legal dispute or controversy; go to law.” With the preposition אִם (*im*) 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.

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

15 sn The words אֲמִיץ (*ammits*) and כֹּחַ (*koakh*) 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”).

16 tn 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 אֵלָיו (*elayv*) 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.

17 tn The verb is the Hiphil of the verb קָשָׁה (*qashah*, “to be hard”). It frequently is 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.

18 tn The use of שָׁלֵם (*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.

19 tn The verb is plural: “they do not know it.” This suggests that the mountains would not know it. Some follow the Syriac with a singular verb, i.e., God does not know it, meaning, it is so trifling to God that he can do it without thinking. But the better interpretation may be “suddenly.” This would be interpreted from the MT as it stands; it would imply “before they know anything,” thus “suddenly” (Gray, Dhorme, Buitenwieser, 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*” in Hebrew,” *JTS* 15 [1964]: 54-57). J. A. Emerton works with a possible root יָדָה (*yada*) meaning “be still” (“A Consideration of Some Alleged Meanings of *yada*” in Hebrew,” *JSS* 15 [1970]: 145-80).

20 sn This line beginning with the relative pronoun can either be read as a parallel description of God, or it can be subordinated by the relative pronoun to the first (“they do not know who overturned them”).

9:6 he who shakes the earth out of its place¹
 so that its pillars tremble;²
 9:7 he who commands the sun and³ it
 does not shine⁴
 and seals up⁵ the stars;
 9:8 he alone spreads out the heavens,
 and treads⁶ on the waves of the sea;⁷
 9:9 he makes the Bear,⁸ Orion,⁹ and the
 Pleiades,¹⁰
 and the constellations of the southern
 sky,¹¹

9:10 he does great and unsearchable
 things,¹²
 and wonderful things without number.
 9:11 If¹³ he passes by me, I cannot see¹⁴
 him,¹⁵
 if he goes by, I cannot perceive him.¹⁶
 9:12 If he snatches away,¹⁷ who can turn
 him back?¹⁸
 Who dares to say to him, ‘What are you
 doing?’
 9:13 God does not restrain his anger;¹⁹
 under him the helpers of Rahab²⁰ lie
 crushed.²¹

The Impossibility of Facing God in Court

9:14 “How much less,²² then, can I

¹ sn Shakes the earth out of its place probably refers to earthquakes, although some commentators protest against this in view of the idea of the pillars. In the ancient world the poetical view of the earth is that it was a structure on pillars, with water around it and under it. In an earthquake the pillars were shaken, and the earth moved.

² tn The verb הִתְפַּלֵּץ (*hitfallats*) is found only here, but the root seems clearly to mean “to be tossed; to be thrown about,” and so in the Hitpael “quiver; shake; tremble.” One of the three nouns from this root is פִּלְצוּת (*pallatsut*), the “shudder” that comes with terror (see Job 21:6; Isa 21:4; Ezek 7:18; and Ps 55:6).

³ tn The form could also be subordinated, “that it shine not” (see further GKC 323 §109.g).

⁴ tn The verb זָרַח (*zarakh*) means “rise.” This is the ordinary word for the sunrise. But here it probably has the idea of “shine; glisten,” which is also attested in Hebrew and Aramaic.

sn There are various views on the meaning of this line in this verse. Some think it refers to some mysterious darkness like the judgment in Egypt (Exod 10:21-23), or to clouds building (3:5), often in accompaniment of earthquakes (see Joel 2:10, 3:15-16; Isa 13:10-13). It could also refer to an eclipse. All this assumes that the phenomenon here is limited to the morning or the day, but it could simply be saying that God controls light and darkness.

⁵ tn The verb חָתַם (*khatam*) with בָּנִי (*bē’ad*) before its complement, means “to seal; to wall up; to enclose.” This is a poetic way of saying that God prevents the stars from showing their light.

⁶ tn Or “marches forth.”

⁷ tn The reference is probably to the waves of the sea. This is the reading preserved in NIV and NAB, as well as by J. Crenshaw, *Wjydorek ‘al-bamote ‘ares*, CBQ 34 (1972): 39-53. But many see here a reference to Canaanite mythology. The marginal note in the RSV has “the back of the sea dragon.” The view would also see in “sea” the Ugaritic god *Yammu*.

⁸ sn The Hebrew אֲשֵׁי (*ash*), although in 38:32 it is אֲשֵׁי (*ayish*). This has been suggested to be Aldebaran, a star in the constellation Taurus, but there have been many other suggestions put forward by the commentaries.

⁹ sn There is more certainty for the understanding of this word as *Orion*, even though there is some overlap of the usage of the words in the Bible. In classical literature we have the same stereotypical reference to these three (see E. Dhorme, *Job*, 131).

¹⁰ sn The identification of this as *the Pleiades* is accepted by most (the Vulgate has “Hyades”). In classical Greek mythology, the seven Pleiades were seven sisters of the Hyades who were pursued by Orion until they were changed into stars by Zeus. The Greek myth is probably derived from an older Semitic myth.

¹¹ tn Heb “and the chambers of the south.”

¹² tn Only slight differences exist between this verse and 5:9 which employs the simple ו (*vav*) conjunction before אֵין (*eyn*) in the first colon and omits the ו (*vav*) conjunction before אֵין נִפְלְאוֹת (*nifla’ot*, “wonderful things”) in the second colon.

sn There is probably great irony in Job’s using this same verse as in 5:9. But Job’s meaning here is different than Eliphaz.

¹³ tn The NIV has “when” to form a temporal clause here. For the use of “if,” see GKC 497 §159.w.

¹⁴ tn The imperfect verbs in this verse are consistent with the clauses. In the conditional clauses a progressive imperfect is used, but in the following clauses the verbs are potential imperfects.

¹⁵ tn The pronoun “him” is supplied here; it is not in MT, but the Syriac and Vulgate have it (probably for translation purposes as well).

¹⁶ sn Like the mountains, Job knows that God has passed by and caused him to shake and tremble, but he cannot understand or perceive the reasons.

¹⁷ tn E. Dhorme (*Job*, 133) surveys the usages and concludes that the verb חָטַף (*khataf*) normally describes the wicked actions of a man, especially by treachery or trickery against another. But a verb חָטַף (*khataf*) is found nowhere else; a noun “robber” is found in Prov 23:28. Dhorme sees no reason to emend the text, because he concludes that the two verbs are synonymous. Job is saying that if God acts like a plunderer, there is no one who can challenge what he does.

¹⁸ tn The verb is the Hiphil imperfect (potential again) from שׁוּב (*shuv*). In this stem it can mean “turn back, refute, repel” (BDB 999 s.v. Hiph.5).

¹⁹ sn The meaning of the line is that God’s anger will continue until it has accomplished its purpose (23:13-14).

²⁰ sn “Rahab” is not to be confused with the harlot of the same name from Jericho. “Rahab” is identified with Tiamat of the Babylonian creation epic, or Leviathan of the Canaanite myths. It is also used in parallelism to the sea (26:12), or the Red Sea (Ps 74:13), and so comes to symbolize Egypt (Isa 30:7). In the Babylonian Creation Epic there is reference to the helpers of Tiamat. In the Bible the reference is only to the raging sea, which the LORD controlled at creation.

²¹ tn The verb שָׁחָה (*shakhakh*) means “to be prostrate” or “to crouch.” Here the enemies are prostrate under the feet of God – they are crushed.

²² tn The construction אַף כִּי אֲנֹכִי (*af ki ‘anokhi*) is an expression that means either “how much more” or “how much less.” Here it has to mean “how much less,” for if powerful forces like Rahab are crushed beneath God’s feet, how could Job contend with him?

answer him¹
and choose my words² to argue³ with⁴
him!⁵
9:15 Although⁶ I am innocent,⁷
I could not answer him;⁸
I could only plead⁹ with my judge¹⁰ for
mercy.
9:16 If I summoned him, and he answered
me,¹¹
I would not believe¹²
that he would be listening to my voice –

9:17 he who¹³ crushes¹⁴ me with a tem-
pest,
and multiplies my wounds for no reason.¹⁵
9:18 He does not allow¹⁶ me to recover¹⁷
my breath,
for he fills¹⁸ me with bitterness.
9:19 If it is a matter of strength,¹⁹
most certainly²⁰ 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 mouth²³ would condemn me,²⁴
although I am blameless,

1 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.

2 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.

3 tn The verb is supplied in this line.

4 tn The preposition אִם (*im*, “with”) carries the idea of “in contest with” in a number of passages (compare vv. 2, 3; 16:21).

5 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.”

6 tn The line begins with אֲשֶׁר (*asher*, “which”), which is omitted in the LXX and the Syriac. The particle אִם (*im*) can introduce a concessive clause (GKC 498 §160.a) or a conditional clause (GKC 495 §159.n). The idea here seems to be “even if I were...I could not...”

7 tn The verb is יִשְׁדַּאֲקִי (*isadaqti*, “I am right [or “righteous”]”). The term here must be forensic, meaning “in the right” or “innocent” (see 11:2; 13:18; 33:12; 40:8). Job is claiming to be in the right, but still has difficulty speaking to God.

8 tn The form is the Qal 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 Theodotus 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.

9 tn The verb אֶתְחַנֵּן (*etkhanan*) is the Hitpael of חָנַן (*khanan*), meaning “seek favor,” make supplication,” or “plead for mercy.” The nuance would again be a modal nuance; if potential, then the translation would be “I could [only] plead for mercy.”

10 tn The word מִשְׁפָּטִי (*mishofiti*) appears to be simply “my judge.” But most modern interpretations take the *po’el* participle to mean “my adversary in a court of law.” Others argue that the form is at least functioning as a noun and means “judge” (see 8:5). This would fit better with the idea of appealing for mercy from God. The dilemma of Job, of course, is that the LORD would be both his adversary in the case and his judge.

11 sn The idea of “answer” in this line is that of responding to the summons, i.e., appearing in court. This preterite and the perfect before it have the nuance of hypothetical perfects since they are in conditional clauses (GKC 330 §111.x). D. J. A. Clines (*Job* [WBC], 219) translates literally, “if I should call and he should answer.”

12 tn The Hiphil imperfect in the apodosis of this conditional sentence expresses what would (not) happen if God answered the summons.

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 יִשְׁפֹּטֵי (*shufeni*) is the same verb that is used in Gen 3:15 for the wounding of the serpent. The Targum to Job, the LXX, and the Vulgate all translate it “to crush; to pound,” 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.

15 tn תְּהִיָּם (*khinnam*) is adverbial, meaning “gratuitously, without a cause, for no reason, undeservedly.” See its use in 2:4.

16 tn The verb נָתַן (*natan*) essentially means “to give,” but followed by the infinitive (without the ל [lamed] here) it means “to permit; to allow.”

17 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.m).

18 sn 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.

19 tn The MT has only “if of strength.”

20 tn “Most certainly” translates the particle הִנֵּה (*hinneh*).

21 tn The question could be taken as “who will summon me?” (see Jer 49:19 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).

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 tn 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.¹
 9:21 I am blameless.² I do not know myself³
 I despise my life.

Accusation of God's Justice

9:22 "It is all one!⁴ That is why I say,⁵
 'He destroys the blameless and the guilty.'
 9:23 If a scourge brings sudden death,⁶
 he mocks⁷ at the despair⁸ of the innocent.⁹
 9:24 If a land¹⁰ has been given
 into the hand of a wicked man,¹¹

¹ **tn** The verb אָשָׁח (*aqash*) means "to be twisted; to be tortuous." The Piel has a meaning "to bend; to twist" (Mic 3:9) and "to pervert" (Isa 59:8). The form here is classified as a Hiphil, with the softening of the vowel *i* (see GKC 147 §53.7). It would then also be a declarative use of the Hiphil.

² **tn** Dhorme, in an effort to avoid tautology, makes this a question: "Am I blameless?" The next clause then has Job answering that he does not know. But through the last section Job has been proclaiming his innocence. The other way of interpreting these verses is to follow NIV and make all of them hypothetical ("If I were blameless, he would pronounce me guilty") and then come to this verse with Job saying, "I am blameless." The second clause of this verse does not fit either view very well. In vv. 20, 21, and 22 Job employs the same term for "blameless" (טָהוֹר, *tam*) as in the prologue (1:1). God used it to describe Job in 1:8 and 2:3. Bildad used it in 8:20. These are the final occurrences in the book.

³ **tn** The meaning of the expression "I do not know myself" seems to be, "I do not care." NIV translates it, "I have no concern for my life."

sn Job believes he is blameless and not deserving of all this suffering; he will hold fast to that claim, even if the future is uncertain, especially if that future involved a confrontation with God.

⁴ **tc** The LXX omits the phrase "It is all one." Modern scholars either omit it or transpose it for clarity.

sn The expression "it is one" means that God's dealings with people is indiscriminating. The number "one" could also be taken to mean "the same" – "it is all the same." The implication is that it does not matter if Job is good or evil, if he lives or dies. This is the conclusion of the preceding section.

⁵ **tn** The relationships of these clauses is in some question. Some think that the poet has inverted the first two, and so they should read, "That is why I have said: 'It is all one.'" Others would take the third clause to be what was said.

⁶ **tc** The LXX contains a paraphrase: "for the worthless die, but the righteous are laughed to scorn."

sn The point of these verses is to show – rather boldly – that God does not distinguish between the innocent and the guilty.

⁷ **tn** This bold anthropomorphism means that by his treatment of the despair of the innocent, God is in essence mocking them.

⁸ **tn** The term מַסָּה (*massat*), a *hapax legomenon*, was translated "trial" in the older versions, but it is not from מָסָה (*masah*, "to tempt; to test; to try"); instead it is from מָסַח (*masas*, "to flow"). It is used in the Niphal to speak of 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.

⁹ **sn** Job uses this word to refute Eliphaz; cf. 4:7.

¹⁰ **tn** 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.

¹¹ **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.

he covers¹² the faces of its judges;¹³
 if it is not he, then who is it?¹⁴

Renewed Complaint

9:25 "My days¹⁵ are swifter than a runner,¹⁶
 they speed by without seeing happiness.
 9:26 They glide by¹⁷ like reed¹⁸ boats,
 like an eagle that swoops¹⁹ down on its prey.²⁰
 9:27 If I say,²¹ 'I will²² forget my complaint,
 I will change my expression²³ and be cheerful,²⁴

¹² **tn** The subject of the verb is God. The reasoning goes this way: It is the duty of judges to make sure that justice prevails and that restitution and restoration are carried through, but when the wicked gain control of the land of other people and the judges are ineffective to stop it, then God must be veiling their eyes.

¹³ **sn** That these words are strong, if not wild, is undeniable. But Job is only taking the implications of his friends' speeches to their logical conclusion – if God dispenses justice in the world, and there is no justice, then God is behind it all. The LXX omitted these words, perhaps out of reverence for God.

¹⁴ **tn** This seems to be a broken-off sentence (anacoluthon), and so is rather striking. The scribes transposed the words אִשֵּׁי (*'efo*) and הוּא (*hu*) to make the smoother reading: "If it is not he, who then is it?"

¹⁵ **tn** The text has "and my days" following the thoughts in the previous section.

¹⁶ **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.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* "they flee."

¹⁸ **tn** The word מִבָּה (*'evah*) means "reed, papyrus," but it is a different word than was in 8:11. What is in view here is a light boat made from bundles of papyrus that glides swiftly along the Nile (cf. Isa 18:2 where papyrus vessels and swiftness are associated).

¹⁹ **tn** The verb יָטַח (*yatus*) is also a *hapax legomenon*; the Aramaic cognate means "to soar; to hover in flight." The sentence here requires the idea of swooping down while in flight.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "food."

²¹ **tn** The construction here uses the infinitive construct with a pronominal suffix – "if my saying" is this, or "if I say." For the conditional clause using אִם (*im*) with a noun clause, see GKC 496 §159.11.

²² **tn** The verbal form is a cohortative of resolve: "I will forget" or "I am determined to forget." The same will be used in the second colon of the verse.

²³ **tn** *Heb* "I will abandon my face," i.e., change my expression. The construction here is unusual; G. R. Driver connected it to an Arabic word *'adaba*, "made agreeable" (IV), and so interpreted this line to mean "make my countenance pleasant" ("Problems in the Hebrew text of Job," VTSup 3 [1955]: 76). M. Dahood found a Ugaritic root meaning "make, arrange" ("The Root 'zb II in Job," *JBL* 78 [1959]: 303-9), and said, "I will arrange my face." But see H. G. Williamson, "A Reconsideration of 'azab II in Ugaritic," *ZAW* 87 (1985): 74-85; Williamson shows it is probably not a legitimate cognate. D. J. A. Clines (*Job* [WBC], 219) observes that with all these suggestions there are too many homonyms for the root. The MT construction is still plausible.

²⁴ **tn** In the Hiphil of בָּלַג (*balag*) corresponds to Arabic *balija* which means "to shine" and "to be merry." The shining face would signify cheerfulness and smiling. It could be translated "and brighten [my face]."

9:28 I dread⁴ all my sufferings,²
 for³ I know that you do not hold me
 blameless.⁴
 9:29 If I am guilty,⁵
 why then⁶ weary myself⁷ in vain?⁸
 9:30 If I wash myself with snow water,⁹
 and make my hands clean with lye,¹⁰
 9:31 then you plunge me into a slimy pit¹¹
 and my own clothes abhor me.
 9:32 For he¹² is not a human being like I
 am,
 that¹³ I might answer him,
 that we might come¹⁴ together in judg-
 ment.
 9:33 Nor is there an arbiter¹⁵ between us,

who¹⁶ might lay¹⁷ his hand on us both,¹⁸
 9:34 who¹⁹ would take his²⁰ rod²¹ away from
 me
 so that his terror²² would not make me
 afraid.
 9:35 Then²³ would I speak and not fear
 him,
 but it is not so with me.²⁴

An Appeal for Revelation

10:1 “I²⁵ am weary²⁶ of my life;
 I will complain without restraint,²⁷
 I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
 10:2 I will say to God, ‘Do not condemn²⁸
 me;

1 tn The word was used in Job 3:25; it has the idea of “dread, fear, tremble at.” The point here is that even if Job changes his appearance, he still dreads the sufferings, because he knows that God is treating him as a criminal.

2 sn See Job 7:15; see also the translation by G. Perles, “I tremble in every nerve” (“The Fourteenth Edition of Gesenius-Buhl’s Dictionary,” *JQR* 18 [1905/06]: 383-90).

3 tn The conjunction “for” is supplied in the translation.

4 sn A. B. Davidson (*Job*, 73) appropriately notes that Job’s afflictions were the proof of his guilt in the estimation of God. If God held him innocent, he would remove the afflictions.

5 tn The clause simply has “I am guilty.” It is the same type of construction found in v. 24. It is also the opposite of that in v. 20. GKC 317 §107.n lists this as an example of the use of the imperfect to express an obligation or necessity according to the judgment of others; it would therefore mean “if I am to be guilty.”

6 tn The demonstrative pronoun is included to bring particular emphasis to the question, as if to say, “Why in the world...” (see R. J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, 24, §118).

7 tn The verb means “tire oneself”; see 3:17.

8 tn Here הֶבֶל (*hevel*, “breath, vapor, vanity”) is used as an adverb (adverbial accusative).

9 tn The Syriac and Targum Job read with the *Qere* “with water of בִּינִין, *b^eme*” snow.” The *Kethib* simply has “בִּינִין, *b^emo*” snow.” In Ps 51:9 and Isa 1:18 snow forms a simile for purification. Some protest that snow water is not necessarily clean, but if fresh melting snow is meant, then the runoff would be very clear. The image would work well here. Nevertheless, others have followed the later Hebrew meaning for שֵׁנֶיג (*sheleg*) – “soap” (so NIV, NRSV, NLT). Even though that makes a nice parallelism, it is uncertain whether that meaning was in use at the time this text was written.

10 tn The word בֹר (*bor*, “lye, potash”) does not refer to purity (Syriac, KJV, ASV), but refers to the ingredient used to make the hands pure or clean. It has the same meaning as בִּרִית (*borit*), the alkali or soda made from the ashes of certain plants.

11 tn The pointing in the MT gives the meaning “pit” or “ditch.” A number of expositors change the pointing to שִׁחֹת (*shukhot*) to obtain the equivalent of שִׁחֹת (*sukhot*) / שְׁחֹת (*sukhot*): “filth” (Isa 5:25). This would make the contrast vivid – Job has just washed with pure water and soap, and now God plunges him into filth. M. H. Pope argues convincingly that the word “pit” in the MT includes the idea of “filth,” making the emendation unnecessary (“The Word *sahat* in Job 9:31,” *JBL* 83 [1964]: 269-78).

12 tn The personal pronoun that would be expected as the subject of a noun clause is sometimes omitted (see GKC 360 §116.s). Here it has been supplied.

13 tn The consecutive clause is here attached without the use of the ו (*vav*), but only by simple juxtaposition (see GKC 504-5 §166.a).

14 tn The sense of the verb “come” with “together in judgment” means “to confront one another in court.” See Ps 143:2.

15 tn The participle מוֹכִיחַ (*mokhiakh*) is the “arbiter” or “mediator.” The word comes from the verb יָכַח (*yakhakh*, “decide,

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).

sn The old translation of “daysman” came from a Latin expression describing the fixing of a day for arbitration.

16 tn The relative pronoun is understood in this clause.

17 tn The jussive in conditional sentences retains its voluntative sense: let something be so, and this must happen as a consequence (see GKC 323 §109.i).

18 sn The idiom of “lay his hand on the two of us” may come from a custom of a judge putting his hands on the two in order to show that he is taking them both under his jurisdiction. The expression can also be used for protection (see Ps 139:5). Job, however, has a problem in that the other party is God, who himself will be arbiter in judgment.

19 tn The verse probably continues the description from the last verse, and so a relative pronoun may be supplied here as well.

20 tn According to some, the reference of this suffix would be to God. The arbiter would remove the rod of God from Job. But others take it as a separate sentence with God removing his rod.

21 sn The “rod” is a symbol of the power of God to decree whatever judgments and afflictions fall upon people.

22 tn “His terror” is metonymical; it refers to the awesome majesty of God that overwhelms Job and causes him to be afraid.

23 tn 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 tn 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 cannot.” This is very smooth and interpretive. Others transpose the two halves of the verse to read, “Since it is not so, I with myself // will commune and not fear him.” Job would be saying that since he cannot contend with God on equal terms, and since there is no arbiter, he will come on his own terms. English versions have handled this differently: “for I know I am not what I am thought to be” (NEB); “since this is not the case with me” (NAB); “I do not see myself like that at all” (JB).

25 tn The Hebrew has נַפְשִׁי (*nafshi*), usually rendered “my soul.”

26 tn The verb is pointed like a Qal form but is originally a Niphal from קָוַת (*qut*). 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 tn The verb אָזַב (*azav*) 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 tn The negated jussive is the Hiphil jussive of רָשַׁע (*ra-sha*); its meaning then would be literally “do not declare me guilty.” The negated jussive stresses the immediacy of the request.

tell me¹ why you are contending² with me.³

10:3 Is it good for you³ to oppress,⁴ to⁵ despise the work of your hands, while⁶ you smile⁷ on the schemes of the wicked?

Motivations of God

10:4 “Do you have eyes of flesh,⁸ or do you see⁹ as a human being sees?¹⁰

10:5 Are your days like the days of a mortal, or your years like the years¹¹ of a mortal,

10:6 that¹² you must search out¹³ my iniquity,

¹ **tn** The Hiphil imperative of יָדַע (*yada'*) would more literally be “cause me to know.” It is a plea for God to help him understand the afflictions.

² **tn** The verb is רִיב (*riv*), meaning “to dispute; to contend; to strive; to quarrel” – often in the legal sense. The precise words chosen in this verse show that the setting is legal. The imperfect verb here is progressive, expressing what is currently going on.

³ **tn** Or “Does it give you pleasure?” The expression could also mean, “Is it profitable for you?” or “Is it fitting for you?”

⁴ **tn** The construction uses כִּי (*ki*) with the imperfect verb – “that you oppress.” Technically, this clause serves as the subject, and “good” is the predicate adjective. In such cases one often uses an English infinitive to capture the point: “Is it good for you to oppress?” The LXX changes the meaning considerably: “Is it good for you if I am unrighteous, for you have disowned the work of your hands.”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “that you despise.”

⁶ **tn** Now, in the second half of the verse, there is a change in the structure. The conjunction on the preposition followed by the perfect verb represents a circumstantial clause.

⁷ **tn** The Hiphil of the verb יָצַע (*yaf'a*) means “shine.” In this context the expression “you shine upon” would mean “have a glowing expression,” be radiant, or smile.

⁸ **tn** Here “flesh” is the sign of humanity. The expression “eyes of flesh” means essentially “human eyes,” i.e., the outlook and vision of humans.

⁹ **sn** The verb translated “see” could also include the figurative category of perceive as well. The answer to Job’s question is found in 1 Sam 16:7: “The LORD sees not as a man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”

¹⁰ **sn** In this verse Job asks whether or not God is liable to making mistakes or errors of judgment. He wonders if God has no more insight than his friends have. Of course, the questions are rhetorical, for he knows otherwise. But his point is that God seems to be making a big mistake here.

¹¹ **tn** The Hebrew has repeated here “like the days of,” but some scholars think that this was an accidental replacement of what should be here, namely, “like the years of.” D. J. A. Clines notes that such repetition is not uncommon in Job, but suggests that the change should be made for English style even if the text is not emended (*Job* [WBC], 221). This has been followed in the present translation.

sn The question Job asks concerns the mode of life and not just the length of it (see Job 7:1). Humans spend their days and years watching each other and defending themselves. But there is also the implication that if God is so limited like humans he may not uncover Job’s sins before he dies.

¹² **tn** The clause seems to go naturally with v. 4: do you have eyes of flesh...that you have to investigate? For that reason some like Durham would delete v. 5. But v. 5 adds to the premise: are you also like a human running out of time that you must try to find out my sin?

¹³ **tn** The imperfect verbs in this verse are best given modal nuances. Does God have such limitations that he must make such an investigation? H. H. Rowley observes that Job implies that God has not yet found the iniquity, or extracted a confession from him (*Job* [NCBC], 84).

and inquire about my sin,
10:7 although you know¹⁴ that I am not guilty,
and that there is no one who can deliver¹⁵ out of your hand?

Contradictions in God’s Dealings

10:8 “Your hands have shaped¹⁶ me and made me,
but¹⁷ now you destroy me completely.¹⁸

10:9 Remember that you have made me as with¹⁹ the clay;

will²⁰ you return me to dust?

10:10 Did you not pour²¹ me out like milk,

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* עַל-דַּעְתְּךָ (*al da'ekha*, “upon your knowledge”). The use of the preposition means basically “in addition to your knowledge,” or “in spite of your knowledge,” i.e., “notwithstanding” or “although” (see GKC 383 §119.aa, n. 2).

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “and there is no deliverer.”

sn The fact is that humans are the work of God’s hands. They are helpless in the hand of God. But it is also unworthy of God to afflict his people.

¹⁶ **tn** The root עָצַב (*atsav*) is linked by some to an Arabic word meaning “to cut out, hew.” The derived word עֲצָבִים (*atsabbim*) means “idols.” Whatever the precise meaning, the idea is that God formed or gave shape to mankind in creation.

¹⁷ **tn** The verb in this part is a preterite with the *vav* (ו) consecutive. However, here it has merely an external connection with the preceding perfects, so that in reality it presents an antithesis (see GKC 327 §111.e).

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “together round about and you destroy me.” The second half of this verse is very difficult. Most commentators follow the LXX and connect the first two words with the second colon as the MT accents indicate (NJPS, “then destroyed every part of me”), rather than with the first colon (“and made me complete,” J. E. Hartley, *Job* [NICOT], 185). Instead of “together” some read “after.” Others see in קָבִיב (*saviv*) not so much an adjectival use but a verbal or adverbial use: “you turn and destroy” or “you destroy utterly (all around).” This makes more sense than “turn.” In addition, the verb form in the line is the preterite with *vav* consecutive; this may be another example of the transposition of the copula (see 4:6). For yet another option (“You have engulfed me about altogether”), see R. Fuller, “Exodus 21:22: The Miscarriage Interpretation and the Personhood of the Fetus,” *JETS* 37 (1994): 178.

¹⁹ **tn** The preposition “like” creates a small tension here. So some ignore the preposition and read “clay” as an adverbial accusative of the material (GKC 371 §117.hh but cf. 379 §119.i with reference to *beth essentiae*: “as it were, by clay”). The NIV gets around the problem with a different meaning for the verb: “you molded me like clay.” Some suggest the meaning was “as [with] clay” (in the same manner that we have “as [in] the day of Midian” [Isa 9:4]).

²⁰ **tn** The text has a conjunction: “and to dust....”

²¹ **tn** The verb נָתַךְ (*natakh*) means “to flow,” and in the Hiphil, “to cause to flow.”

and curdle¹ me like cheese?²

10:11 You clothed³ me with skin and flesh and knit me together⁴ with bones and sinews.

10:12 You gave me⁵ life and favor,⁶ and your intervention⁷ watched over my spirit.

10:13 “But these things⁸ you have concealed in your heart;

I know that this⁹ is with you: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,¹¹ woe¹² to me, and if I am innocent, I cannot lift my head:¹³

I am full of shame,¹⁴ and satiated with my affliction.¹⁵

1 tn This verb קָפַף (*qafaf*) means “to coagulate.” In the Hiphil it means “to stiffen; to congeal.”

2 tn The verbs in v. 10 are prefixed conjugations; since the reference is to the womb, these would need to be classified as preterites.

sn These verses figuratively describe the formation of the embryo in the womb.

3 tn The skin and flesh form the exterior of the body and so the image of “clothing” is appropriate. Once again the verb is the prefixed conjugation, expressing what God did.

4 tn This verb is found only here (related nouns are common) and in the parallel passage of Ps 139:13. The word סָבַךְ (*sakhakh*), here a Poel prefixed conjugation (preterite), means “to knit together.” The implied comparison is that the bones and sinews form the tapestry of the person (compare other images of weaving the life).

5 tn Heb “you made with me.”

6 tn E. Dhorme (*Job*, 150) suggests that the relation between these two words is like a hendiadys. In other words, “life,” which he says is made prominent by the shift of the copula, specifies the nature of the grace. He renders it “the favor of life.” D. J. A. Clines at least acknowledges that the expression “you showed loyal love with me” is primary. There are many other attempts to improve the translation of this unusual combination.

7 tn The noun בְּקָרָה (*p’quddah*), originally translated “visitation,” actually refers to any divine intervention for blessing on the life. Here it would include the care and overseeing of the life of Job. “Providence” may be too general for the translation, but it is not far from the meaning of this line. The LXX has “your oversight.”

8 sn “These things” refers to the affliction that God had brought on Job. They were concealed by God from the beginning.

9 sn The meaning of the line is that this was God’s purpose all along. “These things” and “this” refer to the details that will now be given in the next few verses.

10 sn The contradiction between how God had provided for and cared for Job’s life and how he was now dealing with him could only be resolved by Job with the supposition that God had planned this severe treatment from the first as part of his plan.

11 sn The verbs “guilty” and “innocent” are actually the verbs “I am wicked,” and “I am righteous.”

12 tn The exclamation occurs only here and in Mic 7:1.

13 sn The action of lifting up the head is a symbol of pride and honor and self-respect (Judg 8:28) – like “hold your head high.” In 11:15 the one who is at peace with God lifts his head (face).

14 tn The expression שָׂבַע קָלוֹן (*s’va’ qalon*) may be translated “full of shame.” The expression literally means “sated of ignominy” (or contempt קָלוֹן, *qalal*).

15 tn The last clause is difficult to fit into the verse. It trans-

10:16 If I lift myself up,¹⁶ you hunt me as a fierce lion,¹⁷ and again¹⁸ you display your power¹⁹ against me.

10:17 You bring new witnesses²⁰ against me, and increase your anger against me; relief troops²¹ come against me.

lates easily enough: “and see my affliction.” Many commentators follow the suggestion of Geiger to read רָחַף (*r’veh*, “watered with”) instead of רָחַח (*r’eh*, “see”). This could then be interpreted adjectivally and parallel to the preceding line: “steeped/saturated with affliction.” This would also delete the final yod as dittography (E. Dhorme, *Job*, 152). But D. J. A. Clines notes more recent interpretations that suggest the form in the text is an orthographic variant of *raweh* meaning “satiated.” This makes any emendation unnecessary (and in fact that idea of “steeped” was not helpful any way because it indicated imbibing rather than soaking). The NIV renders it “and drowned in my affliction” although footnoting the other possibility from the MT, “aware of my affliction” (assuming the form could be adjectival). The LXX omits the last line.

16 tn The MT has the 3rd person of the verb, “and he lifts himself up.” One might assume that the subject is “my head” – but that is rather far removed from the verb. It appears that Job is talking about himself in some way. Some commentators simply emend the text to make it first person. This has the support of Targum Job, which would be expected since it would be interpreting the passage in its context (see D. M. Stec, “The Targum Rendering of WYG’H in Job X 16,” VT 34 [1984]: 367-8). Pope and Gordis make the word adjectival, modifying the subject: “proudly you hunt me,” but support is lacking. E. Dhorme thinks the line should be parallel to the two preceding it, and so suggests יָגַעָה (*yagea’*, “exhausted”) for רָחַח (*rig’eh*, “lift up”). The contextual argument is that Job has said that he cannot raise his head, but if he were to do so, God would hunt him down. God could be taken as the subject of the verb if the text is using enallage (shifting of grammatical persons within a discourse) for dramatic effect. Perhaps the initial 3rd person was intended with respect within a legal context of witnesses and a complaint, but was switched to 2nd person for direct accusation.

17 sn There is some ambiguity here: Job could be the lion being hunted by God, or God could be hunting Job like a lion hunts its prey. The point of the line is clear in either case.

18 tn The text uses two verbs without a coordinating conjunction: “then you return, you display your power.” This should be explained as a verbal hendiadys, the first verb serving adverbially in the clause (see further GKC 386-87 §120. g).

19 tn The form is the Hitpael of פָּלָא (*pala’*), “to be wonderful; to be surpassing; to be extraordinary”). Here in this stem it has the sense of “make oneself admirable, surpassing” or “render oneself powerful, glorious.” The text is ironic; the word that described God’s marvelous creation of Job is here used to describe God’s awesome destruction of Job.

20 tn The text has “you renew/increase your witnesses.” This would probably mean Job’s sufferings, which were witness to his sins. But some suggested a different word here, one that is cognate to Arabic *adiya*, “to be an enemy; to be hostile”: thus “you renew your hostility against me.” Less convincing are suggestions that the word is cognate to Ugaritic “troops” (see W. G. E. Watson, “The Metaphor in Job 10,17,” *Bib* 63 [1982]: 255-57).

21 tn The Hebrew simply says “changes and a host are with me.” The “changes and a host” is taken as a hendiadys, meaning relieving troops (relief troops of the army). The two words appear together again in 14:14, showing that emendation is to be avoided. The imagery depicts blow after blow from God – always fresh attacks.

An Appeal for Relief

10:18 “Why then did you bring me out from the womb?

I should have died¹

and no eye would have seen me!

10:19 I should have been as though I had never existed;²

I should have been carried right from the womb to the grave!

10:20 Are not my days few?³

Cease,⁴ then, and leave⁵ me alone,⁶ that I may find a little comfort,⁷

10:21 before I depart, never to return,⁸ to the land of darkness

and the deepest shadow,⁹

10:22 to the land of utter darkness, like the deepest darkness,

and the deepest shadow and disorder,¹⁰

¹ **tn** The two imperfect verbs in this section are used to stress regrets for something which did not happen (see GKC 317 §407.n).

² **sn** This means “If only I had never come into existence.”

³ **tn** *Heb* “are not my days few; cease/let it cease....” The versions have “the days of my life” (reading ימי חַיִּי *[yami vakhadai]*) instead of ימי יְהוָה *[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 [1057]: 14). But the text is not impossible as it stands.

⁴ **tn** Taking the form as the imperative with the *vav* (vav), the sentence follows the direct address to God (as in v. 18 as well as 7:16). This requires less changes. See the preceding note regarding the plausibility of the jussive. The point of the verse is clear in either reading – his life is short, and he wants the suffering to stop.

⁵ **tn** In the different suggestions for the line, the *vod* (vod) of this word is believed to belong to the preceding word making “my life.” That would here leave an imperative rather than an imperfect. But if the *Qere* is read, then it would be an imperative anyway, and there would be no reason for the change.

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “put from me,” an expression found nowhere else. The *Qere* has a *vav* (vav) and not a *vav* (vod), forming an imperative rather than an imperfect. H. H. Rowley suggests that there is an ellipsis here, “hand” needing to be supplied. Job wanted God to take his hand away from him. That is plausible, but difficult.

⁷ **tn** The verb בָּלַג (balag) in the Hiphil means “to have cheer [or joy]” (see 7:27; Ps 39:14 HT [39:13 ET]). The cohortative following the imperatives shows the purpose or result – “in order that.”

⁸ **sn** The verbs are simple, “I go” and “I return,” but Job clearly means before he dies. A translation of “depart” comes closer to communicating this. The second verb may be given a potential imperfect translation to capture the point. The NIV offered more of an interpretive paraphrase: “before I go to the place of no return.”

⁹ **tn** See Job 3:5.

¹⁰ **tn** The word סֵדֶר (*seder*, “order”) occurs only here in the Bible. G. R. Driver found a new meaning in Arabic *sadira*, “dazzled by the glare” (“Problems in the Hebrew text of Job,” VTSup 3 [1955]: 76-77); this would mean “without a ray of light.” This is accepted by those who see chaos out of place in this line. But the word “order” is well-attested in later Hebrew (see J. Carmignac, “Précisions apportées au vocabulaire d’hébreu biblique par La guerre des fils de lumière contre les fils de ténèbres,” VT 5 [1955]: 345-65).

where even the light¹¹ is like darkness.”¹²

Zophar’s First Speech to Job¹³

11:1 Then Zophar the Naamathite spoke up and said:

11:2 “Should not this¹⁴ abundance of words be answered,¹⁵

or should this¹⁶ talkative man¹⁷ be vindicated?¹⁸

11:3 Will your idle talk¹⁹ reduce people to silence,²⁰

and will no one rebuke²¹ you when you mock?²²

11:4 For you have said, ‘My teaching²³ is flawless,

and I am pure in your sight.’

11:5 But if only God would speak,²⁴

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” (reading כְּמוֹ אֶפֶס *[kemo ’ofel tsalmavet]*) as glosses on the rare word עִפְתָּה (*efatah*, “darkness”) drawn from v. 21 (see also RSV). The verse literally reads: “[to the] land of darkness, like the deep darkness of the shadow of death, without any order, and the light is like the darkness.”

