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COMMENTARY

Barnes' Notes on the Bible
Volume 4 -
Job

By A. Barnes

To the Students of the Words, Works and Ways of God:

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

In presenting these volumes to the British public, it may not be amiss to state, that they have been subjected to the same careful scrutiny with the volumes on the epistles. To these last supplementary notes were added in many places, where the opinions of the author were supposed to be at variance with the orthodox theology. The general acceptance with which these notes had been favored, determined the editor to adopt the same plan in his revision of the volumes on Job. Ultimately, however, various circumstances seemed to demand a modification of that plan. The Book of Job does not, or at all events very rarely, lead a commentator to the discussion of those points in doctrinal theology, which seemed to render additional notes desirable in former volumes. Consequently, the editor could not but feel, while reading the delightful comments and disquisitions on the many interesting points, relating to art, science, and religion, which this "the oldest book in the world" presents to view — that his vocation, as formerly exercised at all events, was well nigh gone. He entertained the conviction, that the learning and research displayed in the introduction, and indeed throughout the commentary; the full and luminous statements on almost every point of difficulty, leaving nothing to be desired in the way of further elucidation; the general fidelity of the translation, and the charm which the special genius of the author has, "more solito," thrown around the whole — would place his work in the first rank among English commentaries on Job. Sufficiently critical, it is at the same time full and popular. Indeed, no criticism of any value seems to have escaped the author's notice, nor is the least fear entertained, that the judicious reader will ever have occasion to consult him in vain. In fine, the distinguishing excellence, to which attention has been drawn in a prefatory notice affixed to a former volume, (the volume on the Hebrews.) and which, for purposes of general utility, gives a commentary higher claims than originality even — the excellence, namely, of writing under full and digested knowledge of all that has been said on a subject, is throughout apparent in these volumes. "The author is fully up to the modern mark, and never leaves the reader to complain, that a judgment has been formed, in ignorance of what the more recent authorities have alleged, while his independence is everywhere manifest." There is, however, one point, in regard to which, very many will be found to differ from the author, and that point, in the Book of Job, is

brought into great and frequent prominence, namely, “the state of knowledge, in patriarchal times, on the doctrine of a future world.” The views presented in the commentary and introduction on this subject, are not such as have been generally entertained in this country, and, on that account, are likely to startle many readers. Expression is given to them in almost every case where the passage furnishes occasion, and that is not unfrequently. As, however, the point is but “one,” it seemed better so far to modify the plan adopted in former volumes, as to present a general view of the subject in a prefatory notice, rather than insert detached notes under the passages especially touching the question.

The author’s views on this subject may be seen at length in his introduction (~~1870~~ Job 7:10), and in his commentary, under the texts that affect it. The substance of them is, that the resurrection of the body was a doctrine utterly unknown to Job and his times, and that the celebrated passage in the 19th chapter, with other places that have been confidently appealed to in evidence of knowledge of it, have been quite misinterpreted, and are, when rightly explained, silent on the subject. He allows that there existed an idea of the soul’s separate or disembodied existence, but in a region “where only a few scattered rays of light would exist, and where the whole aspect of the dwelling was in strong contrast with the cheerful region of the land of the living. To that dark world,” he continues, “even Job felt that it would be a calamity to descend, for though there was an expectation, that there would be a distinction there between the good and the evil, yet compared with the present world of light and beauty, it was a sad and gloomy place” (See the introduction). He appeals, in corroboration of these remarks, to Hezekiah and to David, (In ~~1881~~ Isaiah 38:11,18,19; and ~~1885~~ Psalm 6:5) with what success there may possibly be room to inquire toward the close of this notice. He allows that the idea of future retribution obtained, though faintly and inefficiently. Such is a fair, though brief, account of the view of the future state, which the author professes to have found in the Book of Job. It embraces the ideas entertained of the resurrection, the separate existence of the soul, and future retribution. But as no good purpose could be served by examining these points separately, since very nearly the same passages would require to be appealed to, it will be deemed sufficient to subject to a careful scrutiny those texts, or the more important of them, that have a bearing on the general question of the knowledge of the future world in the times of Job, noting, as they pass

under review, to what extent they furnish evidence on one or all of the points embraced. These passages may be divided into two classes:

- (1) those which indicate, or seem to indicate, clearer light in regard to the future world, than the author supposes then existed;
- (2) those which seem to countenance the dark views which he imagines to have prevailed.

Before entering on an examination of the evidence contained in these passages, it is proper to notice a presumption in favor of the opinion which attributes more knowledge to Job on the subject of a future world, than those who think with our author imagine he could possibly possess. That presumption arises from the improbability — the high improbability — that God, in any age, should have left the church, or the saints, in utter ignorance of the resurrection of the body, and with just so much knowledge of the separate existence of the soul in another world, as made them look on their admission to it rather in the light of a calamity to be deplored, than a blessing to be desired; with such ideas too of future retribution as could serve little or no practical purpose. It is of no use to allege in opposition to this presumption, that we must allow something for the gradual progress of truth, and for the development of the science of theology, which, like other sciences, has had its infancy and early stages, during which we in vain look for the fullness, the breadth, the precision, that are at length attained in the ripened and perfected system. For while there are certain points of analogy between human science and the science of theology; and between the mode in which the truth in both cases is advanced in the world, there are, in this very respect, points of strong dissimilarity and contrast. The knowledge of the true religion was not discovered by man, imperfectly apprehended at first, and gradually brought by him to perfection. It was originally a matter of divine revelation, and subsequently preserved by tradition. The early ancestors of the human family were in direct communication with God, and were not inventors of religious science at all. It is true indeed, that revelation becomes more full and explicit as ages roll on; and that Jesus by his gospel hath brought life and immortality to light. But this on all hands must be understood comparatively, and not absolutely. And a consistent enough sense of it is given, when it is allowed, that on the great doctrine of a future state, a fullness of light, unknown before, has been shed by Christianity. It is not necessary to suppose, that the resurrection of the body, or the immortality

of the soul, were absolutely unknown. The presumption, on the other hand, is, that they must have been known from the earliest times. Man could not discover them, but God could reveal them, just as he did the rite of sacrifice to Adam or to Abel. Moreover, while the general law of increasing fullness as ages pass away, according to which the measure of revelation seems to be regulated, might account for “less” knowledge on the part of Job, than on the part of Paul, it cannot account for “contradictory” belief. It is difficult to conceive of the one regarding death as a departure to be with Christ, which is far better than to remain alive, and of the other regarding it as a calamity, “because” introducing to a gloomier world than the present. No, this general law does not forbid the supposition, that, on certain occasions, Job, or saints in his day, might go beyond the knowledge of their times, and, as it were, anticipate the revelations of the future. How highly evangelical, and “Christian” even, does David become, in many of his psalms, speaking in them in such manner as argues a measure of knowledge that would be no discredit to anyone in the fullness of New Testament light!

Yet, a host of eminent critics, on examination of the Book of Job, have substantially agreed with the author, as Grotius, LeClerc, Michaelis, Warburton, Rosenmuller, Patrick, Kennicott, and others. It is time, therefore, that we examine particularly one or two passages belonging to the first class noticed above, namely, the class indicating clearer light on the future world, than these critics will allow to have existed in Job’s day.

(In the course of this examination, passages belonging to the second class will necessarily be introduced and discussed, thus rendering needless any further or more formal notice. The plan of this preface is to embrace all that is essential to its subject, under the two leading texts, ~~18147~~ Job 14:7-15; 19:25-27.)

An important passage under this class is ~~18147~~ Job 14:7-15,

“There is hope of a tree if it be cut down that it will sprout again. But man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up; so man lieth down and riseth not: until the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave ... until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, until my change come. Thou shalt call and I will answer thee, thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.”

The author, in his introduction, places this passage among those which argue ignorance of the doctrine of the resurrection, and that strangely enough, since it is very confidently appealed to on the other side. Dr. Good, who is not at all disposed to push his views on this subject to extremes, after remarking that nothing can be inferred either for or against resurrection belief, from the use of the image of sleep in ^{<1842>}Job 14:12, further observes, under the same verse, that “it has been a subject of dispute among the commentators, whether Job, in the present place, refers to a definite term in which a resurrection will take place, or denies it by the strongest figure he could command. Yet I think the latter part of the sentence in ^{<1844>}Job 14:14,15, is so strongly in favor of the former opinion, that no man can refuse his assent to it, who gives it the attention it is entitled to; “nor do I well know how a full persuasion of such a belief could be more definitely drawn up.” It appears to me so strong as to settle the question of itself, and without the concurrence of other passages that might be called in to its aid.” The testimony of the passage indeed seems most explicit and full. Anything in it that “seems” to oppose resurrection belief may consistently enough be explained of man’s no longer appearing “in the present scene,” without at all affecting the question of his again appearing in “another” scene, and this principle of explanation is admitted again and again in the commentary, as will immediately be seen. Some, indeed, find “no use” for this principle here, but on the contrary, find in ^{<1847>}Job 14:7-10, a beautiful analogical argument in favor of the resurrection.

“He (Job) toucheth upon the argument from the analogy of things, which has so often been made use of in treating upon this subject, as if he had said, After a tree is cut down, we see nevertheless the old stock flourish again and send forth new branches, and shall man

then, when he once expires, be extinct for ever? Is there no hope that he shall revive, and be raised again hereafter? Yes there is, according to the doctrine delivered to us from our ancestors; but then they inform us, that this resurrection shall not be, but with the desolation of the world.” (Peters’ Critical Dissertation on the Book of Job.)

The reading of the Septuagint, with the point of interrogation, favors this view — *πεσων δε βωτος ουχ επι εστι* ; There seems not, however, sufficient evidence to establish this as the true sense; and it appears more natural to understand the comparison with the tree introduced, not to furnish an analogical argument, but to set off, by way of contrast, the brief existence of man “on the present stage,” and the impossibility of his reappearing on it. The passage is a lament over the comparative brevity of human existence, yet, as shall by and by be seen, the doctrine of the resurrection looks through the gloom, and inspires the mourner with gladness and triumph. It should be remarked, however, while thus abandoning the analogical argument, that it has appeared satisfactory to very high authorities. The author has himself introduced the beautiful poetical paraphrase of Dr. Dwight, in which that argument is embodied, and though he will not allow that anything of the kind is intended by the comparison in the passage, he admits, notwithstanding, that “such comparisons must have early occurred to mankind, and hence, “led” to the inquiry whether he (man) would not live in a future state. Other things that are cut down spring up again and live. But man is cut down, and does not spring up again. Will he not be likely, therefore, to have an existence in some future state, and to spring up and flourish there?” But the advocates of resurrection belief can well afford to waive this point. Their cause finds enough in the passage without it.

First, a term is appointed when the slumbers of the grave shall be broken. These shall not continue forever, but only until the heavens be no more. It is indeed confidently asserted, that this is simply a strong poetical or rhetorical figure, the meaning of which is never — as if Job had said, These heavens will never pass; they are the most durable things we know, rise from the grave! He may, when the everlasting heavens pass away, but not until then; that is, the resurrection is impossible. Finally, it is affirmed, that “it does not follow from this passage, that he believed that the heavens ever WOULD be no more.” Yet the author is not disposed to use the emphatic “never” thus obtained, for the purpose of bringing out of it a positive denial

of the resurrection on the part of Job. He seeks but to neutralize the evidence in favor of the doctrine. The question of the resurrection, according to his comment, "is not touched," since Job simply asserts, that man, when he dies, "dies to live no more on the earth." Whether he believed in a "future" state, or in the future resurrection, is another question, and one that cannot be determined from this passage. In this ingenious decision, one might be disposed more readily to acquiesce, if the author himself were found always to abide by it. But in his introduction, he adduces "this very passage" and others, which, in the commentary, he has in like manner disposed of, as not touching the question — in evidence of "disbelief" of the doctrine of the resurrection, or "ignorance" of it." (vii. (10) (c).) How can passages which "determine nothing" on a question, be evidence of ignorance and unbelief regarding it? It is said, indeed, that had Job known of the resurrection he would have expressed himself differently. But according to the author, in the comment, Job just speaks of death and the grave as Christian poets and Christian people do every day, when they intimate that by them an end is put to all the present pursuits of man, and he is forever removed from this life. (See this point further discussed in the remarks that follow under ~~18925~~ Job 19:25-27.)

It is still needful, therefore, to inquire into the validity of the criticism that explains away the famous clause "until the heavens be no more," and substitutes "never" in its room. Such an interpretation, to say the least of it, is not natural, is not (as the author himself frequently speaks in his commentaries on the epistles) what would first occur to any unbiased mind, what would at once strike an unprejudiced reader. There is nothing in the words, nothing in the sentiment they are commonly understood to express, forcing one to seek about for a non-literal interpretation. That truth or sentiment is just what might very naturally be expected in such a connection, and nothing but the idea, that the knowledge of the resurrection was too much for Job and his times, could ever have raised a question about it. It is a corroboration of these remarks, that, in very early times, the knowledge of the doctrine regarding the final dissolution of all things prevailed, so that the literal interpretation cannot be said to proceed on what was inconsistent with the belief of the period, on that important article. (Good, "in loco.") Moreover, on considering the other parts of the passage, the literal interpretation of this clause will be found essential to the unity and coherence of the whole. So convinced was Mr. Scott of the truth of this view, that he expresses himself with a severity scarce

justifiable, considering that the question is not about the truth of the resurrection, but about the amount of knowledge obtained in regard to it, in a particular age or book. “When a man is cut off by death, he is forever removed from his place in this world; no one expects to see him again, and his body returns to the earth whence it was taken ... Thus, he lieth down until the consummation of all things, when he shall awake at the general resurrection. All these expressions imply Job’s belief of that great doctrine, though both ancient and modern Sadducees have contrived to misunderstand him. Why else should he speak of death as “sleep,” and mention a “period” to it, when he shall “awake,” even “when the heavens be no more?”

Secondly, Job wishes to be hidden in the grave, or in the state of the dead, until God’s wrath should be past, but he has no idea of remaining in that state forever; and therefore “desires an appointed time in which he might be remembered and restored.” It is allowed in the commentary, that here is an “expectation that he should live at some future period;” and that he had “unconsciously worked himself up almost to the belief that man might live again on earth,” although it is added, he immediately “checks himself,” and abandons the hope as “visionary and vain.” And well he might, if his hope regarded restoration to the present life, with its occupations and enjoyments. But he felt that such restoration could not be, and expresses himself everywhere so strongly on that point, that he has been supposed to deny the resurrection altogether. When, then, he asserts that his hope regarded something that should take place after his body had long slumbered in the dust, and his spirit had inhabited Sheol; according to every legitimate principle of interpretation, he must be understood as referring to the future life and the resurrection. It remains to be seen, moreover, whether the clause in which he is supposed to abandon his hope; namely, “If a man die, shall he live again?” will admit of such a sense being put on it, or will not equally admit of another.

Thirdly, let it be noticed, meantime, that Job expressly mentions his renovation, **hpwl j**, in our translation rendered “change,” though with less propriety. The word is most frequently, if not always, used of a change to the better, a renewal. (Peters’ Dissertation.) It is the same word, in its verbal form, which, in the preceding context, is applied to the reviving of trees, and in ⁹⁹⁰⁵Psalm 90:5, to the springing of the grass. Anticipating this blessed revival, Job intimates that he would wait with patience all the days appointed to him in the grave, or in Sheol, until at last it arrived —

γτρϋλ j awb d[, i.e. as the Septuagint beautifully render, ἕως παλιν γενωμαι — until I am made anew. It is somewhat remarkable, that the argument so very generally founded on this significant word is in the commentary passed over in silence. It is certainly worthy of notice. And now, as to the introductory clause of ^{<1844>}Job 14:14, “If a man die, shall he live again?” there seems just as good reason to interpret of joyful assurance, as of gloomy doubt, and better reason, if we take the connection into account. Job had expressed “an expectation that he should live at some future period. He had worked himself up to the belief that man MIGHT live again.” Is it not then as natural to suppose the clause in question an exclamation of glad surprise — “Yea, is it so, shall man live again!” as to suppose it a sudden and emphatic denial of his fondly cherished hopes, involving a transition in a moment from the joys of faith to the horrors of despair? If we understand it in this way, there is a beautiful connection between the two parts of the verse, “Shall man indeed live again! THEN all the days of my appointed time will I wait until my renovation come.” “Here,” says Dr. Adam Clarke, remarking on this clause, “is “no doubt,” but a strong persuasion of the certainty of the general resurrection.” (See also Parkhurst, Hebrew Lexicon, sub voce **pl j** .)

Fourthly, in exact consistency with his previously expressed expectations, Job addressing God says, “Thou shalt call and I will answer thee thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands — referring obviously to the resurrection and the general judgment, when his innocence should be established, and his sufferings terminated forever. The proposed rendering, “call thou now,” etc., alters the sense indeed, and supposes Job to express his anxiety to come to “immediate trial.” (See the Commentary.) But is it natural? Is not the reference obviously to the set time, the period of renovation? Else, what becomes of the connection of the passage? According to this rendering, the striking contrast between what God “would do” at the set time, and what he “now did,” would in like manner be entirely lost. “Then” God would have a desire toward him. But NOW, (^{<1846>}Job 14:16), he “numbered his steps, and watched over his sin.” On the whole, if the resurrection and the future life be excluded from this celebrated passage, it seems nothing but a collection of disjointed fragments, or a rhapsody of passionate contradictions, which, it may be said, the intensity of Job’s sufferings must excuse. Yet certainly if the sufferer utter beautiful and connected speech, or a fair interpretation can be

found according to which he does so, there is no need of resorting to such apologies.

The next passage requiring consideration, is that celebrated one, ~~181925~~ Job 19:25,27.

“For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth,” etc.

It is impossible, in a brief notice of this kind, to present anything like a full view of the controversy to which these remarkable words have given rise. Such a task would require a volume. The sense that would at once spring up in the mind of a reader ignorant of the disputations of the learned, is that which supposes Job to speak of the resurrection. And not a few, rising from the study of these disputations, have, notwithstanding, been heartily disposed to subscribe, with some little abatement, to the opinion of Jerome,

“Quid hac prophetia manifestius? Nullus tam aperte post Christum, quam iste ante Christum, de resurrectione loquitur. What can be clearer than this prophecy? No one living after Christ has spoken more plainly of the resurrection than Job, who lived before him.”

Such, indeed, is the opinion of the fathers generally, of our venerable translators, and of the larger part both of ancient and modern critics. It is not denied, that interpreters of great note are opposed to this view, the chief of whom are Grotius, LeClerc, and Warburton. Allured by the luster of these names, and supported by their authority, a certain class of critics have been but too proud to follow in their wake. Yet, though these great chiefs are distinguished for vast and varied learning, and for critical acumen, no one acquainted with them will expect the evangelical or spiritual view to be taken, if it can be avoided, or a loftier sense to be received, if a meaner one can be obtained. Grotius is famed as the expositor that can find Christ nowhere. Nor is LeClerc distinguished for greater elevation of view. To both may be applied the celebrated stricture of Robert Hall on a recent commentator. “He never sets his foot,” said Hall, “in the other world, if he can get a hole to step into in this; and he never gives a passage a meaning which would render it applicable and useful in all ages, if he can find in it any local or temporary allusion.” (Hall’s Works, vol. VI., p. 148 of Life.) Warburton’s love of paradox is as well known as his fondness for controversy, and rare ability in the conducting of it. It is true that opinions are entitled to considerations on

their own merits, irrespective of the character of their authors. But when great names are put forward as authority (and in no question has the argument from authority been put forward more frequently, or more confidently, than in this), it is but just to inquire what are their claims to sober, judicious, evangelical exposition; while at the same time the profoundest respect is entertained for genius and learning.

Those who deny the reference to the resurrection in this passage, are not exactly at one in regard to the sense that ought to be assigned to it. It was first asserted, and long confidently maintained, that Job expresses a firm persuasion of “temporal deliverance from suffering, and restoration to his former state of prosperity and happiness.” The absurdity, however, of attributing such an expectation to one who nowhere else gives the slightest hint of it; and who uniformly, both before and after this time, expresses himself in the language of despair in regard to hopes of happiness on earth; and who maintained the position against his friends, that, in the providence of God, a good man might be overwhelmed with adversity, and, in this world, never be relieved from it; has induced many to abandon this untenable position, and adopt in its stead the modified hypothesis of Kennicott. “The conviction,” says that critic, “which I suppose Job to express here, is this: that though his dissolution was hastening on, amidst the unjust accusations of his pretended friends; and though, while he was thus singularly oppressed with anguish of mind. he was also tortured with pains of body, torn by sores and ulcers from head to foot, and sitting upon dust and ashes; yet still out of that miserable body, in his flesh thus stripped of skin, and really dropping into the grave, HE SHOULD SEE GOD, who would “appear in his favor,” and vindicate the INTEGRITY of his character.” According to this modified view, Job had an expectation, not of temporal deliverance, but of vindication only. He believed that, ere he died, however low he might be reduced, his God would appear to dispel the clouds that had for a time obscured his reputation, and to assert his innocence in the face of the world. The opinion ably maintained by the author in his exposition of the passage, is substantially the same, unless the writer has misapprehended him. Job had an expectation that God would come forth as his vindicator in some such way as he is declared afterward to have done. The events at the close of the book, it is further stated, fully meet all that is implied in the words. He would be vindicated “on earth;” of that he was assured, in whatever manner it might be effected. (See the commentary, <81925> Job 19:25ff. Compare the notes at <8162> Job 16:22 and <81923> Job 30:23.) It

will afterward appear, that this theory of interpretation, though less gross than that of temporal “deliverance,” is exposed to very nearly the same objections with it. Meantime the passage must be subjected to some little examination.

It is asserted that our English translators have given a turn to the text by the use of certain supplementary words, which carry the mind forward to the resurrection, though there be no such idea in the original. It very true, as anyone consulting the English Bible may see without help of critics, that the words “day,” “though,” “body,” and “worms,” are supplied in the translation. But the addition of these words all essential to bring out the idea of the resurrection. That idea will be manifest in any translation that is accurate, however literal or severe. The following is a close rendering of the Hebrew. “I surely do know my REDEEMER, the LIVING ONE. And He, the LAST, will arise over the dust. And after the disease has cut down my skin, even from my flesh, I shall see God; whom I shall see on my behalf; and mine eyes shall behold him, and not estranged. The thoughts of my bosom are accomplished.”

(Dr. Pye Smith. He has adopted Dr. Good’s emendation, by which the original text is read **tazw pqn** instead of **az ypqn**, “disease” (so **tazw**, an Arabic term, signifies) “hath destroyed my skin,” instead of “after my skin THEY destroy THIS,” **taz**, i.e., body.”)

Job’s hope of the resurrection, instead of being obscured, seems to brighten, the more faithfully the original is followed. It were easy to show further, by an analysis of the words, that they are just such as would have been used, or might properly have been used, had it been the intention of Job, or of the Spirit speaking by him, to point to that glorious scene, when the Redeemer shall arise over the ruins of the grave and re-animate its dust. It is not needful, however, to enter largely on any such task, as the reader will observe that all that is contended for on the other side of the question, is that the words do not NECESSARILY bear the resurrection sense, but are capable of another, to which certain circumstances, different entirely from those which depend on the meaning of the words or terms, compel the critic to resort. This, at all events, is what will be found stated by the author in his commentary. He does not say that the sense usually put upon the words is such as they will not bear. It does not contend for another sense, on the ground that it better suits the meaning of the original text. He attempts to prove that the words will equally suit the idea of vindication, in

some such way as ultimately happened, and then proceeds to settle the controversy on other ground than that of verbal criticism. To that ground it will be necessary to follow him. Meanwhile, it may be observed, that though certain of the words and phrases may possibly be explained on the theory that excludes the resurrection, yet the passage, taken as a whole, cannot very consistently, or without an appearance of force, be so explained; while some of the more important clauses have a dignity and energy about them, that disappears the moment the attempt is made. If the English translation in this place be supposed, in some of its renderings, more favorable to a particular view than faithful to its original, there is one instance in which it has departed from the original much to the disadvantage of that view. The words **μῦγῳ ῥῑ** [**ἰ**] literally signify, “He shall arise over the dust.” That **ῥῑ** dust is sometimes used to denote “the earth,” as in ^{<840B>}Job 41:3, is allowed. But while those who reject the idea of the resurrection cannot understand why “this” word should be used, rather than the ordinary term for earth, **χρᾶ**,^{<h776>}, that rejected idea sufficiently explains it. By a beautiful and obvious figure, “the dust” is put for “the dead,” as in ^{<831D>}Psalm 30:9, where the same Hebrew term is used. “What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?

Shall the DUST praise thee?” It should be noticed also, that **μῦγῳ** is clearly a forensic term, (For the same use of it see ^{<3702>}Psalm 74:22; 82:8; and ^{<831B>}Job 31:13,14; with Dr. Goods remarks in Intro. Dis. p. 82.) indicating a rising to the judgment-seat; and, although taken by itself it may not determine whether that judgment should be “visible or not,” yet when conjoined with “the dust,” or “dead,” to what other judgment can it refer than that which is connected with the resurrection? See also ^{<8314>}Job 31:14, for a similar use of the word. As to **γῶν ἔμ** FROM my flesh; if it be contended that this means “out of” my body — “absque carne mea,” — “without” my body, then it is clear Job did “not” expect to “see God” in “this” world, unless, indeed, the improbable hypothesis of Dr. Stock be admitted, (a hypothesis which never could have been invented, but from the great difficulty the ingenious author felt in explaining the words in accordance with the principle he had adopted), namely, “that the irritated patriarch roused himself to an expectation that he should be miraculously restored from the grave, “for a time,” even in this present world, to the vindication of his own character, and the utter confusion of his enemies!” How hard pressed the critic must have been, ere he fled to a resort of this

kind! The idea of a resurrection looked out on him so clearly from this famous text, that he knows not what to do, and he will rather “invent a temporary resurrection” for Job, than allow that the distressed patriarch could be acquainted with “the true doctrine.” The invention is instructive, and shows, among other things, that people of learning and sense have found no small difficulties in their way as soon as they departed from the common understanding of this text.

But since, as has just been stated, it is not contended that the words will not bear the ordinary sense, the only question that remains is, on what other grounds a sense that it is allowed to be the most obvious is set aside. The first, and perhaps the principal ground, is that the doctrine of the resurrection, introduced on this occasion, must have solved the whole difficulty, and at once have decided the controversy in favor of Job. It must have finally settled the long pending question. The frequency with which this objection is introduced, and the various forms in which it is put, by Warburton and his followers, shows the importance attached to it. In their view, the very mention of this grand article of the faith, on the part of Job, must have given him an immediate and triumphant victory, and left no room for his adversaries to utter another word. All this proceeds on the supposition, that the question under discussion in this patriarchal debate is, how the afflictions of the righteous, and the prosperity of the wicked, can be reconciled with the equity of Divine Providence? The doctrine of the resurrection is supposed to furnish a complete solution of this question. It may be so. But what evidence is there that Job’s friends must necessarily have regarded it in that light? Certainly “they” may be excused though they manifested some little dulness of apprehension, and presumed to continue the controversy, even after this decisive settlement, when certain eminent modern critics, though not disposed to admit Job’s knowledge of the resurrection, profess themselves equally dull.

(Hengstenberg, in Kitto’s Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature, article “Job.” He remarks on two great errors into which he thinks most commentators on Job have fallen. The second is thus introduced, “There is another fundamental error which has led nearly all modern interpreters to a mistaken idea of the design of this book. Pareau (“De Immortalitatis Not. in libro Jobi,” Deventer, 1807, p. 207,) is the only one who saw the error adverted to, and combated it with success. They assume that the problem could be satisfactorily solved only when the doctrine of immortality and

retribution had been first established ... On nearer examination, however, it appears that the doctrine of retribution after death is not of itself alone calculated to lead to a solution of the problem ... The belief in a final judgment is firm and rational only when it rests on the belief in God's continued providential government of the world, and in his acting as sovereign Lord in all the events of human life. If God is holy and just, he must also have the will to manifest these qualities in our present life. Woe to him who expects in a future world to be supplied with everything he missed here, and with redress for all injuries sustained. He deceives himself. His God was during his life on earth, inactive, shutting himself up in heaven; is he sure that his God will hereafter be better disposed, or more able to protect him? As his essence remains the same, and the nature of sin and virtue is unchanged, holy should he, then, in a future life. punish the former and reward the latter, if he does not do so in this life temporary injustice is still injustice, and destroys the idea of a holy and just God." They who have leisure and inclination may examine the theology of this extract. To have quoted it is enough to establish what is said above.

What wonder if people living in this early age could not see the bearing of Job's doctrine, on the discussion in which they were engaged, when people of learning and abilities cannot see it, under all the advantages of Christian times? It is possible, moreover, that critics and philosophical interpreters may have erred in laying down a problem about providence, and asserting that the Book of Job was designed to furnish a solution of it. The simple question, according to Peters, was not "how" the sufferings of good people might be reconciled with the equity of Divine Providence, but whether Job was an innocent man or not, and in order to ascertain this, whether great sufferers were not necessarily great sinners? But what is the bearing of the resurrection on these questions? At best, it could only furnish a reason WHY good people suffered (on the supposition that the suffering of such "was admitted to be fact"), but could give no answer to the inquiry regarding the "fact" whether they "did" suffer, i.e., of course under such heavy trials as had been imposed on Job.

(The following passage from Peters is worthy of being quoted entire. "It will appear plain to any one that reads this book with care, that the main point debated between those friends was, whether Job was an upright or religious man, or, on the contrary, a

wicked man and a hypocrite? And this very naturally brought on another question, not “why” good people are afflicted? (as LeClerc has wrongly put it,) but “whether” they are so or not? Whether it was usual with God to afflict in so extraordinary a manner as they saw Job afflicted, but for sins of an extraordinary size. This, then, being the truth of the case, it is easy to observe that the doctrine of the resurrection and a future state, supposing they had received an obscure tradition of it, as it is evident to me they had, will afford no solution to either of these questions. The friends might still judge rashly of poor Job (as we know some Christians do of one another with as little reason, notwithstanding they believe a life to come), and then there could be no room for their urging this doctrine to him by way of consolation, for it can be only such to good people, and he, in their opinion, was quite otherwise. Job, indeed, might take some consolation to himself from it, and it appears that he does do so in more places than one.” — Page 220, “Ed. London,” 1751.

Job’s friends, too, would have their own mode of regarding the resurrection and the judgment. Instead of looking forward to these events for an explanation of inequalities in providence, the “existence of which they did not believe,” they may have regarded them as in reality suited to strengthen their favorite position, for if God “in the end” deal with people, in respect of imposing suffering and exempting from it, according to character, “i.e.,” if “then” the righteous alone are rewarded and the wicked alone punished, must it not be so in this world also? The ruler is the same. And it is remarkable, that this is exactly the line of reasoning adopted by the critics referred to above, as not allowing that the resurrection furnishes any solution of the difficulty.

It is further alleged, that “the interpretation which refers this (passage) to the resurrection of the dead, is inconsistent with numerous passages where Job expresses a contrary belief.” The passages cited are ~~870~~ Job 7:9,21; 10:21,22; 14:7-12; 16:22. The first of these obviously intimates only, that man shall appear no more “in this present scene,” when once the grave has closed on him. “As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.” If further evidence of this being the true sense were needed, the very next verse would furnish it. “He shall return no more to “his house,” neither shall his place know him anymore.” But this is admitted in the commentary, under ~~870~~ Job 7:9, where

the author informs his readers that “it would be pressing this too far, to adduce it as proving that Job did not believe in the doctrine of the resurrection;” and under ~~<1825>~~ Job 19:25-27, where the above list of texts is given, he says of the passages contained in it generally, that they “imply that when he (man) should die, he would not appear again on the earth,” and adds, “this is not such “language as one would use” who believed in the resurrection of the dead;” so that although he immediately asks, “How is it “possible” to believe that a man in his circumstances would ever “deny” the doctrine of the resurrection if he held it,” etc., and has cited the passage as ““expressing” contrary belief,” yet he seems to intend no more than that Job’s faith in the resurrection must have prevented the use of so melancholy strains. Thus, in the introduction, he says, too, “It “may be said” (he comes to say it himself in his commentary) that these passages only teach that man would not appear again “on the earth.” This may be so; but still, if they had known of the resurrection at all, these sentiments would not have been uttered. “That” doctrine would have relieved all the difficulty as effectually as the belief that man would be raised up to dwell on the earth would have done.” It is not, however, by any means clear that the knowledge of the resurrection must have prevented Job from speaking as he has done in these places. That doctrine might have removed what is supposed to have been the grand difficulty, namely, that regarding the equity of the divine administration. Yet Job might, notwithstanding, speak of man dying and returning no more “to the earth,” and even lament that such should soon be his own case, since it could not but grieve him, that he must die under a cloud, and leave a tarnished name behind him. The vindication and recompense at the “resurrection of the just,” would not render him altogether indifferent to this. In this view his expostulation with God in ~~<1807>~~ Job 7:7-10, ought evidently to be understood, ~~<1807>~~ Job 7:8 is thus paraphrased by Dr. Adam Clarke,

“If I die in my present state, with all this load of undeserved odium which is east upon me by my friends, I shall never have an opportunity of vindicating my character and regaining the good opinion of mankind.”

It should be noticed, too, that these lamentations, on the part of Job, are for the most part introduced in connection with the cruel aspersions of his friends, which entered his very soul, and formed the chief cause of his mental agony. He was not afraid to die because of the gloom of “Sheol,” but he desired to die with a spotless name, and accordingly, in ~~<1807>~~ Job 7:21,

he passionately appeals to God for “immediate” assistance, if it were to be granted at all, otherwise it might come too late; “for now,” says he, “I shall sleep in the dust, and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be.” Such is the sense which the author himself attaches to ^{<18162>}Job 16:22. In ^{<18162>}Job 16:21 the afflicted patriarch says, “Oh that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbor,” and then in ^{<18162>}Job 16:22 subjoins, “When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.” “He was overwhelmed,” says the author, “with calamities and reproaches. He did not wish to die thus. He wished that the reproaches might be wiped off, and if he obtained that he was not unwilling to die. It is the expression of such a wish as “every man” has that his sun may not go down under a cloud, and that his name, if remembered at all when he is dead, may go untarnished down to future times, and be such that his friends might repeat it without a blush.” It appears then that Job, though supported by the knowledge of the resurrection, might, notwithstanding, very well use the language in question. To suppose that he might not, or that the idea of a future state of rewards and punishments must have “kept him from murmuring and complaining under his severe trials,” (Introduction, ^{<18170>}Job 7:10 (d).) is to expect from him what perhaps “no Christian” under similar suffering, with all the advantage of life and immortality brought fully to light, would be able to exhibit.

Nor is there anything in the two remaining places, namely, ^{<18147>}Job 14:7-12; 10:21,22, that might not have been uttered by one acquainted with the doctrine of the resurrection, or that can be produced as evidence of “contrary belief.” The first of these passages has already been claimed proof of Job’s faith in a coming **hpyl j** , or renovation, in which the body of man should rise from the grave, as the grass of the field from the earth, when the breath of spring revisits its. The last is a description of the grave, or of the region of departed spirits.

“I go,” says Job, “whence shall not return, even to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death; a land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.”

It is not necessary to remark on the almost endlessly varied renderings by which this passage has been distracted. Suffice it to say, that it does not touch the doctrine of the resurrection, either directly or by implication. No possible construction can bring anything more out of the words, than that

they present a most doleful view of the state of separate existence, or of Sheol. Many, however, are of opinion that they do “not” refer to that state. In any view, the anguish and distraction of the speaker must be taken into account.

“The description,” says Mr. Scott, “seems to be only intended for the grave, and not to relate to the invisible world. Coherency or exactness in the discourse of one who spoke in the bitterness of his spirit, was not to be expected; yet Job certainly believed that there would be a future state, and had some hope of happiness in it, though now exceedingly clouded and discouraged. But he here described the state of dead bodies in the grave, as darkness and disorder; and he used many repetitions, meaning in general, that they know nothing of the vicissitudes of day and night, or of the order established among the living; and that men are cited thither, and arraigned there, without respect to age, rank, or character.”

Others, who understand the passage of the unseen world, regard it as descriptive of the “obscurity and uncertainty that hangs over it,” of the small amount of knowledge which people possess in regard to it. There are a multitude of questions bearing on the intermediate state, to which no answer can be returned, and which people shall never be able to resolve, until they find themselves in the midst of its disclosures.

(“There are here a crowd of obscure and dislocated terms, admirably expressive of the obscurity and uncertainty of the subject. What do we know of the state of separate spirits? What do we know of the spiritual world? How do souls exist separate from their respective bodies? Of what are they capable, and what is their employment? Who can answer these questions? Perhaps nothing can be said much better of the state than is here said, “a land of obscurity, like darkness” ... It is the “state of the dead!” The “place of separate spirits!” It is “out of time, out of probation, beyond change or mutability.” It is on the “confines of eternity.” But “what” is THIS? And where? “Eternity!” how can I form any conception of thee? In thee there is no order, no bound, no substance, no progression, no change, no past, no present, no future! Thou art an indescribable something, to which there is no analogy in the compass of creation. Thou art infinity and incomprehensibility to all finite beings. Thou art what living, I know

not, and what I must die to know; and even then I shall apprehend no more of thee than that thou art ETERNITY” — “Dr. Adam Clarke, in loco.” The readers of John Foster will be reminded by this passage of his frequent questionings in regard to the intermediate state, and his inextinguishable desire to penetrate the gloom which he felt to hang over it. In a long letter on the subject to F. Clowes, the following passage occurs: “But that “mysterious” hereafter! We must submit to feel that we are in the dark, and have to walk by faith in the mere general fact of a conscious and retributive state immediately after death, revealed without definitions, illustrations, expansion into a field of varieties and specific forms. Still a contemplative spirit hovers with insuppressible inquisitiveness about the “dark frontier” beyond which it knows that wonderful realities are existing, realities of greater importance to it than the whole world on this side of that limit. We watch for some “glimmer through any part of the solemn shade;” but still are left to the faint, dubious resources of analogy, imagination, and conjecture.” “Life and Correspondence of John Foster,” vol. ii.; page 369.)

<8175> Job 17:15,16; is another of the same class of passages, though not cited on the list given above. It is supposed to carry in it more of gloom than could have been admitted into the mind of Job, had he known the cheering doctrine of the resurrection. Care should be taken, however, not to throw over it a gloomier sense than Job, under all his despondency, ever intended. The interpreters of Job are not unfrequently more gloomy than himself. His words are, “And where is now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it? They, (my hopes,) shall go down to the bars of the pit, **l av ydb** when our rest together is in the dust,” i.e., of me and my hopes. But what hopes? Confessedly the hopes which he might have entertained of temporal deliverance or vindication. He felt he was about to descend into the grave. Already he claimed kindred with corruption and the worms, and should soon be beyond the reach of deliverance on earth. Therefore, he had said to his friends in introducing this doleful complaint, “Do ye return and come now,” i.e., reinvestigate my cause. Reconsider your judgment. It will soon be too late. The talons of the all-devouring grave will soon enclose me fast, and opportunity of reversal on your part be forever gone! There is certainly nothing in the passages entitling one to say, that in Job’s opinion the place of souls after death was “a gloomy and wretched world,” which, “though

not properly a place of “punishment”(!) yet was not a place of positive joy;” or that the certainty of his going to it, filled Job “not with joy, but with anguish and distress of heart.” It is admitted that the hopes which Job abandoned were temporal hopes only, hopes of life and happiness here, and the whole of this lugubrious exposition is founded on an erroneous, or at all events very doubtful sense of the expression **l av ydb**, according to which **ydb** means “bars;” and these suggest the idea of a prison, in which the souls of people after death were by Job supposed to be confined; and thus in a moment the deep gloom of a nether dungeon gathers around the text and its interpreter! The radical idea of the word is “separated, disjoined, branched off,” hence, it signifies “branches” as of a tree, and “limbs” of the leviathan or crocodile, ^{<B176>}Ezekiel 17:6; ^{<B103>}Job 41:3, or ^{<B412>}Job 41:12. The other word **l av**, meaning either the grave or the invisible state, is with great probability here explained of the former, since Job, immediately before, had been contemplating it. In this view Parkhurst renders the phrase “bars of the “sepulchre;”” others, adhering still more closely to the radical idea, “sepulchral cells “branching off” from the main subterraneous grot.” But the rendering which at once gives the best sense, and is at the same time the most faithful, is that of “limbs or talons,” according to which, in the true spirit of poetry, the grave is personified as a huge monster enclosing his prey within his deadly gripe.

(“The image is especially bold, and true to the general character under which the grave is presented to us in the figurative language of sacred poetry — as a monster ever greedy to devour; with horrid jaws wide gaping for his prey; and in the passage before us, with limbs in unison with his jaws, and ready to seize hold of the victims allotted to him, with a strength and violence from which none can extricate themselves. The common rendering of “fulcra, vectes,” or “bars,” as of a prison, is as unnecessary a departure from the proper figure, as it is from the primary meaning of the original term” — Dr. Good.)

On the whole there seems nothing in this passage that argues a belief on the part of Job, contrary to that of the resurrection; nor indeed anything that countenances the idea that he had no more cheering views of the invisible state than the heroes of Virgil and Homer.

Another objection against the common interpretation of ^{<B927>}Job 19:27, is drawn from the supposed fact that the doctrine of the resurrection is

nowhere else introduced in the poem. It is not, it is said, referred to by Job, either before or after this memorable occasion; it is neither noticed by his friends, nor by Elihu; while in the speech of God himself, with which the controversy is closed and settled, the same neglect appears of a doctrine which would have cleared up all the difficulties that perplexed the Arabian sages. It will not be necessary to make many observations on an argument of this kind, for even admitting the truth of the representation on which it is built, the conclusion does not follow. It is quite possible that the resurrection may be introduced here, though elsewhere in the book there be no reference to it. On such a supposition it might be alleged, that the author had studied effect, by reserving, for one particular occasion and place, the sublime doctrine of the resurrection, and the equally sublime expression he has given to it. Such a mode of presenting a subject of this nature is in perfect keeping with the poetical usage, which the

“matter is disposed, (to use the language of an eminent living critic,) according to the taste and choice of the writer; and that a more vivid impression might be made, by presenting a capital circumstance with its brightness and force collected into one point, than would be produced if it were dispersed through the general composition.” (Dr. John Pye Smith.)

But the representation in the objection is not according to fact. Job “does” elsewhere introduce the resurrection. The most competent judges find the doctrine in [Job 14:7-12](#), expressed with a distinctness and force which no language could have surpassed. There are, moreover, in the speeches of Job, frequent allusions to the future state of retribution, as in [Job 21:27,30; 27:8,9; 30:1-4,13](#). True indeed, the friends of Job make scarcely any allusion to this doctrine, yet there is no evidence that they denied it; nay, in one of the passages quoted above, namely, [Job 21:27,30](#); Job ascribes to them the same belief entertained by himself. That they should not have recurred to the doctrine of the resurrection after Job’s famous appeal, may appear wonderful, but it cannot be regarded as of any great consequence in the present controversy, unless it can be proved that Job must have alleged the resurrection, if he introduced it at all, as a solution of a particular difficulty in regard to the arrangements of providence, or that his friends must so have understood him. There is no evidence of either of these things. Job seems to have intended by a solemn appeal to convince his friends of his innocence, and in this light they understood him, and continued the controversy as before. The same remarks apply to the

omission on the part of “Elihu.” Nor can it appear unaccountable that “God” should not introduce the doctrine of the resurrection. That doctrine, according to the views of some, was alone wanting to solve the entire difficulty; but the Almighty has his own way of solving the question. He attests the innocence of Job, and in doing so, forever establishes the position that great sufferings are not always evidence of corresponding guilt. He does not indeed condescend to “vindicate” his providence, but asserts his sovereignty, and claims the submission of his creatures; and thus while the “real” question in dispute is solved by the “dictate” of the Almighty, a practical lesson is furnished of the highest moment, and of equal importance to people in all ages.

The last objection requiring notice is derived from the supposed inconsistency between the common opinion, and the amount of knowledge that obtained in Job’s time, regarding the resurrection and the future world. This objection may be dealt with precisely in the same way with the preceding one. Admitting it to be true that Job on this grand occasion uttered sentiments in advance of his times, if we suppose him to refer to the resurrection of the dead; it will not follow that such reference is therefore impossible, or even improbable. It must first be proved that when he exclaimed, “Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book, that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever,” he was not under “immediate inspiration,” or that the doctrine and the occasion were alike unworthy of this. It must be proved too that saints and prophets have never uttered anything beyond the general knowledge of their times, or that the morning twilight of revelation has never for a moment been lit up with a gleam, that partook of the character of its noon-day splendors. But the patriarchal knowledge of a future state may not have been so scanty as some imagine. The doctrine of the resurrection was involved in the covenant made with Abraham, by which Yahweh engaged to be “a God unto him and his seed after him.” (~~Q177~~Genesis 17:7.) Under this covenant name of the “God of Abraham,” the Almighty made himself known to Moses at the bush. (~~Q186~~Exodus 3:6.) And our Lord has thus expounded it:

“Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead but of the living, for all live unto him” (~~Q187~~Luke 20:37,38).

There is no evading of the fact that the covenant name is cited in proof of the resurrection of the body. The resurrection was the subject in dispute, and the scribes on the occasion held the argument from Moses decisive, while the objectors were silenced. The “bearing” of the argument may be differently explained; it may be said that the covenant relation extends to the entire person, to the body as well as to the soul, or that the immortality of the soul was so connected in the minds of the Jews with the resurrection of the body, that the one doctrine involved the other. But the fact is the same. The covenant name WAS produced in proof of the resurrection. Nor were the minds of the patriarchs occupied by so gloomy views of the state after death as is sometimes supposed. They “confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. They that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.”

(~~38113~~ Hebrews 11:13,16. It was at first intended to extend this inquiry so far as to embrace a very brief view of the principal texts that cast light on the amount of knowledge that rained in patriarchal times, and in subsequent times, under the ancient economy, on the doctrine of the resurrection and the intermediate state. This must have led to an examination of the views of David and Hezekiah noticed in the opening of this preface, the course of which it would have been attempted to show that ~~4906~~ Psalm 6:5; and ~~23811~~ Isaiah 38:11,18,19; are to be interpreted on very nearly the same principles with the gloomy passages in Job — David and Hezekiah felt that death closed all opportunity of praising God, serving man on earth; and that, therefore, it was painful to leave the world without having accomplished the good they intended. If this be thought an improbable view of their state of feeling, the same liberty may be allowed them, that in certain moods of mind is taken by good Christians, when they speak of death in somewhat mournful strains, as shutting them out from the light of the sun and the society of friends, etc. This is “but one side of their view;” ask them for the other, and they will reply in the language of the Psalmist “Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and “afterward receive me to glory,”” ~~49734~~ Psalm 73:24. The whole Psalm is

instructive, as showing the Psalmist's views of the future world. The length to which this preface has already extended, however, renders it necessary to abandon the design originally entertained.)

The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews was evidently unacquainted with that part of the patriarchal belief, according to which the patriarchs regarded leaving this world and entering on the next, as a serious calamity. There is no hint here of intermediate gloom. "If we may believe the papist," says Dr. Owen, "they (the patriarchs) were deceived in their expectation. For whereas the apostle teacheth, that when they died, they looked to go to heaven, they affirm that they came short of it, and fell into a "limbus" they know not where."

Such are the principal objections against the resurrection view of Job's sublime testimony. None of them is fatal to it, or indeed of very great weight; certainly not of so great weight as to justify the assertion that "feeling" and not "judgment, piety" and not "argument," have originated it. On the other hand, the opposite view is inconsistent with Job's uniform despair of such temporal deliverance or vindication as he ultimately enjoyed; ^{<RES>}Job 6:8-11; 9:21-24; 10:15-22; 30:16-23. It is inconsistent with the principles which Job maintained regarding what have been called the unequal distributions of providence. At all events, maintaining these principles he could have no assurance that "he" anymore than other righteous people would be vindicated and recompensed on earth, unless he obtained it by express revelation — a supposition not in itself improbable, but which cannot consistently be resorted to by those who urge the objections that have just been reviewed, since the same supposition, on the other side, would at once account for Job's views being beyond those of his age. Finally, when the grandeur and solemnity of its introduction is taken into account, along with the obvious — confessedly obvious — sense of the words, and the general consent of interpreters — this much disputed passage will appear to be most consistently explained of that glorious occasion, when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation! (^{<RES>}John 5:28; ^{<TRP>}Daniel 12:2.) May the writer and reader of these pages alike see God on that day as Job believed he should see him, not estranged, but his friend and redeemer!

THE BOOK OF JOB

INTRODUCTION

In reference to no part of the Scriptures have so many questions arisen as to the Book of Job. The time of its composition; the author; the country where the scene was laid; the question whether Job was a real person; the nature and design of the poem; have been points on which a great variety of opinion has been entertained among expositors, and on which different views still prevail. It is important, in order to have a correct understanding of the book, that all the light should be thrown on these subjects which can be; and though amidst the variety of opinion which prevails among men of the highest distinction in learning absolute certainty cannot be hoped for, yet such advances have been made in the investigation that on some of these points we may arrive to a high degree of probability.

SECTION 1. THE QUESTION WHETHER JOB WAS A REAL PERSON

The first question which presents itself in the examination of the book is, whether Job had a real existence. This has been doubted on such grounds as the following:

(1) The book has been supposed by some to have every mark of an allegory. Allegories and parables, it is said, are not uncommon in the Scriptures where a case is supposed, and then the narrative proceeds as if it were real. Such an instance, it has been maintained, occurs here, in which the author of the poem designed to illustrate important truths, but instead of stating them in an abstract form, chose to present them in the more graphic and interesting form of a supposed case — in which we are led to sympathize with a sufferer; to see the ground of the difficulty in the question under discussion in a more affecting manner than could be presented in an abstract form; and where the argument has all to interest the mind which one has when occurring in real life.

(2) It has been maintained that some of the transactions in the book must have been of this character, or are such as could not have actually

occurred. Particularly it has been said that the account of the interview of Satan with YAHWEH (^{<3006>}Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7) must be regarded merely as a supposed case, it being in the highest degree improbable that such an interview would occur, and such a conversation be held.

(3) The same conclusion has been drawn from the artificial character of the statements about the possessions of Job, both before and after his trials — statements which appear as if the case were merely supposed, and which would not be likely to occur in reality. Thus, we have only round numbers mentioned in enumerating his possessions — as 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 she-asses. So, also, there is something artificial in the manner in which the sacred numbers seven and three are used. He had 7,000 sheep, 7 sons — both before and after his trials; his three friends came and sat down 7 days and 7 nights without saying a word to condole with him (^{<3013>}Job 2:13); and both before and after his trials he had three daughters. The same artificial and parabolical appearance, it is said, is seen in the fact that after his recovery his possessions were exactly doubled, and he had again in his old age exactly the same number of 7 sons and 3 daughters which he had before his afflictions.

(4) That the whole narration is allegorical or parabolical has been further argued from the conduct of the friends of Job. Their sitting down 7 days and 7 nights without saying anything, when they had come expressly to condole with him, it is said, is a wholly improbable circumstance, and looks as if the whole were a supposed case.

(5) The same thing has been inferred from the manner in which the book is written. It is of the highest order of poetry. The speeches are most elaborate; are filled with accurate and carefully prepared argument; are arranged with great care; are expressed in the most sententious manner; embody the results of long and careful observation, and are wholly unlike what would be uttered in unpremeditated and extemporary debate. No men, it is said, talk in this manner; nor can it be supposed that beautiful poetry and sublime argument, such as abound in this book, ever fell in animated debate from the lips of men. See Eichorn, *Einleitung in das Alte Tes.* V. Band. 129-131. From considerations such as these the historical character of the book has been doubted, and the whole has been regarded as a supposed case designed to illustrate the great question which the author of the poem proposed to examine.

It is important, therefore, to inquire what reasons there are for believing that such a person as Job lived, and how far the transactions referred to in the book are to be regarded as historically true.

(1) The fact of his existence is expressly declared, and the narrative has all the appearance of being a simple record of an actual occurrence. The first two chapters of the book, and a part of the last chapter, are simple historical records. The remainder of the book is indeed poetic, but these portions bare none of the characteristics of poetry. There are not to be found in the Bible more simple and plain historical statements than these; and there are none which, in themselves considered, might not be as properly set aside as allegorical. This fact should be regarded as decisive, unless there is some reason which does not appear on the face of the narrative for regarding it as allegorical.

(2) The account of the existence of such a man is regarded as historically true by the inspired writers of the Scriptures. Thus, in ³¹⁴⁴Ezekiel 14:14, God says,

“Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it (the land), they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God.”

Compare ³¹⁴⁶Ezekiel 14:16,20. Here Job is referred to as a real character as distinctly as Noah and Daniel, and all the circumstances are just such as they would be on the supposition that he had a real existence. They are alike spoken of as real “men;” as having souls — “they should deliver but their own souls by their own righteousness;” as having sons and daughters

—
 “they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, they only shall be delivered” (³¹⁴⁶Ezekiel 14:16);

and are in all respects mentioned alike as real characters. Of the historic fact that there were such men as Noah and Daniel there can be no doubt, and it is evident that Ezekiel as certainly regarded Job as a real character as he did either of the others. A parallel passage, which will illustrate this, occurs in ³¹⁵⁰Jeremiah 15:1:

“Then said the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people.”

Here Moses and Samuel are spoken of as real characters, and there is no doubt of their having existed. Yet they are mentioned in the same manner as Job is in the passage in Ezekiel. In either case it is incredible that a reference should have been made to a fictitious character. The appeal is one that could have been made only to a real character, and there can be no reasonable doubt that Ezekiel regarded Job as having really existed; or rather, since it is God who speaks and not Ezekiel, that he speaks of Job as having actually existed. The same thing is evident from a reference to Job by the apostle James:

“Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy”
(~~3:11~~ James 5:11);

that is, the happy issue to which the Lord brought all his trials, showing that he was pitiful to those in affliction, and of great mercy. There can be no doubt that there is reference here to the sufferings of a real man, as there is to the real compassion which the Lord shows to one in great trials. It is incredible that this sacred writer should have appealed in this instance to the case of one whom he regarded as a fictitious character; and if the views of Ezekiel and James are to be relied on, there can be no doubt that Job had a real existence. Ezekiel mentions him just as he does Noah and Daniel, and James mentions him just as he does Elijah (~~5:17~~ James 5:17); and so far as this historical record goes there is the same evidence of the actual existence of the one as of the other.

(3) The specifications of places and names in the book are not such as would occur in an allegory. Had it been merely a “supposed case,” to illustrate some great truth, these specifications would have been unnecessary, and would not have occurred. In the acknowledged parables of the Scripture, there are seldom any very minute specifications of names and places. Thus, in the parable of the prodigal son, neither the name of the father, nor of the sons, nor of the place where the scene was laid, is mentioned. So of the nobleman who went to receive a kingdom; the unjust steward; the ten virgins, and of numerous others. But here we have distinct specifications of a great number of things which are in no way necessary to illustrate the main truth in the poem. Thus, we have not only the name of the sufferer, but the place of his residence mentioned, as if it were well known. We have the names of his friends, and the places of their residence mentioned — “Eliphaz the Temanite,” and “Bildad the Shuhite,” and

“Zophar the Naamathite.” and Elihu “the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram.” Why are the places of residence of these persons mentioned unless it be meant to intimate that they were real persons, and not allegorical characters? In like manner we have express mention of the Sabeans and the Chaldeans — specifications wholly unnecessary if not improbable if the work is an allegory. The single word “robbers” would have answered all the purpose, and would have been such as an inspired writer would have used unless the transaction were real, for an inspired writer would not have charged this offence on any class of men, thus holding them up to lasting reproach, unless an event of this kind had actually occurred. When the Savior, in the parable of the good Samaritan, mentions a robbery that occurred between Jerusalem and Jericho, the word “thieves,” or more properly “robbers”, is the only word used. No names are mentioned, nor is any class of men referred to, who would by such a mention of the name be held up to infamy. Thus, also we have the particular statement respecting the feasting of the sons and daughters of Job; his sending for and admonishing them; his offering up special sacrifices on their behalf; the account of the destruction of the oxen, the sheep, the camels, and the house where the sons and daughters of Job were — all statements of circumstances which would not be likely to occur in an allegory. They are such particular statements as we expect to find respecting the real transactions, and they bear on the face of them the simple impression of truth. This is not the kind of information which we look for in a parable. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, almost the only one spoken by the Saviour where a name is mentioned, we have not that of the rich man; and though the name Lazarus is mentioned, yet that is all. We have no account of his family, of his place of residence, of his genealogy, of the time when he lived; and the name itself is so common that it would be impossible even to suspect whom the Savior had in his eye, if he had any real individual at all. Far different is this in the account of Job. It is true that in a romance, or in an extended allegory like the Pilgrim’s Progress, we expect a detailed statement of names and places; but there is no evidence that there is any such extended fictitious narrative in the Bible, and unless the Book of Job be one there is no such extended allegory.

(4) The objections urged against this view are not such as to destroy the positive proof of the reality of the existence of Job. The objections which

have been urged against the historical truth of the narrative, and which have already been in part alluded to, are principally the following:

The first is, the account of the interview between God and Satan in Job 1 and Job 2. It is alleged that this is so improbable a transaction as to throw an air of fiction over all the historical statements of the book. In reply to this, it may be observed, first, that even if this were not to be regarded as a literal transaction, it does not prove that no such man as Job lived, and that the transactions in regard to him were not real. He might have had an existence, and been stripped of his possessions, and subjected to these long and painful trials of his fidelity, even if this were a poetic ornament, or merely a figurative representation.

But, secondly, it is impossible to prove that no such transaction occurred. The existence of such a being as Satan is everywhere recognized in the Scriptures; the account which is here given of his character accords entirely with the uniform representation of him; he exerts no power over Job which is not expressly conceded to him; and it is impossible to prove that he does not even now perform the same things in the trial of good men, which it is said that he did in the case of Job. And even if it be admitted that there is somewhat of poetic statement in the form in which he is introduced, still this does not render the main account improbable and absurd. The Bible, from the necessity of the case, abounds with representations of this sort; and when it is said that God “speaks” to men, that he conversed with Adam, that he spake to the serpent (Genesis 3), we are not necessarily to suppose that all this is strictly literal, nor does the fact that it is not strictly literal invalidate the main facts. There were results, or there was a series of FACTS following, as if this had been literally true; see the notes at ~~BOOK~~ Job 1:6-12.

A second objection to the historical truth of the transactions recorded in the book is, the poetic character of the work, and the strong improbability that addresses of this kind should ever have been made in the manner here represented. See Eichhorn, Einleit. v. 123, 124. They are of the highest order of poetry; they partake not at all of the nature of extemporaneous effusions; they indicate profound and close thinking, and are such as must have required much time to have prepared them. Especially it is said that it is in the highest degree improbable that Job, in the anguish of his body and mind, should have been capable of giving utterance to poetry and argument

of this highly finished character. In regard to this objection, it may be observed,

(1) that even if this were so, and it were to be supposed that the arguments of the various speakers have a poetic character, and were in reality never uttered in the form in which we now have them, still this would not invalidate the evidence which exists of the historic truth of the facts stated about the existence and trials of Job. It might be true that he lived and suffered in this manner, and that a discussion of this character actually occurred, and that substantially these arguments were advanced, though they were afterward wrought by Job himself or by some other hand into the poetic form in which we now have them. Job himself lived after his trials 140 years, and, in itself considered, there is no improbability in the supposition, that when restored to the vigorous use of his powers, and in the leisure which he enjoyed, he should have thought it worthy to present the argument which he once held on this great subject in a more perfect form, and to give to it a more poetic cast. In this case, the main historic truth would be retained, and the real argument would in fact be stated — though in a form more worthy of preservation than could be expected to fall extemporaneously from the lips of the speakers. But

(2) all the difficulty may be removed by a supposition which is entirely in accordance with the character of the book and the nature of the case. It is, that the several speeches succeeded each other at such intervals as gave full time for reflection, and for carefully framing the argument. There is no evidence that the whole argument was gone through with “at one sitting;” there are no proofs that one speech followed immediately on another, or that a sufficient interval of time may not have elapsed to give opportunity for preparation to meet the views which had been suggested by the previous speaker. Everything in the book bears the marks of the most careful deliberation, and is as free as possible from the hurry and bustle of an extemporaneous debate. The sufferings of Job were evidently of a protracted nature. His friends sat down “seven days and seven nights” in silence before they said anything to him. The whole subject of the debate seems to be arranged with most systematic care and regularity. The speakers succeed each other in regular order in a series of arguments — in each of these series following the same method, and no one of them out of his place. No one is ever interrupted while speaking; and no matter how keen and sarcastic his invectives, how torturing his reproaches, how bold or blasphemous what he said was thought to be, he is patiently heard until

he has said all that he designed to say; and then all that he said is carefully weighed and considered in the reply. All this looks as if there might have been ample time to arrange the reply before it was uttered, and this supposition, of course, would relieve all the force of this objection. If this be so, then there is no more ground of objection against the supposition that these things were spoken, as it is said they were, than there is about the genuineness of the poems of the Grecian Rhapsodists, composed with a view to public recitation, or to the Iliad of Homer or the History of Herodotus, both of which, after they were composed, were recited publicly by their authors at Athens. No one can prove certainly that the several persons named in the book — Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zolphar, and Elihu — were incompetent to compose the speeches which are severally assigned to them, or that all the time necessary for such a composition was not taken by them. Unless this can be done, the objection of its improbability, so confidently urged by Eichhorn (*Einleit.* v. 123ff.), and defended by Noyes (*Intro.* pp. xxi., xxi.), where he says that “the supposition that so beautiful and harmonious a whole, every part of which bears the stamp of the highest genius, was the casual production of a man brought to the gates of the grave by a loathsome disease, of three or four friends who had come to comfort him in his affliction, all of them expressing their thoughts in poetical and measured language; that the Deity was actually heard to speak half an hour in the midst of a violent storm; and that the consultations in the heavenly world were actual occurrences, is too extravagant to need refutation,” is an objection really of little force.

A third objection has been derived from the round and doubled numbers which occur in the book, and the artificial character which the whole narrative seems to assume on that account. It is alleged that this is wholly an unusual and improbable occurrence; and that the whole statement appears as if it were a fictitious narrative. Thus Job’s possessions of oxen and camels and sheep are expressed in round numbers; one part of these is exactly the double of another; and what is more remarkable still, all these are exactly doubled on his restoration to health. He had the same number of sons and the same number of daughters after his trial which he had before, and the number of each was what was esteemed among the Hebrews as a sacred number.

In regard to this objection, we may observe:

(1) That as to the round numbers, this is no more than what constantly occurs in historical statements. Nothing is more common in the enumeration of armies, of the people of a country, or of herds and flocks, than such statements.

(2) In regard to the fact that the possessions of Job are said to have been exactly “doubled” after his recovery from his calamities, it is not necessary to suppose that this was in all respects literally true. Nothing forbids us to suppose that, from the gifts of friends and other causes, the possessions of Job came so near to being just twice what they were before his trials, as to justify this general statement. In the statement itself, there is nothing improbable. Job lived 140 after his trials. If he had then the same measure of prosperity which he had before, and with the assistance of his friends to enable him to begin life again, there is no improbability in the supposition that these possessions would be doubled.

These are substantially all the objections which have been urged against the historical character of the book, and if they are not well founded, then it follows that it should be regarded as historically true that such a man actually lived, and that he passed through the trials which are here described. How far, if at all, the license of poetry has been employed in the composition of the book will be considered more particularly in another part of this introduction, section 5. A more extended statement of these objections, and a refutation of them, may be found in the following works: — Warburton’s *Divine Legation of Moses*, Vol. V. p. 298ff. ed. 8vo, London, 1811; Prof. Lee on *Job*, Intro. Section 11; and Magee on *atonement and Sacrifice*, p. 212, following, ed. New York, 1813. It should be said, however, that not a few writers admit that such a man as Job lived, and that the book has an historical basis, while they regard the work itself as in the main poetic. In the view of such critics, the poet, in order to illustrate the great truth which he proposed to consider, made use of a tradition respecting the sufferings of a well-known person of distinction, and gave to the whole argument the high poetic cast which it has now. This supposition is in accordance with the methods frequently adopted by epic and tragic poets, and which is commonly followed by writers of romance. This is the opinion of Eichhorn, *Einleitung V. Section 638*.

SECTION 2. THE QUEST ON WHERE JOB LIVED

In ^{<800>}Job 1:1, it is said that Job dwelt “in the land of Uz.” The only question, then, to be settled in ascertaining where he lived, is, if possible, to determine where this place was. From the manner in which the record is made (“the land of Uz”) it would seem probable that this was a region of country of some considerable extent, and also that it derived its name from some man of that name who had settled there. The word Uz ^{<45780>} $\aleph\omega$, according to Gesenius, means a light, sandy soil; and if the name was given to the country with reference to this quality of the soil, it would be natural to fix on some region remarkable for its barrenness — a waste place or a desert. Gesenius supposes that Uz was in the northern part of Arabia Deserta — a place lying between Palestine and the Euphrates, called by Ptolemy Αισιταα . This opinion is defended by Rosenmuller (Prolegomena); and is adopted by Spanheim, Bochart, Lee, Umbreit, Noyes, and the authors of the Universal History. Dr. Good supposes that the Uz here referred to was in Arabia Petraea, on the southwestern coast of the Dead Sea, and that Job and all his friends referred to in the poem were Idumeans. Introductory Dissertation, Section 1, pp. 7-12. Eichhorn also supposes that the scene is laid in Idumea, and that the author of the poem shows that he had a particular acquaintance with the history, customs, and productions of Egypt. Einleit. Section 638. Bochart (in Phaleg et Canaan), Michaelis (Spicileg. Geog. Hebraeo.), and Ilgen (Jobi, Antiquis. carminis Hebrew natura et indoles, p. 91), suppose that the place of his residence was the valley of Guta near Damascus, regarded as the most beautiful of the four Paradises of the Arabians. For a description of this valley, see Eichhorn, Einleit. V. s. 134. The word ^{<45780>} $\aleph\omega$ (Uz) occurs only in the following places in the Hebrew Bible: ^{<0102>}Genesis 10:23; 22:21; 36:28, and ^{<3017>}1 Chronicles 1:17,42; in each of which places it is the name of a man; and in ^{<2251>}Jeremiah 25:20; ^{<2021>}Lamentations 4:21, and in ^{<800>}Job 1:1, where it is applied to a country. The only circumstances which furnish any probability in regard to the place where Job lived, are the following:

(1) Those which enable us to determine with some probability where the family of Uz was settled, who not improbably gave his name to the country — as Sheba, and Seba, and Tema, and Cush, and Misraim, and others, did to the countries where they settled. In ^{<0102>}Genesis 10:23; Uz ^{<45780>} $\aleph\omega$, is mentioned as a grandson of Shem. In ^{<0221>}Genesis 22:21; an Uz (English Bible, “Huz”) is mentioned as the son of Nahor, brother of Abraham,

undoubtedly a different person from the one mentioned in ^{<0102>}Genesis 10:23. In ^{<0338>}Genesis 36:28, an individual of this name is mentioned among the descendants of Esau. In ^{<0017>}1 Chronicles 1:17, the name occurs among the “sons of Shem;” and in ^{<0042>}1 Chronicles 1:42, the same name occurs among the descendants of Esau. So far, therefore, as the name is concerned, it may have been derived from one of the family of Shem, or from one who was a contemporary with Abraham, or from a somewhat remote descendant Esau. It will be seen in the course of this introduction, that there is strong improbability that the name was given to the country because it was settled by either of the two latter, as such a supposition would bring down the time when Job lived to a later period than the circumstances recorded in his history will allow, and it is therefore probable that the name was conferred in honor of the grandson of Shem. This fact, of itself, will do something to determine the place. Shem lived in Asia, and we shall find that the settlements of his descendants originally occupied the country somewhere in the vicinity of the Euphrates; ^{<0123>}Genesis 10:21-30. In ^{<0123>}Genesis 10:23; Uz is mentioned as one of the sons of Aram, who gave name to the country known as Aramea, or Syria, and from whom the Arameans descended. Their original residence, it is supposed, was near the river Kir, or Cyrus, from where they were brought, at some period now unknown, by a deliverance resembling that of the children of Israel from Egypt, and placed in the regions of Syria; see ^{<0097>}Amos 9:7. The inhabitants of Syria and Mesopotamia are always called by Moses “Arameus”: as they had their seat in and near Mesopotamia, it is probable that Uz was located also not far from that region. We should, therefore, naturally be led to look for the country of Uz somewhere in that vicinity. In ^{<0130>}Genesis 10:30; it is further said of the sons of Shem, that “their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar, a mount of the East;” a statement which corresponds with what is said of Job himself, that he was “the greatest of all the men of the East” (^{<0008>}Job 1:8); manifestly implying that he was an inhabitant of the country so called. Various opinions have been entertained of the places where Mesha and Sephar were. The opinion of Michaelis is the most probable (Spicileg. pt. 11, p. 214),

“that Mesha is the region around Passora, which the later Syrians called Maishon, and the Greeks Mesene. Under these names they included the country on the Euphrates and the Tigris, between Seleucia and the Persian Gulf. Abulfeda mentions in this region two

cities not far from Passora, called Maisan, and Mushan. Here, then, was probably the northeastern border of the district inhabited by the Joktanites. The name of the opposite limit, Sephar, signifies in the Chaldee shore or coast, and is probably the western part of Yemen, along the Arabian Gulf, now called by the Arabs Tchiainah. The range of high and mountainous country between these two borders, Moses calls “the Mount of the East,” or eastern mountains. It is also called by the Arabs, Djebal, i.e., “mountains,” to the present day. See Rosenmuller’s *Alterthumskunde*, iii. 163, 164.

The supposition that some portion of this region is denoted by the country where Uz settled, and is the place where Job resided is strengthened by the fact, that many of the persons and tribes mentioned in the book resided in this vicinity. Thus, it is probable that Eliphaz the Temanite had his residence there; see the notes at ^{<R021>}Job 2:11. The Sabeans probably dwelt not very remote from that region (see the notes at ^{<R015>}Job 1:15); the Chaldeans we know had their residence there (notes, ^{<R017>}Job 1:17), and this supposition will agree well with what is said of the tornado that came from the “wilderness,” or desert; see the notes at ^{<R019>}Job 1:19. The residence of Job was so near to the Chaldeans and the Sabeans that he could be reached in their usual predatory excursions; a fact that better accords with the supposition that his residence was in some part of Arabia Deserta, than that it was in Idumea.

(2) This country is referred to in two places by Jeremiah, which may serve to aid us in determining its location; ^{<R041>}Lamentations 4:21:

*“Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom,
That dwellest in the land of Uz;
The cup shall pass through unto thee:
Thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked.”*

At first view, perhaps, this passage would indicate that the land of Uz was a part of Edom, yet it more properly indicates that the land of Uz was not a part of that land, but that the Edomites or Idumeans had gained possession of a country which did not originally belong to them. Thus, the prophet speaks of the “daughter of Edom,” not as dwelling in her own country properly, but as dwelling “in the land of Uz” — in a foreign country, of which she had somehow obtained possession. The country of Edom, properly, was Mount Seir and the vicinity, south of the Dead Sea; but it is known that the Edomites subsequently extended their boundaries, and that

at one period Bozrah, on the east of the Dead Sea, in the country of Moab, was their capital; see the Analysis of Isaiah 34, and the notes at ^{<2346>}Isaiah 34:6. It is highly probable that Jeremiah refers to the period when the Idumeans, having secured these conquests, and made this foreign city their capital, is represented as dwelling there. If so, according to this passage in Lamentations, we should naturally look for the land of Uz somewhere in the countries to which the conquests of the Edomites extended — and these conquests were chiefly to the east of their own land. A similar conclusion will be derived from the other place where the name occurs in Jeremiah. It is in ^{<2453>}Jeremiah 25:20ff.

“And all the mingled people, and all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Askelon, and Azzah, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod, and Edom, and Moab, and the children of Ammon,” etc.

Two things are apparent here. One is, that the country of Uz was distinct from the land of Edom, since they are mentioned as separate nations; the other is, that it was a country of some considerable extent, since it is mentioned as being under several “kings.” There is, indeed, in this reference to it no allusion to its situation; but it is mentioned as being well known in the time of Jeremiah.

(3) The same thing is evident from the manner in which the residence of Job is spoken of in ^{<3008>}Job 1:8. He is there said to have been the “greatest of all the men of the east.” This implies that his residence was in the land which was known familiarly as the country of the East. It is true, indeed, that we have not yet determined where the poem was composed, and of course do not know precisely what the author would understand by this phrase, but the expression has a common signification in the Scriptures, as denoting the country east of Palestine. The land of Idumea, however, was directly south; and we are, therefore, naturally led to look to some other place as the land of Uz; compare the notes at ^{<3008>}Job 1:3. The expression “the East,” as used in the Bible, would in no instance naturally lead us to look to Idumea.

(4) The Septuagint renders the word Uz in ^{<3001>}Job 1:1. by **Ασιτις** Asitis — a word which seems to have been formed from the Hebrew **אֲשִׁיטִי** ^{<45780>}, Utz, or Uz. Of course, their translation gives no intimation of the place referred to. But Ptolemy (Geog. Lib. v.) speaks of a tribe or nation in the

neighborhood of Babylon, whom he calls **Αυσίται**, Ausitae (or as it was perhaps written **Αισίται**, the same word which is used by the Septuagint in rendering the word Uz. These people are placed by Ptolemy in the neighborhood of the Cauchebeni — **ὑπο μὲν τοῖς Καυχαβηνοῖς** — and he speaks of them as separated from Chaldea by a ridge of mountains. See Rosenm. Prolegomena, p. 27. This location would place Job so near to the Chaldeans, that the account of their making an excursion into his country (^{<K017>}Job 1:17) would be entirely probable. — It may be added, also, that in the same neighborhood we find a town called Sabas (**Σαβας**) in Diodorus Sic. Lib. iii. Section 46. Prof. Lee, p. 32. These circumstances render it probable that the residence of the patriarch was west of Chaldea, and somewhere in the northern part of Arabia Deserta, between Palestine, Idumea, and the Euphrates.

(5) The monuments and memorials of Job still preserved or referred to in the East, may be adduced as some slight evidence of the fact that such a man as Job lived, and as an indication of the region in which he resided. It is true that they depend on mere tradition; but monuments are not erected to the memory of any who are not supposed to have had an existence, and traditions usually have some basis in reality. Arabian writers always make mention of Job as a real person, and his pretended grave is shown in the East to this day. It is shown indeed in six different places: but this is no evidence that all that is said of the existence of such a man is fabulous, any more than the fact that seven cities contended for the honor of the birth of Homer is an evidence that there was no such man. The most celebrated tomb of this kind is that of the Trachonitis, toward the springs of the Jordan. It is situated between the cities still bearing the names of Teman, Shuah, and Naama — (Wemyss); though there is every reason to believe that these names have been given rather with reference to the fact that that was supposed to be his residence, than that they were the names of the places referred to in the book of Job. One of these tombs was shown to Niebuhr. He says (Reisebeschreib, i. 466, “Two or three hours east of Saada is a great mosque, in which, according to the opinion of the Arabs who reside there, the sufferer Job lies buried.” “On the eastern limits of Arabia, they showed me the grave of Job, close to the Euphrates, and near the Helleh, one hour south from Babylon.” is of importance to remark here only that all of these tombs are outside the limits of Idumea. Among the Arabians there are numerous traditions respecting Job, many of them indeed stories that are entirely ridiculous, but all showing the firm belief

prevalent in Arabia that there was such a man. See Sale's Koran, vol. ii. pp. 174, 322; Magee on Atonement and Sacrifice, pp. 366, 367; and D'Herbelot, Bibli. Orient. tom. i. pp. 75, 432, 438, as quoted by Magee.

(6) The present belief of the Arabians may be referred to as corroborating the results to which we have approximated in this inquiry, that the residence of Job was not in Idumea, but was in some part of Arabia Deserta, lying between Palestine and the Euphrates. Eli Smith stated to me (November, 1840) that there was still a place in the Houran called by the Arabians, Uz; and that there is a tradition among them that that was the residence of Job. It is northeast of Bozrah. Bozrah was once the capital of Idumea (notes on ²³⁴⁶Isaiah 34:6), though it was situated without the limits of their natural territory. If this tradition is well founded, then Job was not probably an Idumean. There is nothing that renders the tradition improbable, and the course of the investigation conducts us, with a high degree of probability, to the conclusion that this was the residence of Job. On the residence of Job and his friends, consult also Abrahami Peritsol Itinera Mundi, in Ugolin, Thes. Sac. vii. pp. 103-106.

SECTION 3. THE TIME WHEN JOB LIVED

There has been quite as much uncertainty in regard to the time when Job lived, as there has been in regard to the place where he lived. It should be observed here, that this question is not necessarily connected with the inquiry when the book was composed, and will not be materially affected, whether we suppose it to have been composed by Job himself, by Moses, or by a later writer. Whenever the book was composed, if at a later period than that in which the patriarch lived, the author would naturally conceal the marks of his own time, by referring only to such customs and opinions as prevailed in the age when the events were supposed to have occurred.

On this question, we cannot hope to arrive at absolute certainty. It is remarkable that neither the genealogical record of the family of Job nor that of his three friends is given. The only record of the kind occurring in the book, is that of Elihu (¹⁸³⁰Job 32:2), and this is so slight as to furnish but little assistance in determining when he lived. The only circumstances which occur in regard to this question, are the following; and they will serve to settle the question with sufficient probability, as it is a question on which no important results can depend.

(1) The age of Job. According to this, the time when he lived, would occur somewhere between the age of Terah, the father of Abraham, and Jacob, or about 1,800 years before Christ, and about 600 years after the deluge. For the reasons of this opinion, see the notes at ^{<18216>}Job 42:16. This estimate cannot pretend to be entirely accurate, but, it has a high degree of probability. If this estimate is correct, he lived not far from 400 years before the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt, and before the giving of the law on Mount Sinai; compare the notes at ^{<4076>}Acts 7:6.

(2) As a slight confirmation of this opinion, we may refer to the traditions in reference to the time when he lived. The account which is appended to the Septuagint, that he was a son of Zare, one of the sons of Esau, and the fifth in descent from Abraham, may be seen in the notes at ^{<18216>}Job 42:16. A similar account is given at the close of the Arabic translation of Job, so similar that the one has every appearance of having been copied from the other, or of their having had a common origin. “Job dwelt in the land of Uz, between the borders of Edom and Arabia, and was before called Jobab. He married a foreign wife, whose name was Anun. Job was himself a son of Zare, one of the sons of Esau; and his mother’s name was Basra, and he was the sixth in descent from Abraham. But of the kings who reigned in Edom, the first who reigned over the land was Balak, the son of Beor; and the name of his city was Danaba. And after him Jobab, who is called Job; and after him the name of him who was prince of the land of Teman; and after him his son Barak, he who slew and put to flight Madian in the plain of Moab, and the name of his city was Gjates. And of the friends of Job who came to meet him, was Elifaz, of the sons of Esau, the king of the Temanites.” These traditions are worthless, except as they show the prevalent belief when these translations were made, that Job lived somewhere near the time of the three great Hebrew patriarchs.

A nearly uniform tradition also has concurred in describing this as about the age in which he lived. The Hebrew writers generally concur in describing him as living in the days of Isaac and Jacob. Wemyss. Eusebius places him about two “ages” before Moses. The opinions of the Eastern nations generally concur in assigning this as the age in which he lived.

(3) From the representations in the book itself, it is clear that he lived before the departure from Egypt. This is evident from the fact that there is no direct allusion either to that remarkable event, or to the series of wonders which accompanied it, or to the journey to the land of Canaan.

This silence is unaccountable on any other supposition than that he lived before it occurred, for two reasons. One is, that it would have furnished the most striking illustration occurring in history, of the interposition by God in delivering his friends and in destroying the wicked, and was such an illustration as Job and his friends could not have failed to refer to, in defense of their opinions, if it were known to them; and the other is, that this event was the great storehouse of argument and illustration for all the sacred writers, after it occurred. The deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and the divine interposition in conducting the nation to the promised land, is constantly referred to by the sacred writers. They derive from those events their most magnificent descriptions of the power and majesty of Yahweh. They refer to them as illustrating his character and government. They appeal to them in proof that he was the friend and protector of his people, and that he would destroy his foes. They draw from them their most sublime and beautiful poetic images, and are never weary with calling the attention of the people to their obligation to serve God, on account of his merciful and wonderful interposition. The very point of the argument in this book is one that would be better illustrated by that deliverance, than by any other event which ever occurred in history; and as this must have been known to the inhabitants of the country where Job lived, it is inexplicable that there is no allusion to these transactions, if they had already occurred.

It is clear, therefore, that even if the book was written at a later period than the exode from Egypt, the author of the poem meant to represent the patriarch as having lived before that event. He has described him as one who was ignorant of it, and in such circumstances, and with such opinions, that he could not have failed to refer to it, if he was believed to have lived after that event. It is equally probable that Job lived before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. This event occurred in the vicinity of the country where he lived, and he could not have been ignorant of it. It was, moreover, a case not less in point in the argument than the deliverance from Egypt was; and it is not conceivable that a reference to so signal a punishment on the wicked by the direct judgment of the Almighty, would have been omitted in an argument of the nature of that in this book. It was the very point maintained by the friends of Job, that God interposed by direct judgments to cut off the wicked; and the world never furnished a more appropriate illustration of this than had occurred in their own neighborhood, on the supposition that the calamities of Job occurred after that event.

(4) The same thing is apparent also from the absence of all allusion to the Jewish rites, manners, customs, religious ceremonies, priesthood, festivals, fasts, sabbaths, etc. There will be occasion in another part of this introduction (Section 4.3.) to inquire how far there is in fact such a lack of allusion to these things. All that is now meant is, that there is an obvious and striking lack of such allusions as we should expect to find made by one who lived at a later period, and who was familiar with the customs and religious rites of the Jews. The plan of the poem, it may be admitted, indeed, did not demand any frequent allusion to these customs and rites, and may be conceded to be adverse to such an allusion, even if they were known; but it is hardly conceivable that there should not have been some reference to them of more marked character than is now found. Even admitting that Job was a foreigner, and that the author meant to preserve this impression distinctly, yet his residence could not have been far from the confines of the Jewish people; and one who manifested such decided principles of piety toward God as he did, could not but have had a strong sympathy with that people, and could not but have referred to their rites in an argument so intimately pertaining to the government of YAHWEH. The representation of Job, and the allusions in the book, are in all respects such as would occur on the supposition that he lived before the special Jewish polity was instituted.

(5) The same thing is manifest from another circumstance. The religion of Job is of the same kind which we find prevailing in the time of Abraham, and before the institution of the Jewish system. It is a religion of sacrifices, but without any officiating priest. Job himself presents the offering, as the head of the family, in behalf of his children and his friends; ~~BOOK~~ Job 1:5; 42:8. There is no priest appointed for this office; no temple, tabernacle, or sacred place of any kind; no consecrated altar. Now this is just the kind of religion which we find prevailing among the patriarchs, until the giving of the law on Mount Sinai; and hence, it is natural to infer that Job lived anterior to that event. Thus, we find Noah building an altar to the Lord, and offering sacrifices, ~~BOOK~~ Genesis 8:20; Abraham offering a sacrifice himself in the same manner, ~~BOOK~~ Genesis 15:9-11; compare ~~BOOK~~ Genesis 12:1-13; and this was undoubtedly the earliest form of religion. Sacrifices were offered to God, and the father of a family was the officiating priest.

These circumstances combined leave little doubt as to the time when Job lived. They concur in fixing the period as not remote from the age of Abraham, and there is no other period of history in which they will be

found to unite. No question of great importance, however, depends on settling this question; and these circumstances determine the time with sufficient accuracy for all that is necessary, in an exposition of the book.

SECTION 4. THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOK

A question of more vital importance than those which have been already considered, relates to the authorship of the book. As the name of the author is nowhere mentioned, either in the book itself or elsewhere in the Bible, it is of course impossible to arrive at absolute certainty; and after all that has been written on it, it is still and must be a point of mere conjecture. Still the question, as it is commonly discussed, opens a wide range of inquiry, and claims an investigation. If the name of the author cannot be discovered with certainty, it may be possible at least to decide with some degree of probability at what period of the world it was committed to writing, and perhaps with a degree of probability that may be sufficiently satisfactory, by whom it was done.

The first inquiry that meets us in the investigation of this point is, whether the whole book was composed by the same author, or whether the historical parts were added by a later hand. The slightest acquaintance with the book is sufficient to show, that there are in it two essentially different kinds of style — the poetic and prosaic. The body of the work, Job 3—42:1-6, is poetry; the other portion, Job 1; Job 2 and ~~Job~~ Job 42:7-17, is prose. The genuineness of the latter has been denied by many eminent critics, and particularly by DeWette, who regard it as the addition of some later hand. Against the prologue and the epilogue DeWette urges,

“that the perfection of the work requires their rejection, because they solve the problem which is the subject of the discussion, by the idea of trial and compensation; whereas it was the design of the author to solve the question through the idea of entire submission on the part of man to the wisdom and power of God;” see Noyes, Intro. pp. xxi., xxii.

To this objection it may be replied:

(1) That we are to learn the view of the author only by all that he has presented to us. It may have been a part of his plan to exhibit just this view — not to present an abstract argument, but such an argument in connection with a real case, and to make it more vivid by showing an

actual instance of calamity falling upon a pious man, and by a state of remarkable prosperity succeeding it. The presumption is, that the author of the poem designed to throw all the light possible on a very obscure and dark subject; and in order to that, a statement of the facts which preceded and followed the argument seems indispensable.

(2) Without the statement in the conclusion of the prosperity of Job after his trials, the argument of the book is incomplete. The main question is not solved. God is introduced in the latter chapters, not as solving by explicit statements the questions that had given so much perplexity, but as showing the duty of unqualified submission. But when this is followed by the historical statement of the return of Job to a state of prosperity, of the long life which he afterward enjoyed, and of the wealth and happiness which attended him for nearly a century and a half, the objections of his friends and his own difficulties are abundantly met, and the conclusion of the whole shows that God is not regardless of his people, but that, though they pass through severe trials, still they are the objects of his tender care.

(3) Besides, the prologue is necessary in order to understand the character, the language, and the arguments of Job. In the harsh and irreverent speeches which he sometimes makes, in his fearful imprecations in Job 3 on the day of his birth, and in the outbreaks of impatience which we meet with, it would be impossible for us to have the sympathy for the sufferer which the author evidently desired we should have, or to understand the depth of his woes, unless we had a view of his previous prosperity, and of the causes of his trials, and unless we had the assurance that he had been an eminently pious and upright man. As it is, we are prepared to sympathize with a sufferer of eminent rank, a man of previous wealth and prosperity, and one who had been brought into these circumstances or the very purpose of trial. We become at once interested to know how human nature will act in such circumstances, nor does the interest ever flag. Under these sudden and accumulated trials, we admire, at first, the patience and resignation of the sufferer; then, under the protracted and intolerable pressure, we are not surprised to witness the outbreak of his feelings in Job 3; and then we watch with great interest and without weariness the manner in which he meets the ingenious arguments of his “friends” to prove that he had always been a hypocrite, and their cutting taunts and reproaches. It would be impossible to keep up this interest in the argument unless we were prepared for it by the historical statement in the introductory chapters. It should be added, that any supposition that these chapters are

by a later hand, is entirely conjectural — no authority for any such belief being furnished by the ancient versions, manuscripts, or traditions. These remarks, however, do not forbid us to suppose, that, if the book were composed by Job himself, the last two verses in Job 42, containing an account of his age and death, were added by a later hand — as the account of the death of Moses (Deuteronomy 34) must be supposed not to be the work of Moses himself, but of some later inspired writer.

If there is, therefore, reason to believe that the whole work, substantially as we have it now, was committed to writing by the same hand, the question arises, whether there are any circumstances by which it can be determined with probability who the author was. On no question, almost, pertaining to sacred criticism, have there been so many contradictory opinions as on this. Lowth, Magee, Prof. Lee, and many others, regard it as the work of Job himself. Lightfoot and others ascribe it to Elihu; some of the rabbinical writers, as also Kennicott, Michaelis, Dathe, and Good, to Moses; Luther, Grotius, and Doederlin, to Solomon; Umbreit and Noyes to some writer who lived not far from the period of the Jewish captivity; Rosenmuller, Spanheim, Reimar, Stuedlin, and C.F. Richter, suppose that it was composed by some Hebrew writer about the time of Solomon; Warburton regards it as the production of Ezra; Herder (*Hebrew Poetry*, i. 110) supposes that it was written by some ancient Idumean, probably Job himself, and was obtained by David in his conquests over Idumea. He supposes that in the later writings of David he finds traces of his having imitated the style of this ancient book.

It would be uninteresting and profitless to go into an examination of the reasons suggested by these respective authors for their various opinions. Instead of this, I propose to state the leading considerations which have occurred in the examination of the book itself, and of the reasons which have been suggested by these various authors, which may enable us to form a probable opinion. If the investigation shall result only in adding one more conjecture to those already formed, still it will have the merit of stating about all that seems to be of importance in enabling us to form an opinion in the case.

I. The first circumstance that would occur to one in estimating the question about the authorship of the book, is the foreign cast of the whole work — the fact that it differs from the usual style of the Hebrew compositions. The customs, allusions, figures of speech, and modes of

thought, to one who is familiar with the writings of the Hebrews, have a foreign air, and are such as evidently show that the speakers lived in some other country than Judea. There is, indeed, a common Oriental cast diffused over the whole work, enough to distinguish it from all the modes of composition in the Occidental world; but there is, also, scarcely less to distinguish it from the compositions which we know had their origin among the Hebrews. The style of thought, and the general cast of the book, is Arabian. The allusions; the metaphors; the illustrations; the reference to historical events and to prevailing customs, are not such as an Hebrew would make; certainly not, unless in the very earliest periods of history, and before the character of the nation became so formed as to distinguish it characteristically from their brethren in the great family of the East. Arabian deserts; streams failing from drought; wadys filled in the winter and dry in the summer; moving hordes and caravans that come regularly to the same place for water; dwellings of tents easily plucked up and removed; the dry and stinted shrubbery of the desert; the roaring of lions and other wild beasts; periodical rains; trees planted on the verge of running streams; robbers and plunderers that rise before day, and make their attack in the early morning; the rights, authority, and obligation of the Goel, or avenger of blood; the claims of hospitality; the formalities of an Arabic court of justice, are the images which are kept constantly before the mind. Here the respect due to an Emir; the courtesy of manners which prevails among the more elevated ranks in the Arabic tribes; the profound attention which listens to the close while one is speaking, and which never interrupts him (Herder i. 81), so remarkable among well-bred Orientals at the present day, appear everywhere. It is true, that many of these things may find a resemblance in the undoubted Hebrew writings — for some of them are the common characteristics of the Oriental people — but still, no one can doubt that they abound in this book more than in any other in the Bible, and that, as we shall see more particularly soon, they are unmixed as they are elsewhere, with what is indubitably of Hebrew origin. In connection with this, it may be remarked that there are in the book an unusual number of words, whose root is found now only in the Arabic, and which are used in a sense not common in the Hebrew, but usual in the Arabic. Of this all will be convinced who, in interpreting the book, avail themselves of the light which Gesenius has thrown on numerous words from the Arabic, or who consult the Lexicon of Castell, or who examine the Commentaries of Schultens and Lee. That more importance has been attached to this by many critics than facts will warrant, no one can deny;

but as little can it be denied that more aid can be derived from the Arabic language in interpreting this book, than in the exposition of any other part of the Bible. On this point Gesenius makes the following remarks

“Altogether there is found in the book much resemblance to the Arabic, or which can be illustrated from the Arabic; but this is either Hebrew, and pertains to the poetic diction, or it is at the same time Aramaish, and was borrowed by the poet from the Aramaean language, and appears here not as Aramaean but as Arabic. Yet there is not here proportionably more than in other poetic books and portions of books. It would be unjust to infer from this that the author of this book had any immediate connection with Arabia, or with Arabic literature.”

Geschichte der hebr. Sprache und Schrift, S. 88. The fact of the Arabic cast of the work is conceded by Gesenius in the above extract; the inferences in regard to the connection of the book with Arabia and with Arabic literature which may be derived from this, is to be determined from other circumstances; compare Eichhorn, Einleitung, v. S. 163ff.

II. A second consideration that may enable us to determine the question respecting the authorship of the book is, the fact that there are in it numerous undoubted allusions to events which occurred before the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt, the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, and the establishment of the Jewish institutions. The point of this remark is, that if we shall find such allusions, and also that there are no allusions to events occurring after that period, this is a circumstance which may throw some light on the authorship. It will at least enable us to fix, with some degree of accuracy, the time when the book was committed to writing. Now that there are manifest allusions to events occurring before that period, the following references will show; ~~<1800>~~ Job 10:9,

“Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay,
and wilt thou bring me to dust again?”

Here there is an allusion in almost so many words to the statements in ~~<1800>~~ Genesis 2:7; 3:19, respecting the manner in which man was formed — showing that Job was familiar with the account of the creation of man, ~~<1820>~~ Job 27:3,

“All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils;”

<8374>Job 33:4,

“The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life;”

<8318>Job 32:8,

“But there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.”

Here there are undoubted allusions, also, to the manner in which man was formed — (compare <0017>Genesis 2:7) — allusions which show that the fact must have been made known to the speakers by tradition, since it is not such a fact as man would readily arrive at by reasoning. The imbecility and weakness of man also, are described in terms which imply an acquaintance with the manner in which he was created.

“How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth;”

<8449>Job 4:19.

In <8513>Job 31:33, there is probably an allusion to the fact that Adam attempted to hide himself from God when he had eaten the forbidden fruit. “If I covered my transgressions as Adam.” For the reasons for supposing that this refers to Adam, see the notes at the verse. In <8215>Job 22:15,16, there is a manifest reference to the deluge. “Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden? which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with a flood?” See the notes on that passage. In connection with this we may refer also to the fact that the description of the modes of worship, and the views of religion, found in this book, show an acquaintance with the form in which worship was offered to God before the exode from Egypt. They are of precisely such a character as we find in the time of Abel, Noah, and Abraham. These events are not such as would occur to one who was not familiar with the historical facts recorded in the first part of the book of Genesis. They are not such as would result from a train of reasoning, but could only be derived from the knowledge of those events which would be spread over the East at that early period of the world. They demonstrate that the work was composed by one who had had

an opportunity to become acquainted with what is now recorded as the Mosaic history of the creation, and of the early events of the world.

III. There are no such allusions to events occurring after the exode from Egypt, and the establishment of the Jewish institutions. As this is a point of great importance in determining the question respecting the authorship of the book, and as it has been confidently asserted that there are such allusions, and as they have been made the basis of an argument to prove that the book had an origin as late as Solomon or even as Ezra, it is of importance to examine this point with attention. The point is, that there are no such allusions as a Hebrew would make after the exode; or in other words, there is nothing in the book itself which would lead us to conclude that it was composed after the departure from Egypt. A few remarks will show the truth and the bearing of this observation.

The Hebrew writers were remarkable above most others for allusions to the events of their own history. The dealings of God with their nation had been so special, and they were so much imbued with the conviction that the events of their own history furnished proofs of the divine favor toward their nation, that we find in their writings a constant reference to what had happened to them as a people. Particularly the deliverance from Egypt, the passage of the Red Sea, the giving of the law on Sinai, the journey in the wilderness, the conquest of the land of Canaan, and the destruction of their enemies, constituted an unfailing depository of argument and illustration for their writers in all ages. All their poetry written subsequent to these events, abounds with allusions to them. Their prophets refer to them for topics of solemn appeal to the nation; and the remembrance of these things warms the heart of piety, and animates the song of praise in the temple-service. Under the sufferings of the "captivity," they are cheered by the fact that God delivered them once from much more galling oppression; and in the times of freedom, their liberty is made sweet by the memory of what their fathers suffered in the "house of bondage."

Now it is as undeniable as it is remarkable, that in the book of Job there are no such allusions to these events as a Hebrew would make. There is no allusion to Moses; no indisputable reference to their bondage in Egypt, to the oppressive acts of Pharaoh, to the destruction of his army in the Red Sea, to the rescue of the children of Israel, to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, to the perils of the wilderness, to their final settlement in the promised land. There is no reference to the tabernacle, to the ark, to the

tables of the law, to the institution and the functions of the priesthood, to the cities of refuge, or to the special religious rites of the Hebrew people. There is none to the theocracy, to the days of solemn convocation, to the great national festivals, or to the names of the Jewish tribes. There is none to the special judicial laws of the Hebrews, and none to the administration of justice but such as we should find in the early patriarchal times.

These omissions are the more remarkable, as has been already observed, because many of these events would have furnished the most apposite illustrations of the points maintained by the different speakers of any which had ever occurred in history. Nothing could have been more in point, on numerous occasions in conducting the argument, than the destruction of Pharaoh, the deliverance and protection of the people of God, the care evinced for them in the wilderness, and the overthrow of their enemies in the promised land. So obvious do these considerations appear, that they seem to settle the question on one point in regard to the authorship of the book, and to show that it could not have been composed by a Hebrew after the exode. For several additional arguments to prove that the book was written before the exode, see Eichhorn, *Einleit*, section 641. As, however, notwithstanding these facts, it has been held by some respectable critics — as Rosenmuller, Umbreit, Warburton, and others — that it was composed as late as the time of Solomon, or even the captivity, it is important to inquire in what way it is proposed to set this argument aside, and by what considerations they propose to defend its composition at a later date than the exode. They are, briefly, the following:

(1) One is, that the very design of the poem, whenever it was composed, required that there should be no such allusion. The scene, it is said is laid, not in Palestine, but in a foreign country; the time supposed is that of the patriarchs, and before the exode; the characters are not Hebrew, but are Arabian or Idumean, and the very purpose of the author required that there should be no allusion to the unique history or customs of the Hebrews. The same thing, it is said, occurred which would in the composition of poem or romance now in which the scene is laid in a foreign land, or in the time of the Crusades or the Caesars. We should expect that the characters, the costume, the habits of that foreign country or those distant times, would be carefully observed.

“As they (the characters and the author of the work) were Arabians who had nothing to do with the institutions of Moses, it is plain that

a writer of genius would not have been guilty of the absurdity of putting the sentiments, eats of a Jew into the mouth of an Arabian, at least so far as relates to such tangible matters as institutions, positive laws, ceremonies, and history. The author has manifested abundant evidence of genius and skill in the structure and execution of the work, to account for his not having given to Arabians the obvious peculiarities of Hebrews who lived under the institutions of Moses, at whatever period it may have been written. Even if the characters of the book had been Hebrews, the argument under consideration would not have been perfectly conclusive, for, from the nature of the subject, we might have expected as little in it that was Levitical or grossly Jewish, as in the Book of Proverbs or Ecclesiastes.” Noyes, Introduction p. 28.

This supposition assumes that the work was written in a later age than that of Moses. It furnishes no evidence, however, that it was so written. It can only furnish evidence that the author had genius and skill so to throw himself back into a distant age and into a foreign land, as completely to conceal his own uniqueness of country or time, and to represent characters as living and acting in the supposed country and period, without betraying his own. So far as the question about the author, and the time when the work was composed, is concerned, the fact here admitted, that there are no allusions to events after the exode, is quite as strong certainly in favor of the supposition that it was composed before as after that event. There are still some difficulties on the supposition that it was written by a Hebrew of a later age, who designedly meant to give it an Arabic dress, and to make no allusion to anything in the institutions and history of his own country that would betray its authorship, One is, the intrinsic difficulty of doing this. It requires rare genius for an author so to throw himself into past ages, as leave nothing that shall betray his own times and country. We are never so betrayed as to imagine that Shakespeare lived in the time of Coriolanus or of Caesar; that Johnson lived in the time and the country of Rasselas; or that Scott lived in the times of the Crusaders. Instances have been found, it is admitted, where the concealment has been effectual, but they have been exceedingly rare. Another objection to this view is, that such a work would have been especially impracticable for a Hebrew, who of all men would have been most likely to betray his time and country. The cast of the poem is highly philosophical. The argument is in many places exceedingly abstruse. The appeal is to close and long observation; to the

recorded experience of their ancestors; to the observed effects of divine judgments on the world. A Hebrew in such circumstances would have appealed to the authority of God; he would have referred to the terrible sanctions of the law rather than to cold and abstract reasoning; and he could hardly have refrained from some allusion to the events of his own history that bore so palpably on the case, It may be doubted, also, whether any Hebrew ever had such versatility of genius and character as to divest himself wholly of the proper costume of his country, and to appear throughout as an Arabic Emir, and so as never in a long argument to express anything but such as became the assumed character of the foreigner. It should be remembered, also, that the language which is used in this poem is different from that which prevailed in the time of Solomon and the captivity. It has an antique cast. It abounds in words which do not elsewhere occur, and whose roots are now to be found only in the Arabic. It has much of the peculiarities of a strongly marked dialect — and would require all the art necessary to keep up the spirit of an ancient dialect. Yet in the whole range of literature there are not probably half a dozen instances where such an expedient as this has been resorted to — where a writer has made use of a foreign or an antique dialect for the purpose of giving to the production of his pen an air of antiquity. Aristophanes and the tragedians, indeed, sometimes introduce persons speaking the dialects of parts of Greece different from that in which they had been brought up (Lee), and the same is occasionally true of Shakespeare; but except in the case of Chatterton, scarcely one has occurred where the device has been continued through a production of any considerable length. There is a moral certainty that a Hebrew would not attempt it.

(2) A second objection to the supposition that the work was composed before the exode, or argument that it was composed by a Hebrew who lived at a much later period of the world, is derived from the supposed allusions to the historical events connected with the Jewish people, and to the unique institutions of Moses. It is not maintained that there is any direct mention of those events or those institutions, but that the author has undesignedly “betrayed” himself by the use of certain words and phrases such as no one would employ but a Hebrew. This argument may be seen at length in Warburton’s *Divine Legation of Moses*, vol. v. pp. 306-319, and a full examination of it may be seen in Peters’ *Critical Dissertation on the Book of Job*, pp. 22-36. All that can be done here is to make a very brief reference to the argument. Even the advocates for the opinion that the

book was composed after the exode, have generally admitted that the passages referred to contribute but little to the support of the opinion. The passages referred to by Warburton are the following:

(a) The allusion to the calamities which the wickedness of parents brings upon their children.

“He that speaketh flattery to his friends, even the eyes of his children shall fail;” ~~<18176>~~ Job 17:5.

“God layeth up his iniquity for his children; he rewardeth him, and they shall know it;” ~~<18219>~~ Job 21:19.

Here it is supposed there is a reference to the principle laid down in the Hebrew Scriptures as a part of the divine administration, that the iniquities of the fathers should be visited upon their children. But it is not necessary to suppose that there was any particular acquaintance with the laws of Moses, to understand this. Observation of the actual course of events would have suggested all that is alleged in the Book of Job on this point. The poverty, disease, and disgrace which the vicious entail on their offspring in every land, would have furnished to a careful observer all the facts necessary to suggest this remark. The opinion that children suffer as a consequence of the sins of wicked parents was common all over the world. Thus, in a verse of Theocritus, delivered as a sort of oracle from Jupiter, Idyll. xxvi.

Ευσεβειων παιδεσσι τα λωια δυσσεβειων δ' ου .

*“Good things happen to children of the pious,
but not to those of the irreligious.”*

(b) Allusion to the fact that idolatry is an offence against the state, and is to be punished by the civil magistrate.

“This also (idolatry) were an iniquity to be punished by the judge, for I should have denied the God that is above;” ~~<18328>~~ Job 31:28.

This is supposed to be such a sentiment as a Hebrew only would have employed, as derived from his special institutions, where idolatry was an offence against the state, and was made a capital crime. But there is not the least evidence that in the patriarchal times, and in the country where Job lived, idolatrous worship might not be regarded as a civil offence; and whether it were so or not, there is no reason for surprise that a man who

had a profound veneration for God, and for the honor due to his name, such as Job had, should express the sentiment, that the worship of the sun and moon was a heinous offence, and that pure religion was of so much importance that a violation of its principles ought to be regarded as a crime against society.

(c) Allusions to certain PHRASES such as only a Hebrew would use, and which would be employed only at a later period of the world than the exode. Such phrases are referred to as the following:

“He shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter;” ~~<8017>~~ Job 20:17.

“Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart;” ~~<8222>~~ Job 22:22.

“O that I were in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle;” ~~<8294>~~ Job 29:4.

It is maintained that these are manifest allusions to facts referred to in the books of Moses: that the first refers to the common description of the holy land; the second, to the giving of the law on Sinai; and the third, to the dwelling of the Shekinah, or visible symbol of God, on the tabernacle. To this we may reply, that the first is such common language as was used in the East to denote plenty or abundance, and is manifestly a proverbial expression. It is used by Pindar, Nem.; and is common in the Arabic writers. The second is only such general language as anyone would use who should exhort another to be attentive to the law of God, and has in it manifestly no particular allusion to the method in which the law was given on Sinai. And the third can be shown to have no special reference to the Shekinah or cloud of glory as resting on the tabernacle, nor is it such language as a Hebrew would employ in speaking of it. That cloud is nowhere in the Scripture called “the secret of God,” and the fair meaning of the phrase is, that God came into his dwelling as a friend and counselor, and admitted him familiarly to communion with him; see the notes at ~~<8294>~~ Job 29:4. It was one of the privileges, Job says, of his earlier life that he could regard himself as the friend of God, and that he had clear views of his plans and purposes. Now, those views were withheld, and he was left to darkness and solitude.

(d) Supposed allusions to the miraculous history of the Jewish people.

“Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars;” ^{<18107>}Job 9:7.

Here it is supposed there is allusion to the miracle performed by Joshua in commanding the sun and moon to stand still. But assuredly there is no necessity for supposing that there is a reference to anything miraculous. The idea is, that God has power to cause the sun, the moon, and the stars to shine or not, as he pleases. He can obscure them by clouds, or He can blot them out altogether. Besides, in the account of the miracle performed at the command of Joshua, there is no allusion to the stars.

“He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud;” ^{<18312>}Job 26:12.

Here it is supposed there is an allusion to the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea. But the language does not necessarily demand this interpretation, nor will it admit of it. The word improperly rendered “divideth,” means to awe, to cause to cower, or tremble, and then to be calm or still, and is descriptive of the power which God has over a tempest. See the notes at the verse. There is not the slightest evidence that there is any allusion to the passage through the Red Sea.

“He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness where there is no way;” ^{<18124>}Job 12:24.

“Who can doubt,” says Warburton, “but that these words alluded to the wandering of the Israelites 40 years in the wilderness, as a punishment for their cowardice and diffidence in God’s promises?” But there is no necessary reference to this. Job is speaking of the control which God has over the nations. He has power to frustrate all their counsels, and to defeat all their plans. He can found all the purposes of their princes, and throw their affairs into inextricable confusion. In the original, moreover, the word does not necessarily imply a “wilderness” or desert. The word is **WhTo** ^{<18414>} a word used in ^{<18002>}Genesis 1:2, to denote “emptiness,” or “chaos,” and may here refer to the “confusion” of their counsels and plans; or if it refer to a desert, the allusion is of a general character, meaning that God had power to drive the people from their fixed habitations, and to make them wanderers on the face of the earth.

“I will show thee; hear me; and what I have seen will I declare;
which wise men have told from their fathers, and have not hid it;”
~~-18157-~~Job 15:17,18.

“The very way,” says Warburton, “in which Moses directs the Israelites to preserve the memory of the miraculous works of God.” And the very way, also, it may be replied, in which all ancient history, and all the ancient wisdom from the beginning of the world, was transmitted to posterity. There was no other method of preserving the record of past transactions, but by transmitting the memory of them from father to son; and this was and is, in fact, the method of doing it all over the East. It was by no means confined to the Israelites. “Unto whom alone the earth was given, AND NO STRANGER PASSED AMONGST THEM;” ~~-18159-~~Job 15:19. “A circumstance,” says Warburton, “agreeing to no people whatever but to the Israelites settled in Canaan.” But there is no necessary allusion here to the Israelites. Eliphaz is speaking of the golden age of his country; of the happy and pure times when his ancestors dwelt in the land without being corrupted by the intermingling of foreigners. He says that he will state the result of their wisdom and observation in those pure and happy days, before it could be pretended that their views were corrupted by any foreign admixture; see the notes on the passage. These passages are the strongest instances of what has been adduced to show that in the Book of Job there are allusions to the customs and opinions of the Jews after the exode from Egypt. It would be tedious and unprofitable to go into a particular examination of all those which are referred to by Dr. Warburton. The remark may be made of them all, that they are of so general a character, and that they apply so much to the prevailing manners and customs of the East, that there is no reason for supposing that there is a special reference to the Hebrews. The remaining passages referred to, are ~~-18216-~~Job 22:6; 24:7,9,10; 33:17ff; 34:20; 36:7-12; and ~~-183713-~~Job 37:13. A full examination of these may be seen in Peters’ Critical Dissertation, pp. 32-36.

(3) A third objection to the supposition that the book was composed before the time of the exode, is derived from the use of the word YAHWEH. This word occurs several times in the historical part of the book (~~-18016-~~Job 1:6-9,12,21; 2:1-4,6; 42:1,10,12), and a few times in the body of the poem. The objection is founded on what God says to Moses, ~~-18003-~~Exodus 6:3;

“And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by my name YAHWEH was I not known to them.”

At the burning bush, when he appeared to Moses, he solemnly assumed this name, and directed him to announce him as “I am that I am,” or as YAHWEH. From this it is inferred that, as the name occurs in the book of Job, that book must have been composed subsequently to the time when God appeared to Moses. But this conclusion does not follow, for the following reasons:

(a) It might be true that God was not known to “Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,” by this name, and still the name might have been used by others to designate him.

(b) The name YAHWEH was actually used before this by God himself and by others; ^{<0007>}Genesis 2:7-9,15,16,18,19,21; 3:9, et al; 12:1,4,7,8,17; 13:10,13,14; 15:6,18; 16:9,10,13, et saepe al. If the argument from this, therefore, be valid to prove that the book of Job was not composed before the exode, it will demonstrate that the book of Genesis was also a subsequent production.

(c) But the whole argument is based on a misapprehension of ^{<0008>}Exodus 6:3. The meaning of that passage, since the name YAHWEH was known to the patriarchs, must be

(1) that it was not by this name that he had promulgated his existence, or was publicly and solemnly known. It was a name used in common with other names by them, but which He had in no special way appropriated to Himself, or to which He had affixed no special sacredness. The name which He had Himself more commonly employed was another. Thus when He appeared to Abraham and made Himself known, he said,

“I am the ALMIGHTY GOD; walk before me, and be thou perfect;”
^{<0170>}Genesis 17:1.

So He appeared to Jacob: “I am GOD be fruitful and multiply;”
^{<0151>}Genesis 35:11; compare ^{<0128>}Genesis 28:3; 43:14.

(2) At the bush (Exodus 3; 4:3), God publicly and solemnly assumed the name YAHWEH. He affixed to it a special sacredness. He explained

its meaning, ^{<1084>}Exodus 3:14. He said it was the name by which He intended especially to be known as the God of His people. He invested it with a solemn sacredness, as that by which He chose ever afterward to be known among His people as their God. Other nations had their divinities with different names; the God of the children of Israel was to be known by the special and sacred name YAHWEH. But this solemn assumption of the name is by no means inconsistent with the supposition that He might have used it before, or that it might have been used before in the composition of the Book of Job.

(4) A fourth objection to the supposition that the book was composed before the time of the exode, is, that the name Satan, which occurs in this book, was not known to the Hebrews at so early a date, and that in fact it occurs as a proper name only at a late period of their history. See Warburton's Divine Legation, vol. v. 353ff. In reply to this it may be observed,

(a) that the doctrine of the existence of an evil spirit of the character ascribed in this book to Satan, was early known to the Hebrews. It was known in the time of Ahab, when, it is said, the Lord had put a lying spirit in the mouth of the prophets, (^{<1222>}1 Kings 22:22,23,) and the belief of such an evil spirit must have been early prevalent to explain in any tolerable way the history of the fall. On the meaning of the word, see the notes at ^{<8006>}Job 1:6.

(b) The word "Satan" early occurs in history in the sense of an adversary or accuser, and it was natural to transfer this word to the great adversary. See ^{<0222>}Numbers 22:22. In ^{<8006>}Zechariah 3:1,2, it is used in the same sense as in Job, to denote the great adversary of God appearing before him; see the notes at ^{<8006>}Job 1:6. Here Satan is introduced as a being whose name and character were well known.

(c) It is admitted by Warburton himself (p. 355), that the notion of "an evil demon," or a "fury," was a common opinion among the pagan, even in early ages, though he says it was not admitted among the Hebrews until a late period of their history. But if it prevailed among the pagan, it is possible that the same sentiment might have been understood in Arabia, and that this might at a very early period have been incorporated into the Book of Job. See this whole subject examined in Peters' Critical Dissertation, pp. 80-92. I confess, however, that the answers which Peters and Magee (pp. 322,323) give to this objection, are not perfectly

satisfactory; and that the objection here urged against the composition of the book before the exode, is the most forcible of all those which I have seen. A more thorough investigation of the history of opinions respecting a presiding evil being than I have had access to, seems to be necessary to a full removal of the difficulty. The real difficulty is, not that no such being is elsewhere referred to in the Scriptures; not that his existence is improbable or absurd — for the existence of Satan is no more improbable in itself than that of Nero, Tiberius, Richard III, Alexander VI, or Caesar Borgia, than either of whom he is not much worse; and not that there are no traces of him in the early account in the Bible; — but it is, that while in the Scriptures we have, up to the time of the exode, and indeed long after, only obscure intimations of his existence and character — without any particular designation of his attributes, and without any name being given to him, in the Book of Job he appears with a name apparently in common use; with a definitely formed character; in the full maturity of his plans — a being evidently as well defined as the Satan in the latest periods of the Jewish history. I confess myself unable to account for this, but still do not perceive that there is any impossibility in supposing that this maturity of view in regard to the evil principle might have prevailed in the country of Job at this early period, though no occasion occurred for its statement in the corresponding part of the Jewish history. There may have been such a prevalent belief among the patriarchs, though in the brief records of their opinions and lives no occasion occurred for a record of their belief.

(5) A fifth objection has been derived from the fact that in the Book of Job there is a strong resemblance to many passages in the Psalms, and in the Book of Proverbs, from which it is inferred that it was composed subsequently to those books. Rosenmuller, who has particularly urged this objection, appeals to the following instances of resemblance; ^{<1947D>}Psalm 107:40; compare with ^{<18121>}Job 12:21,24; ^{<1947D>}Psalm 107:42; ^{<181516>}Job 5:16; ^{<19510>}Psalm 65:10; 147:8; ^{<181510>}Job 5:10; ^{<19125>}Psalm 136:25; 147:9; ^{<18381>}Job 38:41; ^{<11081>}Proverbs 8:11; ^{<18312>}Job 28:12; ^{<11017>}Proverbs 1:7; ^{<18388>}Job 28:28; ^{<11051>}Proverbs 15:11; ^{<18316>}Job 26:6; ^{<11016>}Proverbs 26:6; ^{<181516>}Job 15:16; 34:7; ^{<11028>}Proverbs 8:28,29; ^{<18325>}Job 28:25; ^{<11075>}Proverbs 17:25; ^{<181315>}Job 13:5; ^{<11028>}Proverbs 2:18; 21:16; ^{<18315>}Job 26:5; ^{<11018>}Proverbs 28:8; ^{<182716>}Job 27:16,17; ^{<11018>}Proverbs 16:18; 18:12; 29:23; ^{<18229>}Job 22:29; ^{<11035>}Proverbs 8:26-29; 30:4; ^{<18304>}Job 38:4-8; ^{<11017>}Proverbs 10:7; ^{<18117>}Job 20:7. It is unnecessary to go into an examination of these passages, or to attempt to disprove their similarity. There can be no doubt of their very strong resemblance, but still

the question is fairly open, which of these books was first composed, and which, if one has borrowed from another, was the original fountain. Warburton has himself well remarked, that

“if the sacred writers must needs have borrowed trite moral sentences from one another, it may be as fairly said that the authors of the Psalms borrowed from the book of Job, as that the author of Job borrowed from the book of Psalms.” Works, vol. v. 320.

The supposition that the Book of Job was first composed will meet the whole difficulty, so far as one was derived from the other. It should be added, also, that many of these sentiments consist of the common maxims that must have prevailed among a people accustomed to close observation, and habituated to expressing their views in a proverbial form.

I have now noticed at length all the objections which have been urged, which seem to me to have any force, against the supposition that the Book of Job was composed before the exode from Egypt, and have stated the arguments which lead to the supposition that it had so early an origin. The considerations suggested are such as seem to me to leave no rational doubt that the work was composed before the departure from Egypt. The train of thought pursued, therefore, if conclusive, will remove the necessity of all further inquiry into the opinion of Luther, Grotius, and Doederlin, that Solomon was the author; of Umbreit and Noyes, that it was composed by some unknown writer about the period of the captivity; of Warburton, that it was the production of Ezra; and of Rosenmuller, Spanheim, Reimer, Staudlin, and Richter, that it was composed by some Hebrew writer about the time of Solomon. It remains then to inquire whether there are any circumstances which can lead us to determine with any degree of probability who was the author. This inquiry leads us,

IV. In the fourth place, to remark that there are no sufficient indications that the work was composed by Elihu. The opinion that he was the author was held, among others, by Lightfoot. But, independently of the want of any positive evidence which would lead to such a conclusion, there are objections to this opinion which render it in the highest degree improbable. They are found in the argument of Elihu himself. He advances, indeed, with great modesty, but still with extraordinary pretensions to wisdom. He lays claim to direct inspiration, and professes to be able to throw such light on the whole of the perplexed subject as to end the debate. But in the course of his addresses, he introduces but one single idea on the point under

discussion which had not been dwelt on at length by the speakers before. That idea is, that afflictions are designed, not to demonstrate that the sufferer was eminently guilty, as the friends of Job held, but that intended for the benefit of the sufferer himself, and might, therefore, be consistent with true piety. This idea he places in a variety of attitudes; illustrates it with great beauty, and enforces it with great power on the attention of Job; compare the notes at ~~18314~~ Job 33:14-30; 34:31,32; 35:10-15; 36:7-16. But in his speeches Elihu shows no such extraordinary ability as to lead us to suppose that he was the author of the work. He does not appear to have understood the design of the trials that came upon Job; he gives no satisfactory solution of the causes of affliction; he abounds in repetition; his observation of the course of events had been evidently much less profound than that of Eliphaz, and his knowledge of nature was much less extensive than that of Job and the other speakers; and he was evidently as much in the dark in the great question which is discussed throughout the book as the other speakers were. Besides, as Prof. Lee has remarked (p. 44), the belief that Elihu wrote the book is inconsistent with the supposition that the first two chapters and the last chapter were written by the same author who composed the body of the work. He who wrote these chapters manifestly “saw through the whole affair,” and understood the reasons why these trials came upon the patriarch. Those reasons would have been suggested by Elihu in his speech, if he had known them.

V. The supposition that Job himself was the author of the book, though it may have been slightly modified by some one subsequently, will meet all the circumstances of the case. This will agree with its foreign cast and character; with the use of the Arabic words now unknown in Hebrew; with the allusions to the nomadic habits of the times, and to the modes of living, and to the illustrations drawn from sandy plains and deserts; with the statements about the simple modes of worship prevailing, and the notice of the sciences and the arts (see the introduction, section 8), and with the absence of all allusion to the exode, the giving of the law, and the special customs and institutions of the Hebrews. In addition to these general considerations for supposing that Job was the author of the work, the following suggestions may serve to show that this opinion is attended with the highest degree of probability.

(1) Job lived after his calamities 140 years, affording ample leisure to make the record of his trials.

(2) The art of making books was known in his time, and by the patriarch himself, ~~<K&B23>~~ Job 19:23,24; 31:35. In whatever way it was done, whether by engraving on stone or lead, or by the use of more perishable materials, he was not ignorant of the art of making a record of thoughts to be preserved and transmitted to future times. Understanding this art, and having abundant leisure, it is scarcely to be conceived, that he would have failed to make a record of what had occurred during his own remarkable trials.

(3) The whole account was one that would furnish important lessons to mankind, and it is hardly probable that a man who had passed through so unusual a scene would be willing that the recollection of it should be entrusted to uncertain tradition. The strongest arguments which human ingenuity could invent, had been urged on both sides of a great question pertaining to the divine administration; a case of a strongly marked character had happened, similar to what is constantly occurring in the world, in which similar perplexing and embarrassing questions would arise; God had come forth to inculcate the duty of man in this case, and had furnished instruction that would be invaluable in all similar instances; and the result of the whole trial had been such as to furnish the strongest proof that however the righteous are afflicted, their sufferings are not proof that they are deceivers or hypocrites.

(4) The record of his own imperfections and failures is just such as we should expect from Job, on the supposition that he was the author of the book. Nothing is concealed. There is the most fair and full statement of his impatience, his murmuring, his irreverence, and of the rebuke which he received of the Almighty. Thus Moses, too, records his own failings, and, throughout the Scriptures, the sacred writers never attempt to conceal their own infirmities and faults.

(5) Job has shown in his own speeches that he was abundantly able to compose the book. In everything he goes immeasurably beyond all the other speakers, except God; and he who was competent, in trials so severe as his were, to give utterance to the lofty eloquence, the argument, and the poetry now found in his speeches, was not incompetent to make record of them in the long period of health and prosperity which he subsequently enjoyed. Every circumstance, therefore, seems to me to render it probable that Job was the compiler, or perhaps we should rather say, the editor of this remarkable book, with the exception of the record which is made of his own age and death. The speeches were undoubtedly made substantially as

they are recorded, and the work of the author was to collect and edit those speeches, to record his own and that of the Almighty, and to furnish to the whole the proper historical notices, that the argument might be properly understood.

VI. But one other supposition seems necessary to meet all the questions which have been raised in regard to the origin of the work. It is, that Moses adopted it and published it among the Hebrews as a part of divine revelation, and entrusted it to them, with his own writings, to be transmitted to future times. Several circumstances contribute to render this probable.

(1) Moses spent forty years in various parts of Arabia, mostly in the neighborhood of Horeb; and in a country where, if such a work had been in existence, it would be likely to be known.

(2) His talents and previous training at the court of Pharaoh were such as would make him likely to look with interest on any literary document; on any work expressive of the customs, arts, sciences, and religion of another land: and especially on anything having the stamp of uncommon genius.

(3) The work was eminently adapted to be useful to his own countrymen, and could be employed to great advantage in the enterprise which he undertook of delivering them from bondage. It contained an extended examination of the great question which could not but come before their minds — why the people of God were subjected to calamities; it inculcated the necessity of submission without murmuring, under the severest trials; and it showed that God was the friend of his people, though they were long afflicted, and would ultimately bestow upon them abundant prosperity. There is every probability, therefore, that if Moses found such a book in existence, he would have adopted it as an important auxiliary in accomplishing the great work to which he was called. It may be added

(4) that there is every reason to think that Moses was not himself the author of it. This opinion rests on such considerations as these:

(a) The style is not that of Moses. It has more allusion to proverbs, and maxims, and prevailing views of science, than occur in his poetic writings; see Lowth, *Prae. Hebr.* xxxii.; Michaelis, *Nat. et Epim.* p 186, as quoted by Magee, p. 328, and Herder, *Hebrew Poetry*, vol. i. pp. 108, 109.

(b) Moses in his poetry almost invariably used the word YAHWEH as the name of God, rarely that of the Almighty ^{אלהים} ~~yDææ~~; in Job, the word YAHWEH rarely occurs in the body of the poem, some other name for the Deity being almost uniformly employed.

(c) In the book of Job there are numerous instances of words, the roots of which are now obsolete, or which are found only in the Arabic or Chaldee. See Prof. Lee, Intro. p. 50.

(d) The allusions to Arabic customs, opinions, and manners, are not such as would have been likely to be familiar to the mind of Moses. All that he could have learned of them would have been what he acquired, when over forty years of age, in keeping the flocks of his father-in-law Jethro; and though it might be said with plausibility that the forty years which he spent with him might have made him familiar with the habits of Arabia, still, in a poem of this length, we should have expected that these would not have been the only allusions. The most vivid and permanent impressions on the mind are those made in youth; and on the mind of Moses, those impressions had been received in Egypt. the work had been composed by him we should, therefore, bare expected that there would have been frequent allusions that would have betrayed Egyptian origin. But of these there are none, or if there are any which have such an origin, they are such as might have been readily learned from the common reports of travelers. But with all that pertained to the desert, to the keeping of flocks and herds, to the nomadic mode of life, to the poor and needy wanderers there, to the methods of plunder and robbery, the author of the poem shows himself to be perfectly familiar. It seems to me, therefore, that by this train of remarks, we are conducted to a conclusion tended with as much certainty as can be hoped for in the nature of the case, that the work was composed by Job himself in the period of rest and prosperity which succeeded his trials, and came to the knowledge of Moses during his residence in Arabia, and was adopted by him to represent to the Hebrews, in their trials, the duty of submission to the will of God, and to furnish the assurance that he would yet appear to crown with abundant blessings his own people, however much they might be afflicted.

SECTION 5. THE CHARACTER AND THE DESIGN OF THE BOOK

It has long been a question which has excited much interest among those who have written on this book, what is the nature of the poem? That the body of the work is poetic, admits of no doubt; and an attempt was early made to determine the department of poetry to which it belonged. With some, it has been regarded as a regular drama; with others, as an epic poem; and laborious efforts have been made to show, that in its form, spirit, and arrangement, it comes within the limits usually assigned to these kinds of composition. But it cannot be doubted that undue importance has been attached to this question; nor can it be anymore doubted that it cannot fairly be classed with either. It stands by itself — a poem, framed without reference to the Grecian rules of art; composed and published long before the laws of composition were reduced to order, and having, in fact, the characteristics of neither the epic nor the drama. There is nothing that bears an exact resemblance to it in Grecian, in Roman, or in modern literature. As a composition, it has little that resembles the Iliad, the Aeneid, the Jerusalem Delivered, or the Paradise Lost. The design of the author was not to excite interest in the fortunes of the principal person or hero of the poem, nor to exhibit characteristic traits in the other personages introduced, nor conduct a regular action to a determined and important result — as in an epic poem. As little can it be regarded as a regular drama. In its dialogue, indeed, and in the tragic interest which encompasses the character of Job, it has some resemblance to the drama; but this resemblance is incidental to the purpose of the author, and not a part of his main design.

“If the word” (drama), says Eichhorn, Einleit, section 640, “be taken in its most simple meaning, as denoting a dialogue, I would not contend with anyone about the name. But if the word be taken according to the modern acceptation, the poem is not a drama. The drama, according to the modern conceptions, was entirely unknown to the Orientals, and is so little in accordance with their views and customs, that the Arabians, after they become acquainted with the Grecian dramatic learning, would not introduce it among themselves. Casiri, Biblioth. Arabic Escur. T. 1, p. 85. All action is wanting in this poem, for the prologue and epilogue, where there is some action, do not pertain properly to the poem.”

On the question, whether it has the properties of an epic poem, the reader may consult also Eichhorn, *Einleit*, section 640, vol. v, pp. 139ff. Indeed, this whole controversy, to what particular department of poetry this work belongs, which has been waged for centuries almost, has all the characteristics of a logomachy, and, if determined, would do little in explanation of the book. Those who are disposed to prosecute the inquiry, may find a full discussion in Lowth's *Lectures on Hebrew Poetry*, Lecture xxxii—xxxiv: Warburton's *Divine Legation*, B. VI. section 2; Herder's *Hebrew Poetry*, Dial. IV. 5; and Dr. Good's *Introduction*.

Instead of entering into the controversy respecting the nature of the poem, it will be more useful to state what seems to be the design of the book, and the form which the poem actually presents. Having this object before the mind distinctly, it will be easy for anyone to give it such a classification in the various departments of poetry, as shall seem to him to be most accordant with truth. In order to understand this poem, it is important to have before the mind a clear conception of the peculiarities of the poetry of the Hebrews. I shall, therefore, enter here into a somewhat detailed explanation of a subject that is important to every student of the Scriptures.

Much has been written on the subject of Hebrew poetry, and yet there is no department of Scriptural investigation which has been pursued with less encouraging success. Almost nothing has been done to throw light on it since the time of Lowth, and it must be admitted that he has left many questions almost entirely unsettled. It is still asked, What constitutes the peculiarity of Hebrew poetry? Is it to be found in rhythm? Are the various kinds of poetry, which occur in the writings of other nations, to be found in the compositions of the Hebrews? How does their poetry differ from the more elevated parts of their prose writings? And as the one sometimes seems to slide insensibly into the other, how shall it be known where the one ends and the other begins?

In regard to these questions, it may be observed:

(1) That the poetry of the Hebrews is not constituted by rhyme. The same remark, it is obvious, might be made respecting the poetry of all other people. Rhyme, or the occurrence of similar sounds at the close of the lines, is an artifice of modern origin, and of doubtful advantage. The reader need not be informed that it does not occur in Homer or Hesiod; in Virgil or Ovid; in the *Paradise Lost*, or in the *Task*. The highest kind of poetry

exists without rhyme, and it has been made a question whether its use might not have been dispensed with altogether.

It is certain that rhyme does not constitute the uniqueness of Hebrew poetry, for in the few cases where it occurs in the Hebrew Scriptures, it seems to have been the result of accident rather than design. Something like rhyme can, indeed, be discovered in cases like the following:

hwōy^{<h3068>}, l aæ^{<h408>} āaa^{<h639>} j kyæ^{<h3198>}; l aæ^{<h408>} hmj e^{<h2534>} rsæ^{<h3256>}
^{<h912>} Psalm 6:2 (1).

hm^{<h4100>}, vwōa^{<h582>} yki^{<h3588>} rkæ^{<h2142>}? ^Be^{<h1121>} µda^{<h120>}, yki^{<h3588>}
 rqpæ^{<h6485>}? ^{<h985>} Psalm 8:5 (4).

l aæ^{<h408>} hrj^{<h2734>} [[æ^{<h7489>}, l aæ^{<h408>} anq^{<h7065>} [v]^{<h7563>}.
^{<h1019>} Proverbs 24:19

j l æ^{<h7971>} Ēl m^{<h4428>}, rtæ^{<h5425>}, l vœ^{<h4910>} µ[æ^{<h5971>} j tœ^{<h6605>}. ^{<h9830>} Psalm
 105:20.

In ^{<h3106>}Isaiah 10:6 the two subdivisions of the first clause of the verse rhyme together:

ywō^{<h1471>} ānj^{<h2611>}, j l æ^{<h7971>}. l [æ^{<h5921>} µ[æ^{<h5971>} hrpI^{<h5678>}, hwx^{<h6680>}.

So in ^{<h2506>}Isaiah 53:6:

l kō^{<h3605>} ^aa^{<h6629>} h[;T^{<h8582>}. vyai^{<h376>} ĒrD^{<h1870>} hnp^{<h6437>}.

So the two last clauses in ^{<h3109>}Isaiah 1:9; 44:3, and Psalm 15:8. The two principal clauses of the verse rhyme in ^{<h1060>}Proverbs 6:1,2; ^{<h1019>}Job 6:9; ^{<h2029>}Isaiah 1:29. In one instance three rhymes are to be found in a sentence, as in ^{<h3025>}Isaiah 1:25:

bllv^{<h7725>} dy^{<h3027>} l [æ^{<h5921>} ! āræ^{<h6884>} rBō^{<h1252>} gysi^{<h5509>} ! rws^{<h5493>}
 l kō^{<h3605>} l ydB^{<h913>} !

Other instances of a similar kind may be found in the dissertation of Theodore Ebert on the rules of Hebrew measure and rhythm, in Ugolin's Thes. Sac. Ant, tom. xxxi. pp. 20,21. The cases, however, which occur in the poetry of the Hebrews where rhyme at the end of verses is apparent, are too few to lead us to suppose that it was designed by the writers, and

they are probably only such as would occur had an effort to write in the form of rhyme never been known.

(2) The poetry of the Hebrews is not constituted by rhythm. Rhythm has reference to the admeasurement of the lines of poetry by feet and numbers, and relates to the length and shortness of the syllables, and to the regular succession of one after another. It is the rule in composition which aims to reduce its various and resisting elements to unity and harmony. DeWette, *Einlei.* pp. 51,52. The rules in regard to this pertain to quantity, inflection, accentuation, and the arrangement of the members and parts of a period. Metre of some kind has been regarded as almost necessary to poetry, and the care of the ancient Greek and Latin poets in regard to it is well known. It has been made a question of much interest whether such laws prevail in the Hebrew poetry; and whether, if it ever existed, it is possible to trace it now. Carpzov, Ebert, and Lowth, maintained that such meter or rhythm must have existed, though it is now lost to us. Lowth (*Lectures on Hebrew Poetry*, III) maintains that "the Hebrew writings are not only animated with the true poetic spirit, but are in some degree confined to numbers;" that properties altogether unique to metrical composition are found; that the Hebrew poets use, like the Greeks, "glosses," or expressions taken from foreign languages, and adopt a special form in the termination of words, so as to form a poetical dialect; but that as to the "quantity, rhythm, or modulation," it is hopeless now to attempt to recover it, "the true pronunciation being now lost." Similar views are expressed by Pfeiffer (*Ueber d. Musik d. alten Hebrew* p. xvi.); Bauer (cited in *A. T.* p. 358, following); Jahn (*Bibl. Arch. Thessalonians I. B. I.*); and Meyer, *Hermen. des A. T.* ii. 329; compare De Wette, *Einleit.* p. 45. Josephus affirmed that in Hebrew poetry are to be found both hexameter and tetrameter verses. *Ant. B. II. chap. 16: Section 4; B. VII. chap. 12: Section 3.* "Philo, in several passages of his writings, maintains that Moses was acquainted with meter." Nordheimer, *Hebrew Gram.* vol. ii. p. 319. Gomarus, Hare, Greve, and several others of equal celebrity, have sought to ascertain the laws of meter in Hebrew poetry, but without success. If it ever existed, it is now hopeless to attempt to recover it. There is little evidence that we have the correct pronunciation of the language; the laws of meter are now unknown, and there is no way of ascertaining them. Indeed, the evidence is not satisfactory that any such laws ever existed. The assertions of Josephus and Philo can be easily accounted for. They were Jews, proud of their own language; and supposing, justly, that the

poetry of their sacred bards was equal to any which could be produced in the writings of the Romans or the Greeks, they were anxious to show that it had all the properties of poetry existing among them. Yet in their time, it was a settled rule among the Greeks and Romans that poetry was known by its rhythm, by its accurate and careful admeasurement of numbers, and its harmonious and graceful flow of measure. Nothing was more natural, therefore, than that they should affirm that the same thing existed in the Hebrew poetry, and that portions of it could be adduced which for beauty and grace of measure would equal the boasted productions of Greece and Rome. That specimens might have been produced capable of being measured by feet, no one can disprove; and yet this may not have been at all a leading object in the poetry of the Hebrews. It should be remembered, that that Hebrew poetry is the oldest now extant; that it was composed long before the artificial rules known in Greece and Rome were in existence; that it was designed to express the sentiments of the earliest period of the world when all was fresh and new; and that we are to look for less attention to the rules of composition than in a more cultivated and artificial age. Indications of art there are indeed in the alphabetical poems, and in the carefully constructed parallelisms, but it is not the art of rhythm or meter.

(3) It is not a characteristic of Hebrew poetry, that it is formed according to the regular laws of composition which fetter the poets of more modern times. There are, indeed, lyric and elegiac poems of exquisite beauty and tenderness. But there is no regular epic poem, for although their early history furnished finer materials for such a poem than the occurrences celebrated in either the Iliad or the Aeneid, it seems never to have occurred to them to attempt to mould those materials into the form of a heroic poem. The Hebrews had no dramatic poetry. The stage was unknown among them, and indeed was unknown among the Greeks until long after the time when the most celebrated of the Hebrew poets lived. We are not to look, therefore, for the characteristics of Hebrew poetry in the stately modes of composition which occur in other languages.

If it be asked, then, what are the characteristics of Hebrew poetry; how does it differ from prose; how can its existence be determined, we may reply,

(1) It consists in the nature of the subjects which are treated; in the ornate and elevated character of the style; in the sententious manner of expression;

and in certain peculiarities in the structure of sentences and the choice of words which are found only in poetry, which will be noticed hereafter.

(2) It is the language of nature in the early periods of the world, expressing itself in the form of surprise, astonishment, exultation, triumph — the outpouring of a mind raised by excitement above its ordinary tone of feeling. The prose writer expresses himself in a calm and tranquil manner when free from the influence of strong excitement. His sedate emotions are reflected in the language which he uses. The poet is animated. His mind is excited. Every faculty of the soul is brought into exercise. His heart is full; his imagination glows; his associations are rapid; and the soul pours forth its emotions in language figurative, concise, abrupt. The boldest metaphors are sought; the terms expressing deepest intensity of feeling suggest themselves to the mind; or language most beautiful, tender, and soothing, expresses the emotions of sorrow or of love. It is in the Hebrew poetry more strikingly than anywhere else, that we perceive the evidence of the intensity with which objects struck the imagination in the early periods of the world; and nowhere do we find such examples of sublimity and power as there.

(3) The language of poetry is distinguished from prose by the effort which is made to express the ideas, and by the form which that effort gives. Sometimes we have merely a glimpse of the thought or the object, which it is left for the imagination to fill up. Sometimes the thought is repeated, thrown into a new form, modified, or merely echoed from the first attempt to express it. The mind, full of the conception, labors to give utterance to it, and in the effort there may be repetition, or a slight variation in the words, or an attempt to show its force by striking contrast. It is from this effort of the mind that there was originated the principal peculiarity of the Hebrew poetry, exhibited in the form of parallelism.

This general characteristic of poetry in all languages, manifests itself in some special form in accordance with the character of a people or with prevailing taste, or in imitation of some distinguished writer. Some artificial rules are adopted, in accordance with which the poetic spirit is manifested. In one country or age this may be by rhyme; in another, by the rhythm of measured feet or numbers; at one time, it may be by simple “blank verse;” at another, by the smoothness and harmony of similar endings. The elegy, the eclogue, the pastoral, the lyric, the tragic, the epic, may all be employed, and in all the poetic spirit may reign. The Greeks and Romans

employed rhythm, and reduced the laws of poetic feet and numbers to the severest rules; rhyme has been since invented for similar purposes, and occupies a large place in modern poetry; while another form still may be found in the Hebrew, the Arabic, and the Persian poetry. In some countries and times the artificial rules may be few and little complicated; in others they may be numerous and wrought up with the highest skill of art. One mode may be adapted to the taste of one people, and another to that of another; and still the essential characteristics of poetry be found in all. Nay, one artificial mode of poetry that is now obsolete may be in itself as reasonable and valuable as another that is retained, and no reason can be given except that the tastes of men change by time, circumstances, and fashion. The parallelism of the Hebrew may be as poetic in its character, and as rational in itself, as the rhyme; perhaps it may be better adapted to express the conceptions of the highest kind of poetry. The apparently cumbrous versification of Spenser may have as much poetic merit as the numbers of Pope, and the time may come when that stanza shall be restored to the honor which it once possessed as the medium of the poetic sentiment.

We are not, therefore, to judge Hebrew poetry by our artificial forms. We are not to say, because it lacks the ornament of rhyme, or because it cannot now be reduced to the laws of poetic numbers which are applied to Homer or Virgil, that therefore it is destitute of the true spirit of poetry. We are to inquire whether it have the elevated conceptions, the sublime thoughts, the grandeur of imagery, the tenderness and sweetness, the beauty of description, and the power to rouse the soul, which are every where recognized as the characteristic of poetry. We are then to inquire, what modes the ancient bards chose as the forms in which they should embody their conceptions; — perhaps as an incidental inquiry we are to ask whether those forms are not adapted to the age and land in which they occur, as really as the forms now most admired may be to our own. This inquiry has never been pursued as it should have been, and this is not the place in which to prosecute it. The inquiry which is proper here is, only, in what artificial forms the spirit of poetry among the Hebrews was embodied and preserved. What rules had they according to which to record their poetic conceptions?

Hebrew poetry appears, then, under the following artificial forms.

1. In an alphabetical arrangement. We have something like this in the acrostic, where each line begins with a letter of a certain word. The Hebrew poets sometimes adopted a similar method, by commencing each line with one of the letters of the alphabet; or where every alternate verse began with succeeding letter; or where a series of verses have the same initial letters. This artificial mode of composition appears with several modifications.

(a) Commonly each verse begins with one of the successive letters of the alphabet, and the number of the verses is, therefore, the same as the number of Hebrew letters. This occurs in ^{אבג}Proverbs 31:10-31, where the order of the letters is exactly observed, and Lamentations 1: This is the case, also, in Psalm 25, except that two verses begin with 'aleph (a); and none with beth (b); the waw (w) and qoph (q) are missing, and two verses begin with resh (r); and at the close after the taw (t) a line beginning with pe (p) occurs. So in ^{אבג}Lamentations 2:4, except that pe (p) and `ayin (ʿ) are exchanged in their places. In like manner, in Psalm 34, which is constructed on this plan, the waw (w) is lacking, and the psalm concludes with a line beginning with pe (p). In Psalm 145 the order is exactly observed, except that nun (n) is missing.

(b) In Psalm 37 there are evidences of a more artificial structure, though it is not wholly regular. The psalm consists of 40 verses, and it would seem that it was the original conception that the letter kaph (k) should precede each of the letters of the alphabet in the beginning of the verse. The order of letters is the following: 'aleph (a), kaph (k), beth (b), waw (w), gimel (g), waw (w), daleth (d), he (h), kaph (k), waw (w), waw (w), zayin (z), 'aleph (a), taw (t), cheth (j), Teth (T), kaph (k), yodh (y), lamedh (l), kaph (k), lamedh (l), kaph (k), mem (m), kaph (k), nun (n), kaph (k), camekh (s), kaph (k), tsade (x), pe (p), he (h), tsade (x), yodh (y), qoph (q), resh (r), waw (w), shin (v), waw (w), waw (w), waw (w). The psalm, it will at once be seen, is quite irregular, though the general order of the letters of the alphabet is observed. It now impossible to explain the cause of the irregularity.

(c) Another form is found in Psalm 111; Psalm 12. In these Psalms the half-verses are alphabetically arranged, or every half-verse or member begins with a new letter of the alphabet. These Psalms are regular in their

structure, and the series occurs in the exact order of the letters of the alphabet.

(d) In Lamentations 3 and Psalm 119 another alphabetical (still more artificial) form appears. In Lamentations, three verses in succession begin with one of the letters of the alphabet, followed by three more verses beginning with succeeding letter, and so on through the alphabet; except that, as in Lamentations 2; Lamentations 4, pe (פ) and `ayin (א) change places. In Psalm 119 the same arrangement extends through eight successive verses, dividing the whole Psalm into alphabetical strophes of that number of verses.

What was the design of this arrangement is now unknown. Michaelis supposes that it was at first a device employed in the funeral dirge to aid mourners; and DeWette, that it was owing to a vitiated taste. Lowth supposes that it was confined to those compositions which consisted of detached maxims, or sentiments without any express order or connection, and that the whole arrangement was to assist the memory. It seems to me that it must be regarded as a mere matter of taste — and certainly of taste quite as elevated and rational as the rhyme or the acrostic are with moderns. That it was not adopted to aid the memory is apparent, because it is found in very few of the poetical compositions of the Hebrews; while if this were the object, we should expect to find it extended to all. For a similar reason it could not have been designed, as Michaelis supposes, to aid in funeral dirges, for it is found in no funeral dirges, unless the “Lamentations” be regarded as such. Nor can the supposition of Lowth be correct, for in Psalm 25; 37; 111; 112; 145 there is as close a connection of sentiment as occurs in any of the Psalms; and indeed some of them are quite remarkable for the continuity of thought and singleness of design. There are many artificial modes of poetry in all languages which can be accounted for on no other principle than that they are mere matters of taste; and they who censure this form of Hebrew poetry, should inquire whether the censure should be withheld from many forms of poetry existing in the best writings of modern times.

II. An artificial form of poetry is observable in a few instances where complex rhythmical period or strophe occurs. The uniqueness of this form is, that the same verse or sentiment is repeated at somewhat distant intervals, or after the recurrence of about the same number of verses. Whether this intercalary verse (Germ. *Schaltvers*) was designed to aid the

memory, or to be sung by a part of a choir, or was regarded as a mere poetic ornament, cannot now be determined. An instance occurs in Psalm 42; 43: After the first four verses, the following occurs:

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.”

After five verses, the same verse occurs with a slight variation, and after four verses more it occurs again in the same manner, showing that it was intended to close a strophe, or large period. The same thing occurs in Psalm 112; where the Psalm is divided into unequal portions by the recurrence of the same sentiment,

“O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.”

This occurs after ^{<RB1>}Psalm 112:1-7,9-14,16-20,22-30. Gesenius supposes that a part of Solomon’s Song is composed in the same manner. One instance of tilts occurs in Isaiah. It is in ^{<RB2>}Job 9:8-21; 10:1-4. After each strophe, consisting of four or five verses, the following sentiment is repeated: “For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still;” ^{<RB2>}Job 9:12,17; 10:4; Amos 1:3-15; 2:1-6; is constructed in the same artificial manner.

III. A third artificial form of poetry occurs in the rhythm of gradation (DeWette, Stufenrhythmus), and is found mainly in the “Psalms of Degrees.” It consists in this, that the thought or expression of the preceding verse is resumed and carried forward in the next. An instance of this occurs in Psalm 121:

^{<RB1>}Psalm 121:1. I lift up mine eyes unto the hills;
From whence will my help come?

^{<RB1>}Psalm 121:2. My help cometh from YAHWEH,
The Creator of heaven and earth.

^{<RB1>}Psalm 121:3. He suffereth not thy foot to be moved;
Thy keeper slumbereth not.

^{<RB1>}Psalm 121:4. Lo! he slumbereth not, nor sleepeth
The keeper of Israel.

~~<BC15>~~ Psalm 121:5. YAHWEH is thy keeper;
YAHWEH thy shade is at thy right hand.

~~<BC16>~~ Psalm 121:6. The sun shall not smite thee by day,
Nor the moon by night.

~~<BC17>~~ Psalm 121:7. YAHWEH preserveth thee from all evil,
Preserveth thy soul.

~~<BC18>~~ Psalm 121:8. YAHWEH preserveth thy going out and thy coming
in,
From this time forth and forevermore.

These “Songs of Degrees” are fifteen in number, extending from Psalm 120—134. The same characteristics may be found in them all, and it is probable that they derived their name from this artificial structure, and not because they were sung as the tribes were going up to Jerusalem. The song of Deborah (Judges 5) is constructed on this principle, as the following specimens will show:

~~<BC19>~~ Judges 5:4. Lord, when thou wentest out of Seir, When thou
marchedst out of the field of Edom, The earth trembled, And the
heavens dropped, The clouds also dropped water.

~~<BC20>~~ Judges 5:5. The mountains melted before the Lord, Even that
Sinai, from before the Lord God of Israel.

~~<BC21>~~ Judges 5:3. The inhabitants of the villages ceased, They ceased
in Israel. Until that I Deborah arose, That I arose a mother in Israel.

~~<BC22>~~ Judges 5:20. They fought from heaven, The stars in their
courses fought against Sisera.

~~<BC23>~~ Judges 5:21. The river of Kishon swept thom away, That
ancient river, the river Kishon.

~~<BC24>~~ Judges 5:22. Then were the horse-hoofs broken by means of the
prancings, The prancings of their mighty ones, etc. etc.

An instance of this artificial arrangement occurs in ~~<BC25>~~ Isaiah 26:5,6:

*The lofty city he layeth it low,
Hath laid it low to the ground,
He hath leveled it to the dust,
The foot shall trample on it,
The feet of the poor, the steps of the needy.*

IV. The grand uniqueness of the Hebrew poetry, however, is the parallelism. This form of composition, which seems to us to be artificial in a high degree, consists in the repetition of the main thought usually with some modification. It arose from such circumstances as the following.

(1) The Hebrew poetry, in the main, was composed at a very early period of the world, and at that point of intellectual cultivation when the mind is in a condition to seize only certain simple and general relations of things, and to express them strongly.

(2) The mind is supposed to be struck with wonder and to be highly excited. The object presented is new and strange, and the soul with elevated and glowing conceptions.

(3) In this state, the mind naturally expresses itself in short sentences, and is apt merely to repeat the idea. It is not in a condition to observe minute relations, but seeks to express the thought in the most impressive and forcible manner possible. The speaker struggles with language; the words are slow to adapt themselves to the thought; and the principal idea is expressed and dwelt upon with earnestness. The object is to express the glowing conception of the mind; and that object is effected by repetition, by the addition of a slight circumstance, by comparison, or by contrast with some other subject. Sometimes in this effort to express the main thought, the secondary expression will be little more than the echo of the first attempt; sometimes it will greatly excel it in force and brilliancy; sometimes some striking and beautiful conception will be appended; sometimes, to heighten the impression, the main idea will be expressed in contrast with some other. In all these cases the form of short sentences will be preserved: though the number and modes of the efforts made to give expression to the main thought may be greatly varied. These circumstances gave rise to the parallelism, which became the favorite form of poetry among the Hebrews, and which abounds so much in every part of the Old Testament.

Various divisions have been made of the parallelism, and to a considerable extent those divisions must be arbitrary. Lowth (Prel. Diss. to Isaiah, and

Lectures on Hebrew Poetry, xix.) reduces the parallelism to three kinds — synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic, This division has been adopted by Nordheimer (Gram. vol. ii. pp. 323, following), and by writers on Hebrew poetry in general. DeWette (Einleit. 56-63) has suggested four kinds of parallelism, as embracing the forms which exist in the Old Testament. They are:

- (I)** when there is an equality of words;
- (II)** when the words are not equal: divided into
 - (1)** the simple unequal parallelism, and
 - (2)** the complex unequal parallelism, embracing
 - (a)** the synonymous,
 - (b)** the antithetic, and
 - (c)** the synthetic;
 - (3)** instances where the simple member is disproportionably small;
 - (4)** cases where the complex member is increased to three or four propositions; and
 - (5)** cases where there is a short clause or supplement, for the most part in the second member.

III. Parallelism when both the members are complex; embracing also

- (a)** the synonymous;
- (b)** the antithetic; and
- (c)** the synthetic.

IV. Rhythmical parallelism, when it consists not in the thought but in the form of the period. Under this last form of parallelism, DeWette supposes that the Lamentations of Jeremiah should be nearly all ranged.

Without adopting precisely either of the arrangements above referred to, the following classification will probably include all the modes in which the parallelism occurs in the Scriptures, being substantially the same as that of Lowth.

I. The synonymous parallelism. In this, the second clause is a repetition of the first. This occurs under considerable variety in regard to the length of the members.

(a) The repetition is nearly in the same words, or where a single word may be changed. Thus in ^{<2351>}Isaiah 15:1, where the subject alone is changed:

*Verily, by a nightly assault,
Ar of Moab is laid waste and ruined!
Verily, by a nightly assault,
Kir of Moab is laid waste and ruined!*

In ^{<1112>}Proverbs 6:2 the verb only is changed:

*Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth;
Thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.*

Sometimes an idea is only partially expressed in the first clause; in the second this is repeated, and the sentence brought to a close, as in ^{<5941>}Psalms 94:1:

*God of vengeance — YAHWEH!
God of vengeance — shine forth.*

In ^{<5941>}Psalms 93:3, the entire sentence is again repeated in a varied form:

*The floods have lifted up, O YAHWEH
The floods have lifted up their voice;
The floods lift up their waves.*

(b) In this parallelism there is often an equality in the words, at least in their number. Thus in the song of Lamech, ^{<1023>}Genesis 4:23:

*Adah and Zillah, hear my voice! Wives of Lamech, receive my
speech! If I have slain a man to my wounding, And a young man to
my hurt; If Cain was avenged seven times, Then Lamech — seventy
times seven.*

Thus, also in ^{<1015>}Job 6:5:

*Doth the wild donkey bray over his grass?
Doth the ox low over his fodder?*

Such instances occur often in the Scriptures, and perhaps this may be considered the original form of the parallelism.

(c) In the synonymous parallelism, as in other forms also, there is often great inequality in the number of the words. These instances seem to have occurred where it was desirable to give emphasis to the thought by the utmost brevity in one of the members, while, perhaps, in the other member, the thought is dwelt upon or repeated. Thus, in ^{<1582>}Psalm 68:32:

Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto
YAHWEH.

So in ^{<1909>}Psalm 40:9, where the simple member is disproportionately small, and the inequality, therefore, still more striking:

I proclaim thy righteousness in the great congregation, Lo! I refrain
not my lips O Lord, thou knowest:

So in ^{<1808>}Job 10:1, where the principal emphatic thought is followed by a parallelism, stating what was proper in view of the fact of which he complained:

*I am weary of my life:
Therefore will I give loose to my complaints;
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.*

(d) The idea is expressed in the form of a climax, where the thought rises and becomes more emphatic. This climax sometimes is found in the verbs used. Thus in ^{<1927>}Psalm 22:27:

All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord; And
all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

For the sake of emphasis, the verb of the first clause is sometimes placed the commencement, and the corresponding one of the second at the termination. ^{<2381>}Isaiah 35:3:

Strengthen the weak hands; And the tottering knees make firm.

A climax in thought often occurs, as in this instance, ^{<2541>}Isaiah 54:4:

Fear not, for thou shalt not be confounded; And blush not, for thou
shalt not be put to shame For thou shalt forget the shame of thy
youth, And the reproach of thy widowhood shalt thou remember no
more.

(e) We meet with double parallelisms, or cases where each clause of a verse corresponds with each clause of the member preceding, as in ^{<4983>}Psalm 33:13,14.

From heaven the Lord looks down, He sees all the sons of men;
From his dwelling-place he looks Upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

So in ^{<2015>}Isaiah 1:15:

*When ye spread forth your hands
I will hide mine eyes from you;
When ye multiply prayers,
I will not hearken.*

Sometimes the second parallelism contains the cause of what is stated in the preceding ^{<2610>}Isaiah 61:10:

I will greatly rejoice in YAHWEH; My soul shall exult in my God:
For he hath clothed me, with the garments of salvation; He hath covered me with the mantle of righteousness.

Or the first contains a comparison, and the second the thing compare ^{<2611>}Isaiah 61:11:

For as the earth putteth for her tender shoots, And as a garden causes its seed to germinate; So the Lord YAHWEH will cause righteousness to germinate, And praise before all the nations.

(f) This form of parallelism — the synonymous, admits of five lines, and often employs them with great elegance. Thus in ^{<2015>}Isaiah 1:15, quoted above, where the fifth line is given as a reason for what is affirmed in the second and fourth:

And when ye spread forth yoder hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; And when ye multiply prayers, I will not hear: Your hands are full of blood!

In the stanza of five lines the odd line may come in between the two distichs. Thus in ^{<2407>}Isaiah 46:7:

They bear him upon the shoulder and they carry him; They set him in his place, and there he standeth; From his place shall he not remove — Yea, one cries unto him, and he does not answer; Nor save him out of his trouble.

So, also, in ^{<2800>}Isaiah 50:10:

Who is there among you that feareth YAHWEH, That obeyeth the voice of his servant, Who walketh in darkness and seeth no light? Let him trust in the name of YAHWEH; Let him stay himself upon his God.

II. A second form of the parallelism is the antithetic, in which the idea contained in the second clause is the converse of that in the first. This appears also with various modifications.

(a) It occurs in a simple form. ^{<2000>}Proverbs 10:1:

*A wise son rejoiceth his father;
But a foolish son is the grief of his mother.*

(b) A form of antithesis occurs in which the second clause is the consequence of the first. ^{<2019>}Isaiah 1:19,20:

If ye be willing and obedient, Ye shall eat the good of the land; But if ye refuse and rebel, Ye shall be devoured with the sword.

(c) Occasionally we meet with a double synonym and a double antithesis. ^{<2003>}Isaiah 1:3:

The ox knoweth his owner, And the donkey the crib of his master; Israel knoweth not, My people understand not.

(d) Sometimes there is an alternate correspondence in the antithesis, ^{<0412>}Psalms 44:2:

Thou didst drive out the pagan with thy hand, And plantedst those; Didst destroy the nations, And enlargedst those.—DeWette's translation.

(e) A double antithetical form of the parallelism is not uncommon in the prophets. A very beautiful parallelism of this kind occurs in ^{<3017>}Habakkuk 3:17,18:

Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, Neither shall fruit be in the vines; The buds of the olive shall fail, And the fields shall yield no bread; The flock shall be cut off from the fold, And there shall be no herd in the stall; Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

Compare ^{<2090>}Isaiah 9:10.

The bricks are fallen down, But we will build with hewn stone; The sycamores are cast down, But we will replace them with cedars.

III. The third form of the parallelism is that which is denominated by Lowth, the synthetic. In this, the parallelism consists only in the similar form of construction; where there is

“a correspondence and equality between different propositions in respect to the shape and turn of the whole sentence, such as noun answering to noun, verb to verb, member to member, negative to negative, interrogative to interrogative.” Lowth.

The poet, instead of merely echoing the former sentiment, or placing it in contrast, forces his thought by accessory ideas and modifications. A general proposition is stated, and the sentiment is amplified or dwelt upon in detail. Thus in ^{<2005>}Isaiah 1:5-9 the description of the punishment brought upon the Hebrews is continued through several verses, each heightening the effect of the preceding:

The whole head is sick, the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; It is wound, and bruise, and running sore; They have neither pressed it nor bound it up, Neither hath it been softened with ointment. Your country is desolate; Your cities are burnt with fire: Your land — strangers devour it in your presence, And it is desolation, like the overturning produced by enemies.

So in ^{<2805>}Isaiah 58:6 following:

Is not this the fast that I approve: To loose the bands of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To free the oppressed, And to break asunder every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, And to bring the poor that are cast out, into thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou clothe him, And that thou hide not thyself from thine own kindred?

A beautiful specimen of this kind of amplification occurs in the powerful passage in ^{<RB>}Job 3:3-9; where he curses the day of his birth, and where he amplifies the thought with which he commences in the most impressive and solemn manner:

O that the day might have perished in which I was born, And the night which said, "A male child is conceived." Let that day be darkness, Let not God inquire after it from on high! Yea, let not the light shine upon it! Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; Let a cloud dwell upon, Let whatever darkens the day terrify it!

Examples of this kind of parallelism occur in abundance in the Scriptures and especially in the prophets.

Under this head may be included also a species of alternate parallelism, a form of poetic composition not uncommon. The following are specimens.

^{<SB>}Isaiah 51:19:

These two things are come upon thee; Who shall bemoan thee?
Desolation and destruction, famine and the sword; How shall I comfort thee?

That is, taken alternately, desolation by famine, and destruction by sword.

^{<SB>}Song of Solomon 1:5:

I am black, but yet beautiful, O daughters of Jerusahem; Like the tents of Kedar, like the pavilions of Solomon.

That is, black as the tents of Kedar; beautiful as the pavilions of Solomon.

Under this head, also, may be mentioned a form of parallelism, of a highly artificial kind, called the introverted parallelism, where the fourth member answers to the first, and the third to the second. An instance of this kind occurs in the New Testament; ^{<SB>}Matthew 7:6:

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, Neither cast ye your pearls before swine; Lest they trample them under their feet, And turn again and rend you.

Here it is the dogs mentioned in the first member which in the fourth it said would turn and rend them; and the swine which it is said in the third member would trample under their feet the pearls mentioned in the second.

It may be added here, that the Arabic has no parallelism of members, the Hebrew has, though both the modern Arabic and Persian have rhyme. Pococke, however, regards the Arabic meter as a late invention, and probably everywhere rhyme was invented long after poetry had existence in other forms.

In reading the Bible, it is of importance to understand the laws of poetic parallelism, for it often furnishes important facilities in interpretation. One member often expresses substantially the same sense as its parallel, and difficult words and phrases are thus rendered susceptible of easy explanation. The subject of Hebrew poetry is confessedly one of the most difficult pertaining to the study of the Bible, and all that is hoped from the above observations is to furnish some principles which may be applied in the study of the sacred Scriptures. Those who are desirous of pursuing the investigation further may consult the following works:

Lowth's Introduction to Isaiah, and Lectures on Hebrew Poetry, particularly Lec. xix.; The Spirit of Hebrew Poetry, by John G. Herder, translated by James Marsh, 2 vols. 12mo.; DeWette, Einleitung in die Psalmen (translated in the Biblical Repository, vol. iii. p. 445, following); Nordheimer's Hebrew Grammar, vol. ii. p. 320, following; Theod. Eberti Poetica Hebraica; Davidis Lyra, autore Francisco Gomaro; Augusti Pfeifferi Diatribe de Poesi Hebrew; and Francis Hare on the Psalms, found in Ugolin's Thesau.; Sac. Ant., tom. 31:

In reference to the poetry in the book of Job, the following characteristics are discernible.

I. The leading feature of the Hebrew poetry — the parallelism — is observed with great strictness and perfection. In no part of the Old Testament are there more perfect specimens of this mode of composition. The parallels are, indeed, in general, of the more simple forms — where the second member corresponds with the first with some slight modification of

the meaning; and the instances are very rare, if they occur at all, where the more labored and artificial forms of the parallelism occur. Indeed, it may be doubted whether one instance of the introverted parallelism occurs in the book. This circumstance marks the early age of the poetry, and is an additional consideration to show that the book had an early origin.

II. Besides the parallelism, the poem bears the marks of a regular design or plan in its composition, and is constructed with a rigid adherence to the purpose which was in the mind of the author. I refer to the tripartite division of the book, and to the regularity observed in that division. The trichotomy appears not only in respect to the longer divisions of the book, but also in respect to most of its minuter subdivisions. Thus, we have in the grand division of the book

- (1) the prologue;
- (2) the poem proper; and
- (3) the epilogue, or the conclusion.

The poem presents also three leading divisions,

- (1) the dispute or controversy of Job and his three friends;
- (2) the address of Elihu, who proffers himself as umpire; and
- (3) the address of God, who decides the controversy.

In the controversy between Job and his friends, we find the same artificial arrangement. There are three series in the controversy, each having the same order, and without any deviation, except that in the last of the series, Zophar, whose turn it was to speak, fails to respond. No poem in any language exhibits a more artificial structure than this, and as this is the most striking feature in it, it may be proper to exhibit it at one view.

I. The first series of the argument, Job 4—14.

- (1) With Eliphaz, Job 4—7.
 - (a) Speech of Eliphaz, Job 4; 5.
 - (b) Reply of Job, Job 6; 7.
- (2) With Bildad, Job 8—10.

- (a) Speech of Bildad, Job 8.
- (b) Reply of Job, Job 9; 10.
- (3) With Zophar, Job 11—14.
- (a) Speech of Zophar, Job 11.
- (b) Reply of Job, Job 12—14.

II. The second series of the argument, Job 15—21.

- (1) With Eliphaz, Job 15—17.
- (a) Speech of Eliphaz, Job 15.
- (b) Reply of Job, Job 16; 17.
- (2) With Bildad, Job 18; 19.
- (a) Speech of Bildad, Job 18.
- (b) Reply of Job, Job 19.
- (3) With Zophar, Job 20; 21.
- (a) Speech of Zophar, Job 20.
- (b) Reply of Job, Job 21.

III. The third series of the argument, Job 22—31.

- (1) With Eliphaz, Job 22—24.
- (a) Speech of Eliphaz, Job 22.
- (b) Reply of Job, Job 23; 24.
- (2) With Bildad, Job 25; 26.
- (a) Speech of Bildad, Job 25.
- (b) Reply of Job, Job 26.
- (3) With Zophar, Job 27—31.
- (a) * * * * *
- (b) Continuation of the reply of Job, Job 27—31.

So also in the final address of Job (Job 26—31), there are three speeches,

- (a) Job 26;
- (b) Job 27; 28;
- (c) Job 29—31.

In the speeches of Elihu, there is evidence of a design that a regular number of speeches should be made. The plan seems to have been, that to each of the speakers there should be assigned three speeches. But Zophar, one of the original disputants, had failed when his regular turn came, and four speeches are allowed to Elihu;

- (1) Job 32; Job 33;
- (2) Job 34;
- (3) Job 35; and
- (4) Job 36; Job 37.

In the controversy, the dispute appears to have been carried on through three days or sessions — perhaps with a considerable interval between them, and the most rigid order was observed during the debate. In like manner YAHWEH is introduced as making three addresses,

- (1) Job 38; Job 39;
- (2) ~~1801~~ Job 40:1,2; and
- (3) ~~1806~~ Job 40:6-24; Job 41;

and last of all the epilogue contains a similar subdivision. There is:

- (1) an account of Job's justification;
- (2) his reconciliation with his friends;
- (3) his restoration to prosperity, Job 42.

“If,” says Prof. Stuart (Introduction to the Apocalypse), “we withdraw attention from these obvious and palpable trichotomies, in respect to the larger portions of the book, and direct it to the examination of the individual speeches which are exhibited, we shall find the like three-fold division in many of them. If we descend still

lower, even down to strophes, we shalt there find that a great number consist of three members.”

“Thus, the economy of this book exhibits a regular and all-pervading series of trichotomies, most of them so palpable that none can mistake them. This seems to settle two things that have been called in question, namely, : first, the highly artificial arrangement of the book; and secondly, that the prologue and the epilogue are essential parts of the work. The great contest about the genuineness of these, and also of the speech of Elihu, might have been settled long ago, had due attention been paid to the trichotomy of the book. It is proper to add, that notwithstanding the highly artificial arrangement of the poem, such is the skill of the writer in the combinations, that every thing appears to proceed in a way which is altogether easy and natural.”

Another circumstance evincing artificial arrangement is noticed by Etchhorn, *Einleitung*, Section 640, vol. v. pp. 148-150. It is the regular advance in the argument, or the increase (*das Wachsende*) of zeal and ardor in the debaters. This is seen in the speeches of Job. “In the beginning he will not trust himself to contend with God (^{<1891>}Job 9:11); then he wishes before his death to prove to him his innocence (^{<1813>}Job 13:3); then he sighs after a judicial hearing before God (^{<1816>}Job 16:18); then he affirms that it is certain that before his death God wilt appear to vindicate him (^{<1825>}Job 19:25); and then at last he solemnly demands of him a judicial investigation.” The stone is true of the other speakers. “Eliphaz, who begins the controversy with Job, commences with mildness and gentleness, for the passion and heat with which he had heard Job speak, one gladly forgives to a sufferer. With Bildad, who speaks next, every thing is more severe and bitter; the heat of Job had made his friends too warm, and he could not speak to Job with the gentleness and softness evinced by Eliphaz. And so also the manner of the individual speakers rises in warmth and interest. Eliphaz, the first time that he speaks, is mild and forbearing; the second time he is more ardent, and utters reproaches against Job, yet in a manner somewhat covered; but in the third speech he hides nothing, but charges him openly with being hypocrite. The same thing is observable in the speeches of Bildad. In the beginning of his speeches he is more heated than Eliphaz, yet he condemns him only conditionally (*bedingnisweis*); in the second he condemns him openly; and in the third, with cool contempt, he tramples the sufferer under foot.”

The same artificial mode of composition prevails elsewhere in the poetry of the Hebrews. See it more fully illustrated in the Introduction to Isaiah, section 8. Thus we have seven Psalms each verse of which begins with a letter of the alphabet in succession; Psalm 25; Psalm 34; Psalm 37; Psalm 111; Psalm 112; Psalm 119; Psalm 145. In Psalm 119 we have this peculiarity, that each paragraph of it consists of eight verses, and these eight verses all begin with the same letter of the alphabet. In the book of Lamentations, four chapters out of the five are alphabetic compositions, while Lamentations 3 exhibits three verses in succession, each one of which begins with the same letter of the alphabet. This artificial mode of composition seems to have been one of the earliest features of Hebrew poetry, and in no part of the Bible is it more perfect than in the book of Job.

III. The true account of the book of Job, as a poem, is, that it is A PUBLIC DEBATE, conducted in a poetic form, on a very important question pertaining to the divine government. It is not an epic poem, where the hero is placed in a great variety of interesting and perilous situations, and where the main object is to create an interest in his behalf; it is not a drama, with a regular plot to be gradually developed, and where the dialogue is adopted to inculcate some moral lesson, or to awaken a tragic interest. It is a public discussion, with a real case in view, where the question is one of great difficulty, and where there is all the interest of reality. The question fairly understood. The whole arrangement appears to have been made, or tacitly fallen into from a sense of propriety. The discussion is continued, evidently, on successive days, giving a full opportunity to weigh the arguments which had been previously advanced, and to frame reply. The most respectful attention is paid to what is advanced. There is no rude interruption; no impatience; no disposition to correct the speaker; no outbreak of excited feeling even under the most provoking remarks. The poetic form in the argument is adopted manifestly, because it would furnish the opportunity for expressing their sentiments in the most terse, beautiful, and sententious manner, and in a way which could be best retained in the memory, and which was most in accordance with the genius of the age. In all countries, poetry is among the earliest forms of composition; and in Arabia and the East generally, it has been customary to preserve their sentiments in the terse and somewhat proverbial form which is exhibited here.

If conjecture may be allowed in a case where it is now impossible to speak with certainty, and if we may be permitted to judge according to what

appears to have been the fact in regard to this remarkable argument, we may imagine that the discussion assumed somewhat of this form; Job, as related in Job 1—2, was suddenly overwhelmed with almost unparalleled calamity. All that he possessed was suddenly swept away; and he was visited with a form of disease of the most distressing nature. Of his character hitherto there had been no doubt. His life had never given occasion to suspect him of insincerity. Three of his friends, apparently intimate with him before this — men of age, and prudence, and large experience, came to him with a full intention of sympathizing with him, and of suggesting to him the usual topics of consolation under trials. The greatness of his calamity, severe beyond what they had anticipated, struck them mute with amazement, and they remained a long time speechless, apparently contemplating the keenness and the extent of his sufferings. It would be obvious that the case would present a grave one for consideration; that it would be in conflict with many of the maxims which they had cherished, as we learn from their expressions subsequently, about the methods of the divine government with the pious. Here was an individual, esteemed universally as a man of eminent piety, who was now treated as if he were the most vile and abandoned of sinners. This fact, thus in conflict with their settled views, appears at first to have confounded them, and to have divested them of the power offering the topics of consolation which they had intended. But it was not until Job made his first speech (Job 3), bitterly cursing his day, indulging in the language of murmuring and complaint, and wishing for death, that they seem to have had any confirmed suspicion of his insincerity and hypocrisy. That speech, in connection with his remarkable sufferings, so much at variance with all their views of the manner in which God deals with the righteous, seems to have satisfied them that, so far from being, as had been supposed, a man of eminent piety, he was a man of eminent guilt. This, therefore, opened the whole field of debate, and suggested the great question whether the divine government was not conducted on equal principles here; whether a life of piety would not be attended with corresponding prosperity, and whether extraordinary sufferings like these were not demonstrative corresponding guilt. Either tacitly, or by express arrangement, it seems to have been agreed to discuss this question. The manner of doing it was the best possible, and was in accordance with every principle of urbanity, justice, and refined feeling. Eliphaz, as the oldest, and as the most experienced and sagacious, led the way in the argument, to be followed, in the same order, during each sitting of the debate, by his two friends. Job, having no one to stand by him, and being the one most deeply

concerned in the issue, is allowed to respond to each one of the speakers. Three successive series of arguments in this order gave to each one the privilege of expressing all that he desired to say on the point of debate; thus permitting each one of the friends of Job to speak three times, and Job himself to make nine addresses. It seems to have been understood that the debate should proceed in this order until the third series should be completed, or until one party should cease to speak. The debate continued in fact until Zophar, whose turn it was, failed to speak — thus tacitly acknowledging defeat, and leaving the whole field open, and conceding that no reply could be made to Job. At this stage Elihu, who appears to have been an attentive auditor, comes forward to do what the friends of Job tacitly confessed that they could not do — to reply to what had been advanced by Job. He comes modestly forward, and begs permission to state some considerations which had been suggested to him, and which he supposed would relieve all the difficulty. The divine interposition, unexpected by all except by Job (compare ^{<181925>}Job 19:25-29, notes), the indications of whose appearance in the tempest overwhelm the mind of Elihu with astonishment, and cause him abruptly to break off his address (the notes at ^{<185719>}Job 37:19-24), closes the argument. “The whole book,” says Eichhorn, “may be regarded as a dialogue of sages respecting the government of the world, with a prologue and an epilogue; a “consensus” of friends, as we find it among the Arabs of later times. In Casiri, Biblioth. Arabic Escur., t. i. p. 144, mention is made of a dialogue held by 51 artists, in which each one praises his own art.” Einleit. Section 640, vol. v. p. 142. By this supposition, it will be allowable to suppose that the debate may have occupied several days, for there is no evidence that it was completed at one sitting. By this supposition, also, some difficulties which have been felt in regard to its composition may be removed.

(1) It is not necessary to suppose that the addresses are extemporaneous; and the objection that it is incredible that men in the heat of debate should utter such finished and sublime specimens of poetry, is of no force. All the time requisite for composing each successive speech, may be allowed, and it may be presumed that each speaker came fully prepared to meet what had been advanced by the one who went before him.

(2) The same supposition will meet much of the difficulty which has been felt in regard to the speeches of Job. It has been said that it is wholly incredible that a man suffering under intolerable pain, and prostrate by long continued disease, should have uttered the sentiments which are here

ascribed to him, and been able to reply as he did to the arguments of his opponents. To this difficulty it may be said in reply, that there is no evidence that his disease impaired his mental powers — for it is not always true that the faculties of the mind are enfeebled by bodily suffering; and further, that Job may have had ample time to mature his reflections, and to arrange them in such a manner as he would wish.

(3) This supposition may throw some light on the question of the authorship of the poem. According to this view, what would be necessary for the author to do, would be to prepare the introductory and concluding historical statements, and to collect and arrange the speeches which had been actually made. Those speeches would doubtless be preserved mostly in the memory, and the work to be done would be rather that of a compiler or editor, than that of an author. In the discussion pursued in the poem, the great inquiry propounded relates to the equality of the divine dealings, and this inquiry is conducted in the most interesting manner conceivable. An actual case of a pious sufferer existed, giving to the question all the interest of reality. It was not a mere abstract inquiry, examined in a cold and unfeeling manner; but it was a case which, while it admitted of all the illustration which could be derived from experience, observation, tradition, and profound reflection, had all the interest also to be derived from the warm feelings and even excited passions which the case of an actual sufferer is fitted to produce.

The main question discussed has respect to the distribution of good and evil in the world. It is an inquiry whether there is a righteous and equal retribution in the present life, and whether the dealings of God here are according to the character. In the discussion of this question, the three friends of Job maintain the affirmative — defending the position, that the character of an individual can be determined from the events which occur to him under the divine administration; that there is a course of things which favors the righteous, and brings calamity on the wicked; that where there is extraordinary prosperity there is extraordinary virtue, and that when overwhelming calamities come upon a man or a community, there is proof of extraordinary wickedness. On this principle they infer that, notwithstanding Job's professions in his prosperity, the calamities which had come upon him were full proof that he had been insincere, and that he must have been at heart a man of eminent wickedness. In defense of this opinion, they refer to their own observation, appeal to revelations which they say they had had on this very point, adduce the maxims and adages

which had been accumulated by their ancestors, and boldly maintain that it must be so under the ministration of a holy God.

Job as strenuously maintains the opposite opinion, with all the interest which can be derived from the fact that it is his own case, and that it involves the whole question about his own character as well as from the fact that it is an inquiry about the general rectitude of the dealings of God with his creatures. He appeals to his consciousness of integrity; shows by abstract arguments that the opinions of his friends are not well founded; refers to general principles, to his own observation. and to the reports of travelers; complains bitterly of the unkindness of his friends, and expresses an earnest desire to carry the cause up to God to get a hearing before him, with a confident assurance that he would at once decide it in his favor. He is evidently embarrassed by the arguments of his friends, and is unable to meet many things in their reasoning, and to explain why it is that the righteous are thus afflicted. He maintains only that their afflictions do not prove that they are bad men, and float the dealings of God with men are not a certain indication of their true moral character. There are two considerations which would have relieved his embarrassment, and which we would now in such a case, but which did not occur to him; the one is, that the afflictions of the righteous may be disciplinary, and may be really a proof of paternal kindness on the part of God; the other, that in the future state all the inequalities of the present limb will be adjusted; that though the good may suffer much here, they will be abundantly recompensed hereafter; and that however prosperous the wicked may be here, the divine dealings in the future state will be entirely according to their character.

In reading the book of Job, we must remember that these truths were not then clearly revealed. We must place ourselves in the circumstances of the speakers, and look at the argument in view of the light which they had. We must not approach the book under the feeling that they had the same knowledge of the divine government, of the design of affliction, and of the doctrine of the future state, which we now have under the Christian dispensation. Children now, under the light of the gospel, may easily solve many questions on moral subjects which entirely confounded these sagacious ancient sages, just as children now can answer many questions in astronomy which perplexed and embarrassed the most profound Grecian and Roman sopers.

The manner in which the great question about the equality of the divine administration is disposed of in this book, will be understood by a brief analysis of the argument, and by a statement of the points maintained by the different speakers.

I. In the commencement of the book, the reader is made acquainted with the character and the sufferings of the principal personage referred to. We are introduced to an inhabitant of the land of Uz, in the northern part of Arabia. He is a prince or an Emir in the place where he resided — honored and respected by all. He is a man of large property, whose life had been one of almost unexampled prosperity. He is surrounded by a large and interesting family, who are represented as enjoying themselves in the festivities usual in the place where they resided, and in a manner appropriate to their station and rank in life. The patriarch himself is a man of eminent holiness. He performs with faithfulness the duties of a pious father, evinces the deepest concern that his children should not sin, and is declared to be perfect and upright man — a man whose character would bear the severest scrutiny. In this state of things, the scene is opened in heaven. The tribunal of the Almighty appears; an assembling of the Sons of God occurs; and the celestial spirits are summoned before the Most High. Among those who came is Satan — an evil spirit — an accuser — a dark, malignant being, who is represented as having no confidence in human integrity, and who says that he has been through the earth to look on its affairs. Being asked respecting the character of this good man, he insinuates that all his religion is mere selfishness; that he could not be otherwise than devout worshipper of God in the circumstances in which God had placed him; but that if his circumstances were changed, it would soon be apparent that all his professions were false and hollow. Permission is given to the evil spirit to make the trial, with the single reservation that the person of the man himself was to be untouched. Animated by this permission, Satan immediately leaves the heavenly council, and in a single day Job is stripped of his children and all his possessions. By the instrumentality of robbers, and whirlwinds, and storms, every thing which he had is swept away, and messenger after messenger comes to him in rapid succession, acquainting him with these calamities. Still the integrity of the patriarch remains. He sits down patient and resigned. Not a word of murmuring escapes from his lips, not a complaining thought seems to have been in his heart. The trial is thus far complete; the insinuation of Satan is shown to be unfounded, and piety is triumphant.

The celestial session is held again, and Satan again appears, Foiled in his first attempt, he now insinuates that the trial had not been fair; that there could be no real, thorough trial of the character of a man unless he were made personally to suffer, and his life were placed in jeopardy. If a man were himself spared to enjoy health, it was not yet certainly known what his true character was, for he might still be purely selfish. If he were made personally to suffer, he says that, so far from maintaining his integrity, he would curse God to his face. Permission is given to make this trial also, with the single reservation that his life was to be spared. The evil spirit again goes forth, selects the most painful and loathsome form of disease consistent with the preservation of life, and Job becomes an object of loathing and abhorrence even to his friends. Still this trial results as the former did. The integrity of the patriarch is preserved, and religion again triumphs. Satan is thus far foiled, and appears no more on the scene. The best man on the earth is made the most miserable; the man that was most prospered in the East is reduced to the lowest stage of poverty and wretchedness. But his virtue has survived it all, and it is seen that fidelity to God can be maintained in the most sudden reverses and in the deepest distresses which body can be made to endure short of death.

In this state of things, three of his friends, who had heard of his calamities, are represented as coming by agreement to condole with him. When they arrive, however, they have nothing to say. The sufferings of their friend appear to be beyond any thing which they had anticipated, and the topics of consolation which they had purposed to use are found insufficient, and they sit down in silent astonishment. The overwhelming calamities which had come upon an eminently good man seem to have confounded them, but still they do not yet express a doubt, if they cherished a suspicion, about his integrity. The subject is evidently one that, in their view, demands grave reflection, and that presents some deep inquiries about the reason of the divine dealings. They were probably overcome by the unexpected severity of his sufferings and the depth of their sympathetic sorrow, but they were perplexed also because it seems to have conflicted with their cherished views of the divine government, that such trials should come upon so good a man; and it is possible that, in accordance with these views, a suspicion may have already been started in their minds that he was less holy than he had been reputed to be. Still, if they had any doubts about the integrity of their friend, his perfect patience and resignation seem thus far to have silenced or removed them, or their courtesy kept them from

expressing them, and not knowing what to say, they sat down in silence. It was only the bitter language of complaint of the sufferer himself (Job 3), that led them to adopt the conclusion that their much venerated and esteemed friend must have been a bad man.

II. The second, or principal part of the work, comprises the discussion between Job and his three friends, and extends from the third to the thirty-first chapter. The discussion is brought on by the bitter complaints of Job as recorded in Job 3. Up to this time his friends had been silent. If they had had any suspicion of his integrity, they had not until then expressed it. His complaints and murmurings, however, now gave them occasion to express their feelings without reservation. They commence the discussion respecting the causes of human suffering. They hold the doctrine of a strict retribution in the present life; maintain that misery always implies corresponding guilt; defend the opinion that it is fair to infer what a man's character is from the dealings of God with him; and do not hesitate to express the opinion that the calamities of Job must have been brought upon him in consequence of his secret wickedness. Job repels their insinuations with indignation, and boldly asserts his innocence. He knows not why he suffers. He is unable to explain the causes why calamities come upon good men, but he maintains that they are no certain indications of the character of the sufferer. He regards himself as unkindly treated by his friends; complains that they are not disposed to do him justice; affirms that instead of offering him the consolation which they ought, they have taken occasion to aggravate his woes by false and severe accusations; and expresses a desire to carry the cause directly before God himself, assured that he would do him that justice which was denied him by his friends. His friends are offended at his sentiments, and undertake to vindicate the conduct of the Deity toward him, and repeat the charges with greater asperity, and even accuse him of particular crimes. But the more they press the argument, the more confidently does he assert his innocence, and the more boldly does he appeal to God to vindicate his character. His friends are finally reduced to silence; Bildad, in the last series of the controversy, closing the discussion by a few general maxims of great beauty, but without any pertinency to the cause, on the greatness of God, and Zophar, who should have replied in his turn to Job, not saying any thing.

In this controversy, as has been already remarked, there are three series, or sessions, conducted with great regularity, and carried on in the same order.

Eliphaz is the first speaker, Bildad the second, and Zophar the third; and Job replies to each.

The first series of the discussion extends from Job 4 to Job 14. Eliphaz commences it, Job 4; 5. He probably had the precedence among those engaged in the discussion, both on account of age and experience. He is more mild than either of the others, depends more on close reasoning and observation, and is less severe in his reflections on his friend. His speech commences with delicacy and an air of candour, and is conducted with artful address. After apologizing, in a tender manner, for speaking, he proceeds to point out the inconsistency of a good man's repining under discipline; says that Job had counseled and comforted many others, and ought now to show that the same considerations were sufficient to sustain himself, and that it is absurd that he should not bear up under trial who had so often exhorted others to fortitude. He then advances the position that the truly righteous are never overthrown, and that no one who was innocent ever perished; that the wicked are dealt with according to their sins, and that the ways of God must be just. This position he proceeds to establish by a vision which he says he himself had had, of a most remarkable character, affirming the uprightness of the divine dealings, and declaring that man could not be more just than his Maker, and that even the angels were charged with folly before God. The object of this, as applied by Eliphaz, is to meet the complaints of Job, and to show that God must be right in his ways. He admits (Job 5) that the wicked may prosper for a while, but asserts that they will meet with sudden calamity; that their habitation will be suddenly cursed, their children crushed in the gate, and their property carried away by robbers. He does not expressly apply this to Job, but he leaves no doubt that it was intended for him, and advises Job even now to turn to God, and assures him that he may yet find happiness, and come to the grave in an honored old age.

Job replies to Eliphaz (Job 6—7), and justifies himself for complaining. He says that there was a good reason for his complaints; expresses again the earnest wish to die; declares that his strength is not equal to the weight of woes laid on him; complains severely of his friends for having wholly disappointed his reasonable expectations; and compares them to the deceitful brook of the desert, which wholly disappoints the hopes of the faint and thirsty traveler. He says that he had not asked them to come and sympathize with him, but that even now, if they would make use of solid argument, he would listen to them. He then (Job 7) proceeds to a more

impassioned description of his sufferings, as being wholly beyond endurance; expresses again the wish to die; says that he is not a monster, like a whale, that God should pursue him in this manner; and complains of God in language highly irreverent, as having punished him far beyond his deserts, and as having set a special mark on him, and asks with impatience why he will not let him alone?

Bildad is the next one to speak, Job 8. He commences his address in a most severe and provoking manner. he openly declares that the children of Job had been cut off for their transgressions, and that Job was a wicked man. If he were pure and upright, God would at once interpose and restore his prosperity. He exhorts him, therefore, as Eliphaz had done, to repent, and enforces his sentiments by a reference to the opinions of the men of former days. In accordance with those sentiments, he says that the hypocrite must be soon destroyed; that however flourishing and prosperous he may appear, he is like succulent plants that spring up with rapid growth and are soon withered; and that his hope will be like the spider's web. He does not expressly apply these maxims to Job, but he leaves no doubt on the mind that he intends it, and that he fully believes that this principle will fully account for all that he had suffered; or in other words, that in the midst of all his prosperity he had been a mere hypocrite.

To Bildad Job replies in his turn, Job 9—10. He commences in a calm manner, and shows that he is superior to the acrimony of the assault. He acknowledges that all power is with God, and confesses that he has a right to universal supremacy. He controls the heavens and the earth, rules among the stars and directs them, and nothing can stand before the exertion of his power. He acknowledges that he is far from being perfect, and says that, even if this were his private feeling, he would not dare to assert it before God. He could not engage in so unequal a contest where he should regard him as guilty, but he must yield his own views to those of God. Still he maintains that the position of his friends cannot be defended; that the earth is given into the hands of the wicked; and that so far from its being true that the dealings of God are according to the character of men, and are a fair illustration of their character, it is a matter of fact that the wicked are triumphant and prosperous. Then he adverts to his own sorrows; says that his days are fast flying away amid grief, and complains bitterly that notwithstanding all his attempts to be innocent and holy, God holds and treats him as if he were a guilty man. Though he should wash himself in the purest water, yet God throws him in the ditch, and regards and treats him

as if he were most vile. He complains that he has no fair opportunity of vindicating himself before God, and that he presses him down with sorrows so that he cannot make a defense; but says that if he would remove his rod from him, and give him the opportunity of a fair trial, he would speak, and would vindicate himself. Becoming more excited as he proceeds (Job 10), he gives himself up to complaint. He becomes desperate at the idea that God has become his enemy and persecutor; speaks of him as if he were seeking an opportunity to inflict pain under some plausible pretence; complains that he had made him, as if with exquisite skill, only to torment and destroy him; says that he hunts him with the fierceness of a lion; expresses regret again that he had not died on the day of his birth; and entreats of God to let him alone only for a little time, until he should go down to the deep shades of death.

Zophar, the third speaker, now takes his place in the argument, and replies, Job 11. He commences, as Bildad did, with violent invective. He regards Job as a man of words without sense; and reproaches him for maintaining his innocence before God. He says that the ways of God are plain, and earnestly desires that God would himself speak to Job, and is assured that he would then see that it was his own iniquities that had brought these calamities upon him. He refers, in magnificent language, to the supremacy of God; says that he fully understands the secret character of men; and, like Eliphaz and Bildad, exhorts Job to acknowledge his transgressions, and assures him that if he would do this he would be restored to prosperity and yet end his days in peace.

To Zophar Job replies, Job 12—14. Yet he does not answer him personally. As they had all maintained the same sentiments, he groups them together, and commences, in turn, with a severe sarcasm. He says that no doubt wisdom would die with them, and reproaches them for their cool self-complacency and their arrogance in supposing that they were wiser than all the rest of mankind. In return for their traditionary maxims he retorts in the same manner, and shows them that he is as much at home in this kind of argument as they can be. He therefore adduces a large number of proverbial sayings (Job 12), of far more pertinency and point than many of those on which they relied, all going to show the majesty the power, and the supremacy of God. He then (Job 13) commences a direct attack on their motives, and charges them with maintaining their opinions with the hope of propitiating the favor of God. To do this, he says, they had employed unsound arguments; had evinced partiality for God; had been

unwilling to yield the proper weight to the considerations adduced on the other side; and that they had really no regard for the truth in the case, but were “special” and partial pleaders. He says that they ought to be awed and to tremble in view of such a fact; that they were really mocking God by undertaking to defend his government by such reasons as they had adduced; and that they had great reason to dread his investigation of their motives, even when they were pretending to vindicate his government. Alike in the principles of government which they ascribed to him, and the arguments by which they undertook to vindicate him, they were offensive to him, and must apprehend his displeasure. Weary with this mode of argumentation, he then expresses the earnest wish that he might carry his cause directly before the tribunal of God, and manage it there, on equal terms, for himself. He would go before God in this cause, confident that he would do right, and resolved to trust him even though he should slay him, ~~Job~~ Job 13:15. He would ask of him only two things — one was, that he would withdraw his hand from him so that he might be able to do justice to himself in the argument; the other was, that he would not take advantage of his great power to overawe him, so that he could say nothing. He then reverts to his calamities, speaks of them as overwhelming, and closes his address (Job 14) with a most beautiful and pathetic description of the frailty and the shortness of life. He says that God removes man from all his comforts, and hides him in the grave, hopeless of a return to the land of the living, and that his condition is even more sad and desolate than that of the tree that is cut down. Thus ends the first series in the controversy. The second commences with Job 15; and extends to the close of Job 21. It is pursued in the same order, and with the same question in view.

Eliphaz, as before, opens the discussion, Job 15. He accuses Job vehemence and vanity; charges him with casting off fear and restraining prayer; says that his own mouth condemned him; blames him for his arrogance and presumption in speaking as if he were the first man that had lived; declares that with himself were men far more advanced in life than Job was, and even older than his father; and asks him whether he had been admitted to the secret counsels of the Almighty, that he spoke so confidently of the nature of his government. He then enters into a vindication of God; proposes to adduce the observations of the sages of ancient times, in the purer days when there was no foreign admixture in the sentiments of his country; and maintains that, in accordance with those sentiments, and with the settled course of events, God deals with wicked

men according to their character. This opinion he illustrates with great beauty, and by a large number of apothegms, showing that the wicked man is subject to sudden alarms; that in prosperity the destroyer comes suddenly upon him; that he wanders abroad for bread; that he is made to dwell in desolate cities; that all his prosperity fails, like the shaking off of fruit before it is ripe; and that he is like a tree dried up by heat.

To this speech of Eliphaz, Job replies in his turn, Job 16; 17. He renews his complaint of the severe manner in which his friends had treated him, and says that he could easily speak as they did, but if his case were theirs he would meet them with consolatory words. But now, he says, makes no difference whether he speaks or is silent. He finds no consolation if he speaks; he meets with no relief though he is silent. He then adverts with new bitterness of feeling, and in still more severe and irreverent language, to the intensity of his sufferings, and to their manifest injustice. He compares his enemies to a wild beast, gnashing his teeth and casting a furious glance upon him; says that God had given him over to the ungodly that he was at ease, when God came upon him like a hunter, and stationed his archers around him; that he had come upon him like an army attacking a city, "breach upon breach;" and that all this was not because he Wicked, for his hands were pure. He then calls upon the earth to covet his blood, and says that, after all, his only appeal is to God, and before him his eyes poured out tears. In Job 17 he continues the description of his sufferings, and says that the record of his trials will yet be a subject of amazement to good men which they will not be able to understand, and that all his plans are now broken off, and that he must make the grave his house and his bed in darkness.

To this address of Job, Bildad replies in his turn, Job 18. He begins by repeating the accusation before made, that the argument of Job was made up merely of vain words. He accuses him of arrogance and a presumptuous idea of his own importance — as if the settled course of events were to be made to give way on his account. He says that the great laws of the divine administration are fixed, and that it is an established maxim that the wicked shall be punished in this life. This sentiment he proceeds to enforce by a number of beautiful adages or proverbs. The light of the wicked shall be put out; the candle in his dwelling shall be extinguished; he shall be cast down by his own counsel; the gin shall suddenly take him; the robber shall come upon him; his strength shall vanish; terrors shall surprise him; his roots shall perish; his memory shall perish; he shall be chased out of the

world; he shall have neither son nor nephew; and all that come after him shall hold him up as an example of the manner in which God deals with the wicked. Bildad advances nothing new, but he enforces what had been said before with great emphasis, and urges it as if it were so settled that it could not admit of dispute. He does not, in the description of the evils that come upon the wicked, refer to Job by name, but he presents his argument in such a way as to leave no doubt that he designs to have it applied to him. There is much refinement of cruelty in this, and he doubtless meant that it should be keenly felt by Job.

In the reply of Job to Bildad, Job 19; he shows that he felt it deeply. His speech on this occasion is one of the most pathetic parts of the poem, and exhibits his character in a most beautiful light. He commences, as usual, with the language of sorrow, but it is with a tender and subdued spirit. He asks his friends bow long they will continue to vex him, and crush him with their remarks; says that they had reproached him ten times, and had made themselves strange to him; and declares that if he had erred, his error was his own, and remained with himself. He then gives a most affecting description of his sufferings. God had overthrown him; he had fenced up his way; he had taken the crown from his head; he had removed all his hopes; he had put away from him his brethren and friends, his kinsfolk and acquaintance; he had made him an object of reproach to his servants; his wife was estranged from him, and he was derided even by children. In most impassioned language he calls on his friends to pity him, for the hand of God had touched him. Then follows the most noble and sublime declaration, perhaps, to be found in the book. Conscious of the importance of what he was about to say, he asks that his words might be engraved on the eternal rock, and then professes his unwavering confidence in God, and his firm assurance that he would yet appear and fully vindicate his character. Though now consumed by disease, and thought this process should still go on until all his flesh was wasted away, yet he had the firmest conviction that God would appear on the earth to deliver him, and that with renovated flesh, and in prosperity, he would be permitted to see God for himself. For a view of the reasons for this interpretation of this sublime passage, the reader is referred to the notes on the chapter.

Zophar now speaks in his turn, Job 20. But he speaks only to recapitulate the old argument under a new form. He maintains the position which had been so often before advanced, that certain and dreadful calamity must overtake the wicked. This thought he puts into new forms, and urges it

with a variety of proverbial illustrations and bold statements, but without much that is new in the argument. He undoubtedly means, like the previous speakers, to have Job apply this to himself, though he does not expressly declare it.

Job replies to Zophar, Job 21; and his reply closes the second session of the controversy. He collects all his strength for the argument, as though he were resolved at once to answer all that had been said. He calls upon them attentively to mark what he has to urge; and says that if they will now hear him, they may then mock on. He then proceeds to answer their arguments by appealing to well-known and indisputable facts. He says that the wicked live — grow old — become mighty in power — are prospered in their flocks and herds — send forth their children to the dance — and spend their days in wealth and enjoyment, and then go down to the grave without long and lingering pain. He says that they openly cast off the fear of God, and live in irreligion. Yet he admits that it is not always so; that the candle of the wicked is sometimes put out, and that sorrows are laid up for their children; so that no universal rule can be laid down in regard to the dealings of God with men here. He alleges that in fact there is the greatest variety in the manner in which people die — one dying in full strength, cut down in his vigor, and another in the bitterness of his soul, having had no pleasure. He says that the wicked are reserved for the day of destruction — for some future retribution, and that they will be hereafter brought forth to wrath. By this appeal to facts, he evidently supposed that the controversy would be ended. Of the facts he had no doubt; and these facts were of more value than all speculations on the subject.

The third session of the discussion, like the previous ones, is opened by Eliphaz, Job 22. This is the last speech which Eliphaz makes, and roused by the argument of Job in the previous chapter, and excited by his appeal to facts, he pours forth his soul in one grand effort to confute the position which he had taken. There is great art in this speech, and greater severity than he had before used. He begins by maintaining that a man could not be profitable to God, and that he could not be influenced in his dealings with men by any claim which they had on him, or any dread which he had of them. No rank, authority, or eminence could prevent his dealing with them as he pleased. He then, in open and bold terms, charges Job with great guilt; says that these calamities could not have come upon a man unless there had been extraordinary iniquity, and proceeds to argue as if this were so, and to state what crimes Job must have committed to make it necessary

to bring such calamities upon him. He accuses him of cruelty, oppression, and injustice in the performance of his duties as a magistrate; affirms that he had wronged the poor, the widow, and the fatherless; says that he had wholly disregarded the laws of hospitality, and that it was no wonder that in view of these things such heavy calamities had come upon him. It could not be otherwise. God could have dealt with him in no other way than this. He then appeals, with great force, to the deluge, and says that that was a case which demonstrated that God would deal with the wicked according to their character and deserts. In view of these things he again counsels Job to acquaint himself with God, and to be at peace with him. He assures him that if he would confess his sins and return to God, he would yet have prosperity, and be able to lay up gold as dust; and that if he prayed to God, he would be propitious to him. He would become yet a counselor to the feeble, and be exalted to honor in the land.

Job, in his turn, replies, Job 23; 24. He commences in a most pathetic and tender manner. He turns away from every human helper, and looks to God. He had looked to earthly friends in vain; and finding there no consolation, he expresses the most earnest wish that he might be able to carry his cause at once before his Maker. Could he come before him, as he wished, he would plead his cause there, and there he would find One who would hear him, and would know why it was that he was thus afflicted. He could not now explain it, yet God would do it, if he was permitted to carry his cause before him. Yet he could not find him. He looked in every direction for some token of his appearing, in vain. He went east, and west, and north, and south — in the quarters of the heavens where he usually manifested himself, but he could not find him; the notes at ~~1820~~ Job 23:9,10. Yet he had the firmest confidence in him, and he felt assured that when he had been tried, he would come forth as gold. He asserts his consciousness of integrity, and says that it had been the great aim of his life to honor and obey God. He then proceeds, Job 24; to defend his former position, and affirms that so far from its being true that the dealings of God were in accordance with the character of men here, it was a fact that the wicked often lived long and in great prosperity. He refers to large classes of the wicked — to those who remove the landmarks — to those who take the property of the widow and the fatherless for a pledge — to those who live by plunder — to those who oppress the poor and turn them out without shelter — to those who cause others to labor under hard exactions — to the murderer who rises early to accomplish his purpose — to the adulterer,

and to all who perform deeds of darkness. He says that they often have in fact long prosperity, though he admits that they will be ultimately cut off; they are only exalted for a little time, and then they will be brought low.

These facts being undeniable, Bildad, whose turn it was to answer, does not attempt to reply to them. The argument of Job from what actually occurs had settled the question, and, so far as the friends of Job were concerned, decided the controversy. Bildad indeed, Job 25; attempts something like a reply; but it consists merely of a description of the power, wisdom, and majesty of God, and closes with the sentiment twice before expressed concerning the comparative impurity and insignificance of man — a reply that, however beautiful, has no relevancy to the considerations stated by Job. The manner in which he speaks is, in fact, a yielding of the argument, and a retiring from the field of debate.

Job, who next speaks, in reply to Bildad, Job 26; opens his address in a strain of bitter irony. “How had the feeble, the powerless, and the ignorant (referring to himself), been strengthened, helped, and enlightened, by this wise speech!” He inquires of Bildad, by whose spirit he had spoken, and who had helped him to utter such marvelous things! He then proceeds himself to expatiate on the topic on which Bildad had proposed to enlighten him — the greatness and majesty of God, and does it in such a manner as to show that his own views were far more elevated than those of Bildad, and that he was far in advance of his professed teacher in his knowledge of the character and government of God. In this sublime description, he states his views of the creation; says that the deep, dark world of the shades is open before God; that he stretched out the north over the immense void, and hung the earth upon nothing; that he binds up the thick clouds, holds back the face of his throne, compasses the waters with bounds so that they cannot pass, divides the sea with his power; and that by his own hands he had formed the beautiful constellations of the heavens. There is not to be found any where a more sublime description of God, nor a passage of more exquisite beauty, than that with which he closes:

Lo! these are but the outlines of his ways! And how faint the whisper which we hear of him! (Should he speak with) the thunder of his power, who could understand him?

This was the appropriate place for Zophar to reply, and Job evidently paused to give him an opportunity. But he had nothing to say, and the argument on the part of the three friends of Job is closed.

Finding that no one replies to him, Job proceeds, in a more calm manner to a full vindication of himself, Job 27—31. He states further his views about the government of God, and especially in reference to his dealings with a hypocrite (Job 27); gives a most beautiful description of the search for wisdom, detailing many of the discoveries of science known in his time, and saying that no one of them could disclose it, and concluding by saying that true wisdom could be found only in the fear of the Lord (Job 28); affectingly contrasts his present condition with his former prosperity (Job 29—30); maintains the integrity of his life, asserting that he was free from the crimes charged on him, and imprecating the severest punishment if he had been guilty; and closes by saying, that if God would come forth and pronounce a just judgment on him, he would take the decision and bind it on his head as a diadem, and march forth with it in triumph. For the train of thought in these beautiful chapters, the reader is referred to the “Analysis” prefixed to the notes.

III. Thus far Job is triumphant. He has silenced his “friends,” and gained the field as a victor. At this stage a new character is introduced, who comes with great apparent modesty, and yet with great pretensions. It is Elihu. He had evidently listened to the debate, and feels indignant that no one of the three friends of Job dared to reply to him. He is young and comparatively inexperienced, and hence, he had thus far taken no part in the controversy. But he professes to have had views communicated to him by divine revelation, which clear up all the difficulties in the case; and he proceeds to state them. The single additional thought on which he dwells so much, and which he introduces with so much pomp and parade of language, is, that afflictions are for the good of the sufferer, and that if those who are afflicted will hearken to the counsel which God sends, and turn from their sins, they will find their afflictions to be sources of great benefit. This leading thought he exhibits in various lights, and evidently supposes that it would be sufficient to solve the difficulties which had been felt in the discussion. It is remarkable that it had not been made more prominent by Job and his friends; and it is from the fact that it had not been particularly adverted to, that leads Elihu to place it in such a variety of view. In the course of his speech there is much severe reflection on Job for his rashness and presumption, and the general tenor of the address is,

undoubtedly, to coincide with the “friends” of Job in their views, rather than in his. Job 32 is wholly introductory, in which he expresses great modesty, and apologizes for his speaking, by saying that he was grieved that no one replied to Job, and that he was constrained to reply by the pressure of important thoughts on his mind. In Job 33 he enters on his argument, and says that he was inspired of God to say what he had to communicate; that as Job had wished to bring his cause before God, he was now in the place of God, and that Job need not be overawed by one of the same nature with himself. He then adverts to what he understood Job to maintain, that he was innocent; and says that in this he could not be correct, but that God must be more righteous than man. He then adverts to the main thought which he had to communicate, that God speaks to man in various ways, by dreams, by visions, and by afflictions — to withdraw him from his purpose, and to save him from sin. If God sends a messenger to him when he is afflicted, and he turns from his sins, then he is merciful to him, and he is restored to more than his former prosperity. To this fact Elihu calls the particular attention of Job, and then pauses for a reply. As Job says nothing, Elihu in Job 34 proposes more particularly to examine his case. He then proceeds to state that Job had manifested a very improper spirit; that he had been irreverent, and had maintained that it was of no advantage for a man to serve God. He then advances the position that God cannot do wickedly, and proceeds to illustrate this by showing that he is supreme, that it is presumptuous for man to arraign his dealings, and that in fact his government is administered on the principles of equity. On the basis of this, and assuming that Job was a wicked man, he calls on him to confess that his chastisement was just, and to resolve to offend no more. In Job 35 he charges Job with having in fact maintained that his own righteousness was more than that of God. This position he proceeds to examine, and to show, which he does with great conclusiveness, that it is impossible that the righteousness of man can be in any way profitable to God. He admits that a man’s righteousness might be of advantage to his fellow-man, but maintains that it could not affect God. He then proceeds to show that the true reason why God did not interpose when men were afflicted, and remove their calamities, was, that they were obstinate and perverse, and that no one cried to God, who alone could give consolation. Elihu, having undertaken to vindicate the character of God, proceeds, in Job 36; 37; to state some of the great principles of his government, and to maintain that God was right. He says that there yet remains much to be said on the part of God. Job, as he understood, had maintained that his

government was administered on no settled principles. In opposition to this, Elihu asserts that God is mighty, and that his government is not to be despised; that he will not prosper the wicked; that in fact he protects the righteous and vindicates the cause of the poor; and that his eye is on all. If they are in affliction, and bound in fetters, it is in order that they may see their iniquity and be brought to true repentance. The hypocrites, he says, heap up wrath, but the poor and afflicted are delivered, and Job would have found favor if he had been truly penitent. Elihu counsels him to beware lest his refusal to submit to God, and to exercise true repentance should be the occasion of his entire destruction. To illustrate his views, and to show the necessity of submission, he closes his speech (^{36} Job 36:26-33; Job 37) with a sublime description of the greatness of God, especially as manifested in the storm and tempest. There is in this description every indication that a storm was actually rising, and that a fearful tempest was gathering. In the midst of this approaching tempest, the address of Elihu is broken off, and the Almighty appears and closes the debate, See the Analysis to Job 37.

IV. The fourth part of the book consists of the address of the Almighty; Job 38—41. This sublime discourse is represented as made from the midst of the tempest or whirlwind which Elihu describes as gathering. In this address, the principal object of God is to assert his own greatness and majesty, and the duty of profound submission under the dispensations of his government. The general thought is, that he is Lord of heaven and earth; that all things have been made by him, and that he has a right to control them; and that in the works of his hands he had given so much evidence of his wisdom, power, and goodness, that men ought to have unwavering confidence in him. He appeals to his works, and shows that in fact man could explain little, and that the most familiar objects were beyond his comprehension. It was, therefore, to be expected that in his moral government there would be much that would be above the power of man to explain. In this speech, the creation of the world is first brought before the mind in language which has never been equalled. Then the Almighty refers to various things in the universe that surpass the wisdom of man to comprehend them, or his power to make them — to the laws of light; the depths of the ocean; the formation of the snow, the rain, the dew, the ice, the frost; the changes of the seasons, the clouds, the lightnings; and the instincts of animals. He then makes a particular appeal to some of the more remarkable inhabitants of the air, the forests, and the waters, as

illustrating his power. He refers to the gestation of the mountain-goats; to the wild ass, to the rhinoceros, to the ostrich, and to the horse; Job 39. The ground of the argument in this part of the address, is, that he had adapted every kind of animals to the mode of life which it was to lead; that he had giving cunning where cunning was necessary, and where unnecessary, that he had withheld it; that he had endowed with rapidity of foot or wing where such qualities were needful; and that where power was demanded, he had conferred it. In reference to all these classes of creatures, there were special laws by which they were governed; and all, in their several spheres, showed the wisdom and skill of their Creator. Job is subdued and awed by these exhibitions, and confesses that he is vile; ~~Job~~ Job 40:3-5. To produce, however, a more overpowering impression of his greatness and majesty, and to secure a deeper prostration before him, the Almighty proceeds to a particular description of two of the more remarkable animals which he had made — the behemoth, or hippopotamus, and the leviathan, or crocodile; and with this description, the address of the Almighty closes.

The general impression designed to be secured by this whole address is that of awe, reverence, and submission. The general thought is, that God is supreme; that he has a right to rule; that there are numberless things in his government which are inexplicable by human wisdom; that it is presumptuous in man to sit in judgment on his doings; and that at all times man should bow before him with profound adoration. It is remarkable that in this address, the Almighty does not refer to the main point in the controversy. He does not attempt to vindicate his government from the charges brought against it of inequality, nor does he refer to the future state as a place where all these apparent inequalities will be adjusted. For the reasons of this, see the remarks at the close of the notes at Job 41.

V. The whole work now closes; Job 42. Job is humbled and penitent. His confession is accepted, and his general course is approved. His three friends are reprimanded for the severity of their judgment on him, and he is directed to make intercession for them. His calamities are at an end, and he is restored to double his former prosperity, and is permitted to live long in affluence and respectability. Thus God shows himself in the end to be the friend of the righteous; and thus the great object of the trial is fully secured — by showing that there is true virtue which is not based on selfishness, and that real piety will bear any trial to which it can be subjected.

SECTION 6. THE CANONICAL AUTHORITY AND INSPIRATION OF THE BOOK

The canonical authority of the book of Job, or its right to a place among the inspired Scriptures, is determined on the same principles as the other books of the Old Testament. The argument for this rests mainly on two considerations, which have generally been regarded as satisfactory by those who hold to the divine mission of the Saviour and the inspiration of the apostles. The first is, that it was found in the canon of the Jewish Scriptures to which the Saviour gave his sanction as inspired; and the other is, that it is quoted in the New Testament as of divine authority.

In regard to the first of these, there can be no doubt that it existed among the books which were regarded by the Hebrews as inspired. It has the same evidence of this kind which exists in favor of any one of the books of the Old Testament. There is the same authority — arising from the opinions of the Jews, from the existence of manuscripts, from the ancient versions, from repeated quotations, from extended commentaries, and from the enumeration of the books of divine inspiration in the ancient catalogues — in favor of the book of Job, which there is for any one of the books of Moses or of the prophets. The argument from this source is thus stated by Wemyss:

“The Seventy (LXX) translated it about 277 years before Christ; Josephus places it among the historical writings; Philo the Jew quotes a fragment of it; part of it is evidently imitated by Baruch; the subject of it is mentioned in the book of Tobit; and in the catalogue of Jewish canonical books, drawn up by Melito, Bishop of Sardis, near the end of the second century, we find it inserted after the Song of Songs, on the supposition that it was written by Solomon. Jerome introduced it into the Vulgate, and almost all the fathers of the Church have quoted it. The Talmud places it after the book of Psalms, so that Jews and Christians equally acknowledge its canonicity.” p. 6.

It was in reference to this entire collection that the Saviour gave to the Jews of his time the direction, “Search the Scriptures;” ~~John~~ John 5:39. And it was of this entire collection that the apostle Paul said,

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; ^{<1816>}2 Timothy 3:16.

The other argument for the canonical authority and inspiration of the book of Job, is the fact that it is quoted in the New Testament. It is introduced by the same formula, and evidently with the belief that it sustains the same rank as the other books of the inspired volume. It is true that it is but twice quoted directly, but that is sufficient to show that the writers of the New Testament, in common with all the Jews, regarded it as of divine authority. The quotations in the New Testament are the following:

^{<1853>}Job 5:13:

“He taketh the wise in their own craftiness,”

quoted in ^{<1819>}1 Corinthians 3:19, where Paul introduces the quotation by the words, “It is written,” agreeably to the common form of quoting from the other parts of Scripture.

^{<1831>}Job 39:30:

*“Her young ones suck up blood;
And where the slain are, there is she,” i.e. the eagle.*

This is evidently referred to by the Saviour; ^{<1843>}Matthew 24:28,

“For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together;”

and ^{<1873>}Luke 17:37. It must, in candour, however, be admitted that the argument from this source rests mainly on the former passage, as the remark of the Saviour may have been merely proverbial, without any special reference to the book of Job. Besides these places, there are a few others in which there seems to be an allusion to Job, though not so manifest as to be regarded as intentional quotations; see ^{<1840>}James 4:10, compare ^{<1822>}Job 22:29; ^{<18134>}Romans 11:34,35, compare ^{<18153>}Job 15:8; and ^{<18116>}1 Peter 5:6; compare ^{<1822>}Job 22:29. It is once alluded to by Philo (Section 31), but is not referred to by Josephus. Eichhorn, Einleit. Section 645.

But if the canonical authority and inspiration of the book of Job be admitted, still a most interesting question presents itself. In what sense is it to be regarded as of divine origin? Are we to consider the whole of it as

inspired? Are all the speeches made, and all the arguments used, and all the complaints uttered by Job, and all the views of science presented, to be regarded as the suggestions of the Holy Spirit? If this is not to be supposed, on what principles are we to be guided in determining what is of divine authority, and what not? And in what sense is the word inspiration to be used, as applied to those portions of the book? These questions, which probably occur to every reader of the book, and which create perplexity whenever they occur, make it necessary to offer a few suggestions in regard to its inspiration. The principles which are necessary to be understood in order to a correct interpretation of the book of Job, may be stated as follows:

(1) In an inspired book there is an exact and infallible record of facts as they actually occur. Whether the record relates to the existence, perfections, and plans of God; to what he has done in the work of creation, providence, or redemption, or to his claims on mankind; whether to the existence and employments of angels, or to the creation, character, and destiny of man; and whether to the revolutions of kingdoms, or to the actions, words, feelings, and views of individual men, still the same principle exists in the case. The sole object is to secure a fair record; to state things as they are. The design of inspiration is not always to communicate new truth, or truth that was not or could not be otherwise known; it is to make a record that shall be free from all error, and shall preserve the remembrance of things as they actually exist. And so far as pertains to this principle, it is unnecessary to inquire whether inspiration is by immediate suggestion or by superintendence; the only essential thing is, that in an inspired work there is an exact and infallible statement of the truth which is professed to be recorded. As a matter of fact, in the volume of revelation, a large part of the truths are far above any power of man to discover them, and they were directly communicated to the speakers and writers by the Holy Spirit. In regard to all that is recorded in the Scriptures, it is to be held that the Holy Spirit so presided over the minds of the sacred writers, as to keep them from error, and to secure the exact record of such things as were necessary to be known to man.

In applying this principle to the book before us, the only thing which it is necessary to maintain is, that there is a correct record of events as they occurred to Job, and of the arguments of himself and his friends, and of the address of the Almighty. Whether either he or his friends were inspired, is quite another question, and is to be determined by other considerations.

Whether all which he said was true, or whether all or any thing which they advanced was correct, is not to be determined by the mere position that the book is inspired.

(2) It is to be admitted that there are in this book many things recorded which are in themselves wrong and false. It is not to be denied that Job uttered some sentiments which cannot be vindicated, and often manifested a spirit which was wrong. This is apparent not only from the contrariety of such sentiments and feelings to other parts of the Scriptures, but from the reproof of the Almighty himself at the close of the book. Nor can it be denied that the friends of Job uttered many erroneous sentiments, for their views are expressly condemned by God himself, ~~18407~~ Job 42:7. Still, it is true that they uttered those sentiments, and that they entertained those opinions; and this is properly all that inspiration is responsible for. In the records of profane history there are often things occurring just of this character. There are many things recorded which were in themselves wrong, yet the record is correctly made; there are many sentiments expressed by various speakers which are wrong in spirit, and yet the record that such sentiments were uttered is true. All that the fidelity of the historian is responsible for is the correctness of the record. He is not at all answerable for the propriety of the acts referred to, nor for the sentiments of the various speakers. If he gives a fair statement, he has done all that the world can demand of him as an historian — just as all that a painter can be required to do is to give a fair copy of his original. Whether that original be beautiful or otherwise, is quite another question. So in the matter before us, all that the inspired writer, whoever he may have been, is fairly responsible for, is the fairness and correctness of his record.

(3) It is of great importance to preserve the record of things as they actually occurred, whether they were good or evil, right or wrong. This gives its value and importance to history; and this object is not unworthy of inspiration. We wish to know what the facts were; what were the opinions which prevailed; what were the sentiments expressed; what were the views of men on important subjects. Hence, history has brought down to us many things that are in themselves of little value, or that cannot be depended on as guides now, but which show what has been the progress of events. So in the book before us, it was of great importance to show the opinions which prevailed in an early age of the world, and with the best opportunities for reflection, on a great and important question of the divine government. It will make us prize more highly the revelation which we have on those

points; and it will show us how much we are really indebted to revelation. The discussion in this book was on one of the most important points that can come before the mind of man. It is on a question which has occurred in all ages, and which has been every where examined. The inquiry why the good are afflicted, and why the wicked are prospered, is one that must come before the minds of thinking men, and must present a great many difficulties. This question is discussed here under every conceivable advantage. It arose from a most interesting and afflicting case which had actually occurred. It was examined by men of age, experience, and wisdom; by men who could bring to bear on it the result of patient thought, and who were imbued with the wisdom of the ancients. The subject was never more fairly or fully examined; and nothing ever occurred that could do more to determine the just limits of the human powers on these great inquiries pertaining to the divine government.

(4) In a book of revelation for the guidance of mankind, it is important not only to preserve the memory of facts as they actually occurred, and to impart to men truths which the human mind could not originate; but to preserve, also, a correct record of the workings of the human mind in circumstances of trial and temptation. It is important not only to state in the abstract, and by clear propositions, what man is, but to show what he is by exhibiting him as placed in a great variety of situations, and by permitting us to see how he will feel, and speak, and act in such circumstances. We need to see what human nature is; how it develops itself in trying situations; how the general declarations which God makes about man are illustrated in his life; and especially, we want to see the effect of religion in subduing, calming, and elevating the soul, and in enabling it to bear trials and to meet with temptations. And for the same purpose, also, it is important to exhibit mind as it actually exists under the influence of religion — with the imperfections of our nature — with the impatience, restlessness, murmuring, and unguarded expressions which occur in times of calamity and trial. Even the eminent saint is not perfect in this life. Religion does not deliver him from all imperfection. It leaves the mind subject to conflict, anxiety, trouble; engaged in a fearful warfare with sin and temptation; liable to the outbreaks of impatience and murmuring; subject to the possibility of being thrown off the guard, and of saying things which will be subsequently the occasion of much regret. Now, as it is the design of revelation to exhibit religion not only in its precepts, doctrines, and commands, but as it actually exists in the mind and heart, it

was important to furnish some actual illustrations of this in detail. For this purpose, nothing could be better adapted than to select just such a case as that of Job, and to exhibit him in a condition of most extraordinary trial. He possessed undoubted piety. He had made uncommon attainments in religion. He had been a man of calm judgment — of sober views — of eminent wisdom. His was a fair case, therefore, in which to show the workings of human nature even under the most favorable circumstances, and when the mind is imbued with religion. It was a case designed not to show what man ought to be, but what he is; and how much infirmity and passion may actually exist in the soul, even when imbued with the principles of piety. Much of this same thing also occurs in the Book of Psalms; and one of the principal things which gives value to that inestimable part of the Scriptures is, that it so fully expresses the feelings of a pious man in a great variety of trying circumstances. Many of the expressions in the Psalms, as well as in the Book of Job, we are by no means to regard as the offspring of genuine religion, but as denoting what human nature is, even when the prevailing feelings are those of piety. Even in such a mind, there will be outbreakings of passion; improper murmuring; doubts about the safe condition of the soul; moments of darkness, when clear visions of the divine goodness will be withdrawn; and expressions of impatience, which will give occasion of regret in the subsequent life; compare ³⁸⁹¹Psalm 116:11; 73:1-15. To record these is not to express approbation of them; and the record may be a source of unspeakable consolation to those who are betrayed into similar expressions, as showing that their feelings do not demonstrate that they have no true religion. One of the principal excellencies of the Book of Job is, that it preserves just such a record, and that it shows what the human mind is, even under the prevalent ascendancy of religious feeling, when it is subjected to severe trials.

(5.) In order, then, to ascertain in this book what is right and what is wrong, a careful examination is necessary, in connection with the other parts of the Bible. The views of the friends of Job, and the expressions of Job himself, must be carefully compared with the law of God, with the counsels and precepts elsewhere revealed, and with the nature of true religion as elsewhere exhibited. We are not to assume that all that Job said was right; nor are we to assume that we would have avoided the impatience and irreverence which he sometimes manifested. We are to compare the arguments of Job and his friends with the statements of truth

elsewhere occurring in the Scriptures, and to place his feelings by the side of those of the only perfect man — the Lord Jesus. In him there was no impatience — no murmuring — no irreverence. In him was illustrated fully what religion, under the most trying circumstances, ought to be; in Job we see what, as human nature is constituted, it often is. With the New Testament in our hand, it is not difficult to form a correct estimate of what was wrong in the patriarch of Uz; and we shall not find it difficult to determine what we ought to avoid when we are called to pass through similar trials.

(6) It is not difficult, then, to determine the value of this book, or the place which it deserves to occupy in the sacred canon. It shows the following things:

(a) The operations of the human heart when under trial.

(b) The real power of religion in restraining the mind, and in producing ultimately acquiescence in God.

(c) It shows how far the human mind can go of itself, under the most favorable circumstances, in explaining the mysteries of the divine government.

(d) It shows the necessity that truth should be revealed beyond what the human understanding has power itself to originate, to furnish support and consolation.

(e) It shows the duty of perfect submission to the will of God, even when we cannot see the reason of his doings.

In the works of creation and providence he has evinced so much wisdom and power, so much that surpasses even now all that science can do to explain it, so much that is every way superior to man, that we ought to have confidence in the wisdom of God in all things, and to believe that the great Governor of the universe is qualified for universal empire.

Various places have been assigned to the Book of Job in the ancient and modern arrangements. The place which it occupied at first in the Jewish canon is uncertain, for the ancient catalogues of the sacred books differ much from each other in regard to the place of this book. In that of Melito, it stands after the Canticles; in that of Origen, after Ezekiel; in that of Jerome, after the minor prophets. In Bava Barbra, c. L. f. 14, b., the books

of the Hagiographa follow each other in the following order: 1-Ruth, 2-Psalms, 3-Job, 4-the writings of Solomon, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, 5-Lamentations, ... According to Elias Levita, the Masoretes arranged the Hagiographa in the following order: 1-Chronicles, 2-Psalms, 3-Job, 4-Proverbs, 5-the five festival books. The order in the printed editions varies as much as in the catalogs. In the Bomberg edition, in 1521, it is placed between the book of Proverbs and Daniel; in the edition of Buxtorf, it is placed between Proverbs and Canticles; see Eichhorn, Einleit, section 645, Carpzov, Introd. in V. T. p. 31. The proper place for the book of Job, in order to estimate its real value and importance, is at the commencement the Bible, or in the early part of the book of Genesis. There is reason to suppose that it is the oldest book in the world; and there is a moral certainty that it was penned before the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, and before, in fact, any of the revelations were given which now shed so much light on the path of man. In our estimation of its design, it should stand the commencement of the volume of revealed truth, to show how little the human mind can discover in regard to the principles of the divine government, and the necessity of revelation. The reasonings of the sages of Arabia, in the earliest period of the world, demonstrated abundantly what the reasonings of the sages of Greece afterward did — that man needed a revelation to acquaint him with the true principles of the divine administration.

SECTION 7. THE PATRIARCHAL RELIGION, AS DEVELOPED IN THE BOOK OF JOB

On the supposition that this book was composed at the time supposed, then it is an invaluable document in regard to the nature of the patriarchal religion. We have comparatively few notices on that subject in the book of Genesis, and this volume supplies a chasm which it is of the greatest importance to fill up in order to understand the history of the world. We may suppose, without impropriety, that the mind of Job was imbued with the principles of religion, as then understood by the patriarchs; that he was acquainted with the traditions which had come down from more remote periods; that he was apprized of the revelations which had then been communicated to mankind; and that he practiced the rites of religion which were then prevalent among the true worshippers of God. If this is so, then it will be of interest and importance to bring together, in a brief compass,

some of the notices of the patriarchal religion scattered throughout this book.

(1) The existence of one supreme God, the infinitely wise and glorious Creator of all things. In the entire book, God is spoken of as one, nor is there an intimation by any of the speakers that there is more than one God. There are no allusions to a good and an evil principle contending in the universe; nor any trace of the doctrine which subsequently became prevalent in the East, that such contending principles existed. No sentiments occur like those which were afterward embodied in Persia respecting the existence and conflicts of Ormuzd and Ahriman (see Creuzer, *Symbolik und Mythologie*, Erster Band, 226, following, and Neander, *Geschichte* 2. a. 219, following), or what became subsequently the doctrine of the Manichaeans. The religion of the book of Job is throughout a pure theism. This fact is remarkable, because the subject of the controversy — the mingled good and evil in the world — was such as constituted the foundation of the argument for dualism subsequently in a considerable portion of the Oriental world.

The characteristics ascribed to God in this book are such as are every where attributed to him in the Bible, and are far above any conceptions which prevailed of him at any time among Pagan philosophers. He is almighty, ^{<1818>}Job 5:9; 6:4; 9:5-12, et al. He is omniscient, ^{<1811>}Job 11:11; 21:22. He is wise, ^{<1823>}Job 12:13; 24:1; inscrutable, ^{<1810>}Job 11:7-9; 36:26; invisible, ^{<1891>}Job 9:11. He is the Supreme Governor world, and the regulator of its concerns, ^{<1819>}Job 5:9-13; 9:5-10. He is the Creator of all things, ^{<1847>}Job 4:17; 10:8-11; 35:10; 38:4-10. He is perfectly pure and holy, ^{<1855>}Job 15:15,16; 25:5,6. He is eternal, ^{<1805>}Job 10:5. He is a spiritual Being, ^{<1804>}Job 10:4. He is gracious, and is ready to forgive sin to the penitent, ^{<1857>}Job 5:17-27; 11:13-19; 22:21-23; 33:23-28. He is a hearer of prayer, ^{<1835>}Job 33:26; 12:4; 22:27. He is the dispenser of life and death, ^{<1849>}Job 4:9; 10:12; 33:4. He communicates his will by revelation to mankind, ^{<1842>}Job 4:12-17; 33:14-17. In these and in numerous other passages in the book, the existence and attributes of One Supreme God are stated with perhaps as much clearness as in any part of the Bible, and in a manner infinitely superior to any statements respecting the divine character and perfections in any other ancient books except those of the Scriptures.

(2) The universe was created by this one great and glorious God. It was not the work of chance; it was not the creation of any inferior beings; it

was not eternal. A single passage is on this point — passage of unequalled sublimity, ^{<8804>}Job 38:4-11.

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, it thou knowest? Or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or who laid the cornerstone thereof, When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who shut up the sea with doers, When it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, And thick darkness a swaddling-band for it, And brake it up for my decreed place And set bars and doors, And said, “Hereto shalt thou come, but no further; And here shall thy proud wave, be stayed?”

(3) He is the moral Governor of all his intelligent creatures, dispensing rewards and punishments according to their character. It is unnecessary to refer to particular passages demonstrating this, as the whole of the controversy in the book turns on it. The fact that God thus governs the universe, and that he punishes the evil and rewards the good, is assumed on both sides in the controversy, and is never called in question. The point of inquiry is, In what manner is it done? One of the parties maintains that the dispensations of God here are strictly according to human character, and that character may be fairly inferred from those dispensations; the other denies this, but maintains that there will be future retribution, which will be strictly in accordance with justice; compare the notes at ^{<8823>}Job 19:23-27. Somewhere, and somehow, it seems to have been held by all parties, God would show himself the friend of the righteous and the punisher of the wicked.

(4) The existence of angels, or a superior rank of holy intelligences, is asserted. In ^{<8005>}Job 1:6, it cannot be denied that by “the sons of God,” who came to present themselves before God, holy beings superior to men are denoted, and that it is designed to represent this scene as occurring in heaven. It is further implied there, that they came together from an important service, as if they had been absent engaged in some ministry to other parts of the universe, and returned now to render an account, and to receive a fresh commission in their work. The term “son of God” is used in ^{<8025>}Daniel 3:25, compare ^{<8028>}Daniel 3:28, to denote an angel. Angels also are, undoubtedly, referred to in ^{<8055>}Job 15:15:

***Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints;
Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.***

The express mention of “the heavens” in the parallelism, as well as the contrast between the “saints” or holy ones, here referred to, and with man (^{<18154>}Job 15:14,16), proves that the “holy ones” are angels. It is possible also that in a parallel expression in ^{<18215>}Job 25:5, there may be a reference to angels:

***Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not;
Yea, the stars are not pure in his sight.***

The declaration in ^{<18155>}Job 15:15, demonstrates that the received opinion then was that the angels were far inferior to God. They are spoken of as holy beings; as superior to men; as eminently holy in comparison with the most holy men, but still as so far inferior to God that they were comparatively impure.

In ^{<18111>}Job 5:1, also, there is probably an allusion to angels:

***Call now, if there be any to answer thee;
And to which of the saints wilt thou turn?***

And in ^{<18317>}Job 38:7, they are mentioned as having been present at the creation of the earth, and as celebrating that great event with a song of praise:

***When the morning stars sang together,
And all the sons of God shouted for joy.***

If the book of Job was composed in the time which I have supposed, as stated in the previous parts of this Introduction, then these are among the earliest notices of the heavenly hierarchy that we have in the sacred volume. They imply that the existence of superior intelligences was an undisputed fact that might be used for the sake of argument and illustration; that they were eminently holy, though far inferior to God; that they performed important offices in the administration of the universe, and that they were under the control of the Almighty, and assembled together before him from time to time to give their account, and to receive afresh his commands. Early notices of the existence of angelic beings may be found also in ^{<01901>}Genesis 19:1,15; 22:11; 24:7,40; 28:12; 48:16; ^{<12331>}Exodus 23:20; ^{<07339>}Judges 13:19; ^{<12416>}2 Samuel 24:16, et al.

It would be impossible now to trace the origin of the belief in the existence of superior ranks of holy intelligences, and it would be inappropriate here to attempt to follow out the development of the idea as it occurs in the Scriptures, or as it is found in the early views of the Orientals. The belief, however, has always pervaded the Oriental world, of a series of ascending orders of intelligences, employed for various purposes in the administration of the affairs of the universe. See Creuzer, Sym. u. Myth. and Neander, as quoted above. "The ancient Persians," says Mr. Sale, Pre. Dis. to the Koran, sect. iv., "firmly believed the ministry of angels, and their superintendence over the affairs of the world (as the Magians still do), and therefore assign them distinct charges and provinces, giving their names to the months and the days of the months." The Muslims probably derived their views on this subject from the Old Testament, intermingled with the fables of the Jews; but it is an interesting fact that in the country of Mohammed, in the days of Job, the doctrine of the existence of a superior order of intelligences was held in its purity, and without any of the intermixtures of puerility with which the doctrine is intermingled in the Jewish traditions, and in the Koran. See Sale, Pre. Dis., sect. iv.

(5) The doctrine of the existence of evil spirits was believed with as much certainty. The introduction of the character of Satan, ^{<8011>}Job 1:11, is conclusive proof on that point. He is a dark, malignant, accusing spirit; one who lives to spy out the conduct of others; who is suspicious of the sincerity of all virtue; who delights in the opportunity of putting virtue to the severest test with a view to show that it is false and hollow; who delights to give pain. Satan is introduced in ^{<8011>}Job 1:11, as if it were generally admitted that there were such evil spirits, and as if their character was so well understood that it was unnecessary to offer a remark on the subject. The book of Job, however, furnishes no information as to the prevalent belief whether those spirits were originally evil, or whether they had apostatized from a former state of holiness and happiness. The character of Satan, however, in the book of Job, is such as to render it in the highest degree probable that it was a matter of tradition that he had been the agent in the temptation of Adam, and in the introduction of sin into the world. There is a strong resemblance between the feelings with which he looked on Job, and those with which he must have regarded man in Paradise; and the general distrust which he is represented as having in the piety of Job, and the conviction which he expresses that if the proper test were applied it would be found to be insincere, is such as we might

expect from one emboldened by the successful attempt to alienate man as he was created, from his Creator. There is, indeed, a slight intimation in the poem itself, that Satan was a fallen spirit that had been once holy and happy. It is found in the expression of the belief of Eliphaz in two places, that entire confidence could not be put even in the holy angels — as if there had been some revolt or apostasy among them, which rendered it possible that there might be more:

Behold, he put no trust in his servants, And his angels he charged with folly. How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, Whose foundation is in the dust? ^{<18048>}Job 4:18, 19.

And again:

Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. ^{<18151>}Job 15:15.

Compare ^{<18215>}Job 25:5. Language like this would hardly be employed unless there was a belief that even the holiness of the angels was not incorruptible, and that there had been some revolt there among a part, which rendered it possible that others might revolt also; compare ^{<18106>}Jude 1:6, “And the angels which kept not their first estate.” These passages taken together lead to a clear intimation of a belief that there had been a defection among the heavenly hosts, which was of such a character as to make it possible that they who remained there might apostatize also. They are not represented, indeed, as sinful (see the notes on those passages); they have a degree of holiness which nothing human can equal; but still it is not of the same character as that of God; it is not so exalted as to put it above the suspicion that it might fall.

(6) Man, in the time of Job, was regarded as a fallen being, and as wholly depraved. Of the belief that man is fallen, the following passages are full proof:

Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his Maker? Behold, he put no trust in his servants, And his angels be charged with folly. How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, Whose foundation is in the dust? ^{<18047>}Job 4:17-19.

Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, And full of trouble. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean Not one. ^{<18401>}Job 14:1,4.

What is man, that he should be clean? And he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight, How much more abominable and filthy is man, Who drinketh iniquity like water? ^{<18154>}Job 15:14-16.

There is also an allusion to the manner in which this depravity was introduced into the world:

If I covered my transgressions as Adam, By hiding mine iniquity in my bosom. ^{<18133>}Job 31:33.

In ^{<18021>}Job 1:21, there seems also to be a reference to the sentence pronounced on man in consequence of the apostasy, and in ^{<18019>}Job 10:9, it is possible that there may be the same allusion. As the language there used, however, is such as is common in all languages, and such as may be suggested by mere observation, it is not conclusively certain that the reference is to the sentence pronounced on man on account of his sin.

(7) The necessity of reconciliation with God in order that peace enjoyed, is abundantly stated and enforced:

Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace; Thereby good shall come unto thee. Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, And lay up his words in thine heart. ^{<18221>}Job 22:21,22.

Compare ^{<18167>}Job 5:17-27; 11:13-19.

(8) The doctrine is taught that if man was penitent under the divine chastisement, God would receive the true penitent to his favor. See the passages quoted above (7), and the following:

If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, Thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles. ^{<18223>}Job 22:23.

If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, One among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness, Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom. His flesh shall be fresher than a child's; He shall return to the days of his youth; He shall pray unto God, and he will be favorable unto him, And he shall see his face with joy; For he will render unto man his righteousness. He looketh upon men; and if any say, I have sinned, And perverted that which was right, and it profited me not, He will deliver his soul from going unto the pit, And his life shall see the light. ^{<18323>}Job 33:23-28.

(9) The doctrine was held that man would not live again on the earth; that when he died, he departed to return no more. See this opinion presented with great beauty and force in Job 14.

(10) A very important inquiry next meets us in reference to the question whether man would live after death; and if he did, what would be his condition then. This inquiry is of special importance, if, as has been supposed, this is the oldest book in the world. It will thus throw important light on the development of the idea of the future state, and the belief of the early ages on that point. On this important subject, the following remarks will probably comprise all the views presented in the book of Job.

(a) There is no distinct and formal statement of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Indeed, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to make out from this book that there were any settled views on that subject then prevailing.

(b) There is no mention made of heaven, as a place of rest, or as an abode of holiness. The angels are referred to, and God is often mentioned, and there is, as we shall see, a reference to a future state of being; but there is no distinct conception of heaven, as a place where the righteous would dwell together forever.

(c) There is no belief expressed of the resurrection. The only passage which can, by any persons, be regarded as teaching this doctrine, is the celebrated passage, ^{<18325>}Job 19:25-27. But that this does not refer to the resurrection of the body, seems to me to be clear, for the reasons which are suggested in the notes on that passage. The remarks also in Job 14 seem to be conclusive proof that Job did not suppose that the body would be raised up again after it had once been laid in the dust.

For there is hope of a tree, If it be cut down, that it will sprout again, And that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, And the stock thereof die in the ground; Yet through the scent of water it will bud, And bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth and wasteth away; Yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? ^{<1840>}Job 14:7-10.

The same disbelief of the doctrine of the resurrection, or ignorance of it appears from the following passages:

As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, So he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more: He shall return no more to his house, Neither shall his place know him anymore. ^{<1800>}Job 7:9,10.

As the waters fail from the sea, And the flood decayeth and drieth up; So man lieth down and riseth not: Till the heavens be no more they shall not awake. Nor be raised out of their sleep. ^{<1841>}Job 14:11,12.

If a man die, shall he live again? ^{<1844>}Job 14:14.

It may be said that these passages only teach that man would not appear again on the earth; that he would not rise as the tree sprouts up and lives again. This may be so; but still, if they had known of the resurrection at all, these sentiments would not have been uttered. That doctrine would have relieved all the difficulty as effectually as the belief that man would be raised up to dwell on the earth would have done.

(d) The doctrine of future retribution is not brought forward as it would have been, if it was clearly understood. The reference to a future state of rewards and punishments would have removed all the embarrassment which was felt by Job and his friends. It would have explained the mysterious events in the unequal distribution of rewards and punishments in this life; relieved the difficulty arising from the fact that the righteous suffer and the wicked are prospered here; and would have kept Job from murmuring and complaining under his severe trials. And though there is an occasional allusion to a future state, yet it is by no means such as would be made now in arguing on the difficulties which perplexed the minds of Job and his friends.

(e) Yet still, there was a belief that man would live after death, or that the grave would not be the end of existence. It is remarkable that the only passages which refer to the subject, or express the belief at all, occur in the speeches of Job; and the manner in which he brings forward the doctrine seems to have made no impression on the minds of the other speakers. Even the reference to the future state by Job himself does not appear to have been designed to turn aside the force of their arguments. The views which he presented on the subject do not seem to have excited any curiosity in their minds, or to have been regarded as of sufficient importance to demand a reply. The views which were entertained by Job on the subject are the following:

1. The grave was a quiet resting place; a place where toil and woe and care would cease:

For now should I have lain still and been quiet; I should have slept; Then had I been at rest With kings and counselors of the earth. Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; As infants which never saw the light. There the wicked cease from troubling, And there the weary be at rest. <K13>Job 3:13-17.

My days are passed; My plans are at an end — The cherished purposes of my heart. Night has become day to me; The light bordereth on darkness. Truly, I look to Sheol as my home; My bed I spread in the place of darkness. To corruption I say, “thou art my father;” To the worm, “My mother and my sister.” And where now is my hope? And who will see my hope fulfilled? To the bars of Sheol they must descend; Yea, we shall descend together to the dust. <K171>Job 17:11-16.

For the numbered years pass away; And I am going the way whence I shall not return. My spirit is exhausted; My days are at an end; The grave waits for me. <K162>Job 16:22; 17:1.

And surely the mountain falling comes to nought; And the rock is removed from his place; The waters wear away the stones, The floods wash away the dust of the earth, And the hope of man thou dost destroy. Thou dost overpower him forever, and he passes off; Thou dost change his countenance, and sendest him away. His sons are honored, but he knoweth it not; Or they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not. <K148>Job 14:18-21.

2. But though the grave is thus the termination of man's earthly hopes, yet is not the end of man. There is an abode to which the grave is but the entrance; a world where there is still consciousness, and susceptibility of happiness or woe. In that world the Shades or the Rephaim reside — the spirits of departed men:

The shades tremble from beneath; The waters and their inhabitants.
Sheol is naked before him; And Destruction hath no covering.
~~<3315>~~Job 26:5,6.

It is clear here that that world is supposed to be “beneath;” that it is under the waters; that it is the region of “Sheol” to which the grave is the entrance; and that there is a dominion of God over those departed Shades or Rephaim, so that he has power to make them tremble. There can be no doubt that by the Shades or Rephaim here, there is an allusion to the Manes Mortuorum, the spirits of the dead confined in Sheol; compare ~~<3349>~~Isaiah 14:9; ~~<3128>~~Proverbs 2:18; ~~<3880>~~Psalm 88:10; ~~<3198>~~Proverbs 9:18; ~~<3339>~~Isaiah 26:19. That world is dark and dismal. There is an obscure light there, but it serves only heighten the gloom:

Are not my days few? O spare me, and let me alone, that I may take a little ease, Before I go whence I shall not return, To the land of darkness, and the shadow of death — The land of darkness, like the blackness of the shadow of death, Where there is no order, and where its shining is like blackness. — ~~<3800>~~Job 10:20-22.

For the bearing of this passage on the belief of the future state, the reader is referred to the notes. This view of the future world is remarkably obscure and gloomy, and shows that even the mind of Job had not such anticipations of the future state as to cheer and support him in the time of trial. The apprehension seems to have been that all the dead would descend through the grave to a region where only a few Scattered rays of light would exist, and where the whole aspect of the dwelling was in strong contrast with the cheerful regions of the “land of the living.” To that dark world even Job felt that it would be a calamity to descend, for though there was an expectation that there would be a distinction there between the good and the evil, yet compared with the present world of light and beauty, it was a sad and gloomy dwelling-place.

3. That world was regarded by the ancients as less desirable as a place of residence than this in several respects. It was dark and gloomy. It was

entered through the grave, and the grave was only its outer court. They who dwelt there were cut off from the enjoyments of the present life. It was a land of silence. Thus Hezekiah, speaking of that world to which he had a prospect of descending when so sick, says:

I said, "I shall not see YAHWEH; YAHWEH in the land of the living: I shall see man no more, Among the inhabitants of the land of stillness." ^{<3381>}Isaiah 38:11.

In like manner, it would be a place where the worship of God could not be appropriately celebrated. Thus Hezekiah says:

For Sheol cannot praise thee; Death cannot celebrate thee; They that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day; The father to the children shall make known thy faithfulness. — ^{<3388>}Isaiah 38:18,19.

A similar sentiment is expressed by David, ^{<4015>}Psalms 6:5:

For in death there is no remembrance of thee; In the grave who shall give thee thanks?

A similar view of that world appears to have been taken by Job. Indeed, it is not improbable that the view of Job was even more gloomy in regard to that future world, as he lived at a period so much earlier than David and Hezekiah. Successive revelations imparted new light, and the idea of the future state was more and more developed, though in the time of Hezekiah it was accompanied with much that was dark and gloomy. It was reserved for the gospel fully to "bring life and immortality to light." Yet,

4. In that future world there was some belief that there would be a separation between the good and the bad; or that the wicked would be visited with punishment — though the belief of this is represented as received from travelers, the faith of foreign lands:

Have ye not inquired of the travelers? And will you not admit their testimony? That the wicked man is kept for the day of destruction? And that he shall be brought forth in the day of fierce wrath? — ^{<4272>}Job 21:29,30.

That this "wrath" refers to punishment which the wicked will experience after death, is apparent from what Job immediately adds, that he well knows that his present life may be one of prosperity, and that he may lie

down with honor in the grave, and that the clods of the valley will be sweet unto him:

Who charges him with his way to his face? And who recompenses to him that which he hath done? And he shall be borne with honor to the grave, And friends shall watch tenderly over his tomb. Sweet to him shall be the clods of the valley; Every man shall go out to honor him, And of those before him there shall be no number. —
~~823~~Job 21:31-33.

Compare the notes at ~~2345~~Isaiah 14:15-19. It will be apparent from these illustrations, that the views of the future state in the time of Job were very obscure, and this is the reason of the remarkable fact that no particular reference is made in the argument to it, in order to remove the difficulties that were felt in regard to the divine administration here.

(11) God was to be worshipped by sacrifice and burnt-offerings. It was in this way that Job sought to make expiation for the sins which his children might inadvertently have committed (~~8008~~Job 1:4,5), and that the sins of his friends were to be expiated (~~8808~~Job 42:8). This was evidently among the earliest modes of worship (compare ~~0008~~Genesis 4:4; 8:20,21), and there was, therefore, some idea of the nature of an atonement, or of expiation for sin. I do not see any reason to doubt that Job, in common with all the patriarchs, may have had some conception that these bloody offerings were designed to point to the one great Sacrifice that was to be made for the sins of the world but there is no intimation of any such belief in the book itself. Of the modes of worship, besides the offering of sacrifice, nothing can be learned from this book, except that sacrifices were to be accompanied with prayer, and that prayer was acceptable to God and would be heard; ~~8808~~Job 42:8; 33:26,27,28; 11:13-15. Repentance was also demanded, and where there was a penitent heart, the offender would be accepted.

If thou prepare thine heart, And stretch out thine hands toward him;

If the iniquity which is in thine hands thou wilt put far away, And will not suffer evil to dwell in thy habitation, Then shalt thou lift up thy countenance (bright) without spot, And then shalt be firm, and shalt not fear. And thy life shall be bright above the noonday, — Now thou art in darkness — but thou shalt be as the morning. —
~~8813~~Job 11:13-17.

The religion of the time of Job was a pure theism. It consisted in the worship of one God, with appropriate sacrifices, and with acts of confidence and adoration, and with dependence on his mercy to lost sinners. There is, indeed, no express mention of convocations for public worship, nor of the Sabbath, nor of the office of priest. As in the time of Noah (Genesis 8) the father of a family was the officiating priest who laid the victim on the altar, so it was in the time of Job, ^{<R004>}Job 1:4,5. In these services there was the most profound veneration for the one God, and the deepest abhorrence of idolatry in all its forms.

If I have made gold my trust, Or said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; If I rejoiced because my wealth was great, And because mine hand had found much; If I beheld the sun when it shined, And the moon advancing in its brightness, And my heart has been secretly enticed, And my mouth has kissed my hand; This also were a crime to be punished by the judge, For I should have denied the God who is above. ^{<R024>}Job 30:24-28.

There is nowhere in the book an intimation that the sun, the moon, the stars, or any created being, was to be honored as God.

(12) We have in the book of Job an interesting view of the nature and effects of true piety. The necessity of holiness of life, of trust in God, of integrity and truth, is every where insisted on as essential to true religion. To transcribe the particular places where these are dwelt upon, would be to copy a considerable part of the book. We may just advert to the beautiful manner in which the necessity of sincerity in the service of God is urged, and in which the sin and danger of hypocrisy are expressed:

Can the paper reed grow up without mire? Can the bulrush grow up without water? Even yet in its greenness, and uncut, It withereth before any other herb. Such are the ways of all who forget God; So perishes the hope of the hypocrite. His hope shall rot, And his trust shall be the building of the spider. He shall lean upon the building, and it shall not stand; He shall grasp it, but it shall not endure. ^{<R011>}Job 8:11-16.

Knowest thou not that from the most ancient times, From the time when man was placed upon the earth, That the triumphing of the wicked is short, And the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment? Though his greatness mount up to the heavens, And his excellency unto the clouds. Yet he shall perish forever as the vilest substance They who have seen him shall say, Where is he? He shall flee away as a dream, and not be found, Yea, he shall vanish as a vision of the night. ~~<1814>~~ Job 20:4-8.


For what is the hope of the hypocrite when (God) cuts him off; When he taketh away his life? Will God listen to his cry When trouble cometh upon him? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he call at all times upon God? ~~<1827>~~ Job 27:8-10.

(13) An interesting view of the religion of the time of Job is seen in influence on morals and manners. Customs in the Oriental world change little, and in Arabia at the present time we have still interesting illustrations of what existed in the days of Job. In the patriarchal times all this was identified with their religion, and there is scarcely even now to be found any where more beautiful illustrations of the nature and effects of religion in these respects, than occur in the book of Job, and nowhere are there more happy descriptions of the simplicity, the purity, the urbanity of early manners and customs. This is seen in the book of Job in the following respects:

(a) In the perfect respectfulness of manner in their treatment of each other. In all the long controversy recorded in this book, and in all that was said that was harsh and adapted to irritate, there is no interruption of the speaker. There is no passionate outbreak. It was a conceded and wellunderstood matter that the speaker was to be heard patiently through, and then that the reply was to be heard as patiently. No matter how much misapprehension of the meaning of the one who had spoken there might be, no matter what reflection there might be on his motives or character, and no matter how severe and withering the sarcasm, yet there is no attempt to break in upon the speaker. This is understood still to be courtesy in the Oriental world; this was regarded as courtesy among the aborigines of N. America; and in this respect the more civilized and polished people of our times might learn something from even the wandering Arab, or the “wild untutored Indian.” Thus, Dr. Franklin (Works, vol. ii. 455), speaking of the “Savages of North America,” says,

“Having frequent occasions to hold public councils, they have acquired great order and decency in conducting them. The old men sit in the foremost ranks, the warriors in the next, and the women and children in the hindmost. The business of the women is to take exact notice of what passes, imprint it on their memories, and communicate it to their children. He that would speak, rises. The rest observe a profound silence. When he has finished, and sits down, they leave him five or six minutes to recollect, that if he has omitted any thing he intended to say, or has any thing to add, he may rise again and deliver it. To interrupt another, even in common conversation, is reckoned highly indecent. How different this is from the conduct of a polite British House of Commons, where scarcely a day passes without some confusion, that makes the Speaker hoarse in calling to order,” etc. “It is one of the Indian rules of politeness not to answer a public proposition the same day that it is made; they think it would be treating it as a light matter, and that they show it respect by taking time to consider it, as of a matter important” Ibid. p. 454.

(b) Respect for age. More beautiful instances of this can nowhere be found than in the modesty of Elihu, and in the deference which Job said was paid to him in his days of prosperity. Elihu says:

I am young, and ye are very old; Therefore I was afraid, And durst not make known to you mine opinion. I said, Days should speak, And multitude of years should teach wisdom. But there is a spirit in man: And the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding. Great men are not always wise; Neither do the aged always understand what is right Therefore I said, Hearken unto me; I also will declare mine opinion. Behold, I waited for your words, I listened to your arguments, While ye searched out what to say. Yea, I attended to you; And behold, there is no one that hath refuted Job, Or answered his words. They were confounded; they answered no more; They put words far from them. And I waited, although they did not speak; Although they stood still, and answered no more. Now will I answer on my part; Even I will show mine opinion.  Job 32:6-17.

So Job speaks of the respect that was shown him in the days of his prosperity:

When I went forth to the gate through the city, And prepared my seat in the public place, The young men saw me, and respectfully retired before me; The aged arose, and stood. The princes refrained from speaking, And laid their hand upon their mouth. The voice of counselors was silent, And their tongue cleaved to the roof of their month. For the ear heard, and it blessed me; And the eye saw, and it bore witness to me. ~~18207~~ Job 29:7-11.

(c) One of the virtues then much dwelt on, as an act of piety, was that of hospitality. This is frequently alluded to with great beauty in the poem, as it is in all the poetry of Arabia now, and in the days of Job was esteemed to be a virtue as essential as it is now in the East.

If I have withheld the poor from their desire, Or caused the eyes of the widow to fail; If I have eaten my morsel alone, And the fatherless hath not eaten of it; — For from my youth he grew up with me as with a father, And I was her guide from my earliest days —

If I have seen any one perish for want of clothing, Or any poor man without covering; If his loins have not blessed me, And if he have not been warmed with the fleece of my sheep; Then may my shoulder fall from the blade, And mine arm be broken from the upper bone. ~~18316~~ Job 31:16-22.

If my domestics could not at all times say, “Let them show one who has not been satisfied from his hospitable table,” (The stranger did not lodge in the street, My doors I opened to the traveler,) Then let me be confounded before a great multitude! Let the contempt of families crush me! ~~18313~~ Job 31:31-34.

See also ~~18115~~ Job 18:5,6; 21:17, and the notes on those places.

(d) In like manner, piety then consisted much in kindness to the poor, the widow, and the fatherless, and to those in the humbler ranks of life. Job’s beautiful description of his own piety in the days of his prosperity is all that is needful to illustrate this:

For I rescued the poor when they cried, And the fatherless when there was none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, And I caused the heart of the widow to sing for joy. — ~~18292~~ Job 29:12,13

I was eyes to the blind. And feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor; And the cause of the unknown I searched out. And I broke the teeth of the wicked, And from their teeth I plucked away the spoil. — ^{<18295>}Job 29:15-17

Did not I weep for him that was in trouble, Was not my soul grieved for the poor? ^{<18125>}Job 30:25

If I have refused justice to my man-servant or maid-servant, When they had a cause with me, What shall I do when God riseth up? When he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb make him? Did not the same One fashion us in the womb? — ^{<18313>}Job 31:13-15

If my land cry out against me, And the furrows likewise complain; If I have eaten its fruits without payment, And extorted the living of its owners; Let thistles grow up instead of wheat, And noxious weeds instead of barley. ^{<18313>}Job 31:38-40

SECTION 8. THE STATE OF THE ARTS AND SCIENCES IN THE TIME OF JOB

There is one important aspect still in which the book of Job may be contemplated. It is as an illustration of the state of the arts and sciences of the period of the world when it was composed. We are not indeed, in a poem of this nature, to look for formal treatises on any of the arts or sciences as then understood, but all that we can expect to find must be incidental allusions, or hints, that may enable us to determine with some degree of accuracy what advances society had then made. Such allusions are also of much more value in determining the progress of society, than extended descriptions of conquests and sieges would be. The latter merely change the boundaries of empire; the former indicate progress in the condition of man. Inventions in the arts and discoveries in science are fixed points, from which society does not go backward. I propose, then, as an illustration of the progress which society had made in the time of Job, as well as to prepare the mind to read the book in the most intelligent manner, to bring together the scattered notices of the state of the arts and sciences contained in this poem. No exact order can be observed in this; nor is there anything in the poem to indicate which of the things specified had the priority in point of time, or when the invention or discovery was made. The order of the arrangement chosen will have some reference to the

importance of the subjects, and also some to what may be supposed to have first attracted attention. For a more full view of the various points that will be referred to, reference may be made to the notes on the various passages adduced.

1. ASTRONOMY

The stars were early observed in Chaldea, where the science of astronomy had its origin. A pastoral people always have some knowledge of the heavenly bodies. The tending of flocks by night, under a clear Oriental sky, gave abundant opportunity for observing the motions of the heavenly bodies, and names would soon be given to the most important of the stars; the difference between the planets and the fixed stars would be observed, and the imagination would be employed in grouping the stars into fanciful resemblances to animals and other objects. In like manner, as caravans traveled much at night through the deserts, on account of the comparative coolness then, they would have an opportunity of observing the stars, and some knowledge of the heavenly bodies became necessary to guide their way. The notices of the heavenly bodies in this poem show chiefly that names were given to some of the stars; that they were grouped together in constellations; and that the times of the appearance of certain stars had been carefully observed, and their relation to certain aspects of the weather had been marked. There is no express mention of the planets as distinguished from the fixed stars; and nothing to lead us to suppose that they were acquainted with the true system of astronomy.

He commandeth the sun, and it riseth not, And he sealeth up the stars. He alone stretcheth out the heavens And walketh upon the high waves of the sea. He maketh Arcturus, Orion, The Pleiades, and the secret chambers of the south. — ~~1890~~ Job 9:7-9

Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, Or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season, Or lead forth the Bear with her young? Knowest thou the laws of the heavens, Or hast thou appointed their dominion over the earth? — ~~1891~~ Job 38:31-33.

It would seem from these passages, that the allusion to the clusters of stars here, is made to them as the harbingers of certain seasons.

“It is well known, that, in different regions of the earth, the appearance of certain constellations before sunrise or after sunset,

marks the distinction of seasons, and regulates the labors of the farmer.” Wemyss.

It is also known that the appearance of certain constellations — as Orion — was regarded by mariners as denoting a stormy and tempestuous season of the year. See the notes on the passages quoted above. This seems to be the knowledge of the constellations referred to here, and there is no certain evidence that the observation of the heavens in the time of Job had gone beyond this.

A somewhat curious use has been made of the reference to the stars in the book of Job, by an attempt to determine the time when he lived. Supposing the principal stars here mentioned to be those of Taurus and Scorpio, and that these were the cardinal constellations of spring and autumn in the time of Job, and calculating their positions by the precession of the equinoxes, the time referred to in the book of Job was found to be 818 years after the deluge, or 184 years before the birth of Abraham. “This calculation, made by Dr. Brinkley of Dublin, and adopted by Dr. Hales, had been made also in 1765 by M. Ducontant in Paris, with a result differing only in being forty-two years less.” The coincidence is remarkable, but the proof that the constellations referred to are Taurus and Scorpio, is too uncertain to give much weight to the argument.

2. COSMOLOGY

The intimations about the structure, the size, and the support of the earth, are also very obscure, and the views entertained would seem to have been very confused. Language is used, doubtless, such as would express the popular belief, and it resembles that which is commonly employed in the Scriptures. The common representation is, that the heavens are stretched out as a curtain or tent, or sometimes as a solid concave sphere in which the heavenly bodies are fixed (see the notes at ^{<2304>}Isaiah 34:4), and that the earth is an immense plain, surrounded by water, which reached the concave heavens in which the stars were fixed. Occasionally, the earth is represented as supported by pillars, or as resting on a solid foundation; and once we meet with an intimation that it is globular, and suspended in space.

In the following passages the earth and the sky are represented as supported by pillars:

He shaketh the earth out of her place, And the pillars thereof
tremble. ^{<806>}Job 9:6

The pillars of heaven tremble, And are astonished at his rebuke.
 <8911>Job 31:11

In the latter passage the reference is to mountains, which seem to uphold the sky as pillars, in accordance with the common and popular representation among the ancients. Thus Mount Atlas, in Mauritania, was represented as a pillar on which heaven was suspended:

*“Atlas’ broad shoulders prop th’ incumbent skies
 Around his cloud-girt head the stars arise,”*

In the following passage the earth is represented as suspended on nothing, and there would seem to be a slight evidence that the true doctrine about the form of the earth was then known:

He stretcheth out the North over the empty space, And hangeth the earth upon nothing. <8917>Job 26:7

See particularly the notes on that passage. Though the belief seems to have been that the earth was thus “self-balanced,” yet there is no intimation that they were acquainted with the fact that it revolves on its axis, or around the sun as a center.

3. GEOGRAPHY

There are few intimations of the prevalent knowledge of geography in the time of Job. In one instance foreign regions are mentioned, though there is no certainty that the countries beyond Palestine are there referred to:

Have ye not inquired of the travelers? And will ye not hear their testimony? <8923>Job 21:29.

In the close of the book, in the mention of the hippopotamus and the crocodile, there is evidence that there was some knowledge of the land of Egypt, though no intimation is given of the situation or extent of that Country.

The cardinal points are referred to, and there is evidence in this book, as well as elsewhere in the Scriptures, that the geographer then regarded himself as looking toward the East. The South was thus the “right hand,” the North the left hand, and the West the region “behind:”

Behold, I go to the East, and he is not there; And to the West, but I cannot perceive him; To the North, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; He hideth himself on the South, that I cannot see him. — ^{<18218>}Job 23:8,9

See the notes on this verse for an explanation of the terms used; compare the following places, where similar geographical terms occur; ^{<171812>}Judges 18:12; ^{<161124>}Deuteronomy 11:24; ^{<38148>}Zechariah 14:8; ^{<12109>}Exodus 10:19; ^{<16171>}Joshua 17:7; ^{<12213>}2 Kings 23:13; ^{<12224>}1 Samuel 23:24; ^{<11445>}Genesis 14:15; ^{<16197>}Joshua 19:27.

Whatever was the form of the earth, and the manner in which it was sustained, it is evident from the following passage that the land was regarded as surrounded by a waste of waters, whose outer limit was deep and impenetrable darkness:

He hath drawn a circular bound upon the waters, To the confines of the light and darkness. ^{<18310>}Job 26:10

Yet the whole subject is represented as one with which man was then unacquainted, and which was beyond his grasp:

Hast thou observed the breadths of the earth? Declare, if thou knowest it all. ^{<18318>}Job 38:18

For a full illustration of this passage, and the views of geography which then prevailed, the reader is referred to the notes. It is evident that the knowledge of geography, so far as is indicated by this book, was then very limited, though it should also be said that in the argument of the poem there was little occasion to refer to knowledge of this kind, and that few intimations are to be expected on the subject.

4. METEOROLOGY

There are much more frequent intimations of the state of knowledge on the various subjects embraced under this head, than of either astronomy or geography. These intimations show that these subjects had excited much attention, and had been the result of careful observation; and in regard to some of them there are indications of a plausible theory of their causes, though most of them are appealed to as among the inscrutable things of God. The facts excited the wonder of the Arabian observers, and they clothed their conceptions of them in the most beautiful language of poetry; but they do not often attempt to explain them. On the contrary, these

obvious and undisputed facts, so inscrutable to them, are referred to as full proof that we cannot hope to comprehend the ways of God, and as reason why we should bow before him with profound adoration. Among the things referred to are the following:

(a) The Aurora Borealis, or Northern lights. Thus the magnificent description of the approach of the Almighty to close the controversy (^{<1872>}Job 37:21-23), seems to have been borrowed by Elihu from the beautiful lights of the North, in accordance with the common opinion that the North was the seat of the Divinity:

And now — man cannot look upon the bright splendor that is on the clouds: For the wind passeth along and maketh them clear. golden splendor approaches from the North: How fearful is the majesty of God! The Almighty! we cannot find him out! Great in power and in justice, and vast in righteousness!

Compare the notes at ^{<2341>}Isaiah 14:13, and at ^{<1821>}Job 23:9.

(b) Tornadoes, whirlwinds, and tempests, were the subject of careful observation. The sources from where they usually came were attentively marked, and the various phenomena which they exhibited were so observed that the author of the poem was able to describe them with the highest degree of poetic beauty:

With his hands he covereth the lightning And commandeth it where to strike. He pointeth out to it his friends — The collecting of his wrath is upon the wicked. At this also my heart palpitates, And is moved out of its place. Hear, O hear, the thunder of his voice! The muttering thunder that goes forth from his mouth! He directeth it under the whole heaven, And his lightning to the ends of the earth. He thundereth with the voice of his majesty, And he will not restrain the tempest when his voice is heard.

— ^{<1862>}Job 36:32,33; 37:1-4

Terrors come upon him like waters, In the night a tempest stealeth him away. The east wind carrieth him away, and he departeth, And it sweeps him away from his place. — ^{<1871>}Job 27:20,21

(c) The dew had been carefully observed, yet the speakers did not understand its phenomena. How it was produced; whether it descended from the atmosphere, or ascended from the earth, they did not profess to

be able to explain. It was regarded as one of the things which God only could understand; yet the manner in which it is spoken of shows that it had attracted deep attention, and led to much inquiry:

Hath the rain a father? And who hath begotten the drops of the dew? ^{<1833>}Job 38:28

(d) The same remarks may be made of the formation of the hoar frost, of snow, of hail, and of ice. There is no theory suggested to account for them but they are regarded as among the things which God alone could comprehend, and which evinced his wisdom. There had been evidently much careful observation of the facts, and much inquiry into the cause of these things but the speakers did not profess to be able to explain them. To this day, also, there is much about them which is unexplained, and the farther the investigation is carried, the more occasion is there to admire the wisdom of God in the formation of these things, See the notes on the passages that will now be referred to:

From whose womb came the ice; The hoar-frost of heaven, who gave it birth? ^{<1832>}Job 38:29

By the breath of God frost is produced, And the broad waters become compressed. ^{<1870>}Job 37:10

For he saith to the snow, “Be thou on the earth.” ^{<1876>}Job 37:6

Hast thou been into the storehouses of snow? Or seen the storehouses of hail, Which I have reserved until the time of trouble, To the day of battle and war? ^{<1832>}Job 38:22,23

(e) The dawning of the morning is described with great beauty, and is represented as wholly beyond the power of man to produce or explain:

Hast thou, in thy life, given commandment to the morning? Or caused the dawn to know His place? That it may seize on the far corners of the earth, And scatter the robbers before it? It turns itself along like clay under the seal, And all things stand forth as if in gorgeous apparel.* — ^{<1882>}Job 38:12-14

* NOTE: For the meaning of this uncommonly beautiful imagery, see the notes on this place.

(f) So all the phenomena of light are represented as evincing the wisdom of God, and as wholly beyond the ability of man to explain or comprehend them; yet so represented as to show that it had been a subject of careful observation and reflection:

Where is the way to the dwelling-place of light? And the darkness, where is its place? That thou couldest conduct it to its limits, And that thou shouldest know the path to its dwelling? — ~~1839~~Job 38:19,20

(g) The clouds and rain also had been carefully observed, and the laws which governed them were among the inscrutable things of God:

Who can number the clouds by wisdom? And who can empty the bottles of heaven? ~~1837~~Job 38:37

The clouds seem to have been regarded as a solid substance capable of holding rain like a leather bottle, and the rain was caused by their emptying themselves on the earth. Yet the whole phenomena were considered to be beyond the comprehension of man. The laws by which the clouds suspended in the air, and the reason why the rain descended in small drops, instead of gushing floods, were alike incomprehensible:

Who also can understand the outspreading of the clouds, And the fearful thunderings in his pavilion? ~~1869~~Job 36:29

For he draweth up the drops of water; They distil rain in his vapor, Which the clouds pour down; They pour it upon man in abundance. ~~1837~~Job 36:27,28

He bindeth up the waters in the thick clouds, And the cloud is not rent under them. ~~1808~~Job 26:8

(h) The sea had also attracted the attention of these ancient observers and there were phenomena there which they could not explain:

Who shut up the sea with doors, In its bursting forth as from the womb? When I made the cloud its garment, And swathed it in thick darkness? I measured out for it its limits. And fixed its bars and doors, And said, Thus far shalt thou come, but no farther. And here shall thy proud waves be stayed! ~~1808~~Job 38:8-11

There is a reference here, undoubtedly, to the creation; but as this is the language of God describing that event, it cannot be determined with certainty that a knowledge of the method of creation had been communicated to them by tradition. But language like this implies that there had been a careful observation of the ocean, and that there were things in regard to it which were to them incomprehensible. The passage is a most sublime description of the creation of the mighty mass of waters, and while it is entirely consistent with the account in Genesis, it supplies some important circumstances not recorded there.

5. MINING OPERATIONS

Job 28 — one of the most beautiful portions of the Bible — contains a statement of the method of mining then practiced, and shows that the art was well understood. The mechanical devices mentioned, and the skill with which the process was carried on, evince considerable advance in the arts:

Truly there is a vein for silver, And a place for gold where they refine it. Iron is obtained from the earth, And ore is fused into copper. Man putteth an end to darkness, And completely searches every thing — The rocks, the thick darkness, and the shadow of death He sinks a shaft far from a human dwelling; They, unsupported by the feet, hang suspended; Far from men they swing to and fro. The earth — out of it cometh bread; And when turned up beneath, it resembles fire. Its stones are the places of sapphires, And gold dust pertains to it. The path thereto no bird knoweth, And the vulture's eye hath not seen it. The fierce wild beasts have not trodden it, And the lion hath not walked over it. Man layeth his hand upon the flinty rock; He overturneth mountains from their foundations; He cutteth out canals among the rocks, And his eye seeth every precious thing. He restraineth the streams from trickling down, And bringeth hidden things to light. ~~Job 28:1-11~~

The operation of mining must have early attracted attention, for the art of working metals, and of course their value, was understood in a very early age of the world. Tubal Cain is described as an “instructor of every artificer in brass and iron;” ~~Genesis 4:22~~. The description in Job shows that this art had received much attention, and that in his time it had been carried to a high degree of perfection; see the notes at ~~Job 28:1-11~~.

6. PRECIOUS STONES

There is frequent mention of precious stones in the book of Job, and it is evident that they were regarded as of great value, and were used for ornament. The following are mentioned, as among the precious stones, though some of them are now ascertained to be of little value. There is evidence that they judged, as was necessarily the case in the early age of the world, rather from appearances than from any chemical knowledge of their nature. The onyx and sapphire:

It (wisdom) cannot be estimated by the gold of Ophir By the precious onyx, or the sapphire. ~~<18316>~~ Job 28:16.

Coral, crystal, and rubies:

No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal; For the price of wisdom is above rubies. ~~<18318>~~ Job 28:18

The topaz found in Ethiopia, or Cush:

The topaz of Cush cannot equal it, Nor can it be purchased with pure gold. ~~<18319>~~ Job 28:19

These were found as the result of the processes of mining, though it is not known that the art of engraving on them was known. It is, moreover, not entirely easy to fix the signification of the original words used here. See the notes at Job 28.

7. COINING, WRITING ENGRAVING

It is not quite certain, though there is some evidence, that the art of coining was known in the days of Job. The solution of this question depends on the meaning of the word rendered "a piece of money," in ~~<18211>~~ Job 42:11. For an examination of this, the reader is referred to the notes on that verse. There is the fullest evidence that the art of writing was then known:

O that my words were now written! O that they were engraved on a tablet! That with an iron graver, and with lead, They were engraven upon a rock forever. ~~<18223>~~ Job 19:23,24

O that He would hear me! Behold my defense! May the Almighty answer me! Would that he who contends with me would write down his charge! Truly upon my shoulder would I bear it; I would bind it upon me as a diadem. ~~<18135>~~ Job 31:35,36

The materials for writing are not indeed particularly mentioned, but it is evident that permanent records on stone were made; that this was done sometimes by making use of lead; and also that it was common to make use of portable materials, and as would seem of flexible materials, since Job speaks (Job 31) of binding the charge of his adversary, when written down, around his head like a turban or diadem; compare the notes at ~~<3001>~~Isaiah 8:1; 30:8. Though the papyrus, or “paper reed,” of Egypt, seems to be once alluded to (see the notes at ~~<881>~~Job 8:11), yet there is no evidence that it was known as a material for writing.

8. THE MEDICAL ART

Physicians are once mentioned.

For truly are ye forgers of fallacies; Physicians of no value, all of you. ~~<810>~~Job 13:4

But there is no intimation of the methods of cure, or of the remedies that were applied. It is remarkable that, so far as appears, no methods were taken to cure the extraordinary malady of Job himself. He excluded himself from society, sat down in dust and ashes, and merely attempted to remove the offensive matter that the disease collected on his person; ~~<808>~~Job 2:8. So far as appears from the Scripture early times were chiefly external applications. See the notes at ~~<2006>~~Isaiah 1:6; 38:21,22. “Physicians” are mentioned in ~~<0510>~~Genesis 50:2, but only in connection with embalming, where it is said that

“Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father, and the physicians embalmed Israel.”

9. MUSIC

Musical instruments are mentioned in the book of Job in such a manner as to show that the subject of music had attracted attention, though we may not be able now to ascertain the exact form of the instruments which were employed:

They excite themselves with the tabor and the harp, And rejoice at the sound of the pipe. ~~<8212>~~Job 21:12

My harp also is turned to mourning, And my pipes to notes of grief. ~~<8313>~~Job 30:31

For an explanation of these terms, the reader is referred to the notes on these passages. We have evidence that music was cultivated long before the time in which it is supposed Job lived (^{<0021>}Genesis 4:21), though there is no certainty that even in his time it had reached a high degree of perfection.

10. HUNTING

One of the earliest arts practiced in society would be that of taking and destroying wild beasts, and we find several allusions to the methods in which this was done, in the book of Job. Nets, gins, and pitfalls, were made use of for this purpose, and in order to drive the wild beasts into the nets or pitfalls, it was customary for a number of persons to extend themselves in a forest, enclosing a large space, and gradually drawing near to each other and to the center:

His strong steps shall be straitened, And his own plans shall cast him down. For he is brought into his net by his own feet, And into the pitfall he walks. The snare takes him by the heel And the gin takes fast hold of him. A net is secretly laid for him in the ground, And a trap for him in the pathway. ^{<1817>}Job 18:7-10

The howling of dogs, and the shouts of the hunters, are represented as filling the wild animal with dismay, and as harassing him as he attempts to escape:

Terrors alarm him on every side, And harass him at his heels.
^{<1811>}Job 18:11

While spent with hunger and fatigue, he is entangled in the spread nets, and becomes an easy prey for the hunter:

His strength shall be exhausted by hunger, And destruction shall seize upon his side. It shall devour the vigour of his frame, The first-born of Death shall devour his limbs. — ^{<1812>}Job 18:12,13

Compare ^{<1404>}Psalms 140:4,5; ^{<1906>}Ezekiel 19:6-9.

11. METHODS OF HUSBANDRY

The customs of the pastoral life, one of the chief employments of early ages, are often referred to; ^{<1003>}Job 1:3,16; 42:12.

He shall never look upon the rivulets — The streams of the valleys
— of honey and butter. <1817>Job 20:17

When I washed my steps with cream, And the rock poured me out
rivers of oil. <1826>Job 29:6

Plowing with oxen is mentioned, <1814>Job 1:14. So also <1813>Job 31:38-40:

If my land cry out against me, And the furrows likewise complain;

If I have eaten its fruits without payment, And extorted the living of
its owners; Let thistles grow up instead of wheat, And noxious
weeds instead of barley. <1813>Job 31:38-40

The cultivation of the vine and the olive, and the pressure of grapes and
olives, is mentioned:

He shall cast his unripe fruit as the vine, And shed his blossoms like
the olive. <1815>Job 15:33

They reap their grain in the field (of others), And they gather the
vintage of the oppressor. <1826>Job 24:6

They cause them to express oil within their walls; They tread their
wine-presses, and yet they suffer thirst. — <1841>Job 24:11

It is remarkable that in the book of Job there is no mention of the palm, the
pomegranate, or any species of flowers. In a country like Arabia, where the
date now is so important an article of food, it would have been reasonable
to anticipate that there would have been some allusion known, from what
is said, of the implements of husbandry, and nothing forbids us to suppose
that they were of the rudest sort.

12. MODES OF TRAVELING

From the earliest period in the East the mode of traveling to any distance
appears to have been by caravans, or companies. Two objects seem to have
been contemplated by this in making long journeys across pathless deserts
that were much infested by robbers; the one was the purpose of
selfdefense, the other mutual accommodation. For the purposes of those
traveling companies, camels are admirably adapted by nature, alike from
their ability to bear burdens, from the scantiness of food which they
require, and for their being able to travel far without water. Caravans are
first mentioned in <1872>Genesis 37:25,

“And they sat down to eat bread, and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and behold a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.”

A beautiful notice of this mode of traveling occurs in Job (~~8015~~ Job 6:15-20), as being common in his time:

My brethren are faithless as a brook, Like the streams of the valley that pass away; Which are turbid by means of the (melted) ice, In which the snow is hid (by being dissolved). In the time when they become warm they evaporate. When the heat cometh, they are dried up from their place; The channels of their way wind round about; They go into nothing, and are lost. The caravans of Tema look; The traveling companies of Sheba expect to see them. They are ashamed that they have relied on them, They come even to the place, and are confounded.

There is, in one place in Job, a slight intimation that runners or carriers were employed to carry messages when extraordinary speed was demanded, though there is no evidence that this was a settled custom, or that it was regulated by law:

And my days are swifter than a runner; They flee away, and they see no good. ~~8025~~ Job 9:25.

Connected with the subject of traveling, we may remark, that the art of making light boats or skiffs from reeds appears to have been known, though there is no mention of ships, or of distant navigation:

They pass on like the reed-skiffs; As the eagle darting on its prey. ~~8026~~ Job 9:26.

13. THE MILITARY ART

There are in the book of Job frequent allusions to weapons of war, and to modes of attack and defense, such as to show that the subject had attracted much attention, and that war then was by no means unknown. In the poem we find the following allusions to the weapons used, and to the methods of attack and defense.

To poisoned arrows:

For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, Their poison drinketh up my spirit; The terrors of God set themselves in array against me. ^{<1816>}Job 6:4

To the shield:

He runneth upon him with outstretched neck, With the thick bosses of his shields. ^{<1815>}Job 15:26

To the methods of attack, and the capture of a walled town:

He set me up for a mark, His archers came around me; He transfixed my reins, and did not spare; My gall hath he poured out upon the ground. He breaketh me with breach upon breach; He rusheth upon me like a mighty man. ^{<1816>}Job 16:12-14

To the iron weapon and the bow of brass:

He shall flee from the iron weapon, But the bow of brass shall pierce him through. ^{<1814>}Job 20:24

To the works cast up by a besieging army for the annoyance of a city by their weapons of war:

His troops advanced together against me; They throw up their way against me, And they encamp round about my dwelling. ^{<1812>}Job 19:12

In this connection, also, should be mentioned the sublime description of the war-horse in ^{<1819>}Job 39:19, following The horse was undoubtedly used in war and a more sublime description of this animal caparisoned for battle, impatient for the contest, does not occur in any language:

Hast thou given the horse his strength? Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? Dost thou make him to leap as the locust? How terrible is the glory of his nostrils! He paweth in the valley; he exulteth in his strength; He goeth forth into the midst of arms. He laugheth at fear, and is nothing daunted; And he turneth not back from the sword. Upon him rattleth the quiver; The glittering spear and the lance. In his fierceness and rage he devoureth the ground, And will no longer stand still when the trumpet sounds. When the trumpet sounds, he saith, "Aba!" And from afar be snuffeth the battle — The war-cry of the princes, and the battle-shout.

14. ZOOLOGY

The references to zoology in this book, which are numerous, and which show that the habits of many portions of the animated creation had been observed with great care, may be ranked under the heads of insects, reptiles, birds, and beasts.

1. Of insects, the only two that are mentioned are the spider and the moth:

His hope shall rot, And his trust shall be the building of the spider.
He shall lean upon his dwelling, and it shall not stand; He shall grasp it, but it shall not endure. <1814>Job 8:14,15

Behold, in his servants he putteth no confidence, And his angels he chargeth with frailty; How much more true is this of those who dwell in houses of clay, Whose foundation is in the dust; They are crushed before the moth-worm! <1848>Job 4:18,19

He buildeth his house like the moth, Or like a shed which the watchman maketh. <1878>Job 27:18

2. Of reptiles, we find the asp and the viper mentioned:

He shall suck the poison of asps; The viper's tongue shall destroy him. <1816>Job 20:16

3. The birds or fowls that are mentioned in this book, are much more numerous. They are the following, nearly all so mentioned as their habits had been the subject of careful observation.

The vulture:

The path thereto no bird knoweth, And the vulture's eye hath not seen it. <1817>Job 28:7

The raven:

Who provideth for the raven his food, When his young ones cry unto God, And wander for lack of food? <1834>Job 38:41

The stork and the ostrich:

A wing of exulting fowls moves joyfully! Is it the wing and plumage of the stork? For she leaveth her eggs upon the ground, And upon the dust she warmeth them, And forgetteth that her foot may crush them, And that the wild beast may break them. She is hardened toward her young, as it they were not hers; In vain is her travail, and without solicitude; Because God hath withheld wisdom from her, And hath not imparted to her understanding. In the time when she raiseth herself up on high, She laugheth at the horse and his rider. ^{<18913>}Job 39:13-18

The eagle and the hawk:

Is it by thy understanding that the hawk flieth, And spreadeth his wings toward the south? Is it at thy command that the eagle mounteth up, And that he buildeth his nest on high? He inhabiteth the rock and abideth there — Upon the crag of the rock, and the high fortress. From thence he spieth out his prey, His eyes discern it from afar. His young ones greedily gulp down blood; And where the slain are, there is he. ^{<18926>}Job 39:26-30 4.

The beasts that are mentioned are, also, quite numerous, and the description of some of them constitutes the most magnificent part of the poem. The descriptions of the various animals are also more minute than any thing else referred to, and but a few of them can be copied without transcribing whole chapters. The beasts referred to are the following.

The camel, sheep, ox, and she-ass, ^{<18103>}Job 1:3; 42:12.

The lion:

The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion (are silenced), And the teeth of young lions are broken out. The old lion perishes for want of prey, And the whelps of the lioness are scattered abroad. ^{<18910>}Job 4:10,11

The wild ass:

Doth the wild donkey bray in the midst of grass? Or loweth the ox over his fodder? ^{<18915>}Job 6:5.

Who hath sent forth the wild donkey free; Or who hath loosed the bonds of the wild ass? Whose home I have made the wilderness, And his dwellings the barren land. He scorneth the uproar of the city; The cry of the driver he heedeth not. The range of the mountains is his pasture: He searcheth after every green thing.

<830>Job 39:5-8

The dog:

But now they who are younger than I have me in derision, Whose fathers I would have disdained to set with the dogs of my flock.

<830>Job 30:1

The jackal:

I am become a brother to the jackal, And a companion to the ostrich.

<830>Job 30:29

The mountain-goat and the hind:

Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? Or canst thou observe the birth-throes of the hind? Canst thou number the months that they fulfil? Knowest thou the season when they bring forth? They bow themselves; they give birth to their young; They cast forth their sorrows. Their young ones increase in strength, They grow up in the wilderness, They go from them, and return no more.

<830>Job 39:1-4

The unicorn:

Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee? Will he abide through the night at thy crib? Wilt thou bind him with his band to the furrow? And will he harrow the valleys after thee? Wilt thou trust him because his strength is great? Or wilt thou commit thy labor to him? Wilt thou have confidence in him to bring in thy grain? Or to gather it to thy threshing-floor?

<830>Job 39:9-12

The war-horse, in a splendid passage already quoted, <830>Job 39:19-25. And, finally, the behemoth or hippopotamus, and the leviathan or crocodile, in <830>Job 40:15-24; 41 — perhaps the most splendid descriptions of animals to be found any where in poetry. For the nature and habits of the animals there described, as well as of those already referred to, the reader is referred to the notes.

Such is a mere reference to the various topics of science and the arts referred to in the book of Job. Though brief, yet they furnish us with an invaluable account of the progress which society had then made; and in order to obtain an estimate of the state of the world on these subjects at an early period, there is no better means now at command than a careful study of this book. The scene of the book is laid in the vicinity of those portions of the earth which had made the greatest progress in science and the arts, and from this poem we may learn with considerable accuracy, probably, what advances had then been made in Babylon and in Egypt.

SECTION 9. EXEGETICAL HELPS TO THE BOOK OF JOB

1. THE ANCIENT VERSIONS

The Vulgate, Septuagint, Syriac, and the Chaldee Paraphrase. For the general character of these versions, and their value in interpreting the Old Testament, see Introduction to Isaiah, Section 8. Of the Book of Job, the Vulgate is, in general, a very fair and correct version. The translation of the Septuagint is much inferior to what it is on the Pentateuch, and some of the other books of the Bible, though superior to the translation of Isaiah. There are various attempts at explanation of difficulties in it, and statements of things as facts, for which there is no authority in the original — showing that if these were inserted by the translators themselves, there was an effort to make it as clear as possible. Whether these, however, were inserted by the translators, or have been interpolated by later hands, it is not easy now to determine. The same attempt at explanation occurs, but much more frequently, in the Targum, or Chaldee Paraphrase. In that work, however, this is much more excusable than in what was designed as a strict translation, for the word “Targum” (*targum*), “interpretation, translation, explanation of one language by another”) will admit with propriety considerable latitude of explanation in the attempt to render a work from one language into another. See Buxtorf, *Lex. Chald. Talmud.* The old Syriac version is literal, and, so far as I can judge, is incomparably the best ancient version of the Scriptures which has been made. Its aid is of great value in the exposition of the Bible.

2. HEBREW WRITERS

Abraham Ben Juda, published under the name of $\mu\text{q}\ell\ \text{w}\text{r}\text{w}\text{r}\text{j}$, i.e. *Compositiones Collectaneoe*, a commentary on the prophets, Megilloth,

and Hagiographa, collected chiefly from Jarchi, Aben-Ezra, and Levi Ben Gersom. 1593 and 1612, folios.

Abraham Ben Meir, Aben-Esrae, Commentary on Job. Found in the rabbinic editions of the Bible, Venice, 1525, 1526, Basle, 1618, 1619, and Amsterdam, 1724. “In multifarious erudition, and accurate knowledge of the Hebrew language, and in a happy tact of hitting the sense of his author, Aben-Ezra greatly surpasses all his contemporaries.” Rosenmuller. He has made much use of the Arabic language; but on account of his conciseness, he is often obscure.

Abraham Ben Mardochai Perizol, Commentary on Job in the Bible published at Venice, 1517, and Amsterdam, 1724.

Isaac Cohen, Ben Schelomoh, Commentary on Job with the Hebrew text, Constantinople, 1545.

Isaac Ben Schelomoh Jabez, who lived at Constantinople in the 16th century, also published a commentary on Job, inscribed ארץ ידע, “The fear of the Almighty,” which is found in the edition of the Bible at Amsterdam, 1724.

Levi Ben Gerschom, born 1288, died 1370. In 1326 he wrote a commentary on Job, which was first published in 1477. It was republished at Naples in 1487, and is found in the rabbinical Bibles. This is the most copious and clear of the rabbinical commentaries. He gives an explanation of the words and phrases in the book, and accompanies it with a paraphrase.

Meir Ben Isaac Arama, born 1492, died at Thessalonica 1556. He wrote a commentary on Job, called רמב"ם בראי, “Illustrating Job,” which was published in fol. at Thessalonica, in 1516, and subsequently at Venice, 1567 and 1603.

Moseh Alscheh, of Galilee. He died about 1601. He wrote a commentary on Job, called קדמו תל"י, “The Portion of the Legislator.” It was published at Venice, 1603-1604. Again in 1722 and 1725.

Moses Nachmanides. He lived in the 13th century. A commentary of his on Job is found in the rabbinical Bible, Venice, 1517, and Amsterdam, 1724.

Obadiah Ben Jacob Sphorno. He wrote a commentary on Job with the title. ⲑⲣⲱⲛⲓ^{th4941} ⲓⲩⲃⲁⲗⲉ^{th662}, “The Judgment of the Just.” Venice, 1590, and Amsterdam, 1724.

Schelomoh Jarchi Ben Jizchak, commonly called Rasche. He lived in Campania in the 11th century. His commentary on Job, and on the other books of the Old Testament, is found in the rabbinical Bible published at Venice and Amsterdam. This work of Jarchi is of great authority among the Hebrews. He has collected and preserved most of the interpretations handed down by tradition.

Schelomoh Ben Melech. He lived at Constantinople in the 16th century. He published a commentary on the whole of the Old Testament under the title of ⲓⲩⲃⲁⲗⲉ | ⲓⲩⲃⲁⲗⲉ km, “Perfection of Beauty.” Amsterdam, 1661 and 1663, fol. In this work he was much aided by the celebrated David Kimchi.

Schimeon Ben Zemach Duran, a Spanish Jew of the 15th century. He wrote a commentary on Job called ⲃⲏⲁⲟ^{th159} ⲑⲣⲱⲛⲓ^{th4941}, “Loving Judgment.” Venice, 1590, 1594.

3. THE FATHERS

Catena in beatissimum Job absolutissimae xxiv. Graeciae doctorum explanationibus, contexta a PAULO COMITOLO Perusiano. Lyons, 1586; Venice, 1587.

The same published under the title of Catena Graecorum Patrum in beatum Job, etc., by Niceta. He revised the work, and amended it, and greatly increased it. This was published under the care of P. Junius, Royal Librarian, in London, 1637, fol.

Ephrem the Syrian. Commentary, or Scholia on Job, in Syriac. Found in his works.

Jerome. Commentary found in his works. It is of very little value. The principles of interpretation are fanciful. Jerome held that Job was a type of Christ; that the land of Uz represents the Virgin Mary; that his seven sons were the seven-form spirit of grace; that his daughters were the law, the prophets, and the gospel; that the sheep represented the church, and the camels the depravity of the Gentiles; the oxen, which are clean animals, represent the Jews! See the notes at <1800B> Job 1:3.

Augustine. Found in his works.

Philip Presbyter lived about 440 A.D. Basle, 1527. His commentary is allegorical and mystical.

Gregory the Great, 590 A.D. Expositiones in Job. Rome, 1475; Paris, 1495, fol.; and in French, Paris, 1666, 1669.

4. CATHOLIC VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES

Thomae de Vio Caietani (Cardinal and Bishop) Commentarii in Librum Jobi. Rome, 1535, fol. Cardinal Cajetan was ignorant of the Hebrew language, but a man of distinguished talent. Had he been as much acquainted with the Hebrew, says Rosenmuller, as he was distinguished for genius and the power of judgment, he would have greatly excelled all who went before him in the explication of Job.

Franc. Titelmanni Elucidatio paraphastica in Jobum. Antwerp, 1547, 1550, 1553, 1556. Lyons, 1554.

Augustini Steuchi Enarrationes in Librum Jobi. Venice, 1567. He was well acquainted with the Hebrew and Chaldee languages.

Joa. Merceri Commentarii in Job. Geneva, 1573.

C. Sanctii Commentarius in Job. Lugd. Bat. 1625, fol.

Cypriani de Huerga Commentaria in xviii. priora Capita Jobi. 1582, fol.

Didaci de Zuniga Commentaria in Librum Jobi. Rome, 1591. This professes to explain and reconcile the Hebrew, Latin Vulgate, and Septuagint.

John de Pineda Commentariorum in Librum Jobi Libri xiii. With a paraphrase. 1597, 1602, fol. Often reprinted. 1600, 1605, 1609, 1613, 1619, 1627, 1631, 1685, 1701, 1710. This work is highly commended by Schultens.

Liber Job paraphrasticè explicatus a Joanne a Jesu Maria. Rome, 1611.

Jacobi Jansonii Enarrationes in propheticum Librum Job. 1623, 1643, fol.

Gasparis Sanctii in Librum Jobi Commentantii, cum Paraphrasi. 1625, fol. Lyons. 1712, Leipsic.

Jacob Bolducii Commentaria in Librum Job. Paris, 1638.

Balthas Corderii Jobus explicatus. Antwerp, 1646 and 1656, fol.

Philippi Codurci Scholia seu Adnotationes in Jobum. Paris, 1651.

Job brevi commentario et Metaphrasi poetica illustratus. Scripsit Franciscus Vavassor. Paris, 1638.

Analyse du livre de Job (par Laur. Daniel). Lyon, 1710.

Le Livre de Job, selon la Vulgate, Paraphrase, avec des remarques, par Jean Hardouin. 2 vol. Paris, 1729.

Explication du Livre de Job, etc. 4 vol. Paris, 1732. Il Libro de Giob. be dal testo Ebreo in versi Italiani dall' Giacinto Ceruti. Rome, 1773.

5. PROTESTANT VERSIONS AND COMMENTARIES

Jo. Bugenhagii Adnotationes in Jobum. 1526.

Mart. Buccri Commentaria in Librum Job. 1528, fol.

Jo. OEcolampadii Exegemata in Job et Danielelem. Basle, 1532, 1533, 1536. Geneva, 1532, 1533, 1567, 1578, fol. French at Geneva, 1562.

Mart. Borrhai, alias Cellarii, Commentarius in Jobum. 1532, 1539, 1610.

Reinhardt Lutzi Adnotationes in Librum Jobi. 1539, 1563.

Jo. Calvini Conciones in Jobum. 1569, 1593. French, 1563, 1611. German, 1587. English, London, 1584, fol.

Victorini Strigellii Liber Job, ad Ebraicam veritatem recognitus, et Argumentis atque Scholiis illustratus. 1566, 1571.

Ivan. Merceri Commentarii in Librum Job. Geneva, 1573, fol. With a letter from Beza appended.

Jehus Commentario et Paraphrasi illustratus a Theodoro Beza. Geneva, 1583, 1589, 1599, 1600.

Roberti Rolloci (a minister at Edinburgh) Commentarius in Jobum. Geneva, 1610.

Jo. Piscatoris Commentarius in Librum Job. 1612.

Job. Drusius, Nova Versio et Scholia in Jobum. Amsterdam, 1626. A posthumous work.

Explications sur le livre de Job, Pseaumes, Proverbes, Ecclesiaste, Cantique, par Jean Diodati. Geneva, 1638.

Exposition office Book of Job, by George Abbott. London, 1640.

Abbott's Paraphrase of the Book of Job. 1640, 4to. It is formed on the basis of the English version, and contains no notes.

Christophori Schulteti Analysis typica concionum habitarum in Job, etc. 1647, fol.

Job. Cocceii Commentarius in Librum Jobi. 1644, fol. "A diffuse work, and filled with numerous disputations merely theological." Rosenmuller.

Jo. Meiern, Commentaria in Job, Proverbia, Ecclesiasten, et in Canticum Canticorum. 1651, fol.

Ed. Leigh, Annotations on the five poetical Books of the Old Testament, London, 1657, fol.

Terenti, Liber Jobi, Chald. Grace. et Lat. 1663, 4to.

Spanheim, Historia Jobi. 1672.

John cour. Zelleri, Auslegung des Buchleins Hiob. Hamburg, 1667.

Exposition of the Book of Job, being the sum of 316 Lectures, by George Hutcheson (of Edinburgh). London, 1669, fol.

Caryl's Exposition of the Book of Job, two vols. fol. 1669. This work was originally published in six vols., 4vo. "The author was a respectable scholar, a useful preacher, and an exemplary man. He was a non-conformist minister. He was concerned in an English-Greek Lexicon." The work too voluminous to be much consulted, or to be generally useful.

Sebast. Schmidii in Librum Jobi Commentarius, etc. 1670, 1680, 1705. Commended by Schultens for the careful comparison of the different versions, the accurate examination of words, and the clearness of the method. There is, however, too constant a reference to theological questions debated in the time of the author between the Lutherans and the Reformed. Petr. Van Hoecke on Job. Leyden, 1697.

Theod. Antonis (a Dutch commentator) on Job. Frankfort, 1702. He holds that the book of Job is a representation or a type of the church in its afflictions and persecutions.

A paraphrase on the Book of Job, by Richard Blackmore. London, 1700.

Das Buch Hiob aus dem Hebraischen Grundtext aufs neue getreulich ins Teusehe übersetzt u.s. w. von Renato Andrea Kortum. Leips. 1708.

Pauli Egerdi Erläuterung des Buches Hiob. u.s. w. von John Hein. chaelis. 1716. Published after the death of the author.

Animadversiones philologicae in Jobum, etc. Auc. Albert Schultens. 1708.

John Hen. Michaelis *Notae uberiorae in Librum Jobi*, in vol. ii. of his *Annotations on the Hagiographa*. Halle, 1720. Herm. Von der Hardt, on Job. 1728, fol.

Jobi Physica Sacra, oder Hiobs Naturwissenschaft verglichen mit der heutigen, von John Jac. Scheutzer. 1721. The author sometimes attributes views of science to the speakers in the book of Job which there is no certain evidence that they possessed. Still the work of Scheutzer contains much that is valuable. It extends to the whole Bible, and is in 8 vols. fol. in Latin and German, with numerous valuable plates.

Theodore de Hase, *de Leviathan Jobi et Ceto Jonae*. Bremen, 1723, 8vo.

Le Livre de Job, traduit en François, sur l' original Hebreu, par Theod. Criusoz. Rotterdam, 1729.

Veteris Testamenti Libri Hagiographi, ex translatione Joannis Clerici. Amsterdam, 1731, fol. He regards the book of Job as written after the return from the Babylonian exile.

Annotations on the Book of Job and the Psalms, by Thomas Fenton. London, 1732.

John Adolf Hoffmaus *Neue Erklärung des Buchs Hiob u. s. w.* Hamburg, 1734. This work professes to illustrate Job from the remains of antiquity, and from the Oriental philosophy. The author found deep mysteries in the book, and is much addicted to the allegorical mode of interpretation. The work is now of little value.

Samuel Wesley *Dissertationes et Conjecturae in Librum Jobi, tabulis geographicis et figuris aeneis illustratae*. London, 1736, fol.

Liber Jobi, cum nova versione, ad Hebraeum fontem, et commentario perpetuo, in quo veterum et recentiorum interpretum cogitata praecipua

expenduntur; genuinus sensus ad priscum linguae genium indagatur, atque ex filo, et nexu universo, argumenti nodus intricatissimus evolvitur. Curavit et edidit ALBERTUS SCHULTENS. Lugd. Batav. 1737. The same work abridged by Richard Grey, London, 1741, 8vo; and a more full abridgment, Halae, 1773, 1774, 8vo. This great work of Schultens on Job deserves the first place, on many accounts, in the list of those illustrative of this book. It is the most elaborate commentary which has been published, and contains a full statement of the opinions which have been entertained by critics on different parts of the work. Schultens brought to the interpretation of the book of Job a more accurate and extensive knowledge of the Hebrew and Arabic than was possessed by anyone who preceded him in this department of labor. The leading faults of the work are, a too minute and tedious detail of the opinions of other commentators — amounting in many instances to a statement of more than twenty opinions on the meaning of a verse or phrase, and, in determining the meaning of Hebrew words, too great a proneness to rely on etymological conjectures.

Liber Jobi in versiculos metricè divisus, cum versione Alberti Schultens Notisque ex ejus Commentario excerptis. Richard Grey. London, 1741.

Sigmund Jacob Baumgartens Auslegung des Buchs Hiob. Halle, 1740.

Recht beleuchtetes Buch Hiobs, mit vielen dabey gemachten neuen Entdeckungen, nothigen Anmerkungen und erbaulichen Nutzenwendungen. Herausgegeben von Jacob Koch. 1743, 1744, 1747.

Kleine Geographisch-historische Abhandlungen zur Erläuterung einiger Stellen Mosis und vornehmlich des ganzen Buchs Hiob. von Jac. Koch. 1747.

Costard's Observations on the Book of Job. 1747, 8vo.

A Dissertation on the Book of Job, ..., by John Garnett, D. D., quarto, London, 1749. According to Garnett, the book of Job is a drama, or allegory; the Babylonian captivity is the main subject of the allegory; the three friends who came to visit Job are the children of Edom coming to condole with the Hebrews in their captivity. The work is of very little value.

Das richtige Gericht in dem kurz und verständlich erklärten, übersetzten und zergliederten Buch Hiob u.s.w. durch Christoph Friedrich Oetinger. 1743.

Elihu, or an inquiry into the principal scope and design of the Book of Job, by Walter Hodges, D. D. London, quarto, 1750. According to Dr. Hodges, the Book of Job relates to patriarchal times, and the design is to give a summary of the patriarchal religion. The particular purpose of the book, according to the view of this author, is, to reveal and establish the doctrine of justification. Job was a type of the Saviour, and by Job's friends being directed to offer sacrifices for themselves, is "intimated that each national church ought to have an independent power in such matters." In the opinion of this author, Elihu was the Son of God himself! The nature and value of the work may be easily seen from these views. The author was a divine of the Hutchinsonian school.

The Book of Job, with a Paraphrase from the third verse of the third chapter to the seventh verse of the forty-second chapter. By Leonard Chappelow, B. D., Arabic Professor. Cambridge, 1752. "A mere paraphrase, verbose, and without annotations."

Observationes Miscellaneae in Librum Job, etc., by David Renat. Bouillier. Amsterdam, 1758.

The Divine Legation of Moses demonstrated, by Dr. Warburton. 1758. In this great work there is an examination of the book of Job which has attracted much attention on account of the learning and talent of the author. The theory of Warburton is, that the book of Job is a drama; that it relates to the Jews in the time of the captivity; that it was written some time between the return and the thorough settlement of the Jews in their own land; that the drama is allegorical in its character; that the character of Job is designed to represent the Jewish people; that his wife is a representation of the pagan influence which led the Hebrews on their return to marry "strange wives;" that the three friends of Job represent the three capital enemies of the Jews who hindered their efforts to rebuild the temple on their return from Babylon, Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem; that under the character of Elihu the writer or author of the poem is himself designated. Div. Lega. B. vi., section 2. After the view which Dr. Warburton gives of the book of Job, there is more real point and force than he himself intended in what he says in a letter to his friend Dr. Hurd. "Poor Job! It was his eternal fate to be persecuted by his friends. His three friends passed sentence of condemnation upon him, and he has been executed in effigy ever since. He was first bound to the stake by a long catena of Greek fathers; then tortured by Pineda; then strangled by Caryl; and afterward cut

up by Wesley and anatomized by Garnett. I only acted the tender part of his wife, and was for making short work with him. But he was ordained, I think, by a fate like that of Prometheus, to lie still upon his dunghill, and to have his brains sucked out by owls.”

An Essay toward a new English version of the Book of Job from the original Hebrew, with a commentary, and some account of his life, by Thomas Heath, Esq., of Exeter. Quarto. London, 1756. There is little in this work that can now be regarded as of value. The knowledge of Hebrew by the author was quite limited, and the notes throw little light on the meaning of the text.

A Critical Dissertation on the Book of Job, by Charles Peters, A.M. London, 1751, quarto. This work is designed particularly to examine the theory of Dr. Warburton; to vindicate the antiquity of the book; to show that the passage in ^{<181925>}Job 19:25-27 refers to the resurrection and the future judgment; and that the doctrine of the future state was the popular belief among the Hebrews. It is a work of considerable learning and value. It contains much valuable matter, though all its reasonings may not be satisfactory.

Paraphrastische Erklärung des Buchs Hiob, von John Fried. Bahrdt. Leips. 1764.

Das Buch Hiob, in einer poetischen Uebersetzung nach Schultens Erklärung mit Anmerkungen, von Simon Grynaeus. 1767.

John Day. Cube poetische und prosaische Uebersetzung des Buchs Hiob. Berlin, 1769.

Paul Bauldri, Critical Remarks on Job.

Kurze doch grundliche Erklärung des Buchs Hiob, u. s. w. von John Georg. Meintel. Nurnberg, 1771.

Velthusen, Exercitationes Criticae in Jobum. cap xix. 1772, 12mo.

Scott's Book of Job in English verse, with notes. 1773, 8vo. "A very valuable work." Wemyss.

Metaphrasis libri Jobi, sive Job metricus, vario carminis genere, primo ejulans, post jubilans, interprete Jo. Georg. Meintel. 1775.

Versuch einer neuen poetischen Uebersetzung des Buches Hiob, u. s .w. von John C. R. Eckermann. 1778.

Animadversiones in Librum Job. Scripsit Jas. Christ. Rud. Eckermann. Lubeck, 1779.

Jo. Christoph. Doederlein Scholia in libros vet. Testam. poeticos, Jobum, Psalmos, et tres Salomonis. Halle, 1779.

Joa. Jac. Reiske, Conjecturae in Jobum et Proverbia Salomonis. Leips. 1779. He takes great liberty with the Hebrew text, transposing, changing, or rejecting whole verses at pleasure.

Hiob. ubersetzt von Daniel Gotthilf Moldenhawer. Leips. 1780.

Das Buch Hiob zum allgemeinen Gebrauch, von Heinr. Sander. Leips. 1780, 8vo.

Hiob, neu ubersetzt mit Anmerkungen, von W. F. Hufnagel. 1781, 8vo.

Hiob, aus dem Hebraischen Original neu ubersetzt, u. s. w. von Christ. Dav. Kessler. 1784, 8vo.

Hiob, aus dem Hebraischen Original neu ubersetzt und mit erklärenden Anmerkungen versehen, zum allgemeinen Gebrauch, von Chronicles Daniel Kessler. Tubingen, 1784, 8vo.

Greve, Ultima Capita Jobi. 1788, 4to.

Jobi, antiquissimi carminis Hebraici, natura atque virtus. Scripsit Car, Dav. Ilgen. Leips. 1789, 8vo.

Jobus, Proverbia Salomonis, etc. a John Aug. Dathio. Halle, 1789, 8vo.

Job oversat (with brief critical and philological remarks), by And. Heins. In the Dutch language. Amsterdam, 1794, 8vo.

Het Bock Job, etc. (also in the Dutch language.) By Herrman Muntinghe. Amsterdam, 1794, 8vo.

Garden's improved version of the Book of Job. 1796, 8vo.

The same work translated into German by John P. Berg. Leips. 1797, 8vo.

Hiob, ubersetzt; ein Versuch von Samuel Christian Pape. Gottingen, 1797, 8vo.

Das Buch Hiob metrisch übersetzt. Ein Versuch von A. S. Block. Ratzeburg, 1799, 8vo.

Hiob, übersetzt von John G. Eichhorn. Leips. 1800, 8vo. Neue verbesserte Ausgabe. Gottingen, 1824,

Exegetische und kritische versuche über die schwersten stellen des Buchs Hiob. Leips. 1801, 8vo.

Discourses and Dissertations on the Scriptural Doctrine of atonement and Sacrifice. By William Magee, D. D. 1801. In this important work on the atonement, there is a very valuable dissertation on the book of Job. Dr. Magee supposes that Moses was the author, or that it was written by Job himself, or by some contemporary, and that it fell into the hands of Moses, and was adopted by him as an important help to encourage the Israelites in their trials.

Die heilige Schrift des Alten Testaments, zweiten Theils. dritten Bandes zweite Hälfte, welche das Buch Hiob enthält, von D. Brentano und Thessalonians A. Dereser. Frankfurt, 1804, 8vo.

Hiob Ein religiöses Gedicht Aus dem Hebraischen neu übersetzt, gepflegt und erliebert von Matthias Heinr. Stuhlmann. Hamburg, 1804, 8vo.

Stock's Book of Job; a new version, with notes. 1805, 4to. See this work examined with great severity in Magee on the atonement. Pareau, Commentatio, etc. 1807, 8vo.

Das Buch Hiob, bearbeitet von Gaab. Tübingen, 1809, 8vo.

Die Schriften des Alten Testaments. Neu übersetzt von John C. W. Augusti und W. M. L. de Wette. Drifter Band Hiob. Heidelberg, 1809, 8vo.

Jobus: Latine vertit, et annotatione perpetua illustravit, Ern. Frid. Car. Rosenmüller, Ling. Arabic in Acad. Leips. Prof. Leips. 1806. The commentary of Rosenmüller is, on the whole, probably the most valuable of all the expositions of this book. One who wishes to explain and understand the book of Job will find more valuable materials collected there than in any other of the commentaries. Nothing is passed over without an attempt at explanation; and nothing collected by his predecessors that would throw light on the meaning of the book, seems to have been unnoticed by him. For the most part, also, the exposition is

distinguished by sound sense, by correct and sober views, as well as by eminent learning.

The Book of Job, translated by Eliz. Smith. 1810, 8vo.

“This work was completed before the twenty-sixth year of the authoress, with little help except from Parkhurst’s Lexicon, and the revision of her friend Dr. Randolph, who annexed to it a few critical notes. She left a fine example to her sex; and though self-taught, with little access to books, she left behind her some monuments of learning and piety, calculated to make many blush for their own idleness.” Wemyss.

The Book of Job literally translated from the original Hebrew, and restored to its natural arrangement, with notes critical and illustrative, and an introduction on its scene, scope, language, author, and object. By John Mason Good, F. R. S., etc. 1812. The “Introduction” by Dr. Good is very valuable. In the notes there is much learning, but it is more extensive than accurate. The translation cannot be relied on as correct. The work, however, is a valuable contribution to sacred literature, and deserves a place in every theological library.

Das Buch Hiob, aus dem Grundtext metrisch übersetzt und erläutert von John Rud. Scharer. Bern, 1818, 8vo.

Bridel, Le Livre de Job. 1818, 8vo.

Hiob, für gebildete Leser bearbeitet von C. G. A. Beckel. Berlin, 1821, 8vo.