¹³ **sn** 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 assume that the vocalization of רַב (*rov*, “abundance”) should be רַב (*rav*, “great”): “great of words.” This would then mean “one who is abundant of words,” meaning, “a man of many words,” and make a closer parallel to the second half. But the MT makes good sense as it stands.

tn There is no article or demonstrative with the word; it has been added here simply to make a smoother connection between the chapters.

¹⁵ **tn** The Niphal verb יָעַנְהוּ (*ye’aneh*, “he answered”) would normally require a personal subject, but “abundance” functions as the subject in this sentence. The nuance of the imperfect is obligatory.

¹⁶ **tn** The word is supplied here also for clarification.

¹⁷ **tn** The bound construction “man of lips” means “a boaster” or “proud talker” (attributive genitive; and see GKC 417 §128.t). Zophar is saying that Job pours out this stream of words, but he is still not right.

¹⁸ **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.

¹⁹ **tn** The word means “chatter, pratings, boastings” (see Isa 16:6; Jer 48:30).

²⁰ **tn** The verb כָּרַשׁ (*kharash*) in the Hiphil means “to silence” (41:4); here it functions in a causative sense, “reduce to silence.”

²¹ **tn** The form מְכַלְמִים (*makhlim*, “humiliating, mocking”) is the Hiphil participle. The verb כָּלַם (*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 מִיִּיָּתֵן (*mi yitten*, “who will give”) see GKC 477 §151.b) is followed here by an infinitive (Exod 16:3; 2 Sam 19:1).

if only he would open his lips against you,¹

11:6 and reveal to you the secrets of wisdom –

for true wisdom has two sides² – so that you would know³ that God has forgiven some of your sins.⁴

11:7 “Can you discover⁵ the essence⁶ of God?

Can you find out⁷ 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?

¹ sn 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.” The point is that 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 כְּבִלְיָיִם (*khiflayim*, “two sides”) with כְּבִלְיָיִם (*khiflayim*, “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. Slotki has “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 ו (vav). Following the jussive, this clause would be subordinated to the preceding (see GKC 325 §110.i).

⁴ tn Heb “God causes to be forgotten for you part of your iniquity.” The meaning is that God was exacting 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* [NCBC], 88). Others in an attempt to improve the text make too many unwarranted changes. Some would read יִשְׁאַלְךָ (*yish’alkha*, “he asks of you”) instead of יִשֶׁה לְךָ (*yasseh l’ka*, “he causes to be forgotten for you”). This would mean that God demands an account of Job’s sin. But, as D. J. A. Clines says, this change is weak and needless (*Job* [WBC], 254-55).

⁵ tn The verb is מַצֵּא (*mat’sa*, “to find; to discover”). Here it should be given the nuance of potential imperfect. And, in the rhetorical question it is affirming that Job cannot find out the essence of God.

⁶ tn The word means “search; investigation,” but it here means what is discovered in the search (so a metonymy of cause for the effect).

⁷ tn The same verb is now found in the second half of the verse, with a slightly different sense – “attain, reach.” A. R. Ceresko notes this as an example of antanaclassis (repetition of a word with a lightly different sense – “find/attain”). See “The Function of Antanaclassis in Hebrew Poetry,” *CBQ* 44 (1982): 560-61.

⁸ tn The abstract תְּכִלִּית (*takhliit*) from כָּלָה (*kalah*, “to be complete; to be perfect”) may mean the end or limit of something, perhaps to perfection. So the NIV has “can you probe the limits of the Almighty?” The LXX has: “have you come to the end of that which the Almighty has made?”

⁹ tn The Hebrew says “heights of heaven, what can you do?” A. B. Davidson suggested this was an exclamation and should be left that way. But most commentators will report תְּכִלִּית גְּבוּהַ שָׁמַיִם (*govhe shamayim*, “heights of heaven”) to גְּבוּהַ מִשְׁמַיִם (*govhe mishamayim*, “higher than the heavens”) to match the parallel expression. The LXX may have rearranged the text: “heaven is high.”

¹⁰ tn Or “deeper than hell.” The word “Sheol” always poses problems for translation. Here because it is the opposite of heaven in this merism, “hell” would be a legitimate translation. It refers to the realm of the dead – the grave and beyond. The language is excessive, but the point is that God’s wisdom is immeasurable – and Job is powerless before it.

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

11:10 If he comes by¹¹ and confines¹² you¹³ and convenes a court,¹⁴

then who can prevent¹⁵ 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

¹¹ tn The verb יָחֹלֵף (*yakhlof*) is literally “passes by/through” (NIV “comes along” in the sense of “if it should so happen”). Many accept the emendation יַחְתּוֹף (*yakhtof*, “he seizes,” cf. Gordis, *Driver*), but there is not much support for these.

¹² tn The verb is the Hiphil of סָגַר (*sagar*, “to close; to shut”) 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 is cryptic. E. Dhorme (*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.”

¹³ tn The pronoun “you” is not in the Hebrew text but has been supplied in the translation.

¹⁴ tn The denominative Hiphil of קָהַל (*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.”

¹⁵ tn The verb means “turn him back.” Zophar uses Job’s own words (see 9:12).

¹⁶ tn The pronoun is emphatic implying that Zophar indicates that God indeed knows Job’s sin even if Job does not.

¹⁷ tn The expression is literally “men of emptiness” (see Ps 26:4). These are false men, for שָׁוְיָא (*shav’ei*) can mean “vain, empty, or false, deceitful.”

¹⁸ 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.”

¹⁹ 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 לוֹ (*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.

²⁰ tn As A. B. Davidson (*Job*, 84) says, the one thing will happen when the other happens – which is never. The word “empty” נָבוֹב (*navuv*) means “hollow; witless,” and “become wise” יִלְלַעַב (*yillavev*) is “will get heart” (not to “lack 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 פָּרָא (*pere*, “donkey”) to פָּרָד (*pered*, “stallion”), rendering “a witless might 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 יִלְלַעַב (*yivvalev*, “is born”) to יִלְלַעַב (*yil-lamed*, “is taught”), resulting in “a hollow man may get understanding, and a wild donkey’s colt may be taught [= tamed]” (cf. NAB).

11:13 “As for you,¹ if you prove faithful,² and if³ you stretch out your hands toward him,⁴

11:14 if⁵ iniquity is in your hand – put it far away,⁶ and do not let evil reside in your tents.

11:15 For⁷ then you will lift up your face without⁸ blemish;⁹ you will be securely established¹⁰ and will not fear.

11:16 For you¹¹ will forget your trouble;¹² you will remember it like water that¹³ has flowed away.

11:17 And life¹⁴ will be brighter¹⁵ than the

noonday;
though there be darkness,¹⁶
it will be like the morning.

11:18 And you will be secure, because there is hope;
you will be protected¹⁷

and will take your rest in safety.

11:19 You will lie down with¹⁸ no one to make you afraid,
and many will seek your favor.¹⁹

11:20 But the eyes of the wicked fail,²⁰ and escape²¹ eludes them;
their one hope²² is to breathe their last.”²³

*Job's Reply to Zophar*²⁴

12:1 Then Job answered:

12:2 “Without a doubt you are the people,²⁵

¹ **tn** The pronoun is emphatic, designed to put Job in a different class than the hollow men – at least to raise the possibility of his being in a different class.

² **tn** The Hebrew uses the perfect of כּוּן (*kun*, “establish”) with the object “your heart.” The verb can be translated “prepare, fix, make firm” your heart. To fix the heart is to make it faithful and constant, the heart being the seat of the will and emotions. The use of the perfect here does not refer to the past, but should be given a future perfect sense – if you shall have fixed your heart, i.e., prove faithful. Job would have to make his heart secure, so that he was no longer driven about by differing views.

³ **tn** This half-verse is part of the protasis and not, as in the RSV, the apodosis to the first half. The series of “if” clauses will continue through these verses until v. 15.

⁴ **sn** This is the posture of prayer (see Isa 1:15). The expression means “spread out your palms,” probably meaning that the one praying would fall to his knees, put his forehead to the ground, and spread out his hands in front of him on the ground.

⁵ **tn** Verse 14 should be taken as a parenthesis and not a continuation of the protasis, because it does not fit with v. 13 in that way (D. J. A. Clines, *Job* [WBC], 256).

⁶ **tn** Many commentators follow the Vulgate and read the line “if you put away the sin that is in your hand.” They do this because the imperative comes between the protasis (v. 13) and the apodosis (v. 15) and does not appear to be clearly part of the protasis. The idea is close to the MT, but the MT is much more forceful – if you find sin in your hand, get rid of it.

⁷ **tn** The absolute certainty of the statement is communicated with the addition of כִּי (*ki*) (see GKC 498 §159.ee).

⁸ **tn** For this use of the preposition מִן (*min*) see GKC 382 §119.w.

⁹ **tn** The word “lift up” is chosen to recall Job’s statement that he could not lift up his head (10:15); and the words “without spot” recall his words “filled with shame.” The sentence here says that he will lift up his face in innocence and show no signs of God’s anger on him.

¹⁰ **tn** The form מְטַאֵץ (*mutsaq*) is a Hophal participle from מָטַץ (*yatsaq*, “to pour”). The idea is that of metal being melted down and then poured to make a statue, and so hard, firm, solid. The LXX reads the verse, “for thus your face shall shine again, like pure water, and you shall divest yourself of uncleanness, and shall not fear.”

¹¹ **tn** For a second time (see v. 13) Zophar employs the emphatic personal pronoun. Could he be providing a gentle reminder that Job might have forgotten the sin that has brought this trouble? After all, there will come a time when Job will not remember this time of trial.

¹² **sn** It is interesting to note in the book that the resolution of Job’s trouble did not come in the way that Zophar prescribed it.

¹³ **tn** The perfect verb forms an abbreviated relative clause (without the pronoun) modifying “water.”

¹⁴ **tn** Some translations add the pronoun to make it specifically related to Job (“your life”), but this is not necessary. The word used here has the nuance of lasting life.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “and more than the noonday life will arise.” The present translation is an interpretation in the context. The

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 מְחֹלָה (*ḥoflah*), 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 *hafara*, “to protect” and repointing it to מְחֹלָה (*ḥoflarta*, “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 כָּלַח (*kalah*) means “to fail, cease, fade away.” The fading of the eyes, 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 paratactic 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 understanding² as well as
 you;
 I am not inferior to you.³
 Who does not know such things as
 these?⁴
12:4 I am⁵ a laughingstock⁶ to my
 friends,⁷
 I, who called on God and whom he an-
 swered⁸ –
 a righteous and blameless⁹ man
 is a laughingstock!
12:5 For calamity,¹⁰ there is derision
 (according to the ideas of the fortunate¹¹) –
 a fate¹² for those whose feet slip!

12:6 But¹³ the tents of robbers are peace-
 ful,
 and those who provoke God are confi-
 dent¹⁴ –
 who carry their god in their hands.¹⁵

*Knowledge of God's Wisdom*¹⁶

12:7 “But now, ask the animals and they¹⁷
 will teach you,
 or the birds of the sky and they will tell
 you.
12:8 Or speak¹⁸ to the earth¹⁹ and it will
 teach you,
 or let the fish of the sea declare to you.
12:9 Which of all these²⁰ does not know
 that the hand of the LORD²¹ has done²²
 this,
12:10 in whose hand²³ is the life²⁴ of every
 creature
 and the breath of all the human race.²⁵

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 נפל (*nofel*) 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 these friends 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 insurmountable, some have emended the text. Some simply changed the verb to “he is,” which was not very compelling. C. D. Isbell argued that אהיה (*ehyeh*, “I am”) is an orthographic variant of יהיה (*yihyeh*, “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 his 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], 92) contends that because Job has been saying that God is not answering him, these words must be part of the derivative words of his friends.

⁹ **tn** The two words, צדיק תמים (*tsadiq tamim*), could be understood as a hendiadys (= “blamelessly just”) following W. G. E. Watson (*Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 327).

¹⁰ **tn** The first word, לפיד (*lapid*), could be rendered “a torch of scorn,” but this gives no satisfying meaning. The ל (*lamed*) is often taken as an otiose letter, and the noun פיד (*pid*) is “misfortune, calamity” (cf. Job 30:24; 31:29).

¹¹ **tn** The noun אשיות (*ashtot*, preferably אשיות, *ashtot*) is an abstract noun from אשת (*asht*, “to think”). The word שאנן (*sha’anān*) means “easy in mind, carefree,” and “happy.”

¹² **tn** The form has traditionally been taken to mean “is ready” from the verb כן (*kān*, “is fixed, sure”). But many commentators look for a word parallel to “calamity.” So the suggestion has been put forward that נכון (*nakhon*) be taken as a noun from נכה (*nakhah*, “strike, smite”): “a blow” (Schultens, Dhorme, Gordis), “thrust” or “kick” (*HALOT* 698 s.v. נכון).

¹³ **tn** The verse gives the other side of the coin now, the fact that the wicked prosper.

¹⁴ **tn** The plural is used to suggest the supreme degree of arrogant confidence (E. Dhorme, *Job*, 171).

¹⁵ **sn** The line is perhaps best understood as describing one who thinks he is invested with the power of God.

¹⁶ **sn** As J. E. Hartley (*Job* [NICOT], 216) observes, in this section Job argues that respected tradition “must not be accepted uncritically.”

¹⁷ **tn** The singular verb is used here with the plural collective subject (see GKC 464 §145.k).

¹⁸ **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).

¹⁹ **tn** A. B. Davidson (*Job*, 90) offers a solution by taking “earth” to mean all the lower forms of life that teem in the earth (a metonymy of subject).

²⁰ **tn** This line could also be translated “by all these,” meaning “who is not instructed by nature?” (H. H. Rowley, *Job* [NCBC], 93). But D. J. A. Clines points out that the verses have presented the animals as having knowledge and communicating it, so the former reading would be best (*Job* [WBC], 279).

²¹ **tc** Some commentators have trouble with the name “Yahweh” in this verse, which is not the pattern in the poetic section 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 copyist to introduce the tetragrammaton. But one could argue equally that the few mss with “God” were the copyists’ attempt to correct the text in accord with usage elsewhere.

²² **sn** The expression “has done this” probably refers to everything 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.

²³ **tn** The construction with the relative clause includes a resumptive pronoun referring to God: “who in his hand” = “in whose hand.”

²⁴ **tn** The two words נפש (*nefesh*) and רוח (*ruakh*) are synonymous in general. They could be translated “soul” and “spirit,” but “soul” is not precise for נפש (*nefesh*), 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.

²⁵ **tn** 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 all 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,
as⁴ the tongue² tastes food?³
12:12 Is not wisdom found among the
aged?⁴
Does not long life bring understanding?

12:13 “With God⁵ are wisdom and power;
counsel and understanding are his.⁶

12:14 If⁷ he tears down, it cannot be re-
built;
if he imprisons a person, there is no es-
cape.⁸

12:15 If he holds back the waters, then
they dry up;⁹
if he releases them,¹⁰ they destroy¹¹ the
land.

12:16 With him are strength and pru-
dence;¹²
both the one who goes astray¹³

and the one who misleads are his.

12:17 He¹⁴ leads¹⁵ counselors away
stripped¹⁶

and makes judges¹⁷ into fools.¹⁸

12:18 He loosens¹⁹ the bonds²⁰ of kings
and binds a loincloth²¹ around their waist.

12:19 He leads priests away stripped²²
and overthrows²³ the potentates.²⁴

¹ tn The *vav* (ו) 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).

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 vv. 13-25 Job refers to many catastrophes which he could not have seen, but must have heard about.

⁴ 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 לו (lo’) from the previous verse and make it the negative here, to say, “wisdom is not....” But Job will draw on the wisdom of the aged, only with discernment, for ultimately all wisdom is with God.

⁵ tn Heb “him”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

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 הִנֵּה (hen, equivalent to הִנֵּה, *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 הִפָּקַח (hafakh) means “to overthrow; to destroy; to overwhelm.” It was used in Job 9:5 for “overturning” mountains. The word is used in Genesis for the destruction of Sodom.

¹² tn The word תוֹשִׁיָּיָה (tushiyah) 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 v. 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: שָׁגַג (shogeg) is “the one going astray,” i.e., the one who is unable to guard and guide his life. The second word is מִשְׁגָּה (mashgeh), from a different but historically related root שָׁגַה (shagah), which here in the Pihlpi 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*. Here the participle (“leads”) is followed by an imperfect (“makes fools”) after a *vav*.

¹⁶ tn The word שׁוּלַל (sholal), from the root שָׁלַל (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 God 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 מוֹסָר (musar, “discipline”), which might have replaced מוֹסָר (moser, “bond, chain”) from אָסַר (asar, “to bind”). Or מוֹסָר might be an unusual form of אָסַר (an option noted in HALOT 557 s.v. מוֹסָר*). 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 אֵזוֹר (ezor, “girdle”) to אָסַר (asar, “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 tn Except for “priests,” the phraseology is identical to v. 17a.

²³ tn The verb has to be defined by its context: it can mean “falsify” (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 עֵינָן (eynan) 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 advisers¹ of speech² and takes away the discernment³ of elders.
 12:21 He pours contempt on noblemen and disarms⁴ the powerful.⁵
 12:22 He reveals the deep things of darkness, and brings deep shadows⁶ into the light.
 12:23 He makes nations great,⁷ and destroys them; he extends the boundaries of nations and disperses⁸ them.⁹
 12:24 He deprives the leaders of the earth¹⁰ of their understanding;¹¹ he makes them wander in a trackless desert waste.¹²
 12:25 They grope about in darkness¹³ without light; he makes them stagger¹⁴ like drunkards.

*Job Pleads His Cause to God*¹⁵

13:1 “Indeed, my eyes have seen all this,¹⁶ my ears have heard and understood it.
 13:2 What you know,¹⁷ I¹⁸ know also; I am not inferior¹⁹ to you!
 13:3 But I wish to speak²⁰ to the Almighty,²¹ and I desire to argue²² my case²³ with God.
 13:4 But you, however, are inventors of lies;²⁴ all of you are worthless physicians!²⁵
 13:5 If only you would keep completely silent!²⁶ For you, that would be wisdom.²⁷

¹ **tn** The Hebrew נְאִמָּנִים (*ne'emanim*) is the Niphal participle; it is often translated “the faithful” in the Bible. The Rabbis rather fancifully took the word from נָאָם (*n'e'um*, “oracle, utterance”) and so rendered it “those 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 אָמַן (*aman*, “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 **tn** *Heb* “he removes the lip of the trusted ones.”

³ **tn** *Heb* “taste,” meaning “opinion” or “decision.”

⁴ **tn** The expression in Hebrew uses מְצִיחַ (*m'eziakh*, “belt”) and the Piel verb רִפָּה (*rippah*, “to loosen”) so that “to loosen the belt of the mighty” would indicate “to disarm/incapacitate the mighty.” Others have opted to change the text: P. Joüon emends to read “forehead” – “he humbles the brow of the mighty.”

⁵ **tn** The word אָפַק (*afaq*, “to be strong”) is well-attested, and the form אָפִיק (*afiq*) is a normal adjective formation. So a translation like “mighty” (KJV, NIV) or “powerful” is acceptable, and further emendations are unnecessary.

⁶ **tn** The Hebrew word is traditionally rendered “shadow of death” (so KJV, ASV); see comments at Job 3:3.

⁷ **tn** The word מַשְׂגִּי (*masgi*, “makes great”) is a common Aramaic word, but only occurs in Hebrew here and in Job 8:11 and 36:24. Some mss have a change, reading the form from שָׂגָה (*shagah*, “leading astray”). The LXX omits the line entirely.

⁸ **tn** The difficulty with the verb נָחָה (*nakhah*) is that it means “to lead; to guide,” but not “to lead away” or “to disperse,” unless this passage provides the context for such a meaning. Moreover, it never has a negative connotation. Some vocalize it וַיְנַחֵם (*vayyannikhem*), from נָחָה (*nuakh*), the causative meaning of “rest,” or “abandon” (Driver, Gray, Gordis). But even there it would mean “leave in peace.” Blommerde suggests the second part is antithetical parallelism, and so should be positive. So Ball proposed וַיְנַחֵם (*vayyimkhem*) from מָחָה (*makhah*): “and he cuts them off.”

⁹ **sn** The rise and fall of nations, which does not seem to be governed by any moral principle, is for Job another example of God’s arbitrary power.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “the heads of the people of the earth.”

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “heart.”

¹² **tn** The text has בְּתוֹהוּ לֹא דַרְכָּה (*b'e'tohu lo' darekh*): “in waste – no way,” or “in a wasteland [where there is] no way,” thus, “trackless” (see the discussion of negative attributes using לֹא [*lo*] in GKC 482 §152.u).

¹³ **tn** The word is an adverbial accusative.

¹⁴ **tn** The verb is the same that was in v. 24, “He makes them [the leaders still] wander” (the Hiphil of נָחָה, *ta'ah*). 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.

¹⁵ **sn** Chapter 13 records Job’s charges against his friends for the way they used their knowledge (1-5), his warning that God would find out their insincerity (6-12), and his pleading of his cause to God in which he begs for God to remove his hand from him and that he would not terrify him with his majesty and that he would reveal the sins that caused such great suffering (13-28).

¹⁶ **tn** Hebrew has כֹּל (*kol*, “all”); there is no reason to add anything to the text to gain a meaning “all this.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “Like your knowledge”; in other words Job is saying that his knowledge is like their knowledge.

¹⁸ **tn** The pronoun makes the subject emphatic and stresses the contrast: “I know – I also.”

¹⁹ **tn** The verb “fall” is used here as it was in Job 4:13 to express becoming lower than someone, i.e., inferior.

²⁰ **tn** The verb is simply the Piel imperfect אֲדַבֵּר (*adabber*, “I speak”). It should be classified as a desiderative imperfect, saying, “I desire to speak.” This is reinforced with the verb “to wish, desire” in the second half of the verse.

²¹ **tn** The Hebrew title for God here is אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי (*el shadday*, “El Shaddai”).

²² **tn** The infinitive absolute functions here as the direct object of the verb “desire” (see GKC 340 §113.b).

²³ **tn** The infinitive הוֹכְחָה (*hokheakh*) is from the verb יָחַה (*yakhakh*), which means “to argue, plead, debate.” It has the legal sense here of arguing a case (cf. 5:17).

²⁴ **tn** The מְלַחֵם שֶׂקֶר (*tof'le shaqer*) are “plasterers of lies” (Ps 119:69). The verb means “to coat, smear, plaster.” The idea is that of imputing something that is not true. Job is saying that his friends are inventors of lies. The LXX was influenced by the next line and came up with “false physicians.”

²⁵ **tn** The literal rendering of the construct would be “healers of worthlessness.” Ewald and Dillmann translated it “patchers” based on a meaning in Arabic and Ethiopic; this would give the idea “botchers.” But it makes equally good sense to take “healers” as the meaning, for Job’s friends came to minister comfort and restoration to him – but they failed. See P. Humbert, “Maladie et médecine dans l’AT,” *RHPR* 44 (1964): 1-29.

²⁶ **tn** The construction is the imperfect verb in the wish formula preceded by the infinitive that intensifies it. The Hiphil is not directly causative here, but internally – “keep silent.”

²⁷ **tn** The text literally reads, “and it would be for you for wisdom,” or “that it would become your wisdom.” Job is rather sarcastic here, indicating if they shut up they would prove themselves to be wise (see Prov 17:28).

13:6 “Listen now to my argument,¹
and be attentive to my lips’ contentions.²
13:7 Will you speak wickedly³ on God’s
behalf?⁴
Will you speak deceitfully for him?
13:8 Will you show him partiality?⁵
Will you argue the case⁶ for God?
13:9 Would it turn out well if he would
examine⁷ you?
Or as one deceives⁸ a man would you
deceive him?
13:10 He would certainly rebuke⁹ you
if you secretly¹⁰ showed partiality!
13:11 Would not his splendor¹¹ terrify¹²
you
and the fear he inspires¹³ fall on you?
13:12 Your maxims¹⁴ are proverbs of
ashes;¹⁵

your defenses¹⁶ are defenses of clay.¹⁷
13:13 “Refrain from talking¹⁸ with me so
that¹⁹ I may speak;
then let come to me²⁰ what may.²¹
13:14 Why²² do I put myself in peril,²³
and take my life in my hands?
13:15 Even if he slays me, I will hope in
him;²⁴
I will surely²⁵ defend²⁶ my ways to his
face!

1 sn Job first will argue with his friends. His cause that he will plead with God begins in v. 13. The same root *יָבַח* (*yakhakh*, “argue, plead”) is used here as in v. 3b (see note). Synonymous parallelism between the two halves of this verse supports this translation.

2 tn The Hebrew word *רִיבֹת* (*rivot*, “disputes, contentions”) continues the imagery of presenting a legal case. The term is used of legal disputations and litigation. See, also, v. 19a.

3 tn The construction literally reads “speak iniquity.” The form functions adverbially. The noun *עֲוֹלָה* (*avlah*) means “perversion; injustice; iniquity; falsehood.” Here it is parallel to *רִמְיָהוּ* (*rīmīyah*, “fraud; deceit; treachery”).

4 tn The expression “for God” means “in favor of God” or “on God’s behalf.” Job is amazed that they will say false things on God’s behalf.

5 sn The idiom used here is “Will you lift up his face?” Here Job is being very sarcastic, for this expression usually means that a judge is taking a bribe. Job is accusing them of taking God’s side.

6 tn The same root is used here (*רִיב*, *riv*, “dispute, contention”) as in v. 6b (see note).

7 tn The verb *חָפַר* (*khafar*) means “to search out, investigate, examine.” In the conditional clause the imperfect verb expresses the hypothetical case.

8 tn Both the infinitive and the imperfect of *תָּלַל* (*talal*, “deceive, mock”) retain the *ה* (*he*) (GKC 148 §53.q). But for the alternate form, see F. C. Fensham, “The Stem HTL in Hebrew,” VT 9 (1959): 310-11. The infinitive is used here in an adverbial sense after the preposition.

9 tn The verbal idea is intensified with the infinitive absolute. This is the same verb used in v. 3; here it would have the sense of “rebuke, convict.”

sn Peake’s observation is worth noting, namely, that as Job attacks the unrighteousness of God boldly he nonetheless has confidence in God’s righteousness that would not allow liars to defend him.

10 sn The use of the word “in secret” or “secretly” suggests that what they do is a guilty action (31:27a).

11 sn The word translated “his majesty” or “his splendor” (*תִּשְׁאוֹן*, *tisṣa’ūn*) forms a play on the word “show partiality” (*תִּשְׂאוֹן*, *tisṣa’ūn*) in the last verse. They are both from the verb *נָסָא* (*nasa*, “to lift up”).

12 tn On this verb in the Piel, see 7:14.

13 tn Heb “His dread”; the suffix is a subjective genitive.

14 tn The word is *זִכְרוֹנֵיהֶם* (*zikhronekhem*, “your remembrances”). The word *זִכְרוֹן* (*zikaron*) not only can mean the act of remembering, but also what is remembered – what provokes memory or is worth being remembered. In the plural it can mean all the memorabilia, and in this verse all the sayings and teachings. H. H. Rowley (*Job* [NCBC], 99) suggests that in Job’s speech it could mean “all your memorized sayings.”

15 tn The parallelism of “dust” and “ashes” is fairly frequent in scripture. But “proverbs of ashes” is difficult. The genitive is certainly describing the proverbs; it could be classified as a

genitive of apposition, proverbs that are/have become ashes. Ashes represent something that at one time may have been useful, but now has been reduced to what is worthless.

16 tn There is a division of opinion on the source of this word. Some take it from “answer”, related to Arabic, Aramaic, and Syriac words for “answer,” and so translate it “responses” (JB). Others take it from a word for “back,” with a derived meaning of the “boss” of the shield, and translate it bulwark or “defenses” (NEB, RSV, NIV). The idea of “answers” may fit the parallelism better, but “defenses” can be taken figuratively to refer to verbal defenses.

17 sn Any defense made with clay would crumble on impact.

18 tn The Hebrew has a pregnant construction: “be silent from me,” meaning “stand away from me in silence,” or “refrain from talking with me.” See GKC 384 §119.ff. The LXX omits “from me,” as do several commentators.

19 tn The verb is the Piel cohortative; following the imperative of the first colon this verb would show purpose or result. The inclusion of the independent personal pronoun makes the focus emphatic – “so that I (in my turn) may speak.”

20 tn The verb *עָבַר* (*avar*, “pass over”) is used with the preposition *עַל* (*al*, “upon”) to express the advent of misfortune, namely, something coming against him.

21 tn The interrogative pronoun *מָה* (*mah*) is used in indirect questions, here introducing a clause [with the verb understood] as the object – “whatever it be” (see GKC 443-44 §137.c).

22 tc Most editors reject *עַל־מָה* (*al mah*) as dittography from the last verse.

23 tn Heb “why do I take my flesh in my teeth?” This expression occurs nowhere else. It seems to be drawn from animal imagery in which the wild beast seizes the prey and carries it off to a place of security. The idea would then be that Job may be destroying himself. An animal that fights with its flesh (prey) in its mouth risks losing it. Other commentators do not think this is satisfactory, but they are unable to suggest anything better.

24 tn There is a textual difficulty here that factors into the interpretation of the verse. The *Kethib* is *לוֹ* (*lo*, “not”), but the *Qere* is *לוֹ* (*lo*, “to him”). The RSV takes the former: “Behold, he will slay me, I have no hope.” The NIV takes it as “though he slay me, yet will I hope in him.” Job is looking ahead to death, which is not an evil thing to him. The point of the verse is that he is willing to challenge God at the risk of his life; and if God slays him, he is still confident that he will be vindicated – as he says later in this chapter. Other suggestions are not compelling. E. Dhorme (*Job*, 187) makes a slight change of *אֶיֶכְהָל* (*ayakhel*, “I will hope”) to *אֶיֶכְהַל* (*akhil*, “I will [not] tremble”). A. B. Davidson (*Job*, 98) retains the MT, but interprets the verb more in line with its use in the book: “I will not wait” (cf. NLT).

25 tn On *אֶךְ* (*akh*, “surely”) see GKC 483 §153 on intensive clauses.

26 tn The verb once again is *יָבַח* (*yakhah*, in the Hiphil, “argue a case, plead, defend, contest”). But because the word usually means “accuse” rather than “defend,” I. L. Seeligmann proposed changing “my ways” to “his ways” (“Zur Terminologie für das Gerichtsverfahren im Wortschatz des biblischen Hebräisch,” VTSup 16 [1967]: 251-78). But the word can be interpreted appropriately in the context without emendation.

13:16 Moreover, this will become my deliverance,
for no godless person would come before him.¹
13:17 Listen carefully² to my words;
let your ears be attentive to my explanation.³
13:18 See now,⁴ I have prepared⁵ my⁶
case;⁷
I know that I am right.⁸
13:19 Who⁹ 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 Remove¹³ your hand¹⁴ 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 my¹⁷ 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

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 342 §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 הִנֵּה (*hinneh*) functions almost as an imperative here, calling attention to what follows: “look” (archaic: behold).

⁵ tn The verb עָרַךְ (*arakh*) 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 מִשְׁפָּט (*mishpat*) 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 outcome of the suit.

⁹ tn The interrogative is joined with the emphatic pronoun, stressing “who is he [who] will contend,” or more emphatically, “who in the world will contend.” Job is confident that no one can bring charges against him. He is certain of success.

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 הֲרַחֵק (*harkhaq*, “remove”; GKC 98 §29.q), from רָחַק (*rakhaq*, “far, be far”) means “take away [far away]; to remove.”

¹⁴ sn This is a common, but bold, anthropomorphism. The fact that the word used is כַּף (*kaf*, properly “palm”) rather than יָד (*yad*, “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 chiasmic 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.

¹⁷ tn The pronoun “my” is not in the Hebrew text, but has been supplied here in the translation.

¹⁸ sn Job uses three words for sin here: “iniquities,” which means going astray, erring; “sins,” which means missing the mark or the way; and “transgressions,” which are open rebellions. They all emphasize different kinds of sins and different degrees of willfulness. Job is demanding that any sins be brought up. Both Job and his friends agree that great afflictions would have to indicate great offenses – he wants to know what they are.

¹⁹ sn The anthropomorphism of “hide the face” indicates a withdrawal of favor and an outpouring of wrath (see Ps 30:7 [8]; Isa 54:8; Ps 27:9). Sometimes God “hides his face” to make himself 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.

²⁰ tn The verb תַּעֲרֹךְ (*ta’arots*, “you torment”) is from עָרַךְ (*araks*), which usually means “fear; dread,” but can also mean “to make afraid; to terrify” (Isa 2:19,21). The imperfect is here taken as a desiderative imperfect: “why do you want to,” but it could also be a simple future: “will you torment.”

²¹ tn The word נָדַף (*niddaf*) is “driven” from the root נָדַף (*nadaf*, “drive”). The words “by the wind” or the interpretation “windblown” has to be added for the clarification. Job is comparing himself to this leaf (so an implied comparison, called hypocatstasis) – so light and insubstantial that it is amazing that God should come after him. Guillaume suggests that the word is not from this root, but from a second root נָדַף (*nadaf*), cognate to Arabic *nadifa*, “to dry up” (A. Guillaume, “A Note on Isaiah 19:7,” *JTS* 14 [1963]: 382-83). But as D. J. A. Clines notes (*Job* [WBC], 283), a dried leaf is a driven leaf – a point Guillaume allows as he says there is ambiguity in the term.

²² tn The word קָשׁ (*qash*) means “chaff; stubble,” or a wisp of straw. It is found in Job 41:20-21 for that which is so worthless and insignificant that it is hardly worth mentioning. If dried up or withered, it too will be blown away in the wind.

²³ tn The meaning is that of writing down a formal charge against someone (cf. Job 31:15).

²⁴ sn Job acknowledges sins in his youth, but they are trifling compared to the suffering he now endures. Job thinks it unjust of God to persecute him now for those – if that is what is happening.

²⁵ tn The word occurs here and in Job 33:11. It could be taken as “stocks,” in which the feet were held fast; or it could be “shackles,” which allowed the prisoner to move about. The parallelism favors the latter, if the two lines are meant to be referring to the same thing.

²⁶ tn The word means “ways; roads; paths,” but it is used here in the sense of the “way” in which one goes about his activities.

you put marks¹ on the soles of my feet.
13:28 So I² 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 up⁷ like a flower and then
 withers away,⁸
 he flees like a shadow, and does not re-
 main.⁹
14:3 Do you fix your eye¹⁰ on such a
 one?¹¹
 And do you bring me¹² before you for
 judgment?
14:4 Who can make¹³ a clean thing come

from an unclean?¹⁴

No one!

14:5 Since man’s days¹⁵ are determined,¹⁶
 the number of his months is under your
 control;¹⁷
 you have set his limit¹⁸ and he cannot pass
 it.
14:6 Look away from him and let him
 desist;¹⁹
 until he fulfills²⁰ his time like a hired man.

The Inevitability of Death

14:7 “But there is hope for²¹ 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 old²³ in
 the ground

¹ **tn** The verb תִּיתְחַקֵּה (titkhaqqeh) is a Hitpael from the root חָקַה (khaqah, parallel to חָקַק, khaqaq). The word means “to engrave” or “to carve out.” This Hitpael would mean “to imprint something on oneself” (E. Dhorme [Job, 192] says on one’s mind, and so derives the meaning “examine.”). The object of this is the expression “on the roots of my feet,” which would refer to where the feet hit the ground. Since the passage has more to do with God’s restricting Job’s movement, the translation “you set a boundary to the soles of my feet” would be better than Dhorme’s view. The image of inscribing or putting marks on the feet is not found elsewhere. It may be, as Pope suggests, a reference to marking the slaves to make tracking them easier. The LXX has “you have penetrated to my heels.”

² **tn** Heb “and he.” Some of the commentators move the verse and put it after Job 14:2, 3 or 6.

³ **tn** The word רָקַב (raqav) is used elsewhere in the Bible of dry rot in a house, or rotting bones in a grave. It is used in parallelism with “moth” both here and in Hos 5:12. The LXX has “like a wineskin.” This would be from רָקַב (roqev, “wineskin”). This word does not occur in the Hebrew Bible, but is attested in Sir 43:20 and in Aramaic. The change is not necessary.

⁴ **tn** The first of the threefold apposition for אָדָם (‘adam, “man”) is “born of a woman.” The genitive (“woman”) after a passive participle denotes the agent of the action (see GKC 359 §116.l).

⁵ **tn** The second description is simply “[is] short of days.” The meaning here is that his life is short (“days” being put as the understatement for “years”).

⁶ **tn** The third expression is “consumed/full/sated – with/of – trouble/restlessness.” The latter word, רָגַז (rogez), occurred in Job 3:17; see also the idea in 10:15.

⁷ **tn** Heb יָצָא (yatsa’, “comes forth”). The perfect verb expresses characteristic action and so is translated by the present tense (see GKC 329 §111.s).

⁸ **tn** The verb לָמַל (lammal) is from the root מָלַל (malal, “to languish; to wither”) and not from a different root מָלַל (malal, “to cut off”).

⁹ **tn** The verb is “and he does not stand.” Here the verb means “to stay fixed; to abide.” The shadow does not stay fixed, but continues to advance toward darkness.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “open the eye on,” an idiom meaning to prepare to judge someone.

¹¹ **tn** The verse opens with אֲפִי־עַל־יְהוָה (af-‘al-zeh), meaning “even on such a one!” It is an exclamation of surprise.

¹² **tn** The text clearly has “me” as the accusative, but many wish to emend it to say “him” (אָרוֹ, ‘oto). But D. J. A. Clines rightly rejects this in view of the way Job is written, often moving back and forth from his own tragedy and others’ tragedies (Job [WBC], 283).

¹³ **tn** The expression מִי־יִתֵּן (mi-yitten, “who will give”; see GKC 477 §151.b). Some commentators (H. H. Rowley and A. B. Davidson) wish to take this as the optative formula: “O that a clean might come out of an unclean!” But that does not fit the verse very well, and still requires the addition of a verb.

The exclamation here simply implies something impossible – man is unable to attain purity.

¹⁴ **sn** The point being made is that the entire human race is contaminated by sin, and therefore cannot produce something pure. In this context, since man is born of woman, it is saying that the woman and the man who is brought forth from her are impure. See Ps 51:5; Isa 6:5; and Gen 6:5.

¹⁵ **tn** Heb “his days.”