Das Buch Hiob, aus dem Hebraischen metrisch übersetzt und durch kurze philologische Anmerkungen erläutert von L. F. Melsheimer, Mannheim, 1823.

Buch Hiob. Uebersetzung und Anlegung, von D. Friedrich Wilhelm Carl Umbreit, Professor an der Universität zu Heidelberg. Heidelberg, 1824, 8vo. This is the production of an acute and sharp-sighted critic. The translation is very accurate, and the notes, though brief, are very valuable. The Introduction is less brief than is desirable, and the views maintained in it are not such as seem to me to be correct.

Middledorff, curae Hexaplares in Jobum. 1837, 4to.

The book of the patriarch Job, translated from the original Hebrew, as nearly as possible, in the terms and style of the authorized English version, to which is prefixed an introduction on the History, Times, Country, Friends, and book of the patriarch, etc. By Samuel Lee, D. D., etc. London, 1837. This work is not what might have been expected from the learning and reputation of Prof. Lee. It abounds with Arabic learning, which is scattered with ostentatious profuseness through the volume, but which often contributes little to the elucidation of the text. It is designed for the critical scholar rather than the general reader.

A new translation of the Book of Job, with an Introduction and Notes chiefly explanatory, by George R. Noyes. Boston, 1838. This is an elegant and a very accurate translation. Dr. Noyes is understood to be a Unitarian, but neither in this work nor in the translation of Isaiah, have I observed any attempt to accommodate the translation to the views of that denomination. His aim has evidently been to give the exact sense of the original, and this, so far as I can judge, has been accomplished with great accuracy. The notes are very brief, but they are pithy and valuable. The introduction is less valuable than the other parts of the work.

Job and his times, or a picture of the patriarchal age during the period between Noah and Abraham, as regards the state of morality, arts and sciences, manners and customs, etc., and a new version of that most ancient poem, accompanied with Notes and Dissertations. The whole adapted to the English reader. By Thomas Wemyss, author of *Biblical Gleanings*, *Symbolical Dictionary*, and other works. London, 1839. This is designed to be a popular work. It is not so much of the nature of a commentary as a collection of fragments and brief essays on various topics referred to in the book of Job. It is chiefly valuable from its illustration of the religion of the time of Job, the arts and sciences, the manners and customs, etc. It lacks lucid arrangement, and furnishes comparatively little illustration of the difficulties of the text.

GENERAL ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF JOB

FIRST PART

THE HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION, IN PROSE, JOB 1—2

SECOND PART

THE ARGUMENT, OR CONTROVERSY, IN VERSE, JOB 3—42:6

I. The first series in the controversy, Job 3—14

- (1.) Job opens the discussion by cursing his birth-day, and by a bitter complaint of his calamity, Job 3
- (2.) Speech of Eliphaz, Job 4; 5
- (3.) Answer of Job, Job 5—6
- (4.) Speech of Bildad, Job 8
- (5.) Answer of Job, Job 9—10
- (6.) Speech of Zophar, Job 11
- (7.) Answer of Job, Job 12—14

II. The second series in the controversy, Job 15—21

- (1.) Speech of Eliphaz, Job 15
- (2.) Answer of Job, Job 16—17
- (3.) Speech of Bildad, Job 18
- (4.) Answer of Job, Job 19
- (5.) Speech of Zophar, Job 20
- (6.) Answer of Job, Job 21

III. The third series in the controversy, Job 22—31

- (1.) Speech of Eliphaz Job 22

(2.) Answer of Job, Job 23—24

(3.) Speech of Bildad, Job 25

(4.) Answer of Job, Job 26—31

IV. Speech of Elihu, Job 32—37

V. The close of the discussion, Job 38—42:6

(1.) The speech of the Almighty, Job 38—41

(2.) The response and penitent confession of Job, ~~1800~~ Job 42:1-6.

THIRD PART

THE CONCLUSION, IN PROSE, JOB 42:7-17

THE BOOK OF JOB

NOTES ON JOB 1

<800> **Job 1:1.** *There was a man* This has all the appearance of being a true history. Many have regarded the whole book as a fiction, and have supposed that no such person as Job ever lived. But the book opens with the appearance of reality; and the express declaration that there was such a man, the mention of his name and of the place where he lived, show that the writer meant to affirm that there was in fact such a man. On this question see the Introduction, Section 1.

In the land of Uz On the question where Job lived, see also the Introduction, Section 2.

Whose name was Job The name Job (Hebrew **יֹבְיָד**^{†h347}, Gr. **Ιωβ**^{<2492>}) means properly, according to Gesenius, “one persecuted,” from a root **byā**^{h340} meaning to be an enemy to anyone, to persecute, to hate. The primary idea, according to Gesenius, is to be sought in breathing, blowing, or puffing at, or upon anyone, as expressive of anger or hatred, Germ. “Anschnauben.” Eichhorn (Einleit. Section 638. 1.) supposes that the name denotes a man who turns himself penitently to God, from a sense of the verb still found in Arabic “to repent.” On this supposition, the name was given to him, because, at the close of the book, he is represented as exercising repentance for the improper expressions in which he had indulged during his sufferings. The verb occurs only once in the Hebrew Scriptures, <122> Exodus 23:22: But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak, then “I will be an enemy” **byā**^{h341} “unto thine enemies” **taē**^{h853} **byā**^{h341}. The participle **byā**^{h341} is the common word to denote an enemy in the Old Testament, <156> Exodus 15:6,9; <125> Leviticus 26:25; <1653> Numbers 35:23; <1622> Deuteronomy 32:27,42; <1006> Psalm 7:5; 8:2; 31:8; <2114> Lamentations 2:4,5; <1834> Job 13:24; 27:7; 33:10, “et soepe al.” If this be the proper meaning of the word “Job,” then the name would seem to have been given him by anticipation, or by common consent, as a much persecuted man. Significant names were very common among the Hebrews — given either by anticipation (see the notes at <2188> Isaiah 8:18), or

subsequently, to denote some leading or important event in the life; compare ^{<0100>}Genesis 4:1,2,25; 5:29; ^{<0102>}1 Samuel 1:20. Such, too, was the case among the Romans, where the “agnomen” thus bestowed became the appellation by which the individual was best known. Cicero thus received his name from a wart which he had on his face, resembling a “vetch,” and which was called by the Latins, “cicer.” Thus also Marcus had the name “Ancus,” from the Greek word **ανκων** ^{<43>}, because he had a crooked arm; and thus the names Africanus, Germanicus, etc., were given to generals who had distinguished themselves in particular countries; see Univer. Hist. Anc. Part ix. 619, ed. 8vo, Lond. 1779. In like manner it is possible that the name “Job” was given to the Emir of Uz by common consent, as the man much persecuted or tried, and that this became afterward the appellation by which he was best known. The name occurs once as applied to a son of Issachar, ^{<0463>}Genesis 46:13, and in only two other places in the Bible except in this book; ^{<2444>}Ezekiel 14:14; ^{<3051>}James 5:11.

And that man was perfect **μᾶ** ^{<18552>}. The Septuagint have greatly expanded this statement, by giving a paraphrase instead of a translation. “He was a man who was true (**αληθινος** ^{<228>}), blameless (**αμεμπτος** ^{<273>}), just (**δικαιος** ^{<1342>}), pious (**θεοσεβης** ^{<2318>}), abstaining from every evil deed.” Jerome renders it, “simplex — simple,” or “sincere.” The Chaldee, **מל נ**, “complete, finished, perfect.” The idea seems to be that his piety, or moral character, was “proportionate” and was “complete in all its parts.” He was a man of integrity in all the relations of life — as an Emir, a father, a husband, a worshipper of God. Such is properly the meaning of the word **μᾶ** ^{<18552>} as derived from **μᾶ** ^{<18552>}, “to complete, to make full, perfect” or “entire,” or “to finish.” It denotes that in which there is no part lacking to complete the whole — as in a watch in which no wheel is missing. Thus, he was not merely upright as an Emir, but he was pious toward God; he was not merely kind to his family, but he was just to his neighbors and benevolent to the poor. The word is used to denote integrity as applied to the heart, ^{<0215>}Genesis 20:5: **ybbi bbl e** ^{<43824>}, “In the honesty, simplicity, or sincerity of my heart (see the margin) have I done this.” So ^{<11234>}1 Kings 22:34, “One drew a bow **wmtl** in the simplicity (or perfection) of his heart;” i.e. without any evil intention; compare ^{<0151>}2 Samuel 15:11; ^{<0109>}Proverbs 10:9. The proper notion, therefore, is that of simplicity, sincerity, absence from guile or evil intention, and completeness of parts in

his religion. That he was a man absolutely sinless, or without any propensity to evil, is disproved alike by the spirit of complaining which he often evinces, and by his own confession, ^{<800>}Job 9:20:

*If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me;
If I say I am perfect, it shall prove me perverse.*

So also ^{<800>}Job 42:5,6:

*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear,
But now mine eye seeth thee;
Wherefore I abhor myself,
And repent in dust and ashes.*

Compare ^{<2070>}Ecclesiastes 7:20.

And upright The word ^{<1347>}רַבֵּי, from ^{<1347>}רַבָּע, to be straight, is applied often to a road which is straight, or to a path which is level or even. As used here it means upright or righteous; compare ^{<3910>}Psalm 11:7; 37:14; ^{<6304>}Deuteronomy 32:4; ^{<1304>}Psalm 33:4.

And one that feared God Religion in the Scriptures is often represented as the fear of God; ^{<1000>}Proverbs 1:7,29; 2:5; 8:13; 14:26,27; ^{<2100>}Isaiah 11:2; ^{<4031>}Acts 9:31, “et soepe al.”

And eschewed evil “And departed from ^{<15493>}רָע evil.” Septuagint, “Abstaining from every evil thing.” These then are the four characteristics of Job’s piety — he was sincere; upright; a worshipper of God; and one who abstained from all wrong. These are the essential elements of true religion everywhere; and the whole statement in the book of Job shows Job was, though not absolutely free from the sins which cleave to our nature, eminent in each of these things.

^{<800>}**Job 1:2.** *And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters* The same number was given to him again after these were lost, and his severe trials had been endured; see ^{<18213>}Job 42:13. Of his second family the names of the daughters are mentioned, ^{<18214>}Job 42:14. Of his first, it is remarkable that neither the names of his wife, his sons nor his daughters are recorded. The Chaldee, however, on what authority is unknown, says that the name of his wife was ^{<1783>}הַמְּיָדִי, ^{<800>}Job 2:9.

Job 1:3. *His substance* Margin, or “cattle.” The word used here **חֲנֻכְיָהוּ**^{<4735>} is derived from **חָנַךְ**^{<47069>}, to gain or acquire, to buy or purchase, and properly means anything acquired or purchased — property, possessions, riches. The wealth of nomadic tribes, however, consisted mostly in flocks and herds, and hence the word in the Scripture signifies, almost exclusively, property in cattle. The word, says Gesenius, is used “strictly” to denote sheep, goats, and neat cattle, excluding beasts of burden (compare Greek (**κτηνος**^{<2934>}), herd, used here by the Septuagint), though sometimes the word includes asses and camels, as in this place.

Seven thousand sheep In this verse we have a description of the wealth of an Arab ruler or chief, similar to that of those who are at this day called “Emirs.” Indeed the whole description in the book is that which is applicable to the chief of a tribe. The possessions referred to in this verse would constitute no inconsiderable wealth anywhere, and particularly in the nomadic tribes of the East. Land is not mentioned as a part of this wealth; for among nomadic tribes living by pasturage, the right to the soil in fee simple is not claimed by individuals, the right of pasturage or a temporary possession being all that is needed. For the same reason, and from the fact that their circumstances require them to live in movable tents, houses are not mentioned as a part; of the wealth of this Emir. To understand this book, as well as most of the books of the Old Testament, it is necessary for us to lay aside our notions of living, and transfer ourselves in imagination to the very dissimilar customs of the East. The Chaldee has made a very singular explanation of this verse, which must be regarded as the work of fancy, but which shows the character of that version: “And his possessions were seven thousand sheep — a thousand for each of his sons; and three thousand camels — a thousand for each of his daughters; and five hundred yoke of oxen — for himself; and five hundred she-asses — for his wife.”

And three thousand camels Camels are well-known beasts of burden, extensively used still in Arabia. The Arabs employed these animals anciently in war, in their caravans, and for food. They are not unfrequently called “ships of the desert,” particularly valuable in arid plains because they go many days without water. They carry from three to five hundred pounds, in proportion to the distance which they have to travel. Providence has adapted the camel with wonderful wisdom to sandy deserts, and in all ages the camel must be an invaluable possession there. The driest thistle

and the barest thorn is all the food that he requires, and this he eats while advancing on his journey without stopping or causing a moment's delay. As it is his lot to cross immense deserts where no water is found, and where no dews fall, he is endowed with the power of laying in a store of water that will suffice him for days — Bruce says for thirty days. To effect this, nature has provided large reservoirs or stomachs within him, where the water is kept pure, and from which he draws at pleasure as from a fountain. No other animal is endowed with this power, and were it not for this, it would be wholly impracticable to cross those immense plains of sand. The Arabians, the Persians, and others, eat the flesh of camels, and it is served up at the best tables in the country. One of the ancient Arab poets, whose hospitality grew into a proverb, is reported to have killed yearly, in a certain month, ten camels every day for the entertainment of his friends. In regard to the hardihood of camels, and their ability to live on the coarsest fare, Burckhardt has stated a fact which may furnish an illustration. In a journey which he made from the country south of the Dead Sea to Egypt, he says,

“During the whole of this journey, the camels had no other provender than the withered shrubs of the desert, my dromedary excepted, to which I gave a few handfuls of barley each evening.”
Trav. in Syria, p. 451;

compare Bruce's Travels, vol. iv. p. 596; Niebuhr, Reise-beschreibung nach Arabien, 1 Band, s. 215; Sandys, p. 138; Harmer's Obs. 4:415, ed. Lond. 1808, 8vo; and Rob. Cal.

And five hundred yoke of oxen The fact that Job had so many oxen implies that he devoted himself to the cultivation of the soil as well as to keeping flocks and herds; compare ^{<3014>}Job 1:14. So large a number of oxen would constitute wealth anywhere.

And five hundred she-asses Bryant remarks (Observations, p. 61) that a great part of the wealth of the inhabitants of the East often consisted of she-asses, the males being few and not held in equal estimation. She-asses are early mentioned as having been in common use to ride on; ^{<0225>}Numbers 22:25; ^{<0350>}Judges 5:10. ^{<1204>}2 Kings 4:24 (Hebrew). One reason why the ass was chosen in preference to the horse, was that it subsisted on so much less than that animal, there being no animal except the camel that could be so easily kept as the ass. She-asses were also regarded as the most valuable, because, in traversing the deserts of the country they would

furnish travelers with milk. It is remarkable that “cows” are not mentioned expressly in this enumeration of the articles of Job’s wealth, though “butter” is referred to by him subsequently as having been abundant in his family, ^{<8916>}Job 29:6. It is possible, however, that “cows” were included as a part of the “five hundred yoke of רִקְבִי^{<1241>}.” here rendered “oxen;” but which would be quite as appropriately rendered “cattle.” The word is in the common gender, and is derived from דִּקַּב, in Arabic to cleave, to divide, to lay open, and hence, to plow, to cleave the soil. It denotes properly the animals used in plowing; and it is well known that cows are employed as well as oxen for this purpose in the East; see ^{<0748>}Judges 14:18; ^{<8040>}Hosea 4:10; compare ^{<6924>}Deuteronomy 32:14, where the word רִקְבִי^{<1241>} is used to denote a cow — “milk of kine,” ^{<0333>}Genesis 33:13 (Hebrew).

And a very great household Margin, “husbandry.” The Hebrew word here חֲדָבִי^{<4567>} ambiguous. — It may denote service rendered, i.e., work, or the servants who performed it; compare ^{<0234>}Genesis 26:14, margin. The Septuagint renders it ὑπηρεσία, Aquila δουλεία ^{<1397>}, and Symmachus, οἰκετία ^{<3610>}; all denoting “service,” or “servitude,” or that which pertained to the domestic service of a family. The word refers doubtless to those who had charge of his camels, his cattle, and of his husbandry; see ^{<8015>}Job 1:15. It is not implied by the word here used, nor by that in ^{<8015>}Job 1:15, that they were “slaves.” They may have been, but there is nothing to indicate this in the narrative. The Septuagint adds to this, as if explanatory of it, “and his works were great in the land.”

So that this man was the greatest Was possessed of the most wealth, and was held in the highest honor.

Of all the men of the East Margin as in Hebrew “sons.” The sons of the East denote those who lived in the East. The word “East” מִדְּמָ^{<46924>} is commonly employed in the Scriptures to denote the country which lies east of Palestine. For the places intended here, see Intro. Section 2, (3). It is of course impossible to estimate with accuracy the exact amount of the value of the property of Job. Compared with many persons in modern times, indeed, his possessions would not be regarded as constituting very great riches. The Editor of the Pictorial Bible supposes that on a fair estimate his property might be considered as worth from thirty to forty thousand pounds sterling — equivalent to some \$200,000 (circa 1880’s). In this estimate the camel is reckoned as worth about \$45.00 dollars, the oxen as

worth about five dollars, and the sheep at a little more than one dollar, which it is said are about the average prices now in Western Asia. Prices, however, fluctuate much from one age to another; but at the present day such possessions would be regarded as constituting great wealth in Arabia. The value of the property of Job may be estimated from this fact, that he had almost half as many camels as constituted the wealth of a Persian king in more modern times. Chardin says, “as the king of Persia in the year 1676 was in Mesandera, the Tartars fell upon the camels of the king and took away three thousand of them which was to him a great loss, for he had only seven thousand.” — Rosenmuller, *Morgenland*, “in loc.” The condition of Job we are to regard as that of a rich Arabic Emir, and his mode of life as between the nomadic pastoral life, and the settled manner of living in communities like ours. He was a princely shepherd, and yet he was devoted to the cultivation of the soil. It does not appear, however, that he claimed the right of the soil in “fee simple,” nor is his condition inconsistent with the supposition that his residence in any place was regarded as temporary, and that all his property might be easily removed. “He belonged to that condition of life which fluctuated between that of the wandering shepherd, and that of a people settled in towns. That he resided, or had a residence, in a town is obvious; but his flocks and herds evidently pastured in the deserts, between which and the town his own time was probably divided. He differed from the Hebrew patriarchs chiefly in this, that he did not so much wander about “without any certain dwelling place.” This mixed condition of life, which is still frequently exhibited in Western Asia, will, we apprehend, account sufficiently for the diversified character of the allusions and pictures which the book contains — to the pastoral life and the scenes and products of the wilderness; to the scenes and circumstances of agriculture; to the arts and sciences of settled life and of advancing civilization.” — *Pict. Bib.* It may serve somewhat to illustrate the different ideas in regard to what constituted wealth in different countries, to compare this statement respecting Job with a remark of Virgil respecting an inhabitant of ancient Italy, whom he calls the most wealthy among the Ausonian farmers:

Seniorque Galaesua.

Dum paci medium se offert; justissimus unus

Qui fuit, Ausoniisque olim ditissimus arvis:

Quinque greges illi balantum. quina redibant

Armenta, et terram centurn vertebat aratris. — AEn. 7:535-539.

Among the rest, the rich Galaesus lies; A good old man, while
 peace he Preached in vain, Amid the madness of the unruly train:
 Five herds, five bleating flocks his pasture filled, His lands a
 hundred yoke of oxen tilted. — DRYDEN.

Job 1:4. *And his sons went and feasted in their houses* Dr. Good renders this, “and his sons went to hold a banquet house.” Tindal renders it, “made bankertea.” The Hebrew means, they went and made a “house-feast;” and the idea is, that they gave an entertainment in their dwellings, in the ordinary way in which such entertainments were made. The word used here **חָתַן**^{h4960} is derived from **חָתַן**, “to drink;” and then to drink together, to banquet. Schultens supposes that this was merely designed to keep up the proper familiarity between the different branches of the family, and not for purposes of revelry and dissipation; and this seems to accord with the view of Job. He, though a pious man, was not opposed to it, but he apprehended merely that they might have sinned in their hearts, **Job 1:5**. He knew the danger, and hence, he was more assiduous in imploring for them the divine guardianship.

Every one his day In his proper turn, or when his day came round. Perhaps it refers only to their birthdays; see **Job 3:1**, where the word “day” is used to denote a birthday. In early times the birthday was observed with great solemnity and rejoicing. Perhaps in this statement the author of the Book of Job means to intimate that his family lived in entire harmony, and to give a picture of his domestic happiness strongly contrasted with the calamities which came upon his household. It was a great aggravation of his sufferings that a family thus peaceful and harmonious was wholly broken up. — The Chaldee adds, “until seven days were completed,” supposing that each one of these feasts lasted seven days, a supposition by no means improbable, if the families were in any considerable degree remote from each other.

And sent and called for their three sisters This also may be regarded as a circumstance showing that these occasions were not designed for revelry. Young men, when they congregate for dissipation, do not usually invite their “sisters” to be with them; nor do they usually desire the presence of virtuous females at all. The probability, therefore, is, that this was designed as affectionate and friendly family conversation. In itself there was nothing wrong in it, nor was there necessarily any danger; yet Job felt it “possible”

that they might have erred and forgotten God, and hence, he was engaged in more intense and ardent devotion on their account; ^{<1806>}Job 1:5.

^{<1806>}**Job 1:5.** *And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about* Dr. Good renders this, “as the days of such banquets returned.” But this is not the idea intended. It is, when the banquets had gone round as in a circle through all the families, “then” Job sent and sanctified them. It was not from an anticipation that they “would” do wrong, but it was from the apprehension that they “might” have sinned. The word rendered “were gone about” *āqae* ^{<45362>} means properly to join together, and then to move round in a circle, to revolve, as festivals do; see the notes at ^{<2301>}Isaiah 29:1: “Let the festivals go round.” Here it means that the days of their banqueting had gone round the circle, or had gone round the several families. Septuagint “When the days of the entertainment (or drinking, *ποτου* ^{<4224>}) were finished.” A custom of feasting similar to this prevails in China. “They have their fraternities which they call the brotherhood of the months; this consists of months according to the number of the days therein, and in a circle they go abroad to eat at one another’s houses by turns. If one man has not conveniences to receive the fraternity in his own house, he may provide for them in another; and there are many public houses well furnished for this purpose.” See Semedo’s History of China, i chapter 13, as quoted by Burder in Rosenmuller’s Morgenland. “in loc.”

That Job sent Sent for them, and called them around him. He was apprehensive that they might have erred, and he took every measure to keep them pure, and to maintain the influence of religion in his family.

And sanctified them This expression, says Schultens, is capable of two interpretations. It may either mean that he “prepared” them by various lustrations, ablutions, and other ceremonies to offer sacrifice; or that he offered sacrifices for the purpose of procuring expiation for sins which they might actually have committed. The former sense, he remarks, is favored by the use of the word in ^{<1290>}Exodus 19:10; ^{<1915>}1 Samuel 16:5, where the word means to prepare themselves by ablutions to meet God and to worship him. The latter sense is demanded by the connection. Job felt as every father should feel in such circumstances, that there was reason to fear that God had not been remembered as he ought to have been, and he was therefore more fervent in his devotions, and called them around him, that their own minds might be affected in view of his pious solicitude. What father is there who loves God, and who feels anxious that his

children should also, who does not feel special solicitude if his sons and his daughters are in a situation where successive days are devoted to feasting and mirth? The word here rendered “sanctified” **vdap** ^{<h6942>} means properly to be pure, clean, holy; in Pihel, the form used here, to make holy, to sanctify, to consecrate, as a priest; and here it means, that he took measures to make them holy on the apprehension that they had sinned; that is, he took the usual means to procure for them forgiveness. The Septuagint renders it **εκαθαριζεν** ^{<2511>}, he purified them.

And rose up early in the morning For the purpose of offering his devotions, and procuring for them expiation. It was customary in the patriarchal times to offer sacrifice early in the morning. See ^{<0121B>}Genesis 22:3; ^{<02316>}Exodus 32:6.

And offered burnt-offerings Hebrew “and caused to ascend;” that is, by burning them so that the smoke ascended toward heaven. The word rendered “burnt-offerings” **twq[** is from **hl [**, ^{<h5927>}, “to ascend” (the word used here and rendered “offered”), and means that which was made to ascend, to wit, by burning. It is applied in the Scriptures to a sacrifice that was wholly consumed on the altar, and answers to the Greek word (**ὄλοκαυστον** ^{<3646>}), “Holocaust.” See the notes at ^{<2011>}Isaiah 1:11. Such offerings in the patriarchal times were made by the father of a family, officiating as priest in behalf of his household. Thus, Noah officiated, ^{<01021>}Genesis 8:20; and thus also Abraham acted as the priest to offer sacrifice, ^{<01127>}Genesis 12:7,8; 13:18; 22:13. In the earliest times, and among pagan nations, it was supposed that pardon might be procured for sin by offering sacrifice. In Homer there is a passage which remarkably corresponds with the view of Job before us; Iliad 9:493:

The gods (the great and only wise) Are moved by offerings, vows,
and sacrifice; Offending man their high compassion wins, And daily
prayers atone for daily sins. — POPE

According to the number of them all Sons and daughters. Perhaps an additional sacrifice for each one of them. The Septuagint renders this, “according to their numbers, **και** ^{<2532>} **μοσχον** ^{<3448>} **ενα** ^{<1520>} **περι** ^{<4012>} **αμαρτιας** ^{<266>} **περι** ^{<4012>} **των** ^{<3588>} **ψυχων** ^{<5590>} **αυτων** ^{<846>} — a young bullock for sin (or a sin-offering) for their souls.”

It may be that my sons have sinned He had no positive or certain proof of it. He felt only the natural apprehension which every pious father must, that

his sons might have been overtaken by temptation, and perhaps, under the influence of wine, might have been led to speak reproachfully of God, and of the necessary restraints of true religion and virtue.

And cursed God in their hearts The word here rendered curse is that which is usually rendered “bless” **Ēræ** ^{<h1288>}. It is not a little remarkable that the same word is used in senses so directly opposite as to “bless” and “to curse.” Dr. Good contends that the word should be always rendered “bless,” and so translates it in this place, “peradventure my sons may have sinned, “nor” blessed God in their hearts,” understanding the Hebrew prefix waw **W** as a disjunctive or negative participle. So too in ^{<R119>}Job 2:9, rendered in our common translation, “curse God and die,” he translates it, “blessing God and dying.” But the interpretation which the connection demands is evidently that of cursing, renouncing, or forgetting; and so also it is in ^{<R119>}Job 2:9. This sense is still more obvious in ^{<I2110>}1 Kings 21:10: “Thou didst “blaspheme” **tkrb** God and the king.” So also ^{<I2113>}1 Kings 21:13 of the same chapter — though here Dr. Good contends that the word should be rendered “bless,” and that the accusation was that Naboth “blessed” or worshipped the gods, even Moloch — where he supposes the word **Ēl m,** ^{<h428>}, should be pointed **Ēl mo** ^{<h4432>} and read “Molech.” But the difficulty is not removed by this, and after all it is probable that the word here, as in ^{<R119>}Job 2:9, means to “curse.” So it is understood by nearly all interpreters. The Vulgate indeed renders it singularly enough, “Lest perhaps my sons have sinned, and have blessed God (et benedixerint Deo) in their hearts.” The Septuagint, “Lest perhaps my sons in their mind have thought evil toward God” — **κακα** ^{<2556>} **ενενοησαν** ^{<3539>} **προς** ^{<4314>} **Θεον** ^{<2316>}. The Chaldee, “Lest my sons have sinned and provoked **YAHWEH** **hwbyj** ^{<h3068>} in their hearts.” Assuming that this is the sense of the word here, there are three ways of accounting for the fact that the same word should have such opposite significations.

(1) One is that proposed by Taylor (Concor.), that pious persons of old regarded blasphemy as so abominable that they abhorred to express it by the proper name, and that therefore by an “euphemism” they used the term “bless” instead of “curse.” But it should be said that nothing is more common in the Scriptures than words denoting cursing and blasphemy. The word **hl a,** ^{<h423>}, in the sense of cursing or execrating, occurs frequently. So the word **āḏæ** ^{<h1442>}, means to blaspheme, and is often used; ^{<I2116>}2 Kings

19:6,22; ^{<2376>}Isaiah 37:6,23; ^{<9416>}Psalms 44:16. Other words also were used in the same sense, and there was no necessity of using a mere “euphemism” here.

(2) A second mode of accounting for this double use of the word is that this was the common term of salutation between friends at meeting and parting. It is then supposed to have been used in the sense of the English phrase “to bid farewell to.” And then, like that phrase, to mean “to renounce, to abandon, to dismiss from the mind, to disregard.” The words **χαιρειν** ^{<5463>}, in Greek, and “valere” in Latin, are used in this way. This explanation is suggested by Schultens, and is adopted by Rosenmuller and Noyes, who refer to the following places as parallel instances of the use of the word. Virg. Ecl. 8.58. “Vivite Sylvoe” — a form, says the Annotator on Virgil (Delphin), of bidding farewell to, like the Greek **χαιρετε** ^{<5463>}, — “a form used against those whom we reject with hatred, and wish to depart.” Thus, Catull. 11. 17: Cum suis vivat, valeatque moechis. So Aesch. Agam. 574:

Και ^{<2532>} **πολλα** ^{<4183>} **χαιρειν** ^{<5463>}
ξυμφοραις καταξιω ^{<2661>}.

Thus, Plutarch, Dion. p. 975. So Cicero in a letter to Atticus (8:8), in which he complains of the disgraceful flight of Pompey, applies to him a quotation from Aristophanes; **πολλα** ^{<4183>} **χαιρειν** ^{<5463>} **ειπω** ^{<2036>} **τω** ^{<3588>} **καλω** ^{<2570>} — “bidding farewell to honour he fled to Brundisium;” compare Ter. And. 4:2. 14. Cicero de Nat. Deor. 1. 44. According to this interpretation, it means that Job apprehended they had renounced God in their hearts. i.e., had been unmindful of him, and had withheld from him the homage which was due. — This is plausible: but the difficulty is in making out the use of this sense of the word in Hebrew. That the word was used as a mode of “parting salutation” among the Hebrews is undoubted. It was a solemn form of invoking the divine blessing when friends separated; compare ^{<1228>}Genesis 28:3; 47:10. But I find no use of the word where it is applied to separation in the sense of “renouncing,” or bidding farewell to “in a bad sense;” and unless some instances of this kind can be adduced, the interpretation is unsound, and though similar phrases are used in Greek, Latin, and other languages, it does not demonstrate that this use of the word obtained in the Hebrew.

(3) A third, and more simple explanation is that which supposes that the original sense of the word was “to kneel.”

This, according to Gesenius, is the meaning of the word in Arabic. So Castell gives the meaning of the word — “to bend the knees for the sake of honour;” that is, as an act of respect. So in Syriac, “Genua flexit, procubuit.” So “Genu.” the “knee.” Then it means to bend the knee for the purpose of invoking God, or worshipping. In Piel, the form used here, it means

(1) to bless God, to celebrate, to adore;

(2) to bless men — i.e., to “invoke” blessings on them; to greet or salute them — in the sense of invoking blessings on them when we meet them; ^{<01513>}1 Samuel 15:13; ^{<04707>}Genesis 47:7; ^{<01620>}2 Samuel 6:20; or when we part from them; ^{<04710>}Genesis 47:10; ^{<10866>}1 Kings 8:66; ^{<02460>}Genesis 24:60;

(3) to “invoke evil,” in the sense of “cursing others.” The idea is, that punishment or destruction is from God, and hence, it is “imprecated” on others. In one word, the term is used, as derived from the general sense of kneeling, in the sense of “invoking” either blessings or curses; and then in the general sense of blessing or cursing. This interpretation is defended by Selden, de jure Nat. et Gent. Lib. II. 100:11:p. 255, and by Gesenius, Lexicon. The idea here is, that Job apprehended that his sons, in the midst of mirth, and perhaps revelry, had been guilty of irreverence, and perhaps of reproaching God inwardly for the restraints of virtue and piety. What is more common in such scenes? What was more to be apprehended?

Thus did Job continually It was his regular habit whenever such an occasion occurred. He was unremitting in his pious care; and his solicitude lest his sons should have sinned never ceased — a beautiful illustration of the appropriate feelings of a pious father in regard to his sons. The Hebrew is, “all day;” i.e., at all times.

^{<8006>}**Job 1:6.** *Now there was a day* Dr. Good renders this, “And the day came.” Tindal. “Now upon a time.” The Chaldee Paraphrast has presumed to specify the time, and renders it, “Now it happened in the day of judgment (or scrutiny, *anydd amwyb*, “in the beginning of the year,” that hosts of angels came to stand in judgment before YAHWEH, and Satan came.” According to this, the judgment occurred once a year, and a solemn investigation was had of the conduct even of the angels. In the Hebrew there is no intimation of the frequency with which this occurred, nor of the time of the year when it happened. The only idea is, that “the sons of God” on a set or appointed day came to stand before God to give an account of

what they had done, and to receive further orders in regard to what they were to do. — This is evidently designed to introduce the subsequent events relating to Job. It is language taken from the proceedings of a monarch who had sent forth messengers or ambassadors on important errands through the different provinces of his empire, who now returned to give an account of what they had observed, and of the general state of the kingdom. Such a return would, of course, be made on a fixed day when, in the language of the law, their report would be “returnable,” and when they would be required to give in an account of the state of the kingdom. If it be said that it is inconsistent with the supposition that this book was inspired to suppose such a poetic fiction, I reply,

(1) That it is no more so than the parables of the Savior, who often supposes cases, and states them as real occurrences, in order to illustrate some important truth. Yet no one was ever led into error by this.

(2) It is in accordance with the language in the Scripture everywhere to describe God as a monarch seated on his throne, surrounded by his ministers, and sending them forth to accomplish important purposes in different parts of his vast empire.

It is not absolutely necessary, therefore, to regard this as designed to represent an actual occurrence. It is one of the admissible ornaments of poetry; — as admissible as any other poetic ornament. To represent God as a king is not improper; and if so, it is not improper to represent him with the usual accompaniments of royalty, — surrounded by ministers, and employing angels and messengers for important purposes in his kingdom. This supposition being admitted, all that follows is merely in “keeping,” and is designed to preserve the verisimilitude of the conception. — This idea, however, by no means militates against the supposition that angels are in fact really employed by God in important purposes in the government of his kingdom, nor that Satan has a real existence, and is permitted by God to employ an important agency in the accomplishment of his purposes toward his people. On this verse, however, see the Introduction, Section 1, (4).

The sons of God Angels; compare ^{<18307>}Job 38:7. The whole narrative supposes that they were celestial beings.

Came to present themselves As having returned from their embassy, and to give an account of what they had observed and done.

Before the Lord Before **hwby**^{h3068}. On the meaning of this word, see the notes at ^{<2002>}Isaiah 1:2. A scene remarkably similar to this is described in ^{<1229>}1 Kings 22:19-23. Yahweh is there represented as “sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left.” He inquires who would go and persuade Ahab that he might go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? “And there came forth a spirit and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him.” This he promised to do by being “a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.”

And Satan came also among them Margin, “The adversary” came “in the midst of them.” On the general meaning of this passage, and the reasons why Satan is introduced here, and the argument thence derived respecting the age and authorship of the book of Job, see Introduction, Section 4, (4). The Vulgate renders this by the name “Satan.” The Septuagint: **ὁ** ^{<3588>} **δίαβολος** ^{<1228>} — the devil, or the accuser. The Chaldee, **anfš**, “Satan.” So the Syriac. Theodotion, **ὁ** ^{<3588>} **αντικειμενος** ^{<480>} — “the adversary.” The word rendered “Satan” **ʿfç**^{<4785>} is derived from **ʿfæ**^{<4785>} “Satan,” to lie in wait, to be an adversary, and hence, it means properly an adversary, an accuser. It is used to denote one who “opposes,” as in war (^{<1114>}1 Kings 11:14,23,25; ^{<0200>}1 Samuel 29:4); one who is an adversary or an accuser in a court of justice (^{<4906>}Psalms 109:6), and one who stands in the way of another; ^{<0222>}Numbers 22:22, “And the angel of YAHWEH stood in the way for an adversary against him” **wl** (HSN-8705), “to oppose him.” It is then used by way of eminence, to denote the “adversary,” and assumes the form of a proper name, and is applied to the great foe of God and man — the malignant spirit who seduces people to evil, and who accuses them before God. Thus, in ^{<3801>}Zechariah 3:1,2,

“And he showed me Joshua the priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Loan said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan;”

compare ^{<6620>}Revelation 12:10, “Now is come salvation — for the accuser (**ὁ** ^{<3588>} **κατηγορων** ^{<2723>} — i.e., Satan, see ^{<6619>}Revelation 12:9) of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.” — The word does not often occur in the Old Testament. It is found in the various forms of a verb and a noun in only the following places. As a verb, in the sense of being an adversary, ^{<49713>}Psalms 71:13; 109:4,20,29; ^{<3801>}Zechariah 3:1; ^{<4980>}Psalms 38:20; as a noun, rendered “adversary” and

“adversaries,” ^{<1080>}1 Kings 5:4; 11:14,23,25; ^{<022>}Numbers 22:22,32; ^{<020>}1 Samuel 29:4; ^{<1022>}2 Samuel 19:22; rendered “Satan,” ^{<320>}1 Chronicles 21:1; ^{<0906>}Psalms 109:6; ^{<3006>}Job 1:6,7,8,9,12; 2:1,2,3,4,6,7; ^{<380>}Zechariah 3:2; and once rendered “an accusation,” ^{<5006>}Ezra 4:6. It was a word, therefore, early used in the sense of an adversary or accuser, and was applied to anyone who sustained this character, until it finally came to be used as a proper name, to denote, by way of eminence, the prince of evil spirits, as the adversary or accuser of people. An opinion has been adopted in modern times by Herder, Eichhorn, Dathe, Ilgen, and some others, that the being here referred to by the name of Satan is not the malignant spirit, the enemy of God, the Devil, but is one of the sons of God, “a faithful, but too suspicious servant of YAHWEH.” According to this, God is represented as holding a council to determine the state of his dominions. In this council, Satan, a zealous servant of YAHWEH, to whom had been assigned the honorable office of visiting different parts of the earth, for the purpose of observing the conduct of the subjects of YAHWEH, makes his appearance on his return with others. Such was the piety of Job, that it had attracted the special attention of YAHWEH, and he puts the question to Satan, whether in his journey he had remarked this illustrious example of virtue. Satan, who, from what he has observed on earth, is supposed to have lost all confidence in the reality and genuineness of the virtue which man may exhibit, suggests that he doubts whether even Job serves God from a disinterested motive; that God had encompassed him with blessings, and that his virtue is the mere result of circumstances; and that if his comforts were removed he would be found as destitute of principle as any other man. Satan, according to this, is a suspicious minister of YAHWEH, not a malignant spirit; he inflicts on Job only what he is ordered to by God, and nothing because he is himself malignant. Of this opinion Gesenius remarks (Lexicon), that it “is now universally exploded.” An insuperable objection to this view is, that it does not accord with the character usually ascribed to Satan in the Bible, and especially that the disposition attributed to him in the narrative before us is wholly inconsistent with this view. He is a malignant being; an accuser; one delighting in the opportunity of charging a holy man with hypocrisy, and in the permission to inflict tortures on him, and who goes as far in producing misery as he is allowed — restrained from destroying him only by the express command of God. — In Arabic the word Satan is often applied to a serpent. Thus, Gjahhari, as quoted by Schultens, says, “The Arabs call a serpent Satan, especially one that is conspicuous by its crest, head, and odious appearance.” It is applied also to

any object or being that is evil. Thus, the Scholiast on Hariri, as quoted by Schultens also, says, “Everything that is obstinately rebellious, opposed, and removed from good, of genii, human beings, and beasts, is called Satan.” — The general notion of an adversary and an opponent is found everywhere in the meaning of the word. — Dr. Good remarks on this verse, “We have here another proof that, in the system of patriarchal theology, the evil spirits, as well as the good, were equally amenable to the Almighty, and were equally cited, at definite periods, to answer for their conduct at his bar.” Rosenmuller remarks well on this verse, “It is to be observed, that Satan, no less than the other celestial spirits, is subject to the government of God, and dependent on his commands (compare ^{<BIB>}Job 2:1) where Satan equally with the sons of God ^{<A1121>} *ἄγγελοι* ^{<h430>} is said to present himself before God *ἄγγελοι* ; i.e., *λειτουργεῖν* ^{<3008>}), to minister. Yahweh uses the ministry of this demon (hujus daemonis) to execute punishment, or when from any other cause it seemed good to him to send evil upon men. But he, although incensed against the race of mortals, and desirous of injuring, is yet described as bound with a chain, and never dares to touch the pious unless God relaxes the reins. Satan, in walking round the earth, could certainly attentively consider Job, but to injure him he could not, unless permission had been given him.”

^{<BIB>}**Job 1:7.** *And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou?* This inquiry does not appear to have been made as if it was improper that Satan should have appeared there, for no blame seems to have been attached to him for this. He came as a spirit that was subject to the control of YAHWEH; he came with others, not to mingle in their society, and partake of their happiness, but to give an account of what he had done, and of what he had observed. The poetic idea is, that this was done periodically, and that “all” the spirits employed by YAHWEH to dispense blessings to mortals, to inflict punishment, or to observe their conduct, came and stood before him. Why the inquiry is directed particularly to “Satan,” is not specified. Perhaps it is not meant that there was any “special” inquiry made of him, but that, as he was to have so important an agency in the transactions which follow, the inquiry that was made of him only is recorded. In respect to the others, nothing occurred pertaining to Job, and their examination is not adverted to. Or it may be, that, as Satan was known to be malignant, suspicious, and disposed to think evil of the servants of God, the design was to direct his attention particularly to Job as an illustrious and indisputable example of virtue and piety.

From going to and fro in the earth Dr. Good renders this, “from roaming round.” Noyes, “from wandering over.” The word which is here used **פָּוּ**^{<47751>} means properly,

- (1.) to whip, to scourge, to lash;
- (2.) to row, i.e., to lash the sea with oars;
- (3.) to run up and down, to go here and there, or to and fro, so as to lash the air with one’s arms as with oars, and hence, to travel over a land, or to go through it in order to see it, **פָּוּ**^{<47752>} 2 Samuel 24:2,8.

Dr. Good, in conformity with the interpretation proposed by Schultens, says that “the word imports, not so much the act of going forward and backward, as of making a circuit or circumference; of going round about. The Hebrew verb is still in use among the Arabic writers, and in every instance implies the same idea of gyration or circumambulation.” In Arabic, according to Castell, the word means “to heat, to burn, to cause to boil, to consume:” then to propel to weariness, as e.g. a horse, and then to make a circuit, to go about at full speed, to go with diligence and activity. Thus, in Carnuso, as quoted by Schultens, “a course made at one impulse to the goal is called **פָּוּ**^{<47752>}. In **פָּוּ**^{<47752>} 2 Samuel 24:2, the word is used in the sense of passing around through different places for the purpose of taking a census. “Go now (Margin, “compass”) through all the tribes of Israel.” In **פָּוּ**^{<47752>} Numbers 11:8, it is applied to the Israelites going about to collect manna, passing rapidly and busily in the places where it fell for the purpose of gathering it. In **פָּוּ**^{<47752>} Zechariah 4:10, it is applied to “the eyes of Yahweh,” which are said to “run to and fro through the earth,” i.e., he surveys all things as one does whose eye passes rapidly from object to object. The same phrase occurs in **פָּוּ**^{<47752>} 2 Chronicles 16:9. In **פָּוּ**^{<47752>} Jeremiah 5:1, it is applied to the action of a man passing rapidly through the streets of a city. “Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem;” compare **פָּוּ**^{<47752>} Jeremiah 49:3. From these passages it is clear that the idea is not that of going “in a circuit” or circle, but it is that of passing rapidly; of moving with alacrity and in a hurry; and it is not improbable that the “original” idea is that suggested in the Arabic of “heat” — and thence applied to a whip or scourge because it produces a sensation like burning, and also to a rapid journey or motion, because it produces heat or a glow. It means that Satan had been active and diligent in passing from place to place in the earth to

survey it. The Chaldee adds to this, “to examine into the works of the sons of men.”

And from walking That is, to investigate human affairs. On this verse it is observed by Rosenmuller, that in the life of Zoroaster (see Zendavesta by John G. Kleukner, vol. 3: p. 11,) the prince of the evil demons, the angel of death, whose name is “Engremeniosch,” is said to go far and near through the world for the purpose of injuring and opposing good people.

<800>Job 1:8. *Hast thou considered my servant Job?* Margin, “Set thine heart on.” The margin is a literal translation of the Hebrew. Schultens remarks on this, that it means more than merely to observe or to look at — since it is abundantly manifest from the following verses that Satan “had” attentively considered Job, and had been desirous of injuring him. It means, according to him, to set himself against Job, to fix the heart on him with an intention to injure him, and YAHWEH means to ask whether Satan had done this. But it seems more probable that the phrase means to consider “attentively,” and that God means to ask him whether he had carefully observed him. Satan is represented as having no confidence in human virtue, and as maintaining that there was none which would resist temptation, if presented in a form sufficiently alluring. God here appeals to the case of Job as a full refutation of this opinion. The trial which follows is designed to test the question whether the piety of Job was of this order.

That there is none like him in the earth That he is the very highest example of virtue and piety on earth. Or might not the word **yKI**^{<h3588>} here be rendered “for?” “For there is none like him in the earth.” Then the idea would be, not that he had considered “that” there was none like him, but God directs his attention to him “because” he was the most eminent among mortals.

A perfect and an upright man See the Notes at **<800>Job 1:1**. The Septuagint translates this verse as they do **<800>Job 1:1**.

<800>Job 1:9. *Doth Job fear God for nought?* “Is his religion disinterested? Would not anyone be willing to worship God in such circumstances?” The idea is that there was nothing genuine about his piety; that religion could not be tried in prosperity; that Job had an abundant compensation for serving God, and that if the favors conferred on him were taken away, he would be like the rest of mankind. Much of the apparent virtue and religion of the world is the result of circumstances, and the question here proposed

“may,” it is to be feared, be asked with great propriety of many professors of religion who are rich; it “should” be asked by every professed friend of the Most High, whether his religion is not selfish and mercenary. Is it because God has blessed us with great earthly advantages? Is it the result of mere gratitude? Is it because he has preserved us in peril, or restored us from sickness? Or is it merely because we hope for heaven, and serve God because we trust he will reward us in a future world? All this may be the result of mere selfishness; and of all such persons it may be appropriately asked, “Do they fear God for nought?” True religion is not mere gratitude, nor is it the result of circumstances. It is the love of religion for its own sake — not for reward; it is because the service of God is right in itself, and not merely because heaven is full of glory; it is because God is worthy of our affections and confidence, and not merely because he will bless us — and this religion will live through all external changes, and survive the destruction of the world. It will flourish in poverty as well as when surrounded by affluence; on a bed of pain as well as in vigorous health; when we are calumniated and despised for our attachment to it, as well as when the incense of flattery is burned around us, and the silvery tones of praise fall on our ear; in the cottage as well as the palace; on the pallet of straw as well as on the bed of down.

Job 1:10. *Hast thou not made an hedge about him?* Dr. Good remarks, that to give the original word here its full force, it should be derived from the science of engineering, and be rendered, “Hast thou not raised a “palisado” about him?” The Hebrew word used here **dwv** properly means “to hedge”; to hedge in or about; and hence, to protect, as one is defended whose house or farm is hedged in either with a fence of thorns, or with an enclosure of stakes or palisades. The word in its various forms is used to denote, as a noun, “pricks in the eyes” (^{<0855>}Numbers 33:55); that is, that which would be like thorns; “barbed irons” (^{<1807>}Job 41:7), that is, the barbed iron used as a spear to take fish; and a hedge, and thorn hedge, ^{<3004>}Micah 7:4; ^{<0159>}Proverbs 15:19; ^{<2375>}Isaiah 5:5. The idea here is, that of making an enclosure around Job and his possessions to guard them from danger. The Septuagint renders it **περιεφραξας** ^{<5420>}, to make a defense around,” to “circumvallate” or inclose, as a camp is in war. In the Syriac and Arabic it is rendered, “Hast thou not protected him with thy hand? The Chaldee, “Hast thou protected him with thy word? The Septuagint renders the whole passage, “Hast thou not encircled the things which are without him” (**τα** ^{<3588>} **εξω** ^{<1854>} **αυτου** ^{<846>}) i.e., the things abroad which

belong to him, “and the things within his house.” The sense of the whole passage is, that he was eminently under the divine protection, and that God had kept himself, his family, and property from plunderers, and that therefore he served and feared him.

Thou hast blessed the work of his hands Thou hast greatly prospered him.

And his substance is increased in the land His property, ^{<1800B>}Job 1:3. Margin, “cattle.” The word “increased” here by no means expresses the force of the original. The word ^{<16555>}כרע means properly to break, to rend, then to break or burst forth as waters do that have been pent up; ^{<1050>}2 Samuel 5:20, compare ^{<2180>}Proverbs 3:10, “So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses “shall burst out” ^{<16555>}כרע with new wine;” i.e., thy wine-fats shall be so full that they shall overflow, or “burst” the barriers, and the wine shall flow out in abundance. The Arabians, according to Schultens, employ this word still to denote the mouth or “embouchure” — the most; rapid part of a stream. So Golius, in proof of this, quotes from the Arabic writer Gjanhari, a couplet where the word is used to denote the mouth of the Euphrates:

*“His rushing wealth o’er flowed him with its heaps;
So at its mouth the mad Euphrates sweeps.”*

According to Schultens, the word denotes a place where a river bursts forth, and makes a new way by rending the hills and rocks asunder. In like manner the flocks and herds of Job had burst, as it were, every barrier, and had spread like an inundation over the land; compare ^{<1050>}Genesis 30:43; ^{<1430>}2 Chronicles 31:5; ^{<1000>}Exodus 1:7; ^{<1864>}Job 16:14.

^{<801>}**Job 1:11.** *But put forth thine hand now* That is, for the purpose of injuring him, and taking away his property.

And touch all that he hath Dr. Good renders this, “and smite.” The Vulgate and the Septuagint, “touch.” The Hebrew word used here [^{<500>}געח] means properly to “touch;” then to touch anyone with violence (^{<1051>}Genesis 26:11; ^{<1019>}Joshua 9:19), and then to smite, to injure, to strike; see ^{<1326>}Genesis 32:26,33; ^{<1010>}1 Samuel 6:9; ^{<1892>}Job 19:21; compare the notes at ^{<2504>}Isaiah 53:4. Here it means evidently to smite or strike; and the idea is, that if God should take away the property of Job, he would take away his religion with it — and the trial was to see whether this effect would follow.

And he will curse thee to thy face He will do it openly and publicly. The word rendered “curse” here **Ēræ**^{h1288} is the same as that used in ^{<8005>}Job 1:5, and which is usually rendered “bless;” see the notes at ^{<8005>}Job 1:5. Dr. Good contends that; it should be rendered here “bless,” and translates it as a question: “Will he then, indeed, bless thee to thy face?” But in this he probably stands alone. The evident sense is, that Job would openly renounce God, and curse him on his throne; that all his religion was caused merely by his abundant prosperity, and was mere gratitude and selfishness; and that if his property were taken away, he would become the open and avowed enemy of him who was now his benefactor.

^{<8012>}**Job 1:12.** *All that he hath is in thy power* Margin, as in Hebrew “hand.” That is, all this is now committed to thee, for it is manifest that hitherto Satan had no power to injure even his property. He complained that God had made a hedge around all that Job possessed. Now it was all entrusted to him in order that he might make full trim of the faith of Job. The grant extended to his sons and daughters as well as to his property.

Only upon himself put not forth thine hand Job himself was not to be visited with sickness nor was his life to be taken. The main accusation of Satan was, that Job was virtuous only because God encompassed him with so many blessings, and especially because he had endowed him with so much property. The trial, therefore, only required that it should be seen whether his piety was the mere result of these blessings.

So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD That is from the council which had been convened; see the notes at ^{<8006>}Job 1:6.

^{<8013>}**Job 1:13.** *And there was a day* That is, on the day on which the regular turn came for the banquet to be held in the house of the older brother; compare the notes at ^{<8004>}Job 1:4.

And drinking wine This circumstance is omitted in ^{<8004>}Job 1:4. It shows that wine was regarded as an essential part of the banquet, and it was from its use that Job apprehended the unhappy results referred to in ^{<8005>}Job 1:5.

^{<8014>}**Job 1:14.** *And there came a messenger unto Job* Hebrew **Ēal** **ḡn**^{<h4397>}; the word usually rendered “angel,” appropriately rendered “messenger” here. The word properly means “one who is sent.”

The oxen were plowing Hebrew “the cattle” רֶקֶב, ^{<h1241>} including not merely “oxen,” but probably also “cows;” see the notes at ^{<800B>}Job 1:3.

And the asses Hebrew ׀ׁׁׁׁׁ, ^{<h860>} “she-asses.” The “sex” is here expressly mentioned and Dr. Good maintains that it should be in the translation. So it is in the Septuagint ἄι ^{<3588>} θηλειαι ^{<2337>} ονοι ^{<3688>}. So Jerome, “asinoe.” The reason why the sex is specified is, that female asses, on account of their milk, were much more valuable than males. On this account they were preferred also for traveling; see the notes at ^{<800B>}Job 1:3.

Beside them Hebrew “By their hands,” i.e., by their sides, for the Hebrew דַּי, ^{<h3027>} is often used in this sense; compare the notes at ^{<3321>}Isaiah 33:21.

^{<8015>}**Job 1:15.** *And the Sabeans* Hebrew אבׁׁׁ, ^{<h7614>}, Vulgate, “Suboei.” The Septuagint gives a paraphrase, και ^{<2532>} ελθονια ^{<2064>} οί ^{<3588>} αιχμαλωτευοντες ^{<162>} ηχμαλωτευσαν ^{<162>}, “And the plunderers coming, plundered them,” or made them captive. On the situation of Sheba and Seba, see the notes at ^{<348B>}Isaiah 43:3; 45:14; 9:6. The people here referred to were, undoubtedly, inhabitants of some part of Arabia Felix. There are three persons of the name of Sheba mentioned in the Scriptures.

- (1) A grandson of Cush; ^{<0107>}Genesis 10:7.
- (2) A son of Joktan; ^{<0105>}Genesis 10:28.
- (3) A son of Jokshan, the son of Abraham by Keturah.

“Calmet.” The Sheba here referred to was probably in the southern part of Arabia, and from the narrative it is evident that the Sabeans here mentioned were a predatory tribe. It is not improbable that these tribes were in the habit of wandering for purposes of plunder over the whole country, from the banks of the Euphrates to the outskirts of Egypt. The Bedawin Arabs of the present day resemble in a remarkable manner the ancient inhabitants of Arabia, and for many centuries the manners of the inhabitants of Arabia have not changed, for the habits of the Orientals continue the same from age to age. The Syriac renders this simply, “a multitude rushed” upon them;” omitting the word “Sabean.”

Fell upon them With violence; or rushed unexpectedly upon them. This is the way in which the Arab tribes now attack the caravan, the traveler, or the village, for plunder.

And took them away As plunder. It is common now to make such sudden incursions, and to carry off a large booty.

They have slain the servants Hebrew ר [אע] ^{<45288>}, “the young men.” The word ר [אע] ^{<45288>}, properly means a “boy,” and is applied to an infant just born, ^{<1016>}Exodus 2:6; ^{<07135>}Judges 13:5,7; or to a youth, ^{<0349>}Genesis 34:19; 41:12. It came then to denote a servant or slave, like the Greek παις ^{<3816>}; ^{<12412>}Genesis 24:2; ^{<12170>}2 Kings 5:20; compare ^{<44716>}Acts 5:6. So the word “boy” is often used in the Southern States of North America to denote a slave. Here it evidently means the servants that were employed in cultivating the lands of Job, and keeping his cattle. There is no intimation that they were slaves. Jerome renders it “pueros, boys;” so the Septuagint τους ^{<3588>} παιδας ^{<3816>}.

And I only am escaped alone By myself, dBæ ^{<4905>}. There is no other one with me. It is remarkable that the same account is given by each one of the servants who escaped, ^{<3016>}Job 1:16,17,19. The Chaldee has given a very singular version of this — apparently from the desire of accounting for everything, and of mentioning the “names” of all the persons intended. “The oxen were plowing, and Lelath, queen of Zamargad, suddenly rushed upon them, and carried them away.”

^{<3016>}**Job 1:16.** *While he was yet speaking* All this indicates the rapidity of the movement of Satan, and his desire to “overwhelm” Job with the suddenness and greatness of his calamities. The object seems to have been to give him no time to recover from the shock of one form of trial before another came upon him. If an interval had been given him he might have rallied his strength to bear his trials; but afflictions are much more difficult to be borne when they come in rapid succession. — It is not a very uncommon occurrence, however, that the righteous are tried by the rapidity and accumulation as well as the severity of their afflictions. It has passed into a proverb that “afflictions do not come alone.”

The fire of God.” Margin, “A great fire;” evidently meaning a flash of lightning, or a thunderbolt. The Hebrew is “fire of God;” but it is probable that the phrase is used in a sense similar to the expression, “cedars of God,” meaning lofty cedars; I or “mountains of God,” meaning very high mountains. The lightning is I probably intended; compare ^{<04655>}Numbers 16:35; see the note at ^{<2906>}Isaiah 29:6.

From heaven From the sky, or the air. So the word heaven is often used in the Scriptures; see the notes at ^{<4061>}Matthew 16:1.

And hath burnt up the sheep That lightning might destroy herds and men no one can doubt; though the fact of their being actually consumed or burned up may have been an exaggeration of the much affrighted messenger. — The narrative leads us to believe that these things were under the control of Satan, though by the permission of God; and his power over the lightnings and the winds (^{<18019>}Job 1:19) may serve to illustrate the declaration, that he is the “Prince of the power of the air,” in ^{<4012>}Ephesians 2:2.

^{<8017>}**Job 1:17.** *The Chaldeans* The Septuagint translates this, ^{<3588>}αἱ ἵππεις ^{<2460>}, “the horsemen.” Why they thus expressed it is unknown. It may be possible that the Chaldeans were supposed to be distinguished as horsemen, and were principally known as such in their predatory excursions. But it is impossible to account for all the changes made by the Septuagint in the text. Tho Syriac and the Chaldee render it correctly, “Chaldeans.” The Chaldeans (Hebrew ^{<43778>}yDcKæ were the ancient inhabitants of Babylonia. According to Vitringa (Commentary in Isaiah tom. i. p. 412, c. xiii. 19), Gesenius (Commentary zu ^{<23213>}Isaiah 23:13), and Rosenmiller (Bib. Geog. 1, 2, p. 36ff), the Chaldees or Casdim were a warlike people who originally inhabited the Carduchian mountains, north of Assyria, and the northern part of Mesopotamia. According to Xenophon (Cyrop. iii. 2, 7) the Chaldees dwelt in the mountains adjacent to Armenia and they were found in the same region in the campaign of the younger Cyrus, and the retreat of the ten thousand Greeks. Xen. Anaba. iv. 3, 4; v. 5, 9; viii. 8, 14. They were allied to the Hebrews, as appears from ^{<10222>}Genesis 22:22, where ^{<10222>}dvk, (whence “Kasdim”) the ancestor of the people is mentioned as a son of Nabor, and was consequently the nephew of Abraham. And further, Abraham himself emigrated to Canaan from Ur of the Chaldees ^{<h218>}rWa ^{<43778>}yDcKæ, “Ur of the Kasdim”), ^{<11128>}Genesis 11:28; and in Judith 5:6, the Hebrews themselves are said to be descended from the Chaldeans. The region around the river Chaboras, in the northern part of Mesopotamia, is called by Ezekiel (^{<2003>}Ezekiel 1:3) “the land of the Chaldeans;” Jeremiah (^{<24515>}Jeremiah 5:15) calls them “an ancient nation;” see the notes at ^{<23213>}Isaiah 23:13. The Chaldeans were a fierce and warlike people, and when they were subdued by the Assyrians, a portion of them appear to have been placed in Babylon to ward off the incursions of the

neighboring Arabians. In time “they” gained the ascendancy over their Assyrian masters, and grew into the mighty empire of Chaldea or Babylonia. A part of them, however, appear to have remained in their ancient country, and enjoyed under the Persians some degree of liberty. Gesenius supposes that the Kurds who have inhabited those regions, at least since the middle ages, are probably the descendants of that people. — A very vivid and graphic description of the Chaldeans is given by the prophet Habakkuk, which will serve to illustrate the passage before us, and show that they retained until his times the predatory and fierce character which they had in the days of Job; ^{<18006>} Job 1:6-11:

For lo I raise up the Chaldeans,
 A bitter and hasty nation,
 Which marches far and wide in the earth.
 To possess the dwellings which are not theirs.
 They are terrible and dreadful,
 Their judgments proceed only from themselves
 Swifter than leopards are their horses,
 And fiercer than the evening wolves.
 Their horsemen prance proudly around;
 And their horsemen shall come from afar and fly,
 Like the eagle when he pounces on his prey.
 They all shall come for violence,
 In troops their glance is ever forward!
 They gather captives like the sand!
 And they scoff at kings,
 And princes are a scorn unto them.
 They deride every strong hold;
 They cast up [mounds of] earth and take it.

This warlike people ultimately obtained the ascendancy in the Assyrian empire. About the year 597 B.C. Nabopolassar, a viceroy in Babylon, made himself independent of Assyria, contracted an alliance with Cyaxares, king of Media, and with his aid subdued Nineveh, and the whole of Assyria. From that time the Babylonian empire rose, and the history of the Chaldeans becomes the history of Babylon. — “Rob. Calmet.” In the time of Job, however, they were a predatory race that seem to have wandered far for the sake of plunder. They came from the North, or the East, as the Sabeans came from the South.

Made out three bands literally, “three heads.” That is, they divided themselves, for the sake of plunder, into three parties. Perhaps the three thousand camels of Job (^{<8006>}Job 1:3) occupied three places remote from each other, and the object of the speaker is to say that the whole were taken.

And fell upon the camels Margin, “And rushed.” The word is different from that which in ^{<8015>}Job 1:15 is rendered “fell.” The word used here ^{<6584>}*fvpe* means to spread out, to expand. It is spoken of hostile troops, ^{<349>}1 Chronicles 14:9,13; of locusts which spread over a country, ^{<3015>}Nahum 3:15; and of an army or company of marauders. ^{<003>}Judges 9:33,44; ^{<0278>}1 Samuel 27:8. This is its sense here.

^{<8018>}**Job 1:18.** *Eating and drinking wine*; the notes at ^{<8004>}Job 1:4,13.

^{<8019>}**Job 1:19.** *There came a great wind* Such tornadoes are not less common in Oriental countries than in the United States. Indeed they abound more in regions near the equator than they do in those which are more remote; in hot countries than in those of higher latitude.

From the wilderness Margin, “From aside.” That is, from aside the wilderness. The word here rendered “from aside” in the margin ^{<677>}*yb [m* means properly “from across,” and is so rendered by Dr. Good. The word ^{<5674>}*rbte* means literally a region or country beyond, or on the other side, sc. of a river or a sea, which one must “pass;” ^{<0718>}Judges 11:18; ^{<0020>}Genesis 2:10,11; ^{<6000>}Deuteronomy 1:1,5. Then it means on the other side, or beyond; see the notes at ^{<2300>}Isaiah 18:1. Here it means that the tornado came sweeping across the desert. On the ample plains of Arabia it would have the opportunity of accumulating its desolating power, and would sweep everything before it. The Hebrew word here rendered “wilderness,” ^{<4057>}*rBdini*, does not express exactly what is denoted by our word. We mean by it usually, a region wholly uncultivated, covered with forests, and the habitation of wild beasts. The Hebrew word more properly denotes a “desert;” an uninhabited region, a sterile, sandy country, though sometimes adapted to pasture. In many places the word would be well translated by the phrases “open fields,” or “open plains;” compare ^{<3022>}Joel 2:22; ^{<6513>}Psalms 65:13; ^{<2430>}Jeremiah 23:10; ^{<3421>}Isaiah 42:11; ^{<0146>}Genesis 14:6; 16:7; ^{<0000>}Exodus 3:1; 13:18; ^{<6124>}Deuteronomy 11:24; compare ^{<2325>}Isaiah 32:15; 35:1,2.

And smote the four corners of the house Came as a tornado usually does, or like a whirlwind. It seemed to come from all points of the compass, and prostrated everything before it.

And it fell upon the young men The word here rendered "young men" is the same which is rendered in ^{<8015>}Job 1:15,17, servants $\mu y w [n h]$. There can be no reasonable doubt, however, that the messenger by the word here refers to the children of Job. It is remarkable that his daughters are not particularly specified, but they may be included in the word used here $\mu y w [n]$, which may be the same in signification as our phrase "young people," including both sexes. So it is rendered by Etchhorn: Es sturtzo tiber den jungen Leuten zusammen.

^{<8012>}**Job 1:20.** *Then Job arose* The phrase to arise, in the Scriptures is often used in the sense of beginning to do anything. It does not necessarily imply that the person had been previously sitting; see ^{<10131>}2 Samuel 13:13.

And rent his mantle The word here rendered "mantle" $l y [m]$ ^{<4598>} means an upper or outer garment. The dress of Orientals consists principally of an under garment or tunic — not materially differing from the "shirt" with us — except that the sleeves are wider, and under this large and loose pantaloons. Niebuhr, Reisebescreib. 1. 157. Over these garments they often throw a full and flowing mantle or robe. This is made without sleeves; it reaches down to the ankles; and when they walk or exercise it is bound around the middle with a girdle or sash. When they labor it is usually laid aside. The robe here referred to was worn sometimes by women, ^{<10138>}2 Samuel 13:18; by men of birth and rank, and by kings, ^{<10157>}1 Samuel 15:27; 18:4; 24:5,11; by priests, ^{<10284>}1 Samuel 28:14, and especially by the high priest under the ephod, ^{<10281>}Exodus 28:31. See Braun de vest Sacerd. ii. 5. Schroeder de vest. muller. Hebrew p. 267; Hartmann Ilcraerin, iii. p. 512, and Thesau. Antiq. Sacra. by Ugolin, Tom. i. 509, iii. 74, iv. 504, viii. 90, 1000, xii. 788, xiii. 306; compare the notes at ^{<10150>}Matthew 5:40, and Niebuhr, as quoted above. The custom of rending the garment as an expression of grief prevailed not only among the Jews but also among the Greeks and Romans. Livy i. 13. Suetonius, in "Jul. Caes." 33. It prevailed also among the Persians. Curtius, B. x. c. 5, Section 17. See Christian Boldich, in Thesau. Antiq. Sacra. Tom. xii. p. 145; also Tom. xiii. 551, 552, 560, XXX. 1105, 1112. In proof also that the custom prevailed among the Pagan, see Diod. Sic. Lib. i. p. 3, c. 3, respecting the Egyptians; Lib. xvii. respecting the Persians; Quin. Curt. iii. 11; Herod. Lib. iii. in

Thalia, Lib. viii. in Urania, where he speaks of the Persians. So Plutarch in his life of Antony, speaking of the deep grief of Cleopatra, says, *περιερρηξάτο* ^{<4048>} *τους* ^{<3588>} *πιπλους επ'* ^{<1909>} *αυτω* ^{<846>}. Thus, Herodian, Lib. i.: *και* ^{<2532>} *ρηξαμενη* ^{<4486>} *εσθητα* ^{<2066>}. So Statius in Glaucum:

*Tu mode fusus humi, lucem aversaris iniquam,
Nunc torvus pariter vestes, et pectora rumpis.*

So Virgil:

*Tune pins Aeneas humeris abscindere vestem,
Auxilioque vocare Deos, et tendere palmas. — AEn. v. 685.*

*Demittunt mentes; it scissa veste Latinus,
Conjugis attonitus fatis, urbisque ruina, — AEn. 12:609.*

So Juvenal, Sat. x.:

*ut primos edere planctus
Cassandra inciperet, scissaque Polyxena palla.*

Numerous other quotations from the classic writers, as well as from the Jewish writings, may be seen in Ugolin's Sacerdotium Hebraicum, cap. vi. Thesau. Antiq. Sacrar. Tom. xiii. p. 550ff.

And shaved his head This was also a common mode of expressing great sorrow. Sometimes it was done by formally cutting off the hair of the head; sometimes by plucking it violently out by the roots, and sometimes also the beard was plucked out, or cut off. The idea seems to have been that mourners should divest themselves of that which was usually deemed most ornamental; compare ^{<2472>}Jeremiah 7:29; ^{<2372>}Isaiah 7:20. Lucian says that the Egyptians expressed their grief by cutting off their hair on the death of their god Apis, and the Syrians in the same manner at the death of Adonis. Olympiodorus remarks on this passage, that the people among whom long hair was regarded as an ornament, cut it off in times of mourning; but those who commonly wore short hair, suffered it on such occasions to grow long. See Rosenmuller, Morgenland, "in loc." A full description of the customs of the Hebrews in times of mourning, and particularly of the custom of plucking out the hair, may be seen in Martin Geier, de Hebraeorum Luctu, especially in chapter viii. Thesau. Antiq. Sacra. XXXii. p. 147ff. The meaning here is that Job was filled with excessive grief, and that he expressed that grief in the manner that was common in

his day. Nature demands that there should be “some” external expression of sorrow; and religion does not forbid it. He pays a tribute to the nature with which God has endowed him who gives an appropriate expression to sorrow; he wars against that nature who attempts to remove from his countenance, conversation, dress, and dwelling, everything that is indicative of the sorrows of his soul in a time of calamity. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus; and religion is not designed to make the heart insensible or incapable of grief. Piety, like every kind of virtue, always increases the susceptibility of the soul to suffering. Philosophy and sin destroy sensibility; but religion deepens it. Philosophy does it on principle — for its great object is to render the heart dead to all sensibility; sin produces the same effect naturally. The drunkard, the licentious man, and the man of avarice, are incapable of being affected by the tender scenes of life. Guilt has paralyzed their feelings and rendered them dead. But religion allows people to feel, and then shows its power in sustaining the soul, and in imparting its consolations to the heart that is broken and sad. It comes to dry up the tears of the mourner, not to forbid those tears to flow; to pour the balm of consolation into the heart, not to teach the heart to be unfeeling.

And fell down upon the ground So Joshua in a time of great calamity prostrated himself upon the earth and worshipped, ^{<BIB>}Joshua 7:6. — The Orientals were then in the habit, as they are now, of prostrating themselves on the ground as an act of homage. Job seems to have done this partly as an expression of grief, and partly as an act of devotion — solemnly bowing before God in the time of his great trial.

And worshipped Worshipped God. He resigned himself to his will. A pious man has nowhere else to go in trial; and he will desire to go nowhere else than to the God who has afflicted him.

^{<BIB>}**Job 1:21.** *And said, Naked came I out* That is, destitute of property, for so the connection demands; compare ^{<BIB>}1 Timothy 6:7;

“For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.”

A similar expression also occurs in Pliny, “Hominem natura tantum nudism.” Nat. Hist. proem. L. vii. Job felt that he was stripped of all, and that he must leave the world as destitute as he entered it.

My mother's womb The earth — the universal mother. That he refers to the earth is apparent, because he speaks of returning there again. The Chaldee adds **tyBæ** ^{<1000>} **tybl** — “to the house of burial.” The earth is often called the mother of mankind; see Cic. de Nat. Deor. ii. 26; compare ^{<895>} Psalm 139:15. Dr. Good remarks, that “the origin of all things from the earth introduced, at a very early period of the world, the superstitious worship of the earth, under the title of Dameter, or the “Mother-goddess,” a Chaldee term, probably common to Idumea at the time of the existence of Job himself. It is hence the Greeks derive their **Δημητηρ** (Demeter), or as they occasionally wrote it **Γημητηρ** (Ge-meter), or Mother (**μητηρ** ^{<3384>}) Earth (**γη** ^{<1093>}), to whom they appropriated annually two religious festivals of extraordinary pomp and solemnity. Thus, Lucretius says,

*Linquitur, ut merito materhum nomen adepta
Terra sit, e terra quoniam sunt cuneta creata. — v. 793.*

— “Whence justly earth
Claims the dear name of mother, since alone
Flowed from herself whate’er the sight enjoys.”

For a full account of the views of the ancients in regard to the “marriage” (**ἱερος** ^{<2413>} **γαμος**) ^{<1062>} of the “heaven” and the “earth,” from which union all things were supposed to proceed, see Creuzer’s Symbolik und Mythologie der alt. Volk. Erst. Theil, p. 26, fg.

And naked Stripped of all, I shall go to the common mother of the race. This is exceedingly beautiful language; and in the mouth of Job it was expressive of the most submissive piety. It is not the language of complaint; but was in him connected with the deep feeling that the loss of his property was to be traced to God, and that he had a right to do as he had done.

The Lord gave Hebrew **hwbyj** ^{<13068>}. He had nothing when he came into the world, and all that he had obtained had been by the good providence of God. As “he” gave it, he had a right to remove it. Such was the feeling of Job, and such is the true language of submission everywhere. He who has a proper view of what he possesses will feel that it is all to be traced to God, and that he has a right to remove it when he pleases.

And the Lord hath taken away It is not by accident; it is not the result of haphazard; it is not to be traced to storms and winds and the bad passions of people. It is the result of intelligent design, and whoever has been the

agent or instrument in it, it is to be referred to the overruling providence of God. Why did not Job vent his wrath on the Sabeans? Why did he not blame the Chaldeans? Why did he not curse the tempest and the storm? Why did he not blame his sons for exposing themselves? Why not suspect the malice of Satan? Why not suggest that the calamity was to be traced to bad fortune, to ill-luck, or to an evil administration of human affairs? None of these things occurred to Job. He traced the removal of his property and his loss of children at once to God, and found consolation in the belief that an intelligent and holy Sovereign presided over his affairs, and that he had removed only what he gave.

Blessed be the name of the Lord That is, blessed be YAHWEH — the “name” of anyone in Hebrew being often used to denote the person himself. The Syriac, Arabic, and some manuscripts of the Septuagint here adds “forever.” — “Here,” says Schmid, “the contrast is observable between the object of Satan, which was to induce Job to renounce God, and the result of the temptation which was to lead Job to bless God.” Thus, far Satan had been foiled, and Job had sustained the shock of the calamity, and showed that he did not serve God on account of the benefits which he had received from him.

~~802~~ **Job 1:22.** *In all this* In all his feelings and expressions on this occasion.

Job sinned not He expressed just the feelings and manifested just the submission which he ought to do.

Nor charged God foolishly Margin, “Attributed folly to God.” Vulgate, “Neither did he speak any foolish thing against God.” The Septuagint renders it, “and he did not impute (or give, *εδωκεν* ^{<1325>}) folly (*αφορσυνην* ^{<877>}) (indiscretion, ‘Thompson’) to God.” Good renders this, “nor vented a murmur against God;” and remarks that the literal rendering would be, “nor vented FROTH against God. Tindal renders it, “nor murmured foolishly against God.” The Hebrew word *hl pt* is derived from the obsolete root *l pt*, “to spit out;” and hence, to be insipid, tasteless, not seasoned. The noun, therefore, means properly that which is spit out; then that which is insipid or tasteless; and then folly. Wit and wisdom are represented by Oriental writers as pungent and seasoned; compare the expression among the Greeks of “Attic salt,” meaning wit or wisdom. The word “folly” in the Scriptures often means wickedness, for

this is supreme folly. Here it has this sense, and means that Job did not say anything “wrong.” Satan was disappointed and had borne a false accusation before God. He did “not” charge God foolishly, and he did “not” curse him to his face.

From this instructive narrative of the manner in which Job received afflictions, we may learn

(1) That true piety will bear the removal of property and friends without murmuring. Religion is not based on such things, and their removal cannot shake it. It is founded deeper in the soul, and mere external changes cannot destroy it.

(2) When we are afflicted, we should not vent our wrath on winds and waves; on the fraud and perfidy of our fellow-men; on embarrassments and changes in the commercial world; on the pestilence and the storm. Any or all of these may be employed as instruments in taking away our property or our friends, but we should trace the calamity ultimately to God. Storms and winds and waves, malignant spirits and our fellow-men, do no more than God permits. They are all restrained and kept within proper limits. They are not directed by chance, but they are under the control of an intelligent Being, and are the wise appointment of a holy God.

(3) God has a right to remove our comforts. He gave them — not to be our permanent inheritance, but to be withdrawn when he pleases. It is a proof of goodness that we have been permitted to tread his earth so long — though we should be allowed to walk it no more; to breathe his air so long — though we should be permitted to inhale it no more; to look upon his sun and moon and stars so long — though we should be permitted to walk by their light no more; to enjoy the society of the friends whom he has given us so long — though we should enjoy that society no longer. A temporary gift may be removed at the pleasure of the giver, and we hold all our comforts at the mere good pleasure of God.

(4) We see the nature of true resignation. It is not because we can always see the “reason” why we are afflicted; it consists in bowing to the will of a holy and intelligent God, and in the feeling that he has a “right” to remove what he has given us. It is his; and may be taken away when he pleases. It may be, and should be yielded, without a complaint — and to do this “because” God wills it, is true resignation.

(5) We see the true source of “comfort” in trials. It is not in the belief that things are regulated by chance and hap-hazard; or even that they are controlled by physical laws. We may have the clearest philosophical view of the mode in which tempests sweep away property, or the pestilence our friends; we may understand the laws by which all this is done, but this affords no consolation. It is only when we perceive an “intelligent Being” presiding over these events, and see that they are the result of plan and intention on his part, that we can find comfort in trial. What satisfaction is it for me to understand the law by which fire burns when my property is swept away; or to know “how” disease acts on the human frame when my child dies; or how the plague produces its effects on the body when friend after friend is laid in the grave? This is “philosophy;” and this is the consolation which this world furnishes. I want some higher consolation than that which results from the knowledge of unconscious laws. I want to have the assurance that it is the result of intelligent design, and that this design is connected with a benevolent end — and that I find only in religion.

(6) We see the “power” of religion in sustaining in the time of trial. How calm and submissive was this holy man! How peaceful and resigned! Nothing else but piety could have done this. Philosophy blunts the feelings, paralyses the sensibilities, and chills the soul; but it does not give consolation. It is only confidence in God; a feeling that he is right; and a profound and holy acquiescence in his will, that can produce support in trials like these. This we may have as well so Job; and this is indispensable in a world so full of calamity and sorrow as this is.

NOTES ON JOB 2

Job 2:1. *Again there was a day ...* See the notes at ^{<8006>}Job 1:6. These seasons are represented as periodical, when the angels came, as it were, to make report to God of what they had observed and done. The Chaldee renders this, “And there was a day of the great judgment ^{th3117>} ^{th1780>} ^{abr}, a day of the remission of sins ^{qwbv} ^{mwY} ^{aynhys} and there came bands ^{ytk} of angels.”

To present himself before the LORD This does not occur in the former statement in ^{<8006>}Job 1:6. It here means that he came before the Lord after he had had permission to afflict; Job. The Chaldee renders it “that he might stand in judgment ^{anyb} before the Lord.”

Job 2:2. *And the Lord said unto Satan ...* See the notes at ^{<8007>}Job 1:7.

Job 2:3. *Hast thou considered* Notes, ^{<8008>}Job 1:8.

That there is none like him in the earth The same addition is made here by the Septuagint which occurs in ^{<8006>}Job 1:1; see the notes at that verse.

And still he holdeth fast his integrity Notwithstanding all the efforts made to show that his piety was the result of mere selfishness. The word “integrity” here ^{wtmt} means “perfection;” another form of the word which is rendered “perfect” in ^{<8006>}Job 1:1; see the notes at that verse.

Although thou movedst me The word rendered “movedst” ^{tws} means to incite, to impel, to urge, to irritate against anyone; ^{<6658>}Joshua 15:18; ^{<8014>}Judges 1:14; ^{<482>}2 Chronicles 18:2; ^{<9269>}1 Samuel 26:19; ^{<2483>}Jeremiah 43:3. The Septuagint renders this in a special manner, “And thou hast ordered (^{ειπας} ^{<3004>}) his property to be destroyed in vain” (^{διακενης} ^{<2756>}), i.e., without accomplishing the purpose intended.

To destroy him The word used here (from ^{[I E} ^{th1106>} means properly to swallow, to devour, with the idea of eagerness or greediness. It is then used in the sense of to consume, or destroy; compare ^{<8208>}Job 20:18; ^{<3012>}Proverbs 1:12; ^{<4160>}Numbers 16:30; ^{<9915>}Psalms 69:15. In the margin it is rendered “swallow him up.”

Without cause Without any sufficient reason. The cause assigned by Satan (~~<800>~~Job 1:9-11) was, that the piety of Job was selfish, and that if God should remove his possessions, he would show that he had no true religion. God says now that it was demonstrated that there was no reason for having made the trial. The result had shown that the charge was unfounded, and that his piety still remained, though he was stripped of all that he had. This passage may remind us of the speech of Neptune in favor of Aeneas, Iliad v. 297:

*And can ye see this righteous chief atone
With guiltless blood for vices not his own?
To all the gods his constant vows were paid;
Sure though he wars for Troy he claims our aid.
Fate wills not this — Pope.*

~~<800>~~**Job 2:4.** *Skin for skin* This is a proverbial expression, whose origin is unknown, nor is its meaning as “a proverb” entirely clear. The general sense of the passage here is plain, for it is immediately explained that a man would give everything which he had to save his life; and the idea here is, that if Job was so afflicted in his body that he was likely to die, he would give up all his religion in order to purchase life. His religion, which had borne the comparatively trifling test before applied to it, would not bear the severer trial if his life was endangered. In regard to the proverb itself, a great variety of explanations has been given. The ancient versions throw no light on it. The Vulgate renders it, “Pellem pro pelle.” The Septuagint δερμα ^{<1192>} ὑπερ ^{<5228>} δερματος ^{<1192>} — skin for, or instead of, skin. The Chaldee renders it, “member for member,” aya l wfma ayba — and the author of that paraphrase seems to have supposed that it means that a man would give the members of his body or his limbs to preserve his life. Parkhurst renders it, “skin after skin,” meaning, as he explains it, that a man may bear to part with all that he has, and even to have his skin, as it were, stripped off again and again, provided only that his life is safe. Noyes supposes that it means that any man will give the skin or life of another, whether animal or man, to save his own; and that: Job gave up all, without complaint, from the selfish fear of exposing his own life to danger. Dr. Good remarks on the passage, that the skins or spoils of beasts, in the rude and early ages of man, were the most valuable property he could acquire, and that for which he most frequently combated. Thus, Lucretius says,

*Tam igitur “pelles,” nunc aurum et purpura, curis
Exercent hominum vitam, belloque fatigant. — v. 1422.*

*“Then man for “skins” contended; purple now,
And gold, forever plunge him into war.”*

In various parts of the book of Job, however, Dr. Good remarks, the word skin imports the “person” of a man as well as his “property,” the whole living body which it envelopes, as in ^{<18183>}Job 18:13; 19:26.

“It is,” says he, “upon the double meaning of the same term, and the play which is here given to it, by employing the term first in one sense and then in the other, that the gist of the proverb, as of a thousand others similarly constructed, depends. ‘Skin for skin’ is in this view, in plain English, ‘property for person,’ or ‘the skin forming property for the skin forming person.’”

See a somewhat similar view presented by Callaway, in Bush’s Illustrations, “in loco.” The editor of the Pictorial Bible coincides mainly with this view, and supposes that the reference is to the time when trade was conducted by barter, and when the skins of animals, being a most frequent and valuable commodity, were used to represent property. Tributes, ransoms, etc., he observes, were paid in skins. According to this, it means that a man would give “skin upon skin;” that is, would pile one piece of property upon another, and give “all” that he had, in order to save his life. It refers to the necessity of submitting to one great evil rather than incur a greater, answering to the Turkish proverb, “We must give our beards to save our heads.” According to Gesenius, it means “life for life.” Drusius explains it as meaning, that he would give the skin of others, as of his sons, to save his own; that is, that he was unmoved so long as his own skin or life was safe. The same view is given by Ephrem the Syrian. “Skin for skin; the skin not only of flocks, but even of his sons will he give, in order to save his own.” This view also is adopted by Umbreit. That is, his religion was supremely selfish. The loss of property and even of children he could bear, provided his person was untouched. His own health, and life; his own skin and body were dearer to him than anything else. Other people would have been afflicted by the loss of children and property. But Job was willing to part with any or all of these, provided he himself was safe. Rosenmuller supposes that the word skin here is used for the whole body; and says that the sense is, that he would give the body of another for his own, as in ^{<12123>}Exodus 21:23.

“The meaning of this proverbial formula,” says he, “is, that any one would redeem his own safety by the skin of others; that is, not only by the skins or lives of oxen, camels, servants, but even of his own children.”

Schultens supposes it means that a man would submit to any sufferings in order to save his life; that he would be willing to be flayed alive; to be repeatedly excoriated; to have, so to speak, one skin stripped off after another, if he might save his own life. According to this, the idea is, that the loss of life was the great calamity to be feared, and that a man would give “any” thing in order to save it. Umbreit says,

“there is nothing so valuable to a man that he will not exchange it — one thing for another; one outward good for another, ‘skin for skin.’ But life, the inward good, is to him of no value that can be estimated. That he will give for nothing; and much more, he will offer everything for that.”

Another solution is offered in the *Biblische Untersuchungen* ii. Th. s. 88. “Before the use of gold, traffic was conducted chiefly by barter. Men exchanged what was valuable to themselves for what others had which they wanted. Those who hunted wild beasts would bring their skins to market, and would exchange them for bows and arrows. Since these traffickers were exposed to the danger of being robbed, they often took with them those who were armed, who agreed to defend them on condition that they should have a part of the skins which they took, and in this way they purchased their property and life.” That is, they gave the skins of animals for the safety of their own; all that they had they would surrender, in order that their lives might be saved. See Rosenmuller’s *Morgenland*, “in loc.” None of these solutions appear to me perfectly satisfactory, and the proverb is involved in perplexity still. It seems to refer to some kind of barter or exchange, and to mean that a man would give up one thing for another; or one piece of property of less value in order to save a greater; and that in like manner he would be willing to surrender “everything,” in order that his life, the most valuable object, might be preserved. But the exact meaning of the proverb, I suspect, has not yet been perceived.

Yea, all that a man hath This is evidently designed to express the same thing as the proverb, “skin for skin,” or to furnish an illustration of that. The meaning is plain. A man is willing to surrender all that he has, in order to preserve his life. He will part with property and friends, in order that he

may be kept alive. if a man therefore is to be reached in the most tender and vital part; if any thing is to be done that shall truly reveal his character, his life must be put in danger, and his true character will then be revealed. The object of Satan is to say, that a test had not been applied to Job of sufficient severity to show what he really was. What he had lost was a mere trifle compared with what would be if he was subjected to severe bodily sufferings, so that his life would be in peril. it is to be remembered that these are the words of Satan, and that they are not necessarily true. Inspiration is concerned only in securing “the exact record” of what is said, not in affirming that all that is said is true. We shall have frequent occasion to illustrate this sentiment in other portions of the book. In regard to the sentiment here expressed, however, it is in general true. Men will surrender their property, their houses, and lands, and gold, to save their lives. Many, too, would see their friends perish, in order that they might be saved. It is not universally true, however. It is possible to conceive that a man might so love his property as to submit to any torture, even endangering life, rather than surrender it. Many, too, if endangered by shipwreck, would give up a plank in order to save their wives or children, at the risk of their own lives. Many will give their lives rather than surrender their liberty; and many would die rather than abandon their principles. Such were the noble Christian martyrs; and such a man was Job. Satan urged that if his life were made wretched, he would abandon his integrity, and show that his professed piety was selfish, and his religion false and hollow. The Syriac and Arabic add, “that he may be safe.”

Job 2:5. *But put forth thine hand now* Satan felt that he had no power to afflict Job without permission. Malignant as he was, he knew that God only could subject the holy man to this trial — another proof that Satan is under the control of the Almighty, and acts only as he is “permitted” to act in tempting and trying the good.

And touch his bone See the note at **Job 1:11**. Afflict his body so as to endanger his life. The words “bone” and “flesh” denote the whole body. The idea was, that the whole body should be subjected to severe pain.

And he will curse thee to thy face Notes at **Job 1:11**.

Job 2:6. *Behold, he is in thine hand* He is at thy disposal; see **Job 1:12**, Margin.

But save his life Margin, “only.” This was to be the only limitation. It would seem that he had the power to make any selection of disease, and to afflict him in any manner, provided it did not terminate fatally. The keen sorrows which Job afterward endured showed the malignancy of the tempter; evinced his ingenuity in inflicting pain, and his knowledge of what the human frame could be made to bear.

<8117> **Job 2:7.** *So went Satan forth* <8012> Job 1:12.

And smote Job with sore boils The English word boil denotes the well-known turnout upon the flesh, accompanied with severe inflammation; a sore angry swelling. “Webster.” The Hebrew word, however, is in the singular number $\hat{y}j \dot{m}j$ ^{<17822>}, and should have been so rendered in our translation. Dr. Good renders it “a burning ulceration.” The Vulgate translates it, “ulcere pessimo.” The Septuagint, $\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\kappa\epsilon\iota$ ^{<1668>} $\pi\omicron\nu\eta\rho\omega$ ^{<4190>} — “with a foul ulcer.” The Hebrew word $\hat{y}j \dot{m}j$ ^{<17822>} means a burning sore; an inflamed ulcer, a bile. “Gesenius.” It is derived from $\hat{k}\alpha\epsilon$ ^{<17931>}, an obsolete root, retained in Arabic, and meaning to be hot or inflamed. It is translated “bile” or “boil,” in <1191> Exodus 9:9-11; <61318> Leviticus 13:18; <12107> 2 Kings 20:7; <23821> Isaiah 28:21, (see the notes on that place), <61319> Leviticus 13:19,20; <8107> Job 2:7; and “botch,” <6327> Deuteronomy 28:27,35. The word does not occur elsewhere in the Scriptures. In <6327> Deuteronomy 28:27, it means “the botch of Egypt,” some species of leprosy, undoubtedly, which prevailed there. In regard to the disease of Job, we may learn some of its characteristics, not only from the usual meaning of the word, but from the circumstances mentioned in the book itself. It was such that he took a potsherd to scrape himself with, <1818> Job 2:8; such as to make his nights restless, and full of tossings to and fro and to clothe his flesh with clods of dust, and with worms, and to break his flesh, or to constitute a running sore or ulcer, <8104> Job 7:4,5; such as to make him bite his flesh for pain, <8134> Job 13:14, and to make him like a rotten thing, or a garment that is moth eaten, <18138> Job 13:28; such that his face was foul with weeping, <81616> Job 16:16, and such as to fill him with wrinkles, and to make his flesh lean, <18168> Job 16:8; such as to make his breath corrupt, <18170> Job 17:1, and his bones cleave to his skin, <18180> Job 19:20,26; such as to pierce his bones with pain in the night, <18177> Job 30:17, and to make his skin black, and to burn up his bones with heat, <18180> Job 30:30. It has been commonly supposed that the disease of Job was a species of black leprosy commonly called “elephantiasis,” which prevails much in Egypt. This disease received its

name from *ελεφας* , “an elephant,” from the swelling produced by it, causing a resemblance to that animal in the limbs; or because it rendered the skin like that of the elephant, scabtons and dark colored. It is called by the Arabs “judham” (Dr. Good), and is said to produce in the countenance a grim, distorted, and “lion-like” set of features, and hence has been called by some “Leontiasis.” It is known as the black leprosy, to distinguish it from a more common disorder called “white leprosy” — an affection which the Greeks call “Leuce,” or “whiteness.” The disease of Job seems to have been a universal ulcer; producing an eruption over his entire person, and attended with violent pain, and constant restlessness. A universal bile or groups of biles over the body would accord with the account of the disease in the various parts of the book. In the elephantiasis the skin is covered with incrustations like those of an elephant. It is a chronic and contagious disease, marked by a thickening of the legs, with a loss of hair and feeling, a swelling of the face, and a hoarse nasal voice. It affects the whole body; the bones as well as the skin are covered with spots and tumors, at first red, but afterward black. “Coxe, Ency. Webster.” It should be added that the leprosy in all its forms was regarded as contagious, and of course involved the necessity of a separation from society; and all the circumstances attending this calamity were such as deeply to humble a man of the former rank and dignity of Job.

Job 2:8. *And he took him a potsherd* The word used here *vrj* ; ¹²⁷⁹⁶ means a fragment of a broken vessel; see the notes at ²³⁴⁹ Isaiah 45:9. The Septuagint renders it *οστρακον* — “a shell.” One object of taking this was to remove from his body the filth accumulated by the universal ulcer, compare ⁸¹⁰⁴ Job 7:4,5; and another design probably was, to “indicate” the greatness of his calamity and sorrow. The ancients were accustomed to show their grief by significant external actions (compare the notes at ⁸⁰¹² Job 1:20), and nothing could more strongly denote the greatness of the calamity, than for a man of wealth, honor, and distinction, to sit down in the ashes, to take a piece of broken earthen-ware, and begin to scrape his body covered over with undressed and most painful sores. It does not appear that anything was done to heal him, or any kindness shown in taking care of his disease. It would seem that he was at once separated from his home, as a man whom none would venture to approach, and was doomed to endure his suffering without sympathy from others.

To scrape himself withal The word used here *drāe*^{h1623} has the sense of grating, scraping, sawing; or to scrape or rasp with an edged tool. The same word identically, as to letters, is used at present among the Arabs; meaning to rasp or scrape with any kind of tool. The idea here seems to be, that Job took the pieces of broken pottery that he found among the ashes to scrape himself with.

And he sat down among the ashes On the expressions of grief among the ancients, see the notes at ^{<800>}Job 1:20. The general ideas of mourning among the nations of antiquity seem to have been, to strip off all their ornaments; to put on the coarsest apparel, and to place themselves in the most humiliating positions. To sit on the ground (see the note at ^{<2186>}Isaiah 3:26), or on a heap of ashes, or a pile of cinders, was a common mode of expressing sorrow; see the note at ^{<2805>}Isaiah 58:5. To wear sackcloth to shave their heads and their beards and to abstain from pleasant food and from all cheerful society, and to utter loud and long exclamations or shrieks, was also a common mode of indicating grief. The Vulgate renders this “sedates in sterquilinio,” “sitting on a dunghill.” The Septuagint, “and he took a shell to scrape off the ichor (ιχώρα), the “sanies,” or filth produced by a running ulcer, and sat upon the ashes “out of the city,”” implying that his grief was so excessive that he left the city and his friends, and went out to weep alone.

^{<800>}**Job 2:9.** *Then said his wife unto him* Some remarkable additions are made by the ancient versions to this passage. The Chaldee renders it, “and “Dinah” *hnyDi*^{h1783}, his wife, said to him.” The author of that paraphrase seems to have supposed that Job lived in the time of Jacob, and had married his daughter Dinah; ^{<0101>}Genesis 30:21. Drusius says, that this was the opinion of the Hebrews, and quotes a declaration from the Gemara to this effect: “Job lived in the days of Jacob, and was born when the children of Israel went down into Egypt; and when they departed thence he died. He lived therefore 210 years, as long as they were into Egypt.” This is mere tradition, but it shows the ancient impression as to the time when Job lived. The Septuagint has introduced a remarkable passage here, of which the following is a translation. “After much time had elapsed, his wife said unto him, How long wilt thou persevere, saying, Behold, I will wait a little longer, cherishing the trope of my recovery? Behold, the memorial of thee has disappeared from the earth — those sons and daughters, the pangs and sorrows of my womb, for whom I toiled laboriously in vain. Even thou

sittest among loathsome worms, passing the night in the open air, whilst I, a wanderer and a drudge, from place to place, and from house to house, watch the sun until his going down, that I may rest from the toils and sorrows that now oppress me. But speak some word toward the Lord (τῷ ^{<5100>} ῥημα ^{<4487>} εἰς ^{<1519>} κυριον ^{<2962>}) and die.” Whence this addition had its origin, it is impossible now to say. Dr. Good says it is found in Theodotion, in the Syriac, and the Arabic (in this he errs, for it is not in the Syriac and Arabic in Waltoh’s Polyglott), and in the Latin of Ambrose. Dathe suggests that it was probably added by some person who thought it incredible that an angry woman could be content with saying so “little” as is ascribed in the Hebrew to the wife of Job. It may have been originally written by some one in the margin of his Bible by way of paraphrase, and the transcriber, seeing it there, may have supposed it was omitted accidentally from the text, and so inserted it in the place where it now stands. It is one of the many instances, at all events, which show that implicit confidence is not to be placed in the Septuagint. There is not the slightest evidence that this was ever in the Hebrew text. It is not wholly unnatural, and as an exercise of the fancy is not without ingenuity and plausibility, and yet the simple but abrupt statement in the Hebrew seems best to accord with nature. The evident distress of the wife of Job, according to the whole narrative, is not so much that she was subjected to trials, and that she was compelled to wander about without a home, as that Job should be so patient, and that he did not yield to the temptation.

Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Notes ^{<808>} Job 2:3. The question implies that, in her view, he ought not to be expected to mantles, patience and resignation in these circumstances. He had endured evils which showed that confidence ought not to be reposed in a God who would thus inflict them. This is all that we know of the wife of Job. Whether this was her general character, or whether “she” yielded to the temptation of Satan and cursed God, and thus heightened the sorrows of Job by her unexpected impropriety of conduct, is unknown. It is not conclusive evidence that her general character was bad; and it may be that the strength of her usual virtue and piety was overcome by accumulated calamities. She expressed, however, the feelings of corrupt human nature everywhere when sorely afflicted. The suggestion “will” cross the mind, often with almost irresistible force, that a God who thus afflicts his creatures is not worthy of confidence; and many a time a child of God is “tempted” to give vent to

feelings of rebellion and complaining like this, and to renounce all his religion.

Curse God See the notes at ^{<R011>}Job 1:11. The Hebrew word is the same. Dr. Good renders it, “And yet dost thou hold fast thine integrity, blessing God and dying?” Noyes translates it, “Renounce God, and die,” Rosenmuller and Umbreit, “Bid farewell to God, and die.” Castello renders it, “Give thanks to God and die.” The response of Job, however (^{<R210>}Job 2:10), shows that he understood her as exciting him to reject, renounce, or curse God. The sense is, that she regarded him as unworthy of confidence, and submission as unreasonable, and she wished Job to express this and be relieved from his misery. Roberts supposes that this was a pagan sentiment, and says that nothing is more common than for the pagan, under certain circumstances, to curse their gods.

“That the man who has made expensive offerings to his deity, in hope of gaining some great blessing, and who has been disappointed, will pour out all his imprecations on the god whose good offices have (as he believes) been prevented by some superior deity. A man in reduced circumstances says, ‘Yes, yes, my god has lost his eyes; they are put out; he cannot look after my affairs.’ ‘Yes,’ said an extremely rich devotee of the supreme god Siva, after he had lost his property, ‘Shall I serve him any more? What! make offerings to him! No, no. He is the lowest of all gods?’”

And die Probably she regarded God as a stern and severe Being, and supposed that by indulging in blasphemy Job would provoke him to cut him off at once. She did not expect him to lay wicked hands on himself. She expected that God would at once interpose and destroy him. The sense is, that nothing but death was to be expected, and the sooner he provoked God to cut him off from the land of the living, the better.

^{<R210>}**Job 2:10.** *As one of the foolish women speaketh* The word here rendered foolish **twl bn** from **l bn**, means properly stupid or foolish, and then wicked, abandoned, impious — the idea of “sin” and “folly” being closely connected in the Scriptures, or sin being regarded as supreme folly; ^{<R225>}1 Samuel 25:25; ^{<R233>}2 Samuel 3:33; ^{<R410>}Psalms 14:1; 53:2. The Arabs still use the word with the same compass of signification. “Gesenius.” The word is used here in the sense of “wicked;” and the idea is, that the sentiment which she uttered was impious, or was such as were on the lips

of the wicked. Sanctius supposes that there is a reference here to Idumean females, who, like other women, reproached and cast away their gods, if they did not obtain what they asked when they prayed to them. Homer represents Achilles and Menelaus as reproaching the gods. Iliad i. 353, iii. 365. See Rosenmuller, Morgenland, "in loc."

What shall we receive good at the hand of God Having received such abundant tokens of kindness from him, it was unreasonable to complain when they were taken away, and when he sent calamity in their stead.

And shall we not receive evil? Shall we not expect it? Shall we not be willing to bear it when it comes? Shall we not have sufficient confidence in him to believe that his dealings are ordered in goodness and equity? Shall we at once lose all our confidence in our great Benefactor the moment he takes away our comforts, and visits us with pain? This is the true expression of piety. It submits to all the arrangements of God without a complaint. It receives blessings with gratitude; it is resigned when calamities are sent in their place. It esteems it as a mere favor to be permitted to breathe the air which God has made, to look upon the light of his sun, to tread upon his earth, to inhale the fragrance of his flowers, and to enjoy the society of the friends whom he gives; and when he takes one or all away, it feels that he has taken only what belongs to him, and withdraws a privilege to which we had no claim. In addition to that, true piety feels that all claim to any blessing, if it had ever existed, has been forfeited by sin. What right has a sinner to complain when God withdraws his favor, and subjects him to suffering? What claim has he on God, that should make it wrong for Him to visit him with calamity?

Wherefore doth a living man complain, A man for the punishment of his sins? — ^{<218D>}Lamentations 3:39.

In all this did not Job sin with his lips See the notes at ^{<202D>}Job 1:22. This remark is made here perhaps in contrast with what occurred afterward. He subsequently did give utterance to improper sentiments, and was rebuked accordingly, but thus far what he had expressed was in accordance with truth, and with the feelings of most elevated piety.

^{<201D>}**Job 2:11.** *Now when Job's three friends heard* It would seem from this that these men were his particular friends.

They came every one from his own place His residence. This was the result of agreement or appointment thus to meet together.

Eliphaz the Temanite This was the most prominent of his friends. In the ensuing discussion he regularly takes the lead, advances the most important and impressive considerations, and is followed and sustained by the others. The Septuagint renders this **Ελιφαζ ὁ Θαυμαϊνων βασιλευς** — Eliphaz, the king of the Themanites. The Hebrew does not intimate that he held any office or rank. The word rendered “Temanite” **ymnyTe**⁴⁸⁴⁸⁹ is a patronymic from **myTe**⁴⁸⁴⁸⁷, meaning properly “at the right hand,” and then “the South.” The Hebrew geographers are always represented as looking to the East, and not toward the North, as we do; and hence, with them, the right hand denotes the South. Teman or Theman was a son of Eliphaz, and grandson of Esau; see ⁴⁰⁶⁶⁵Genesis 36:15, where he is spoken of as “duke” or prince **āwl a** a head of a family or tribe, a chieftain. He is supposed to have lived on the east of Idumea. Eusebius places Thaeman in Arabia Petraea, five miles from Petra (see the notes at ²³⁴⁰¹Isaiah 16:1), and says that there was a Roman garrison there. The Temanites were celebrated for wisdom. “Is wisdom no more in Teman?” ²⁴⁴⁰⁷Jeremiah 49:7. The country was distinguished also for producing men of strength: “And thy mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed;” ³¹⁰⁰⁹Obadiah 1:9. That this country was a part of Idumea is apparent, not only from the fact that Teman was a descendant of Esau, who settled there, but from several places in the Scriptures. Thus, in ⁴⁵⁵³Ezekiel 25:13, it is said,

“I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and I will make it desolate from Toman, and they of Dedan shall fall by the sword.”

In ³¹⁰⁰¹Amos 1:12, Teman is mentioned as in the vicinity of Bozrah, at one time the capital of Idumea:

“But I will send a fire upon Teman, which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah;”

see the notes at ²²¹¹⁴Isaiah 21:14. The inhabitants of this country were distinguished in early times for wisdom, and particularly for that kind of wisdom which is expressed in close observation of men and manners, and the course of events, and which was expressed in proverbs. Thus, they are mentioned in the book of Baruch, 3:23: “The merchants of Meran and of Theman, the authors of fables, and searchers out of understanding,” **ὄι**

<3588> μυθολογοι και <2532> οι <3588> εκζητηται <1567> της <3588>
 συνεσεως <4907> .

And Bildad the Shuhite The second speaker uniformly in the following argument. The Septuagint renders this, “Bildad the sovereign of the Sauchians,” Σαυχεων τυραννος . Shuah j ~~W~~^{<1774>} (meaning a pit) was the name of a son of Abraham, by Keturah, and also of an Arabian tribe, descended from him, ^{<1270>}Genesis 25:2. “The country of the Shuhites,” says Gesenius, “was not improbably the same with the Σακκαια of Ptolemy, v. 15, eastward of Batanea.” But the exact situation of the Shubites is unknown. It is difficult to determine the geography of the tribes of Arabia, as many of them are migratory and unsettled. It would seem that Bildad did not reside very far from Eliphaz, for they made an “agreement” to go and visit Job.

And Zophar the Naamathite An inhabitant of Naamah, whose situation is unknown. The Septuagint renders this, “Zophar, king of the Minaians — Μιναιων βασιλευς ^{<935>} . A place by the name of Naamah is mentioned in ^{<1654>}Joshua 15:41, as in the limits of the tribe of Judah. But this was a considerable distance from the residence of Job, and it is not probable that Zophar was far from that region. Conjecture is useless as to the place where he lived. The Editor of the Pictorial Bible, however, supposes that Zophar was from the town in Judah mentioned in ^{<1654>}Joshua 15:41. He observes that this town is

“mentioned in a list of the uttermost cities of Judah’s lot, ‘toward the coast of Edom southward;’ it is further among that portion of those towns that lay ‘in the valley’ (^{<1653>}Joshua 15:33), which valley is the same that contained Joktheel (^{<1653>}Joshua 15:38), which is supposed to have been Petra. Naamah was probably, therefore, in or near the Ghor or valley which extends from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Akaba. — These considerations,” he adds, “seem to establish the conclusion that the scene of this book is laid in the land of Edom.”

In the first part of this verse, a remarkable addition occurs in the Chaldee paraphrase. — It is as follows: “And the three friends of Job heard of all the evil which had come upon him, and when they saw the trees of his gardens (Chaldee, “Paradise” ^{whysdrp} that they were dried up, and the bread of his support that it was turned into living flesh, and the wine of his

drink turned into blood.” Here is evidently the doctrine of “transubstantiation,” the change of bread into flesh, and of wine into blood, and bears the marks of having been interpolated by some friend of the papacy. But when or by whom it was done is unknown. It is a most stupid forgery. The evident intention of it was to sustain the doctrine of transubstantiation, by the plea that it was found far back in the times of Job, and that it could not be regarded, therefore, as an absurdity. To what extent it has ever been used by the advocates of that doctrine, I have no means of ascertaining. Its interpolation here is a pretty sure proof of the conviction of the author of it that the doctrine is not found in any fair interpretation of the Bible.

For they had made an appointment together They had agreed to go together, and they evidently set out on the journey together. The Chaldee — or someone who has interpolated a passage in the Chaldee — has introduced a circumstance in regard to the design of their coming, which savors also of the Papacy. It is as follows: “They came each one from his place, and for the merit of this they were freed from the place destined to them in Gehenna,” a passage evidently intended to defend the doctrine of “purgatory,” by the authority of the ancient Chaldee Paraphrase.

To come to mourn with him, and to comfort him To show the appropriate sympathy of friends in a time of special calamity. They did not come with an intention to reproach him, or to charge him with being a hypocrite.

~~8012~~ **Job 2:12.** *And when they lifted up their eyes afar off*

“When they saw him at the distance at which they could formerly recognize him without difficulty, disease had so altered his appearance that at first sight they knew him not” — Noyes.

They lifted up their voice This is a common expression in the Scriptures, to denote grief; ~~012738~~ Genesis 27:38; 29:11; ~~07004~~ Judges 2:4; ~~8000~~ Ruth 1:9; ~~02446~~ 1 Samuel 24:16, “et soepe al.” We learn to suppress the expressions of grief. The ancients gave vent to their sorrows aloud. — They even hired persons to aid them in their lamentations; and it became a professional business of women to devote themselves to the office of making an outcry on occasions of mourning. The same thing prevails in the East at present. Friends sit around the grave of the dead, or go there at different times, and give a long and doleful shriek or howl, as expressive of their grief.

And they rent every one his mantle See the notes at <801>Job 1:20.

And sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven Another expression of sorrow; compare <520>Lamentations 2:10; <460>Nehemiah 9:1; <0012>1 Samuel 4:12; <4606>Joshua 7:6; <5273>Ezekiel 27:30. The indications of grief here referred to, were such as were common in ancient times. They resemble, in a remarkable manner, the mode in which Achilles gave utterance to his sorrow, when informed of the death of Patroclus. Iliad xviii. 21-27.

*A sudden horror shot through all the chief,
And wrapp'd his senses in the cloud of grief;
Cast on the ground, with furious hands he spread*

*The scorching ashes o'er his graceful head,
His purple garments, and his golden hairs,
Those he deforms with dust, and these he tears:*

*On the hard soil his groaning breast he threw,
And roll'd and grovell'd as to earth he grew. — POPE*

Thus far the feelings of the three friends were entirely kind, and all that they did was expressive of sympathy for the sufferer.

<8013>**Job 2:13.** *So they sat down with him upon the ground;* see the notes at <8011>Job 1:20; 2:8; compare <4508>Ezra 9:3, "I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head, and my beard, and sat down astonished."

Seven days and seven nights Seven days was the usual time of mourning among the Orientals. Thus, they made public lamentation for Jacob seven days, <0500>Genesis 50:10. Thus, on the death of Saul, they fasted seven days, <0813>1 Samuel 31:13. So the author of the book of Ecclesiasticus says, "Seven days do men mourn for him that is dead;" Ecclus. 22:12. It cannot be supposed that they remained in the same place and posture for seven days and nights, but that they mourned with him during that time in the usual way. An instance of grief remarkably similar to this, continuing through a period of six days, is ascribed by Euripides to Orestes:

Εντευθεν αγριαξυντακεις νοσω νοσει
Τλημων Ορεστης ; ὁ δε πεσων εν δεμνιοις
Κειται. ἕκτον δε δη τοδ' ημαρ , etc.

*“Tis hence Orestes, agonized with griefs
And sore disease, lies on his restless bed
Delirious. Now six morns have winged their flight,
Since by his hands his parent massacred
burnt on the pile in expiatory flames.*

*Stubborn the while he keeps a rigid fast,
Nor bathes, nor dresses; but beneath his robes
He skulks, and if he steals a pause from rage,
‘Tis but to feel his weight of wo and weep.”*

And none spake a word to him — That is, on the subject of his grief. They came to condole with him, but they had now nothing to say. They saw that his affliction was much greater than they had anticipated.

For they saw that his grief was very great This is given as a reason why they were silent. But “how” this produced silence, or why his great grief was a cause of their silence, is not intimated. Perhaps one or all of the following considerations may have led to it.

(1) They were amazed at the extent of his sufferings. Amazement is often expressed by silence. We look upon that which is out of the usual course of events without being able to express anything. We are “struck dumb” with wonder.

(2) The effect of great calamity is often to prevent utterance. Nothing is more natural or common than profound silence when we go to the house of mourning. “It is the lesser cares only that speak; the greater ones find not language.” *Curae leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent.*

(3) They might not have known what to say. They had come to sympathize with him, and to offer consolation. But their anticipated topics of consolation may have been seen to be inappropriate. The calamity was greater than they had before witnessed. The loss of property and children; the deep humiliation of a man who had been one of the most distinguished of the land; the severity of his bodily sufferings, and his changed and haggard appearance, constituted so great a calamity, that the usual topics of conversation did not meet the case. What “they” had to say, was the result of careful observation on the usual course or events, and it is by no means improbable that they had never before witnessed sorrows so keen, and that they now saw that their maxims would by no means furnish consolation for “such” a case.

(4) They seem to have been very early thrown into doubt in regard to the real character of Job. They had regarded him as a pious man, and had come to him under that impression. But his great afflictions seem soon to have shaken their confidence in his piety, and to have led them to ask themselves whether so great a sufferer “could” be the friend of God. Their subsequent reasonings show that it was with them a settled opinion that the righteous would be prospered, and that very great calamities were proof of great criminality in the sight of God. It was not inconsistent with this belief to suppose that the righteous might be slightly afflicted, but when they saw “such” sorrows, they supposed they were altogether beyond what God could send upon his friends; and with this doubt on their minds, and this change in their views, they knew not what to say. How “could” they console him when it was their settled belief that great sufferings were proof of great guilt? They could say nothing which would not seem to be a departure from this, unless they assumed that he had been a hypocrite, and should administer reproof and rebuke for his sins.

(5) In this state of things, to administer “rebuke” would seem to be cruel. It would aggravate the sorrows which already were more than he could bear. They did, therefore, what the friends of the afflicted are often compelled to do in regard to specific sufferings; they kept silence. As they could not comfort him, they would not aggravate his grief. All they could have said would probably have been unmeaning generalities which would not meet his case, or would have been sententious maxims which would imply that he was a sinner and a hypocrite; and they were therefore dumb, until the bitter complaint of Job himself (Job 3) gave them an opportunity to state the train of thought which had passed through their minds during this protracted silence. How often do similar cases occur now — cases where consolation seems almost impossible, and where any truths which might be urged, except the most abstract and unmeaning generalities, would tend only to aggravate the sorrows of the afflicted! When calamity comes upon a person as the result of his sins; when property is taken away which has been gained in an unlawful manner; when a friend dies, leaving no evidence that he was prepared; when it is impossible to speak of that friend without recalling the memory of his irreligious, prayerless, or dissolute life, how difficult is it to administer consolation! How often is the Christian friend constrained to close his lips in silence, or utter only “torturing” general truths that can give no consolation, or refer to facts which will tend only to open the wound in the heart deeper! To be silent at such times is all that

can be done; or to commend the sufferer in humble prayer to God, an expedient which seems not to have been resorted to either by Job or his friends, It is remarkable that Job is not represented as calling upon God for support, and it is as remarkable that his friends during these seven days of silent grief did not commend the case of their much afflicted friend to the Father of mercies. Had “Job” prayed, he might have been kept from much of the improper feeling to which he gave vent in the following chapter; had “they” prayed, they might have obtained much more just views of the government of God than they had hitherto possessed.

NOTES ON JOB 3

Job 3:1. *After this* Dr. Good renders this, “at length.” It means after the long silence of his friends, and after he saw that there was no prospect of relief or of consolation.

Opened Job his mouth The usual formula in Hebrew to denote the commencement of a speech; see **Matthew 5:2**. Schultens contends that it means boldness and vehemency of speech, **παρρησια**^{<3954>}, or an opening of the mouth for the purpose of accusing, expostulating, or complaining; or to begin to utter some sententious, profound, or sublime maxim; and in support of this he appeals to **Psalm 78:2**, and **Proverbs 8:6**. There is probably, however nothing more intended than to begin to speak. It is in accordance with Oriental views, where an act of speaking is regarded as a grave and important matter, and is entered on with much deliberation. Blackwell (*Life of Homer*, p. 43) remarks that the Turks, Arabs, Hindoos, and the Orientals in general, have little inclination to society and to general conversation, that they seldom speak, and that their speeches are sententious and brief, unless they are much excited. With such men, to make a speech is a serious matter, as is indicated by the manner in which their discourses are commonly introduced: “I will open my mouth,” or they “opened the mouth,” implying great deliberation and gravity. This phrase occurs often in Homer, Hesiod, Orpheus, and in Virgil (compare *AEn.* vi. 75), as well as in the Bible. See Burder, in Rosenmuller’s *Morgenland*, “in loc.”

And cursed his day The word rendered “curse” here, **hn[** is different from that used in **Job 1:11; 2:9**. It is the proper word to denote “to curse.” The Syriac adds, “the day in which he was born.” A similar expression occurs in Klopstock’s *Messias*, *Ges.* iii.

*Wenn nun, aller Kinder beraubt, die verzweifelude Mutter,
Wuthend dem Tag. an dem sie gebahr, und gebohren ward, fluchet.*

*“When now of all her children robbed, the desperate mother enraged
curses the day in which she bare, and was borne.”*

Job 3:2. *And Job spake* Margin, as in Hebrew, “answered.” The Hebrew word used here **hn[**,^{<4600>} “to answer,” is often employed when one

commences a discourse, even though no question had preceded. It is somewhat in the sense of replying to a subject, or of speaking in a case where a question might appropriately be asked; Isaiah 14:10 (Hebrew), ~~<808>~~ Zechariah 3:4; ~~<838>~~ Deuteronomy 26:5 (Hebrew), 27:14 (Hebrew). The word “to answer” (**αποκρινομαι** ^{<611>}) is frequently used in this way in the New Testament; ~~<4070>~~ Matthew 17:4,17; 28:5; ~~<4195>~~ Mark 9:5; 10:51, et al.

~~<888>~~ **Job 3:3.** *Let the day perish* “Perish the day! O that there had never been such a day! Let it be blotted from the memory of man! There is something singularly bold, sublime, and “wild” in this exclamation. It is a burst of feeling where there had been long restraint, and where now it breaks forth in the most vehement and impassioned manner. The word “perish” here **dbay** expresses the “optative,” and indicates strong desire. So the Septuagint, **Απολοιτο** ^{<622>}, “may it perish,” or be destroyed; compare ~~<8308>~~ Job 10:18. “O that I had given up the ghost.” Dr. Good says of this exclamation, “There is nothing that I know of, in ancient or modern poetry, equal to the entire burst, whether in the wildness and horror of the imprecations. or the terrible sublimity of its imagery.” “the boldest and most animated of the Hebrew poets have imitated it, and have expressed themselves in almost the same language, in scenes of distress. A remarkably similar expression of feeling is made by Jeremiah.

Cursed be the day wherein I was born: Let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed! Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying “A man child is born unto thee,” Making him very glad. Be that man as the cities which YAHWEH overthrew and repented not! Yea, let him hear the outcry in the morning, And the lamentation at noon day! — ~~<2044>~~ Jeremiah 20:14-16.

The sense of this expression in Job is plain. He wished there never had been such a day, and then he would not have been born. It is impossible to vindicate these expressions in Job and Jeremiah, unless it be on the supposition that it is highly worked poetic language, caused by sorrow so acute that it could not be expressed in prose. We are to remember, however, if this seems to us inconsistent with the existence of true piety, that Job had far less light than we have; that he lived at an early period of the world, when the views of the divine government were obscure, and that he was not sustained by the hopes and promises which the Christian possesses now. What light he had was probably that of tradition, and of the result of careful observation on the course of events. His topics of

consolation must have been comparatively few. He had few or no promises to sustain him. He had not had before him, as we have, the example of the patient Redeemer. His faith was not sustained by those strong assurances which we have of the perfect rectitude of the divine government. Before we blame him too severely, we must place ourselves in imagination in his circumstances, and ask what our piety would have done under the trials which afflicted “him.” Yet with all allowances, it is not possible to vindicate this language; and while we cannot but admire its force and sublimity, and its unequalled power and boldness in expressing strong passion, we at the same time feel that there was a want of proper submission and pittance. — It is the impassioned language of a man who felt that he could bear no more; and there can be no doubt that it gave to Satan the hope of his anticipated triumph.

And the night in which it was said Dr. Good renders this, “And the night which shouted.” Noyes, “And the night which said.” So Gesenius and Rosenmuller, “Perish the night which said, a man child is conceived.” The Vulgate renders it, “The night in which it was said;” the Septuagint, “That night in which they said.” The Chaldee paraphrases the verse, “Perish the day in which I was born, and the angel who presided over my conception.” Scott, quoted by Good, translates it, “The night which hailed the new-born man.” The language throughout this imprecation is that in which the night is “personified,” and addressed as if it were made glad by the birth of a son. So Schultens says, “Inducitur enim “Nox illa quasi conscia mysterii, et exultans ob spem prolis virilis.” Such personifications of day and night are common among the Arabs; see Schultens. It is a representation of day and night as “sympathizing with the joys and sorrows of mankind, and is in the truest vein of Oriental poetry.”

There is a man child conceived Hebrew רבִּי, ^{<h1397>} — “a man;” compare ^{<B162>} John 16:21. The word “conceived” Dr. Good renders “brought forth” So Herder translates it. The Septuagint, Ἰδοὺ ^{<2400>} ἀρσεν ^{<730>} — “lo, a male” The common translation expresses the true sense of the original. The joy at the birth of a male in Oriental countries is much greater than that at the birth of a female. A remarkable instance of an imprecation on the day of one’s birth is found in a Muslim book of modern times, in which the expressions are almost precisely the same as in Job. “Malek er Nasser Daub, prince of some tribes in Palestine, from which however he had been driven, after many adverse fortunes, died in a village near Damascus in the year 1258. When the crusaders had desolated his country, he deplored its

misfortunes and his own in a poem, from which Abulfeda (Annals, p. 560) has quoted the following passage: ‘O that my mother had remained unmarried all the days of her life! That God had determined no lord or consort for her! O that when he had destined her to an excellent, mild, and wise prince, she had been one of those whom he had created barren; that she might never have known the happy intelligence that she had born a man or woman! Or that when she had carried me under her heart, I had lost my life at my birth; and if I had been born, and had seen the light, that, when the congratulating people hastened on their camels, I had been gathered to my fathers.’“ The Greeks and the Romans had their unlucky days (ἡμεραι αποφραδες , “dies infausti”); that is, days which were unpropitious, or in which they expected no success in any enterprise or any enjoyment. Tacitus (Annals, xiv. 12) mentions that the Roman Senate, for the purpose of flattering Nero, decreed that the birthday of Agrippina should be regarded as an accursed day; ut dies natalis Agrippinae inter nefastos esset. See Rosenmuller, All. u. neue Morgenland, “in loc” Expressions also similar to those before us, occur in Ovid, particularly in the following passage, “Epist. ad Ibin:”

*Natus es infelix (ita Dii voluere), nec ulla
Commoda nascenti stella, levisve fuit.
Lux quoque natalis, ne quid nisi tristo videres,
Turpis, et inductis nubibus atra fuit.
Sedit in adverso nocturnas culmine bubo,
Funereoque graves edidit ore sonos.*

We have now similar days, which by common superstition are regarded as unlucky or inauspicious. The wish of Job seems to be, that the day of his birth might be regarded as one of those days.

~~<RRD>~~ **Job 3:4.** *Let that day be darkness* Let it not be day; or, O, that it had not been day, that the sun had not risen, and that it had been night.

Let not God regard it from above The word rendered here “regard” **vr̄a**^{h1875>} means properly to seek or inquire after, to ask for or demand. Dr. Good renders it here, “Let not God inclose it,” but this meaning is not found in the Hebrew. Noyes renders it literally, “Let not God seek it.” Herder, “Let not God inquire after it.” The sense may be, either that Job wished the day sunk beneath the horizon, or in the deep waters by which he conceived the earth to be surrounded, and prays that God would not seek it and bring it from its dark abode; or he desired that God would

never inquire after it, that it might pass from his remembrance and be forgotten. What we value, we would wish God to remember and bless; what we dislike, we would wish him to forget. This seems to be the idea here. Job hated that day, and he wished all other beings to forget it. He wished it blotted out, so that even God would never inquire after it, but regard it as if it had never been.

Neither let the light shine upon it Let it be utter darkness; let not a ray ever reveal it. It will be seen here that Job first curses “the day.” The amplification of the curse with which he commenced in the first part of ^{<88B>}Job 3:3, continues through ^{<88B>}Job 3:4,5; and then he returns to the “night,” which also (in the latter part of ^{<88B>}Job 3:3) he wished to be cursed. His desires in regard to that unhappy night, he expresses in ^{<88B>}Job 3:6-10.

^{<88B>}**Job 3:5.** *Let darkness and the shadow of death* The Hebrew word **twm| kæ** ^{<46757>} is exceedingly musical and poetical. It is derived from **l xē** ^{<46738>}, “a shadow,” and **twm|** ^{<4194>}, “death;” and is used to denote the deepest darkness; see the notes at ^{<2192>}Isaiah 9:2. It occurs frequently in the sacred Scriptures; compare ^{<88B>}Job 10:21,22; ^{<9234>}Psalms 23:4; ^{<88B>}Job 12:22; 16:16; 24:17; 34:22; 38:17; ^{<3088>}Amos 5:8; ^{<3406>}Jeremiah 2:6. It is used to denote the abode of departed spirits, described by Job as

“a land of darkness, as darkness itself; of the shadow of death without any order, and where the light is as darkness;” ^{<88B>}Job 10:21,22.

The idea seems to have been, that “death” was a dark and gloomy object that obstructed all light, and threw a baleful shade afar, and that that melancholy shade was thrown afar over the regions of the dead. The sense here is, that Job wished the deepest conceivable darkness to rest upon it.

Stain it Margin, or “challenge.” Vulgate, “obscure it.” Septuagint, “take or occupy it,” **Εκλαβοι**, Dr. Good, “crush it.” Noyes, “redeem it.” Herder, “seize it.” This variety of interpretation has arisen in part from the twofold signification of the word used here, **l aæ** ^{<41350>}. The word means either to “redeem,” or to “defile,” “pollute,” “stain.” These senses are not very closely connected, and I know not how the one has grown out of the other, unless it be that redemption was accomplished with blood, and that the frequent sprinkling of blood on an altar rendered it defiled, or unclean. In

one sense, blood thus sprinkled would purify, when it took away sin; in another, it would render an object unclean or polluted. Gesenius says, that the latter signification occurs only in the later Hebrew. If the word here means to “redeem,” the sense is, that Job wished darkness to resume its dominion over the day, and redeem it to itself, and thus wholly to exclude the light. If the word means to defile or pollute, the sense is, that he desired the death-shade to stain the day wholly black; to take out every ray of light, and to render it wholly obscure. Gesenius renders it in the former sense. The sense which Reiske and Dr. Good give to the word, “crush it,” is not found in the Hebrew. The word means to defile, stain, or pollute, in the following places, namely, it is rendered “pollute” and “polluted” in ^{<3007>}Malachi 1:7,12; ^{<3008>}Zephaniah 3:1; ^{<2944>}Lamentations 4:14; ^{<1812>}Ezra 2:62; ^{<1076>}Nehemiah 7:64; “defile” or “defiled” in ^{<2948>}Isaiah 59:3; ^{<2008>}Daniel 1:8; ^{<1639>}Nehemiah 13:29; and “stain” in ^{<2918>}Isaiah 63:3. It seems to me that this is the sense here, and that the meaning has been well explained by Schultens, that Job wished that his birthday should be involved in a deep “stain,” that it should be covered with clouds and storms, and made dark and dismal. This imprecation referred not only to the day on which he was born, but to each succeeding birthday. Instead of its being on its return a bright and cheerful day, he wished that it might be annually a day of tempests and of terrors; a day so marked that it would excite attention as especially gloomy and inauspicious. It was a day whose return conveyed no pleasure to his soul, and which he wished no one to observe with gratitude or joy.

Let a cloud dwell upon it There is, as Dr. Good and others have remarked, much sublimity in this expression. The Hebrew word rendered “a cloud” חֶמֶד ^{<4603>} occurs nowhere else in this form. It is the feminine form of the word חֶמֶד ^{<4603>}, “a cloud,” and is used “collectively” to denote “clouds;” that is, clouds piled on clouds; clouds “condensed, impacted, heaped together” (Dr. Good), and hence, the gathered tempest, the clouds assembled deep and dark, and ready to burst forth in the fury of a storm. Theodotion renders it συννεφεα, “assembled clouds;” and hence, “darkness.” The Septuagint renders it γνοφος ^{<1105>}, “tempest,” or “thick darkness.” So Jerome, “caligo.” The word rendered “dwell upon it” ἵκντ, means properly to “settle down,” and there to abide or dwell. Perhaps the original notion was that of fixing a tent, and so Schultens renders it, “tentorium figat super eo Nubes,” “Let the cloud pitch its tent over it;” rendered by Dr. Good, “The gathered tempest pavilion over it!” “This is an image,”

says Schultens, “common among the Arabs.” The sense is, that Job wished clouds piled on clouds to settle down on the day permanently, to make that day their abode, and to involve it in deep and eternal night.

Let the blackness of the day terrify it Margin, “Or, Let them terrify it as those who have a bitter day.” There has been great variety in the interpretation of this passage. Dr. Good renders it, “The blasts of noontide terrify it.” Noyes, “Let whatever darkens the day terrify it.” Herder, “The blackness of misfortune terrify it.” Jerome, *Et involvatur amaritudine*, “let it be involved in bitterness.” The Septuagint, *καταραθειν ἡ* ^{<3588>} *ἡμερα* ^{<2250>}, “let the day be cursed.” This variety has arisen from the difficulty of determining the sense of the Hebrew word used here and rendered “blackness,” *ryAmK* ^{<3650>}. If it is supposed to be derived from the word *rmkq* ^{<3648>}, to be warm, to be hot, to burn, then it would mean the deadly heats of the day, the dry and sultry blasts which prevail so much in sandy deserts. Some writers suppose that there is a reference here to the poisonous wind Samum or Samiel, which sweeps over those deserts, and which is so much dreaded in the heat of summer. “Men as well as animals are often suffocated with this wind. For during a great heat, a current of air often comes which is still hotter; and when human beings and animals are so exhausted that they almost faint away with the heat, it seems that this little addition quite deprives them of breath. When a man is suffocated with this wind, or when, as they say, his heart is burst blood is said to flow from his nose and ears two hours after his death. The body is said to remain long warm, to swell, to turn blue and green, and if the arm or leg is taken hold of to raise it up, the limb is said to come off.” Burder’s Oriental customs, No. 176. From the testimony of recent travelers, however, it would seem that the injurious effects of this wind have been greatly exaggerated. If this interpretation be the true one, then Job wished the day of his birth to be frightful and alarming, as when such a poisonous blast should sweep along all day, and render it a day of terror and dread. But this interpretation does not well suit the parallelism. Others, therefore, understand by the word, “obscurations,” or whatever darkens the day. Such is the interpretation of Gesenius, Bochart, Noyes, and some others. According to this, the reference is to eclipses or fearful storms which cover the day in darkness. The noun here is not found elsewhere; but the “verb” *rmkq* ^{<3648>} is used in the sense of being black and dark in *Lain. v. 10*: “Our skin was black like an oven, because of the terrible famine;” or perhaps more literally, “Our skin is scorched as with a furnace, from the burning heat of famine.” That

which is burned becomes black, and hence, the word may mean that which is dark, obscure, and gloomy. This meaning suits the parallelism, and is a sense which the Hebrew will bear. Another interpretation regards the Hebrew letter kaph (k) used as a prefix (K) before the word *ryAmK* ^{<13650>} “bitterness,” and then the sense is, “according to the bitterness of the day;” that is, the greatest calamities which can happen to a day. This sense is found in several of the ancient versions, and is adopted by Rosenmuller. To me it seems that the second interpretation proposed best suits the connection, and that the meaning is, that Job wished that everything which could render the day gloomy and obscure might rest upon it. The Chaldee adds here, “Let it be as the bitterness of day — the grief with which Jeremiah was afflicted in being cut off from the house of the sanctuary, and Jonah in being cast into the sea of Tarshish.”

^{<13650>}**Job 3:6.** As for “that night.” Job, having cursed the day, proceeds to utter a malediction on the “night” also; see ^{<13650>}Job 3:3. This malediction extends to ^{<13650>}Job 3:9.

Let darkness seize upon it Hebrew, Let it take it. Let deep and horrid darkness seize it as its own. Let no star arise upon it; let it be unbroken and uninterrupted gloom. The word “darkness,” however, does not quite express the force of the original. The word used here *l pa* is poetic, and denotes darkness more intense than is denoted by the word which is usually rendered darkness *Ēvj* ^{<12822>}. It is a darkness accompanied with clouds and with a tempest. Herder understands it as meaning, that darkness should seize upon that night and bear it away, so that it should not be joined to the months of the year. So the Chaldee. But the true sense is, that Job wished so deep darkness to possess it, that no star would rise upon it; no light whatever be seen. A night like this Seneca beautifully describes in Agamemnon, verses 465ff:

*Nox prima coelum sparserat stellis,
Cum subito luna conditur, stellae cadunt;
In astra pontus tollitur, et coelum petit.
Nec una nox est, densa tenebras obruit
Caligo, et Omni luce subducta, fretum
Coelumque miscet ...
Premunt tenebrae lumina, et dirae stygis
Inferna nox est.*

Let it not be joined unto the days of the year Margin, “rejoice among.” So Good and Noyes render it. The word used here **hdj** ; ^{<12302>}, according to the present pointing, is the apocopated future of **hdj** ; “to rejoice, to be glad.” If the pointing were different **dhya** it would be the future of **dj** ^{<13162>} **ya**, to be one; to be united, or joined to. The Masoretic points are of no authority, and the interpretation which supposes that the word means here to exult or rejoice, is more poetical and beautiful. It is then a representation of the days of the year as rejoicing together, and a wish is expressed that “that” night might never be allowed to partake of the general joy while the months rolled around. In this interpretation Rosenmuller and Gesenius concur. Dodwell supposes that there is an allusion to a custom among the ancients, by which inauspicious days were stricken from the calendar, and their place supplied by intercalary days. But there is no evidence of the existence of snell a custom in the time of Job.

Let it not come etc Let it never be reckoned among the days which go to make up the number of the months. Let there be always a blank there; let its place always be lacking.

^{<1811>}**Job 3:7.** *Lo, let that night be solitary* Dr. Good, “O! that night! Let it be a barren rock!” Noyes, “O let that night be unfruitful!” Herder, “Let that night be set apart by itself.” The Hebrew word used here **dwml g** means properly “hard;” then sterile, barren, as of a hard and rocky soil. It does not mean properly solitary, but that which is unproductive and unfruitful. It is used of a woman who is barren, ^{<2342>} Isaiah 49:21, and also of that which is lean, famished, emaciated with hunger; ^{<18154>} Job 15:34; 30:3. According to this it means that that should be a night in which none would be born — a night of loneliness and desolation. According to Jerome, it means that the night should be solitary, lonely, and gloomy; a night in which no one would venture forth to make a journey, and in which none would come together to rejoice. Thus interpreted the night would resemble that which is so beautifully describe by Virgil, AEn. vi. 268:

*Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbras,
Perque domos Ditis vacuas et inania regna.*

It is probable, however, that the former is the correct interpretation.

Let no joyful voice come therein Let there be no sound of praise and rejoicing. The Chaldee paraphrases this, “Let not the crowing of a cock be

heard in it.” The sense of the whole is, that Job wished that night to be wholly desolate. He wished there might be no assembling for amusement, congratulation, or praise, no marriage festivals, and no rejoicing at the birth of children; he would have it as noiseless, solitary, and sad, as if all animals and human beings were dead, and no voice were heard. It was a night hateful to him, and he would have it in no way remembered.

~~RRB~~ **Job 3:8.** *Let them curse it who curse the day* This entire verse is exceedingly difficult, and many different expositions have been given of it. It seems evident that it refers to some well-known class of persons, who were accustomed to utter imprecations, and were supposed to have the power to render a day propitious or unpropitious — persons who had the power of divination or enchantment. A belief in such a power existed early in the world, and has prevailed in all savage and semi-barbarous nations, and even in nations considerably advanced in civilization. The origin of this was a desire to look into futurity; and in order to accomplish this, a league was supposed to be made with the spirits of the dead, who were acquainted with the events of the invisible world, and who could be prevailed on to impart their knowledge to favored mortals. It was supposed, also, that by such union there might be a power exerted which would appear to be miraculous. Such persons also claimed to be the favorites of heaven, and to be endowed with control over the elements, and over the destiny of men; to have the power to bless and to curse, to render propitious or calamitous. Balaam was believed to be endowed with this power, and hence, he was sent for by Balak, king of Moab, to curse the Israelites; ~~QTB~~ Numbers 22:5,6; see the notes at ~~ZRB~~ Isaiah 8:19. The practice of cursing the day, or cursing the sun, is said by Herodotus to have prevailed among a people of Africa, whom he calls the Atlantes, living in the vicinity of Mount Atlas. “Of all mankind,” says he, “of whom we have any knowledge, the Atlantes alone have no distinction of names; the body of the people are termed Atlantes, but their individuals have no appropriate appellation. When the sun is at the highest they heap on it reproaches and execrations, because their country and themselves are parched by its rays; book iv. 184. The same account of them is found in Pliny, Nat. His. v. 8: Solem orientem occidentemque dira imprecatione contuentur, ut exitialem ipsis agrisque. See also Strabo, Lib. xvii. p. 780. Some have supposed, also, that there may be an allusion here to a custom which seems early to have prevailed of hiring people to mourn for the dead, and who probably in their official lamentation bewailed or cursed the day of their calamity;

compare ^{<3497>}Jeremiah 9:17; ^{<4825>}2 Chronicles 35:25. But the correct interpretation is doubtless that which refers it to pretended prophets, priests, or diviners — who were supposed to have power to render a day one of ill omen. Such a power Job wished exerted over that unhappy night when he was born. He desired that the curses of those who had power to render a day unpropitious or unlucky, should rest upon it.

Who are ready to raise up their mourning This is not very intelligible, and it is evident that our translators were embarrassed by the passage. They seem to have supposed that there was an allusion here to the practice of employing professional mourners, and that the idea is, that Job wished that they might be employed to howl over the day as inauspicious, or as a day of ill omen. The margin is, as in the Hebrew, “a leviathan.” The word rendered “ready” ^{μydyt} [, means properly ready, prepared; and then practiced or skillful. This is the idea here, that they were practiced or skillful in calling up the “leviathan;” see Schultens “in loc.” The word rendered in the text “mourning,” and in the margin “leviathan” ^{tywl} , in all other parts of the sacred Scriptures denotes an animal; see it explained in the notes at ^{<2270>}Isaiah 27:1, and more fully in the notes at Job 41: It usually denotes the crocodile, or some huge sea monster. Here it is evidently used to represent the most fierce, powerful and frightful of all the animals known, and the allusion is to some power claimed by necromancers to call forth the most terrific monsters at their will from distant places, from the “vasty deep,” from morasses and impenetrable forests. The general claim was, that they had control over all nature; that they could curse the day, and make it of ill omen, and that the most mighty and terrible of land or sea monsters were entirely under their control. If they had such a power, Job wished that they would exercise it to curse the night in which he was born. On what pretensions they founded this claim is unknown. The power, however, of taming serpents, is practiced in India at this day; and jugglers bear around with them the most deadly of the serpent race, having extracted their fangs, and creating among the credulous the belief that they have control over the most noxious animals. Probably some such art was claimed by the ancients. and to some such pretension Job alludes here.

^{<888>}**Job 3:9.** *Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark* That is, be extinguished, so that it shall be total darkness — darkness not even relieved by a single star. The word here rendered “twilight” ^{āvn} means properly a breathing; and hence, the evening, when cooling breezes “blow,”

or gently breathe. It is used however, to denote both the morning and the evening twilight, though here probably it means the latter. He wishes that the evening of that night, instead of being in any way illuminated, should “set in” with total darkness and continue so. The Septuagint renders it, “night.

Let it look for light, but have none Personifying the night, and representing it as looking out anxiously for some ray of light. This is a beautiful poetic image — the image of “Night,” dark and gloomy and sad, anxiously looking out for a single beam or a star to break in upon its darkness and diminish its gloom.

Neither let it see the dawning of the day Margin, more literally and more beautifully, “eyelids of the morning.” The word rendered “dawning” μυρ[ρ] means properly “the eyelashes” (from ἄω[“to fly”), and it is given to them from their flying or fluttering. The word rendered “day” yj v means the aurora, the morning. The sun when he is above the horizon is called by the poets the eye of day; and hence, his earliest beams, before he is risen, are called the eyelids or eyelashes of the morning opening upon the world. This figure is common in the ancient classics, and occurs frequently in the Arabic poets; see Schultens “in loc.” Thus, in Soph. Antiq. 104, the phrase occurs, ἄμερας βλεφαρον . So in Milton’s *Lycidas*,

*“ — Ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the dawn,
We drive afield.”*

Job’s wish was, that there might be no star in the evening twilight, and that no ray might illuminate that of the morning; that it might be enveloped in perpetual, unbroken darkness.

◀880▶ **Job 3:10.** *Because it shut not up ...* That is, because the accursed day and night did not do it. Aben Ezra supposes that God is meant here, and that the complaint of Job is that he did not close his mother’s womb. But the more natural interpretation is to refer it to the Νυχθημεροι — the night and the day which he had been cursing, on which he was born. Throughout the description the day and the night are personified, and are spoken of as active in introducing him into the world. He here curses them because they did not wholly prevent his birth.

Nor hid sorrow from mine eyes By preventing my being born. The meaning is, that he would not have known sorrow if he had then died.

Job 3:11. *Why died I not from the womb?* Why did I not die as soon as I was born? Why were any pains taken to keep me alive? The suggestion of this question leads Job in the following verses into the beautiful description, of what he would have been if he had then died. He complains, therefore, that any pains were taken by his friends to keep him alive, and that he was not suffered peacefully to expire.

Gave up the ghost A phrase that is often used in the English version of the Bible to denote death; ^{<1443>}Genesis 49:33; ^{<1817>}Job 11:20; 14:10; ^{<4159>}Jeremiah 15:9; ^{<4170>}Matthew 27:50; ^{<4150>}Acts 5:10. It conveys an idea, however, which is not necessarily in the original, though the idea in itself is not incorrect. The idea conveyed by the phrase is that of yielding up the “spirit” or “soul,” while the sense of the original here and elsewhere is simply “to expire, to die.”

Job 3:12. *Why did the knees prevent me?* That is, the lap of the nurse or of the mother, probably the latter. The sense is, that if he had not been delicately and tenderly nursed, he would have died at once. He came helpless into the world, and but for the attention of others he would have soon died. Jahn supposes (Archae Section 161) that it was a common custom for the father, on the birth of a son, to clasp the new-born child to his bosom, while music was heard to sound, and by this ceremony to declare it as his own. That there was some such recognition of a child or expression of paternal regard, is apparent from ^{<01512>}Genesis 50:23. Probably, however, the whole sense of the passage is expressed by the tender care which is necessarily shown to the new-born infant to preserve it alive. The word rendered “prevent” here **bdq**, means properly to anticipate, to go before, as the English word “prevent” formerly did; and hence, it means to go to meet anyone in order to aid him in any way. There is much beauty in the word here. It refers to the provision which God has made in the tender affection of the parent to “anticipate” the needs of the child. The arrangement has been made beforehand. God has taken care when the feeble and helpless infant is born, that tender affection has been already created and prepared to meet it. It has not to be created then; it is not to be excited by the suffering of the child; it is already in existence as an active, powerful, and self-denying principle, to “anticipate” the needs of the newborn babe, and to save it from death.

ⲀⲚⲚⲓ **Job 3:13.** *For now should I have lain still* In this verse Job uses four expressions to describe the state in which he would have been if he had been so happy as to have died when an infant. It is evidently a very pleasant subject to him, and he puts it in a great variety of form. He uses the words which express the most quiet repose, a state of perfect rest, a gentle slumber; and then in the next verses he says, that instead of being in the miserable condition in which he then was, he would have been in the same state with kings and the most illustrious men of the earth.

I should have lain still — **ytbkv**. I should have been “lying down,” as one does who is taking grateful repose. This is a word of less strength than any of those which follow.

And been quiet — **fwqva**. A word of stronger signification than that before used. It means to rest, to lie down, to have quiet. It is used of one who is never troubled, harassed, or infested by others, ⲀⲚⲚⲓ Judges 3:11; 5:31; 8:25; and of one who has no fear or dread, ⲀⲚⲚⲓ Psalm 76:9. The meaning is, that he would not only have lain down, but; would have been perfectly tranquil. Nothing would have harassed him, nothing would have given him any annoyance.

I should have slept — **ytvy**. This expression also is in advance of those before used. There would not only have been “quiet,” but there would have been a calm and gentle slumber. Sleep is often represented as “the kinsman of death.” Thus, Virgil speaks of it:

“Tum consanguineus Leti sopor”
AEn. vi. 278.

So Homer:

Ενθ' ὕπνω ζυμβλητο χασιγνητω θανατοιο
—Iliad, 14:231.

This comparison is an obvious one, and is frequently used in the classic writers. It is employed to denote the calmness, stillness, and quiet of death. In the Scriptures it frequently occurs, and with a significance far more beautiful. It is there employed not only to denote the tranquility of death, but also to denote the Christian hopes of a resurrection and the prospect of being awakened out of the long sleep. We lie down to rest at night with the hopes of awaking again. We sleep calmly, with the

expectation that it will be only a temporary repose, and that we shall be aroused, invigorated for augmented toil, and refreshed for sweeter pleasure. So the Christian lies down in the grave. So the infant is committed to the calm slumber of the tomb. It may be a sleep stretching on through many nights and weeks and years and centuries, and even cycles of ages, but it is not eternal. The eyes will be opened again to behold the beauties of creation; the ear will be unstopped to hear the sweet voice of friendship and the harmony of music; and the frame will be raised up beautiful and immortal to engage in the service of the God that made us; compare ^{<1913>}Psalm 13:3; 90:5; ^{<1111>}John 11:11; ^{<1151>}1 Corinthians 15:51; ^{<2044>}1 Thessalonians 4:14; 5:10. Whether Job used the word in this sense and with this understanding, has been made a matter of question, and will be considered more fully in the examination of the passage in ^{<18925>}Job 19:25-27.

Then had I been at rest Instead of the troubles and anxieties which I now experience. That is, he would have been lying in calm and honorable repose with the kings and princes of the earth.

^{<8814>}**Job 3:14.** *With kings* Reposing as they do. This is the language of calm meditation on what would have been the consequence if he had died when he was an infant. He seems to delight to dwell on it. He contrasts it with his present situation. He pauses on the thought that that would have been an honorable repose. He would have been numbered with kings and princes. Is there not here a little spice of ambition even in his sorrows and humiliation? Job had been an eminently rich man; a man greatly honored; an emir; a magistrate; one in whose presence even princes refrained talking, and before whom nobles held their peace; ^{<18210>}Job 29:9. Now he was stripped of his honors, and made to sit in ashes. But had he died when an infant, he would have been numbered with kings and courtsellers, and would have shared their lot. Death is repulsive; but Job takes comfort in the thought that he would have been associated with the most exalted and honorable among people. There is some consolation in the idea that when an infant dies he is associated with the most honored and exalted of the race; there is consolation in the reflection that when we die we shall lie down with the good and the great of all past times, and that though our bodies shall moulder back to dust, and be forgotten, we are sharing the same lot with the most beautiful, lovely, wise, pious, and mighty of the race. To Christians there is the richest of all consolations in the thought that they will sleep as their Savior did in the tomb, and that the grave,

naturally so repulsive, has been made sacred and even attractive by being the place where the Redeemer reposed.

*Why should we tremble to convey
Their bodies to the tomb?
There the dear flesh of Jesus lay,
And left a long perfume.*

*The graves of all his saints he blessed,
And softened every bed:
Where should the dying members rest
But with the dying Head?*

And counsellors of the earth Great and wise men who were qualified to give counsel to kings in times of emergency.

Which built desolate places for themselves Gesenius supposes that the word used here **twbyj** means palaces which would soon be in ruins. So Noyes renders it, “Who build up for themselves — ruins!” That is, they build splendid palaces, or perhaps tombs, which are destined soon to fall to ruin. Dr. Good renders it, “Who restored to themselves the ruined wastes;” that is, the princes who restored to their former magnificence the ruins of ancient cities, and built their palaces in them But it seems to me that the idea is different. It is, that kings constructed for their own burial, magnificent tombs or mausoleums, which were lonely and desolate places, where they might lie in still and solemn grandeur; compare the notes at ^{234B}Isaiah 14:18. Sometimes these were immense excavations from rocks; and sometimes they were stupendous structures built as tombs. What more desolate and lonely places could be conceived than the pyramids of Egypt — reared probably as the burial places of kings? What more lonely and solitary than the small room in the center of one of those immense structures, where the body of the monarch is supposed to have been deposited? And what more emphatic than the expression — though” so nearly pleonastic that it may be omitted” (“Noyes”) — “for themselves?” To my view, that is far from being pleonastic. It is full of emphasis. The immense structure was made for “them.” It was not to be a common burial-place; it was not for the public good; it was not to be an abode for the living and a contributor to their happiness: it was a matter of supreme selfishness and pride — an immense structure built only run THEMSELVES. With such persons lying in their places of lonely grandeur, Job felt it would be an honor to be associated. Compared with his present condition it was

one of dignity; and he earnestly wished that it might have been his lot thus early to have been consigned to the fellowship of the dead. It may be some confirmation of this view to remark, that the land of Edom, near which Job is supposed to have lived, contains at this day some of the most wonderful sepulchral monuments of the world; comp the notes at ^{<2370E>}Isaiah 17:1.

^{<88B5>}**Job 3:15.** *Or with princes that had gold* That is, he would have been united with the rich and the great. Is there not here too also a slight evidence of the fondness for wealth, which might have been one of the errors of this good man? Would it not seem that such was his estimate of the importance of being esteemed rich, that he would count it an honor to be united with the affluent in death, rather than be subjected to a condition of poverty and want among the living?

Who filled their houses with silver Rosenmuller supposes that there is reference here to the custom among the ancients of burying treasures with the dead, and that the word “houses” refers to the tombs or mausoleums which they erected. That such a custom prevailed, there can be no doubt. Josephus informs us that large quantities of treasure were buried in the tomb with David, which afterward was taken out for the supply of an army; and Schultens (“in loc.”) says that the custom prevailed extensively among the Arabs. The custom of burying valuable objects with the dead was practiced also among the aborigines of N. America, and is to this day practiced in Africa. If this be the sense here, then the idea of Job was, that he would have been in his grave united with those who even there were accompanied with wealth, rather than suffering the loss of all his property as he was among the living.

^{<88B6>}**Job 3:16.** *Or as an hidden untimely birth* As an abortion which is hid, or concealed; that is, which is soon removed from the sight. So the Psalmist, ^{<88B8>}Psalms 58:8:

*As a snail which melteth, let thom dissolve;
As the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun.*

Septuagint **εκτρομομα** , the same word which is used by Paul in ^{<6578>}1 Corinthians 15:8, with reference to himself; see the notes at that place.

I had not been I should have perished; I should not have been a man, as I now am, subject to calamity. The meaning is, that he would have been

taken away and concealed, as such an untimely birth is, and that he would never have been numbered among the living and the suffering.

As infants which never saw light Job expresses here no opinion of their future condition, or on the question whether such infants had immortal souls. He is simply saying that his lot would have been as theirs was, and that he would have been saved from the sorrows which he now experienced.

~~◀BIB▶~~ **Job 3:17.** *There the wicked cease* from “troubling.” In the grave — where kings and princes and infants lie. This verse is often applied to heaven, and the language is such as will express the condition of that blessed world. But as used by Job it had no such reference. It relates only to the grave. It is language which beautifully expresses the condition of the dead, and the “desirableness” even of an abode in the tomb. They who are there, are free from the vexations and annoyances to which people are exposed in this life. The wicked cannot torture their limbs by the fires of persecution, or wound their feelings by slander, or oppress and harass them in regard to their property, or distress them by thwarting their plans, or injure them by impugning their motives. All is peaceful and calm in the grave, and “there” is a place where the malicious designs of wicked people cannot reach us. The object of this verse and the two following is! to show the “reasons” why it was desirable to be in the grave, rather than to live and to suffer the ills of this life. We are not to suppose that Job referred exclusively to his own case in all this. He is describing, in general, the happy condition of the dead, and we have no reason to think that he had been particularly annoyed by wicked people. But the pious often are, and hence, it should be a matter of gratitude that there is one place, at least, where the wicked cannot annoy the good; and where the persecuted, the oppressed, and the slandered may lie down in peace.

And there the weary be at rest Margin, “Wearied in strength.” The margin is in accordance with the Hebrew. The meaning is, those whose strength is exhausted; who are worn down by the toils and cares of life, and who feel the need of rest. Never was more beautiful language employed than occurs in this verse. What a charm such language throws even over the grave — like strewing flowers, and planting roses around the tomb! Who should fear to die, if prepared, when such is to be the condition of the dead? Who is there that is not in some way troubled by the wicked — by their thoughtless, ungodly life; by persecution, contempt, and slander? compare

<608>2 Peter 2:8; <690E> Psalm 39:1. Who is there that is not at some time weary with his load of care, anxiety, and trouble? Who is there whose strength does not become exhausted, and to whom rest is not grateful and refreshing? And who is there, therefore, to whom, if prepared for heaven, the grave would not be a place of calm and grateful rest? And though true religion will not prompt us to wish that we had lain down there in early childhood, as Job wished, yet no dictate of piety is violated when “we” look forward with calm delight to the time when we may repose where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary be at rest. O grave, thou art a peaceful spot! Thy rest is calm: thy slumbers are sweet.

*Nor pain, nor grief, nor anxious fear
Invade thy bounds. No mortal woes
Can reach the peaceful sleeper here,
While angels watch the soft repose.*

*So Jesus slept; God's dying Son
Passed through the grave, and blest the bed.*

<888>**Job 3:18.** *There the prisoners rest together* Herder translates this, “There the prisoners rejoice in their freedom.” The Septuagint strangely enough, “There they of old (ὁἱ <3588> αἰωνιοι <166>) assembled together (ὁμοθυμαδον <3661>) have not heard the voice of the exactor.” The Hebrew word *av* means to rest, to be quiet, to be tranquil; and the sense is, that they are in the grave freed from chains and oppressions.