¹⁶ **tn** The passive participle is from חָרַט (kharats), which means “determined.” The word literally means “cut” (Lev 22:22, “mutilated”). E. Dhorme (Job, 197) takes it to mean “engraved” as on stone; from a custom of inscribing decrees on tablets of stone he derives the meaning here of “decreed.” This, he argues, is parallel to the way חָקַק (khaqaq, “engrave”) is used. The word חָקַק (khaq) is an “ordinance” or “statute”; the idea is connected to the verb “to engrave.” The LXX has “if his life should be but one day on the earth, and his months are numbered by him, you have appointed him for a time and he shall by no means exceed it.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “[is] with you.” This clearly means under God’s control.

¹⁸ **tn** The word חָקַק (khaq) has the meanings of “decree, decision, and limit” (cf. Job 28:26; 38:10).

sn Job is saying that God foreordains the number of the days of man. He foreknows the number of the months. He fixes the limit of human life which cannot be passed.

¹⁹ **tn** The verb חָדַל (khalal) means “to desist; to cease.” The verb would mean here “and let him desist,” which some take to mean “and let him rest.” But since this is rather difficult in the line, commentators have suggested other meanings. Several emend the text slightly to make it an imperative rather than an imperfect; this is then translated “and desist.” The expression “from him” must be added. Another suggestion that is far-fetched is that of P. J. Calderone (“CHDL-II in poetic texts,” CBQ 23 [1961]: 451-60) and D. W. Thomas (VTSup 4 [1957]: 8-16), having a new meaning of “be fat.”

²⁰ **tn** There are two roots רָצַח (ratsah). The first is the common word, meaning “to delight in; to have pleasure in.” The second, most likely used here, means “to pay; to acquit a debt” (cf. Lev 26:34, 41, 43). Here with the mention of the simile with the hired man, the completing of the job is in view.

²¹ **tn** The genitive after the construct is one of advantage – it is hope for the tree.

²² **sn** The figure now changes to a tree for the discussion of the finality of death. At least the tree will sprout again when it is cut down. Why, Job wonders, should what has been granted to the tree not also be granted to humans?

²³ **tn** The Hiphil of זָקַן (zaqan, “to be old”) is here an internal causative, “to grow old.”

and its stump begins to die⁴ in the soil,²
14:9 at the scent³ of water it will flourish⁴
 and put forth⁵ shoots like a new plant.
14:10 But man⁶ dies and is powerless;⁷
 he expires – and where is he?⁸
14:11 As⁹ water disappears from the sea,¹⁰
 or a river drains away and dries up,
14:12 so man lies down and does not rise;
 until the heavens are no more,¹¹
 they¹² will not awake

1 tn The Hiphil is here classified as an inchoative Hiphil (see GKC 145 §53.e), for the tree only begins to die. In other words, it appears to be dead, but actually is not completely dead.

2 tn The LXX translates “dust” [soil] with “rock,” probably in light of the earlier illustration of the tree growing in the rocks.

sn Job is thinking here of a tree that dies or decays because of a drought rather than being uprooted, because the next verse will tell how it can revive with water.

3 tn The personification adds to the comparison with people – the tree is credited with the sense of smell to detect the water.

4 tn The sense of “flourish” for this verb is found in Ps 92:12,13[13,14], and Prov 14:11. It makes an appropriate parallel with “bring forth boughs” in the second half.

5 tn *Heb* “and will make.”

6 tn There are two words for “man” in this verse. The first (גִּבּוֹר, *geber*) can indicate a “strong” or “mature man” or “mighty man,” the hero; and the second (אָדָם, *’adam*) simply designates the person as mortal.

7 tn The word ܟܠܫܐ (*khalash*) in Aramaic and Syriac means “to be weak” (interestingly, the Syriac OT translated ܟܠܫܐ [*khalash*] with “fade away” here). The derived noun “the weak” would be in direct contrast to “the mighty man.” In the transitive sense the verb means “to weaken; to defeat” (Exod 17:13); here it may have the sense of “be lifeless, unconscious, inanimate” (cf. E. Dhorme, *Job*, 199). Many commentators emend the text to יַחְלֹף (*yakhalof*, “passes on; passes away”). A. Guillaume tries to argue that the form is a variant of the other, the letters ש (*shin*) and פ (*pe*) being interchangeable (“The Use of *halas* in Exod 17:13, Isa 14:12, and Job 14:10,” *JTS* 14 [1963]: 91-92). G. R. Driver connected it to Arabic *halasa*, “carry off suddenly” (“The Resurrection of Marine and Terrestrial Creatures,” *JSS* 7 [1962]: 12-22). But the basic idea of “be weak, powerless” is satisfactory in the text. H. H. Rowley (*Job* [NCBC], 105) says, “Where words are so carefully chosen, it is gratuitous to substitute less expressive words as some editors do.”

8 tn This break to a question adds a startling touch to the whole verse. The obvious meaning is that he is gone. The LXX weakens it: “and is no more.”

9 tn The comparative clause may be signaled simply by the context, especially when facts of a moral nature are compared with the physical world (see GKC 499 §161.a).

10 tn The Hebrew word יָם (*yam*) can mean “sea” or “lake.”

11 tc The Hebrew construction is “until not,” which is unusual if not impossible; it is found in only one other type of context. In its six other occurrences (Num 21:35; Deut 3:3; Josh 8:22; 10:33; 11:8; 2 Kgs 10:11) the context refers to the absence of survivors. Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, Syriac, and Vulgate all have “till the heavens wear out.” Most would emend the text just slightly from עַד בִּלְתִּי (*’ad-bilti*, “are no more”) to עַד בִּיּוֹת (*’ad b’lot*, “until the wearing out of,” see Ps 102:26 [27]; Isa 51:6). Gray rejects emendation here, finding the unusual form of the MT in its favor. Orlinsky (p. 57) finds a cognate Arabic word meaning “will not awake” and translates it “so long as the heavens are not rent asunder” (H. M. Orlinsky, “The Hebrew and Greek Texts of Job 14:12,” *JQR* 28 [1937/38]: 57-68). He then deletes the last line of the verse as a later gloss.

12 tn The verb is plural because the subject, אִישׁ (*’ish*), is viewed as a collective: “mankind.” The verb means “to wake up; to awake”; another root, קָץ (*qats*, “to split open”) cognate to Arabic *qada* and Akkadian *kasu*, was put forward by H. M.

nor arise from their sleep.

The Possibility of Another Life

14:13 “O that¹³ you would hide me in Sheol,¹⁴ and conceal me till your anger has passed!¹⁵ O that you would set me a time¹⁶ and then remember me!¹⁷ **14:14** If a man dies, will he live again?¹⁸ All the days of my hard service¹⁹ I will wait²⁰ until my release comes.²¹

Orlinsky (“The Hebrew and Greek Texts of Job 14:12,” *JQR* 28 [1937-38]: 57-68) and G. R. Driver (“Problems in the Hebrew Text of Job,” *VTSup* 3 [1955]: 72-93).

13 tn The optative mood is introduced here again with יִי (*mi yitten*), literally, “who will give?”

sn After arguing that man will die without hope, Job expresses his desire that there be a resurrection, and what that would mean. The ancients all knew that death did not bring existence to an end; rather, they passed into another place, but they continued to exist. Job thinks that death would at least give him some respite from the wrath of God, but this wrath would eventually be appeased, and then God would remember the one he had hidden in Sheol just as he remembered Noah. Once that happened, it would be possible that Job might live again.

14 sn *Sheol* in the Bible refers to the place where the dead go. But it can have different categories of meaning: death in general, the grave, or the realm of the departed spirits [hell]. A. Heidel shows that in the Bible when hell is in view the righteous are not there – it is the realm of the departed spirits of the wicked. When the righteous go to Sheol, the meaning is usually the grave or death. See chapter 3 in A. Heidel, *The Gilgamesh Epic and the Old Testament Parallels*.

15 tn The construction used here is the preposition followed by the infinitive construct followed by the subjective genitive, forming an adverbial clause of time.

16 tn This is the same word used in v. 5 for “limit.”

17 tn The verb זָכַר (*zakhar*) 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 Gen 8:1, “and God remembered Noah”). In this sense, a prayer “remember me” is a prayer for God to act upon his covenant promises.

18 tc The LXX removes the interrogative and makes the statement affirmative, i.e., that man will live again. This reading is taken by D. H. Gard (“The Concept of the Future Life according to the Greek Translator of the Book of Job,” *JBL* 73 [1954]: 137-38). D. J. A. 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 apodosis, 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 death. The point the line is making is that if there is life after death, that would be all the more reason for Job to eagerly expect, to hope for, his death.

19 tn See Job 7:1.

20 tn The verb אִחַל (*ayakhel*) may be rendered “I will/would wait” or “I will/would hope.” The word describes eager expectation and longing hope.

21 tn The construction is the same as that found in the last verse: a temporal preposition עַד (*’ad*) followed by the infinitive construct followed by the subjective genitive “release/relief.” Due, in part, to the same verb ܟܠܫܐ (*khalaf*) having the meaning “sprout again” in v. 7, some take “renewal” as the mean-

14:15 You will call¹ and I² – I will answer you;
you will long for³ the creature you have made.⁴

*The Present Condition*⁵

14:16 “Surely now you count my steps;⁶
then you would not mark⁷ my sin.⁸
14:17 My offenses would be sealed up⁹ in
a bag;¹⁰
you would cover over¹¹ my sin.
14:18 But as¹² 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 torrents¹⁴ 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 change¹⁸ his appearance
and send him away.

14:21 If¹⁹ his sons are honored,²⁰
he does not know it;²¹
if they are brought low,
he does not see²² it.

14:22 Only his flesh has pain for himself,²³
and he mourns for himself.”²⁴

*Eliphaz’s Second Speech*²⁵

15:1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:

ing here (J. E. Hartley, Alden, NIV, ESV).

¹ **sn** The idea would be that God would sometime in the future call Job into his fellowship again when he longed for the work of his hands (cf. Job 10:3).

² **tn** The independent personal pronoun is emphatic, as if to say, “and I on my part will answer.”

³ **tn** The word כָּסַף (*kasaf*) originally meant “to turn pale.” It expresses the sentiment that causes pallor of face, and so is used for desire ardently, covet. The object of the desire is always introduced with the ל (*lamed*) preposition (see E. Dhorme, *Job*, 202).

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “long for the work of your hands.”

⁵ **sn** The hope for life after death is supported now by a description of the severity with which God deals with people in this life.

⁶ **tn** If v. 16a continues the previous series, the translation here would be “then” (as in RSV). Others take it as a new beginning to express God’s present watch over Job, and interpret the second half of the verse as a question, or emend it to say God does not pass over his sins.

⁷ **sn** Compare Ps 130:3-4, which says, “If you should mark iniquity O LORD, Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, in order that you might be feared.”

⁸ **tn** The second colon of the verse can be contrasted with the first, the first being the present reality and the second the hope looked for in the future. This seems to fit the context well without making any changes at all.

⁹ **tn** The passive participle קְתַם (*khatum*), from קָתַם (*khatam*, “seal”), which is used frequently in the Bible, means “sealed up.” The image of sealing sins in a bag is another of the many poetic ways of expressing the removal of sin from the individual (see 1 Sam 25:29). Since the term most frequently describes sealed documents, the idea here may be more that of sealing in a bag the record of Job’s sins (see D. J. A. Clines, *Job* [WBC], 334).

¹⁰ **tn** The idea has been presented that the background of putting tally stones in a bag is intended (see A. L. Oppenheim, “On an Operational Device in Mesopotamian Bureaucracy,” *JNES* 18 [1959]: 121-28).

¹¹ **tn** This verb was used in Job 13:4 for “plasterers of lies.” The idea is probably that God coats or paints over the sins so that they are forgotten (see Isa 1:18). A. B. Davidson (*Job*, 105) suggests that the sins are preserved until full punishment is exacted. But the verse still seems to be continuing the thought of how the sins would be forgotten in the next life.

¹² **tn** The indication that this is a simile is to be obtained from the conjunction beginning 19c (see GKC 499 §161.a).

¹³ **tn** The word יָבֹל (*yibbol*) usually refers to a flower fading and so seems strange here. The LXX and the Syriac translate “and will fall”; most commentators accept this and reposit the preceding word to get “and will surely fall.” Duhm retains the MT and applies the image of the flower to the falling mountain. The verb is used of the earth in Isa 24:4, and so NIV, RSV, and NJPS all have the idea of “crumble away.”

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “the overflowings of it”; the word מְפִיקֶיהָ (*s^efikhayha*) in the text is changed by just about everyone. The idea of “its overflowings” or more properly “its aftergrowths” (Lev 25:5; 2 Kgs 19:29; etc.) does not fit here at all. Budde suggested reading סִחָפָה (*s^ekhifah*), which is cognate to Arabic *sahifeh*, “torrential rain, rainstorm” – that which sweeps away” the soil. The word סִחָף (*sakhaf*) 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 **tn** D. W. Thomas took נֶצַח (*netsakh*) here to have a superlative meaning: “You prevail utterly against him” (“Use of *netsakh* 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 Eccl 9:5-6, which makes a similar point.

²² **tn** The verb is בִּין (*bin*, “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 עָלָיו (*‘alayv*, “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 אָךְ (*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** In 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 bluster knowledge,¹ or fill his belly² with the east wind?³ 15:3 Does he argue⁴ with useless⁵ talk, with words that have no value in them? 15:4 But you even break off⁶ piety,⁷ and hinder⁸ meditation⁹ before God. 15:5 Your sin inspires¹⁰ your mouth; you choose the language¹¹ of the crafty.¹² 15:6 Your own mouth condemns¹³ you, not I; your own lips testify against¹⁴ 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?¹⁵ Do you limit¹⁶ wisdom to yourself?

¹ **tn** The Hebrew is דַעַת-רוּחָה (*da’at-ruakh*). This means knowledge without any content, vain knowledge.

² **tn** The image is rather graphic. It is saying that he puffs himself up with the wind and then brings out of his mouth blasts of this wind.

³ **tn** The word for “east wind,” קָדִים (*qadim*), is parallel to “spirit/wind” also in Hos 12:2. The east wind is maleficent, but here in the parallelism it is so much hot air.

⁴ **tn** The infinitive absolute in this place is functioning either as an explanatory adverb or as a finite verb.

⁵ **tn** Eliphaz draws on Job’s claim with this word (cf. Job 13:3), but will declare it hollow.

⁶ **tn** The verb סָכַן (*sakhan*) means “to be useful, profitable.” It is found 5 times in the book with this meaning. The Hiphil of יָעַל (*ya’al*) has the same connotation. E. Lipiriski offers a new meaning on a second root, “incur danger” or “run risks” with words, but this does not fit the parallelism (FO 21 [1980]: 65-82).

⁷ **tn** The word פָּרַר (*parar*) in the Hiphil means “to annul; to frustrate; to destroy; to break,” and this fits the line quite well. The NEB reflects G. R. Driver’s suggestion of an Arabic cognate meaning “to expel; to banish” (“Problems in the Hebrew text of Job,” VTSup 3 [1955]: 77).

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “fear,” “reverence.”

⁹ **tn** The word גָּרַע (*gara*) means “to diminish,” regard as insignificant, occasionally with the sense of “pull down” (Deut 4:2; 13:1). It is here that Eliphaz is portraying Job as a menace to the religion of society because they dissuade people from seeking God.

¹⁰ **tn** The word שִׁיחָה (*sikhah*) is “complaint; cry; meditation.” Job would be influencing people to challenge God and not to meditate before or pray to him.

¹¹ **tn** The verb אָלַף (*alaf*) has the meaning of “to teach; to instruct,” but it is unlikely that the idea of revealing is intended. If the verb is understood metonymically, then “to inspire; to prompt” will be sufficient. Dahood and others find another root, and render the verb “to increase,” reversing subject and object: “your mouth increases your iniquity.”

¹² **tn** *Heb* “tongue.”

¹³ **tn** The word means “shrewd; crafty; cunning” (see Gen 3:1). Job uses clever speech that is misleading and destructive.

¹⁴ **tn** The Hiphil of this root means “declare wicked, guilty” (a declarative Hiphil), and so “condemns.”

¹⁵ **tn** The verb עָנָה (*anah*) with the ל (*lamed*) preposition following it means “to testify against.” For Eliphaz, it is enough to listen to Job to condemn him.

¹⁶ **tn** The meaning of סָוַר (*sod*) is “confidence.” In the context the implication is “secret counsel” of the Lord God (see Jer 23:18). It is a question of confidence on the part of God, that only wisdom can know (see Prov 8:30,31). Job seemed to them to claim to have access to the mind of God.

¹⁷ **tn** In v. 4 the word meant “limit”; here it has a slightly different sense, namely, “to reserve for oneself.”

15:9 What do you know that we don’t know? What do you understand that we don’t understand?¹⁷ 15:10 The gray-haired¹⁸ and the aged are on our side,¹⁹ men far older than your father.²⁰ 15:11 Are God’s consolations²¹ too trivial for you;²² or a word spoken²³ in gentleness to you? 15:12 Why²⁴ has your heart carried you away,²⁵ and why do your eyes flash,²⁶ 15:13 when you turn your rage²⁷ against God and allow such words to escape²⁸ 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,²⁹

¹⁷ **tn** The last clause simply has “and it is not with us.” It means that one possesses something through knowledge. Note the parallelism of “know” and “with me” in Ps 50:11.

¹⁸ **tn** The participle שָׂבִיב (*sav*), from שָׁבַב (*shiv*), “to have white hair”; 1 Sam 12:2), only occurs elsewhere in the Bible in the Aramaic sections of Ezra. The word יָשִׁישׁ (*yashish*, “aged”) occurred in 12:12.

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “with us.”

²⁰ **tn** The line reads: “[men] greater than your father [in] days.” The expression “in days” underscores their age – they were older than Job’s father, and therefore wiser.

²¹ **tn** The word תַּנְחִימוֹת (*tankhumot*) occurs here and only in Job 21:34. The words of comfort and consolation that they have been offering to Job are here said to be “of God.” But Job will call them miserable comforters (16:2).

²² **tn** The formula “is it too little for you” or “is it too slight a matter for you” is also found in Isa 7:13 (see GKC 430 §133. c).

²³ **tn** The word “spoken” is not in the Hebrew text, but has been supplied in the translation.

²⁴ **tn** The interrogative מָה (*mah*) here has the sense of “why?” (see Job 7:21).

²⁵ **tn** The verb simply means “to take.” The RSV has “carry you away.” E. Dhorme (*Job*, 212-13) goes further, saying that it implies being unhinged by passion, to be carried away by the passions beyond good sense (pp. 212-13). Pope and Tur-Sinai suggest that the suffix on the verb is datival, and translate it, “What has taken from you your mind?” But the parallelism shows that “your heart” and “your eyes” are subjects.

²⁶ **tn** Here is another word that occurs only here, and in the absence of a completely convincing suggestion, probably should be left as it is. The verb is רָזַם (*razam*, “wink, flash”). Targum Job and the Syriac equate it with a verb found in Aramaic and postbiblical Hebrew with the same letters but metathesized – רָמַז (*ramaz*). It would mean “to make a sign” or “to wink.” Budde, following the LXX probably, has “Why are your eyes luffy?” Others follow an Arabic root meaning “become weak.”

²⁷ **tn** The Hebrew is רוּחָה (*rukheka*, “your spirit” or “your breath”). But the fact that this is turned “against God,” means that it must be given a derived meaning, or a meaning that is metonymical. It is used in the Bible in the sense of anger – what the spirit vents (see Judg 8:3; Prov 16:32; and Job 4:9 with “blast”).

²⁸ **tn** The verb is a Hiphil perfect of *yasa’*, “to go out, proceed, issue forth.”

²⁹ **tn** Eliphaz here reiterates the point made in Job 4:18.

if even the heavens¹ are not pure in his eyes,
15:16 how much less man, who is abominable and corrupt,²
 who drinks in evil like water!³

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 of⁶ 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

¹ **sn** The question here is whether the reference is to material “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), always in a moral sense. On the significance of the first description, see P. Humbert, “Le substantif *to'ebā* et le verbe *i'b* dans l'Ancien Testament,” ZAW 72 (1960): 217ff.). On the second word, G. R. Driver suggests from Arabic, “debauched with luxury, corrupt” (“Some Hebrew Words,” JTS 29 [1927/28]: 390-96).

³ **sn** Man commits evil with the same ease and facility as he drinks in water – freely and in large quantities.

⁴ **tn** The demonstrative pronoun is used here as a nominative, to introduce an independent relative clause (see GKC 447 §138.h).

⁵ **tn** Here the *vav* (ו) *apodosis* follows with the cohortative (see GKC 458 §143.d).

⁶ **tn** The word “tradition” is not in the Hebrew text, but has been supplied in the translation.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “their fathers.” Some commentators change one letter and follow the reading of the LXX: “and their fathers have not hidden.” Pope tries to get the same reading by classifying the מ (*mem*) as an enclitic *mem*. The MT on first glance would read “and did not hide from their fathers.” Some take the clause “and they did not hide” as adverbial and belonging to the first part of the verse: “what wise men declare, hiding nothing, according to the tradition of 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 fathers. At any rate, the tradition of wisdom to Eliphaz has not been polluted by foreigners, but has retained its pure and moral nature from antiquity.

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “all the days of the wicked, he suffers.” The word “all” is an adverbial accusative of time, stating along with its genitives (“of the days of a wicked man”) how long the individual suffers. When the subject is composed of a noun in construct followed by a genitive, the predicate sometimes agrees with the genitive (see GKC 467 §146.a).

¹⁰ **tn** The Hebrew term *miikholel* (מִיִּכְהוֹל) is a Hitpolel participle from *khil* (כָּהַל, “to tremble”). It carries the idea of “torment oneself,” or “be tormented.” Some have changed the letter *h* (*khet*) for a letter *h* (*he*), and obtained the meaning “shows himself mad.” Theodotion has “is mad.” Syriac (“behave arrogantly,” apparently confusing Hebrew *hehal* with *heidi* M. Szpek, *Translation Technique in the Peshitta to Job* [SBLDS], 277), Symmachus, and Vulgate have “boasts himself.” But the reading of the MT is preferable.

throughout the number of the years
 that¹¹ are stored up for the tyrant.¹²
15:21 Terrifying sounds fill¹³ his ears;
 in a time of peace marauders¹⁴ attack
 him.

15:22 He does not expect¹⁵ to escape from
 darkness;¹⁶

he is marked for the sword;¹⁷

15:23 he wanders about – food for vultures;¹⁸

he knows that the day of darkness is at
 hand.¹⁹

¹¹ **tn** It is necessary, with Rashi, to understand the relative pronoun before the verb “they are stored up/reserved.”

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 *shoded* (ש׹דֵד) means “a robber; a plunderer” (see Job 12:6). With the verb *bo'* the sentence means that the robber pounces on 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.

sn The meaning of this line is somewhat 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.

¹⁶ **sn** In the context of these arguments, “darkness” probably refers to calamity, and so the wicked can expect a calamity that is final.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “he is 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 *tsafah* (צָפֵה, “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 אֵיָהָה (*ayyah*, “vulture”) for אֵיָיָה (*ayyeh*, “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 נִדָד (*noded*, “wandering”) such as נִתָן (*nittan*, “is given”) or נִוָד (*no'ad*, “is appointed”), נִוָד (*noda*, “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 offered for נִכְחֹן (*nakhon*, “ready”), such as נִכְחֵר (*nekher*, “disaster”); and for בְּיָדוֹ (*b'yado*, “in his hand”) a number of ideas – לְאֵד (*led*, “calamity”) or פִּידוֹ (*pido*, “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.

15:24 Distress and anguish¹ 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!⁶
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 worth-
less,¹⁶
deceiving himself;
for worthlessness will be his reward.¹⁷
15:32 Before his time¹⁸ he will be paid in
full,¹⁹

¹ **tn** If “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 **tn** 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. כִּידֹר 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 **sn** The symbol of the outstretched hand is the picture of attempting to strike someone, or shaking a fist at someone; it is a symbol of a challenge or threat (see Isa 5:25; 9:21; 10:4).

⁴ **tn** The Hitpael of גָּבַר (*gavar*) means “to act with might” or “to behave like a hero.” The idea is that the wicked boldly vaunts himself before the Lord.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “he runs against [or upon] him with the neck.” The RSV takes this to mean “with a stiff neck.” Several commentators, influenced by the LXX’s “insolently,” have attempted to harmonize with some idiom for neck (“outstretched neck,” for example). Others have made more extensive changes. Pope and Anderson follow Tur-Sinai in accepting “with full battle armor.” But the main idea seems to be that of a headlong assault on God.

⁶ **tn** *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.

⁷ **sn** This verse tells us that he is not in any condition to fight, because he is bloated and fat from luxurious living.

⁸ **tn** D. W. Thomas defends a meaning “cover” for the verb עָשָׂה (*asah*). See “Translating Hebrew *asah*,” BT 17 [1966]: 190-93.

⁹ **tn** The term פִּימָה (*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.”

¹⁰ **sn** K&D 11:266 rightly explains that these are not cities that he, the wicked, has destroyed, but that were destroyed by a judgment on wickedness. Accordingly, Eliphaz is saying that the wicked man is willing to risk such a curse in his confidence in his prosperity (see further H. H. Rowley, *Job* [NCBC], 113).

¹¹ **tn** The verbal idea serves here to modify “houses” as a relative clause; so a relative pronoun is added.

¹² **tn** The Hebrew has simply “they are made ready for heaps.” The LXX translates it, “what they have prepared, let others carry away.” This would involve a complete change of the last word.

¹³ **tn** This word מִיְלָמָה (*minlam*) also is a *hapax legomenon*, although almost always interpreted to mean “possession” (with Arabic *mana*) and reprinted as מִיְנֹלָמָה (*mⁿolam*). M. Dahoud 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 common word for “ears of grain” or a *hapax legomenon* in Deut 23:26 HT (23:25 ET).

¹⁴ **tn** 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).

¹⁵ **tn** 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 פִּירָה *pirha*, properly, “his fruit”) instead of פִּי *piv*, and “fall” instead of “depart.” Modern commentators and a number of English versions (e.g., RSV, NRSV, TEV) alter פִּירָה (*yasur*, “depart”) to something like יִטְעַר *so’ar*, from סָעַר *sa’ar*, “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).

¹⁶ **tn** The word, although difficult in its form, is “vanity,” i.e., that which is worthless. E. Dhorme (*Job*, 224) thinks that the form שָׁוְיָה (*shav*) conceals the word שִׁיאוֹ (*shi’o*, “his stature”). But Dhorme reworks most of the verse. He changes נִתְּיָה (*nit’ah*, “deceived”) to נָדַע (*neda*, “we 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.”

¹⁷ **tn** 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 תְּמוּרָתוֹ (*temurato*, “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 תְּמוּרָתוֹ (*timorato*, “his palm tree”) and זְמוּרָתוֹ (*zsmorato*, “his vine shoot”). A number of writers simply delete all of v. 31. H. H. Rowley (*Job* [NCBC], 115) suggests the best reading (assuming one were 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.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “before his day.”

¹⁹ **tn** Those who put the last colon of v. 31 with v. 32 also have to change the verb תִּמְלָא (*timmale*, “will be fulfilled”). E. Dhorme (*Job*, 225) says, “a mere glance at the use of *yimmal*...abundantly proves that the original text had *timmal* (G. Syr., Vulg), which became *timmale* through the accidental transposition of the *alep* of *bys’o*...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. A commercial metaphor is not out of place here, since parallelism does not demand that the same metaphor appear in both lines.

and his branches will not flourish.¹
15:33 Like a vine he will let his sour
 grapes fall,²
 and like an olive tree
 he will shed his blossoms.³
15:34 For the company of the godless is
 barren,⁴
 and fire⁵ consumes the tents of those who
 accept bribes.⁶
15:35 They conceive⁷ trouble and bring
 forth evil;
 their belly⁸ prepares deception.”

Job's Reply to Eliphaz⁹

16:1 Then Job replied:

16:2 “I have heard many things like these
 before.
 What miserable comforters¹⁰ are you all!
16:3 Will¹¹ there be an end to your¹²
 windy words?¹³
 Or what provokes¹⁴ you that you
 answer?¹⁵

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 inclusion 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: מְנַחֲמֵי עִבְלִי (mⁿnahame ‘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,” *ExpTim* 44 [1932/33]: 192).

¹¹ **tn** Disjunctive questions are introduced with the sign of the interrogative; the second part is introduced with וְ (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 מְרִיץ (marats) does not occur anywhere else. The word means “to compel; to force” (see G: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

16:4 I also could speak¹⁶ like you,
 if¹⁷ you were in my place;
 I could pile up¹⁸ words against you
 and I could shake my head at you.¹⁹
16:5 But²⁰ I would strengthen²¹ you with
 my words;²²
 comfort from my lips would bring²³ you
 relief.

Abandonment by God and Man

16:6 “But²⁴ if I speak, my pain is not re-
 lieved,²⁵
 and if I refrain from speaking
 – how²⁶ much of it goes away?
16:7 Surely now he²⁷ has worn me out,
 you have devastated my entire household.
16:8 You have seized me,²⁸
 and it²⁹ has become a witness;
 my leanness³⁰ has risen up against me

answering?”

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

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

¹⁸ **tn** This verb אָכַרְתִּיךָ (‘akhbirah) is usually connected to קָבַר (kavar, “to bind”). There are several suggestions for this word. J. 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; see also 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 אָמַץ (‘amats) means “to strengthen, fortify.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “my mouth.”

²³ **tn** The verb יָחַסְתִּיךָ (yakhsokh) 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 יָחַסְתִּיךָ (yekhasekh) means “to be soothed; to be assuaged.”

²⁶ **tn** Some argue that מָה (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 is קָבַחַ (qamar) 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 His¹ anger has torn me² and persecuted³ me;

he has gnashed at me with his teeth;
my adversary locks⁴ his eyes on me.

16:10 People⁵ have opened their mouths
against me,

they have struck my cheek in scorn,⁶
they unite⁷ together against me.

16:11 God abandons me to evil⁸ men,⁹
and throws¹⁰ 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 archers¹³ surround me.

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

² **sn** 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 **tn** The verb שָׂטַם (*satam*) is translated “hate” in the RSV, but this is not accepted by very many. Many emend it to שָׂמַט (*shamat*), reading “and he dropped me” (from his mouth). But that suggests escape. D. J. A. Clines notes that usage shows it reflects ongoing hatred represented by an action such as persecution or attack (*Job* [WBC], 370).

⁴ **tn** The verb is used of sharpening a sword in Ps 7:12; here it means “to look intently” as an animal looks for prey. The verse describes God’s relentless pursuit of Job.

⁵ **tn** “People” is supplied; the Hebrew verb is third plural. 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).

⁶ **tn** This is an “insult” or a “reproach.”

⁷ **tn** The verb תִּבְלַחַן (*yitmallā’un*) is taken from בָּלַח (*male’*), “to be full,” and in this stem, “to pile up; to press together.” The term has a military connotation, such as “to mobilize” (see D. W. Thomas, “*ml’w* in Jeremiah 4:5: a military term,” *JIS* 3 [1952]: 47-52). Job sees himself surrounded by enemies who persecute him and mock him.

⁸ **tn** The word עָוִיל (*avil*) means “child,” and this cannot be right here. If it is read as עָוַל (*avval*) as in Job 27:7 it would be the unrighteous.

⁹ **sn** Job does not refer here to his friends, but more likely to the wicked men who set about to destroy him and his possessions, or to the rabble in ch. 30.

¹⁰ **tn** The word יִרְטֵנִי (*virteni*) does not derive from the root רָטַח (*ratah*) as would fit the pointing in the MT, but from יָרַח (*yarat*), cognate to Arabic *warrata*, “to throw; to hurl.” E. Dhorme (*Job*, 236) thinks that since the normal form would have been יִרְטֵנִי (*irteni*), it is probable that one of the *yods* (י) would have affected the word עָוִיל (*avil*) – but that does not make much sense.

¹¹ **tn** The verb פָּרַר (*parar*) means “to shake.” In the Hiphil it means “to break; to shatter” (5:12; 15:4). The Pilpel means “to break in pieces,” and in the Poel in Jer 23:29 “to smash up.” So Job was living at ease, and God shattered his life.

¹² **tn** Here is another Pilpel, now from פָּצַץ (*patsats*) 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.”

¹³ **tn** The meaning of “his archers” is supported for רֶבִיבִי (*rabbayy*) 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 pity¹⁴ he pierces¹⁵ my kidneys
and pours out my gall¹⁶ on the ground.

16:14 He breaks through against me, time
and time again,¹⁷

he rushes¹⁸ against me like a warrior.

16:15 I have sewed sackcloth on my skin,¹⁹
and buried²⁰ my horn²¹ in the dust;

16:16 my face is reddened²² because of
weeping,²³

and on my eyelids there is a deep dark-
ness,²⁴

16:17 although²⁵ there is no violence in
my hands

and my prayer is pure.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and he does not pity,” but the clause is functioning adverbially in the line.

¹⁵ **tn** The verb פָּלַח (*palakh*) in the Piel means “to pierce” (see Prov 7:23). A fuller comparison should be made with Lam 3:12-13.

¹⁶ **tn** This word מִרְרֵתִי (*m^ererati*, “my gall”) is found only here. It is close to the form in Job 13:26, “bitter things.” In Job 20:14 it may mean “poison.” The thought is also found in Lam 2:11.

¹⁷ **tn** The word פָּרַץ (*parats*) means “to make a breach” in a wall (Isa 5:5; Ps 80:13). It is used figuratively in the birth and naming of Peres in Gen 38:29. Here the image is now of a military attack that breaks through a wall. The text uses the cognate accusative, and then with the addition of עַל-פָּנָי (*‘al-p^{ne}*, “in addition”) it repeats the cognate noun. A smooth translation that reflects the three words is difficult. E. Dhorme (*Job*, 237) has “he batters me down, breach upon breach.”

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “runs.”

¹⁹ **sn** 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.

²⁰ **tn** The Poel עָלְתִי (*‘olati*) from עָלָה (*‘alal*, “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.

²¹ **tn** There is no English term that captures exactly what “horn” is meant to do. Drawn from the animal world, the image was meant to convey strength and pride and victory. Some modern commentators have made other proposals for the line. Svi Rin suggested from Ugaritic that the verb be translated “lower” or “dip” (“Ugaritic – Old Testament Affinities,” *BZ* 7 [1963]: 22-33).

²² **tn** An intensive form, a Qetaltal form of the root קָחַר (*khamar*, “red”) is used here. This word has as probable derivatives קָחַר (*khomer*, “[red] clay”) and קָחַר (*khamor*, “[red] ass”) and the like. Because of the weeping, his whole complexion has been reddened (the LXX reads “my belly”).

²³ **sn** A. B. Davidson (*Job*, 122) notes that spontaneous and repeated weeping is one of the symptoms of elephantiasis.

²⁴ **sn** See Job 3:5. Just as joy brings light and life to the eyes, sorrow and suffering bring darkness. The “eyelids” here would be synecdoche, reflecting the whole facial expression as sad and sullen.

²⁵ **tn** For the use of the preposition עַל (*‘al*) to introduce concessive clauses, see GKC 499 §160.c.

An Appeal to God as Witness

16:18 “O earth, do not cover my blood,¹ nor let there be a secret² place for my cry.
16:19 Even now my witness³ is in heaven; my advocate⁴ is on high.
16:20 My intercessor is my friend⁵ as my eyes pour out⁶ tears to God;
16:21 and⁷ he contends with God on behalf of man
as a man⁸ pleads⁹ for his friend.

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 place 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 – “Sahadutha.”

⁵ **tn** The first two words of this verse are problematic: מְלִיץ (mlîtsay re’ay, “my scorners are my friends”). The word מְלִיץ (melîts), from or related to the word for “scorner” (לִיץ, lîts), in wisdom literature especially, can also mean “mediator” (Job 33:23), “interpreter” (Gen 42:23). This gives the idea that “scorn” 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 *lis* 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 LXX has “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” (רֵעַ, rea’). E. Dhorme takes it as “clamor,” from רִעַ (rua’) and so interprets “my claimant word has reached God.” J. B. Curtis tries “My intercessor is my shepherd,” from רִעַ (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 [with tears as I cry out] to God.” But many suggestions have been made for this line too. Driver suggested in connection with cognate words that it be given the meaning “sleepless” (JTS 34 [1933]: 375-85), but this would also require additional words for a smooth reading. See also E. A. Speiser, “The Semantic Range of *dalapu*,” JCS 5 (1951): 64-66, for the Akkadian connection. But for the retention of “dripping eyes” based on the Talmudic use, see J. C. Greenfield, “Lexicographical Notes I,” HUCA 29 (1958): 203-28.

⁷ **tn** E. Dhorme (Job, 240) alters this slightly to read “Would that?” or “Ah! if only.”

⁸ **tn** This is the simple translation of the expression “son of man” in Job. But some commentators wish to change the word בֶּן (ben, “son”) to בֵּין (ben, “between”). It would then be “[as] between a man and [for] his friend.” Even though a few mss have this reading, it is to be rejected. But see J. Barr, “Some Notes on ‘ben’ in Classical Hebrew,” JSS 23 (1978): 1-22.

⁹ **tn** The verb is supplied from the parallel clause.

16:22 For the years that lie ahead are few,¹⁰ and then I will go on the way of no return.¹¹

17:1 My spirit is broken,¹² my days have faded out,¹³ the grave¹⁴ awaits me.

17:2 Surely mockery¹⁵ is with me;¹⁶ my eyes must dwell on their hostility.¹⁷

17:3 Make then my pledge¹⁸ with you. Who else will put up security for me?¹⁹

17:4 Because²⁰ you have closed their²¹ minds to understanding, therefore you will not exalt them.²²

¹⁰ **tn** The expression is “years of number,” meaning that they can be counted, and so “the years are few.” The verb simply means “comes” or “lie ahead.”

¹¹ **tn** The verbal 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 כָּבַל (khalal, “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 51).

¹³ **tn** The verb יָנַח (za’aq, equivalent of Aramaic דָּעַק [da’aq]) 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 harde at deathes dore.” The Hebrew expression simply reads “graves for me.” It probably means that graves await him.

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 **tn** The meaning of הַמְרוֹתָם (hamm^orotam) is unclear, and the versions offer no help. If the MT is correct, it would probably be connected to מָרָה (marah, “to be rebellious”) and the derived form something like “hostility; provocation.” But some commentators suggest it should be related to מְרוֹרֹת (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 wearied 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 hendiadys, 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 *their* 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,¹ the eyes of his children will fail.
 17:6 He has made me² a byword³ to people, I am the one in whose face they spit.⁴
 17:7 My eyes have grown dim⁵ with grief; my whole frame⁶ is but a shadow.
 17:8 Upright men are appalled⁷ at this; the innocent man is troubled⁸ with the godless.
 17:9 But the righteous man holds to his way, and the one with clean hands grows stronger.⁹

Anticipation of Death

17:10 “But turn, all of you,¹⁰ and come¹¹ now!¹²

I will not find a wise man among you.
 17:11 My days have passed, my plans¹³ are shattered, even¹⁴ the desires¹⁵ of my heart.
 17:12 These men¹⁶ change¹⁷ night into day; they say,¹⁸ ‘The light is near in the face of darkness.’¹⁹
 17:13 If²⁰ I hope for the grave to be my home, if I spread out my bed in darkness,
 17:14 If I cry²¹ to corruption,²² ‘You are my father,’ and to the worm, ‘My Mother,’ or ‘My sister,’
 17:15 where then²³ is my hope? And my hope,²⁴ 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 Bible (מִשָּׁל, *mashal*). Job’s case is so well known that he is synonymous with afflictions and with abuse by people.

4 tn The word תִּפְתֵּחַ (*tofet*) 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 יְצִירִים (*yetsirim*), here with a suffix, occurs only here in the Bible. The word is related to יָצַר (*yatsar*, “to form, fashion”). And so Targum Job has “my forms,” and the Vulgate “my members.” The Syriac uses “thoughts” to reflect יָצַר (*yetsar*). 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 שָׁמַם (*shamam*, “appalled”) is the one found in Isa 52:14, translated there “astounded.”

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 יוֹסִיף (*yosif*) 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 jussive and an imperative (see GKC 386 §120.e).

sive 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 יָרַשׁ (*yarash*, “to inherit”) yielding a meaning “the possessions of my heart.” But it is actually to be connected to אָרַשׁ (*arash*, “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 שִׁיַם (*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 אִם (*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. 15.

22 tn The word שָׁחַת (*shakhat*) may be the word “corruption” from a root שָׁחַת (*shakhat*, “to destroy”) or a word “pit” from שָׁחַת (*shuakh*, “to sink down”). The same problem surfaces in Ps 16:10, where it is parallel to “Sheol.” E. F. Sutcliffe, *The Old Testament and the Future Life*, 76ff., defends the meaning “corruption.” But many commentators here take it to mean “the grave” in harmony with “Sheol.” But in this verse “worms” would suggest “corruption” is better.

23 tn The adverb אָזְנִי (*’efo*, “then”) plays an enclitic role here (see Job 4:7).

24 tn The repetition of “my hope” in the verse has thrown the versions off, and their translations have led commentators also to change the second one to something like “goodness,” on the assumption that a word cannot be repeated in the same verse. The word actually carries two different senses here. The first would be the basic meaning “hope,” but the second a metonymy of cause, namely, what hope produces, what will be seen.

17:16 Will¹ it² go down to the barred gates³ of death?
Will⁴ we descend⁵ together into the dust?⁷

*Bildad's Second Speech*⁶

18:1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:
18:2 "How long until you⁷ make an end of words?⁸
You must consider,⁹ and then¹⁰ we can talk.
18:3 Why should we be regarded as beasts,
and considered stupid¹¹ 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 בָּרִים (*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 אִם (*im*) confirms the interrogative interpretation.

⁵ **tn** The translation follows the LXX and the Syriac versions with the change of vocalization in the MT. The MT has the noun "rest," yielding, "will our rest be together in the dust?" The verb נָחַת (*nakhat*) 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 נָחַת (*nekhat*). 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 describes the miserable existence of the wicked, indicating that it is the proof of sin. His speech falls into two main parts: why is Job so contemptuous toward his friends (Job 18:2-4), and the fate of the wicked (18:5-21). On this chapter see N. M. Sama, "The Mythological Background of Job 18," *JBL* 82 (1963): 315-18; and W. A. Irwin, "Job's Redeemer," *JBL* 81 (1962): 217-29.

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 קִנְיָה לְמִלִּין (*qintse l'millin*), which is often taken to be "end of words," as if the word was from קָנָה ("end"). But a plural of "end" is not found in the OT. Some will link the word to Arabic *qanasa*, "to hunt; to give chase," to get an interpretation of "snares for words." But 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*, "fettlers, 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 ך (nun) as from a Aramaizing by-form. This is supported by 11Q¹Job that uses סוּף (*sof*, "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 נִמְנְיָה (*nimniyu*) has been explained from different roots. Some take it from תָּמָה (*tame*), "to be unclean"), and translate it "Why should we be unclean in your eyes?" Most would connect it to תָּמַם (*tamam*, "to stop up"), meaning "to be stupid" in the Niphal. Another suggestion is to follow the LXX and read from דָּמַם (*damam*, "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

18:4 You who tear yourself¹² to pieces in your anger,
will the earth be abandoned¹³ for your sake?
Or will a rock be moved from its place?¹⁴

18:5 "Yes,¹⁵ the lamp¹⁶ of the wicked is extinguished;
his flame of fire¹⁷ does not shine.

18:6 The light in his tent grows dark;
his lamp above him is extinguished.¹⁸

18:7 His vigorous steps¹⁹ are restricted,²⁰
and his own counsel throws him down.²¹

18:8 For he has been thrown into a net by his feet²²

and he wanders into a mesh.²³

18:9 A trap²⁴ seizes him by the heel;

what? Various suggestions have been made, but all are simply conjectures.

¹² **tn** The construction uses the participle and then 3rd person suffixes: "O tearer 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?"

¹³ **tn** There is a good deal of study on this word in this passage, and in Job in general. M. Dahood suggested a root קָנָה (*qanav*) meaning "to arrange; to rearrange" ("The Root 'zb II in Job," *JBL* 78 [1959]: 303-9). But this is refuted by H. G. M. Williamson, "A Reconsideration of 'zb II in Biblical Hebrew," *ZAW* 97 (1985): 74-85.

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 (*gam*, "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."

sn This thesis of Bildad will be questioned by Job in 21:17 – how often is the lamp of the wicked snuffed out?

¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* "the steps of his vigor," the genitive being the attribute.

²⁰ **tn** The verb צָרַר (*sarar*) 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."

²¹ **tn** The LXX has "causes him to stumble," which many commentators accept, but this involves the transposition of the three letters. The verb is שָׁלַךְ (*shalakh*, "throw") not יָשַׁל (*kashal*, "stumble").

²² **tn** See Ps 25:15.

²³ **tn** The word שֶׁבַח (*savakh*) is used in scripture for the lattice window (2 Kgs 1:2). The Arabic cognate means "to be intertwined." So the term could describe a net, matting, grating, or lattice. Here it would be the netting stretched over a pit.

²⁴ **tn** This word פָּח (*pakh*) specifically refers to the snare of theowler – thus a bird trap. But its plural seems to refer to nets in general (see Job 22:10).

a snare¹ grips him.

18:10 A rope is hidden for him² on the ground

and a trap for him³ lies on the path.

18:11 Terrors⁴ frighten him on all sides and dog⁵ his every step.

18:12 Calamity is⁶ hungry for him,⁷ and misfortune is ready at his side.⁸

18:13 It eats away parts of his skin;⁹ the most terrible death¹⁰ devours his limbs.

18:14 He is dragged from the security of his tent,¹¹

and marched off¹² to the king¹³ of terrors.

18:15 Fire resides in his tent;¹⁴ 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.¹⁵

18:18 He is driven¹⁶ from light into darkness

and is banished from the world.

18:19 He has neither children nor descendants¹⁷ among his people, no survivor in those places he once stayed.¹⁸

18:20 People of the west¹⁹ are appalled at his fate;²⁰

1 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.

2 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.

3 tn Heb "his trap." The pronominal suffix is objective genitive here as well.

4 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.

5 tn The verb בָּרַץ (*puts*) 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.

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

7 tn There are a number of suggestions for אָנִי (*'ono*). Some take it as "vigor": thus "his strength is hungry." Others take it as "iniquity": thus "his iniquity/trouble is hungry."

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

9 tn The expression "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 בָּרֵי (*badde*, "limbs of") in the first part to be בְּרֵי (*bidvay*, "by a disease"; Dhorme, 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 cities 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 linen garments that cover his skin."

10 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*, 134).

11 tn Heb "from his tent, his security." The apposition serves to modify the tent as his security.

12 tn The verb is the Hiphil of נָצַד (*tsa'ad*, "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 *t-* 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 *y* (*yod*), or argue that the *t* (*tav*) can be masculine, or follow Gesenius.

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

14 tn This line is difficult as well. The verb, again a third feminine form, says "it dwells in his tent." But the next part מִבְּלֵי לוֹ (*mibb²li lo*) means something like "things of what are 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 naught of his" to weeds and wild animals. M. Dahood suggested a reading מִבְּבֵל (*mabbel*) and a connection to Akkadian *nablu*, "fire" (cf. Ugaritic *nb*). The interchange of *m* and *n* 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.

15 tn Heb "outside." Cf. ESV, "in the street," referring to absence from his community's memory.

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

17 tn The two words יָן (*nin*, "offspring") and נֶכֶד (*nekhed*, "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-Sinai had "breed or brood." But the words are best simply translated as "lineage and posterity" or as in the NIV "offspring or descendants."

18 tn Heb "in his sojournings." The verb גָּר (*gur*) 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.

19 tn The word אַחֲרֹנִים (*akharonim*) means "those [men] coming after." And the next word, קִדְמוֹנִים (*qadmonim*), 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 Dead Sea (Zech 14:8), namely, the East. The versions understood this as temporal: "the last groaned for him, and wonder seized the first" (LXX).

20 tn Heb "his day."

people of the east are seized with horror,¹
saying,²
18:21 'Surely such is the residence³ of an
evil man;
and this is the place of one who has not
known God.'⁴

*Job's Reply to Bildad*⁵

19:1 Then Job answered:
19:2 "How long will you torment me⁶
and crush⁷ me with your words?⁸
19:3 These ten times⁹ you have been re-
proaching me;¹⁰
you are not ashamed to attack me!¹¹

19:4 But even if it were¹² true that I have
erred,¹³
my error¹⁴ remains solely my concern!
19:5 If indeed¹⁵ you would exalt your-
selves¹⁶ above me
and plead my disgrace against me,¹⁷
19:6 know¹⁸ then that God has wronged
me¹⁹
and encircled²⁰ me with his net.²¹

Job's Abandonment and Affliction

19:7 "If²² I cry out,²³ 'Violence!'²⁴
I receive no answer;²⁵
I cry for help,
but there is no justice.
19:8 He has blocked²⁶ my way so I cannot
pass,
and has set darkness²⁷ over my paths.

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 יָגַח (*yagah*, "to afflict; to torment"). This is supported by the versions. But the LXX has "to tire" which is apparently from יָגַע (*yaga*). The form in the MT is unusual because it preserves the final (original) *yod* in the Hiphil (see GKC 214 §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 דָּכָא (*dakha*), "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 קָלַם (*kalam*) means "outrage; insult; shame." The verbs in this verse are prefixed conjugations, and may be interpreted as preterites 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 כ (*khet*) to ח (*het*). Three Hebrew mss actually have the ח (*khet*). 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" (שָׁגִיתִי, *shagiti*) 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 מִשְׁגָּחָה (*m^eshugah*) is a *hapax legomenon*. It is derived from שָׁוַה (*shuv*, "to wander; to err") with root paralleling שָׁגַג (*shagag*) and שָׁגָה (*shagah*). 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 אֲנִי אֵינִי ('*annam*, "indeed") but now with אִם ('*im*, "if"). 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 גָּדַל (*gadal*); 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 אָוַת ('*avat*) 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 נָקַף (*naqaf*) 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 מַצְוֵר (*m^etsud*) is usually connected with צוּר (*tsud*, "to hunt"), and so is taken to mean "a net." Gordis and Habel, however, interpret it to mean "siege works" thrown up around a city – but that would require changing the ת (*dalet*) to a ר (*resh*) (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 tc 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 גָּדַר (*gadar*) 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 tn Some commentators take the תּוֹךְ הַשָּׂק (*hasak*), related to an Arabic word for "thorn hedge."

19:9 He has stripped me of my honor and has taken the crown off my head.¹

19:10 He tears me down² on every side until I perish,³

he uproots⁴ my hope⁵ like one uproots⁶ a tree.

19:11 Thus⁷ his anger burns against me, and he considers me among his enemies.⁸

19:12 His troops⁹ advance together; they throw up¹⁰ a siege ramp against me, and they camp around my tent.

Job's Forsaken State

19:13 "He has put my relatives¹¹ far from me; my acquaintances only¹² turn away from me.

19:14 My kinsmen have failed me; my friends¹³ have forgotten me.¹⁴

19:15 My guests¹⁵ and my servant girls consider¹⁶ me a stranger; I am a foreigner¹⁷ in their eyes.

19:16 I summon¹⁸ my servant, but he does not respond, even though I implore¹⁹ him with my own mouth.

19:17 My breath is repulsive²⁰ to my wife; I am loathsome²¹ to my brothers.²²

19:18 Even youngsters have scorned me; when I get up,²³ they scoff at me.²⁴

¹ sn The images here are fairly common in the Bible. God has stripped away Job's honorable reputation. The crown is the metaphor for the esteem and dignity he once had. See 29:14; Isa 61:3; see Ps 8:5 [6].

² tn The metaphors are changed now to a demolished building and an uprooted tree. The verb is נָתַץ (*natats*, "to demolish"). Since it is Job himself who is the object, the meaning cannot be "demolish" (as of a house so that an inhabitant has to leave), but more of the attack or the battering.

³ tn The text has הִלַּךְ (*halakh*, "to leave"). But in view of Job 14:20, "perish" or "depart" would be a better meaning here.

⁴ tn The verb נָסַף (*nasa'*) means "to travel" generally, but specifically it means "to pull up the tent pegs and move." The Hiphil here means "uproot." It is used of a vine in Ps 80:9. The idea here does not contradict Job 14:7, for there the tree still had roots and so could grow.

⁵ tn The NEB has "my tent rope," but that seems too contrived here. It is absurd to pull up a tent-rope like a tree.

⁶ tn Heb "like a tree." The words "one uproots" are supplied in the translation for clarity.

⁷ tn The verb is a nonpreterite *vayyiqtol* perhaps employed to indicate that the contents of v. 11 are a logical sequence to the actions described in v. 10.

⁸ tn This second half of the verse is a little difficult. The Hebrew has "and he reckons me for him like his adversaries." Most would change the last word to a singular in harmony with the versions, "as his adversary." But some retain the MT pointing and try to explain it variously: Weiser suggests that the plural might have come from a cultic recitation of Yahweh's deeds against his enemies; Fohrer thinks it refers to the primeval enemies; Gordis takes it as distributive, "as one of his foes." If the plural is retained, this latter view makes the most sense.

⁹ sn Now the metaphor changes again. Since God thinks of Job as an enemy, he attacks with his troops, builds the siege ramp, and camps around him to besiege him. All the power and all the forces are at God's disposal in his attack of Job.

¹⁰ tn Heb "they throw up their way against me." The verb קָלַף (*salaf*) means "to build a siege ramp" or "to throw up a ramp"; here the object is "their way." The latter could be taken as an adverbial accusative, "as their way." But as the object it fits just as well. Some delete the middle clause; the LXX has "Together his troops fell upon me, they beset my ways with an ambush."

¹¹ tn Heb "brothers."

¹² tn The LXX apparently took אֶחָד־וְיָרֵי (*akh*, "even, only," and *zaru*, "they turn away") together as if it was the verb יָרָה (*akhzaru*, "they have become cruel," as in 20:21). But the grammar in the line would be difficult with this. Moreover, the word is most likely from זָר (*zur*, "to turn away"). See L. A. Snijders, "The Meaning of *zar* in the Old Testament," *OTS* 10 (1964): 1-154 (especially p. 9).

¹³ tn The Pual participle is used for those "known" to him, or with whom he is "familiar," whereas קָרוֹב (*qarov*, "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 גַּרְי בֵּיתִי (*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 eyes" is a masculine plural. So the evidence lies on both sides.

¹⁷ tn This word נֹכְרִי (*nokhri*) is the person from another race, from a strange land, the foreigner. The previous word, גֵּר (*ger*), is a more general word for someone who is staying in the land but is not a citizen, a sojourner.

¹⁸ tn The verb קָרָא (*qara'*) followed by the ל (*lamed*) preposition means "to summon." Contrast Ps 123:2.

¹⁹ tn Heb "plead for grace" or "plead for mercy" (ESV).

²⁰ tn The Hebrew appears to have "my breath is strange to my wife." This would be the meaning if the verb was from זָר (*zur*, "to turn aside; to be a stranger"). But it should be connected to זִיר (*zir*), cognate to Assyrian *zaru*, "to feel repugnance toward." Here it is used in the intransitive sense, "to be repulsive." L. A. Snijders, following Driver, doubts the existence of this second root, and retains "strange" ("The Meaning of *zar* in the Old Testament," *OTS* 10 [1964]: 1-154).

²¹ tn The normal meaning here would be based on the root כָּנָן (*khanan*, "to be gracious"). And so we have versions reading "although I entreated" or "my supplication." But it seems more likely it is to be connected to another root meaning "to be offensive; to be loathsome." For the discussion of the connection to the Arabic, see E. Dhorme, *Job*, 278.

²² tn The text has "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 sn 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 דִּבֶּר (*dibber*) 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 friends¹ detest me; and those whom² I love have turned against me.³

19:20 My bones stick to my skin and my flesh;⁴

I have escaped⁵ alive⁶ 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?⁷

Will you never be satiated with my flesh?⁸

19:24 that with an iron chisel and with lead¹¹

they were engraved in a rock forever!

19:25 As for me, I know that my Redeemer¹² lives,

and that as the last¹³

he will stand upon the earth¹⁴

19:26 And after my skin has been destroyed,¹⁵

Job's Assurance of Vindication

19:23 "O that⁹ my words were written down,

O that they were written on a scroll,¹⁰

¹ **tn** *Heb* "men of my confidence," or "men of my council," i.e., intimate friends, confidants.

² **tn** The pronoun *zēh* functions here in the place of a nominative (see GKC 447 §138.h).

³ **tn** T. Penar translates this "turn away from me" (*Job* 19:19 in the *Light of Ben Sira* 6.11, *Bib* 48 [1967]: 293-95).

⁴ **tn** The meaning would be "I am nothing but skin and bones" in current English idiom. Both lines of this verse need attention. The first half seems to say, "My skin and my flesh sticks to my bones." Some think that this is too long, and that the bones can stick to the skin, or the flesh, but not both. Dhorme proposes "in my skin my flesh has rotted away" (*רָקַב, raqav*). This involves several changes in the line, however. He then changes 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 teeth" (Merx); "my teeth fall out" (Duhm); "my teeth fall from my gums" (Pope); "my bones protrude in sharp points" (Kisane). 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 clear, there is a small problem and a plausible solution. The last word is indeed *sefer* ("book"), usually understood here to mean "scroll." But the verb that follows it in the verse is *yukhaqq*, from *khaqq*, "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 *siparru*, "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 notes 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.

¹¹ **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.

¹² **tn** Or "my Vindicator." The word is the active participle from *al*; (*ga'al*, "to redeem, protect, vindicate"). The word is well-known in the OT because of its identification as the kinsman-redeemer (see the book of Ruth). This is the near kinsman who will pay off one's debts, defend the family, avenge a killing, marry the widow of the deceased. The word "redeemer" evokes the wrong connotation for people familiar with the NT alone; a translation of "Vindicator" would capture the idea more. The concept might include the description of the mediator already introduced in Job 16:19, but surely here Job is thinking of God as his vindicator. The interesting point to be stressed here is that Job has said clearly that he sees no vindication in this life, that he is going to die. But he knows he will be vindicated, and even though he will die, his vindicator lives. The dilemma remains though: his distress lay in God's hiding his face from him, and his vindication lay only in beholding God in peace.

¹³ **tn** The word *akharon* ("last") has triggered a good number of interpretations. Here it is an adjectival form and not adverbial; it is an epithet of the vindicator. Some commentators, followed by the RSV, change the form to make it adverbial, and translate it "at last." T. H. Gaster translates it "even if he were the last person to exist" ("Short notes," *VT* 4 [1954]: 78).

¹⁴ **tn** The Hebrew has "and he will rise/stand upon [the] dust." The verb *qum* is properly "to rise; to arise," and certainly also can mean "to stand." Both English ideas are found in the verb. The concept here is that of God rising up to mete out justice. And so to avoid confusion with the idea of resurrection (which although implicit in these words which are pregnant with theological ideas yet to be revealed, is not explicitly stated or intended in this context) the translation "stand" has been used. The Vulgate had "I will rise," which introduced the idea of Job's resurrection. The word "dust" is used as in 41:33. The word "dust" is associated with death and the grave, the very earthly particles. Job assumes that God will descend from heaven to bring justice to the world. The use of the word also hints that this will take place after Job has died and returned to dust. Again, the words of Job come to mean far more than he probably understood.

¹⁵ **tn** This verse on the whole has some serious interpretation problems that have allowed commentators to go in several directions. The verbal clause is "they strike off this," which is then to be taken as a passive in view of the fact that there is no expressed subject. Some have thought that Job was referring to this life, and that after his disease had done its worst he would see his vindication (see T. J. Meek, "Job 19:25-27," *VT* 6 [1956]: 100-103; E. F. Sutcliffe, "Further notes on Job, textual and exegetical," *Bib* 31 [1950]: 377; and others). But Job has been clear – he does not expect to live and see his vindication in this life. There are a host of other interpretations that differ greatly from the sense expressed in the MT. Duhm, for example, has "and another shall arise as my witness." E. Dhorme (*Job*, 284-85) argues that the vindication comes after death; he emends the verb to get a translation: "and that, behind my skin, I shall stand up." He explains this to mean that it will be Job in person who will be present at the ultimate drama. But the interpretation is forced, and really unnecessary.

yet in my flesh¹ I will see God,²
 19:27 whom I will see for myself,³
 and whom my own eyes will behold,
 and not another.⁴
 My heart⁵ grows faint within me.⁶
 19:28 If you say, ‘How we will pursue
 him,
 since the root of the trouble is found in
 him!’⁷

19:29 Fear the sword yourselves,
 for wrath⁸ brings the punishment⁹ by the
 sword,
 so that you may know
 that there is judgment.¹⁰

Zophar's Second Speech¹¹

20:1 Then Zophar the Naamathite answered:
 20:2 “This is why¹² my troubled thoughts
 bring me back¹³ –
 because of my feelings¹⁴ within me.
 20:3 When¹⁵ I hear a reproof that dishon-
 ors¹⁶ me,
 then my understanding¹⁷ prompts me to
 answer.¹⁸

1 tn 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.

2 tn H. H. Rowley (*Job* [NCBC], 140) says, “The text of this 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 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 behold God”; or L. Waterman’s translation in the English present, making it a mystic vision in which Job already sees that God is his vindicator (“Note on Job 19:23-27: Job’s Triumph of Faith,” *JBL* 69 [1950]: 379-80).

3 tn The emphasis is on “I” and “for myself.” No other will be seeing this vindication, but Job himself will see it. Of that he is confident. Some take יִי (*li*, “for myself”) to mean favorable to me, or on my side (see A. B. Davidson, *Job*, 143). But Job is expecting (not just wishing for) a face-to-face encounter in the vindication.

4 tn Hitzig offered another interpretation that is somewhat forced. The “other” (רֵי, *zar*) or “stranger” would refer to Job. He would see God, not as an enemy, but in peace.

5 tn *Heb* “kidneys,” a poetic expression for the seat of emotions.

6 tn *Heb* “fail/grow faint in my breast.” Job is saying that he has expended all his energy with his longing for vindication.

7 tc 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.

8 tn The word “wrath” probably refers to divine wrath for the wicked. Many commentators change this word to read “they,” or more precisely, “these things.”

9 tn The word is “iniquities,” but here as elsewhere it should receive the classification of the punishment for iniquity (a category of meaning that developed from a metonymy of effect).

10 tc The last word is problematic because of the textual variants in the Hebrew. In place of שְׁדִין (*shaddin*, “judgment”) some have proposed שְׁדַי (*shadday*, “Almighty”) and read it “that you may know the Almighty” (Ewald, Wright). Some have read it יֵשׁ דָּיִן (*yesh dayyan*, “there is a judge,” Gray, Fohrer). Others defend the traditional view, arguing that the שׁ (*shin*) is the abbreviated relative particle on the word דָּיִן (*din*, “judgment”).

11 sn Zophar breaks in with an impassioned argument about the brevity and prosperity of the life of the wicked. But every statement that he makes is completely irrelevant to the case at hand. The speech has four sections: after a short preface (2-3) he portrays the brevity of the triumph of the wicked (4-11), retribution for sin (12-22), and God’s swift judgment (23-29). See further B. H. Kelly, “Truth in Contradiction, A Study of Job 20 and 21,” *Int* 15 (1961): 147-56.

12 tn The ordinary meaning of לָכֵן (*lakhen*) is “therefore,” coming after an argument. But at the beginning of a speech it is an allusion to what follows.

13 tn The verb is שׁוּב (*shuv*, “to return”), but in the Hiphil, “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.

14 tn The word is normally taken from the root “to hasten,” and rendered “because of my haste within me.” But K&D 11:374 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 *Ecl* 2:25.

15 tn There is no indication that this clause is to be subordinated to the next, other than the logical connection, and the use of the ו (*vav*) in the second half.

16 tn See Job 19:3.

17 tn The phrase actually has רוּחַ מִבִּינָתִי (*ruakh mibbinati*, “a spirit/wind/breath/impulse from my understanding”). Some translate it “out of my understanding a spirit answers me.” The idea is not that difficult, and so the many proposals to re-write the text can be rejected. The spirit of his understanding prompts the reply.

18 tn To take this verb as a simple Qal and read it “answers me,” does not provide a clear idea. The form can just as easily be taken as a Hiphil, with the sense “causes me to answer.” It is Zophar who will “return” and who will “answer.”

20:4 “Surely you know¹ that it has been from old,
ever since humankind was placed² on the earth,
20:5 that the elation of the wicked is brief,³
the joy of the godless⁴ lasts but a moment.⁵
20:6 Even though his stature⁶ reaches to the heavens
and his head touches the clouds,
20:7 he will perish forever, like his own excrement;⁷
those who used to see him will say,
‘Where is he?’
20:8 Like a dream he flies away, never again to be found,⁸
and like a vision of the night he is put to flight.
20:9 People⁹ who had seen him will not see him again,
and the place where he was will recognize him no longer.
20:10 His sons must recompense¹⁰ the poor;

his own hands¹¹ must return his wealth.
20:11 His bones¹² were full of his youthful vigor,¹³
but that vigor will lie down with him in the dust.

20:12 “If¹⁴ evil is sweet in his mouth and he hides it under his tongue,¹⁵
20:13 if he retains it for himself and does not let it go,
and holds it fast in his mouth,¹⁶
20:14 his food is turned sour¹⁷ in his stomach;¹⁸
it becomes the venom of serpents¹⁹ within him.
20:15 The wealth that he consumed²⁰ he vomits up,
God will make him throw it out²¹ of his stomach.
20:16 He sucks the poison²² of serpents;²³ the fangs²⁴ of a viper²⁵ kill him.

¹ **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 *khanef*, “godless” see Job 8:13.

⁵ **tn** The phrase is “until a moment,” meaning it is short-lived. But see J. Barr, “Hebrew *ʿad*, especially at Job 1:18 and Neh 7:3,” *JSS* 27 (1982): 177-88.

⁶ **tn** The word *šimʿ* (*siʿ*) has been connected with the verb *šāʿ* (*nasaʿ*, “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 *ratsats*, “mistreat” and not from *ratsah*, “be please with”). So it was taken to mean, “Let inferiors destroy his children.” But the verb is *ratsah*. This has been taken to mean “his sons will seek the favor of the poor.” This would mean that they would be reduced to poverty and need help from even the poor. Some commentators see this as another root *ratsah* 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 **sn** This line means that he dies prematurely – at the height of his youthful vigor.

¹⁴ **tn** The conjunction *ʾim* (*im*) 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 **tn** *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 *varash* means either “to inherit” or “to disinherit; to dispossess.” 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 for “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 **tn** Some have thought this verse is a gloss on v. 14 and should be deleted. But the word for “viper” (*ʾefet*, *efet*) 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,¹
the rivers, which are the torrents²
of honey and butter.³
20:18 He gives back the ill-gotten gain⁴
without assimilating it;⁵
he will not enjoy the wealth from his
commerce.⁶
20:19 For he has oppressed the poor and
abandoned them;⁷
he has seized a house which he did not
build.⁸
20:20 For he knows no satisfaction in his
appetite,⁹
he does not let anything he desires¹⁰
escape.¹¹

20:21 “Nothing is left for him to devour;¹²
that is why his prosperity does not last.¹³
20:22 In the fullness of his sufficiency,¹⁴
distress¹⁵ overtakes him.
the full force of misery will come upon
him.¹⁶
20:23 “While he is¹⁷ filling his belly,
God¹⁸ sends his burning anger¹⁹ against
him,
and rains down his blows upon him.²⁰
20:24 If he flees from an iron weapon,
then an arrow²¹ 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.

1 tn The word בְּנֵיחַ (p^llaggot) 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.

2 tn 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 יְשָׁרָה (yishar, “oil”) and connected to the first colon. Older editors argued for a נָהָר (nahar) 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 “streams” 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.

3 sn This word is often translated “curds.” It is curdled milk, possibly a type of butter.

4 tn The idea is the fruit of his evil work. The word יָגָה (yaga) occurs only here; it must mean ill-gotten gains. The verb is in 10:3.

5 tn Heb “and he does not swallow.” In the context this means “consume” for his own pleasure and prosperity. The verbal clause is here taken adverbially.

6 sn The expression is “according to the wealth of his exchange.” This means he cannot enjoy whatever he gained in his business deals. Some mss have ב (bet) preposition, making the translation easier, but this is evidence of a scribal correction.

7 tc 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 text to get a word parallel to “house.” Ehrlich came up with עִנָּה (‘ozev, “mud hut”), Kissane had “hovel” (similar to Neh 3:8). M. Dahood did the same (“The Root ‘zb II in Job,” *JBL* 78 [1959]: 306-7). J. Reider came up with עִזָּה (‘ezev, the “leavings”), what the rich were to leave for the poor (“Contributions to the Scriptural text,” *HUCA* 24 [1952/53]: 103-6). But an additional root עִזָּה (‘azav) is questionable. And while the text as it stands is general and not very striking, there is absolutely nothing wrong with it. Dhorme reverses the letters to gain בְּעִזָּה (b^l‘oz, “with force [or violence]”).

8 tn The last clause says, “and he did not build it.” This can be understood in an adverbial sense, supplying the relative pronoun to the translation.

9 tn Heb “belly,” which represents his cravings, his desires and appetites. The “satisfaction” is actually the word for “quiet; peace; calmness; ease.” He was driven by greedy desires, or he felt and displayed an insatiable greed.

10 tn The verb is the passive participle of the verb חָמַד (khamad) which is one of the words for “covet; desire.” This person is controlled by his desires; there is no escape. He is a slave.

11 tn The verb is difficult to translate in this line. It basically

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 shall save nothing” (“The Interchange of the Preposition *bet* and *min* in Biblical Hebrew,” *JBL* 78 [1959]: 315-16). The RSV has “he will save nothing in which he delights”; NIV has “he cannot save himself by his treasure.”

12 tn Heb “for his eating,” which is frequently rendered “for his gluttony.” It refers, of course, to all the desires he has to take things from other people.

13 sn The point throughout is that insatiable greed and ruthless plundering to satisfy it will be recompensed with utter and complete loss.

14 tn The word שָׂפָא (safaq) occurs only here; it means “sufficiency; wealth; abundance (see D. W. Thomas, “The Text of *Jesaia* 2:6 and the Word *sapaq*,” *ZAW* 75 [1963]: 88-90).

15 tn Heb “there is straightness for him.” The root צָרָר (sarar) means “to be narrowed in straits, to be in a bind.” The word here would have the idea of pressure, stress, trouble. One could say he is in a bind.

16 tn Heb “every hand of trouble comes to him.” The pointing of עָמַל (‘amel) indicates it would refer to one who brings trouble; LXX and Latin read an abstract noun עָמָל (amal, “trouble”) here.

17 tn D. J. A. Clines observes that to do justice to the three jussives in the verse, one would have to translate “May it be, to fill his belly to the full, that God should send...and rain” (*Job* [WBC], 477). The jussive form of the verb at the beginning of the verse could also simply introduce a protasis of a conditional clause (see GKC 323 §109.h, i). This would mean, “if he [God] is about to fill his [the wicked’s] belly to the full, he will send....” The NIV reads “when he has filled his belly.” These fit better, because the context is talking about the wicked in his evil pursuit being cut down.

18 tn “God” is understood as the subject of the judgment.

19 tn Heb “the anger of his wrath.”

20 tn Heb “rain down upon him, on his flesh.” Dhorme changes עָלָיו (‘alimo, “upon him”) to “his arrows”; he translates the line as “he rains his arrows upon his flesh.” The word בְּרִיחָיו (birkhmo, “his flesh”) has been given a wide variety of translations: “as his food,” “on his flesh,” “upon him, his anger,” or “missiles or weapons of war.”

21 tn Heb “a bronze bow pierces him.” The words “an arrow from” are implied and are supplied in the translation; cf. “pulls it out” in the following verse.

20:25 When he pulls it out⁴ and it comes out of his back, the gleaming point² out of his liver, terrors come over him.
 20:26 Total darkness waits to receive his treasures;³ a fire which has not been kindled⁴ 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 appointment⁵ from God.”

*Job's Reply to Zophar*⁶

21:1 Then Job answered:
 21:2 “Listen carefully⁷ to my words; let this be⁸ the consolation you offer me.⁹
 21:3 Bear with me¹⁰ and I¹¹ will speak,

and after I have spoken¹² you may mock.¹³
 21:4 Is my¹⁴ complaint against a man?¹⁵
 If so,¹⁶ why should I not be impatient?¹⁷
 21:5 Look¹⁸ at me and be appalled; put your hands over your mouths.¹⁹
 21:6 For, when I think²⁰ about this, I am terrified²¹ and my body feels a shudder.²²

The Wicked Prosper

21:7 “Why do the wicked go on living,²³ grow old,²⁴ even increase in power?
 21:8 Their children²⁵ are firmly established in their presence,²⁶

¹ tn The MT has “he draws out [or as a passive, “it is drawn out/forth”] and comes [or goes] out of his back.” For the first verb שָׁלַף (*shalaf*, “pull, draw”), many commentators follow the LXX and use שֵׁלַח (*shelakh*, “a spear”). It then reads “and a shaft comes out of his back,” a sword flash comes out of his liver.” But the verse could also be a continuation of the preceding.

² tn Possibly a reference to lightnings.

³ tn Heb “all darkness is hidden for his laid up things.” All darkness” refers to the misfortunes and afflictions that await. The verb “hidden” means “is destined for.”

⁴ tn Heb “not blown upon,” i.e., not kindled by man. But G. R. Driver reads “unquenched” (“Hebrew notes on the ‘Wisdom of Jesus Ben Sirach’,” *JBL* 53 [1934]: 289).

⁵ tn For the word אִמְרוֹ (*imro*) some propose reading “his appointment,” and the others, “his word.” Driver shows that “the heritage of his appointment” means “his appointed heritage” (see GKC 440 §135.n).

⁶ sn In this chapter Job actually answers the ideas of all three of his friends. Here Job finds the flaw in their argument – he can point to wicked people who prosper. But whereas in the last speech, when he looked on his suffering from the perspective of his innocence, he found great faith and hope, in this chapter when he surveys the divine government of the world, he sinks to despair. The speech can be divided into five parts: he appeals for a hearing (2-6), he points out the prosperity of the wicked (7-16), he wonders exactly when the godless suffer (17-22), he shows how death levels everything (23-26), and he reveals how experience contradicts his friends’ argument (27-34).

⁷ tn The intensity of the appeal is again expressed by the imperative followed by the infinitive absolute for emphasis. See note on “listen carefully” in 13:17.

⁸ tc The LXX negates the sentence, “that I may not have this consolation from you.”

⁹ tn The word תְּנַחֲמוּתֵיכֶם (*tankhumotekhem*) is literally “your consolations,” the suffix being a subjective genitive. The friends had thought they were offering Job consolation (Job 14:11), but the consolation he wants from them is that they listen to him and respond accordingly.

¹⁰ tn The verb נָסָה (*nasa*) means “to lift up; to raise up,” but in this context it means “to endure; to tolerate” (see Job 7:21).

¹¹ tn The conjunction and the independent personal pronoun draw emphatic attention to the subject of the verb: “and I on my part will speak.”

¹² tn The adverbial clauses are constructed of the preposition “after” and the Piel infinitive construct with the subjective genitive suffix: “my speaking,” or “I speak.”

¹³ tn The verb is the imperfect of לָעַג (*la’ag*). The Hiphil has the same basic sense as the Qal, “to mock; to deride.” The imperfect here would be modal, expressing permission. The verb is in the singular, suggesting that Job is addressing Zophar; however, most of the versions put it into the plural. Note the singular in 16:3 between the plural in 16:1 and 16:4.

¹⁴ tn The addition of the independent pronoun at the beginning of the sentence (“Is it / against a man / my complaint”) strengthens the pronominal suffix on “complaint” (see GKC 438 §135.f).

¹⁵ sn The point seems to be that if his complaint were merely against men he might expect sympathy from other men, but no one dares offer him sympathy when his complaint is against God. So he will give free expression to his spirit (H. H. Rowley, *Job* [NCBC], 147).

¹⁶ tn On disjunctive interrogatives, see GKC 475 §150.g.

¹⁷ tn Heb “why should my spirit/breath not be short” (see Num 21:4; Judg 16:16).

¹⁸ tn The verb פָּנָה (*panu*) is from the verb “to turn,” related to the word for “face.” In calling for them to turn toward him, he is calling for them to look at him. But here it may be more in the sense of their attention rather than just a looking at him.

¹⁹ tn The idiom is “put a hand over a mouth,” the natural gesture for keeping silent and listening (cf. Job 29:9; 40:4; Mic 7:16).

²⁰ tn The verb is זָכַר (*zakhar*, “to remember”). Here it has the sense of “to keep in memory; to meditate; to think upon.”

²¹ tn The main clause is introduced here by the conjunction, following the adverbial clause of time.

²² tn Some commentators take “shudder” to be the subject of the verb, “a shudder seizes my body.” But the word is feminine (and see the usage, especially in Job 9:6 and 18:20). It is the subject in Isa 21:4; Ps 55:6; and Ezek 7:18.

²³ sn A. B. Davidson (*Job*, 154) clarifies that Job’s question is of a universal scope. In the government of God, why do the wicked exist at all? The verb could be translated “continue to live.”