They hear not the voice of the oppressor Of him who exacted taxes, and who laid on them heavy burdens, and who imprisoned them for imaginary crimes. He who is bound in chains, and who has no other prospect of release, can look for it in the grave and will find it there. Similar sentiments are found respecting death in Seneca “ad Marcian,” 20:

“Mots omnibus finis, multis remedium, quibusdam votum; haec servitutum invito domino remittit; haec captivorum catenas levat; haec a carcere reducit, quos cxire impcrium impofens vetuerat; haec exulibus, in pairtam semper animum oculosque tendentibus, ostendit, nihil intercisse inter quos quisque jaceat; haec, ubi res communes fortuna male divisit, et aequo jure genitos allure alii donavit, cxaequat omnia; haec est, quae nihil quidquam alieno fecit arbitrio; haec cst, ea qua nemo humilitatem guam sensit; haec est, quae nulli paruit.”

The sense in Job is, that all are at liberty in death. Chains no longer bind; prisons no longer incarcerate; the voice of oppression no longer alarms.

Job 3:19. *The small and the great are there* The old and the young, the high and the low. Death levels all. It shows no respect to age; it spares none because they are vigorous, young, or beautiful. This sentiment has probably been expressed in various forms in all languages, for all people are made deeply sensible of its truth. The classic reader will recall the ancient proverb,

Mors scepra ligonibus aequat,

and the language of Horace:

AEquae lege Necessitas Sortitur insignes et imos. Omne capax
 movet urna nomen. Tristis unda scilicet omnibus, Quicumque terrae
 munere vescimur, Enaviganda, sive reges, Sive inopes erimus
 coloni. Divesne prisco natus ab Inacho Nil interest, an pauper et
 infima De gente sub dio moreris Victima nil miserantis Orci. Omnes
 codem cogimur. Omnium Versatur urna. Serius, ocyus, Sors
 exitura. — Omnes una manet nox, Et calcauda semel via leti.
 [Nullum Mista senum acjuvenum densantur funera. Saeva caput
 Proserpina lugit. tabernas Pallida mors aequo pulsat pede pauperum
 Regumque turres.

And the servant is free from his master Slavery is at an end in the grave. The master can no longer tax the powers of the slave, can no longer scourge him or exact his uncompensated toil. Slavery early existed, and there is evidence here that it was known in the time of Job. But Job did not regard it as a desirable institution; for assuredly that is not desirable from which death would be regarded as a “release,” or where death would be preferable. Men often talk about slavery as a valuable condition of society, and sometimes appeal even to the Scriptures to sustain it; but Job felt that “it was worse than death,” and that the grave was to be preferred because there the slave would be free from his master. The word used here and rendered “free” **yvph** properly expresses manumission from slavery. See it explained at length in my the notes at ²⁸¹⁶Isaiah 58:6.

Job 3:20. *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery?* The word “light” here is used undoubtedly to denote “life.” This verse commences a new part of Job’s complaint. It is that God keeps people alive who would

prefer to die; that he furnishes them with the means of sustaining existence, and actually preserves them, when they would consider it an inestimable blessing to expire. Schultens remarks, on this part of the chapter, that the tone of Job's complaint is considerably modified. He has given vent to his strong feelings, and the language here is more mild and gentle. Still it implies a reflection on God. It is not the language of humble submission. It contains an implied charge of cruelty and injustice; and it laid the foundation for some of the just reproofs which follow.

And life unto the bitter in soul Who are suffering bitter grief. We use the word "bitter" yet to denote great grief and pain.

~~REB~~ **Job 3:21.** *Which long for death* Whose pain and anguish are so great that they would regard it as a privilege to die. Much as people dread death, and much as they have occasion to dread what is beyond, yet there is no doubt that this often occurs. Pain becomes so intense, and suffering is so protracted, that they would regard it as a privilege to be permitted to die. Yet that sorrow "must" be intense which prompts to this wish, and usually must be long continued. In ordinary cases such is the love of life, and such the dread of death and of what is beyond, that people are willing to bear all that human nature can endure rather than meet death; see the notes at ~~REB~~ Job 2:4. This idea has been expressed with unsurpassed beauty by Shakespeare:

For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,

When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death—
The undiscovered country, from whose bourne
No traveler returns—puzzles the will;
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of. — HAMLET.

And dig for it That is, express a stronger desire for it than people do who dig for treasures in the earth. Nothing would more forcibly express the intense desire to die than this expression.

Job 3:22. *Which rejoice exceedingly* Hebrew “Who rejoice upon joy or exultation” | ygAyl a, that is, with exceedingly great joy.

When they can find the grave What an expression! How strikingly does it express the intense desire to die, and the depth of a man’s sorrow, when it becomes a matter of exultation for him to be permitted to lie down in the corruption and decay of the tomb! A somewhat similiar sentiment occurs in Euripides, as quoted by Cicero, Tusc. Quaest. Lib. 1, cap. 48:

*Nam nos decebat, doman
Lugere, ubi esset aliquis in lucem editus,
Humanae vitae varia reputantes mala;
At qui labores morte finisset graves
Hunc omni amicos laude et Lactitia exsequi.*

Job 3:23. Why is light given “to a man whose way is hid?” That is, who does not know what way to take, and who sees no escape from the misery that surrounds him.

Whom God hath hedged in See Notes, ^{<R110>}Job 1:10. The meaning here is, that God had surrounded him as with a high wall or hedge, so that he could not move freely. Job asks with impatience, why light, i.e. life, should be given to such a man? Why should he not be permitted to die? This closes the complaint of Job, and the remaining verses of the chapter contain a statement of his sorrowful condition, and of the fact that he had now been called to suffer all that he had ever apprehended. — In regard to the questions here proposed by Job (^{<R111>}Job 3:20-23), we may remark, that; there was doubtless much impatience on his part, and not a little improper feeling. The language shows that Job was not absolutely sinless; but let us not harshly blame him. What he says, is a “statement” of feelings which often pass through the mind, though they are not often expressed. Who, in deep and protracted sorrows, has not found such questions rising up in his soul — questions which required all his energy and all his firmness of principle, and all the strength which he could gain by prayer, to suppress? To the questions themselves, it may be difficult to give an answer; and it is certain that none of the friends of Job furnished a solution of the difficulty. When it is asked, why man is kept in misery on earth, when he would be glad to be released by death, perhaps the following, among others, may be the reasons:

(1) Those sufferings may be the very means which are needful to develop the true state of the soul. Such was the case with Job.

(2) They may be the proper punishment of sin in the heart, of which the individual was not fully aware, but which may be distinctly seen by God. There may be pride, and the love of ease, and self-confidence, and ambition, and a desire of reputation. Such appear to have been some of the besetting sins of Job.

(3) They are needful to teach true submission, and to show whether a man is willing to resign himself to God.

(4) They may be the very things which are necessary to prepare the individual to die. At the same time that people often desire death, and feel that it would be a relief, it might be to them the greatest possible calamity. They may be wholly unprepared for it. For a sinner, the grave contains no rest; the eternal world furnishes no repose.

One design of God in such sorrows may be, to show to the wicked how “intolerable” will be future pain, and how important it is for them to be ready to die. If they cannot bear the pains and sorrows of a few hours in this short life, how can they endure eternal sufferings? If it is so desirable to be released from the sorrows of the body here, — if it is felt that the grave, with all that is repulsive in it, would be a place of repose, how important is it to find some way to be secured from everlasting pains! The true place of release from suffering for a sinner, is not the grave; it is in the pardoning mercy of God, and in that pure heaven to which he is invited through the blood of the cross. In that holy heaven is the only real repose from suffering and from sin; and heaven will be all the sweeter in proportion to the extremity of pain which is endured on earth.

~~MR~~ **Job 3:24.** *For my sighing cometh before I eat* Margin, “My meat.” Dr. Good renders this, “Behold! my sighing takes the place of my daily food, and refers to ~~DR~~ Psalm 42:3, as an illustration:

My tears are my meat day and night.

So substantially Schultens renders it, and explains it as meaning, “My sighing comes in the manner of my food,” “*Suspirium ad modum panis veniens*” — and supposes it to mean that his sighs and groans were like his daily food; or were constant and unceasing. Dr. Noyes explains it as meaning, “My sighing comes on when I begin to eat, and prevents my

taking my daily nourishment;” and appeals to a similar expression in Juvenal. Sat. xiii. 211:

Perpetua anxietas, nec mensae tempore cessat.

Rosenmuller gives substantially the same explanation, and remarks, also, that some suppose that the mouth, hands, and tongue of Job were so affected with disease, that the effort to eat increased his sufferings, and brought on a renewal of his sorrows. The same view is given by Origen; and this is probably the correct sense.

And my roarings My deep and heavy groans.

Are poured out like the waters That is,

- (1) “in number” — they were like rolling billows, or like the heaving deep.
- (2) Perhaps also in “sound” like them. His groans were like the troubled ocean, that can be heard afar. Perhaps, also,
- (3.) he means to say that his groans were attended with “a flood of tears,” or that his tears were like the waves of the sea.

There is some hyperbole in the figure, in whichever way it is understood; but we are to remember that his feelings were deeply excited, and that the Orientals were in the habit of expressing themselves in a mode, which to us, of more phlegmatic temperament, may seem extravagant in the extreme. We have, however, a similar expression when we say of one that “he burst into a “flood of tears.””

~~REBS~~ **Job 3:25.** *For the thing which I greatly feared* Margin, As in the Hebrew “I feared a fear, and it came upon me.” This verse, with the following, has received a considerable variety of exposition. Many have understood it as referring to his whole course of life, and suppose that Job meant to say that he was always apprehensive of some great calamity, such as that which had now come upon him, and that in the time of his highest prosperity he had lived in continual alarm lest his property should be taken away, and lest he should be reduced to penury and suffering. This is the opinion of Drusius and Codurcus. In reply to this, Schultens has remarked, that such a supposition is contrary to all probability; that there was no reason to apprehend that such calamities as he now suffered, would come upon him; that they were so unusual that they could not have been anticipated; and that, therefore, the alarm here spoken of, could not refer

to the general tenor of his life. That seems to have been happy and calm, and perhaps, if anything, too tranquil and secure. Most interpreters suppose that it refers to the state in which he was “during” his trial, and that it is designed to describe the rapid succession of his woes. Such is the interpretation of Rosenmuller, Schultens, Drs. Good, Noyes, Gill, and others. According to this, it means that his calamities came on him in quick succession. He had no time after one calamity to become composed before another came. When he heard of one misfortune, he naturally dreaded another, and they came on with overwhelming rapidity. If this be the correct interpretation, it means that the source of his lamentation is not merely the greatness of his losses and his trials considered in the “aggregate,” but the extraordinary rapidity with which they succeeded each other, thus rendering them much more difficult to be borne; see Job 1: He apprehended calamity, and it came suddenly. When one part of his property was taken, he had deep apprehensions respecting the rest; when all his property was seized or destroyed, he had alarm about his children; when the report came that they were dead, he feared some other affliction still. The sentiment is in accordance with human nature, that when we are visited with severe calamity in one form, we naturally dread it in another. The mind becomes exquisitely sensitive. The affections cluster around the objects of attachment which are left, and they become dear to us. When one child is taken away, our affections cling more closely to the one which survives, and any little illness alarms us, and the value of one object of affection is more and more increased — like the Sybil’s leaves — as another is removed. It is an instinct of our nature, too, to apprehend calamity in quick succession when one comes “Misfortunes seldom come alone;” and when we suffer the loss of one endeared object, we instinctively feel that there may be a succession of blows that will remove all our comforts from us. Such seems to have been the apprehension of Job.

~~RB~~ **Job 3:26.** *I was not in safety* That is, I have, or I had no peace.

ytwl v Septuagint, ουτε ^{<3777>} ειρηνησσα ^{<1514>} — “I had no peace.” The sense is, that his mind had been disturbed with fearful alarms; or perhaps that at that time he was filled with dread.

Neither had I rest Trouble comes upon me in every form, and I am a stranger wholly to peace. The accumulation of phrases here, all meaning nearly the same thing, is descriptive of a state of great agitation of mind.

Such an accumulation is not uncommon in the Bible to denote any thing which language can scarcely describe. So in ^{<382>}Isaiah 8:22:

And they shall look upward; And to the earth shall they look; And lo! trouble and darkness, Gloom, oppression, and deepened darkness.

So ^{<382>}Job 10:21,22:

To the land of darkness and the death-shade, The land of darkness like the blackness of the death-shade, Where is no order, and where the light is as darkness.

Thus, in the Hamasa (quoted by Dr Good), “Death, and devastation, and a remorseless disease, and a still heavier and more terrific family of evils.” The Chaldee has made a remarkable addition here, arising from the general design in the author of that Paraphrase, to explain every thing. “Did I not dissemble when the annunciation was made to me respecting the oxen and the asses? Was I not stupid (unalarmed, or unmoved, *tykwdv*, when the report came about the conflagration? Was I not quiet, when the report came respecting the camels? And did not indignation come, when the report was made respecting my sons?”

Yet trouble came Or rather, “and trouble comes.” This is one of the cumulative expressions to denote the rapidity and the intensity of his sorrows. The word rendered “trouble” *zgy* means properly trembling, commotion, disquiet. Here it signifies such misery as made him tremble. Once the word means wrath (^{<382>}Habakkuk 3:2); and it is so understood here by the Septuagint, who renders it *οργη* ^{<3709>}.

In regard to this chapter, containing the first speech of Job, we may remark, that it is impossible to approve the spirit which it exhibits, or to believe that it was acceptable to God. It laid the foundation for the reflections — many of them exceedingly just — in the following chapters, and led his friends to doubt whether such a man could be truly pious. The spirit which is manifested in this chapter, is undoubtedly far from that calm submission which religion should have produced, and from that which Job had before evinced. That he was, in the main, a man of eminent holiness and patience, the whole book demonstrates; but this chapter is one of the conclusive proofs that he was not absolutely free from imperfection. From the chapter we may learn,

(1) That even eminently good men sometimes give utterance to sentiments which are a departure from the spirit of religion, and which they will have occasion to regret. Such was the case here. There was a language of complaint, and a bitterness of expression, which religion cannot sanction, and which no pious man, on reflection, would approve.

(2) We see the effect of heavy affliction on the mind. It sometimes becomes overwhelming. It is so great that all the ordinary barriers against impatience are swept away. The sufferer is left to utter language of complaining, and there is the impatient wish that life was closed, or that he had not existed.

(3) We are not to infer that because a man in affliction makes use of some expressions which we cannot approve, and which are not sanctioned by the word of God, that therefore he is not a good man. There may be true piety, yet it may be far from perfection; there may be in general submission to God, yet the calamity may be so overwhelming as to overcome the usual restraints on our corrupt and fallen nature: and when we remember how feeble is our nature at best, and how imperfect is the piety of the holiest of men, we should not harshly judge him who is left to express impatience in his trials, or who gives utterance to sentiments different from those which are sanctioned by the word of God. There has been but one model of pure submission on earth — the Lord Jesus Christ; and after the contemplation of the best of men in their trials, we can see that there is imperfection in them, and that if we would survey absolute perfection in suffering, we must go to Gethsemane and to Calvary.

(4) Let us not make the expressions used by Job in this chapter our model in suffering. Let us not suppose that because he used such language, that therefore we may also. Let us not infer that because they are found in the Bible, that therefore they are right; or that because he was an unusually holy man, that it would be proper for us to use the same language that he did. The fact that this book is a part of the inspired truth of revelation, does not make such language right. All that inspiration does, in such a case, is to secure an exact record of what was actually said; it does not, of necessity, sanction it any more than an accurate historian can be supposed to approve all that he records. There may be important reasons why it should be preserved, but he who makes the record is not answerable for the truth or propriety of what is recorded. The narrative is true; the sentiment may be false. The historian may state exactly what was said or done: but what was said or done, may have violated every law of truth and justice; and unless

the historian expresses some sentiment of approbation, he can in no sense be held answerable for it. So with the narratives in the Bible. Where a sentiment of approbation or disapprobation is expressed, there the sacred writer is answerable for it; in other cases he is answerable only for the correctness of the record. This view of the nature of inspiration will leave us at liberty freely to canvass the speeches made in the book of Job, and make it more important that we compare the sentiments in those speeches with other parts of the Bible, that we may know what to approve, and what was erroneous in Job or his friends.

NOTES ON JOB 4

Job 4:1. *Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered* See the notes at **Job 2:11**.

Job 4:2. *If we assay to commune with thee* Margin, A word. Hebrew — **hshhAbd**. “May we attempt a word with thee?” This is a gentle and polite apology at the beginning of his speech — an inquiry whether he would take it as unkind if one should adventure on a remark in the way of argument. Jahn, in characterizing the part which Job’s three friends respectively take in the controversy, says: “Eliphaz is superior to the others in discernment and delicacy. He begins by addressing Job mildly; and it is not until irritated by opposition that he reckons him among the wicked.”

Wilt thou be grieved? That is, Wilt thou take it ill? Will it be offensive to you, or weary you, or tire your patience? The word used here **hal** means to labor, to strive, to weary, to exhaust; and hence, to be weary, to try one’s patience, to take anything ill. Here it is the language of courtesy, and is designed to introduce the subsequent remarks in the kindest manner. Eliphaz knew that he was about to make observations which might implicate Job, and he introduced them in as kind a manner as possible. There is nothing abrupt or harsh in his beginning. All is courteous in the highest degree, and is a model for debaters.

But who can withhold himself from speaking? Margin, “Refrain from words.” That is, “the subject is so important, the sentiments advanced by Job are so extraordinary, and the principles involved are so momentous, that it is impossible to refrain.” There is much delicacy in this. He did not begin to speak merely to make a speech. He professes that he would not have spoken, if he had not been pressed by the importance of the subject, and had not been full of matter. To a great extent, this is a good rule to adopt: not to make a speech unless there are sentiments which weigh upon the mind, and convictions of duty which cannot be repressed.

Job 4:3. *Behold, thou hast instructed many* That is, thou hast instructed many how they ought to bear trials, and hast delivered important maxims to them on the great subject of the divine government. This is not designed to be irony, or to wound the feelings of Job. It is intended to

recall to his mind the lessons which he had inculcated on others in times of calamity, and to show him how important it was now that he should reduce his own lessons to practice, and show their power in sustaining himself.

Thou hast strengthened the weak hands That is, thou hast aided the feeble. The hands are the instruments by which we accomplish anything, and when they are weak, it is an indication of helplessness.

<804>**Job 4:4.** *Thy words have upholden him that was falling* That is, either falling into sin, or sinking under calamity and trial. The Hebrew will bear either interpretation, but the connection seems to require us to understand it of one who was sinking under the weight of affliction.

The feeble knees Margin, “bowing.” The knees support the frame. If they fail, we are feeble and helpless. Hence, their being weak, is so often used in the Bible to denote imbecility. The sense is, that Job, in the days of his own prosperity, had exhorted others to submit to God; had counselled them in such a manner as actually to give them support, and that the same views should now have sustained him which he had so successfully employed in comforting others.

<804>**Job 4:5.** *But now it is come upon thee* That is, calamity; or, the same trial which others have had, and in which thou hast so successfully exhorted and comforted them. A similar sentiment to that which is here expressed, is found in Terence:

Facile omnes, cum valemus, recta consilia aegrotis damus.
— *And. ii. i. 9.*

It toucheth thee That is, affliction has come to yourself. It is no longer a thing about which you can coolly sit down and reason, and on which you can deliver formal exhortations.

And thou art troubled Instead of evincing the calm submission which you have exhorted others to do, your mind is now disturbed and restless. You vent your complaints against the day of your birth, and you charge God with injustice. A sentiment resembling this, occurs in Terence, as quoted by Codurcus:

*Nonne id flagitium est, te aliis consilium dare,
Foris sapere, tibi non posse te auxiliarier?*

Something similar to this not unfrequently occurs. It is an easy thing to give counsel to others, and to exhort them to be submissive in trial. It is easy to utter general maxims, and to suggest passages of Scripture on the subject of affliction, and even to impart consolation to others; but when trial comes to ourselves, we often fail to realize the power of those truths to console us. Ministers of the gospel are called officially to impart such consolations, and are enabled to do it. But when the trial comes on them, and when they ought by every solemn consideration to be able to show the power of those truths in their own case, it sometimes happens that they evince the same impatience and want of submission which they had rebuked in others; and that whatever truth and power there may have been in their instructions, they themselves little felt their force. It is often necessary that he who is appointed to comfort the afflicted, should be afflicted himself. Then he can “weep with those who weep;” and hence, it is that ministers of the gospel are called quite as much as any other class of people to pass through deep waters. Hence, too, the Lord Jesus became so pre-eminent in suffering, that he might be touched with the feelings of our infirmity, and be qualified to sympathize with us when we are tried;

⁸¹²⁴ Hebrews 2:14,17,18; 4:15,16. It is exceedingly important that when they whose office it is to comfort others are afflicted, they should exhibit an example of patience and submission. Then is the time to try their religion; and then they have an opportunity to convince others that the doctrines which they preach are adapted to the condition of weak and suffering man.

⁸¹⁰⁶ **Job 4:6.** *Is not this thy fear, thy confidence?* There has been considerable variety in the interpretation of this verse. Dr. Good renders it,

*Is thy piety then nothing? thy hope
Thy confidence? or the uprightness of thy ways?*

Noyes renders it,

*Is not thy fear of God thy hope,
And the uprightness of thy ways the confidence?*

Rosenmuller translates it,

*Is not in thy piety and integrity of life
Thy confidence and hope?*

In the Vulgate it is translated, “Where is thy fear, thy fortitude, thy patience, and the integrity of thy ways?” In the Septuagint, “Is not thy fear founded on folly, and thy hope, and the evil of thy way?”

Castellio translates it,

*Nimirum tantum religionis, quantum expectationis;
Quantum spei, tantum habebas integritatis morum;*

and the idea according to his version is, that he had as much religion as was prompted by the hope of reward; that his piety and integrity were sustained only by his hope, and were not the result of principle; and that of course his religion was purely selfish. If this be the sense, it is designed to be a reproach, and accords with the charge in the question of Satan (~~800~~ Job 1:9), “Doth Job fear God for naught?” Rosenmuller adopts the opinion of Ludovicus de Dieu, and explains it as meaning, “You seemed to be a man fearing God, and a man of integrity, and you were led hence to cherish high hopes and expectations; but now you perceive that you were deceived. Your piety was not sincere and genuine, for the truly pious do not thus suffer. Remember therefore that no one perishes being innocent.”

Codurcus renders it, “All thy hope was placed in thy religion, and thy expectation in the rectitude of thy ways; consider now, who perishes being innocent?” The true sentiment of the passage has undoubtedly been expressed by Good, Noyes. and Codurcus. The Hebrew rendered thy fear **dtary** means doubtless religious fear, veneration, or piety, and is a word synonymous with **εὐλαβεία** ^{<2124>}, **εὐσεβεία** ^{<2150>}, religion. The sentiment is, that his confidence or hope was placed in his religion — in his fear of God, his respect and veneration for him, and in reliance on the equity of his government. This had been his stay in times past; and this was the subject which was naturally brought before him then. Eliphaz asks whether he should not put his trust in that God still, and not reproach him as unequal and unjust in his administration.

The uprightness of thy ways Hebrew, The perfection of thy ways. Note ~~800~~ Job 1:1. The idea is, that his hope was founded on the integrity of his life, and on the belief that the upright would be rewarded. The passage may be rendered,

Is not thy confidence and thy expectation founded on thy religion,
And on the integrity of thy ways?

This is the general sentiment which Eliphaz proceeds to illustrate and apply. If this was a just principle, it was natural to ask whether the trials of Job did not prove that he had no well grounded reason for such confidence.

Job 4:7. *Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent?*

The object of this question is manifestly to show to Job the inconsistency of the feelings which he had evinced. He claimed to be a righteous man. He had instructed and counselled many others. He had professed confidence in God, and in the integrity of his own ways. It was to have been expected that one with such pretensions would have evinced resignation in the time of trial, and would have been sustained by the recollection of his integrity. The fact, therefore, that Job had thus “fainted,” and had given way to impatient expressions, showed that he was conscious that he had not been altogether what he had professed to be. “There must have been,” is the meaning of Eliphaz, “something wrong, when such calamities come upon a man, and when his faith gives way in such a manner. It would be contrary to all the analogy of the divine dealings to suppose that such a man as Job had professed to be, could be the subject of overwhelming judgments; for who, I ask, ever perished, being innocent? It is a settled principle of the divine government, that no one ever perishes who is innocent, and that great calamities are a proof of great guilt.” This declaration contains the essence of all the positions held by Eliphaz and his colleagues in this argument. This they considered as so established that no one could call it in question, and on the ground of this they inferred that one who experienced such afflictions, no matter what his professions or his apparent piety had been, could not be a good man. This was a point about which the minds of the friends of Job were settled; and though they seem to have been disposed to concede that some afflictions might happen to good men, yet when sudden and overwhelming calamities such as they now witnessed came upon them, they inferred that there must have been corresponding guilt. Their reasoning on this subject — which runs through the book — perplexed but did not satisfy Job, and was obviously based on a wrong principle — The word “perished” here means the same as cut off, and does not differ much from being overwhelmed with calamity. The whole sentence has a proverbial cast; and the sense is, that when persons were suddenly cut off it proved that they were not innocent. Job, therefore, it was inferred, could not be a righteous man in these unusual and very special trials.

Or where were the righteous cut off? That is, by heavy judgment; by any special and direct visitation. Eliphaz could not mean that the righteous did not die — for he could not be insensible to that fact; but he must have referred to sudden calamities. This kind of reasoning is common — that when men are afflicted with great and sudden calamities they must be especially guilty. It prevailed in the time of the Savior, and it demanded all his authority to settle the opposite principle; see ~~Q101~~ Luke 13:1-5. It is that into which people naturally and easily fall; and it required much observation, and long experience, and enlarged views of the divine administration, to draw the true lines on this subject. To a certain extent, and in certain instances, calamity certainly does prove that there is special guilt. Such was the case with the old world that was destroyed by the deluge; such was the case with the cities of the plain; such is the case in the calamities that come upon the drunkard, and such too in the special curse produced by indulgence in licentiousness. But this principle does not run through all the calamities which befall people. A tower may fall on the righteous as well as the wicked; an earthquake may destroy the innocent as well as the guilty; the pestilence sweeps away the holy and the unholy, the profane and the pure, the man who fears God and him who fears him not; and the inference is now seen to be too broad when we infer, as the friends of Job did, that no righteous man is cut off by special calamity, or that great trials demonstrate that such sufferers are less righteous than others are. Judgments are not equally administered in this world, and hence, the necessity for a future world of retribution; see the notes at ~~Q102~~ Luke 13:2,3.

~~Q103~~ **Job 4:8.** *Even as I have seen* Eliphaz appeals to his own observation, that people who had led wicked lives were suddenly cut off. Instances of this kind he might doubtless have observed — as all may have done. But his inference was too broad when he concluded that all the wicked are punished in this manner. It is true that wicked people are thus cut off and perish; but it is not true that all the wicked are thus punished in this life, nor that any of the righteous are not visited with similar calamities. His reasoning was of a kind that is common in the world — that of drawing universal conclusions from premises that are too narrow to sustain them, or from too few carefully observed facts.

They that plow iniquity This is evidently a proverbial expression; and the sense is, that as people sow they reap. If they sow wheat, they reap wheat; if barley, they reap barley; if tares, they reap tares. Thus, in ~~Q104~~ Proverbs 22:8:

“He that soweth iniquity shall reap also vanity.”

So in ~~<2007>~~ Hosea 8:7:

“For they have sown the wind, And they shall reap the whirlwind: It hath no stalk; the bud shall yield no meal If so be it yield, strangers shall swallow it up”

Thus, in the Persian adage:

“He that planteth thorns shall not gather roses.” — Dr. Good.

So AEschylus:

Ατης αρουρα θανατον εκκαρπιζεται .

The field of wrong brings forth death as its fruit.

The meaning of Eliphaz is, that people who form plans of wickedness must reap appropriate fruits. They cannot expect that an evil life will produce ultimate happiness.

~~<3009>~~ **Job 4:9.** *By the blast of God* That is, by the judgment of God. The figure is taken from the hot and fiery wind, which, sweeping over a field of grain, dries it up and destroys it. In like manner Eliphaz says the wicked perish before God.

And by the breath of his nostrils By his anger. The Scripture often speaks of breathing out indignation and wrath; ~~<4001>~~ Acts 9:1; ~~<1272>~~ Psalm 27:12; ~~<1026>~~ 2 Samuel 22:16; ~~<1915>~~ Psalm 18:15; 33:6; notes at ~~<2104>~~ Isaiah 11:4; 30:28; 33:11. The figure was probably taken from the violent breathing which is evinced when the mind is under any strong emotion, especially anger. It refers here to any judgment by which God cuts off the wicked, but especially to sudden calamity — like a tempest or the pestilence.

~~<3010>~~ **Job 4:10.** *The roaring of the lion* This is evidently a continuation of the argument in the preceding verses, and Eliphaz is stating what had occurred under his own observation. The expressions have much of a proverbial cast, and are designed to convey in strong poetic language what he supposed usually occurred. There can be no reasonable doubt here that he refers to men in these verses, for

(1) It is not true that the lion is destroyed in this manner. No more frequent calamity comes upon him than upon other animals, and perhaps he is less frequently overcome than others.

(2) Such a supposition only would make the remarks of Eliphaz pertinent to his argument. He is speaking of the divine government in regard to wicked people, and he uses this language to convey the idea that they are often destroyed.

(3) It is common in the Scriptures, as in all Oriental writings, and indeed in Greek and Roman poetry, to compare unjust, cruel, and rapacious men with wild animals; see the notes at Isaiah 11; compare ^{<910>}Psalm 10:9; 58:6.

Eliphaz, therefore, here by the use of the words rendered lion, means to say that men of savage temper, and cruel dispositions, and untamed ferocity, were cut off by the judgments of God. It is remarkable that he employs so many words to designate the lion in these two verses. No less than five are employed, all of them probably denoting originally some special and striking characteristics of the lion. It is also an illustration of the copiousness of the Hebrew language in this respect, and is a specimen of the custom of speaking in Arabia. The Arabic language is so copious that the Arabs boast that they have four hundred terms by which to designate the lion. A large part of them are, indeed, figurative expressions, derived from some quality of the animal, but they show a much greater copiousness in the language than can be found in Western dialects. The words used here by Eliphaz are about all the terms by which the "lion" is designated in the Scriptures. They are *hyra*, *l j v*, *rypk*, *vyl*, and *aybl*. The word *xj v* elations, pride, is given to the lion, ^{<1828>}Job 28:8; 41:34, from his proud gait; and perhaps the word *l ayra* ^{<h739>}, ^{<9170>}1 Samuel 17:10; ^{<1312>}1 Chronicles 11:22. But Eliphaz has exhausted the usual epithets of the lion in the Hebrew language. It may be of some interest to inquire, in a few words, into the meaning of those which he has used.

The roaring of the lion The word used here *hyra* or in a more usual form *yra*, is from, *hra*, ^{<h717>}, to pull, to pluck, and is probably given to the lion as the puller in pieces, on account of the mode in which he devours his prey, Bochart, however, contends that the name is not from, *hAa*, because, says he, the lion does not bite or crop his food like grass, which, he says, the word properly means, but is from the verb *har*, ^{<h7200>}, to see, because, says he, the lion is the most keen-sighted of the animals; or rather from the

fire of his eyes — the terror which the glance of his eye inspires. So the Greeks derive the word lion, **λεοντα** ^{<3023>}, from **λαω** ^{<2992>}, to see. See Beehart, Hieroz. Lib. iii. c. 1, p. 715.

The voice of the fierce lion The word here translated fierce lion **ljæis** from **ljæc** ^{<4726>}, to roar, and hence, given for an obvious reason to a lion. Bochart understands by it the swarthy lion of Syria; the lion which the Arabians call adlamon. This lion, says he, is dark and dingy. The usual color of the lion is yellow, but Oppian says that the lion in Aethiopia is sometimes found of a dark color, **μελανοχρως**; see Bochart, Hieroz. Lib. i. c. 1, p. 717, 718.

The teeth of the young lions The word used here, **rypKj** ^{<3715>}, means a “young lion already weaned, and beginning to hunt for prey.” — Gesenius. It thus differs from the **rWC** ^{<4181>}, which means a whelp, still under the care of the dam; see ^{<2692>}Ezekiel 19:2,3; compare Bochart, Hieroz. Lib. iii. c. 1, p. 714. Some expression is here evidently to be understood that shall be applicable to the voice, or the roaring of the lion. Noyes supplies the words, “are silenced.” The words “are broken” can be applicable only to the teeth of the young lions. It is unnatural to say that the “roaring” and the “voice” are broken. The sense is, that the lion roars in vain, and that calamity and destruction come notwithstanding his growl; and as applied to men, it means that men who resemble the lion are disappointed and punished.

^{<8041>}**Job 4:11.** *The old lion* The word used here, **vyl**, denotes a lion, “so called,” says Gesenius, “from his strength and bravery,” or, according to Urnreit, the lion in the strength of his old ago; see an examination of the word in Bochart, Hieroz. P. i. Lib. iii. c. 1, p. 720.

Perisheth for lack of prey Not withstanding his strength and power. That is, such a thing sometimes occurs. Eliphaz could not maintain that it always happened. The meaning seems to be, that as the strength of the lion was no security that he would not perish for want, so it was with men who resembled the lion in the strength of mature age.

And the stout lion's whelps The word here rendered “stout lion,” **aybl**, is probably derived from the obsolete root **abl**, “to roar,” and it is given to the lion on account of his roaring. Bochart, Hieroz. P. i. Lib. iii. c. 1. p. 719, supposes that the word means a lioness. These words complete the

description of the lion, and the sense is, that the lion in no condition, or whatever name indicative of strength might be given to it, had power to resist God when he came forth for its destruction. Its roaring, its strength, its teeth, its rage, were all in vain.

Are scattered abroad That is, when the old lion is destroyed, the young ones flee, and are unable to offer resistance. So it is with men. When the divine judgments come upon them, they have no power to make successful resistance. God has them under control, and he comes forth at his pleasure to restrain and subdue them, as he does the wild beasts of the desert, though so fearful and formidable.

Job 4:12. *Now a thing* To confirm his views, Eliphaz appeals to a vision of a most remarkable character which he says he had had on some former occasion on the very point under consideration. The object of the vision was, to show that mortal man could not be more just than God, and that such was the purity of the Most High, that he put no confidence comparatively even in the angels. The design for which this is introduced here is, evidently, to reprove what he deemed the unfounded self-confidence of Job. He supposed that he had been placing an undue reliance on his own integrity; that he had not a just view of the infinite holiness of God, and had not been aware of the true state of his own heart. The highest earthly excellency, is the meaning of Eliphaz, fades away before God, and furnishes no ground for self-reliance. It is so imperfect, so feeble, so far from what it should be, that it is no wonder that a God so holy and exalted should disregard it: He designed also, by describing this vision, to reprove Job for seeming to be more wise than his Maker in arraigning him for his dealings, and uttering the language of complaint. The word “thing” here means a word (Hebrew), a communication, a revelation.

Was secretly brought to me Margin, “by stealth.” The Hebrew word **בִּלְטָא**^{<41589>} means “to steal,” to take away by stealth, or secretly. Here it means, that the oracle was brought to him as it were by stealth. It did not come openly and plainly, but in secrecy and silence — as a thief approaches a dwelling. An expression similar to this occurs in Lucian, in Amor. p. 884, as quoted by Schultens, **κλεπτομενη**^{<2813>} **λαλικ και**^{<2532>} **ψιθυρισμος**^{<5587>}.

And mine ear received a little thereof Dr. Good translates this, “And mine ear received a whisper along with it.” Noyes, “And mine ear caught a

whisper thereof.” The Vulgate, “And my ear received secretly the pulsations of its whisper” — *venas susurri ejus*. The word rendered “a little,” $\hat{y}mv$, occurs only here and in ^{<18264>}Job 26:14, where it is also rendered little. It means, according to Gesenius, a transient sound rapidly uttered and swiftly passing away. Symm. $\psi\iota\theta\upsilon\rho\iota\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$ ^{<5587>} — a whisper. According to Castell, it means a sound confused and feeble, such as one receives when a man is speaking in a hurried manner, and when he cannot catch all that is said. This is probably the sense here. Eliphaz means to say that he did not get all that might have been said in the vision. It occurred in such circumstances, and what was said was delivered in such a manner, that he did not hear it all distinctly. But he heard an important sentiment, which he proceeds to apply to the case of Job. — It has been made a question whether Eliphaz really had such a vision, or whether he only supposed such a case, and whether the whole representation is not poetic. The fair construction is, that he had had such a vision. In such a supposition there is nothing inconsistent with the mode in which the will of God was made known in ancient times; and in the sentiments uttered there is nothing inconsistent with what might have been spoken by a celestial visitant on such an occasion. All that was spoken was in accordance with the truth everywhere revealed in the Scriptures, though Eliphaz perverted it to prove that Job was insincere and hypocritical. The general sentiment in the oracle was, that man was not pure and holy compared with his Maker; that no one was free from guilt in his sight; that there was no virtue in man in which God could put entire confidence; and that, therefore, all were subjected to trials and to death. But this general sentiment he proceeds to apply to Job, and regards it as teaching, that since he was overwhelmed with such special afflictions, there must have been some secret sin of which he was guilty, which was the cause of his calamities.

^{<8043>}**Job 4:13.** *In thoughts* Amidst the tumultuous and anxious thoughts which occur in the night. The Hebrew word rendered thoughts, $\mu\upsilon\rho$ [v , means thoughts which divide and distract the mind.

From the visions of the night On the meaning of the word visions, see the notes at ^{<2000>}Isaiah 1:1. This was a common mode in which the will of God was made known in ancient times. For an extended description of this method of communicating the will of God, the reader may consult my Introduction to Isaiah, Section 7.

When deep sleep falleth on men The word here rendered deep sleep, **hmdAt**, commonly denotes a profound repose or slumber brought upon man by divine agency. So Schultens in loc. It is the word used to describe the “deep sleep” which God brought upon Adam when he took from his side a rib to form Eve, ^{<0121>}Genesis 2:21; and that, also, which came upon Abraham, when an horror of great darkness fell upon him; ^{<01512>}Genesis 15:12. It means here profound repose, and the vision which he saw was at that solemn hour when the world is usually locked in slumber. Umbreit renders this, “In the time of thoughts, before the night-visions,” and supposes that Eliphaz refers to the time that was especially favorable to meditation and to serious contemplation before the time of sleep and of dreams. In support of this use of the preposition ^{mi^{h4480}}, he appeals to ^{<01216>}Haggai 2:16, and Noldius Concord. Part. p. 546. Our common version, however, has probably preserved the true sense of the passage. It is impossible to conceive anything more sublime than this whole description. It was midnight. There was solitude and silence all around. At that fearful hour this vision came, and a sentiment was communicated to Eliphaz of the utmost importance, and fitted to make the deepest possible impression. The time; the quiet; the form of the image; its passing along, and then suddenly standing still; the silence, and then the deep and solemn voice — all were fitted to produce the proroundest awe. So graphic and so powerful is this description, that it would be impossible to read it — and particularly at midnight and alone — without something of the feeling of awe and horror which Eliphaz says it produced on his mind. It is a description which for power has probably never been equalled, though an attempt to describe an apparition from the invisible world has been often made. Virgil has attempted such a description, which, though exceedingly beautiful, is far inferior to this of the Sage of Teman. It is the description of the appearance of the wife of AENEAS:

*Infelix simulacrum atque ipsius umbra Crouasæ
Visa mihi ante oculos, et nora major imago.*

Obstupui, steteruntque comas, et vox faucibus hæsit. — AEn. ii. 772.

— “At length she hears, And sudden through the shades of night appears; Appears no more Creusa, nor my wife, But a pale spectre, larger than the life. Aghast, astonished, and struck dumb with fear, I stood: like bristles rose my stiffened hair.” — DRYDEN.

In the poems of Ossian, there are several descriptions of apparitions or ghosts, probably more sublime than are to be found in any other uninspired writings. One of the most magnificent of these, is that of the Spirit of Loda, which I will copy, in order that it may be compared with the one before us. “The wan cold moon rose in the east. Sleep descended on the youths. Their blue helmets glitter to the beam; the fading fire decays. But sleep did not rest on the king. He rose in the midst of his arms, and slowly ascended the hill, to behold the flame of Sarno’s tower. The flame was dim and distant: the moon hid her red flame in the east. A blast came from the mountain; on its wings was the Spirit or LODA. He came to his place in his terrors, and shook his dusky spear. His eyes appear like flames in his dark face; his voice is like distant thunder. Fingal advanced his spear amid the night, and raised his voice on high. ‘Son of Night, retire: call thy winds, and fly! Why dost thou come to my presence with thy shadowy arms? Do I fear thy gloomy form, spirit of dismal Loda? Weak is thy shield of clouds; feeble is that meteor, thy sword! The blast rolls them together; and thou thyself art lost. Fly from my presence, Son of Night! Call thy winds and fly!’ ‘Dost thou force me from my place?’ replied the hollow voice. ‘The people bend before me. I turn the battle in the field of the brave. I look on the nations, and they vanish; my nostrils pour the blast of death. I come abroad on the winds; the tempests are before my face, but my dwelling is calm above the clouds; the fields of my rest are pleasant.’” Compare also, the description of the Ghost in Hamlet.

Job 4:14. *Fear came upon me* Margin, “Met me.” The Chaldee Paraphrase renders this, “a tempest,” אֲרִיז. The Septuagint, φοικη — “shuddering,” or “horror.” The sense is, that he became greatly alarmed at the vision.

Which made all my bones to shake Margin, as in Hebrew, the multitude of my bones. A similar image is employed by Virgil,

*Obstupere auiinis, gelidusque per ima cucurrit
Ossa tremor; — AEn. ii. 120.*

“A cold tremor ran through all their bones.”

Job 4:15. *Then a spirit passed before my face* He does not intimate whether it was the spirit of a man, or an angel who thus appeared. The belief in such apparitions was common in the early ages, and indeed has prevailed at all times. No one can demonstrate that God could not

communicate his will in such a manner as this, or by a messenger deputed from his immediate presence to impart valuable truth to people.

The hair of my flesh stood up This is an effect which is known often to be produced by fear. Sometimes the hair is made to turn white almost in an instant, as an effect of sudden alarm; but usually the effect is to make it stand on end. Seneca uses language remarkably similar to this in describing the effect of fear, in *Hercule OEtoeo*:

*Vagus per artus errat excussos tremor;
Erectus horret crinis. Impulsis adhuc
Star terror animis. et cor attonitum salit,
Pavidumque trepidis palpitat venis jecur.*

So Virgil,

Steteruntque comae, et vox faucibus haesit. — AEn. ii. 774.

See also AEn. iii. 48, iv. 289. So also AEn. xii. 868:

Arrectaeque horrore comae.

A similar description of the effect of fear is given in the Ghost's speech to Hamlet:

“But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood.
Make thy two eyes like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotty and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine.”

The fact here referred to — that fear or fright; causes the hair to stand on end — is too well established, and too common to admit a doubt. The cause may be, that sudden fear has the effect to drive the blood to the heart, as the seat of vitality, and the extremities are left cold, and the skin thus contracts, and the effect is to raise the hair.

~~8046~~ **Job 4:16.** *It stood still* It took a fixed position and looked on me. It at first glided by, or toward him, then stood in an immovable position, as if to attract his attention, and to prepare him for the solemn announcement which it was about to make. This was the point in which most horror

would be felt. We should be less alarmed at anything which a strange messenger should say, than to have him stand and fix his eyes steadily and silently upon us. Hence, Horatius, in "Hamlet," tortured by the imperturbable silence of the Ghost, earnestly entreated it to give him relief by speaking.

Hor. — What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometime march? By heaven, I charge thee, speak.

Mar. — It is offended.

Ber. — See: It stalks away.

Hor. — Stay; speak: speak, I charge thee speak. — Act i. Sc. i.

Re-enter Ghost.

Hor. — But, soft; behold! lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me. — Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice, Speak to me:
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me, Speak to me:
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,
If thou art privy to thy country's fate. O speak!
Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
Speak of it; stay, and speak. — Act i. Sc. i.

Enter Ghost

Hor. — Look, my lord; it comes!

Ham. — Angels and ministers of grace, defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee, Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me;
Let me not burst in ignorance! — Act 1:Sc. iv.

But I could not discern the form thereof This might have arisen from fear, or from the darkness of the night, or because the spirit was not distinct enough in its outline to enable him to do it. There is here just the kind of

obscurity which is essential to the sublime, and the statement of this circumstance is a master-stroke in the poet. A less perfect imagination would have attempted to describe the form of the spectre, and would have given an account of its shape, and eyes, and color. But none of these are here hinted at. The subject is left so that the imagination is most deeply impressed, and the whole scene has the aspect of the highest sublimity. Noyes very improperly renders this, “Its face I could not discern.” But the word used, **hmmdr**, does not mean “face” here merely; it means the form, figure, aspect, of the spectre.

An image was before mine eyes Some form; some appearance was before me, whose exact figure I could not mark or describe.

There was silence Margin, “I heard a still voice.” So Rosenmuller says that the word here, **hmmdj**^{<h1827>}, does not mean silence, but a gentle breeze, or air — auram, lenem — such as Elijah heard after the tempest had gone by, and when God spoke to him, ^{<1191>}1 Kings 19:12,13. Grotius supposes that it means here the **tbæ**^{<h1323>} **lwq**^{<h6963>}, or “daughter of the voice,” of which the Jewish Robbins speak so often — the still and gentle voice in which God spoke to people. The word used **hmmdj**^{<h1827>} usually means silence, stillness, as of the winds after a storm, a calm, ^{<h979>}Psalm 107:29. The Septuagint renders it, “I heard a gentle breeze, **αυραυ**, and a voice,” **και**^{<2532>} **φωνη**^{<5456>}. But it seems to me that the common reading is preferable. There was stillness — a solemn, awful silence, and then he heard a voice impressively speaking. The stillness was designed to fix the attention, and to prepare the mind for the sublime announcement which was to be made.

^{<8017>}**Job 4:17.** *Shall mortal man* Or, shall feeble man. The idea of “mortal” is not necessarily implied in the word used here, **vwna**^{<h582>}. It means man; and is usually applied to the lower classes or ranks of people; see the notes at ^{<2381>}Isaiah 8:1. The common opinion in regard to this word is, that it is derived from **vna**, to be sick, or ill at ease; and then desperate, or incurable — as of a disease or wound; ^{<41518>}Jeremiah 15:18; ^{<31018>}Micah 1:9; Job. 34:6. Gesenius (Lex) calls this derivation in question; but if it be the correct idea, then the word used here originally referred to man as feeble, and as liable to sickness and calamity. I see no reason to doubt that the common idea is correct, and that it refers to man as weak and feeble. The other word used here to denote man **rbq**^{<h1397>} is given to him on account of his strength. The

two words, therefore, embrace man whether considered as feeble or strong — and the idea is, that none of the race could be more pure than God.

Be more just than God Some expositors have supposed that the sense of this expression in the Hebrew is, “Can man be pure before God, or in the sight of God?” They allege that it could not have been made a question whether man could be more pure than God, or more just than his Maker. Such is the view presented of the passage by Rosenmuller, Good, Noyes, and Umbreit:

*“Shall mortal man be just before God?
Shall man be pure before his Maker?”*

In support of this view, and this use of the Hebrew preposition **M**, Rosenmuller appeals to ~~2515~~Jeremiah 51:5; ~~4629~~Numbers 32:29; ~~2548~~Ezekiel 34:18. This, however, is not wholly satisfactory. The more literal translation is that which occurs in the common version, and this accords with the Vulgate and the Chaldee. If so understood, it is designed to repress and reprove the pride of men, which arraigns the equity of the divine government, and which seems to be wiser and better than God. Thus, understood, it would be a pertinent reproof of Job, who in his complaint (Job 3) had seemed to be wiser than God. He had impliedly charged him with injustice and want of goodness. All people who complain against God, and who arraign the equity and goodness of the divine dispensations, claim to be wiser and better than he is. They would have ordered flyings more wisely, and in a better manner. They would have kept the world from the disorders and sins which actually exist, and would have made it pure and happy. How pertinent, therefore, was it to ask whether man could be more pure or just than his Maker! And how pertinent was the solemn question propounded in the hearing of Eliphaz by the celestial messenger — a question that seems to have been originally proposed in view of the complaints and murmurs of a self-confident race!

~~808~~**Job 4:18.** *Behold, he put no trust in his servants* These are evidently the words of the oracle that appeared to Eliphaz; see Schultens, in loc. The word servants here refers to angels; and the idea is, that God was so pure that he did not confide even in the exalted holiness of angels — meaning that their holiness was infinitely inferior to his. The design is to state that God had the highest possible holiness, such as to render the holiness of all others, no matter how exalted, as nothing — as all lesser lights are as nothing before the glory of the sun. The Chaldee renders this, “Lo, in his

servants, the prophets, he does not confide;” but the more correct reference is undoubtedly to the angels.

And his angels he charged with folly Margin, Or, ”Nor in his angels, in whom he put light.” The different rendering in the text and in the margin, has arisen from the supposed ambiguity of the word employed here — **hl ht**. It is a word which occurs nowhere else, and hence, it is difficult to determine its true signification. Walton renders it, gloriatio glorying; Jerome, pravitas, wickedness; the Septuagint, **σκολιον** ^{<4646>}, fault, blemish; Dr. Good. default, or defection; Noyes, frailty. Gesenius says that the word is derived from **l l** **ḥ** ^{<1984>}, (No. 4), to be foolish. So also Kimchi explains it. According to this, the idea is that of foolishness — i.e. they are far inferior to God in wisdom; or, as the word folly in the Scriptures is often synonymous with sin, it might mean that their purity was so far inferior to his as to appear like impurity and sin. The essential idea is, that even the holiness of angels was not to be compared with God. It is not that they were polluted and unholy, for, in their measure, they are perfect; but it is that their holiness was as nothing compared with the infinite perfection of God. It is to be remembered that a part of the angels had sinned, and they had shown that their integrity was not to be confided in; and whatever might be the holiness of a creature, it was possible to conceive that he might sin. But no such idea could for a moment enter the mind in regard to God. The object of this whole argument is to show, that if confidence could not be reposed in the angels, and if all their holiness was as nothing before God, little confidence could be placed in man; and that it was presumption for him to sit in judgment on the equity of the divine dealings.

Job 4:19. *How much less* **āāæ** ^{<1639>}. This particle has the general sense of addition, accession, especially of something more important; ”yea more, besides, even.” Gesenius. The meaning here is, “how much more true is this of man!” He puts no confidence in his angels; he charges them with frailty; how much more strikingly true must this be of man! It is not merely, as our common translation would seem to imply, that he put much less confidence in man than in angels; it is, that all he had said must be more strikingly true of man, who dwelt in so frail and humble a habitation.

In them that dwell in houses of clay In man. The phrase “houses of clay” refers to the body made of dust. The sense is, that man, from the fact that he dwells in such a tabernacle, is far inferior to the pure spirits that surround the throne of God, and much more liable to sin. The body is

represented as a temporary tent, tabernacle, or dwelling for the soul. That dwelling is soon to be taken down, and its tenant, the soul, to be removed to other abodes. So Paul (^{<4081>}2 Corinthians 5:1) speaks of the body as ἡ ^{<3588>} ἐπιγείος ^{<1919>} ἡμῶν ^{<2257>} οἰκία ^{<3614>} τοῦ ^{<3588>} σκηνῶς ^{<4636>} — “our earthly house of this tabernacle.” So Plato speaks of it as γήινον σκηνῶς ^{<4636>} — an earthly tent; and so Aristophanes (Av. 587), among other contemptuous expressions applied to people, calls them πλάσματα ^{<4110>} πηλῶν ^{<4081>}, “vessels of clay.” The idea in the verse before us is beautiful, and as affecting as it is beautiful. A house of clay *Amh* was little fitted to bear the extremes of heat and cold, of storm and sunshine, of rain, and frost, and snow, and would soon crumble and decay. It must be a frail and temporary dwelling. It could not endure the changes of the seasons and the lapse of years like a dwelling of granite or marble. So with our bodies. They can bear little. They are frail, infirm, and feeble. They are easily prostrated, and soon fall back to their native dust. How can they who dwell in such edifices, be in any way compared with the Infinite and Eternal God?

Whose foundation is in the dust A house to be firm and secure should be founded on a rock; see ^{<4075>}Matthew 7:25. The figure is kept up here of comparing man with a house; and as a house that is built on the sand or the dust may be easily washed away (compare ^{<4076>}Matthew 7:26,27), and could not be confided in, so it was with man. He was like such a dwelling; and no more confidence could be reposed in him than in such a house.

Which are crushed They are broken in pieces, trampled on, destroyed *akd*, by the most insignificant objects.

Before the moth See the notes at ^{<2810>}Isaiah 50:9; 51:8. The word moth *v*[^{<4621>}], Greek σης ^{<4597>}, Vulgate, tinea, denotes properly an insect which flies by night, and particularly that which attaches itself to woollen cloth and consumes it. It is possible, however, that the word here denotes the moth-worm. This

“moth-worm is one state of the creature. which first is inclosed in an egg, and thence issues in the form of a worm; after a time, it quits the form of a worm, to assume that of the complete state of the insect, or the moth.” Calmet.

The comparison here, therefore, is not that of a moth flying against a house to upset it, nor of the moth consuming man as it does a garment, but it is that of a feeble worm that preys upon man and destroys him; and the idea is, that the most feeble of all objects may crush him. The following remarks from Niebuhr (*Reisebeschreibung von Arabien*, S. 133), will serve to illustrate this passage, and show that so feeble a thing as a worm may destroy human life.

“There is in Yemen, in India, and on the coasts of the South sea, a common sickness caused by the Guinea, or nerve-worm, known to European physicians by the name of vena Medinensis. It is supposed in Yemen that this worm is drunk in from the bad water which the inhabitants of those countries are under a necessity of using. Many of the Arabians on this account take the precaution to strain the water which they drink. If anyone has by accident swallowed an egg of this worm, no trace of it is to be seen until it appears on the skin; and the first indication of it there, is the irritation which is caused. On our physician, a few days before his death, five of these worms made their appearance, although we had been more than five months absent from Arabia. On the island of Charedsch, I saw a French officer, whose name was Le Page, who after a long and arduous journey, which he had made on foot, from Pondicherry to Surat, through the heart of India, found the traces of such a worm in him, which he endeavored to extract from his body. He believed that he had swallowed it when drinking the waters of Mahratta. The worm is not dangerous, if it can be drawn from the body without being broken. The Orientals are accustomed, as soon as the worm makes its appearance through the skin, to wind it up on a piece of straw, or of dry wood. It is finer than a thread, and is from two to three feet in length. The winding up of the worm frequently occupies a week; and no further inconvenience is experienced, than the care which is requisite not to break it. If, however, it is broken, it draws itself back into the body, and then becomes dangerous. Lameness, gangrene, or the loss of life itself is the result.”

See the notes at Isaiah referred to above. The comparison of man with a worm, or an insect, on account of his feebleness and shortness of life, is common in the sacred writings, and in the classics. The following passage from Pindar, quoted by Schultens, hints at the same idea:

Επαμεροι , τι δε τις ; τι δ' ου τις ;
 Σκιας οναρ ανθρωποι .

“Things of a day! What is anyone? What is he not? Men are the dream of a shadow!” — The idea in the passage before us is, that people are exceedingly frail, and that in such creatures no confidence can be placed. How should such a creature, therefore, presume to arraign the wisdom and equity of the divine dealings? How can he be more just or wise than God?

Job 4:20. *They are destroyed from morning to evening* Margin, “beaten in pieces.” This is nearer to the Hebrew. The phrase “from morning to evening” means between the morning and the evening; that is, they live scarcely a single day; see the notes at ²³⁸⁰Isaiah 38:12. The idea is, not the continuance of the work of destruction from morning to evening; but that man’s life is exceedingly short, so short that he scarce seems to live from morning to night. What a beautiful expression, and how true! How little qualified is such a being to sit in judgment on the doings of the Most High!

They perish forever Without being restored to life. They pass away, and nothing is ever seen of them again!

Without any regarding it Without its being noticed. How strikingly true is this! What a narrow circle is affected by the death of a man, and how soon does even that circle cease to be affected! A few relatives and friends feel it and weep over the loss; but the mass of men are unconcerned. It is like taking a grain of sand from the sea-shore, or a drop of water from the ocean. There is indeed one less, but the place is soon supplied, and the ocean rolls on its tumultuous billows as though none had been taken away. So with human life. The affairs of people will roll on; the world will be as busy, and active, and thoughtless as though we had not been; and soon, O how painfully soon to human pride, will our names be forgotten! The circle of friends will cease to weep, and then cease to remember us. The last memorial that we lived, will be gone. The house that we built, the bed on which we slept, the counting-room that we occupied, the monuments that we raised, the books that we made, the stone that we directed to be placed over our graves, will all be gone; and the last memento that we ever lived, will have faded away! How vain is man! How vain is pride! How foolish is ambition! How important the announcement that there is another world, where we may live on forever!

Job 4:21. *Doth not their excellency ...* Dr. Good renders this, “Their fluttering round is over with them,” by a very forced construction of the passage. Translators and expositors have been very much divided in opinion as to its meaning; but the sense seems to be, that whatever is excellent in people is torn away or removed. Their excellence does not keep them from death, and they are taken off before they are truly wise. The word “excellency” here refers not only to moral excellency or virtue, but everything in which they excel others. Whatever there is in them of strength, or virtue, or influence, is removed. The word used here *rty*,^{<43499>} means, literally, something hanging over or redundant (from *rtye*,^{<43498>} to hang over, be redundant, or to remain), and hence, it means abundance or remainder, and then that which exceeds or abounds. It is thus applied to any distinguished virtue or excellency, as that which exceeds the ordinary limits or bounds. Men perish; and however eminent they may have been, they are soon cut off, and vanish away. The object here is to show how weak, and frail, and unworthy of confidence are people even in their most elevated condition.

They die, even without wisdom That is, before they become truly wise. The object is to show, that people are so short-lived compared with angels, that they have no opportunity to become distinguished for wisdom. Their days are few; and however careful may be their observation, before they have had time to become truly wise they are hurried away. They are, therefore, wholly disqualified to sit in judgment on the doings of God, and to arraign, as Job had done, the divine wisdom.

Here closes the oracle which was addressed to Eliphaz. It is a description of unrivaled sublimity. In the sentiments that were addressed to Eliphaz, there is nothing that is contradictory to the other communications which God has made to people, or to what is taught by reason. Every reader of this passage must feel that the thoughts are singularly sublime, and that they are such as are adapted to make a deep impression on the mind. The error in Eliphaz consisted in the application which he makes of them to Job, and in the inference which he draws, that he must have been a hypocrite. This inference is drawn in the following chapter. As the oracle stands here, it is pertinent to the argument which Eliphaz had commenced, and just fitted to furnish a reproof to Job for the irreverent manner in which he had spoken, and the complaints which he had brought (Job 3) against the dealings of God. Let us learn from the oracle:

- (1) That man cannot be more just than God; and let this be an abiding principle of our lives;
- (2) Not to complain at his dispensations, but to confide in his superior wisdom and goodness;
- (3) That our opportunities of observation, and our rank in existence, are as nothing compared with those of the angels, who are yet so inferior to God as to be charged with folly;
- (4) That our foundation is in the dust, and that the most insignificant object may sweep us away; and
- (5) That in these circumstances humility becomes us.

Our proper situation is in the dust; and whatever calamities may befall us, we should confide in God, and feel that he is qualified to direct our affairs, and the affairs of the universe.

NOTES ON JOB 5

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~~**Job 5:1.** *Call now* The expressions used here, as Noyes has well observed, seem to be derived from the law, where the word “call” denotes the language of the complainant, and answer that of the defendant. According to this, the meaning of the words “call now” is, in jus voca: that is, call the Deity to account, or bring an action against him: or more properly, enter into an argument or litigation, as before a tribunal; see the notes at Isaiah 41:1, where similar language occurs.

If there be any that will answer thee If there is anyone who will respond to thee in such a trial. Noyes renders this, “See if He will answer thee;” that is, “See if the Deity will condescend to enter into a judicial controversy with thee, and give an account of his dealings toward thee.” Dr. Good renders it, “Which of these can come forward to thee; i.e. “Which of these weakly, ephemeral, perishing insects — which of these nothings can render thee any assistance?” The meaning is probably, “Go to trial, if you can find any respondent; if there is any one willing to engage in such a debate; and let the matter be fairly adjudicated and determined. Let an argument be entered into before a competent tribunal, and the considerations pro and con be urged on the point now under consideration.” The desire of Eliphaz was, that there should be a fair investigation, where all that could be said on one side or the other of the question would be urged, and where there would be a decision of the important point in dispute. He evidently felt that Job would be foiled in the argument before whomsoever it should be conducted, and whoever might take up the opposite side; and hence, he says that he could get no one of “the saints” to assist him in the argument. In the expression, “if there be any that will answer thee,” he may mean to intimate that he would find no one who would be willing even to go into an investigation of the subject. The case was so plain, the views of Job were so obviously wrong, the arguments for the opinion of Eliphaz were so obvious, that he doubted whether anyone could be found who would be willing to make it the occasion of a set and formal trial, as if there could be any doubt about it.

And to which of the saints wilt thou turn? Margin, as in Hebrew “look.” That is, to which of them wilt thou look to be an advocate for such sentiments, or which of them would be willing to go into an argument on

so plain a subject? Grotius supposes that Eliphaz, having boasted that he had produced a divine revelation in his favor (Job 4), now calls upon Job to produce, if he can, something of the same kind in his defense, or to see if there were any of the heavenly spirits who would give a similar revelation in his favor. The word here rendered “saints” **μυνη** means properly those who are sanctified or holy; and it may be either applied to holy men, or to angels. It is generally supposed that it here refers to angels. So Schultens, Rosenmuller, Noyes, Good, and others, understand it. The word is often used in this sense in the Scriptures. So the Septuagint understands it here — **η** ^{<2228>} **ειτινα** **αγγελων** ^{<32>} **αγιων** ^{<40>} **οψη** ^{<3700>}. Such is probably its meaning; and the sense of the passage is, “Call now upon anyone, and you will find none willing to be the advocate of such sentiments as you have urged. No holy beings — human beings or angels — would defend them.” By this, probably, Eliphaz designed to show Job that he differed from all holy being, and that his views were not those of a truly pious man. If he could find no one, either among holy angels or pious men, to be the advocate of his opinions, it followed that he must be in error.

<HRD> Job 5:2. *For wrath killeth the foolish man* That is, the wrath of God. The word foolish here is used as synonymous with wicked, because wickedness is supreme folly. The general proposition here is, that the wicked are cut off, and that they are overtaken with heavy calamities in this life. In proof of this, Eliphaz appeals in the following verses to his own observation: The implied inference is, that Job, having had all his possessions taken away, and having been overwhelmed with unspeakably great personal calamities, was to be regarded as having been a great sinner. Some suppose, however, that the word “wrath” here relates to the indignation or the repining of the individual himself, and that the reference is to the fact that such wrath or repining preys upon the spirit, and draws down the divine vengeance. This is the view of Schultens, and of Noyes. But it seems more probable that Eliphaz means to state the proposition, that the wrath of God burns against the wicked, and that the following verses are an illustration of this sentiment, derived from his own observation.

And envy Margin, “indignation.” Jerome, invidia, envy. Septuagint **ζηλος** ^{<2205>}. Castellio, severitas ac vehementia. The Hebrew word **hanq** means jealousy, envy, ardor, zeal. It may be applied to any strong affection of the mind; any fervent, glowing, and burning emotion. Gesenius supposes it

means here envy, as excited by the prosperity of others. To me it seems that the connection requires us to understand it of wrath, or indignation, as in ^{<621>}Deuteronomy 29:20; ^{<996>}Psalms 79:5. As applied to God, it often means his jealousy, or his anger, when the affections of people are placed on other objects than himself; ^{<951>}Numbers 25:11; ^{<3018>}Zephaniah 1:18, et al.

Slayeth the silly one Good and Noyes render this, “the weak man.” Jerome, parvulum, the little one. The Septuagint, *πεπλανημενον* ^{<4105>}, the erring. Walton, ardelionem, the busy-body. The Hebrew word *htp̄is* from *htp̄*, ^{<6601>}, to open, go expand; and hence, the participle is applied to one who opens his lips, or whose mouth is open; that is, a garrulous person, ^{<3109>}Proverbs 20:19; and also to one who is open-hearted, frank, ingenuous, unsuspecting; and hence, one who is easily influenced by others, or whose heart may be easily enticed. Thus, it comes to mean one who is simple and foolish. In this sense it is used here, to denote one who is so simple and foolish as to be drawn aside by weak arguments and unfounded opinions. I have no doubt that Eliphaz meant, by insinuation, to apply this to Job, as being a weak-minded man, for having allowed the views which he entertained to make such an impression on his mind, and for having expressed himself as he had done. The proposition is general; but it would be easy to understand how he intended it to be applied.

^{<818>}**Job 5:3.** *I have seen the foolish* The wicked. To confirm the sentiment which he had just advanced, Eliphaz appeals to his own observation, and says that though the wicked for a time seem to be prosperous, yet he had observed that they were soon overtaken with calamity and cut down. He evidently means that prosperity was no evidence of the divine favor; but that when it had continued for a little time, and was then withdrawn, it was proof that the man who had been prospered was at heart a wicked man. It was easy to understand that he meant that this should be applied to Job, who, though he had been favored with temporary prosperity, was now revealed to be at heart a wicked man. The sentiment here advanced by Eliphaz, as the result of his observation, strikingly accords with the observation of David, as expressed in Psalm 23:

“I have seen the wicked in great power, And spreading himself like a green bay-tree; Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: Yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.” — ^{<9218>}Psalm 23:35,36.

Taking root This figure, to denote prosperous and rapid growth, is often used in the Scriptures. Thus, in ~~<BOOK>~~ Psalm 1:3:

“And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, That bringeth forth his fruit in his season.”

So ~~<2776>~~ Isaiah 27:6:

“Those that come out of Jacob shall he cause to take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, And shall fill the face of the world with fruit.”

So ~~<8819>~~ Psalm 80:9,10:

“Thou preparedst room before it, And didst cause it to take deep root, And it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, And the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars.”

But suddenly Meaning either that calamity came upon him suddenly — as it had upon Job, that is, without any apparent preparation, or that; calamity came before a great while, that is, that this prosperity did not continue. Probably there is an implied reference hereto the case of Job, meaning that he had known just such instances before; and as the case of Job accorded with what he had before seen, he hastened to the conclusion that Job must have been a wicked man.

I cursed his habitation I had occasion to regard it as accursed; that is, I witnessed the downfall of his fortunes, and pronounced his habitation accursed. I saw that God regarded it as such, and that he had suddenly punished him. This accords with the observation of David, referred to above.

~~<8814>~~ **Job 5:4.** *His children are far from safety* That is, this is soon manifest by their being cut off or subjected to calamity. The object of Eliphaz is, to state the result of his own observation, and to show how calamity overtook the wicked though they even prospered for a time. He begins with that which a man would feel most — the calamity which comes upon his children, and says that God would punish him in them. Every word of this would go to the heart of Job; for he could not but feel that it was aimed at him, and that the design was to prove that the calamities that had come upon his children were a proof of his own wickedness and of the divine displeasure. It is remarkable that Job listens to this with the utmost

patience. There is no interruption of the speaker; no breaking in upon the argument of his friend; no mark of uneasiness. Oriental politeness required that a speaker should be heard attentively through whatever he might say. See the Introduction, Section 7. (13). Cutting and severe, therefore, as this strain of remark must have been, the sufferer sat meekly and heard it all, and waited for the appropriate time when an answer might be returned.

And they are crushed in the gate The gate of a city in ancient times was the chief place of concourse, and was the place where public business was usually transacted, and where courts of justice were held; see ^{<0230>}Genesis 23:10; ^{<0219>}Deuteronomy 21:19; 25:6,7; ^{<0801>}Ruth 4:1ff: ^{<0275>}Psalms 127:5; ^{<0222>}Proverbs 22:22. The Greeks also held their courts in some public place of business. Hence, the forum, *αγορα* ^{<58>}, was also a place for fairs. See Jahn's Archaeology, Section 247. Some suppose that the meaning here is, that they were oppressed and trodden down by the concourse in the gate. But the more probable meaning is, that they found no one to advocate their cause; that they were subject to oppression and injustice in judicial decisions, and then when their parent was dead, no one would stand up to vindicate them from respect to his memory. The idea is, that though there might be temporary prosperity, yet that it would not be long before heavy calamities would come upon the children of the wicked.

^{<0815>}**Job 5:5.** *Whose harvest the hungry eateth up* That is, they are not permitted to enjoy the avails of their own labor. The harvest field is subject to the depredations of others, who contrive to possess themselves of it, and to consume it.

And taketh it even out of the thorns Or, he seizes it to the very thorns. That is, the famished robber seizes the whole of the harvest. He takes it all away, even to the thistles, and chaff, and cockle, and whatever impure substances there may be growing with the grain. He does not wait to separate the grain from the other substances, but consumes it all. He spares nothing.

And the robber swalloweth up their substance Noyes renders this, as Gesenius proposes to do, "and a snare gapeth after his substance;" Dr. Good, "and rigidly swoopeth up their substance." Rosenmuller much better,

Cujusquo facultates oxhauriebant sitibundi,

copying exactly the version of Castello. The Vulgate in a similar manner, Et bibent sitientes divitias ejus — And the thirsty drink up his wealth. The Septuagint, εκσιφωνισθειν αυτων ^{<846>} ἦ ^{<3588>} ισχυς ^{<2479>} — “should their power be absorbed.” The true sense, as I conceive, is, “the thirsty gasp, or pant, after their wealth;” that is, they consume it. The word rendered in our common version “the robber μυμχ is, according to the ancient versions, the same as μυαμχ, the thirsty, and this sense the parallelism certainly requires. So obvious is this, that it is better to suppose a slight error in the Hebrew text, than to give it the signification of a snare,” as Noyes does, and as Gesenius (Lexicon) proposes. The word rendered “swalloweth up” אַאע ^{<17602>} means, properly, to breathe hard, to pant, to blow; and then to yawn after, to desire, to absorb; and the sense here is, that the thirsty consume their property. The whole figure is taken from robbers and freebooters; and I have no doubt that Eliphaz meant impliedly to allude to the ease of Job, and to say that he had known just such cases, where, though there was great temporary prosperity, yet before long the children of the man who was prospered, and who professed to be pious, but was not, were crushed, and his property taken away by robbers. It was this similarity of the case of Job to the facts which he had observed, that staggered him so much in regard to his character.

<886> **Job 5:6.** *Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust* Margin, “or iniquity.” The marginal reading here has been inserted from the different meanings attached to the Hebrew word. That word וַא properly means nothingness, or vanity; then nothingness as to worth, unworthiness, wickedness, iniquity; and then the consequences of iniquity — adversity, calamity, affliction; <1284> Psalm 55:4; <1278> Proverbs 22:8; <1900> Psalm 90:10; Job. 15:35. The Septuagint renders it κοπος ^{<2873>}, “labor,” or “trouble.” The Vulgate, Nihil in terra, sine causa — “there is nothing on the earth without a cause.” The general sense is plain. It is, that afflictions are not to be ascribed to chance, or that they are not without intelligent design. They do not come up like thistles, brambles, and thorns, from the unconscious earth. They have a cause. They are under the direction of God. The object of Eliphaz in the statement is, to show to Job that it was improper to complain, and that he should commit his cause to a God of infinite power and wisdom; <888> Job 5:8ff. Afflictions, Eliphaz says, could not be avoided. Man was born unto them. He ought to expect them, and when they come, they should be submitted to as ordered by an intelligent, wise, and good

Being. This is one true ground of consolation in afflictions. They do not come from the unconscious earth: they do not spring up of themselves. Though it is true that man is born to them, and must expect them, yet it is also true that they are ordered in infinite wisdom, and that they always have a design.

Neither doth trouble spring out of the ground The Septuagint renders this, “Nor will affliction spring up from the mountains.”

Job 5:7. *Yet man is born unto trouble* All this is connected with the sentiment in ^{<888>}Job 5:8ff. The meaning is, that “since afflictions are ordered by an intelligent Being, and since man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward, therefore it is wise to commit our cause to God, and not to complain against him.” Margin, or labor. The word here **l m**, ^{<15999>} rather means trouble, or affliction, than labor. The sense is, that as certainly as man is born, so sure is it that he will have trouble. It follows from the condition of our being, as certainly as that unconscious objects will follow the laws of their nature — that sparks will ascend. This seems to have a proverbial cast, and was doubtless regarded as a sentiment universally true. It is as true now as it was then; for it is still the great law of our being, that trouble as certainly comes sooner or later, as that material objects obey the laws of nature which God has impressed on them.

As the sparks fly upward The Hebrew expression here is very beautiful — “as ^{<1121>}**Be** ^{<1121>}**āvr** — the sons of flame fly.” The word used means flame, lightning; the sons, or children of the flame, are that which it produces; i.e. sparks. Gesenius strangely renders it, “sons of the lightning; i.e. birds of prey which fly as swift as the lightning.” So Dr. Good, “As the bird-tribes are made to fly upwards.” So Umbreit renders it, Gleichwie die Brut des Raubgefugels sich hoch in Fluge hebt — “as a flock of birds of prey elevate themselves on the wing.” Noyes adopts the construction of Gesenius; partly on the principle that man would be more likely to be compared to birds, living creatures, than to sparks. There is considerable variety in the interpretation of the passage. The Septuagint renders it, **νεοσσοι** ^{<3502>} **δε** ^{<1161>} **γυπος** — the young of the vulture. The Chaldee, ^{<1121>}**Be** ^{<1121>}**āvr** — “the sons of demons.” Syriac “Sons of birds.” Jerome, “Man is born to labor, and the bird to flight” — et avis ad volatum. Schultens renders it, “glittering javelins,” and Arius Montanus, “sons of the live coal.” It seems to me that our common version has expressed the true meaning. But the idea is not essentially varied whichever interpretation

is adopted. It is, that as sparks ascend, or as birds fly upward — following the laws of their being — so is trouble the lot of man. It certainly comes; and comes under the direction of a Being who has fixed the laws of the inferior creation. It would be wise for man, therefore, to resign himself to God in the times when those troubles come. He should not sit down and complain at this condition of things, but should submit to it as the law of his being, and should have sufficient confidence in God to believe that he orders it aright.

Job 5:8. *I would seek unto God* Our translators have omitted here the adversative particle **וְ** *wa* but, yet, nevertheless, and have thus marred the connection. The meaning of Eliphaz, I take to be, “that since affliction is ordered by an intelligent Being, and does not spring out of the ground, therefore he would commit his cause to God, and look to him.” Jerome has well expressed it, *Quam ob rem ego deprecabor Dominum*. Some have understood this as meaning that Eliphaz himself was in the habit of committing his cause to God, and that he exhorted Job to imitate his example. But the correct sense is that which regards it as counsel given to Job to look to God because afflictions are the result of intelligent design, and because God had shown himself to be worthy of the confidence of people. The latter point Eliphaz proceeds to argue in the following verses.

Job 5:9. *Which doeth great things* The object of this is, to show why Job should commit his cause to God. The reason suggested is, that he had showed himself qualified to govern the world by the great and wonderful acts which he performed. Eliphaz, therefore, proceeds to expatiate on what God had done, and thus states the ancient belief in regard to his sovereignty over the world. This strain of reasoning continues to the end of the chapter. There is great beauty and force in it; and though we have, through the revelations of the New Testament, some more enlarged views of the government of God and of the design of affliction, yet perhaps there can be found nowhere a more beautiful argument to lead people to put confidence in God. The reason here stated is, that God does “great things,” and, therefore, we should commit ourselves to him. His works are vast and boundless; they are such as to impress the mind with a sense of his own immensity; and in such a being we should confide rather than in a feeble creature’s arm. Who, when he contemplates the vast universe which God has made, and surveys the starry world under the light of the modern

astronomy, can doubt that God does “great things,” and that the interests which we commit to him are safe?

And unsearchable Margin, “There is no search.” Septuagint ανεξιχνιαστα ^{<421>} — “whose footsteps cannot be traced.” The Hebrew word yyqj means searching out or examining; and the idea is here, that it is impossible fully to search out and comprehend what God does. See ^{<810>}Job 11:7. This is stated as a reason why we should look to him. We should expect things in his administration which we cannot understand. The argument of Eliphaz seems to be, that it was a matter of indisputable fact that there are many things in the government of God which are above our comprehension; and when he afflicts us, we should feel that this is a part of the doings of the incomprehensible God. Such mysterious dealings are to be expected, and they should not be allowed for a moment to shake our confidence in him.

Marvellous things Things that are wonderful, and are fitted to excite amazement. See the notes at ^{<306>}Isaiah 9:6.

Without number Margin, “Until there be no number.” The sense is, that it is impossible to estimate the number of those things in the universe over which he presides which are adapted to excite admiration. If the view of the universe entertained in the time of Eliphaz was fitted to overwhelm the mind by its vastness and by the number of the objects which were created, this astonishment is much greater now that the telescope has disclosed the wonders of the heavens above to man, and the microscope the not less amazing wonders of the world beneath him. Leuwenhoeck, by the aid of the microscope, discovered, he supposed, a thousand million animalculae, whose united bulk did not exceed the size of a grain of sand — all of whom are distinct formations, with all the array of functions necessary to life. Of the number also of the larger works of God, much interesting and overpowering truth is presented by the science of modern astronomy. As an instance of this, we may refer to the Milky Way, or the whitish, irregular zone, that goes round the whole heavens, and that can be seen at any season of the year, but particularly in the months of August, September, and November.

“This vast portion of the heavens is found to consist wholly of stars, crowded into immense clusters. On first presenting a telescope of considerable power to this splendid zone, we are lost

in astonishment at the number, the variety, and the beautiful configuration of the stars of which it is composed. In certain parts of it, every slight motion of the telescope presents now groups and new configurations; and the new and wondrous scene is continued over a space of many degrees in succession. In several fields of view, occupying a space of not more than twice the breadth of the moon, you perceive more of these twinkling luminaries, than all the stars visible to the naked eye throughout the whole canopy of heaven. The late Sir W. Herschel, in passing his telescope along a space of this zone fifteen degrees long, and two broad, descried at least fifty thousand stars, large enough to be distinctly counted; besides which, he suspected twice as many more, which could be seen only now and then by faint glimpses for want of sufficient light; that is, fifty times more than the acutest eye can discern in the whole heavens during the clearest night; and the space which they occupy is only the one thousand three hundred and seventy-fifth part of the visible canopy of the sky. On another occasion this astronomer perceived nearly six hundred stars in one field of view of his telescope; so that in the space of a quarter of an hour, one hundred and sixteen thousand stars passed in review before him. Now, were we to suppose every part of this zone equally filled with stars as the places now alluded to, there would be found in the Milky Way alone, no less than twenty million, one hundred and ninety thousand stars. In regard to the distance of some of these stars, it has been ascertained that some of the more remote are not less than five hundred times the distance of the nearest fixed star, or nearly two thousand billions of miles; a distance so great, that light, which flies at the rate of twelve million miles every minute, would require one thousand six hundred and forty years before it could traverse this mighty interval! The Milky Way is now, with good reason, considered to be the cluster of stars in which our sun is situated; and all the stars visible to the naked eye are only a few scattered orbs near the extremity of this cluster. Yet there is reason also to believe that the Milky Way, of which our system forms a part, is no mere than a single nebula, of which several thousands have already been discovered, which compose the universe; and that it bears no more proportion to the whole sidereal heavens than a small dusky speck which our telescopes enable us to descry in the heavens. Three thousand nebulae have already been discovered.

Suppose the number of stars in the whole Milky Way to be no more than ten million, and that each of the nebulae, at an average, contains the same number; supposing further, that only two thousand of the three thousand nebulae are resolvable into stars, and that the other thousand are masses of a shining fluid, not yet condensed by the Almighty into luminous globes, the number of stars or suns comprehended in that portion of the firmament which is within the reach of our telescopes, is twenty thousand million.”

Yet all this may be as nothing compared with the parts of the universe which we are unable to discover. See in the Christian Keepsake for 1840, an article by Thomas Dick, entitled” An Idea of the Universe;” compare the notes at ~~1840~~ Job 9:9.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE TO JOB 5:9

The labors of astronomers, aided by instruments of remarkable accuracy and power, and by improved methods of observation, are ever adding to our knowledge of the “wonderful things without number” which render the mechanism of the heavens such a spectacle of sublimity. Among the most interesting and beautiful of the celestial phenomena are the star clusters and nebulae. A small number of the star-clusters are bright enough to be distinguished by the naked eye, to which they appear as a faint cloudlike patch of light; but it is only when the telescope is used that their real character becomes known, and they are then seen to be vast agglomerations of stars-connected systems of suns. The greater number are of a rounded and apparently globular form, the stars being densely crowded together in the center; though others are very irregular in shape. Those of a globular form often consist of an astonishingly great number of stars. “Herschel has calculated that many clusters contain 5000 collected in a space, the apparent dimensions of which are scarcely the tenth part of the surface of the lunar disk.” “The beautiful cluster in Aquarius, which Sir John Herschel’s drawing exhibits as fine luminous dust, when examined through the Earl of Rosse’s powerful reflector, appeared like a magnificent globular cluster, entirely separated into stars. But the most beautiful specimen of this kind is without doubt the splendid cluster in Toucan, quite visible to the naked eye, in the vicinity of the smaller Magellanic cloud, in a region of the southern sky entirely void of stars. The condensation at the center of this cluster is extremely decided; there are three perfectly distinct gradations, and the orange red color of the central agglomeration contrasts

wonderfully with the white light of the concentric envelopes." It was formerly supposed by many that all nebulae were resolvable into star-clusters, and that it was only the want of instruments of sufficient power that prevented this from being done; but spectrum analysis has now demonstrated what was before conjectured, that although there may be many nebulae that would appear as distinct stars if more powerful instruments were brought to bear upon them, there are others of a different nature, consisting, namely, of glowing masses of gaseous matter. The forms assumed by nebulae are extremely varied, and some of them very remarkable. The round or globular form is very common; others resemble rings, circular or oval; others are conical or fan-shaped, resembling the tail of a comet; some consist of spirals, radiating from a common nucleus; while many assume forms so irregular and bizarre as to be difficult to describe. The names given to some of them, such as the Crab Nebula, the Dumb-bell Nebula, the Fish-mouth Nebula (Nebula in Orion, see Plate), sufficiently intimate the striking aspects that they sometimes present. Many of the nebulae, in which the separate stars could not previously be distinguished, have been resolved by Lord Rosse's great telescope; while others as seen by it have very different shapes from what less powerful instruments gave them. This is the case with the Dumb-bell Nebula in particular, its form as described and figured by Sir John Herschel being considerably different from that in our engraving, which shows its aspect under Lord Rosse's telescope. "Two luminous masses symmetrically placed and bound together by a rather short neck, the whole surrounded with a light nebulous envelope of oval form, gave it a very marked appearance of regularity. This aspect was, however, modified by Lord Rosse's telescope of three feet aperture, and the nebulous masses showed a decided tendency to resolvability. Later still, with the six-feet telescope, numerous stars were observed standing out, however, on a nebulous ground. The general aspect retains its primitive shape, less regular, but striking nevertheless. "With regard to the nebula in Orion we extract the following passage from Guillemin's "The Heavens," edited by John N. Lockyer, F.R.A.S., the work from which the above passages are taken: —

"Sir John Herschel compares the brightest portion to the head of a monstrous animal, the mouth of which is open, and the nose of which is in the form of a trunk. Hence, its name, the Fish-mouth Nebula. It is at the edge of the opening, in a space free from nebula that the four brightest of the components of theta (θ) (a sevenfold

star, i.e. a connected system of seven stars which appear to the naked eye a single luminous point) are to be found; around, but principally above the trapezium formed by these four stars is a luminous region, with a mottled appearance, which Lord Rosse and Bond have partly resolved. This region is remarkable on account, not only of the brilliancy of its lights, but also of the numerous centers where this light is condensed, and each of which appears to form a stellar cluster. The rectangular form of the whole is also worthy of attention. The nebulous masses surrounding it, the light of which is much fainter than that of the central region, are lost gradually; according to Bond they assume a spiral form as indicated in the drawing executed by that astronomer” (from which our engraving is taken).

Writing soon after Lord Rosse’s observation had resolved the nebula of Orion, Dr. Nichol says: —

“The great cluster in Hercules has long dazzled the heart with its splendors; but we have learned now, that among circular and compact galaxies, a class to which the nebulous stars belong, there are multitudes which infinitely surpass it; nay, that schemes of being rise above it, sun becoming nearer to sun, until their skies must be one blaze of light, a throng of burning activities! But far aloft stands Orion, the pre-eminent glory and wonder of the starry universe! — It would seem almost that if all other clusters, hitherto gauged, were collected and compressed into one, they would not surpass this mighty group, in which every wisp, every wrinkle, is a SAND HEAP of stars. There are cases in which, though imagination has quailed, reason may still adventure inquiry, and prolong its speculations; but at times we are brought to a limit across which no human faculty has the strength to penetrate, and where, as if at the very footstool of the secret THRONE, we can only bend our heads, and silently ADORE!”

“These facts furnish a most impressive commentary upon the words of Eliphaz — which doeth great things and unsearchable, “marvelous things until there be no number” (margin) — and become the more significant from their connection with the constellation of ORION, which is more than once mentioned in the book of Job” (~~Job~~ Job 9:9; 38:31).

Job 5:10. *Who giveth rain upon the earth* In the previous verse, Eliphaz had said, in general, that God did wonderful things — things which are fitted to lead us to put our trust in him. In this and the succeeding verses, he descends to particulars, and specifies those things which show that God is worthy to be confided in. This enunciation continues to ver. 16, and the general scope is, that the agency of God is seen everywhere; and that his providential dealings are adapted to impress man with elevated ideas of his justice and goodness. Eliphaz begins with the rain, and says that the fact that God sends it upon the earth was fitted to lead man to confide in him. He means, that while the sun, and moon, and seasons have stated times, and are governed by settled laws, the rain seems to be sent directly by God, and is imparted at such times as are best. It is wholly under his control, and furnishes a constant evidence of his benevolence. Without it, every vegetable would dry up, and every animal on the earth would soon die. The word earth here refers probably to the cultivated part of the earth — the fields that are under tillage. Thus, Eichhorn renders it, *Angebauten Feldern*. On the interest which the phenomena of rain excited among the ancient sages of Idumea, and the laws by which it is produced, see the notes at **Job 37:6,15,16; 38:22-28.**

And sendeth waters That is, showers.

Upon the fields Margin, “out-places.” Hebrew *twxwh* — out of doors, outside, abroad, meaning the fields out of cities and towns. Eichhorn renders it, “the pastures,” *auf Triften*. The meaning is, that the whole country is watered; and the fact that God gives rain in this manner, is a reason why we should put confidence in him. It shows that he is a benevolent Being, since it contributes so essentially to human life and happiness, and since no other being but God can cause it.

Job 5:11. *To set up on high* That is, who sets up on high; or God exalts those who are low. From the works of nature, Eliphaz passes to the dealings of God with people, as designed to show that he was worthy of confidence. The first proof is, that he showed himself to be the friend of the humble and the afflicted, and often exalted those who were in lowly circumstances, in a manner which evinced his direct interposition. It is to be remembered here, that Eliphaz is detailing the result of his own observation, and stating the reasons which he had observed for putting confidence in God; and the meaning here is, that he had so often seen this done as to show that God was the friend of the humble and the poor. This

sentiment was afterward expressed with great beauty by Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus:

He hath put down the mighty from their seats, And exalted them of low degree; He hath filled the hungry with good things, And the rich he hath sent empty away. — ^{<4015>}Luke 1:52,53.

That those which mourn may be exalted to safety Or rather, they who mourn are exalted to a place of safety, The sense is, that God did this; and that, therefore, there was ground of confidence in him. The word rendered “those which mourn” $\mu\upsilon\rho\delta\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ from $\rho\delta\alpha\epsilon$ ^{<46937>}, to be turbid or foul as a torrent, ^{<3816>}Job 6:16; hence, to go about in filthy garments, like mourners, to mourn. The general sense of the Hebrew word, as in Arabic, is to be squalid, dark, filthy, dusky, obscure; and hence, it denotes those who are afflicted, which is its sense here. The Septuagint renders it, $\alpha\pi\omicron\lambda\omega\lambda\omicron\tau\alpha\varsigma$ ^{<622>}, “the lost,” or those who are perished. The sense is plain. God raises up the bowed down, the oppressed, and the afflicted. Eliphaz undoubtedly referred to instances which had come under his own observation, when persons who had been in very depressed circumstances, had been raised up to situations of comfort, honor, and safety: and that in a manner which was a manifest interposition of his Providence. From this he argued that those who were in circumstances of great trial, should put their trust in him. Cases of this kind often occur; and a careful observation of the dealings of God with the afflicted, would undoubtedly furnish materials for an argument like that on which Eliphaz relied in this instance.

^{<3812>}**Job 5:12.** *He disappointeth the devices of the crafty* He foils them in their schemes, or makes their plans vain. This too was the result of close observation on the part of Eliphaz. He had seen instances where the plans of crafty, designing, and artful people had been defeated, and where the straightforward had been prospered and honored. Such cases led him to believe that God was the friend of virtue, and was worthy of entire confidence.

So that their hands So that they. The hands are the instruments by which we accomplish our plans.

Their enterprise Margin, Or, “anything.” Hebrew $h\upsilon\upsilon\gamma\tau$. This word properly means uprightness from $h\upsilon\upsilon$; then help, deliverance, ^{<3813>}Job 6:13; then purpose, undertaking, enterprise, i.e. what one wishes to set up or

establish. Gesenius. This is its meaning here. Vulgate, “Their hands cannot finish (implere) what they had begun.” Septuagint, “Their hands cannot perform that which is true” — *αληθες* ^{<227>}. The Chaldee Paraphrase refers this to the defeat of the purposes of the Egyptians: “Who made vain the thoughts of the Egyptians, who acted wisely (or cunningly — *ymykj d* that they might do evil to Israel, but their hands did not perform the work of their wisdom (^{<R513>}Job 5:13), who took the wise men of Pharaoh in their own wisdom, and the counsel of their perverse astrologers he made to return upon them.” The general sense is, that artful and designing men — people who work in the dark, and who form secret purposes of evil, are disappointed and foiled. Eliphaz probably had seen instances of this, and he now attributes it to God as rendering him worthy of the confidence of people. It is still true. The crafty and the designing are often foiled in such a manner as to show that it is wholly of God. He exposes their designs in this way, and shows that he is the friend of the sincere and the honest; and in doing this, he shows that he is worthy the confidence of his people.

^{<R513>}**Job 5:13.** *He taketh the wise in their own craftiness* This passage is quoted by the apostle Paul in ^{<K161>}1 Corinthians 3:19, with the usual formula in referring to the Old Testament, *γεγραπται* ^{<1125>} *γαρ* ^{<1063>}; “for it is written,” showing that he regarded it as a part of the inspired oracles of God. The word “wise” here undoubtedly means the cunning, the astute, the crafty, and the designing. It cannot mean those who are truly wise in the Scripture sense; but the meaning is, that those who form plans which they expect to accomplish by cunning and craft, are often the victims of their own designs. The same sentiment not unfrequently occurs in the Scriptures and elsewhere, and has all the aspect of being a proverb. Thus, in ^{<L1715>}Psalms 7:15:

*He made a pit and digged it,
And is fallen into the ditch which he made.”*

So ^{<L1915>}Psalms 9:15:

*The pagan are sunk down into the pit that they made;
In the net which they hid is their own foot taken.”*

So ^{<L2118>}Psalms 35:8:

*Let his net that he hath bid catch himself
Into that very destruction let him fall.”*

So ^{<18715>}Psalm 37:15:

*Their sword shall enter into their own heart,
And their bow shall be broken.”*

Compare Eurip. Med. 409:

ΚΑΚΩΝ ΔΕ ΠΑΝΤΩΝ ΤΕΚΤΟΝΕΣ ΣΟΦΩΤΑΤΑΙ .

See also the same sentiment in Lucretius, v. 1151:

*Circumretit enim visatque injuria quemque,
Atque, unde exorta est, ad caim plerumque revertit.*

*“For force and rapine in their craftiest neta
Oft their own sons entangle; and the plume Ten-fold recoils.”*

It is to be remembered that Eliphaz here speaks of his own observation, and of that as a reason for putting confidence in God. The sentiment is, that he had observed that a straightforward, honest, and upright course, was followed with the divine favor and blessing; but that a man who attempted to carry his plans by intrigue and stratagem, would not be permanently successful. Sooner or later his cunning would recoil upon himself, and he would experience the disastrous consequences of such a course. It is still true. A man is always sure of ultimate success and prosperity, if he is straightforward and honest. He never can be sure of it, if he attempts to carry his plans by management. Other men may evince as much cunning as himself; and when his net springs, it may include himself as well as those for whom he set it. It will be well for him if it is not made to spring on him, while others escape.

And the counsel of the froward The design of the perverse. The word here rendered “froward,” *ἰτῆρ*^{<h6617>}, is from *ἰτῆρ*^{<h6617>}, to twist, to twine, to spin. It then means, to be twisted, crooked, crafty, deceitful. Here it means those who are crooked, artful, designing. Septuagint, *πολυπλοκων*, the involved — the much-entangled.

Is carried headlong Hebrew is precipitated, or hastened. There is not time for it to be matured; there is a development of the scheme before it is ripe, and the trick is detected before there is time to put it in execution. Nothing can be more true than this often is now. Something that could not be anticipated develops the design, and brings the dark plot out to mid-day; and God shows that he is the foe of all such schemes.

Job 5:14. *They meet with darkness in the day-time* Margin, “run into;” compare the notes at ^{<2890>}Isaiah 59:10. The sense is, that where there is really no obstacle to the accomplishment of an honest plan — any more than there is for a man to walk in the day-time — they become perplexed and embarrassed, as much as a man would be, should sudden darkness come around him at mid-day. The same sentiment occurs in ^{<1825>}Job 12:25. A life of honesty and uprightness will be attended with prosperity, but a man who attempts to carry his plans by trick and art, will meet with unexpected embarrassments. The sentiment in all these expressions is, that God embarrasses the cunning, the crafty, and the artful, but gives success to those who are upright; and that, therefore, he is worthy of confidence.

Job 5:15. *But he saveth the poor from the sword* He shows himself to be the friend and protector of the defenseless. The phrase “from the sword, from their mouth,” has been variously interpreted. Dr. Good renders it,

*So he saveth the persecutors from their mouth,
And the helpless from the hand of the violent.”*

Noyes,

*So he saveth the persecuted from their mouth,
The oppressed from the hand of the mighty.”*

This rendering is obtained by changing the points in the word **brj**, ^{<12719>}, “from the sword,” to **byhjn**; making it the Hophal participle from **baJ**, to make desolate. This was proposed by Capellus, and has been adopted by Durell, Michaelis, Dathe, Doederlein, and others. Rosenmuller pronounces it wholly unauthorized. Jerome renders it, a gladio otis eorum — “from the sword of their mouth.” It seems to me that the whole verse may be literally rendered, “he saveth from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the strong, the poor.” According to this version, the phrase “from their mouth” may either mean from the mouth, i.e. the edge of the sword, using the plural for the singular, or from the mouth of oppressors, using it to represent their violence, and their disposition to devour the poor. The latter is more probably the true interpretation, and there is no need of a change in the points in the Hebrew. Thus, interpreted, the sense is, that God preserves the poor from oppression; or, in other words, that he befriends them, and is therefore worthy of confidence. This sentiment accords with what is found everywhere in the Bible.

Job 5:16. *So the poor hath hope* From the interposition of God. They are not left in a sad and comfortless condition. They are permitted to regard God as their protector and friend, and to look forward to another and a better world. This sentiment accords with all that is elsewhere said in the Scriptures, that the offers of mercy are specially made to the poor, and that they are especially the objects of the divine compassion.

And iniquity stoppeth her mouth That is, the wicked are confounded when they see all their plans foiled, and find themselves entangled in the snares which they have laid for others. A similar sentiment occurs in ^{<19A74>}Psalm 107:41,42:

Yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, And maketh him families like a flock. The righteous shall see it and rejoice, And all iniquity shall stop her mouth.”

It is to be remembered that Eliphaz states this as the result of his own observation, and as clearly demonstrating in his view that there is a superintending and overruling Providence. A careful observation of the course of events would lead undoubtedly to the same conclusion, and this has been embodied in almost every language by some proverbial sentiment. We express it by saying that “honesty is the best policy;” a proverb that is undoubtedly founded in wisdom. The sentiment is, that if a man wishes long to prosper, he should pursue a straight-forward and an honest course; that cunning, intrigue, underhanded dealing, and mere management, will sooner or later defeat itself, and recoil on the head of him who uses it; and that, therefore, if there were no higher motive than self-interest, a man should be honest, frank, and open. See this argument stated at greater length, and with great beauty, in Psalm 37.

Job 5:17. *Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth* This verse commences a new argument, designed to show that afflictions are followed by so important advantages as to make it proper that we should submit to them without a complaint. The sentiment in this verse, if not expressly quoted, is probably alluded to by the apostle Paul in ^{<38116>}Hebrews 12:5. The same thought frequently occurs in the Bible: see ^{<30112>}James 1:12;

^{<31111>}Proverbs 3:11,12. The sense is plain, that God confers a favor on us when he recalls us from our sins by the corrections of his paternal hand — as a father confers a favor on a child whom he restrains from sin by suitable correction. The way in which this is done, Eliphaz proceeds to state at

length. He does it in most beautiful language, and in a manner entirely in accordance with the sentiments which occur elsewhere in the Bible. The word rendered “correcteth” $j\ k\ \text{קָרַע}$ ^{<43198>} means to argue, convince, reprove, punish, and to judge. It here refers to any of the modes by which God calls people from their sins, and leads them to walk in the paths of virtue. The word “happy” here, means that the condition of such an one is blessed $y\ r\ v\ a$; Greek $\mu\alpha\kappa\alpha\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma$ ^{<3107>} — not that there is happiness in the suffering. The sense is, that it is a favor when God recalls his friends from their wanderings, and from the error of their ways, rather than to suffer them to go on to ruin. He does me a kindness who shows me a precipice down which I am in danger of falling; he lays me under obligation to him who even with violence saves me from flames which would devour me. Eliphaz undoubtedly means to be understood as implying that Job had been guilty of transgression, and that God had taken this method to recall him from the error of his ways. That he had sinned, and that these calamities had come as a consequence, he seems never once to doubt; yet he supposes that the affliction was meant in kindness, and proceeds to state that if Job would receive it in a proper manner, it might be attended still with important benefits.

Therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty “Do not regret $s\ a\ m\ t$. Septuagint, $\mu\eta$ ^{<3361>} $\alpha\pi\alpha\nu\alpha\iota\nu\omicron\upsilon$ — the means which God is using to admonish you.” There is direct allusion here undoubtedly to the feelings which Job had manifested (Job 3); and the object of Eliphaz is, to show him that there were important benefits to be derived from affliction which should make him willing to bear it without complaining. Job had exhibited, as Eliphaz thought, a disposition to reject the lessons which afflictions were designed to teach him, and to spurn the admonitions of the Almighty. From that state of mind he would recall him, and would impress on him the truth that there were such advantages to be derived from those afflictions as should make him willing to endure all that was laid upon him without a complaint.

^{<4858>}**Job 5:18.** *For he maketh sore* That is, he afflicts.

And bindeth up He heals. The phrase is taken from the custom of binding up a wound; see the notes at ^{<3006>}Isaiah 1:6; 38:21. This was a common mode of healing among the Hebrews; and the practice of medicine appears to have been confined much to external applications. The meaning of this verse is, that afflictions come from God, and that he only can support,

comfort, and restore. Health is his gift; and all the consolation which we need, and for which we can look, must come from him.

Job 5:19. *He shall deliver thee in six troubles* Six is used here to denote an indefinite number, meaning that he would support in many troubles. This mode of speech is not uncommon among the Hebrews, where one number is mentioned, so that an extreme number may be immediately added. The method is, to mention a number within the limit, and then to add one more, meaning that in all instances the thing referred to would occur. The limit here is seven, with the Hebrews a complete and perfect number; and the idea is, that in any succession of troubles, however numerous, God was able to deliver. Similar expressions not unfrequently occur. Thus, in Amos 1:3,6,9,11,13; 2:1,4,6:

Thus saith the LORD: For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof. Thus saith the LORD: For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away, the punishment thereof. Thus saith the LORD: For three transgressions of Tyrus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof.

Thus in **Proverbs 30:15:**

There are three things that are never satisfied, Yea, four things say not, It is enough. There be three things that are too wonderful for me, Yea, four which I know not. **Proverbs 30:18.**

For three things the earth is disquieted, And for four which it cannot bear.” **Proverbs 30:21.**

There be three things that go well, Yea, four are comely in going: A lion which is strongest among beasts, And turneth not away for any; A grey-hound; An he-goat also; And a king, against whom there is no rising up.” — **Proverbs 30:29-31.**

Compare Homer, Iliad vi. 174:

Εννημαρ ξεινισσε και εννεα βους ιερευσεν .

An enumeration, in regard to number similar to the one before us, occurs in **Proverbs 6:16:**

*These six things doth the Lord hate;
Yea, seven are an abomination to him.*

There shall no evil touch thee That is, permanently; for he could not mean that he would not be subjected to calamity at all, since by the very supposition he was a sufferer. But the sense is, that God would save from those calamities.

Job 5:20. *In famine he shall redeem thee* That is, will deliver thee from death. On the meaning of the word “redeem,” see the notes at **Isaiah 43:1,3.**

From the power of the sword Margin, as in Hebrew “hands.” That is, he should not be slain by armed men. A mouth is often attributed to the sword in the Scriptures, because it devours; “hands” are attributed to it here, because it is by the hand that we perform an undertaking, and the sword is personified, and represented as acting as a conscious agent; compare **Ezekiel 35:5**, margin. The meaning is that God would protect those who put their trust in him, in times of calamity and war. Doubtless Eliphaz had seen instances enough of this kind to lead him to this general conclusion, where the pious poor had been protected in a remarkable manner, and where signal deliverances had been vouchsafed to the righteous in danger.

Job 5:21. *Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue* Margin, Or, “when the tongue scourgeth.” The word rendered “scourge” — **fwo**^{<47752>} — means properly a whip. It is used of God when he scourges people by calamities and punishments; **Isaiah 10:26**; **Job. 9:23**. See the use of the verb **fWv**^{<47751>} in **Job 2:7**. Here it is used to denote a slanderous tongue, as being that which inflicts a severe wound upon the reputation and peace of an individual. The idea is, that God would guard the reputation of those who commit themselves to him, and that they shall be secure from slander, “whose breath,” Shakespeare says, “outvenoms all the worms of Nile.”

Neither shalt thou be afraid when destruction cometh That is, your mind shall be calm in those calamities which threaten destruction. When war rages, when the tempest howls, when the pestilence breathes upon a community, then your mind shall be at peace. A similar thought occurs in **Isaiah 26:3**:

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee;”

and the same sentiment is beautifully illustrated at length in Psalm 91. The Chaldee Paraphrase applies all this to events which had occurred in the history of the Hebrews. Thus, ^{<882>}Job 5:20:

“In the famine in Egypt, he redeemed thee from death; and in the war with Amalek, from being slain by the sword;”

^{<882>}Job 5:21:

“In the injury inflicted by the tongue of Balaam thou wert hid among the clouds, and thou didst not fear from the desolation of the Midianites when it came;”

^{<882>}Job 5:22:

“In the desolation of Sihon, and in the famine of the desert, thou didst laugh; and of the camps of Og, who was like a wild beast of the earth, thou wert not afraid.”

^{<882>}**Job 5:22.** *At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh* That is thou shalt be perfectly safe and happy. They shall not come upon thee; and when they approach with threatening aspect, thou shalt smile with conscious security. The word here rendered famine ^{pk} is an unusual word, and differs from that occurring in ^{<882>}Job 5:20, ^{b[r]}. This word is derived from ^{pk}^{<3719>} — to languish, to pine from hunger and thirst. It then means the languid and feeble state which exists where there is a want of proper nutriment. A sentiment similar to that which is here expressed occurs in Martial, iv. 19, 4. Ridebis ventos line munere tectus, et imbres. “Neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.” Wild beasts in new countries are always objects of dread, and in the fastnesses and deserts of Arabia, they were especially so. They abounded there; and one of the highest images of happiness there would be, that there would be perfect safety from them. A similar promise occurs in ^{<8913>}Psalm 91:13:

*Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder;
The young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under foot.*

And a promise similar to this was made by the Savior to his disciples: “They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not

hurt them.” The sentiment of Eliphaz is, that they who put their trust in God would find protection, and have the consciousness that they were secure wherever they were.

Job 5:23. *For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field* In the Hebrew, “There shall be a covenant between thee and the stones of the field.” The sense is, they shall not harm thee. They are here spoken of as enemies that were made to be at peace, and that would not annoy or injure. It is to be remembered that this was spoken in Arabia, where rocks and stones abounded, and where traveling, from that cause, was difficult and dangerous. The sense here is, as I understand it, that he would be permitted to make his way in ease and safety. Tindal renders it:

*But the castels in the land shall be confederate with thee;
The beastes of the fealde shall give thee peace.*

Some have supposed that the meaning is, that the land would be free from stones that rendered it barren, and would be rendered fertile if the favor of God was sought. Shaw, in his Travels, supposes that it refers to the custom of walking over stones, in which the feet are liable to be injured every moment, and that the meaning is, that that danger would be averted by the divine interposition. By others it has been conjectured that the allusion is to a custom which is known as skopelism, of which Egmont and Heyman (Reisen, II. Th. S. 156), give the following account: “that in Arabia, if anyone is living at variance with another he places on his land stones as a warning that no one should dare to plow it, as by doing it he would expose himself to the danger of being punished by him who had placed the stones there.” This custom is also referred to by Ulpian (L. ix. de officio Proconsulis), and in the Greek Pandects, Lib. lx. Titus xxii. Leg. 9. It may be doubted, however, whether this custom was as early as the time of Job, or was so common then as to make it probable that the allusion is to it. Rosenmuller supposes the meaning to be, “Thy field shall be free from stones, which would render it unfruitful.” Alte u. neue Morgenland, in loc. Other explanations may be seen in Rosenmuller (Commentary), but it seems to me that the view presented above, that traveling would be rendered safe and pleasant, is the true one. Such a promise would be among the rich blessings in a country like Arabia.

Job 5:24. *And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be in peace*
Thy tent — **hao**¹⁶⁸ — showing that it was common then to dwell in

tents. The sense is, that when he was away from home he would have confidence that his dwelling was secure, and his family safe. This would be an assurance producing no small degree of consolation in a country abounding in wild beasts and robbers. Such is the nature of the blessing which Eliphaz says the man would have who put his confidence in God, and committed his cause to him. To a certain extent this was, and is, undoubtedly true. A man cannot indeed have miraculous assurance when from home, that his wife and children are still alive, and in health; nor can he be certain that his dwelling is not wrapped in flames, or that it has been preserved from the intrusion of evil-minded men. But he may feel assured that all is under the wise control of God; that whatever occurs will be by his permission and direction, and will tend to ultimate good. He may also, with calmness and peace, commit his home with all that is dear to him to God, and feel that in his hands all is safe.

And thou shalt visit thy habitation That is, on the return from a journey.

And not sin This is a very unhappy translation. The true sense is thou shalt not miss thy dwelling; thou shalt not wander away lost, to return no more. The word used here, and which is rendered “sin” in our common version, is **afj**, ^{<12398>}. It is true that it is commonly rendered to sin, and that it often has this sense. But it properly means “to miss;” that is, not to hit the mark, spoken of a slinger. ^{<1216>}Judges 20:16; then to make a false step, to stumble or fall, ^{<1892>}Proverbs 19:2. It thus accords exactly in sense with the Greek **ἀμαρτανω** ^{<264>}. Here the original sense of the Hebrew word should be retained, meaning that he would not miss the way to his dwelling; that is, that he would be permitted to return to it in safety. Gesenius, however, renders it, “thou mustered thy pasture (flocks), and missest naught:” that is, nothing is gone; all thy flocks are there. But the more obvious sense, and a sense which the connection demands, is that which refers the whole description to a man who is on a journey, and who is exposed to the dangers of wild beasts, and to the perils of a rough and stony way, but who is permitted to visit his home without missing it or being disappointed. A great variety of interpretations have been given of the passage, which may be seen in Rosenmuller and Good. Many suppose it means that he should review his domestic affairs, and find all to his mind; or should find that everything was in its place, or was as it should be. It can, not be doubted that the Hebrew word “visit” **rqj** ^{<16485>} will bear this interpretation, but that

above proposed seems to me best to suit the connection. The margin correctly renders it, err.

Job 5:25. *Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great* Margin, “much.” That is, thy posterity shall be numerous. This was one of the blessings supposed to be connected with the favor of God; see the notes at **Isaiah 53:10**.

And thine offspring as the grass of the earth On the meaning of the word here rendered offspring, see the notes at **Isaiah 48:19**. Nothing is more common in the Scriptures, than to compare a prosperous and a happy man to a green and flourishing tree; see **Psalms 1:3; 92:12-14**. The idea here is, that the righteous would have a numerous and a happy posterity, and that the divine favor to them would be shown by the blessing of God on their children; compare **Psalms 128:1,3**.

Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord, That walketh in his ways. Thy wife shall be a fruitful vine by the side of thine house; Thy children like olive-plants round about thy table.

Job 5:26. *Thou shalt come to thy grave in full age* That is, thou shalt have long life; thou shalt not be cut down prematurely, nor by any sudden calamity. It is to be remembered that long life was regarded as an eminent blessing in ancient times; see the notes at **Isaiah 65:22**.

Like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season Margin, “ascendeth.” As a sheaf of grain is harvested when it is fully ripe. This is a beautiful comparison, and the meaning is obvious. He would not be cut off before his plans were fully matured; before the fruits of righteousness had ripened in his life. He would be taken away when he was ripe for heaven — as the yellow grain is for the harvest. Grain is not cut down when it is green; and the meaning of Eliphaz is, that it is as desirable that man should live to a good old age before he is gathered to his fathers, as it is that grain should be suffered to stand until it is fully ripe.

Job 5:27. *Lo this* All this that I have said; the truth of all the remarks which I have made.

We have searched it We have by careful observation of the course of events come to these conclusions. These are our views of the providence of God, and of the principles of his government, as far as we have had the opportunity of observing, and they are well worthy of your attention. The

sentiments in these two chapters indicate close and accurate observation; and if we think that the observation was not always wholly accurate, or that the principles were carried further than facts would warrant, or that Eliphaz applied them with somewhat undue severity to the case of Job, we are to remember that this was in the infancy of the world, that they had few historical records, and that they had no written revelation. If they were favored with occasional revelations, as Eliphaz claimed (~~ROM12~~ Job 4:12ff), yet they were few in number, and at distant intervals, and the divine communications pertained to but few points. Though it may without impropriety be maintained that some of the views of Eliphaz and his friends were not wholly accurate, yet we may safely ask, Where among the Greek and Roman sages can views of the divine government be found that equal these in correctness, or that are expressed with equal force and beauty? For profound and accurate observation, for beauty of thought and sublimity of expression, the sage of Teman will not fall behind the sages of Athens; and not the least interesting thing in the contemplation of the book of Job, is the comparison which we are almost of necessity compelled to make between the observations on the course of events which were made in Arabia, and those which were made by the philosophers of the ancient pagan world. Is it improper to suppose that one design of this book was to show how far the human mind could go, with the aid of occasional revelations on a few points, in ascertaining the principles of the divine administration, and to demonstrate that, after all, the mind needed a fuller revelation to enable man to comprehend the truths pertaining to the kingdom of God? “Hear it for thy good.” Margin, as in Hebrew “thyself.” These principles are such that they are of importance for you to understand and to apply.

NOTES ON JOB 6

^{<8018>}**Job 6:2.** *O that my grief were thoroughly weighed* The word rendered “grief” here **v[s]** may mean either vexation, trouble, grief; ^{<2018>}Ecclesiastes 1:18; 2:23; or it may mean anger; ^{<8529>}Deuteronomy 32:19; ^{<5018>}Ezekiel 20:28. It is rendered by the Septuagint here, **οργη** ^{<3709>} — anger; by Jerome, peccata — sins. The sense of the whole passage may either be, that Job wished his anger or his complaints to be laid in the balance with his calamity, to see if one was more weighty than the other — meaning that he had not complained unreasonably or unjustly (Rosenmuller); or that he wished that his afflictions might be put into one scale and the sands of the sea into another, and the one weighed against the other (Noyes); or simply, that he desired that his sorrows should be accurately estimated. This latter is, I think, the true sense of the passage. He supposed his friends had not understood and appreciated his sufferings; that they were disposed to blame him without understanding the extent of his sorrows, and he desires that they would estimate them aright before they condemned him. In particular, he seems to have supposed that Eliphaz had not done justice to the depth of his sorrows in the remarks which he had just made. The figure of weighing actions or sorrows, is not uncommon or unnatural. It means to take an exact estimate of their amount. So we speak of heavy calamities, of afflictions that crush us by their weight. etc.

Laid in the balances Margin, “lifted up.” That is, raised up and put in the scales, or put in the scales and then raised up — as is common in weighing.

Together **dj væ** ^{<4216>}. At the same time; that all my sorrows, griefs, and woes, were piled on the scales, and then weighed. He supposed that only a partial estimate had been formed of the extent of his calamities.

^{<8018>}**Job 6:3.** *Heavier than the sand of the sea* That is, they would be found to be insupportable. Who could bear up the sands of the sea? So Job says of his sorrows. A comparison somewhat similar is found in ^{<1273>}Proverbs 27:3.

*Heavy is a stone, and weighty the sand of the Sea,
But a fool's wrath is heavier than them both.*

My words are swallowed up Margin, “I want words to express my grief.” This expresses the true sense — but not with the same poetic beauty. We express the same idea when we say that we are choked with grief; we are so overwhelmed with sorrow that we cannot speak. Any very deep emotion prevents the power of utterance. So in ^{<1970>}Psalm 77:4:

*Thou holdest mine eyes waking:
I am so troubled that I cannot speak.*

So the well-known expressions in Virgil,

Obstupui, steteruntque comae, et vox faucibus haesit.

There has been, however, considerable variety in the interpretation of the word here rendered swallowed up — w[] . Gesenius supposes that it means to speak rashly, to talk at random, and that the idea is, that Job now admits that his remarks had been unguarded — “therefore were my words rash.” The same sense Castell gives to the Arabic word. Schultens renders it, “therefore are my words tempestuous or fretful.” Rosenmuller, “my words exceed due moderation.” Castellio, “my words fail.” Luther, “therefore it is vain that I speak.” The Septuagint, “but my words seem to be evil.” Jerome, “my words are full of grief.” In this variety it is difficult to determine the meaning; but probably the old interpretation is to be retained, by which the word is derived from [wl] , to absorb, to swallow up; compare ^{<302>}Proverbs 20:25; ^{<3016>}Obadiah 1:16; Job. 39:30; ^{<312>}Proverbs 23:2. The word does not elsewhere occur.

^{<800>}**Job 6:4.** *For the arrows of the Almighty are within me* That is, it is not a light affliction that I endure. I am wounded in a manner which could not be caused by man — called to endure a severity of suffering which shows that it proceeds from the Almighty. Thus called to suffer what man could not cause, he maintains that it is right for him to complain, and that the words which he employed were not an improper expression of the extent of the grief.

The poison whereof drinketh up my spirit Takes away my rigor, my comfort, my life. He here compares his afflictions with being wounded with poisoned arrows. Such arrows were not unfrequently used among the ancients. The object was to secure certain death, even where the wound caused by the arrow itself would not produce it. Poison was made so concentrated, that the smallest quantity conveyed by the point of an arrow

would render death inevitable. This practice contributed much to the barbarity of savage war. Thus, Virgil speaks of poisoned arrows:

Ungere tela manu, ferrumque armare veneno. — AEn. ix. 773

And again, AEn x. 140:

Vulnera dirigere, et calamos armare veneno.

So Ovid, Lib. 1. de Ponto, Eleg. ii. of the Scythians:

*Qui mortis saevo gement ut vulnere causas,
Omnia vipereo spicula felle linunt.*

Compare Justin, Lib. ii. c. 10. Section 2; Grotius, de Jure Belli et Pacis; and Virgil, En. xii. 857. In the Odyssey, i. 260ff we read of Ulysses that he went to Ephyra, a city of Thessaly, to obtain from Ilus, the son of Mermer, deadly poison, that he might smear it over the iron point of his arrows. The pestilence which produced so great a destruction in the Grecian camp is also said by Homer (Iliad i. 48) to have been caused by arrows shot from the bow of Apollo. The phrase “drinketh up the spirit” is very expressive. We speak now of the sword thirsting for blood; but this language is more expressive and striking. The figure is not uncommon in the poetry of the East and of the ancients. In the poem of Zohair, the third of the Moallakat, or those transcribed in golden letters, and suspended in the temple of Mecca, the same image occurs. It is thus rendered by Sir William Jones:

Their javelins had no share in drinking the blood of Naufel.

A similar expression occurs in Sophocles in Trachinn, verse 1061, as quoted by Schultens, when describing the pestilence in which Hercules suffered:

εκ δε χλωρον αίμα μου Πεπωκεν ηδη —

This has been imitated by Cicero in Tusculan. Disp. ii. 8:

*Haec me irretivit veste furiali inscium,
Quae lateri inhaerens morsu lacerat viscera,
Urgensque graviter, pulmonum haurit spiritus,
Jam decolorem sanguinem omnem exsorbuít.*

So Lucan, Pharsa. ix. 741ff gives a similar description:

*Ecce subit virus taciturn, carpitque medullas
Ignis edax calidaque iacendit viscera tabe.
Ebibit humorem circa vitalia fusum
Pestis, et in sicco linguam torrere palato Coepit.*

Far more beautiful, however, than the expressions of any of the ancient classics — more tender, more delicate, more full of pathos — is the description which the Christian poet Cowper gives of the arrow that pierces the side of the sinner. It is the account of his own conversion:

I was a stricken deer that left the herd Long since. With many an artery deep infix'd My panting side was charged when I withdrew To seek a tranquil death in distant shades. There I was found by one, who had himself Been hurt by the archers. In his side he bore, And in his hands and feet, the cruel scars. — TASK, b. iii.

Of such wounding he did not complain. The arrow was extracted by the tender hand of him who alone had power to do it. Had Job known of him; had he been fully acquainted with the plan of mercy through him, and the comfort which a wounded sinner may find there, we should not have heard the bitter complaints which he uttered in his trials. Let us not judge him with the severity which we may use of one who is afflicted and complains under the full light of the gospel.

The terrors of God do set themselves in array against me Those things which God uses to excite terror. The word which is rendered “set in array” **ἔστη**⁴⁶¹⁸⁶ properly denotes the drawing up of a line for battle; and the sense is here, that all these terrors seem to be drawn up in battle array, as if on purpose to destroy him. No expression could more strikingly describe the condition of an awakened sinner, though it is not certain that Job used it precisely in this sense. The idea as he used it is, that all that God commonly employed to produce alarm seemed to be drawn up as in a line of battle against him.

Job 6:5. *Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass?* On the habits of the wild ass, see the notes at ⁴⁸¹¹²Job 11:12. The meaning of Job here is, that he did not complain without reason; and this he illustrates by the fact that the wild animal that had a plentiful supply of food would be gentle and calm, and that when its bray was heard it was proof that it was suffering. So Job says that there was a reason for his complaining. He was suffering; and perhaps he means that his complaint was just as natural, and just as

innocent, as the braying of the ass for its food. He should have remembered however, that he was endowed with reason, and that he was bound to evince a different spirit from the brute creation.

Or loweth the ox over his fodder? That is, the ox is satisfied and uncomplaining when his needs are supplied. The fact that he lows is proof that he is in distress, or there is a reason for it. So Job says that his complaints were proof that he was in distress, and that there was a reason for his language of complaint.

Job 6:6. *Can that which is unsavoury* Which is insipid, or without taste.

Be eaten without salt It is necessary to add salt in order to make it either palatable or wholesome. The literal truth of this no one can doubt, Insipid food cannot be relished, nor would it long sustain life.

“The Orientals eat their bread often with mere salt, without any other addition except some dry and pounded summer-savory, which last is the common method at Aleppo.” Russell’s Natural History of Aleppo, p. 27.

It should be remembered, also, that the bread of the Orientals is commonly mere unleavened cakes; see Rosenmuller, *Alte u. neue Morgenland*, on **Genesis 18:6**. The idea of Job in this adage or proverb is, that there was a fitness and propriety in things. Certain things went together, and were necessary companions. One cannot be expected without the other; one is incomplete without the other. Insipid food requires salt in order to make it palatable and nutritious, and so it is proper that suffering and lamentation should be united. There was a reason for his complaints, as there was for adding salt to unsavory food. Much perplexity, however, has been felt in regard to this whole passage; **Job 6:6,7**. Some have supposed that Job means to rebuke Eliphaz severely for his harangue on the necessity of patience, which he characterizes as insipid, impertinent, and disgusting to him; as being in fact as unpleasant to his soul as the white of an egg was to the taste. Dr. Good explains it as meaning, “Doth that which has nothing of seasoning, nothing of a pungent or irritating power within it, produce pungency or irritation? I too should be quiet and complain not, if I had nothing provocative or acrimonious; but alas! the food I am doomed to partake of is the very calamity which is most acute to my soul, that which I most loathe, and which is most grievous or trying to my palate.” But the

real sense of this first part of the verse is, I think, that which is expressed above — that insipid food requires proper condiment, and that in his sufferings there was a real ground for lamentation and complaint — as there was for making use of salt in that which is unsavory. I see no reason to think that he meant in this to reproach Eliphaz for an insipid and unmeaning address.

Or is there any taste in the white of an egg? Critics and commentators have been greatly divided about the meaning of this. The Septuagint renders it, εἰ ^{<1487>} δε ^{<1161>} καὶ ^{<2532>} ἐστὶ ^{<2076>} γεῦμα ^{<1722>} ρημασι κενοῖς ^{<2756>}; is there any taste in vain words? Jerome (Vulgate), “can anyone taste that which being tasted produces death?” The Targums render it substantially as it is in our version. The Hebrew word rendered “white” ryr means properly spittle; ^{<9213>}1 Samuel 21:13. If applied to an egg, it means the white of it, as resembling spittle. The word rendered “egg” twml j occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures. If it be regarded as derived from מל jē ^{<2492>}, to sleep, or dream, it may denote somnolency or dreams, and then fatuity, folly, or a foolish speech, as resembling dreams; and many have supposed that Job meant to characterize the speech of Eliphaz as of this description. The word may mean, as it does in Syriac, a species of herb, the “purslain” (Gesenius), proverbial for its insipidity among the Arabs, Greeks, and Romans, but which was used as a salad; and the whole phrase here may denote purslain-broth, and hence, an insipid discourse. This is the interpretation of Gesenius. But the more common and more probable explanation is that of our common version, denoting the white of an egg. But what is the point of the remark as Job uses it? That it is a proverbial expression, is apparent; but in what way Job meant to apply it, is not so clear. The Jews say that he meant to apply it to the speech of Eliphaz as being insipid and dull, without anything to penetrate the heart or to enliven the fancy; a speech as disagreeable to the mind as the white of an egg was insipid to the taste. Rosenmuller supposes that he refers to his afflictions as being as unpleasant to bear as the white of an egg was to the taste. It seems to me that the sense of all the proverbs used here is about the same, and that they mean, “there is a reason for everything which occurs. The ass brays and the ox lows only when destitute of food. That which is insipid is unpleasant, and the white of an egg is loathsome. So with my afflictions. They produce loathing and disgust, My very food (^{<3047>}Job 6:7) is disagreeable, and everything seems tasteless as the most

insipid food would. Hence the language which I have used — language spoken not without reason, and expressive of this state of the soul.”

Job 6:7. *The things that my soul refused to touch* That I refused to touch — the word “soul” here being used to denote himself. The idea here is, that those things which formerly were objects of loathing to him, had become his painful and distressing food. The idea may be either that he was reduced to the greatest pain and distress in partaking of his food, since he loathed that which he was obliged to eat (compare Notes, **Job 3:24**), or more probably his calamity is described under the image of loathsome food in accordance with the Oriental usage, by which one is said to eat or taste anything; i.e. to experience it. His sorrows were as sickening to him as the articles of food which he had mentioned were to the stomach. The Septuagint renders it strangely, “For my wrath — μου ^{<3450>} ἡ ^{<3588>} οργη ^{<3709>} — cannot cease. For I see my food offensive as the smell of a lion’ — ὡσπερ ^{<5618>} οσμην ^{<3744>} λεοντος ^{<3023>} .

Job 6:8. *Oh that I might have my request* To wit, death. This he desired as the end of his sorrows, either that he might be freed from them, or that he might be admitted to a happy world — or both.

Would grant me the thing that I long for Margin, “My expectation.” That is, death. He expected it; he looked out for it; he was impatient that the hour should come. This state of feeling is not uncommon — where sorrows become so accumulated and intense that a man desires to die. It is no evidence, however, of a preparation for death. The wicked are more frequently in this state than the righteous. They are overwhelmed with pain; they see no hope of deliverance from it and they impatiently wish that the end had come. They are stupid about the future world, and either suppose that the grave is the end of their being, or that in some undefinable way they will be made happy hereafter. The righteous, on the other hand, are willing to wait until God shall be pleased to release them, feeling that He has some good purpose in all that they endure, and that they do not suffer one pang too much. Such sometimes were Job’s feelings; but here, as in some other instances, no one can doubt that he was betrayed into unjustifiable impatience under his sorrows, and that he expressed an improper wish to die.

Job 6:9. *Even that it would please God to destroy me* To put me to death, and to release me from my sorrows; compare **Job 3:20,21**. The

word rendered “destroy” here **akd** means properly to break in pieces, to crush, to trample under foot, to make small by bruising. Here the sense is, that Job wished that God would crush him, so as to take his life. The Septuagint renders it “wound” — **τρωσατω**. The Chaldee renders it, “Let God, who has begun to make me poor, loose his hand and make me rich.”

That he would let loose his hand Job here represents the hand of God as bound or confined. He wishes that that fettered hand were released, and were so free in its inflictions that he might be permitted to die.

And cut me off This expression, says Gesenius (Lexicon on the word [**x̄b̄**^{h1215}], is a metaphor derived from a weaver, who, when his web is finished, cuts it off from the thrum by which it is fastened to the loom; see the notes at ^{<2882>}Isaiah 38:12. The sense is, that Job wished that God would wholly finish his work, and that as he had begun to destroy him he would complete it.

^{<860>}**Job 6:10.** *Then should I yet have comfort* Dr. Good renders this, “then would I already take comfort.” Noyes, “yet it should still be my consolation.” The literal sense is, “and there would be to me yet consolation;” or “my consolation would yet be.” That is, he would find comfort in the grave (compare ^{<883>}Job 3:13ff), or in the future world.

I would harden myself in sorrow Dr. Good renders this, “and I will leap for joy.” In a similar way Noyes renders it, “I would exult.” So Schultens understands the expression. The Hebrew word rendered “I would harden myself” **dl s** occurs nowhere else, and expositors have been divided in regard to its meaning. According to Castell, it means to strengthen, to confirm. The Chaldee **dl s** means to grow warm, to glow, to burn. The Arabic word is applied to a horse, and means to beat the earth with his feet, and then to leap, to exult, to spring up; and this is the idea which Gesenius and others suppose is to be retained here — an idea which certainly better suits the connection than the common one of hardening himself in sorrow. The Septuagint renders it **ἠλλομην** — “I would leap,” or exult, although they have sadly missed the sense in the other part of the verse. They render it, “Let but my city be a grave, upon whose walls I will leap; I will not spare, for I have not falsified the holy words of my God.” The Chaldee renders it, “and I will exult [**wbaw** when fury comes upon the wicked.” The probable meaning is, that Job would exult or rejoice, if be

was permitted to die; he would triumph even in the midst of his sorrow, if he might lie down and expire.

Let him not spare Let him not withhold or restrain those sufferings which would sink me down to the grave.

For I have not concealed the words of the Holy One I have openly and boldly maintained a profession of attachment to the cause of God, and to his truth. I have, in a public and solemn manner, professed attachment to my Maker; I have not refused to acknowledge that I am his; I have not been ashamed of him and his cause. How much consolation may be found in such a reflection when we come to die! If there has been a consistent profession of religion; if there has been no shrinking back from attachment to God; if in all circles, high and low, rich and poor, frivolous and serious, there has been an unwavering and steady, though not ostentatious, attachment to the cause of God, it will give unspeakable consolation and confidence when we come to die. If there has been concealment, and shame, and shrinking back from a profession of religion, there will be shame, and regret, and sorrow; compare ^{<B94B>}Psalm 40:9; ^{<A41D>}Acts 20:20-27.

^{<B61>}**Job 6:11.** *What is my strength, that I should hope?* Job had hitherto borne his trials without apprehension that he would lose his constancy of hope, or his confidence in God. He here seems to apprehend that his constancy might fail, and he therefore wishes to die before he should be left to dishonor God. He asks, therefore, what strength he had that he should hope to be able to sustain his trials much longer.

And what is mine end, that I should prolong my life? Various interpretations have been given of this passage. Some suppose it means, “What is the limit of my strength? How long will it last?” Others, “What end is there to be to my miseries?” Others, “How distant is mine end? How long have I to live?” Noyes renders it, “And what is mine end that I should be patient?” Rosenmuller supposes that the word “end” here means the “end of his strength,” or that he had not such fortitude as to be certain that he could long bear his trials without complaining or murmuring. The phrase rendered “prolong my life,” probably means rather “to lengthen the patience,” or to hold out under accumulated sorrows. The word rendered life $\nu\pi\eta$,^{<B315>} often means soul, spirit, mind, as well as life, and the sense is, that he could not hope, from any strength that he had, to bear without complaining these trials until the natural termination of his life; and hence,

he wished God to grant his request, and to destroy him. Feeling that his patience was sinking under his calamities, he says that it would be better for him to die than be left to dishonor his Maker. It is just the state of feeling which many a sufferer has, that his trials are so great that nature will sink under them, and that death would be a relief. Then is the time to look to God for support and consolation.

Job 6:12. *Is my strength the strength of stones?* That is, like a rampart or fortification made of stones, or like a craggy rock that can endure assaults made upon it. A rock will bear the beatings of the tempest, and resist the floods, but how can frail man do it? The idea of Job is, that he had no strength to bear up against these accumulated trials; that he was afraid that he should be left to sink under them, and to complain of God; and that his friends were not to wonder if his strength gave way, and he uttered the language of complaint.

Or is my flesh of brass? Margin, “brazen.” The comparison used here is not uncommon. So Cicero, Aca. Qu. iv. 31, says, Non enim est e saxo sculptus, ant e robore dolatus homo; habet corpus, habet animum; movetur mente, movetur sensibus: — “for man is not chiselled out of the rock, nor cut from a tree; he has a body, he has a soul; he is actuated by mind, he is swayed by senses.” So Theocritus, in his description of Amycus, Idyll. xxii. 47:

Στηθεα δ' εσφαιρωτο πελωρια και πλατυ νωτον,
 Σαρκι σιδαρειη σφυρηλακος οια κολοσσος .

Round as to his vast breast and broad back, and with iron flesh, he is as if a colossus formed with a hammer So in Homer the expression frequently occurs — **σιδηρειον ητορ** — an iron heart — to denote courage. And so, according to Schultens, it has come to be a proverb, **ουκ** ^{<3756>}, **απο** ^{<575>} **δρυος**, **ουκ** ^{<3756>} **απο** ^{<575>} **πετρης** ^{<4073>} — not from a tree, not from a rock. The meaning of Job is plain. He had flesh like others. His muscles, and nerves, and sinews, could not bear a constant force applied to them, as if they were made of brass or iron. They must give way; and he apprehended that he would sink under these sorrows, and be left to use language that might dishonor God. At all events, he felt that these great sorrows justified the strong expressions which he had already employed.

Job 6:13. *Is not my help in me?* This would be better rendered in an affirmative manner, or as an exclamation. The interrogative form of the

previous verses need not be continued in this. The sense is, “alas! there is no help in me!” That is, “I have no strength; I must give up under these sorrows in despair.” So it is rendered by Jerome, Rosenmuller, Good, Noyes, and others.

And is wisdom quite driven from me? This, also, should be read as an affirmation, “deliverance is driven from me.” The word rendered wisdom **hyvwt** means properly a setting upright; then help, deliverance; and then purpose, enterprise; see the notes at ^{<18512>}Job 5:12. Here it means that all hope of deliverance had fled, and that he was sinking in despair.

^{<1814>}**Job 6:14.** *To him that is afflicted* Margin, “melteth.” The word here used **sm**,^{<14523>} is from **ssæ**,^{<14549>} to melt, flow down, waste away, and here means one who pines away, or is consumed under calamities. The design of this verse is, to reprove his friends for the little sympathy which they had shown for him. He had looked for consolation in his trials, and he had a right to expect it; but he says that he had met with just the opposite, and that his calamity was aggravated by the fact that they had dealt only in the language of severity.

Pity should be showed from his friend Good renders this, “shame to the man who despiseth his friend.” A great variety of interpretations have been proposed of the passage, but our translation has probably expressed the true sense. If there is any place where kindness should be shown, it is when a man is sinking under accumulated sorrows to the grave.

But he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty This may be either understood as referring to the language which Job says they had used of him — charging him with forsaking the fear of God, instead of consoling him; or it may mean that they had forsaken the fear of God in reproaching him, and in failing to comfort him; or it may mean that if such kindness were not shown to a friend in trial, he would be left to cast off the fear of God. This last interpretation is adopted by Noyes. Good supposes that it is designed to be a severe reproach of Eliphaz, for the course which he had pursued. It seems to me that this is probably the correct interpretation, and that the particle (**W**) here is used in an adversative sense, meaning that while it was an obvious dictate of piety to show kindness to a friend, Eliphaz had forgotten this obligation, and had indulged himself in a strain of remark which could not have been prompted by true religion. This sentiment he

proceeds to illustrate by one of the most beautiful comparisons to be found in any language.

~~1865~~ **Job 6:15.** *My brethren* To wit, the three friends who had come to condole with him. He uses the language of brethren, to intimate what he had a right to expect from them. It is common in all languages to give the name brethren to friends.

Have dealt deceitfully That is, I have been sadly disappointed. I looked for the language of condolence and compassion; for something to cheer my heart, and to uphold me in my trials — as weary and thirsty travelers look for water and are sadly disappointed when they come to the place where they expected to find it, and find the stream dried up. The simile used here is exquisitely beautiful, considered as a mere description of an actual occurrence in the deserts of Arabia. But its chief beauty consists in its exact adaptation to the case before him, and the point and pith of the reproof which it administers. “The fullness, strength, and noise of these temporary streams in winter, answer to the large professions made to Job in his prosperity by his friends. The dryness of the waters at the approach of summer, resembles the failure of their friendship in time of affliction.” Scott, as quoted by Noyes.

As a brook That is, as a stream that is swelled by winter torrents, and that is dry in summer. Such streams abound in Arabia, and in the East generally. The torrents pour down from the hills in time of rain, or when swelled by the melting of the ice; but in summer they are dry, or their waters are lost in the sand. Even large streams are thus absorbed. The river Barrady, which waters Damascus, after passing to a short distance to the southeast of the city toward the Arabian deserts, is lost in the sand, or evaporated by the heat of the sun. The idea here is, that travelers in a caravan would approach the place where water had been found before, but would find the fountain dried up, or the stream lost in the sand; and when they looked for refreshment, they found only disappointment. In Arabia there are not many rivers. In Yemen, indeed, there are a few streams that flow the year round, and on the East the Euphrates has been claimed as belonging to Arabia. But most of the streams are winter torrents that become dry in summer, or rivulets that are swelled by heavy rains. An illustration of the verse before us occurs in Campbell’s Travels in Africa. “In desert parts of Africa it has afforded much joy to fall in with a brook of water, especially when running in the direction of the journey, expecting it would prove a valuable

companion. Perhaps before it accompanied us two miles it became invisible by sinking into the sand; but two miles farther along it would reappear and raise hopes of its continuance; but after running a few hundred yards, would sink finally into the sand, no more again to rise.” A comparison of a man who deceives and disappoints one to such a Stream is common in Arabia, and has given rise, according to Schultens, to many proverbs. Thus, they say of a treacherous friend, “I put no trust in thy torrent;” and, “O torrent, thy flowing subsides.” So the Scholiast on Moallakat says, “a pool or flood was called Gadyr, because travelers when they pass by it find it full of water, but when they return they find nothing there, and it seems to have treacherously betrayed them. So they say of a false man, that he is more deceitful than the appearance of water” — referring, perhaps, to the deceitful appearance of the mirage in the sands of the desert; see the notes at ^{<387>}Isaiah 35:7.

And as the stream of brooks they pass away As the valley stream — the stream that runs along in the valley, that is filled by the mountain torrent. They pass away on the return of summer, or when the rain ceases to fall, and the valley is again dry. So with the consolations of false friends. They cannot be depended on. All their professions are temporary and evanescent.

^{<386>}**Job 6:16.** *Which are blackish* Or, rather, which are turbid. The word used here **rdq** means to be turbid, foul, or muddy, spoken of a torrent, and then to be of a dusky color, to be dark-colored, as e.g. the skin scorched by the sun, ^{<385>}Job 30:28; or to be dark — as when the sun is obscured; ^{<390>}Joel 2:10; 3:15. Jerome renders it, Qui timent pruina — “which fear the frost, when the snow comes upon them.” The Septuagint renders it, “they who had venerated me now rushed upon me like snow or hoar frost, which melting at the approach of heat, it was not known whence it was.” The expression in the Hebrew means that they were rendered dark and turbid by the accumulated torrents caused by the dissolving snow and ice.

By reason of the ice When it melts and swells the streams.

And wherein the snow is hid That is, says Noyes, melts and flows into them. It refers to the melting of the snow in the spring, when the streams are swelled as a consequence of it. Snow, by melting in the spring and summer, would swell the streams, which at other times were dry. Lucretius

mentions the melting of the snows on the mountains of Ethiopia, as one of the causes of the overflowing of the Nile:

*Forsitan AEthiopum pentrue de montibus altis
Crescat, ubi in campos albas descendere ningues
Tahificiss subigit radiis sol, omnia lustrans. — vi. 734.*

*Or, from the Ethiop-mountains, the bright sun,
Now full matured, with deep-dissolving ray,
May melt the agglomerate snows, and down the plains
Drive them, augmenting hence the incipient stream. — GOOD*

A similar description occurs in Homer, Iliad xi. 492:

ὥς δ' ὅποτε πληθων ποταμος
πεδιονδε κατεισι Χειμαρρους κατ' ορεσφιν , etc.

And in Ovid also, Fast. ii. 219:

*Ecce, velut torrens andis pluvialibus auctus,
Ant hive, quae, Zephyro victa, repente fluit,
Per sara, perque vias, tertur; nec, ut ante solebat,
Riparum clausas margine finit aquas.*

^{<8167>} **Job 6:17.** *What time* In the time; or after a time.

They wax warm Gesenius renders this word ^{<4215>}bræ when they became narrow, and this version has been adopted by Noyes. The word occurs nowhere else. Taylor (Concord.) renders it, “to be dissolved by the heat of the sun.” Jerome, fuerint dissipati — “in the time in which they are scattered.” The Septuagint, ^{<2329>}τακείσα ^{<1096>}θερμης γενομενης — “melting at the approach of heat.” The Chaldee, “In the time in which the generation of the deluge sinned, they were scattered.” Castell says that the word ^{<4215>}bræ in Piel, as the word in Chaldee ^{<1686>}bræ means “to flow”; and also that it has the same signification as ^{<1686>}bræ, to become warm. In Syriac the word means to be straitened, bound, confined. On the whole, however, the connection seems to require us to understand it as it is rendered in our common translation, as meaning, that when they are exposed to the rays of a burning sun, they evaporate. They pour down from the mountains in torrents, but when they flow into burning sands, or become exposed to the intense action of the sun, they are dried up, and disappear.

They vanish Margin, “are cut off.” That is, they wander off into the sands of the desert until they are finally lost.

When it is hot Margin, “in the heat thereof.” When the summer comes, or when the rays of the sun are poured down upon them.

They are consumed Margin, “extinguished.” They are dried up, and furnish no water for the caravan.

^{<8168>}**Job 6:18.** *The paths of their way are turned aside* Noyes renders this, “The caravans turn aside to them on their way.” Good, “The outlets of their channel wind about.” Rosenmuller, “The bands of travelers direct their journey to them.” Jerome, “Involved are the paths of their steps.” According to the interpretation of Rosenmuller, Noyes, Umbreit, and others, it means that the caravans on their journey turn aside from their regular way in order to find water there; and that in doing it they go up into a desert and perish. According to the other interpretation, it means that the channels of the stream wind along until they diminish and come to nothing. This latter I take to be the true sense of the passage, as it is undoubtedly the most poetical. It is a representation of the stream winding along in its channels, or making new channels as it flows from the mountain, until it diminishes by evaporation, and finally comes to nothing.

They go to nothing Noyes renders this very singularly, “into the desert,” — meaning that the caravans, when they suppose they are going to a place of refreshment, actually go to a desert, and thus perish. The word used here, however **WhTo**^{<8414>}, does not occur in the sense of a desert elsewhere in the Scriptures. It denotes nothingness, emptiness, vanity (see ^{<000D>}Genesis 1:2), and very appropriately expresses the nothingness into which a stream vanishes when it is dried up or lost in the sand. The sense is, that those streams wander along until they become smaller and smaller, and then wholly disappear. They deceive the traveler who hoped to find refreshment there. Streams depending on snows and storms, and having no permanent fountains, cannot be confided in. Pretended friends are like them. In times of prosperity they are full of professions, and their aid is proffered to us. But we go to them when we need their assistance, when we are like the weary and thirsty traveler, and they disappear like deceitful streams in the sands of the desert.

^{<8169>}**Job 6:19.** *The troops of Tema looked* That is, looked for the streams of water. On the situation of Tema, see Notes, ^{<8211>}Job 2:11. This was the

country of Eliphaz, and the image would be well understood by him. The figure is one of exquisite beauty. It means that the caravans from Tema, in journeying through the desert, looked for those streams. They came with an expectation of finding the means of allaying their thirst. When they came there they were disappointed, for the waters had disappeared. Reiske, however, renders this, “Their tracks (the branchings of the flood) tend toward Tema;” — a translation which the Hebrew will bear, but the usual version is more correct, and is more elegant.

The companies of Sheba waited for them The “Sheba” here referred to was probably in the southern part of Arabia; see the notes at ^{<3514>}Isaiah 45:14. The idea is, that the caravans from that part of Arabia came and looked for a supply of water, and were disappointed.

^{<361>}**Job 6:20.** *They were confounded because they had hoped* The caravans of Tema and Sheba. The word “confounded” here means ashamed. It represents the state of feeling which one has who has met with disappointment. He is perplexed, distressed, and ashamed that he had entertained so confident hope; see the notes at ^{<3315>}Isaiah 30:5. They were downcast and sad that the waters had failed, and they looked on one another with confusion and dismay. There are few images more poetic than this, and nothing that would more strikingly exhibit the disappointment of Job, that he had looked for consolation from his friends, and had not found it. He was down-cast, distressed, and disheartened, like the travelers of Tema and of Sheba, because they had nothing to offer to console him; because he had waited for them to sustain him in his afflictions, and had been wholly disappointed.

^{<3812>}**Job 6:21.** *For now ye are as nothing* Margin, “or, Ye are like to it, or them.” In the margin also the word “nothing” is rendered “not.” This variety arises from a difference of reading in the Hebrew text, many MSS. having instead of *al* ^{<3808>}*o*, not, (HSN-8705), to him, or to it. Which is correct, it is not easy to determine. Rosenmuller supposes that it is only a variety in writing the word *l*]HSN, where the waw is often used for ‘aleph (*a*) HSN. The probability is, that it means, that they were as nothing — like the stream that had disappeared. This is the point of the comparison; and this Job now applies to his friends. They had promised much by their coming — like the streams when swollen by rains and melted ice. But now they were found to be nothing.

Ye see my casting down tth — my being broken or crushed; my calamity. Vulgate, plugam. Septuagint, τραυμα ^{<5134>}, wound.

And are afraid. Are timid and fearful. You shrink back; you dare not approach the subject boldly, or come to me with words of consolation. You came with a professed intention to administer comfort, but your courage fails.

Job 6:22. *Did I say, Bring unto me?* Job proceeds to state that their conduct in this had been greatly aggravated by the fact that they had come voluntarily. He had not asked them to come. He had desired no gift; no favor. He had not applied to them in any way or form for help. They had come of their own accord, and when they came they uttered only the language of severity and reproach. If he had asked them to aid him, the case would have been different. That would have given them some excuse for interposing in the case. But now the whole was gratuitous and unasked. He did not desire their interference, and he implies by these remarks that if they could say nothing that would console him, it would have been kindness in them to have said nothing.

Or, Give a reward for me of your substance? That is, did I ask a present from you out of your property? I asked nothing. I have on no occasion asked you to interpose and aid me.

Job 6:23. *Or, Deliver me out of the enemy's hand?* At no time have I called on you to rescue me from a foe.

Or, Redeem me? That is, rescue me from the hand of robbers. The meaning is, that he was in no way beholden to them; he had never called on them for assistance; and there was therefore no claim which they could now have to afflict him further by their reflections. There seems to be something peevish in these remarks; and we need not attempt to justify the spirit which dictated them.

Job 6:24. *Teach me, and I will hold my tongue* That is, give me any real instruction, or show me what is my duty, and I will be silent. By this he means that Eliphaz had really imparted no instruction, but had dealt only in the language of reproof. The sense is, "I would willingly sit and listen where truth is imparted, and where I could be enabled to see the reason of the divine dealings. If I could be made to understand where I have erred, I would acquiesce."

Job 6:25. *How forcible are right words!* How weighty and impressive are words of truth! Job means that he was accustomed to feel their power, and to admit it on his soul. If their words were such, he would listen to them with profound attention, and in silence. The expression has a proverbial cast.

But what doth your arguing reprove? Or rather, what doth the reproof from you reprove? or what do your reproaches prove? Job professes a readiness to listen to words of truth and wisdom; he complains that the language of reproach used by them was not adapted to instruct his understanding or to benefit his heart. As it was, he did not feel himself convinced, and was likely to derive no advantage from what they said.

Job 6:26. *Do ye imagine to reprove words?* A considerable variety of interpretation has occurred in regard to this verse. Dr. Good, following Schultens, supposes that the word translated wind here **j We** ^{<17307>} means sighs, or groans, and renders it,

*Would ye then take up words for reproof,
The mere venting the means of despair?*

But Rosenmuller has well remarked that the word never has this signification. Noyes renders it,

*Do ye mean to censure words?
The words of a man in despair are but wind.*

In this, he has probably expressed the true sense. This explanation was proposed by Ludov. de Dieu, and is adopted by Rosenmuller. According to this, the sense is, “Do you think it reasonable to carp at mere words? Will you pass over weighty and important arguments and facts, and dwell upon the words merely that are extorted from a man in misery? Do you not know that one in a state of despair utters many expressions which ought not to be regarded as the result of his deliberate judgment? And will you spend your time in dwelling on those words rather than on the main argument involved?” This is probably the true sense of the verse; and if so it is a complaint of Job that they were disposed to make him “an offender for a word” rather than to enter into the real merits of the case, and especially that they were not disposed to make allowances for the hasty expressions of a man almost in despair.

Job 6:27. *Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless* Job undoubtedly means that this should be applied to himself. He complains that they took advantage of his words, that they were disposed to pervert his meaning, and unkindly distorted what he said. The word rendered "fatherless" **μwty** properly denotes an orphan; ^{<1222>}Exodus 22:22; ^{<5018>}Deuteronomy 10:18; 14:29. But it is possible that it is not to be taken in this limited signification here. The word is still retained in the Arabic language — the language spoken in the country where Job lived, — where the word *yatham* means to be lonely, bereaved, etc. It may be that this idea occurs under the form of the word used here, that Job was lonely and bereaved; that he was as desolate and helpless as a fatherless child; and especially that they manifested a spirit like that of those who would oppress an orphan. The word "overwhelm" **wl ypt** means properly, "ye fall upon;" that is, you deal with him violently. Or, it may mean here, in the Hiphil, "you cause to fall upon," referring to a net, and meaning, that they sprung a net for the orphan. So Rosenmuller and Noyes understand it. To do this was, in Oriental countries, regarded as a crime of special enormity, and is often so spoken of in the Bible; see the notes at ^{<3017>}Isaiah 1:17.

And ye dig a pit for your friend You act toward your friend as hunters do toward wild beasts. They dig a pit and cover it over with brushwood to conceal it, and the hunted animal, deceived, falls into it unawares. So you endeavor to entrap your friend. You lay a plan for it. You conceal your design. You contrive to drive him into the pit that you have made, and urge him on until you have caught him in the use of unguarded language, or driven him to vent expressions that cover him with confusion. Instead of throwing a mantle of charity over his frailties and infirmities, you make the most of every word, take it out of its proper connection, and attempt to overwhelm him in shame and disgrace. On the method of hunting in ancient times, see the notes at ^{<888>}Job 18:8—10.

Job 6:28. *Now, therefore, be content* Rosenmuller has better rendered this, "if it please you." The sense is, "if you are willing, look upon me." That is, "if you are disposed, you may take a careful view of me. Look me in the countenance. You can see for yourselves whether I am sincere or false. I am willing that my whole demeanor should be subjected to the utmost scrutiny."

For it is evident unto you if I lie Margin, as in Hebrew before your face. That is, "you yourselves can see by my whole demeanor, by my sufferings,

my patience, my manifest sincerity, that I am not playing the hypocrite.” Conscious of sincerity, he believed that if they would look upon him, they would be convinced that he was a sincere and an upright man.

~~816~~ **Job 6:29.** *Return, I pray you* That is, return to the argument. Give your attention to it again. Perhaps he may have discerned a disposition in them to turn away from what he was saying, and to withdraw and leave him. Job expresses his belief that he could convince them; and he proposes more fully to state his views, if they would attend to him.

Let it not be iniquity Let it not be considered as wrong thus to come back to the argument. Or, let it not be assumed that my sentiments are erroneous, and my heart evil. Job means, that it should not be taken for granted that he was a hypocrite; that he was conscious of sincerity, and that he was convinced that he could satisfy them of it if they would lend a listening ear. A similar sentiment he expresses in ~~818~~ Job 19:28:

*But ye should say, Why persecute we him?
Seeing the root of the matter is found in me.*

My righteousness is in it Margin, i.e., this matter. The sense is, “my complete vindication is in the argument which I propose to state. I am prepared to show that I am innocent.” On that account, he wishes them to return and attend to what he proposed to say.

~~816~~ **Job 6:30.** *Is there iniquity in my tongue?* This is a solemn appeal to their consciences, and their own deep conviction that he was sincere. Iniquity in the tongue means falsehood, deceit, hypocrisy — that which would be expressed by the tongue.

Cannot my taste discern perverse things? Margin, palate. The word used here Ēj ^{A2441} means properly the palate, together with the corresponding lower part of the mouth, the inside mouth. Gesenius. Hence, it means the organ of taste, residing in the mouth. The meaning is, that Job was qualified to discern what was true or false, sincere or hypocritical, just or unjust, in the same manner as the palate is fitted to discern the qualities of objects, whether bitter or sweet, pleasant or unpleasant, wholesome or unwholesome. His object is to invite attention to what he had to state on the subject. To this proposed vindication he proceeds in the following chapter, showing the greatness of his calamity, and his right, as he supposes, to complain. Their attention was gained. They did not refuse to

listen to him, and he proceeds to a fuller statement of his calamity, and of the reasons why he had allowed himself to use the language of complaint. They listened without interruption until he was done, and then replied in tones of deeper severity still.

NOTES ON JOB 7

<800> Job 7:1. *Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?* Margin, or, warfare. The word used here **abx**,^{<h6635>} means properly a host, an army, see the notes, ^{<200>}Isaiah 1:9; then it means warfare, or the hard service of a soldier; notes, ^{<300>}Isaiah 40:2. Here it means that man on the earth was enlisted, so to speak, for a certain time. He had a certain and definite hard service to perform, and which he must continue to discharge until he was relieved by death. It was a service of hazard, like the life of a soldier, or of toil, like that of one who had been hired for a certain time, and who anxiously looked for the period of his release. The object of Job in introducing this remark evidently is, to vindicate himself for the wish to die which he had expressed. He maintains that it is as natural and proper for man in his circumstances to wish to be released by death, as for a soldier to desire that his term of service might be accomplished, or a weary servant to long for the shades of the evening. The Septuagint renders it, “Is not the life of man upon the earth **πειρατηριον**,” — explained by Schleusner and rendered by Good, as meaning a band of pirates. The Vulgate renders it, militia — military service. The sense is, that the life of man was like the hard service of a soldier; and this is one of the points of justification to which Job referred in ^{<800>}Job 6:29,30. He maintains that it is not improper to desire that such a service should close.