²⁴ tn The verb עָתָק (*ataq*) means “to move; to proceed; to advance.” Here it is “to advance in years” or “to grow old.” This clause could serve as an independent clause, a separate sentence, but it more likely continues the question of the first colon and is parallel to the verb “live.”

²⁵ tn Heb “their seed.”

²⁶ tn The text uses עָמַם לְפָנֵיהֶם (*lifnehem ’immam*, “before them, with them”). Many editors think that these were alternative readings, and so omit one or the other. Dhorme moved עָמַם (*immam*) to the second half of the verse and emended it to read עָמַדִּים (*om’dim*, “abide”). Kissane and Gordis changed only the vowels and came up with עָמַם (*ammam*, “their kinfolk”). But Gordis thinks the presence of both of them in the line is evidence of a conflated reading (p. 229).

their offspring before their eyes.

21:9 Their houses are safe¹ and without fear;² and no rod of punishment³ from God is upon them.⁴

21:10 Their bulls⁵ breed⁶ without fail;⁷ their cows calve and do not miscarry. **21:11** They allow their children to run⁸ like a flock;

their little ones dance about.

21:12 They sing⁹ to the accompaniment of tambourine and harp, and make merry to the sound of the flute.

21:13 They live out¹⁰ their years in prosperity and go down¹¹ to the grave¹² in peace.

21:14 So they say to God, ‘Turn away from us! We do not want to¹³ know your ways.¹⁴

21:15 Who is the Almighty, that¹⁵ we should serve him?

What would we gain if we were to pray¹⁶ to him?’¹⁷

21:16 But their prosperity is not their own doing.¹⁸

The counsel of the wicked is far from me!¹⁹

How Often Do the Wicked Suffer?

21:17 ‘How often²⁰ is the lamp of the wicked extinguished?

How often does their²¹ misfortune come upon them?

How often does God apportion pain²² to them²³ in his anger?

21:18 How often²⁴ are they like straw before the wind, and like chaff swept away²⁵ by a whirlwind?

21:19 You may say,²⁶ ‘God stores up a man’s²⁷ punishment for his children!’²⁸

¹ **tn** The word שָׁלוֹם (*shalom*, “peace, safety”) is here a substantive after a plural subject (see GKC 452 §141.c, n. 3).

² **tn** The form מִפְּחָד (*mippakhad*) is translated “without fear,” literally “from fear”; the preposition is similar to the alpha privative in Greek. The word “fear, dread” means nothing that causes fear or dread – they are peaceful, secure. See GKC 382 §119.w.

³ **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.

⁴ **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.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “his bull,” but it is meant to signify the bulls of the wicked.

⁶ **tn** The verb used here means “to impregnate,” and not to be confused with the verb עָבַר (*avar*, “to pass over”).

⁷ **tn** The use of the verb יָצַר (*ga’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).

⁸ **tn** The verb שָׁלַח (*shalakh*) means “to send forth,” but in the Piel “to release; to allow to run free.” The picture of children frolicking in the fields and singing and dancing is symbolic of peaceful, prosperous times.

⁹ **tn** The verb is simply “they take up [or lift up],” but the understood object is “their voices,” and so it means “they sing.”

¹⁰ **tc** The *Kethib* has “they wear out” but the *Qere* and the versions have יָבִילוּ (*khallu*, “bring to an end”). The verb בָּקַח (*kalah*) means “to finish; to complete,” and here with the object “their days,” it means that they bring their life to a (successful) conclusion. Both readings are acceptable in the context, with very little difference in the overall meaning (which according to Gordis is proof the *Qere* does not always correct the *Kethib*).

¹¹ **tc** The MT has יִתְרֹוּ (*yekhattu*, “they are frightened [or broken]”), taking the verb from יָרָתָה (*khatat*, “be terrified”). But most would slightly rephrase it as יִתְרֹוּ (*yekhattu*), an Aramaism, “they go down,” from יָרַח (*nakhat*, “go down”). See Job 17:16.

¹² **tn** The word רֵגַע (*rega*) has been interpreted as “in a moment” or “in peace” (on the basis of Arabic *raja’a*, “return to rest”). Gordis thinks this is a case of *talhin* – both meanings present in the mind of the writer.

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** Contrast Ps 25:4, which affirms that walking in God’s ways means to obey God’s will – the Torah.

¹⁵ **tn** The interrogative clause is followed by *ki*, similar to Exod 5:2, “Who is Yahweh, that I should obey him?”

¹⁶ **tn** The verb פָּגַע (*paga*) means “to encounter; to meet,” but also “to meet with request; to intercede; to interpose.” The latter meaning is a derived meaning by usage.

¹⁷ **tn** The verse is not present in the LXX. It may be that this was considered too blasphemous and therefore omitted.

¹⁸ **tn** *Heb* “is not in their hand.”

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.”

¹⁹ **sn** 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.”

²⁰ **tn** The interrogative “How often” occurs only with the first colon; it is supplied for smoother reading in the next two.

²¹ **tn** The pronominal suffix is objective; it re-enforces the object of the preposition, “upon them.” The verb in the clause is בּוֹא (*bo*) followed by עַל (*al*), “come upon [or against],” may be interpreted as meaning attack or strike.

²² **tn** תְּבִלִים (*khalvim*) can mean “ropes” or “cords,” but that would not go with the verb “apportion” in this line. The meaning of “pangs (as in “birth-pangs”) seems to fit best here. The wider meaning would be “physical agony.”

²³ **tn** The phrase “to them” is understood and thus is supplied in the translation for clarification.

²⁴ **tn** To retain the sense that the wicked do not suffer as others, this verse must either be taken as a question or a continuation of the question in v. 17.

²⁵ **tn** The verb used actually means “rob.” It is appropriate to the image of a whirlwind suddenly taking away the wisp of straw.

²⁶ **tn** 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).

²⁷ **tn** The text simply has אֲוִנִי (*ono*, “his iniquity”), but by usage, “the punishment for the iniquity.”

²⁸ **tn** *Heb* “his sons.”

Instead let him repay¹ the man himself² so that³ he may know it!

21:20 Let his own eyes see his destruction,⁴ let him drink of the anger of the Almighty.

21:21 For what is his interest⁵ in his home after his death,⁶ when the number of his months has been broken off?⁷

21:22 Can anyone teach⁸ God knowledge, since⁹ he judges those that are on high?¹⁰

Death Levels Everything

21:23 “One man dies in his full vigor,¹¹ completely secure and prosperous,

21:24 his body¹² well nourished,¹³

¹ **tn** The verb שָׁלַם (*shalam*) in the Piel has the meaning of restoring things to their normal, making whole, and so reward, repay (if for sins), or recompense in general.

² **tn** The text simply has “let him repay [to] him.”

³ **tn** 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].”

⁴ **tc** This word occurs only here. The word כִּיד (*kid*) was connected to Arabic *kaid*, “fraud, trickery,” or “warfare.” The word is emended by the commentators to other ideas, such as כִּיד (*pid*, “[his] calamity”). Dahood and others alter it to “cup”; Wright to “weapons.” A. F. L. Beeston argues for a meaning “condemnation” for the MT form, and so makes no change in the text (*Mus* 67 [1954]: 315-16). If the connection to Arabic “warfare” is sustained, or if such explanations of the existing MT can be sustained, then the text need not be emended. In any case, the sense of the line is clear.

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “his desire.” The meaning is that after he is gone he does not care about what happens to his household (“house” meaning “family” here).

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “after him,” but clearly the meaning is “after he is gone.”

⁷ **tc** The rare word חֲטָצִי (*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 חֲטָצִי (*khatsats*) do not offer any help.

⁸ **tn** 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 **tn** The clause begins with the disjunctive *vav* (ו) and the pronoun, “and he.” This is to be subordinated as a circumstantial clause. See GKC 456 §142.d.

¹⁰ **tc** The Hebrew has רָמִים (*ramim*), a plural masculine participle of רוּם (*rum*, “to be high; to be exalted”). This is probably a reference to the angels. But M. Dahood restores an older interpretation that it refers to “the Most High” (“Some Northwest Semitic words in Job,” *Bib* 38 [1957]: 316-17). He would take the word as a singular form with an enclitic *mem* (ם). He reads the verse, “will he judge the Most High?”

¹¹ **tn** The line has “in the bone of his perfection.” The word עֲצֵם (*’etsēm*), which means “bone,” is used pronominally to express “the same, very”; here it is “in the very fullness of his strength” (see GKC 449 §139.g). The abstract רֵם (*tom*) is used here in the sense of physical perfection and strengths.

¹² **tn** The verb נָטַח (*atan*) has the precise meaning of “press olives.” But because here it says “full of milk,” the derived meaning for the noun has been made to mean “breasts” or “pails” (although in later Hebrew this word occurs – but with olives, not with milk). Dhorme takes it to refer to “his sides,” and reports the word for “milk” (חֵלֵב, *khalev*) to get “fat” (חֵלֵב, *khelev*) – “his sides are full of fat,” a rendering followed by NAB. However, this weakens the parallelism.

¹³ **tn** This interpretation, adopted by several commentaries and modern translations (cf. NAB, NIV), is a general rendering

and the marrow of his bones moist.¹⁴

21:25 And another man¹⁵ dies in bitterness of soul,¹⁶

never having tasted¹⁷ 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,¹⁸

the schemes¹⁹ by which you would wrong me.²⁰

21:28 For you say, ‘Where now is the nobleman’s house,²¹ and where are the tents in which the wicked lived?’²²

21:29 Have you never questioned those who travel the roads?

Do you not recognize their accounts²³ –

21:30 that the evil man is spared from the day of his misfortune, that he is delivered²⁴

from the day of God’s wrath?²⁵

21:31 No one denounces his conduct to his face;

to capture the sense of the line.

¹⁴ **tn** The verb שָׁקַח (*shaqah*) means “to water” and here “to be watered thoroughly.” The picture in the line is that of health and vigor.

¹⁵ **tn** The expression “this (v. 23)...and this” (v. 25) means “one...the other.”

¹⁶ **tn** The text literally has “and this [man] dies in soul of bitterness.” Some simply reverse it and translate “in the bitterness of soul.” The genitive “bitterness” may be an attribute adjective, “with a bitter soul.”

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “eaten what is good.” It means he died without having enjoyed the good life.

¹⁸ **tn** The word is “your thoughts.” The word for “thoughts” (from חָשַׁב [*khatsav*, “to think; to reckon; to plan”]) has more to do with their intent than their general thoughts. He knows that when they talked about the fate of the wicked they really were talking about him.

¹⁹ **tn** For the meaning of this word, and its root זָמַם (*zamam*), see Job 17:11. It usually means the “plans” or “schemes” that are concocted against someone.

²⁰ **tn** E. Dhorme (*Job*, 321) distinguishes the verb חָמַם (*khamas*) from the noun for “violence.” He proposes a meaning of “think, imagine”: “and the ideas you imagined about me.”

²¹ **sn** The question implies the answer will be “vanished” or “gone.”

²² **tn** *Heb* “And where is the tent, the dwellings of the wicked.” The word “dwellings of the wicked” is in apposition to “tent.” A relative pronoun must be supplied in the translation.

²³ **tc** The LXX reads, “Ask those who go by the way, and do not disown their signs.”

tn The idea is that the merchants who travel widely will talk about what they have seen and heard. These travelers give a different account of the wicked; they tell how he is spared. E. Dhorme (*Job*, 322) interprets “signs” concretely: “Their custom was to write their names and their thoughts somewhere at the main cross-roads. The main roads of Sinai are dotted with these scribbles made by such passers of a day.”

²⁴ **tn** The verb means “to be led forth.” To be “led forth in the day of trouble” means to be delivered.

no one repays him for what¹ he has done.²

21:32 And when he is carried to the tombs, and watch is kept³ over the funeral mound,⁴

21:33 The clods of the torrent valley⁵ are sweet to him;

behind him everybody follows in procession,

and before him goes a countless throng.

21:34 So how can you console me with your futile words?

Nothing is left of your answers but deception!⁶

Eliphaz's Third Speech⁷

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?⁸

22:3 Is it of any special benefit⁹ to the Almighty

that you should be righteous,

or is it any gain to him

that you make your ways blameless?¹⁰

22:4 Is it because of your piety¹¹ that he rebukes you

and goes to judgment with you?¹²

22:5 Is not your wickedness great¹³ and is there no end to your iniquity?

22:6 "For you took pledges¹⁴ from your brothers

for no reason,

and you stripped the clothing from the naked.¹⁵

22:7 You gave the weary¹⁶ no water to drink

and from the hungry you withheld food.

22:8 Although you were a powerful man,¹⁷ owning land,¹⁸

an honored man¹⁹ living on it,²⁰

22:9 you sent widows away empty-handed,

and the arms²¹ of the orphans you crushed.²²

22:10 That is why snares surround you, and why sudden fear terrifies you,

22:11 why it is so dark you cannot see,²³

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 מַדְּלִי (ma'dal) is used for "treachery; deception; fraud." Here Job is saying that their way of interpreting reality is dangerously unfaithful.

⁷ sn The third and final cycle of speeches now begins with Eliphaz' final speech. Eliphaz 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 tn The word כֶּהֱפֵטִים (khefets) 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 תָּמַם (tamam, "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 tn The adjective רַבָּה (rabbah) normally has the idea of "great" in quantity ("abundant," ESV) rather than "great" in quality.

¹⁴ tn The verb תָּקַח (khaval) 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 tn 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 tn 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 tn 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 tn The "arms of the orphans" are their helps or rights on which they depended for support.

²² tn The verb in the text is Pual: יָדָּקָה (yē'dukka', "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 its favor is the parallelism, the use of the second person all throughout 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 אֵי ('o, "or") as אֵר ('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 flood¹ of water covers you.

22:12 “Is not God on high in heaven?²
And see³ the lofty stars,⁴ how high they
are!

22:13 But you have said, ‘What does God
know?
Does he judge through such deep dark-
ness?’⁵

22:14 Thick clouds are a veil for him, so
he does not see us,⁶
as he goes back and forth
in the vault⁷ of heaven.⁸

22:15 Will you keep to the old path⁹
that evil men have walked –

22:16 men¹⁰ who were carried off¹¹ before
their time,¹²

when the flood¹³ was poured out¹⁴
on their foundations?¹⁵

22:17 They were saying to God, ‘Turn
away from us,’
and ‘What can the Almighty do to us?’¹⁶

22:18 But it was he¹⁷ who filled their
houses
with good things –
yet the counsel of the wicked¹⁸
was far from me.¹⁹

22:19 The righteous see their destruction²⁰
and rejoice;
the innocent mock them scornfully,²¹ say-
ing,

22:20 ‘Surely our enemies²² are destroyed,
and fire consumes their wealth.’

22:21 “Reconcile yourself²³ with God,²⁴
and be at peace²⁵ with him;

in this way your prosperity will be good.
22:22 Accept instruction²⁶ from his mouth
and store up his words²⁷ in your heart.

22:23 If you return to the Almighty, you
will be built up,²⁸
if you remove wicked behavior far from
your tent,

¹ **tn** The word שִׁפְטָה (*shif'at*) means “multitude of.” It is used of men, camels, horses, and here of waters in the heavens.

² **tn** This reading preserves the text as it is. The nouns “high” and “heavens” would then be taken as adverbial accusatives of place (see GKC 37.3-74 §118.g).

³ **tn** The parallel passage in Isa 40:26-27, as well as the context here, shows that the imperative is to be retained here. The LXX has “he sees.”

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “head of the stars.”

⁵ **sn** Eliphaz is giving to Job the thoughts and words of the pagans, for they say, “How does God know, and is there knowledge in the Most High?” (see Ps 73:11; 94:11).

⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and he does not see.” The implied object is “us.”

⁷ **sn** The word is “circle; dome”; here it is the dome that covers the earth, beyond which God sits enthroned. A. B. Davidson (*Job*, 165) suggests “on the arch of heaven” that covers the earth.

⁸ **sn** The idea suggested here is that God is not only far off, but he is unconcerned as he strolls around heaven – this is what Eliphaz says Job means.

⁹ **tn** The “old path” here is the way of defiance to God. The text in these two verses is no doubt making reference to the flood in Genesis, one of the perennial examples of divine judgment.

¹⁰ **tn** The word “men” is not in the Hebrew text, but has been supplied to clarify the relative pronoun “who.”

¹¹ **tn** The verb קָבַט (*qamat*) basically means “to seize; to tie together to make a bundle.” So the Pual will mean “to be bundled away; to be carried off.”

¹² **tn** The clause has “and [it was] not the time.” It may be used adverbially here.

¹³ **tn** The word is נָהָר (*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).

¹⁴ **tn** The verb יָצַק (*yatsaq*) 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).

¹⁵ **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.

¹⁶ **tn** The form in the text is “to them.” The LXX and the Syriac versions have “to us.”

¹⁷ **tn** The pronoun is added for this emphasis; it has “but he” before the verb.

¹⁸ **tn** 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 the words of Job. Verses 17 and 18 are deleted by a number of commentators as a gloss because they have many similarities to 21:14-16. But 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 **sn** 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. Dhorme (*Job*, 336) reprints קִימָנוּ (*qimannu*) of the MT to קִימָנוּ (*qumam*), arguing that קִימָנוּ (*qumam*) means “what exists [or has substance]” (although that is used of animals). He translates: “have not their possessions been destroyed.”

²³ **tn** The verb סָכַח (*sakhan*) meant “to be useful; to be profitable” in v. 2. Now, in the Hiphil it means “to be accustomed to” or “to have experience with.” Joined by the preposition “with” it means “to be reconciled with him.” W. B. Bishai cites Arabic and Ugaritic words to support a meaning “acqiesce” (“Notes on *hskn* in Job 22:21,” *JNES* 20 [1961]: 258-59).

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “him”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁵ **tn** The two imperatives in this verse imply a relationship of succession and not consequence.

²⁶ **tn** The Hebrew word here is תּוֹרָה (*torah*), its only occurrence in the book of Job.

²⁷ **tc** M. Dahood has “write his words” (“Metaphor in Job 22:22,” *Bib* 47 [1966]: 108-9).

²⁸ **tc** The MT has “you will be built up” (תִּבְנֶה, *tibbaneh*). But the LXX has “humble yourself” (reading תִּנְחַל [*anneh*] apparently). Many commentators read this; Dahood has “you will be healed.”

22:24 and throw¹ your gold² in the dust –
your gold³ of Ophir
among the rocks in the ravines –
22:25 then the Almighty himself will be
your gold,⁴
and the choicest⁵ silver for you.
22:26 Surely then you will delight your-
self⁶ 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.⁷
22:28 Whatever you decide⁸ on a matter,
it will be established for you,
and light will shine on your ways.
22:29 When people are brought low⁹ and
you say
'Lift them up!'¹⁰
then he will save the downcast;¹¹
22:30 he will deliver even someone who is
not innocent,¹²

who will escape¹³ through the cleanness
of your hands."

*Job's Reply to Eliphaz*¹⁴

23:1 Then Job answered:

23:2 "Even today my complaint is still
bitter,¹⁵
his¹⁶ hand is heavy despite¹⁷ my groan-
ing.

23:3 O that I knew¹⁸ where I might find
him,¹⁹
that I could come²⁰ to his place of resi-
dence!²¹

23:4 I would lay out my case²² before him

¹³ **tc** The MT has "he will escape [or be delivered]." Theodotion has the second person, "you will be delivered."

¹⁴ **sn** 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 מַרְיָ (m'ri, "rebellious"). The word is related to the verb מָרָה (marah, "to revolt"). Many commentators follow the Vulgate, Targum Job, and the Syriac to read מַר (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 the meaning would be 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 י (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 **tn** The preposition can take this meaning; it could be also translated simply "upon." R. Gordis (*Job*, 260) reads the preposition "more than," saying that Job had been defiant (he takes that view) but God's hand had been far worse.

¹⁸ **tn** The optative here is again expressed with the verbal clause, "who will give [that] I knew...."

¹⁹ **tn** The form in Hebrew is אֶמְצְאוֹ (e'mtsa'ehu), simply "and I will find him." But in the optative clause this verb is subordinated 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 GK 386 §120.e). This could also be translated making the second verb a complementary infinitive: "knew how to find him."

²⁰ **sn** 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 **tn** This verb also depends on מִי־יֵתֵן (mi-yitten, "who will give") of the first part, forming an additional clause in the wish formula.

²² **tn** Or "his place of judgment." The word is from כּוּן (kun, "to prepare; to arrange") in the Poel 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.

²³ **tn** The word מִשְׁפָּט (mishpat) is normally "judgment; decision." But in these contexts it refers to the legal case that Job will bring before God. With the verb אָרַךְ (arakh, "to set in order; to lay out") the whole image of drawing up a lawsuit is complete.

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 וְשָׂתָה (v'shatta, "and you will esteem...."). This would mean that he is promising Job restoration of his wealth.

tn *Heb* "place."

² **tn** The word for "gold" is the rare בְּצֵר (bets'er), which may be derived from a cognate of Arabic *basara*, "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 בְּצִוִּיר (b'etsur, "in the rock").

³ **tn** The Hebrew text simply has "Ophir," a metonymy for the gold that comes from there.

⁴ **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."

⁵ **tn** E. Dhorme (*Job*, 339) connects this word with an Arabic root meaning "to be elevated, steep." From that he gets "heaps of silver."

⁶ **tc** This is 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).

⁷ **tn** The words "to him" are not in the Hebrew text, but are implied.

⁸ **tn** The word is גָּזַר (gazar, "to cut"), in the sense of deciding a matter.

⁹ **tn** There is no expressed subject here, and so the verb is taken as a passive voice again.

¹⁰ **tn** The word גָּבַח (gevah) 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" [Duhm]; "[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 אִישׁ נָקִי (i naqi), which could be taken as "island of the innocent" (so Ibn-Ezra), or "him that is not innocent" (so Rashi). But some have changed אִישׁ (i) to אִי (ish, "the innocent man"). Others differ: A. Guillaume links אִי (i) to Arabic 'ayya "whosoever," and so leaves the text alone. M. Da-hood secures the same idea from Ugaritic, but reads it אִי (e).

and fill my mouth with arguments.

23:5 I would know with what words¹ he would answer me, and understand what he would say to me.

23:6 Would he contend² with me with great power?

No, he would only pay attention to me.³

23:7 There⁴ an upright person could present his case⁵ 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 north⁶ when he is at work,⁷ I do not see him;⁸ when he turns⁹ to the south, I see no trace of him.

23:10 But he knows the pathway that I take;¹⁰ if he tested me, I would come forth like gold.¹¹

23:11 My feet¹² have followed¹³ his steps closely;

I have kept to his way and have not

turned aside.¹⁴

23:12 I have not departed from the commands of his lips;

I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my allotted portion.¹⁵

23:13 But he is unchangeable,¹⁶ and who can change¹⁷ him?

Whatever he¹⁸ has desired, he does.

23:14 For he fulfills his decree against me,¹⁹

and many such things are his plans.²⁰ **23:15** That is why I am terrified in his presence;

when I consider, I am afraid because of him.

23:16 Indeed, God has made my heart faint;²¹

the Almighty has terrified me.

23:17 Yet I have not been silent because of the darkness, because of the thick darkness that covered my face.²²

¹ **tn** *Heb* “the words he would answer me.”

² **tn** The verb is now ריב (*riv*) and not יכח (*yakhakh*, “contend”); ריב (*riv*) means “to quarrel; to dispute; to contend,” often in a legal context. Here it is still part of Job’s questioning about this hypothetical meeting – would God contend with all his power?

³ **tn** The verbal clause ישים בי (*yasim bi*) has been translated “he would pay [attention] to me.” Job is saying that God will not need all his power – he will just have pay attention to Job’s complaint. Job does not need the display of power – he just wants a hearing.

⁴ **tn** The adverb “there” has the sense of “then” – there in the future.

⁵ **tn** The form of the verb is the Niphal נִבַּח (*nokkakh*, “argue, present a case”). E. Dhorme (*Job*, 346) is troubled by this verbal form and so changes it and other things in the line to say, “he would observe the upright man who argues with him.” The Niphal is used for “engaging discussion,” “arguing a case,” and “settling a dispute.”

⁶ **sn** The text has “the left hand,” the Semitic idiom for directions. One faces the rising sun, and so left is north, right is south.

⁷ **tc** The form בְּעִשְׂתּוֹ (*ba’asoto*) would be the temporal clause using the infinitive construct with a pronoun (subject genitive). This would be “when he works.” Several follow the Syriac with “I seek him.” The LXX has “[when] he turns.” R. Gordis (*Job*, 261) notes that there is no need to emend the text; he shows a link to the Arabic cognate *ghasa*, “to cover.” To him this is a perfect parallel to יִכְסֶה (*yiksof*, “covers himself”).

⁸ **tn** The verb is the apocopated form of the imperfect. The object is supplied.

⁹ **tn** The MT has “he turns,” but the Syriac and Vulgate have “I turn.”

¹⁰ **tn** The expression דֶּרֶךְ עֲמַדִּי (*derekh ’immadi*) means “the way with me,” i.e., “the way that I take.” The Syriac has “my way and my standing.” Several commentators prefer “the way of my standing,” meaning where to look for me. J. Reider offers “the way of my life” (“Some notes to the text of the scriptures,” *HUCA* 3 [1926]: 115). Whatever the precise wording, Job knows that God can always find him.

¹¹ **tn** There is a perfect verb followed by an imperfect in this clause with the protasis and apodosis relationship (see GKC 493 §159.b).

¹² **tn** *Heb* “my foot.”

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “held fast.”

¹⁴ **tn** The last clause, “and I have not turned aside,” functions adverbially in the sentence. The form אֲתִּי (*at*) is a pausal form of אֲתִּיחָה (*ateh*), the Hiphil of נָטַח (*natah*, “stretch out”).

¹⁵ **tc** The form in the MT מְקֻחִי (*mekhuqi*) 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. חֶק 1 indicates that חֶק (*khog*) 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 בְּהֶקִּי (*b^ekehi*, “in my bosom”).

¹⁶ **tc** The MT has “But he [is] in one.” Many add the word “mind” to capture the point that God is resolute and unchanging. Some commentators find this too difficult, and so change the text from בְּאֶחָד (*b^eekhad*, here “unchangeable”) to בָּחַר (*bakhar*, “he has chosen”). The wording in the text is idiomatic and should be retained. 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).

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “cause him to return.”

¹⁸ **tn** Or “his soul.”

¹⁹ **tn** The text has “my 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) suggests taking it in the same sense as in Job 14:5: “my limit.”

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “and many such [things] are with him.”

sn The text is saying that many similar situations are under God’s rule of the world – his plans are infinite.

²¹ **tn** The verb הִרַךְ (*herakh*) means “to be tender”; in the Piel it would have the meaning “to soften.” The word is used in parallel constructions with the verbs for “fear.” The implication is that God has made Job fearful.

²² **tn** This is a very difficult verse. The Hebrew text literally says: “for I have not been destroyed because of darkness, and because of my face [which] gloom has covered.” Most commentators omit the negative adverb, which gives the meaning that Job is enveloped in darkness and reduced to terror. The verb נִטְמַתִּי (*nitsmatti*) means “I have been silent” (as in Arabic and Aramaic), and so obviously the negative must be retained – he has not been silent.

The Apparent Indifference of God

24:1 “Why are times not appointed by¹ the Almighty?²

Why do those who know him not see his days?

24:2 Men³ move boundary stones; they seize the flock and pasture them.⁴

24:3 They drive away the orphan’s donkey;

they take the widow’s ox as a pledge.

24:4 They turn the needy from the pathway, and the poor of the land hide themselves together.⁵

24:5 Like⁶ wild donkeys in the desert they⁷ go out to their labor,⁸ seeking diligently for food; the wasteland provides⁹ food for them and for their children.

24:6 They reap fodder¹⁰ in the field, and glean¹¹ in the vineyard of the wicked.

1 tn The preposition מִן (*min*) is used to express the cause (see GKC 389 §121.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.” So 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 הֵן (*hen*), but the LXX, Vulgate, and Syriac all have “like.” R. Gordis (*Job*, 265) takes הֵן (*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 עֶרְבָה (*aravah*), which he takes to mean “evening”; this gives a clause, “although they work until the evening.” Then, with many others, he takes לוֹ (*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 בְּלִילוֹ (*b^elilo*) 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 לוֹ לֹ, *b^eli lo*). A conjectural emendation would change the word to בְּלַיְלָה (*ballaylah*, “in the night”). But there is no reason for this.

11 tn The verbs in this verse are 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

24:7 They spend the night naked because they lack clothing;

they have no covering against the cold.

24:8 They are soaked by mountain rains and huddle¹² in the rocks because they lack shelter.

24:9 The fatherless child is snatched¹³ from the breast,¹⁴

the infant of the poor is taken as a pledge.¹⁵

24:10 They go about naked, without clothing,

and go hungry while they carry the sheaves.¹⁶

24:11 They press out the olive oil between the rows of olive trees;¹⁷

they tread the winepresses while they are thirsty.¹⁸

24:12 From the city the dying¹⁹ groan, and the wounded²⁰ cry out for help, but God charges no one with wrongdoing.²¹

24:13 There are those²² who rebel against the light;

they do not know its ways

and they do not stay on its paths.

verb is uncertain; it has been taken to mean “glean,” which would be the task of the poor.

12 tn Heb “embrace” or “hug.”

13 tn The verb with no expressed subject is here again taken in the passive: “they snatch” becomes “[child] is snatched.”

14 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.

15 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 suggested that instead of עַל (*al*, “against”) one should read עִל (*ul*, “suckling”). This is supported by the parallelism. “They take as pledge” is also made passive here.

16 sn The point should not be missed – amidst abundant harvests, carrying sheaves about, they are still going hungry.

17 tc The Hebrew term is שְׁרוֹתָם (*shurotam*), 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.

18 tn The final verb, a preterite with the ו (*vav*) consecutive, is here interpreted as a circumstantial clause.

19 tc The MT as pointed reads “from the city of men they groan.” Most commentators change one vowel in מָתִים (*m^etim*) to get מָתִים (*metim*) to get the active participle, “the dying.” This certainly fits the parallelism better, although sense could be made out of the MT.

20 tn Heb “the souls of the wounded,” which here refers to the wounded themselves.

21 tc The MT has the noun תִּפְלָה (*tiflah*) 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 תִּפְלָה (*tiflah*, “prayer”), and so then also the verb יִשֵּׁם (*yasim*, here “charges”) to יִשְׁמָה (*yishma*, “hears”). It reads: “But God does not hear the prayer” – referring to the groans.

22 tn Heb “They are among those who.”

24:14 Before daybreak¹ the murderer rises up;
he kills the poor and the needy;
in the night he is² like a thief.³

24:15 And the eye of the adulterer watches
for the twilight,
thinking,⁴ ‘No eye can see me,’
and covers his face with a mask.

24:16 In the dark the robber⁵ breaks into
houses,⁶
but by day they shut themselves in;⁷
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 dark-
ness.

24:18¹⁰ “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 לְאוֹר (la'or, “at light” or “at daylight”), 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 daylight, 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 כִּתְּמוּ (khit^{tu}mu) is the Piel from the verb כָּתַם (khatam, “to seal”). The verb is now in the plural, covering all the groups mentioned that work under the cover of darkness. The suggestion that they “seal,” i.e., “mark” the house they will rob, goes against the meaning of the word “seal.”

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 upon the waters, built up in the agitation of the waters but dying away swiftly.

¹⁴ **tn** 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 Sheol.”

¹⁷ **tn** This is the meaning of the verse, which in Hebrew only has “The grave / they have sinned.”

24:20 The womb¹⁸ forgets him,
the worm feasts on him,
no longer will he be remembered.
Like a tree, wickedness will be broken
down.

24:21 He preys on¹⁹ the barren and child-
less woman,²⁰
and does not treat the widow well.

24:22 But God²¹ drags off the mighty by
his power;
when God²² rises up against him, he has
no faith in his life.²³

24:23 God²⁴ may let them rest in a feeling
of security,²⁵
but he is constantly watching²⁶ all their
ways.²⁷

24:24 They are exalted for a little while,
and then they are gone,²⁸
they are brought low²⁹ like all others,

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 רָעַב (ra'a, “to crush”). The LXX seems to have read something like הִרְעָה (hera', “oppressed”).

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 **tn** This line has been given a number of interpretations due to its cryptic form. The verb יָקַם (yaqum) 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 וְלֹא-אֲמִין (v^{elo}-ya'amin), by its very meaning of “and he does not believe,” cannot have God as the subject, but must refer to the wicked.

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁵ **tn** The expression לְבִטָּח (lavetakh, “in security”) precedes the verb that it qualifies – God “allows him to take root in security.” For the meaning of the verb, see Job 8:15.

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 verb is the Hophal of the rare verb מָכַחַךְ (makhakh), 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,¹
and like a head of grain they are cut off.’²

24:25 “If this is not so, who can prove me
a liar
and reduce my words to nothing?”³

*Bildad’s Third Speech*⁴

25:1 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:
25:2 “Dominion⁵ and awesome might⁶
belong to⁷ God;
he establishes peace in his heights.⁸
25:3 Can his armies be numbered?⁹
On whom does his light¹⁰ not rise?
25:4 How then can a human being be right-
eous before God?
How can one born of a woman be pure?¹¹
25:5 If even the moon is not bright,
and the stars are not pure as far as he is
concerned,¹²
25:6 how much less a mortal man, who is
but a maggot¹³ –

a son of man, who is only a worm!”

*Job’s Reply to Bildad*¹⁴

26:1 Then Job replied:
26:2 “How you have helped¹⁵ the power-
less!¹⁶
How you have saved the person who has
no strength!¹⁷
26:3 How you have advised the one with-
out wisdom,
and abundantly¹⁸ revealed your insight!
26:4 To whom¹⁹ did you utter these
words?
And whose spirit has come forth from
your mouth?²⁰

*A Better Description of God’s Greatness*²¹

26:5 “The dead²² tremble²³ –
those beneath the waters
and all that live in them.²⁴

¹ tn The verb קָפַץ (*qafats*) actually means “to shut in,” which does not provide exactly the idea of being gathered, not directly at least. But a change to קָטַף (*qataf*, “pluck”) 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 The word אַל (*al*, “not”) is used here substantively (“nothing”).

⁴ sn The third speech of Bildad takes up Job 25, a short section of six verses. It is followed by two speeches from Job; and Zophar does not return with his third. Does this mean that the friends have run out of arguments, and that Job is just getting going? Many scholars note that in chs. 26 and 27 there is material that does not fit Job’s argument. Many have rearranged the material to show that there was a complete cycle of three speeches. In that light, 26:5-14 is viewed as part of Bildad’s speech. Some, however, take Bildad’s speech to be only ch. 25, and make 26:5-14 an interpolated hymn. For all the arguments and suggestions, one should see the introductions and the commentaries.

⁵ tn The word הַמְשֵׁל (*hamshel*) is a Hiphil infinitive absolute used as a noun. It describes the rulership or dominion that God has, that which gives power and authority.

⁶ tn The word פָּחַד (*pakhad*) literally means “fear; dread,” but in the sense of what causes the fear or the dread.

⁷ tn Heb “[are] with him.”

⁸ 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 has 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.

⁹ tn Heb “Is there a number to his troops?” The question is rhetorical: there is no number to them!

¹⁰ tc In place of “light” here the LXX has “his ambush,” perhaps reading אֲרֻבֹת (*arubot*) instead of אֹרְחֻ (*orehu*, “his light”). But while that captures the idea of troops and warfare, the change should be rejected because the armies are linked with stars and light. The expression is poetic; the LXX interpretation tried to make it concrete.

¹¹ sn Bildad here does not come up with new expressions; rather, he simply uses what Eliphaz had said (see Job 4:17-19 and 15:14-16).

¹² tn Heb “not pure in his eyes.”

¹³ tn The text just has “maggot” and in the second half “worm.” Something has to be added to make it a bit clearer. The terms “maggot” and “worm” describe man in his lowest and most ignominious shape.

¹⁴ 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 score 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).

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ 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, v).

¹⁷ tn Heb “the 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.

¹⁸ tc The phrase לָרֹב (*larov*) 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 timid are not the same as the ignorant and unwise. So Graetz supplied “to the boorish” by reading לְבָעִיר (*l’ba’ar*). G. R. Driver did the same with less of a change: לָבוֹר (*labbor*; HTR 29 [1936]: 172).

¹⁹ tn The verse begins with the preposition and the interrogative: אֶת־מִי (*et-mi*, “with who[se help]?”). Others take it as the accusative particle introducing the indirect object: “for whom did you utter...” (see GKC 371 §117.gg). Both are possible.

²⁰ tn Heb “has gone out from you.”

²¹ sn 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.

²² tn The text has הַרְפָּאִים (*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.

²³ tn The verb is a Polal from חָיַל (*khil*) which means “to tremble.” It shows that even these spirits cannot escape the terror.

²⁴ tc Most commentators wish to lengthen the verse and make it more parallel, but nothing is gained by doing this.

26:6 The underworld¹ is naked before God;²
 the place of destruction lies uncovered.³
 26:7 He spreads out the northern skies⁴
 over empty space;⁵
 he suspends the earth on nothing.⁶
 26:8 He locks the waters in his clouds,
 and the clouds do not burst with the
 weight of them.
 26:9 He conceals⁷ the face of the full
 moon,⁸
 shrouding it with his clouds.
 26:10 He marks out the horizon⁹ on the
 surface of the waters
 as a boundary between light and dark-
 ness.
 26:11 The pillars¹⁰ of the heavens tremble
 and are amazed at his rebuke.¹¹
 26:12 By his power he stills¹² the sea;
 by his wisdom he cut Rahab the great sea
 monster¹³ to pieces.¹⁴

¹ tn Heb "Sheol."

² tn Heb "before him."

³ tn The line has "and there is no covering for destruction." "Destruction" here is another name for Sheol: אַבְדּוֹן (*avadon*, "Abaddon").

⁴ sn The Hebrew word is טַפְזִין (*tsafon*). Some see here a reference to Mount Zaphon of the Ugaritic texts, the mountain that Baal made his home. The Hebrew writers often equate and contrast Mount Zion with this proud mountain of the north. Of course, the word just means north, and so in addition to any connotations for pagan mythology, it may just represent the northern skies – the stars. Since the parallel line speaks of the earth, that is probably all that was intended in this particular context.

⁵ sn There is an allusion to the creation account, for this word is תוֹהוּ (*tohu*), translated "without form" in Gen 1:2.

⁶ sn Buttenwieser suggests that Job had outgrown the idea of the earth on pillars, and was beginning to see it was suspended in space. But in v. 11 he will still refer to the pillars.

⁷ tn The verb means "to hold; to seize," here in the sense of shutting up, enshrouding, or concealing.

⁸ tc The MT has כִּסֶּה (*khissah*), which is a problematic vocalization. Most certainly כֶּסֶה (*keseh*), alternative for כֶּסֶה (*kese*), "full moon" is intended here. The MT is close to the form of "throne," which would be כִּסֵּה (*kisse*), cf. NLT "he shrouds his throne with his clouds"). But here God is covering the face of the moon by hiding it behind clouds.

⁹ tn The expression חֲקֵי הַיָּם (*khog-khag*) means "he has drawn a limit as a circle." According to some the form should have been חֲקֵי הַיָּם (*khag-khug*, "He has traced a circle"). But others argues that the text is acceptable as is, and can be interpreted as "a limit he has circled." The Hebrew verbal roots are חָקַק (*khagq*, "to engrave; to sketch out; to trace") and חָוַה (*khug*, "describe a circle") respectively.

¹⁰ sn H. H. Rowley (*Job* [NCBC], 173) says these are the great mountains, perceived to hold up the sky.

¹¹ sn The idea here is that when the earth quakes, or when there is thunder in the heavens, these all represent God's rebuke, for they create terror.

¹² tn The verb רָגַע (*raga*) has developed a Semitic polarity, i.e., having totally opposite meanings. It can mean "to disturb; to stir up" or "to calm; to still." Gordis thinks both meanings have been invoked here. But it seems more likely that "calm" fits the context better.

¹³ tn Heb "Rahab" (רַהַב), the mythical sea monster that represents the forces of chaos in ancient Near Eastern literature. In the translation the words "the great sea monster" have been supplied appositionally in order to clarify "Rahab."

¹⁴ sn Here again there are possible mythological allusions or polemics. The god Yam, "Sea," was important in Ugaritic as a god of chaos. And Rahab is another name for the monster

26:13 By his breath¹⁵ the skies became fair;
 his hand pierced the fleeing serpent.¹⁶

26:14 Indeed, these are but the outer fringes
 of his ways!¹⁷

How faint is the whisper¹⁸ we hear of him!
 But who can understand the thunder of
 his power?¹⁹

A Protest of Innocence

27:1 And Job took up his discourse again:¹⁹

27:2 "As surely as God lives,²⁰ who has
 denied me justice,²¹

the Almighty, who has made my life bitter²² –

27:3 for while²³ my spirit²⁴ is still in me,
 and the breath from God is in my nostrils,

27:4 my²⁵ lips will not speak wickedness,
 and my tongue will whisper²⁶ no deceit.

27:5 I will never²⁷ declare that you three²⁸
 are in the right;

of the deep (see Job 9:13).

¹⁵ tn Or "wind"; or perhaps "Spirit." The same Hebrew word, רוּחַ (*ruakh*), may be translated as "wind," "breath," or "spirit/Spirit" depending on the context.

¹⁶ sn Here too is a reference to pagan myths indirectly. The fleeing serpent was a designation for Leviathan, whom the book will simply describe as an animal, but the pagans thought to be a monster of the deep. God's power over nature is associated with defeat of pagan gods (see further W. F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan*; idem, *BASOR* 53 [1941]: 39).

¹⁷ tn Heb "the ends of his ways," meaning "the fringes."

¹⁸ tn Heb "how little is the word." Here "little" means a "fraction" or an "echo."

¹⁹ tn The Hebrew word מִשְׁלַל (*marshal*) is characteristically "proverb; by-word." It normally refers to a brief saying, but can be used for a discourse (see A. R. Johnson, "Mašal," VTSup 3 [1955]: 162ff.).

²⁰ tn The expression חַי־אֵל (*khay-el*) is the oath formula: "as God lives." In other words, the speaker is staking God's life on the credibility of the words. It is like saying, "As truly as God is alive."

²¹ tn "My judgment" would here, as before, be "my right." God has taken this away by afflicting Job unjustly (A. B. Davidson, *Job*, 187).

²² tn The verb הִמָּר (*hemar*) is the Hiphil perfect from מָרַר (*marar*, "to be bitter") and hence, "to make bitter." The object of the verb is "my soul," which is better translated as "me" or "my life."

²³ tn The adverb עוֹד (*od*) was originally a noun, and so here it could be rendered "all the existence of my spirit." The word comes between the noun in construct and its actual genitive (see GKC 415 §128.e).

²⁴ tn The word רוּחַ (*ruakh*) is the "breath" that was breathed into Adam in Gen 2:7. Its usage includes the animating breath, the spiritual understanding, and the functioning conscience – so the whole spirit of the person. The other word in this verse, רוּחַ (*ruakh*), may be translated as "wind," "breath," or "spirit/Spirit" depending on the context. Here, since it talks about the nostrils, it should be translated "breath."

²⁵ tn The verse begins with אֲנִי (*im*), the formula used for the content of the oath ("God lives...if I do/do not..."). Thus, the content of the oath proper is here in v. 4.

²⁶ tn The verb means "to utter; to mumble; to meditate." The implication is that he will not communicate deceitful things, no matter how quiet or subtle.

²⁷ tn The text uses הִלַּחֵלֵהוּ (*khalilah li*) meaning "far be it from me," or more strongly, something akin to "sacrilege."

²⁸ tn In the Hebrew text "you" is plural – a reference to Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad. To make this clear, "three" is supplied in the translation.

until I die, I will not set aside my integrity!
27:6 I will maintain my righteousness
 and never let it go;
 my conscience¹ will not reproach me
 for as long as I live.²

The Condition of the Wicked

27:7 “May my enemy be like the wicked,³
 my adversary⁴ like the unrighteous.⁵
27:8 For what hope does the godless have
 when he is cut off,⁶
 when God takes away his life?⁷
27:9 Does God listen to his cry
 when distress overtakes him?
27:10 Will he find delight⁸ in the Al-
 mighty?
 Will he call out to God at all times?
27:11 I will teach you⁹ about the power¹⁰
 of God;
 What is on the Almighty’s mind¹¹ 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

¹ **tn** *Heb* “my heart.”

² **tn** The prepositional phrase “from my days” probably means “from the days of my birth,” or “all my life.”

³ **sn** Of course, he means like his enemy when he is judged, not when he is thriving in prosperity and luxury.

⁴ **tn** The form is the Hitpolel participle from קָוַם (*qum*): “those who are rising up against me,” or “my adversary.”

⁵ **tc** The LXX made a free paraphrase: “No, but let my enemies be as the overthrow of the ungodly, and they that rise up against me as the destruction of transgressors.”

⁶ **tn** The verb יִבְעַע (*yivtsa’*) means “to cut off.” It could be translated transitively or intransitively – 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 יִבְעֵגַ [yivfga] in place of יִבְעַע [yivtsa’]).

⁷ **tn** The verb יֶשֶׁל (*yeshel*) is found only here. It has been related spoils [or sheaves]”: אֶשְׂאֵל (*sha’al*, “to ask”); אֶנַּסָּא (*nasa’*, “to lift up” [i.e., pray]); and a host of others.

⁸ **tn** See the note on 22:26 where the same verb is employed.

⁹ **tn** The object suffix is in the plural, which gives some support to the idea Job is speaking to them.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “the hand of.”

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “[what is] with Shaddai.”

¹² **tn** The interrogative uses the demonstrative pronoun in its emphatic position: “Why in the world...?” (*IBHS* 312-13 §17.4.3c).

¹³ **tn** 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.q). The LXX has “you all know that you are adding vanity to vanity.”

¹⁴ **tn** The expression “allotted by God” interprets the simple prepositional phrase in the text: “with/from God.”

¹⁵ **tn** *R. Gordis* (*Job*, 294) identifies this as a brevilocuence.

His offspring never have enough to eat.¹⁶
27:15 Those who survive him are buried
 by the plague,¹⁷
 and their¹⁸ 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 sil-
 ver.
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. בָּ 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 **tn** 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 **tn** *Heb* בִּזְיָא (*kha’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 4:14. 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; it is not substantial at all.

²² **tc** The verb is the Niphal יָאָסַף (*ye’asef*), from אָסַף (*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 יֹסִיף (*yo’sif*) stood for יֹסִיף (*yo’sif*, “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 **tn** *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 **tn** Many commentators want a word parallel to “in the night.” And so we are offered בַּיּוֹם (*bayyom*, “in the day”) for בַּיּוֹם (*khammayim*, “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.

27:22 It hurls itself against him without pity¹ as he flees headlong from its power.
27:23 It claps² its hands at him in derision and hisses him away from his place.³

III. Job's Search for Wisdom (28:1-28)

No Known Road to Wisdom⁴

28:1 "Surely⁵ there is a mine⁶ for silver, and a place where gold is refined.⁷
28:2 Iron is taken from the ground,⁸ and rock is poured out⁹ as copper.
28:3 Man puts an end to the darkness;¹⁰ he searches the farthest recesses for the ore in the deepest darkness.¹¹

¹ **tn** 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 **sn** As the book is now arranged, this chapter forms an additional speech by Job, although some argue that it comes from the writer of the book. The mood of the chapter is not despair, but wisdom; it anticipates the divine speeches in the end of the book. This poem, like many psalms in the Bible, has a refrain (vv. 12 and 20). These refrains outline the chapter, giving three sections: there is no known road to wisdom (1-11); no price can buy it (12-19); and only God has it, and only by revelation can man possess it (20-28).

⁵ **tn** The poem opens with *ki* (כִּי). Some commentators think this should have been "for," and that the poem once stood in another setting. But there are places in the Bible where this word occurs with the sense of "surely" and no other meaning (cf. Gen 18:20).

⁶ **tn** The word מִנְעָה (*motsa'*, from יָצָא [*yatsa'*, "go out"]) is the word for "mine," or more simply, "source." Mining was not an enormous industry in the land of Canaan or Israel; mined products were imported. Some editors have suggested alternative readings: Dahood found in the word the root for "shine" and translated the MT as "smelter." But that is going too far. P. Joüon suggested "place of finding," reading מִנְעָה (*mimtsa'*) for מִנְעָה (*motsa'*; see *Bib* 11 [1930]: 323).

⁷ **tn** The verb יָצַק (*yazoqqu*) translated "refined," comes from צָאָה (*zaaqa*), a word that basically means "to blow." From the meaning "to blow; to distend; to inflate" derives the meaning for refining.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "from dust."

⁹ **tn** The verb יָצַק (*yatsaq*) is usually translated as a passive participle "is smelted" (from צָאָה [*yatsaq*, "to melt"]); "copper is smelted from the ore" (ESV) or "from the stone, copper is poured out" (as an imperfect from יָצַק [*tsuq*]). 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."

¹⁰ **sn** 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.

¹¹ **tn** The verse ends with "the stone of darkness and deep darkness." The genitive would be location, describing the

28:4 Far from where people live¹² he sinks a shaft, in places travelers have long forgotten,¹³ far from other people he dangles and sways.¹⁴

28:5 The earth, from which food comes, is overturned below as though by fire;¹⁵

28:6 a place whose stones are sapphires¹⁶ and which contains dust of gold;¹⁷

28:7 a hidden path¹⁸ no bird of prey knows –

no falcon's¹⁹ eye has spotted it.

28:8 Proud beasts²⁰ have not set foot on it, and no lion has passed along it.

place where the stones are found.

¹² **tc** The first part of this verse, "He cuts a shaft far from the place where people live," has received a lot of attention. The word for "live" is נָר (*gar*). Some of the proposals are: "limestone," on the basis of the LXX; "far from the light," reading נָר (*ner*); "by a foreign people," taking the word to mean "foreign people"; "a foreign people opening shafts"; or taking *gar* as "crater" based on Arabic. Driver puts this and the next together: "a strange people who have been forgotten cut shafts" (see *AJSL* 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.

¹³ **tn** *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.

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.

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.

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."

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.

¹⁷ **sn** H. H. Rowley (*Job* [NCBC], 181) suggests that if it is lapis lazuli, then the dust of gold would refer to the particles of iron pyrite found in lapis lazuli which glitter like gold.

¹⁸ **tn** The "path" could refer to the mine shaft or it could refer to wisdom. The former seems more likely in the present context; the word "hidden is supplied in the translation to indicate the mines are "hidden" from sharp-eyed birds of prey above.

¹⁹ **sn** The kind of bird mentioned here is debated. The LXX has "vulture," and so some commentaries follow that. The emphasis on the sight favors the view that it is the falcon.

²⁰ **tn** *Heb* "the sons of pride." In Job 41:26 the expression refers to carnivorous wild beasts.

28:9 On the flinty rock man has set to work¹ with his hand; he has overturned mountains at their bases.²
 28:10 He has cut out channels³ through the rocks; his eyes have spotted⁴ every precious thing.
 28:11 He has searched⁵ the sources⁶ of the rivers and what was hidden he has brought into the light.

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;⁷ it cannot be found in the land of the living.
 28:14 The deep⁸ says, ‘It is not with⁹ 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,

¹ **tn** The Hebrew verb is simply “to stretch out; to send” (שָׁלַח, *shalakh*). With יָדוֹ (*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 בִּשְׂרֹשׁ (mishrosh) 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 יָאֲרִים (y’*orim*), 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 **tc** 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 289 s.v. חָבַשׁ; cf. ESV, NJPS, NASB, REB, NLT).

⁶ **tc** The older translations had “he binds the streams from weeping,” i.e., from trickling (מִבְּכִי, *mibb’khi*). But the Ugaritic parallel has changed the understanding, reading “toward the spring of the rivers” (*m mbk nhrm*). Earlier than that discovery, the versions had taken the word as a noun as well. Some commentators had suggested repointing the Hebrew. Some chose מַבְּכִי (*mabb’khe*, “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 **tc** The LXX has “its way, apparently reading דַּרְכָּה (*dark-hah*) in place of עֵרְכָה (*erkeh*, “place”). This is adopted by most modern commentators. But R. Gordis (*Job*, 308) shows that this change is not necessary, for עֵרְךָ (*erekh*) in the Bible means “order; row; disposition,” and here “place.” An alternate meaning would be “worth” (NIV, ESV).

⁸ **sn** The תְּרוֹם (*t’hom*) 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 בְּ (*bet*) preposition 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.

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?¹⁷
 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

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 זָכַח (*zakhakh*, “clear”). It describes a transparent substance, and so “glass” is an appropriate translation. In the ancient world it was precious and so expensive.

¹³ **tc** The MT has “vase,” but the versions have a plural here, suggesting jewels of gold.

¹⁴ **tn** The word מִשְׁכֶּה (*meshkehi*) 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 הָבִיא (*tavo*, “come”).

¹⁸ **tn** The vav 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 לְ (*lamed*) preposition. Some have emended it to change the preposition to the temporal בְּ (*bet*) 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 measured¹ the waters with a gauge.

28:26 When he imposed a limit² for the rain,

and a path for the thunderstorm,³

28:27 then he looked at wisdom⁴ and assessed its value;⁵

he established⁶ it and examined it closely.⁷

28:28 And he said to mankind,
‘The fear of the Lord⁸ – that is wisdom,
and to turn away from evil is understanding.’”⁹

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 *vav* (וַ) 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 *סָפַר* (*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, Dhorme and others (cf. NAB, NIV), J. Reider has suggested “probed” (“Etymological studies 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 *כִּן* (*kun*) means “to establish; to prepare” in this stem. There are several mss that have the form from *בִּין* (*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 *חָקַר* (*khaqar*) means “to examine; to search out.” Some of the language used here is anthropomorphic, for the sovereign LORD 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.

⁸ **tc** A number of medieval Hebrew manuscripts have YHWH (“LORD”); BHS has אֲדֹנָי (“*adonay*, “Lord”). As J. E. Hartley (*Job* [NICOT], 383) points out, this is the only occurrence of אֲדֹנָי (“*adonay*, “Lord”) in the book of Job, creating doubt for retaining it. Normally, YHWH is avoided in the book. “Fear of” (יִרְאָה, *yir'at*) is followed by שַׁדְדַי (*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. H. Rowley (*Job* [NCBC], 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 the necessary conclusion. Rowley concludes: “It is a pity to rob the poem of its climax and turn it into the expression of unrelieved agnosticism.”

IV. Job’s Concluding Soliloquy (29:1-31:40)

*Job Recalls His Former Condition*¹⁰

29:1 Then Job continued¹¹ his speech:

29:2 “O that I could be¹² as¹³ I was in the months now gone,¹⁴

in the days¹⁵ when God watched¹⁶ over me,

29:3 when¹⁷ he caused¹⁸ his lamp¹⁹

to shine upon my head,

and by his light

I walked²⁰ through darkness;²¹

29:4 just as I was in my most productive time,²²

when God’s intimate friendship²³ was

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 (וַיִּתֵּן, *vayyosef*)...to raise (וַיַּעַר, *s'et*) his speech.” The expression means that he continued, or he spoke again.

¹² **tn** The optative is here expressed with *כִּי־יִתְּנֵנִי* (*mi-yitt'eni*, “who will give me”), meaning, “O that I [could be]...” (see GKC 477 §151.b).

¹³ **tn** The preposition *כ* (*kaf*) 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 *קִדְמָה* (*qedem*) 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.o): “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 *בְּהִלּוֹ* (*b'hillo*) is unusual; it should be parsed as a Hiphil infinitive construct with the elision of the ה (*he*). The proper spelling would have been with a *patakh* under the preposition, reflecting *הַהִלּוֹ* (*hahillo*). 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 was successfully led by God’s light, “through the darkness” (see GKC 374 §118.h).

²² **tn** *Heb* “in the days of my ripeness.” The word *חֹרֵף* (*khoref*) 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 *סוּד* (*sod*) 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 (from *יָסַד*, *yasad*) 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 *ד* (*dalet*) to *כ* (*kaf*), and assuming the root was *סַחַח* (*sakhakh*). This would mean, “when

experienced in my tent,
 29:5 when the Almighty¹ was still with me
 and my children were² around me;
 29:6 when my steps³ were bathed⁴ with
 butter⁵
 and the rock poured out for me streams of
 olive oil!⁶
 29:7 When I went out to the city gate
 and secured my seat in the public square,⁷
 29:8 the young men would see me and
 step aside,⁸
 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,⁹
 and their tongues stuck to the roof of
 their mouths.

Job's Benevolence

29:11 "As soon as the ear heard these
 things,¹⁰ it blessed me,¹¹
 and when the eye saw them, it bore wit-
 ness to me,
 29:12 for I rescued the poor who cried out
 for help,
 and the orphan who¹² had no one to assist
 him;
 29:13 the blessing of the dying man de-
 scended on me,¹³
 and I made the widow's heart rejoice;¹⁴
 29:14 I put on righteousness and it clothed
 me,¹⁵
 my just dealing¹⁶ 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 father¹⁷ to the needy,
 and I investigated the case of the person I
 did not know;
 29:17 I broke the fangs¹⁸ of the wicked,
 and made him drop¹⁹ his prey from his
 teeth.

Job's Confidence

29:18 "Then I thought, 'I will die in my
 own home,'²⁰

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).

¹ **tn** Heb "Shaddai."

² **tc** Some commentators suggest that עָמַדִּי ('*immadi*, "with me") of the second colon of v. 6 (which is too long) belongs to the second colon of v. 5, and should be pointed as the verb עָמַדְתִּי ('*amadi*, "they stood"), meaning the boys stood around him (see, e.g., E. Dhorme, *Job*, 417). But as R. Gordis (*Job*, 319) notes, there is a purpose for the imbalance of the metric pattern at the end of a section.

³ **tn** The word is a *hapax legomenon*, but the meaning is clear enough. It refers to the walking, the steps, or even the paths where one walks. It is figurative of his course of life.

⁴ **tn** The Hebrew word means "to wash; to bathe"; here it is the infinitive construct in a temporal clause, "my steps" being the genitive: "in the washing of my steps in butter."

⁵ **tn** Again, as in Job 21:17, "curds."

⁶ **tn** The MT reads literally, "and the rock was poured out [passive participle] for me as streams of oil." There are some who delete the word "rock" to shorten the line because it seems out of place. But olive trees thrive in rocky soil, and the oil presses are cut into the rock; it is possible that by metonymy all this is intended here (H. H. Rowley, *Job* [NCBC], 186).

⁷ **tn** In the public square. The area referred to here should not be thought of in terms of modern western dimensions. The wide space, plaza, or public square mentioned here is the open area in the gate complex where legal and business matters were conducted. The area could be as small as a few hundred square feet.

⁸ **tn** The verb means "to hide; to withdraw." The young men out of respect would withdraw or yield the place of leadership to Job (thus the translation "step aside"). The old men would rise and remain standing until Job took his seat – a sign of respect.

⁹ **tn** The verb here is "hidden" as well as in v. 8. But this is a strange expression for voices. Several argue that the word was erroneously inserted from 8a and needs to be emended. But the word "hide" can have extended meanings of "withdraw; be quiet; silent" (see Gen 31:27). A. Guillaume relates the Arabic *habī'a*, "the fire dies out," applying the idea of "silent" only to v. 10 (it is a form of repetition of words with different senses, called *jīnas*). The point here is that whatever conversation was going on would become silent or hushed to hear what Job had to say.

¹⁰ **tn** The words "these things" and "them" in the next colon are not in the Hebrew text, but have been supplied in the translation for clarity.

¹¹ **tn** The main clause is introduced by the preterite with the *vav* (ו) consecutive (see GKC 327 §111.h); the clause before it is therefore temporal and circumstantial to the main clause.

¹² **tn** The negative introduces a clause that serves as a negative attribute; literally the following clause says, "and had no helper" (see GKC 482 §152.u).

¹³ **tn** The verb is simply בָּיָא (*bo*, "to come; to enter"). With the preposition עָלַי ('*al*, "upon") it could mean "came to me," or "came upon me," i.e., descended (see R. Gordis, *Job*, 320).

¹⁴ **tn** The verb רָנַן ('*arnan*) is from רָנַן (*ranan*, "to give a ringing cry") but here "cause to give a ringing cry," i.e., shout of joy. The rejoicing envisioned in this word is far greater than what the words "sing" or "rejoice" suggest.

¹⁵ **tn** Both verbs in this first half-verse are from לָבַשׁ (*lavash*, "to clothe; to put on clothing"). P. Joüon changed the vowels to get a verb "it adorned me" instead of "it clothed me" (*Bib* 11 [1930]: 324). The figure of clothing is used for the character of the person: to wear righteousness is to be righteous.

¹⁶ **tn** The word מִשְׁפָּטִי (*mishpati*) is simply "my justice" or "my judgment." It refers to the decisions he made in settling issues, how he dealt with other people justly.

¹⁷ **tn** The word "father" does not have a wide range of meanings in the OT. But there are places that it is metaphorical, especially in a legal setting like this where the poor need aid.

¹⁸ **tn** The word rendered "fangs" actually means "teeth," i.e., the molars probably; it is used frequently of the teeth of wild beasts. Of course, the language is here figurative, comparing the oppressing enemy to a preying animal.

¹⁹ **tn** "I made [him] drop." The verb means "to throw; to cast," throw in the sense of "to throw away." But in the context with the figure of the beast with prey in its mouth, "drop" or "cast away" is the idea. Driver finds another cognate meaning "rescue" (see *AJSL* 52 [1935/36]: 163).

²⁰ **tc** The expression in the MT is "with my nest." The figure is satisfactory for the context – a home with all the young together, a picture of unity and safety. In Isa 16:2 the word can mean "nestlings," and with the preposition "with" that might be the meaning here, except that his children had grown up

my days as numerous as the grains of sand.¹
29:19 My roots reach the water,
 and the dew lies on my branches all night long.
29:20 My glory² will always be fresh³ in me,
 and my bow ever new in my hand.⁷

Job's Reputation

29:21 "People⁴ listened to me and waited silently;⁵
 they kept silent for my advice.
29:22 After I had spoken, they did not respond;
 my words fell on them drop by drop.⁶
29:23 They waited for me as people wait⁷
 for the rain,
 and they opened their mouths⁸

as for⁹ the spring rains.
29:24 If I smiled at them, they hardly believed it;¹⁰
 and they did not cause the light of my face to darken.¹¹
29:25 I chose¹² the way for them¹³
 and sat as their chief;¹⁴
 I lived like a king among his troops;
 I was like one who comforts mourners.¹⁵

Job's Present Misery

30:1 "But now they mock me, those who are younger¹⁶ than I,
 whose fathers I disdained too much¹⁷
 to put with my sheep dogs.¹⁸
30:2 Moreover, the strength of their¹⁹
 hands –
 what use was it to me?
 Men whose strength²⁰ had perished;

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 a long time." The Vulgate has, "In my nest I shall die and like the palm tree increase my days." G. R. Driver found an Egyptian word meaning "strength" ("Birds in the Old Testament," *PEQ* 87 [1955]: 138-39). Several read "in a ripe old age" instead of "in my nest" (Pope, Dhorme; see P. P. Saydon, "Philological and Textual Notes to the Maltese Translation of the Old Testament," *CBQ* 23 [1961]: 252). This requires the verb זָקַן (*zaqan*, "be old"), i.e., בִּזְקֻנָּי (*bizqunay*, "in my old age") instead of קִינִי (*qinni*, "my nest"). It has support from the LXX.

1 tc For חול (*khol*, "sand") the LXX has a word that is "like the palm tree," but which could also be translated "like the phoenix" (cf. NAB, NRSV). This latter idea was developed further in rabbinical teaching (see R. Gordis, *Job*, 321). See also M. Dahood, "Nest and phoenix in Job 29:18," *Bib* 48 (1967): 542-44. But the MT yields an acceptable sense here.

2 tn The word is "my glory," meaning his high respect and his honor. Hoffmann proposed to read כִּידוֹן (*kidon*) instead, meaning "javelin" (as in 1 Sam 17:6), to match the parallelism (*RQ* 3 [1961/62]: 388). But the parallelism does not need to be so tight.

3 tn Heb "new."

4 tn "People" is supplied; the verb is plural.

5 tc The last verb of the first half, "wait, hope," and the first verb in the second colon, "be silent," are usually reversed by the commentators (see G. R. Driver, "Problems in the Hebrew text of Job," *VTSup* 3 [1955]: 86). But if "wait" has the idea of being silent as they wait for him to speak, then the second line would say they were silent for the reason of his advice. The reading of the MT is not impossible.

6 tn The verb simply means "dropped," but this means like the rain. So the picture of his words falling on them like the gentle rain, drop by drop, is what is intended (see Deut 32:2).

7 tn The phrase "people wait for" is not in the Hebrew text, but has been supplied in the translation.

8 sn The analogy is that they received his words eagerly as the dry ground opens to receive the rains.

9 tn The כ (*kaf*) 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 imperfects 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]: 163). The two key words in the MT are אֲבִלִים יְתִיָּם (*avelim y'nakhem*, "he [one who] comforts mourners"). Following Herz, E. Dhorme (*Job*, 422) has these changed to יְתִיָּם אֲבִלִים (*ovilem yinnakhu*). 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 versions.

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 כֶּלֶח (*kelakh*) only occurs in Job 5:26, but the Arabic cognate gives this meaning "strength." Others suggest כֶּלֶח (*kalakh*, "old age"), כֶּלֶחַיִל (*kol-khayil*, "all vigor"), כֶּלֶחָה (*kol-leakh*, "all freshness"), and the like. But there is no reason for such emendation.

30:3 gaunt¹ with want and hunger, they would gnaw² the parched land, in former time desolate and waste.³
 30:4 By the brush⁴ they would gather⁵ herbs from the salt marshes,⁶ and the root of the broom tree was their food.
 30:5 They were banished from the community⁷ – people⁸ shouted at them like they would shout at thieves⁹ – 30:6 so that they had to live¹⁰ 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 **tn** This word, גַּלְמוּד (*gal mud*), 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 §126.b).

³ **tn** The MT has “yesterday desolate and waste.” The word “yesterday” (אַיִשׁ, *’emesh*) is strange here. Among the proposals for אַיִשׁ (*’emesh*), Duhm suggested יַמְשִׁישׁוּ (*’emash’shu*, “they grope”), which would require darkness; Pope renders “by night,” instead of “yesterday,” which evades the difficulty; and Fohrer suggested with more reason אֶרֶץ (’*erets*), “a desolate and waste land.” R. Gordis (*Job*, 331) suggests יַמְשִׁישׁוּ / יַמְשִׁישׁוּ (*yamishu/yamishu*), “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 גֵּוִ (’*gev*) 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 נָהַק (*nahaq*) 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 סָפַח (*safakh*, “to join”) also brings out the passivity of these people – “they were huddled together” (E. Dhorme, *Job*, 434).

¹⁴ **tn** The “sons of the senseless” (נְבִלִים, *naval*) 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. וּבָא). 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” (מִלָּה, *millah*), but in this context it means more: “proverb; byword.”

¹⁷ **tn** Heb “they are far from me.”

¹⁸ **tn** The verb פָּתַח (*patakh*) means “to untie [or undo]” a rope or bonds. In this verse יָתַר (*yitro*, the *Kethib*, LXX, and Vulgate) would mean “his rope” (see יָתַר [’*yeter*] in Judg 16:7-9). The Qere would be יָתִיר (*yitri*, “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 **sn** *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* [NCBC], 193).

²⁰ **tn** This Hebrew word occurs only here. The word פִּרְחָה (*pirkhakh*, “young rabble”) is a quadrilateral, from פָּרַח (*parakh*, “to bud”) The derivative אֶפְרוֹחַ (*’efroakh*) 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. Dhorme (*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 verb נָתַס (*nat’su*) 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 *natsun* (“thorns”), suggesting a denominative idea “they have placed thorns in my path.” Most take it to mean they ruin the way of escape.

²⁵ **tc** The MT has “they further my misfortune.” The line is difficult, with slight textual problems. The verb יָעִילוּ (*yo’ilu*) 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 crash¹ they come rolling in.²
30:15 Terrors are turned loose³ on me;
 they drive away⁴ 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,⁵
 days of suffering take hold of me.
30:17 Night pierces⁶ my bones;⁷
 my gnawing pains⁸ never cease.
30:18 With great power God⁹ grasps my
 clothing,¹⁰
 he binds me like the collar¹¹ 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,¹² but you do not
 answer me;

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 Hitpalpel of גָּלַל (*galal*), 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 "upon me." That phrase is not in the LXX, and so many commentators delete it as making the line too long.

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 כָּבַשׁ (*khavash*, "to bind; to seize") and that the Hitpalpel form is a conflation of the third and second person because of the interchange between them in the passage (R. Gordis, *Job*, 335). The commentaries 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 ב (*bet*), getting a translation "by the neck of my tunic."

¹² **sn** 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.

I stand up,¹³ and you only look at me.¹⁴
30:21 You have become cruel to me;¹⁵
 with the strength of your hand you attack
 me.¹⁶

30:22 You pick me up on the wind and
 make me ride on it;¹⁷

you toss me about¹⁸ in the storm.¹⁹

30:23 I know that you are bringing²⁰ me
 to death,
 to the meeting place for all the living.

The Contrast With the Past

30:24 "Surely one does not stretch out his
 hand
 against a broken man²¹

when he cries for help in his distress.²²

30:25 Have I not wept for the unfortu-
 nate?²³

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.

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 makes 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 תושייה (*tushiyah*, "counsel"), which makes no sense here. The *Kethib* is a variant orthography for תושייה (*teshu'ah*, "storm").

²⁰ **tn** 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 commentaries 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 **tn** *Heb* "for the hard of day."

30:27 My heart⁴ is in turmoil² unceasingly,³
 the days of my affliction confront me.
 30:28 I go about blackened,⁴ 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.⁵
 30:30 My skin has turned dark on me,⁶ my body⁷ is hot with fever.⁸
 30:31 My harp is used for⁹ mourning and my flute for the sound of weeping.

Job Vindicates Himself

31:1 “I made a covenant with¹⁰ my eyes; how then could I entertain thoughts against a virgin?¹¹
 31:2 What then would be one’s lot from God above, one’s heritage from the Almighty¹² 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 If¹³ I have walked in falsehood, and if¹⁴ my foot has hastened¹⁵ to deceit –

31:6 let him¹⁶ weigh me with honest¹⁷ scales;
 then God will discover¹⁸ my integrity.
 31:7 If my footsteps have strayed from the way,
 if my heart has gone after my eyes,¹⁹ or if anything²⁰ has defiled my hands,
 31:8 then let me sow²¹ and let another eat, and let my crops²² be uprooted.
 31:9 If my heart has been enticed by a woman,
 and I have lain in wait at my neighbor’s door,²³
 31:10 then let my wife turn the millstone²⁴ for another man,
 and may other men have sexual relations with her.²⁵

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 “boils.”

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 קָדַר (*qoder*) followed by the Piel perfect of הָלַךְ (*halakh*, “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 lives with them. In Job 39:13 the female ostrich is called “the wailer.”

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 subject, the bony framework indicating the whole body.

⁸ **tn** The word חָרַב (*khorev*) also means “heat.” The heat in this line is not that of the sun, but obviously a fever.

⁹ **tn** The verb הָיָה (*hayah*, “to be”) followed by the preposition לַ (*lamed*) means “to serve the purpose of” (see Gen 1:14ff., 17:7, etc.).

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 29:10).

¹¹ **tn** This half-verse is the effect of the covenant. The interrogative מָה (*mah*) may have the force of the negative, and so be translated “not to pay attention.”

¹² **tn** Heb “lot of Shaddai,” which must mean “the lot from Shaddai,” a genitive of source.

¹³ **tn** The normal approach is to take this as the protasis, 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 protasis in v. 7.

¹⁴ **tn** The “if” is understood by the use of the consecutive 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 צְדָקָה (*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 יָדַע (*yada*, “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 **tc** The word מְאוֹמָה (*mu’um*) could be taken in one of two ways. One reading is to represent מוּם (*mum*, “blemish,” see the Masorah); the other is for מְאוֹמָה (*m’umamah*, “anything,” see the versions and the *Kethib*). 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 יָצָא [*yatsa*] with the sense of “sprout forth”). It could refer metaphorically to children (and so Kissane and Pope), as well as in its literal sense of crops. The latter fits here perfectly.

²³ **tn** Gordis notes that the word פֶּתַח (*petakh*, “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 טָחַן (*takhan*, “grind”) 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.

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 talionic 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 committed¹ a shameful act,² an iniquity to be judged.³
31:12 For it is a fire that devours even to Destruction,⁴ and it would uproot⁵ all my harvest.

31:13 “If I have disregarded the right of my male servants or my female servants when they disputed⁶ with me,
31:14 then what will I do when God confronts me in judgment;⁷ when he intervenes,⁸ how will I respond to him?
31:15 Did not the one who made me in the womb make them?⁹ Did not the same one form us in the womb?
31:16 If I have refused to give the poor what they desired,¹⁰ or caused the eyes of the widow to fail,
31:17 If I ate my morsel of bread myself, and did not share any of it with orphans¹¹ –
31:18 but from my youth I raised the orphan¹² like a father,

and from my mother’s womb¹³ I guided the widow!¹⁴
31:19 If I have seen anyone about to perish for lack of clothing, or a poor man without a coat,
31:20 whose heart did not bless me¹⁵ as he warmed himself with the fleece of my sheep,¹⁶
31:21 if I have raised my hand¹⁷ to vote against the orphan, when I saw my support in the court,¹⁸
31:22 then¹⁹ let my arm fall from the shoulder,²⁰ let my arm be broken off at the socket.²¹
31:23 For the calamity from God was a terror to me,²² and by reason of his majesty²³ I was powerless.
31:24 “If I have put my confidence in gold or said to pure gold,

¹ **tn** *Heb* “for that [would be].” In order to clarify the referent of “that,” which refers to v. 9 rather than v. 10, the words “I have committed” have been supplied in the translation.

² **tn** The word for “shameful act” is used especially for sexual offenses (cf. Lev 18:27).

³ **tc** Some have deleted this verse as being short and irrelevant, not to mention problematic. But the difficulties are not insurmountable, and there is no reason to delete it. There is a *Kethib-Qere* reading in each half verse; in the first the *Kethib* is masculine for the subject but the *Qere* is feminine going with “shameless deed.” In the second colon the *Kethib* is the feminine agreeing with the preceding noun, but the *Qere* is masculine agreeing with “iniquity.”

⁴ **tn** The expression עָוֹן פְּלִילִים (*avon p^lilim*) means “an iniquity of the judges.” The first word is not spelled as a construct noun, and so this has led some to treat the second word as an adjective (with enclitic *mem* [ם]). The sense is similar in either case, for the adjective occurs in Job 31:28 meaning “calling for judgment” (See GKC 427 §131.s).

⁴ **tn** *Heb* “to Abaddon.”

⁵ **tn** The verb means “to root out,” but this does not fit the parallelism with fire. Wright changed two letters and the vowels in the verb to get the root טָרַף (*tsaraf*, “to burn”). The NRSV has “burn to the root.”

⁶ **tn** This construction is an adverbial clause using the temporal preposition, the infinitive from רִיב (*riv*, “contend”), and the suffix which is the subjective genitive.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “arises.” The LXX reads “takes vengeance,” an interpretation that is somewhat correct but unnecessary. The verb “to rise” would mean “to confront in judgment.”

⁸ **tn** The verb פָּקַד (*paqad*) means “to visit,” but with God as the subject it means any divine intervention for blessing or cursing, anything God does that changes a person’s life. Here it is “visit to judge.”

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “him,” but the plural pronoun has been used in the translation to indicate that the referent is the servants mentioned in v. 13 (since the previous “him” in v. 14 refers to God).

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* “kept the poor from [their] desire.”

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “and an orphan did not eat from it.”

¹² **tn** *Heb* “he grew up with me.” Several commentators have decided to change the pronoun to “I,” and make it causative.

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 prothesis. 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 “If...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 (כַּתְּפִי, *k^{et}efi*) from the nape of the neck [or shoulder blade (מִשִּׁכְמַחַ), *mishikmah*].”

²¹ **tn** The word קֶדֶה (*qaneh*) is “reed; shaft; beam,” and 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 fear 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 מִשְׁתַּאֲשֵׁר (umiss^c’eto); the preposition is causal. The form, from the verb נָסָא (*nasa*, “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 sun¹ 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,²

31:28 then this³ also would be iniquity to be judged,⁴ for I would have been false⁵ to God above.

31:29 If⁶ I have rejoiced over the misfortune of my enemy⁷ or exulted⁸ because calamity⁹ found him – **31:30** I¹⁰ have not even permitted my mouth¹¹ to sin

by asking¹² for his life through a curse – **31:31** if¹³ the members of my household¹⁴ have never said,¹⁵

'If only there were¹⁶ someone who has not been satisfied from Job's¹⁷ meat!' –

31:32 But¹⁸ no stranger had to spend the night outside, for I opened my doors to the traveler¹⁹ – **31:33** if²⁰ I have covered my transgressions as men do,²¹

by hiding²² iniquity in my heart,²³ **31:34** because I was terrified²⁴ of the great multitude,²⁵ and the contempt of families terrified me, so that I remained silent and would not go outdoors – ²⁶

Job's Appeal

31:35 "If only I had²⁷ someone to hear me! Here is my signature – ²⁸

¹ **tn** Heb "light," but parallel to the moon it is the sun. This section speaks of false worship of the sun and the moon.