The days of an hireling A man who has been hired to perform some service with a promise of a reward, and who is not unnaturally impatient to receive it. Job maintained that such was the life of man. He was looking forward to a reward, and it was not unnatural or improper to desire that that reward should be given to him.

<800> Job 7:2. *As a servant earnestly desireth* Margin, gapeth after. The word here **ãææ**,^{<h7602>} means to breathe hard, to pant, to blow, and then to desire earnestly.

The shadow This may refer either to a shade in the intense heat of the day, or to the night. Nothing is more grateful in oriental countries, when the sun pours down intensely on burning sands, than the shadow of a tree, or the shade of a projecting rock. The editor of the Pictorial Bible on this verse remarks, “We think we can say, that next to water, the greatest and

deepest enjoyment we could ever realize in the hot climates of the East was, when on a journey, any circumstance of the road brought us for a few minutes under some shade. Its reviving influence upon the bodily frame, and consequently upon the spirits, is inconceivable by one who has not had some experience of the kind. Often also during the halt of a caravan in the open air, when the writer has been enabled to secure a station for repose under the shelter of a rock or of an old wall, has his own exultation and strong sense of luxurious enjoyment reminded him of this and other passages of Scripture, in which shade is mentioned as a thing panted for with intense desire.” Probably here, however, the reference is to the shades of night, the time when darkness falls upon the earth, and the servant is released from his toil. It is common in all languages to speak of night as enveloped with shadows. Thus, Virgil, En. iv. 7:

Humentemque aurora polo dimoverat urnbram.

The meaning of Job is, that as a servant looked impatiently for the shades of the evening when he would be dismissed from toil, so he longed for death.

And as an hireling looketh That is, he anxiously desires his work to be finished, and expects the reward of his labors. So Job looked to the reward of a life of toil and piety. Is there not here an undoubted reference to a future state? Is it not manifest that Job looked to some recompense in the future world, as real and as sure, as a hired servant looks for the reward of his toils when his work is done?

~~808~~ **Job 7:3.** *So am I made to possess* Hebrew I am made to inherit. The meaning is, that such sad and melancholy seasons now were his only portion.

Months of vanity That is, months which were destitute of comfort; in other words, months of affliction. How long his trials had continued before this, we have no means of ascertaining. There is no reason, however, to suppose that his bodily sufferings came upon him all at once, or that they had not continued for a considerable period. It is quite probable that his expressions of impatience were the result not only of the intensity, but the continuance of his sorrows. *And wearisome nights are appointed to me* Even his rest was disturbed. The time when care is usually forgotten and toil ceases, was to him a period of sleepless anxiety and distress — I m[. The Septuagint renders it, nights of pangs ($\nu\kappa\tau\epsilon\sigma$ ^{<3571>} $\omicron\delta\upsilon\nu\omega\nu$ ^{<3601>}),

expressing accurately the sense of the Hebrew. The Hebrew word **l m** is commonly applied to intense sorrow, to trouble and pain of the severest kind, such as the pains of parturition; see the notes at ^{<2531>}Isaiah 53:11.

^{<807>}**Job 7:4.** *When I lie down* I find no comfort and no rest on my bed. My nights are long, and I am impatient to have them passed, and equally so is it with the day. This is a description which all can understand who have been laid on a bed of pain.

And the night be gone Margin, evening be measured. Herder renders this, “the night is irksome to me.” The word rendered night **br**, ^{<6153>} properly means the early part of the night, until it is succeeded by the dawn. Thus, in ^{<0005>}Genesis 1:5, “And the evening **br**, ^{<6153>} and the morning were the first day.” Here it means the portion of the night which is before the dawning of the aurora — the night. The word rendered “be gone” and in the margin “be measured” **ddæ**, ^{<4059>}, has been variously rendered. The verb **ddæ**, ^{<4058>} means to stretch, to extend, to measure; and, according to Gesenius, the form of the word used here is a noun meaning flight, and the sense is, “when shall be the flight of the night?” He derives it from **ddæ**, ^{<5074>} to move, to flee, to flee away. So Rosenmuller explains it. The expression is poetic, meaning, when shall the night be gone?

I am full of tossings to and fro **pyddn**. A word from the same root. It means uneasy motions, restlessness. He found no quiet repose on his bed.

Unto the dawning **āvη**, ^{<5399>}, from **āvæ**, ^{<5398>}, to breathe; hence, the evening twilight because the breezes blow, or seem to breathe, and then it means also the morning twilight, the dawn. Dr. Stock renders it, “until the morning breeze.”

^{<807>}**Job 7:5.** *My flesh is clothed with worms* Job here undoubtedly refers to his diseased state, and this is one of the passages by which we may learn the nature of his complaint; compare the notes at ^{<807>}Job 2:7. There is reference here to the worms which are produced in ulcers and in other forms of disease. Michaelis remarks that such effects are produced often in the elephantiasis. Bochart, Hieroz. P. II, Lib. IV. c. xxvi. pp. 619 — 621, has abundantly proved that such effects occur in disease, and has mentioned several instances where death ensued from this cause; compare ^{<4123>}Acts 12:23. The same thing would often happen — and particularly in

hot climates — if it were not for the closest care and attention in keeping running sores as clean as possible.

And clods of dust Accumulated on the ulcers which covered his whole body. This effect would be almost unavoidable. Dr. Good renders this, “worms and the imprisoning dust,” and supposes that the image is taken from the grave, and that the idea in the whole passage is that of one who is “dead while he lives;” that is, of one who is undergoing putrefaction before he is buried. But the more common and correct interpretation is that which refers it to the accumulated filth attending a loathsome disease; see ^{<80B>}Job 2:8. The word which is used here and rendered clods ^{vwg} means a lump of earth or dust. Septuagint, βωλακας γης ^{<1093>}; Vulgate, sordes pulveris,” clods of earth.” The whole verse is rendered by the Septuagint, “My body swarms with the putrefaction of worms, and I moisten the clods of earth with the ichor (ιχωρος) of ulcers.”

My skin is broken — [gr. This word means, to make afraid, to terrify; and then to shrink together from fear, or to contract. Here it means, according to Gesenius, that “the skin came together and healed, and then broke forth again and ran with pus.” Jerome renders it, aruit — dries up. Herder, “my skin becometh closed.” Dr. Good, “my skin becometh stiff;” and carries out his idea that the reference here is to the stiffened and rigid appearance of the body after death. Doederlin supposes that it refers to the rough and horrid appearance of the skin in the elephantiasis, when it becomes rigid and frightful by the disease. Jarchi renders it, cutis mea corrugata — my skin is rough, or filled with wrinkles. This seems to me to be the idea, that it was filled with wrinkles and corrugations; that it became stiff, fixed, frightful, and was such as to excite terror in the beholder.

And become loathsome Gesenius, “runs again with pus.” The word here used ^{sam} means properly to reject, contemn, despise. A second sense which it has is, to melt, to run like water; ^{<187E>}Psalm 58:7, “Let them melt away ^{wsamr} as waters.” But the usual meaning is to be preferred here. His skin became abhorrent and loathsome in the sight of others.

^{<80B>}**Job 7:6.** *My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle* That is, they are short and few. He does not here refer so much to the rapidity with which they were passing away as to the fact that they would soon be gone, and that he was likely to be cut off without being permitted to enjoy the blessings of a long life; compare the notes at ^{<238D>}Isaiah 38:12. The weaver’s

shuttle is the instrument by which the weaver inserts the filling in the woof. With us few things would furnish a more striking emblem of rapidity than the speed with which a weaver throws his shuttle from one side of the web to the other. It would seem that such was the fact among the ancients, though the precise manner in which they wove their cloth, is unknown. It was common to compare life with a web, which was filled up by the successive days. The ancient classic writers spoke of it as a web woven by the Fates. We can all feel the force of the comparison used here by Job, that the days which we live fly swift away. How rapidly is one after another added to the web of life! How soon will the whole web be filled up, and life be closed! A few more shoots of the shuttle and all will be over, and our life will be cut off, as the weaver removes one web from the loom to make way for another. How important to improve the fleeting moments, and to live as if we were soon to see the rapid shuttle flying for the last time!

And are spent without hope Without hope of recovery, or of future happiness on earth. It does not mean that he had no hope of happiness in the world to come. But such were his trials here, and so entirely had his comforts been removed, that he had no prospect of again enjoying life.

Job 7:7. *O remember* This is evidently an address to God. In the anguish of his soul Job turns his eye and his heart to his Maker, and urges reasons why he should close his life. The extent of his sufferings, and the certainty that he must die (^{<817>}Job 7:9,10), are the reasons on which he dwells why his life should be closed, and he released. The language is respectful, but it is the expression of deep anguish and sorrow.

That my life is wind Life is often compared with a vapor, a shadow, a breath. The language denotes that it is frail, and soon passed — as the breeze blows upon us, and soon passes by; compare ^{<3783>}Psalms 78:39:

*For he remembered that they were but flesh;
A wind that passeth away and cometh not again.*

Mine eye shall no more Margin, as in Hebrew not return. The idea is, that if he was cut off, he would not return again to behold the pleasant scenes of this life.

See good Margin, To see, i.e., to enjoy. The sense is that he would no more be permitted to look upon the things which now so much gratified the sight, and gave so much pleasure. There is some resemblance here to

the feelings expressed by Hezekiah in his apprehension of death; see the notes at ^{<2380>}Isaiah 38:10,11.

^{<8078>}**Job 7:8.** *The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more* I shall be cut off from all my friends — one of the things which most distresses people when they come to die.

Thine eyes are upon me, and I am not; see ^{<8072>}Job 7:21. Dr. Good renders this, “let thine eye be upon me, and I am nothing.” Herder, “thine eye will seek me, but I am no more.” According to this the sense is, that he was soon to be removed from the place where he had dwelt, and that should he be sought there he could not be found. He would seem to represent God as looking for him, and not finding him; see ^{<8072>}Job 7:21. The margin has, “I can live no longer.” It may be possible that this is the meaning, that God had fixed an intense gaze upon him, and that he could not survive it. If this is the sense, then it accords with the descriptions given of the majesty of God everywhere in the Scriptures — that nothing could endure His presence, that even the earth trembles, and the mountains melt away, at his touch. Thus, in ^{<4943>}Psalms 104:32:

*He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth;
He toucheth the hills, and they smoke.*

Compare the representation of the power of the eye in ^{<8160>}Job 16:9:

*He teareth me in his wrath who hateth me;
He gnasheth upon me with his teeth
Mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.*

On the whole, I think it probable that this is the sense here. There is an energy in the original which is greatly enfeebled in the common translation. God had fixed his eyes upon Job, and he at once disappeared; compare ^{<6011>}Revelation 20:11:

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.”

^{<8009>}**Job 7:9.** *As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away* This image is taken from the light and fleecy clouds, which become smaller and smaller until they wholly vanish. For an illustration of a similar phrase, see the notes at ^{<2342>}Isaiah 44:22.

To the grave — **ἡ ᾠὴ**⁷¹⁷⁵⁸⁵. Septuagint, εἰς ^{<1519>} ᾠδην ^{<86>}, to Hades.

The word may mean grave, or the place of departed spirits; see the notes at ^{<23514>}Isaiah 5:14; 14:9; compare the notes at ^{<38021>}Job 10:21,22. Either signification will apply here.

Shall come up no more Shall no more live on the earth. It would be pressing this too far to adduce it as proving that Job did not believe in the doctrine of the resurrection. The connection here requires us to understand him as meaning only that he would not appear again on the earth.

^{<38710>}**Job 7:10.** *He shall return no more to his house* He shall not revisit his family. Job is dwelling on the calamity of death, and one of the circumstances most deeply felt in the prospect of death is, that a man must leave his own house to return no more. The stately palaces that he has built; the splendid halls which he has adorned; the chamber where he slept; the cheerful fireside where he met his family; the place at the table which he occupied, he will revisit no more. His tread will be no more heard; his voice will no more awaken delight in the happy family group; the father and husband returning from his daily toil will no more give pleasure to the joyous circle. Such is death. It removes us from all earthly comforts, takes us away from home and kindred — from children and friends, and bids us go alone to an unknown world. Job felt that it was a sad and gloomy thing. And so it is, unless there is a well-founded hope of a better world. It is the gospel only that can make us willing to leave our happy dwellings, and the embraces of kindred and friends, and to tread the lonely path to the regions of the dead. The friend of God has a brighter home in heaven. He has more numerous and better friends there. He has there a more splendid and happy mansion than any here on earth. He will be engaged in more blissful scenes there, than can be enjoyed by the most happy fireside here; will have more cheerful employments there, than any which can be found on earth; and will have higher and purer pleasures there, than can be found in parks, and lawns, and landscapes; in splendid halls, in music, and the festive board; in literary pursuits, and in the love of kindred. How far Job had the means of consolation from such reflections as these, it is not easy now to determine. The probability, however, is, that his views were comparatively dim and obscure.

^{<38711>}**Job 7:11.** *Therefore I will not refrain my mouth* The idea in this verse is, “such is my distress at the prospect of dying, that I cannot but express it. The idea of going away from all my comforts, and of being committed

to the grave, to revisit the earth no more, is so painful that I cannot but give vent to my feelings.”

^{<1872>}**Job 7:12.** *Am I a sea?* That is, “am I like a raging and tumultuous sea, that it is necessary to restrain and confine me? The sense of the verse is, that God had treated him as if he were untamable and turbulent, as if he were like the restless ocean, or as if he were some monster, which could be restrained within proper limits only by the stern exercise of power. Dr. Good, following Reiske, renders this, “a savage beast,” understanding by the Hebrew word ^{<13220>}μῦ, a sea-monster instead of the sea itself, and then any ferocious beast, as the wild buffalo. But it is clear, I think, that the word never has this meaning. It means properly the sea; then a lake or inland sea, and then it is applied to any great river that spreads out like the ocean. Thus, it is applied both to the Nile, and to the Euphrates; see the notes at ^{<2115>}Isaiah 11:15; 19:15. Herder here renders it, “the river and its crocodile,” and this it seems to me is probably the meaning. Job asks whether he is like the Nile, overflowing its banks, and rolling on impetuously to the sea, and, unless restrained, sweeping everything away. Some such flood of waters, and not a savage beast, is undoubtedly intended here.

Or a whale ^{<18577>}γῆνιτᾶ. Jerome, cetus — a whale. The Septuagint renders it, ^{<1404>}δρακῶν, a dragon. The Chaldee paraphrases it, “Am I condemned as the Egyptians were, who were condemned and submerged in the Red sea; or as Pharaoh, who was drowned in the midst of it, in his sins, that thou placest over me a guard?” Herder renders it, “the crocodile.” On the meaning of the word, see the notes at ^{<2132>}Isaiah 13:22; 51:9. It refers here probably to a crocodile, or some similar monster, that was found either in the Nile or in the branches of the Red sea. There is no evidence that it means a whale. Harmer (Obs. iii. 536, Ed. Lond. 1808) supposes that the crocodile is meant, and observes that “Crocodiles are very terrible to the inhabitants of Egypt; when, therefore, they appear, they watch them with great attention, and take proper precautions to secure them, so as that they should not be able to avoid the deadly weapons the Egyptians afterward make use of to kill them.” According to this, the expression in Job refers to the anxious care which is evinced by the inhabitants of countries where crocodiles abound to destroy them. Every opportunity would be anxiously watched for, and great solicitude would be manifested to take their lives. In countries, too, which were subject to inundation from waters, great anxiety

would be evinced. The rising waters would be carefully watched, lest they should burst over all barriers, and sweep away fences, houses, and towns. Such a constant vigilance Job represents the Almighty as keeping over him — watching him as if he were a swelling, roaring, and ungovernable torrent, or as if he were a frightful monster of the deep, whom he was anxious to destroy. In both respects the language is forcible, and in both instances scarcely less irreverent than it is forcible. For a description of the crocodile, see the notes at Job 41.

<8713> **Job 7:13.** *When I say, My bed shall comfort me* The idea in this verse and the following is, that there was no intermission to his sorrows. Even the times when people usually sought repose were to him times of distress. Then he was disturbed and alarmed by the most frightful dreams and visions, and sleep fled from him.

“Shall ease my complaint The word rendered “shall ease” *avy* means rather, shall bear; that is, shall lighten or sustain. The meaning is, that he sought relief on his bed.

<8714> **Job 7:14.** *Then thou scarest me* This is an address to God. He regarded him as the source of his sorrows, and he expresses his sense of this in language indeed very beautiful, but far from reverence.

With dreams; see <8704> Job 7:4. A similar expression occurs in Ovid:

*Ut puto, cam requies medicinaque publica curae,
Somnus adest, soliris nox venit orba malis,
Somnia me terrent. veros imitantia casus,
Et vigilant sensus in mea damna mei.
— Do Ponto, Lib. i. Eleg. 2.*

And terrifiest me through visions See the notes at <8743> Job 4:13. This refers to the visions of the fancy, or to frightful appearances in the night. The belief of such night-visions was common in the early ages, and Job regarded them as under the direction of God, and as being designed to alarm him.

<8715> **Job 7:15.** *So that my soul* So that I; the soul being put for himself.

Chooseth strangling Dr. Good renders it “suffocation,” and supposes that Job alludes to the oppression of breathing, produced by what is commonly called the night-mare, and that he means that he would prefer the sense of

suffocation excited at such a time to the terrible images before his mind. Herder renders it, death. Jerome, suspendium. The Septuagint, “Thou separatest (*απαλλαξεις*)^{<525>} my life from my spirit, and my bones from death;” but what idea they attached to it, it is impossible now to tell. The Syriac renders it, “Thou chooseth my soul from perdition, and my bones from death.” The word rendered strangling *qnhm* is from *dnh*, to be narrow, strait, close; and then means to strangle, to throttle,^{<3122>} Nahum 2:12; ^{<1073>}2 Samuel 17:23. Here it means death; and Job designs to say that he would prefer even the most violent kind of death to the life that he was then leading. I see no evidence that the idea suggested by Dr. Good is to be found in the passage.

And death rather than my life. Margin, as in Hebrew, bones. There has been great variety in the exposition of this part of the verse. Herder renders it, “death rather than this frail body.” Rosenmuller and Noyes, “death rather than my bones;” that is, he preferred death to such an emaciated body as he then had, to the wasted skeleton which was then all that he had left to him. This is probably the true sense. Job was a sufferer in body and in soul. His flesh was wasting away, his body was covered with ulcers, and his mind was harassed with apprehensions. By day he had no peace, and at night he was terrified by alarming visions and spectres; and he preferred death in any form to such a condition.

^{<8716>}**Job 7:16.** *I loathe it* I loathe my life as it is now. It has become a burden and I desire to part with it, and to go down to the grave. There is, however, considerable variety in the interpretation of this. Noyes renders it, “I am wasting away.” Dr. Good connects it with the previous verse and understands by it, “death in comparison with my sufferings do I despise.” The Syriac is, — it fails to me, i.e., I fail, or my powers are wasting away. But the Hebrew word *sam* means properly to loathe and contemn (see the note at ^{<8716>}Job 7:5), and the true idea here is expressed in the common version. The sense is, “my life is painful and offensive, and I wish to die.”

I would not live always As Job used this expression, there was doubtless somewhat of impatience and of an improper spirit. Still it contains a very important sentiment, and one that may be expressed in the highest state of just religious feeling. A man who is prepared for heaven should not and will not desire to live here always. It is better to depart and to be with Christ, better to leave a world of imperfection and sin, and to go to a world of purity and love. On this text, fully and beautifully illustrating its

meaning, the reader may consult a sermon by Dr. Dwight. Sermons, Edinburgh, 1828, vol. ii. 275ff. This world is full of temptations and of sin; it is a world where suffering abounds; it is the infancy of our being; it is a place where our knowledge is imperfect, and where the affections of the best are comparatively grovelling; it is a world where the good are often persecuted, and where the bad are triumphant; and it is better to go to abodes where all these will be unknown. Heaven is a more desirable place in which to dwell than the earth; and if we had a clear view of that world, and proper desires, we should pant to depart and to be there. Most people live as though they would live always here if they could do it, and multitudes are forming their plans as if they expected thus to live. They build their houses and form their plans as if life were never to end. It is the privilege of the Christian, however, to EXPECT to die. Not wishing to live always here, he forms his plans with the anticipation that all which he has must soon be left; and he is ready to loose his hold on the world the moment the summons comes. So may we live; so living, it will be easy to die. The sentiments suggested by this verse have been so beautifully versified in a hymn by Muhlenberg, that I will copy it here:

*I would not live alway; I ask not to stay
Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way;
The few fleeting mornings that dawn on us here
Are enough for life's sorrows — enough for its cheer.*

*I would not live alway; no, welcome the tomb;
Since Jesus hath lain there, I dread not its gloom;
There sweet be my rest, till he bid me arise,
To hail him in triumph descending the skies.*

*Who, who would live alway, away from his God,
Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode,
Where rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns?*

*Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,
Their Saviour and brethren transported to greet;
While anthems of rapture unceasingly roll,
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul.*

Let me alone This is an address to God. It means, “cease to afflict me. Suffer me to live out my little length of life with some degree of ease. It is

short at best, and I have no desire that it should always continue.” This sentiment he illustrates in the following verses.

For my days are vanity They are as nothing, and are unworthy the notice of God. Life is a trifle, and I am not anxious that it should be prolonged. Why then may I not be suffered to pass my few days without being thus afflicted and pained?

~~8377~~ **Job 7:17.** *What is man, that thou shouldst magnify him?* That thou shouldst make him great, or that thou shouldst regard him as of so great importance as to fix thine eye attentively upon him. The idea here is, that it was unworthy the character of so great a being as God to bestow so much time and attention on a creature so insignificant as man; and especially that man could not be of so much importance that it was necessary for God to watch all his defects with vigilance, and take special pains to mark and punish all his offences. This question might be asked in another sense, and with another view. Man is so insignificant compared with God, that it may be asked why he should so carefully provide for his needs? Why make so ample provision for his welfare? Why institute measures so amazing and so wonderful for his recovery from sin? The answers to all these questions must be substantially the same.

(1) It is a part of the great plan of a condescending God. No insect is so small as to be beneath his notice. On the humblest and feeblest animalcula a care is bestowed in its formation and support as if God had nothing else to regard or provide for.

(2) Man is of importance. He has an immortal soul, and the salvation of that soul is worth all which it costs, even when it costs the blood of the Son of God.

(3) A creature who sins, always makes himself of importance. The murderer has an importance in the view of the community which he never had before. All good citizens become interested to arrest and punish him. There is no more certain way for a man to give consequence to himself, than to violate the laws, and to subject himself to punishment. An offending member of a family has an importance which he had not before, and all eyes are turned to him with deep interest. So it is with man — a part of the great family of God.

(4) A sufferer is a being of importance, and man as a sufferer is worthy of the notice of God. However feeble may be the powers of anyone, or humble his rank, yet if he suffers, and especially if he is likely to suffer forever, he becomes at once an object of the highest importance: Such is man; a sufferer here, and liable to eternal pain hereafter; and hence, the God of mercy has interposed to visit him, and to devise a way to rescue him from his sorrows, and from eternal death. The Syriac renders this, “What is man, that thou shouldst destroy him?” — but the Hebrew means, “to magnify him, to make him great or of importance.”

That thou shouldst set thine heart upon him? Not with affection, but to punish him — for so the expression in this connection evidently means. The phrase itself might mean, “Why shouldst thou love him?” — implying that there was nothing in a creature so insignificant that could render him a proper object of the divine regard. But as used here by Job it means, “Why dost thou fix thy attention upon him so closely — marking the slightest offence, and seeming to take a special pleasure in inflicting pain and torture?” The Psalmist makes use of almost the same language, and not improbably copied it from this, though he employs it in a somewhat different sense. As used by him, it means that it was wonderful that the God who made the heavens should condescend to notice a creature so insignificant as man.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him: —
~~CHB~~ Psalm 8:3,4.

~~CHB~~ **Job 7:18.** *And that thou shouldst visit him?* That is, for the purpose of inflicting pain. This language Job intends undoubtedly to be applicable to himself, and he asks with impatience why God should take a pleasure in visiting with suffering each returning day a creature like him?

Every morning Why is there no intermission even for a day? Why does not God allow one morning, or one moment, to pass without inflicting pain on a creature so feeble and so frail?

And try him Or, prove him; to wit, by afflictions.

Every moment Constantly; without intermission.

~~1879~~ **Job 7:19.** *How long wilt thou not depart?* How long is this to continue? The same word occurs in ~~1846~~ Job 14:6. The word rendered “depart” **h[v** means to look, to look around, and then to look away from anyone or anything. The idea here is, that God had fixed his eyes upon Job, and he asks with anxiety, how long this was to continue, and when he would turn his eyes away; compare the notes at ~~1808~~ Job 7:8. Schultens supposes that the metaphor here is taken from combatants, who never take their eyes from their antagonists.

Till I swallow down my spittle For the shortest time. But there has been considerable variety in the explanation of this phrase. Herder renders it, “Until I draw my breath.” Noyes, “Until I have time to breathe;” but he acknowledges that he has substituted this for the proverb which occurs in the original. The Hebrew is literally rendered in the common version, and the proverb is retained in Arabia to the present day. The meaning is, Give me a little respite; allow me a little time; as we would say, Suffer me to breathe.

“This,” says Burder, “is a proverb among the Arabians to the present day, by which they understand, Give me leave to rest after my fatigue. This is the favor which Job complains is not granted to him. There are two instances which illustrate this passage (quoted by Schultens) in Harris’s Narratives entitled the Assembly. One is of a person, who, when eagerly pressed to give an account of his travels, answered with impatience, ‘Let me swallow down my spittle, for my journey hath fatigued me.’ The other instance is of a quick return made to a person who used the proverb. ‘Suffer me,’ said the person importuned, ‘to swallow down my spittle;’ to which the friend replied, ‘You may, if you please, swallow down even the Tigris and the Euphrates;’ that is, You may take what time you please.”

The expression is proverbial, and corresponds to ours when we say, “in the twinkling of an eye,” or, “until I can catch my breath;” that is, in the briefest interval. Job addresses this language to God. There is much impatience in it, and much that a pious man should not employ; but we are to remember that Job was beset with special trials, and that he had not the views of the divine existence and perfections, the promises and the high hopes, which as Christians we have under the fuller light of revelation; and before harshly condemning him we should put ourselves in his situation,

and ask ourselves how we would be likely to think and feel and speak if we were in the same circumstances.

Job 7:20. *I have sinned* *afj* ^{<1872>}; ^{<12398>}. This is a literal translation, and as it stands in the common version it is the language of a penitent — confessing that he had erred, and making humble acknowledgment of his sins. That such a confession became Job, and that he would be willing to admit that he was a sinner, there can be no doubt; but the connection seems rather to require a different sense — a sense implying that though he had sinned, yet his offences could not be such as to require the notice which God had taken of them. Accordingly this interpretation has been adopted by many, and the Hebrew will bear the construction. It may be rendered as a question, “Have I sinned; what did I against thee?” Herder. Or, the sense may be, “I have sinned. I admit it. Let this be conceded. But what can that be to a being like God, that he should take such notice of it? Have I injured him? Have I deserved these heavy trials? Is it proper that he should make me a special mark, and direct his severest judgments against me in this manner?” compare the notes at ^{<8816>} Job 35:6—8. The Syriac renders it in this manner, “If I have sinned, what have I done to thee?” So the Arabic, according to Walton. So the Septuagint, *Εἰ* ^{<1487>} *εγω* ^{<1473>} *ἡμαρτον* ^{<264>} — “if I have sinned.” This expresses the true sense. The object is not so much to make a penitent confession, as it is to say, that on the worst construction of the case, on the admission of the truth of the charge, he had not deserved the severe inflictions which he had received at the hand of God.

What shall I do unto thee? Or, rather, what have I done unto thee? How can my conduct seriously affect thee? It will not mar thy happiness, affect thy peace, or in any way injure a being so great as God. This sentiment is often felt by people — but not often so honestly expressed.

O thou Preserver of men Or, rather, “O thou that dost watch or observe men.” The word rendered “Preserver” *ῥαε* ^{<5341>} is a participle from *ῥαε* ^{<5341>} which means, according to Gesenius, to watch, to guard, to keep, and is used here in the sense of observing one’s faults; and the idea of Job is, that God closely observed the conduct of people; that he strictly marked their faults, and severely punished them; and he asks with impatience, and evidently with improper feeling, why he thus closely watched people. So it is understood by Schultens, Rosenmuller, Dr. Good, Noyes, Herder,

Kennicott, and others. The Septuagint renders it, “who knowest the mind of men?”

Why hast thou set me as a mark? The word rendered “mark” [gpm, means properly that which one impinges against — from [gæ⁴⁶²⁹⁵], to impinge against, to meet, to rush upon anyone — and here means, why has God made me such an object of attack or assault? The Septuagint renders it, **κατεντευκτην σου** ^{<4675>}, “an accuser of thee.”

So that I am a burden to myself The Septuagint renders this, **επι** ^{<1909>} **σοι** ^{<4671>} **φορτιον** ^{<5413>}, a burden to thee. The copy from which they translated evidently had **Ι** [æ⁴⁵⁰²¹] — to thee, instead of **Ι** [æ⁴⁵⁰²¹] — to me, as it is now read in the Hebrew. “The Masorites also place this among the eighteen passages which they say were altered by transcribers.” Noyes. But the Received Text is sustained by all the versions except the Septuagint and by all the Hebrew manuscripts hitherto examined, and is doubtless the true reading. The sense is plain, that life had become a burden to Job. He says that God had made him the special object of his displeasure, and that his condition was insupportable. That there is much in this language which is irreverent and improper no one can doubt, and it is not possible wholly to vindicate it. Nor are we called to do it by any view which we have of the nature of inspiration. He was a good, but not a perfect man. These expressions are recorded, not for our imitation, but to show what human nature is. Before harshly condemning him, however, we should ask what we would be likely to do in his circumstances; we should remember also, that he had few of the truths and promises to support him which we have.

<872> Job 7:21. *And why dost thou not pardon my transgression?*

Admitting that I have sinned (^{<872>} Job 7:20), yet why dost thou not forgive me? I shall soon pass away from the land of the living. I may be sought but I shall not be found. No one would be injured by my being pardoned — since I am so short-lived, and so unimportant in the scale of being. No one can be benefited by pursuing a creature of a day, such as I am, with punishment. Such seems to be the meaning of this verse. It is the language of complaint, and is couched in language filled with irreverence. Still it is language such as awakened and convicted sinners often use, and expresses the feelings which often pass through their hearts. They admit that they are sinners. They know that they must be pardoned or they cannot be saved. They are distressed at the remembrance of guilt, and under this state of

mind, deeply convicted and distressed, they ask with a complaining spirit why God does not pardon them? Why does he allow them to remain in this state of agitation, suspense, and deep distress? Who could be injured by their being forgiven? Of what consequence to others can it be that they should not be forgiven? How can God be benefited by his not pardoning them? It may not be easy to answer these questions in a manner wholly satisfactory; but perhaps the following may be some of the reasons why Job had not the evidence of forgiveness which he now desired, and why the convicted sinner has not. The main reason is, that they are not in a state of mind to make it proper to forgive them.

- (1) There is a feeling that they have a claim on God for pardon, or that it would be wrong for God not to pardon them. When people feel that they have a claim on God for pardon, they cannot be forgiven. The very notion of pardon implies that it must be when there is no claim existing or felt.
- (2) There is no proper submission to God — to his views, his terms, his plan. In order that pardon may be extended to the guilty, there should be acquiescence in God's own terms, and time, and mode. The sinner must resign himself into his hands, to be forgiven or not as he pleases — feeling that the whole question is lodged in his bosom, and that if he should not forgive, still it would be right, and his throne would be pure. In particular, under the Christian method of pardon, there must be entire acquiescence in the plan of salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ; a willingness to accept of forgiveness, not on the ground of personal claim, but on the ground of his merits; and it is because the convicted sinner is not willing to be pardoned in this way, that he remains unforgiven. There should be a feeling, also, that it would be right for God to pardon others, if he pleases, even though we are not saved; and it is often because the convicted sinner is not willing that that should be done, because he feels that it would be wrong in God to save others and not him, that he is not forgiven. The sinner is often suffered to remain in this state until he is brought to acquiesce in the right of a sovereign God to save whom he pleases.
- (3) There is a complaining spirit — and that is a reason why the sinner is not forgiven. That was manifestly the case with Job; and when that exists, how can God forgive? How can a parent pardon an offending child, when he is constantly complaining of his injustice and of the severity of his government? This very spirit is a new offence, and a new reason why he should be punished. So the awakened sinner murmurs. He complains of the

government of God as too severe; of his law, as too strict; of his dealings, as harsh and unkind. He complains of his sufferings, and thinks they are wholly beyond his deserts. He complains of the doctrines of the Bible as mysterious, incomprehensible, and unjust. In this state how can he be forgiven? God often suffers the awakened sinner, therefore, to remain under conviction for sin, until he is willing to acquiesce in all his claims, and to submit without a complaint; and then, and not until then, he extends forgiveness to the guilty and troubled spirit.

For now shall I sleep in the dust On the word sleep, as applied to death, see the notes at ^{<KRB>}Job 3:13. The meaning is, that he was soon to die. He urges the shortness of the time which remained to him as a reason why his afflictions should be lightened, and why he should be pardoned. If God had anything that he could do for him, it must be done soon. But only a brief period remained, and Job seems to be impatient lest the whole of his life should be gone, and he should sleep in the dust without evidence that his sins were pardoned. Olympiodorus, as quoted by Rosenmuller, expresses the sense in the following manner: “If, therefore, I am so short-lived (or momentary, *προσκαιρος* ^{<4340>}) and obnoxious to death, and must die after a short time, and shall no more arise, as if from sleep, why dost not thou suffer the little space of life to be free from punishment?”

And thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be That is, thou shalt seek to find me after I have slept in the dust, as if with the expectation that I should wake, but I shall not be found. My sleep will be perpetual, and I shall no more return to the land of the living. The idea seems to be, that if God were to show him any favor, it must be done soon. His death, which must happen soon, would put it out of the power even of God to show him mercy on earth, if he should relent and be inclined to favor him. He seems not to doubt that God would be disposed yet to show him favor; that he would be inclined to pardon him, and to relax the severity of his dealings with him, but he says that if it were done it must be done soon, and seems to apprehend that it would be delayed so long that it could not be done. The phrase “in the morning” here is used with reference to the sleep which he had just mentioned. We sleep at night, and awake and arise in the morning. Job says it would not be so with him in the sleep of death. He would awake no more; he could no more be found. — In this chapter there is much language of bitter complaint, and much which we cannot justify. It should not be taken as a model for our language when we are afflicted, though Job may have only expressed what has passed through the

heart of many an afflicted child of God. We should not judge him harshly. Let us ask ourselves how we would have done if we had been in similar circumstances. Let us remember that he had comparatively few of the promises which we have to comfort us, and few of the elevated views of truth as made known by revelation, which we have to uphold us in trial. Let us be thankful that when we suffer, promises and consolations meet us on every hand. The Bible is open before us — rich with truth, and bright with promise. Let us remember that death is not as dark and dismal to us as it was to the pious in the time of the patriarchs — and that the grave is not now to us as dark and chilly, and gloomy, and comfortless an abode. To their view, the shadow of death cast a melancholy chillness over all the regions of the dead; to us the tomb is enlightened by Christian hope. The empire of Death has been invaded, and his power has been taken away. Light has been shed around the tomb, and the grave to us is the avenue to immortal life; the pathway on which the lamp of salvation shines, to eternal glory. Let us not complain, therefore, when we are afflicted, as if the blessing were long delayed, or as if it could not be conferred should we soon die. If withheld here, it will be imparted in a better world, and we should be willing to bear trials in this short life, with the sure promise that God will meet and bless us when we pass the confines of life, and enter the world of glory.

NOTES ON JOB 8

<888> **Job 8:1.** *Then answered Bildad the Shuhite*; see the notes at, <821> Job 2:11.

<888> **Job 8:2.** *How long wilt thou speak these things?* The flyings of murmuring and complaint, such as he had uttered in the previous chapters.

The words of thy mouth be like a strong wind? The Syriac and Arabic (according to Walton) render this, “the spirit of pride fill thy mouth.” The Septuagint renders it, “The spirit of thy mouth is profuse of words” — *πολυρρημον* . But the common rendering is undoubtedly correct, and the expression is a very strong and beautiful one. His language of complaint and murmuring was like a tempest. It swept over all barriers, and disregarded all restraint. The same figure is found in Aristophanes, Ran. 872, as quoted by Schultens, *Τυφως εκβαινειν παρασκευαζεται* <3903> — a tempest of words is preparing to burst forth. And in Silius Italicus, xxi. 581:

— *qui tanta superbo*
Facta sonas ore, et spumanti turbine perflas
Ignorantum aures.

The Chaldee renders it correctly *abr ap[z* — a great tempest.

<888> **Job 8:3.** *Doth God pervert judgment?* That is, Does God afflict people unjustly? Does he show favor to the evil, and punish the good? Bildad here undoubtedly refers to Job, and supposes that he had brought this charge against God. But he had not done it in so many words. He had complained of the severity of his sufferings, and had indulged in irreverent language toward God. But he had not advanced the charge openly that God had perverted right. Bildad strenuously maintains that God would do right. His argument is based on the supposition that God would deal with people in this life according to their character; and thus he infers that Job must have been guilty of some great wickedness, that punishment should come upon him in this manner.

<888> **Job 8:4.** *If thy children have sinned against him* Bildad here assumes that the children of Job had been wicked, and had been cut off in their sins.

This must have cut him to the quick, for there was nothing which a bereaved father would feel more acutely than this. The meaning here is somewhat weakened by the word “if.” The Hebrew **מֵאִי**^{h518} is rather to be taken in the sense of “since” — assuming it as an indisputable point, or taking it for granted. It was not a supposition that if they should now do it, certain other consequences would follow; but the idea is, that since they had been cut off in their sins, if Job would even now seek God with a proper spirit, he might be restored to prosperity, though his beginning should be small; ^{<8887>}Job 8:7.

And he have cast them away Bildad supposes that they had been disowned by God, and had been put to death.

For their transgression Margin, in the hand of their. The Hebrew is, by the hand of their transgression; i.e., their sin has been the cause of it, or it has been by the instrumentality of their sin. What foundation Bildad had for this opinion, derived from the life and character of the sons of Job, we have no means of ascertaining. The probability is, however, that he had learned in general that they had been cut off; and that, on the general principle which he maintained, that God deals with men in this life according to their character, he inferred that they must have been distinguished for wickedness. Men not unfrequently argue in this way when sudden calamity comes upon others.

^{<8885>}**Job 8:5.** *If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes* If thou wouldest do it now. If even on the supposition that your sons have thus perished, and that God has come out in judgment against your family, you would look to God, you might be restored to favor. The word rendered “seek betimes” **רַגְעָא** means literally to seek in the morning, to seek early; and then, to make it the first business. It is derived from the word meaning aurora **רַגְעָא**⁴⁷⁸³⁷ and has reference to the early light of the morning, and hence, to an early seeking. It may be applied to seeking him in early life, or as the first thing — looking to him immediately when help is needed, or before we apply to anyone else; compare ^{<1075>}Proverbs 7:15; 8:17; 13:24; ^{<8945>}Job 24:5; ^{<9501>}Psalms 63:1; 78:34; ^{<2309>}Isaiah 26:9; ^{<2855>}Hosea 5:15; compare the advice of Eliphaz, ^{<8883>}Job 5:8.

^{<8885>}**Job 8:6.** *If thou wert pure and upright* There is something especially severe and caustic in this whole speech of Bildad. He first assumes that the children of Job were cut off for impiety, and then takes it for granted that

Job himself was not a pure and upright man. This inference he seems to have derived partly from the fact that he had been visited with so heavy calamities, and partly from the sentiments which Job had himself expressed. Nothing could be more unjust and severe, however, than to take it for granted that he was a hypocrite, and then proceed to argue as if that were a settled point. He does not make it a supposition that possibly Job might have erred — which would not have been improper; but he proceeds to argue as if it were a point about which there could be no hesitation.

He would awake for thee He would arouse or excite himself *ry[y]* on thy account. The image is that of arousing oneself from sleep or inactivity to aid another; and the idea is, that God had, as it were, slumbered over the calamities of Job, or had suffered them to come without interposing to prevent them, but that he would arouse himself if Job were pure, and would call upon him for aid.

And make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous That is, if thy habitation should become righteous now, he would make it prosperous. Hitherto, is the idea of Bildad, it has been a habitation of wickedness. Thy children have been wicked, and are now cut off. Thou thyself hast been a wicked man, and in consequence art afflicted. If now thou wouldst become pure and seek unto God, then God would make thy habitation prosperous. What could more try the patience of a sufferer than such cold and unfeeling insinuations? And what could more beautifully illustrate the nature of true courtesy, than to sit unmoved and hear such remarks? It was by forbearance in such circumstances eminently that Job showed his extraordinary patience.

~~888~~ **Job 8:7.** *Though thy beginning was small* On the supposition that the children of Job had been cut off, his family now was small. Yet Bildad says, that if he were to begin life again, even with so small a family, and in such depressed and trying circumstances, if he were a righteous man he might hope for returning prosperity.

Yet thy latter end From this, it is evident that Job was not now regarded as an old man. He would still have the prospect of living many years. Some have supposed, however that the meaning here is, that his former prosperity should appear small compared with that which he would hereafter enjoy if he were pure and righteous. So Noyes and Rosenmuller interpret it. But it seems to me that the former interpretation is the correct

one. Bildad utters a general sentiment, that though when a man begins life he has a small family and little property, yet if he is an upright man, he will be prospered and his possessions will greatly increase; compare ^{<18212>}Job 42:12: “Yahweh blessed the latter end of Job more than the beginning.”

^{<18212>}**Job 8:8.** *For inquire thee of the former age* That is, attend to the results of observation. Ask the generations which have passed, and who in their poems and proverbs have left the records of their experience. The sentiment which Bildad proposes to confirm by this appeal is, that though the wicked should for a time flourish, yet they would be cut off, and that the righteous, though they may be for a time afflicted, yet if they seek God, they will ultimately prosper. It was common to make these appeals to the ancients. The results of observation were embodied in proverbs, parables, fables, and fragments of poems; and he was regarded as among the wisest of men who had the fruits of these observations most at command. To that Bildad appeals, and especially, as would appear, to the fragment of an ancient poem which he proceeds to repeat, and which, perhaps, is the oldest poem extant in any language.

And prepare thyself Make an effort, or give diligent attention to it.

To the search of their fathers Of the bygone generations, not only to the age immediately past, but to their ancestors. He would bring the results of the observation of far distant ages to confirm the sentiment which he had advanced.

^{<18212>}**Job 8:9.** *For we are but of yesterday* That is, we are of short life. We have had but few opportunities of observation compared with those who have gone before us. There can be no doubt that Bildad here refers to the longevity of the antecedent ages compared with the age of man at the time when he lived; and the passage, therefore, is of importance in order to fix the date of the poem. It shows that human life had been reduced in the time of Job within comparatively moderate limits, and that an important change had taken place in its duration. This reduction began not long after the flood, and was probably continued gradually until it reached the present limit of seventy years. This passage proves that Job could not have lived in the time of the greatest longevity of man; compare the Introduction Section 3.

And know nothing Margin, not. So the Hebrew literally, “we do not know.” The sense is, “we have had comparatively few opportunities for

observation. From the comparative brevity of our lives, we see but little of the course of events. Our fathers lived through longer periods, and could mark more accurately the result of human conduct.” One suggestion may be made here, perhaps of considerable importance in explaining the course of argument in this book. The friends of Job maintained that the righteous would be rewarded in this life, and that the wicked would be overtaken by calamity. It may seem remarkable that they should have urged this so strenuously, when in the actual course of events as we now see them, there appears to be so slender a foundation for it in fact. But may this not be accounted for by the remark of Bildad in the verse under consideration? They appealed to their fathers. They relied on the results of experience in those ancient times. When people lived 900 or 1,000 years; when one generation was longer than twelve generations are now, this fact would be much more likely to occur than as human life is now ordered. Things would have time to work themselves right. The wicked in that long tract of time would be likely to be overtaken by disgrace and calamity, and the righteous would outlive the detractions and calumnies of their enemies, and meet in their old age with the ample rewards of virtue. Should people now live through the same long period, the same thing substantially would occur. A man’s character, who is remembered at all, is fully established long before a thousand years have elapsed, and posterity does justice to the righteous and the wicked. If people lived during that time instead of being merely remembered, the same thing would be likely to occur. Justice would be done to character, and the world would, in general, render to a man the honor which he deserved. This fact may have been observed in the long lives of the people before the flood, and the result of the observation may have been embodied in proverbs, fragments of poems, and in traditionary sayings, and have been recorded by the sages of Arabia as indubitable maxims. With these maxims they came to the controversy with Job, and forgetful of the change necessarily made by the abbreviation of human life, they proceed to apply their maxims without mercy to him; and because he was overwhelmed with calamity, they assumed that therefore he must have been a wicked man.

Our days upon earth are a shadow Comparisons of this kind are quite common in the Scriptures; see the notes at ^{<806>}Job 7:6. A similar figure occurs in ^{<1215>}1 Chronicles 29:15:

For we are strangers before thee, And sojourners, as were all our fathers: Our days upon earth are as a shadow, Yea, there is no abiding.

An expression similar occurs in AEschylus, Agam. v. 488, as quoted by Drusius and Dr. Good:

— εἰδῶλον ^{<1497>} σκιάς ^{<4639>} —
 — *the image or semblance of a shade* —

So in Pindar, man is called σκιάς ^{<4639>} ὄναρ ^{<3677>} — the dream of a shade; and so by Sophocles, καπνον ^{<2586>} σκία ^{<4639>} — the shadow of smoke. All these mean the same thing, that the life of man is brief and transitory. Bildad designs to apply it not to man in general, but to the age in which he lived, as being disqualified by the shortness of life to make extended observations.

^{<888>}**Job 8:10.** *Shall not they teach thee* The results of human conduct, and the great principles on which God governs the world.

And utter words out of their heart Dr. Good renders this,

“And well forth the sayings of their wisdom,”

and supposes it means that the words of wisdom would proceed from them as water bubbles from a fountain. But this, I think, is a mere conceit. The true sense is, that they would not speak that merely which comes from the mouth, or that which comes upper most, and without reflection — as the Greeks say, λεγειν ^{<3004>} παν ^{<3956>} ὅ ^{<3739>} τι ^{<5100>} επι ^{<1909>} στομα ^{<4750>} ελθη ^{<2064>}; or, as the Latins, Quicquid in buccam venerit loqui — to speak whatever comes in the mouth; but they would utter that which came from the heart — which was sincere, and the result of deep and prolonged reflection. Perhaps, also, Bildad means to insinuate that Job had uttered what was uppermost in his mind, without taking time for reflection.

^{<888>}**Job 8:11.** *Can the rush* This passage has all the appearance of being a fragment of a poem handed down from ancient times. It is adduced by Bildad as an example of the views of the ancients, and, as the connection would seem to imply, as a specimen of the sentiments of those who lived before the life of man had been abridged. It was customary in the early ages of the world to communicate knowledge of all kinds by maxims, moral sayings, and proverbs; by apothegms and by poetry handed down

from generation to generation. Wisdom consisted much in the amount of maxims and proverbs which were thus treasured up; as it now consists much in the knowledge which we have of the lessons taught by the past, and in the ability to apply that knowledge to the various transactions of life. The records of past ages constitute a vast storehouse of wisdom, and the present generation is more wise than those which have gone before, only because the results of their observations have been treasured up, and we can act on their experience, and because we can begin where they left off, and, taught by their experience, can avoid the mistakes which they made. The word “rush” here **אַמִּסָּו**^{<h573>} denotes properly a bulrush, and especially the Egyptian papyrus — papyrus Nilotica; see the notes at ^{<2381D>}Isaiah 18:2. It is derived from the verb **אַמַּסָּ**^{<h1572>}, to absorb, to drink up, and is given to this plant because it absorbs or drinks up moisture. The Egyptians used it to make garments, shoes, baskets, and especially boats or skiffs; Pithy, Nat. His. 13. 21—26; see the notes at ^{<2381D>}Isaiah 18:2. They also derived from it materials for writing — and hence, our word paper. The Septuagint renders it here, **πάπυρος**, papyrus.

Without mire Without moisture. It grew in the marshy places along the Nile.

Can the flag Another plant of a similar character. The word **וַיִּ** **א**^{<h260>}, flag, says Gesenius, is an Egyptian word, signifying marsh-grass, reeds, bulrushes, sedge, everything which grows in wet grounds. The word was adopted not only into the Hebrew, but also into the Greek idiom of Alexandria, where it is written, **αχρῖ**^{<891>}, **αχρει**. Jerome says of it, “When I inquired of the learned what this word meant, I heard from the Egyptians, that by this name everything was intended in their language which grew up in a pool.” The word is synonymous with rush, or bulrush, and denotes a plant which absorbs a great quantity of water. What is the exact idea which this figure is designed to convey, is not very clear. I think it probable that the whole description is intended to represent a hypocrite, and that the meaning is, that he had in his growth a strong resemblance to such a rush or reed. There was nothing solid or substantial in his piety. It was like the soft, spongy texture of the water-reed, and would wilt under trial, as the papyrus would when deprived of water.

^{<881D>}**Job 8:12.** *Whilst it is yet in his greenness* That is, while it seems to be in its vigor.

And is not cut down Even when it is not cut down. If suffered to stand by itself, and if undisturbed, it will wither away. The application of this is obvious and beautiful. Such plants have no self sustaining power. They are dependent on moisture for their support. If that is withheld, they droop and die. So with the prosperous sinner and the hypocrite. His piety, compared with that which is genuine, is like the spongy texture of the paper-reed compared with the solid oak. He is sustained in his professed religion by outward prosperity, as the rush is nourished by moisture; and the moment his prosperity is withdrawn, his religion droops and dies like the flag without water.

✠**Job 8:13.** *So are the paths of all that forget God* This is clearly a part of the quotation from the sayings of the ancients. The word “paths” here means ways, acts, doings. They who forget God are like the paper-reed. They seem to flourish, but they have nothing that is firm and substantial. As the paper-reed soon dies, as the flag withers away before any other herb, so it will be with the wicked, though apparently prosperous.

And the hypocrite's hope shall perish This important sentiment, it seems, was known in the earliest periods of the world; and if the supposition above be correct, that this is a fragment of a poem which had come down from far distant times, it was probably known before the flood. The passage requires no particular philological explanation, but it is exceedingly important. We may remark on it,

(1) That there were hypocrites even in that early age of the world. They are confined to no period, or country, or religious denomination, or profession. There are hypocrites in religion — and so there are in politics, and in business, and in friendship, and in morals. There are pretended friends, and pretended patriots, and pretended lovers of virtue, whose hearts are false and hollow, just as there are pretended friends of religion. Wherever there is genuine coin, it will be likely to be counterfeited; and the fact of a counterfeit is always a tribute to the intrinsic worth of the coin — for who would be at the pains to counterfeit that which is worthless? The fact that there are hypocrites in the church, is an involuntary tribute to the excellency of religion.

(2) The hypocrite has a hope of eternal life. This hope is founded on various things. It may be on his own morality; it may be on the expectation that he will be able to practice a deception; it may be on some wholly false

and unfounded view of the character and plans of God. Or taking the word “hypocrite” in a larger sense to denote anyone who pretends to religion and who has none, this hope may be founded on some change of feeling which he has had, and which he mistook for religion; on some supposed vision which he had of the cross or of the Redeemer, or on the mere subsiding of the alarm which an awakened sinner experiences, and the comparative peace consequent on that. The mere cessation of fear produces a kind of peace — as the ocean is calm and beautiful after a storm — no matter what may be the cause, whether it be true religion or any other cause. Many a sinner, who has lost his convictions for sin in any way, mistakes the temporary calm which succeeds for true religion, and embraces the hope of the hypocrite.

(3) That hope will perish. This may occur in various ways.

(a) It may die away insensibly, and leave the man to be a mere professor of religion — a formalist, without comfort, usefulness, or peace.

(b) It may be taken away in some calamity by which God tries the soul, and where the man will see that he has no religion to sustain him.

(c) It may occur under the preaching of the gospel, when the hypocrite may be convinced that he is destitute of vital piety, and has no true love to God.

(d) It may be on a bed of death — when God comes to take away the soul, and when the judgment-seat appears in view.

(e) Or it will be at the bar of God. Then the hope of the hypocrite will certainly be destroyed. Then it will be seen that he had no true religion, and then he will be consigned to the awful doom of him who in the most solemn circumstances lived to deceive, and who assumed the appearance of that which he had the strongest reason to believe he never possessed. Oh! how important it is for every professor of religion to examine himself, that he may know what is the foundation of his hope of heaven!

~~8884~~ **Job 8:14.** *Whose hope shall be cut off* Schultens supposes that the quotation from the ancients closes with ~~8883~~ Job 8:13, and that these are the comments of Bildad on the passage to which he had referred. Rosenmuller and Noyes continue the quotation to the close of ~~8889~~ Job 8:19; Dr. Good closes it at ~~8883~~ Job 8:13. It seems to me that it is extended further than ~~8883~~ Job 8:13, and probably it is to be regarded as continued to the close of ~~8888~~ Job 8:18. The beginning of this verse has been very variously rendered.

Dr. Good says that it has never been understood, and proposes to translate it, “thus shall his support rot away.” Noyes renders it, “whose expectation shall come to naught;” Gesenius, “shall be cut off.” Jerome, Non ei placebit vecordia sua. “his madness (do age, rage, or frenzy) shall not please him?” The Septuagint, “his house shall be uninhabitable, and his tent shall pass away as the spider.” The Hebrew word translated “cut off” **fqy** is from **fwq**^{<1696>}, usually meaning to loathe, to nauseate, to be offensive. Gesenius supposes that the word here is synonymous with the Arabic “to be cut off.” But this sense does not occur elsewhere in the Hebrew, and it is doubtful whether this is the true sense of the phrase. In the Hebrew word there is probably always the idea of loathing, of being offensive, irksome, or disgusting; see ^{<1950>}Psalm 95:10, I was grieved; ^{<1800>}Job 10:1, is weary; ^{<1819>}Ezekiel 6:9, shall loathe; so ^{<1803>}Ezekiel 20:43; 36:31; ^{<1667>}Ezekiel 16:47, a tiresome, or disgusting object. Taylor (Concord) renders it here, “Whom his hope shall loathe or abominate, i.e., who shall loathe or hate the thing that he hopes for.” I have no doubt that the meaning here is, to be loathsome, offensive, or nauseous, and the correct sense is, “whose hope shall rot.” The figure is continued from the image of the paper-reed and the flag, which soon decay; and the idea is, that as such weeds grow offensive and putrid in the stagnant water, so shall it be with the hope of the hypocrite.

And whose trust Whose confidence, or expectation.

A spider's web Margin, “house.” So the Hebrew **tyBæ**^{<1100>}. The spider's house is the web which it forms, a frail, light, tenuous substance which will sustain almost nothing. The wind shakes it, and it is easily brushed away. So it will be with the hope of the hypocrite.

^{<1815>}**Job 8:15.** *He shall lean upon his house* This is an allusion to the web or house of the spider. The hope of the hypocrite is called the house which he has built for himself; his home, his refuge, his support. But it shall fail him. In times of trial he will trust to it for support, and it will be found to be as frail as the web of the spider. How little the light and slender thread which a spider spins would avail a man for support in time of danger! So frail and unsubstantial will be the hope of the hypocrite! It is impossible to conceive any figure which would more strongly describe the utter vanity of the hopes of the wicked. A similar comparison occurs in the Koran, Sur. 28, 40: “They who assume any other patrons to themselves besides God,

are like the spider building his house; for the house of the spider is most feeble.”

He shall hold it fast Or, he shall lay hold on it to sustain him, denoting the avidity with which the hypocrite seizes upon his hope. The figure is still taken from the spider, and is an instance of a careful observation of the habits of that insect. The idea is, that the spider, when a high wind or a tempest blows, seizes upon its slender web to sustain itself. But it is insufficient. The wind sweeps all away. So the tempest of calamity sweeps away the hypocrite, though he grasps at his hope, and would seek security in that, as a spider does in the light and tenuous thread which it has spun.

^{<8886>}**Job 8:16.** *He is green before the sun* Vulgate, “antequam veniat sol — before the sun comes.” So the Chaldee, “before the rising of the sun.” So Eichhorn renders it. According to this, which is probably the true interpretation, the passage means that he is green and flourishing before the sun rises, but that he cannot bear its heat and withers away. A new illustration is here introduced, and the object is to compare the hypocrite with a vigorous plant that grows up quick and sends its branches afar, but which has no depth of root, and which, when the intense heat of the sun comes upon it, withers away. The comparison is not with a tree, which would bear the heat of the sun, but rather with those succulent plants which have a large growth of leaves and branches, like a gourd or vine, but which will not bear a drought or endure the intense heat of the sun. “This comparison of the transitory nature of human hope and prosperity to the sudden blight which overthrows the glory of the forest and of the garden,” says the Editor of the Pictorial Bible (on ^{<8978>}Psalm 37:35), “is at once so beautiful and so natural, as to have been employed by poets of every age.” One such comparison of exquisite finish occurs in Shakespeare:

This is the state of man! Today he puts forth
The tender leaves of hope; tomorrow blossoms,
And hears his blushing honours thick upon him:
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,
And, when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is a ripening, nips his shoot,
And then he falls, as I do.

And his branch shooteth forth .. A comparison of a prosperous person or nation with a vine which spreads in this manner, is common in the Scriptures. See ^{<9811>}Psalm 80:11:

*She sent out her boughs unto the sea,
And her branches unto the river.*

Compare the note at ^{<2368>}Isaiah 16:8. A similar figure occurs in ^{<3575>}Psalms 37:35:

*I have seen the wicked in great power,
And spreading himself like a green bay tree.*

^{<8887>}**Job 8:17.** *His roots are wrapped about the heap* There has been great diversity of opinion in the interpretation of this passage. Jerome renders it, “over the heap of stones his roots are condensed.” Walton, “super fontem — over a fountain.” The Septuagint, “he lies down (or sleeps, *κοιμᾶται* ^{<2837>}) on a heap of stones; and he lives in the midst of flint-stones.”

According to some, the word rendered heap | *ἑσπεῖρα* ^{<41530>} means a fountain; according to others, it means a heap or pile of stones; according to Dr. Good, it means a rock. According to the view of the former, it refers to the flourishing condition of a hypocrite or sinner, and means that he is like a tree that sends its roots by a fountain, and is nourished by it. According to others, the reference is to the fact that the hypocrite is like a plant that has no depth of earth for its roots, that wraps its roots around anything, even a heap of stones, to support itself; and that consequently will soon wither under the intense heat of the sun. The word | *ἑσπεῖρα* ^{<41530>}, rendered “heap,” means either

(1.) a heap, as a heap of stones, from | | *ἑσπεῖρα* ^{<41556>} — to roll, as e.g. stones. It may denote a heap of stones, ^{<41725>}Joshua 7:26, but it commonly refers to the ruins of walls and cities, ^{<44911>}Jeremiah 9:11; 51:37; ^{<23272>}Isaiah 25:2. It means

(2.) a fountain or spring, so called from the rolling or welling up of the waters, ^{<21412>}Song of Solomon 4:12, and hence, rolling waves or billows, ^{<4947>}Psalms 42:7; 89:9; 107:25,29. The parallelism, if nothing else, demands that the usual signification should be given to it here; and the true sense is, that the prosperous wicked man or the hypocrite is like a plant which stands in the midst of rocks, rubbish, or old ruins, and not like one that stands in a fertile soil where it may strike its roots deep. The reference is to the fact that a tree or plant which springs up on a rock, or in the midst of rocks, will send its roots afar for nutriment, or will wrap them around the projecting points of rocks in order to obtain support. All have observed this in trees standing on rocks; but the following extract from Silliman’s

Journal for January, 1840, will illustrate the fact referred to here more fully.

“About fifteen years ago, upon the top of an immense boulder of limestone, some ten or twelve feet in diameter, a sapling was found growing. The stone was but slightly imbedded in the earth; several of its sides were raised from four to six feet above its surface; but the top of the rock was rough with crevices, and its surface, which was sloping off, on one side, to the earth, was covered with a thin mould. From this mould the tree had sprung up, and having thrust its roots into the crevices of the rock, it had succeeded in reaching the height of some twelve or fifteen feet. But about this period the roots on one side became loosened from their attachment, and the tree gradually declined to the opposite side, until its body was in a parallel line with the earth. The roots on the opposite side, having obtained a firmer hold, afforded sufficient nourishment to sustain the plant; although they could not, alone, retain it in its vertical position. In this condition of things, the tree as if ‘conscious of its needs,’ adopted (if the term may be used) an ingenious process, in order to regain its former upright position. One of the most vigorous of the detached roots sent out a branch from its side, which, passing round a projection of the rock, again united with the parent stalk, and thus formed a perfect loop around this projection, which gave to the root an immovable attachment.

“The tree now began to recover from its bent position. Obeying the natural tendency of all plants to grow erect, and sustained by this root, which increased with unwonted vigor, in a few years it had entirely regained its vertical position, elevated, as no one could doubt who saw it, by the aid of the root which had formed this singular attachment. But this was not the only power exhibited by this remarkable tree.

“After its elevation it flourished vigorously for several years. Some of its roots had traced the sloping side of the rock to the earth, and were buried in the soil below. Others, having embedded themselves in its furrows, had completely filled these crevices with vegetable matter. The tree still continuing to grow, concentric layers of vegetable matter were annually deposited between the alburnum and liber, until by the force of vegetable growth alone, the rock was

split from the top to the bottom, into three nearly equal divisions, and branches of the roots were soon found, extending down, through the divisions into the earth below. On visiting the tree a few months since, to take a drawing of it, we found that it had attained an altitude of fifty feet, and was four and a half feet in circumference at its base.”

The image here shows that the author of this beautiful fragment was a careful observer of nature, and the comparison is exceedingly pertinent and striking. What more beautiful illustration of a hypocrite can there be? His roots do not strike into the earth. His piety is not planted in a rich soil. It is on the hard rock of the unconverted human heart. Yet it sends out its roots afar; seems to flourish for a time; draws nutriment from remote objects; clings to a crag or a projecting rock, or to anything for support — until a tempest sweeps it down to rise no more! No doubt the idea of Bildad was, that Job was just such a man.

Seeth the place of stones Septuagint, “and lives in the midst of flints,” not an unapt rendering — and a very striking description of a hypocrite. So Castellio, “existit inter lapides.” Its only nutriment is derived from the scanty earth in the stony soil on which it stands, or in the crevices of the rocks.

Job 8:18. *If he destroy him from his place* The particle here which is rendered “if $\mu\alpha\iota$ ^{h518}” is often used to denote emphasis, and means here “certainly” — “he shall be certainly destroyed.” The word rendered destroy, from $\beta\epsilon$ ^{h1106}, means literally to swallow (^{h879}Job 7:19), to swallow up, to absorb; and hence, to consume, lay waste, destroy. The sense is, that the wicked or the hypocrite shall be wholly destroyed from his place, but the image or figure of the tree is still retained. Some suppose that it means that God would destroy him from his place; others, as Rosenmuller and Dr. Good, suppose that the reference is to the soil in which the tree was planted, that it would completely absorb all nutriment, and leave the tree to die; that is, that the dry and thirsty soil in which the tree is planted, instead of affording nutriment, acts as a “sucker,” and absorbs itself all the juices which would otherwise give support to the tree. This seems to me to be probably the true interpretation. It is one drawn from nature, and one that preserves the concinnity of the passage.

Then it shall deny him That is, the soil, the earth, or the place where it stood. This represents a wicked man under the image of a tree. The figure is beautiful. The earth will be ashamed of it; ashamed that it sustained the tree; ashamed that it ever ministered any nutriment, and will refuse to own it. So with the hypocrite. He shall pass away as if the earth refused to own him, or to retain any recollection of him.

I have not seen thee I never knew thee. It shall utterly deny any acquaintance with it. There is a striking resemblance here to the language which the Savior says he will use respecting the hypocrite in the day of judgment: "and then will I profess to them, I never knew you;" ^{<1072>}Matthew 7:23. The hypocrite has never been known as a pious man. The earth will refuse to own him as such, and so will the heavens.

^{<889>}**Job 8:19.** *Behold, this is the joy of his way* This is evidently sarcastic. "Lo! such is the joy of his course! He boasts of joy, as all hypocrites do, but his joy endures only for a little time. This is the end of it. He is cut down and removed, and the earth and the heavens disown him!"

And out of the earth shall others grow This image is still derived from the tree or plant. The meaning is, that such a plant would be taken away, and that others would spring up in its place which the earth would not be ashamed of. So the hypocrite is removed to make way for others who will be sincere, and who will be useful. Hypocrites and useless people in the church are removed to make way for others who will be active and devoted to the cause of the Redeemer. A similar sentiment occurs in ^{<18716>}Job 27:16,17. This closes, as I suppose, the quotation which Bildad makes from the poets of the former age, and in the remainder of the chapter he states another truth pertaining to the righteous. This fragment is one of the most interesting that can be found any where. As a relic of the earliest times it is exceedingly valuable; as an illustration of the argument in hand; and of the course of events in this world, it is eminently beautiful. It is as true now as it was when uttered before the flood, and may be used now as describing the doom of the hypocrite, with as much propriety as then, and it may be regarded as one of the way-marks in human affairs, showing that the government of God, and the manner of his dispensations, are always substantially the same.

^{<880>}**Job 8:20.** *Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man* On the meaning of the word perfect, see the note at ^{<8000>}Job 1:1. The sentiment of

Bildad, or the inference which he draws from the whole argument is, that God will be the friend of the pious, but that he will not aid the wicked. This accords with the general sentiment maintained in the argument of the friends of Job.

Neither will he help the evil doers Margin, “Take the ungodly by the hand.” This is in accordance with the Hebrew. The figure is that of taking one by the hand in order to assist him; see ^{<2316>} Isaiah 42:6.

^{<882>}**Job 8:21.** *Till he fill thy mouth with laughing* Until he make thee completely happy. The word rendered “till” ^{<4570>} d[æ], is rendered by Dr. Good, “even yet.” Noyes, following Houbigant, DeWette, and Michaelis, proposes to change the pointing, and to read ^{<45750>} dw[æ], instead of d[æ]—meaning, “while.” The verse is connected with that which follows, and the particle used here evidently means “while,” or “even yet” — and the whole passage means, “if you return to God, he will even yet fill you with joy, while those who hate you shall be clothed with shame. God will show you favor, but the dwelling of the wicked shall come to naught.” The object of the passage is to induce Job to return to God, with the assurance that if he did, he would show mercy to him, while the wicked should be destroyed.

With rejoicing Margin, “Shouting for joy.” The word used ^{<45750>} h[wyt] is properly that which denotes the clangor of a trumpet, or the shout of victory and triumph.

^{<882>}**Job 8:22.** *They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame* When they see your returning prosperity, and the evidences of the divine favor. They will then be ashamed that they regarded you as a hypocrite, and that they reproached you in your trials.

And the dwelling-place of the wicked ... The wicked shall be destroyed, and his family shall pass away. That is, God will favor the righteous, but punish the wicked. This opinion the friends of Job maintain all along, and by this they urge him to forsake his sins, repent, and return to God.

NOTES ON JOB 9

<RMT>Job 9:2. *I know it is so of a truth* Job here refers, undoubtedly, to something that had been said before; but whether it is to the general strain of remark, or to some particular expression, may be doubted. Rosenmuller supposes that he refers to what was said by Eliphaz in **<RMT>Job 4:17**; but it seems more probable that it is to the general position which had been laid down and defended, that God was just and holy, and that his proceedings were marked with equity. Job admits this, and proceeds to show that it was a truth quite as familiar to him as it was to them. The object of his dwelling on it seems to be to show them that it was no new thing to him, and that he had some views on that important subject which were well worthy of attention.

But how should man be just with God? Margin, “before.” The meaning is, that he could not be regarded as perfectly holy in the sight of God; or that so holy and pure a being as God must see that man was a sinner, and regard him as such; see the sentiment explained in the notes at **<RMT>Job 4:17**. The question here asked is, in itself, the most important ever propounded by man — “How shall sinful man be regarded and treated as righteous by his Maker?” This has been the great inquiry which has always been before the human mind. Man is conscious that he is a sinner. He feels that he must be regarded as such by God. Yet his happiness here and hereafter, his peace and all his hope, depend on his being treated as if he were righteous, or regarded as just before God. This inquiry has led to all forms of religion among people; to all the penances and sacrifices of different systems; to all the efforts which have been made to devise some system that shall make it proper for God to treat people as righteous. The question has never been satisfactorily answered except in the Christian revelation, where a plan is disclosed by which God “may be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth.” Through the infinite merits of the Redeemer, man, though conscious that he is personally a sinner, may be treated as if he had never sinned; though feeling that he is guilty, he may consistently be forever treated as if he were just. The question asked by Job implies that such is the evidence and the extent of human guilt, that man can never justify himself. This is clear and indisputable. Man cannot justify himself by the deeds of the law. Justification, as a work of law, is this: A man is charged, for example, with the crime of murder. He sets up in defense that he did

not kill, or that if he took life it was in self-defense, and that he had a right to do it. Unless the fact of killing be proved, and it be shown that he had no right to do in the case as he has done, he cannot be condemned, and the law acquits him. It has no charge against him, and he is just or justified in the sight of the law. But in this sense man can never be just before God. He can neither show that the things charged on him by his Maker were not done, or that being done, he had a right to do them; and being unable to do this, he must be held to be guilty. He can never be justified therefore by the law, and it is only by that system which God has revealed in the gospel, where a conscious sinner may be treated as if he were righteous through the merits of another, that a man can ever be regarded as just before God; see the notes at ~~<8017>~~Romans 1:17; 3:24,25.

~~<8008>~~**Job 9:3.** *If he will contend with him* That is, if God enters into a controversy with man. If he chooses to charge crime on him, and to hold him responsible for his deeds. The language here is taken from courts of justice, and means that if a trial were instituted, where God should submit charges, and the matter were left to adjudication, man could not answer the charges against him; compare the notes at ~~<2400>~~Isaiah 41:1.

He cannot answer him one of a thousand For one of a thousand of the sins charged on him. The word “thousand” here is used to denote the largest number, or all. A man who could not answer for one charge brought against him out of a thousand, must be held to be guilty; and the expression here is equivalent to saying that he could not answer him at all. It may also be implied that God has many charges against man. His sins are to be reckoned by thousands. They are numerous as his years, his months, his weeks, his days, his hours, his moments; numerous as his privileges, his deeds, and his thoughts. For not one of those sins can he answer. He can give no satisfactory account before an impartial tribunal for any of them. If so, how deeply guilty is man before God! How glorious that plan of justification by which he can be freed from this long list of offences, and treated as though he had not sinned.

~~<8008>~~**Job 9:4.** *He is wise in heart* Herder renders this,

Even the wise and the powerful,
Who hath withstood him and prospered?

But the more common interpretation is to refer it to God. The meaning of Job appears to be, that God was a sagacious adversary; that he was able to

manage his cause; that he could meet and refute all objections which could be urged; and that it would be in vain to engage in a litigation before him. He so well understood the whole ground of debate, and was so entirely skilled in the merits of the controversy, and could so successfully meet all that could be alleged, that it was useless to attempt to hold an argument with him.

And mighty in strength He is able to execute all his designs, and to carry all his purposes into effect. Man is weak and feeble, and it is hopeless for him to attempt to contend with the Almighty.

Who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered? To harden oneself, here means to resist or withstand him. It refers to the firmness or resolution which one is obliged to adopt who opposes another. Here it means the opposition which man makes to the law and government of the Most High; and the affirmation is, that no one can make such opposition who will not be ultimately overcome. God is so great, so powerful, and so just, that a successful resistance cannot be made. The arrangements of God will take their course, and man must yield to his claims and his government, or be prostrated. None can successfully resist God; and the true policy of man, as well as his duty, is to yield to him, and be at peace with him.

And hath prospered Or been successful. He has failed in his opposition, and been obliged to yield. Prosperity is not found in opposing God. It is only by falling in with his arrangements and following his designs. A prosperous voyage is made by falling in with winds and currents, and not in opposing them; prosperous agriculture is carried on by coinciding with the favorable seasons of the year, and taking advantage of the dews, and rains, and sunbeams that God sends, and not in opposing them; prosperity in regard to health is found in taking advantage of the means which God gives to secure it, and not in opposing them. And the sinner in his course has no more chance of success and prosperity, than a man would have who should make it a point or principle of life always to sail against tides, and currents, and head winds; or he who should set at defiance all the laws of husbandry, and plant on a rock, or in the dead of winter; or he who should feed himself on poison rather than on nutritious food, and cultivate the nightshade rather than wheat. The great principle is, that if a man desires prosperity, he must fall in with the arrangements of God in his providence and grace; and wisdom is seen in studying these arrangements, and in yielding to them.

<896> Job 9:5. *Which removeth the mountains* In order to show how vain it was to contend with God, Job refers to some exhibitions of his power and greatness. The “removal of the mountains” here denotes the changes which occur in earthquakes and other violent convulsions of nature. This illustration of the power of God is often referred to in the Scriptures; compare **<1085>** Judges 5:5; **<1191>** 1 Kings 19:11; **<976>** Psalm 65:6; 114:4; 144:5; **<202>** Isaiah 40:12; **<209>** Jeremiah 4:24.

And they know not This is evidently a Hebraism, meaning suddenly, or unexpectedly. He does it, as it were, before they are aware of it. A similar expression occurs in the Koran, “God overturns them, and they do not know it;” i.e., he does it without their suspecting any such thing; compare **<988>** Psalm 35:8. “Let destruction come upon him at unawares,” or, as it is in the Hebrew and in the margin, “which he knoweth not of.” Tindal renders this, “He translatethe the mountaynes or ever they be aware.”

Which overturneth them in his anger As if he were enraged. There could scarcely be any more terrific exhibition of the wrath of God than the sudden and tremendous violence of an earthquake.

<896> Job 9:6. *Which shaketh the earth out of her place* This evidently refers to violent convulsions of nature, as if the earth were to be taken away. Objects on the earth’s surface become displaced, and convulsion seems to seize the world. The Septuagint renders this, “who shaketh that which is under the heavens from its foundations” — εκ **<1537>** θεμελιων **<2310>**. The change in the Hebrew would be very slight to authorize this rendering.

And the pillars thereof tremble In this place the earth is represented as sustained like a building by pillars or columns. Whether this is a mere poetic representation, or whether it describes the actual belief of the speaker in regard to the structure of the earth, it is not easy to determine. I am inclined to think it is the former, because in another place where he is speaking of the earth, he presents his views in another form, and more in accordance with the truth (see the notes at **<897>** Job 26:7); and because here the illustration is evidently taken from the obvious and perceived effects of an earthquake. It would convulse and agitate the pillars of the most substantial edifice, and so it seemed to shake the earth, as if its very supports would fall.

<800> Job 9:7. *Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not* Schultens supposes that all this is a description of the deluge — when the mountains were removed, when the fountains of the deep were broken up, and when the sun was obscured and seemed not to rise. Others have supposed that it refers to the fact that the sun is darkened by clouds and tempests, and appears not to rise and shine upon the earth. Others suppose that the allusion is to an eclipse; and others, that it is to the power of God, and means that the rising of the sun depends on him, and that if he should choose to give the command, the heavenly bodies would rise and give light no more. It seems probable that the meaning is, that God has power to do this; that the rising of the sun depends on him; and that he could delay it, or prevent it, at his pleasure. His power over the sun was shown in the time of Joshua, when, at his command, it stood still; but it is not necessary to suppose that there is any reference to this fact here. The whole meaning of the language is met by the supposition that it refers to the power of God, and affirms what he could do, or if it refer to any fact that had been observed, that the allusion is to the darkening of the sun by an eclipse or a tempest. No argument can be derived, therefore, from the expression, in regard to the age of the book.

And sealet up the stars The word “seal” in the Scriptures **טתע**^{h2856} is used with considerable latitude of signification. It is employed in the sense of shutting, closing, making fast — as when anything was sealed, it was shut up or made fast. The Hebrews often used a seal, where we would use a lock, and depended on the protection derived from the belief that one would not break open that which was sealed, where we are obliged to rely on the security of the lock against force. If there were honor and honesty among people everywhere, a seal would be as secure as a lock — as in a virtuous community a sealed letter is as secure as a merchant’s iron “safe.” To “seal up the stars,” means so to shut them up in the heavens, as to prevent their shining; to hide them from the view. They are concealed, hidden, made close — as the contents of a letter, a package, or a room are by a seal, indicating that no one is to examine them, and concealing them from the view. So God hides from our view the stars by the interposition of clouds.

<800> Job 9:8. *Which alone spreadeth out the heavens* As an expanse, or a curtain; see the notes at **<342>** Isaiah 40:22.

And treadeth upon the waves of the sea Margin, “Heights.” So it is in the Hebrew. It means the “high waves;” that is, he walks upon the waves of the ocean when lifted up by a storm. This is spoken of here as a proof of the greatness of God; and the meaning of all is, that he is seen in the storm, in the heaving ocean, when the heavens are black with tempest, and when the earth is convulsed. It may be added here, that the Lord Jesus walked amidst the howling winds on the lake, and thus gave evidence that he was God; ^{<4045>}Matthew 14:25. “The Egyptian hieroglyphic for what was not possible to be done, was a man walking on the water.” Burder. Dr. Good, and some others, render this, “on the mountains.” But the more correct rendering is given in the common version. The Hebrew word rendered “waves” **hmB**,^{<h116>} indeed properly means a height, a lofty place, a mountain; but the comparison of waves with a mountain, is common in all languages. So we speak of waves “mountain-high,” or as high as mountains. So Virgil, *AEneid* i. 105,

Insequitur cumulo praeruptus aquae mons.

Similar to this, is the expression occurring in Homer, **κυματα** ^{<2949>} **ισα** ^{<2470>} **ορεσσιν** ^{<3735>}; and so Apollonius, i. 521 — **άλς** ^{<251>} **ακρον** ^{<206>}. The Septuagint renders it, “who walketh upon the sea as upon a pavement.”

^{<800>}**Job 9:9.** *Which maketh Arcturus* This verse, with others of the same description in the book of Job, is of special importance, as they furnish an illustration of the views which prevailed among the patriarchs on the subject of astronomy. There are frequent references to the sciences in this book (see the Introduction), and there is no source of illustration of the views which prevailed in the earliest times in regard to the state of the sciences, so copious as can be found in this poem. The thoughts of people were early turned to the science of astronomy. Not only were they led to this by the beauty of the heavens, and by the instinctive promptings of the human mind to know something about them, but the attention of the Chaldeans and of the other Oriental nations was early drawn to them by the fact that they were shepherds, and that they passed much of their time in the open air at night, watching their flocks. Having nothing else to do, and being much awake, they would naturally contrive to relieve the tediousness of the night by watching the movements of the stars; and they early gave employment to their talents, by endeavoring to ascertain the influence which the stars exerted over the fates of people, and to their imagination,

by dividing the heavens into portions, having a fancied resemblance to certain animals, and by giving them appropriate names. Hence, arose the arrangement of the stars into constellations, and the names which they still bear. The Hebrew word rendered Arcturus, is $\text{vyl} \overset{4506}{\text{æ}}$. The Septuagint renders it, Πλειαδα — the Pleiades. Jerome, Arcturum. The Hebrew word usually means a moth, $\overset{1049}{\text{}}$ Job 4:19; 13:28; 27:18. It also denotes the splendid constellation in the northern hemisphere, which we call Ursa Major, the Great Bear, Arcturus, or the Wain; compare Niebuhr, Des. of Arabia, p. 114. The word vl does not literally mean a bear, but is made by aphaeresis from the Arabic nas, by the excision of the initial n — as is common in Arabic; see Bochart, Hieroz. P. II. Lib. I.c. xvi. p. 113, 114. The word in Arabic means a bier, and is the name given to the constellation which we denominate Ursa Major, “because,” says Bochart, “the four stars, which are a square, are regarded as a bier, on which a dead body is borne. The three following (the tail of the bear) are the daughters or sons which attend the funeral as mourners.” This name is often given to this constellation in Arabic. The Arabic name is Elna’sch, the bier. “The expression,” says Ideler, “denotes particularly the bier on which the dead are borne, and taken in this sense, each of the two biers [in the Ursa Major and Ursa Minor] is accompanied by three mourning-women. The biers and the mourning-women together, are called Benatna’sch, literally, daughters of the bier; that is, those who pertain to the bier.” Untersuchungen uber den Ursprung und die Bedeutung der Sternnamen, S. 419; compare $\overset{1332}{\text{}}$ Job 38:32: “Canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?” Schultens regards the word $\text{vyl} \overset{4506}{\text{æ}}$ as synonymous with the Arabic asson, night-vigil, from assa to go about by night, and supposes this constellation to be so called, because it always revolves around the pole, and never sets. The situation and figure of this constellation are well known. It is seen at all times in the northern part of the heavens, perpetually revolving around the North Star, and two of its principal stars point to the North Star always. Its resemblance to a bear, is quite fanciful — as it might be imagined as well to resemble any other object. The design of this fancy was merely to assist the memory. The only thing which seems to have suggested it was its slight resemblance to an animal followed by its young. Thus, the stars, now known as the “tail,” might have been supposed to resemble the cubs of a bear following their dam. The comparison of the constellation to a bier, and the movement to a funeral procession, with the sons or daughters of the deceased following on in the mourning train, is much more poetical and

beautiful. This constellation is so conspicuous, that it has been an object of interest in all ages, and has been one of the groups of stars most attentively observed by navigators, as a guide in sailing. The reason was, probably, that as it constantly revolved around the North Pole, it could always be seen in clear weather, and thus the direction in which they were sailing, could always be told. It has had a great variety of names. The name Ursa Major, or the Great Bear, is that which is commonly given to it. It is a remarkable fact, also, that while this name was given to it in the East a tribe of the American Indians — the Iroquois, also gave the same name of the Great Bear to it. This is remarkable, because, so far as known, they had no communication with each other, and because the name is perfectly arbitrary. Is this an evidence that the natives of our country [North America) derived their origin from some of the nations of the East? In some parts of England the constellation is called “Charles’ Wain,” or Wagon, from its fancied resemblance to a waggon, drawn by three horses in a line. Others call it the Plow. The whole number of visible stars in this constellation is eighty seven, of which one is of the first, three of the second, seven of the third, and about twice as many of the fourth magnitude. The constellations of Ursa Major and Ursa Minor were represented by the ancients, under the image of a waggon drawn by a team of horses. This is alluded to by the Greek poet, Aratus, in an address to the Athenians:

*The one called Helix, soon as day retires.
Observed with ease lights up his radiant fires;
The other smaller and with feebler beams,
In a less circle drives his lazy teams:
But more adapted for the sailor’s guide,
Whene’er by night he tempts the briny tide.*

Among the Egyptians these two constellations are represented by the figures of bears, instead of waggons. Whence the Hebrew name is derived is not quite certain; but if it be from the Arabic, it probably means the same — a bier. There seems no reason to doubt, however, that the Ursa Major is intended; and that the idea here is, that the greatness of God is shown by his having made this beautiful constellation.

Orion The Vulgate renders this Orion, the Septuagint, “**ἑσπερον** ^{<2073>}, Hesperus — i.e. the evening star, Venus. The word **Ι yskJ** ^{†13685>}, is from **Ι sk** ^{†13688>}, to be fat or fleshy; to be strong, lusty, firm; and then to be dull,

sluggish, stupid — as fat persons usually are. Hence, the word **lyskj**⁷¹³⁶⁸⁵ means a fool, ^{<991>}Psalm 49:11; ^{<1012>}Proverbs 1:32; 10:1, It is used here, however, to denote a constellation, and by most interpreters it is supposed to denote the constellation Orion, which the Orientals call a giant. “They appear to have conceived of this constellation under the figure of an impious giant bound upon the sky.” Gesenius. Hence the expression, ^{<888>}Job 38:31; “Canst thou loose the bands of Orion?” According to the Eastern tradition, this giant was Nimrod, the founder of Babylon, afterward translated to the skies; see the notes at ^{<2310>}Isaiah 13:10, where it is rendered constellation. Virgil speaks of it as the Stormy Orion:

Cam subito aseurgons fluctu nimbosus Orion.
— *AEn. i. 535.*

And again:

Dum pelago desaevit heims, et aquosus Orion.
— *AEn. iv. 52.*

In another description of Orion by Virgil, it is represented as armed with gold, or surrounded by a yellow light:

Arcturum, pluviasque Hyadas, geminosque Triones,
Armatumque auro circumspicit Oriona.
— *AEn. iii. 516, 517.*

According to the fancy of the ancients, Orion was a mighty hunter, the attendant of Diana, who having offered violence to her was stung to death by a scorpion which she had provided for that purpose. After his death he was translated to heaven, and made a constellation. Others say that he was the son of Neptune and Queen Euryale, a famous Amazonian huntress; and possessing the disposition of his mother, he became the greatest hunter in the world, and made a boast that there was no animal on earth that he could not subdue. To punish this vanity, it is said that a scorpion sprang out of the earth, and bit his foot, so that he died, but that at the request of Diana he was placed among the stars, and directly opposite to the scorpion that caused his death. On the names given to this constellation in Arabic, and the origin of the name Orion among the Greeks, see Ideler, *Unter. uber den Urs. u. die Bedeut. der Stern.* s. 212-227, 331-336. The name El-dscebbar, the giant, or hero, is that which is commonly given to it in Arabic. The constellation Orion is usually mentioned by the ancients as connected with storms, and hence, is called nimbosus Orion by Virgil, and

tristis Orion by Horace. The reason of this was, that its rising usually occurred at those seasons of the year when storms prevailed, and hence, it was supposed to be their cause — as we connect the rising of the dog-star with the idea of intense heat. The situation of Orion is on the equator, midway between the poles of the heavens. It comes to the meridian about the 23d of January. The whole number of visible stars in it is seventy-eight, of which two are of the first magnitude, four of the second, three of the third, and fifteen of the fourth. It is regarded as the most beautiful of the constellations, and when it is on the meridian there is then above the horizon the most magnificent view of the celestial bodies that the firmament exhibits. On the celestial maps it is represented by the figure of a man in the attitude of assaulting the Bull, with a sword in his belt, a huge club in his right hand, and a lion-skin in the left to serve him for a shield. The principal stars are four, in the form of a long square or parallelogram, intersected by the “Three Stars” in the middle called “The Ell and the Yard.” The two upper ones are represented one on each shoulder, and of the two lower ones one is in the left foot, and the other on the right knee. The position of the constellation may be seen by anyone by remarking that the “Three Stars” in the belt are those which point to the Pleiades or seven stars on the one side, and to the dog star on the other. This constellation is mentioned by Homer, as it is indeed by most of the classic writers:

Πληιαδας θ' , Ύαδας τε , το τε σθενος Ωριωνος.
— Iliad, ς .

It may furnish an illustration of the vastness of the starry heavens to remark, that in the sword of the constellation Orion there is a nebula which is almost visible to the naked eye, which is computed to be 2,200,000,000,000,000,000, or two trillions, two hundred thousand billions times larger than the sun! Dr. Dick, *Chronicles Keepsake for 1840*, p. 184. If, then, Job, with his limited views of astronomy, saw in this constellation an impressive proof of the greatness of the Almighty, how much more sublime should be our views of God! We see this constellation not merely as a beautiful object in the sky — a collection of bright and beautiful gems — but we see it as so vast as to surpass our comprehension, and behold in it a single nebula, or speck — not quite visible to the naked eye — that mocks all our powers of conception! It may be added, that by the aid of a telescope about two thousand stars have been seen in this constellation.

And Pleiades The seven stars. The Hebrew word is hmyKi^{h3598}, a heap or cluster. The name is given to the cluster of stars in the neck of the constellation Taurus, of which seven are the principal. Six or seven may be usually seen if the eye is directed toward it; but if the eye be turned carelessly aside while the attention is fixed on the group, many more may be seen. For, “it is a very remarkable fact,” says Sir John Herschell, “that the center of the visual organ is by far less sensible to feeble impressions of light than the exterior portion of the retina.” Ast. p. 398. Telescopes show fifty or sixty large stars there crowded together into a small space. Rheita affirms that he counted two hundred stars in this small cluster. In regard to the Pleiades, Ideler makes the following remarks. “These stars were by the ancients sometimes denoted by the singular, Πλειας, and sometimes by the plural, Πλειαδες (in metrical composition, Πληιαδες), Pleiades. They are mentioned by Homer, Iliad, ς . 486, Odyssey ε). 272, and by Hesiod, Εργ. . 383, 615. Hesiod mentions the cluster as the daughter of Atlas — Ατλαγενεις. The name Atlantides, which so often occurs among the Romans, signifies the same thing. Their mythological names are Alcyone, Merope, Celaeno, Electra, Sterope or Asterope, Taygete, and Maia. There is some uncertainty among the ancient writers from where the name Pleiades is derived. Among most etymologists, the name has respect to navigation, and the derivation is from απο ^{<575>} του ^{<3588>} πλειν ^{<4126>} — because the time of navigation commenced with the rising of the Pleiades in the first part of May, and ended with their setting in the first part of November. But perhaps the name is derived simply from πλεος ^{<4119>}, πλειος ^{<4119>}, full, so that it merely denotes a condensed assemblage of stars, which Manilius, iv. 523, expresses by *glomerabile sidus*. Aratus, v. 257, says that the Pleiades were called ἑπταποροι — those which walked in seven paths, although but six stars can be seen. In a similar sense Ovid, speaking of the Pleiades, says,

Quae septem dici, sex tamen esse solent.
— *FAST. iv. 170.*

Hipparchus, on the contrary, affirms that in a clear night, when there is no moon, seven stars can be seen. The difference of these views is easily explained. The group consists of one star of the third magnitude, three of the fifth, two of the sixth, and many smaller stars. It requires a very keen vision to be able to distinguish in the group more than six stars. Since therefore, among the ancients, it was commonly believed that there were no more than six, and yet among them. as with us, the name the seven stars

was given to them, the opinion arose that one star of the seven had been lost. Some supposed that it had been smitten by lightning, others that it had united itself to the middle star in the tail of the Ursa Major, and others gave to the belief a mythic signification, as is mentioned by Ovid in the place above referred to. The Romans called the Pleiades Vergiliae, because they arose in the spring. The Arabians called those stars El-thoreja — meaning abundant, copious, and answering to the Greek Πλειαός ^{<4119>}, Pleias. The Asiatic poets Sadi, Hafiz, and others, always mention these stars as a beautiful rosette, with one brilliant. Sadi, in the description of a beautiful garden, says “The ground was strewed with pieces of enamel, and bands of Pleiades appeared to hang on the branches of the trees.” Hafiz says, “The heavens bear up thy poems — the pearly rosette of the Pleiades as the seal of immortality. Beigel, who has translated these poets, adds, “In this genuine Oriental spirit must we understand the words of Job, ‘Canst thou bind the brilliant rosettes of the Pleiades? that is, Who can say that he has placed this collection of brilliants as a rosette in the sky?’” Ideler, Untersuchungen u. den Urs. u. die Bedeut. der Sternnamen, s. 143 — 147.

And the chambers of the south What is the exact idea to be attached to this expression, it is not easy to say. Probably it means the remote regions of the south, or the part of the heavens which is not visible to the inhabitants of the northern hemisphere. The word rendered chambers means in the Scriptures a private apartment of a dwelling; a part that is separated from the rest by a curtain; a harem, etc. Hence, it may mean the abodes of the stars in the south — comparing the heavens with an immense tent, and regarding it as divided into separate apartments. It may mean here the stars which are hidden, as it were, in the recesses of the southern hemisphere, like the private apartments of a house, which all were not allowed to enter. There are some intimations in the book of Job that the true structure of the earth was not unknown at that remote period of the world (compare the notes at ^{<4347>}Job 26:7); and if so, then this may refer to the constellations in the south which are invisible to an inhabitant of the northern hemisphere. There is no impropriety, at any rate, in supposing that those who had traveled into the south had brought reports of stars and constellations seen there which are invisible to an inhabitant of northern Arabia.

^{<4348>}**Job 9:10.** *Which doeth great things* This is almost the sentiment which had been expressed by Eliphaz; see the notes, ^{<4349>}Job 5:9. It was evidently a proverb, and as such was used by both Eliphaz and Job.

<891> Job 9:11. *Lo, he goeth by me* That is, he passes along — as in the silent movements of the heavenly bodies. “I see the evidence of his existence. I can see that God must be there — moving along by me in the orbs of night and in the march of the constellations, but I cannot see God himself. He passes by, or rather he passes over me | [æ], as in the majestic movement of the heavenly bodies over my head.” This is, I think, the idea, and the image is exceedingly poetic and beautiful. The heavens are seen to move in silent grandeur. The northern constellation rolls around the pole. The others move on as a marshalled army. They go in silent and solemn order, and God must be there. But, says Job, I cannot see him. I can feel that he must be there, and I look out on the heavens to see him, but my eyes fail, and I cannot behold him. He passes on, and I see him not. Who has ever looked upon the heavens in the still night, and seen the silent grandeur of such movements of the heavenly host, without some such feeling — some emotion of inexpressible awe — as if he, if I may so express it, COULD ALMOST SEE GOD?

<892> Job 9:12. *Behold, he taketh away* Property, friends, or life.

Who can hinder him? Margin, turn him away. Or, rather, “who shall cause him to restore?” i.e. who can bring back what he takes away? He is so mighty, that what he removes, it is impossible for us to recover.

Who will say unto him, What doest thou? A similar expression occurs in **<705> Daniel 4:35**. The meaning is plain. God has a right to remove any thing which we possess. Our friends, property, health, and lives, are his gift, and he has a right to them all. When he takes them away, he is but taking that which is his own, and which has been lent to us for a little time, and which he has a right to remove when it seems good to him. This truth Job fully admits, and in the calm contemplation of all his losses and his sorrows, he acknowledges that God had a right to do as he had done; see note, **<802> Job 1:21**.

<893> Job 9:13. *If God will not withdraw his anger* That is, if he perseveres in inflicting punishment. He will not turn aside his displeasure by any opposition or resistance made to him.

The proud helpers Margin, Helpers of pride, or, strength. Jerome renders this, “under whom they who bear up the world bow down.” The Septuagint, not less singularly, “by him the whales (or monsters — **κετος**

<2785>) which are under heaven, are bowed down.” Codurcus renders it, “aids of pride,” and understands by it all the things on which proud men rely, as wealth, health, rank, talent. So Dr. Good renders it, “the supports of the proud.” The meaning is, probably, that all those things which contribute to the support of pride, or all those persons who are allied together to maintain the dominion of pride on the earth, must sink under the wrath of God. Or it may refer to those who sustain the pride of state and empire — the men who stand around the thrones of monarchs, and who contribute, by their talent and power, to uphold the pomp and magnificence of courts. On the meaning of the word here rendered pride **bj y**, see the notes at <2307>Isaiah 30:7.

<804>**Job 9:14.** *How much less shall I answer him?* I, who am so feeble, how can I contend with him? If the most mighty objects in the universe are under his control; if the constellations are directed by him; if the earth is shaken, and mountains moved from their places, by his power, and if the men of most exalted rank are prostrated by him, how can I presume to contend with God? This is the common view which is given of the passage, and is evidently that which our translators entertained. But I have given in the translation what appears to me to be a more literal version, and to express a better sense — though, I confess, the translation differs from all that I have seen. According to this, the sense is simply, that such was the veneration which Job had for the character of God, that should he attempt to answer him, he would select his words with the utmost care and attention.

<805>**Job 9:15.** *Whom, though I were righteous* That is, if I felt the utmost confidence that I was righteous, yet, if God judged otherwise, and regarded me as a sinner, I would not reply to him, but would make supplication to him as a sinner. I would have so much confidence in him, and would feel that he was so much better qualified than I am to judge, and that I am so liable to be deceived, that I would come to him as a sinner, if he judged and declared me to be one, and would plead for pardon. The meaning is, that God is a much better judge of our character than we can possibly be, and that his regarding us as sinners is the highest proof that we are such, whatever may be our views to the contrary. This shows the extent of the confidence which Job had in God and is an indication of true piety. And it is founded in reason as well as in piety. Men often suppose that they are righteous, and yet they know that God adjudges otherwise,

and regards them as sinners. He offers them pardon as sinners. He threatens to punish them as sinners. The question is, whether they shall act on their own feelings and judgment in the case, or on his? Shall they adhere obstinately to their views, and refuse to yield to God, or shall they act on the truth of his declarations? Now that Job was right in his views of the case, may appear from the following considerations.

(1) God knows the heart. He cannot be deceived; we may be. In nothing are we more liable to be deceived than in regard to our own character. We should, therefore, distrust our own judgment in this case, but we should never distrust God.

(2) God is infinitely benevolent, and will not judge unkindly. He has no wish to find us sinners; he will have no pleasure in making us out to be transgressors. A heart of infinite benevolence would prefer to find all people holy, and would look on every favorable circumstance in the case with all the kindness which it would deserve. No being would be so likely to make a favorable decision in our case as the infinitely benevolent God; none would so delight to find that we were free from the charge of guilt.

(3) God will act on his own views of our character, and not on ours; and it is prudent and wise, therefore, for us to act on his views now. He will judge us in the last day according to his estimate of our character, and not according to the estimate which we may form.

(4) At the same time, we cannot but accord with his views of our own character. Our reason and conscience tell us that we have violated his laws, and that we have no claim to his mercy. No man can persuade himself that he is wholly righteous; and being conscious of guilt, though in the slightest degree, he should make supplication to his Judge.

~~896~~ **Job 9:16.** *If I had called, and he had answered me* It is remarked by Schultens, that the expressions in these verses are all taken from courts of justice. If so, the meaning is, that even if Job should call the Almighty to a judicial action, and he should respond to him, and consent to submit the great question about his innocence, and about the justice of the divine dealings with him, to trial, yet that such was the distance between God and him, that he could not hope successfully to contend with him in the argument. He would, therefore, prostrate himself in a suppliant manner, and implore his mercy and compassion — submitting to him as having all power, and as being a just and righteous Sovereign.

Would I not believe I cannot believe that he would enter into my complaint. He deals with me in a manner so severe; he acts toward me so much as a sovereign, that I have no reason to suppose that he would not continue to act toward me in the same way still.

Job 9:17. *For he breaketh me* He is overwhelming me with a tempest; that is, with the storms of wrath. He shows me no mercy. The idea seems to be, that God acted toward him not as a judge determining matters by rule of law, but as a sovereign — determining them by his own will. If it were a matter of law; if he could come before him as a judge, and maintain his cause there; if the case could be fairly adjudicated whether he deserved the calamities that came upon him, he would be willing to enter into such a trial. But where the matter was determined solely by will, and God acted as a sovereign, doing as he pleased, and giving no account of his matters to anyone, then it would be useless to argue the cause. He would not know what to expect, or understand the principles on which an adjudication would be made. It is true that God acts as a sovereign, but he does not act without reference to law. He dispenses his favors and his judgments as he pleases, but he violates none of the rules of right. The error of Job was the common error which people commit, that if God acts as a sovereign, he must of course act regardless of law, and that it is vain to plead with him or try to please him. But sovereignty is not necessarily inconsistent with respect for law; and He who presides with the most absolute power over the universe, is He who is most directed by the rule of right. In Him sovereignty and law coincide; and to come to Him as a sovereign, is to come with the assurance that supreme rectitude will be done.

And multiplieth my wounds without cause That is, without sufficient reason. This is in accordance with the views which Job had repeatedly expressed. The main ground of his complaint was, that his sufferings were disproportionate to his faults.

Job 9:18. *He will not suffer me to take my breath;* see the notes at **Job 7:19.**

Job 9:19. *If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong* There has been a considerable variety in the interpretation of this passage. The meaning seems to be this. It refers to a judicial contest, and Job is speaking of the effect if he and God were to come to a trial, and the cause were to be settled before judges. He is urging reasons why he would have no hope of

success in such a case. He says, therefore, “If the matter pertained only to strength, or if it were to be determined by strength, lo, he is more mighty than I am, and I could have no hope of success in such a controversy: and if the controversy was one of judgment, i.e. of justice or right, I have no one to manage my cause — no one that could cope with him in the pleadings — no one who could equal him in setting forth my arguments, or presenting my side of the case. It would, therefore, be wholly an unequal contest, where I could have no hope of success; and I am unwilling to engage in such a controversy or trial with God. My interest, my duty, and the necessity of the case, require me to submit the case without argument, and I will not attempt to plead with my Maker.” That there was a want of right feeling in this, must be apparent to all. There was evidently the secret belief that God had dealt with him severely; that he had gone beyond his deserts in indicting pain on him, and that he was under a necessity of submitting not so much to justice and right as to mere power and sovereignty. But who has not had something of this feeling when deeply afflicted? And yet who, when he has had it, has not felt that it was far from being what it should be? Our feeling should be, “we deserve all that we suffer, and more than we have yet endured. God is a sovereign; but He is right. Though he afflicts us much, and others little, yet it is not because he is unjust, but because he sees that there is some good reason why we should suffer. That reason may be seen yet by us, but if not, we should never doubt that it exists.”

Who shall set me a time to plead? Noyes renders this, “Who shall summon me to trial?” Dr. Good, “Who should become a witness for me?” The sense is, “Who would summon witnesses for me? If it was a mere trial of strength, God is too mighty for me; if it were a question of justice, who would compel witnesses to come on my side? Who could make them willing to appear against God, and to bear testimony for me in a controversy with the Almighty?”

Job 9:20. *If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me* That is, referring still to the form of a judicial trial, if I should undertake to manage my own cause, I should lay myself open to condemnation even in my argument on the subject, and should show that I was far from the perfection which I had undertaken to maintain. By passionate expressions; by the language of complaint and murmuring; by a want of suitable reverence; by showing my ignorance of the principles of the divine government; by arguments unsound and based on false positions; or by

contradictions and self-refutations, I should show that my position was untenable, and that God was right in charging me with guilt. In some or in all of these ways Job felt, probably, that in an argument before God he would be self-condemned, and that even an attempt to justify himself, or to prove that he was innocent, would prove that he was guilty. And is it not always so? Did a man ever yet undertake to repel the charges of guilt brought against him by his Maker, and to prove that he was innocent, in which he did not himself show the truth of what he was denying? Did not his false views of God and of his law; his passion, complaining, and irreverence; his unwillingness to admit the force of the palpable considerations urged to prove that he was guilty, demonstrate that he was at heart a sinner, and that he was insubmissive and rebellious? The very attempt to enter into such an argument against God, shows that the heart is not right; and the manner in which such an argument is commonly conducted demonstrates that he who does it is sinful.

If I say, I am perfect Should I attempt to maintain such an argument, the very attempt would prove that my heart is perverse and evil. It would do this because God had adjudged the contrary, and because such an effort would show an insubmissive and a proud heart. This passage shows that Job did not regard himself as a man absolutely free from sin. He was indeed said (^{<800>}Job 1:1) to be “perfect and upright;” but this verse proves that that testimony in regard to him was not inconsistent with his consciousness of guilt. See the notes at that verse. And is not the claim to absolute perfection in this world always a proof that the heart is perverse? Does not the very setting up of such a claim in fact indicate a pride of heart, a self-satisfaction, and an ignorance of the true state of the soul, which is full demonstration that the heart is far from being perfect? God adjudges man to be exceedingly sinful; and if I do not mistake the meaning of the Scriptures, this is his testimony of every human heart — totally until renewed — partially ever onward until death. If this be the account in the Scriptures, then the claim to absolute perfection is prima facie, if not full proof, that the heart is in some way perverse. It has come to a different conclusion from that of God. It sets up an argument against him — and there can be no more certain proof of a want of perfection than such an attempt. There is in this verse an energy in the original which is very feebly conveyed by our translation. It is the language of strong and decided indignation at the very idea of asserting that he was perfect. μτ^{<8535>}
ynæ^{<589>} — “perfect I!” or, “I perfect! The thought is absurd! It can only

prove that I am perverse to attempt to set up any such claim!" Stuhlman renders this,

*"However good I may be, I must condemn myself;
However free from guilt, I must call myself evil:"*

and explains it as meaning, "God can through the punishments which he inflicts constrain me to confess, against the clear consciousness of my innocence, that I am guilty."

~~4822~~ **Job 9:21.** *Though I were perfect* The same mode of expression occurs here again. "I perfect! I would not know it, or recognize it. If this were my view, and God judged otherwise, I would seem to be ignorant of it. I would not mention it."

Yet would I not know my soul Or, "I could not know my soul. If I should advance such a claim, it must be from my ignorance of myself." Is not this true of all the claims to perfection which have ever been set up by man? Do they not demonstrate that he is ignorant of his own nature and character? So clear does this seem to me, that I have no doubt that Job expressed more than three thousand years ago what will be found true to the end of time — that if a man advances the claim to absolute perfection, it is conclusive proof that he does not know his own heart. A superficial view of ourselves, mingled with pride and vanity, may lead us to think that we are wholly free from sin. But who can tell what he would be if placed in other circumstances? Who knows what latent depravity would be developed if he were thrown into temptations?

I would despise my life Dr. Good, I think, has well expressed the sense of this. According to his interpretation, it means that the claim of perfection would be in fact disowning all the consciousness which he had of sinfulness; all the arguments and convictions pressed on him by his reason and conscience, that he was a guilty man. Schultens, however, has given an interpretation which slightly differs from this, and one which Rosenmuller prefers. "Although I should be wholly conscious of innocence, yet that clear consciousness could not sustain me against the infinite splendor of the divine glory and majesty; but I should be compelled to appear ignorant of my own soul, and to reprobate, condemn, and despise my life passed with integrity and virtue." This interpretation is in accordance with the connection, and may be sustained by the Hebrew.

Job 9:22. *This is one thing, therefore I said it* This may mean, “it is all the same thing. It makes no difference whether a man be righteous or wicked. God treats them substantially alike; he has one and the same rule on the subject. Nothing can be argued certainly about the character of a man from the divine dealings with him here.” This was the point in dispute, this the position that Job maintained — that God did not deal with people here in strict accordance with their character, but that the righteous and the wicked in this world were afflicted alike.

He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked He makes no distinction among them. That Job was right in this his main position there can be no doubt; and the wonder is, that his friends did not all see it. But it required a long time in the course of events, and much observation and discussion, before this important point was made clear. With our full views of the state of retribution in the future world, we can have no doubt on the subject. Heavy and sudden judgments do not necessarily prove that they who are cut off are especially guilty, and long prosperity is no evidence that a man is holy. Calamity, by fire and flood, on a steamboat, or in the pestilence, does not demonstrate the unusual and eminent wickedness of those who suffer (compare **Luke 13:1-5**), nor should those who escape from such calamities infer that of necessity they are the objects of the divine favor.

Job 9:23. *If the scourge slay suddenly* If calamity comes in a sudden and unexpected manner. Dr. Good, following Reiske, translates this, “if he suddenly slay the oppressor,” understanding the word scourge **fWQ** ⁴⁷⁷⁵² as meaning an oppressor, or one whom God employs as a scourge of nations. But this is contrary to all the ancient versions. The word **fWV** means properly a whip, a scourge (compare the notes at **Job 5:21**), and then calamity or affliction sent by God upon men. Such is clearly the case here.

He will laugh at the trial of the innocent That is, he seems to disregard or to be pleased with their trials. He does not interpose to rescue them. He seems to look calmly on, and suffers them to be overwhelmed with others. This is a poetic expression, and cannot mean that God derides the trials of the innocent, or mocks their sufferings. It means that he seems to be inattentive to them; he suffers the righteous and the wicked to be swept away together as if he were regardless of character.

Job 9:24. *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked* This is evidently designed as an illustration of the sentiment that Job was

maintaining — that there was not a distribution of rewards and punishments in this life according to character. In illustration of this, he says that the wicked are raised to places of trust and power. They exercise a wide dominion over the earth, and the world is under their control. Of the truth of this there can be no doubt. Rulers have been, in general, eminent for wickedness, and the affairs of nations have thus far been almost always under the control of those who are strangers to God. At the present time there is scarcely a pious man on any throne in the world, and the rulers of even Christian nations are in general eminent for anything rather than for personal religion.

He covereth the faces of the judges thereof There has been considerable variety in the exposition of this expression. Some suppose that it refers to the wicked, meaning that they cover the faces of the judges under them so that they connive at and tolerate crime. Others, that it means that God blinds the eyes of wicked rulers, so that they connive at crime, and are partial and unjust in their decisions. Others, that it means that God covers the faces of the judges of the earth with shame and confusion, that though he admits them to prosperity and honor for a time, yet that he overwhelms them at length with calamities and sorrows. Dr. Good supposes it to mean that the earth is given over into the hands of INJUSTICE, and that this hoodwinks the faces of the judges. The phrase properly means, to hoodwink, to blind, to conceal the face. It seems to me that the true sense is not expressed by either of the views above. The parallelism requires us to understand it as meaning that while the wicked had dominion over the earth, the righteous were in obscurity, or were not advanced to honor and power. The word “judges,” therefore, I think, is to be understood of the righteous judges, of those who are qualified to administer justice. Their face is covered. They are kept in concealment. The wicked have the sway, and they are doomed to shame, obscurity, and dishonor. This interpretation accords with the tenor of the argument, and may be sustained by the Hebrew, though I have not found it in any of the commentaries which I have consulted.

If not, where, and who is he? If this is not a just view, who is God? What are his dealings? Where is he to be seen, and how is he to be known? Or, it may mean, “if it is not God who does these strange things, who is it that does them?” Rosenmuller. But I prefer the former interpretation. “Tell me who and what God is, if this is not a fair and just account of him. These

things in fact are done, and if the agency of God is not employed in them, who is God? And where is his agency seen?

Job 9:25. *Now my days are swifter than a post* Than a courier, runner, or racer, **xWr** ^{<h7323>}. Vulgate, *cursores*; Septuagint, **δρομεως**, a racer. The word is not unfrequently applied to the runners or couriers, that carried royal commands in ancient times. It is applied to the mounted couriers of the Persians who carried the royal edicts to the distant provinces, Est. 3:13,15; 8:14, and to the body-guard and royal messengers of Saul and of David, ^{<h217>}1 Samuel 22:17; ^{<h215>}2 Kings 10:25. The common rate of traveling in the East is exceedingly slow. The caravans move little more than two miles an hour. Couriers are however, employed who go either on dromedaries, on horses, or on foot, and who travel with great rapidity. Lady Montague says that “after the defeat; at Peterwaradin, they (the couriers on dromedaries) far outran the fleetest horses, and brought the first news of the battle at Belgrade.” The messengers in Barbary who carry despatches, it is said, will run one hundred and fifty miles in twenty-four hours (Harmer’s *Observa.* ii. 200, ed. 1808), and it has been said that the messengers among the American savages would run an hundred and twenty miles in the twenty-four hours. In Egypt, it is a common thing for an Arab on foot to accompany a rider, and to keep up with the horse when at full gallop, and to do this for a long time without apparent fatigue. The meaning of Job here is, that his life was short, and that his days were passing swiftly away, not like the slow caravan, but like the most fleet messenger compare the note at ^{<h306>}Job 7:6.

They see no good I am not permitted to enjoy happiness. My life is a life of misery.

Job 9:26. *They are passed away as the swift ships* Margin, Ships of desire; or ships of Ebeh. Hebrew **hYnā** ^{<h591>} **hbāe** ^{<h16>}. Vulgate, *Naves poma portantes*. Septuagint, “Is there any track left by ships in their passage?” The Chaldee renders it as the Vulgate, “Ships bearing good fruit;” that is, as such fruit was perishable, haste was required in order to reach the place of destination. Our translators were evidently perplexed by the word **hbāe** ^{<h16>}, as appears by their placing two different phrases in the margin. “Ships of desire,” denotes the value or desirableness of such ships; and the phrase, “Ships of Ebeh,” denotes their confession of ignorance as to the meaning of the word. Gesenius explains the word to mean reed,

bulrush, or papyrus — from an Arabic use of the word, and supposes that the reference is to the light vessels made of the papyrus, which were used on the Nile; see the note at ^{<281D>}Isaiah 18:2. Such vessels would be distinguished for the ease with which they might be rowed, and the rapidity of their motion. Chardin supposes that the reference is to vessels that were made to go on the Euphrates or the Tigris, and that were borne along with the rapid current. The supposition of an allusion to any boat or vessel under full sail, will be in accordance with the language here, though the probability is, that the reference is to the light vessels, made of reeds, that might be propelled with so much fleetness. Sails were frequently used, also, for such vessels.

As the eagle that hasteth to the prey A striking emblem of rapidity. Few things can be more rapid than the motion of the eagle, as he darts upon his victim.

^{<802>}**Job 9:27.** *If I say, I will forget my complaint* If I resolve that I will leave off complaining, and will be more cheerful, I find it all in vain. My fears and sorrows return, and all my efforts to be cheerful are ineffectual

I will leave off my heaviness The word rendered “my heaviness” here μννρ, ^{<6440>} denotes literally “my face;” and the reference is to the sad and sorrowful countenance which he had. “If I should lay that aside, and endeavor to be cheerful.”

And comfort myself The word rendered comfort here gl B, ^{<1082>} in Arabic means to be bright, to shine forth; and it would here be better rendered by “brighten up.” We have the same expression still when we say to one who is sad and melancholy, “brighten up; be cheerful.” The meaning is, that Job endeavored to appear pleasant and cheerful, but it was in vain. His sorrows pressed heavily on him, and weighed down his spirits in spite of himself, and made him sad.

^{<802>}**Job 9:28.** *I am afraid of all my sorrows* My fears return. I dread the continuance of my griefs, and cannot close my eye to them.

Thou wilt not hold me innocent God will not remove my sorrows so as to furnish the evidence that I am innocent. My sufferings continue, and with them continue all the evidence on which my friends rely that I am a guilty man. In such a state of things, how can I be otherwise than sad? He was

held to be guilty; he was suffering in such a way as to afford them the proof that he was so, and how could he be cheerful?

Job 9:29. *If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?* The word “if,” here introduced by our translators, greatly obscures the sense. The meaning evidently is, “I am held to be guilty, and cannot answer to that charge. God regards me as such, and if I should attempt to meet him on the charge, it would be a vain attempt; and I must admit its truth. It would be labor in vain to deny it against one so mighty as he is.” This interpretation accords with the argument in the whole chapter. Job maintains that it would be in vain to contend with God, and he gives up the argument in despair. It is quite evident, however, that he does not do it so much because he is convinced himself, as because he knows that God is great, and that it would be useless to contend with him. There is evidently implied all along the feeling that if he was able to cope with God in the argument, the result would be different. As it is, he submits — not because he is convinced, but because he is weak; not because he sees that God is right, but because he sees that he is powerful. How much submission of this kind is there in the world — submission, not to right, but to power; submission to God, not because he is seen to be wise and good, but because he is seen to be almighty, and it is vain to attempt to oppose him! It is needless to say that such feelings evince no true submission.

Job 9:30. *If I wash myself with snow water* If I should make myself as pure as possible, and should become, in my view, perfectly holy. Snow water, it seems, was regarded as especially pure. The whiteness of snow itself perhaps suggested the idea that the water of melted snow was better than other for purification. Washing the hands formerly was an emblem of cleansing from guilt. Hence Pilate, when he gave up the Savior to death, took water and washed his hands before the multitude, and said that he was innocent of his blood; **Matthew 27:24**. The expression used here by Job, also is imitated by the Psalmist, to denote his innocence:

I will wash mine hands in innocency: So will I compass thine altar,
O Lord. **Psalm 26:6**.

Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, And washed my hands in
innocency. — **Psalm 73:13**.

So in Shakespeare, Richard III:

*How fain, like Pilate, would I wash my hands
Of this most grievous, guilty murder done!*

And make my hands never so clean Or, rather, should I cleanse my hands with lye, or alkali. The word **rwB**^{<h953>}, means properly purity, cleanliness, pureness; and then it is used to denote that which cleanses, alkali, lye, or vegetable salt. The ancients made use of this, mingled with oil, instead of soap, for the purpose of washing, and also in smelting metals, to make them melt more readily; see the note at ^{<2025>}Isaiah 1:25. The Chaldee renders it accurately, **al hab** — in soap. I have no doubt that this is the sense, and that Job means to say, if he should make use of the purest water and of soap to cleanse himself, still he would be regarded as impure. God would throw him at once into the ditch, and he would be covered with moral filth and defilement again in his sight.

^{<808>}**Job 9:31.** *Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch* God would treat me as if he should throw me into the gutter, and as if I were wholly defiled and polluted. The meaning is, God would not admit the proofs which I should adduce of my innocence, but would overwhelm me with the demonstrations of my guilt. I doubt not that Job urged this with some degree of impatience, and with some improper feelings. He felt, evidently, that God was so great and powerful, that it was vain to contend with him. But it is true in a higher and more important sense than he seems to have understood it. After all the efforts which we can make to justify, vindicate, or purify ourselves, it is in the power of God to overwhelm us with the consciousness of guilt. He has access to the heart. He can show us our past sins. He can recall what we have forgotten, and overwhelm us with the remembrance of our deep depravity. It is in vain, therefore, for any man to attempt to justify himself before God. After the most labored argument to prove his own innocence, after all the confidence which he can repose in his own morality and his own righteousness, still God can with infinite ease overwhelm him with the consciousness of guilt. How many people that were once relying on their own morality for their salvation, have been bowed down with a consciousness of guilt in a revival of religion! How many who halve been trusting to their own righteousness have been overwhelmed with deep and awful conviction, when they have been brought to lie on a bed of death! Let no man, therefore, rely on his own righteousness, when God accuses him with being a sinner. Let no one trust to his own morality for salvation — for soon it will all be seen to be

insufficient, and the soul must appear covered over with the consciousness of guilt at the awful bar of God.

And mine own clothes shall abhor me Margin, Make me to be abhorred. That is, they shall be filthy and offensive — like one who has been rolled in the mire. God has power to make me seem defiled and loathsome, notwithstanding all my efforts to cleanse myself.

Job 9:32. *For he is not a man as I am* He is infinitely superior to me in majesty and power. The idea is, that the contest would be unequal, and that he might as well surrender without bringing the matter to an issue. It is evident that the disposition of Job to yield, was rather because he saw that God was superior in power than because he saw that he was right, and that he felt that if he had ability to manage the cause as well as God could, the matter would not be so much against him as it was then. That there was no little impropriety of feeling in this, no one can doubt; but have we never had feelings like this when we have been afflicted? Have we never submitted to God because we felt that he was Almighty, and that it was vain to contend with him, rather than because he was seen to be right? True submission is always accompanied with the belief that God is RIGHT—whether we can see him to be right or not.

And we should come together in judgment For trial, to have the case adjudicated. That is, that we should meet face to face, and have the cause tried before a superior judge. Noyes.

Job 9:33. *Neither is there any daysman* Margin, One that should argue, or, umpire. The word daysman in English means “an umpire or arbiter, a mediator.” Webster. Why such a man is called a daysman I do not know. The Hebrew word rendered “daysman” $j\ k\ \text{קָרָה}$ is from $j\ k\ \text{קָרָה}$, not used in Qal, to be before, in front of; and then to appear, to be clear, or manifest; and in Hiphil, to cause to be manifest, to argue, prove, convince; and then to argue down, to confute, reprove; see the word used in Job 6:25: “What doth your arguing reprove?” It then means to make a cause clear, to judge, determine, decide, as an arbiter, umpire, judge, Isaiah 11:3; Genesis 31:37. Jerome renders it, “Non est qui utrumque valeat arguere.” The Septuagint, “if there were, or, O that there were a mediator (\acute{o} $\mu\epsilon\sigma\iota\tau\eta\varsigma$), and a reprover ($\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\gamma\chi\omega\upsilon\omicron\upsilon$), and one to hear us both” ($\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\delta\iota\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\omega\upsilon$ $\alpha\upsilon\alpha\mu\epsilon\sigma\omicron\upsilon$ $\alpha\mu\phi\omicron\tau\epsilon\rho\omega\upsilon$). The word as used by Job does not mean mediator, but arbiter,

umpire, or judge; one before whom the cause might be tried, who could lay the hand of restraint on either party. who could confine the pleadings within proper bounds, who could preserve the parties within the limits of order and propriety, and who had power to determine the question at issue. Job complains that there could be no such tribunal. He feels that God was so great that the cause could be referred to no other, and that he had no prospect of success in the unequal contest. It does not appear, therefore, that he desired a mediator, in the sense in which we understand that word — one who shall come between us and God, and manage our cause before him, and be our advocate at his bar. He rather says that there was no one above God, or no umpire uninterested in the controversy, before whom the cause could be argued, and who would be competent to decide the matter in issue between him and his Maker. He had no hope, therefore, in a cause where one of the parties was to be the judge, and where that party was omnipotent; and he must give up the cause in despair. It is not with strict propriety that this language is ever applied to the Lord Jesus, the great Mediator between God and man. He is not an umpire to settle a dispute, in the sense in which Job understood it; he is not an arbiter, to whom the cause in dispute between man and his Maker is to be referred; he is not a judge to listen to the arguments of the respective parties, and to decide the controversy. He is a mediator between us and God, to make it proper or possible that God should be reconciled to the guilty, and to propose to man the terms of reconciliation; to plead our cause before God, and to communicate to us the favors which he proposes to bestow on man.

That might lay his hand upon us both It is not improbable that this may refer to some ancient ceremony in courts where, for some cause, the umpire or arbiter laid his hand on both the parties. Or, it may mean merely that the umpire had the power of control over both the parties; that it was his office to restrain them within proper limits, to check any improper expressions, and to see that the argument was fairly conducted on both sides. The meaning of the whole here is, that if there were such an umpire, Job would be willing to argue the cause. As it was, it was a hopeless thing, and he could do nothing more than to be silent. That there was irreverence in this language must be admitted; but it is language taken from courts of law, and the substance of it is, that Job could not hope to maintain his cause before one so great and powerful as God.

~~808~~ **Job 9:34.** *Let him take his rod away from me* Let him suspend my sufferings, and let us come together on equal terms. His terror now is upon

me, and I can do nothing. I am oppressed, and broken down, and crushed under his hand, and I could not hope to maintain my cause with any degree of success. If my sufferings were lightened, and I could approach the question with the rigor of health and the power of reasoning unweakened by calamity, I could then do justice to the views which I entertain. Now there would be obvious disparity, while one of the parties has crushed and enervated the other by the mere exercise of power.

~~8085~~ **Job 9:35.** *Then would I speak, and not fear him* I should then be able to maintain my cause on equal terms, and with equal advantages.

But it is not so with me Margin, I am not so with myself. Noyes, "I am not so at heart." Good, "but not thus could I in my present state." Literally, "for not thus I with myself." The Syriac renders it, "for neither am I his adversary." Very various interpretations have been given of this phrase. The Jews, with Aben Ezra, suppose it means, "for I am not such as you suppose me to be. You take me to be a guilty man; but I am innocent, and if I had a fair opportunity for trial, I could show that I am." Others suppose it to mean, "I am held to be guilty by the Most High, and am treated accordingly. But I am not so. I am conscious to myself that I am innocent." It seems to me that Dr. Good has come nearer the true sense than any other interpreter, and certainly his exposition accords with the connection. According to this the meaning is, "I am not able thus to vindicate myself in my present circumstances. I am oppressed and crushed beneath a load of calamities. But if these were removed, and if I had a fair opportunity of trial, then I could so state my cause as to make it appear to be just." In this whole chapter, there is evidently much insubmission and improper feeling. Job submits to power, not to truth and right. He sees and admits that God is able to overwhelm him, but he does not seem disposed to admit that he is right in doing it. He supposes that if he had a fair and full opportunity of trial, he could make his cause good, and that it would be seen that he did not deserve his heavy calamities. There is much of this kind of submission to God even among good people. It is submission because they cannot help it, not because they see the divine dealings to be right. There is nothing cheerful or confiding about it. There is often a secret feeling in the heart that the sufferings are beyond the deserts, and that if the case could be fairly tried, the dealings of God would be found to be harsh and severe. Let us not blame Job for his impatience and irreverent language, until we have carefully examined our own hearts in the times of trial like those which he endured. Let us not infer that he was worse than other men, until we are

placed in similar circumstances, and are able to manifest better feelings than he did.

NOTES ON JOB 10

<800>**Job 10:1.** *My soul is weary of my life* compare the note at <8716>Job 7:16. The margin here is, Or, "cut off while I live." The meaning in the margin is in accordance with the interpretation of Schultens. The Chaldee also renders it in a similar way: **trzgj a yvni** — my soul is cut off. But the more correct interpretation is that in our common version; and the sense is, that his soul, i.e., that he himself was disgusted with life. It was a weary burden, and he wished to die.

I will leave my complaint upon myself Noyes, "I will give myself up to complaint." Dr. Good, "I will let loose from myself my dark thoughts." The literal sense is, "I will leave complaint upon myself;" that is, I will give way to it; I will not restrain it; compare <8711>Job 7:11.

I will speak in the bitterness of my soul See the notes, <8711>Job 7:11.

<800>**Job 10:2.** *I will say unto God, Do not condemn me* Do not hold me to be wicked — **l aæ**^{<h408>} [**væ**^{<h7561>}]. The sense is, "Do not simply hold me to be wicked, and treat me as such, without showing me the reasons why I am so regarded." This was the ground of Job's complaint, that God by mere sovereignty and power held him to be a wicked man, and that he did not see the reasons why he was so considered and treated. He now desired to know in what he had offended, and to be made acquainted with the cause of his sufferings. The idea is, that it was unjust to treat one as guilty who had no opportunity of knowing the nature of the offence with which he was charged, or the reason why he was condemned.

<800>**Job 10:3.** *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress* The sense of this is, that it could not be with God a matter of personal gratification to inflict pain wantonly. There must be a reason why he did it. This was clear to Job, and he was anxious, therefore, to know the reason why he was treated in this manner. Yet there is evidently here not a little of the spirit of complaining. There is an insinuation that God was afflicting him beyond what he deserved; see <800>Job 10:7. The state of his mind appears to have been this: he is conscious to himself that he is a sincere friend of God, and he is unwilling to believe that God can wantonly inflict pain — and yet he has no other way of accounting for it. He is in a sort driven to this painful

conclusion — and he asks with deep feeling, whether it can be so? Is there no other solution than this? Is there no way of explaining the fact that he suffers so much, than either the supposition that he is a hypocrite — which he feels assured he is not; or that God took a wanton pleasure in inflicting pain — which he was as little disposed to believe, if he could avoid it? Yet his mind rather verges to this latter belief, for he seems more disposed to believe that God was severe than that he himself was a hypocrite and a wicked man. Neither of these conclusions was necessary. If he had taken a middle ground, and had adverted to the fact that God might afflict his own children for their good, the mystery would have been solved. He could have retained the consciousness of his integrity, and at the same time his confidence in God.

That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands Margin, labor. That is, despise man, or treat him as if he were of no value. The idea is, that it would be natural for God to love his own work, and that his treatment of Job seemed as if he regarded his own workmanship — man — as of no value.

And shine upon the counsel of the wicked By giving them health and prosperity.

~~8100~~ **Job 10:4.** *Hast thou eyes of flesh?* Eyes like man. Dost thou look upon man with the same disposition to discern faults; the same uncharitableness and inclination to construe everything in the severest manner possible, which characterizes man? Possibly Job may have reference here to the harsh judgment of his friends, and means to ask whether it could be possible for God to evince the same feelings in judging of him which they had done.

~~8100~~ **Job 10:5.** *Are thy days as the days of man* Does thy life pass on like that of man? Dost thou expect soon to die, that thou dost pursue me in this manner, searching out my sins, and afflicting me as if there were no time to lose? The idea is, that God seemed to press this matter as if he were soon to cease to exist, and as if there were no time to spare in accomplishing it. His strokes were unintermitted, as if it were necessary that the work should be done soon, and as if no respite could be given for a full and fair development of the real character of the sufferer. The whole passage (~~8100~~ Job 10:4-7) expresses the settled conviction of Job that God could not resemble man; Man was short lived, fickle, blind; he was incapable, from

the brevity of his existence, and from his imperfections, of judging correctly of the character of others. But it could not be so with God. He was eternal. He knew the heart. He saw everything as it was. Why, then, Job asks with deep feeling, did he deal with him as if he were influenced by the methods of judgment which were inseparable from the condition of imperfect and dying man?

Job 10:6. *That thou inquirest after mine iniquity* Art thou governed by human passions and prejudices, that thou dost thus seem to search out every little obliquity and error? Job here evidently refers to the conduct of man in strictly marking faults, and in being unwilling to forgive; and he asks whether it is possible that God could be governed by such feelings as these.

Job 10:7. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked* That is, that I am not a hypocrite, or an impenitent sinner. Job did not claim perfection (see the note at Job 9:20), but he maintained through all this argument that he was not a wicked man, in the sense in which his friends regarded him as such, and for the truth of this he could boldly appeal to God. The margin is, "It is upon thy knowledge." This is a literal translation of the Hebrew, but the sense is well expressed in the text. The meaning of the verse is, "Why dost thou thus afflict me, when thou knowest that I am not wicked? Why am I treated as if I were the worst of men? Why is occasion thus furnished for my friends to construct an argument as if I were a man of singular depravity?"

There is none that can deliver out of thine hand I have no power to release myself. Job felt that God had almighty power; and he seems to have felt that his sufferings were rather the simple exertion of power, than the exercise of justice. It was this that laid the foundation for his complaint.

Job 10:8. *Thine hands have made me* Job proceeds now to state that he had been made by God, and that he had shown great skill and pains in his formation. He argues that it would seem like caprice to take such pains, and to exercise such amazing wisdom and care in forming him, and then, on a sudden, and without cause, dash his own work to pieces. Who makes a beautiful vase only to be destroyed? Who moulds a statue from marble only to break it to pieces? Who builds a splendid edifice only to pull it down? Who plants a rare and precious flower only to have the pleasure of plucking it up? The statement in Job 10:8-12, is not only beautiful and

forcible as an argument, but is especially interesting and valuable, as it may be presumed to embody the views in the patriarchal age about the formation and the laws of the human frame. No inconsiderable part of the value of the book of Job, as was remarked in the Introduction, arises from the incidental notices of the sciences as they prevailed at the time when it was composed. If it is the oldest book in the world, it is an invaluable record on these points. The expression, “thine hands have made me,” is in the margin, “took pains about me.” Dr. Good renders it, “have wrought me;” Noyes, “completely fashioned me;” Rosenmuller explains it to mean, “have formed me with the highest diligence and care.” Schultens renders it, Manus tuæ nervis colligarunt — “thy hands have bound me with nerves or sinews;” and appeals to the use of the Arabic as authority for this interpretation. He maintains (De Defectibus hodiernis Ling. Hebr. pp. 142, 144, 151), that the Arabic word atzaba denotes “the body united and bound in a beautiful form by nerves and tendons;” and that the idea here is, that God had so constructed the human frame. The Hebrew word used here **bx** [means properly to work, form, fashion. The primary idea, according to Gesenius, is, that of cutting, both wood and stone, and hence, to cut or carve with a view to the forming of an image. The verb also has the idea of labor, pain, travail, grief; perhaps from the labor of cutting or carving a stone or a block of wood. Hence it means, in Piel, to form or fashion, with the idea of labor or toil; and the sense here is undoubtedly, that God had elaborated the bodies of men with care and skill, like that bestowed on a carved image or statue. The margin expresses the idea not badly — took pains about me.

And fashioned me Made me. The Hebrew here means simply to make.

Together round about **dj** ^{<h3162>} **yē** ^{<h5439>} **bybis**. Vulgate, totum in circuitu. Septuagint simply, “made me.” Dr. Good, “moulded me compact on all sides.” The word **dj y** rendered “together,” has the notion of oneness, or union. It may refer to the oneness of the man — the making of one from the apparently discordant materials, and the compact form in which the body, though composed of bones, and sinews, and blood-vessels, is constructed. A similar idea is expressed by Lucretius, as quoted by Schultens. Lib. iii. 358:

*Qui coetu, conjugioque
Corporis atque anirnae consistimus uniter apti.*

Yet thou dost destroy me Notwithstanding I am thus made, yet thou art taking down my frame, as if it were of no consequence, and formed with no care.

<800>**Job 10:9.** *Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay* There is evident allusion here to the creation of man, and to the fact that he was moulded from the dust of the earth — a fact which would be preserved by tradition; see <0007>Genesis 2:7. The fact that God had moulded the human form as the potter moulds the clay, is one that is often referred to in the Scriptures; compare <600>Romans 9:20,21. The object of Job in this is, probably, to recall the fact that God, out of clay, had formed the noble structure, man, and to ask whether it was his intention to reduce that structure again to its former worthless condition — to destroy its beauty, and to efface the remembrance of his workmanship? Was it becoming God thus to blot out every memorial of his own power and skill in moulding the human frame?

<800>**Job 10:10.** *Hast thou not poured me out as milk?* The whole image in this verse and the following, is designed to furnish an illustration of the origin and growth of the human frame. The Note of Dr. Good may be transcribed, as furnishing an illustration of what may have possibly been the meaning of Job.

“The whole of the simile is highly correct and beautiful, and has not been neglected by the best poets of Greece and Rome. From the well-tempered or mingled milk of the chyle, every individual atom of every individual organ in the human frame, the most compact and consolidated, as well as the soft and pliable, is perpetually supplied and renewed, through the medium of a system of lacteals or milk-vessels, as they are usually called in anatomy, from the nature of this common chyle or milk which they circulate. Into the delicate stomach of the infant it is introduced in the form of milk; but even in the adult it must be reduced to some such form, whatever be the substance he feed upon, by the conjoint action of the stomach and other chylofactive organs, before it can become the basis of animal nutriment. It then circulates through the system, and either continues fluid as milk in its simple state, or is rendered solid as milk is in its caseous or cheese-state, according to the nature of the organ which it supplies with its vital current.”

True as this is, however, as a matter of physiology, now well understood, a doubt may arise whether Job was acquainted with the method thus described, in which man is sustained. The idea of Job is, that God was the author of the human frame, and that that frame was so formed as to evince his wonderful and incomprehensible wisdom. A consultation of the works on physiology, which explain the facts about the formation and the growth of the human body, will show that there are few things which more strikingly evince the wisdom of God than the formation of the human frame, alike at its origin, and in every stage of its development. It is a subject, however, which cannot, with propriety, be pursued in a work of this kind.

<801> **Job 10:11.** *Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh* This refers, undoubtedly, to the formation of man in his foetal existence, and is designed to denote that the whole organization of the human frame was to be traced to God. Grotius remarks that this is the order in which the infant is formed — that the skin appears first, then the flesh, then the harder parts of the frame. On this subject, the reader may consult Duglison's Physiology, vol. ii. p. 340ff.

And hast fenced me Margin, Hedged. Literally, Hast covered me. The sense is plain. God had formed him as he was, and to him he owed his life, and all that he had. Job asks with the deepest interest whether God would take down a frame formed in this manner, and reduce it again to dust? Would it not be more for his honor to preserve it still — at least to the common limit of human life?

<802> **Job 10:12.** *Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit* Thy constant care; thy watchful providence; thy superintendence. The word rendered visitation **hDqpj**⁷⁶⁴⁸⁶ means properly the mustering of an army, the care that is manifested in looking after those who are enlisted; and then denotes care, vigilance, providence, custody, watch. The idea is, that God had watched over him and preserved him, and that to his constant vigilance he owed the preservation of his life.

<803> **Job 10:13.** *And these things hast thou hid in thine heart* This may either refer to the arrangements by which God had made him, or to the calamities which he had brought upon him. Most expositors suppose that the latter is intended. Such is the opinion of Rosenmuller, Good, Noyes, and Scott. According to this the idea is, that God had purposed in his heart

to bring these calamities upon him. They were a part of his counsel and design. To hide in the heart, or to lay up in the heart, is a phrase expressive of a secret purpose. I see no reason to confine it, however, to the calamities which Job had experienced. It may refer to all the plans and doings of the Most High, to which Job had just referred. All his acts in the creation and preservation of man, were a part of his secret counsel, He had formed the plan in his heart, and was now executing it in the various dispensations of his providence.

I know that this is with thee That all this is a part of thy purpose. It has its origin in thee, and is according to thy counsel. This is the language of piety, recognizing the great truth that all things are in accordance with the purposes of God, or that his plans embrace all events — a doctrine which Job most assuredly held.

~~1804~~ **Job 10:14.** *If I sin* The object of this verse and the following is, evidently, to say that he was wholly perplexed. He did not know how to act. He could not understand the reason of the divine dealings, and he was wholly unable to explain them, and hence, he did not know how to act in a proper manner. It is expressive of a state of mind where the individual wishes to think and feel right, but where he finds so much to perplex him, that he does not know what to do. Job was sure that his friends were not right in the position which they maintained — that he was a sinner of enormous character, and that his sufferings were proof of this, and yet he did not know how to answer their arguments. He desired to have confidence in God, and yet he knew not how to reconcile his dealings with his sense of right. He felt that he was a friend of God, and he did not know why he should visit one who had this consciousness in this distressing and painful manner. His mind was perplexed, vacillating, embarrassed, and he did not know what to do or say. The truth in this whole argument was, that he was more often right than his friends, but that he, in common with them, had embraced some principles which he was compelled to admit to be true, or which he could not demonstrate to be false, which gave them greatly the advantage in the argument, and which they pressed upon him now with overwhelming force.

Then thou markest me Dost carefully observe every fault. Why he did this, Job could not see. The same difficulty he expressed in ~~1807~~ Job 7:17-19; see the note at that place.

And wilt not acquit me Wilt not pardon me. Job did not understand why God would not do this. It was exceedingly perplexing to him that God held him to be guilty, and would not pardon him if he had sinned. The same perplexity he expressed in ^{<81721>}Job 7:21; see the note at that verse.

^{<81015>}**Job 10:15.** *If I be wicked, woe unto me* The meaning of this in this connection is, "I am full of perplexity and sorrow. Whether I am wicked or righteous, I find no comfort. Whatever is my character, my efforts to be happy are unavailing, and my mind is full of anguish. Woe follows if I have been guilty of sin; and if I am not a sinful man, I am equally incapable of enjoyment. In every way I am doomed to wretchedness." And if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head. That is, with confidence and cheerfulness. The meaning is, that though he was conscious that he was not a hypocrite, yet he did not know what to do. God treated him as if he were wicked, and his friends regarded him as such, and he was overwhelmed with the perplexities of his situation. He could not lift up his head with confidence, though he was certain that he was not a sinner in the sense in which they charged him with being such; and yet since he was treated by God in a manner so similar to the mode in which the wicked are treated, he felt ashamed and confounded. Who has not felt the same thing? Who has not experienced a sense of shame and mortification at being sick, — a proof of guilt, and an expression of the hatred of God against sin? Who has not felt humbled that he must die, as the most vile of the race must die, and that his body must become the "prey of corruption" and "the banquet of worms," as a demonstration of guilt? Such humiliation Job experienced. He was treated as if he were the vilest of sinners. He endured from God sufferings such as they endure. He was so regarded by his friends. He felt humbled and mortified that he was brought into this situation, and was ashamed that he could not meet the arguments of his friends.

I am full of confusion Shame, ignominy, distress, and perplexity. On every side there was embarrassment, and he knew not what to do. His friends regarded him as vile, and he could not but admit that he was so treated by God.

Therefore see thou mine affliction The word rendered here "see" *har*,^{<417200>} in the imperative, Rosenmuller, Gesenius, and others suppose should be regarded as in the infinitive absolute, the finite verb being understood; "seeing I see my affliction," that is, I certainly see it. So the Chaldee and the Syriac render it, and this agrees better with the connection of the

passage. “I see the depth of my affliction. I cannot hide it from myself. I see, and must admit, that God treats me as if I were a sinner, and I am greatly perplexed and embarrassed by that fact. My mind is in confusion, and I know not what to say.”

<8106> **Job 10:16.** *For it increaseth* Our translators understand this as meaning that the calamities of Job, so far from becoming less, were constantly increasing, and thus augmenting his perplexity and embarrassment. But a somewhat different explanation is given to it by many interpreters. The word rendered “increaseth” **הִאֲסִי**,^{<h1342>} means properly, to lift up, to lift up oneself, to rise; and Gesenius supposes that it refers here to “the head,” and that the meaning is, “if it lift up itself (sc. my head), thou huntest me as a lion.” It cannot be denied that the notion of pride, elation, haughtiness, is usually connected with the use of the word, but it is not necessary here to depart from the common interpretation, meaning that the increase of his affliction greatly augmented his perplexity. Jerome, however, renders it, “and on account of pride, thou dost seize me as a lioness.” The idea is, “my affliction, as it were, exalts itself, or, becomes more and more prominent.” This is a better interpretation than to refer it to the raising up of his head.

Thou huntest me as a fierce lion On the meaning of the word here rendered “fierce lion” **לִיַּאֲסִי**,^{<37326>} see the notes at <8140> Job 4:10. The sense here is, that God hunted or followed him as a fierce lion pursued his prey.

And again thou showest thyself marvelous Or rather, “thou turnest, and art wonderful toward me.” The meaning is, that he did not at once spring upon his prey and then leave it, but he came back as if it had not been put to death when first seized, as if a lion should come back and torture his victim again. The meaning of the phrase “shewest thyself marvelous” is, that the dealings of God toward him were wonderful. They were wholly incomprehensible. He had no means of finding out the reasons of his doings. On the word used here, compare the notes at <2306> Isaiah 9:6.

<8107> **Job 10:17.** *Thou renewest thy witnesses against me* Margin, “that is, plagues.” The Hebrew is, “thy witnesses” — **דַּיְדִּי**. So the Vulgate. The Septuagint is, “renewing against me my examination,” **την**^{<3588>} **ἐξέτασιν μου**^{<3450>}. Rabbi Levi supposes that the plague of the leprosy is intended. But the true meaning seems to be, that God sent upon him calamities which were regarded by his friends as “proofs” or “witnesses”

that he was wicked, the public and solemn attestation of God, as they supposed, to the truth that he was eminently a bad man. New proofs of this kind were constantly occurring in his augmenting and protracted sorrows, and he could not answer the arguments which were brought from them by his friends.

Changes and war are against me Or rather, are “with me,” י [^{†15973}]. There were with him such reverses of condition as laid the foundation for the argument which they had urged with so much pertinacity and force that he was punished by God. The word rendered “changes” twpyl j means properly “changes,” or exchanges, and is applied to garments, <11815> 2 Kings 5:5,22,23. It may be used also of soldiers keeping watch until they are relieved by a succeeding guard; see the note at <18144> Job 14:14. Here it is not improbably employed in the sense of a succession of attacks made on him. One succeeds another, as if platoon after platoon, to use the modern terms, or phalanx after phalanx, should come up against him. As soon as one had discharged its arrows, another succeeded in its place; or as soon as one became exhausted, it was followed by a fresh recruit. All this Job could not endure. The succession wearied him, and he could not bear it. Dr. Good supposes that the word refers to the skirmishes by which a battle is usually introduced, in which two armies attempt to gall each other before they are engaged. But the true idea, as it seems to me, is, that afflictions succeeded each other as soldiers on a watch, or in a battle, relieve each other. When one set is exhausted on duty, it is succeeded by another. Or, when in battle one company has discharged its weapons, or is exhausted, it is succeeded by those who are brought fresh into the field. The word rendered “war” abx, †16635 properly means an army or a host; see the note at <18015> Job 7:1. Here it means that a whole host had rushed upon him. Not only had he been galled by the succession, the relief-guard of calamities, the attacks which had followed each other from an advanced guard, or from scouts sent out to skirmish, but the whole army was upon him. A whole host of calamities came rushing upon him alone, and he could not endure them.

<18018> **Job 10:18.** *Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth* See the notes at <18011> Job 3:11.

<18019> **Job 10:19.** *I should have been carried from the womb to the grave* See the notes at <18016> Job 3:16.

<810> **Job 10:20.** *Are not my days few?* My life is short, and hastens to a close. Let not then my afflictions be continued to the last moment of life, but let thine hand be removed, that I may enjoy some rest before I go hence, to return no more. This is an address to God, and the meaning is, that as life was necessarily so short, he asked to be permitted to enjoy some comfort before he should go to the land of darkness and of death; compare the note at <817> Job 7:21. A somewhat similar expression occurs in <893> Psalm 39:13:

O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.

<810> **Job 10:21.** *Before I go* from where “I shall not return.” To the grave, to the land of shades, to

“That undiscovered country, from whose bourne
No traveler returns.”

To the land of darkness This passage is important as furnishing an illustration of what was early understood about the regions of the dead. The essential idea here is that it was a land of darkness, of total and absolute night. This idea Job presents in a great variety of forms and phrases. He amplifies it, and uses apparently all the epithets which he can command to represent the utter and entire darkness of the place. The place referred to is not the grave, but the region beyond, the abode of departed spirits, the Hades of the ancients; and the idea here is, that it is a place where not a clear ray of light ever shines. That this was a common opinion of the ancients in regard to the world of departed spirits, is well known. Virgil thus speaks of those gloomy regions:

Oii, quibusimperium est animarum, umbraeque silentes, Et Chaos,
et Phlegethon, loca nocte tacentia late, Sit mihi fas audita loqui;
slt numine vestro Pandere res alta terra et caligine mersas. Ibant
obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram, Perque domos Ditis vacuas, et
inania regna: Quale per incertam lunam sub luce maligna Est iter in
silvis: ubi coelum condidit umbra Jupiter, et rebus nox abstulit atra
colorem — AEn. vi. 259ff

A similar view of Hades was held by the Greeks. Thus, Theognis, 1007:

ὡς μακαρ ευδαιμων τε και ολβιος,
 ὅστις απειρος Αθλων , εις ἡου
 δωμα μελαν κατεβη .

There is nowhere to be found, however, a description which for intensity and emphasis of expression surpasses this of Job.

Shadow of death See this phrase explained in the note at ^{<8885>}Job 3:5.

^{<8022>}**Job 10:22.** *A land of darkness* The word used here ^{<45890>}hpy[ē is different from that rendered “darkness” ^{<42822>}Ēvj in the previous verse. That is the common word to denote darkness; this seldom occurs. It is derived from ^{<45774>}āw[, to fly; and then to cover as with wings; and hence, the noun means that which is shaded or dark; ^{<40413>}Amos 4:13; compare ^{<48713>}Job 17:13; ^{<21822>}Isaiah 8:22; 9:1.

As darkness itself This is still another word ^{<4652>}l pao though in our common version but one term is used. We have not the means in our language of marking different degrees of obscurity with the accuracy with which the Hebrews did it. The word used here ^{<4652>}l pao denotes a THICK darkness — such as exists when the sun is set — from ^{<4651>}l pa, to go down, to set. It is poetic, and is used to denote intense and deep darkness; see ^{<8885>}Job 3:6.

And of the shadow of death I would prefer reading this as connected with the previous word — “the deep darkness of the shadow of death.” The Hebrew will bear this, and indeed it is the obvious construction.

Without any order The word rendered order ^{<45468>}rdš, is in the plural. It is from ^{<45468>}rdš, obsolete, to place in a row or order, to arrange. The meaning is, that everything was mingled together as in chaos, and all was confusion. Milton has used similar language:

— “*a vast immeasurable abyss.*
 — “*dark, wasteful, wild.*”

Ovid uses similar language in speaking of chaos: “Unus chaos, rudis indigestaque moles.”

And where the light is as darkness This is a very striking and graphic expression. It means that there is no pure and clear light. Even all the light

that shines there is dark, sombre, gloomy — like the little light of a total eclipse, which seems to be darkness itself, and which only serves to render the darkness more distressing. Compare Milton:

“A dungeon horrible on all sides round, As one great furnace
flamed, yet from those flames No light; but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe.” — PAR. LOST, 1.

The Hebrew here literally is, “And it shines forth [ptw as darkness:” i.e., the very shining of the light there, if there is any, is like darkness! Such was the view of Job of the abodes of the dead — even of the pious dead. No wonder he shrank back from it, and wished to live. Such is the prospect of the grave to man, until Christianity comes and reveals a brighter world beyond the grave — a world that is all light. That darkness is now scattered. A clear light shines even around the grave, and beyond there is a world where all is light, and where “there is no night,” and where all is one bright eternal day; ⁶²³Revelation 21:23; 22:5. O had Job been favored with these views of heaven, he would not have thus feared to die!

NOTES ON JOB 11

Job 11:2. *Should not the multitude of words be answered?* As if all that Job had said had been mere words; or as if he was remarkable for mere garrulity.

And should a man full of talk be justified Margin, as in Hebrew “of lips.” The phrase is evidently a Hebraism, to denote a great talker — a man of mere lips, or empty sound. Zophar asks whether such a man could be justified or vindicated. It will be recollected that taciturnity was with the Orientals a much greater virtue than with us, and that it was regarded as one of the proofs of wisdom. The wise man with them was he who sat down at the feet of age, and desired to learn; who carefully collected the maxims of former times; who diligently observed the course of events; and who deliberated with care on what others had to say. Thus, Solomon says, “In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise;” ^{<8109>}Proverbs 10:19; so ^{<5019>}James 1:19, “let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak.” It was supposed that a man who said much would say some foolish or improper things, and hence, it was regarded as a proof of prudence to be distinguished for silence. In Oriental countries, and it may be added also, in all countries that we regard as uncivilized, it is unusual and disrespectful to be hasty in offering counsel, to be forward to speak, or to be confident and bold in opinion; see the notes at ^{<8316>}Job 32:6,7. It was for reasons such as these that Zophar maintained that a man who was full of talk could not be justified in it; that there was presumptive proof that he was not a safe man, or a man who could be vindicated in all that he said.

Job 11:3. *Should thy lies* Margin, “devices.” Rosenmuller renders this, “should men bear thy boastings with silence?” Dr. Good, “before thee would man-kind keep silence?” Vulgate, “tibi soli tacebunt homines?” “Shall men be silent before thee alone? The Septuagint tenders the whole passage, “he who speaketh much should also hear in turn; else the fine speaker (εὐλαλος) thinketh himself just. — Blessed be the short-lived offspring of woman. Be not profuse of words, for there is no one that judges against thee, and do not say that I am pure in works and blameless before him?” How this was made out of the Hebrew, or what is its exact sense, I am unable to say. There can be no doubt, I think, that our present

translation is altogether too harsh, and that Zophar by no means designs to charge Job with uttering lies. The Hebrew word commonly used for lies, is wholly different from that which is used here. The word here **dBæ**^{<h907>} denotes properly “separation;” then a part; and in various combinations as a preposition, “alone separate.” “besides.” Then the noun means empty talk, vain boasting; and then it may denote lies or falsehood. The leading idea is that of separation or of remoteness from anything, as from prudence, wisdom, propriety, or truth. It is a general term, like our word “bad,” which I presume has been derived from this Hebrew word [~bad), or from the Arabic “bad.” In the plural **µydb** it is rendered “liars” in ^{<2425>}Isaiah 44:25; ^{<2516>}Jeremiah 50:36; “lies” in ^{<18103>}Job 11:3; ^{<2366>}Isaiah 16:6; ^{<2483>}Jeremiah 48:30; and “parts” in ^{<18412>}Job 41:12. It is also often rendered “staves,” ^{<12716>}Exodus 27:6; 25:14,15,28, et sap, at. That it may mean “lies” here I admit, but it may also mean talk that is aside from propriety, and may refer here to a kind of discourse that was destitute of propriety, empty, vain talk.

And when thou mockest That-is, “shalt thou be permitted to use the language of reproach and of complaint, and no one attempt to make thee sensible of its impropriety?” The complaints and arguments of Job he represented as in fact mocking God.

Shall no man make thee ashamed? Shall no one show thee the impropriety of it, and bring thy mind to a sense of shame for what it has done? This was what Zophar now proposed to do.

^{<18104>}**Job 11:4.** *My doctrine is pure* The Septuagint instead of the word “doctrine” here reads “deeds,” **εργους**^{<2041>}; the Syriac, “thou sayest I have acted justly.” But the word used here **j qbæ**^{<h3948>} means properly “fair speech” or “taking arguments,” that by which one is “taken” or captivated, from **j qbæ**^{<h3947>}, “to take.” Then it means doctrine, or instruction, ^{<10105>}Proverbs 1:5; 9:9. Here it means the views which Job had expressed. Dr. Good supposes that it means “conduct,” a word which would suit the connection, but the Hebrew is not used in this sense.

And I am clean in thine eyes In the eyes of God, or in his sight. This was a false charge. Job had never maintained that he was perfect (compare the notes at ^{<18101>}Job 9:20); he had only maintained that he was not such a sinner as his friends maintained that he was, a hypocrite, and a man eminent for

guilt. His want of absolute perfection he was ever ready to admit and mourn over.

Job 11:5. *But oh that God would speak* Hebrew, “and truly, who will give that God should speak.” It is the expression of an earnest wish that God would address him, and bring him to a proper sense of his ill desert. The meaning is, that if God should speak to him he would by no means find himself so holy as he now claimed to be.

Job 11:6. *And that he would show thee the secrets of wisdom* The hidden things that pertain to wisdom. The reference here is to the wisdom of God himself. The sense is this, “you now think yourself pure and holy. You have confidence in your own wisdom and integrity. But this apprehension is based on a short-sighted view of God, and on ignorance of him. If he would speak and show you his wisdom; if he would express his sense of what purity is, you would at once see how far you have come from perfection, and would be overwhelmed with a sense of your comparative vileness and sin.”