² **tn** Heb "and my hand kissed my mouth." The idea should be that of "my mouth kissed my hand." H. H. Rowley suggests that the hand was important in waving or throwing the kisses of homage to the sun and the moon, and so it receives the focus. This is the only place in the OT that refers to such a custom. Outside the Bible it was known, however.

³ **tn** Heb "it."

⁴ **tn** See v. 11 for the construction. In Deut 17:2ff. false worship of heavenly bodies is a capital offense. In this passage, Job is talking about just a momentary glance at the sun or moon and the brief lapse into a pagan thought. But it is still sin.

⁵ **tn** The verb *kakhash* (in the Piel) means "to deny." The root meaning is "to deceive; to disappoint; to grow lean." Here it means that he would have failed or proven unfaithful because his act would have been a denial of God.

⁶ **tn** The problem with taking this as "if," introducing a conditional clause, is finding the apodosis, if there is one. It may be that the apodosis is understood, or summed up at the end. This is the view taken here. But R. Gordis (*Job*, 352) wishes to take this word as the indication of the interrogative, forming the rhetorical question to affirm he has never done this. However, in that case the parenthetical verses inserted become redundant.

⁷ **sn** The law required people to help their enemies if they could (Exod 23:4; also Prov 20:22). But often in the difficulties that ensued, they did exult over their enemies' misfortune (Pss 54:7; 59:10 [11], etc.). But Job lived on a level of purity that few ever reach. Duhm said, "If chapter 31 is the crown of all ethical developments of the O.T., verse 29 is the jewel in that crown."

⁸ **tn** The Hitpa'el of *u'ru* has the idea of "exult."

⁹ **tn** The word is *ra'*, "evil" in the sense of anything that harms, interrupts, or destroys life.

¹⁰ **tn** This verse would then be a parenthesis in which he stops to claim his innocence.

¹¹ **tn** Heb "I have not given my palate."

¹² **tn** The infinitive construct with the *lamed* preposition ("by asking") serves in an exegetical capacity here, explaining the verb of the first colon ("permitted...to sin"). To seek a curse on anyone would be a sin.

¹³ **tn** Now Job picks up the series of clauses serving as the protasis.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb "the men of my tent." In context this refers to members of Job's household.

¹⁵ **sn** The line is difficult to sort out. Job is saying it is sinful

"if his men have never said, 'O that there was one who has not been satisfied from his food.'" If they never said that, it would mean there were people out there who needed to be satisfied with his food.

¹⁶ **tn** The optative is again expressed with "who will give?"

¹⁷ **tn** Heb "his"; the referent (Job) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁸ **tn** This verse forms another parenthesis. Job stops almost at every point now in the conditional clauses to affirm his purity and integrity.

¹⁹ **tn** The word in the MT, *orakh* ("way"), is a contraction from *oreakh* ("wayfarer"); thus, "traveler." The same parallelism is found in Jer 14:8. The reading here "on/to the road" is meaningless otherwise.

²⁰ **tn** Now the protasis continues again.

²¹ **sn** Some commentators suggest taking the meaning here to be "as Adam," referring to the Paradise story of the sin and denial.

²² **tn** The infinitive is epexegetical, explaining the first line.

²³ **tn** The MT has "in my bosom." This is the only place in the OT where this word is found. But its meaning is well attested from Aramaic.

²⁴ **tn** Here too the verb will be the customary imperfect – it explains what he continually did in past time.

²⁵ **tn** Heb "the great multitude." But some commentators take *rabbah* adverbially: "greatly" (see RSV).

²⁶ **sn** There is no clear apodosis for all these clauses. Some commentators transfer the verses around to make them fit the constructions. But the better view is that there is no apodosis – that Job broke off here, feeling it was useless to go further. Now he will address God and not men. But in vv. 38-40b he does return to a self-imprecation. However, there is not sufficient reason to start rearranging all the verses.

²⁷ **tn** The optative is again introduced with "who will give to me hearing me? – O that someone would listen to me!"

²⁸ **tn** Heb "here is my 'tav'" (*hen tavi*). The letter *t* (*tav*) is the last letter of the alphabet in Hebrew. In paleo-Hebrew the letter was in the form of a cross or an "X," and so used for one making a mark or a signature. In this case Job has signed his statement and delivered it to the court – but he has yet to be charged. Kissane thought that this being the last letter of the alphabet, Job was saying, "This is my last word." Others take the word to mean "desire" – "this is my desire, that God would answer me" (see E. F. Sutcliffe, "Notes on Job, textual and exegetical," *Bib* 30 [1949]: 71-72; G. R. Driver, *AJSL* 3 [1935/36]: 166; P. P. Saydon, "Philological and Textual Notes to the Maltese Translation of the Old Testament," *CBQ* 23 [1961]: 252). R. Gordis (*Job*, 355) also argues strongly for this view.

let the Almighty answer me!
 If only I had an indictment¹
 that my accuser had written.²
31:36 Surely³ I would wear it proudly⁴ on
 my shoulder;
 I would bind⁵ 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 Oath*⁶

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 Speech*¹²

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

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 too are 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 (32:15-22); 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; 42:3). Elihu was respectful of his elders (32:4), 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 further").

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 וַיִּהַר אֵהוּ (vayyikhar 'af, "and the anger became hot"), meaning Elihu became very angry.

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 עָלֵי-צִדְקוֹ נִשְׁבַּח (al-tsadde'qo nafsho, "because 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 בְּדַבָּרִים (bidbarim, "with words") to דַּבְּרָם (dabbaram, "while they spoke [with Job]"). If the MT is retained, it would mean "he waited for Job with words," which while understandable is awkward.

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, אִמְלוֹ (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 מְבַדְּנֹת (ma'adannot, "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," 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 נִשְׁבַּח (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 בְּעֵלֶיהָ (be'aleyha), usually translated "its owners." Dahood, following others (although without their emendations), thought it referred to "laborers" (see M. Dahood, *Bib* 41 [1960]: 303; idem, *Bib* 43 [1962]: 362).

¹¹ **tn** The word בְּאֵשׁ (bo'shah, from בָּאָשׁ [ba'as, "to have a foul smell"]) must refer to foul smelling weeds.

others¹ were older than he was. 32:5 But when Elihu saw² that the three men had no further reply,³ he became very angry.

Elihu Claims Wisdom

32:6 So Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite spoke up:⁴

“I am young,⁵ but you are elderly; that is why I was fearful,⁶ and afraid to explain⁷ to you what I know. 32:7 I said to myself, ‘Age⁸ should speak,⁹ and length of years¹⁰ should make wisdom known.’

32:8 But it is a spirit in people, the breath¹¹ of the Almighty, that makes them understand.

32:9 It is not the aged¹² who are wise, nor old men who understand what is right.

32:10 Therefore I say, ‘Listen¹³ to me. I, even I, will explain what I know.’

32:11 Look, I waited for you to speak;¹⁴ I listened closely to your wise thoughts,¹⁵ while you were searching for words.

32:12 Now I was paying you close attention,¹⁶ yet¹⁷ there was no one proving Job

wrong.¹⁸ not one of you was answering his statements!

32:13 So do not say,¹⁹ ‘We have found wisdom!

God will refute²⁰ him, not man!’

32:14 Job²¹ has not directed²² his words to me, and so I will not reply to him with your arguments.²³

Job’s Friends Failed to Answer²⁴

32:15 “They are dismayed²⁵ and cannot answer any more; they have nothing left to say.²⁶

32:16 And I have waited.²⁷ But because they do not speak,

¹ **tn** Heb “they”; the referent (the other friends) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

² **tn** The first clause beginning with a *vav* (ו) consecutive and the preterite can be subordinated to the next similar verb as a temporal clause.

³ **tn** Heb “that there was no reply in the mouth of the three men.”

⁴ **tn** Heb “answered and said.”

⁵ **tn** The text has “small in days.”

⁶ **tn** The verb *zakhalti* (זָכַחְתִּי) is found only here in the OT, but it is found in a ninth century Aramaic inscription as well as in Biblical Aramaic. It has the meaning “to be timid” (see H. H. Rowley, *Job* [NCBC], 208).

⁷ **tn** The Piel infinitive with the preposition (מִיָּדָעָה, *mekhav-vo*) means “from explaining.” The phrase is the complement: “explain” what Elihu feared.

⁸ **tn** Heb “days.”

⁹ **tn** The imperfect here is to be classified as an obligatory imperfect.

¹⁰ **tn** Heb “abundance of years.”

¹¹ **tn** This is the word *shamah* (נְשָׁמָה, “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 *ruah* (רוּחַ) 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.

¹² **tn** The MT has “the great” or “the many,” meaning great in years according to the parallelism.

¹³ **tc** In most Hebrew mss this imperative is singular, and so addressed to Job. But two Hebrew mss and the versions have the plural. Elihu was probably addressing all of them.

¹⁴ **tn** Heb “for your words.”

¹⁵ **tn** 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.

¹⁶ **tn** The verb again is from *bin* (בִּין, “to perceive; to understand”); in this stem it means to “to pay close attention.”

¹⁷ **tn** The particle *hinneh* (הִנֵּה, “behold”) has a deictic force

here, calling attention to the thought that is now presented.

¹⁸ **tn** The participle *mokhiakh* (מוֹכִיֶּיךָ) is from the verb *yakhakh* (יָכַח) that has been used frequently in the book of Job. It means “to argue; to contend; to debate; to prove; to dispute.” The usage of the verb shows that it can focus on the beginning of an argument, the debating itself, or the resolution of the conflict. Here the latter is obviously meant, for they did argue and contend and criticize – but could not prove Job wrong.

¹⁹ **tn** Heb “lest you say.” R. Gordis (*Job*, 368) calls this a breviloquence: “beware lest [you say].” He then suggests the best reading for their quote to be, “We have attained wisdom, but only God can refute him, not man.” H. H. Rowley (*Job* [NCBC], 209) suggests the meaning is a little different, namely, that they are saying they have found wisdom in Job, and only God can deal with it. Elihu is in effect saying that they do not need God, for he is quite capable for this.

²⁰ **tn** The root is *nadaf* (נָדַף, “to drive away; to drive off”). Here it is in the abstract sense of “succeed in doing something; confound,” and so “refute; rebut.” Dhorme wants to change the meaning of the word with a slight emendation in the text, deriving it from *alaf* (אַלַף, “instruct”) the form becoming *yallafenu* (יָלַף־נֹּנוּ) instead of *yiddafenu* (יִדְדֹּפוּ־נֹּנוּ), obtaining the translation “God will instruct us.” This makes a smoother reading, but does not have much support for it.

²¹ **tn** Heb “he”; the referent (Job) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²² **tn** The verb *arakh* (אַרַךְ) means “to arrange in order; to set forth; to direct; to marshal.” It is used in military contexts for setting the battle array; it is used in legal settings for preparing the briefs.

²³ **tn** Heb “your words.”

²⁴ **sn** Elihu now will give another reason why he will speak – the arguments of these friends failed miserably. But before he gets to his argument, he will first qualify his authority.

²⁵ **tn** The verb *khattu* (כָּתְּוּ) is from *khata* (כָּתַת) which means “to be terrified.” But here it stresses the resulting dilemma. R. Gordis (*Job*, 369) renders it, “they are shattered, beaten in an argument.”

²⁶ **tn** Heb “words have moved away from them,” meaning words are gone from them, they have nothing left to say.

²⁷ **tn** Some commentators take this as a question: “And shall [or must] I wait because they do not speak?” (A. B. Davidson, R. Gordis). But this is not convincing because the silence of the friends is the reason for him to speak, not to wait.

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 me¹ constrains me.²

32:19 Inside I am like wine which has no outlet,³

like new wineskins⁴ ready to burst!

32:20 I will speak,⁵ 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,⁶ nor will I confer a title⁷ on any man.

32:22 for I do not know how to give honorary titles,⁸

if I did,⁹ my Creator would quickly do away with me.¹⁰

Elihu Invites Job's Attention

33:1 "But now, O Job, listen to my words, and hear¹¹ everything I have to say!¹²

33:2 See now, I have opened¹³ my mouth; my tongue in my mouth has spoken.¹⁴

33:3 My words come from the uprightness of my heart,¹⁵

and my lips will utter knowledge sincerely.¹⁶

33:4 The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.¹⁷

33:5 Reply to me, if you can; set your arguments¹⁸ in order before me and take your stand!

33:6 Look, I am just like you in relation to God;

I too have been molded¹⁹ from clay.

33:7 Therefore no fear of me should terrify you,

nor should my pressure²⁰ be heavy on you.²¹

Elihu Rejects Job's Plea of Innocence

33:8 "Indeed, you have said in my hearing²²

(I heard the sound of the words!):

33:9²³ "I am pure, without transgression; I am clean²⁴ and have no iniquity.

33:10²⁵ Yet God²⁶ finds occasions²⁷ with me;

¹ **tn** *Heb* "the spirit of my belly."

² **tn** The verb *נָצַק* (*tsuq*) 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 **tn** *Heb* "in my belly I am like wine that is not opened" (a Niphal imperfect), meaning sealed up with no place to escape.

⁴ **tc** The Hebrew text has כְּבִאוֹת תְּרִישִׁים (*k^e ovot khadashim*), traditionally rendered "like new wineskins." But only here does the phrase have this meaning. The LXX has "smiths" for "new," thus "like smith's bellows." A. Guillaume connects the word with an Arabic word for a wide vessel for wine shaped like a cup ("Archaeological and philological note on Job 32:19," *PEQ* 93 [1961]: 147-50). Some have been found in archaeological sites. The poor would use skins, the rich would use jars. The key to putting this together is the verb at the end of the line, יָבִיגָה (*yibbaqea* "that are ready to burst"). The point of the statement is that Elihu is bursting to speak, and until now has not had the opening.

⁵ **tn** The cohortative expresses Elihu's resolve to speak.

⁶ **tn** The idiom is "I will not lift up the face of a man." Elihu is going to show no favoritism, but speak his mind.

⁷ **tn** 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 **tn** 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 **tn** The words "if I did" are supplied in the translation to make sense out of the two clauses.

¹⁰ **tn** *Heb* "quickly carry me away."

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* "give ear," the Hiphil denominative verb from "ear."

¹² **tn** *Heb* "hear all my words."

¹³ **tn** 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* (NCBC), 210] says, "The self-importance of Elihu is boundless, and he is the master of banality." He adds that whoever wrote these speeches this way clearly intended to expose the character rather than exalt him.

¹⁵ **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 יָשָׁר (*yosher*, "uprightness"). Kissane's makes 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" (יָשַׁר, *yashur*), but this is doubtful. If Kissane'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.

¹⁶ **tn** More literally, "and the knowledge of my lips they will speak purely."

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.

tn The verb תְּחַיֶּינִי (*khayyeni*) is the Piel imperfect of the verb "to live." It can mean "gives me life," but it can also mean "quickens me, enlivens me."

¹⁸ **tn** The Hebrew text does not contain the term "arguments," but this verb has been used already for preparing or arranging a defense.

¹⁹ **tn** The verb means "nipped off," as a potter breaks off a piece of clay when molding a vessel.

²⁰ **tc** The noun means "my pressure; my burden" in the light of the verb אָכַף (*akhaf*, "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.

²¹ **tn** See Job 9:34 and 13:21.

²² **tn** *Heb* "in my ears."

²³ **sn** See Job 9:21; 10:7; 23:7; 27:4; ch. 31.

²⁴ **tn** The word is a *hapax legomenon*; *hap* is from כָּפַף (*kha-faf*). It is used in New Hebrew in expressions like "to wash" the head. Cognates in Syriac and Akkadian support the meaning "to wash; to clean."

²⁵ **sn** See Job 10:13ff.; 19:6ff.; and 13:24.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁷ **tn** The Hebrew means "frustrations" or "oppositions." The RSV has "displeasure," NIV "faults," and NRSV "occasions." Rashi chose the word found in Judg 14:4 – with metathesis – meaning "pretexs" (תְּבִאוֹת, *to'anoth*); this is followed by NAB, NASB.

he regards me as his enemy!
33:11¹ He puts my feet in shackles;
 he watches closely all my paths.²
33:12 Now in this, you are not right – I
 answer you.²
 for God is greater than a human being.³
33:13 Why do you contend against him,
 that he does not answer all a person's⁴
 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 perceive⁵ 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 revelation⁶ to
 people,
 and terrifies them with warnings,⁷
33:17 to turn a person from his sin,⁸
 and to cover a person's pride.⁹
33:18 He spares a person's life from cor-
 ruption,¹⁰
 his very life from crossing over¹¹ the

river.
33:19 Or a person is chastened¹² by pain
 on his bed,
 and with the continual strife of his
 bones,¹³
33:20 so that his life loathes food,
 and his soul rejects appetizing fare.¹⁴
33:21 His flesh wastes away from sight,
 and his bones, which were not seen,
 are easily visible.¹⁵
33:22 He¹⁶ draws near to the place of cor-
 ruption,
 and his life to the messengers of death.¹⁷
33:23 If there is an angel beside him,
 one mediator¹⁸ out of a thousand,
 to tell a person what constitutes his up-
 rightness;¹⁹
33:24 and if²⁰ God²¹ is gracious to him and
 says,

¹ **sn** See Job 13:27.

² **tn** The meaning of this verb is “this is my answer to you.”

³ **tc** The LXX has “he that is above men is eternal.” Elihu was 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 **tn** 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 **tn** The idiom is “he uncovers the ear of men.” This expression means “inform” in Ruth 4:4; 1 Sam 20:2, etc. But when God is the subject it means “make a revelation” (see 1 Sam 9:15; 2 Sam 7:27).

⁷ **tc** *Heb* “and seals their bonds.” The form of the present translation, “and terrifies them with warnings,” is derived only by emending the text. 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 יִחַתֵּם (*yakhtom*) to יִחַתֵּם (*y^hkhittem*). 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 **tc** The MT simply has מַעֲשֵׂה (*ma'aseh*, “deed”). The LXX has “from his iniquity” which would have been מַעֲשֵׂה (*me'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 יִכַּסֵּה (*y^hkhassesh*, “covers”) to יִכַּסֵּה (*y^hkhassakh*, “he cuts away”), or יִכַּלֵּה (*y^hkhalleh*, “he puts an end to”). The various emendations are not all that convincing.

¹⁰ **tn** 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 שַׁלַּח (*shalakh*) does at times refer to a weapon, but most commentators look for a parallel with “the pit [or corruption].” One suggestion is שְׁאוֹלָה (*sh^eolah*, “to Sheol”), proposed by Duhm.

Dhorme thought it was שַׁלַּח (*shalakh*) and referred to the passageway to the underworld (see M. Tsevat, *VT* 4 [1954]: 43; and Svi Rin, *BZ* 7 [1963]: 25). See discussion of options in *HALOT* 1517-18 s.v. IV שַׁלַּח. The idea of crossing the river of death fits the idea of the passage well, although the reading “to perish by the sword” makes sense and was followed by the NIV.

¹² **tc** The MT has the passive form, and so a subject has to be added: “[a man] is chastened.” The LXX has the active form, indicating “[God] chastens,” but the object “a man” has to be added. It is understandable why the LXX thought this was active, within this sequence of verbs; and that is why it is the inferior reading.

¹³ **tc** The *Kethib* “the strife of his bones is continual,” whereas the *Qere* has “the multitude of his bones are firm.” The former is the better reading in this passage. It indicates that the pain is caused by the ongoing strife.

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* “food of desire.” The word “rejects” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied in the translation for clarity.

¹⁵ **tc** *Heb* “are laid bare.” This is the *Qere* reading; the *Kethib* means “bare height.” Gordis reverses the word order: “his bones are bare [i.e., crushed] so that they cannot be looked upon.” But the sense of that is not clear.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “his soul נִפְשׁוֹ, *nefesh*, “life” draws near.”

¹⁷ **tn** The MT uses the Hiphil participle, “to those who cause death.” This seems to be a reference to the belief in demons that brought about death, an idea not mentioned in the Bible itself. Thus many proposals have been made for this expression. Hoffmann and Budde divide the word into לְמוֹתָיִם (*le'mo metim*) and simply read “to the dead.” Dhorme adds a couple of letters to get לְמִקְוֵי מוֹתָיִם (*limqom metim*, “to the place [or abode] of the dead”).

¹⁸ **sn** The verse is describing the way God can preserve someone from dying by sending a messenger (translated here as “angel”), who could be human or angelic. This messenger will interpret/mediate God's will. By “one ... out of a thousand” Elihu could have meant either that one of the thousands of messengers at God's disposal might be sent or that the messenger would be unique (see Eccl 7:28; and cp. Job 9:3).

¹⁹ **tn** This is a smoother reading. The MT has “to tell to a man his uprightness,” to reveal what is right for him. The LXX translated this word “duty”; the choice is adopted by some commentaries. However, that is too far from the text, which indicates that the angel/messenger is to call the person to uprightness.

²⁰ **tn** This verse seems to continue the protasis begun in the last verse, with the apodosis coming in the next verse.

²¹ **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

‘Spare¹ him from going down to the place of corruption, I have found a ransom for him.’²
33:25 then his flesh is restored³ like a youth’s; he returns to the days of his youthful vigor.⁴
33:26 He entreats God, and God⁵ delights in him, he sees God’s face⁶ with rejoicing, and God⁷ 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 פָּדָה (*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 רוּפֵּשׁ (*rutafash*) is found nowhere else. One suggestion is that it should be יִרְטָב (*yirtav*, “to become fresh”), connected to רוּבֵב (*ratav*, “to be well watered [or moist]”). It is also possible that it was a combination of רוּבֵב (*ratav*, “to be well watered”) and תַּפֵּשׂ (*tafash*, “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 individual comes into the presence of the Lord in prayer, and in the sanctuary he sees God’s face, i.e., he sees the evidence of God’s presence.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁹ **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).

¹⁰ **tc** The verb יָשַׁר (*yashor*) is unusual. The typical view is to change it to יָשַׁר (*yashir*, “he sings”), but that may seem out of harmony with a confession. Dhorme suggests a root שָׁר (*shur*, “to repeat”), but this is a doubtful root. J. Reider reads it יָשַׁר (*yasher*) and links it to an Arabic word “confesses” (ZAW 24 [1953]: 275).

¹¹ **tn** *Heb* “to men.”

¹² **tn** The verb שָׁוָה (*shavah*) has the impersonal meaning here, “it has not been requited 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.”

¹³ **sn** See note on “him” in v. 24.

¹⁴ **sn** Elihu will repeat these instructions for Job to listen, over and over in painful repetition. See note on the heading to 32:1.

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 “examines; tests; tries; discerns.”

²¹ **tn** Or “palate”; 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 קָזַב (*kazav*), meaning “to lie.” It could be a question: “Should I lie [against my right?] – when I am innocent. If it is repointed 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 affliction.

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 about¹ in company² with evildoers,
he goes along³ with wicked men.⁴
34:9 For he says, 'It does not profit a man
when he makes his delight with God.'⁵

God is Not Unjust

34:10 "Therefore, listen to me, you men of understanding.⁶
Far be it from⁷ God to do wickedness,
from the Almighty to do evil.
34:11 For he repays a person for his work,⁸
and according to the conduct of a person,
he causes the consequences to find him.⁹
34:12 Indeed, in truth, God does not act
wickedly,
and the Almighty does not pervert justice.
34:13 Who entrusted¹⁰ to him the earth?
And who put him over¹¹ the whole
world?
34:14 If God¹² were to set his heart on it,¹³
and gather in his spirit and his breath,
34:15 all flesh would perish together
and human beings would return to dust.

God Is Impartial and Omniscient

34:16 "If you have¹⁴ understanding, listen
to this,

hear what I have to say.¹⁵
34:17 Do you really think¹⁶
that one who hates justice can govern?¹⁷
And will you declare guilty
the supremely righteous¹⁸ One,
34:18 who says to a king,¹⁹ 'Worthless
man'²⁰
and to nobles, 'Wicked men,'
34:19 who shows no partiality to princes,
and does not take note of²¹ 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,²²
people²³ are shaken²⁴ and they pass away.
The mighty are removed effortlessly.²⁵
34:21 For his eyes are on the ways of an
individual,
he observes all a person's²⁶ steps.
34:22 There is no darkness, and no deep
darkness,

it. So to reflect this idea, Gordis has translated it "blasphemy" (cf. NAB).

¹ **tn** The perfect verb with the *vav* (ו) consecutive carries the sequence forward from the last description.

² **tn** The word *חֵבֶרֶה* (*chevrah*, "company") is a *hapax legomenon*. But its meaning is clear enough from the connections to related words and this context as well.

³ **tn** The infinitive construct with the *lamed* (ל) preposition may continue the clause with the finite verb (see GKC 351 §114.p).

⁴ **tn** *Heb* "men of wickedness"; the genitive is attributive (= "wicked men").

⁵ **tn** Gordis, however, takes this expression in the sense of "being in favor with God."

⁶ **tn** *Heb* "men of heart." The "heart" is used for the capacity to understand and make the proper choice. It is often translated "mind."

⁷ **tn** For this construction, see Job 27:5.

⁸ **tn** *Heb* "for the work of man, he [= God] repays him."

⁹ **tn** *Heb* "he causes it to find him." The text means that God will cause a man to find (or receive) the consequences of his actions.

¹⁰ **tn** The verb *פָּקַד* (*paqad*) means "to visit; to appoint; to number." Here it means "to entrust" for care and governing. The implication would be that there would be someone higher than God – which is what Elihu is repudiating by the rhetorical question. No one entrusted God with this.

¹¹ **tn** The preposition is implied from the first half of the verse.

¹² **tn** *Heb* "he"; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹³ **tc** This is the reading following the *Qere*. The *Kethib* and the Syriac and the LXX suggest a reading *יָסִים* (*yasim*, "if he [God] recalls"). But this would require leaving out "his heart," and would also require redividing the verse to make "his spirit" the object. It makes better parallelism, but may require too many changes.

¹⁴ **tn** The phrase "you have" is not in the Hebrew text, but is implied.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "the sound of my words."

¹⁶ **tn** The force of *הֲאִיף* (*ha'af*) is "Is it truly the case?" The point is being made that if Job were right God could not be judging the world.

¹⁷ **tn** The verb *חָבַשׁ* (*khavash*) has the basic idea of "to bind," as in binding on the yoke, and then in the sense of subduing people under authority (cf. Assyrian *absanu*). The imperfect verb here is best expressed with the potential nuance.

¹⁸ **tn** The two words could be taken separately, but they seem to form a fine nominal hendiadys, because the issue is God's justice. So the word for power becomes the modifier.

¹⁹ **tc** *Heb* "Does one say," although some smooth it out to say "Is it fit to say?" For the reading "who says," the form has to be repointed to *הִיאָמַר* (*ha'omer*) meaning, "who is the one saying." This reading is supported by the LXX, Vulgate, and Syriac. Also it seems to flow better with the following verse. It would be saying that God is over the rulers and can rebuke them. The former view is saying that no one rebukes kings, much less Job rebuking God.

²⁰ **tn** The word *בְּלִיַּא'ל* (*b^eliyya'al*) means both "worthless" and "wicked." It is common in proverbial literature, and in later writings it became a description of Satan. It is usually found with "son of."

²¹ **tn** The verb means "to give recognition; to take note of" and in this passage with *לִפְנֵי* (*lifne*, "before") it means to show preferential treatment to the rich before the poor. The word for "rich" here is an unusual word, found parallel to "noble" (Isa 32:2). P. Joüon thinks it is a term of social distinction (*Bib* 18 [1937]: 207-8).

²² **tn** Dhorme transposes "in the middle of the night" with "they pass away" to get a smoother reading. But the MT emphasizes the suddenness by putting both temporal ideas first. E. F. Sutcliffe leaves the order as it stands in the text, but adds a verb "they expire" after "in the middle of the night" ("Notes on Job, textual and exegetical," *Bib* 30 [1949]: 79ff.).

²³ **tn** R. Gordis (*Job*, 389) thinks "people" here mean the people who count, the upper class.

²⁴ **tn** The verb means "to be violently agitated." There is no problem with the word in this context, but commentators have made suggestions for improving the idea. The proposal that has the most to commend it, if one were inclined to choose a new word, is the change to *יָגִיעוּ* (*yigva'u*, "they expire"; so Ball, Holscher, Fohrer, and others).

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* "not by hand." This means without having to use force.

²⁶ **tn** *Heb* "his"; the referent (a person) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

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 them⁴ in the night⁵ and they are crushed.

34:26 He strikes them for their wickedness,⁶

in a place where people can see,⁷

34:27 because they have turned away from following him, and have not understood⁸ any of his ways,

34:28 so that they caused⁹ the cry of the poor to come before him,

so that he hears¹⁰ the cry of the needy.

34:29 But if God¹¹ is quiet, who can condemn¹² him?

If he hides his face, then who can see him?

Yet¹³ he is over the individual and the nation alike,¹⁴

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.

34:32 Teach me what I cannot see.¹⁷

If I have done evil, I will do so no more.’

34:33 Is it your opinion¹⁸ that God¹⁹

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 that²¹ Job speaks without knowledge and his words are without understanding.²²

34:36 But²³ Job will be tested to the end, because his answers are like those of wicked men.

¹ tn The construction of this colon uses the Niphal infinitive construct from סָתַר (*satar*, “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 עַד (*od*, “yet, still”) has been replaced with בּוֹנֵה (*mo’ed*, “an appointed time,” Reiske and Wright), with the ׀ (*mem*) 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.

⁶ tn Heb “under wicked men,” or “under wickednesses.” J. C. Greenfield shows that the preposition can mean “among” as well (“Prepositions B Tachath 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 רוֹאִים (*ro’im*): “[in the place where there are] seers,” i.e., spectators.

⁸ tn The verb הִשְׁכִּילוּ (*hiskilu*) means “to be prudent; to be wise.” 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 בָּיַח (*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 The verb in this position is somewhat difficult, although it does make good sense in the sentence – it is just not what the parallelism would suggest. So several emendations have been put forward, for which see the commentaries.

¹³ tn The line simply reads “and over a nation and over a man together.” But it must be the qualification for the points being made in the previous lines, namely, that even if God hides himself so no one can see, yet he is still watching over them all (see H. H. Rowley, *Job* [NCBC], 222).

¹⁴ tn The word translated “alike” (*Heb* “together”) has both

ered some interpreters. In the reading taken here it is acceptable. But others have emended it to gain a verb, such as “he visits” (Beer), “he watches over” (Duhm), “he is compassionate” (Kissane), etc. But it is sufficient to say “he is over.”

¹⁵ tn This last verse is difficult because it is unbalanced and cryptic. Some have joined the third line of v. 29 with this entire verse to make a couplet. But the same result is achieved by simply regarding this verse as the purpose of v. 29. But there still are some words that must be added. In the first colon, “[he is over the nations]...preventing from ruling.” And in the second colon, “laying” has to be supplied before “snares.”

¹⁶ tn The Hebrew text has only “I lift up” or “I bear” (= I endure). The reading “I have been led astray” is obtained by changing the vowels to read a passive. If the MT is retained, an object has to be supplied, such as “chastisement” (so RSV, NASB) or “punishment” (NRSV). If not, then a different reading would be followed (e.g., “I was misguided” [NAB]; “I am guilty” [NIV]).

¹⁷ tn Heb “what I do not see,” more specifically, “apart from [that which] I see.”

¹⁸ tn Heb “is it from with you,” an idiomatic expression meaning “to suit you” or “according to your judgment.”

¹⁹ tn Heb “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

²⁰ 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.

²¹ tn Adding “that” in the translation clarifies Elihu’s indirect citation of the wise individuals’ words.

²² tn The Hiphil infinitive construct is here functioning as a substantive. The word means “prudence; understanding.”

²³ tc The MT reads אָבִי (*avi*, “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 ms 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.

34:37 For he adds transgression¹ to his sin; in our midst he claps his hands,² and multiplies his words against God.”

*Elihu's Third Speech*³

35:1 Then Elihu answered:

35:2 “Do you think this to be⁴ just: when⁵ you say, ‘My right before God.’⁶
35:3 But you say, ‘What will it profit you,⁷ and, ‘What do I gain by not sinning?’⁸
35:4 I⁹ will reply to you,¹⁰ and to your friends with you.
35:5 Gaze at the heavens and see; consider the clouds, which are higher than you!¹¹
35:6 If you sin, how does it affect God?¹² If your transgressions are many, what does it do to him?¹³
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 only¹⁴ a person like yourself, and your righteousness only other

¹ **tn** Although frequently translated “rebellion,” the basic meaning of this Hebrew term is “transgression.”

² **tc** If 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, Dhorme alters some of the vowels and obtains a reading “and casts doubt among us,” and then takes “transgression” from the first colon for the complement. Some commentators simply delete the line.

³ **sn** 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 **tn** The line could be read as “do you reckon this for justice? Here “to be” is understood.

⁵ **tn** The word “when” is not in the Hebrew text, but is implied.

⁶ **tn** 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 **tn** The referent of “you” is usually understood to be God.

⁸ **tn** 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], 224). It could also be, “What do I gain without sin?”

⁹ **tn** The emphatic pronoun calls attention to Elihu who will answer these questions.

¹⁰ **tn** The Hebrew text adds, “with words,” but since this is obvious, for stylistic reasons it has not been included in the translation.

¹¹ **tn** 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 (11:7ff.), and even Job (9:8ff.).

¹² **tn** *Heb* “him” (also in v. 7); the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹³ **tn** See Job 7:20.

¹⁴ **tn** The phrase “affects only” is supplied in the translation of this nominal sentence.

sn According to Strahan, “Elihu exalts God’s greatness at the cost of His grace, His transcendence at the expense of His immanence. He sets up a material instead of a spiritual stand of profit and loss. He does not realize that God does gain what He desires most by the goodness of men, and loses what He most loves by their evil.”

people.¹⁵

35:9 “People¹⁶ cry out because of the excess of oppression;¹⁷ they cry out for help because of the power¹⁸ of the mighty.¹⁹
35:10 But no one says, ‘Where is God, my Creator, who gives songs in the night,²⁰
35:11 who teaches us²¹ more than²² the wild animals of the earth, and makes us wiser than the birds of the sky?’
35:12 Then²³ they cry out – but he does not answer – because of the arrogance of the wicked.
35:13 Surely it is an empty cry²⁴ – God does not hear it; the Almighty does not take notice of it.
35:14 How much less, then, when you say that you do not perceive him, that the case is before him and you are waiting for him!²⁵
35:15 And further,²⁶ when you say that his anger does not punish,²⁷ and that he does not know transgression!²⁸
35:16 So Job opens his mouth to no pur-

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* “and to [or for] a son of man, your righteousnessness.”

¹⁶ **tn** The word “people” is supplied, because the sentence only has the masculine plural verb.

¹⁷ **tn** 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 **tn** *Heb* “the arm,” a metaphor for strength or power.

¹⁹ **tn** Or “of the many” (see *HALOT* 1:172 s.v. רבו 6.a).

²⁰ **tn** 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 poetic line when he creates one.”

²¹ **tn** The form in the text, the Piel participle from אָלַף (*alaf*, “teach”) is written in a contracted form; the full form is יִתְּנֵנוּ (m^{pl} *all^{pl}fenu*).

²² **tn** Some would render this “teaches us by the beasts.” But Elihu is stressing the unique privilege humans have.

²³ **tn** The adverb שָׁם (*sham*, “there”) connects this verse to v. 11. “There” can be locative or temporal – and here it is temporal (= “then”).

²⁴ **tn** *Heb* “surely – vanity, he does not hear.” The cry is an empty cry, not a prayer to God. Dhorme translates it, “It is a pure waste of words.”

²⁵ **sn** 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 **tn** 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 **tn** The verb פָּקַד (*paqad*) 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 **tn** The word פֶּשַׁע (*pash*) is a *hapax 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 “folly.” Several define it as “transgression” on the basis of the versions (Theodotion, Symmachus, Vulgate). The RSV took it as “greatly heed,” 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.”

pose;¹
without knowledge he multiplies words.”

Elihu's Fourth Speech²

36:1 Elihu said further:³

36:2 “Be patient⁴ with me a little longer and I will instruct you, for I still have words to speak on God’s behalf.⁵

36:3 With my knowledge I will speak comprehensively,⁶ and to my Creator I will ascribe righteousness.⁷

36:4 For in truth, my words are not false; it is one complete⁸ in knowledge who is with you.

36:5 Indeed, God is mighty; and he does not despise people,⁹ he¹⁰ is mighty, and firm¹¹ in his intent.¹²

36:6 He does not allow the wicked to live,¹³ but he gives justice to the poor.

36:7 He does not take his eyes¹⁴ off the righteous; but with kings on the throne he seats the righteous¹⁵ and exalts them forever.¹⁶

36:8 But if they are bound in chains,¹⁷ and held captive by the cords of affliction,

36:9 then he reveals¹⁸ to them what they have done,¹⁹

and their transgressions, that they were behaving proudly.

36:10 And he reveals²⁰ this²¹ for correction, and says that they must turn²² from evil.

36:11 If they obey and serve him, they live out their days in prosperity and their years in pleasantness.²³

36:12 But if they refuse to listen, they pass over the river of death,²⁴ and expire without knowledge.

36:13 The godless at heart²⁵ nourish anger,²⁶ they do not cry out even when he binds them.

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 וַיֹּסֵף (*vayyosef*) is with the hendiadys construction: “and he added and said,” meaning “and he said again, further.”

⁴ **tn** The verb כָּתַר (*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. Dhorme translates this “I will justify my Maker,” and that is workable if it carries the meaning of “declaring to be right.”

⁸ **tn** The word is תָּמִים (*t^mmim*), often translated “perfect.” It is the same word used of Job in 2:3. Elihu is either a complete stranger to modesty or is confident regarding the knowledge that he believes God has revealed to him for this situation. See the note on the heading before 32:1.

⁹ **tn** The object “people” is not in the Hebrew text but is implied.

¹⁰ **tn** The text simply repeats “mighty.”

¹¹ **tn** The last two words are simply בָּרָה לֵב (*koakh lev*, “strong in heart”), meaning something like “strong; firm in his decisions.”

¹² **tc** 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). Dhorme 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 בָּרָה (“pure”).

¹³ **tn** Or “he does not keep the wicked alive.”

¹⁴ **tc** Many commentators accept the change of “his eyes” to “his right” (reading דִּינֵי *[dino]* for עֵינָיו *[enayiv]*). There is no compelling reason for the change; it makes the line commonplace.