That they are double to that which is Noyes renders this, “his wisdom which is unsearchable.” Dr. Good, strangely enough, “for they are intricacies to iniquity.” The expression, as it stands in our common version, is not very intelligible; and indeed it is difficult, to attach any idea to it. Of the words used in the Hebrew, the sense is not difficult. The word **pyl pk**, “double,” is from **l pke** ⁴³⁷¹⁷ “to fold,” “to double;” and means a doubling (¹⁸⁴⁰⁵Job 41:5); and then two folds, or double folds, and the sense here is, that the wisdom of God is “double-fold;” that is, complicated, inexplicable, or manifold. It is not spread out and plain, but is infolded, so that it requires to be unrolled to be understood. The word rendered “that which is” **hyvwt**, means properly a setting upright, uprightness — from **hvy**. Hence, it means help, deliverance, ¹⁸⁶⁶³Job 6:13; purpose, undertaking, see the notes at ¹⁸⁵¹²Job 5:12; and then counsel, wisdom, understanding, ¹⁸²¹⁶Job 12:16; ²³⁸⁹Isaiah 28:29. It means here, I suppose, “understanding;” and the idea is, that the wisdom of God is “double of understanding;” that is, it is so infolded, so complex, that it greatly surpasses our comprehension. What we see is a small part of it; and the “secrets” of his wisdom — the parts of his wisdom which are not unfolded, are far above our grasp. His wisdom is like a vast roll or volume, only the first and a very small part of which is unrolled so that we can read it. But who can look into that that remains

unopened, and penetrate between the involutions, so as to perceive and read it all? It is but little that is now unrolled of the mighty volume — the remainder will be unfolded as years and ages shall pass on, and the entire unfolding of the book will be reserved for eternity.

Know, therefore, that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth The word here rendered “exacteth” hvn̄^{<15382>} more properly means “to forget” — from hvn̄^{<15382>}. It also means to loan on usury, or to borrow; but the sense here is rather that of forgetting. It is not used in the sense of exacting. The true meaning is, “know, therefore, that for thee God hath caused to be forgotten a part of thy iniquity.” That is, he has treated you as if he had caused a part of your sins to be out of mind, or as if they were not remembered. Instead of treating you, as you complain, with severity, he has by no means inflicted on you the calamities which you deserve. The ground of this unfeeling assertion is the abstract proposition that God is infinitely wiser than human beings; that he has a deeper insight into human guilt than people can have; and that if he should disclose to us all that he sees of the heart, we should be amazed at the revelations of our own sins. This sentiment is undoubtedly true, and accords almost exactly with what Job had himself said (<3899> Job 9:19-22), but there is something very harsh and severe in the manner in which Zophar applies it.

<8107> **Job 11:7.** *Canst then, by searching, find out God?* In order to illustrate the sentiment which he had just expressed, that the secrets of divine wisdom must be far above our comprehension, Zophar introduces here this sublime description of God — a description which seems to have the form and force of a proverb. It seems to have been a settled opinion that man could not find out the Almighty to perfection by his own powers — a sentiment, which is as true now, as it was then, and which is of the utmost importance in all our inquiries about the Creator. The sentiment is expressed in a most beautiful manner; and the language itself is not unworthy of the theme. The word “searching,” rqj e^{<2714>}, is from yqj e to search, to search out, to examine; and the primary sense, according to Gesenius, lies in searching in the earth by boring or digging — as for metals. Then it means to search with diligence and care. Here it means that by the utmost attention in examining the works of God, it would be impossible for man to find out the Almighty to perfection. All the investigations which have been made of God, have fallen short of the object; and at the present time it is as true as it was in the days of Job, that

we cannot, by searching, find him out. Of much that pertains to him and his plans we must be content to remain in ignorance, until we are admitted to the revelations of a higher world — happy and thankful now that we are permitted to know so much of him as we do, and that we are apprized of the existence of ONE INFINITE AND PERFECT MIND. It is an inexpressible privilege to know “anything” of God; and it is proof of the exalted nature of man, that he is now capable of becoming in any degree acquainted with the divine nature.

<818> Job 11:8. *It is as high as heaven* That is, the knowledge of God; or the subject is as high as heaven. The idea is, that man is incompetent to examine, with accuracy, an object that is as far off as the heavens; and that as the knowledge of God must be of that character, it is vain for him to attempt to investigate it fully. There is an energy in the Hebrew which is lost in our common translation. The Hebrew is abrupt and very emphatic: “The heights of the heavens!” It is the language of one looking up with astonishment at the high heavens, and over-powered with the thought that the knowledge of God must be higher even than those distant skies. Who can hope to understand it? Who can be qualified to make the investigation? It is a matter of simple but sublime truth, that God must be higher than these heavens; and when we take into view the amazing distances of many of the heavenly bodies, as now known by the aid of modern astronomy, we may ask with deeper emphasis by far than Zophar did. “Can we, by searching, find out God?”

Deeper than hell Hebrew “Than Sheol” — **לְמַטְּוֹ**^{<7585>}. The Septuagint renders this, “the heaven is high, what canst thou do? And there are things deeper than in Hades — **βαθυτερα**^{<901>} **των**^{<3588>} **εν**^{<1722>} **αδου**^{<86>} — what dost thou know?” On the meaning of the word Sheol, see the notes at **<2354>** Isaiah 5:14; 14:9. It seems to have been supposed to be as deep as the heavens are high; and the idea here is, that it would be impossible for man to investigate a subject that was as profound as Sheol was deep. The idea is not that God was in Sheol, but that the subject was as profound as the abode of departed spirits was deep and remote. It is possible that the Psalmist may have had this passage in his eye in the similar expression, occurring in Psalm 139:

If I ascend into heaven, thou art there; If I make my bed in hell,
behold thou art there.

Job 11:9. *The measure thereof is longer than the earth* The measure of the knowledge of God. The extent of the earth would be one of the longest measures known to the ancients. Yet it is now impossible to ascertain what ideas were attached, in the time of Job, to the extent of the earth — and it is not necessary to know this in order to understand this expression. It is morally certain that the prevailing ideas were very limited, and that a small part of the earth was then known. The general belief seems to have been, that it was a vast plain, surrounded by water — but how supported, and what were its limits, were evidently matters to them unknown. The earliest knowledge which we have of geography, as understood by the Arabs, represents the earth as wholly encompassed by an ocean, like a zone. This was usually characterized as a “Sea of Darkness;” an appellation usually given to the Atlantic; while to the Northern Sea was given the name of “The Sea of Pitchy Darkness.” Edrisi imagined the land to be floating in the sea, and only part appearing above, like an egg in a basin of water. If these views prevailed so late as the tenth and eleventh centuries of the Christian era, it is reasonable to conclude that the views of the figure and size of the earth must have been extremely limited in the time of Job. On the ancient views of geography, see the notes at **Job 26:7-10**, and the maps there, also Murray’s Encyclopaedia of Geography, Book I, and Eschenberg’s Manual of Classical Literature, by Prof. Fiske, Part I.

And broader than the sea What was the idea of the breadth of the sea, which was supposed to surround the earth, it is now wholly impossible to determine. Probably there were no ideas on the subject that could be regarded as settled and definite. The ancients had no means of ascertaining this, and they perhaps supposed that the ocean extended to an unlimited extent — or, perhaps, to the far distant place where the sky and the water appeared to meet. At all events it was an illustration then, as it is now, of a vast distance, and is not inappropriately used here to denote the impossibility of fully understanding God. This illustration would be far more striking then than now. We have crossed the ocean; and we do not deem it an impracticable thing to explore the remotest seas. But not so the ancients. They kept close to the shore. They seldom ventured out of sight of land. The enterprise of exploring and crossing the vast ocean, which they supposed encompassed the globe, was regarded by them as wholly impracticable — and equally so they correctly supposed it was to find out God.

<8110> Job 11:10. *If he cut off* Margin, “Make a change.” But neither of these phrases properly expresses the sense of the original. The whole image here is probably that of arresting a criminal and bringing him to trial, and the language is taken from the mode of conducting a prosecution. The word rendered “cut off” — *ā l hy*, from *ā l jē*^{<h2498>} — means properly to pass along; to pass on; then to pass against anyone, to rush on, to assail; and in a remote sense in Piel and Hiphil, to cause to pass on or away, that is, to change. This is the sense expressed in the margin. The idea is not that of cutting off, but is that of making a rush upon a man, for the purpose of arresting him and bringing him to trial. There are frequent references to such trials in the book of Job. The Chaldee renders this, “if he pass on and shut up the heavens with clouds” — but the paraphrast evidently did not understand the passage.

And shut up That is, imprison or detain with a view to trial. Some such detention is always practiced of necessity before trial.

Or gather together Gather together the parties for trial; or rather call the individual into court for trial. The word *l hēp*^{<h6950>} means properly to call together, to convoke, as a people; and is used to denote the custom of assembling the people for a trial — or, as we would say, to “call the court,” which is now the office of a crier.

Then who can hinder him? Margin, “Who can turn him away?” He has all power, and no one can resist him. No one can deliver the criminal from his hands. Zophar here is in fact repeating in another form what Job had himself said (^{<8008>}Job 9:3ff), and the sentiment seems to be proverbial. The idea here is, that if God should call a man into judgment, and hold him guilty, he could neither answer nor resist him. God is so great; he so intimately knows the human heart; he has so thorough an acquaintance with all our past sins, that we cannot hope to answer him or escape. Zophar argues on this principle: “God holds you to be guilty. He is punishing you accordingly. You do not feel it so, or suppose that you deserve all this. But he sees your heart, and knows all your life. If he holds you to be guilty, it is so. You cannot answer him, and you should so regard it, and submit.”

<8111> Job 11:11. *For he knoweth vain men* He is intimately acquainted with the heart; he knows human beings altogether. The word “vain” here *adv*^{<h7723>}, means properly vanity, emptiness, falsehood, a lie, iniquity. “Men

of vanity,” here may mean people whose opinions are valueless, or it may mean people of deceit, falsehood, hypocrisy. Most probably it means the latter, and the indirect reference may be to such men as Job. The sense is, that God is intimately acquainted with such men. They cannot deceive him, and their wickedness will be found out.

Will he not then consider it? Various ways have been proposed of explaining this. By some it is supposed to mean, “He seeth iniquity, where they do not observe it;” that is, he perceives it, where people do not themselves. This would express a thought which would accord well with the connection, but it is doubtful whether the Hebrew will bear this construction. By another explanation it is supposed to mean, as in our common version, “Will not God observe it, and bring it to trial? Will he suffer it to pass unnoticed?” This makes good sense, and the Hebrew will admit of this interpretation. But there is another view still, which is preferable to either. According to this it means, that God perceives the iniquity in man, though he does not seem to notice it; see the notes at ^{<8116>}Job 11:6. He appears to pass over a part of it, but he sees it notwithstanding, and is intimately acquainted with all the depravity of the heart. The main reference here is to Job, and the object is to show him that he was guilty, though he had asserted his innocence in so decided a manner. Though he seemed to himself to be innocent, yet Zophar labors to show him that he must be guilty, and that he had seen but a small part of his sins.

^{<8112>}**Job 11:12.** *For vain man* Margin, “empty.” ^{<4501>}bbæ, according to Gesenius, from the root ^{<4501>}bbæ, to bore through, and then to be hollow; metaphorical, “empty,” “foolish.” The Septuagint, strangely enough, renders this, “but man floats about with words.” The Hebrew here means, manifestly, hollow, empty; then insincere and hypocritical. Zophar refers to a hollow-hearted man, who, though he was in fact like a wild ass’s colt, attempted to appear mild and gentle, and to have a heart. The meaning is, that man by nature has a spirit untamed and unsubdued, and that with this, he assumes the appearance of gentleness and tenderness, and attempts to appear as if he was worthy of love and affection. God, seeing this hollow-heartedness, treats him accordingly. The reference here is to men like Job, and Zophar undoubtedly meant to say that he was hollow-hearted and insincere, and yet that he wished to appear to be a man having a heart, or, having true piety.

Would be wise Various interpretations have been given to this expression. The most simple and obvious seems to be the true one, though I have not seen it noticed by any of the commentators. The word rendered “would be wise” **bbæ**^{<h3823>} is from **bbæ**^{<h3823>}, or **bl e**^{<h3820>}, meaning “heart,” and the sense here, as it seems to me, is, “vain, hollow, and insincere, man would wish to seem to have a heart;” that is, would desire to appear sincere, or pious. Destitute of that truly, and false and hollow, he would nevertheless wish to appear different, and would put on the aspect of sincerity and religion. This is the most simple exposition, and this accords with the drift of the passage exactly, and expresses a sentiment which is unquestionably true. Gesenius, however, and some others render it, “but man is hollow and wanteth understanding; yea, man is born like a wild ass’s colt, signifying the weakness and dullness of the human understanding in comparison with the divine wisdom.” Others render it, “but the foolish man becometh wise when the wild ass’s colt shall become a man,” i.e., never, a most forced and unnatural construction. Dr. Good renders it:

*Will he then accept the hollow-hearted person?
Or shall the wild ass-colt assume the man?*

Schultens and Dathe translate it:

*Let then vain man be wise,
And the wild ass’s colt become a man.*

Though man be born Though man by nature, or in connection with his birth, is untamed, lawless, rebellious. The wild ass is a striking image of that which is untamed and unsubdued; compare the notes at ^{<h3915>}Job 39:5. Thus, Jeremiah describes it, “a wild ass used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure,” ^{<h4024>}Jeremiah 2:24. Thus, it is said of Ishmael (^{<h162>}Genesis 16:12), “and he will be a wild man,” **arp**^{<h650>} **µda**^{<h121>} — a wild ass of a man. So ^{<h3915>}Job 39:5:

*Who hath sent out the wild ass free?
Or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?*

It is not quite easy for us to understand these allusions, for with us the ass is the proverbial image of stupidity, dullness, obstinacy, and immobility. But it was not so with the ancients. It is mentioned as distinguished for velocity, for wildness, and for an unsubdued spirit. Thus, Oppian, as quoted by Bochart, Hieroz. Lib. i. c. ix. p. 63, says:

Κραιπνον , αελλοποδην , κρατερωνυχον , οζυτατον θειν .

“Swift, rapid, with strong hoofs, and most fleet in his course.”

And Aristotle mentions wild asses as *την* ^{<3588>} *ταχυτητα* ^{<5036>} *διαφεροντες* ^{<1308>}, Hist. Lib. vi. 6 c. 36. So Aelian says of them, *οκιστοι δραμειν* ^{<5143>}, fleet in their course. And Xenophon says of them, *πολυ* ^{<4183>} *του* ^{<3588>} *ιππου* ^{<2462>} *θαπτον ετρεχον* ^{<5143>}, they run much swifter than a horse. In describing the march of the younger Cyrus through Syria, he says, “The wild ass, being swifter of loeb than our horses, would, in gaining ground upon them, stand still and look around; and when their pursuers got nearly up to them, they would start off, and repeat the same trick; so that there remained to the hunters no other method of taking them but by dividing themselves into dispersed parties which succeeded each other in the chase;” compare Bochart, Hieroz. P. I. Lib. iii. c. xvi. pp. 867-879. A similar statement is made by Aelian (Lib. xiv. cap. 10, as quoted by Bochart), “The wild asses of Maurusius (*ονοι Μαυρουσιοι*) are most fleet in their course, and at the commencement of their course they seem to be borne along by the winds, or as on the wings of a bird.” “In Persia,” says the Editor of the Pictorial Bible, “the wild ass is prized above all other animals as an object of chase, not only from its fleetness, but the delicacy of its flesh, which made it an article of luxury even at the royal tables.” “They are now most abundantly found in the deserts of Tartary, and of the countries between the Tigris and the Indus, more particularly in the central parts of the regions thus defined. We know that they were also anciently found in the regions of Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Syria, and Arabia Deserta; but from these regions they seem to have been, in the course of ages, almost entirely expelled or extirpated.” Pict. Bib. on ^{<1895>} Job 39:5. The idea in the passage before us is, that man at his birth has a strong resemblance to a wild and untamed animal; and the passage undoubtedly indicates the early belief of the native proneness of man to wander away from God, and of his possessing by nature an insubmissive spirit.

^{<18113>} **Job 11:13.** *If thou prepare thine heart* Zophar now proceeds to state that if Job even yet would return to God, he might hope for acceptance. Though he had sinned, and though he was now, as he supposed, a hollow-hearted and an insincere man, yet, if he would repent, he might expect the divine favor. In this he accords with the sentiment of Eliphaz, and he

concludes his speech in a manner not a little resembling his; see ^{<18517>}Job 5:17-27.

And stretch out thine hands toward him In the attitude of supplication. To stretch out or spread forth the hands, is a phrase often used to denote the act of supplication; see ^{<5118>}1 Timothy 2:8, and the Notes of Wetstein on that place. Horace, 3 Carm. xxiii. 1, Coelo supinas si tuleris manus. Ovid, M. ix. 701, Ad sidera supplex Cressa manus tollens. Trist. i. 10, 21, Ipsc gubernator, tollens ad sidera palmas; compare Livy v. 21. Seneca, Ep. 41; ^{<1974>}Psalms 63:4; 134:2; 141:2; ^{<1505>}Ezra 9:5.

^{<8114>}**Job 11:14.** *If iniquity be in thine hand* If you have in your possession anything that has been unjustly obtained. If you have oppressed the poor and the fatherless, and have what properly belongs to them, let it be restored. This is the obvious duty of one who comes to God to implore his favor; compare ^{<2908>}Luke 19:8.

^{<8115>}**Job 11:15.** *For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot* That is, thy face shall be bright, clear, and cheerful. Thus, we speak of a bright and happy countenance. Zophar undoubtedly designs to show what his appearance would be, contrasted with what it then was. Now his countenance was dejected and sad. It was disfigured by tears, and terror, and long continued anguish. But if he would put away iniquity, and return to God, his face would be cheerful again, and he would be a happy man.

Yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear The word rendered “steadfast” ^{<4332>}qxʕe is from ^{<4332>}qxʕe, to pour, to pour out, and is applied to liquids, or to metals which are fused and poured into a mould, and which then become hard. Hence, it is used in the sense of firm, solid, intrepid. “Gesenius.” Schultens supposes that the reference here is to metallic mirrors, made by casting, and then polished, and that the idea is, that his face would shine like such a mirror. But it may be doubted whether this interpretation is not too refined. The other and more common explanation well suits the sense, and should probably be retained.

^{<8116>}**Job 11:16.** *And remember it as waters that pass away* As calamity that has completely gone by, or that has rolled on and will return no more. The comparison is beautiful. The water of the river is borne by us, and returns no more. The rough, the swollen, the turbid stream, we remember as it foamed and dashed along, threatening to sweep everything away; but

it went swiftly by, and will never come back. So with afflictions. They are soon gone. The most intense pain soon subsides. The days of sorrow pass quickly away. There is an outer limit of suffering, and even ingenuity cannot prolong it far. The man disgraced, and whose life is a burden, will soon die. On the checks of the solitary prisoner doomed to the dungeon for life, a “mortal paleness” will soon settle down, and the comforts of approaching death will soothe the anguish of his sad heart. The rack of torture cheats itself of its own purpose, and the exhausted sufferer is released. “The excess (of grief) makes it soon mortal.” “No sorrow but killed itself much sooner.” Shakespeare. When we look back upon our sorrows, it is like thinking of the stream that was so much swollen, and was so impetuous. Its waters rolled on, and they come not back again; and there is a kind of pleasure in thinking of that time of danger, of that flood that was then so fearful, and that has now swept on to come back no more. So there is a kind of peaceful joy in thinking of the days of sorrow that are now fled forever; in the assurance that those sad times will never, never recur again.

Job 11:17. *And thine age* Thy life. This does not mean old age, but the idea is, that his life would be cheerful and happy.

Clearer than the noon-day Margin, “Arise above the noon-day.” The margin is a literal rendering; but the sense is clear in the text. The idea is, that the remainder of his life would be bright as the sun if he would return to God.

Thou shalt shine forth Or rather, “thou art now in darkness, but thou shalt be as the morning.” The word used here — **hp[t** is from **āw[**, to cover — as with wings, to fly, to cover with darkness. In no instance does it mean to shine, or to be clear and bright; and why our translators attached that idea to it, it is now difficult to conjecture. The Chaldee and Syriac read the word as a noun, and render the passage, “and thy darkness shall be as the aurora.” The Vulgate renders it, “and meridian splendor, as it were, shall arise upon thee at the evening.” The Septuagint, “and thy prayer shall be like the morning star, and life shall rise upon thee from noon-day.” The sense in the Hebrew is plain. He was then in darkness. Clouds and calamities were round about him, but if he would return to God, he would be permitted to enjoy a bright day of prosperity. Such a day would return to him like the morning after a long and gloomy night.

Job 11:18. *And thou shalt be secure* You will feel confident that your prosperity will be permanent, and you will be free from the distressing anxieties and fears which you now have.

Thou shalt dig about thee The Chaldee renders this, “thou shalt prepare for thyself a sepulchre, and shalt lie down in safety.” The word used here XXX has two significations. It means,

(1) “to dig” — as, e.g. a well, and under this signification to search out, to explore; and,

(2.) to be ashamed, to blush, ^{<3012>}Isaiah 1:29.

According to Gesenius, the latter here is the signification. “Now thou art ashamed, then thou shalt dwell in quiet,” Lexicon. So Noyes renders it. Dr. Good translates it, “yea, thou shalt look around;” Rosenmuller, “thou art suffused with shame.” This is, probably, the true sense; and the idea is, that though he was now covered with shame, yet he would lie down in peace and safety if he would return to the Lord.

Job 11:19. *Many shall make suit unto thee* Many shall come in a suppliant manner to ask counsel and advice. The meaning is, that he would be a man of distinction, to whom many would look for counsel. This was evidently an honor highly valued in the East, and one on which Job had formerly prided himself; see ^{<3207>}Job 29:7-13.

Job 11:20. *But the eyes of the wicked shall fail* That is, they shall be wearied out by anxiously looking for relief from their miseries. “Noyes.” Their expectation shall be vain, and they shall find no relief. Perhaps Zophar here means to apply this to Job, and to say to him that with his present views and character, his hope of relief would fail. His only hope of relief was in a change — in turning to God — since it was a settled maxim that the wicked would look for relief in vain. This assumption that he was a wicked man, must have been among the most trying things that Job had to endure. Indeed nothing could be more provoking than to have others take it for granted as a matter that did not admit of argument, that he was a hypocrite, and that God was dealing with him as an incorrigible sinner.

And they shall not escape Margin, “Flight shall perish from them.” The margin is a literal translation of the Hebrew. The sense is, escape for the wicked is out of the question. They must be arrested and punished.

And their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost literally, “the breathing out of the life or soul.” Their hope shall leave them as the breath or life does the body. It is like death. The expression does not mean that their hope would always expire at death, but that it would certainly expire as life leaves the body. The meaning is, that whatever hope a wicked man has of future happiness and salvation, must fail. The time must come when it will cease to comfort and support him. The hope of the pious man lives until it is lost in fruition in heaven. It attends him in health; supports him in sickness; is with him at home; accompanies him abroad; cheers him in solitude; is his companion in society; is with him as he goes down into the shades of adversity, and it brightens as he travels along the valley of the shadow of death. It stands as a bright star over his grave — and is lost only in the glories of heaven, as the morning star is lost in the superior brightness of the rising sun. Not so the hypocrite and the sinner. His hope dies — and he leaves the world in despair. Sooner or later the last ray of his delusive hopes shall take its departure from the soul, and leave it to darkness. No matter how bright it may have been; no matter how long he has cherished it; no matter on what it is founded — whether on his morals, his prayers, his accomplishments, his learning; if it be not based on true conversion, and the promised mercy of God through a Redeemer, it must; soon cease to shine, and will leave the soul to the gloom of black despair.

NOTES ON JOB 12

Job 12:2. *No doubt but ye are the people* That is, the only wise people. You have engrossed all the wisdom of the world, and all else are to be regarded as fools. This is evidently the language of severe sarcasm; and it shows a spirit fretted and chafed by their reproaches. Job felt contempt for their reasoning, and meant to intimate that their maxims, on which they placed so much reliance, were common-place, and such as every one was familiar with.

And wisdom shall die with you This is ironical, but it is language such as is common perhaps every where. “The people of the East,” says Roberts, “take great pleasure in irony, and some of their satirical sayings are very cutting. When a sage intimates that he has superior wisdom or when he is disposed to rally another for his meagre attainments, he says, ‘Yes, yes, you are the man!’ ‘Your wisdom is like the sea.’ ‘When you die, whither will wisdom go?’” “In a serious sense, language like this is used by the classic writers to describe the death of eminently great or good men. They speak of wisdom, bravery, piety, or music, as dying with them. Thus, Moschus, Idyll. iii. 12.

ὅτι βίων τεθνηκεν ὁ βωκολος,
εστι συν αυτω και το μελος τεθνακε,
και ωλετο Δωρις αιιδος .

*“Bion the swain is dead, and with him song
has died, and the Doric muse has perished.”*

Expressions like these are common. Thus, in the “Pleasures of Hope” it is said:

And Freedom shrieked when Kosciusko fell.

Job 12:3. *But I have understanding as well as you* Margin, as in the Hebrew “an heart.” The word “heart” in the Scriptures is often used to denote the understanding or mind. It seems to have been regarded as the source of that which was called life or soul. Indeed, I do not recollect a single instance in the Scriptures in which the word “head” is used, as with us, as the seat of the intellect, or where the distinction is adverted to that is so common with us, between the head and the heart. With us, the heart is

the seat of the affections and emotions; with the Hebrews, it was the seat of understanding, and the *σπλάνγχνα* ^{<4698>} — the viscera, the bowels, were the seat of the emotions; see the notes at ^{<2361>}Isaiah 16:11. A more correct physiology has taught us that the brain is the organ of the intellect, and we now speak of “the heart” as the seat of the affections. The Romans regarded the “breast” as the seat of the soul. Thus, Virgil, speaking of the death of Lucagus by the hand of Æneas, says:

Tum latebras animae pectus mucrone recludit
— *Æn. x. 601.*

I am not inferior to you Margin, “fall not lower than.” This is the literal translation: “I do not fall beneath you.” Job claims to be equal to them in the power of quoting the sayings of the ancients; and in order to show this, he proceeds to adduce a number of proverbial sayings, occupying the remainder of this chapter, to show that he was familiar with that mode of reasoning, and that in this respect he was fully their equal. This may be regarded as a trial of skill, and was quite common in the East. Wisdom consisted in storing up a large amount of proverbs and maxims, and in applying them readily and pertinently on all public occasions; and in this controversy, Job was by no means disposed to yield to them.

Yea, who knoweth not such things as these? Margin, “With whom” are “not such as these?” The meaning is, that instead of being original, the sentiments which they advanced were the most commonplace imaginable. Job not only said that he knew them, but that it would be strange if every body did not know them.

^{<812D>}**Job 12:4.** *I am as one mocked of his neighbour* There has been considerable variety in the interpretation of this verse. The general sense is, that Job felt himself to be a mere laughing-stock for his neighbors. They treated him as if he were not worth regarding. They had no sympathy for him in his sorrows, and they showed no respect for his opinions. Dr. Good understands this and the following verses as a part of the controversy in which Job proposes to show his skill in debate, and to adduce proverbs after the manner of his friends. But it is more probably an allusion to himself, and is designed to state that he felt that he was not treated with the respect which was due to him. Much difficulty has been felt in understanding the connection. Reiske contends that ^{<812D>}Job 12:2 has no connection with ^{<812B>}Job 12:3, and that ^{<8121>}Job 12:11,12, should be interposed between them. The connection seems to me to be this: Job

complains that he was not treated with due deference. They had showed no respect for his understanding and rank. They had urged the most common-place topics; advanced stale and trite apothegms, as if he had never heard them; dwelt on maxims familiar even to the meanest persons; and had treated him in this manner as if he were a mere child in knowledge. Thus, to be approached with vague common-places, and with remarks such as would be used in addressing children, he regarded as insult and mockery.

Who calleth upon God, and he answereth him This phrase has given occasion to great variety in the interpretation. Umbreit renders it, "I, who once called upon God, and he answered me;" that is, I, who once was a happy man, and blessed of God. Schultens renders it, "I, who call upon God," i.e. for trial, "and am ready to answer him." Rosenmuller supposes that Job has reference to the assurances of his friends, that if he would call upon God, he would answer him, and that in view of that suggestion he exclaims, "Shall a man who is a laughing-stock to his neighbor call upon God, and will he answer him!" The probable meaning is, that he had been a man who had had constant communion with God. He had been a favorite of the Almighty, for he had lent a listening ear to his supplications. It was now a thing of which he might reasonably complain, that a man who had enjoyed such manifest tokens of the divine favor, was treated with reproach and scorn.

^{<817B>}**Job 12:5.** *He that is ready to slip with his feet* The man whose feet waver or totter; that is, the man in adversity; see ^{<1259>}Proverbs 25:19. A man in prosperity is represented as standing firm; one in adversity as wavering, or falling; see ^{<973D>}Psalms 73:2.

*But as for me, my feet were almost gone;
My steps had well nigh slipped.*

There is much difficulty in this passage, and it has by no means been removed by the labor of critics. The reader may consult Rosenmuller, Good, and Schultens, on the verse, for a more full attempt to illustrate its meaning. Dr. Good, after Reiske and Parkhurst, has offered an explanation by rendering the whole passage thus:

The just, the perfect man is a laughing-stock to the proud, A derision amidst the sunshine of the prosperous, While ready to slip with his foot.

It does not appear to me, however, that this translation can be fairly deduced from the Hebrew text, and I am disposed to acquiesce in the more common and obvious interpretation. According to that, the idea is, that a man in adversity, when falling from a high condition of honor, is regarded as an almost extinguished lamp, that is now held in contempt, and is cast away. When the torch was blazing, it was regarded as of value; when nearly extinguished, it would be regarded as worthless, and would be cast away. So when a man was in prosperity, he would be looked up to as a guide and example. In adversity, his counsels would be rejected, and he would be looked upon with contempt. Nothing can be more certain or more common than the fact here adverted to. The rich and the great are looked up to with respect and veneration. Their words and actions have an influence which those of no other men have. When they begin to fall, others are willing to hasten their fall. Long cherished but secret envy begins to show itself; those who wish to rise rejoice in their ruin, and they are looked upon with contempt in proportion to their former honor, rank, and power. They are regarded as an extinguished torch — of no value, and are cast away.

In the thought In the mind, or the view.

Of him that is at ease In a state of comfort and prosperity. He finds no sympathy from them. Job doubtless meant to apply this to his friends. They were then at ease, and were prosperous. Not suffering pain, and not overwhelmed with poverty, they now looked with the utmost composure on him — as they would on a torch which was burned out, and which there would be no hope of rekindling.

◀12:6▶ **Job 12:6.** *The tabernacles of robbers prosper* The tents or dwellings of robbers are safe and secure. This is Job's original proposition, to which he all along adheres. It is, that God does not deal with people in this life according to their character; and in support of this he now appeals to the fact that the tents or dwellings of robbers are safe. Arabia would furnish many illustrations of this, which could not be unknown to the friends of Job. The Arabs dwelt in tents, and they were then, as now, wandering, predatory tribes. They lived, to a great extent, by plunder, and doubtless Job could appeal to the observation of his friends for the proof of this. He affirms that so far from dealing with people according to their character, God often seemed to protect the public robber, and the blasphemer of his name.

Prosper They are secure, tranquil, at rest — for so the Hebrew word means. They are not disturbed and broken in upon.

And they that provoke God Or rather, “the tents are secure to those who provoke God.” Dr. Good renders it, “and are fortresses to those who provoke God;” but the true idea is, that the tents of those who provoke God by their conduct are safe. God does not seem to notice them, or to come out in judgment against them.

Into whose hand God bringeth abundantly Dr. Noyes renders this, “who carry their God in their hand;” but with much less accuracy, as it seems to me, than commonly characterizes his version. Eichhorn renders it in a sense somewhat similar:

*Die ihre Faust fur ihre Gottheit achten —
“who regard their fist as their God.”*

And so Stuhlman renders it:

*Und wem die Faust fur Gottheit gilt —
“and to whom the fist avails for their God;”*

that is, says he, Job means that this is the course of the world. Dr. Good renders it, “of him who hath created all these things with his hand” — still less accurately. In order to this, he is obliged to suppose an error in the text, but without the slightest authority. Jerome renders it as in our version. The Septuagint, “who provoke the Lord as if there would be no trial to them — *ετασις αυτων* ^{<846>} — here-after;” which certainly makes sense, but it was never obtained from the Hebrew. Rosenmuller renders it, “who have their own hand, i.e. power for God;” a description, says he, of a wicked and violent man who thinks it right for him to do as he pleases. It seems to me, however, that the common interpretation, which is the most simple, is most in accordance with the Hebrew, and with the drift of the passage. According to this it means, that there is security to the man who lives to provoke that God who is constantly bringing to him in abundance the tokens of kindness. This is the fact on which Job is insisting — that God does not treat people in this world according to their real character, but that the wicked are prospered and the righteous are afflicted.

^{<812>}**Job 12:7.** *But ask now the beasts* Rosenmuller supposes that this appeal to the inferior creation should be regarded as connected with ^{<812>}Job

12:3, and that the intermediate verses are parenthetical. Zophar had spoken with considerable parade of the wisdom of God. He had said (~~1817~~ Job 11:7ff) that the knowledge of God was higher than the heavens, and had professed (~~1817~~ Job 12:6) to have himself exalted views of the Most High. In reply to this, Job says that the views which Zophar had expressed, were the most commonplace imaginable. He need not pretend to be acquainted with the more exalted works of God, or appeal to them as if his knowledge corresponded with them. Even the lower creation — the brutes — the earth — the fishes — could teach him knowledge which he had not now. Even from their nature, properties, and modes of life, higher views might be obtained than Zophar had. Others suppose, that the meaning is, that in the distribution of happiness, God is so far from observing moral relations, that even among the lower animals, the rapacious and the violent are prospered, and the gentle and the innocent are the victims. Lions, wolves, and panthers are prospered — the lamb, the kid, the gazelle, are the victims. Either of these views may suit the connection, though the latter seems to me to be the more probable interpretation. The object of Job is to show that rewards and punishments are not distributed according to character. This was so plain in his view as scarcely to admit of argument. It was seen all over the world not only among people, but even in the brute creation. Every where the strong prey upon the weak; the fierce upon the tame; the violent upon the timid. Yet God does not come forth to destroy the lion and the hyaena, or to deliver the lamb and the gazelle from their grasp. Like robbers (~~1817~~ Job 12:6), — lions, panthers, and wolves prowl upon the earth; and the eagle and the vulture from the air pounce upon the defenseless, and the great robbers of the deep prey upon the feeble, and still are prospered. What a striking illustration of the course of events among people, and of the relative condition of the righteous and the wicked. Nothing could be more pertinent to the design of Job than this appeal, and nothing was more in accordance with the whole structure of the argument in the poem, where wisdom is seen mainly to consist in the result of careful observation.

And they shall teach thee Shall teach thee that God does not treat all according to their character. He does not give security to the gentle, the tame, and the innocent, and punish the ferocious, the blood-thirsty, and the cruel.

And the fowls They shall give thee information of the point under discussion. Those that prey upon others — as the eagle and the vulture —

are not exposed at once to the divine displeasure, and the tender and harmless are not protected. The general principle is illustrated in them, that the dealings of God are not always in exact accordance with character.

<812> **Job 12:8.** *Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee* Perhaps this appeal to the earth may mean, as Stuhlman supposes, that the same thing is shown in the productions of the earth, as in the case of fierce animals. Noxious weeds and useless plants are more thrifty than the plants which are useful and the growth of poisonous or annoying things on the earth illustrates the same thing as the dealings of God with people — that his dealings are not in accordance with the real nature of objects.

And the fishes of the sea The same thing is manifested in the sea, where the mighty prey upon the feeble, and the fierce and the ferocious overcome the defenseless. The sentiment is that it is a great principle which pervades all things that the ferocious the strong, the wicked, are often prospered, while the weak, the defenseless, the innocent, the pious, are subject to calamities, and that God does not apportion his dealings to the exact character of his creatures. Undoubtedly Job was right in this. and this general principle might be seen then as now, to pervade the world.

<812> **Job 12:9.** *Who knoweth not in all these* Who cannot see in all these the proofs of the same divine and sovereign agency? Who cannot see the hand of the same God and the same great principles of administration? The meaning of Job is, that the position which he defends is so plain, that it may be learned from the very earth and the lowest orders of animals which God has made.

That the hand of the Lord hath wrought this In this place the original word is **hwby**^{<3068>}. On the meaning of the word see the notes at Isaiah, <200> Isaiah 1:2. The Chaldee also renders it here **Hy**^{<3050>}. It is remarkable that this is the only place where the name YAHWEH occurs in poetical parts of the book of Job, in the printed editions. In <838> Job 28:28, YAHWEH is found in some manuscripts, though the word “Adonai” is in the printed copies. Eichhorn, Einleit. section 644, Note. In <812> Job 12:9, the word YAHWEH, though found in the printed editions, is missing in nine ancient manuscripts. Dr. John P. Wilson on the “Hope of Immortality,” p. 57. The word YAHWEH constantly occurs in the historical parts of the book. On the argument derived from this, in regard to the antiquity of the Book of Job, see the introduction, section 4. 3:3.

Job 12:10. *In whose hand is the soul of every living thing* Margin, “Life.” The margin is the more correct rendering. The idea is, that all are under the control of God. He gives life, and health, and happiness when he pleases, and when he chooses he takes them away. His sovereignty is manifested, says Job, in the inferior creation, or among the beasts of the field, the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of heaven.

And the breath of all mankind Margin, “Flesh of man.” The margin is in accordance with the Hebrew. The meaning is, that man is subjected to the same laws as the rest of the creation. God is a sovereign, and the same great principles of administration may be seen in all his works.

Job 12:11. *Doth not the ear try words?* The literal meaning of this, which is evidently a proverbial expression, is plain; but about its bearing here there is more difficulty. The literal sense is, that it is the office of the ear to mark the distinction of sounds, and to convey the sense to the soul. But in regard to the exact bearing of this proverb on the case in hand, commentators have not been agreed. Probably the sense is, that there ought to be a diligent attention to the signification of words, and to the meaning of a speaker, as one carefully tastes his food; and Job, perhaps, may be disposed to complain that his friends had not given that attention which they ought to have done to the true design and signification of his remarks. Or it may mean that man is endowed with the faculty of attending to the nature and qualities of objects, and that he ought to exercise that faculty in judging of the lessons which are taught respecting God or his works.

And the mouth Margin, as in the Hebrew **dh** — “palate.” The word means not merely the palate, but the lower part of the mouth (Gesenius), and is especially used to designate the organ or the seat of taste; **Psalm** 119:103; **Job** 6:30.

His meat Its food — the word “meat” being used in Old English to denote all kinds of food. The sense is, man is endowed with the faculty of distinguishing what is wholesome from what is unwholesome, and he should, in like manner, exercise the faculty which God has given him of distinguishing the true from the false on moral subjects. He should not suppose that all that had been said, or that could be said, must necessarily be true. He should not suppose that merely to string together proverbs, and to utter common-place suggestions, was a mark of true wisdom. He should

separate the valuable from the worthless, the true from the false, and the wholesome from the injurious. Job complains that his friends had not done this. They had shown no power of discrimination or selection. They had uttered common place apothegms, and they gathered adages of former times, without any discrimination, and had urged them in their arguments against him, whether pertinent or not. It was by this kind of irrelevant and miscellaneous remark that he felt that he had been mocked by his friends, ~~<18124>~~ Job 12:4.

~~<18122>~~ **Job 12:12.** *With the ancient is wisdom* With the aged. The word *vyvj*, ~~<13453>~~ used here, means an old man, one gray-headed. It is used chiefly in poetry, and is commonly employed in the sense of one who is decrepit by age. It is rendered “very aged” in ~~<18150>~~ Job 15:10; “him that stooped for age.” ~~<14617>~~ 2 Chronicles 36:17; “very old,” ~~<18316>~~ Job 32:6; and “the aged,” ~~<18318>~~ Job 29:8 The Septuagint renders it, *Ev* ~~<1722>~~ *πολλω* ~~<4183>~~ *χρονω* ~~<5550>~~ “in much time.” The sense is, that wisdom might be expected to be found with the man who had had a long opportunity to observe the course of events; who had conversed with a former generation, and who had had time for personal reflection. This was in accordance with the ancient Oriental views, where knowledge was imparted mainly by tradition, and where wisdom depended much on the opportunity of personal observation; compare ~~<18317>~~ Job 32:7.

~~<18123>~~ **Job 12:13.** *With him is wisdom* Margin, correctly, “God.” However much wisdom there may seem to be with aged men, yes the true wisdom — that which was supreme and worthy of the name — was to be found in God alone. The object of Job was to lead the thoughts up to God, and to bring his friends to a contemplation of the wisdom which he manifests in his works. Accordingly he goes on in the remainder of this chapter to state some of the illustrations of wisdom and power which God had exhibited, and particularly to show that he was a sovereign, and did his pleasure every where. He made all things; he sustains all things; he reverses the condition of people at his pleasure; he sets up whom he pleases, and when he chooses he casts them down. His works are contrary in many respects to what we should anticipate; and the sense of all is, that God was a holy and a righteous sovereign, and that such were the reverses under his administration that we could not argue that he treated all according to their character on earth.

Job 12:14. *Behold, he breaketh down* None can repair what he pulls down. Cities and towns he can devote to ruin by fire, or earthquake, or the pestilence, and so completely destroy them that they can never be rebuilt. We may now refer to such illustrations as Sodom, Babylon, Petra, Tyre, Herculaneum, and Pompeii, as full proof of what is here affirmed.

He shutteth up a man He can shut up a man in such difficulties and straits that he cannot extricate himself; see **Job 11:10**. The Chaldee renders this, “he shuts up a man in the grave **atyAbqb** and it cannot be opened.” But the more correct idea is, that God has complete control over a man, and that he can so hedge up his way that he cannot help himself.

Job 12:15. *He withholdeth the waters* From the clouds and springs. He has control over the rains and the fountains; and when these are withheld, rivers and lakes become dry. The Syriac renders this, — “if he rebuke the waters,” supposing that there might perhaps be an allusion to the drying up of the Red Sea, or the formation of a passage for the Israelites. But it is remarkable that in the argument here there is no allusion to any historical fact, not to the flood, or to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, or to the passage through the Red Sea, though these occurrences would have furnished so appropriate illustrations of the points under discussion. Is it to be inferred that Job had never heard of any of those events? Or may it have been that the lessons which they were adapted to teach had been actually embodied in the proverbs which he was using, and furnished well-known illustrations or the basis of such apothegms?

He sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth Such inundations may have occurred in the swollen torrents of Arabia, and indeed are so common everywhere as to furnish a striking illustration of the power and sovereign agency of God.

Job 12:16. *The deceived and the deceiver are his* This is designed to teach that all classes of people are under his control. All are dependent on him, and all are subject to him. He has power to keep them, and he can destroy them when he pleases. Dr. Good supposes that Job refers here to himself and his friends who had beguiled him into expressions of impatience and complaint. But it is more probably a general declaration that all classes of people were under the control of God.

Job 12:17. *He leadeth counsellors away spoiled* Plundered or captive. That is, the counsels of wise and great men do not avail against God. Statesmen who promised themselves victory as the result of their plans he disappoints, and leads away into captivity. The object of this is to show that God is superior over all, and also that people are not dealt with in exact accordance with their character and rank. God is a sovereign, and he shows his sovereignty when defeating the counsels and purposes of the wisest of men, and overturning the plans of the mighty.

And maketh the judges fools He leaves them to distracted and foolish plans. He leaves them to the adoption of measures which result in their own ruin. He is a sovereign, having control over the minds of the great, and power to defeat all their counsels, and to render them infatuated. Nothing can be clearer than this. Nothing has been more frequently illustrated in the history of nations. In accordance with this belief is the well-known expression:

Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat.

“Whom God purposes to destroy, he first infatuates.”

Job 12:18. *He looseth the bond of kings* The bond of kings rsWm ^{<h4148>} here means that by which they bind others. Their power over others he loosens or takes away.

And girdeth their loins with a girdle That is, he girds them with a rope or cord, and leads them away as prisoners. The whole series of remarks here refers to the reverses and changes in the conditions of life. The meaning here is, that the bonds of authority which they imposed on others are unbound, and that their own loins are bound with a girdle, not a girdle of royal dignity and ornament, but such a one as they are bound with who are servants, or who travel. “Pict. Bib.”

Job 12:19. *He leadeth princes away spoiled* That is, plundered. The word here rendered “princes” hko ^{<h3548>} means properly priests, and it is usually so rendered in the Scriptures. The ancient Hebrew interpreters suppose that the word sometimes also means prince. The Chaldee Paraphrast has not unfrequently so rendered it, using the word pynhk to express it; ^{<0145>}Genesis 41:45; ^{<19104>}Psalms 110:4. In this place, the Vulgate renders it, “sacerdotes;” and the Septuagint, ιερευς ^{<2409>}, “priests.” So Luther renders it, “Priester.” So Castellio. It can be applied to princes or

statesmen only because priests were frequently engaged in performing the functions of civil officers, and were in fact to a certain extent officers of the government. But it seems to me that it is to be taken in its usual signification, and that it means that even the ministers of religion were at the control of God, and were subject to the same reverses as other people of distinction and power.

And overthroweth The word used here **ā l s** has the notion of slipping, or gliding. So in Arabic, the word means to slip by, and to besmear; see ^{<1036>}Proverbs 13:6: “Wickedness overthroweth **ā l s t**, causes to slip) the sinner;” compare ^{<1012>}Proverbs 21:12; 22:12. Here it means to overthrow, to prostrate. The most mighty chieftains cannot stand firm before him, but they glide away and fall.

^{<8121>}**Job 12:20.** *He removeth away the speech of the trusty* Margin, “lip of the faithful.” “He takes away the lip,” i.e., he takes away the power of giving safe counsel or good advice. The “trusty” or “faithful” here refer to those of age and experience, and on whose counsel men are accustomed to rely. The meaning here is, that their most sagacious anticipations are disappointed, their wisest schemes are foiled. They fail in their calculations of the course of events, and the arrangements of Providence are such that they could not anticipate what was to occur.

The understanding of the aged To whom the young were accustomed to look up with deference and respect. The meaning here is, that they who were accustomed to give wise and sound advice, if left by God, give vain and foolish counsels.

^{<8121>}**Job 12:21.** *He poureth contempt upon princes* He has power to hurl them from their thrones, and to overwhelm them with disgrace.

And weakeneth the strength of the mighty Margin, as in Hebrew “looseth the girdle of the strong.” The Orientals wore loose flowing robes, which were secured by a girdle around the loins. When they labored, ran, or traveled, their robes were girded up. But this is common everywhere. Wrestlers, leapers, and runners, put a girdle around them, and are able thus to accomplish much more than they otherwise could. To loosen that, is to weaken them. So Job says that God had power to loosen the strength of the mighty. He here seems to labor for expressions, and varies the form of the image in every way to show the absolute control which God has over

people, and the fact that his power is seen in the reverses of mankind. Lucretius has a passage strongly resembling this in the general sentiment:

*Usque adeo res humanas vis abdita quaedam
Obterit; et pulchros fasces, saevasque secures,
Proculcare, atque ludibrio sibi habere, videtur. — Lib. v. 1232.*

*So from his awful shades, some Power unseen
O'erthrows all human greatness! Treads to dust
Rods, ensigns, crowns — the proudest pomps of state;
And laughs at all the mockery of mad! — GOOD.*

<18122> **Job 12:22.** *He discovereth deep thirsts out of darkness* That is, God discloses truths which are wholly beyond the power of man to discover — truths that seem to be hidden in profound night. This may refer either to the revelation which God was believed to have furnished, or to his power of bringing out the most secret thoughts and purposes, or to his power of predicting future events by bringing them out of darkness to the clear light of day, or to his power of detecting plots, intrigues, and conspiracies.

And bringeth out to light the shadow of death On the meaning of the word rendered “shadow of death,” see the notes at <18115> Job 3:5. It here denotes whatever is dark or obscure. It is rather a favorite expression with the author of this poem (see <18102> Job 10:22; 16:16; 24:17; 34:22; 38:17), though it occurs elsewhere in the Scriptures. The deepest darkness, the obscurest night, are represented by it; and the idea is, that even from the most dark and impenetrable regions God could bring out light and truth. All is naked and open to the mind of God.

<18123> **Job 12:23.** *He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them* He has entire control over them. The sources of prosperity are in his hand, and at his pleasure he can visit them with famine, pestilence, or war, and diminish their numbers and arrest their prosperity. Dr. Good renders this very improperly, “He letteth the nations grow licentious;” but the word *agc*, <17679> never has this sense. It means, to make great; to multiply; to increase.

And straiteneth them again Margin, “leadeth in.” So the word *hj n*, <15148> means. The idea is, that he increases a nation so that it spreads abroad beyond its usual limits, and then at his pleasure leads them back again, or confines them within the limits from where they had emigrated.

Job 12:24. *He taketh away the heart* The word heart here evidently means mind, intelligence, wisdom; see the notes at **Job 12:3**.

Of the chief of the people Hebrew “Heds of the people;” that is, of the rulers of the earth. The meaning is, that he leaves them to infatuated and distracted counsels. By withdrawing from them, he has power to frustrate their plans, and to leave them to an entire want of wisdom; see the notes at **Job 12:17**.

And causeth them to wander in a wilderness They are like persons in a vast waste of pathless sands without a waymark, a guide, or a path. The perplexity and confusion of the great ones of the earth could not be more strikingly represented than by the condition of such a lost traveler.

Job 12:25. *They grope in the dark* They are like persons who attempt to feel their way along in the dark; compare the notes at **Isaiah 59:10**.

And he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man Margin, “wander.” Their unstable and perplexed counsels are like the reelings of a drunken man; see the notes at **Isaiah 19:14; 24:20**. This closes the chapter, and with it the controversy in regard to the ability to adduce pertinent and striking proverbial expressions; see the notes at **Job 12:3**. Job had showed them that he was as familiar with proverbs respecting God as they were, and that he entertained as exalted ideas of the control and government of the Most High as they did. It may be added, that these are sublime and beautiful expressions respecting God. They surpass all that can be found in the writings of the pagan; and they show that somehow in the earliest ages there prevailed views of God which the human mind for ages afterward, and in the most favorable circumstances, was not capable of originating. These proverbial sayings were doubtless fragments of revealed truth, which had come down by tradition, and which were thus embodied in a form convenient to be transmitted from age to age.

NOTES ON JOB 13

Job 13:1. *Lo, mine eye hath seen all this* I have seen illustrations of all that I have said, or that you have said about the methods of divine providence.

Job 13:2. *What ye know ...* See the note at **Job 12:3**.

Job 13:3. *Surely I would speak to the Almighty* I would desire to carry my cause directly up to God, and spread out my reasons before him. This Job often professed to desire; see **Job 9:34,35**. He felt that God would appreciate the arguments which he would urge, and would do justice to them. His friends he felt were censorious and severe. They neither did justice to his feelings, nor to his motives. They perverted his words and arguments; and instead of consoling him, they only aggravated his trials, and caused him to sink into deeper sorrows. But he felt if he could carry his cause to God, he would do ample justice to him and his cause. The views which he entertained of his friends he proceeds to state at considerable length, and without much reserve, in the following verses.

Job 13:4. *But ye are forgers of lies* The word lies here seems to be used in a large sense, to denote sophisms, false accusations, errors. They maintained false positions; they did not see the exact truth in respect to the divine dealings, and to the character of Job. They maintained strenuously that Job was a hypocrite, and that God was punishing him for his sins. They maintained that God deals with people in exact accordance with their character in this world, all of which Job regarded as false doctrine, and asserted that they defended it with sophistical arguments invented for the purpose, and thus they could be spoken of as “forgers of lies.”

Physicians of no value The meaning is, that they had come to give him consolation, but nothing that they had said had imparted comfort. They were like physicians sent for to visit the sick, who could do nothing when they came; compare **Job 16:2**.

Job 13:5. *Oh that ye would altogether hold your peace!* You would show your wisdom by silence. Since you can say nothing that is adapted to give comfort, or to explain the true state of the case, it would be wise to

say nothing; compare ^{<3178>}Proverbs 17:28: “Even a fool when he holdeth his peace is counted wise.”

^{<1817>}**Job 13:7.** *Will ye speak wickedly for God?* That is, will you maintain unjust principles with a view to honor or to vindicate God? Job refers doubtless to the positions which they had defended in regard to the divine administration — principles which he regarded as unjust, though they had employed them professedly in vindicating God. The sense is, that unjust principles ought not to be advanced to vindicate God. The great cause of truth and justice should always be maintained, and even in attempting to vindicate the divine administration, we ought to make use of no arguments which are not based on that which is right and true. Job means to reproach his friends with having, in their professed vindication of God, advanced sentiments which were at war with truth and justice, and which were full of fallacy and sophistry. And is this never done now? Are sophistical arguments never employed in attempting to vindicate the divine government? Do we never state principles in regard to him which we should esteem to be unjust and dishonorable if applied to man? Do not good people sometimes feel that that government must be defended at all events; and when they can see no reason for the divine dealings, do they not make attempts at vindicating them, which are merely designed to throw dust in the eyes of an opponent, and which are known to be sophistical in their nature? It is wrong to employ a sophistical argument on any subject; and in reasoning on the divine character and dealings, when we come, as we often do, to points which we cannot understand, it is best to confess it. God asks no weak or sophistical argument in his defense; still less can he be pleased with an argument, though in defense of his government, which is based on unjust principles.

And talk deceitfully for him Use fallacies and sophisms in attempting to vindicate him. Everything in speaking of God, should be true, pure, and sound. Every argument should be free from any appearance of sophism, and should be such as will bear the test of the most thorough examination. No honor is done to God by sophistical arguments, nor can he be pleased when such arguments are employed even to vindicate and honor his character.

^{<1818>}**Job 13:8.** *Will ye accept his person?* That is, will you be partial to him? The language is such as is used in relation to courts of justice, where a judge shows favor to one of the parties on account of birth, rank, wealth,

or personal friendship. The idea here is, “will you, from partiality to God, maintain unjust principles, and defend positions which are really untenable?” There was a controversy between Job and God. Job maintained that he was punished too severely; that the divine dealings were unequal and disproportioned to his offences. His friends, he alleges, have not done justice to the arguments which he had urged, but had taken sides with God against him, no matter what he urged or what he said. So little disposed were they to do justice to him and to listen to his vindication, that no matter what he said, they set it all down to impatience, rebellion, and insubmission. They assumed that he was wrong, and that God was wholly right in all sayings. Of this position that God was right, no one could reasonably complain, and in his sober reflections Job himself would not be disposed to object to it; but his complaint is, that though the considerations which he urged were of the greatest weight, they would not allow their force, simply because they were determined to vindicate God. Their position was, that God dealt with people strictly according to their character; and that no matter what they suffered, their sufferings were the exact measure of their ill desert. Against this position, they would hear nothing that Job could say; and they maintained it by every kind of argument which was at their command — whether sound or unsound, sophistical or solid. Job says that this was showing partiality for God, and he felt that he had a right to complain. We need never show “partiality” even for God. He can be vindicated by just and equal arguments; and we need never injure others while we vindicate him. Our arguments for him should indeed be reverent, and we should desire to vindicate his character and government; but the considerations which we urge need not be those of mere partiality and favor.

Will ye contend for God? Language taken from a court of justice, and referring to an argument in favor of a party or cause. Job asks whether they would undertake to maintain the cause of God, and he may mean to intimate that they were wholly disqualified for such an undertaking. He not only reproves them for a want of candor and impartiality, as in the previous expressions, but he means to say that they were unfitted in all respects to be the advocates of God. They did not understand the principles of his administration. Their views were narrow, their information limited, and their arguments either common-place or unsound. According to this interpretation, the emphasis will be on the word “ye” — “will YE contend for God?” The whole verse may mean, “God is not to be defended by mere

partiality, or favor. Solid arguments only should be employed in his cause. Such you have not used, and you have shown yourselves to be entirely unfitted for this great argument." The practical inference which we should draw from this is, that our arguments in defense of the divine administration, should be solid and sound. They should not be mere declamation, or mere assertion. They should be such as will become the great theme, and such as will stand the test of any proper trial that can be applied to reasoning. There are arguments which will "vindicate all God's ways to men;" and to search them out should be one of the great employments of our lives. If ministers of the gospel would always abide by these principles, they would often do much more than they do now to commend religion to the sober views of mankind. No people are under greater temptations to use weak or unsound arguments than they are. They feel it to be their duty at all hazards to defend the divine administration. They are in circumstances where their arguments will not be subjected to the searching process which an argument at the bar will be, where a keen and interested opponent is on the alert, and will certainly sift every argument which is urged. Either by inability to explain the difficulties of the divine government, or by indolence in searching out arguments, or by presuming on the ignorance and dullness of their hearers, or by a pride which will not allow them to confess their ignorance on any subject, they are in danger of attempting to hide a difficulty which they cannot explain, or of using arguments and resorting to reasoning, which would be regarded as unsound or worthless any where else. A minister should always remember that sound reasoning is as necessary in religion as in other things, and that there are always some people who can detect a fallacy or see through sophistry. With what diligent study then should the ministers of the gospel prepare for their work! How careful should they be, as the advocates of God and his cause in a world opposed to him, to find out solid arguments, to meet with candor every objection, and to convince people by sound reasoning, that God is right! Their work is to convince, not to denounce; and if there is any office of unspeakable responsibility on earth, it is that of undertaking to be the advocates of God.

Job 13:9. *Is it good that he should search you out?* Would it be well for you if he should go into an investigation of your character, and of the arguments which you adduce? The idea is, that if God should make such an investigation, the result would be highly unfavorable to them. Perhaps Job means to intimate that, if they were subjected to the kind of trial that he

had been, it would be seen that they could not bear it. “Or as one man mocketh another.” The idea here is, “it is possible to delude or deceive man, but God cannot be deceived. You may conceal your thoughts and motives from man, but you cannot from God. You may use arguments that may impose upon man — you may employ fallacies and sophisms which he cannot detect, but every such effort is vain with God;” compare ^{<8867>}Galatians 6:7.

^{<8310>}**Job 13:10.** *He will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons* If you show partiality, you will incur his disapprobation. This seems to have much era proverbial cast, and to mean that under no possible circumstances was it right to show partiality. No matter for whom it may be done, it will be displeasing to God. Even if it be in favor of the righteous, the widow, the fatherless, or of himself, if there is not a disposition to judge according to truth and evidence, God will frown upon you. No matter who the parties might be; no matter what their rank; no matter what friendship there might be for one or the other of them, it was never to be assumed that one was right and the other wrong without evidence. The exact truth was to be sought after, and the judgement made up accordingly. Even when God was one of the parties, the same course was to be pursued. His character was capable of being successfully vindicated, and he would not be pleased to have his cause defended or decided by partiality, or by mere favor. Hence, he encourages people to bring forth their strong reasons, and to adduce all that can be said against his government and laws. See the notes at ^{<2300>}Isaiah 41:1-21.

^{<8311>}**Job 13:11.** *Shall not his excellency* His exaltation ^{<7613>}*tæj* from ^{<5375>}*acn*, to exalt, to lift up), or his majesty, ^{<0498>}Genesis 49:3.

Make you afraid Fill you with awe and reverence. Shall it not restrain you from fallacy, from sophisms, and from all presumptuous and unfounded reasoning? The sense here is, that a sense of the greatness and majesty of God should fill the mind with solemnity and reverence, and make us serious and sincere; should repress all declamation and mere assertion, and should lead us to adduce only those considerations which will bear the test of the final trial. The general proposition, however, is not less clear, that a sense of the majesty and glory of God should at all times fill the mind with solemn awe, and produce the deepest veneration. See ^{<2472>}Jeremiah 5:22; 10:7-10; ^{<0287>}Genesis 28:17.

And his dread The fear of him. You should so stand in awe of him as not to advance any sentiments which he will not approve, or which will not bear the test of examination. Rosenmuller, however, and after him Noyes, supposes that this is not so much a declaration of what ought to be, implying that the fear of God ought to produce veneration, as a declaration of what actually occurred — implying that they were actually influenced by this slavish fear in what they said. According to this it means that they were actuated only by a dread of what God would do to them that led them to condemn Job without proof, and not by a regard to truth. But the common interpretation seems to me most in accordance with the meaning of the passage.

Job 13:12. *Your remembrances are like unto ashes* There has been a considerable variety in the interpretation of this verse. The meaning in our common version is certainly not very clear. The Vulgate renders it, Memoria vestra comparabitur cineri. The Septuagint, **Αποβησεται** ^{<576>} **δε** ^{<1161>} **ὕμων** ^{<5216>} **το** ^{<3588>} **γαυριαμα** **ισα** ^{<2470>} **σποδο** ^{<4700>} — “your boasting shall pass away like ashes.” Dr. Good renders it, “Dust are your stored-up sayings.” Noyes, “Your maxims are words of dust.” The word rendered “remembrances” **zkrwn** ^{<12146>} means properly “remembrance, memory,” ^{<10407>} Joshua 4:7; ^{<26214>} Ezekiel 12:14; then a “memento,” or “record;” then a “memorable saying, a maxim.” This is probably the meaning here; and the reference is to the apothegms or proverbs which they had so profusely uttered, and which they regarded as so profound and worthy of attention, but which Job was disposed to regard as most common-place, and to treat with contempt.

Are like unto ashes That is, they are valueless. See the notes at ^{<2440>} Isaiah 44:20. Their maxims had about the same relation to true wisdom which ashes have to substantial and nutritious food. The Hebrew here **lvm** ^{<4911>} **rpæ** ^{<665>} is rather, “are parables of ashes;” — the word **lvm**, ^{<4912>} meaning similitude, parable, proverb. This interpretation gives more force and beauty to the passage.

Your bodies — **Bgæ** ^{<41354>} Vulgate, “cervices.” Septuagint, **το** ^{<3588>} **δε** ^{<1161>} **σωμα** ^{<4983>} **πηλινον** — but the body is clay. The Hebrew word **bg**, means something gibbous (from where the word “gibbous” is derived), convex, arched; hence, the “back” of animals or human beings, ^{<26102>} Ezekiel 10:12; the boss of a shield or buckler — the “gibbous,” or exterior convex

part — ^{<81536>}Job 15:26; and then, according to Gesenius, an entrenchment, a fortress, a strong-hold. According to this interpretation, the passage here means, that the arguments behind which they entrenched themselves were like clay. They could not resist an attack made upon them, but would be easily thrown down, like mud walls. Grotius renders it, “Your towers (of defense) are tumult of clay.” Rosenmuller remarks on the verse that the ancients were accustomed to inscribe sentences of valuable historical facts on pillars. If these were engraved on stone, they would be permanent; if on pillars covered with clay, they would soon be obliterated. On a pillar or column at Aleandria, the architect cut his own name at the base deep in the stone. On the plaster or stucco with which the column was covered, he inscribed the name of the person to whose honor it was reared. The consequence was, that that name became soon obliterated; his own then appeared, and was permanent. But the meaning here is rather, that the apothegms and maxims behind which they entrenched themselves were like mud walls, and could not withstand an attack.

^{<81537>}**Job 13:13.** *Hold your peace* Margin, Be silent from me; see ^{<81537>}Job 13:5. It is possible that Job may have perceived in them some disposition to interrupt him in a rude manner in reply to the severe remarks which he had made, and he asked the privilege, therefore, of being permitted to go on, and to say what he intended, let come what would.

And let come on me what will Anything, whether reproaches from you, or additional sufferings from the hand of God. Allow me to express my sentiments, whatever may be the consequences to myself. One cannot but be forcibly reminded by this verse of the remark of the Greek philosopher, “Strike, but hear me.”

^{<81534>}**Job 13:14.** *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth* The meaning of the proverbial expressions in this verse is not very clear. They indicate a state of great danger; but the exact sense of the proverbs it has been difficult to ascertain. Some have supposed that the phrase “to take the flesh in the teeth,” is significant of a state of famine, where a man dying from this cause would cease upon his own flesh and devour it; others, that it refers to the contentions of voracious animals, struggling for a piece of flesh; others, that it refers to the fact that what is borne in the teeth is liable to be dropped, and that Job regarded his life as in such a perilous condition. Schultens regards it as denoting that bold courage in which a man exposes his life to imminent peril. He supposes that it is to be taken in

connection with the previous verse, as intimating that he would go forward and speak at any rate, whatever might be the result. He translates it, “Whatever may be the event, I will take my flesh in my teeth, and my life in my hand.” In this interpretation Rosenmuller concurs. Noyes renders it, “I will count it nothing to bear my flesh in my teeth.” Good, “Let what may — I will carry my flesh in my teeth;” and supposes that the phrase is equivalent to saying, that he would incur any risk or danger. The proverb he supposes is taken from the contest which so frequently takes place between dogs and other carnivorous quadrupeds, when one of them is carrying a bone or piece of flesh in his mouth, which becomes a source of dispute and a prize to be fought for. The Vulgate renders it, “Quare lacero carnes meas dentibus meis.” The Septuagint, “Taking my flesh in my teeth, I will put my life in my hand.” It seems to me, that the language is to be taken in connection with the previous verse, and is not to be regarded as an interrogatory, but as a declaration. “Let come upon me anything — whatever it may be — hm,^{<4100>} — (^{<1833>}Job 13:13) on account of that, or in reference to that — I [^{<45021>}æ hm,^{<4100>} — (^{<1834>}Job 13:14), I will take my life in my hand, braving any and every danger.” It is a firm and determined purpose that he would express his sentiments, no matter what might occur — even if it involved the peril of his life. The word “flesh” I take to be synonymous with life, or with his best interests; and the figure is probably taken from the fact that animals thus carry their prey or spoil in their teeth. Of course, this would be a poor protection. It would be liable to be seized by others. It might even tempt and provoke others to seize it: and would lead to conflict and perils. So Job felt that the course he was pursuing would lead him into danger, but he was determined to pursue it, let come what might.

And put my life in mine hand This is a proverbial expression, meaning the same as, I will expose myself to danger. Anything of value taken in the hand is liable to be rudely snatched away. It is like taking a casket of jewels, or a purse of gold, in the hand, which may at any moment be seized by robbers. The phrase is not uncommon in the Scriptures to denote exposure to great peril; compare ^{<8890>}Psalm 119:109, “My soul is continually in my hand;” ^{<0916>}1 Samuel 19:5, “For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine;” ^{<0712>}Judges 12:3, “I put my life in my hands, and passed over against the children of Ammon.” A similar expression occurs in the Greek classics denoting exposure to imminent danger — εν ^{<1722>}τη ^{<3588>}χειρι ^{<5495>}την ^{<3588>}ψυχην ^{<5590>}εχει ^{<2192>} — “he has

his life in his hand;” see Rosenmuller on ^{<43910>}Psalm 119:109. The Arabs have a somewhat similar proverb, as quoted by Schultens, “His flesh is upon a butcher’s block.”

^{<4835>}**Job 13:15.** *Though he slay me* “God may so multiply my sorrows and pains that I cannot survive them. I see that I may be exposed to increased calamities, yet I am willing to meet them. If in maintaining my own cause, and showing that I am not a hypocrite (^{<4816>}Job 13:16), it should so happen that my sufferings should be so increased that I should die, yet I will do it.” The word “slay,” or “kill,” here refers to temporal death. It has no reference to punishment in the future world, or to the death of the soul. It means merely that Job was determined to maintain his cause and defend his character, though his sufferings should be so increased that life would be the forfeit. Such was the extent of his sufferings, that he had reason to suppose that they would terminate in death; and yet notwithstanding this, it was his fixed purpose to confide in God; compare the notes at ^{<4825>}Job 19:25-27. This was spoken in Job’s better moments, and was his deliberate and prevailing intention. This deliberate purpose expresses what was really the character of the man, though occasionally, when he became impatient, he gave utterance to different sentiments and feelings. We are to look to the prevailing and habitual tenor of a man’s feelings and declared principles, in order to determine what his character is, and not to expressions made under the influence of temptation, or under the severity of pain. On the sentiment here expressed, compare ^{<4920>}Psalm 23:4; ^{<4142>}Proverbs 14:32.

Yet will I trust in him The word used here **l j** ^{<4317>} means properly to wait, stay, delay; and it usually conveys the idea of waiting on one with an expectation of aid or help. Hence, it means to hope. The sense here is, that his expectation or hope was in God; and if the sense expressed in our common version be correct, it implies that even in death, or after death, he would confide in God. He would adhere to him, and would still feel that beyond death he would bless him.

In him In God. But there is here an important variation in the reading. The present Hebrew is **al o** ^{<4308>} — “not.” The Qeriy or marginal reading, is with a waw — “in him.” Jerome renders it as if it were (HSN-8705) — “in ipso,” that is, in him. The Septuagint followed some reading which does not now appear in any copies of the Hebrew text, or which was the result of mere imagination: “Though the Almighty, as he hath begun, may subdue

me — χειρωσεται — yet will I speak, and maintain my cause before him.” The Chaldee renders it, *yl xa ywmdq* — *I will pray before him*; evidently reading it as if it were (HSN-8705), “in him.” So the Syriac, in him. I have no doubt, therefore, that this was the ancient reading, and that the true sense is retained in our common version though Rosenmuller, Good, Noyes, and others, have adopted the other reading, and suppose that it is to be taken as a negative. Noyes renders it, “Lo! he slayeth me, and I have no hope!” Good, much worse, “Should he even slay me, I would not delay.” It may be added, that there are frequent instances where *al o* ^{<43808>} and (HSN-8705) are interchanged, and where the copyist seems to have been determined by the sound rather than by a careful inspection of the letters. According to the Masoretes, there are fifteen places where *al o* ^{<43808>}, “not,” is written for (HSN-8705), “to him.” ^{<42108>}Exodus 21:8; ^{<8121>}Leviticus 11:21; 25:30; ^{<4028>}1 Samuel 2:3; ^{<1068>}2 Samuel 16:18; ^{<19404>}Psalms 100:4; 139:16; ^{<81315>}Job 13:15; 41:4; ^{<1502>}Ezra 4:2; ^{<1802>}Proverbs 19:7; 26:2; ^{<232>}Isaiah 9:2; 63:9. On the other hand, (HSN-8705) is put for *al o* ^{<43808>} in ^{<4026>}1 Samuel 2:16; 20:2; ^{<8162>}Job 6:21. A mistake of this kind may have easily occurred here. The sentiment here expressed is one of the noblest that could fall from the lips of man. It indicates unwavering confidence in God, even in death. It is the determination of a mind to adhere to him, though he should strip away comfort after comfort, and though there should be no respite to his sorrows until he should sink down in death. This is the highest expression of piety, and thus it is the privilege of the friends of God to experience. When professed earthly friends become cold toward us, our love for them also is chilled. Should they leave and forsake us in the midst of suffering and want, and especially should they leave us on a bed of death, we should cease to confide in them. But not so in respect to God. Such is the nature of our confidence in him, that though he takes away comfort after comfort, though our health is destroyed and our friends are removed, and though we are led down into the valley and the shadow of death, yet still we never lose our confidence in him. We feel that all will yet be well. We look forward to another state, and anticipate the blessedness of another and a better world. Reader, can you in sincerity lift the eye toward God, and say to him, “Though Thou dost slay me, though comfort after comfort is taken away, though the waves of trouble roll over me, and though I go down into the valley of the shadow of death, yet I WILL TRUST IN THEE; — Thine I will be even then, and when all is dark I will believe that God is right, and just, and true, and good, and will never doubt that he

is worthy of my eternal affection and praise?" Such is religion. Where else is it found but in the views of God and of his government which the Bible reveals. The infidel may have apathy in his sufferings, the blasphemer may be stupid, the moralist or the formalist may be unconcerned; but that is not to have confidence in God. That results from religion alone.

But I will maintain mine own ways before him Margin, "prove," or "argue." The sense is, I will "vindicate" my ways, or myself. That is, I will maintain that I am his friend, and that I am not a hypocrite. His friends charged him with insincerity. They were not able, Job supposed, to appreciate his arguments and to do justice to him. He had, therefore, expressed the wish to carry his cause directly before God (^{<1813B>}Job 13:3); and he was assured that he would do justice to his arguments. Even should he slay him, he would still stand up as his friend, and would still maintain that his calamities had not come upon him, as his friends supposed, because he was a hypocrite and a secret enemy of his Maker.

^{<1813C>}**Job 13:16.** *He also shalt be my salvation* See the notes at ^{<2312D>}Isaiah 12:2. Literally, "He is unto me for salvation," that is, "I put my trust in him, and he will save me. The opportunity of appearing before God, and of maintaining my cause in his presence, will result in my deliverance from the charges which are alleged against me. I shall be able there to show that I am not a hypocrite, and God will become my defender."

For an hypocrite shall not come before him This seems to be a proverb, or a statement of a general and indisputable principle. Job admitted this to be true. Yet he expected to be able to vindicate himself before God, and this would prove that he was not an hypocrite — on the general principle that a man who was permitted to stand before God and to obtain his favor, could not be an unrighteous man. To God he looked with confidence; and God, he had no doubt, would be his defender. This fact would prove that he could not be an hypocrite, as his friends maintained.

^{<1813D>}**Job 13:17.** *Hear diligently my speech* That which I have made; that is, the declaration which I have made of my innocence. He refers to his solemn declaration, (^{<1813E>}Job 13:15,16) that he had unwavering confidence in God, and that even should God slay him he would put confidence in him. This solemn appeal he wished them to attend to as one of the utmost importance.

<8138> **Job 13:18.** *I have ordered my cause* literally. “judgment?” — $\epsilon\pi\upsilon\lambda\eta\theta\eta$ ^{th4941}>. The Septuagint renders it, “I am near ($\epsilon\nu\gamma\upsilon\varsigma$ <1451> $\epsilon\iota\mu\iota$ <1510>) to my judgment,” or my trial. The meaning may be, that he had gone through the pleading, and had said what he wished in self-vindication, and he was willing to leave the cause with God, and did not doubt the issue. Or more probably, I think, the word $\gamma\tau\kappa\rho$ [should be taken, as the word $\gamma\tau$ [dy is, in the present tense, meaning “I now set in order my cause; I enter on the pleading; I am confident that I shall so present it as to be declared righteous.”

I know that I shall be justified I have no doubt as to the issue. I shall be declared to be an holy man, and not a hypocrite. The word rendered “I shall be justified” $qdx\alpha$ is used here in the proper and literal sense of the word justify. It is a term of law; and means, “I shall be declared to be righteous. I shall be shown not to be guilty in the form charged on me, and shall be acquitted or vindicated.” This sense is different from that which so often occurs in the Scriptures when applied to the doctrine of the justification of a sinner. Then it means, to treat one AS IF he were righteous, though he is personally guilty and undeserving.

<8139> **Job 13:19.** *Who is he that will plead with me?* That is, “who is there now that will take up the cause, and enter into an argument against me? I have set my cause before God. I appeal now to all to take up the argument against me, and have no fear if they do as to the result. I am confident of a successful issue, and await calmly the divine adjudication.”

For now, if I hold my tongue I shall give up the ghost This translation, in my view, by no means expresses the sense of the original, if indeed it is not exactly the reverse. According to this version, the meaning is, that if he did not go into a vindication of himself he would die. The Hebrew, however is, “for now I will be silent, and die.” That is, “I have maintained my cause, I will say no more. If there is anyone who can successfully contend with me, and can prove that my course cannot be vindicated, then I have no more to say. I will be silent, and die. I will submit to my fate without further argument, and without a complaint. I have said all that needs to be said, and nothing would remain but to submit and die.”

<8140> **Job 13:20.** *Only do not two* things “unto me.” The two things which are specified in the following verse. This is an address to God as Job

argues his cause before him, and the request is, that he would remove every obstacle to his presenting his cause in the most favorable manner, and so that he may be on equal terms with him. See the notes at ^{<RB4>}Job 9:34,35. He was ready to present his cause, and to plead before God, as (^{<RB3>}Job 13:18) he had the utmost confidence that he would be able so to present it as to vindicate himself; and he asks of God that he would withdraw his hand for a time (^{<RB2>}Job 13:21) and not terrify him (^{<RB1>}Job 13:21), so that he could present his case with the full vigor of his mind and body, and so that he need not be overawed by the sense of the majesty and glory of the Most High. He wished to be free to present his cause without the impediments arising from a deeply distressing and painful malady. He wished to have his full intellectual and bodily vigor restored for a time to him, and then he was confident that he could successfully defend himself. He felt that, he was now enfeebled by disease, and incapacitated from making the effort for self-vindication and for maintaining his cause, which he would have been enabled to make in his palmy days.

Then will I not hide myself from thee From God. I will stand forth boldly and maintain my cause. I will not attempt to conceal myself, or shun the trial and the argument. See ^{<RB4>}Job 9:34,35.

^{<RB2>}**Job 13:21.** *Withdraw thine hand far from me* Notes ^{<RB4>}Job 9:34. The hand of God here is used to denote the calamity or affliction which Job was suffering. The meaning is, “Remove my affliction; restore me to health, and I will then enter on the argument in vindication of my cause. I am now oppressed, and broken down, and enfeebled by disease, and I cannot present it with the vigor which I might evince if I were in health.”

And let not thy dread make me afraid “Do not so overpower me by thy severe majesty, that I cannot present my cause in a calm and composed manner.” See the notes at ^{<RB4>}Job 9:34. Job felt that God had power to overawe him, and he asked, therefore, that he might have a calm and composed mind, and then he would be able to do justice to his own cause.

^{<RB1>}**Job 13:22.** *Then call thou, and I will answer* Call me to trial; summon me to make my defense. This is language taken from courts of justice, and the idea is, that if God would remove his calamity, and not overawe him, and would then call on him to make a defense, he would be ready to respond to his call. The language means, “be thou plaintiff in the case, and

I will enter on my defense.” He speaks now to God not as to a judge but as a party, and is disposed to go to trial. See the notes at ~~1803~~ Job 9:33-35.

Or let me speak, and answer thou me “Let me be the plaintiff, and commence the cause. In any way, let the cause come to an issue. Let me open the cause, adduce my arguments, and defend my view of the subject; and then do thou respond.” The idea is, that Job desired a fair trial. He was willing that God should select his position, and should either open the cause, or respond to it when he had himself opened it. To our view, there is something that is quite irreverent in this language, and I know not that it can be entirely vindicated. But perhaps, when the idea of a trial was once suggested, all the rest may be regarded as the mere filling up, or as language fitted to carry out that single idea, and to preserve the concinnity of the poem. Still, to address God in this manner is a wide license even for poetry. There is the language of complaint here; there is an evident feeling that God was not right; there is an undue reliance of Job on his own powers; there is a disposition to blame God which we can by no means approve, and which we are not required to approve. But let us not too harshly blame the patriarch. Let him who has suffered much and long, who feels that he is forsaken by God and by man, who has lost property and friends, and who is suffering under a painful bodily malady, if he has never had any of those feelings, cast the first stone. Let not those blame him who live in affluence and prosperity, and who have yet to endure the first severe trial of life. One of the objects, I suppose, of this poem is, to show human nature as it is; to show how good people often feel under severe trial; and it would not be true to nature if the representation had been that Job was always calm, and that he never cherished an improper feeling or gave vent to an improper thought.

~~1823~~ **Job 13:23.** *How many are mine iniquities and sins?* Job takes the place of the plaintiff or accuser. He opens the cause. He appeals to God to state the catalogue of his crimes, or to bring forward his charges of guilt against him. The meaning, according to Schultens, is, “That catalogue ought to be great which has called down so many and so great calamities upon my head from heaven, when I am conscious to myself of being guilty of no offence.” God sorely afflicted him. Job appeals to him to show why it was done, and to make a statement of the number and the magnitude of his offences.

Make me to know I would know on what account and why I am thus held to be guilty, and; why I am thus punished.

Job 13:24. *Wherefore hidest thou thy face* To hide the face, or to turn it away, is expressive of disapprobation. We turn away the face when we are offended with anyone. See the notes at ^{<2015>}Isaiah 1:15.

And holdest me for thine enemy Regardest and treatest me as an enemy.

Job 13:25. *Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro?* Job here means to say that the treatment of God in regard to him was like treading down a leaf that was driven about by the wind — an insignificant, unsettled, and worthless thing. “Wouldst thou show thy power against such an object?” — The sense is, that it was not worthy of God thus to pursue one so unimportant, and so incapable of offering any resistance.

And wilt thou pursue the dry stubble? Is it worthy of God thus to contend with the driven straw and stubble of the field? To such a leaf, and to such stubble, he compares himself; and he asks whether God could be employed in a work such as that would be, of pursuing such a flying leaf or driven stubble with a desire to overtake it, and wreak his vengeance on it.

Job 13:26. *For thou writest bitter things against me* Charges or accusations of severity. We use the word “bitter” now in a somewhat similar sense. We speak of bitter sorrow, bitter cold, etc. The language here is all taken from courts of justice, and Job is carrying out the train of thought on which he had entered in regard to a trial before God. He says that the accusations which God had brought against him were of a bitter and severe character; charging him with aggravated offences, and recalling the sins of his youth, and holding him responsible for them. Rosenmuller remarks that the word “write” here is a judicial term, referring to the custom of writing the sentence of a person condemned (as in ^{<1919>}Psalm 149:9; ^{<223>}Jeremiah 22:30); that is, decreeing the punishment. So the Greeks used the expression $\gamma\rho\alpha\phi\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ ^{<1125>} $\delta\iota\kappa\eta\nu$ ^{<1349>}, meaning to declare a judicial sentence. So the Arabs use the word “kitab, writing,” to denote a judicial sentence.

And makest me to possess Hebrew Causest me to inherit — $v\ddot{r}g\epsilon$ ^{<3423>}. He was heir to them; or they were now his as a possession or an inheritance. The Vulgate renders it, consumere me vis, etc. “thou wishest to consume

me with the sins of my youth.” The Septuagint, “and thou dost charge against me” — *περιθηκας* ^{<4060>}.

The iniquities of my youth The offences which I committed when young. He complains now that God recalled all those offences; that he went into days that were past, and raked up what Job had forgotten; that, not satisfied with charging on him what he had done as a man, he went back and collected all that could be found in the days when he was under the influence of youthful passions, and when, like other young men, he might have gone astray. But why should he not do it? What impropriety could there be in God in thus recalling the memory of long-forgotten sins, and causing the results to meet him now that he was a man? We may remark here,

(1) That this is often done. The sins and follies of youth seem often to be passed over or to be unnoticed by God. Long intervals of time or long tracts of land or ocean may intervene between the time when sin was committed in youth, and when it shall be punished in age. The man may himself have forgotten it, and after a youth of dissipation and folly he may perhaps have a life of prosperity for many years. But those sins are not forgotten by God. Far on in life the results of early dissipation, licentiousness, folly, will meet the offender, and overwhelm him in disgrace or calamity.

(2) God has power to recall all the offences of early life. He has access to the soul. He knows all its secret springs. With infinite ease he can reach the memory of a long-forgotten deed of guilt; and he can overwhelm the mind with the recollection of crimes that have not been thought of for years. He can fix the attention with painful intensity on some slight deed of past criminality; or he can recall forgotten sins in groups; or he can make the remembrance of one sin suggest a host of others. No man who has passed a guilty youth can be certain that his mind will not be overwhelmed with painful recollections, and however calm and secure he may now be, he may in a moment be harassed with the consciousness of deep criminality, and with most gloomy apprehensions of the wrath to come.

(3) A young man should be pure. He has otherwise no security of respectability in future life, or of pleasant recollections of the past, should he reach old age. He who spends his early days in dissipation must expect to reap the fruits of it in future years. Those sins will meet him in his way, and most probably at an unexpected moment, and in an unexpected place.

If he ever becomes a good man, he will have many an hour of bitter and painful regret at the follies of his early life; if he does not, he will meet the accumulated results of his sin on the bed of death and in hell. Somewhere, and somehow, every instance of folly is to be remembered hereafter, and will be remembered with sighs and tears.

(4) God rules among people, There is a moral government on the earth. Of this there is no more certain proof than in this fact. The power of summoning up past sins to the recollection; of recalling those that have been forgotten by the offender himself, and of placing them in black array before the guilty man; and of causing them to seize with a giant's grasp upon the soul, is a power such as God alone can wield, and shows at once that there is a God, and that he rules in the hearts of people. And

(5) If God holds this power now, he will hold it in the world to come. The forgotten sins of youth, and the sins of age, will be remembered then. The sinner walks over a volcano. It may be now calm and still. Its base may be crowned with verdure, its sides with orchards and vineyards; and far up its heights the tall tree may wave, and on its summit the snow may lie undisturbed. But at any moment that mountain may heave, and the burning torrent spread desolation every where. So with the sinner. He knows not how soon the day of vengeance may come; how soon he may be made to inherit the sins of his youth.

^{<8137>}**Job 13:27.** *Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks* The word rendered "stocks" ^{<45465>}*dsæ*, denotes the wooden frame or block in which the feet of a person were confined for punishment. The whole passage here is designed to describe the feet; as so confined in a clog or clogs, as to preclude the power of motion. Stocks or clogs were used often in ancient times as a mode of punishment. ^{<1072>}Proverbs 7:22. Jeremiah was punished by being confined in the stocks. ^{<3010>}Jeremiah 20:2; 29:2,6. Paul and Silas were in like manner confined in the prison in stocks; ^{<4462>}Acts 16:24. Stocks appear to have been of two kinds. They were either clogs attached to one foot or to both feet, so as to embarrass, but not entirely to prevent walking, or they were fixed frames to which the feet were attached so as entirely to preclude motion. The former were often used with runaway slaves to prevent their escaping again when taken, or were affixed to prisoners to prevent their escape. The fixed kinds — which are probably referred to here — were of different sorts. They consisted of a frame, with holes for the feet only; or for the feet and the hands; or for the feet, the hands, and

the neck. At Pompeii, stocks have been found so contrived that ten prisoners might be chained by the leg, each leg separately by the sliding of a bar. “Pict. Bible.” The instrument is still used in India, and is such as to confine the limbs in a very distressing position, though the head is allowed to move freely.

And lookest narrowly unto all my paths This idea occurs also in ^{<8391>}Job 33:11, though expressed somewhat differently, “He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths.” Probably the allusion is to the paths by which he might escape. God watched or observed every way — as a sentinel or guard would a prisoner who was hampered or clogged, and who would make an attempt to escape.

Thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet Margin, “roots.” Such also is the Hebrew — ^{<8328>}רַגְלִי | ^{<7272>}גִּרְיָ. Vulgate, “vestigia.” Septuagint, “Upon the roots — ^{<1519>}εἰς ^{<1162>}δὲ ^{<4491>}ρίζας — of my feet thou comest.” The word ^{<8327>}ῥῆξ means properly “root;” then the “bottom,” or the lower part of a thing; and hence, the soles of the feet. The word rendered “settest a print,” from ^{<8327>}ῥῆξ, means to cut in, to hew, to hack; then to engrave, carve, delineate, portray; then to dig. Various interpretations have been given of the passage here. Gesenius supposes it to mean, “Around the roots of my feet thou hast digged,” that is, hast made a trench so that I can get no further. But though this suits the connection, yet it is an improbable interpretation. It is not the way in which one would endeavor to secure a prisoner, to make a ditch over which he could not leap. Others render it, “Around the soles of my feet thou hast drawn lines,” i.e., thou hast made marks how far I may go. Dr. Good supposes that the whole description refers to some method of clogging a wild animal for the purpose of taming him, and that the expression here refers to a mark on the hoof of the animal by which the owner could designate him. Noyes accords with Gesenius. The editor of the Pictorial Bible supposes that it may refer to the manner in which the stocks were made, and that it means that a seal was affixed to the parts of the plank of which they were constructed, when they were joined together. He adds that the Chinese have a portable pillory of this kind, and that offenders are obliged to wear it around their necks for a given period, and that over the place where it is joined together a piece of paper is pasted, that it may not be opened without detection. Rosenmuller supposes that it means, that Job was confined within certain prescribed limits, beyond which he was not allowed to go. This restraint he supposes

was effected by binding his feet by a cord to the stocks, so that he was not allowed to go beyond a certain distance. The general sense is clear, that Job was confined within certain limits, and was observed with very marked vigilance. But I doubt whether either of the explanations suggested is the true one. Probably some custom is alluded to of which we have no knowledge now — some mark that was affixed to the feet to prevent a prisoner from escaping without being detected. What that was, I think, we do not know. Perhaps Oriental researches will yet disclose some custom that will explain it.

~~8128~~ **Job 13:28.** *And he, as a rotten thing, consumeth* Noyes renders this, “And I, like an abandoned thing, shall waste away.” Dr. Good translates it, “Well may he dissolve as corruption.” Rosenmuller supposes that Job refers to himself by the word **alwh**^{<h1931>} — he, and that having spoken of himself in the previous verses, he now changes the mode of speech, and speaks in the third person. In illustration of this, he refers to a passage in Euripides, “Alcestes,” verse 690. The Vulgate renders it in the first person, “Qui quasi putredo consumendus sum.” The design seems to be, to represent himself as an object not worthy such consent surveillance on the part of God. God set his mark upon him; watched him with a close vigilance and a steady eye — and yet he was watching one who was turning fast to corruption, and who would soon be gone. He regarded it as unworthy of God, to be so attentive in watching over so worthless an object. This is closely connected with the following chapter, and there should have been no interruption here. The allusion to himself as feeble and decaying, leads him into the beautiful description in the following chapter of the state of man in general. The connection is something like this: — “I am afflicted and tried in various ways. My feet are in the stocks; my way is hedged up. I am weak, frail, and dying. But so it is with man universally. My condition is like that of the man at large, for

*“Man, the offspring of a woman,
Is short-lived, and is full of trouble.”*

“As a rotten thing,” **bqr**^{<h7538>}. The word (HSN7537) means rottenness, or caries of bones; ~~11231~~ Proverbs 12:4; 14:30; ~~2852~~ Hosea 5:12. Here it means anything that is going to decay, and the comparison is that of man to anything that is thus constantly decaying, and that will soon be wholly gone.

Consumeth Or rather “decays,” **hl B,**^{<h1086>}. The word **hl B,**^{<h1086>} is applied to that which falls away or decays, which is worn out and waxes old — as a garment; ^{<f1004>}Deuteronomy 8:4; ^{<2810>}Isaiah 50:9; 51:6.

As a garment that is moth-eaten “As a garment the moth consumes it.” Hebrew On the word moth, and the sentiment here expressed, see the notes at ^{<K149>}Job 4:19.

NOTES ON JOB 14

Job 14:1. *Man that is born of a woman* See the notes at ^{<844>}Job 13:28. The object of Job in these verses, is to show the frailty and feebleness of man. He, therefore, dwells on many circumstances adapted to this, and this is one of the most stirring and beautiful. He alludes to the delicacy and feebleness, of the female sex, and says that the offspring of one so frail must himself be frail; the child of one so feeble must himself be feeble. Possibly also there may be an allusion here to the prevailing opinion in the Oriental world of the inferiority of the female sex. The following forcible lines by Lord Bacon, express a similar sentiment:

*The world's a bubble, and the life of man
Less than a span,
In his conception wretched, from the womb
So to the tomb.*

*Curst from the cradle, and brought up to years
With cares and fears.
Who then to frail mortality shall trust.
But limns the water, or but writes in dust.*

Of few days Hebrew “Brief of days;” compare ^{<900>}Psalm 90:10; ^{<0470>}Genesis 47:9.

And full of trouble Compare the notes at ^{<887>}Job 3:17. Who cannot bear witness to this? How expressive a description is it of life! And even too where life seems most happy; where the sun of prosperity seems to shine on our way, and where blessings like drops of dew seem to descend on us, how true is it still that life is full of trouble, and that the way of man is a weary way! Despite all that he can do — all his care, and skill, and learning and wealth, life is a weary pilgrimage, and is burdened with many woes. “Few and evil have the days of the years of my pilgrimage been,” said the patriarch Jacob, and they who have advanced near the same number of years with him can utter with deep emotion the same beautiful language. Goethe, the celebrated German, said of himself in advanced age,

“They have called me a child of fortune, nor have I any wish to complain of the course of my life. Yet it has been nothing but labor and sorrow, and I may truly say that in seventy-five years I have

not had four weeks of true comfort. It was the constant rolling of a stone that was always to be lifted anew. When I look back upon my earlier and middle life, and consider how few are left of those that were young with me, I am reminded of a summer visit to a watering-place. On arriving one makes the acquaintance of those who have been already some time there, and leave the week following. This loss is painful. Now one becomes attached to the second generation, with which one lives for a time and becomes intimately connected. But this also passes away and leaves us solitary with the third, which arrives shortly before our own departure, and with which we have no desire to have much contact.” — Rauch’s Psychology, p. 343.

Job 14:2. *He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down* Nothing can be more obvious and more beautiful than this, and the image has been employed by writers in all ages, but nowhere with more beauty, or with more frequency than in the Bible; see ^{<3416>}Isaiah 40:6; ^{<3570>}Psalms 37:2; 90:6; 103:15. Next to the Bible, it is probable that Shakespeare has employed the image with the most exquisite beauty of any poet:

This is the state of man; today he puts forth
The tender leaves of hope, tomorrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honors thick upon him;
The third day comes a frost a killing frost,
And — when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is a ripening — nips his root,
And then he falls. — Henry viii. Act iii. Sc. 2.

He fleeth also as a shadow Another exquisite figure, and as true as it is beautiful. So the Psalmist:

My days are like a shadow that declineth. — ^{<3421>}Psalms 102:11.

Man is like to vanity; His days are as a shadowy that passeth away.
— ^{<3404>}Psalms 144:4.

The idea of Job is, that there is no substance, nothing that is permanent. A shadow moves on gently and silently, and is soon gone. It leaves no trace of its being, and returns no more. They who have watched the beautiful shadow of a cloud on a landscape, and have seen how rapidly it passes over meadows and fields of grain, and rolls up the mountain side and disappears, will have a vivid conception of this figure. How gently yet how rapidly it

moves. How soon it is gone. How void of impression is its course. Who can track its way; who can reach it? So man moves on. Soon he is gone; he leaves no trace of his being, and returns no more.

~~840~~ **Job 14:3.** *And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one?* Is one so weak, so frail, so short-lived, worthy the constant vigilance of the infinite God? In ~~800~~ Zechariah 12:4, the expression “to open the eyes” upon one, means to look angrily upon him. Here it means to observe or watch closely.

And bringest me into judgment with thee Is it equal or proper that one so frail and feeble should be called to a trial with one so mighty as the infinite God? Does God seek a trial with one so much his inferior, and so unable to stand before him? This is language taken from courts of justice, and the meaning is, that the parties were wholly unequal, and that it was unworthy of God to maintain a controversy in this manner with feeble man. This is a favorite idea with Job, that there was no equality between him and God, and that the whole controversy was, therefore, conducted on his part with great disadvantage; compare the notes at ~~800~~ Job 9:34,35.

~~840~~ **Job 14:4.** *Who can bring a clean thing* “out of an unclean?” This is evidently a proverb or an adage; but its connection here is not very apparent. Probably, however, it is designed as a plea of mitigation for his conscious frailties and infirmities. He could not but admit that he had faults. But he asks, how could it be expected to be otherwise? He belonged to a race that was sinful and depraved. Connected with such a race, how could it be otherwise than that he should be prone to evil? Why then did God follow him with so much severity, and hold him with a grasp so close and so unrelenting? Why did he treat him as if he ought to be expected to be perfectly pure, or as if it were reasonable to suppose he would be otherwise than unholy? This passage is of great value as showing the early opinion of the world in regard to the native character of man. The sentiment was undoubtedly common — so common as to have passed into a proverb — that man was a sinner; and that it could not be expected that anyone of the race should be pure and holy. The sentiment is as true as it is obvious — like will beget like all over the world. The nature of the lion, the tiger, the hyaena, the serpent is propagated, and so the same thing is true of man. It is a great law, that the offspring will resemble the parentage; and as the offspring of the lion is not a lamb but a young lion; of a wolf is not a kid but a young wolf, so the offspring of man is not an angel, but is a

man with the same nature, the same moral character, the same proneness to evil with the parent. The Chaldee renders this: “Who will give one pure from a man polluted in sin, except God, who is one, and who forgiveth him?” But this is manifestly a departure from the sense of the passage. Jerome, however, has adopted nearly the same translation. As a historical record, this passage proves that the doctrine of original sin was early held in the world. Still it is true that the same great law prevails, that the offspring of woman is a sinner — no matter where he may be born, or in what circumstances he may be placed. No art, no philosophy, no system of religion can prevent the operation of this great law under which we live, and by which we die; compare the notes at ^{<8159>}Romans 5:19.

^{<8415>}**Job 14:5.** *Seeing his days* are “determined” Since man is so frail, and so short-lived, let him alone, that he may pass his little time with some degree of comfort and then die; see the notes at ^{<8079>}Job 7:19-21. The word “determined” here means “fixed, settled.” God has fixed the number of his days, so that they cannot be exceeded; compare the notes at ^{<23023>}Isaiah 10:23, and ^{<19000>}Psalms 90:10.

The number of his months are with thee Thou hast the ordering of them, or they are determined by thee.

Thou hast appointed his bounds Thou hast fixed a limit, or hast determined the time which he is to live, and he cannot go beyond it. There is no elixir of life that can prolong our days beyond that period. Soon we shall come to that outer limit of life, and then we MUST DIE. When that is we know not, and it is not desirable to know. It is better that it should be concealed. If we knew that it was near, it would fill us with gloom, and deter us from the efforts and the plans of life altogether. If it were remote, we should be careless and secure, and should think there was time enough yet to prepare to die. As it is, we know that the period is not very far distant; we know not but that it may be very near at hand, and we would be always ready.

^{<81416>}**Job 14:6.** *Turn from him* — h[^{<18159>}v]. Look away from; or turn away the eyes; ^{<23204>}Isaiah 22:4. Job had represented the Lord as looking intently upon him, and narrowly watching all his ways. He now asks him that he would look away and suffer him to be alone, and to spend the little time he had in comfort and peace.

That he may rest Margin, “Cease.” “Let him be ceased from” — l dje^{<42308>}. The idea is not that of rest, but it is that of having God cease to afflict him;

or, in other words, leaving him to himself. Job wished the hand of God to be withdrawn, and prayed that he might be left to himself.

Till he shall accomplish — $\delta[\text{a}^{\langle 45704 \rangle} \text{hxr}^{\langle 47521 \rangle}$. Septuagint, $\epsilon\iota\delta\omicron\kappa\eta\sigma\eta \tau\omicron\nu$ $\langle 3588 \rangle$ $\beta\iota\omicron\nu$ $\langle 979 \rangle$ — “and comfort his life,” or make his life pleasant.

Jerome renders it, “until his desired day — “optata dies” — shall come like that of an hireling.” Dr. Good, “that he may fill up his day.” Noyes, “that he may enjoy his day.” The word used here $\text{hxr}^{\langle 47521 \rangle}$ means properly to delight in, to take pleasure in, to satisfy, to pay off; and there can be no doubt that there was couched under the use of this word the notion of “enjoyment,” or “pleasure.” Job wished to be spared, that he might have comfort yet in this world. The comparison of himself with a hireling, is not that he might have comfort like a hireling — for such an image would not be pertinent or appropriate — but that his life was like that of an hireling, and he wished to be let alone until the time was completed. On this sentiment, see the notes at $\langle 8701 \rangle$ Job 7:1.

$\langle 8847 \rangle$ **Job 14:7.** *For there is hope of a tree* This passage to $\langle 8842 \rangle$ Job 14:12, is one of exquisite beauty. Its object is to state reasons why man should be permitted to enjoy this life. A tree, if cut down, might spring up again and flourish; but not man. He died to rise no more; he is cut down and lives not again. The passage is important as expressing the prevalent sentiment of the time in which Job lived about the future condition of man, and is one that deserves a close examination. The great question is, whether Job believed in the future state, or in the resurrection of the dead? On this question one or two things are clear at the outset.

(1) He did not believe that man would spring up from the grave in any sense similar to the mode in which the sprout or germ of a tree grows up when the tree is cut down.

(2) He did not believe in the doctrine of metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls; a doctrine that was so common among the ancients.

In this respect the patriarchal religion stood aloof from the systems of paganism, and there is not to be found, that I know of, any expression that would lead us to suppose that they had ever embraced it, or had even heard of it. The general sentiment here is, that if a tree is cut down, it may be expected to shoot up again, and another tree will be found in its place — as is the case with the chestnut, the willow, the oak. But Job says that there was nothing like this to happen to man. There was no root, no germ, no

seminal principle from which he would be made to live again on the earth. He was to be finally cut off, from all his pleasures and his friends here, and to go away to return no more. Still, that Job believed in his continued existence beyond the grave — his existence in the dark and gloomy world of shades, is apparent from the whole book, and indeed from the very passage before us; see ^{<1841>}Job 14:13 — compare ^{<1802>}Job 10:21,22. The image here is one that is very beautiful, and one that is often employed by poets. Thus, Moschus, in his third Idyl, as translated by Gisborne:

The meanest herb we trample in the field, Or in the garden nurture,
when its leaf At winter's touch is blasted, and its place Forgotten,
soon its vernal bud renews, And from short slumber wakes to life
again. Man wakes no more! Man, valiant, glorious, wise, When
death once chills him, sinks in sleep profound. A long, unconscious,
never-ending sleep.

See also Beattie's Hermit:

'Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more; I mourn, but ye
woodlands, I mourn not for you; For morn is approaching, your
charms to restore, Perfumed with fresh fragrance, and glittering
with dew. Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn; Kind nature
the embryo blossom will save; But when shall spring visit the
mouldering urn? O when shall it dawn on the night of the grave?

The same image, also, has been beautifully employed by Dr. Dwight, though urged by him as an argument to prove the doctrine of the resurrection:

In those lone, silent realms of night, Shall peace and hope no more
arise? No future morning light the tomb, Nor day-star gild the
darksome skies? Shall spring the faded world revive? Shall waning
moons their light renew? Again shall setting suns ascend, And
chase the darkness from our view?

The feeling of Job here is, that when man was removed from the earth, he was removed finally; that there was no hope of his revisiting it again, and that he could not be employed in the dark abode of departed spirits in the cheerful and happy manner in which he might be in this world of light. This idea is expressed, also, in a most tender manner by the Psalmist:

Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee? Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? Or thy faithfulness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark? And thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?

— ^{<18810>}Psalm 88:10—12.

And the same feelings were evinced by Hezekiah, the pious king of Israel:

For Sheol cannot praise thee; Death cannot celebrate thee; They that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day; The father to the children shall make known thy faithfulness.

— ^{<23818>}Isaiah 38:18,19.

All these gloomy and desponding views arose from the imperfect conception which they had of the future world. It was to them a world of dense and gloomy shades — a world of night — of conscious existence indeed — but still far away from light, and from the comforts which people enjoyed on the earth. We are to remember that the revelations then made were very few and obscure; and we should deem it a matter of inestimable favor that we have a better hope, and have far more just and clear views of the employments of the future world. Yet probably our views of that world, with all the light which we have, are much further from the reality than the views of the patriarchs were from those which we are permitted to cherish. Such as they are, however, they are fitted to elevate and cheer the soul. We shall not, indeed, live again on the earth, but we shall enter a world of light and glory, compared with which all that is glorious here shall fade away. Not far distant is that blessed world; and in our trials we may look to it not with dread, as Job did to the land of shades, but with triumph and joy.

Will not cease Will not fail, or be missing. It will spring up and live.

^{<8148>}**Job 14:8.** *Though the root thereof wax old* Though life becomes almost extinct. The idea is, though the root of the tree be very old, yet it does not become wholly lifeless. It is not like an old man, when life goes out altogether. In the very aged root there will be vitality still; but not so in man.

Though the stock thereof The stump — literally that which is cut off — [^{<1503>} *z&c*]. The meaning is, that when the trunk of the tree is cut down and

dies altogether, life remains in the root; but when man fails, life is wholly extinct.

^{<1844>}**Job 14:9.** *Yet through the scent of water* The word here rendered “scent” **j ꝥe** ^{<47381>} means properly the odor or fragrance which anything exhales or emits; ^{<2123>}Song of Solomon 2:13; 7:13; ^{<0177>}Genesis 27:27. The idea is very delicate and poetic. It is designed to denote a gentle and pleasant contact — not a rush of water — by which the tree is made to live. It inhales, so to speak, the vital influence from the water — as we are refreshed and revived by grateful odorifles when we are ready to faint.

It will bud Or, rather, it will germinate, or spring up again — **j rꝥe** ^{<46524>}; see the notes at ^{<2550>}Isaiah 55:10.

And bring forth boughs — **ryxq̄** ^{<47105>}. This word usually means a harvest; ^{<0102>}Genesis 8:22; 30:14; 45:6. It also means, as here, a bough, or branch; compare ^{<1801>}Psalms 80:11; ^{<1816>}Job 18:16; 29:19.

Like a plant Like a young plant — as fresh and vigorous as a plant that is set out.

^{<1840>}**Job 14:10.** *But man dieth and wasteth away* Margin, “Is weakened, or cut off.” The Hebrew word **vl ꝥe** ^{<42522>} means to overthrow, prostrate, discomfit; and hence, to be weak, frail, or waste away. The Septuagint renders it **Ανηρ** ^{<435>} **δε** ^{<1161>} **τελευτησας** ^{<5053>} **ωχετο** — “man dying goes away.” Herder renders it, “his power is gone.” The idea is, he entirely vanishes. He leaves nothing to sprout up again. There is no germ; no shoot; no living root; no seminal principle. Of course, this refers wholly to his living again on the earth, and not to the question about his future existence. That is a different inquiry. The main idea with Job here is, that when man dies there is no germinating principle, as there is in a tree that is cut down. Of the truth of this there can be no doubt; and this comparison of man with the vegetable world, must have early occurred to mankind, and hence, led to the inquiry whether he would not live in a future state. Other flyings that are cut down, spring up again and live. But man is cut down, and does not spring up again. Will he not be likely, therefore, to have an existence in some future state, and to spring up and flourish there? “The Romans,” says Rosenmuller, “made those trees to be the symbol of death, which, being cut down, do not live again, or from whose roots no germs arise, as the pine

and cypress, which were planted in burial-places, or were accustomed to be placed at the doors of the houses of the dead.”

Man giveth up the ghost Expires, or dies. This is all that the word [*wac*^{<h1478>} means. The notion of giving up the spirit or the ghost — an idea not improper in itself — is not found in the Hebrew word, nor is it in the corresponding Greek word in the New Testament; compare ^{<4150>}Acts 5:10.

^{<841>}**Job 14:11.** *As the waters fail from the sea* As the waters evaporate wholly, and leave the bottom wholly dry, so it is with man, who passes entirely away, and leaves nothing. But to what fact Job refers here, is not known. The sea or ocean has never been dried up, so as to furnish a ground for this comparison. Noyes renders it, “the lake.” Dr. Good, without the slightest authority, renders it, “as the billows pass away with the tides.” Herder supposes it to mean that until the waters fail from the sea man will not rise again, but the Hebrew will not bear this interpretation. Probably the true interpretation is, that which makes the word rendered sea *my*^{<h3220>} refer to a lake, or a stagnant pool; see the notes at ^{<2115>}Isaiah 11:15; 19:5. The word is applied not unfrequently to a lake, as to the lake of Genesareth, ^{<6311>}Numbers 34:11; to the Dead Sea, ^{<0148>}Genesis 14:3; ^{<8049>}Deuteronomy 4:49; ^{<3148>}Zechariah 14:8. It is used, also, to denote the Nile, ^{<2316>}Isaiah 19:5, and the Euphrates, ^{<2370>}Isaiah 27:1. It is also employed to denote the brass sea that was made by Solomon, and placed in front of the temple; ^{<1253>}2 Kings 25:13. I see no reason to doubt, therefore, that it may be used here to denote the collections of water, which were made by torrents pouring down from the mountains, and which would after a little while wholly evaporate.

And the flood decayeth The river — *rhn*^{<15104>}. Such an occurrence would be common in the parched countries of the East; see the notes at ^{<18165>}Job 6:15ff. As such torrents vanish wholly away, so it was with man. Every vestige disappeared; compare ^{<0144>}2 Samuel 14:14.

^{<8412>}**Job 14:12.** *So man lieth down, and riseth not* He lies down in the grave and does not rise again on the earth.

Till the heavens be no more That is, never; for such is the fair interpretation of the passage, and this accords with its design. Job means to say, undoubtedly, that man would never appear again in the land of the living; that he would not spring up from the grave, as a sprout does from a

fallen tree; and that when he dies, he goes away from the earth never to return. Whether he believed in a future state, or in the future resurrection, is another question, and one that cannot be determined from this passage. His complaint is, that the present life is short, and that man when he has once passed through it cannot return to enjoy it again, if it has been unhappy; and he asks, therefore, why, since it was so short, man might not be permitted to enjoy it without molestation. It does not follow from this passage that he believed that the heavens ever would be no more, or would pass away. The heavens are the most permanent and enduring objects of which we have any knowledge, and are, therefore, used to denote permanency and eternity; see ^{<1843>}Psalm 89:36,37. This verse, therefore, is simply a solemn declaration of the belief of Job that when man dies, he dies to live no more on the earth. Of the truth of this, no one can doubt — and the truth is as important and affecting as it is undoubted. If man could come back again, life would be a different thing. If he could revisit the earth to repair the evils of a wicked life, to repent of his errors, to make amends for his faults, and to make preparation for a future world, it would be a different thing to live, and a different thing to die. But when he travels over the road of life, he treads a path which is not to be traversed again. When he neglects an opportunity to do good, it cannot be recalled. When he commits an offence, he cannot come back to repair the evil. He falls, and dies, and lives no more. He enters on other scenes, and is amidst the retributions of another state. How important then to secure the passing moment, and to be prepared to go hence, to return no more! The idea here presented is one that is common with the poets. Thus, Horace says:

*Nobis, cum semel occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetua una dormienda.*

^{<1843>}**Job 14:13.** *Oh that thou wouldest hide me in the grave;* compare the notes at ^{<1811>}Job 3:11ff. Hebrew “in Sheol” — **לְשׁוֹלַם**^{<17585>}. Vulgate, “in inferno.” Septuagint **εἰν**^{<1722>} **ᾠδη**^{<86>} — “in Hades.” On the meaning of the word “Sheol,” see the notes at ^{<2154>}Isaiah 5:14. It does not mean here, I think, the grave. It means the region of departed spirits, the place of the dead, where he wished to be, until the tempest of the wrath of God should pass by. He wished to be shut up in some place where the fury of that tempest would not meet him, and where he would be safe. On the meaning of this passage, however, there has been considerable variety of opinion among expositors. Many suppose that the word here properly means “the grave,” and that Job was willing to wait there until the wrath of God

should be spent, and then that he desired to be brought forth in the general resurrection of the dead. So the Chaldee interprets it of the grave — *atywbq*. There is evidently a desire on the part of Job to be hid in some secret place until the tempest of wrath should sweep by, and until he should be safe. There is an expectation that he would live again at some future period, and a desire to live after the present tokens of the wrath of God should pass by. It is probably a wish for a safe retreat or a hiding-place — where he might be secure, as from a storm. A somewhat similar expression occurs in ^{<2129>}Isaiah 2:19, where it is said that people would go into holes and caverns until the storm of wrath should pass by, or in order to escape it. But whether Job meant the grave, or the place of departed spirits, cannot be determined, and is not material. In the view of the ancients the one was not remote from the other. The entrance to Sheol was the grave; and either of them would furnish the protection sought. It should be added, that the grave was with the ancients usually a cave, or an excavation from the rock, and such a place might suggest the idea of a hiding-place from the raging storm.

That thou wouldest appoint me a set time When I should be delivered or rescued. Herder renders this, “Appoint me then a new term.” The word rendered “a set time” — *qj* ^{<2706>} — means, properly, something decreed, prescribed, appointed and here an appointed time when God would remember or revisit him. It is the expression of his lingering love of life. He had wished to die. He was borne down by heavy trials, and desired a release. He longed even for the grave; compare ^{<1813>}Job 3:20-22. But there is the instinctive love of life in his bosom, and he asks that God would appoint a time, though ever so remote, in which he would return to him, and permit him to live again. There is the secret hope of some future life — though remote; and he is willing to be hid for any period of time until the wrath of God should pass by, if he might live again. Such is the lingering desire of life in the bosom of man in the severest trials, and the darkest hours; and so instinctively does man look on even to the most remote period with the hope of life. Nature speaks out in the desires of Job; and one of the objects of the poem is to describe the workings of nature with reference to a future state in the severe trials to which he was subjected. We cannot but remark here, what support and consolation would he have found in the clear revelation which we have of the future world, and what a debt of gratitude do we owe to that gospel which has brought life and immortality to light!

Job 14:14. *If a man die, shall he live again?* This is a sudden transition in the thought. He had unconsciously worked himself up almost to the belief that man might live again even on the earth. He had asked to be hid somewhere — even in the grave — until the wrath of God should be overpast, and then that God would remember him, and bring him forth again to life. Here he checks himself. It cannot be, he says, that man will live again on the earth. The hope is visionary and vain, and I will endure what is appointed for me, until some change shall come. The question here “shall he live again?” is a strong form of expressing negation. He will not live again on the earth. Any hope of that kind is, therefore, vain, and I will wait until the change come — whatever that may be.

All the days of my appointed time *abx,*^{<h6635>} — my warfare; my enlistment; my hard service. See the notes at ^{<8000>}Job 7:1.

Will I wait I will endure with patience my trials. I will not seek to cut short the time of my service.

Till my change come What this should be, he does not seem to know. It might be relief from sufferings, or it might be happiness in some future state. At all events, this state of things could not last always, and under his heavy pressure of wo, he concluded to sit down and quietly wait for any change. He was certain of one thing — that life was to be passed over but once — that man could not go over the journey again — that he could not return to the earth and go over his youth or his age again. Grotius, and after him Rosenmuller and Noyes, here quotes a sentiment similar to this from Euripides, in “Supplicibus,” verses 1080ff.

Οἱμοί' τι δηβροτοισιν ουκ εστιν τοδε,
 Νεους δις ειναι , και γεροντας αυ παλιν ; etc.

The whole passage is thus elegantly translated by Grotius:

Proh fata! cur non est datum mortalibus Duplici juventa, duplici senio frui? Intra penates siquid habet incommode, Fas seriore corrigi sententia; Hoc vita non permittit: at qui bis foret Juvenis senexque, siquid erratum foret Priore, id emendaret in cursu altero.

The thought here expressed cannot but occur to every reflecting mind. There is no one who has not felt that he could correct the errors and follies of his life, if he were permitted to live it over again. But there is a good reason why it should not be so. What a world would this be if man knew

that he might return and repair the evils of his course by living it over again! How securely in sin would he live! How little would he be restrained! How little concerned to be prepared for the life to come! God has, therefore, wisely and kindly put this out of the question; and there is scarcely any safeguard of virtue more firm than this fact. We may also observe that the feelings here expressed by Job are the appropriate expressions of a pious heart. Man should wait patiently in trial until his change comes. To the friend of God those sorrows will be brief. A change will soon come — the last change — and a change for the better. Beyond that, there shall be no change; none will be desirable or desired. For that time we should patiently wait, and all the sorrows which may intervene before that comes, we should patiently bear.

^{<8445>}**Job 14:15.** *Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee* This is language taken from courts of justice. It refers, probably, not to a future time, but to the present. “Call thou now, and I will respond.” It expresses a desire to come at once to trial; to have the matter adjusted before he should leave the world. He could not bear the idea of going out of the world under the imputations which were lying on him, and he asked for an opportunity to vindicate himself before his Maker; compare the notes at ^{<8096>}Job 9:16.

Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands To me, one of thy creatures. This should, with more propriety, be rendered in the imperative, “do thou have a desire.” It is the expression of an earnest wish that God would show an interest in him as one of his creatures, and would bring the matter to a speedy issue. The word here rendered, “have a desire” *āskt*, means literally to be or become “pale” (from *āsk*,^{<43701>} “silver,” so called from its paleness, like the Greek *αργυρος* ^{<696>} from *αγρος* ^{<68>}, white); and then the verb means to pine or long after anything, so as to become pale.

^{<8446>}**Job 14:16.** *For now thou numberest my steps* Thou dost make strict inquiry into all my conduct, that thou mayest mark my errors, and hold me bound to punishment. The sense is, that God treated him now with severity; and he besought him to have pity on him, and bring him to trial, and give him an opportunity to vindicate himself.

^{<8447>}**Job 14:17.** *My transgression is sealed up* The verb rendered sealed up *mtj* means to seal, to close, to shut up; see the notes at ^{<2086>}Isaiah 8:16; compare the notes at ^{<8097>}Job 9:7. It was common with the ancients to use a

seal where we use a lock. Money was counted and put into a bag, and a seal was attached to it. Hence, a seal might be put to a bag, as a sort of certificate of the amount, and to save the necessity of counting it again.

In a bag — $\rho\omega\theta\chi$ ¹⁶⁸⁷². So Jerome, “in sacculo.” So the Septuagint, $\epsilon\nu$ ^{<1722>} $\beta\alpha\lambda\alpha\nu\tau\iota\omega$ ^{<905>}. The word $\rho\omega\chi$ means usually a “bundle” (^{<1259>}1 Samuel 25:29; ^{<2013>}Song of Solomon 1:13), or anything bound up (compare ^{<1818>}Job 26:8; ^{<21312>}Hosea 13:12; ^{<12134>}Exodus 12:34; ^{<10118>}Proverbs 26:8; ^{<20816>}Isaiah 8:16; ^{<10425>}Genesis 42:35; ^{<20113>}Song of Solomon 1:13; ^{<10720>}Proverbs 7:20); but here it is not improperly rendered a bag. The idea is, that they were counted and numbered like money, and then sealed up and carefully put away. God had made an accurate estimate of their number, and he seemed carefully to guard and observe them — as a man does bags of gold — so that none might be lost. His sins seemed to have become a sort of valuable treasure to the Almighty, none of which he allowed now to escape his notice.

And thou sewest up mine iniquity Noyes renders this, “and thou addest unto mine iniquity.” Good, “thou tiest together mine iniquity.” The word used here $\iota\rho\alpha\epsilon$ ^{<12950>} means properly to patch; to patch together; to sew to join together as carpenters do their work; and then to devise or forge — as a falsehood; — to join a malicious charge to a person. Thus, in ^{<13369>}Psalms 119:69, “The proud have “forged a lie” $\iota\rho\alpha\epsilon$ ^{<12950>} $\rho\alpha\nu$,^{<18267>} against me,” that is, they have joined a lie to me, or devised this story about me. So in ^{<18104>}Job 13:4, “Ye are forgers of lies.” The word does not occur elsewhere. The Greeks have a similar expression in the phrase $\rho\alpha\pi\tau\epsilon\iota\nu$ ^{<4474>} $\epsilon\pi\eta$ — from where the word $\rho\alpha\psi\omega\delta\omicron\varsigma$. The word here, it seems to me, is used in the sense of sewing up money in a bag, as well as sealing it. This is done when there are large sums, to avoid the inconvenience of counting it. The sum is marked on the bag, and a seal affixed to it to authenticate it, and it is thus passed from one to another without the trouble of counting. If a seal is placed on the bag, it will circulate for its assigned value, without being opened for examination. It is usual now in the East for a bag to contain five hundred piastres, and hence, such a sum is called “a purse,” and amounts are calculated by so many “purses;” see Harmer, ii. 285, Chardin, and Pict. Bible in loc. The sense here is, that God had carefully numbered his sins, and marked them, and meant that none of them should escape. He regarded them as very great. They could now be referred to in the gross, without the

trouble of casting up the amount again. The sins of a man's past life are summed up and marked with reference to the future judgment.

Job 14:18. *And surely the mountain falling* Margin, "Fadeth." The sense of this is, that the hope of man in regard to living again, must certainly fail — as a mountain falls and does not rise again; as the rock is removed, and is not replaced; or as the waters wear away the stones, and they disappear. The hope of dying man was not like the tree that would spring up again (^{<1840>}Job 14:7-9); it was like the falling mountain, the wasting waters (^{<1841>}Job 14:11), the rock that was removed. The reference in the phrase before us is, probably, to a mountain that settles down and disappears — as is sometimes the case in violent convulsions of nature. It does not rise again, but is gone to reappear no more. So Job says it was of man.

And the rock is removed An earthquake shakes it, and removes it from its foundation, and it is not replaced.

Job 14:19. *The waters wear the stones* By their constant attrition they wear away even the hard rocks, and they disappear, and return no more. The sense is, that constant changes are going on in nature, and man resembles those objects which are removed to appear no more, and not the productions of the vegetable world that spring up again. It is possible that there may also be included the idea here, that the patience, constancy, firmness, and life of any man must be worn out by long continued trials, as even hard rocks would be worn away by the constant attrition of waters.

Thou washest away Margin, "Overflowest." This is literally the meaning of the Hebrew *āfv̄t*. But there is included the sense of washing away by the inundation.

The things which grow out of the dust of the earth Herder and Noyes translate this, "the floods overflow the dust of the earth," and this accords with the interpretation of Good and Rosenmuller. So Castelliio renders it, and so Luther — "Tropfen flossen die Erde weg." This is probably the true sense. The Hebrew word rendered "the things which grow out" *j yps*, means properly that which "is poured out" — from *j ps*, to pour out, to spread out — and is applied to grain produced spontaneously from kernels of the former year, without new seed. ^{<1821>}Leviticus 25:5-11; ^{<1822>}2 Kings

19:29. See the notes at ^{<2370>} Isaiah 37:30. But here it probably means a flood — that which flows out — and which washes away the earth.

The dust of the earth The earth or the land on the margin of streams. The sense is, that as a flood sweeps away the soil, so the hope of man was destroyed.

Thou destroyest the hope of man By death — for so the connection demands. It is the language of despondency. The tree would spring up, but man would die like a removed rock, like land washed away, like a falling mountain, and would revive no more. If Job had at times a hope of a future state, yet that hope seems at times, also, wholly to fail him, and he sinks down in utter despondency. At best, his views of the future world were dark and obscure. He seems to have had at no time clear conceptions of heaven — of the future holiness and blessedness of the righteous; but he anticipated, at best, only a residence in the world of disembodied spirits — dark, dreary, sad; — a world to which the grave was the entrance, and where the light was as darkness. With such anticipations, we are not to wonder that his mind sank into despondency; nor are we to be surprised at the expressions which he so often used, and which seem so inconsistent with the feelings which a child of God ought to cherish. In our trials let us imitate his patience, but not his despondency; let us copy his example in his better moments, and when he was full of confidence in God, and not his language of complaint, and his unhappy reflections on the government of the Most High.

^{<1814>} **Job 14:20.** *Thou prevailest forever against him* Thou dost always show that thou art stronger than he is. He never shows that he is able to contend with God.

And he passeth He cannot stand before thee, but is vanquished, and passes off the stage of being.

Thou changest his countenance Possibly the allusion is to the change produced by death. The countenance that glowed with health and was flushed with beauty and hope — blooming as the rose — is made pale as the lily under the hand of God. What an affecting exhibition of the power of God!

And sendest him away This language seems to be that of expectation that man would still live though he was sent away; but all his hopes on earth

were blasted, and he went away from his friends and possessions to return no more.

Job 14:21. *His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not* He is unacquainted with what is passing on the earth. Even should that occur which is most gratifying to a parent's heart; should his children rise to stations of honor and influence, he would not be permitted to enjoy the happiness which every father feels when his sons do well. This is suggested as one of the evils of death.

They are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them He is not permitted to sympathize with them, or to sustain them in their trials. This is another of the evils of death. When his children need his counsel and advice, he is not permitted to give it. He is taken away from his family, and revisits them no more.

Job 14:22. *But his flesh upon him shall have pain* Dr. Good renders this, "his flesh shall drop away from him." This is evidently a representation of the state of the man after he was dead. He would be taken away from hope and from his friends. His body would be committed to the grave, and his spirit would go to the world of shades. The image in the mind seems to have been, that his flesh would suffer. It would be cold and chill, and would be devoured by worms. There seems to have been an impression that the soul would be conscious of this in its distant and silent abode, and the description is given of the grave as if the body were conscious there, and the turning back to dust were attended with pain. This thought is that which makes the grave so gloomy now. We think of ourselves in its darkness and chilliness. We insensibly suppose that we shall be conscious there. And hence, we dread so much the lonely, sad, and gloomy residence in the tomb. The meaning of the word rendered "shall have pain" — **baḳ**⁴³⁵¹⁰ — is "to be sore, to be grieved, afflicted, sad." It is by the imagination, that pain is here attributed to the dead body. But Job was not alone in this. We all feel the same thing when we think of death.

And his soul within him shall mourn The soul that is within him shall be sad; that is, in the land of shades. So Virgil, speaking of the death of Lausus, says,

*Tum vita per auras
Concessit moesta ad manes, corpusque reliquit.
— AEn. x. 819.*

The idea of Job is, that it would leave all the comforts of this life; it would be separate from family and friends; it would go lonely and sad to the land of shades and of night. Job dreaded it. He loved life; and in the future world, as it was presented to his view, there was nothing to charm and attract. There he expected to wander in darkness and sadness; and from that gloomy world he expected to return no more forever. Eichhorn, however, has rendered this verse so as to give a different signification, which may perhaps be the true one.

*Nur uber sich ist er betruht;
Nur sich betrauert er.*

“His troubles pertain only to himself; his grief relates to himself alone.” According to this, the idea is that he must bear all his sorrows alone, and for himself. He is cut off from the living, and is not permitted to share in the joys and sorrows of his posterity, nor they in his. He has no knowledge of anything that pertains to them, nor do they participate in his griefs. What a flood of light and joy would have been poured on his soul by the Christian hope, and by the revelation of the truth that there is a world of perfect light and joy for the righteous — in heaven! And what thanks do we owe to the Great Author of our religion — to him who is “the Resurrection and the Life “ — that we are permitted to look upon the grave with hearts full of peace and joy!

NOTES ON JOB 15

Job 15:2. *Should a wise man* Referring to Job, and to his claims to be esteemed wise; see **Job 12:3; 13:2,6**. The argument of Eliphaz here is, that the sentiments which Job had advanced were a sufficient refutation of his pretensions to wisdom. A wise man would not be guilty of “mere talk,” or of using language that conveyed no ideas.

Utter literally, answer. It refers to the replies which Job had made to the arguments of his friends.

Vain knowledge Margin, “Knowledge of wind.” So the Hebrew; see **Job 6:26; 7:7**. The “wind” is used to denote what is unsubstantial, vain, changing. Here it is used as an emblem of remarks which were vain, empty, and irrelevant.

And fill his belly Fill his mind with unsubstantial arguments or sentiments — as little fitted for utility as the east wind is for food. The image is, “he fills himself with mere wind, and then blows it out under pretence of delivering the maxims of wisdom.”

With the east wind The east wind was not only tempestuous and vehement, but sultry, and destructive to vegetation. It passed over vast deserts, and was characterized by great dryness and heat. It is used here to denote a manner of discourse that had in it nothing profitable.

Job 15:3. *Should he reason with unprofitable talk?* It does not become a man professing to be wise to make use of words that are nothing to the purpose. The sense is, that what Job said amounted to just nothing.

Job 15:4. *Yea, thou castest off fear* Margin, Makest void. Fear here means the fear or reverence of God; and the idea is, that Job had not maintained a proper veneration or respect for his Maker in his argument. He had defended principles and made assertions which implied great disrespect for the Deity. If those doctrines were true; if he was right in his views about God, then he was not a being who could be revered. No confidence could be placed in his government; no worship of such a being could be maintained. Eliphaz does not refer here so much to what was personal with Job, as to his principles. He does not mean so much to affirm that he himself had lost all reverence for God, as that his arguments led to

that. Job had maintained that God did not in this life reward and punish people strictly according to their deserts. If this was so, Eliphaz says, then it would be impossible to honor him, and religion and worship would be at an end. The Hebrew word rendered “castest off” — more accurately rendered in the margin “makest void” **ypt** — implies this. “And restrainest prayer before God.” Margin, “speech.” The Hebrew word **hhyv** means properly “meditation” — and particularly meditation about divine things: ~~4397~~ Psalm 119:97. Then it means “devotion” — as to meditate on divine things is a part of devotion. It may be applied to any part of devotion, and seems to be not improperly rendered “prayer.” It is that devotion which finds utterance in the language of prayer. The word rendered “restrainest” — **[rgt** — means to shave off — like the beard; then to cut off, to take away, detract, withhold; and the idea here is, that the views which Job maintained were such as “to sap the very foundations of religion.” If God treated the righteous and the wicked alike, the one would have nothing to hope and the other nothing to fear. There could be no ground of encouragement, to pray to him. How could the righteous pray to him, unless there was evidence that he was the friend of virtue? How could they hope for his special blessing, if he were disposed to treat the good and the bad alike? Why was it not just as well to live in sin as to be holy? And how could such a being be the object of confidence or prayer? Eliphaz mistook the meaning of Job, and pressed his positions further than he intended; and Job was not entirely able to vindicate his position, or to show how the consequences stated by Eliphaz could be avoided. “They both wanted the complete and full view of the future state of retribution revealed in the gospel, and that would have removed the whole difficulty.” But I see not how the considerations here urged by this ancient sage of the tendency of Job’s doctrine can be avoided, if it be applied to the views of those who hold that all people will be saved at death. If that be the truth, then who can fail to see that the tendency must be to make people cast off the fear of God and to undermine all devotion and prayer? Why should people pray, if all are to be treated alike at death? How can people worship and honor a Being who will treat the good and the bad alike? How can we have confidence in a being who makes no distinction in regard to character? And what inducement can there be to be pious, when all people shall be made as happy as they can be forever whether they are pious or not? We are not to wonder, therefore, that the system tends every where to sap the

foundations of virtue and religion; that it makes no man better; and that where it prevails, it banishes religion and prayer from the world.

Job 15:5. *For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity* Margin, “teacheth.”

That is, “your whole argument shows that you are a guilty man. A man who can defend such positions about God cannot be a pious man, or have any proper veneration for the Most High.” A man may pursue an argument, and defend positions, that shall as certainly show that he is destitute of religion as though he lived an abandoned life; and he who holds opinions that are dishonorable to God, can no more be a pious man than if he dishonored God by violating his law.

Thou choosest the tongue of the crafty Instead of pursuing an argument with candor and sincerity, you have resorted to miserable sophisms, such as running disputants use. You have not showed a disposition to ascertain and defend the truth, but have relied on the arts and evasions of the subtle disputant and the rhetorician. His whole discourse, according to Eliphaz, was a work of mere art, designed to blind his hearers; to deceive them with a favorable opinion of his piety; and to give some plausible, but delusive view of the government of God.

Job 15:6. *Thine own mouth condemneth thee* That is, the sentiments which you have uttered show that you cannot be a pious man.

Job 15:7. *Art thou the first man that was born?* Hast thou lived ever since the creation, and treasured up all the wisdom of past times, that thou dost now speak so arrogantly and confidently? This question was asked, because, in the estimation of Eliphaz and his friends, wisdom was supposed to be connected with long life, and with an opportunity for extended and varied observation; see **Job 15:10**. Job they regarded as comparatively a young man.

Wast thou made before the hills? The mountains and the hills are often represented as being the oldest of created objects, probably because they are the most ancient things that appear on earth. Springs dry up, and waters change their beds; cities are built and decay; kingdoms rise and fall, and all the monuments of human skill and art perish; but the hills and mountains remain the same from age to age. Thus, in **Psalm 90:2**:

Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever thou hadst
formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to
everlasting thou art God.

So in ^{<01825>}Proverbs 8:25, in the description of wisdom:

Before the mountains were settled,
Before the hills was I brought forth.

So the hills are called “everlasting” (^{<04025>}Genesis 49:26), in allusion to their great antiquity and permanence. And so we, in common parlance, have a similar expression when we say of anything that “it is as old as the hills.” The question which Eliphaz intends to ask here of Job is, whether he had lived from the creation, and had observed everything?

^{<01518>}**Job 15:8.** *Hast thou heard the secret of God?* literally, “in the secret of God hast thou heard” — **dzsbh**. The word rendered “secret” **dws**^{<015475>} means properly a “couch” or “cushion,” on which one reclines — whether for sleep or at a table, or as a divan. Hence, it means a divan, or circle of persons sitting together for familiar conversation, ^{<04011>}Jeremiah 6:11; ^{<04017>}15:17; or of judges, counsellors, or advisers for consultation, as the word “divan” is now used in Oriental countries; ^{<01807>}Psalm 89:7; ^{<01818>}Jeremiah 33:18. Then it means any consultation, counsel, familiar conversation, or intimacy; ^{<01514>}Psalm 55:14; ^{<01522>}Proverbs 15:22. Here God is represented in Oriental language as seated in a “divan,” or council of state: there is deliberation about the concerns of his government; important questions are agitated and decided; and Eliphaz asks of Job whether he had been admitted to that council, and had heard those deliberations; and whether, if he had not, he was qualified to pronounce as he had done, on the plans and purposes of the Almighty.

And dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself? Having obtained the secret of that council, art thou now keeping it wholly to thyself — as a prime minister might be supposed to keep the purposes resolved on in the divan? “Hast thou listened in the council of YAHWEH, and dost thou now reserve all wisdom to thyself?”

^{<01519>}**Job 15:9.** *What knowest thou that we know not?* What pretensions or claims to wisdom have you which we have not? We have had, at least, equal advantages, and may be presumed to know as much as you.

Job 15:10. *With us are both the gray headed* That is, some of us who are here are much older than thy father; or we express the sentiments of such aged men. Job had admitted (^{<18121>}Job 12:12), that with the aged was wisdom, and in length of days understanding; and Eliphaz here urges that on that principle he and his friends had a claim to be heard. It would seem from this, that Job was very far from being regarded as an old man, and would probably be esteemed as in middle life. The Targum (Chaldee) refers this to Eliphaz himself and his two friends. “Truly Eliphaz, who is hoary-headed **bysd**, and Bildad, the long-lived **vyvqd**, are with us, and Zophar, who is older than thy father.” But it is not certain that he meant to confine the remark to them. It seems to me probable that this whole discussion occurred in the presence of others, and perhaps was a public contest. It is clear, I think, that Elihu was present, and heard it all (see ^{<18104>}Job 32:4), and it would accord well with Oriental habits to suppose that this was a trim of skill, which many were permitted to witness, and which was continued for a considerable time. Eliphaz may, therefore, have meant to say that among his friends who had assembled to hear this debate, there were not a few who coincided with him in sentiment, who were much more aged than Job, and who had had much longer experience in the world.

Job 15:11. *Are the consolations of God small with thee?* The “consolations of God” here refer probably to those considerations which had been suggested by Eliphaz and his friends, and which he takes to be the “consolations” which God had furnished for the afflicted. He asks whether they were regarded by Job as of little value? Whether he was not willing to take such consolations as God had provided, and to allow them to sustain him instead of permitting himself to inveigh against God? The Septuagint renders this, “thou hast been chastised less than thy sins deserve. Thou hast spoken with excessive haughtiness!” But the true idea seems to be, that Eliphaz regarded the considerations adduced by him and his friends, as the gracious consolations which God had provided for people in affliction, and as the results of all former reflections on the design of God in sending trial. He now represents Job as regarding them as of no value, and maintaining sentiments directly at variance with them. “Is there any secret thing with thee?” Noyes renders this, “and words so full of kindness to thee,” that is, are they of no account to you? So Dr. Good and Wemyss, “or the addresses of kindness to thyself?” Luther translates it, “but thou hast, perhaps, yet a secret portion with thee.” Rosenmuller, “and words most guilty spoken toward thee.” The Septuagint renders it, “and thou hast

spoken proudly beyond measure” — *μεγαλως* ^{<3171>} *υπερβαλλοντας* ^{<5235>} *λελαληκας* ^{<2980>}. The word which occurs in the Hebrew — *faæ* ^{<h3813>}, when it is a single word, and used as a verb, means to wrap around, to muffle, to cover, to conceal, and then to be “secret” — whence the Greek: *λαθω*, and *λανθανω* ^{<2990>}, and the Latin: *lateo*. In this sense it is understood here by our translators. But it may be also a compound word — from *faæ* ^{<h328>} — a gentle sound, murmur, whisper; from where it is used adverbially — *faæ* ^{<h328>} and *faæ* ^{<h3813>} — gently, softly, slowly — as of the slow gait of a mourner, ^{<1227>} 1 Kings 21:27; and of water gently flowing, as the water of Siloam, ^{<2186>} Isaiah 8:6. And hence, also, it may refer to words flowing kindly or gently toward anyone; and this seems to be the meaning here. Eliphaz asks whether Job could despise or undervalue the words spoken so gently and kindly toward him? A singular illustration, to be sure, of kindness, but still showing how the friends of Job estimated their own remarks.

^{<1852>} **Job 15:12.** *Why doth thine heart carry thee away?* Why do you allow your feelings to control you in spite of the decisions of the understanding? Eliphaz means to represent him as wholly under the influence of passion, instead of looking calmly and coolly at things as they were, and listening to the results of past experience and observation.

And what do thy eyes wink at This expression has given considerable perplexity to commentators. Rosenmuller (and after him Noyes) remarks that the expression indicates pride, haughtiness, and arrogance. In ^{<1959>} Psalm 35:19, it is an indication of joyfulness or triumph over a prostrate foe:

Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me;
Neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.

In ^{<2163>} Proverbs 6:13, it is an indication of a haughty, forward, self-confident person:

A haughty person, a wicked man, Walketh with a forward mouth;
He winketh with his eyes, He speaketh with his feet, He teacheth
with his fingers.

The Hebrew word *muæ* ^{<h7335>} occurs nowhere else, and it is therefore difficult to determine its true signification. The most probable meaning is, to wink with the eyes as a gesture of pride and insolence; compare the

notes at ^{<21816>}Isaiah 3:16. The Vulgate renders it, *attonitos habes oculos?* — “Why, as though meditating great things, hast thou eyes of astonishment?” Septuagint, “Why are thine eyes elevated?” Schultens renders it, “Why do thine eyes roll fury?” — *Quid fremitum volvunt oculi tui?* Luther, “Why art thou so proud? There can be no reasonable doubt that the word conveys the idea of pride and haughtiness manifested in some way by the eyes.

^{<18151>}**Job 15:13.** *That thou turnest thy spirit* That your mind is turned against God instead of acquiescing in his dealings. The views of Job he traces to pride and to overweening self-confidence, and perhaps not improperly.

^{<18154>}**Job 15:14.** *What is man that he should be clean?* The object of Eliphaz in this is to overturn the positions of Job that he was righteous, and had been punished beyond his deserts. He had before maintained (^{<18047>}Job 4:7), that no one ever perished being innocent, and that the righteous were not cut off. This was with him a favorite position; and indeed the whole drift of the argument maintained by him and his friends was, to prove that uncommon calamities were proof of uncommon guilt. Job had insisted on it that he was a righteous man, and had not deserved the calamities which had come upon him — a position which Eliphaz seems to have regarded as an assertion of innocence. To meet this he now maintains that no one is righteous; that all that are born of women are guilty; and in proof of this he goes back to the oracle which had made so deep an impression on his mind, and to the declaration then made to him that no one was pure before God; Job 4: He does not repeat it exactly as the oracle was then delivered to him, but adverts to the substance of it, and regards it as final and indisputable. The meaning is, “What are all the pretensions of man to purity, when even the angels are regarded as impure and the heavens unclean?”

He which is born of a woman Another mode of denoting man. No particular argument to maintain the doctrine of man’s depravity is couched in the fact that he is born of a woman. The sense is, simply, how can anyone of the human family be pure?

^{<18155>}**Job 15:15.** *Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints* In ^{<18048>}Job 4:18, it is, “in his servants,” but no doubt the same thing is intended. The reference is to the angels, called there servants, and here saints *uyvdq*, holy ones; see the notes at ^{<18048>}Job 4:18.

Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight In ^{<8018>}Job 4:18, “and his angels he charged with folly.” The general idea is the same. God is so holy that all things else seem to be impure. The very heavens seem to be unclean when compared with him. We are not to understand this as meaning that the heavens are defiled; that there is sin and corruption there, and that they are loathsome in the sight of God. The object is to set forth the exceeding purity of God, and the greatness of his holiness. This sentiment seemed to be a kind of proverb, or a commonplace in theology among the sages of Arabia. Thus, it occurs in ^{<8215>}Job 25:5, in the speech of Bildad, when he had nothing to say but to repeat the most common-place moral and theological adages —

Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; Yea, the stars are not pure in his sight: How much less man, that is a worm, And the son of man, which is a worm!

^{<8516>}**Job 15:16.** *How much more abominable and filthy is man* How much more than the angels, and than the heavens. In ^{<8419>}Job 4:19, the image is somewhat different. There it is, how can man be the object of the divine confidence since he lives in a house of clay, and is so frail? Here the image is more striking and forcible. The word rendered filthy *j l a*^{<h444>} means, in Arabic, to be sour, as milk, and then to be corrupt, in a moral sense; ^{<8413>}Psalms 14:3; 53:4. Here it means that man is defiled and polluted, and this declaration is a remarkable illustration of the ancient belief of the depravity of man.

Which drinketh iniquity like water! This is still a true, though a melancholy account of man. He loves sin, and is as greedy of it as a thirsty man is of water. He practices it as if it were his very nature — as much so as it is to drink. Perhaps too there may be an allusion, as Dr. Good supposes, to the large draught of water which the camel makes, implying that man is exceedingly greedy of iniquity; compare ^{<8112>}Job 20:12; 34:7; ^{<8128>}Proverbs 19:28.

^{<8517>}**Job 15:17.** *I will show thee ..* The remainder of this chapter is a violent declamation, designed to overwhelm Job with the proofs of personal guilt. Eliphaz professes to urge nothing which had not been handed down from his ancestors, and was the result of careful observation. What he says is made up of apothegms and maxims that were regarded as containing the results of ancient wisdom, all meaning that God would

punish the wicked, or that the wicked would be treated according to their deserts. The implied inference all along was, that Job, who had had so many proofs of the divine displeasure, must be a wicked man.

~~<1815>~~ **Job 15:18.** *Which wise men have told from their fathers* Which they have received from their ancestors and communicated to others.

Knowledge among the ancients was communicated chiefly by tradition from father to son. They had few or no written records, and hence, they embodied the results of their observation in brief, sententious maxims, and transmitted them from one generation to another.

And have not hid it They have freely communicated the result of their observations to others.

~~<1815>~~ **Job 15:19.** *Unto whom alone the earth was given* The land; the land or country where they dwelt. He refers to the period before they became intermingled with other nations, and before they imbibed any sentiments or opinions from strangers. The meaning is, "I will give you the result of the observations of the golden age of the world when our fathers dwelt alone, and it could not be pretended that they had been corrupted by foreign philosophy; and when in morals and in sentiment they were pure." Probably all nations look back to such times of primeval simplicity, and freedom from corruption, when the sentiments on morals and religion were comparatively pure, and before the people became corrupt by the importation of foreign opinions. It is a pleasing delusion to look back to such times — to some innocent Arcadia, or to a golden age — but usually all such retrospections are the mere work of fancy. The world really grows wiser as it grows older; and in the progress of society it is a rare thing when the present is not more pure and happy than its early stages. The comforts, privileges, and intelligence of the patriarchal age were not to be compared with those which we enjoy — any more than the condition of the wandering Arab is to be preferred to the quiet, peace, intelligence, and order of a calm, Christian home.

No stranger passed among them No foreigner came to corrupt their sentiments by an admixture of strange doctrines. "Eliphaz here speaks like a genuine Arab, whose pride is in his tongue, his sword, and his pure blood." Umbreit. It is possible, as Rosenmuller suggests, that Eliphaz means to insinuate that Job had been corrupted by the sentiments of the

Chaldeans and Sabeans, and had departed from the pure doctrines of earlier times.

Job 15:20. *Travaileth with pain* That is, his sorrows are like the pains of parturition. Eliphaz means to say that he is a constant sufferer.

All his days It seems difficult to see how they could have ever formed this universal maxim. It is certainly not literally true now; nor was it ever. But in order to convey the doctrine that the wicked would be punished in as pointed and striking a manner as possible, it was made to assume this universal form — meaning that the life of the wicked would be miserable. There is some reason to think that this and what follows to the close of the chapter, is an ancient fragment which Eliphaz rehearses as containing the sentiments of a purer age of the world.

And the number of years is hidden to the oppressor Wemyss renders this, “and a reckoning of years is laid up for the violent.” So, also, Dr. Good. The Vulgate renders it, “and the number of the years of his tyranny is uncertain.” Rosenmuller, Cocceius, Drusius, and some others suppose that there should be understood here and repeated the clause occurring in the first hemistich, and that it means, “and in the number of years which are laid up for the violent man, he is tortured with pain.” Luther renders it, “and to a tyrant is the number of his years concealed.” It is difficult to tell what the passage means. To me, the most probable interpretation is one which I have not met with in any of the books which I have consulted, and which may be thus expressed, “the wicked man will be tormented all his days.” To one who is an oppressor or tyrant, the number of his years is hidden. He has no security of life. He cannot calculate with any certainty on its continuance. The end is hid. A righteous man may make some calculation, and can see the probable end of his days. He may expect to see an honored old age. But tyrants are so often cut down suddenly; they so frequently perish by assassination, and robbers are so often unexpectedly overcome, that there is no calculation which can be formed in respect to the termination of their course. Their end is hid. They die suddenly and disappear. This suits the connection; and the sentiment is, in the main, in accordance with facts as they occur.

Job 15:21. *A dreadful sound is in his ears* Margin, “A sound of fears.” He hears sudden, frightful sounds, and is alarmed. Or when he thinks himself safe, he is suddenly surprised. The enemy steals upon him,

and in his fancied security he dies. This sentiment might be illustrated at almost any length by the mode of savage warfare in America, and by the sudden attacks which the American savage makes, in the silence of the night, on his unsuspecting foes. The Chaldee renders this, “the fear of the terrors in Gehenna are in his ears; when the righteous dwell in peace and eternal life, destruction comes upon him.”

In prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him When he supposes he is safe, and his affairs seem to be prosperous, then sudden destruction comes; see ^{<11818>}1 Thessalonians 5:3. The history of wicked people, who have encompassed themselves with wealth, and as they supposed with every thing necessary to happiness, and who have been suddenly cut off, would furnish all the instances which would be necessary to illustrate this sentiment of Eliphaz. See an exquisitely beautiful illustration of it in ^{<19725>}Psalm 37:35,36:

I have seen the wicked in great power, And spreading himself like a green bay-tree. Yet he passed away, and lo he was not; Yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

So, also, in ^{<197318>}Psalm 73:18-20:

Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; Thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream when one awaketh, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

^{<18152>}**Job 15:22.** *He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness* Darkness is used in the Bible, as elsewhere, to denote calamity; and the meaning here is, that the wicked man has not confidence ^{<13808>}al o ^{<h539>}mæ, that he shall return safely from impending danger. He is in constant dread of assassination, or of some fearful evil. He is never secure; his mind is never calm; he lives in constant dread. This is still an accurate description of a man with a guilty conscience; for such a man lives in constant fear, and never feels any security that he is safe.

And he is waited for of the sword That is, he is destined for the sword. Gesenius.

Job 15:23. *He wandereth abroad for bread* The Septuagint renders this, “he is destined to be food for vultures” — *κατατετακται δε* ^{<1161>} *εις* ^{<1519>} *σιτος* ^{<4621>} *γυψιν* . The meaning of the Hebrew is, simply, that he will be reduced to poverty, and will not know where to obtain a supply for his returning needs.

He knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand He is assured that the period of calamity is not far remote. It must come. He has no security that it will not come immediately. The whole design of this is to show that there is no calmness and security for a wicked man; that in the midst of apparent prosperity his soul is in constant dread.

Job 15:24. *As a king ready to the battle* Fully prepared for a battle; whom it would be vain to attempt to resist. So mighty would be the combined forces of trouble and anguish against him, that it would be vain to attempt to oppose them.

Job 15:25. *For he stretcheth out his hand against God* The hand is stretched out for battle. It wields the spear or the sword against an enemy. The idea here is, that the wicked man makes God an adversary. He does not contend with his fellow-man, with fate, with the elements, with evil angels, but with God. His opponent is an Almighty Being, and he cannot prevail against him; compare the notes at ^{<2374>} Isaiah 27:4.

And strengtheneth himself As an army does that throws up a rampart, or constructs a fortification. The whole image here is taken from the practice of war; and the sense is, that a wicked man is really making war on the Almighty, and that in that war he must be vanquished; compare ^{<1890E>} Job 9:4.

Job 15:26. *He runneth upon him* That is, upon God. The image here is taken from the mode in which people rushed into battle. It was with a violent concussion, and usually with a shout, that they might intimidate their foes, and overcome them at first, with the violence of the shock. The mode of warfare is now changed, and it is the vaunted excellency of modern warfare that armies now go deliberately and calmly to put each other to death.

Even “on his neck literally, “with the neck” — *ραλξαε* ^{<4657>} . Vulgate, “With erect neck — erecto collo.” Septuagint, contemptuously, or with pride — *ὕβρει* . The idea seems to be, not that he ran “upon the neck” of his adversary — as would seem to be implied in our translation — but that he

ran in a firm, haughty, confident manner; with a head erect and firm, as the indication of self confidence, and a determined purpose to overcome his foe. See Schultens in loc.

Upon the thick bosses The word boss with us means a knob — a protuberant ornament of silver, brass, or ivory on a harness or a bridle; then a protuberant part, a prominence, or a round or swelling body of any kind. The Hebrew word used here **Bgæ**^{<4354>} means properly anything gibbous, convex, arched; and hence, “the back” — as of animals. Applied to a shield, it means the convex part or the back of it — the part which was presented to an enemy, and which was made swelling and strong, called by the Greeks **ομφαλος**, or **μεσομφαλιον**. Gesenius supposes that the metaphor here is taken from soldiers, who joined their shields together, and thus rushed upon an enemy. This was one mode of ancient warfare, when an army or a phalanx united their shields in front, so that nothing could penetrate them, or so united them over their heads when approaching a fortress, that they could safely march under them as a covering. This, among the Romans and Greeks, was commonly practiced when approaching a besieged town. One form of the testudo — the **χελωνη στρατιωτων**^{<4757>} of the Greeks, was formed by the soldiers, pressed close together and holding their shields over their heads in such a manner as to form a compact covering. John H. Eschenburg, *Manual of Classical Literature*. by N. W. Fiske, pt. III, Section 147. The Vulgate renders this, “and he is armed with a fat neck” — *pingui cervice armatus est*. Schultens expresses the idea that is adopted by Gesenius, and refers to Arabic customs to show that shields were thus united in defending an army from a foe, or in making an attack on them. He says, also, that it is a common expression — a proverb — among the Arabs, “he turns the back of his shield” to denote that one is an adversary; and quotes a passage from Hamasa, “When a friend meets me with base suspicions, I turn to him the back of my shield — a proverb, whose origin is derived from the fact, that a warrior turns the back of his shield to his foes.” Paxton supposes that the expression here is taken from single combat, which early prevailed. But the idea here is not that which our translation would seem to convey. It is not that he rushes upon or against the hard or thick shield “of the Almighty” — and that, therefore, he must meet resistance and be overcome: it is that he rushes upon God WITH his own shield. He puts himself in the attitude of a warrior. He turns the boss of his own shield against God, and becomes his antagonist. He is his enemy. The omission of the word “with” in the

passage — or the preposition which is in the Hebrew ([~b|-) has led to this erroneous translation. The passage is often quoted in a popular manner to denote that the sinner rushes upon God, “and must meet resistance” from his shield, or be overcome. It should be quoted only to denote that the sinner places himself in an attitude of opposition to God, and is his enemy.

Of his bucklers Of his shields *wyngm*, that is, of the shields which the sinner has; not the shields of God. The shield was a well-known instrument of war, usually made with a rim of wood or metal, and covered with skins, and carried on the left arm; see the notes at ^{<B1525>}Isaiah 21:5. The outer surface was made rounding from the center to the edge, and was smoothly polished, so that darts or arrows would glide off and not penetrate.

^{<B1525>}**Job 15:27.** *Because he covereth his face with his fatness* That is, he not only stretches out his hand against God (^{<B1525>}Job 15:25) and rushes upon him as an armed foe (^{<B1525>}Job 15:26), but he gives himself up to a life of luxury, gluttony, and licentiousness; and therefore, these calamities must come upon him. This is designed to be a description of a luxurious and licentious person — a man who is an enemy of God, and who, therefore, must incur his displeasure.

And maketh collops of fat Like an ox that is fattened. The word *collop* properly means “a small slice of meat, a piece of flesh” (Webster), but here it means a thick piece, or a mass. The word is used in this sense in New England. The sense is, that he becomes excessively fat and gross — as they usually do who live in sensual indulgence and who forget God.

^{<B1525>}**Job 15:28.** *And he dwelleth* Or rather, “therefore he shall dwell.” As a consequence of his opposing God, and devoting himself to a life of sensuality and ease, he shall dwell in a desolate place. Instead of living in affluence and in a splendid city, he shall be compelled to take up his abode in places that have been deserted and abandoned. Such places — like Petra or Babylon now — became the temporary lodgings of caravans and travelers, or the abodes of outcasts and robbers. The meaning here is, that the proud and wicked man shall be ejected from his palace, and compelled to seek a refuge far away from the usual haunts of men.

Which are ready to become heaps Which are just ready to tumble into ruin.

^{<B1525>}**Job 15:29.** *He shall not be rich* That is, he shall not continue rich; or he shall not again become rich. He shall be permanently poor.

Neither shall his substance continue His property.

Neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof Noyes renders this, “And his possessions shall not be extended upon the earth.” Wemyss, “Nor shall he be master of his own desires.” Good, “Nor their success spread abroad in the land.” Luther, Und sein Gluck wird sich nicht ausbreiten im Lande —” And his fortune shall not spread itself abroad in the land.” Vulgate, “Neither shall he send his root in the earth “— nec mittet in terra radicem suam. The Septuagint, ου ^{<3756>} μη ^{<3361>} βαλη ^{<906>} επι ^{<1909>} την ^{<3588>} γων σκιαν ^{<4639>} — “and shall not cast a shadow upon the earth.” The word rendered “perfection” ηλ ρηη ^{<4512>} is commonly supposed to be from ηλ ρηη ^{<4512>}, from ηλ ρ ^{<4529>} to finish, to procure, and hence, the noun may be applied to that which is procured — and thus may denote possessions. According to this the correct rendering is, “and he does not extend their possessions abroad in the land;” that is, his possessions do not extend abroad. Gesenius supposes, however, that the word is a corruption for μλ βμ — “their flocks.” I see no objection, however, to its being regarded as meaning possessions — and then the sense is, that he would fail in that which is so much the object of ambition with every avaricious man — that his possessions should extend through the land; compare the notes at ^{<2388>} Isaiah 5:8.

^{<853>} **Job 15:30.** *He shall not depart out of darkness* He shall not escape from calamity; see ^{<852>} Job 15:22. He shall not be able to rise again, but shall be continually poor.

The flame shall dry up his branches As the fire consumes the green branches of a tree, so shall punishment do to him. This comparison is very forcible, and the idea is, that the man who has been prospered as a tree shall be consumed — as the fire consumes a tree when it passes through the branches. The comparison of a prosperous man with a tree is very common, and very beautiful. Thus, the Psalmist says,

I have seen the wicked in great power, And spreading himself like a green bay tree. ^{<875>} Psalm 37:35.

Compare ^{<922>} Psalm 92:12,13. The aged Skenandoah — a chief of the Oneida tribe of Indians, said, “I am an aged hemlock. The winds of an hundred winters have whistled through my branches. I am dead at the top. My branches are falling,” etc.

And by the breath of his mouth shall he go away That is, by the breath of the mouth of God. God is not indeed specified, but it is not unusual to speak of him in this manner. The image here seems to be that of the destruction of a man by a burning wind or by lightning. As a tree is dried up, or is rent by lightning, or is torn up from the roots by a tempest sent by the Deity, so the wicked will be destroyed.

~~18151~~ **Job 15:31.** *Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity* The sense is, “Let him not trust in vanity. He will be deceived. Vanity will be his recompense.” The idea is, that a man should not confide in that which will furnish no support. He should not rely on his wealth and rank; his houses and lands; his servants, his armies, or his power, if he is wicked, for all this is vain. He needs some better reliance, and that can be found only in a righteous life. The word vanity here means that which is unsubstantial; which cannot uphold or sustain; which will certainly give way.

For vanity will be his recompense He will find only vanity. He will be stripped of all his honors and possessions.

~~18152~~ **Job 15:32.** *It shall be accomplished before his time* Margin, “cut off.” The image here is that of a tree, which had been suggested in ~~18151~~ Job 15:30. Here it is followed up by various illustrations drawn from the flower, the fruit, etc., all of which are designed to denote the same thing — that a wicked man will not be permanently prosperous; he will not live and flourish as he would if he were righteous. He will be like a tree that is cut down before its proper time, or that casts its flowers and fruits and brings nothing to perfection. The phrase here literally is, “It shall not be filled up in its time;” that is, a wicked man will be cut off before he has filled up the measure of his days, like a tree that decays and falls before its proper time. A similar idea occurs in ~~18153~~ Psalm 55:23. “Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days.” As a general fact this is all true, and the observation of the ancient Idumeans was correct. The temperate live longer than the intemperate; the chaste longer than the licentious; he that controls and governs his passions longer than he who gives the reins to them; and he who leads a life of honesty and virtue longer than he who lives for crime. Pure religion makes a man temperate, sober, chaste, calm, dispassionate, and equable in his temper; saves from broils, contentions, and strifes; subdues the angry passions, and thus tends to lengthen out life.

His branch shall not be green It shall be dried up and withered away — retaining the image of a tree.

^{<18153>}**Job 15:33.** *He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine* The idea here is, that the wicked man shall be like a vine that casts off its grapes while they are yet sour and green, and brings none to perfection; compare the notes at ^{<231815>}Isaiah 18:5. Scott renders this,

“As when the vine her half-grown berries showers, Or poisoned olive her unfolding flowers.”

It would seem from this passage that the vine might be so blasted by a hot wind or other cause, as to cast its unripe grapes to the earth. The employment of a figure of this kind to illustrate an idea supposes that such a case was familiar to those who were addressed. It is well known that in the East the grape and the olive might be blasted while in blossom, or when the fruit was setting, as all fruit may be. The injury is usually done in the flower, or when the fruit is just forming. Yet our observations of the effects of the burning winds that pass over the deserts on fruit that is half formed, in blasting it and causing it to fall, are too limited to allow us to come to any definite conclusion in regard to such effects in general. Anyone, however, can see the beauty of this image. The plans and purposes of wicked people are immature. Nothing is carried to perfection. They are cut off, their plans are blasted, and all the results of their living are like the sour, hard, crabbed, and useless fruit that falls from the tree before it is ripe. The results of the life of the righteous, on the other hand, are like a tree loaded with ripe and mellow fruit — their plans are brought to maturity, and resemble the rich and heavy clusters of grapes, or the abundant fruits of the olive when ripe.

And shall cast off his flower as the olive The olive is a well-known tree that abounds in the East. The fruit is chiefly valuable for the oil which it produces; compare the notes at ^{<5117>}Romans 11:17. The olive is liable to be blasted while the fruit is setting, or while the tree is in blossom. In Greece, a northeast wind often proves destructive to the olive, and the same may be true of other places. Dr. Chandler speaking of Greece, says, “The olive groves are now, as anciently, a principal source of the riches of Athens. The crops had failed five years successively when we arrived; the cause assigned was a northerly wind, called Greco-tramontane, which destroyed the flower. The fruit is set in about a fortnight, when the apprehension from this unpropitious quarter ceases. The bloom in the following year was

unhurt, and we had the pleasure of leaving the Athenians happy in the prospect of a plentiful harvest.” A wicked man is here elegantly compared with such a tree that casts its flowers and produces no fruit.

Job 15:34. *For the congregation of hypocrites* The word rendered “congregation” here **hdjē**^{h5712} means properly an appointed meeting; a meeting convened by appointment or at stated times (from **hdy**^{h3034}), and hence, an assembly of any kind. It is commonly applied to an assembly for public worship; but it may refer to a more private company — a family, or circle of friends, dependents, etc. It refers here, I suppose, to such a community that a man can get around him in his own dwelling — his family, servants, dependents, etc. The word rendered “hypocrites” **ānj** **as** in the singular number, and should be so rendered here. It does not mean that a worshipping assembly composed of hypocrites would be desolate — which may be true — but that the community which a man who is a hypocrite can gather around him shall be swept away. His children, his dependents, and his retinue of servants, shall be taken away from him, and he shall be left to solitude. Probably there was an allusion here to Job, who had been stripped in this manner; or at any rate the remark was one, if it were a quotation from the ancient sayings of the Arabians, which Job could not but regard as applied to himself.

And fire shall consume This has all the appearance of being a proverb. The meaning is, that they who received a bribe would be certainly punished.

The tabernacles of bribery The tents or dwellings of those who receive bribes, and who therefore are easily corrupted, and have no solid principles. There is probably an allusion here to Job; and no doubt Eliphaz meant to apply this severe remark to him. Job was a Sheik, an Emir, a head of a tribe, and, therefore, a magistrate; see **Job 29:7**, seq. Yet a part of his possessions and servants had been cut off by fire from heaven (**Job 1:16**); and Eliphaz means probably to imply that it had been because he had been guilty of receiving a bribe. This ancient proverb declared that the dwellings of the man who could be bribed would be consumed by fire; and now he presumes that the fact that Job had been visited by the fire of heaven was full proof that he had been guilty in this manner. It was about on principles such as these that the reasoning of the friends of Job was conducted.

~~18155~~ **Job 15:35.** *They conceive mischief* The meaning of this verse is, that they form and execute plans of evil. It is the characteristic of such men that they form such plans and live to execute them, and they must abide the consequences. All this was evidently meant for Job; and few things could be more trying to a man's patience than to sit and hear those ancient apothegms, designed to describe the wicked, applied so unfeelingly to himself.

NOTES ON JOB 16

Job 16:2. *Many such things* That is, either things fitted to provoke and irritate, or sentiments that are common-place. There was nothing new in what they said, and nothing to the purpose.

Miserable comforters Compare ^{1813}Job 13:4. They had come professedly to condole with him. Now all that they said was adapted only to irritate, and to deepen his distress. He was disappointed; and he was deeply wounded and grieved.

Job 16:3. *Shall vain words?* Margin, As in Hebrew words of wind; that is, words which were devoid of thought-light, trifling. This is a retort on Eliphaz. He had charged Job (^{1813}Job 15:2,3) with uttering only such words. Such forms of expression are common in the East. “His promise, it is only wind.” “Breath, breath: all breath.” Roberts.

Or what emboldeneth thee? “What provokes or irritates thee, that thou dost answer in this manner? What have I said, that has given occasion to such a speech — a speech so severe and unkind?” The Syriac reads this, “do not afflict me any more with speeches; for if you speak any more, I will not answer you.”

Job 16:4. *I also could speak as ye do* In the same reproachful manner, and stringing together old proverbs and maxims as you have.

If your soul were in my soul's stead If you were in my place. The idea is, that there is no difficulty in finding arguments to overwhelm the afflicted — a truth which most persons who have been unfortunate, have had opportunity to experience.

I could heap up words against you Or, rather, “I could string together words against you.” The idea is not that of heaping up, or accumulating; it is that of tying together, or uniting; and refers here to stringing together old maxims, saws, and proverbs, in the form of a set argument or discourse. The idea of Job is, that their discourses were nothing but ancient proverbs, thrown together, or strung along without regard to order, pertinency, or force. The Hebrew word used here ^{rbje}^{h2266} means to bind, to bind together, to associate, to be confederate. It may be applied to

friends — united in friendship; to nations — united in an alliance, etc. Gesenius supposes that it means here that he “would make a league with words against them;” but the above seems to be the more probable interpretation. The Septuagint renders it, “then I could insult you — **εναλουμαι** — with words.” Jerome (Vulgate) “I would console you with words, and move my head over you.” The Chaldee is as the Hebrew — **ybj a**. Dr. Good renders it, “against you will I string together old sayings.”

And shake mine head at you An action common to all countries and ages, expressive of contempt, or of threatening; compare ^{<24836>}Jeremiah 18:16; ^{<3025>}Lamentations 2:15; ^{<3025>}Zephaniah 2:15; ^{<4073>}Matthew 27:39. So Lucretius ii. 1163:

*Jamque caput quassans grandis suspirat ararat
Crebrius incassum magnum cecidisse laborem.*

In like manner Virgil, AEn. xii. 292:

Tum quassanos caput, haec effudit pectore dicta.

So, also, Homer, Odys. ε :

Κινησας δε καρη προτι ον μυθησατο θυμον .

The meaning of Job here is, that he could as easily have expressed contempt, reproach, and scorn, as they did. It required no uncommon talent to do it, and he felt that he would have been fully sufficient for the task.

^{<18105>}**Job 16:5.** (But I would strengthen you with my mouth With that which proceeds from the mouth — words.

And the moving of my lips My speaking — implying that it would have been done in a mild, gentle, kind manner — so that the lips would appear just to move. Others, however, have given a different interpretation. Thus, Dr. Good renders it:

*“With my own mouth will I overpower you,
Till the quivering of my lips shall fall.”*

But the common interpretation is to be preferred. The word rendered “moving” **dyn**, is from **dWn** ^{<5110>} — “to move,” “agitate,” and hence, denotes “motion.” It denotes here the motion of the lips when we speak. Gesenius

renders it, “consolation,” “comfort” — because this is expressed by a motion of the head.

Should assuage your grief The word used here **Ēcþe**^{h2820} means properly “to hold back,” “to restrain;” ^{<h71>}Job 7:11. Here it is correctly rendered, meaning that he would hold back, or check their sorrows. In other words, he would sustain them.

^{<h16>}**Job 16:6.** *Though I speak, my grief is not assuaged* “But for me, it makes now no difference whether I speak or am silent. My sufferings continue. If I attempt to vindicate myself before people, I am reproached; and equally so if I am silent. If I maintain my cause before God, it avails me nothing, for my sufferings continue. If I am silent, and submit without a complaint, they are the same. Neither silence, nor argument, nor entreaty, avail me before God or man. I am doomed to suffering.”

What am I eased? Margin. “Goeth from me.” Literally, “what goeth from me?” The sense is, that it all availed nothing.

^{<h17>}**Job 16:7.** *But now he hath made me weary* That is, God has exhausted my strength. This verse introduces a new description of his sufferings; and he begins with a statement of the woes that God had brought on him. The first was, that he had taken away all his strength.

All my company The word rendered “company” **hdfe**^{h5712} means properly an assembly that comes together by appointment, or at stated times; but here it is evidently used in the sense of the little community of which Job was the head and father. The sense is, that all his family had been destroyed.

^{<h18>}**Job 16:8.** *And thou hast filled me with wrinkles* Noyes renders this, “and thou hast seized hold of me, which is a witness against me.” Wemyss, “since thou hast bound me with chains, witnesses come forward.” Good, “and hast cut off myself from becoming a witness.” Luther, “he has made me “kuntzlich” (skillfully, artificially, cunningly,) and bears witness against me.” Jerome, “my wrinkles bear witness against me.” Septuagint, “my lie has become a witness, and is risen up against me.” From this variety of explanations, it will be seen that this passage is not of easy and obvious construction. The Hebrew word which is here used and rendered, “thou hast filled me with wrinkles” **ynfmqt**, from **fmæ**^{h7069} — occurs only in one other place in the Bible; ^{<h216>}Job 22:16. It is there in the “Pual” form,

and rendered “were cut down.” According to Gesenius, it means, to lay fast hold of, to seize with the hands, and answers to the Arabic “to bind.” The word in Chaldee **fml** means to wrinkle, or collect in wrinkles; and is applied to anything that is “contracted,” or rough. It is applied in the form **fmwq** to the pupil of the eye as being “contracted,” as in the declaration in *Derec Erez*, c. 5, quoted by Castell. “The world is like the eye; where the ocean that surrounds the world is white; the world itself is black; the pupil is Jerusalem, and the image in the pupil is the sanctuary.” Probably the true notion of the word is to be found in the Arabic. According to Castell, this means, to tie together the four feet of a sheep or lamb, in order that it might be slain; to bind an infant in swaddling clothes before it is laid in a cradle; to collect camels into a group or herd; and hence, the noun is used to denote a cord or rope twisted of wool, or of leaves of the palm, or the bandages by which an infant is bound. This idea is not in use in the Hebrew; but I have no doubt that this was the original sense of the word, and that this is one of the numerous places in *Job* where light may be cast upon the meaning of a word from its use in Arabic. The Hebrew word may be applied to the “collecting” or “contraction” of the face in wrinkles by age, but this is not the sense here. We should express the idea by “being drawn up” with pain or affliction; by being straitened, or compressed.” The meaning — is that of “drawing together” — as the feet of a sheep when tied, or twisting — as a rope; and the idea here is, that *Job* was drawn up, compressed, bound by his afflictions — and that this was a witness against him. The word “compressed” comes as near to the sense as any one that we have.

Which is a witness against me That is, “this is an argument against my innocence. The fact that God has thus compressed, and fettered, and fastened me; that he has bound me as with a cord — as if I were tied for the slaughter, is an argument on which my friends insist, and to which they appeal, as a proof of my guilt. I cannot answer it. They refer to it constantly. It is the burden of their demonstration, and how can I reply to it?” The position of mind here is, that he could appeal to God for his uprightness, but these afflictions stood in the way of his argument for his innocence with his friends. They were the “usual” proofs of God’s displeasure, and he could not well meet the argument which was drawn from them in his case, for in all his protestations of innocence there stood these afflictions — the usual proofs of God’s displeasure against people — as evidence against him, to which they triumphantly appealed.

And my leanness rising up in me Dr. Good renders this, “my calumniator.” Wemyss, “false witnesses.” So Jerome, “falsiloquus.” The Septuagint renders it, “my lie — το ^{<3588>} ψευδος ^{<5579>} μου ^{<3450>} — rises up against me.” The Hebrew word vj כֶּזֶב ^{<3588>} means properly “a lie, deceit, hypocrisy.” But it cannot be supposed that Job would formally admit that he was a liar and a hypocrite. This would have been to concede the whole point in dispute. The word, therefore, it would seem, “must” have some other sense. The verb vj כָּזַב ^{<3584>} is used to denote not only to “lie,” but also to “waste away, to fail.” ^{<3492>} Psalm 109:24, “My flesh “faileth” of fatness.” The idea seems to have been, that a person whose flesh had wasted away by sickness, as it were, “belied himself;” or it was a “false testimony” about himself; it did not give “a fair representation” of him. That could be obtained only when he was in sound health. Thus, in Hab. 3:17, “the labour of the olive “shall fail.”” Hebrew shall “lie” or “deceive;” that is, it shall belie itself, or shall not do justice to itself; it shall afford no fair representation of what the olive is fitted to produce. So the word is used ^{<3492>} Hosea 9:2. It is used here in this sense, as denoting “the false appearance of Job” — his present aspect — which was no proper representation of himself; that is, his emaciated and ulcerated form. This, he says, was a “witness” against him. It was one of the proofs to which they appealed, and he did not know how to answer it. It was usually an evidence of divine displeasure, and he now solemnly and tenderly addresses God, and says, that he had furnished this testimony against him — and he was overwhelmed.

^{<310>} **Job 16:9.** *He teareth me in his wrath* The language here is all taken from the ferocity of wild beasts; and the idea is, that his enemy had come upon him as a lion seizes upon its prey. Rosenmuller, Reiske, and some others suppose that this refers to God. Cocceius refers it to Satan. Schultens, Dr. Good, and some others, to Eliphaz, as the leading man among his adversaries. I have no doubt that this is the true reference. The connection seems to demand this; and we ought not to suppose that Job would charge this upon God, unless there is the clearest evidence. The whole passage is a description of the manner in which Job supposed his friends had come upon him. He says they had attacked him like wild beasts. Yet it must be admitted that he sometimes attributes these feelings to God, and says that he came upon him like a roaring lion see ^{<3106>} Job 10:16,17.

Who hateth me Or rather, “and persecutes me, or is become my adversary,” for so the word used here *μῆα*^{h7852} means; see the notes at ^{<837D>}Job 30:21.

He gnasheth upon me with his teeth As an enraged wild animal does when about to seize upon its prey. A similar figure occurs in Otway, in his “Orphan:”

— for my Castalio’s false; False as the wind, the water, or the weather: Cruel as tigers o’er their trembling prey: I feel him in my breast, he tears my heart, And at each sigh he drinks the gushing blood.

And so Homer, when he describes the wrath of Achilles as he armed himself to avenge the death of Patroclus, mentions among other signs of wrath his gnashing his teeth:

Του και οδοντων μεν καναχη πελε.
— Iliad xix. 364.

So Virgil describes his hero as

furens animis, dentibus infrendens.
AEn. viii. 228.

Mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me Looks fiercely; watches me narrowly — as an animal does his victim when about to seize upon it. The image is probably drawn from the intense gaze of the lion when about to pounce upon his prey. “He darts piercing looks at me; or looks at me with a fierce and penetrating eye.”

^{<816D>}**Job 16:10.** *They have gaped upon me* Changing the form from the singular to the plural, and including “all” his pretended friends. Such a change in the number is not uncommon. His mind seems to have passed from the particular instance which he was contemplating, to “all” his friends, and he suddenly felt that “all” had treated him alike. The meaning is, that, like wild beasts, they open their mouth to devour me.

They have gathered themselves together They have entered into a conspiracy, and have “agreed” to oppose me. They are united in this thing, and all feel and act alike.

<8161> **Job 16:11.** *God hath delivered me* Margin “shut me up.” The meaning is, that God had committed him to their hands as a prisoner or captive. They had power over him to do as they pleased.

To the ungodly Into the hands of wicked people — meaning undoubtedly his professed friends.

And turned me over The word used here (from *fry*) means to throw head long, to precipitate, to cast down. Here it means, “he has thrown me headlong into the hands of the wicked.”

<8162> **Job 16:12.** *I was at ease* I was in a state of happiness and security. The word used here *wl* *ⵍ*, <47961> means sometimes to be “at ease” in an improper sense; that is, to be in a state of “carnal security,” or living unconcerned in sin (<3520> Ezekiel 23:42; compare <4013> Proverbs 1:32); but here it is used in the sense of comfort. He had everything desirable around him.

But he hath broken me asunder He has crushed me.

He hath also taken, me by my neck Perhaps as an animal does his prey. We have all seen dogs seize upon their prey in this manner.

And set me up for his mark Changing the figure, and saying that God had directed his arrows against him; so Jeremiah, <5182> Lamentations 3:12:

*He hath bent his bow,
And set me as a mark for the arrow.*

<8163> **Job 16:13.** *His archers* He does not come alone to shoot at me; he has employed a company of bowmen, who also direct “their” arrows against me. The word used here *bræ*, <47228> means properly “much, large,” great; and is applied to that which is powerful or mighty. It is nowhere else used in the sense of “archers,” and might be rendered “his many;” i.e. his bands, hosts, or armies. But as all the ancient versions render it “arrows,” or “archers,” probably that sense is to be retained. Allusion is here made to those who claimed to be the friends of Job, but who now showed to his apprehension that they were merely sharp-shooters under the control of God, to deepen his woes.

He cleaveth my reins asunder With his arrows. They penetrate quite through me.

He poureth out my gall The word “gall” means the “bile” — the yellowish green bitter fluid secreted in the liver. A similar figure occurs in ^{<211>}Lamentations 2:11, “My liver is poured upon the earth.” Among the pagan poets, also, the “liver” is represented as pierced, and as pouring out gore. Thus, AEsch. Agam. 442: ^{<2345>}θινγανει ^{<4314>}προς ^{<3077>}ἦπαρ. So also 801: ^{<1909>}Δηγμα λυπης ^{<3077>}εφ’ ^{<1909>}ἦπαρ προσικνεεται. So in the Iliad xiii. 412, xx. 469, 470. The meaning here is, “I am transfixed with a deadly wound, and must die. God has come upon me as an armed man, and has pierced my vitals.”

^{<814>}**Job 16:14.** *He breaketh me* He crushes me.

With breach upon breach He renews and repeats the attack, and thus completely overwhelms me. One blow follows another in such quick succession, that he does not give me time to recover.

He runneth upon me like a giant With great and irresistible force — as some strong and mighty warrior whom his adversary cannot resist. The Hebrew is ^{<1368>}רַב־גִּי — “a mighty one.” Septuagint, “The mighty — ^{<1410>}δυναμενοι — run upon me.” Vulgate, “gigas” — a giant.

^{<815>}**Job 16:15.** *I have sewed sackcloth* I have put on the badges of humiliation and grief; see the notes at ^{<3124>}Isaiah 3:24. This was the usual emblem of mourning. In order more deeply to express it, or to make it a “permanent” memorial of sorrow, it would seem that it was “sewed” around the body — as we “sew” crape on the hat.

And defiled my horn in the dust The word rendered “defiled” (from ^{<5953>}לִּעַ has, according to Gesenius, the notion of “repetition,” derived from the use of the Arabic word. The Arabic means, to drink again, i.e. after a former draught; and then, to drink deep. Hence, the word is applied to any action which is repeated — as to the second blow by which one already struck down is killed; to an after-harvest, or to gleaning in the fields. Here Gesenius supposes it means to “maltreat,” to “abuse;” and the idea according to him is, that he had covered his whole head in the dust. The word “horn” is used in the Scriptures to denote strength and power. The figure is taken from horned animals, whose strength resides in their horns; and hence, as the horn is the means of defense, the word comes to denote that on which one relies; his strength, honor, dignity. A horn, made of “silver,” was also worn as an ornament, or as an emblem, on the

forehead of females or warriors. It was probably used at first by warriors as a symbol of “power, authority,” or “strength;” and the idea was undoubtedly derived from the fact that the strength of animals was seen to lie in the horn. Then it came to be a mere ornament, and as such is used still in the vicinity of Mount Lebanon. Oriental customs do not undergo those changes which are so common in the Western world, and it is possible that this custom prevailed in the time of Job. The “horn” was usually worn by females; it is also a part of the ornament on the head of a male, and as such would be regarded doubtless as an emblem of honor. The custom is prevalent at the present day among the Druses of Lebanon, the Egyptian cavalry, and in some parts of Russia bordering on Persia. Dr. Macmichael, in his “Journey,” says:

“One of the most extraordinary parts of the attire of their females (Drusus of Lebanon), is a silver horn, sometimes studded with jewels, worn on the head in various positions, “distinguishing their different conditions.”

A married woman has it affixed to the right side of the head, a widow on the left, and a virgin is pointed out by its being placed on the very crown. Over this silver projection the long veil is thrown, with which they so completely conceal their faces to rarely have more than an eye visible.” The horn worn by females is a conical tube, about twelve inches long. Colossians Light mentions the horn of the wife of an emir, made of gold, and studded with precious stones. Horns are worn by Abyssinian chiefs in military reviews, or on parade after a victory. They are much shorter than those of the females, and are about the size and shape of a candle extinguisher, fastened by a strong fillet to the head, which is often made of metal; they are not easily broken off. This special kind of horn is undoubtedly the kind made by the false prophet Zedekiah for Ahab, to whom he said, when Ahab was about to attack the enemy, “With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou hast conquered them;” ^{<1221>}1 Kings 22:11; ^{<1480>}2 Chronicles 18:10; compare ^{<1637>}Deuteronomy 33:17. The idea here is, that whatever once constituted the reliance or the glory of Job, was now completely prostrate. It was as if it were buried in the earth.

^{<816>}**Job 16:16.** *My face is foul with weeping* Wemyss, “swelled.” Noyes, “red.” Good, “tarnished.” Luther, “ist geschwollen” — is swelled. So Jerome. The Septuagint, strangely enough, ἡ ^{<3588>} γαστήρ ^{<1064>} μου ^{<3450>} συνκεκαύται, etc. “my belly is burned with weeping.” The Hebrew

word **רמַע** ^{<12560>} means to boil up, to ferment, to foam. Hence, it means to be red, and the word is often used in this sense in Arabic — from the idea of becoming heated or inflamed. Here it probably means either to be “swelled,” as any thing does that “ferments,” or to be “red” as if “heated” — the usual effect of weeping. The idea of being “defiled” is not in the word.

And on my eyelid; is the shadow of death On the meaning of the word rendered “shadow of death,” see the notes at ^{<1875>}Job 3:5. The meaning is, that darkness covered his eyes, and he felt that he was about to die. One of the usual indications of the approach of death is, that the sight fails, and everything seems to be dark. Hence, Homer so often describes death by the phrase, “and darkness covered his eyes;” or the form “a cloud of death covered his eyes” — **θανατου** ^{<2288>} **νεφους** ^{<3509>} **οσσε εκαλυψη** ^{<2572>}. The idea here is, that he experienced the indications of approaching death.

^{<1817>}**Job 16:17.** *Not for any injustice ..* Still claiming that he does not deserve his sorrows, and that these calamities had not come upon him on account of any enormous sins, as his friends believed.

My prayer is pure My devotion; my worship of God is not hypocritical — as my friends maintain.

^{<1818>}**Job 16:18.** *O earth* Passionate appeals to the earth are not uncommon in the Scriptures; see the notes at ^{<2102>}Isaiah 1:2. Such appeals indicate deep emotion, and are among the most animated forms of personification.

Cover not thou my blood Blood here seems to denote the wrong done to him. He compares his situation with that of one who had been murdered, and calls on the earth not to conceal the crime, and prays that his injuries may not be hidden, or pass unavenged. Aben Ezra, Dr. Good, and some others, however, suppose that he refers to blood shed “by” him, and that the idea is, that he would have the earth reveal any blood if he had ever shed any; or in other words, that it is a strong protestation of his innocence. But the former interpretation seems to accord best with the connection. It is the exclamation of deep feeling. He speaks as a man about to die, but he says that he would die as an innocent and a much injured man, and he passionately prays that his death may not pass unavenged. God had crushed him, and his friends had wronged him, and he now earnestly implores that his character may yet be vindicated. “According to the saying of the Arabs, the blood of one who was unjustly slain remained

upon the earth without sinking into it; until the avenger of blood came up. It was regarded as a proof of innocence.” Eichhorn, “in loc” That there is much of irreverence in all this must, I think, be conceded. It is not language for us to imitate. But it is not more irreverent and unbecoming than what often occurs, and it is designed to show what the human heart “will” express when it is allowed to give utterance to its real feelings.

And let my cry have no place Let it not be hid or concealed. Let there be nothing to hinder my cry from ascending to heaven. The meaning is, that Job wished his solemn protestations of his innocence to go abroad. He desired that all might hear him. He called on the nations and heaven to hear. He appealed to the universe. He desired that the earth would not conceal the proof of his wrongs, and that his cry might not be confined or limited by any bounds, but that it might go abroad so that all worlds might hear.

<sig>**Job 16:19.** *My witness is in heaven* That is, I can appeal to God for my sincerity. He is my witness; and he will bear record for me. This is an evidence of returning confidence in God — to which Job always returns even after the most passionate and irreverent expressions. Such is his real trust in God, that though he is betrayed at times into expressions of impatience and irreverence, yet he is sure to return to calmer views, and to show that he has true confidence in the Most High. The strength, the power, and the point of his expressions of passion and impatience are against his “friends;” but they “sometimes” terminate on God, as if even he was leagued with them against him. But he still had “permanent” or “abiding” confidence in God.

My record is on high Margin “in the high places.” It means, in heaven. Luther renders this, und der mich kennet, ist in der Hohe — and he who knows me is on high. The Hebrew is **dhe**,^{<47717>} — “my witness;” properly an eye witness. The meaning is, that he could appeal to God as a witness of his sincerity.

<sig>**Job 16:20.** *My friends scorn me* Margin “are my scorers.” That is, his friends had him in derision and mocked him, and he could only appeal with tears to God.

Mine eye poureth out tears unto God Despised and mocked by his friends, he made his appeal to one who he knew would regard him with compassion. This shows that the heart of Job was substantially right.

Notwithstanding, all his passionate exclamations; and notwithstanding, his expressions, when he was urged on by his sorrows to give vent to improper emotions in relation to God; yet he had a firm confidence in him, and always returned to right feelings and views. The heart may sometimes err. The best of people may sometimes give expression to improper feelings. But they will return to just views, and will ultimately evince unwavering confidence in God.

Job 16:21. *Oh that one might plead for a man* A more correct rendering of this would be, “Oh that it might be for a man to contend with God;” that is, in a judicial controversy. It is the expression of an earnest desire to carry his cause at once before God, and to be permitted to argue it there. This desire Job had often expressed; see the notes at **Job 13:3,18-22**. On the grammatical construction of the passage, see Rosenmuller.

As a man pleadeth for his neighbour Hebrew “the son of man;” that is, the offspring of man. Or, rather, as a man contendeth with his neighbor; as one man may carry on a cause with another. He desired to carry his cause directly before God, and to be permitted to argue the case with him, as one is permitted to maintain an argument with a man; see the notes at **Job 13:20,21**.

Job 16:22. *When a few years are come* Margin “years of number;” that is, numbered years, or a few years. The same idea is expressed in **Job 7:21**; see the notes at that place. The idea is, that he must soon die. He desired, therefore, before he went down to the grave, to carry his cause before God, and to have, as he did not doubt he should have, the divine attestation in his favor; compare the notes at **Job 19:25-27**. Now he was overwhelmed with calamities and reproaches, and was about to die in this condition. He did not wish to die thus. He wished that the reproaches might be wiped off, and that his character might be cleared up and made fair. He believed assuredly that if he could be permitted to carry his cause directly before God, he might be able to vindicate his character, and to obtain the divine verdict in his favor; and if he obtained that, he was not unwilling to die. It is the expression of such a wish as every man has, that his sun may not go down under a cloud; that whatever aspersions may rest on his character may be wiped away; and that his name, if remembered at all when he is dead, may go untarnished down to future times, and be such that his friends may repeat it without a blush.

NOTES ON JOB 17

Job 17:1. *My breath is corrupt* Margin or “spirit is spent.” The idea is, that his vital powers were nearly extinct; his breath failed; his power was weakened, and he was ready to die. This is connected with the previous chapter, and should not have been separated from it. There was no necessity of making a new chapter here, and we have one of those unfortunate breaks in the middle of a paragraph, and almost of a sentence, which are too common in the Scriptures.

The graves are ready for me The Hebrew is plural, but why so used I know not. The Vulgate is singular — sepulchrum. The Septuagint renders it, “I pray for a tomb (singular, $\tau\alpha\phi\eta\varsigma$ ^{<5027>}), but I cannot obtain it.” Possibly the meaning is, “I am about to be united “to the graves,” or “to tombs.”” Schultens remarks that the plural form is common in Arabic poetry, as well as in poetry in general.

Job 17:2. *And doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?* Margin “lodge.” This is the meaning of the Hebrew word used here — $\text{^}W$ ^{<13885>}. It properly denotes to pass the night or to lodge in a place, as distinguished from a permanent residence. The idea here seems to be, that his eye “rested” on their provocations. It remained fixed on them. It was not a mere glance, a passing notice, but was such a view as resulted from a careful observation. It was not such a view as a traveler would obtain by passing hastily by, but it was such as one would obtain who had encamped for a time, and had an opportunity of looking around him with care, and seeing things as they were. Thus explained, there is much poetic beauty in the passage. The Vulgate, however, renders it, “I have not sinned, and mine eye remains in bitterness.” The Septuagint, “I supplicate in distress — $\kappa\alpha\mu\omega\upsilon\nu$ ^{<2577>} — yet what have I done? Strangers came, and stole my substance: who is the man?” The simple meaning is, that Job had a calm view of their wickedness, and that he could not be deceived.

Job 17:3. *Lay down now* This is evidently an address to God — a repetition of the wish which he had so often expressed, that he might be permitted to bring his cause directly before him; see ^{<8133>} Job 13:3. The whole passage here is obscure, because we are in a great measure ignorant of the ancient practices in courts of law, and of the ancient forms of trial.

The general sense seems to be, that Job desires the Deity to enter into a judicial investigation, and to give him a “pledge” — or, as we should say, a “bond,” or “security” — that he would not avail himself of his almighty power, but would place him on an equality in the trial, and allow him to plead his cause on equal terms; see the notes at ^{<K13D>}Job 13:20-22. The phrase “lay down now” means, lay down a pledge, or something of that kind; and may have referred to some ancient custom of giving security on going to trial, that no advantage would be taken, or that the parties would abide by the decision in the case.

Put me in a surety with thee The word used here ^{<H6148>}br̄ṯ is from ^{<H6148>}br̄ṯ, to mix, mingle; to exchange, to barter and then to become surety for anyone — that is, to “exchange” places with him, or to stand in his place; ^{<H430>}Genesis 43:9; 44:32. Here the idea seems to be, that Job wished the Deity to give him some pledge or security that justice would be done, or that he would not take advantage of his power and majesty to overawe him. Or, as has been remarked, it may refer to some custom of furnishing security on a voluntary trial or arbitration, that the award of the referees would be observed. I think it most probable that this is the idea. The controversy here was to be voluntary. In a voluntary trial, or an arbitration, there is a necessity of some security by the parties that the decision shall be submitted to — a pledge to each other that they will abide by it. Such a pledge Job desired in this case. All this is language taken from courts, and should not be pressed too much, nor should Job be hastily charged with irreverence. Having once suggested the idea of a “trial” of the cause, it was natural for him to use the language which was commonly employed in reference to such trials; and these expressions are to be regarded as thrown in for the sake of “keeping,” or verisimilitude.

Who is he that will strike hands with me? Striking hands then, as now, seems to have been one mode of confirming an agreement, or ratifying a compact. The idea here is, “Who is there that will be surety to me for thee?” that is, for the faithful observance of right and justice. There is an appearance of irreverence in this language, but it arises from carrying out the ideas pertaining to a form of trial in a court. In entering into “sureties,” it was usual to unite hands; see ^{<H101>}Proverbs 6:1:

My son, if thou be surety for thy friend,
If thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger.

So ^{<3178>}Proverbs 17:18:

A man void of understanding striketh hands, And becometh surety
in the presence of his friend

Compare ^{<3115>}Proverbs 11:15; 22:26. The same custom prevailed in the times of Homer and of Virgil. Thus, Homer (Iliad, β . 341) says:

Που δη — δεξιαι ἦς επεπιθμεν —

And so Virgil (AEneid 4:597) says;

— *en dextra fidesque.*

^{<8170>}**Job 17:4.** *For thou hast hid their heart from understanding* That is, the heart of his professed friends. Job says that they were blind and perverse, and indisposed to render him justice; and he therefore pleads that he may carry his cause directly before God. He attributes their want of understanding to the agency of God in accordance with the doctrine which prevailed in early times, and which is so often expressed in the Scriptures, that God is the source of light and truth, and that when people are blinded it is in accordance with his wise purposes; see ^{<2169>}Isaiah 6:9,10. It is “because” they were thus blind and perverse, that he asks the privilege of carrying the cause at once up to God — and who could blame him for such a desire?

Therefore thou shalt not exalt them By the honor of deciding a case like this, or by the reputation of wisdom. The name of sage or “wise” man was among the most valued in those times; but Job says that that would not be awarded to his friends. God would not exalt or honor people thus devoid of wisdom.

^{<8176>}**Job 17:5.** *He that speaketh flattery to his friends* Noyes renders this, “He that delivers up his friend as a prey, the eyes of his children shall fail.” So Wemyss, “He who delivers up his friends to plunder.” Dr. Good, “He that rebuketh his friends with mildness, even the eyes of his children shall be accomplished.” The Septuagint, “He announces evil for his portion; his eyes fail over his sons.” The Vulgate, “He promises spoil to his companions, and the eyes of his sons fail.” The word rendered “flattery” **ql j e** ^{<2506>} properly means “that which is smooth, smoothness” (from **ql j e** ^{<2506>} to be smooth); and thence it denotes “a lot” or “portion,” because “a smooth stone” was anciently used to cast lots in dividing spoils;

^{<518>}Deuteronomy 18:8. Here it is synonymous with plunder or spoil; and the idea is, that he who betrayeth his friends to the spoil or to the spoiler, the eyes of his children shall fail. The meaning in this connection is, that the friends of Job had acted as one would who should announce the residence of his neighbors to robbers, that they might come and plunder them. Instead of defending him, they had acted the part of a traitor. Schultens says that this verse is “a Gordian knot;” and most commentators regard it as such; but the above seems to give a clear and consistent meaning. It is evidently a proverb, and is designed to bear on the professed friends of Job, and to show that they had acted a fraudulent part toward him. In ^{<317>}Job 17:4, he had said that God had hid their heart from understanding, and that wisdom had failed them. He “here” says that in addition to a want of wisdom, they were like a man who should betray his neighbors to robbers.

Even the eyes of his children shall fail He shall be punished. To do this is a crime, and great calamity shall come upon him, represented by the failure of the eyes of his children. Calamity is not unfrequently expressed by the loss of the eyes; see ^{<317>}Proverbs 30:17.

^{<317>}**Job 17:6.** *He hath also* That is, God has done this.

Also a by-word A proverb | *vm*,^{<491>}; a term of reproach, ridicule, or scorn. lie has exposed me to derision.

And aforetime Margin “before them.” The margin is the correct translation of the Hebrew, *μνηρ*,^{<644>}. It means, in their presence, or in their view.

I was as a tabret This is an unhappy translation. The true meaning is, “I am become their “abhorrence,” or am to them an object of contempt.” Vulgate, “I am an example (“exemplum”) to them.” Septuagint, “I am become a laughter (*γελωσ* ^{<1071>}) to them.” The Chaldee renders it, “Thou hast placed me for a proverb to the people, and I shall be Gehenna *μνηρ* to them.” The Hebrew word *תִּפְתֵּי*,^{<861>} — or “Tophet,” is the name which is often given in the Scriptures to the valley of Hinnom — the place where children were sacrificed to Moloch; see the notes at ^{<412>}Matthew 5:22. But there is no evidence or probability that the word was so used in the time of Job. It is never used in the Scriptures in the sense of a “tabret,” that is a tabor or small drum; though the word *āṭ* is thus used; see the notes at ^{<352>}Isaiah 5:12. The word used here is derived, probably, from the obsolete

verb **pyt** — “to spit out;” and then to spit out with contempt. The verb is so used in Chaldee. “Castell.” The meaning of the word probably still lives in the Arabic, The Arabic word means to spit out with contempt; and the various forms of the nouns derived from the verb are applied to anything detested, or detestable; to the parings of the nails; to an abandoned woman; to a dog, etc. See “Castell” on this word. I have no doubt that is the sense here, and that we have here a word whose true signification is to be sought in the Arabic; and that Job means to say that he was treated as the most loathsome and execrable object.

<B77>**Job 17:7.** *Mine eye is dim by reason of sorrow* Schultens supposes that this refers to his external appearance in general, as being worn down, exhausted, “defaced” by his many troubles; but it seems rather to mean that his eyes failed on account of weeping.

And all my members are as a shadow “I am a mere skeleton, I am exhausted and emaciated by my sufferings.” It is common to speak of persons who are emaciated by sickness or famine as mere shadows. Thus, Livy (L. 21:40) says, Effigies, imo, “umbrae hominum;” fame, frigore, illuvie, squalore enecti, contusi, debilitati inter saxa rupesque. So Aeschylus calls OEdipus — **Οιδιπου σκιαν** ^{<4639>} — the shadow of OEdipus.

<B77>**Job 17:8.** *Upright men shall be astonished at this* At the course of events in regard to me. They will be amazed that God has suffered a holy man to be plunged into such calamities, and to be treated in this manner by his friends. The fact at which he supposes they would be so much astonished was, that the good were afflicted in this manner, and that no relief was furnished.

And the innocent shall stir up himself Shall rouse himself, or assume vigor to resist the wicked.

The hypocrite The wicked — alluding probably to his professed friends. The idea of hypocrisy which the sentence conveys arises from the fact, that they professed to be “his” friends, and had proved to be false; and that they had professed to be the friends of God, and yet had uttered sentiments inconsistent with any right views of him. He now says, that that could not go unnoticed. The world would be aroused at so remarkable a state of things, and a just public indignation would be the result.

Job 17:9. *The righteous also shall hold on his way* The meaning of this verse is plain; but the connection is not so apparent. It seems to me that it refers to “Job himself,” and is a declaration that “he,” a righteous man, who had been so grievously calumniated, would hold on his way, and become stronger and stronger, while “they” would sink in the public esteem, and be compelled to abandon their position. It is the expression of a confident assurance that “he” would be more and more confirmed in his integrity, and would become stronger and stronger in God. Though Job intended, probably, that this should be applied to himself, yet he has expressed it in a general manner, and indeed the whole passage has a proverbial cast; and it shows that even then it was the settled belief that the righteous would persevere. As an expression of the early faith of the pious in one of the now settled doctrines of Christianity, “the perseverance of the saints,” this doctrine is invaluable. It shows that that doctrine has traveled down from the earliest ages. It was one of the elementary doctrines of religion in the earliest times. It became a proverb; and was admitted among the undisputed maxims of the wise and good, and it was such a sentiment as was just adapted to the circumstances of Job — a much tried and persecuted man. He was in all the danger of apostasy to which the pious are usually exposed; he was tempted to forsake his confidence in God; he was afflicted for reasons which he could not comprehend; he was without an earthly friend to sustain him, and he seemed to be forsaken by God himself; yet he had the fullest conviction that he would be enabled to persevere. The great principle was settled, that if there was true religion in the heart, it would abide; that if the path of righteousness had been entered, he who trod it would keep on his way.

And he that hath clean hands The innocent; the friend of God; the man of pure life; see the notes at **Job 9:30**; compare **Psalm 24:4**. “Clean hands” here, are designed to denote a pure and holy life. Among the ancients they were regarded as indicative of purity of heart. Porphyry remarks (*de antro Nympharum*) that in the “mysteries,” those who were initiated were accustomed to wash their hands with honey instead of water, as a pledge that they would preserve themselves from every impure and unholy thing; see Burder, in *Rosenmuller’s Alte u. neue Morgenland*, in loc.

Shall be stronger and stronger Margin, as in Hebrew add strength. He shall advance in the strength of his attachment to God. This is true. The man of pure and blameless life shall become more and more established in

virtue; more confirmed in his principles; more convinced of the value and the truth of religion. Piety, like everything else, becomes stronger by exercise. The man who speaks truth only, becomes more and more attached to truth; the principle of benevolence is strengthened by being practiced; honesty, the more it is exhibited, becomes more the settled rule of the life; and he who prays, delights more and more in his approaches to God. The tendency of religion in the heart is to grow stronger and stronger; and God intends that he who has once loved him, shall continue to love him forever.

<871> **Job 17:10.** *But as for you all, do you return* This may mean, either, “return to the debate;” or, “return from your unjust and uncharitable opinion concerning me.” The former seems to accord best with the scope of the passage. Tindal renders it, “Get you hence.” Dr. Good, “Get ye hence, and begone, I pray.” Wemyss, “Repeat your discourses as often as you may, I do not find a wise man among you.” It is doubtful, however, whether the Hebrew will bear this construction.

For I cannot find one wise man among you Perhaps the idea here is, “I have not yet found one wise man among you, and you are invited, therefore, to renew the argument. Hitherto you have said nothing that indicates wisdom. Try again, and see if you can say anything now that shall deserve attention.” If this is the meaning, it shows that Job was willing to hear all that they had to say, and to give them credit for wisdom, if they ever evinced any.

<871> **Job 17:11.** *My days are past* “I am about to die.” Job relapses again into sadness — as he often does. A sense of his miserable condition comes over him like a cloud, and he feels that he must die.

My purposes are broken off All my plans fail, and my schemes of life come to an end. No matter what they could say now, it was all over with him, and he must die; compare <382> Isaiah 38:12:

“My habitation is taken away, and is removed from me like a shepherd’s tent; My life is cut off as by a weaver Who severeth the web from the loom; Between the morning and the night thou wilt make an end of me.”

Even the thoughts of my heart Margin, possessions. Noyes, “treasures.” Dr. Good, “resolves.” Dr. Stock, “the tenants of my heart.” Vulgate,

“torquen’ es cor meum.” Septuagint, τα ^{<3588>} αρθρα της ^{<3588>} καρδιας ^{<2588>} μου ^{<3450>} — the strings of my heart. The Hebrew word וְרִשְׁוֹ ^{<4180>}

means properly possession (from וָרָשׁ ^{<4323>}, to inherit); and the word here means the dear possessions of his heart; his cherished plans and schemes; the delights of his soul — the purposes which he had hoped to accomplish. All these were now to be broken on by death. This is to man one of the most trying things in death. All his plans must be arrested. His projects of ambition and gain, of pleasure and of fame, of professional eminence and of learning, all are arrested midway. The farmer is compelled to leave his plow in the furrow; the mechanic, his work unfinished; the lawyer, his brief half prepared; the student, his books lying open; the man who is building a palace, leaves it incomplete; and he who is seeking a crown, is taken away when it seemed just within his grasp. How many unfinished plans are caused by death every day! How many unfinished books, sermons, houses, does it make! How many schemes of wickedness and of benevolence, of fraud and of kindness, of gain and of mercy, are daily broken in upon by death! Soon, reader, all your plans and mine will be ended — mine, perhaps, before these lines meet your eye; yours soon afterward. God grant that our purposes of life may be such that we shall be willing to have them broken in upon — all so subordinate to the GREAT PLAN of being prepared for heaven, that we may cheerfully surrender them at any moment, at the call of the Master summoning us into his awful presence!

<1872> **Job 17:12.** *They change* The word “they” in this place, some understand as referring to his friends; others, to his thoughts. Rosenmuller supposes it is to be taken impersonally, and that the meaning is, “night is become day to me.” Wemyss translates it, “night is assigned me for day.” So Dr. Good renders it. The meaning may be, that the night was to him as the day. He had no rest. The period when he had formerly sought repose, was now made like the day, and all was alike gloom and sadness.

The light is short because of darkness Margin, near. The meaning is, probably, “even the day has lost its usual brilliancy and cheerfulness, and has become gloomy and sad. It seems to be like night. Neither night nor day is natural to me; the one is restless and full of cares like the usual employments of day, and the other is gloomy, or almost night, where there is no comfort and peace. Day brings to me none of its usual enjoyments. It is short, gloomy, sad, and hastens away, and a distressing and restless night soon comes on.”

Job 17:13. *If I wait* Or more accurately, “truly I expect that the grave will be my home.” The word rendered “if” **μαί**^{h518} is often used in such a sense. The meaning is, “I look certainly to the grave as my home. I have made up my mind to it, and have no other expectation.”

The grave Hebrew **לְוַאֲבִי**^{h7585}. It may mean here either the grave, or the region of departed spirits, to which he expected soon to descend.

Mine house My home; my permanent abode.

I have made my bed I am certain of making my bed there. I shall soon lie down there.

In the darkness In the grave, or in the dark world to which it leads; see the notes at **Job 10:21,22**.

Job 17:14. *I have said* Margin, cried, or called. The sense is, “I say,” or “I thus address the grave.”

To corruption The word used here **τῆς σέψης**^{h7845} means properly a pit, or pit-fall, **Psalm 7:15; 9:15**; a cistern, or a ditch, **Job 9:31**; or the sepulchre, or grave, **Psalm 30:9**; **Job 33:18,30**. The Septuagint renders it here by **θανάτου**^{<2288>} — death. Jerome (Vulgate), putredini dixi. According to Gesenius (Lex), the word never has the sense of corruption. Schultens, however, Rosenmuller, and others, understand it in the sense of corruption or putrefaction. This accords, certainly, with the other hemistich, and better constitutes a parallelism with the “worm” than the word “grave” would. It seems probable that this is the sense here; and if the proper meaning of the word is a pit, or the grave, it here denotes the grave, as containing a dead and mouldering body.

Thou art my father “I am nearly allied to it. I sustain to it a relation like that of a child to a father.” The idea seems to be that of family likeness; and the object is to present the most striking and impressive view of his sad and sorrowful condition. He was so diseased, so wretched, so full of sores and of corruption (see **Job 7:5**), that he might be said to be the child of one mouldering in the grave, and was kindred to a family in the tomb!

To the worm The worm that feeds upon the dead. He belonged to that sad family where the body was putrifying, and where it was covered with worms; see the notes at **Isaiah 14:11**.

My mother I am so nearly allied to the worms, that the connection may be compared to that between a mother and her son.

And my sister “The sister here is mentioned rather than the brother, because the noun rendered worm in the Hebrew, is in the feminine gender.” Rosenmuller. The sense of the whole is, that Job felt that he belonged to the grave. He was destined to corruption. He was soon to lie down with the dead. His acquaintance and kindred were there. So corrupt was his body, so afflicted and diseased, that he seemed to belong to the family of the putrifying, and of those covered with worms! What an impressive description; and yet how true is it of all! The most vigorous frame, the most beautiful and graceful form, the most brilliant complexion, has a near relationship to the worm, and will soon belong to the mouldering family beneath the ground! Christian reader! such are you; such am I. Well, let it be so. Let us not repine. Be the grave our home; be the mouldering people there our parents, and brothers, and sisters. Be our alliance with the worms. There is a brighter scene beyond — a world where we shall be kindred with the angels, and ranked among the sons of God. In that world we shall be clothed with immortal youth, and shall know corruption no more. Then our eyes will shine with undiminished brilliancy forever; our cheeks glow with immortal health; our hearts beat with the pulsations of eternal life. Then our hands shall be feeble and our knees totter with disease or age no more; and then the current of health and joy shall flow on through our veins forever and eye! Allied now to worms we are, but we are allied to the angels too; the grave is to be our home, but so also is heaven; the worm is our brother, but so also is the Son of God! Such is man; such are his prospects here, such his hopes and destiny in the world to come. He dies here, but he lives in glory and honor hereafter forever.

Shall man, O God of light and life, For ever moulder in the grave?
Canst thou forget thy glorious work, Thy promise and thy power to save?

Shall life revisit dying worms, And spread the joyful insects' wing;
And O shall man awake no more, To see thy face, thy name to sing?

Faith sees the bright, eternal doors, Unfold to make her children way;
They shall be clothed with endless life, And shine in everlasting day.

The trump shall sound, the dead shall wake, From the cold tomb
the slumberers spring; Through heaven with joy these myriads rise,
And hail their Savior and their King. — DR. DWIGHT

<81715> **Job 17:15.** *And where is now my hope?* What hope have I of life? What possibility is there of my escape from death?

Who shall see it? That is, who will see any hopes that I may now cherish fulfilled. If I cherish any, they will be disappointed, and no one will see them accomplished.

<81716> **Job 17:16.** *They shall go down* That is, my hopes shall go down. All the expectations that I have cherished of life and happiness, will descend there with me. We have a similar expression when we say, that a man “has buried his hopes in the grave,” when he loses an only son.

To the bars of the pit “Bars of Sheol” — dBæ^{<1905>} I wəv^{<17585>}. Vulgate, “Profoundest deep.” Septuagint, εἰς^{<1519>} ἄδην^{<86>} — to Hades. Sheol, or Hades, was supposed to be under the earth. Its entrance was by the grave as a gate that led to it. It was protected by bars — as prisons are — so that those who entered there could not escape; see the notes at <2349> Isaiah 14:9. It was a dark, gloomy dwelling, far away from light, and from the comforts which people enjoy in this life; see <18121> Job 10:21,22. To that dark world Job expected soon to descend; and though he did not regard that as properly a place of punishment, yet it was not a place of positive joy. It was a gloomy and wretched world — the land of darkness and of the shadow of death; and he looked to the certainty of going there not with joy, but with anguish and distress of heart. Had Job been favored with the clear and elevated views of heaven which we have in the Christian revelation, death to him would have lost its gloom. We wonder, often, that so good a man expressed such a dread of death, and that he did not look more calmly into the future world. But to do him justice, we should place ourselves in his situation. We should lay aside all that is cheerful and glad in the views of heaven which Christianity has given us. We should look upon the future world as the shadow of death; a land of gloom and spectres; a place beneath the ground — dark, chilly, repulsive; and we shall cease to wonder at the expressions of even so good a man at the prospect of death. When we look at him, we should remember with thankfulness the different views which we have of the future world, and the source to which we owe them. To us, if we are pious in any measure as Job was, death is

the avenue, not to a world of gloom, but to a world of light and glory. It opens into heaven. There is no gloom, no darkness, no sorrow. There all are happy; and there all that is mysterious in this life is made plain — all that is sad is succeeded by eternal joy. These views we owe to that gospel which has brought life and immortality to light; and when we think of death and the future world, when from the midst of woes and sorrows we are compelled to look out on eternity, let us rejoice that we are not constrained to look forward with the sad forebodings of the Sage of Uz, but that we may think of the grave cheered by the strong consolations of Christian hope of the glorious resurrection.

When our rest together is in the dust The rest of me and my hopes. My hopes and myself will expire together.

NOTES ON JOB 18

~~1817~~ **Job 18:2.** *How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?* It has been made a question to whom this is addressed. It is in the plural number, and it is not usual in Hebrew when addressing an individual to make use of the plural form. Some have supposed that it is addressed to Job and to Eliphaz, as being both “long-winded” and tedious in their remarks. Others have supposed that it refers to Job “and the members of his family,” who possibly interposed remarks, and joined Job in his complaints. Others suppose that it refers to Eliphaz and Zophar, as being silent during the speech of Job, and not arresting his remarks as they ought to have done. Rosenmuller supposes that it refers to Job and those similar to him, who were mere feigners of piety, and that Bildad means to ask how long it would be before they would be effectually silenced, and their complaints hushed. I see no great difficulty in supposing that the reference is to Job. The whole strain of the discourse evidently supposes it; and there is no evidence that any of the family of Job had spoken, nor does it seem at all probable that Bildad would reprove his own friends either for the length of their speeches, or for not interrupting an other. The custom in the East is to allow a man to utter all that he has to say without interruption.

Mark Hebrew understand; or be intelligent — $\hat{y}Bi^{h995}$; that is, either speak distinctly, clearly, intelligently; or consider and weigh our arguments. The former is the interpretation of Schultens, and seems to me to be the true one. The idea is this: “You, Job, have been altering mere words. They are words of complaint, without argument. Speak now in a different manner; show that you understand the case; advance arguments that are worthy of attention, and then we will reply.”

~~1817~~ **Job 18:3.** *Wherefore are we counted as beasts?* “Why are we treated in your remarks as if we had no sense, and were unworthy of sound argument in reply to what we say?” It is possible that there may be reference here to what Job said (~~1817~~ Job 12:7) — that even the beasts could give them information about God. But the general idea is, that Job had not treated their views with the attention which they deserved, but had regarded them as unworthy of notice.

And reputed vile The word used here *hmf*^{<12933>} means to be unclean, or polluted; and the idea is, that Job regarded them as worthless or impious.

~~1804~~ **Job 18:4.** *He teareth himself* More correctly, “thou that tearest thyself in anger!” It is not an affirmation about Job, but it is a direct address to him. The meaning is, that he was in the paroxysms of a violent rage; he acted like a madman.

Shall the earth be forsaken for thee? A reproof of his pride and arrogance. “Shall everything be made to give way for you? Are you the only man in the world and of so much importance, that the earth is to be made vacant for you to dwell in? Are the interests of all others to be sacrificed for you, and is everything else to give place for you? Are all the laws of God’s government to be made to yield rather than that you should be punished?” Similar modes of expression to denote the insignificance of anyone who is proud and arrogant, are still used among the Arabs. “Since Muhammed died, the Imams govern.” “The world will not suffer loss on your account.” “The world is not dependent on anyone man.” T. Hunt, in Lowth’s Lectures on Hebrew Poetry. Rosenmuller’s *Morgenland*, in lec.

And shall the rock be removed out of his place? “Shall the most firm and immutable things give way for your special accommodation? Shall the most important and settled principles of the divine administration be made to bend on your account?” These were not the principles and feelings of Job; and great injustice was done to him by this supposition. He was disposed to be submissive in the main to the divine arrangement. But this will describe the feelings of many a man of pride, who supposes that the divine arrangements should be made to bend for his special accommodation, and that the great, eternal principles of justice and right should give way rather than that he should be dealt with as common sinners are, and rather than that he should be cast into hell. Such people wish a special place of salvation for themselves. They are too proud to be saved as others are. They complain in their hearts that they are made to suffer, to lose their property, to be sick, to die — as others do. They would wish to be treated with special mercy, and to have special enactments in their favor, and would have the eternal laws of right made to bend for their special accommodation Such is the pride of the human heart!

~~1805~~ **Job 18:5.** *Yea* Truly; or, behold. Bildad here commences his remarks on the certain destiny of the wicked, and strings together a number of

apparently proverbial sayings, showing that calamity in various forms would certainly overtake the wicked. There is nothing particularly new in his argument, though the use of the various images which he employs shows how deep was the conviction of this doctrine at that time, and how extensively it prevailed.

The light of the wicked shall be put out Light here is an emblem of prosperity.

The spark of his fire Hebrew the flame of his fire. There may be an allusion here to the customs of Arabian hospitality. This was, and is, their national glory, and it is their boast that no one is ever refused it. The emblem of fire or flame here may refer to the custom of kindling a fire on an eminence, near a dwelling, to attract the stranger to share the hospitality of the owner of it; or it may refer to the fire in his tent, which the stranger was always at liberty to share. In the collection of the Arabian poems, called the Hamasa, this idea occurs almost in the words of Bildad. The extract was furnished me by the Revelation Eli Smith. It is a boast of Salamiel, a prince of Tema. In extolling the virtues of his tribe, he says, "No fire of ours was ever extinguished at night without a guest; and of our guests never did one disparage us." The idea here is, that the wicked would attempt to show hospitality, but the means would be taken away. He would not be permitted to enjoy the coveted reputation of showing it to the stranger, and the fire which might invite the traveler, or which might confer comfort on him, would be put out in his dwelling. The inability to extend the offer of a liberal hospitality would be equivalent to the deepest poverty or the most trying affliction.

◀1816▶ **Job 18:6.** *And his candle* Margin, lamp. The reference is to a lamp that was suspended from the ceiling. The Arabians are fond of this image. Thus, they say, "Bad fortune has extinguished my lamp." Of a man whose hopes are remarkably blasted, they say, "He is like a lamp which is immediately extinguished if you let it sink in the oil." See Schultens. The putting out of a lamp is to the Orientals an image of utter desolation. It is the universal custom to have a light burning in their houses at night. "The houses of Egypt, in modern times, are never without lights; they burn lamps all the night long, and in every occupied apartment. So requisite to the comfort of a family is this custom reckoned, and so imperious is the power which it exercises, that the poorest people. would rather retrench part of their food than neglect it." Paxton. It is not improbable that this

custom prevailed in former times in Arabia, as it does now in Egypt; and this consideration will give increased beauty and force to this passage.

<8813> **Job 18:7.** *The steps of his strength* Strong steps. “Steps of strength” is a Hebraism, to denote firm or vigorous steps.

Shall be straitened Shall be compressed, embarrassed, hindered. Instead of walking freely and at large, he shall be compressed and limited in his goings. “Large steps,” “free movement,” etc. are proverbial expressions among the Arabs, to denote freedom, prosperity, etc. Rosenmuller. Schultens quotes the following illustrations from the Arabic poets. From Ibn Doreid, “He who does not confine himself within human limits, his vast strides shall be straitened.” And from Taurizius, “After the battle of Bedrense, the steps were straitened.” The meaning here is, that he would be greatly impeded in his movements, instead of going forth at large and in full vigor as he had formerly done.

And his own counsel His own plans shall be the means of his fall.

<8813> **Job 18:8.** *For he is cast into a net by his own feet* He is caught in his own tricks, as if he had spread a net or dug a pitfall for another, and had fallen into it himself. The meaning is, that he would bring ruin upon himself while he was plotting the ruin of others; see <8916> Psalm 9:16, “The wicked is snared by the work of his own hands;” compare the note at <8813> Job 5:13. The phrase “by his own feet” here means, that he walks there himself. He is not led or driven by others, but he goes himself into the net. Wild animals are sometimes driven, but he walks along of his own accord into the net, and has no one to blame but himself.

And he walketh upon a snare Or a pitfall. This was formerly the mode of taking wild beasts. It was done by excavating a place in the earth, and covering it over with turf, leaves, etc. supported in a slender manner; so that the lion, or elephant or tiger that should tread on it, would fall through. These methods of taking wild beasts have been practiced from the earliest times, and are practiced everywhere.

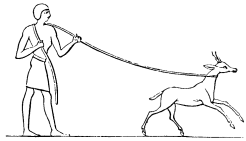
<8813> **Job 18:9.** *The gin* Another method of taking wild beasts. It was a snare so made as to spring suddenly on an animal, securing him by the neck or feet. We use a trap for the same purpose. The Hebrew word *j pæ* <86341> may denote anything of this kind — a snare, net, noose, etc. with which birds or wild animals are taken.

By the heel By the foot.

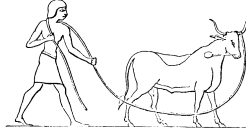
And the robber shall prevail He shall be overpowered by the highwayman; or the plunderer shall make a sudden descent upon him, and strip him of his all. The meaning is, that destruction would suddenly overtake him. There can be no doubt that Bildad meant to apply all this to Job.

Job 18:10. *The snare is laid* All this language is taken from the modes of taking wild beasts; but it is not possible to designate with absolute certainty the methods in which it was done. The word used here **l bj**, ^{<12256>} means a cord, or rope; and then a snare, gin, or toil, such as is used by hunters. It was used in some way as a noose to secure an animal. This was concealed (Hebrew) “in the earth” — so covered up that an animal would not perceive it, and so constructed that it might be made to spring upon it suddenly.

And a trap We have no reason to suppose that at that time they employed steel to construct traps as we do now, or that the word here has exactly the sense which we give to it. The Hebrew word **t dkl m** is from **t dKb jnæ** ^{<1434>} — “to take,” “to catch,” and means a noose, snare, spring — by which an animal was seized. It is a general term; though undoubtedly used to denote a particular instrument, then well known. The general idea in all this is, that the wicked man would be suddenly seized by calamities, as a wild animal or a bird is taken in a snare. Independently of the interest of the entire passage (^{<1818>}Job 18:8-10) as a part of the argument of Bildad, it is interesting from the view which it gives of the mode of securing wild animals in the early periods of the world. They had no guns as we have; but they early learned the art of setting gins and snares by which they were taken. In illustrating this passage, it will not be inappropriate to refer to some of the modes of hunting practiced by the ancient Egyptians. The same methods were practiced then in catching birds and taking wild beasts as now, and there is little novelty in modern practices. The ancients had not only traps, nets, and springs, but also bird-lime smeared upon twigs, and made use of stalking-horses, setting dogs, etc. The various methods in which this was done, may be seen described at length in Wilkinson’s *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, vol. iii. pp. 1-81. The noose was employed to catch the wild ox, the antelope, and other animals.

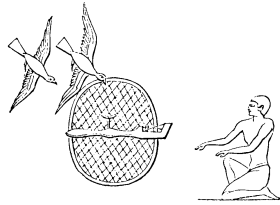


Catching a Gazelle with the Noose.



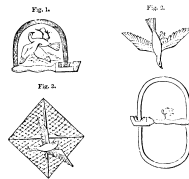
Catching a Wild Ox with the Noose or Iron.

This seems to be a self-acting net, so constructed that the birds, when coming in contact with it, close it upon themselves.



Egyptian Catching Dinka.

This trap appears as if in a vertical position, although, doubtless, it is intended to represent a trap lying upon the ground.

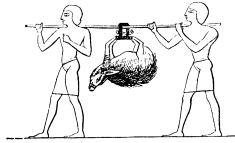


Egyptian Bird Traps.

Fig. 1.—Trap closed, and the bird ready to fly; the net part of the trap being offered.
 Fig. 2.—The same trap as in Fig. 1, after taking the net away from it.
 Fig. 3.—Square trap of different construction from the preceding, showing the net work entire.

There are other traps very similar to this, except that they are oval; and probably have a net like the former. They are composed of two arcs, which, being kept open by machinery in the middle, furnish the oval frame of the net; but when the bird flies in, and knocks out the pin in the center, the arcs collapse enclosing the bird in the net. One instance occurs, in a painting at Thebes, of a trap, in which a hyaena is caught, and carried on the shoulders of two men. It was a common method of hunting to enclose a large tract of land by a circle of nets, or to station men at convenient distances, and gradually to contract the circle by coming near to each other, and thus to drive all the wild animals into a narrow enclosure, where they could be easily slain. Some idea of the extent of those enclosures may be formed from the by no means incredible circumstance related by

Plutarch, that when the Macedonian conquerors were in Persia, Philotos, the son of Armenio, had hunting-nets that would enclose the space of an hundred furlongs. The Oriental sovereigns have sometimes employed whole armies in this species of hunting. Picture Bible.



Hyon caught in a Trap.

<1811> **Job 18:11.** *Terrors shall make him afraid* He shall be constantly subject to alarms, and shall never feel secure. “Terrors here are represented as allegorical persons, like the Furies in the Greek poets.” Noyes. The idea here is substantially the same as that given by Eliphaz, <1812> Job 15:21,22.

And shall drive him to his feet Margin, scatter. This is a literal translation of the Hebrew. The idea is, that he will be alarmed by such terrors; his self-composure will be dissipated, and he will “take to his heels.”

<1812> **Job 18:12.** *His strength shall be hungerbitten* Shall be exhausted by hunger or famine.

And destruction shall be ready at his side Hebrew “Shall be fitted” *ynk* “to his side.” Some have supposed that this refers to some disease, like the pleurisy, that would adhere closely to his side. So Jerome understands it. Schultens has quoted some passages from Arabic poets, in which calamities are represented as “breaking the side.” Bildad refers probably, to some heavy judgments that would crush a man; such that the ribs, or the human frame, could not bear; and the meaning is, that a wicked man would be certainly crushed by misfortune.

<1813> **Job 18:13.** *It shall devour the strength of his skin* Margin, bars. The margin is a correct translation of the Hebrew. The word used (*ydb*, construct with *WAW* [— his skin) means bars, staves, branches, and here denotes his limbs, members; or, more literally, the bones, as supports of the skin, or the human frame. The bones are regarded as the bars, or the framework, holding the other parts of the body in their place, and over which the skin is stretched. The word “it” here refers to the “first-born of death” in the other hemistich of the verse; and the meaning is, that the strength of his body shall be entirely exhausted.

The first-born of death The “first-born” is usually spoken of as distinguished for vigor and strength; ^{<144B>}Genesis 49:3, “Reuben, thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength;” and the idea conveyed here by the “first-born of death” is the most fearful and destructive disease that death has ever engendered; compare Milton’s description of the progeny of sin, in Paradise Los. Diseases are called “the sons or children of death” by the Arabs, (see Schultens in loc.,) as being begotten by it.

^{<888A>}**Job 18:14.** *His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle* Security shall forsake his dwelling, and he shall be subject to constant alarms. There shall be nothing there in which he can confide, and all that he relied on as sources of safety shall have fled.

And it shall bring him That is, he shall be brought.

To the king of terrors There has been much variety in the explanation of this verse. Dr. Noyes renders it, “Terror pursues him like a king.” Dr. Good, “Dissolution shall invade him like a monarch.” Dr. Stock says. “I am sorry to part with a beautiful phrase in our common version, the king of terrors, as descriptive of death, but there is no authority for it in the Hebrew text.” Wemyss renders it, “Terror shall seize him as a king.” So Schultens translates it, “Gradientur in eum, instar regis, terrores.” Rosenmuller renders it as it is in our version. The Vulgate: Et calcet super eum, quasi rex, interitus — “destruction shall tread upon him as a king.” The Septuagint “and distress shall lay hold on him with the authority of a king” — **σατια βασιλικη** ^{<937>}. The Chaldee renders it, “shall be brought to the king of terrors” — **atvwgr dl ml** is not evident, therefore, that we are to give up the beautiful phrase, “king of terrors.” The fair construction of the Hebrew, as it seems to me, is that which is conveyed in our common version — meaning, that the wicked man would be conducted, not merely to death, but to that kind of death where a fearful king would preside — a monarch infusing terrors into his soul. There is something singularly beautiful and appropriate in the phrase, “the king of terrors.” Death is a fearful monarch. All dread him. He presides in regions of chilliness and gloom. All fear to enter those dark regions where he dwells and reigns, and an involuntary shudder seizes the soul on approaching the confines of his kingdom. Yet all must be brought there; and though man dreads the interview with that fearful king, there is no release. The monarch reigns from age to age — reigns over all. There is

but one way in which he will cease to appear as a terrific king. — It is by confidence in Him who came to destroy death; that great Redeemer who has taken away his “sting,” and who can enable man to look with calmness and peace even on the chilly regions where he reigns. The idea here is not precisely that of the Roman and Grecian mythologists, of a terrific king, like Rhadamanthus, presiding over the regions of the dead but it is of death personified — of death represented as a king fitted to inspire awe and terror.

~~18885~~ **Job 18:15.** *It shall dwell in his tabernacle* It is uncertain what is to be understood as referred to here. Some suppose that the word to be understood is soul, and that the meaning is “his soul,” i.e. he himself, “shall dwell in his tent.” Rosenmuller, Noyes, Wemyss, and others, suppose that the word is terror. “Terror **hhl b** shall dwell in his tent,” the same word which is used in the plural in the previous verse. This is undoubtedly the correct sense; and the idea is, that his forsaken tent shall be a place of terror — somewhat, perhaps, as we speak of a forsaken house as “haunted.” It may be that Bildad refers to some such superstitious fear as we sometimes, and almost always in childhood, connect with the idea of a house in which nobody lives.

Because it is none of his It is no longer his. It is a forsaken, tenantless dwelling.

Brimstone shall be scattered Brimstone has been always the image of desolation. Nothing will grow on a field that is covered with sulphur; and the meaning here is, that his house would be utterly desolate and forsaken. Rosenmuller and Noyes suppose that there is an allusion here to a sudden destruction, such as was that of Sodom and Gomorrha. Grotius doubts whether it refers to that or to lightning. Others suppose that lightning is referred to both here and in ~~11824~~ Genesis 19:24; ~~15223~~ Deuteronomy 29:23. I can see no evidence here, however, that there is any reference to Sodom and Gomorrha, or that there is any allusion to lightning. If the allusion had been to Sodom, it would have been more full. That was a case “just in point” in the argument; and the fact that was exactly in point, and would have furnished to the friends of Job such an irrefragable proof of the position which they were defending, and that it is not worked into the very texture of their argument, is full demonstration, to my mind, that that remarkable event is not referred to in this place. The only thing necessarily implied in the language before us is, that sulphur, the emblem of desolation,

would be scattered on his dwelling, and that his dwelling would be wholly desolate.

Job 18:16. *His roots shall be dried up* Another image of complete desolation — where he is compared to a tree that is dead — a figure whose meaning is obvious, and which often occurs; see the notes, **Job 15:30**; 8:12,13.

Above his branch Perhaps referring to his children or family. All shall be swept away — an allusion which Job could not well hesitate to apply to himself.

Job 18:17. *His remembrance shall perish* His name — all recollection of him. Calamity shall follow him even after death; and that which every man desires, and every good man has, and honored name when he is dead, will be denied him. Men will hasten to forget him as fast as possible; compare **Proverbs 10:7**, “The name of the wicked shall rot.”

No name in the street Men when they meet together in highways and places of concourse — when traveler meets traveler, and caravan caravan, shall not pause to speak of him and of the loss which society has sustained by his death. It is one of the rewards of virtue that the good will speak of the upright man when he is dead; that they will pause in their journey, or in their business, to converse about him; and that the poor and the needy will dwell with affectionate interest upon their loss. “This” blessing, Bildad says, will be denied the wicked man. The world will not feel that they have any loss to deplore when he is dead. No great plan of benevolence has been arrested by his removal. The poor and the needy fare as well as they did before. The widow and the fatherless make no grateful remembrance of his name, and the world hastens to forget him as soon as possible. There is no man, except one who is lost to all virtue, who does not desire to be remembered when he is dead — by his children, his neighbors, his friends, and by the stranger who may read the record on the stone that marks his grave. Where this desire is “wholly” extinguished, man has reached the lowest possible point of degradation, and the last hold on him in favor of virtue has expired.

Job 18:18. *He shall be driven from light into darkness* Margin, “They shall drive him.” The meaning is, that he should be driven from a state of prosperity to one of calamity.

And chased out of the world Perhaps meaning that he should not be conducted to the grave with the slow and solemn pomp of a respectful funeral, but in a hurry — as a malefactor is driven from human life, and hastily committed to the earth. The living would be glad to be rid of him, and would “chase” him out of life.

~~1819~~ **Job 18:19.** *He shall neither have son ...* All his family shall be cut off. He shall have no one to perpetuate his name or remembrance. All this Job could not help applying to himself, as it was doubtless intended he should. The facts in his case were just such as were supposed in these proverbs about the wicked; and hence, his friends could not but conclude that he was a wicked man; and hence, his friends could not but conclude that he was a wicked man; and hence, too, since these were undisputed maxims, Job felt so much embarrassment in answering them.

~~1820~~ **Job 18:20.** *They that come after him* Future ages; they who may hear of his history and of the manner in which he was cut off from life. So the passage has been generally rendered; so, substantially, it is by Dr. Good, Dr. Noyes, Rosenmuller, and Luther. The Vulgate translates it novissimi; the Septuagint, εσχάτοι ^{<2078>} — “the last” — meaning those that should live after him, or at a later period. But Schultens supposes that the word used here denotes those in “the West,” and the corresponding word rendered “went before,” denotes those in “the East.” With this view Wemyss concurs, who renders the whole verse:

*“The West shall be astonished at his end;
The East shall be panic-struck.”*

According to this, it means that those who dwelt in the remotest regions would be astonished at the calamities which would come upon him. It seems to me that this accords better with the scope of the passage than the other interpretation, and avoids some difficulties which cannot be separated from the other view. The word translated in our version, “that come after him” ^{<h314>} wōj aæ is from ^{<h309>} rj æ, to be after, or behind; to stay behind, to delay, remain. It then means “after,” or “behind;” and as in the geography of the Orientals the face was supposed to be turned to “the East,” instead of being turned to the North, as with us — a much more natural position than ours — the word “after,” or “behind,” comes to denote West, the right hand the South, the left the North; see the notes at ~~1821~~ Job 23:8,9.

Thus, the phrase $\mu\upsilon$,^{<1320>} $\hat{w}\theta j$ $a\hat{a}$ ^{<h314>} — “the sea behind, denotes the Mediterranean sea — the West; ^{<134B>}Deuteronomy 24:3; see also ^{<1024>}Deuteronomy 9:24; 34:2; Joel 11:20, where the same phrase in Hebrew occurs. Those who dwelt in the “West,” therefore, would be accurately referred to by this phrase.

Shall be astonied Shall be “astonished” — the old mode of writing the word being “astonied;” ^{<2524>}Isaiah 52:14. It is not known, however, to be used in any other book than the Bible.

As they that went before Margin, or “lived with him.” Noyes, “his elders shall be struck with horror.” Vulgate, “et primos invadet “horror.” Septuagint, “amazement seizes “the first” — $\pi\rho\omega\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ ^{<4413>}. But the more correct interpretation is that which refers it to the people of the East. The word $\gamma\iota\nu\omega\delta\eta\epsilon$ ^{<46931>} is from $\mu\delta\alpha$ ^{<h6923>} to precede, to go before; and then the derivatives refer to that which goes before, which is in front, etc.; and as face was turned to the East by geographers, the word comes to express that which is in the East, or near the sun-rising; see ^{<2121>}Joel 2:20; ^{<1218>}Job 23:8; ^{<0018>}Genesis 2:8. Hence, the phrase $\hat{B}\epsilon$ $\mu\delta\alpha$,^{<h1121>} ^{<h6924>} — “sons of the East” — meaning the persons who dwelt east of Palestine; ^{<1303>}Job 1:3; ^{<2114>}Isaiah 11:14; ^{<0256>}Genesis 25:6; 29:1. The word used here, $\gamma\iota\nu\omega\delta\eta\epsilon$ ^{<46931>}, is used to denote the people or the regions of the East; in ^{<2678>}Ezekiel 47:8,18; ^{<3848>}Zechariah 14:8. Here it means, as it seems to me, the people of the East; and the idea is that people everywhere would be astonished at the doom of the wicked man. His punishment would be so sudden and entire as to hold the world mute with amazement.

Were affrighted Margin, “laid hold on horror.” This is a more literal rendering. The sense is, they would be struck with horror at what would occur to him.

^{<1882>}**Job 18:21.** *Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked* The conclusion or sum of the whole matter. The meaning is, that the habitations of all that knew not God would be desolate — a declaration which Job could not but regard as aimed at himself; compare ^{<1879>}Job 20:29. This is the close of this harsh and severe speech. It is no wonder that Job should feel it keenly, and that he “did” feel it is apparent from the following chapter. A string of proverbs has been presented, having the appearance of proof, and as the result of the long observation of the course of events, evidently bearing on his circumstances, and so much in point that he could not well

deny their pertinency to his condition. He was stung to the quick, and and gave vent to his agonized feelings in the following chapter.

NOTES ON JOB 19

Job 19:2. *How long will ye vex my soul?* Perhaps designing to reply to the taunting speech of Bildad; **Job 18:2.** “He” had asked “how long it would be ere Job would make an end of empty talk?” “Job” asks, in reply, “how long” they would torture and afflict his soul? Or whether there was on hope that this would ever come to an end!

And break me in pieces Crush me, or bruise me — like breaking any thing in a mortar, or breaking rocks by repeated blows of the hammer. “Noyes.” He says they had crushed him, as if by repeated blows.

Job 19:3. *These ten times* Many times; the word “ten” being used as we often say, “ten a dozen” or “twenty,” to denote many; see **Genesis 31:7**, “And your father hath changed my wages “ten times.” **Leviticus 26:26**, “And when I have broken your staff of bread, “ten women” shall bake your bread, in one oven;” compare **Numbers 14:22**; **Nehemiah 4:6**.

You are not ashamed that you make yourselves strange to me Margin, “harden yourselves strange to me.” Margin, “harden yourselves against me.” Gesenius, and after him Noyes, renders this, “Shameless ye stun me.” Wemyss, “Are ye not ashamed to treat me thus cruelly? The word used here **rkæ**^{h1970} occurs no no where else, and hence, it is difficult to determine its meaning. The Vulgate renders it, “oppressing me.” The Septuagint, “and you are not ashamed to press upon me.” — **επικεισθε μοι**^{<3427>}. Schultens has gone into an extended examination of its meaning, and supposes that the primary idea is that of being “stiff,” or “rigid.” The word in Arabic, he says, means to be “stupid with wonder.” It is applied, he supposes, to those who are “stiff or rigid” with stupor; and then to those who have a stony heart and an iron an iron fore-head — and who can look on the suffering without feeling or compassion. This sense accords well with the connection here. Gesenius, however, supposes that the primary idea is that of beating or pounding; and hence, of stunning by repeated blows. In either case the sense would be substantially the same — that of “stunning.” The idea given by our translators of making themselves “strange” was derived from the supposition that the word might be formed from **rkæ**^{h5234} — to be strange, foreign; to estrange, alienate, etc. For a

more full examination of the word, the reader may consult Schultens, or Rosenmuller “in loco.”

Job 19:4. *And be it indeed that I have erred* Admitting that I have erred, it is my own concern. You have a right to reproach and revile me in this manner.

Mine error abideth with myself I must abide the consequences of the error.” The design of this seems to be to reprove what he regarded as an improper and meddlesome interference with his concerns. Or it may be an expression of a willingness to bear all the consequences himself. He was willing to meet all the fair results of his own conduct.

Job 19:5. *If, indeed, ye will magnify yourselves against me* This is connected with the next verse. The sense is, “all these calamities came from God. He has brought them upon me in a sudden and mysterious manner. In these circumstances you ought to have pity upon me;” ^{<1892>}Job 19:21. Instead of magnifying yourselves against me, setting yourselves up as censors and judges, overwhelming me with reproaches and filling my mind with pain and anguish, you ought to show to me the sympathy of a friend.” The phrase, “magnify yourselves,” refers to the fact that they had assumed a tone of superiority and an authoritative manner, instead of showing the compassion due to a friend in affliction.

And plead against me my reproach My calamities as a cause of reproach. You urge them as a proof of the displeasure of God, and you join in reproaching me as a hypocrite. Instead of this, you should have shown compassion to me as a man whom God had greatly afflicted.

Job 19:6. *Know now that God* Understand the case; and in order that they might, he goes into an extended description of the calamities which God had brought upon him. He wished them to be “fully” apprised of all that he had suffered at the hand of God.

Hath overthrown me The word used here ^{<1579>}twæ means to bend, to make crooked or curved; then to distort, pervert: them to overturn, to destroy; ^{<2301>}Isaiah 24:1; ^{<2310>}Lamentations 3:9. The meaning here is, that he had been in a state of prosperity, but that God had completely “reversed” everything.

And hath compassed me with his net Has sprung his net upon me as a hunter does, and I am caught. Perhaps there may be an allusion here to

what Bildad said in ^{<1818>}Job 18:8ff, that the wicked would be taken in his own snares. Instead of that, Job says that “God” had sprung the snare upon him — for reasons which he could not understand, but in such a manner as should move the compassion of his friends.

^{<1817>}**Job 19:7.** *Behold, I cry out of wrong* Margin, or “violence.” The Hebrew word **smj** ; ^{<12555>} means properly violence. The violence referred to is that which was brought upon him by God. It is, indeed, harsh language; but it is not quite sure that he means to complain of God for doing him injustice. God had dealt with him in a severe or violent manner, is the meaning, and he had cried unto him for relief, but had cried in vain.

No judgment No justice. The meaning is, that he could obtain justice from no one God would not interpose to remove the calamities which he had brought upon him, and his friends would do no justice to his motives and character.

^{<1818>}**Job 19:8.** *He hath fenced up my way* This figure is taken from a traveler, whose way is obstructed by trees, rocks, or fences, so that he cannot get along, and Job says it was so with him. He was traveling along in a peaceful manner on the journey of life, and all at once obstructions were put in his path, so that he could not go farther. This does not refer, particularly, to his spiritual condition, if it does at all. It is descriptive of the obstruction of his plans, rather than of spiritual darkness or distress.

And he hath set darkness in my paths So that I cannot see — as if all around the traveler should become suddenly dark, so that he could not discern his way. The “language” here would well express the spiritual darkness which the friends of God sometimes experience, though it is by no means certain that Job referred to that. All the dealings of God are to them mysterious, and there is no light in the soul — and they are ready to sink down in despair.

^{<1819>}**Job 19:9.** *He hath stripped me of my glory* Everything which I had that contributed to my respectability and honor, he has taken away. My property, my health, my family, the esteem of my friend — all is gone.

And taken the crown from my head The crown is an emblem of honor and dignity — and Job says that God had removed all that contributed to his — and Job says that God had removed all that contributed to his former

dignity; compare ^{<1009>}Proverbs 4:9; 17:6; ^{<3162>}Ezekiel 16:12; ^{<3166>}Lamentations 5:16.

^{<1890>}**Job 19:10.** *He hath destroyed me on every side* He has left me nothing. The word which is used here is that which is commonly applied to which is used here is that which is commonly applied to destroying cities, towns, and houses. “Rosenmuller.”

And I am gone That is, I am near death. I cannot recover myself.

And mine hope hath he removed like a tree A tree, which is plucked up by the roots, and which does not grow again. That is, his hopes of life and happiness, of an honored old age, and of a continuance of his prosperity, had been wholly destroyed. This does not refer to his “religious” hope — as the word hope is often used now — but to his desire of future comfort and prosperity in this life. It does not appear but that his religious hope, arising from confidence in God, remained unaffected.

^{<1891>}**Job 19:11.** *He hath also kindled his wrath* He is angry. Wrath in the Scriptures is usually represented as burning or inflamed — because like fire it destroys everything before it.

And he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies He treats me as he would an enemy. The same complaint he elsewhere makes; see ^{<1813>}Job 13:24; perhaps also in ^{<1816>}Job 16:9. We are not to understand Job here as admitting that “he” was an enemy of God. He constantly maintained that he was not, but he was constrained to admit that God “treated him” as if he were his enemy, and he could not account for it. “On this ground,” therefore, he now maintains that his friends ought to show him compassion, instead of trying to prove that he “was” an enemy of God; they ought to pity a man who was so strangely and mysteriously afflicted, instead of increasing his sorrows by endeavoring to demonstrate that he was a man of eminent wickedness.

^{<1892>}**Job 19:12.** *His troops* The calamities which he had sent, and which are here represented as “armies” or “soldiers” to accomplish his work. It is not probable that he refers here to the bands of the Chaldeans and the Sabeans, that had robbed him of his property, but to the calamities that had come upon him, “as if” they were bands of robbers.

And raise up their way As an army that is about to lay siege to a city, or that is marching to attack it, casts up a way of access to it, and thus obtains every facility to take it; see the notes at ^{<2408>}Isaiah 40:3; 57:14.

And encamp round about my tabernacle In the manner of an army besieging a city. Often an army is encamped in this manner for months or even years, in order to reduce the city by famine.

My tabernacle My tent; my dwelling.

^{<8913>}**Job 19:13.** *He hath put my brethren* This is a new source of affliction that he had not adverted to before, that God had caused all his children to be estranged from him — a calamity which he regarded as the crown of all his woes. The word rendered “my brethren” *j a*,^{<h251>} means properly “my brothers” — but whether he means literally his brothers, or whether he designs it to be taken in a figurative sense as denoting his intimate friends, or those of the same rank in life or calling, it is impossible now to determine.

And mine acquaintance My friends — on whom I relied in time of calamity.

And verily estranged They have forgotten me, and treat me as a stranger. What an accurate description is this of what often occurs! In prosperity a man will be surrounded by friends; but as soon as his prosperity is stripped away, and he is overwhelmed with calamity, they withdraw, and leave him to suffer alone. Proud of his acquaintance before, they now pass him by as a stranger, or treat him with cold civility, and when he “needs” their friendship, they are gone.

^{<8914>}**Job 19:14.** *My kinsfolk have failed* My neighbors *bwθq*,^{<h7138>} those who were near to me. It may refer to “nearness” of affinity, friendship, or residence. The essential idea is that of “nearness” — whether by blood, affection, or vicinity. In ^{<9881>}Psalms 38:11, it denotes near friends.

And my familiar friends Those who knew me — [*dye*]^{<h3045>}. The allusion is to those who were “intimately” acquainted with him, or who were his bosom friends.

^{<8915>}**Job 19:15.** *They that dwell in mine house* The trials came to his very dwelling, and produced a sad estrangement there. The word used here

$\rho\omega\gamma$ ^{<h1481>} from $\rho\omega\gamma$ ^{<h1481>} means properly those who “sojourn” in a house for a little time. It may refer to guests, strangers, servants, clients, or tenants. The essential idea is, that they were not “permanent” residents, though for a time they were inmates of the family. Jerome renders the place, “Inquilini domus meae — the tenants of my house.” The Septuagint, $\Gamma\epsilon\iota\tau\omicron\nu\epsilon\varsigma$ ^{<1069>} $\omicron\iota\kappa\iota\alpha\varsigma$ ^{<3614>} — neighbors. Schultens supposes it means “clients,” or those who were taken under the protection of a great man. He quotes from the Arabian poets to show that the word is used in that sense, and particularly a passage from the “Hamasa,” which he thus translates:

Descendite sub alas meas, alasque gentis meae. Ut sim praesidium vobis quum pugna con seritur. Namque testamento injunxit mihi pater, ut reciperem vos hospites. Omnemque oppressorem a vobis pulsarem.

There can be no doubt that Job refers to “dependents,” but whether in the capacity of servants, tenants, or clients, it is not easy to determine, and is not material. Dr. Good renders it “sojourners,” and this is a correct rendering of the word. This would be clearly the sense if the corresponding member of the parallelism were not “maids.” or female servants. “That” requires us to understand here persons who were “somehow” engaged in the service of Job. Perhaps his clients, or those who came for protection, were under obligation to some sort of service as the return of his patronage.

And my maids Female domestics. The Chaldee, however, renders this $y\tau n y j \mid$ — “my concubines;” but the correct reference is to female female servants.

I am an alien That is, to them. They cease to treat me as the head of the family.

^{<896>}**Job 19:16.** *I called my servant* He lost all respect for me, and paid me no attention.

I entreated him I ceased to expect “obedience,” and tried to see what “persuasion” would do. I ceased to be master in my own house.

^{<897>}**Job 19:17.** *My breath is strange to my wife* Schultens renders this, “my breath is loathsome to my wife,” and so also Noyes. Wemyss translates it, “my own wife turns aside from my breath.” Dr Good, “my

breath is scattered away by my wife.” The literal meaning is, “my breath is “strange” רWז^{<2114>} to my wife;” and the idea is, that there had been such a change in him from his disease, that his breath was not that which she had been accustomed to breathe without offence, and that she now turned away from it as if it were the breath of a stranger. Jerome renders it, “Halitum meum exhorruit uxor mea — my wife abhors my breath.” It may be worthy of remark here, that but “one” wife of Job is mentioned — a remarkable fact, as he probably lived in an age when polygamy was common.

I entreated her I appealed to her by all that was tender in the domestic relation, but in vain. From this it would seem that even his wife had regarded him as an object of divine displeasure and had also left him to suffer alone.

For the children’s sake of mine own body Margin, “my belly.” There is considerable variety in the interpretation of this passage. The word rendered “my own body” רב^{<h990>} means literally, “my belly or womb;” and Noyes, Gesenius, and some others, suppose it means the children of his own mother! But assuredly this was scarcely an appeal that Job would be likely to make to his wife in such circumstances. There can be no impropriety in supposing that Job referred to himself, and that the word is used somewhat in the same sense as the word “loins” is in ^{<1351>}Genesis 35:11; 46:26; ^{<1005>}Exodus 1:5; ^{<1089>}1 Kings 8:19. Thus, understood, it would refer to his own children, and the appeal to his wife was founded on the relation which they had sustained to them. Though they were now dead, he referred to their former united attachment to them, to the common affliction which they had experienced in their loss; and in view of all their former love to them, and all the sorrow which they had experienced in their death, he made an appeal to his wife to show him kindness, but in vain. Jerome renders this, “Orabam filios uteri mei.” The Septuagint, not understanding it, and trying to “make” sense of it, introduced a statement which is undoubtedly false, though Rosenmuller accords with it. “I called affectionately (κολλακων) the sons of my concubines” — υιους ^{<5207>}παλλακιδων μου ^{<3450>}. But the whole meaning is evidently that he made a solemn and tender appeal to his wife, in view of all the joys and sorrows which they had experience as the united head of a family of now no more. What would reach the heart of an estranged wife, if such an appeal would not?

Job 19:18. *Yea, young children* Margin, or “the wicked.” This difference between the text and the margin arises from the ambiguity of the original word — **לַיָּוִל** ^{<15759>}. The word **לַיָּוִל** ^{<15759>} (whence our word “evil”) means sometimes the wicked, or the ungodly, as in ^{<18611>}Job 16:11. It may also mean a child, or suckling, (from **לַוָּל** ^{<15763>} — to give milk, to suckle, ^{<10071>}1 Samuel 7:7-10; ^{<10223>}Genesis 22:13; ^{<19707>}Psalms 77:71; ^{<34011>}Isaiah 40:11; compare ^{<23415>}Isaiah 49:15; 65:20,) and is doubtless used in this sense here. Jerome, however, renders it “stulti — fools.” The Septuagint, strangely enough, “They renounced me forever.” Dr. Good renders it, “Even the dependents.” So Schultens, *Etiam clientes egentissimi* — “even the most needy clients.” But the reference is probably to children who are represented as withholding from him the respect which was due to age.

I arose, and they spake against me “When I rise up, instead of regarding and treating me with respect, they make me an object of contempt and sport.” Compare the account of the respect which had formerly been shown him in ^{<18908>}Job 29:8.

Job 19:19. *All my inward friends* Margin, “the men of my secret.” The meaning is those, who were admitted to the intimacy of friendship or who were permitted to be acquainted with his secret thoughts, purposes, and plans. The word uses here **דַּוְשׁ** ^{<15475>} denotes properly “a couch, cushions, pillow,” on which one reclines; then a “divan,” a circle of persons sitting together for consultation or conversation; and hence, it refers to those who are sitting together in intimate counsel, (see the notes at ^{<18158>}Job 15:8; 29:4,) and then familiar conversation, intimacy. Here the phrase “men of my intimacy” **דַּוְשׁ** ^{<15475>} denotes those who were admitted to intimate friendship. All such persons had now forsaken him, and turned against him.

Job 19:20. *My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh* The meaning of this probably is, “my skin and flesh are dried up so that the bone seems adhere to the skin, and so tht the form of the bone becomes visible.” It is designed to denote a state of great emaciation, and describes an effect which we often see.

And I am escaped with the skin of my teeth A very difficult expression, and which has greatly perplexed commentators, and on whose meaning they are by no means agreed. Dr. Good renders it, “and in the skin of my teeth am I dissolved;” but what that means is as difficult of explanation as the original.

Noyes, “and I have scarcely escaped with the skin of my teeth.” Herde, (as translated by Marsh,) “and scarcely the skin in my teeth have I brought away as a spoil.” He says that “the figure is taken from the prey which wild beasts carry in their teeth; his skin is his poor and wretched body, which alone he had escaped with. His friends are represented as carnivorous animals which gnaw upon his skin, upon the poor remnant of life;” but the Hebrew will not bear this construction. Poole observes, quaintly enough, that it means, “I am scarcely sound and whole and free from sores in any part of my skin, except that of my jaws, which holdeth and covereth the roots of my teeth. This being, as divers observe, the devil’s policy, to leave his mouth untouched, that he might more freely express his mind, and vent his blasphemies against God, which he supposed sharp pain would force him to do.” Schultens has mentioned four different interpretations given to the phrase, none of which seems to be perfectly satisfactory. They are the following:

- (1) That it means that the skin “about” the teeth alone was preserved, or the gums and the lips, so that he had the power of speaking, though every other part was wasted away, and this exposition is given, accompanied with the suggestion that his faculty of speech was preserved entire by Satan, in order that he might be “able” to utter the language of complaint and blasphemy against God.
- (2) That he was emaciated and exhausted completely, “except” the skin about his teeth, that is, his lips, and that by them he was kept alive; that if it were not for them he could not breathe, but must soon expire.
- (3) That the teeth themselves had fallen out by the force of disease, and that nothing was left but the gums. This opinion Schultens himself adopts. The image, he says, is taken from pugilists, whose teeth are knocked out by each other; and the meaning he supposes to be, that Job had been treated by his disease in the same manner. So violent had it been that he had lost all his teeth and nothing was left but his gums.
- (4) A fourth opinion is, that the reference is to the “enamel” of the teeth, and that the meaning is, that such was the force and extent of his afflictions that all his teeth became hollow and were decayed, leaving only the enamel. It is difficult to determine the true sense amidst a multitude of learned conjectures; but probably the most simple and easy interpretation is the best. It may mean that he was “almost” consumed. Disease had preyed upon his frame until he was wasted away. Nothing was left but his lips, or

his gums; he was just able to speak, and that was all. So Jerome renders it, *delicta sunt tantummodo labia circa dentes meos*. Luther renders it, *und kann meine Zahne mit der Haut nicht bedecken* — “and I cannot cover my teeth with the skin;” that is, with the lips.

<1812> **Job 19:21.** *Have pity on me* A tender, pathetic cry for sympathy.

“God has afflicted me, and stripped me of all my comforts, and I am left a poor, distressed, forsaken man. I make my appeal to you, my friends, and entreat you to have pity; to sympathize with me, and to sustain me by the words of consolation.” One would have supposed that these words would have gone to the heart, and that we should hear no more of their bitter reproofs. But far otherwise was the fact.

The hand of God hath touched me Hath smitten me; or is heavy upon me. The meaning is, that he had been subjected to great calamities by God, and that it was right to appeal now to his friends, and to expect their sympathy and compassion. On the usual meaning of the word here rendered, “hath touched” [*gæ*^{450G}] from [*gæ*^{450G}], see the notes at <2534> Isaiah 53:4.

<1812> **Job 19:22.** *Why do ye persecute me as God?* As God has done. That is, without giving me any reason for it; accusing me of crimes without proof, and condemning me without mitigation. That there is here an improper reflection on God, will be apparent to all. It accords with what Job frequently expresses where he speaks of him as judging him severely, and is on of the instances which prove that he was not entirely perfect.

And are not satisfied with my flesh That is, are not contented that my “body” is subjected to inexpressible torment, and is wholly wasting away, but add to this the torment of the soul. Why is it not enough that my “body” is thus tormented without adding the severer tortures of the mind?

<1812> **Job 19:23.** *Oh that my words were now written!* Margin, as in Hebrew, “Who will give;” a common mode of expressing desire among the Hebrews. This expression of desire introduces one of the most important passages in the book of Job. It is the language of a man who felt that injustice was done by his friends, and that he was not likely to have justice done him by that generation. He was charged with hypocrisy; his motives were called in question; his solemn appeals, and his arguments to assert his innocence, were disregarded; and in this state of mind he expresses the earnest wish that his expressions might be permanently recorded, and go

down to far distant times. He desired that what he had said might be preserved, that future ages might be able to judge between him and his accusers, and to know the justice of his cause. The desire thus expressed has been granted, and a more permanent record has been made than if, in accordance with his request, his sentiments had been engraved on lead or stone.

Oh that they were printed! It is clear that this expression may convey wholly an erroneous idea. The art of “printing” was then unknown; and the passage has no allusion to that art. The original word **qqjæ**^{†2710>} means properly, to cut in, to hew; then to cut — e.g. a sepulchre in a rock, ^{†2026}Isaiah 22:16; then to cut, or engrave letters on a tablet of lead or stone, ^{†2318}Isaiah 30:8; ^{†2900}Ezekiel 4:1; and generally it implies the notion of engraving, or inscribing on a plate with an engraving tool. Anciently books were made of materials which allowed of this mode of making a record. Stone would probably be the first material; and then plates of metal, leaves, bark, skins, etc. The notion of engraving, however, is the proper idea here.

In a book — **rpse**^{†5612>}. The word **rpse**^{†5612>} is derived from **rpæ**^{†5608>}. In Arabic the kindred word shafar means to scratch, to scrape; and hence, to engrave, write, record — and the idea was originally that of insculping or engraving on a stone. Hence, the word comes to denote a book, of any materials, or made in any form. Pliny, speaking of the materials of ancient books, says, *Olim in palmarum foliis scriptitatum, et libris quarundam arborum; postea publica monumenta plumbeis voluminibus, mox et privata lintels confici coepta aut ceris. Lib. xiii. 11.*

“At first men wrote on the leaves of the palm, or the bark of certain trees; but afterward public documents were preserved in leaden volumes (or rolls), and those of a private nature on wax or linen.”

“Montfaucon purchased at Rome, in 1699, an ancient book entirely composed of lead. It was about four inches long, and three inches wide: and not only were the two pieces that formed the cover, and the leaves, six in number, of lead, but also the stick inserted through the rings to hold the leaves together, as well as the hinges and nails. It contained Egyptian Gnostic figures and unintelligible writing. Brass, as more durable, was used for the inscriptions designed to last the longest, such as treaties, laws, and alliances. These public documents were, however, usually written on large

tablets. The style for writing on brass and other hard substances was sometimes tipped with diamond.”

The meaning of the word here is evidently a record made on stone or lead — for so the following verses indicate. The art of writing or engraving was known in the time of Job; but I do not know that there is evidence that the art of writing on leaves, bark, or vellum was yet understood. As books in the form in which they are now were then unknown; as there is no evidence that at that time anything like volumes or rolls were possessed; as the records were probably preserved on tablets of stone or lead; and as the entire description here pertains to something that was engraved; and as this sense is conveyed by the Arabic verb from which the word *rpse*⁴⁵⁶¹², book, is derived, the word tablet, or some kindred word, will better express the sense of the original than book — and I have, therefore, used it in the translation. It may be interesting, however, to see a specimen of the mode of writing on papyrus.



Assyrian records are found generally in stone or clay; and the latter being more easily and speedily engraven with a triangular instrument, was more frequently employed. (1) Assyrian terra-cotta cylinder from Khorsabad, containing the annals of the reign of Sargon, about 721 B.C.—(2) Hexagonal terra-cotta cylinder from Koyunjik, containing the annals of the first eight years of the reign of Sennacherib (702 to 694 B.C.), with an account of the expedition against Hezekiah.—(3) Assyrian scribes making notes of prisoners, heads of slain, spoils, &c., from Koyunjik.

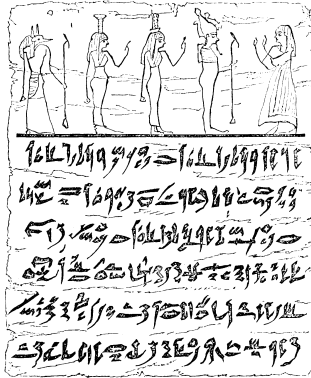
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- (1) An Assyrian terra-cotta cylinder from Khorsabad contains the annals of the reign of Sargon. It is dated about 721 B.C.
- (2) A hexagonal terra cotta cylinder from Koyunjik contains the annals of the first eight years of the reign of Sennacherib (702 to 694 B.C.), with an account of the expedition against Hezekiah.
- (3) The inscription shows Assyrian scribes making notes of prisoners, heads of slain, spoils, etc. It comes from Koyunjik.

~~1892~~ **Job 19:24.** *That they were graven* Cut in, or sculptured — as is done on stones. That they might become thus a permanent record.

With an iron pen A stylus, or an engraving tool — for so the word **f**[**e** ⁴⁵⁸⁴² means. The instrument formerly used for writing or engraving was a small, sharp-pointed piece of iron or steel, that was employed to mark on lead or stone — somewhat in the form of small graying tools now. When the writing was on wax, the instrument was made with a flat head, that it could be obliterated by pressing it on or passing it over the wax.

The reason why Job mentions the iron pen here is, that he wished a permanent record. He did not desire one made with paint or chalk, but one which would convey his sentiments down to future times.



Exemplar of Writing on Papyrus.

And lead That is, either engraved on lead, or more probably with lead. It was customary to cut the letters deep in stone, and then to fill them up with lead, so that the record became more permanent. This I take to be the meaning here. The Hebrew will scarcely allow of the supposition that Job meant that the records should be made on plates of lead — though such plates were used early, but perhaps not until after the time of Job.

In the rock It was common, at an early period, to make inscriptions on the smooth surface of a rock. Perhaps the first that were made were on stones, which were placed as way marks, or monuments over the dead — as we now make such inscriptions on grave-stones. Then it became common to record any memorable transaction — as a battle — on stones or rocks; and perhaps, also, sententious and apothegmatical remarks were recorded in this manner, to admonish travelers, or to transmit them to posterity. Numerous inscriptions of this kind are found by travelers in the East, on tombs, and on rocks in the desert. All that can be appropriate here is a notice of such early inscriptions of that kind in Arabia, as would render it probable that they existed in the time of Job, or such as indicate great

antiquity. Happily we are at no loss for such inscriptions on rocks in the country where Job lived. The Wady Mokatta, the cliffs of which bear these inscriptions, is a valley entering Wady Sheikh, and bordering the upper regions of the Sinai mountains. It extends for about three hours' march, and in most places its rocks present abrupt cliffs, twenty or thirty feet high. From these cliffs large masses have separated, and lie at the bottom of the valley. The cliffs and rocks are thickly covered with inscriptions, which are continued at intervals of a few hundred paces only, for at least the distance of two hours and a half. Burckhardt, in his travels from Akaba to Cairo, by Mount Sinai, observed many inscriptions on the rocks, part of which he has copied. See his *Travels in Syria*, Lond. Ed. pp. 506, 581, 582, 606, 613, 614. Pococke, who also visited the regions of Mount Sinai in 1777, has given a description of the inscriptions which he saw on the rocks at Mount Sinai. Vol. i. 148, he says, "There are on many of the rocks, both near these mountains and in the road, a great many inscriptions in an ancient character; many of them I copied, and observed that most of them were not cut, but stained, making the granite of a lighter color, and where the stone had scaled, I could see the stain had sunk into the stone." Numerous specimens of these inscriptions may be seen in Pococke, vol. i. p. 148. These inscriptions were also observed by Robinson and Smith, and are described by them in *Biblical Researches*, vol. i. 108, 118, 119, 123, 161, 167. They are first mentioned by Cosmas, about 535 A.D. He supposed them to be the work of the ancient Hebrews, and says that certain Jews, who had read them, explained them to him as noting "the journey of such an one, out of such a tribe, in such a year and month." They have also been noticed by many early travelers, as Neitzschitz, p. 149; Moncongs, i. p. 245; and also by Niebuhr in his *Reisebeschr.* i. p. 250. The copies of them given by Pococke and Niebuhr are said to be very imperfect; those by Seetzen are better, and those made by Burckhardt are tolerably accurate. *Rob. Bib. Research.* i. 553. A large number of them have been copied and published by Mr. Grey, in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature*, vol. iii. pt. 1, Lond. 1832; consisting of one hundred and seventy-seven in the unknown character, nine in Greek, and one in Latin. These inscriptions, which so long excited the curiosity of travelers, have been recently deciphered (in the year 1839) by Professor Beer, of the University of Leipzig. He had turned his attention to them in the year 1833, but without success. In the year 1839 his attention was again turned to them, and after several months of the most persevering application, he succeeded in making out the alphabet, and was enabled to

read all the inscriptions which have been copied, with a good degree of accuracy. According to the results of this examination, the characters of the Sinaitic inscriptions belong to a distinct and independent alphabet. Some of the letters are wholly unique; the others have more or less affinity with the Palmyrene, and particularly with the Estrangelo and the Cufic. They are written from right to left. The contents of the inscriptions, so far as examined, consist only of proper names, preceded by a word which is usually $\mu\omega\text{Ov}$; ^{<17965>}, peace, though occasionally some other word is used. In one or two instances the name is followed by a sentence which has not yet been deciphered. The names are those common in Arabic. It is a remarkable fact that not one Jewish or Christian name has been found. The question, as to the writers of these inscriptions, receives very little light from their contents. A word at the end of some of them may be so read as to affirm that they were pilgrims, and this opinion Professor Beer adopts; but this is not certain. That the writers were Christians, seems apparent from many of the crosses connected with the inscriptions. The age, also, of the inscriptions, receives no light from their contents, as no date has yet been read. Beer supposes that the greater part of them could not have been written earlier than the fourth century. Little light, therefore, is cast upon the question who wrote them; what was their design; in what age they were written, or who were the pilgrims who wrote them. See Rob. Bib. Research. i. 552-556. That there were such records in the time of Job, is probable.



^{<181925>}**Job 19:25.** *For I know that my Redeemer liveth* There are few passages in the Bible which have excited more attention than this, or in respect to which the opinions of expositors have been more divided. The importance of the passage (^{<181925>}Job 19:25-27) has contributed much to the anxiety to understand its meaning — since, if it refers to the Messiah, it is one of the most valuable of all the testimonials now remaining of the early faith on that subject. The importance of the passage will justify a somewhat

more extended examination of its meaning than it is customary to give in a commentary of a single passage of Scripture; and I shall

- (1.) give the views entertained of it by the translators of the ancient and some of the modern versions;
- (2.) investigate the meaning of the words and phrases which occur in it; and
- (3.) state the arguments, pro and con, for its supposed reference to the Messiah.

The Vulgate renders it, “For I know that my Redeemer — Redemptor meus — lives, and that in the last day I shall rise from the earth; and again, I shall be enveloped — circumdabor — with my skin, and in my flesh shall I see my God. Whom I myself shall see, and my eyes shall behold, and not another — this, my hope, is laid up in my bosom.” The Septuagint translate it, “For I know that he is Eternal who is about to deliver me — ὁ ^{<3588>} **εκλυειν** ^{<1590>} **με** ^{<3165>} **μελλων** ^{<3195>} — to raise again upon earth this skin of mine, which draws up these things — **το** ^{<3588>} **αναντλουν** ^{<501>} **ταυτα** ^{<5023>} (the meaning of which, I believe, no one has ever been able to divine.) For from the Lord these things have happened to me of which I alone am conscious, which my eye has seen, and not another, and which have all been done to me in my bosom.” Thompson’s trans. in part. The Syriac is in the main a simple and correct rendering of the Hebrew. “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the consummation he will be revealed upon the earth, and after my skin I shall bless myself in these things, and after my flesh. If my eyes shall see God, I shall see light.” The Chaldee accords with our version, except in one phrase. “And afterward my skin shall be inflated, **ykvm ypya** — then in my flesh shall I see God.” It will be seen that some perplexity was felt by the authors of the ancient versions in regard to the passage. Much more has been felt by expositors. Some notices of the views of the moderns, in regard to particular words and phrases, will be given in the exposition.

I know I am certain. On that point Job desires to express the utmost confidence. His friends might accuse him of hypocrisy — they might charge him with want of piety, and he might not be able to refute all that they said; but in the position referred to here he would remain fixed, and with this firm confidence he would support his soul. It was this which he wished to have recorded in the eternal rocks, that the record might go

down to future times. If after ages should be made acquainted with his name and his sufferings — if they should hear of the charges brought against him and of the accusations of impiety which had been so harshly and unfeelingly urged, he wished that this testimony might be recorded, to show that he had unwavering confidence in God. He wished this eternal record to be made, to show that he was not a rejecter of truth; that he was not an enemy of God; that he had a firm confidence that God would yet come forth to vindicate him, and would stand up as his friend. It was a testimony worthy of being held in everlasting remembrance, and one which has had, and will have, a permanency much greater than he anticipated.

That my Redeemer This important word has been variously translated. Rosenmuller and Schultens render it, vindicem; Dr. Good, Redeemer; Noyes and Wemyss, vindicator; Herder, avenger, Luther, Erlöser — Redeemer; Chaldee and Syriac, Redeemer. The Hebrew word, **l aē**^{h1350}, is from **l aē**^{h1350}, “to redeem, to ransom.” It is applied to the redemption of a farm sold, by paying back the price, ^{<R25>}Leviticus 25:25; ^{<R04>}Ruth 4:4,6; to anything consecrated to God that is redeemed by paying its value, ^{<R73>}Leviticus 27:13, and to a slave that is ransomed, ^{<R54>}Leviticus 25:48,49. The word **l aē**^{h1350}, is applied to one who redeems a field, ^{<R26>}Leviticus 25:26; and is often applied to God, who had redeemed his people from bondage, ^{<R06>}Exodus 6:6; ^{<R01>}Isaiah 43:1. See the notes at ^{<R01>}Isaiah 43:1; and on the general meaning of the word, see the notes at ^{<R05>}Job 3:5. Among the Hebrews, the **l aē** occupied an important place, as a blood-avenger, or a vindicator of violated rights. See ^{<R52>}Numbers 35:12,19,21,24,25,27; ^{<R96>}Deuteronomy 19:6-12; ^{<R00>}Ruth 4:1,6,8; ^{<R03>}Joshua 20:3. The word **l aē**^{h1350}, is rendered kinsman, ^{<R00>}Ruth 4:1,3,6,8; near kinsman, ^{<R09>}Ruth 3:9,12; avenger, ^{<R52>}Numbers 35:12; ^{<R03>}Joshua 20:3; Redeemer, ^{<R25>}Job 19:25; ^{<R94>}Psalms 19:14; ^{<R04>}Isaiah 47:4; 63:16; 44:24; 48:17; 54:8; 41:14; 49:26; 60:16; kin, ^{<R25>}Leviticus 25:25, et al. Moses found the office of the **l aē**, or avenger, already instituted, (see Michaelis’s Commentary on laws of Moses, Section cxxxvi.) and he adopted it into his code of laws. It would seem, therefore, not improbable that it prevailed in the adjacent countries in the time of Job, or that there may have been a reference to this office in the place before us. The **l aē** is first introduced in the laws of Moses, as having a right to redeem a mortgaged field, ^{<R25>}Leviticus 25:25,26; and then as buying a right, as kinsman, to the restoration of anything which had been iniquitously

acquired, Num 5:8. Then he is often referred to in the writings of Moses as the blood-avenger, or the kinsman of one who was slain, who would have a right to pursue the murderer, and to take vengeance on him, and whose duty it would be to do it. This right of a near relative to pursue murderer, and to take vengeance, seems to have been one that was early conceded every where. It was so understood among the American Indians, and probably prevails in all countries before there are settled laws for the trial and punishment of the guilty. It was a right, however, which was liable to great abuse. Passion would take the place of reason, the innocent would be suspected, and the man who had slain another in self-defense was as likely to be pursued and slain as he who had been guilty of willful murder. To guard against this, in the unsettled state of jurisprudence, Moses appointed cities of refuge, where the man-slayer might flee until he could bare a fair opportunity of trial. It was impossible to put an end at once to the office of the *l aē*. The kinsman, the near relative, would feel himself called on to pursue the murderer; but the man-slayer might flee into a sacred city, and remain until he had a fair trial; see Numbers 35; ^{<51916>}Deuteronomy 19:6,7. It was a humane arrangement to appoint cities of refuge, where the man who had slain another might be secure until he had an opportunity of trial — an arrangement which eminently showed the wisdom of Moses. On the rights and duties of the *l aē*, the reader may consult Michaelis's Com. on the laws of Moses, art. 136, 137. His essential office was that of a vindicator — one who took up the cause of a friend, whether that friend was murdered, or was oppressed, or was wronged in any way. Usually, perhaps always, this pertained to the nearest male kin, and was instituted for the aid of the defenceless and the wronged. In times long subsequent, a somewhat similar feeling gave rise to the institution of chivalry, and the voluntary defence of the innocent and oppressed. It cannot now be determined whether Job in this passage has reference to the office of the *l aē*, as it was afterward understood, or whether it existed in his time. It seems probable that the office would exist at the earliest periods of the world, and that in the rudest stages of society the nearest of kin would feel himself called on to vindicate the wrong done to one of the feebler members of his family. The word properly denotes, therefore, either vindicator, or redeemer; and so far as the term is concerned, it may refer either to God, as an avenger of the innocent, or to the future Redeemer — the Messiah. The meaning of this word would be met, should it be understood as referring to God, coming forth in a public manner to vindicate the cause of Job against all the

charges and accusations of his professed friends; or to God, who would appear as his vindicator at the resurrection; or to the future Messiah — the Redeemer of the body and the soul. No argument in favor of either of these interpretations can be derived from the use of the word.

Liveth Is alive — *yj æ* ^{<32416>} Septuagint, immortal — *αενναος* . He seems now to have forsaken me as if he were dead, but my faith is unwavering in him as a living vindicator. A similar expression occurs in ^{<3169>}Job 16:19. “My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high.” It is a declaration of entire confidence in God, and will beautifully convey the emotions of the sincere believer in all ages. He may be afflicted with disease, or the loss of property, or be forsaken by his friends, or persecuted by his foes, but if he can look up to heaven and say, “I know that my Redeemer live’s,” he will have peace.

And that he shall stand He will stand up, as one does who undertakes the cause of another. Jerome has rendered this as though it referred to Job, “And in the last day I shall rise from the earth” — *de terra surrecturus sum* — as if it referred to the resurrection of the body. But this is not in accordance with the Hebrew, *μῠq* ^{<16965>} — “HE shall stand.” There is clearly no necessary reference in THIS word to the resurrection. The simple meaning is, “he shall appear, or manifest himself, as the vindicator of my cause.”

At the latter day The word “day” here is supplied by the translators. The Hebrew is, *ˆwθj aæ* ^{<314>} — and after, afterward, hereafter, at length. The word literally means, hinder, hinder part — opposite to foremost, former. It is applied to the Mediterranean sea, as being behind when the eye of the geographer was supposed to be turned to the East; (see the notes at ^{<3181>}Job 18:20;) then it means after, later, applied to a generation or age. ^{<1984>}Psalm 48:14, to a day — to future times — *μῠϑ* ^{<3117>} *ˆwθj aæ* ^{<314>} , ^{<1825>}Proverbs 31:25; ^{<2318>}Isaiah 30:8. All that this word necessarily expresses here is, that at some future period this would occur. It does not determine when it would be. The language would apply to any future time, and might refer to file coming of the Redeemer, to the resurrection, or to some subsequent period in the life of Job. The meaning is, that however long he was to suffer, however protracted his calamities were, and were likely to be, he had the utmost confidence that God would at length, or at some future time, come forth to vindicate him. The phrase, “the latter day,” has now acquired a kind of technical meaning, by which we naturally refer it to the

day of judgment. But there is no evidence that it has any such reference here. On the general meaning of phrases of this kind, however, the reader may consult my notes at ^{<211D>}Isaiah 2:2.

Upon the earth Hebrew $\text{ל} [\text{æ}^{\langle 45921 \rangle} \text{r} \text{p}]^{\langle 46083 \rangle}$ — upon the dust. Why the word dust is used, instead of $\text{xra}^{\langle h776 \rangle}$ earth, is unknown. It may be because the word dust is emphatic, as being contrasted with heaven, the residence of the Deity. Noyes. What kited of an appearance God would assume when he should thus come forth, or how he would manifest himself as the vindicator and Redeemer of Job, he does not intimate, and conjecture would be useless. The words do not necessarily imply any visible manifestation — though such a manifestation would not be forbidden by the fair construction of the passage. I say, they do not necessarily imply it; see ^{<491B>}Psalms 12:5, “For the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, (Hebrew: stand up — $\mu\text{Wq}^{\langle h6965 \rangle}$, saith the Lord.” ^{<494B>}Psalms 44:26, “Arise (Hebrew $\mu\text{Wq}^{\langle h6965 \rangle}$ — stand up) for our help.” Whether this refers to any visible manifestation in behalf of Job is to be determined in other words than by the mere meaning of this word.

^{<892B>}**Job 19:26.** *And though* Margin, Or, after I shall awake, though this body be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God. This verse has given not less perplexity than the preceding. Noyes renders it,

*And though with this skin this body be wasted away,
Yet in my flesh shall I see God.*

Dr. Good renders it,

*And, after the DISEASE hath destroyed my skin,
That in my flesh I shall see God.*

Rosenmuller explains it, “And when after my skin (scil. is consumed and destroyed) they consume (scil. those corroding, or consuming, i.e. it is corroded, or broken into fragments) this, that is, this structure of my bones — my body (which he does not mention, because it was so wasted away that it did not deserve to be called a body) — yet without my flesh — with my whole body consumed, shall I see God.” He translates it,

*Et quum post cutem meam hoc fuerit consumptum,
Tamen absque carne mea videbo Deum.*

The Hebrew is literally, “and after my skin.” Gesenius translates it, “After they shall have destroyed my skin, this shall happen — that I will see God.” Herder renders it,

*Though they tear and devour this my skin,
Yet in my living body shall I see God.*

The fair and obvious meaning, I think, is that which is conveyed by our translation. Disease had attacked his skin. It was covered with ulcers, and was fast consuming; compare ^{<18018>}Job 2:8; 7:5. This process of corruption and decay he had reason to expect would go on until all would be consumed. But if it did, he would hold fast his confidence in God. He would believe that he would come forth as his vindicator, and he would still put his trust in him.

Worms This word is supplied by our translators. There is not a semblance of it in the original. That is, simply, “they destroy;” where the verb is used impersonally, meaning that it would be destroyed; The agent by which this would be done is not specified. The word rendered “destroy” ^{<45362>}āqæ from ^{<45362>}āqæ, means “to cut, to strike, to cut down” (compare the notes at ^{<18018>}Job 1:5, for the general meaning of the word), and here means to destroy; that is, that the work of destruction might go on until the frame should be wholly wasted away. It is not quite certain that the word here would convey the idea that he expected to die. It may mean that he would become entirely emaciated, and all his flesh be gone. There is nothing, however, in the word to show that he did not expect to die — and perhaps that would be the most obvious and proper interpretation.

This body The word body is also supplied by the translators. The Hebrew is simply ^{<10063>}tazō — this. Perhaps he pointed to his body — for there can be no doubt that his body or flesh is intended. Rosenmuller supposes that he did not mention it, because it was so emaciated that it did not deserve to be called a body.

Yet in my flesh Hebrew “From my flesh” — ^{<11320>}rcb. Herder renders this, “In my living body.” Rosenmuller, absque carne mea — “without my flesh;” and explains it as meaning, “my whole body being consumed, I shall see God.” The literal meaning is, “from, or out of, my flesh shall I see God.” It does not mean in his flesh, which would have been expressed by the preposition **B** — but there is the notion that from or out of his flesh he

would see him; that is, clearly, as Rosenmuller has expressed it, tho' my body be consumed, and I have no flesh, I shall see him. Disease might carry its fearful ravages through all his frame, until it utterly wasted away, yet; he had confidence that he would see his vindicator and Redeemer on the earth. It cannot be proved that this refers to the resurrection of that body, and indeed the natural interpretation is against it. It is, rather, that though without a body, or though his body should all waste away, he would see God as his vindicator. He would not always be left overwhelmed in this manner with calamities and reproaches. He would be permitted to see God coming forth as his Goal or Avenger, and manifesting himself as his friend. Calmly, therefore, he would bear these reproaches and trials, and see his frame waste away, for it would not always be so — God would yet undertake and vindicate his cause.

Shall I see God He would be permitted to behold him as his friend and avenger. What was the nature of the vision which he anticipated, it is not possible to determine with certainty. If he expected that God would appear in some remarkable manner to judge the world and to vindicate the cause of the oppressed; or that he would come forth in a special manner to vindicate his cause; or if he looked to a general resurrection, and to the trial on that day, the language would apply to either of these events.

~~1897~~ **Job 19:27.** *Whom I shall see for myself* It will not come to be by mere report. I shall not merely hear of the decision of God in my favor, but I shall myself behold him. He will at length come forth, and I shall be permitted to see him, and shall have the delightful assurance that he settles this controversy in my favor, and declares that I am his friend. Job was thus permitted to see God (~~1875~~ Job 42:5), and hear his voice in his favor. He spake to him from the whirlwind (~~1891~~ Job 38:1), and pronounced the sentence in his favor which he had desired.

And not another Margin, a stranger. So in the Hebrew. The meaning is, that his own eyes would be permitted to see him. He would have the satisfaction of seeing God himself, and of hearing the sentence in his favor. That expectation he deemed worthy of a permanent record, and wished it transmitted to future times, that in his darkest days and severest trials — when God overwhelmed him, and man forsook him, he still firmly maintained his confidence in God, and his belief that he would come forth to vindicate his cause.

Though my reins The margin renders this, “my reins within me are consumed with earnest desire for that day.” Noyes translates it, “For this my soul panteth within me.” Herder,

*I shall see him as my deliverer,
Mine eyes shall behold him, as mine,
For whom my heart so long fainted.*

So Wemyss, “My reins faint with desire of his arrival.” Jerome renders it (Vulgate), reposita est hoc spes mea in sinu meo — “this, my hope, is laid up in my bosom.” The Septuagint, “All which things have been done — συντετελεσται ^{<4931>} — in my bosom,” but what they understood by this it is difficult to say. The word rendered “reins” hyl Kl ^{<h3629>} — or in the plural twyl k — in which form only it is found), means properly the reins, or the kidneys (^{<1813>}Job 16:13). and then comes to denote the inward parts, and then the seat of the desires and affections, because in strong emotions the inward parts are affected. We speak of the heart as the seat of the affections, but with no more propriety than the Hebrews did of the upper viscera in general, or of the reins. In the Scriptures the heart and the reins are united as the seat of the affections. Thus, ^{<2112>}Jeremiah 11:20, God “trieth the reins and the heart;” ^{<2470>}Jeremiah 17:10; 20:12; ^{<4970>}Psalms 7:10. I see no reason why the word here may not be used to denote the viscera in general, and that the idea may be, that he felt that his disease was invading the seat of life, and his body, in all its parts, was wasting away. Our word vitals, perhaps, expresses the idea.

Be consumed Gesenius renders this, “Pine away.” So Noyes, Wemyss, and some others. But the proper meaning of the word is, to consume, to be wasted, to be destroyed. The word hl K, ^{<h3615>} strictly means to finish, complete, render entire; and thence has the notion of completion or finishing — whether by making a thing perfect, or by destroying it. It is used with reference to the eyes that fail or waste away with weeping, ^{<2121>}Lamentations 2:11, or to the spirit or heart. as fainting with grief and sorrow. ^{<1843>}Psalms 84:3; 143:7; 69:4. It is used often in the sense of destroying. ^{<2443>}Jeremiah 16:4; ^{<1513>}Ezra 5:13; ^{<3991>}Psalms 39:11; ^{<2270>}Isaiah 27:10; 49:4; ^{<0413>}Genesis 41:30; ^{<2442>}Jeremiah 14:12; et soepe al. This, I think, is the meaning here. Job affirms that his whole frame, external and internal, was wasting away, yet he had confidence that he would see God.

Within me Margin, in my bosom. So the Hebrew. The word bosom is used here as we use the word chest — and is not improperly rendered “within me.” In view of this exposition of the words, I would translate the whole passage as follows:

For I know that my Avenger liveth, And that hereafter he shall stand upon the earth; And though after my skin this (flesh) shall be destroyed, Yet even without my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, And mine eyes shall behold, and not another, Though my vitals are wasting away within me.

It has already been observed, that very various views have been entertained of this important passage of Scripture. The great question has been, whether it refers to the Messiah, and to the resurrection of the dead, or to an expectation which Job had that God would come forth as his vindicator in some such way as he is declared afterward to have done. It may be proper, therefore, to give a summary of the arguments by which these opinions would be defended. I have not found many arguments stated for the former opinion, though the belief is held by many, but they would be probably such as the following: —

I. Arguments which would be adduced to show that the passage refers to the Messiah and to the future resurrection of the dead.

- (1) The language which is used is such as would appropriately describe such events. This is undoubted, though more so in our translation than in the original; but the original would appropriately express such an expectation.
- (2) The impression which it would make on the mass of readers, and particularly those of plain, sober sense, who had no theory to defend. It is probably a fact, that the great body of the readers of the Bible suppose that it has such a reference. It is usually a very strong presumptive proof of the correctness of an interpretation of Scripture when this can be alleged in its favor, though it is not an infallible guide.
- (3) The probability that some knowledge of the Messiah would prevail in Arabia in the time of Job. This must be admitted, though it cannot be certainly demonstrated; compare ^{<0047>}Numbers 24:17. The amount of this is, that it could not be regarded as so improbable that any such knowledge

would prevail as to demonstrate certainly that this could not be referred to the Messiah.

(4) The probability that there would be found in this book some allusion to the Redeemer — the great hope of the ancient saints, and the burden of the Old Testament But this is not conclusive or very weighty, for there are several of the books of the Old Testament which contain no distinct allusion to him.

(5) The pertinency of such a view to the case, and its adaptedness to give to Job the kind of consolation which he needed. There can be no doubt of the truth of this; but the question is, not what would have imparted consolation, but what knowledge he actually had. There are many of the doctrines of the Christian religion which would have been eminently fitted to give comfort in such circumstances to a man in affliction, which it would be exceedingly unreasonable to expect to find in the book of Job, and which it is certain were wholly unknown to him and his friends.

(6) The importance which he himself attached to his declaration, and the solemnity of the manner in which he introduced it. His profession of faith on the subject he wished to have engraved in the eternal rocks. he wished it transmitted to future times. He wished a permanent record to be made, that succeeding ages might read it, and see the ground of his confidence and his hope. This, to my mind, is the strongest argument which has occurred in favor of the opinion that the passage refers to the Redeemer and to the resurrection. These are all the considerations which have occurred to me, or which I have found stated, which would go to sustain the position that the passage referred to the resurrection. Some of them have weight; but the prevailing opinion, that the passage has such a reference. will be found to be sustained, probably, more by the feelings of piety than by solid argument and sound exegesis. It is favored, doubtless, by our common version, and there can be no doubt that the translators supposed that it had such a reference.

II. On the other hand, weighty considerations are urged to show that the passage does not refer to the Messiah, and to the resurrection of the dead. They are such as the following:

(1) The language, fairly interpreted and translated, does not necessarily imply this. It is admitted that our translators had this belief, and without doing intentional or actual violence to the passage, or designing to make a

forced translation, they have allowed their feelings to give a complexion to their language which the original does not necessarily convey. Hence, the word “Redeemer,” which is now used technically to denote the Messiah, is employed, though the original “may,” and commonly “does,” have a much more general signification; and hence, the phrase “at the latter day,” also a technical phrase, occurs, though the original means no more than “afterward” or “after this;” and hence, they have employed the phrase “in my flesh,” though the original means no more than “though my flesh be all wasted away.” The following I believe to express fairly the meaning of the Hebrew:” I know that my deliverer, or avenger, lives, and that he will yet appear in some public manner on the earth; and though after the destruction of my skin, the process of corruption shall go on until “all” my flesh shall be destroyed, yet when my flesh is entirely wasted away, I shall see God; I shall have the happiness of seeing him for myself, and beholding him with my own eyes, even though my very vitals shall be consumed. He will come and vindicate me and my cause. I have such confidence in his justice, that I do not doubt that he will yet show himself to be the friend of him who puts his trust in him.”

(2) It is inconsistent with the argument, and the whole scope and connection of the book, to suppose that this refers to the Messiah and to the resurrection of the body after death. The book of Job is strictly an “argument” — a train of clear, consecutive reasoning. It discusses a great inquiry about the doctrines of divine Providence and the divine dealings with people. The three friends of Job maintained that God deals with men strictly according to their character in this life — that eminent wickedness is attended with eminent suffering; and that when people experience any great calamity, it is proof of eminent wickedness. All this they meant to apply to Job, and all this Job denied. Yet he was perplexed and confounded. He did not know what to do with the “facts” in the case; but still he felt embarrassed. All that he could say was, that God would “yet” come forth and show himself to be the friend of those who loved him and that though they suffered now, yet he had confidence that he would appear for their relief. Now, had they possessed the knowledge of the doctrine of the “resurrection of the dead,” it would have ended the whole debate. It would not only have met all the difficulties of Job, but we should have found him perpetually recurring to it — placing it in every variety of form — appealing to it as relieving his embarrassments, and as demanding an answer from his friends. But, on the supposition that this refers to the

resurrection, it is remarkable that the passage here stands alone. Job never adverted to it before, but allowed himself to be greatly embarrassed for the want of just such an argument, and he never refers to it again. He goes on to argue again “as if” he believed no such doctrine. He does not ask his friends to notice this: he expresses no surprise that they should pass by, in entire neglect, an argument which “must have been seen” to be decisive of the controversy. It is equally unaccountable that his friends should not have noticed it. If the doctrine of the resurrection was true, it settled the case. It rendered all their arguments worthless, and would have met the case just as we meet similar cases now. It was incumbent on them to show that there was no evidence of the truth of any such doctrine as the resurrection, and that this could not be urged to meet their arguments. Yet they never allude to so important and unanswerable an argument, and evidently did not suppose that Job referred to any such event. It is equally remarkable that neither Elihu nor God himself, in the close of the book, make any such allusion, or refer to the doctrine of the resurrection at all, as meeting the difficulties of the case. In the argument with which the Almighty is represented as closing the book, the whole thing is resolved into a matter of “sovereignty,” and people are required to submit because God is great, and is inscrutable in his ways — not because the dead will be raised, and the inequalities of the present life will be recompensed in a future state. The doctrine of a “resurrection” — a great and glorious doctrine, such as, if once suggested, could not have escaped the profound attention of these sages — would have solved the whole difficulty; and yet, confessedly, it is never alluded to by them — never introduced — never examined — never admitted or rejected — never becomes a matter of inquiry, and is never referred to by God himself as settling the matter — never occurs in the book in any form, unless it be in this. This is wholly unaccountable on the supposition that this refers to the resurrection.

(3) The interpretation which refers this to the resurrection of the dead, is inconsistent with numerous passages where Job expresses a contrary belief. Of this nature are the following: ^{<1870>}Job 7:9,

“As the cloud is consumed, and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more;”

^{<1871>}Job 7:21,

“I shall sleep in the dust thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be;”

see ~~8101~~ Job 10:21,22,

“I go whence I shall not return — to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death; a land of darkness as darkness itself;”

Job 14 throughout, particularly ~~8147~~ Job 14:7,9,11,12,

“For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. But man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up, so man lieth down and riseth not; until the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.”

~~8162~~ Job 16:22,

“When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.”

These passages all imply that when he should die, he would not appear again on the earth. This is not such language as one would use who believed in the resurrection of the dead. It is true, that in the discourses of Job, various and sometimes apparently contradictory feelings are expressed. He was a severe sufferer; and under strong conflicting emotions he sometimes expressed himself in a manner which he at other times regrets, and gives vent to feelings which, on mature reflection, he confesses to have been wrong. But how is it “possible” to believe that a man, in his circumstances, would ever deny the doctrine of the resurrection if he held it? How could he forget it? How could he throw out a remark that “seemed” to imply a doubt of it? If he had known of this, it would have been a sheet-anchor to his soul in all the storms of adversity — an unanswerable argument to all that his friends advanced — atopic of consolation which he could never have lost sight of, much less denied. He would have clung to that hope as the refuge of his soul, and not for one moment would he have denied it, or expressed a doubt of its truth.

(4) I may urge as a distinct argument what has before been hinted at, that this is not referred to as a topic of consolation by either of the friends of Job, by Elihu, or by God himself. Had it been a doctrine of those times, his friends would have understood it, and it would have reversed all their theology. Had it been understood by Elihu, he would have urged it as a reason for resignation in affliction. Had God designed that it should be

known in that age, no more favorable opportunity could be conceived for the purpose than at the end of the arguments in this book. What a flood of light would it have thrown on the design of afflictions! How effectually would it have rebuked the arguments of the friends of Job! And how clear is it, therefore, that God did not “intend” that it should then be revealed to man, but meant that it should be reserved for a more advanced state of the world, and particularly that it should be reserved as the grand doctrine of the Christian revelation.

(5) A fifth consideration is, that on the supposition that it refers to the resurrection, it would be inconsistent with the views which prevailed in the age when Job is supposed to have lived. It is wholly in advance of that age. It makes little difference in regard to this whether we suppose him to have lived in the time of Abraham, Jacob, or Moses, or even at a later period — such a supposition would be equally at variance with the revelations which had then been given. The clear doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, is one of the unique doctrines of Christianity — one of the last truths of revelation, and is one of the glorious truths which seem to have been reserved for the Redeemer himself to make known to man. There are, indeed, obscure traces of it in the Old Testament. Occasionally we meet with a hint on the subject that was sufficient to excite the hopes of the ancient saints, and to lead them to suppose that more glorious truths were in reserve to be communicated by the Messiah. But those hints occur at distant intervals; are obscure in their character, and perhaps if all in the Old Testament were collected, they would not be sufficient to convey any very intelligible view of the resurrection of the dead. But on the supposition that the passage before us refers to that doctrine, we have here one of the most clear and full revelations on the subject, laid far back in the early ages of the world, originating in Arabia, and entirely in advance of the prevailing views of the age, and of all that had been communicated by the Spirit of inspiration to the generations then living. It is admitted, indeed, that it was “possible” for the Holy Spirit to communicate that truth in its fulness and completeness to an Arabian sage; but it is not the way in which revelation, in other respects, has been imparted. It has been done “gradually.” Obscure intimations are given at first — they are increased from time to time — the light becomes clearer, until some prophet discloses the whole truth, and the doctrine stands complete before us. Such a course we should expect to find in regard to the doctrine of the resurrection, and such is exactly the course

pursued, unless “this” passage teaches what was in fact the highest revelation made by the Messiah.

(6) All which the words and phrases fairly convey, and all which the argument demands, is fully met by the supposition that it refers to some such event as is recorded in the close of the book. God appeared in a manner corresponding to the meaning of the words here upon the earth. He came as the Vindicator, the Redeemer, the **labe**^{ch1350}, of Job. He vindicated his cause, rebuked his friends, expressed his approbation of the sentiments of Job, and blessed him again with returning prosperity and plenty. The disease of the patriarch may have advanced, as he supposed it would. His flesh may have wasted away, but his confidence in God was not misplaced, and he came forth as his vindicator and friend. It was a noble expression of faith on the part of Job; it showed that he “had” confidence in God, and that in the midst of his trials he truly relied on him; and it was a sentiment worthy to be engraved in the eternal rock, and to be transmitted to future times. It was an invaluable lesson to sufferers, showing them that confidence could, and should be placed in God in the severest trials. So far as I can see, all that is fairly implied in the passage, when properly interpreted, is fully met by the events recorded in the close of the book. Such an interpretation meets the exigency of the case, accords with the strain of the argument and with the result, and is the most simple and natural that has been proposed. These considerations are so weighty in my mind that they have conducted me to a conclusion, contrary I confess to what I had “hoped” to have reached, that this passage has no reference to the Messiah and the doctrine of the resurrection. We do not “need” it — for all the truths respecting the Messiah and the resurrection which we need, are fully revealed elsewhere; and though this is an exquisitely beautiful passage, and piety would love to retain the belief that it refers to the resurrection of the dead, yet “truth” is to be preferred to indulgence of the wishes and desires of the heart, however amiable or pious, and the “desire” to find certain doctrines in the Bible should yield to what we are constrained to believe the Spirit of inspiration actually taught. I confess that I have never been so pained at any conclusion to which I have come in the interpretation of the Bible, as in the case before us. I would like to have found a distinct prophecy of the Messiah in this ancient and venerable book. I would like to have found the faith of this eminent saint sustained by such a faith in his future advent and incarnation. I would like to have found evidence that this expectation had become incorporated in the piety of the

early nations, and was found in Arabia. I would like to have found traces of the early belief of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead sustaining the souls of the patriarchs then, as it does ours now, in trial. But I cannot. Yet I can regard it as a most beautiful and triumphant expression of confidence in God, and as wholly worthy to be engraved, as Job desired it might be, in the solid rock forever, that the passing traveler might see and read it; or as worthy of that more permanent record which it has received by being “printed IN A BOOK” — by an art unknown then, and sent down to the end of the world to be read and admired in all generations.

The opinion which has now been expressed, it is not necessary to say, has been held by a large number of the most distinguished critics. Grotius says that the Jews never applied it to the Messiah and the resurrection. The same opinion is held by Grotius himself, by Warburton, Rosenmuller, Le Clerc, Patrick, Kennicott, Dalthe, and Jahn. Calvin seems to be doubtful — sometimes giving it an interpretation similar to that suggested above, and then pursuing his remarks as if it referred to the Messiah. Most of the fathers, and a large portion of modern critics, it is to be admitted, suppose that it refers to the Messiah, and to the future resurrection.

~~18128~~ **Job 19:28.** *But ye should say* Noyes renders this, “Since ye say, ‘How may we persecute him, and find grounds of accusation against him?’“ Dr. Good,

Then shall ye say, “How did we persecute him?” When the root of the matter is disclosed in me.

The Vulgate, “Why now do ye say, let us persecute him, and find ground of accusation — “radicem verbi” against him?” The Septuagint, “If you also say, What shall we say against him? and what ground of accusation — ριζαν ^{<4491>} λογου ^{<3056>} — shall we find in him?” Rosenmuller renders it, “When you say, let us persecute him, and see what ground of accusation we can find in him, then fear the sword.” Most critics concur in such an interpretation as implies that they had sought a ground of accusation against him, and that they would have occasion to fear the divine displeasure on account of it. It seems to me, however, that our translators have given substantially the fair sense of the Hebrew. A slight variation would, perhaps, better express the idea: “For you will yet say, Why did we persecute him? The root of the matter was found in him — and since this will be the case, fear now that justice will overtake you for it, for vengeance will not always slumber when a friend of God is wronged.”

Seeing the root of the matter Margin, “and” what “root of matter is found in me.” The word rendered “matter” $\text{rbd}_i^{\text{ch1697}}$, “word or thing.” means, properly, word or thing — and may refer to “any” thing. Here it is used in one of the two opposite senses, “piety” or “guilt” — as being “the thing” under consideration. The interpretation to be adopted must depend on the view taken of the other words of the sentence. To me it seems that it denotes piety, and that the idea is, that the root of true piety was in him, or that he was not a hypocrite. The word root is so common as to need no explanation. It is used sometimes to denote the “bottom,” or the lowest part of anything — as e.g., the foot (see ch1327 Job 13:27, “margin”), the bottom of the mountains (ch289 Job 28:9), or of the sea, (ch370 Job 36:30, “margin.” Here it means the foundation, support, or source — as the root is of a tree; and the sense, I suppose, is, that he was not a dead trunk, but he was like a tree that had a root, and consequently support and life. Many critics, however, among whom is Gesenius, suppose that it means that the root of the controversy, that is, the ground of strife, was in “him,” or that he was the cause of the whole dispute.

ch1929 **Job 19:29.** *Be ye afraid of the sword* Of the sword of justice, of the wrath of God. In taking such views, and using such language, you ought to dread the vengeance of God, for he will punish the guilty.

For wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword The word “bringeth” is supplied by the translators, and as it seems to me improperly. The idea is, that wrath or anger such as they had manifested, was proper for punishment; that such malice as they had shown was a crime that God would not suffer to escape unpunished. They had, therefore, everything to dread. Literally, it is, “for wrath the iniquities of the sword;” that is, wrath is a crime for the sword.

That ye may know that there is a judgment That there is justice; that God punishes injuries done to the character, and that he will come forth to vindicate his friends. Probably Job anticipated that when God should come forth to vindicate “him,” he would inflict exemplary punishment on “them;” and that this would be not only by words, but by some heavy judgment, such as he had himself experienced. The vindication of the just is commonly attended with the punishment of the unjust; the salvation of the friends of God is connected with the destruction of his foes. Job seems to have anticipated this in the case of himself and his friends; it will certainly

occur in the great day when the affairs of this world shall be wound up in the decisions of the final judgment. See Matthew 25.

NOTES ON JOB 20

Job 20:2. *Therefore* ⁴³⁶⁵¹ *Ke*, “certainly, truly.” In view of what has been just said. Or perhaps the word means merely certainly, truly.

Do my thoughts cause me to answer This is variously rendered. The Vulgate renders it, *Idcirco cogitationes meae variae succedunt sibi, et mens in diversa rapitur* — “Therefore my various thoughts follow in succession, and the mind is distracted.” The Septuagint, “I did not suppose that thou wouldst speak against these things, and you do not understand more than I.” How this was ever made from the Hebrew it is impossible to say. On the word “thoughts,” see the notes at ⁴³⁰⁴³ Job 4:13. The word denotes thoughts which divide and distract the mind; not calm and collected reflections, but those which disturb, disconcert, and trouble. He acknowledges that it was not calm reflection which induced him to reply, but the agitating emotions produced by the speech of Job. The word rendered “cause me to answer” ⁴⁷⁷²⁵ *bllv*, “cause me to return” — and Jerome understood it as meaning that his thoughts returned upon him in quick and troublesome succession, and says in his Commentary on Job, that the meaning is, “I am troubled and agitated because you say that you sustain these evils from God without cause, when nothing evil ought to be suspected of God.”

And for this I make haste Margin, “my haste is in me.” The meaning is, “the impetuosity of my feelings urges me on. I reply on account of the agitation of my soul, which will admit of no delay.” His heart was full, and he hastened to give vent to his feelings in impassioned and earnest language.

Job 20:3. *I have heard the check of my reproach* I have heard your violent and severe language reproaching us. Probably he refers to what Job had said in the close of his speech (⁴³⁰²⁹ Job 19:29), that they had occasion to dread the wrath of God, and that they might anticipate heavy judgments as the result of their opinions. Or it may be, as Schultens supposes, that he refers to what Job said in ⁴³⁰¹² Job 19:2, and the rebuke that he had administered there. Or possibly, and still more probably, I think, he may refer to what Job had said in reply to the former speech of Zophar (⁴³⁰¹² Job 12:2), where he tauntingly says that “they were the people, and that

wisdom would die with them.” The Hebrew literally is, “the correction of my shame” **רסלמ**^{<4148>} **חמל כ**^{<3639>}, “the correction of my shame.” that is, the castigation or rebuke which tends to cover me with ignominy. The sense is, “you have accused me of that which is ignominious and shameful, and under the impetuous feelings caused by such a charge I cannot refrain from replying.”

And the spirit of my understanding Meaning, perhaps, “the emotion of his mind.” The word “mind” or “soul” would better express the idea than the word “understanding;” and the word “spirit” here seems to be used in the sense of violent or agitating emotions — perhaps in allusion to the primary signification of the word **י** **ע**^{<47307>}, “mind.”

<8104> Job 20:4. *Knowest thou not this of old* That is, dost thou not know that this has always happened from the beginning of the world, or that this is the invariable course of events. His purpose is to show that it was the settled arrangement of Providence that the wicked would be overtaken with signal calamity. It was “so” settled that Job ought not to be surprised that it had occurred in “his” case. Zophar goes on to show that though a wicked man might rise high in honor, and obtain great wealth, yet that the fall would certainly come, and he would sink to a depth of degradation corresponding to the former prosperity.

Since man was placed upon earth Since the creation; that is, it has always been so.

<8105> Job 20:5. *That the triumphing* The word “triumphing” here **חנר** **י**^{<17445>}, “shouting, rejoicing” — such a shouting as people make after a victory, or such as occurred at the close of harvesting. Here it means that the occasion which the wicked had for rejoicing would be brief. It would be but for a moment, and he then would be overwhelmed with calamity or cut off by death.

Short Margin, as in Hebrew “from near.” That is, it would be soon over.

And the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment? This probably means, as used by Zophar, that the happiness of a hypocrite would be brief — referring to the happiness arising from the possession of health, life, property, friends, reputation. Soon God would take away all these, and leave him to sorrow. This, he said, was the regular course of events as they had been observed from the earliest times. But the “language” conveys

most important truths in reference to the spiritual joys of the hypocrite at all times, though it is not certain that Zophar used it in this sense. The truths are these.

(1) There is a kind of joy which a hypocrite may have — the counterfeit of that which a true Christian possesses. The word “hypocrite” may be used in a large sense to denote the man who is a professor of religion, but who has none, as well as him who intentionally imposes on others, and who makes pretensions to piety which he knows he has not. Such a man may have joy. He supposes that his sins are forgiven, and that he has a well-founded hope of eternal life. He may have been greatly distressed in view of his sin and danger, and when he supposes that his heart is changed, and that the danger is passed, from the nature of the case he will have a species of enjoyment. A man is confined in a dungeon under sentence of death. A forged instrument of pardon is brought to him. He does not know that it is forged, and supposes the danger is past, and his joy will be as real as though the pardon were genuine. So with the man who “supposes” that his sins are forgiven.

(2) The joy of the self-deceiver or the hypocrite will be short. There is no genuine religion to sustain it, and it soon dies away. It may be at first very elevated, just as the joy of the man who supposed that he was pardoned would fill him with exultation. But in the case of the hypocrite it soon dies away. He has no true love to God; he has never been truly reconciled to him; he has no real faith in Christ; he has no sincere love of prayer, of the Bible, or of Christians and soon the temporary excitement dies away, and he lives without comfort or peace. He may be a professor of religion, but with him it is a matter of form, and he has neither love nor zeal in the cause of his professed Master. Motives of pride, or the desire of a reputation for piety, or some other selfish aim may keep him in the church, and he lives to shed blighting on all around him. Or if, under the illusion, he should be enabled to keep up some emotions of happiness in his bosom, they must soon cease, for to the hypocrite death will soon end it all. How much does it become us, therefore, to inquire whether the peace which we seek and which we may possess in religion, is the genuine happiness which results from true reconciliation to God and a well founded hope of salvation. Sad will be the disappointment of him who has cherished a hope of heaven through life, should he at last sink down to hell! Deep the condemnation of him who has professed to be a friend of God, and who has been at heart his

bitter foe; who has endeavored to keep up the forms of religion, but who has been a stranger through life to the true peace which religion produces!

^{<8306>}**Job 20:6.** *Though his excellency mount up to the heavens* Though he attain to the highest pitch of honor and prosperity. The Septuagint renders this, “Though his gifts should go up to heaven, and his sacrifice should touch the clouds;” a sentence conveying a true and a beautiful idea, but which is not a translation of the Hebrew. The phrases, to go up to heaven, and to touch the clouds, often occur to denote anything that is greatly exalted, or that is very high. Thus, in Virgil,

It clamor coelo.

So Horace,

Sublimi feriam sidera vertice.

And again,

Attingit solium Jovis.

Compare ^{<1104>}Genesis 11:4, “Let us build us a tower whose top may reach unto heaven.” In Homer the expression not unfrequently occurs, ^{<3588>}του γαρ ^{<1063>} κλεος ^{<2811>} ουρανον ^{<3772>} ἵκει . In Seneca (Thyest. Act. v. ver. 1,2,4,) similar expressions occur:

*Aequalis astris gradior, et cunctos super
Altum superbo vertice attingens polum,
Dimitto superos: summa votorum attingi.*

The “language” of Zophar would also well express the condition of many a hypocrite whose piety seems to be of the most exalted character, and who appears to have made most eminent attainments in religion. Such a man may “seem” to be a man of uncommon excellence. He may attract attention as having extraordinary sanctity. He may seem to have a remarkable spirit of prayer, and yet all may be false and hollow. Men who design to be hypocrites, aim usually to be “eminent” hypocrites; they who have true piety often, alas, aim at a much lower standard. A hypocrite cannot keep himself in countenance, or accomplish his purpose of imposing on the world, without the appearance of extraordinary devotedness to God; many a sincere believer is satisfied with much less of the appearance of religion. He is sincere and honest. He is conscious of true piety, and he attempts to impose on none. At the same time he makes no attempt scarcely “to be”

what the hypocrite wishes “to appear” to be; and hence, the man that shall appear to be the most eminently devoted to God “may” be a hypocrite — yet usually not long. His zeal dies away, or he is suffered to fall into open sin, and to show that he had no true religion at heart.

Job 20:8. *He shall fly away as a dream* As a dream wholly disappears or vanishes. This comparison of man with a dream is not uncommon, and is most impressive. See **Psalm 73:20**; see the notes at **Isaiah 29:7,8**.

As a vision of the night As when one in a dream seems to see objects which vanish when he awakes. The parallelism requires us to understand this of what appears in a dream, and not of a spectre. In our dreams we “seem” to see objects, and when we awake they vanish.

Job 20:9. *The eye also which saw him* This is almost exactly the language which Job uses respecting himself. See **Job 7:8,10**, and the notes at those verses.