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 §111.1 = “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** Dhorme 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 שׁוּב (*shuv*, “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. NIV).

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 die¹ in their youth,
and their life ends among the male cultic
prostitutes.²

36:15 He delivers the afflicted by³ their⁴
afflictions,
he reveals himself to them⁵ by their suf-
fering.

36:16 And surely, he drew you⁶ from the
mouth of distress,
to a wide place, unrestricted,⁷
and to the comfort⁸ of your table
filled with rich food.⁹

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

¹ **tn** The text expresses this with “their soul dies.”

² **tn** *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); “and perish among the reprobate” (NAB); “die...after wasting their lives in immoral living” (NLT).

³ **tn** The preposition ב (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 **tn** *Heb* “his.”

⁵ **tn** *Heb* “he uncovers their ear.”

⁶ **tn** The Hebrew verb means “to entice; to lure; to allure; to seduce,” but these have negative connotations. The English “to persuade; to draw” might work better. The verb is the Hiphil perfect of בחר (bחר). But the nuance of the verb is difficult. It can be equivalent to an English present expressing what God is doing (Peake). But the subject is contested as well. Since the verb usually has an evil connotation, there have been attempts to make the “plaza” the subject – “the wide place has led you astray” (Ewald).

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “a broad place where there is no cramping beneath [or under] it.”

⁸ **tn** The word נחת (nakhat) could be translated “set” if it is connected with the verb נוח (nuakh, “to rest,” but then “to lay to rest, to set”). Kissane translates it “comfort.” Dhorme thinks it could come from נוח (nuakh, “to rest”) or נחת (nakhat, “to descend”). But his conclusion is that it is a dittography after “under it” (p. 545).

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “filled with fat.”

¹⁰ **tn** The first expression is idiomatic: the text says, “because wrath lest it entice you” – thus, beware.

¹¹ **tn** The word is כופר (kofēr), often translated “ransom,” but frequently in the sense of a bribe.

¹² **tn** 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.

¹³ **tn** This part has only two words לֹא בְּצָר לֹא (lo’ b’c̄sar, “not in distress”). The negated phrase serves to explain the first colon.

¹⁴ **tc** For the many suggestions and the reasoning here, see the commentaries.

¹⁵ **tn** The meaning of this line is difficult. There are numerous suggestions for emending the text. Kissane takes the first verb in the sense of “oppress,” and for “the night” he has

36:21 Take heed, do not turn to evil,
for because of this you have been tested¹⁶
by affliction.

36:22 Indeed, God is exalted in his power;
who is a teacher¹⁷ like him?

36:23 Who has prescribed his ways for
him?

Or said to him, “You have done what is
wicked?”

36:24 Remember to extol¹⁸ his work,
which people have praised in song.

36:25 All humanity has seen it;
people gaze on it from afar.

The Work and Wisdom of God

36:26 “Yes, God is great – beyond our
knowledge!¹⁹

The number of his years is unsearchable.

36:27 He draws up drops of water;
they distill²⁰ the rain into its mist,²¹

36:28 which the clouds pour down
and shower on humankind abundantly.

36:29 Who can understand the spreading
of the clouds,

the thunderings of his pavilion?²²

36:30 See how he scattered²³ his lightning²⁴
about him;

he has covered the depths²⁵ of the sea.

36:31 It is by these that he judges²⁶ the
nations
and supplies food in abundance.

“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.”

¹⁶ **tn** Normally “tested” would be the translation for the Niphil of בָּחַר (bakhār). Although the Qal is employed here, the context favors “tested” rather than “chose.”

¹⁷ **tn** The word מוֹרֵה (moreh) is the Hiphil participle from יָרָה (yarah). It is related to the noun תּוֹרָה (torah, “what is taught” i.e., the law).

¹⁸ **tn** The expression is “that you extol,” serving as an object of the verb.

¹⁹ **tn** The last part has the verbal construction, “and we do not know.” This clause is to be used adverbially: “beyond our understanding.”

²⁰ **tn** 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.”

²¹ **tn** This word עֵד (’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.

²² **tn** *Heb* “his booth.”

²³ **tn** The word actually means “to spread,” but with lightning as the object, “to scatter” appears to fit the context better.

²⁴ **tn** 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.

²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “roots.”

²⁶ **tn** The verb is יָדַן (yadin, “he judges”). Houbigant proposed יָזַן (yazun, “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 hands¹ he covers² the lightning,
and directs it against its target.
36:33³ 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 carefully⁴ to the thunder of his voice,
to the rumbling⁵ that proceeds from his mouth.
37:3 Under the whole heaven he lets it go,
even his lightning to the far corners⁶ of the earth.
37:4 After that a voice roars;
he thunders with an exalted voice,
and he does not hold back his lightning bolts⁷
when his voice is heard.
37:5 God thunders with his voice in marvelous ways;⁸
he does great things beyond our understanding.⁹
37:6 For to the snow he says, 'Fall¹⁰ to earth,'
and to the torrential rains,¹¹ 'Pour

¹ **tn** R. Gordis (*Job*, 422) 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. Dhorme has "lifts" (נָשָׂא [nissa'] בְּקֶדֶר [kissah]). This fit 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] concerning it; cattle also concerning what rises." Dhorme has it: "The flock which sniffs the coming storm has warned the shepherd." Kissane: "The thunder declares concerning him, as he excites wrath against iniquity." Gordis translates it: "His thunderclap 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 29).

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 נִלְמַד (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 Elishu'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 Hebrew mss delete the second pair, and so many editors do. But the repetition may have served to stress the idea that the rains were heavy.

down.'¹²

37:7 He causes everyone to stop working,¹³
so that all people¹⁴ may know¹⁵ his work.

37:8 The wild animals go to their lairs,
and in their dens they remain.

37:9 A tempest blows out from its chamber,
icy cold from the driving winds.¹⁶

37:10 The breath of God produces ice,
and the breadth of the waters freeze solid.

37:11 He loads the clouds with moisture;¹⁷
he scatters his lightning through the clouds.

37:12 The clouds¹⁸ go round in circles,
wheeling about according to his plans,
to carry out¹⁹ all that he commands them
over the face of the whole inhabited world.

37:13 Whether it is for punishment²⁰ for
his land,
or whether it is for mercy,
he causes it to find its mark.²¹

37:14 "Pay attention to this, Job!
Stand still and consider the wonders God
works.

37:15 Do you know how God commands
them,²²
how he makes lightning flash in his storm
cloud?²³

37:16 Do you know about the balancing²⁴

¹² **tn** Heb "Be strong."

¹³ **tn** Heb "by the hand of every man he seals." This line is intended to mean with the heavy rains God suspends all agricultural activity.

¹⁴ **tc** This reading involves a change in the text, for in MT "men" is in the construct. It would be translated, "all men whom he made" (i.e., all men of his making). This is the translation followed by the NIV and NRSV. Olshausen suggested that the word should have been אַנְשִׁים (anashim) with the final ם (mem) being lost to haplography.

¹⁵ **tn** D. W. Thomas suggested a meaning of "rest" for the verb, based on Arabic. He then reads עָנֹשׂ (enosh) for man, and supplies a ם (mem) to "his work" to get "that every man might rest from his work [in the fields]."

¹⁶ **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.

¹⁷ **tn** The word "moisture" is drawn from רֵי (ri) as a contraction for רֵי (rivi). 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.

¹⁸ **tn** The words "the clouds" are supplied from v. 11; the sentence itself actually starts: "and it goes round," referring to the cloud.

¹⁹ **tn** Heb "that it may do."

²⁰ **tn** Heb "rod," i.e., a rod used for punishment.

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*, 429) suggests man is the subject - let him find what it is for, i.e., the fate appropriate for him.

²² **tn** The verb is בָּשָׂם (b'sum, from שָׂם [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** Dhorme reads this "and how his stormcloud makes lightning to flash forth?"

²⁴ **tn** As indicated by HALOT 618 s.v. בִּפְלִטָה, the concept of "balancing" probably refers to "floating" or "suspension" (cf. NIV's "how the clouds hang poised" and J. E. Hartley, *Job* [NICOT], 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 out¹ the clouds,

solid as a mirror of molten metal?

37:19 Tell us what we should² say to him. We cannot prepare a case³ 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.⁷

37:22 From the north he comes in golden splendor;⁸ 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*¹²

38:1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind.¹³

38:2 “Who is this¹⁴ who darkens counsel¹⁵ with words without knowledge?

38:3 Get ready for a difficult task¹⁶ like a man;

I will question you and you will inform me!

¹ **tn** The verb means “to beat out; to flatten,” and the analogy in the next line will use molten metal. From this verb is derived the word for the “firmament” in Gen 1:6-8, that canopy-like pressure area separating water above and water below.

² **tn** The imperfect verb here carries the obligatory nuance, “what we should say?”

³ **tn** The verb means “to arrange; to set in order.” From the context the idea of a legal case is included.

⁴ **tn** This imperfect works well as a desiderative imperfect.

⁵ **tn** The light here must refer to the sun in the skies that had been veiled by the storm. Then, when the winds blew the clouds away, it could not be looked at because it was so dazzling. Elihu’s analogy will be that God is the same – in his glory one cannot look at him or challenge him.

⁶ **tn** The verb has an indefinite subject, and so should be a passive here.

⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and cleaned them.” The referent is the clouds (v. 18), which has been supplied in the translation for clarity. There is another way of reading this verse: the word translated “bright” means “dark; obscured” in Syriac. In this interpretation the first line would mean that they could not see the sun, because it was darkened by the clouds, but then the wind came and blew the clouds away. Dhorme, Gray, and several others take it this way, as does the NAB.

⁸ **tn** The MT has “out of the north comes gold.” Left in that sense the line seems irrelevant. The translation “golden splendor” (with RV, RSV, NRSV, NIV) depends upon the context of theophany. Others suggest “golden rays” (Dhorme), the aurora borealis (Graetz, Gray), or some mythological allusion (Pope), such as Baal’s palace. Golden rays or splendor is what is intended, although the reference is not to a natural phenomenon – it is something that would suggest the glory of God.

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 accompaniment 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 foundation¹ of the earth? Tell me,² if you possess understanding!
38:5 Who set its measurements – if³ you know – or who stretched a measuring line across it?
38:6 On what⁴ were its bases⁵ set, or who laid its cornerstone –
38:7 when the morning stars⁶ sang⁷ in chorus,⁸ and all the sons of God⁹ shouted for joy?

38:8 “Who shut up¹⁰ the sea with doors when it burst forth,¹¹ coming out of the womb,
38:9 when I made¹² the storm clouds its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band,¹³
38:10 when I prescribed¹⁴ its limits,

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 כ (ki) is taken here for a conditional clause, “if you know” (see GKC 498 §159.4d). 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 קָן (ranan), which is often a ringing cry, an exultation. The parallelism with “shout for joy” shows this to be enthusiastic acclamation. The infinitive is then continued in the next colon with the *vav* (v) consecutive preterite.

⁸ **tn** Heb “together.” This is Dhorome’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 יָצָא (yatsa’, “when it burst forth”) and then the finite verb יָצָא (yetsa’, “go out”) to mark the concomitance of the two actions.

¹² **tn** The temporal clause here uses the infinitive from שָׂם (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 אָשִׁית (’ashiyt, “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” de-

and set¹⁵ in place its bolts and doors,
38:11 when I said, ‘To here you may come¹⁶ and no farther,¹⁷ here your proud waves will be confined?’¹⁸

38:12 Have you ever in your life¹⁹ commanded the morning, or made the dawn know²⁰ its place,
38:13 that it might seize the corners of the earth,²¹ and shake the wicked out of it?
38:14 The earth takes shape like clay under a seal;²² its features²³ are dyed²⁴ like a garment.
38:15 Then from the wicked the light is withheld, and the arm raised in violence²⁵ is broken.²⁶

velops the connotation of “decide, determine” (2 Sam 5:24; Job 14:3; Dan 11:36).

¹⁵ **tn** Dhorome suggested reversing the two verbs, making this the first, and then “shatter” for the second colon.

¹⁶ **tn** The imperfect verb receives the permission nuance here.

¹⁷ **tn** The text has תוסיף (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. But there has to be some object for the verb “put,” such as “limit” or “boundary”; the translations “confined; halted; stopped” all serve to paraphrase such an idea. The LXX has “broken” at this point, suggesting the verse 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 יָדָע (yada’, “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 day makes the earth appear 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 תִּשְׁבָּבָה (tishbaba, “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 **tn** Heb “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,⁴ or walked about in the recesses of the deep?
38:17 Have the gates of death been revealed to you?² Have you seen the gates of deepest darkness?³
38:18 Have you considered the vast expanses of the earth? Tell me, if you know it all!
38:19 “In what direction⁴ does light reside, and darkness, where is its place,
38:20 that you may take them to their borders and perceive the pathways to their homes?⁵
38:21 You know, for you were born before them,⁶ and the number of your days is great!
38:22 Have you entered the storehouse⁷ of the snow, or seen the armory⁸ of the hail,
38:23 which I reserve for the time of trouble, for the day of war and battle?⁹
38:24 In what direction is lightning¹⁰ 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,
38:26 to cause it to rain on an uninhabited land,¹¹ a desert where there are no human beings,¹²
38:27 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 hard¹⁵ like stone, when the surface of the deep is frozen solid?
38:31 Can you tie the bands¹⁶ of the Pleiades, or release the cords of Orion?
38:32 Can you lead out the constellations¹⁷ in their seasons, or guide the Bear with its cubs?¹⁸
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’?
38:36 Who has put wisdom in the heart,²⁰

the Old Testament,” *JTS* 4 [1953]: 208-12).

¹ **tn** *Heb* “the springs of the sea.” The words “that fill” are supplied in the translation to clarify the meaning of the phrase.

² **tn** *Heb* “uncovered to you.”

³ **tn** 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 **tn** The interrogative with *דֶּרֶךְ* (*derekh*) means “in what road” or “in what direction.”

⁵ **tn** 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 **tn** The imperfect verb after the adverb *אָז* (“then”) functions as a preterite: “you were born.” The line is sarcastic.

⁷ **sn** 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 **tn** The same Hebrew term (*אֹצֵרוֹת*, *otsar*), has been translated “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 **sn** The terms translated *war* and *battle* are different Hebrew words, but both may be translated “war” or “battle” depending on the context.

¹⁰ **tn** 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 **tn** *Heb* “on a land, no man.”

¹² **tn** *Heb* “a desert, no man in it.”

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “to cause to sprout a source of vegetation.” The word *מִצְוֵה* (*motsa*) is rendered “mine” in Job 28:1. The suggestion with the least changes is Wright’s *צִמָּה* (*tsame*), “thirsty”. But others choose *מִצְוֵה* (*mitsiyah*), “from the steppe”).

¹⁴ **tn** Or “heavens.” The Hebrew term *שָׁמַיִם* (*shamayim*) may be translated “heaven(s)” or “sky” depending on the context.

¹⁵ **tn** Several suggest that the verb is not from *חָבַה* (*khava*), “to hide”) but from a homonym, “to congeal.” This may be too difficult to support, however.

¹⁶ **tn** This word is found here and in 1 Sam 15:32. Dhorme 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 **tn** The word *מַזְרֹת* (*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 **sn** See Job 9:9.

¹⁹ **tc** The LXX has “answer you,” and some editors have adopted this. However, the reading of the MT makes better sense in the verse.

²⁰ **tn** This verse is difficult because of the two words, *לֵבָהּ* (*ukhot*, rendered here “heart”) and *עֵינָיו* (*sekhi*, 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, “ibis” 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 over⁴ the water jars of heaven,

38:38 when the dust hardens² into a mass,
and the clumps of earth stick together?

38:39 “Do you hunt prey for the lioness,
and satisfy the appetite³ of the lions,
38:40 when they crouch in their dens,
when they wait in ambush in the thicket?
38:41 Who prepares prey for the raven,
when its young cry out to God
and wander about⁴ for lack of food?

39:1 “Are you acquainted with the way⁵
the mountain goats⁶ 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?⁷

39:3 They crouch, they bear⁸ their young,
they bring forth the offspring they have
carried.⁹

39:4 Their young grow strong, and grow
up in the open;¹⁰
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,

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.¹¹
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 ser-
vant?
Will it spend the night at your feeding
trough?

39:10 Can you bind the wild ox¹² to a fur-
row 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 commit¹³ your labor to it?

39:12 Can you count¹⁴ it to bring in¹⁵
your grain,¹⁶
and gather the grain¹⁷ to your threshing
floor?¹⁸

39:13¹⁹ “The wings of the ostrich²⁰ flap
with joy,²¹
but are they the pinions and plumage of
a stork?²²

teor” (from a verb “to wander”) and “a celestial appearance.” But these meanings are not well-attested.

¹ **tn** The word actually means “to cause to lie down.”

² **tn** The word means “to flow” or “to cast” (as in casting metals). So the noun developed the sense of “hard,” as in cast metal.

³ **tn** *Heb* “fill up the life of.”

⁴ **tn** The verse is difficult, making some suspect that a line has dropped out. The little birds in the nest hardly go wandering about looking for food. Dhorme suggest “and stagger for lack of food.”

⁵ **tn** The text uses the infinitive as the object: “do you know the giving birth of?”

⁶ **tn** Or “ibex.”

⁷ **tn** Here the infinitive is again a substantive: “the time of their giving birth.”

⁸ **tc** The Hebrew verb used here means “to cleave,” and this would not have the object “their young.” Olshausen and others after him change the כ (khet) to צ (tet) and get a verb “to drop,” meaning “drop [= give birth to] young” as used in Job 21:10. G. R. Driver holds out for the MT, arguing it is an idiom, “to breach the womb” (“Problems in the Hebrew text of Job,” VTSup 3 [1955]: 92-93).

⁹ **tn** *Heb* “they cast forth their labor pains.” This word usually means “birth pangs” but here can mean what caused the pains (metonymy of effect). This fits better with the parallelism, and the verb (“cast forth”). The words “their offspring” are supplied in the translation for clarity; direct objects were often omitted when clear from the context, although English expects them to be included.

¹⁰ **tn** The idea is that of the open countryside. The Aramaic is found only here.

¹¹ **sn** The animal is happier in open countryside than in a busy town, and on its own rather than being driven by a herdsman.

¹² **tn** Some commentators think that the addition of the “wild ox” here is a copyist’s error, making the stich too long. They therefore delete it. Also, binding an animal to the furrow with ropes is unusual. So with a slight emendation Kisansane came up with “Will you bind him with a halter of cord?” While the MT is unusual, the sense is understandable, and no changes, even slight ones, are absolutely necessary.

¹³ **tn** *Heb* “leave.”

¹⁴ **tn** The word is normally translated “believe” in the Bible. The idea is that of considering something dependable and acting on it. The idea of reliability is found also in the Niphal stem usages.

¹⁵ **tc** There is a textual problem here: יָשִׁיב (yashuv) is the *Kethib*, meaning “[that] he will return”; יָשִׁיב (yashiv) is the *Qere*, meaning “that he will bring in.” This is the preferred reading, since the object follows it. For commentators who think the line too unbalanced for this, the object is moved to the second colon, and the reading “returns” is taken for the first. But the MT is perfectly clear as it stands.

¹⁶ **tn** *Heb* “your seed”; this must be interpreted figuratively for what the seed produces.

¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “gather it”; the referent (the grain) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁸ **tn** Simply, the MT has “and your threshing floor gather.” The “threshing floor” has to be an adverbial accusative of place.

¹⁹ **tc** This whole section on the ostrich is not included in the LXX. Many feel it is an interpolation and should therefore be deleted. The pattern of the chapter changes from the questions being asked to observations being made.

²⁰ **tn** The word occurs only here and means “shrill cries.” If the MT is correct, this is a poetic name for the ostrich (see Lam 4:3).

²¹ **tn** Many proposals have been made here. The MT has a verb, “exult.” Strahan had “flap joyously,” a rendering followed by the NIV. The RSV uses “wave proudly.”

²² **tn** The point of this statement would be that the ostrich cannot compare to the stork. But there are many other proposals for this line – just about every commentator has a different explanation for it. Of the three words here, the first means “pinion,” the third “plumage,” and the second prob-

39:14 For she leaves¹ 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 animal² might trample them.
39:16 She is harsh³ 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,⁴
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?⁵
39:20 Do you make it leap⁶ like a locust?
Its proud neighing⁷ is terrifying!
39:21 It⁸ paws the ground in the valley,⁹
exulting mightily,¹⁰
it goes out to meet the weapons.
39:22 It laughs at fear and is not dismayed;

it does not shy away from the sword.
39:23 On it the quiver rattles;
the lance and javelin¹¹ flash.
39:24 In excitement and impatience it consumes the ground.¹²
It cannot stand still¹³ when the trumpet is blown.
39:25 At the sound of the trumpet, it says,
‘Aha!’
And from a distance it catches the scent of battle,
the thunderous shouting of commanders,
and the battle cries.
39:26 “Is it by your understanding that the hawk soars,¹⁴
and spreads its wings toward the south?
39:27 Is it at your command¹⁵ that the eagle soars,
and builds its nest on high?
39:28 It lives on a rock and spends the night there,
on a rocky crag¹⁶ and a fortress.¹⁷
39:29 From there it spots¹⁸ its prey,¹⁹
its eyes gaze intently from a distance.
39:30 And its young ones devour the blood,
and where the dead carcasses²⁰ are,
there it is.”

ably “stork,” although the LXX has “heron.” The point of this whole section is that the ostrich is totally lacking in parental care, whereas the stork is characterized by it. The Hebrew word for “stork” is the same word for “love”: הַסִּידָה (*khasidah*), an interpretation followed by the NASB. The most likely reading is “or are they the pinions and plumage of the stork?” The ostrich may flap about, but cannot fly and does not care for its young.

¹ tn The meaning may have the connotation of “lays; places,” rather than simply abandoning (see M. Dahood, “The Root *ʿzb* II in Job,” *JBL* 78 [1959]: 307f.).

² tn Heb “an animal of the field.”

³ sn This verb, “to deal harshly; to harden; to treat cruelly,” is used for hardening the heart elsewhere (see Isa 63:17).

⁴ tn The colon poses a slight problem here. The literal meaning of the Hebrew verb translated “springs up” (i.e., “lifts herself on high”) might suggest flight. But some of the proposals involve a reading about readying herself to run.

⁵ tn The second half of the verse contains this *hapax legomenon*, which is usually connected with the word רַעְמָה (*raʾmah*, “thunder”). A. B. Davidson thought it referred to the quivering of the neck rather than the mane. Gray thought the sound and not the movement was the point. But without better evidence, a reading that has “quivering mane” may not be far off the mark. But it may be simplest to translate it “mane” and assume that the idea of “quivering” is part of the meaning.

⁶ sn The same ideas are found in Joel 2:4. The leaping motion is compared to the galloping of the horse.

⁷ tn The word could mean “snorting” as well (see Jer 8:16). It comes from the root “to blow.” If the horse is running and breathing hard, this could be the sense here.

⁸ tc The Hebrew text has a plural verb, “they paw.” For consistency and for stylistic reasons this is translated as a singular.

⁹ tn The armies would prepare for battles that were usually fought in the valleys, and so the horse was ready to charge. But in Ugaritic the word *mk* means “force” as well as “valley.” The idea of “force” would fit the parallelism here well (see M. Dahood, “Value of Ugaritic for textual criticism,” *Bib* 40 [1959]: 166).

¹⁰ tn Or “in strength.”

Job’s Reply to God’s Challenge

40:1 Then the LORD answered Job:

40:2 “Will the one who contends²¹ with the Almighty correct him?²²

¹¹ tn This may be the scimitar (see G. Molin, “What is a kidon?” *JSS* 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 tn The use of אָמַן (*aman*) 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 קְהָלִים (*khalalim*) designates someone who is fatally wounded, literally the “pierced one,” meaning anyone or thing that dies a violent death.

²¹ tn The form רִב (*rov*) is the infinitive absolute from the verb רִיב (*riv*, “contend”). Dhorme wishes to reposit it to make it the active participle, the “one who argues with the Almighty.”

²² tn The verb יָסַר (*yissor*) 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 *yasur* in the sense of “to turn aside; to yield.” Ehrlich 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 Speech*⁵

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 abase 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 acknowledge¹⁷ to you that your own right hand can save you.¹⁸

*The Description of Behemoth*¹⁹

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 קָלוּי (*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.” Dhorme 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 Behemoth (40:15-24), and the description of Leviathan (41:1-34).

⁶ **tn** See note on “task” in 38:3.

⁷ **tn** The verb פָּרַר (*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 overflowings.”

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 תַּחְתָּם (*takhtam*, “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 כָּבַשׁ (*khavash*) 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 יָדַח (*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 הִנֵּה (*hinneh*, “behold”) has the deictic force (the word is from Greek δεικνυμι, *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 כָּבַשׁ (*khafats*) 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.

40:19 It ranks first among the works of God,¹ the One who made it has furnished it with a sword.²
 40:20 For the hills bring it food,³ where all the wild animals play.
 40:21 Under the lotus trees it lies, in the secrecy of the reeds and the marsh.
 40:22 The lotus trees conceal it in their⁴ shadow; the poplars by the stream conceal it.
 40:23 If the river rages,⁵ it is not disturbed, it is secure,⁶ though the Jordan should surge up to its mouth.
 40:24 Can anyone catch it by its eyes,⁷ or pierce its nose with a snare?⁸

The Description of Leviathan

41:1 (40:25)⁹ “Can you pull in¹⁰ Leviathan with a hook, and tie down¹¹ 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,¹² will it speak to you with tender words?¹³
 41:4 Will it make a pact¹⁴ with you, so you could take it¹⁵ as your slave for life?
 41:5 Can you play¹⁶ with it, like a bird, or tie it on a leash¹⁷ for your girls?
 41:6 Will partners¹⁸ bargain¹⁹ for it? Will they divide it up²⁰ 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 remember²¹ the fight, and you will never do it again!
 41:9 (41:1)²² See, his expectation is wrong,²³ he is laid low even at the sight of it.²⁴

1 tn Heb “the ways of God.”

sn This may be a reference to Gen 1:24, where the first of the animal creation was the cattle – *b^hemah* (בְּהֵמָה).

2 tc 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 being a reference to the sharp tusks with which he can attack).

3 tn The word בּוֹלֵי (*bul*) probably refers to food. Many take it as an abbreviated form of יְבוּלֵי (יָבֹול, “produce of the field”). The vegetation that is produced on the low hills is what is meant.

4 tn The suffix is singular, but must refer to the trees’ shade.

5 tn The word ordinarily means “to oppress.” So many commentators have proposed suitable changes: “overflows” (Beer), “gushes” (Duhm), “swells violently” (Dhorme, from a word that means “be strong”).

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 Ehrlich altered the MT slightly to get “with thorns,” a view accepted by Driver, Dhorme and Pope.

9 sn Beginning with 41:1, the verse numbers through 41:9 in the English Bible differ from the verse numbers in the Hebrew text (*BHS*), with 41:1 ET = 40:25 HT, 41:2 ET = 40:26 HT, etc., through 41:34 ET = 41:26 HT. The Hebrew verse numbers in the remainder of the chapter differ from the verse numbers in the English Bible. Beginning with 42:1 the verse numbers in the ET and HT are again the same.

10 tn The verb מִשְׁחֵךְ (*mashakh*) means “to extract from the water; to fish.” The question here includes the use of a hook to fish the creature out of the water so that its jaws can be tied safely.

11 tn The verb שָׁקַע (*shaqa*) means “to cause to sink,” if it is connected with the word in Amos 8:8 and 9:5. But it may have the sense of “to tie; to bind.” If the rope were put around the tongue and jaw, binding tightly would be the sense.

12 tn The line asks if the animal, when caught and tied and under control, would keep on begging for mercy. Absolutely not. It is not in the nature of the beast. The construction uses יַרְבֵּה (*yarbeh*, “[will] he multiply” [= “make numerous”]), with the object, “supplications” i.e., prayers for mercy.

13 tn The rhetorical question again affirms the opposite. The poem is portraying the creature as powerful and insensitive.

14 tn Heb “will he cut a covenant.”

15 tn The imperfect verb serves to express what the covenant pact would cover, namely, “that you take.”

16 tn The Hebrew verb is שָׂחַק (*sakhaq*, “to sport; to trifle; to play,” Ps 104:26).

17 tn The idea may include putting Leviathan on a leash. D. W. Thomas suggested on the basis of an Arabic cognate that it could be rendered “tie him with a string like a young sparrow” (*VT* 14 [1964]: 114ff.).

18 tn The word חָבַר (*khabbar*) is a *hapax legomenon*, but the meaning is “to associate” since it is etymologically related to the verb “to join together.” The idea is that fishermen usually work in companies or groups, and then divide up the catch when they come ashore – which involves bargaining.

19 tn The word כָּרַח (*karah*) means “to sell.” With the preposition עִלֵּי (*‘al*, “upon”) it has the sense “to bargain over something.”

20 tn The verb means “to cut up; to divide up” in the sense of selling the dead body (see Exod 21:35). This will be between them and the merchants כְּבִנְיָיִם, *k^hna’anim*).

21 tn The verse uses two imperatives which can be interpreted in sequence: do this, and then this will happen.

22 sn Job 41:9 in the English Bible is 41:1 in the Hebrew text (*BHS*). From here to the end of the chapter the Hebrew verse numbers differ from those in the English Bible, with 41:10 ET = 41:2 HT, 41:11 ET = 41:3 HT, etc. See also the note on 41:1.

23 tn The line is difficult. “His hope [= expectation]” must refer to any assailant who hopes or expects to capture the creature. Because there is no antecedent, Dhorme and others transpose it with the next verse. The point is that the man who thought he was sufficient to confront Leviathan soon finds his hope – his expectation – false (a derivative from the verb קָזַב [*kazab*, “lie”] is used for a mirage).

24 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 fierce¹ when it is awakened?
Who is he, then, who can stand before
it?²

41:11 (Who has confronted³ me that I
should repay?⁴

Everything under heaven belongs to
me!)⁵

41:12 I will not keep silent about its limbs,
and the extent of its might,
and the grace of its arrangement.⁶

41:13 Who can uncover its outer cover-
ing?⁷

Who can penetrate to the inside of its
armor?⁸

41:14 Who can open the doors of its
mouth?⁹

Its teeth all around are fearsome.

41:15 Its back¹⁰ has rows of shields,
shut up closely¹¹ together as with a seal;

41:16 each one is so close to the next¹²
that no air can come between them.

41:17 They lock tightly together, one to
the next;¹³

they cling together and cannot be sepa-
rated.

41:18 Its snorting throws out flashes of
light;

its eyes are like the red glow¹⁴ of dawn.

41:19 Out of its mouth go flames,¹⁵
sparks of fire shoot forth!

41:20 Smoke streams from its nostrils
as from a boiling pot over burning¹⁶
rushes.

41:21 Its breath sets coals ablaze
and a flame shoots from its mouth.

41:22 Strength lodges in its neck,
and despair¹⁷ runs before it.

41:23 The folds¹⁸ of its flesh are tightly
joined;

they are firm on it, immovable.¹⁹

41:24 Its heart²⁰ 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.²¹

41:26 Whoever strikes it with a sword²²
will have no effect,²³

nor with the spear, arrow, or dart.

41:27 It regards iron as straw
and bronze as rotten wood.

41:28 Arrows²⁴ do not make it flee;

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, NJPS). 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 *qadam* (*qadam*) means “to come to meet; to come before; to confront” to the face.

⁴ sn The verse seems an intrusion (and so E. Dhorme, 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 *li-yehi* (*li-hu*), “it [belongs] to me” into *lo-yehi* (*lo-hu*), “there is no one”. So it would say that there is no one under the whole heaven who could challenge Leviathan and live, rather than saying it is more dangerous to challenge God to make him repay.

⁶ tn Dhorme changes the noun into a verb, “I will tell,” and the last two words into *en’erekh*, “there is no comparison”. The result is “I will tell of his incomparable might.”

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 *resen* (*resen*) has often been rendered “bridle” (cf. ESV), but that leaves a number of unanswered questions. The LXX reads *siryon* (*siryon*), with the transposition of letters, but that means “coat of armor.” If the metathesis stands, there is also support from the cognate Akkadian.

⁹ tn Heb “his face.”

¹⁰ tc The MT has *ga’avah* (*ga’avah*, “his pride”), but the LXX, Aquila, and the Vulgate all read *gavvo*, “his back”. Almost all the modern English versions follow the variant reading, speaking about “his [or its] back.”

¹¹ tn Instead of *tsar* (*tsar*, “closely”) the LXX has *tsor* (*tsor*, “stone”) to say that the seal was rock hard.

¹² tn The expression “each one...to the next” is literally “one with one.”

¹³ tn Heb “a man with his brother.”

¹⁴ tn Heb “the eyelids,” but it represents the early beams of the dawn as the cover of night flits.

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 אגמון [*ogem*] for אגמון [*agmon*]). This view is widely accepted.

¹⁷ tn This word, *avah* (*avah*) 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 encountered before for molten or cast metal.

²¹ tc 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 אלים (*elim*) as “gods.” But the last two words, which could be rendered “at the breaking [crashing, or breakers] they fail,” receive much attention. E. Dhorme (*Job*, 639) suggests “majesty” for “raising up” and “billows” (*gallim*, *gallim*) for אלים (*elim*), 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 RSV works well for the first part, but the second part need some change; so Rowley adopts “in their dire consternation they are beside themselves.”

²² tn This is the clearest reading, following A. B. Davidson, *Job*, 285. The versions took different readings of the construction.

²³ tn The verb *qum* (*qum*, “stand”) with בלי (*b’eli*, “not”) has the sense of “does not hold firm,” or “gives way.”

²⁴ tn Heb “the son of the bow.”

slingstones become like chaff to it.
41:29 A club is counted¹ as a piece of
 straw;
 it laughs at the rattling of the lance.
41:30 Its underparts² are the sharp points
 of potsherds,
 it leaves its mark in the mud
 like a threshing sledge.³
41:31 It makes the deep boil like a caul-
 dron
 and stirs up the sea like a pot of oint-
 ment.⁴
41:32 It leaves a glistening wake behind it;
 one would think the deep had a head of
 white hair.
41:33 The likes of it is not on earth,
 a creature⁵ without fear.
41:34 It looks on every haughty being;
 it is king over all that are proud.⁶

Job's Confession

42:1 Then Job answered the LORD:
42:2 "I know that you can do all things;
 no purpose of yours can be thwarted;
42:3 you asked,⁷
 'Who is this who darkens counsel
 without knowledge?'
 But⁸ I have declared without understand-
 ing⁹
 things too wonderful for me to know.¹⁰
42:4 You said,¹¹
 'Pay attention, and I will speak;
 I will question you, and you will answer
 me.'
42:5 I had heard of you by the hearing of
 the ear,
 but now my eye has seen you.¹²

42:6 Therefore I despise myself,¹³
 and I repent in dust and ashes!

VII. The Epilogue (42:7-17)

42:7 After the LORD had spoken these things to
 Job, he¹⁴ said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My anger
 is stirred up¹⁵ against you and your two friends, be-
 cause you have not spoken about me what is right,¹⁶
 as my servant Job has. **42:8** So now take¹⁷ seven
 bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and
 offer a burnt offering for yourselves. And my ser-
 vant Job will intercede¹⁸ for you, and I will respect
 him,¹⁹ so that I do not deal with you²⁰ according to
 your folly,²¹ because you have not spoken about me
 what is right, as my servant Job has."²²

42:9 So they went, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bil-
 dad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, and
 did just as the LORD had told them; and the LORD
 had respect for Job.²³

¹ **tn** The verb is plural, but since there is no expressed sub-
 ject 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 repre-
 sents 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** *Heb* "the sons of pride." Dhorme repoints the last word
 to get "all the wild beasts," but this misses the point of the
 verse. This animal looks over every proud creature – but he is
 king of them all in that department.

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 לְכֵן (*lakhen*) 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 un-
 derstand."

¹⁰ **tn** The last clause is "and I do not know." This is also sub-
 ordinated 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. Kuypers, "Repentance of Job," *VT* 9 [1959]: 91-94).

¹⁴ **tn** *Heb* "the LORD." The title has been replaced by the pro-
 noun ("he") in the translation for stylistic reasons.

¹⁵ **tn** *Heb* "is kindled."

¹⁶ **tn** The form מְבִינָה (*m'khonah*) is from בָּיַן (*kun*, "to be firm;
 to be fixed; to be established"). Here it means "the right thing"
 or "truth." The Akkadian word *kenu* (from בָּיַן, *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 Hitpa'el from the root פָּלַל (*palal*).
 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 infini-
 tive construct.

²¹ **tn** The word "folly" can also be taken in the sense of "dis-
 grace." 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; rath-
 er, 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 an-
 swered his prayer.

42:10 So the LORD¹ restored what Job had lost² after he prayed for his friends,³ and the LORD doubled⁴ 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 dined⁵ 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 silver⁶ and a gold ring.⁷

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 sons⁸ and three daughters. **42:14** The first daughter he named Jemimah,⁹ the second Keziah,¹⁰ and the third Keren-Happuch.¹¹ **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.

¹ **tn** The paragraph begins with the disjunctive vav, "Now as for the LORD, he...."

² **sn** The expression here is interesting: "he returned the captivity of Job," a clause used elsewhere in the Bible of Israel (see e.g., Ps 126). Here it must mean "the fortunes of Job," i.e., what he had lost. There is a good deal of literature on this; for example, see R. Borger, "Zu sub sb(i)t," ZAW 25 (1954): 315-16; and E. Baumann, ZAW 6 (1929): 17ff.

³ **tn** This is a temporal clause, using the infinitive construct with the subject genitive suffix. By this it seems that this act of Job was also something of a prerequisite for restoration – to pray for them.

⁴ **tn** The construction uses the verb "and he added" with the word "repeat" (or "twice").

⁵ **tn** *Heb* "ate bread."

⁶ **tn** The Hebrew word קְּשִׁיטָה (*q^esitah*) is generally understood to refer to a unit of money, but the value is unknown.

sn The Hebrew word refers to a piece of silver, yet uncoined. It is the kind used in Gen 33:19 and Josh 24:32. It is what would be expected of a story set in the patriarchal age.

⁷ **sn** This *gold ring* was worn by women in the nose, or men and women in the ear.

⁸ **tn** The word for "seven" is spelled in an unusual way. From this some have thought it means "twice seven," or fourteen sons. Several commentators take this view, but it is probably not warranted.

⁹ **sn** The Hebrew name *Jemimah* means "dove."

¹⁰ **sn** The Hebrew name *Keziah* means "cassia."

¹¹ **sn** The Hebrew name *Keren-Happuch* means "horn of eye-paint."