Job 20:10. *His children shall seek to please the poor* Margin, or, “the poor shall oppress his children.” The idea in the Hebrew seems to be, that his sons shall be reduced to the humiliating condition of asking the aid of the most needy and abject. Instead of being in a situation to assist others, and to indulge in a liberal hospitality, they themselves shall be reduced to the necessity of applying to the poor for the means of subsistence. There is great strength in this expression. It is usually regarded as humiliating to be compelled to ask aid at all; but the idea here is, that they would be reduced to the necessity of asking it of those who themselves needed it, “or would be beggars of beggars.”

And his hands shall restore their goods Noyes renders this, “And their hands shall give back his wealth.” Rosenmuller supposes it means, “And their hands shall restore his iniquity;” that is, what their father took unjustly away. There can be but little doubt that this refers to his “sons,” and not to himself — though the singular suffix in the word **dy**,^{h3027}, “his hands” is used. But the singular is sometimes used instead of the plural. The word rendered “goods” **w**^{h202}, means “strength, power, and then wealth;” and the idea here is, that the hands of his sons would be compelled to give back the property which the father had unjustly acquired. Instead of retaining and enjoying it, they would be compelled to make restitution, and thus be reduced to penury and want.

⚔️ **Job 20:11.** *His bones are full of the sin of his youth* The words “of the sin” in our common translation are supplied by the translators. Gesenius and Noyes suppose that the Hebrew means, “His bones are full of youth;” that is, full of vigor and strength, and the idea according to this would be, that he would be cut off in the fulness of his strength. Dr. Good renders it forcibly,

*“His secret lusts shall follow his bones,
Yea, they shall press upon him in the dust.”*

The Vulgate renders it, “His bones are full of the sins of his youth.” The Septuagint, “His bones are full of his youth.” The Chaldee Paraphrase, “His bones are full of his strength.” The Hebrew literally is, “His bones are full of his secret things” *wmwł* [— referring, as I suppose, to the “secret, long-cherished” faults of his life; the corrupt propensities and desires of his soul which had been seated in his very nature, and which would adhere to him, leaving a withering influence on his whole system in advancing years. The effect is that which is so often seen, when vices corrupt the very physical frame, and where the results are seen long in future life. The effect would be seen in the diseases which they engendered in his system, and in the certainty with which they would bring him down to the grave. The Syriac renders it, “marrow,” as if the idea were that he would die full of vigor and strength. But the sense is rather that his secret lusts would work his certain ruin.

Which shall lie down with him That is, the results of his secret sins shall lie down with him in the grave. He will never get rid of them. He has so long indulged in his sins; they have so thoroughly pervaded his nature, and he so delights to cherish them, that they will attend him to the tomb. There is truth in this representation. Wicked people often indulge in secret sin so long that it seems to pervade the whole system. Nothing will remove it; and it lives and acts until the body is committed to the dust, and the soul sinks ruined into hell.

⚔️ **Job 20:12.** *Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth* Though he has pleasure in committing it, as he has in pleasant food. The sense of this and the following verses is, that though a man may have pleasure in indulgence in sin, and may find happiness of a certain kind in it, yet that the consequences will be bitter — as if the food which he ate should become like gall, and he should cast it up with loathing. There are many sins which,

from the laws of our nature, are attended with a kind of pleasure. Such, for illustration, are the sins of gluttony and of intemperance in drinking; the sins of ambition and vanity; the sins of amusement and of fashionable life. To such we give the name of “pleasures.” We do not speak of them as “happiness.” That is a word which would not express their nature. It denotes rather substantial, solid, permanent joy — such joy as the “pleasures of sin for a season” do not furnish. It is this temporary “pleasure” which the lovers of vanity, fashion and dress, seek, and which, it cannot be denied, they often find. As long ago as the time of Zophar, it was admitted that such pleasure might be found in some forms of sinful indulgence and yet even in his time that was seen, which all subsequent observation has proved true, that such indulgence must lead to bitter results.

Though he hide it under his tongue It is from this passage, probably, that we have derived the phrase, “to roll sin as a sweet morsel under the tongue,” which is often quoted as if it were a part of Scripture. The “meaning” here is, that a man would find pleasure in sin, and would seek to prolong it, as one does the pleasure of eating that which is grateful to the palate by holding it long in the mouth, or by placing it under the tongue.

<803>**Job 20:13.** *Though he spare it* That is, though he retains it long in his mouth, that he may enjoy it the more.

And forsake it not Retains it as long as he can.

But keep it still within his mouth Margin, as in Hebrew “in the midst of his palate.” He seeks to enjoy it as long as possible.

<804>**Job 20:14.** *Yet his meat* His food.

In his bowels is turned That is, it is as if he had taken food which was exceedingly pleasant, and had retained it in his mouth as long as possible, that he might enjoy it, but when he swallowed it, it became bitter and offensive; compare <609>Revelation 10:9,10. Sin may be pleasant when it is committed, but its consequences will be bitter.

It is the gall of asps On the meaning of the word here rendered “asps” ^{†tp, <4662>}, see the notes at <23108>Isaiah 11:8. There can be little doubt that the “asp,” or aspic, of antiquity, which was so celebrated, is here intended. The bite was deadly, and was regarded as incurable. The sight became

immediately dim after the bite — a swelling took place, and pain was felt in the stomach, followed by stupor, convulsions, and death. It is probably the same as the “boetan” of the Arabians. It is about a foot in length, and two inches in circumference — its color being black and white. “Pict. Bib.” The word “gall” 𐤁𐤓𐤓^{Th4846}, means “bitterness, acridness” (compare 𐤁𐤓𐤓^{Th4835} Job 13:26); and hence, bile or gall. It is not improbable that it was formerly supposed that the poison of the serpent was contained in the gall, though it is now ascertained that it is found in a small sack in the mouth. It is used here as synonymous with the “poison” of asps — supposed to be “bitter” and “deadly.” The meaning is, that sin, however pleasant and grateful it may be when committed, will be as destructive to the soul as food would be to the body, which, as soon as it was swallowed, became the most deadly poison. This is a fair account still of the effects of sin.

𐤁𐤓𐤓^{Th4816} **Job 20:15.** *He hath swallowed down riches* He has “glutted” down riches — or gormandized them — or devoured them greedily. The Hebrew word [𐤁𐤓𐤓]^{Th1106}, means “to absorb, to devour with the idea of greediness.” It is descriptive of the voracity of a wild beast, and means here that he had devoured them eagerly, or voraciously.

And he shall vomit As an epicure does that which he has drunk or swallowed with delight. “Noyes.” The idea is, that he shall lose that which he has acquired, and that it will be attended with loathing. All this is to a great extent true still, and may be applied to those who aim to accumulate wealth, and to lay up ill gotten gold. It will be ruinous to their peace; and the time will come when it will be looked on with inexpressible loathing. Zophar meant, undoubtedly, to apply this to Job, and to infer, that since it was a settled maxim that such would be the result of the ill-gotten gain of a wicked man, where a result like this “had” happened, that there must have been wickedness. How cutting and severe this must have been to Job can be easily conceived. The Septuagint renders this, “Out of his house let an angel drag him.”

𐤁𐤓𐤓^{Th4816} **Job 20:16.** *He shall suck the poison of asps* That which he swallowed as pleasant nutriment, shall become the most deadly poison; or the consequence shall be as if he had sucked the poison of asps. It would seem that the ancients regarded the poison of the serpent as deadly, however, it was taken into the system. They seem not to have been aware that the poison of a wound may be sucked out without injury to him who does it;

and that it is necessary that the poison should mingle with the blood to be fatal.

The viper's tongue shall slay him The early impression probably was, that the injury done by a serpent was by the fiery, forked, and brandished tongue, which was supposed to be sharp and penetrating. It is now known, that the injury is done by the poison ejected through a groove, or orifice in one of the teeth, which is so made as to lie flat on the roof of the mouth, except when the serpent bites, when that tooth is elevated, and penetrates the flesh. The word “viper” here **h[pā**,^{<h660>}, “viper,” is probably the same species of serpent that is known among the Arabs by the same name still — “El Effah.” See the notes at ^{<2306>}Isaiah 30:6. It is the most common and venomous of the serpent tribe in Northern Africa and in South-western Asia. It is remarkable for its quick and penetrating poison. It is about two feet long, as thick as a man’s arm, beautifully spotted with yellow and brown, and sprinkled over with blackish specks. They have a large mouth, by which they inhale a large quantity of air, and when inflated therewith, they eject it with such force as to be heard a considerable distance. “Jackson.” Capt. Riley, in his “Authentic Narrative,” (New York, 1817,) confirms this account. He describes the viper as the “most beautiful object in nature,” and says that the poison is so virulent as to cause death in fifteen minutes.

^{<807>}**Job 20:17.** *He shall not see the rivers* That is, he shall not be permitted to enjoy plenty and prosperity. Rivers or rills of honey and butter are emblems of prosperity; compare ^{<1117>}Exodus 3:17; ^{<8206>}Job 29:6. A land flowing with milk, honey, and butter, is, in the Scripture, the highest image of prosperity and happiness. The word rendered “rivers” **hG[pā**,^{<h6390>}, means rather “rivulets small streams — or brooks,” such as were made by “dividing” a large stream (from **gl pē**,^{<h6385>}, to “cleave, divide”), and would properly be applied to canals made by separating a large stream, or dividing it into numerous watercourses for the purpose of irrigating lands. The word rendered “floods,” and in the margin, “streaming brooks” **rhn**,^{<h5104>} **l j ae**,^{<h5158>}, means “the rivers of the valley,” or such as flow through a valley when it is swelled by the melting of snow, or by torrents of rain. A flood, a rapid, swollen, full stream, would express the idea. These were ideas of beauty and fertility among the Orientals; and where butter and honey were represented as flowing in this manner in a land, it was the highest conception of plenty. The word rendered “honey” **vbd** may, and

commonly does, mean “honey;” but it also means the juice of the grape, boiled down to about the consistency of molasses, and used as an article of food. The Arabs make much use of this kind of food now, and in Syria, nearly two-thirds of the grapes are employed in preparing this article of food. It is called by the Arabs “Dibs,” which is the same as the Hebrew word used here. May not the word mean this in some of the places where it is rendered “honey” in the Scriptures? The word rendered “butter”

hamj, ^{<h2529>} probably means, usually, “curdled milk.” See the notes at ^{<23715>} Isaiah 7:15. It is not certain that the word is ever used in the Old Testament to denote “butter.” The article which is used still by the Arabs is chiefly curdled milk, and probably this is referred to here. It will illustrate this passage to remark, that the inhabitants of Arabia, and of those who live in similar countries, have no idea of “butter,” as it exists among us, in a solid state. What they call “butter,” is in a fluid state, and is hence compared with flowing streams. An abundance of these articles was regarded as a high proof of prosperity, as they constitute a considerable part of the diet of Orientals. The same image, to denote plenty, is often used by the sacred writers, and by classic poets; see ^{<23722>} Isaiah 7:22:

And it shall come to pass in that day
That a man shall keep alive a
young cow and two sheep,
And it shall be that from the plenty of
milk which they shall give, he shall eat butter
For butter and honey
shall every one eat,
Who is left alone in the midst of the land.

See also in ^{<23818>} Joel 3:18:

And it shall come to pass in that day,
The mountains shall drop
down new wine, And the hills shall flow with milk,
And all the rivers of Judah shall flow with water.

Thus, also Ovid, *Metam.* iii.

Flumina jam lactis, jam flumina nectaris ibant.

Compare Horace *Epod.* xvi. 41.

*Mella cava manant ex ilice; montibus altis
Levis crepante lympha desilit pede.*

*From oaks pure honey flows, from lofty hills
Bound in light dance the murmuring rills.* — BOSCAWEN.

See also Euripides, Bacch. 142; and Theoc. Idyll. 5, 124. Compare Rosenmuller's *Alte u. neue Morgenland* on ^{
}Exodus 3:8, No. 194.

^{
}**Job 20:18.** *That which he laboured for shall he restore* This means that he shall give back the profit of his labor. He shall not be permitted to enjoy it or to consume it.

And shall not swallow it down Shall not enjoy it; shall not eat it. He shall be obliged to give it to others.

According to his substance shall the restitution be literally, according to Gesenius, "As a possession to be restored in which one rejoices not." The sense is, that all that he has is like property which a man has, which he feels not to be his own, but which belongs to another and which is soon to be given "up." In such property a man does not find that pleasure which he does in that which he feels to be his own. He cannot dispose of it, and he cannot look on it and feel that it is his. So Zophar says it is with the wicked man. He can look on his property only as that which he will soon be compelled to part with, and not having any security for retaining it, he cannot rejoice in it as if it were his own. Dr. Lee, however, renders this, "As his wealth is, so shall his restitution be; and he shall not rejoice." But the interpretation proposed above, seems to me to accord best with the sense of the Hebrew.

^{
}**Job 20:19.** *Because he hath oppressed* Margin, "crushed." Such is the Hebrew.

And forsaken the poor He has plundered them, and then forsaken them — as robbers do. The meaning is, that he had done this by his oppressive manner of dealing, and then left them to suffer and pine in want.

He hath violently taken away an house which he builded not That is, by overreaching and harsh dealings he has come in possession of dwellings which he did not build, or purchase in any proper manner. It does not mean that he had done this by violence — for Zophar is not describing a robber, but he means that he took advantage of the needs of the poor and obtained their property. This is often done still. A rich man takes advantage of the needs of the poor, and obtains their little farm or house for much less than it is worth. He takes a mortgage, and then forecloses it, and buys the property himself for much less than its real value, and thus practices a species of the worst kind of robbery. Such a man, Zophar says, must

expect punishment — and if there is any man who has occasion to dread the wrath of heaven it is he.

◀818▶ **Job 20:20.** *Surely he shall not feel quietness* Margin, as in the Hebrew “know.” The sense is, he shall not know peace or tranquility. He shall be agitated and troubled. Wemyss, however, renders this, “Because his appetite could not be satisfied.” Noyes, “Because his avarice was insatiable.” So Rosenmuller explains it. So the Vulgate renders it, “Nec est satiatus rener ejus.” The Septuagint, “Neither is there safety to his property, nor shall he be saved by his desire.” But it seems to me that the former is the sense, and that the idea is, that he should not know peace or tranquility after he had obtained the things which he had so anxiously sought.

In his belly Within him; in his mind or heart. The viscera in general in the Scriptures are regarded as the seat of the affections. We confine the idea now to the “heart.”

He shall not save of that which he desired literally, he shall not “escape” with that which was an object of desire. He shall not be “delivered” from the evils which threaten him by obtaining that which he desired. All this shall be taken from him.

◀818▶ **Job 20:21.** “There shall none of his meat be left Margin, “or, be none left for his meat.” Noyes renders it, “Because nothing escaped his greatness.” Prof. Lee, “no survivor shall remain for his provision.” But the meaning, probably, is, nothing shall remain of his food, or it shall all be wasted, or dissipated.

Therefore, shall no man look for his goods Or rather, his goods or his property shall not endure. But a great variety of interpretations has been given to the passage. The Hebrew word rendered “shall look,” **ל** **וַי** ^{<42342>} is from **ל** **וַי** ^{<42342>}, which means, “to turn round, to twist, to whirl;” and thence, arises the notion of being firm, stable, or strong — as a rope that is twisted is strong. That is the idea here; and the sense is, that his property should not be secure or firm; or that he should not prosper. Jerome renders it, “Nothing shall remain of his goods.” The Septuagint, “Therefore his good things — **αυτου** ^{<846>} **τα** ^{<3588>} **αγαθα** ^{<18>} — shall not flourish” — **ανθησει** .

◀812▶ **Job 20:22.** *In the fulness of his sufficiency* When he seems to have an abundance.

He shall be in straits Either by the dread of calamity, or because calamity shall come suddenly upon him, and his property shall be swept away. When everything seemed to be abundant he should be reduced to want.

Every hand of the wicked shall come upon him Margin, “or, troublesome” The meaning is, that all that the wretched or miserable endure should come suddenly upon him. Rosenmuller suggests, however, that it means that all the poor, and all who had been oppressed and robbed by him, would suddenly come upon him to recover their own property, and would scatter all that he had. The general meaning is clear, that he would be involved in misery from every quarter, or on every hand.

◀812▶ **Job 20:23.** *When he is about to fill his belly* Or rather, “there shall be enough to fill his belly.” But what “kind” of food it should be, is indicated in the following part of the verse. “God” would fill him with the food of his displeasure. It is spoken sarcastically, as of a gormandizer, or a man who lived to enjoy eating, and the meaning is, that he should for once have enough. So Rosenmuller interprets it.

God shall cast the fury This is the kind of food that he shall have. God shall fill him with the tokens of his wrath — and he shall have enough.

And shall rain it upon him while he is eating Noyes renders this, “And rain it down upon him for his food.” The meaning is, that God would pour down his wrath like a plentiful shower while he was in the act of eating. In the very midst of his enjoyments God would fill him with the tokens of his displeasure. There can be no doubt that Zophar designed that this should be understood to be applicable to Job. Indeed no one can fail to see that his remarks are made with consummate skill, and that they are such as would be fitted “to cut deep,” as they were doubtless intended to do. The speaker does not, indeed, make a direct application of them, but he so makes his selection of proverbs that there could be no difficulty in perceiving that they were designed to apply to him, who, from such a height of prosperity, had been so suddenly plunged into so deep calamity.

◀812▶ **Job 20:24.** *He shall flee from the iron weapon* The sword, or the spear. That is, he shall be exposed to attacks, and shall flee in cowardice and alarm. Bands of robbers shall come suddenly upon him, and he shall

have no safety except in flight. Prof. Lee explains this as meaning, “While he flees from the iron weapon, the brass bow shall pierce him through.” Probably the expression is proverbial, like that in Latin, *Incidit in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdin*.

The bow of steel shall strike him through That is, the “arrow” from the bow of steel shall strike him down. Bows and arrows were commonly used in hunting and in war. To a considerable extent they are still employed in Persia, though the use has been somewhat superseded by the gun. “Bows” were made of various materials. The first were, undoubtedly, of wood. They were inlaid with horn, or ivory, or were made in part of metal. Sometimes, it would seem that the whole bow was made of metal, though it is supposed that the metal bow was not in general use. The “weight,” if nothing else, would be an objection to it. The word which is here rendered “steel” *hvwj nj*^{7b5154}, means properly “brass or copper” — but it is certain that brass or copper could never have been used to form the main part of the bow, as they are destitute of the elasticity which is necessary. Jerome renders it, *et irruet in arcum aereum* — “he rushes on the brazen bow.” So the Septuagint, *τοξον*^{<5115>} *χαλκειον*^{<5473>}. So the Chaldee, *afwkrkd atvq* — “the bow of brass.” There is no certain proof that “steel” was then known — though “iron” is often mentioned. It is possible, however, that though the whole bow was not made of brass or copper, yet that such quantities of these metals were employed in constructing bows, that they might, without impropriety, be called bows of brass. The Oriental bow consists of three parts. The handle, or middle part — that on which the arrow rested — was straight, and might be made of wood, brass, copper, or any other strong substance. To this was affixed, at each end, pieces of horn, or of any other elastic substance, in this form:

And, the string was applied to the ends of these horns. The straight piece might have been of brass, and so without impropriety it might be called a brass bow. It is not properly rendered “steel” at any rate, as the word used here is never employed to denote iron or steel.

^{<8125>}**Job 20:25.** *It is drawn* Or rather, “he draws” — that is, he draws out the arrow that has been shot at him; or it may mean, as Prof. Lee supposes, that he draws, that is, “someone” draws the arrow from its quiver, or the sword from its sheath, in order to smite him. The object is to describe his death, and to show that he should be certainly overtaken with calamity.

Zophar, therefore, goes through the process by which he would be shot down, or shows that he could not escape.

And cometh out of the body That is, the arrow, or the glittering blade. It has penetrated the body, and passed through it. He shall be pierced through and through.

The glittering sword Hebrew qrB_7^{ch1301} — “the glittering;” scil. thing, or weapon, and is given to the sword, because it is kept bright.

Cometh out of his gall Supposed to be the seat of life. See the notes, $\langle 8163 \rangle$ Job 16:13.

Terrors are upon him The terrors of death.

$\langle 8105 \rangle$ **Job 20:26.** *All darkness shall be hid in his secret places* The word “darkness” here, as is common, means evidently calamity. The phrase “is hid,” means is treasured up for him. The phrase “in his secret places,” may mean “for his treasures,” or instead of the great treasures which he had laid up for himself The Apostle Paul has a similar expression, in which, perhaps, he makes an allusion to this place. $\langle 8115 \rangle$ Romans 2:5, “But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath.” Treasures formerly were laid up in secret places, or places of darkness, that were regarded as inaccessible; see the notes at $\langle 8115 \rangle$ Isaiah 45:3.

A fire not blown A fire unkindled. Probably the meaning is, a fire that man has not kindled, or that is of heavenly origin. The language is such as would convey the idea of being consumed by lightning, and probably Zophar intended to refer to such calamities as had come upon the family of Job, $\langle 8115 \rangle$ Job 1:16. There is much “tact” in this speech of Zophar, and in the discourses of his friends on this point. They never, I believe, refer expressly to the calamities that had come upon Job and his family. They never in so many words say, that those calamities were proof of the wrath of heaven. But they go on to mention a great many similar “cases” in the abstract; to prove that the wicked would be destroyed in that manner; that when such calamities came upon people, it was proof that they were wicked, and they leave Job himself to make the application. The allusion, as in this case, was too broad to be misunderstood, and Job was not slow in regarding it as intended for himself. Prof Lee (“in loc.”) supposes that there may be an allusion here to the “fire that shall not be quenched,” or to the future

punishment of the wicked. But this seems to me to be foreign to the design of the argument, and not to be suggested or demanded by the use of the word. The argument is not conducted on the supposition that people will be punished in the future world. That would at once have given a new phase to the whole controversy, and would have settled it at once. The question was about the dealings of God “in this life,” and whether men are punished according to their deeds here. Had there been a knowledge of the future world of rewards and punishments, the whole difficulty would have vanished at once, and the controversy would have been ended.

It shall go ill with him in his tabernacle Hebrew [רָע^{h3415} דַּיְרִיךְ^{h8300}] — “It shall be ill with whatever survives or remains in his tent.” That is, all that remains in his dwelling shall be destroyed. Prof Lee renders it, “In his tent shall his survivor be broken” — supposing that the word [רָע^{h3415}] is from [אָרַע^{h7489}] — “to break.” But it is more probably from [וַיַּעַבֵּר^{h1121}] — “to be evil; to suffer evil; to come off ill:” and the sense is, that evil, or calamity, would come upon all that should remain in his dwelling.

^{h8307}**Job 20:27.** *The heaven shall reveal his iniquity* The meaning here is, that the whole creation would conspire against such a man. Heaven and earth would be arrayed against him. The course of events would be so ordered as to seem designed to bring his character out, and to show what he was. He would attempt to conceal his sin, but it would be in vain. He would hide it in his bosom, but it would be developed. He would put on the air of piety and innocence, but his secret sin would be known. This seems to be the general sense of the verse; and it is not necessary to attempt to show “how” it would be done — whether by lightning from heaven, as Noyes supposes, or whether by some direct manifestation from the skies. Probably the meaning is, that the divine dispensations toward such a man — the overwhelming calamities which he would experience, would show what he was. The word “heaven” is not unfrequently put for God himself. ^{h2023}Daniel 4:23, “The heavens do rule.” ^{h2157}Luke 15:21, “I have sinned against heaven.”

The earth shall rise up against him Calamities from the earth. The course of events here. Want of success — sterility of soil — blight and mildew, would rise up against such a man and show what he was. His real character would in some way be brought out, and it would be seen that he was a wicked man; compare ^{h1011}Judges 5:20.

They fought from heaven; The stars in their courses fought against Sisera.

<1818> **Job 20:28.** *The increase of his house shall depart* Septuagint, “Destruction shall bring his house to an end.” The word rendered “depart” **hl ḡ**,^{<h1540>} from **hl ḡ**,^{<h1540>}, means, properly, “shall go into captivity.” The sense is, that whatever he had laid up in his house would entirely disappear.

His goods shall flow away What he had gained would seem to flow away like water.

In the day of his wrath The wrath of God — for so the connection demands.

<1819> **Job 20:29.** *This is the portion of a wicked man* This conclusion is similar to that which Bildad drew at the close of his speech, <1820> Job 18:21. Zophar intended, undoubtedly, that Job should apply it to himself, and that he should draw the inference, that one who had been treated in this manner, must be a wicked man.

And the heritage appointed Margin, “of his decree from.” The Hebrew is, “Of his word” **rmae**^{<h561>} — that is, of his “purpose.” The idea is, that this is the divine rule, or arrangement. It is not a matter of chance. It is the result of appointment, and when people are afflicted in this manner, we are to conclude that “God” regards them as guilty. The whole object of the discussion was to arrive at the principles of the divine administration. Nothing is attributed to chance; and nothing is ascribed to second causes, except as indicating the will of God. It is assumed, that the course of events in the world was a sufficient exponent of the divine intention, and that when they understood how God “treated” a man, they could clearly understand how he regarded his character. The principle is a good one, when “the whole of existence” is taken into the account; the fault here was in taking in only a small part of existence — this short life — and hastening to the conclusion, that the character could be certainly determined by the manner in which God deals with people here.

NOTES ON JOB 21

~~1821B~~ **Job 21:2.** *Hear diligently* Hebrew “Hearing hear” — that is, hear attentively. What he was about to say was worthy of their solemn consideration.

And let this be your consolations That is, “You came to me for the professed purpose of giving “me” consolation. In that you have wholly failed. You have done nothing to sustain or comfort me; but all that you have said has only tended to exasperate me, and to increase my sorrow. If you will now hear me attentively, I will take that as a consolation, and it shall be in the place of what I had a right to expect from you. It will be “some” comfort if I am permitted to express my sentiments without interruption, and I will accept it as a proof of kindness on your part.”

~~1821B~~ **Job 21:3.** *Suffer me that I may speak* Allow me to speak without interruption, or bear with me while I freely express my sentiments — it is all that I now ask.

And after that I have spoken, mock on Resume your reproaches, if you will, when I am done. I ask only the privilege of expressing my thoughts on a very important point, and when that is done, I will allow you to resume your remarks as you have done before, and you may utter your sentiments without interruption. Or it may be, that Job utters this in a kind of triumph, and that he feels that what he was about to say was so important that it would end the “argument;” and that all they could say after that would be mere mockery and reviling. The word rendered “mock on” g[æ¹⁸³⁹³² means, originally, “to stammer, to speak unintelligibly” — then, “to speak in a barbarous or foreign language” — then, “to deride or to mock, to ridicule or insult.” The idea is, that they might mock his woes, and torture his feelings as they had done, if they would only allow him to express his sentiments.

~~1820A~~ **Job 21:4.** *As for me, is my complaint to man?* There is some difficulty in the interpretation of this verse, and considerable variety of explanation may be seen among expositors. The “object” of the verse is plain. It is to state a reason why they should hear him with patience and without interruption. The meaning of this part of the verse probably is, that his principal difficulty was not with his friends, but with God. It was not so

much what they had said, that gave him trouble, as it was what God had done. Severe and cutting as were their rebukes, yet it was far more trying to him to be treated as he had been by God, “as if” he were a great sinner. That was what he could not understand. Perplexed and troubled, therefore, by the mysteriousness of the divine dealings, his friends ought to be willing to listen patiently to what he had to say; and in his anxiety to find out “why” God had treated him so, they ought not at once to infer that he was a wicked man, and to overwhelm him with increased anguish of spirit. It will be recollected that Job repeatedly expressed the wish to be permitted to carry his cause at once up to God, and to have his adjudication on it. See the notes at ^{<813B>}Job 13:3,18ff. It is that to which he refers when he says here, that he wished to have the cause before God, and not before man. It was a matter which he wished to refer to the Almighty, and he ought to be allowed to express his sentiments with entire freedom. One of the difficulties in understanding this verse arises from the word “complaint.” We use it in the sense of “murmuring,” or “repining;” but this, I think, is not its meaning here. It is used rather in the sense of “cause, argument, reasoning, or reflections.” The Hebrew word **j ꝥei** ^{<h7879>} means, properly, that which is “brought out” — from **j ꝥei** ^{<h7879>}, “to bring out, to put forth, to produce” — as buds, leaves, flowers; and then it means “words” — as brought out, or spoken; and then, meditations, reflections, discourses, speeches; and then it “may” mean “complaint.” But there is no evidence that the word is used in that sense here. It means his reflections, or arguments. They were not to man. He wished to carry them at once before God, and he ought, therefore, to be allowed to speak freely. Jerome renders it, “disputatio mea.” The Septuagint, **ελεγχξις** ^{<1651>} — used here, probably, in the sense of “an argument to produce conviction,” as it is often.

And if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled? Margin, “shortened,” meaning the same as troubled, afflicted, or impatient. A more literal translation will better express the idea which is now lost sight of, “And if so, why should not my spirit be distressed?” That is, since my cause is with God — since my difficulty is in understanding his dealings with me — since I have carried my cause up to him, and all now depends on him, why should I not be allowed to have solicitude in regard to the result? If I manifest anxiety, who can blame me? Who would not, when his all was at stake, and when the divine dealings toward him were so mysterious?

Job 21:5. *Mark me* Margin, “look unto.” Literally, “Look upon me. That is, attentively look on me, on my sufferings, on my disease, and my losses. See if I am a proper object of reproof and mockery — see if I have not abundant reason to be in deep distress when God has afflicted me in a manner so unusual and mysterious.

And be astonished Silent astonishment should be evinced instead of censure. You should wonder that a man whose life has been a life of piety, should exhibit the spectacle which you now behold, while so many proud contemners of God are permitted to live in affluence and ease.

And lay your hand upon your mouth As a token of silence and wonder. So Plutarch, de Iside et Osiride, “Wherefore, he had laid his finger on his mouth as a symbol of silence and admiration — εχεμυθιας και ^{<2532>} σιωπης ^{<4623>} συμβολον .”

Job 21:6. *Even when I remember, I am afraid* I have an internal shuddering and horror when I recall the scenes through which I have passed. I am myself utterly overwhelmed at the magnitude of my own sufferings, and they are such as should excite commiseration in your hearts. Some, however, have connected this with the following verse, supposing the idea to be, that he was horror-stricken when he contemplated the prosperity of wicked people. But there seems to me to be no reason for this interpretation. His object is undoubtedly to show them that there was enough in his ease to awe them into silence; and he says, in order to show that, that the recollection of his sufferings perfectly overwhelmed “him,” and filled him with horror. They who have passed through scenes of special danger, or of great bodily suffering, can easily sympathize with Job here. The very recollection will make the flesh tremble.

Job 21:7. *Wherefore do the wicked live?* Job comes now to the main design of his argument in this chapter, to show that it is a fact, that the wicked often have great prosperity; that they are not treated in this life according to their character; and that it is not a fact that men of eminent wickedness, as his friends maintained, would meet, in this life, with proportionate sufferings. He says, that the fact is, that they enjoy great prosperity; that they live to a great age; and that they are surrounded with the comforts of life in an eminent degree. The meaning is, “If you are positive that the wicked are treated according to their character in this life — that great wickedness is followed by great judgments, how is it to be

accounted for that they live, and grow old, and are mighty in power?" Job assumes the fact to be so, and proceeds to argue as if that were indisputable. It is remarkable, that the fact was not adverted to at an earlier period of the debate. It would have done much to settle the controversy. The "question," "Why do the wicked live?" is one of great importance at all times, and one which it is natural to ask, but which it is not even yet always easy to answer. "Some" points are clear, and may be easily suggested. They are such as these — They live

- (1) to show the forbearance and long suffering of God;
- (2) to furnish a full illustration of the character of the human heart;
- (3) to afford them ample space for repentance, so that there shall not be the semblance of a ground of complaint when they are called before God, and are condemned;
- (4) because God intends to make some of them the monuments of his mercy, and more fully to display the riches of his grace in their conversion, as he did in the case of Paul, Augustine, John Bunyan, and John Newton;
- (5) they may be preserved to be the instruments of his executing some important purpose by them, as was the case with Pharaoh, Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar; or,
- (6) he keeps them, that the great interests of society may be carried on; that the affairs of the commercial and the political world may be forwarded by their skill and talent.

For some, or all of these purposes, it may be, the wicked are kept in the land of the living, and are favored with great external prosperity, while many a Christian is oppressed, afflicted, and crushed to the dust. Of the "fact," there can be no doubt; of the "reasons" for the fact, there will be a fuller development in the future world than there can be now.

Become old The friends of Job had maintained that the wicked would be cut off. Job, on the other hand, affirms that they live on to old age. The "fact" is, that many of the wicked are cut off for their sins in early life, but that some live on to an extreme old age. The argument of Job is founded on the fact, that "any" should live to old age, as, according to the principles of his friends, "all" were treated in this life according to their character.

Yea, are mighty in power Or, rather, “in wealth” — *l yj æ*^{<42428>}. Jerome, “Are comforted in riches” — “confortatique divitiis.” So the Septuagint, *εῦ*^{<1722>} *πλουτω*^{<4147>}. The idea is, that they become very rich.

^{<8208>}**Job 21:8.** *Their seed* Their children — their posterity.

Is established in their sight Around them, where they may often see them — where they may enjoy their society. The friends of Job had maintained, with great positiveness and earnestness, that the children of wicked people would be cut off. See ^{<8189>}Job 18:19; 20:28. This position Job now directly controverts, and says that it is a fact, that so far from being cut off, they are often established in the very presence of their ungodly parents, and live and prosper. How, he asks, is this consistent with the position, that God deals with people in this life according to their character?

^{<8219>}**Job 21:9.** *Their houses are safe from fear* Margin, “peace from.” The friends of Job had maintained just the contrary; see ^{<8217>}Job 20:27,28; 15:21-24. Their idea was, that the wicked man would never be free from alarms. Job says, that they lived in security and peace, and that their houses are preserved from the intrusions of evil-minded people.

Neither is the rod of God upon them The “rod” is an emblem of punishment. The idea is, that they were free from the chastisements which their sins deserved. There can be no doubt that there are cases enough in which the wicked live in security, to justify Job in all that he here affirms, as there are instances enough in which the wicked are cut off for their sins. to make what his friends said plausible. The truth is, good and evil are intermingled. There is a “general” course of events by which the wicked are involved in calamity in this life, and the righteous are prospered; but still, there are so many exceptions as to show the necessity of a future state of rewards and punishments. To us, who look to that future world, all is clear. But that view of the future state of retribution was not possessed by Job and his friends.

^{<8210>}**Job 21:10.** *Their bull gendereth* See Rosenmuller and Lee on this verse; comp Bochart, Hieroz. P. 1, Lib. ii. c. XXX. The general idea is, that the wicked were prospered as well as the pious. God did not interpose by a miracle to cut off their cattle, and to prevent their becoming rich.

^{<8211>}**Job 21:11.** *They send forth their little ones* Their numerous and happy children they send forth to plays and pastimes.

Like a flock In great numbers. This is an exquisitely beautiful image of prosperity. What can be more so than a group of happy children around a man's dwelling?

And their children dance Dance for joy. They are playful and sportive, like the lambs of the flock. It is the skip of playfulness and exultation that is referred to here, and not the set and formal dance where children are instructed in the art; the sportiveness of children in the fields, the woods, and on the lawn, and not the set step taught in the dancing-school. The word used here *αἰῶν*⁴⁵³⁷⁵, means "to leap, to skip" — as from joy, and then to dance. Jerome has well rendered it, "exultant lusibus" — "they leap about in their plays." So the Septuagint, *προσπαιζουσιν* — "they frolic" or "play." There is no evidence here that Job meant to say that they taught their children to dance; that they caused them to be trained in anything that now corresponds to dancing-schools; and that he meant to say that such a training was improper and tended to exclude God from the heart. The image is one simply of health, abundance, exuberance of feeling, cheerfulness, prosperity. The houses were free from alarms; the fields were filled with herds and flocks, and their families of happy and playful children were around them. The object of Job was not to say that all this was in itself wrong, but that it was a plain matter of fact that God did not take away the comforts of all the wicked and overwhelm them with calamity. Of the impropriety of training children in a dancing-school, there ought to be but one opinion among the friends of religion (see National Preacher for January 1844), but there is no evidence that Job referred to any such training here, "and" this passage should not be adduced to prove that dancing is wrong. It refers to the playfulness and the cheerful sports of children, and God has made them so that they "will" find pleasure in such sports, and so that they are benefited by them. There is not a more lovely picture of happiness and of the benevolence of God any where on earth than in such groups of children, and in their sportiveness and playfulness there is no more that is wrong than there is in the gambols of the lambs of the flock.

Job 21:12. *They take the timbrel* They have instruments of cheerful music in their dwellings; and this is an evidence that they are not treated as the friends of Job had maintained. Instead of being, as they asserted, overwhelmed with calamity, they are actually happy. They have all that can make them cheerful, and their houses exhibit all that is usually the emblem

of contentment and peace. Rosenmuller and Noyes suppose this to mean, “They sing to the timbrel and harp;” that is, “they raise up” **acn**^{<h5375>} “the voice” to accompany the timbrel. Dr. Good renders it, “They rise up to the tabor and harp, and trip merrily to the sound of the pipe.” So Wemyss. It is literally, “They rise up with the tabor;” and the word “voice” may be understood, and the meaning may be that they accompany the timbrel with the voice. The Vulgate and the Septuagint, however, render it, they “Take up the timbrel.” Dr. Good supposes that the allusion is to the modes of dancing; to their raising themselves in an erect position, and then changing their position — advancing and retreating as in alternate dances, and quotes the following exquisite piece of poetry as illustrating it:

*“Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling troops they meet;
To brisk notes, in cadence meeting.
Glance their many-twinkling feet.”*

Still, it seems to me, that the exact idea has not been expressed. It is this, “They raise, or elevate **acn**^{<h5375>} scil. THEMSELVES;” that is, they become exhilarated and excited at the sound of music. It is in their dwellings, and it is one of the indications of joy. Instead of lamentations and wo, as his friends said there would be in such dwellings, Job says that there was there the sound of music and mirth; that they exhilarated themselves, and were happy. On the word rendered “timbrel” **ātō**^{<h596>} and the word “harp” **rwnc**, see the notes at ^{<h512>}Isaiah 5:12.

At the sound of the organ The word “organ” we now apply to an instrument of music which was wholly unknown in the time of Job. With us it denotes an instrument consisting of pipes, which are filled with wind, and of stops touched by the fingers. It is the largest and most harmonious of the wind instruments, and is blown by bellows. That such an instrument was known in the time of Job, is wholly improbable, and it is not probable that it would be used for the purposes here referred to if it were known. Jerome renders it, “organ;” the Septuagint, **ψαλμου** ^{<h5568>}, “the sound of a song;” Noyes, “pipe;” Lee, “lyre;” Good and Wemyss, “pipe.” The Hebrew word **bgw** [^{<h5748>}] is derived from **bgē**^{<h5689>} — to breathe, to blow; and it is manifest that the reference is to some wind instrument. Various forms of wind instruments were early invented, and this is expressly mentioned as having been early in use. Thus, it is said of Jubal (^{<h1002>}Genesis 4:21), “He was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ” — **bgw** [^{<h5748>}]. It

was probably at first a rude reed or pipe, which came ultimately to be changed to the fife and flute. It is here mentioned merely as an instrument exciting hilarity, and in the mere use of such an instrument there can be nothing improper. Job does not mean, evidently, to complain of it as wrong. He is simply showing that the wicked live in ease and prosperity, and are not subjected to trials and calamities as his friends maintained.

Job 21:13. *They spend their days in wealth* Margin, or, “mirth.” Literally, “they wear out their days in good” — **bw**⁴²⁸⁹⁶. Vulgate “in bonis.” Septuagint, **ε**^{<1722>} **αγαθου**^{<18>} — “in good things;” in the enjoyment of good. They are not oppressed with the evils of poverty and want, but they have abundance of “the good things” of life.

And in a moment go down to the grave Hebrew to **l waw**⁴¹⁷⁵⁸⁵ — but here meaning evidently the grave. The idea is, that when they die they are not afflicted with lingering disease, and great bodily pain, but having lived to an old age in the midst of comforts, they drop off suddenly and quietly, and sleep in the grave. God gives them prosperity while they live, and when they come to die he does not come forth with the severe expressions of his displeasure, and oppress them with long and lingering sickness. The author of Psalm 73 had a view of the death of the wicked remarkably similar to this, when he said,

For I was envious at the foolish, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death, But their strength is firm. ^{<19718>}Psalm 73:3,4.

All that Job says here is predicated on the supposition that such a sudden removal is preferable to death accompanied with long and lingering illness. The idea is, that it is in itself “desirable” to live in tranquility; to reach an honorable old age surrounded by children and friends, and then quietly and suddenly to drop into the grave without being a burden to friends. The wicked, he says, often live such a life, and he infers, therefore, that it is not a fact that God deals with people according to their character in this life, and that it is not right to draw an inference respecting their moral character from his dealings with them in this world. There are instances enough occurring in every age like those supposed here by Job, to justify the conclusion which he draws.

Job 21:14. *Therefore* This would seem to indicate that the “result” of their living in this manner was that they rejected God, or that one of the consequences of their being prospered would be that they would cast off his government and authority; that they renounced him “because” they were thus prosperous, or because they wished to train up their children in merriment and dancing. All this may be true in itself, but that idea is not in the Hebrew. That is simply “AND they say” — **rmæ^{h559}**. So the Vulgate; the Septuagint; the Chaldee — **wrmaw**; and the Syriac. The word “therefore” should not have been inserted. Job is not affirming that their mode of life is a “reason” why they reject the claims of God, but that it is a simple “fact” that they “do” live, even in this prosperity, in the neglect of God. This is the gist of what he is saying, that being thus wicked they were in fact prospered, and not punished as his friends had maintained.

They say unto God This is the language of their conduct. Men do not often formally and openly say this; but it is the language of their deportment.

Depart from us This is about all that the wicked say of God. “They wish him to let them alone.” They do not desire that he would come into their habitations; they would be glad never more to hear his name. Yet what a state of mind is this! What must be the condition and character of the human heart when this desire is felt?

We desire not the knowledge of thy ways We have no wish to become acquainted with God. His “ways” here mean his government, his law, his claims — whatever God does. Never was there a better description of the feelings of the human heart than is here expressed. The ways of God are displeasing to people, and they seek to crowd from their minds all respect to his commandments and claims. Yet, if this is the character of man, assuredly he is very far from being a holy being. What higher proof of depravity can there be, than that a man has no desire to know anything about a pure and holy God; no pleasure in becoming acquainted with his Maker!

Job 21:15. *What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?* compare for similar expressions, **Exodus 5:2**; **Proverbs 30:9**. The meaning here is,

“What claim has the Almighty, or who is he, that we should be bound to obey and worship him? What authority has he over us? Why should we yield our will to his, and why submit to his claims?”

This is the language of the human heart everywhere. Man seeks to deny the authority of God over him, and to feel that he has no claim to his service. He desires to be independent. He would cast off the claims of God. Forgetful that he made, and that he sustains him; regardless of his infinite perfections and of the fact that he is dependent on him every moment, he asks with contempt, what right God has to set up a dominion over him. Such is man — a creature of a day — dependent for every breath he draws on that Great Being, whose government and authority he so contemptuously disowns and rejects!

And what profit should we have, if we pray unto him? What advantage would it be to us should we worship him? Men still ask this question, or, if not openly asked, they “feel” the force of it in their hearts. Learn hence,

(1) That wicked people are influenced by a regard to “self” in the inquiry about God, and in meeting his claims. They do not ask what is “right,” but what “advantage” will accrue to them.

(2) If they see no immediate benefit arising from worshipping God, they will not do it. Multitudes abstain from prayer, and from the house of God, because they cannot see how their self-interest would be promoted by it.

(3) Men “ought” to serve God, without respect to the immediate, selfish, and personal good that may follow to themselves. It is a good in itself to worship God. It is what is “right;” what the conscience says “ought” to be done yet

(4) It is not difficult to answer the question which the sinner puts. There is an advantage in calling upon God. There is

(a) the possibility of obtaining the pardon of sin by prayer — an immense and unspeakable “profit” to a dying and guilty man;

(b) a peace which this world cannot furnish — worth more than all that it costs to obtain it;

(c) support in trial in answer to prayer — in a world of suffering of more value than silver and gold;

(d) the salvation of friends in answer to prayer — an object that should be one of intense interest to those who love their friends:

(e) eternal life — the “profit” of which who can estimate? What are the few sacrifices which religion requires, compared with the infinite and immortal blessings which may be obtained by “asking” for them? ‘Profit!’ What can be done by man that will be turned to so good an account as to pray? Where can man make so good an investment of time and strength as by calling on God to save his soul, and to bless his friends and the world?

^{<8216>}**Job 21:16.** *Lo, their good is not in their hand* Schultens, Rosenmuller, and Noyes, suppose, I think, correctly, that this is to be understood ironically, or as referring to what “they” had maintained. “Lo! you say, that their good is not in their hand! They do not enjoy prosperity, do they? They are soon overwhelmed with calamity, are they? How often have I seen it otherwise! How often is it a fact that they continue to enjoy prosperity, and live and die in peace!” The common interpretation, which Prof. Lee has adopted, seems to me to be much less probable. According to that it means that “their prosperity was not brought about or preserved by their own power. It was by the power of God, and was under his control. An inscrutable Providence governs all things.” But the true sense is, that Job is replying to the arguments which they had advanced, and one of those was, that whatever prosperity they had was not at all secure, but that in a moment it might be, and often was, wrested from them. Job maintains the contrary, and affirms that it was a somewhat unusual occurrence (^{<8217>}Job 21:17), that the wicked were plunged into sudden calamity. The phrase “in their hand” means “in their power,” or under their control, and at their disposal.

The counsel of the wicked is far from me Or, rather, “far be it from me!” Perhaps the meaning is this, “Do not misunderstand me. I maintain that the wicked are often prospered, and that God does not in this life deal with them according to their deserts. They have life, and health, and property. But do not suppose that I am their advocate. Far be it from me to defend them. Far from me be their counsels and their plans. I have no sympathy with them. But I maintain merely that your position is not correct that they are ALWAYS subjected to calamity, and that the character of people can ALWAYS be known by the dealings of Providence toward them.” Or, it may mean, that he was not disposed to be united with them. They were, in fact, prospered; but though they were prospered, he wished to have no part in

their plans and counsels. He would prefer a holy life with all the ills that might attend it.

~~1817~~ **Job 21:17.** *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* Margin, “lamp.” A light, or a lamp, was an image of prosperity. There is, probably, an allusion here to what had been maintained by Bildad, ~~1818~~ Job 18:5,6, that the light of the wicked would be extinguished, and their dwellings made dark; see the notes at those verses. Job replies to this by asking how often it occurred. He inquires whether it was a frequent thing. By this, he implies that it was not universal; that it was a less frequent occurrence than they supposed. The meaning is, “How often does it, in fact, happen that the light of the wicked is extinguished, and that God distributes sorrows among them in his anger? Much less frequently than you suppose, for he bestows upon many of them tokens of abundant prosperity.” In this manner, by an appeal to “fact” and “observation,” Job aims to convince them that their position was wrong, and that it was not true that the wicked were invariably overwhelmed with calamity, as they had maintained.

God distributeth sorrows The word “God” here, is understood, but there can be no doubt that it is correct. Job means to ask, how often it was true in fact that God “apportioned” the sorrows which he sent on men in accordance with their character. How often, in fact, did he treat the wicked as they deserved, and overwhelm them with calamity. It was not true that he did it, by any means, as often as they maintained, or so as to make it a certain rule in judging of character.

~~1821~~ **Job 21:18.** *They are as stubble before the wind* According to the interpretation proposed of the previous verse, this may be read as a question, “How often is it that the wicked are made like stubble? You say that God deals with people exactly according to their characters, and that the wicked are certainly subjected to calamities; but how often does this, in fact, occur? Is it a uniform law? Do they not, in fact, live in prosperity, and arrive at a good old age?” It is not uncommon in the Scriptures to compare the wicked with stubble, and to affirm that they shall be driven away, as the chaff is driven by the wind; see the notes at ~~2317~~ Isaiah 17:13.

The storm carrieth away Margin, “stealeth away.” This is a literal translation of the Hebrew. The idea is that of stealing away before one is aware, as a thief carries off spoil.

Job 21:19. *God layeth up his iniquity for his children* Margin, i.e. “the punishment of iniquity.” This is a reference evidently to the opinion which “they” had maintained. It may be rendered, “You say that God layeth up iniquity,” etc. They had affirmed that not only did God, as a great law, punish the wicked in this life, but that the consequences of their sins passed over to their posterity; or, if “they” were not punished, yet the calamity would certainly come on their descendants; see ^{<1818>}Job 18:19,20; 20:10,28. This is the objection which Job now adverts to. The statement of the objection, it seems to me, continues to ^{<1822>}Job 21:22, where Job says, that no one can teach God knowledge, or prescribe to him what he should do, and then goes on to say, that the “fact” was far different from what they maintained; that there was no such exact distribution of punishments; but that one died in full strength, and another in the bitterness of his soul, and both laid down in the dust, together. This view seems to me to give better sense than any other interpretation which I have seen proposed.

He rewardeth him, and he shall know it That is, you maintain that God will certainly reward him in this life, and that his dealings with him shall so exactly express the divine view of his conduct, that he shall certainly know what God thinks of his character. This opinion they had maintained throughout the argument, and this Job as constantly called in question.

Job 21:20. *His eyes shall see his destruction* That is, his own eyes shall see his destruction, or the calamities that shall come upon him. That is, “You maintain that, or this is the position which you defend.” Job designs to meet this, and to show that it is not always so.

And he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty Wrath is often represented as a cup which the wicked are compelled to drink. See the notes, ^{<2517>}Isaiah 51:17.

Job 21:21. *For what pleasure hath he ...* That is, what happiness shall he have in his family? This, it seems to me, is designed to be a reference to their sentiments, or a statement by Job of what “they” maintained. They held, that a man who was wicked, could have none of the comfort which he anticipated in his children, for he would himself be cut off in the midst of life, and taken away.

When the number of his months is cut off in the midst? When his “life” is cut off — the word “months” here being used in the sense of “life,” or

“years.” This they had maintained, that a wicked man would be punished, by being cut off in the midst of his way; compare ^{<8142>}Job 14:21.

^{<822>}**Job 21:22.** *Shall any teach God knowledge?* This commences the reply of Job to the sentiments of his friends to which he had just adverted. The substance of the reply is, that no one could prescribe to God how he should deal with people, and that it; was not a FACT that people were treated as they had supposed. Instead of its being true, as they maintained, that wicked people would all be cut down in some fearful and violent manner, as a punishment for their sins, Job goes on (^{<823>}Job 21:23-26) to show that they died in a great variety of ways — one in full age and prosperity, and another in another manner. This, he says, God directs as he pleases. No one can teach him knowledge; no one can tell him what he ought to do. The reasoning of his friends, Job seems to imply, had been rather an attempt to teach God how he “ought” to deal with people, than a patient and candid inquiry into the “facts” in the case, and he says the facts were not as they supposed they ought to be.

Seeing he judgeth those that are high Or rather, he judges “among the things” that are high. He rules over the great affairs of the universe, and it is presumptuous in us to attempt to prescribe to him how he shall govern the world. The design of this and the following verses is to show, that, from the manner in which people actually die, no argument can be derived to determine what was their religious condition, or their real character. Nothing is more fallacious than that kind of reasoning.

^{<823>}**Job 21:23.** *One dieth in his full strength* Margin, “very perfection,” or, “in the strength of his perfection.” The meaning is, that he dies in the very prime and vigor of life, surrounded with everything that can contribute to comfort. Of the truth of this position, no one can doubt; and the wonder is, that the friends of Job had not seen or admitted it.

Being wholly at ease and quiet That is, having everything to make them happy, so far as external circumstances are concerned. He is borne down by no calamities; he is overwhelmed by no sudden and heavy judgments. The phrase in this verse rendered “full strength” $\mu\chi\lambda$, ^{<6106>} $\mu\tau\omicron$ ^{<8537>}, is literally, “in the bone of his perfection.” It means full prosperity.

^{<824>}**Job 21:24.** *His breasts* Margin, “milk pails.” The marginal translation is much the most correct, and it is difficult to understand why so

improbable a statement has been introduced into our common version. But there has been great variety in the translation. The Vulgate renders it, *Viscera ejus plena sunt adipe*— “his viscera are full of fat.” So the Septuagint, $\tau\alpha$ ^{<3588>} *ενγκατα αυτου* ^{<846>} *πληρη* ^{<4134>} *στεατος* . The Syraic, “his sides;” Prof. Lee, “his bottles;” Noyes, “his sides;” Luther, “sein milkfass” — “his milk-pail;” Wemyss, “the stations of his cattle;” Good, “his sleek skin.” In this variety of rendering, what hope is there of ascertaining the meaning of the word? It is not easy to account for this variety, though it is clear that Jerome and the Septuagint followed a different reading from the present, and instead of $\text{y}f\text{f}$ ^{<45845>}, they read $wynyf$ f - from $\text{f}B$ ^{<h990>} — “the belly;” and that instead of the word blj ^{<42461>} as at present pointed, meaning “milk,” they understood it as if it were pointed blj ^{<42459>} — meaning “fat” — the same letters, but different vowels. The word which is rendered “breast” $\text{y}f\text{f}$ ^{<45845>} occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew Scriptures. It has become necessary, therefore, to seek its meaning in the ancient versions, and in the cognate languages. For a full examination of the word, the reader may consult Bochart, Hieroz. P. 1, Lib. ii. c. xliv., pp. 455,458; or Rosenmuller, where the remarks of Bochart are abridged; or Lee on Job, “in loc.” The Chaldee renders it *wyzyb* “his breasts.” So Junius et Tre. Piscator, and others. Among the rabbis, Moses Bar Nackman, Levi, and others, render it as denoting the breasts, or “mulctralia” — “milk-vessels,” denoting, as some have supposed, “the lacteals.” This idea would admirably suit the connection, but it is doubtful whether it can be maintained; and the presumption is, that it would be in advance of the knowledge of physiology in the times of Job. Aben Ezra explains it of the places where camels lie down to drink — an idea which is found in the Arabic, and which will well suit the connection. According to this, the sense would be, that those places abounded with milk — that is, that he was prospered and happy. The Hebrew word $\text{y}fy$, as has been observed, occurs nowhere else. It is supposed to be derived from an obsolete root, the same as the Arabic “atana, to lie down around water, as cattle do;” and then the derivative denotes a place where cattle and flocks lie down around water; and then the passage would mean, “the resting places of his herds are full, or abound with milk.” Yet the primary idea, according to Castell, Golius, and Lee, is that of saturating with water; softening, “scil.” a skin with water, or dressing a skin, for the purpose of using it as a bottle. Perhaps the word was used with reference to the place where camels came to drink, because it was a place that was “saturated”

with water, or that abounded with water. The Arabic verb, also, according to Castell, is used in the sense of freeing a skin from wool and hairs — a *lana pilisve levari pellem* — so that it might be dressed for use. From this reference to a “skin” thus dressed, Prof. Lee supposes that the word here means “a bottle,” and that the sense is, that his bottles were full of milk; that is, that he had great prosperity and abundance. But it is very doubtful whether the word will bear this meaning, and whether it is ever used in this sense. In the instances adduced by Castell, Schultens, and even of Prof. Lee, of the use of the word, I find no one where it means “a skin,” or denotes a bottle made of a skin. The application of the “verb” to a skin is only in the sense of saturating and dressing it. The leading idea in all the forms of the word, and its common use in Arabic, is “that of a place where cattle kneel down for the purpose of drinking,” and then a place well watered, where a man might lead his camels and flocks to water. The noun would then come to mean a watering place — a place that would be of great value, and which a man who had large flocks and herds would greatly prize. The thought here is, therefore, that the places of this kind, in the possession of the man referred to, would abound with milk — that is, he would have abundance.

Are full of milk Milk, butter and honey, are, in the Scriptures, the emblems of plenty and prosperity. Many of the versions, however, here render this “fat.” The change is only in the pointing of the Hebrew word. But, if the interpretation above given be correct, then the word here means “milk.”

And his bones are moistened with marrow From the belief, that bones full of marrow are an indication of health and vigor.

⚔️ **Job 21:26.** *They shall lie down alike in the dust* The emphasis here is on the word “alike” — *dj jæ* ^{⚔️}. The idea is, that they should die “in a similar manner.” There would be no such difference in the mode of their death as to determine anything about their character or to show that one was the friend of God, and that the other was not. The friends of Job had maintained, that that could be certainly known by the divine dealings with people, either in their life, or in their death. Job combats this opinion, and says, that there is no such marked distinction in their life, nor is there any certain indication of their character in their death. Prosperity often attends the wicked as well as the righteous, and the death of the righteous and the wicked resemble each other.

And the worms shall cover them Cover them “both.” They shall alike moulder back to dust. There is no distinction in the grave. There is no difference in the manner in which they moulder back to dust. No argument can be drawn respecting their character from the divine dealings toward them when in life — none from the manner of their death — none from the mode in which they moulder back to dust. On the reference to the “worm” here, see the notes at ^{<8141>}Job 14:11.

^{<8127>}**Job 21:27.** *Behold, I know your thoughts* That is, “I see that you are not satisfied, and that you are disposed still to maintain your former position. You will be ready to ask, Where “are” the proofs of the prosperity of the wicked? Where “are” the palaces of the mighty? Where “are” the dwelling places of ungodly men!”

And the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me The course of sophistical argument which you pursue, the tendency and design of which is to prove that I am a wicked man. You artfully lay down the position, that the wicked must be, and are in fact, overwhelmed with calamities, and then you infer, that because “I” am overwhelmed in this manner, I “must be” a wicked man.

^{<8128>}**Job 21:28.** *For ye say, Where is the house of the prince?* That is, you maintain that the house of the wicked man, in a high station, will be certainly overthrown. The parallelism, as well as the whole connection, requires us to understand the word “prince” here as referring to a “wicked” ruler. The word used *bydi*,^{<8081>} properly means, one willing, voluntary, prompt; then, one who is liberal, generous, noble; then, one of noble birth, or of elevated rank; and then, as princes often had that character, it is used in a bad sense, and means a “tyrant.” See ^{<8130>}Isaiah 13:2.

And where are the dwelling places of the wicked Margin, “tent of the tabernacles.” The Hebrew is, “The tent of the dwelling places.” The dwelling place was usually a “tent.” The meaning is, that such dwelling places would be certainly destroyed, as an expression of the divine displeasure.

^{<8129>}**Job 21:29.** *Have ye not asked them that go by the way?* Travelers, who have passed into other countries, and who have had an opportunity of making observations, and of learning the opinions of those residing there. The idea of Job is, that they might have learned from such travelers that

such people were “reserved” for future destruction, and that calamity did not immediately overtake them. Information was obtained in ancient times by careful observation, and by traveling, and they who had gone into other countries would be highly regarded concerning point like this. They could speak of what they had observed of the actual dealings of God there, and of the sentiments of sages there. The idea is, that “they” would confirm the truth of what Job had said, that the wicked were often prosperous and happy.

And do ye not know their tokens The signs, or intimations which they have given of the actual state of things in other countries, perhaps by the inscriptions, records, and proverbs, by which they had “signified” the result of their inquiries.

Job 21:30. *That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction?* He is not punished, as you maintain, at once. He is “kept” with a view to future punishment; and though calamity will certainly overtake him at some time, yet it is not immediate. This was Job’s doctrine in opposition to theirs, and in this he was undoubtedly correct. The only wonder is, that they had not at all seen it sooner, and that it should have been necessary to make this appeal to the testimony of travelers. Rosenmuller, Noyes, and Schultens, understand it as meaning that the wicked are “spared” in the day of destruction, that is, in the day when destruction comes upon other people. This accords well with the argument which Job is maintaining. Yet the word **Ecjæ**¹²⁸²¹ rather means, especially when followed by **L**, to hold back, reserve, or retain “for” something future; and this is the sentiment which Job was maintaining, that the wicked were not cut off at once, or suddenly overwhelmed with punishment. He did not deny that they would be punished at some period; and that exact justice would be done them. The point of the controversy turned upon the inquiry whether this would come “at once,” or whether the wicked might not live long in prosperity.

They shall be brought forth **l byæ**¹²⁹⁸⁶. They shall be led or conducted — as one is to execution. This appears as if Job held to the doctrine of “future” retribution. But when that time would be, or what were his exact views in reference to the future judgment, is not certainly intimated. It is clear, however, from this discussion, that he supposed it would be “beyond” death, for he says that the wicked are prospered in this life: that they go down to the grave and sleep in the tomb; that the clods of the valley are sweet unto them, (¹⁸²¹²Job 21:32,33), yet that the judgment, the just

retribution, would certainly come. This passage, therefore, seems to be decisive to prove that he held to a state of retribution beyond the grave, where the inequalities of the present life would be corrected, and where people, though prospered here, would be treated as they deserved. This, he says, was the current opinion. It was that which was brought by travelers, who had gone into other lands. What impropriety is there in supposing that he may refer to some travelers who had gone into the country where Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob had lived, or then lived, and that they had brought this back as the prevalent belief there? To this current faith in that foreign land, he may now appeal as deserving the attention of his friends, and as meeting all that they had said. It “would” meet all that they said. It was the exact truth. It accorded with the course of events. And sustained, as Job says it was, by the prevailing opinion in foreign lands, it was regarded by him as settling the controversy. It is as true now as it was then; and this solution, which could come only from revelation, settles all inquiries about; the rectitude of the divine administration in the dispensation of rewards and punishments. It answers the question, “How is it consistent for God to bestow so many blessings on the wicked, while his own people are so much afflicted?” The answer is, they have “their” good things in this life, and in the future world all these inequalities will be rectified.

Day of wrath Margin, as in Hebrew “wraths.” The plural form here is probably employed to denote emphasis, and means the same as “fierce wrath.”

Job 21:31. *Who shall declare his way to his face?* That is, the face of the wicked. Who shall dare to rise up and openly charge him with his guilt? The idea is, that none would dare to do it, and that, therefore, the wicked man was not punished according to his character here, and was reserved to a day of future wrath.

And who shall repay him what he hath done? The meaning is, that many wicked people lived without being punished for their sins. No one was able to recompense them for the evil which they had done, and consequently they lived in security and prosperity. Such were the tyrants and conquerors, who had made the world desolate.

Job 21:32. *Yet shall he be brought to the grave* Margin, “graves.” That is, he is brought with honor and prosperity to the grave. He is not cut

down by manifest divine displeasure for his sins. He is conducted to the grave as other people are, not withstanding his enormous wickedness. The “object” of this is clearly to state that he would not be overwhelmed with calamity, as the friends of Job had maintained, and that nothing could be determined in regard to his character from the divine dealings toward him in this life.

And shall remain in the tomb Margin, “watch in the heap.” The marginal reading does not make sense, though it seems to be an exact translation of the Hebrew. Noyes renders it, “Yet he still survives upon his tomb.” Prof. Lee, “For the tomb was he watchful;” that is, his anxiety was to have an honored and a splendid burial. Wemyss, “They watch over his tomb;” that is, he is honored in his death, and his friends visit his tomb with affectionate solicitude, and keep watch over his grave. So Dr. Good renders it. Jerome translates it; “et in congerie mortuorum vigilabit.” The Septuagint, “And he shall be borne to the graves, and he shall watch over the tombs;” or, he shall cause a watch to be kept over his tomb — $\epsilon\pi\iota$ ^{<1909>} $\sigma\omega\rho\omega\nu$ $\eta\gamma\rho\upsilon\pi\eta\sigma\epsilon\nu$ ^{<69>}. Amidst this variety of interpretation, it is not easy to determine the true sense of the passage. The “general” meaning is not difficult. It is, that he should be honored even in his death; that he would live in prosperity, and be buried with magnificence. There would be nothing in his death or burial which would certainly show that God regarded him as a wicked man. But there is considerable difficulty in determining the exact sense of the original words. The word rendered “tomb” in the text and “heap” in the margin $\nu\upsilon\delta\delta\grave{\epsilon}$, ^{<h1430>} occurs only in the following places, ^{<1226>} Exodus 22:6; ^{<8155>} Job 5:26; ^{<7151>} Judges 15:5, where it is rendered “a shock of corn,” and in this place. The “verb” in the Syriac, Arabic, and in Chaldee, means “to heap up” (see Castell), and the noun may denote, therefore, a stack, or a heap, of grain, or a tomb, that was made by a pile of earth, or stones. The ancient “tumuli” were there heaps of earth or stone, and probably such a pile was made usually over a grave as a monument. On the meaning of the word used here, the reader may consult Bochart, Hieroz. P. i. L. iii. c. xiii. p. 853. There can be little doubt that it here means a tomb, or a monument raised over a tomb. There is more difficulty about the word rendered “shall remain” $dq\grave{a}e$ ^{<h8245>}. This properly means, to wake, to be watchful, to be sleepless. So the Chaldee $\nu\upsilon\delta\delta\grave{\epsilon}$, and the Arabic “dakash” The verb is commonly rendered in the Scriptures, “watch,” or “waketh.” See ^{<8701>} Psalm 127:1; 102:7; ^{<8128>} Jeremiah 31:28; 1:12; 5:6; 44:27; ^{<2311>} Isaiah 29:20; ^{<1589>} Ezra 8:29; ^{<2704>} Daniel 9:14.

There is usually in the word the notion of “watching,” with a view to guarding, or protecting, as when one watches a vineyard, a house, or other property. The sense here is, probably, that his tomb should be carefully “watched” by friends, and the verb is probably taken impersonally, or used to denote that “someone” would watch over his grave. This might be either as a proof of affection, or to keep it in repair. One of the most painful ideas might have been then, as it is now among American savages (Bancroft’s History of the United States, vol. iii. p. 299), that of having the grave left or violated, and it may have been regarded as a special honor to have had friends, who would come and watch over their sepulchre. According to this view, the meaning is, that the wicked man was often honorably buried; that a monument was reared to his memory; and that every mark of attention was paid to him after he was dead. Numbers followed him to his burial, and friends came and wept with affection around his tomb. The argument of Job is, that there was no such distinction between the lives and death of the righteous and the wicked as to make it possible to determine the character; and is it not so still? The wicked man often dies in a palace, and with all the comforts that every clime can furnish to alleviate his pain, and to soothe him in his dying moments. He lies upon a bed of down; friends attend him with unwearied care; the skill of medicine is exhausted to restore him, and there is every indication of grief at his death. So, in the place of his burial, a monument of finest marble, sculptured with all the skill of art, is reared over his grave. An inscription, beautiful as taste can make it, proclaims his virtues to the traveler and the stranger. Friends go and plant roses over his grave, that breathe forth their odors around the spot where he lies. Who, from the dying scene, the funeral, the monument, the attendants, would suppose that he was a man whom God abhorred, and whose soul was already in hell? This is the argument of Job, and of its solidity no one can doubt.

~~Job~~ **Job 21:33.** *The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him* That is, he shall lie as calmly as others in the grave. The language here is taken from that delusion of which we all partake when we reflect on death. We think of “ourselves” in the grave, and it is almost impossible to divest our minds of the idea, that we shall be conscious there, and be capable of understanding our condition. The idea here is, that the person who was thus buried, might be sensible of the quiet of his abode, and enjoy, in some measure, the honors of the beautiful or splendid tomb, in which he was buried, and the anxious care of his friends. So we “think” of our friends,

though we do not often “express” it. The dear child that is placed in the dark vault, or that is covered up in the ground — we feel as if we could not have him there. We insensibly shudder, as if “he” might be conscious of the darkness and chilliness, and “a part” of our trial arises from this delusion. So felt the American savage — expressing the emotions of the heart, which, in other cases, are often concealed.

“At the bottom of a grave, the melting snows had left a little water; and the sight of it chilled and saddened his imagination. ‘You have no compassion for my poor brother’ — such was the reproach of an Algonquin — ‘the air is pleasant, and the sun so cheering, and yet you do not remove the snow from the grave, to warm him a little,’ and he knew no contentment until it was done.” — Bancroft’s History, U.S. iii. 294, 295. The same feeling is expressed by Fingal over the grave of Gaul:

*Prepare, ye children of musical strings,
The bed of Gaul, and his sun-beam by him;
Where may be seen his resting place from afar*

*Which branches high overshadow,
Under the wing of the oak of greenest flourish,
Of quickest growth, and most durable form,
Which will shoot forth its leaves to the breeze of the shower,*

*While the heath around is still withered.
Its leaves, from the extremity of the land,
Shall be seen by the birds in Summer;
And each bird shall perch, as it arrives,*

*On a sprig of its verdant branch;
Gaul in this mist shall hear the cheerful note,
While the virgins are singing of Evirchoma.*

Thus, also, Knolles (History of the Turks, p. 332) remarks of the Sultan Muted II, that “after his death, his son raised the siege, and returned back to Adrianople. He caused the dead to be buried with great solemnity in the Western suburbs of Broosa, in a chapel without a roof, in accordance with the express desire of the Sultan, in order that the mercy and blessing of God might descend on him, that the sun and the moon might shine on his grave, and the rain and the dew of heaven fall upon it.” Rosenmuller’s *Alte u. neue Morgenland*, “in loc.” The word “clods” here, is rendered “stones” by Prof. Lee, but the more general interpretation is that of “sods,” or

“clods.” The word is used only here, and in ~~<1838>~~ Job 38:38, where it is also rendered clods. The word “valley” | j ~~<15158>~~ ~~<1838>~~ means usually a stream, brook, or rivulet, and then a valley where such a brook runs. Notes ~~<18065>~~ Job 6:15. It is not improbable that such valleys were chosen as burial places, from the custom of planting shrubs and flowers around a grave, because they would flourish best there. The valley of Jehoshaphat, near Jerusalem, was long occupied as a burial place.

And every man shall draw after him Some suppose that this means, that he shall share the common lot of mortals — that innumerable multitudes have gone there before him — and that succeeding generations shall follow to the same place appointed for all the living. “Noyes.” Others, however, suppose that this refers to a funeral procession and that the meaning is, that all the world is drawn out after him, and that an innumerable multitude precedes him when he is buried. Others, again, suppose it means, that his example shall attract many to follow and adopt his practices, as many have done before him in imitating similar characters. “Lee.” It is clear, that there is some notion of honor, respect, or pomp in the language; and it seems to me more likely that the meaning is, that he would draw out every body to go to the place where he was buried, that they might look on it, and thus honor him. What multitudes would go to look on the grave of Alexander the Great! How many have gone to look on the place where Caesar fell! How many have gone, and will go, to look on the place where Nelson or Napoleon is buried! This, I think, is the idea here, that the man who should thus die, would draw great numbers to the place where he was buried, and that before him, or in his presence, there was an innumerable multitude, so greatly would he be honored.

~~<18234>~~ **Job 21:34.** *How then comfort ye me in vain ...* That is, how can you be qualified to give me consolation in my trials, who have such erroneous views of the government and dealings of God? True consolation could be founded only on correct views of the divine government; but such views, Job says, they had not. With their conceptions of the divine administration, they could not administer to him any real consolation. We may learn hence,

(1) That all real consolation in trial must be based on correct apprehensions of the divine character and plans. Falsehood, delusion, error, can give no permanent comfort.

(2) They whose office it is to administer consolation to the afflicted, should seek after the “truth” about God and his government.

They should endeavor to learn why he afflicts people, what purpose he proposes to accomplish, and what are the proper ends of trial. They should have an unwavering conviction that he is right, and should see as far as possible “why” he is right, before they attempt to comfort others. Their own souls should be imbued with the fullest conviction that all the ways of God are holy, and then they should go and endeavor to pour their convictions into other hearts, and make them feel so too. A minister of the gospel, who has unsettled, erroneous, or false views of the character and government of God, is poorly qualified for his station, and will be a “miserable comforter” to those who are in trial. Truth alone sustains the soul in affliction. Truth only can inspire confidence in God. Truth only can break the force of sorrow, and enable the sufferer to look up to God and to heaven with confidence and joy.

(THE END OF PART ONE OF THE COMMENTARY ON JOB)

NOTES ON JOB 22

Job 22:2. *Can a man be profitable unto God?* Can a man confer any favor on God, so as to lay him under obligation? Eliphaz supposes that Job sets up a “claim” to the favor of God, because he was of service to him, or because God had something to fear if he was cut off. He maintains, therefore, that a man can confer no favor on God, so as to lay him under obligation. God is independent and supreme. He has nothing to gain if man is righteous — he has nothing to apprehend if he is punished. He is not dependent at all on man.

As he that is wise Margin, or, “if he may be profitable, doth his goodness depend thereon.” The meaning of the passage is, a wise man may promote his own advantage, but he cannot be of advantage to God. All the result of his wisdom must terminate on himself, and not on God; compare ^{196E}Psalm 16:2. Of the correctness of this sentiment there can be no doubt. It accords with reason, and with all that is said in the Scriptures. God is too great to be benefited by man. He is infinite in all his perfections; he is the original fountain of blessedness; he is supremely wise; he has all resources in himself, and he cannot be dependent on his creatures. He cannot, therefore, be deterred from punishing them by any dread which he has of losing their favor — he cannot be induced to bless them because they have laid him under obligation. Eliphaz meant this as a reply to what Job had said. He had maintained, that God did “not” treat people according to their character in this life, but that, in fact, the wicked were often prospered, and suffered to live long. Eliphaz at once “infers,” that if this were so, it must be because they could render themselves “serviceable” to God, or because he must have something to dread by punishing them. In the general sentiment, he was right; in the “inference” he was wrong — since Job had not affirmed that they are spared from any such cause, and since many other “reasons” may be assigned.

Job 22:3. *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?* This is the same sentiment which was advanced in the previous verse. The meaning is, that it can be no advantage to God that a man is righteous. He is not dependent on man for happiness, and cannot be deterred from dealing justly with him because he is in danger of losing anything. In this sense, it is true. God “has” pleasure in holiness wherever it is, and is

pleased when people are righteous; but it is not true that he is dependent on the character of his creatures for his own happiness, or that people can lay him under obligation by their own righteousness. Eliphaz applies this general truth to Job, probably, because he understood him as complaining of the dealings of God with him, as if he had laid God under obligation by his upright life. He supposes that it was implied in the remarks of Job, that he had been so upright, and had been of so much consequence, that God “ought” to have continued him in a state of prosperity. This supposition, if Job ever had it, Eliphaz correctly meets, and shows him that he was not so profitable to God that he could not do without him. Yet, do people not often feel thus? Do ministers of the gospel not sometimes feel thus? Do we not sometimes feel thus in relation to some man eminent for piety, wisdom, or learning? Do we not feel as if God could not do without him, and that there was a sort of necessity that he should keep him alive? Yet, how often are such people cut down, in the very midst of their usefulness, to show

(1) that God is not dependent on them; and

(2) to keep them from pride, as if they were necessary to the execution of the divine plans; and

(3) to teach his people their dependence on “Him,” and not on frail, erring mortals. When the church places its reliance on a human arm, God very often suddenly knocks the prop away.

~~1821B~~ **Job 22:4.** *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee?* Or, rather, will he come into trial, and argue his cause before a tribunal, because he is afraid that his character will suffer, or because he feels himself bound to appear, and answer to the charges which may be brought? The language is all taken from courts of justice, and the object is, to reprove Job as if he felt that it was necessary that God should appear and answer to what he alleged against him.

Will he enter with thee into judgment? Will he condescend to enter on a trial with one like thee? Will he submit his cause to a trial with man, as if he were an equal, or as if man had any right to such an investigation? It is to be remembered, that Job had repeatedly expressed a desire to carry his cause before God, and that God would meet him as an equal, and not take advantage of his majesty and power to overwhelm him; see the notes at ~~1821B~~ Job 13:3,20,21. Eliphaz here asks, whether God could be expected to meet “a man,” one of his own creatures, in this manner, and to go into a

trial of the cause. He says that God was supreme; that no one could bring him into court; and that he could not be restrained from doing his pleasure by any dread of man. These sentiments are all noble and correct, and worthy of a sage. Soon, however, he changes the style, and utters the language of severe reproach, because Job had presumed to make such a suggestion. Perhaps, also, in this verse, a special emphasis should be placed on “thee.”

“Will God enter into trial with thee ... a man whose wickedness is so great, and whose sin is infinite?” ^{<1827>}Job 22:4,5.

^{<1827>}**Job 22:5.** *Is not thy wickedness great?* That is, “Is it not utter presumption and folly for a man, whose wickedness is undoubtedly so great, to presume to enter into a litigation with God?” Eliphaz here “assumes” it as an undeniable proposition, that Job was a great sinner. This charge had not been directly made before. He and his friends had argued evidently on that supposition, and had maintained that one who was a great sinner would be punished in this life for it, and they had left it to be implied, in no doubtful manner, that they so regarded Job. But the charge had not been before so openly made. Here Eliphaz argues as if that were a point that could not be disputed. The only “proof” that he had, so far as appears, was, that Job had been afflicted as they maintained great sinners “would be,” and they, therefore, concluded that he must be such. No facts are referred to, except that he was a great sufferer, and yet, on the ground of this, he proceeds to take for granted that he “must have been” a man who had taken a pledge for no cause; had refused to give water to the thirsty; had been an oppressor, etc.

And thine iniquities infinite? Hebrew “And there is no end to thine iniquities,” that is, they are without number. This does not mean that sin is an “infinite evil,” or that his sins were infinite in degree; but that if one should attempt to reckon up the number of his transgressions, there would be no end to them. This, I believe, is the only place in the Bible where sin is spoken of, in any respect, as “infinite;” and this cannot be used as a proof text, to show that sin is an infinite evil, for:

- (1) that is not the meaning of the passage even with respect to Job;
- (2) it makes no affirmation respecting sin in general; and

(3) it was untrue, even in regard to Job, and in the sense in which Zophar meant to use the phrase.

There is no intelligible sense in which it can be said that sin is “an infinite evil;” and no argument should be based on such a declaration, to prove that sin demanded an infinite atonement, or that it deserves eternal sufferings. Those doctrines can be defended on solid grounds — they should not be made to rest on a false assumption, or on a false interpretation of the Scriptures.

^{<8216>}**Job 22:6.** *For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought*

The only evidence which Eliphaz seems to have had of this was, that this was a heinous sin, and that as Job seemed to be severely punished, it was to be “inferred” that he must have committed some such sin as this. No way of treating an unfortunate and a suffering man could be more unkind. A “pledge” is that which is given by a debtor to a creditor, for security for the payment of a debt, and would be, of course, that which was regarded as of value. Garments, which constituted a considerable part of the wealth of the Orientals, would usually be the pledge which would be given. With us, in such cases, watches, jewelry, notes, mortgages, are given as collateral security, or as pledges. The law of Moses required, that when a man took the garment of his neighbor for a pledge, it should be restored by the time the sun went down, ^{<1226>}Exodus 22:26,27. The crime here charged on Job was, that he had exacted a pledge from another where there was no just claim to it; that is, where no debt had been contracted, where a debt; had been paid, or where the security was far beyond the value of the debt. The injustice of such a course would be obvious. It would deprive the man of the use of the property which was pledged, and it gave him to whom it was pledged an opportunity of doing wrong, as he might retain it, or dispose of it, and the real owner see it no more.

And stripped the naked of their clothing Margin, “clothes of the naked.” That is, of those who were poorly clad, or who were nearly destitute of clothes. The word naked is often used in this sense in the Scriptures; see the notes at ^{<8217>}John 21:7. The meaning here is, that Job had taken away by oppression even the garments of the poor in order to enrich himself.

^{<8217>}**Job 22:7.** *Thou hast not given water to the weary* That is, thou hast withheld the rites of hospitality — one of the most grievous offences which could be charged on an Arabian; compare the notes at ^{<8214>}Isaiah 21:14. In

all the Oriental world, hospitality was regarded, and is still, as a duty of the highest obligation.

Job 22:8. *But as for the mighty man* Hebrew as in the margin, “man of arm.” The “arm,” in the Scriptures, is the symbol of power; ^{<1905>}Psalm 10:15, “Break thou the arm of the wicked;” ^{<1911>}Ezekiel 30:21. “I have broken the arm of Pharaoh;” ^{<1913>}Psalm 89:13, “Thou hast a mighty arm;” ^{<1970>}Psalm 97:1, “His holy arm hath gotten him the victory.” The reason of this is, that the sword and spear were principally used in war, and success depended on the force with which they were wielded by the arm. There can be no doubt that this is intended to be applied to Job, and that the meaning is, that he had driven the poor from their possessions, and he had taken forcible occupancy of what belonged to them. The idea is, that he had done this by power, not by “right.”

Had the earth Took possession of the land, and drove off from it those to whom it belonged, or who had an equal right to it with him.

And the honorable man Margin, “eminent,” or “accepted of countenance.” Hebrew: “Lifted up of countenance;” that is, the man whose countenance was elevated either by honor or pride. It may be used to describe either; but, perhaps, there is more force in the former, in saying that it was the great man, the man of rank and office, who had got possession. There is, thus, some sarcasm in the severe charge: “The great man ... the man of rank, and wealth, and office, has got possession, while the humble and poor are banished.” Job had had great possessions; but this charge as to the manner in which he had acquired them seems to be wholly gratuitous. Eliphaz takes it for granted, since he was so severely punished, that it “must have been” in some such way.

Job 22:9. *Thou hast sent widows away empty* That is, without regarding their needs, and without doing anything to mitigate their sorrows. The oppression of the widow and the fatherless is, in the Scriptures, every where regarded as a crime of special magnitude; see the notes at ^{<2017>}Isaiah 1:17.

The arms of the fatherless have been broken Thou hast taken away all that they relied on. Thou hast oppressed them and taken advantage of their weak and defenseless condition to enrich yourself. This charge was evidently gratuitous and unjust. It was the result of an “inference” from the fact that he was thus afflicted, and about as just as inferences, in such

cases, usually are. To all this, Job replies in beautiful language in ^{<8291>}Job 29:11-6, when describing his former condition, and in justice to him, we may allow him to speak “here,” and to show what was, in fact, the course of his life.

When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; And when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: Because I delivered the poor that cried, And the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: And I caused the widow’s heart to leap for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; My judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, And feet was I to the lame; I was a father to the poor, And the cause which I knew not, I searched out

^{<8210>}**Job 22:10.** *Therefore snares are round about thee* “Snares” were used for catching wild animals and birds, and the word then came to denote any sudden calamity; see ^{<8108>}Job 18:8-10. Eliphaz here says, that it “must be” that these calamities came upon Job in consequence of such sins as he had specified. About that he took it for granted there could be no dispute.

And sudden fear The calamities of Job came upon him suddenly Job 1. It was to this, doubtless, that Eliphaz alluded.

^{<8211>}**Job 22:11.** *Or darkness* Darkness and night in the Scriptures are emblems of calamity.

That thou canst not see Deep and fearful darkness; total night, so that nothing is visible. That is, the heaviest calamities had overwhelmed him.

And abundance of waters An emblem, also, of calamities; ^{<8212>}Job 27:20; ^{<8611>}Psalms 69:1,2; 73:10.

^{<8212>}**Job 22:12.** *Is not God in the height of heaven?* In the highest heaven. That is, Is not God exalted over all worlds? This seems to be intended to refer to the sentiments of Job, as if he had maintained that God was so exalted that he could not notice what was occurring on earth. It should, therefore, be read in connection with the following verse: “God is so exalted, that thou sayest, How can he know? Can he look down through the thick clouds which intervene between him and man?” Job had maintained no such opinion, but the process of thought in the mind of Eliphaz seems to have been this. Job had maintained that God did “not” punish the wicked in this life as they deserved, but that they lived and

prospered. Eliphaz “inferred” that he could hold that opinion only because he supposed that God was so exalted that he could not attend to worldly affairs. He knew no other way in which the opinion could be held, and he proceeds to argue “as if” it were so. Job had in the previous chapter appealed to plain “facts,” and had rested his whole argument on them. Eliphaz, instead of meeting the “facts” in the case, or showing that they did not exist as Job said they did, considered his discourse as a denial of Divine Providence, and as representing God to be so far above the earth that he could not notice what was occurring here. How common is this in theological controversy! One man, in defending his opinions, or in searching for the truth, appeals to “facts,” and endeavors to ascertain their nature and bearing. His adversary, instead of meeting them, or showing that they are not so, at once appeals to some admitted doctrine, to some established article of a creed, or to some tradition of the fathers, and says that the appeal to fact is but a denial of an important doctrine of revelation. It is easier to charge a man with denying the doctrine of Providence, or to call him by a harsh name, than it is to meet an argument drawn from fact and from the plain meaning of the Bible.

And behold the height of the stars Margin, as in Hebrew “head” —
⁴⁷¹⁸*varo*. God is more exalted than the highest of the stars. The stars are the highest objects in view, and the sense, therefore, is, that God is infinitely exalted.

⁴⁸²¹³**Job 22:13.** *And thou sayest, How doth God know?* That is, it “follows” from what you have said; or the opinion which you have advanced is “the same” as if you had affirmed this. How common it is to charge a man with holding what we “infer,” from something which he has advanced, he must hold, and then to proceed to argue “as if” he actually held that. The philosophy of this is plain. He advances a certain opinion. “We” infer at once that he can hold that only on certain grounds, or that if he holds that he must hold something else also. We can see that if “we” held that opinion, we should also, for the sake of consistency, be compelled to hold something which seems to follow from it, and we cannot see how this can be avoided, and we at once charge him with holding it. But the truth may be, that “he” has not seen that such consequences follow, or that he has some other way of accounting for the fact than we have; or that he may hold to the fact and yet deny wholly the consequences which legitimately follow from it. Now we have a right to show him “by

argument” that his opinions, if he would follow them out, would lead to dangerous consequences, but we have a right to charge him with holding only what he “professes” to hold. He is not answerable for our inferences; and we have no right to charge them on him as being his real opinions. Every man has a right to avow what he actually believes, and to be regarded as holding that, and that only.

How doth God know? That is, How can one so exalted see what is done on the distant earth, and reward and punish people according to their deserts? This opinion was actually held by many of the ancients. It was supposed that the supreme God did not condescend to attend to the affairs of mortals, but had committed the government of the earth to inferior beings. This was the foundation of the Gnostic philosophy, which prevailed so much in the East in the early ages of the Christian church. Milton puts a similar sentiment into the mouth of Eve in her reflections after she had eaten the forbidden fruit:

And I, perhaps, am secret: heaven is high, High and remote from
thence to see distinct Each thing on earth; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch Our great Forbidder, safe
with all his spies about him. — Paradise Lost, B. ix.

Can he judge through the dark cloud? Can he look down through the clouds which interpose between man and him? Eliphaz could not see how Job could maintain his opinions without holding that this was impossible for God. He could see no other reason why God did not punish the wicked than because “he did not see them,” and he, therefore, charges this opinion on Job.

~~18214~~ **Job 22:14.** *Thick clouds are a covering to him* This is to be understood as expressing what Eliphaz regarded as the sentiment of Job — that so thick clouds intervened between him and man that he could not take cognizance of what was going forward on earth.

And he walketh in the circuit of heaven Upon the arch of heaven, as it seems to be bent over our heads. He walks above that cerulean, so high, that he cannot see what occurs on earth, and to punish mortals. This was not an uncommon sentiment among the ancients, though it is here, with the greatest injustice, attributed to Job. A similar sentiment is expressed by Lucretius, as quoted by Rosenmuller and Noyes:

*Omnis enim per se Divum natura necesse est
Immortali aevo summa cum pace fruatur,
Semota a nostris rebus, sejunctaque longe.*

*Nam privata dolore omni, privata periculis,
Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil in liga nostri,
Nec bene promeritus capitur, nec tangitur ira.*

Compare ^{<23915>}Isaiah 29:15.

^{<18215>}**Job 22:15.** *Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?* Hast thou seen what has happened in former times to wicked people? Job had maintained that God did not deal with people in this world according to their character. To meet this, Eliphaz now appeals to ancient facts, and especially refers to the deluge, when the wicked were cut off by a flood for their sins. Schultens, Dr. Good, Noyes, and Reiske, however, suppose that the word here rendered “mark,” means to “pursue,” or “imitate,” and that the sense is, “Are you willing to adopt the principles of those wicked people who lived in the time of the deluge?” But the sense is not materially affected. The general design is to refer Job to the case of the impious generation that was swept off by a flood. The judgments of God on them were a full refutation, in his view, of the sentiments of Job.

^{<18216>}**Job 22:16.** *Which were cut down* Who were suddenly destroyed by a flood. On the word used here **fmeḡ**^{<17059>} see the notes at ^{<18108>}Job 16:8. It occurs only in that place and this. Its primary notion is that of drawing together or contracting — as the feet of a lamb or calf are drawn together and tied preparatory to being killed; and the meaning here is, probably, “who were huddled together by the waters,” or who were driven in heaps by the deluge, so rapidly and suddenly did it come upon them.

Out of time Hebrew “And there was no time;” that is, it was done in a moment, or suddenly. No time was given them; no delay was granted. The floods rushed over them, and nothing could stay them.

Whose foundation was overflown Margin, or, “a flood was poured upon their foundation.” That is, all on which they relied was swept away. The word “foundation” refers to that on which their happiness and security rested, as a house rests on its foundation, and when that is swept away the house falls.

With a flood Hebrew rhn ,¹⁵¹⁰⁴ “river.” The word is commonly applied to a river; and in the Scriptures, by way of eminence, to the Euphrates; see the notes at ²¹⁷²Isaiah 7:20; 8:7. It may be used, however, to denote a river which is swollen, and then a flood — and it is several times rendered “flood” in the Scriptures; ¹⁸⁴¹Job 14:11; ³¹¹³Jonah 2:3 (where it means the sea); ¹⁶⁴¹Joshua 24:2,3,14,15; ¹⁹⁶⁶Psalms 66:6; ¹⁸⁸¹Job 28:11; ¹⁹⁴¹Psalms 24:2; 93:3; ²¹⁰⁷Song of Solomon 8:7. Prof. Lee supposes that the allusion here is to some overflowing of the Euphrates, but the reference seems to be decidedly to the deluge in the time of Noah. The “language” is such as would be used in referring to that, and the fact is just such an one as would be pertinent to the argument of Eliphaz. The fact was undoubtedly well known to all, so that a bare allusion to it would be enough.

¹⁸²⁷**Job 22:17.** *Which said unto God, Depart from us* Notes, ¹⁸²¹⁴Job 21:14. A very correct description of the old world. They had no wish to retain God in their knowledge. Probably Eliphaz here refers to what Job had said, ¹⁸²¹⁴Job 21:14,15. He had remarked, in describing the wicked, that they said unto God, “Depart from us,” and yet they lived prosperously. “But see,” says Eliphaz, “a case” where they did this. It was done by the inhabitants of the world before the deluge, and their houses were filled, as you say the houses of the wicked are, with good things, but God swept them all suddenly away.”

And what can the Almighty do for them? Margin, or, ”to.” That is, they demanded what the Almighty could do for them. They did not feel their dependence on him; they did not admit that they needed his aid; they cast off all reliance on him. This whole passage is a most sarcastic retort on what Job had said in ¹⁸²¹⁴Job 21:14,15. He had affirmed that though wicked people used this language, yet that they prospered. Eliphaz takes the same language and applies it to the sinners before the deluge, and says that they expressed themselves just in this manner. The language which Job puts into the mouths of the wicked, had indeed, says Eliphaz, been used. But by whom? By those who lived in security and prosperity. “By the men before the deluge,” says he, “the race that was so wicked that it was necessary to cut them off by the flood. These are the people to whose sentiments Job appeals; these the people with whom he has sympathy!”

¹⁸²¹⁸**Job 22:18.** *Yet he filled their houses with good things* This is undoubtedly a biting sarcasm. Job had maintained that such people were

prosperous. “Yes,” says Eliphaz, “their houses were well filled! They were signally blessed and prospered!”

But the counsel of the wicked is far from me This is the very language of Job, ^{<K216>}Job 21:16. It is used here sarcastically. “Far from me,” you say, “be the counsel of the wicked. Thus you defend them, and attempt to show that they are the favorites of heaven! You attempt to prove that God must and will bless them! Far from me, say I, be the counsel of the wicked! With them I have no part, no lot. I will not defend them ... I will not be their advocate!” The object is, to show that, notwithstanding all that Job had said, he was secretly the advocate of the wicked, and stood up as their friend.

^{<K219>}**Job 22:19.** *The righteous see it, and are glad* see the destruction of the wicked; compare ^{<G17B>}Revelation 15:3; 16:7; 19:1,2. This is designed by Eliphaz, probably, not only to state a fact about the righteous of other times who saw the wicked punished, but, also, to vindicate his own conduct and that of his two friends in regard to Job. If the righteous of other times had rejoiced when the wicked were punished, they inferred that it was not improper for them to manifest similar rejoicings when God had overtaken one who was so signally depraved as they supposed Job to be. Their want of sympathy for him, therefore, they would defend by a reference to the conduct of the people of other times. There is a sense in which good people rejoice when the wicked are detected and punished. It is not:

- (1) that they rejoice that the sin was committed; nor
- (2) that they rejoice in misery; nor
- (3) that they would not rejoice more if the wicked had been righteous, and had escaped suffering altogether.

But it is the kind of joy which we have when a murderer, a robber, or a pirate is seized — when a counterfeiter is detected — when a man who prowls around the dwelling at night to murder its inmates is brought to punishment. It is joy, not that the sin was committed, but that the laws are executed; and who should not rejoice in that? We have joy in the character of an upright judge when he impartially and faithfully administers the laws; and why should we not rejoice in God when he does the same? We rejoice in the manifestation of truth and justice among people — why should we

not in the exhibition of the same things in God? We rejoice in a police that can ferret out every form of iniquity, and bring offenders to justice; and why should we not rejoice in that government which is infinitely more perfect than any police ever was among people?

And the innocent laugh them to scorn This is another way of saying that they exult or rejoice; compare ^{<1006>}Proverbs 1:26,27. No consideration can justify people in deriding and mocking those who are subjected to punishment; and it is by no means certain that the speaker meant to refer to such derision.

^{<8221>}**Job 22:20.** *Whereas our substance is not cut down* Margin, or, “Estate” Gesenius supposes that this means our adversary or enemy. The word used here ^{<1700>}μῦγι he regards as derived from ^{<16965>}μῠγι — to rise, to rise up; and, hence, it may have the sense of rising up against, or an enemy. So Noyes understands it, and renders it:

*“Truly, our adversary is destroyed;
And fire hath consumed his abundance.”*

Rosemuller accords with this, and it seems to me to be the correct view. According to this, it is the language of the righteous (^{<8219>}Job 22:19) when exciting over the punishment of the wicked, saying, “Our foe is cut down.” Jerome renders it, Nonne succisa est erectio eorum, etc. The Septuagint, “Has not their substance ^{<5287>}ὑποστασις disappeared?” The sense is not materially different. If the word “substance,” or “property,” is to be retained it should be read as a question, and regarded as the language of the righteous who exult. “Has not their substance been taken away. and has not the fire consumed their property?” Dr. Good strangely renders it, “For our tribe is not cut off.”

But the remnant of them Margin, “their excellency.” Hebrew ^{<13499>}רְתִי. Jerome, “reliquias eorum” — “the remnants of them.” Septuagint, ^{<2640>}καταλειμμα — “the residue,” or “what is left.” The Hebrew word ^{<13499>}רְתִי means, “the remainder, the residue, the rest;” then, what is redundant, more than is needed, or that abounds; and then, “wealth,” the superabundant property which a man does not “need” for his own use or family. The word here probably means that which the rich sinner possessed.

The fire consumeth Or, hath consumed. It has been supposed by many that the allusion here is to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and it

cannot be denied that such an allusion is possible. If it were “certain” that Job lived before that event, there could be little objection to such a supposition. The “only” objection would be, that a reference to such an event was not more prominent. It would be a case just in point in the argument of the three friends of Job, and one to which it might be supposed they would have appealed as decisive of the controversy. They lived in the vicinity. They could not have been strangers to so remarkable an occurrence, and it would have furnished just the argument which they wished, to prove that God punishes the wicked in this life. If they lived after that event, therefore, it is difficult to account for the fact, that they did not make a more distinct and prominent allusion to it in their argument. It is true, that the same remark may be made respecting the allusion to the flood, which was a case equally in point, and in reference to which the allusion, if it exist at all, is almost equally obscure. So far as the language here is concerned, the reference may be either to the destruction of Sodom, or to destruction by lightning, such as happened to the possessions of Job, ^{<8016>}Job 1:16; and it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine which is correct. The general idea is, that the judgments of heaven, represented by fire, had fallen on the wicked, and that the righteous, therefore, had occasion to rejoice.

^{<8221>}**Job 22:21.** *Acquaint now thyself with him* Margin, i.e., “with God.” Eliphaz takes it for granted now, that Job was a sinner wholly unreconciled to God, and unacquainted with him. This fact, he supposes, was the source of all his calamities. As long as he remained thus unreconciled to God, he must be miserable. He proceeds, therefore, in a most beautiful manner, to exhort him to be at peace with God, and portrays the benefits which would result from such a reconciliation. There are few passages in the Bible of more exquisite beauty than this, and nothing could be sounder advice, on the supposition that Job was, as he supposed, a stranger to God. In this beautiful exhortation, he shows:

(1) what he means by becoming acquainted with God (^{<8221>}Job 22:21,22,23); and then

(2) what would be the happy results of such reconciliation, ^{<8224>}Job 22:24-30.

The word rendered “acquaint thyself” ^{^kæ^{h5532}} — from ^{^kæ^{h5532}} means, properly, “to dwell,” to be familiar with anyone, to associate with one —

from the idea of dwelling in the same tent or house; and in Hiphil, the form used here, to become familiar with anyone, to be on terms of friendship. The meaning here is, "Secure the friendship of God. Become truly acquainted with him. Be reconciled to him. You are now estranged. You have no just views of him. You murmur and complain, and you are suffering under his displeasure as a sinner. But it is not too late to repent, and to return to him; and in so doing you will find peace." An acquaintance with God, in the sense of this passage, implies:

- (1) a correct knowledge of his true character, and
- (2) reconciliation with him.

There are two great difficulties among people in regard to God. The first is, that they have no just views of his real character. They think him harsh, stern, tyrannical. They regard his law as severe, and its penalty as unjust. They think his government to be arbitrary, and himself to be unworthy of confidence. This erroneous view must be corrected before people can be reconciled to him — for how can they be brought to lay aside their opposition to him while they regard him as unjust and severe? Secondly, even when the character of God is explained, and his true character is set before people, they are opposed to it. They are opposed to him because he is so holy. Loving sin, they cannot love one who has no sin, and who frowns on evil; and this opposition to the real character of God must be removed before they can be reconciled to him. This requires a change of heart — a change from sin to holiness; and this is the work performed in regeneration.

And be at peace There can be no peace while you maintain a warfare with God. It is a war against your Maker, where he has control over your conscience, your intellect, your body, and all which can affect your welfare; and while this is maintained, there can be no peace. If the mind is reconciled to him, there will be peace. Peace of mind always follows reconciliation where there has been a variance, and nowhere is the peace so entire and full of joy as when man feels that he is reconciled to God. Eliphaz here has stated a doctrine which has been confirmed by all the subsequent revelations in the Bible, and by the experience of all those who have become reconciled to God; compare the notes at ~~Exo~~ Romans 5:1: It is peace, as opposed to the agitation and conflict of the mind before; peace resulting from acquiescence in the claims of God; peace in the belief that he is wholly right, and worthy of confidence; and peace in the assurances of

his friendship and favor forever. This doctrine, it seems, was thus understood in the early ages of the world, and, indeed, must have been known as early as religion existed after the fall. Man became alienated from God by the apostasy; peace was to be found again only by returning to God, and in reconciliation to him.

Thereby good shall come unto thee The benefits which he supposed would result from such reconciliation, he proceeds to state in the following verses. They relate chiefly to temporal prosperity, or to proofs of the divine favor in this life. This was in accordance with the views which then prevailed, and especially with their limited and obscure conceptions of the future state. They saw a part — “we” see more; and yet we by no means see all. The “good” which results from reconciliation with God consists in:

- (1) pardon of sin;
- (2) peace of conscience;
- (3) the assurance that we shall have all that is needful in this life;
- (4) support in trial;
- (5) peace and triumph in death;
- (6) a part in the resurrection of the just; and
- (7) a crown incorruptible and undefiled in heaven.

No man was ever “injured” by becoming reconciled to God; no one is reconciled to him who is not made a better and a happier man in this life, and who will not be crowned with immortal glory hereafter.

Job 22:22. *Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth* Listen to his commands, and obey his precepts.

And lay up his words in thine heart Embrace his truth, and do not forget it. Let it abide with you, and let it influence your secret feelings and the purposes of the soul.

Job 22:23. *If thou return to the Almighty* Assuming that he was an impenitent sinner, and wholly unreconciled to him.

Thou shalt be built up A figure taken from building up a house, in contradistinction from pulling one down, and denoting that he would be prospered and happy.

Thou shalt put away iniquity Rosenmuller, Good, Noyes, and Wemyss, suppose correctly, as it seems to me, that the word “if” is to be understood here to complete the sense — “if thou shalt put away iniquity.”

From thy tabernacle From thy tent, or dwelling.

~~1822a~~ **Job 22:24.** *Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust* Margin, or, “on the dust.” Dr. Good renders this, “Thou shalt then count thy treasure as dust” — implying that he would have much of it. Noyes, “Cast to the dust thy gold” — implying that he would throw his gold away as of no account, and put his dependence on God alone. Kim-chi, and, after him, Grotius, suppose that it means, “Thy gold thou shalt regard no more than dust, and gold of Ophir no more than the stones of the brook; God shall be to thee better than gold and silver.” The editor of the Pictorial Bible supposes that there is here a distinct reference to the sources from which gold was formerly obtained, as being washed down among the stones of the brooks. The word rendered “gold” here $RxB,$ ^{<h1220>} is from $rxB,$ ^{<h1219>} — to cut off, ~~1932~~ Psalm 76:12, and was properly applied to the ore of precious metals in the rude state, as cut or dug out of mines. Hence, it properly refers to the metals in their crude state, and before they were subjected to the fire. Then it comes to mean precious metals, and is parallel with gold of Ophir in the other hemistich. The word occurs only in the following places; ~~1822a~~ Job 22:24; 36:19, where it is rendered “gold,” and ~~1822b~~ Job 22:25, where it is rendered “defense.” The literal translation here would be, “Cast to the dust the precious metals; on the stones of the brooks (the gold of) Ophir.” The Vulgate renders it, “He shall give for earth flint, and for flint golden torrents.” The Septuagint, “Thou shalt be placed on a mount in a rock, and as a rock of the torrent of Ophir.” Chaldaen: “And thou shalt place upon the dust thy strong tower $\ddot{a}yqt$ $\ddot{E}yk$, and as a rock of the torrents the gold of Ophir.” The word here is probably synonymous with “precious treasure,” whether consisting in gold or silver; and the idea is, that he should cast to the dust all that treasure, or regard it as valueless; that he should cease to make it an object of solicitude to gain it, and “then” the Almighty would be to him a treasure of more value than gold. According to this, the idea is, not that he would be recompensed with gold and silver as the consequence of returning to God, but that God would afford him

more happiness than he had found in the wealth which he had sought, and on which Eliphaz supposed his heart had been set. He regarded Job as covetous of property, as mourning over that which he had lost, and he entreats him now to cease to grieve on account of that, and to come and put his trust in God.

And the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks Or, rather, “Cast the gold of Ophir to the stones of the valley, or let it remain in its native valley among the stones of the brook, as of no more value than they are.” There is, probably, allusion here to the fact, that gold was then commonly found in such places, as it is often now. It was washed down by mountain torrents, and lodged among the stones of the valley, and was thence collected, and the sand being washed out, the gold remained. Ophir is uniformly mentioned in the Scriptures as a place abounding in gold, and as well known; see ^{<1102>}1 Kings 9:28; ^{<408>}2 Chronicles 8:18; 9:10; ^{<1101>}1 Kings 10:11; 22:48; ^{<3204>}1 Chronicles 29:4. Much perplexity has been felt in reference to its situation, and the difficulty has not been entirely removed. In regard to the opinions which have been held on the point, the reader may consult the notes at ^{<2312>}Isaiah 13:12, the note in the Pictorial Bible on ^{<406>}2 Chronicles 20:36, and the Dissertation of Martin Lipenius “de Ophir,” in Ugolin’s Thesaur. Sacr. Ant. Tom. vii. pp. 262-387; also, the Dissertation of John C. Wichmanshausen, “de navigatione Ophiritica,” and Reland’s Dissertation “de Ophir” in the same volume. From the mention of this place at a period so early as the time of Job, it is reasonable to suppose that it was not a very remote region, as there is no evidence that voyages were made then to distant countries, or that the knowledge of geography was very extensive. The presumption would be, that it was in the vicinity of Arabia.

^{<822>}**Job 22:25.** *Yea, the Almighty shall be* Or, rather, “then the Almighty shall be” — *hyh*, ^{<1961>}. The meaning is, that if he would return to God, and cast off his anxiety for gold, “then” the Almighty would be his real treasure, and would impart to him solid happiness.

Thy defense Margin, “gold.” The margin is the more correct translation. The word is the same which occurs in the previous verse *rxB*, ^{<1221>}, and there rendered “gold.” The word may have the sense of “defense,” as the verb *rxB*, ^{<1219>} is often used with such a reference; ^{<4138>}Numbers 13:28; ^{<4028>}Deuteronomy 1:28; 3:5; 9:1, et al. The meaning of such places, where the word is applied to walled towns or fortified places, is, that the enemy

was, by means of walls, “cut off” from approach. Here, however, the idea of “gold” or “treasure” better suits the connection, and the meaning is, that “God” would be to him an invaluable “treasure” or source of happiness.

And thou shalt have plenty of silver Margin, “silver of strength.” The correct idea, however, is, “and the Almighty shall be treasures of silver unto thee;” that is, he shall be better to you than an abundance of the precious metals. The Hebrew is literally, “And silver of treasures unto thee.”

~~8226~~ **Job 22:26.** *Shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty* Instead of complaining of him as you now do, you would then find calm enjoyment in contemplating his character and his moral government. This is a correct account of the effects of reconciliation. He who becomes truly “acquainted” with God has pleasure in his existence and attributes; in his law and administration. No longer disposed to complain, he confides in him when he is afflicted; flees to him when he is persecuted; seeks him in the day of prosperity; prefers him to all that this world can give, and finds his supremest joys in turning away from all created good to hold communion with the Uncreated One.

And shalt lift up thy face unto God An emblem of prosperity, happiness, and conscious innocence. We hang our face down when we are conscious of guilt; we bow the head in adversity. When conscious of uprightness; when blessed with prosperity, and when we have evidence that we are the children of God, we look up toward heaven. This was the natural condition of human beings — made to look upward, while all other animals look grovelling on the earth. So Milton describes the creation of man:

There wanted yet the master-work, the end
Of all yet done; a creature, who, not prone
And brute as other creatures, but endued
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature, and upright with front serene
Govern the rest, self-knowing; and from thence
Magnanimous to correspond with heaven,
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good

Directed in devotion, to adore
And worship God supreme, who made him chief
Of all his works. *Paradise Lost*, B. vii.

The classic reader will instantly recollect the description in Ovid:

*Pronaque cum spectent animalia caetera terram;
Os homini sublime dedit; coelumque tueri
Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus. — Meta. 1:84.*

Job 22:27. *Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him* God would then hear him, for he would be righteous. This was one of the blessings which would follow reconciliation. It is, in fact, one of the blessings of a return to God. He hears the cry of his people, and answers their supplications. To be permitted to go to God and to tell him all our needs, to plead for all we need and to implore blessings on our families and friends, is a privilege of far higher value than anything which wealth can bestow; is worth more than all the honors of this world.

And thou shalt pay thy vows That is, thy vows shall be accepted; thou shalt obtain those blessings for which thou didst make thy vows.

Job 22:28. *Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee* Thou shalt form a purpose or plan, and it shall not be frustrated. It shall not be opposed by the events of divine Providence, but whatever you undertake shall prosper.

And the light shall shine upon thy ways Thou shalt be prospered in all things, instead of being overtaken with calamity.

Job 22:29. *When men are cast down* The meaning of this is, probably, when people are usually cast down, or in the times of trial and calamity, which prostrate others, you shall find support. You shall then be enabled to say, “there is lifting up, or there is support.” Or, more probably still, it may mean, “in times when others are cast down and afflicted, thou shalt be able to raise them up, or to aid them. Thou shalt be able to go to them and say, ‘Be of good cheer. Do not be cast down. There is consolation.’ And thou shalt be able to procure important blessings for them by thy counsels and prayers;” see the notes at **Job 22:30**.

And he shall save the humble person That is, either, “Thou shalt save the humble person,” by a change from the second person to the third, which is not uncommon in Hebrew; or, “thou shalt be able from thine own experience to say, “He,” i.e., “God,” will save the humble person, or the one that is cast down.” Margin, “him that hath low eyes.” The Hebrew is like the margin. In affliction the eyes are cast upon the ground; and so, also, a casting the eyes to the ground is indicative of dejection, of humility,

or of modesty. It refers here to one who experiences trials; and Eliphaz says that Job would be able to save such an one; that is, to support him in his afflictions, and furnish the helps necessary to restore him again to comfort.

Job 22:30. *He shall deliver the island of the innocent* Margin, “the innocent shall deliver the island.” Never was there a more unhappy translation than this; and it is quite clear that our translators had no intelligible idea of the meaning of the passage. What can be meant by “saving the island of the innocent?” The word rendered island *ya*^{<h336>} commonly means, indeed, an island, or a maritime country; see the notes at ^{<2316>}Isaiah 20:6; 41. It is, however, used as a “negative” in ^{<0021>}1 Samuel 4:21, in the name “I-chabod” — *dwOkAyai*^{<h350>}. “And she named the child I-chabod (margin, i.e., “where is the glory?” or, there is “no glory”), saying, the glory is departed from Israel.” This sense is frequent in the Rabbinic Hebrew, where it is used as connected with an adjective in a privative sense, like the English “un.” It is probably an abbreviated form of *yāæ*^{<h369>} “not, nothing;” and is used here as a “negative” to qualify the following word, “He shall deliver even him that is not innocent.” So it is rendered by the Chaldee, by Le Clerc, Rosenmuller, Gesenius, Noyes, and others. The Vulgate and the Septuagint render it, “He shall deliver the innocent.” The sense is, that the man who returns to God, and who is regarded by him as his friend, will be able to intercede for the guilty, and to save them from the punishment which they deserved. His prayers and intercessions will be heard in their behalf, and on his account layouts will be shown to them, even when they did not personally deserve them. This sentiment accords with that expressed in ^{<0183>}Genesis 18:26,

“If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes;”

^{<2644>}Ezekiel 14:14,

“Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, they should deliver but their own souls;”

compare ^{<3221>}Ezekiel 22:30; ^{<2491>}Jeremiah 5:1. The sentiment, also, had a beautiful illustration, though one which Eliphaz did not here think of, in his own case and that of his friends, where this very Job, to whom he was giving this counsel, was directed to intercede for them; ^{<1847>}Job 42:7,8. The

sentiment, indeed, is found every where in the Scriptures, that the righteous are permitted to pray for others, and that they are thus the means of bringing down important blessings on them. In answer to those prayers, multitudes are saved from calamity here, and will be brought to eternal life hereafter.

And it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands Or, rather, he, i.e., the wicked, for whom you pray, will be delivered by the pureness of thine hands. That is, God will save him in answer to the prayers of a righteous man. Your upright and holy life; your pure hands stretched out in supplication, shall be the means of saving him. No one can tell how many blessings are conferred on wicked people because the righteous pray for them. No one can tell how many a wicked son is spared, and ultimately saved, in answer to the intercessions of a holy parent; nor can the wicked world yet know how much it owes its preservation, and the numberless blessings which it enjoys, to the intercessions of the saints. It is one of the innumerable blessings of being a child of God thus to be permitted to be the means of bringing down blessings on others, and saving sinners from ruin. All the friends of God may thus confer unspeakable benefits to others; and they who have “an interest at the throne of grace” should plead without ceasing for the salvation of guilty and dying people.

NOTES ON JOB 23

~~821B~~ **Job 23:2.** *Even to-day* At the present time. I am not relieved. You afford me no consolation. All that you say only aggravates my woes.

My complaint See the notes at ~~821B~~ Job 21:3.

Bitter Sad, melancholy, distressing. The meaning is, not that he made bitter complaints in the sense which those words would naturally convey, or that he meant to find fault with God, but that his case was a hard one. His friends furnished him no relief, and he had in vain endeavored to bring his cause before God. This is now, as he proceeds to state, the principal cause of his difficulty. He knows not where to find God; he cannot get his cause before him.

My stroke Margin, as in Hebrew “hand;” that is, the hand that is upon me, or the calamity that is inflicted upon me. The hand is represented as the instrument of inflicting punishment, or causing affliction; see the notes at ~~819D~~ Job 19:21.

Heavier than my groaning My sighs bear no proportion to my sufferings. They are no adequate expression of my woes. If you think I complain; if I am heard to groan, yet the sufferings which I endure are far beyond what these would seem to indicate. Sighs and groans are not improper. They are prompted by nature, and they furnish “some” relief to a sufferer. But they should not be:

- (1) with a spirit of murmuring or complaining;
- (2) they should not be beyond what our sufferings demand, or the proper expression of our sufferings. They should not be such as to lead others to suppose we suffer more than we actually do.
- (3) They should — when they are extorted from us by the severity of suffering — lead us go look to that world where no groan will ever be heard.

~~821B~~ **Job 23:3.** *Oh that I knew where I might find him!* Where I might find “God.” He had often expressed a wish to bring his cause directly before God, and to be permitted to plead his cause there; see the notes at ~~819B~~ Job 13:3,20ff. But this he had not yet been able to do. The argument had been

with his three friends, and he saw that there was no use in attempting further to convince them. If he could get the cause before God, and be allowed to plead it there, he felt assured that justice would be done him. But he had not been able to do this. God had not come forth in any visible and public manner as he wished, so that the cause could be fairly tried before such a tribunal, and he was in darkness. The “language” used here will express the condition of a pious man in the times of spiritual darkness. He cannot find God. He has no near access as he once had to him. In such a state he anxiously seeks to find God, but he cannot. There is no light and no comfort to his soul. This language may further describe the state of one who is conscious of uprightness, and who is exposed to the suspicion or the unkind remarks of the world. His character is attacked; his motives are impugned; his designs are suspected, and no one is disposed to do him justice. In such a state, he feels that “God” alone will do him justice. “He” knows the sincerity of his heart, and he can safely commit his cause to him. It is always the privilege of the calumniated and the slandered to make an appeal to the divine tribunal, and to feel that whatever injustice our fellow-men may be disposed to do us, there is One who will never do a wrong.

That I might come even to his seat To his throne, or tribunal. Job wished to carry the cause directly before him. Probably he desired some manifestation of God — such as he was afterward favored with — when God would declare his judgment on the whole matter of the controversy.

~~820~~ **Job 23:4.** *I would order my cause before him* Compare the notes at ~~2426~~ Isaiah 43:26. That is, I would arrange my arguments, or plead my cause, as one does in a court of justice. I would suggest the considerations which would show that I am not guilty in the sense charged by my friends, and that notwithstanding my calamities, I am the real friend of God.

And fill my mouth with arguments Probably he means that he would appeal to the evidence furnished by a life of benevolence and justice, that he was not a hypocrite or a man of distinguished wickedness, as his friends maintained.

~~820~~ **Job 23:5.** *I would know the words which he would answer me* That is, I wish to understand what would be “his” decision in the case — and what would be his judgment in regard to me. That was of infinitely more importance than any opinion which “man” could form, and Job was anxious to have the matter decided by a tribunal which could not err. Why

should “we” not desire to know exactly what God thinks of us, and what estimate he has formed of our character? There is no information so valuable to us as that would be; for on “his” estimate hangs our eternal doom, and yet there is nothing which people more instinctively dread than to know what God thinks of their character. It would be well for each one to ask himself, “Why is it so?”

Job 23:6. *Will he plead against me with his great power?* “Will he make use of his mere power to overwhelm me and confound me? Will he take advantage of omnipotence to triumph over me, instead of argument and justice? No: he will not do it. The discussion would be fair. He would hear what I have to say, and would decide according to truth. Though he is Almighty, yet he would not take advantage of that to prostrate and confound me.” When Job (^{<813B>}Job 13:3) wished to carry the cause directly before God, he asked of Him two conditions only. One was, that he would take off his hand from him, or remove his afflictions for a time, that he might be able to manage his own cause; and the other was, that He would not take advantage of his power to overwhelm him in the debate, and prevent his making a fair statement of his case; see the notes at ^{<813D>}Job 13:20,21. He here expresses his firm conviction that his wish in this respect would be granted. He would listen, says he, to what; I have to say in my defense as if I were an equal.

No; but he would put strength in me The word “strength” is not improperly supplied by our translators. It means that he would enable him to make a fair presentation of his cause. So far from taking advantage of his mere “power” to crush him, and thus obtain an ascendancy in the argument, he would rather “strengthen” him, that he might be able to make his case as strong as possible. He would rather aid him, though presenting his own cause in the controversy, than seek to weaken his arguments, or so to awe him by his dread majesty as to prevent his making the case as strong as it might be. This indicates remarkable confidence in God.

Job 23:7. *There the righteous might dispute with him* One who is conscious of his integrity might carry his cause there, with the assurance that he would be heard, and that justice would be done him. There can be no doubt that Job here refers to himself, though he speaks in the third person, and advances this as a general proposition.

So shall I be delivered forever from my judge From him who would judge or condemn me ^{†8199>} *fpæ*. He does not here refer to “God,” as if he would be delivered from him, but to ANYONE who would attempt to judge and condemn him, as his friends had done. The meaning is, that having, as he confidently expected he would, obtained the verdict of God in his favor, he would be ever after free from condemnation. The decision would be final. There was no higher tribunal, and no one would dare to condemn him afterward. This shows his consciousness of integrity. It may be applied to ourselves — to all. If we can obtain, at the last day, when our cause shall be brought before God, the divine verdict in our favor, it will settle the matter forever. No one, after that, will condemn us; never again shall our character or conduct be put on trial. The divine decision of that day will settle the question to all eternity. How momentous, then, is it that we should so live as to be acquitted in that day, and to have “an eternal sentence” IN OUR FAVOUR!

^{<8278>} **Job 23:8.** *Behold, I go forward* The meaning of these verses is, I go in all directions, but I cannot find God. I am excluded from the trial which I seek, and I cannot bring my cause to his throne. Job expresses his earnest desire to see some visible manifestation of the Deity, and to be permitted to argue his cause in his presence. But he says he sought this in vain. He looked to all points of the compass where he might rationally expect to find God, but all in vain. The terms here used refer to the points of the compass, and should have been so rendered. The Oriental geographers considered themselves as facing the East, instead of the North, as we do. Of course, the West was behind them, the South on the right hand, and on the left the North. This was a more natural position than ours, as day begins in the East, and it is natural to turn the face in that direction. There is no reason why our maps should be made so as to require us to face the “North,” except that such is the custom. The Hebrew custom, in this respect, is found also in the notices of geography in other nations. The same thing prevails among the Hindoos. Among them, *Parc*, or *Purra*, signifying “before,” denotes the East; *Apara* and *Paschima*, meaning “behind,” the West; *Dacshina*, or “the right hand,” the South; and *Bama*, or “the left hand,” the North; see Wilford’s *Inquiry* respecting the Holy Isles in the West, *Asiatic Researches*, vol. viii. p. 275. The same thing occurred among the ancient Irish; see an *Essay on the Antiquity of the Irish language*, by an unknown author, Dublin, 1772; compare on this subject, *Rosenmuller’s Alterthumskunde* i. s. 136-144. The same custom prevailed

among the Mongols. “Gesenius.” On the notices of the science of geography exhibited in the book of Job, compare Introduction Section viii. 2,3. The phrase, therefore, “Behold, I go forward,” means, “I go to the East. I look toward the rising of the sun. I see there the most wonderful of the works of the Creator in the glories of the sun, and I go toward it in hopes of finding there some manifestation of God. But I find him not, and, disappointed, I turn to other directions.” Most of the ancient versions render this the East. Thus, the Vulgate, “Si ad Orientem iero.” The Chaldee **anydmI** , “to the sun-rising.”

But he is not there There is no manifestation of God, no coming forth to meet me, and to hear my cause.

And backward **rwjDa**,^{<h268>}. To the West — for this was “behind” the individual when he stood looking to the East. Sometimes the West is denoted by this term “behind” **rwj a**, and sometimes by “the sea” **μy**,^{<h3220>}, because the Mediterranean was at the West of Palestine and Arabia; see the notes at ^{<2392>}Isaiah 9:12; compare ^{<2209>}Exodus 10:19; 27:13; 38:12; ^{<2284>}Genesis 28:14.

But I cannot perceive him The meaning is, “Disappointed in the East, the region of the rising sun, I turn with longing to the West, the region of his setting, and hope, as his last beams fade from the view, that I shall be permitted to behold some ray that shall reveal God to my soul. Before the night settles down upon the world, emblem of the darkness in my soul, I would look upon the last lingering ray, and hope that in that I may see God. In that vast region of the West, illuminated by the setting sun, I would hope somewhere to find him; but I am disappointed there. The sun withdraws his beams, and darkness steals on, and the world, like my soul, is enveloped in gloom. I can see no indications of the presence of God coming forth to give me an opportunity to argue my cause before him.”

^{<829>}**Job 23:9.** *On the left hand* That is, in the North — at the left hand when the face was turned to the East. So the Chaldee, **anwpxb** — “on the North.” The other versions, the Vulgate, the Septuagint, the Syriac, Castellio, Luther, etc., render it “on the left hand.” The common term among the Hebrews for the “North” is **wpx** — (from **wpx**^{<h6845>} — “to hide,” or “conceal”), meaning the hidden, concealed, or dark region, since the ancients regarded the North as the seat of gloom and darkness, (Homer, *Odyssey* ix. 25ff), while they supposed the South to be illuminated

by the sun. "Gesenius." Frequently, however, as here, the word "left," or "left hand," is used. The region of the North is intended.

Where he doth work Where there are such wonderful manifestations of his majesty and glory. May Job here not refer to the "Aurora Borealis," the remarkable display of the power of God which is seen in those regions? May he not have felt that there was some special reason why he might hope to meet with God in that quarter, or to see him manifest himself amidst the brilliant lights that play along the sky, as if to precede or accompany him? And when he had looked to the splendor of the rising sun, and the glory of his setting, in vain, was it not natural to turn his eye to the next remarkable manifestation, as he supposed, of God, in the glories of the Northern lights, and to expect to find him there? There is reason to think that the ancient Chaldeans, and other pagans, regarded the regions of the North, illuminated with these celestial splendors, as the special residence of the gods (see the notes at ²³¹⁴³Isaiah 14:13), and it seems probable that Job may have had allusion to some such prevailing opinion.

But I cannot behold him I can see the exhibition of remarkable splendor, but still "God" is unseen. He does not come amidst those glories to give me an opportunity to carry my cause before him. The meaning, then, of this is, "Disappointed in the East and the West. I turn to the North. There I have been accustomed to witness extraordinary manifestations of his magnificence and glory. There beautiful constellations circle the pole. There the Aurora plays, and seems to be the manifestation of the glory of God. Next to the glory of the rising and setting sun, I turn to those brilliant lights, to see if there I may not find my God, but in vain. Those lights are cold and chilly, and reveal no God to my soul. Disappointed, then I turn to the last point, the South, to see if I can find him there."

He hideth himself on the right hand On the South. The South was to the ancients an unknown region. The deserts of Arabia, indeed, stretched away in that region, and they were partially known, and they had some knowledge that the sea was beyond. But they regarded the regions farther to the South, if there was land there, as wholly impassable and uninhabitable on account of the heat. The knowledge of geography was slowly acquired, and, of course, it is impossible to tell what were the views which prevailed on the subject in the time of Job. That there was little accuracy of information about remote countries must be regarded as an indisputable fact; and, probably, they had little conception of distant parts

of the earth, except that formed by conjecture. Interesting details of the views of the ancients, on this subject, may be found in the Encyclopedia of Geography, vol. i. pp. 10-68; compare particularly the notes at ~~830~~ Job 26:10. The earth was regarded as encompassed with waters, and the distant southern regions, on account of the impossibility of passing through the heat of the torrid zone, were supposed to be inaccessible. To those hidden and unknown realms, Job says he now turned, when he had in vain looked to each other quarter of the heavens, to see if he could find some manifestation of God. Yet he looked to that quarter equally in vain. God “hid” or “concealed” himself in those inaccessible regions so that he could not approach him. The meaning is, “I am also disappointed here. He hides himself in that distant land. In the burning and impassable wastes which stretch themselves to an unknown extent there, I cannot find him. The feet of mortals cannot traverse those burning plains, and there I cannot approach him. To whatever point of the compass I turn, I am left in equal darkness.” What a striking description is this of the darkness that sometimes comes over the Christian’s soul, prompting to the language, “O that I knew where I might find him! That I could come to his throne!”

~~820~~ **Job 23:10.** *But he knoweth the way that I take* Margin, “is with me.” That is, “I have the utmost confidence in him. Though I cannot see him, yet he sees me, and he knows my integrity; and whatever people may say, or however they may misunderstand my character, yet he is acquainted with me, and I have the fullest confidence that he will do me justice.”

When he hath tried me When he has subjected me to all the tests of character which he shall choose to apply.

I shall come forth as gold As gold that is tried in the crucible, and that comes forth the more pure the intenser is the heat. The application of fire to it serves to separate every particle of impurity or alloy, and leaves only the pure metal. So it is with trials applied to the friend of God; and we may remark

- (1) That all real piety will bear “any” test that may be applied to it, as gold will bear any degree of heat without being injured or destroyed.
- (2) That the effect of all trials is to purify piety, and make it more bright and valuable, as is the effect of applying intense heat to gold.

(3) There is often much alloy in the piety of a Christian, as there is in gold, that needs to be removed by the fiery trial of affliction. Nothing else will remove it but trial, as nothing will be so effectual a purifier of gold as intense heat.

(4) A true Christian should not dread trial. It will not hurt him. He will be the more valuable for his trials, as gold is for the application of heat. There is no danger of destroying true piety. It will live in the flames, and will survive the raging heat that shall yet consume the world.

Job 23:11. *My foot hath held his steps* Roberts, in his Oriental Illustrations, and the Editor of the Pictorial Bible, suppose that there is an allusion here to the active, grasping power which the Orientals have in their feet and toes. By constant usage they accustom themselves to make use of them in holding things in a manner which to us seems almost incredible, and they make the toes perform almost the work of fingers. We bind ours fast from early childhood in our close shoes, and they become useless except for the purpose of walking. But the Orientals use theirs differently. They seize upon an object with their toes, and hold it fast. If in walking along they see anything on the ground which they desire to pick up, instead of stooping as we would, they seize it with their toes, and lift it up. Alypulle, a Kandian chief, was about to be beheaded. When he arrived at the place of execution, he looked round for some object on which to seize, and saw a small shrub, and seized it with his toes, and held it fast in order to be firm while the executioner did his office. “Roberts.” So an Arab in treading firmly, or in taking a determined stand, seems to lay hold of, to grasp the ground with his toes, giving a fixedness of position inconceivable to those whose feet are cramped by the use of tight shoes. This may be the meaning here, that Job had fixed himself firmly in the footsteps of God, and had adhered tenaciously to him; or, as it is rendered by Dr. Good,” In his steps will I rivet my feet.”

And not declined Turned aside.

Job 23:12. *Neither have I gone back* I have not put away or rejected.

The commandment of his lips That which he has spoken, or which has proceeded out of his mouth.

I have esteemed Margin, “hid,” or, “laid up.” The Hebrew is, “I have hid,” as we hide or lay up that which is valuable. It is a word often applied to laying up treasures, or concealing them so that they would be safe.

More than my necessary food Margin, “or, appointed portion.” Dr. Good renders it, “In my bosom have I laid up the words of his mouth.” So Noyes, “The words of his mouth I have treasured up in my bosom.” So Wemyss; and so it is rendered in the Vulgate, and by the Septuagint. The variety in the translation has arisen from the difference of reading in regard to the Hebrew word **qj o** ^{<A2706>}. Instead of this meaning “more than my portion” or “allowance,” the Septuagint and Vulgate appear to have read **yqhb** — “in my bosom.” But there is no authority for the change, and there seems to be no reason for it. The word **qj o** ^{<A2706>}, means something decreed, designated, appointed; then an appointed portion, as of labor, ^{<B1614>}Exodus 5:14; then of food — an allowance of food, ^{<A1818>}Proverbs 30:8; then a limit, bound, law, statute, etc. It seems to me that the word here means “purpose, intention, rule, or design,” and that the idea is that he had regarded the commands of God more “than his own purposes.” He had been willing to sacrifice his own designs to the will of God, and had thus shown his preference for God and his law. This sense seems to be the most simple of any, and it is surprising that it has not occurred to any expositors. So the same word is used in ^{<B2314>}Job 23:14. If this be the meaning, it expresses a true sentiment of piety in all ages. He who is truly religious is willing to sacrifice and abandon his own plans at the command of God. Job says that he was conscious of having done this, and he thus had a firm conviction that he was a pious man.

^{<B2313>}**Job 23:13.** *But he is in one mind* He is unchangeable. He has formed his plans, and no one can divert him from them. Of the truth of this sentiment there can be no dispute. The only difficulty in the case is to see why Job adverted to it here, and how it bears on the train of thought which he was pursuing. The idea seems to be, that God was now accomplishing his eternal purposes in respect to him; that he had formed a plan far back in eternal ages, and that that plan must be executed; that he was a Sovereign, and that however mysterious his plans might be, it was vain to contend with them, and that man ought to submit to their execution with patience and resignation. Job expected yet that God would come forth and vindicate him; but at present all that he could do was to submit. He did not pretend to understand the reason of the divine dispensations; he felt that he had no

power to resist God. The language here is that of a man who is perplexed in regard to the divine dealings, but who feels that they are all in accordance with the unchangeable purpose of God.

And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth He does what he pleases. None can resist or control him. It is vain, therefore, to contend against him. From this passage we see that the doctrine of divine sovereignty was understood at a very early age of the world, and entered undoubtedly into the religion of the patriarchs. It was then seen and felt that God was absolute; that he was not dependent on his creatures; that he acted according to a plan; that he was inflexible in regard to that plan, and that it was in vain to attempt to resist its execution. It is, when properly understood, a matter of unspeakable consolation that God has a plan — for who could honor a God who had “no” plan, but who did everything by hap-hazard? It is matter of rejoicing that he has “one” great purpose which extends through all ages, and which embraces all things — for then everything falls into its proper place, and has its appropriate bearing on other events. It is a matter of joy that God “does” execute all his purposes; for as they are all good and wise, it is “desirable” that they should be executed. It would be a calamity if a good plan were not executed. Why then should people complain at the purposes or the decrees of God?

Job 23:14. *For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me* “I am now meeting only what has been determined by his eternal plan. I know not what is the “reason” why it was appointed; but I see that God had resolved to do it, and that it is vain to resist him.” So when we suffer, we may say the same thing. It is not by chance or hap-hazard that we are afflicted; it is because “God” has “appointed” that it should be so. It is not by passion or caprice on his part; not by sudden anger or wrath; but it is because he had determined to do it as a part of his eternal plan. It is much, when we are afflicted, to be able to make this reflection. I had rather be afflicted, feeling that it is “the appointment of God,” than feeling that it is “by chance” or “hap-hazard.” I had rather think that it is a part of a plan calmly and deliberately formed by God, than that it is the result of some unexpected and uncontrollable cause. In the one case, I see that mind and thought and plan have been employed, and I infer that there is a “reason” for it, though I cannot see it; in the other, I can see no proof of reason or of wisdom, and my mind finds no rest. The doctrine of divine purposes or decrees, therefore, is eminently adapted to give consolation to a sufferer. I had infinitely rather be under the operation of a plan or decree where there

“may” be a reason for all that is done, though I cannot see it, than to feel that I am subject to the tossings of blind chance, where there can possibly be no reason.

And many such things are with him The purpose does not pertain to me alone. It is a part of a great plan which extends to others — to all things. He is executing his plans around me, and I should not complain that in the development of his vast purposes I am included, and that I suffer. The idea seems to be this, that Job found consolation in the belief that he was not alone in these circumstances; that he had not been marked out and selected as a special object of divine displeasure. Others had suffered in like manner. There were “many” cases just like his own, and why should he complain? If I felt that there was special displeasure against “me;” that no others were treated in the same way, it would make afflictions much more difficult to bear. But when I feel that there is an eternal plan which embraces all, and that I only come in for my share, in common with others, of the calamities which are judged necessary for the world, I can bear them with much more ease and patience.

~~48215~~ **Job 23:15.** *Therefore am I troubled at his presence* The doctrine of divine purposes and decrees “is fitted to impress the mind with awe.” So vast are the plans of God; so uncertain to us is it what will be developed next; so impossible is it to resist God when he comes forth to execute his plans, that they fill the mind with reverence and fear. And this is one of the objects for which the doctrine is revealed. It is designed to rebuke the soul that is filled with flippancy and self-conceit; to impress the heart with adoring views of God, and to secure a proper reverence for his government. Not knowing what may be the next development of his plan, the mind should be in a state of holy fear — yet ready to submit and bow in whatever aspect his purposes may be made known. A Being, who has an eternal plan, and who is able to accomplish all that he purposes, and who makes known none of his dealings beforehand, should be an object of veneration and fear. It will not be the same “kind of dreadful fear” which we would have of one who had almighty power, but who had “no plan” of any kind, but profound veneration for one who is infinitely wise as well as almighty. The fear of an Almighty Being, who has an eternal plan, which we cannot doubt is wise, though it is inscrutable to us, is a fear mingled with confidence; it is awe leading to the profoundest veneration. His eternal counsels may take away “our” comforts, but they are right; his coming forth may fill us with awe, but we shall venerate and love him.

When I consider When I endeavor to understand his dealings; or when I think closely on them.

I am afraid of him This would be the effect on any mind. A man that will sit down alone and “think” of God, and on his vast plans, will see that there is abundant occasion to be in awe before him.

^{<8216>}**Job 23:16.** *For God maketh my heart soft* That is, “faint.” He takes away my strength; compare the notes at ^{<3704>}Isaiah 7:4. This effect was produced on Job by the contemplation of the eternal plan and the power of God.

^{<8217>}**Job 23:17.** *Because I was not cut off before the darkness* Before these calamities came upon me. Because I was not taken away in the midst of prosperity, and while I was enjoying his smiles and the proofs of his love. His trouble is, that he was spared to pass through these trials, and to be treated as if he were one of the worst of men. This is what now perplexes him, and what he cannot understand. He does not know why God had reserved him to treat him as if he were the chief of sinners.

Neither hath he covered the darkness from my face The word “neither” is supplied here by our translators, but not improperly. The difficulty with Job was, that God had not “hidden” this darkness and calamity so that he had not seen it. He could not understand why, since he was his friend, God had not taken him away, so that all should have seen, even in his death, that he was the friend of God. This feeling is not, perhaps, very uncommon among those who are called to pass through trials. They do not understand why they were reserved to these sufferings, and why God did not take them away before the billows of calamity rolled over them.

NOTES ON JOB 24

Job 24:1. *Why, seeing times are not hidden froth the Almighty* Dr. Good renders this,

*“Wherefore are not doomsdays kept by the Almighty.
So that his offenders may eye his periods?”*

Dr. Noyes:

*“Why are not times of punishment reserved by the Almighty.
And why do not they, who regard him, see his judgments?”*

Jerome, “Times are not hidden from the Almighty; but they who know him are ignorant of his days.” The Septuagint, “But why have set times — ὥραι ^{<5610>}, escaped the notice — ἐλαθον ^{<2990>} — of the Almighty, and the wicked transgressed all bounds? The word ת [ע ^{<46256>}], here translated “times,” is rendered by the Chaldee aynd [“set times,” times appointed for an assembly or a trial, beforehand designated for any purpose. The Hebrew word properly means, set time, fit and proper times; and in the plural, as used here, means “seasons,” ^{<7013>} Esther 1:13; ^{<1322>} 1 Chronicles 12:32; and then vicissitudes of things, fortunes, destinies; ^{<1816>} Psalm 31:16; ^{<1321>} 1 Chronicles 29:30. Here it means, probably, the vicissitudes of things, or what actually occurs. All changes are known to God. He sees good and bad times; he sees the changes that take place among people. And since he sees all this, Job asks, with concern, Why is it that God does not come forth to deal with people according to their true character? That this was the fact, he proceeds to show further in illustration of the position which he had maintained in Job 21 by specifying a number of additional cases where the wicked undeniably prospered. It was this which perplexed him so much, for he did not doubt that their conduct was clearly known to God. If their conduct had been unknown to God, it would not have been a matter of surprise that they should go unpunished. But since all their ways were clearly seen by him, it might well excite inquiry why they were permitted thus to prosper. “He” believed that they were reserved to a future day of wrath, ^{<1213>} Job 21:30; 24:23,24. They would be punished in due time, but it was not a fact as his friends alleged, that they were punished in this life according to their deeds.

Do they that know him? His true friends; the pious.

Not see his days The days of his wrath, or the day when he punishes the wicked. Why are they not permitted to see him come forth to take vengeance on his foes? The phrase “his days” means the days when God would come forth to punish his enemies. They are called “his days,” because at that time God would be the prominent object that would excite attention. They would be days when he would manifest himself in a manner so remarkable as to characterize the period. Thus, the day of judgment is called the day “of the Son of Man,” or “his day” (^{<18274>}Luke 17:24), because at that time the Lord Jesus will be the prominent and glorious object that shall give character to the day. The “question” here seems to have been asked by Job mainly to call attention to “the fact” which he proceeds to illustrate. The fact was undeniable. Job did “not” maintain, as Eliphaz had charged on him (^{<18212>}Job 22:12-14), that the reason why God did not punish them was, that he could not see their deeds. He admitted most fully that God did see them, and understood all that they did. In this they were agreed. Since this was so, the question was why the wicked were spared, and lived in prosperity. The fact that it was so, Job affirms. The “reason” why it was so, was the subject of inquiry now. This was perplexing, and Job could solve it only by referring to what was to come hereafter.

^{<18212>}**Job 24:2.** *Some remove the land-marks* Landmarks are pillars or stones set up to mark the boundaries of a farm. To remove them, by carrying them on to the land of another, was an act of dishonesty and robbery — since it was only by marks that the extent of a man’s property could be known. Fences were uncommon; the art of surveying was not well understood, and deeds describing land were probably unknown also, and their whole dependence, therefore, was on the stones that were erected to mark the boundaries of a lot or farm. As it was not difficult to remove them, it became a matter of special importance to guard against it, and to make it a crime of magnitude. Accordingly, it was forbidden in the strictest manner in the law of Moses. “Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor’s land-mark;” (^{<18217>}Deuteronomy 27:17; compare ^{<18194>}Deuteronomy 19:14; ^{<18228>}Proverbs 22:28; 23:10.

And feed thereof Margin, “or, them.” The margin is correct. The meaning is, that they drive off the flocks of others, and “pasture” them; that is, they are at no pains to conceal what they do, but mingle them with their own herds, and feed them as if they were their own. If they drove them away to

kill, and removed them wholly from view, it would be less shameful than to keep and claim them as their own, and to make the robbery so public.

Job 24:3. *They drive away the ass of the fatherless* Of the orphan, who cannot protect himself, and whose only property may consist in this useful animal. Injury done to an orphan is always regarded as a crime of special magnitude, for they are unable to protect themselves; see the notes at **Job 22:9**.

They take the widow's ox for a pledge See the notes at **Job 22:6**. The widow was dependent on her ox to till the ground, and hence, the crime of taking it away in pledge for the payment of a debt.

Job 24:4. *They turn the needy out of the way* They crowd the poor out of the path, and thus oppress and injure them. They do not allow them the advantages of the highway.

The poor of the earth hide themselves together For fear of the rich and mighty man. Driven from the society of the rich, without their patronage and friendship, they are obliged to associate together, and find in the wicked man neither protector nor friend. And yet the proud oppressor is not punished.

Job 24:5. *Behold, as wild asses in the desert* In regard to the wild ass, see the notes at **Job 6:5**. Schultens, Good, Noyes, and Wemyss, understand this, not as referring to the haughty tyrants themselves, but to the oppressed and needy wretches whom they had driven from society, and compelled to seek a precarious subsistence, like the wild ass, in the desert. They suppose that the meaning is, that these outcasts go to their daily toil seeking roots and vegetables in the desert for a subsistence, like wild animals. But it seems to me that the reference is rather to another class of wicked people: to the wandering tribes that live by plunder — who roam through the deserts, and live an unrestrained and a lawless life, like wild animals. The wild ass is distinguished for its fleetness, and the comparison here turns principally on this fact. These marauders move rapidly from place to place, make their assault suddenly and unexpectedly, and, having plundered the traveler, or the caravan, as suddenly disappear. They have no home, cultivate no land, and keep no flocks. The only objection to this interpretation is, that the wild ass is not a beast of prey. But, in reply to this, it may be said, that the comparison does not depend on that, but on

the fact that they resemble those animals in their lawless habits of life; see the notes at ^{<8112>}Job 11:12; 39:5.

Go they forth to their work To their employment — to wit, plunder.

Rising betimes Rising early. It is a custom of the Orientals everywhere to rise by break of day. In journeys, they usually rise long before day, and travel much in the night, and during the heat of the day they rest. As caravans often traveled early, plunderers would rise early, also, to meet them.

For a prey For plunder — the business of their lives.

The wilderness The desert, for so the word wilderness is used in the Scriptures; see the notes at ^{<2381>}Isaiah 35:1; ^{<4081>}Matthew 3:1.

Yieldeth food To wit, by plunder. They obtain subsistence for themselves and their families by plundering the caravans of the desert. The idea of Job is, that they are seen by God, and yet that they are suffered to roam at large.

^{<8346>}**Job 24:6.** *They reap every one his corn* Margin, “mingled corn,” or “dredge.” The word used here **l y l B]** ^{<31098>} denotes, properly, “meslin,” mixed provender, made up of various kinds of grain, as of barley, vetches, etc., prepared for cattle; see the notes at ^{<2384>}Isaiah 30:24.

In the field They break in upon the fields of others, and rob them of their grain, instead of cultivating the earth themselves. So it is rendered by Jerome — *Agrum non suum deme-runt; et vineam ejus, quem vi. oppresserint vindemiant.* The Septuagint renders it, “A field, not their own, they reap down before the time — **πρo** ^{<4253>} **ώρας** ^{<5610>} .

They gather the vintage of the wicked Margin, “the wicked gather the vintage.” Rather, they gather the vintage of the oppressor. It is not the vintage of honest industry; not a harvest which is the result of their own labor, but of plunder. They live by depredations on others. This is descriptive of those who support themselves by robbery.

^{<8347>}**Job 24:7.** *They cause the naked to lodge without clothing* They strip others of their clothing, and leave them destitute.

That they have no covering in the cold All travelers tell us, that though the day is intensely hot in the deserts of Arabia, yet the nights are often

intensely cold. Hence, the sufferings of those who are plundered, and who have nothing to defend themselves from the cold air of the night.

Job 24:8. *They are wet with the showers of the mountains* That is, the poor persons, or the travelers whom they have robbed. Hills collect the clouds, and showers seem to pour down from the mountains. These showers often collect and pour down so suddenly that there is scarcely time to seek a shelter.

And embrace the rock for want of a shelter Take refuge beneath a projecting rock. The robbers drive them away from their homes, or plunder them of their tents, and leave them to find a shelter from the storm, or at night, beneath a rock. This agrees exactly with what Niebuhr says of the wandering Arabs near mount Sinai: “Those who cannot afford a tent, spread out a cloth upon four or six stakes; and others spread their cloth near a tree, or endeavor to shelter themselves from the heat and the rain in the cavities of the rocks. Reisebeschreib.i. Thessalonians s. 233.

Job 24:9. *They pluck the fatherless from the breast* That is, they steal away unprotected children, and sell them, or make slaves of them for their own use. If this is the correct interpretation, then there existed at that time, what has existed since, so much to the disgrace of mankind, the custom of kidnapping children, and bearing them away to be sold as slaves. Slavery existed in early ages; and it must have been in some such way that slaves were procured. The wonder of Job is, that such people were permitted to live — that God did not come forth and punish them. The fact still exists, and the ground of wonder is not diminished. Africa bleeds under wrongs of this kind; and the vengeance of heaven seems to sleep, though the child is torn away from its mother, and conveyed, amid many horrors, to a distant land, to wear out life in hopeless servitude.

And take a pledge of the poor Take that, therefore, which is necessary for the comfort of the poor, and retain it, so that they cannot enjoy its use; see the notes at **Job 22:6**.

Job 24:10. *And they take away the sheaf from the hungry* The meaning of this is, that the hungry are compelled to bear the sheaf for the rich without being allowed to satisfy their hunger from it. Moses commanded that even the ox should not be muzzled that trod out the grain (**Deuteronomy 25:4**); but here was more aggravated cruelty than that would be, in compelling men to bear the sheaf of the harvest without

allowing them even to satisfy their hunger. This is an instance of the cruelty which Job says was actually practiced on the earth, and yet God did not interpose to punish it.

<8341> **Job 24:11.** *Which made oil within their walls* Or rather, they compel them to express oil within their walls. The word *rhæ*^{<46671>}, rendered “made oil,” is from *rj ææ*^{<46713>}, to shine, to give light; and hence, the derivatives of the word are used to denote light, and then oil, and thence the word comes to denote to press out oil for the purpose of light. Oil was obtained for this purpose from olives by pressing them, and the idea here is, that the poor were compelled to engage in this service for others without compensation. The expression “within their walls,” means probably within the walls of the rich; that is, within the enclosures where such presses were erected. They were taken away from their homes; compelled to toil for others; and confined for this purpose within enclosures erected for the purpose of expressing oil. Some have proposed to read this passage, “Between their walls they make them toil at noonday;” as if it referred to the cruelty of causing them to labor in the sweltering heat of the sun. But the former interpretation is the most common, and best agrees with the usual meaning of the word, and with the connection.

And tread their wine-presses and suffer thirst They compel them to tread out their grapes without allowing them to slake their thirst from the wine. Such a treatment would, of course, be cruel oppression. A similar description is given by Addison in his letter from Italy:

*Il povreo Abitante mira indarno
Il roseggiante Arancio e'l pingue grano,
Crescer dolente ei mira ed oli, e vini,
E de mirti odorar l' ombra ei sdegna.
In mezzo alla Bonta della Natura
Maledetto languisce, e deatro a cariche
Di vino vigne muore per la sete.*

*“The poor inhabitant beholds in vain
The reddening orange and the swelling grain;
Joyless he sees the growing oils and wines
And in the myrtle’s fragrant shade repines;
Starves, in the midst of nature’s bounty curst,
And in the loaden vineyard dies for thirst.”*

Addison’s works, vol. i. pp. 51-53. Ed. Lond. 1721.

Job 24:12. *Men groan from out of the city* The evident meaning of this is, that the sorrows caused by oppression were not confined to the deserts and to solitary places; were not seen only where the wandering freebooter seized upon the traveler, or in the comparatively unfrequented places in the country where the poor were compelled to labor in the wine presses and the olive presses of others, but that they extended to cities also. In what way this oppression in cities was practiced, Job does not specify. It might be by the sudden descent upon an unsuspecting city, of hordes of freebooters, who robbed and murdered the inhabitants, and then fled, or it might be by internal oppression, as of the rich over the poor, or of masters over their slaves. The idea which Job seems to wish to convey is, that oppression abounded. The earth was full of violence. It was in every place, in the city and the country, and yet God did not in fact come forth to meet and punish the oppressor as he deserved. There would be instances of oppression and cruelty enough occurring in all cities to justify all that Job here says, especially in ancient times, when cities were under the control of tyrants. The word which is translated “men” here is **tmaē**^{th402}, which is not the usual term to denote men. This word is derived from **tWm**^{th4192}, “to die”; and hence, there may be here the notion of “mortals,” or of the “dying,” who utter these groans.

And the soul of the wounded crieth out This expression appears as if Job referred to some acts of violence done by robbers, and perhaps the whole description is intended to apply to the sufferings caused by the sudden descent of a band of marauders upon the unsuspecting and slumbering inhabitants of a city.

Yet God layeth not folly to them The word rendered “folly” **hl pJi**^{th804} means “folly”; and thence also wickedness. If this reading is to be retained, the passage means that God does not lay to heart, that is, does not regard their folly or wickedness. He suffers it to pass without punishing it; compare **Acts 17:30**^{th473}. But the same word, by a change of the points, **hLpTj**^{th805}, means “prayer;” and many have supposed that it means, that God does not regard the prayer or cry of those who are thus oppressed. This, in itself, would make good sense, but the former rendering agrees better with the connection. The object of Job is not to show that God does not regard the cry of the afflicted, but that he does not interpose to punish those who are tyrants and oppressors.

Job 24:13. *They are of those that rebel against the light* That is, they hate the light: compare ^{<ARD>}John 3:20. It is unpleasant to them, and they perform their deeds in the night. Job here commences a reference to another class of wicked persons — those who perform their deeds in the darkness of the night; and he shows that the same thing is true of them as of those who commit crimes in open day, that God does not interpose directly to punish them. They are suffered to live in prosperity. This should be rendered, “Others hate the light;” or, “There are those also who are rebellious against the light.” There is great force in the declaration, that those who perform deeds of wickedness in the night are “rebels” against the light of day.

They know not the ways thereof They do not see it. They work in the night.

Nor abide in the paths thereof In the paths that the light makes. They seek out paths on which the light does not shine.

Job 24:14. *The murderer* One of the instances, referred to in the previous verse, of those who perform their deeds in darkness.

Rising with the light Hebrew **rwā**^{<h216>}. Vulgate “Mane primo — in the earliest twilight.” The meaning is, that he does it very early; by daybreak. It is not in open day, but at the earliest dawn.

Killeth the poor and needy Those who are so poor and needy that they are obliged to rise early and go forth to their toil. There is a double aggravation — the crime of murder itself, and the fact that it is committed on those who are under a necessity of going forth at that early hour to their labor.

And in the night is as a thief The same man. Theft is usually committed under cover of the night. The idea of Job is, that though these crimes cannot escape the notice of God, yet that he does not interpose to punish those who committed them. A striking incidental illustration of the fact stated here, occurred in the journey of Messrs. Robinson and Smith, on their way from Akabah to Jerusalem. After retiring to rest one night, they were aroused by a sudden noise; and they apprehended attack by robbers. “Our Arabs,” says Dr. R. “were evidently alarmed. They said, if thieves, “they would steal upon us at midnight; if robbers they would come down upon towards morning.” Bibl. Research. i. 270. It would seem, therefore,

that there was some settled time or order in which they are accustomed to commit their various depredations.

Job 24:15. *The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight;* compare the description in **Proverbs 7:8,9,**

“He went the way to her house; in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night.”

And disguiseth his face Margin, “setteth his face in secret.” The meaning is, that he put a mask on his face, lest he should be recognized. So Juvenal, Sat. viii. 144, as quoted by Noyes:

— *si nocturnus adulter*
Tempora Santonico velas adoperta cucullo.

These deeds of wickedness were then performed in the night, as they are still; and yet, though the eye of God beheld them, he did not punish them. The meaning of Job is, that people were allowed to commit the blackest crimes, but that God did not come forth to cut them off.

Job 24:16. *In the dark they dig through houses* This refers, probably, to another class of wicked persons. The adulterer steals forth in the night, but it is not his way to “dig” into houses. But the persons here referred to are robbers, who conceal themselves by day, and who at night secretly enter houses for plunder. The phrase “dig through” probably has reference to the fact that houses were made of clay, or of bricks dried in the sun — a species of mud cottages, and whose walls, therefore, could be easily penetrated. In the East, nearly all the houses are made of unburned brick, and there is little difficulty in making a hole in the wall large enough to admit the human body; compare **Ezekiel 12:7.** In Bengal, says Mr. Ward, it is common for thieves to dig through the walls of houses made of mud, or under the house floors, which are made merely of earth, and enter thus into the dwellings while the inmates are asleep. Rosenmuller’s *Alte u. neue Morgenland* “in loc.”

Which they had marked for themselves in the day-time According to this translation the idea would be, that in the day-time they carefully observed houses, and saw where an entrance might be effected. But this interpretation seems contrary to the general sense of the passage. It is said that they avoid the light, and that the night is the time for accomplishing their purposes. Probably, therefore, the meaning of this passage is, “in the

day time they shut themselves up.” So it is rendered by Gesenius, Rosenmuller, Noyes, and others. The word here used, and rendered “marked” **utj**, means to seal, to seal up; and hence, the idea of shutting up, or making fast; see the notes at ^{<RB07>}Job 9:7; ^{<2187>}Isaiah 8:17. Hence, it may mean to shut up close as if one was locked in; and the idea here is, that in the day-time they shut themselves up close in their places of concealment, and went forth to their depredations in the night.

They know not the light They do not see the light. They do all their work in the dark.

^{<RB17>}**Job 24:17.** *For the morning is to them even as the shadow of death* They dread the light as one does usually the deepest darkness. The morning or light would reveal their deeds of wickedness, and they therefore avoid it.

As the shadow of death As the deepest darkness; see the notes at ^{<RB15>}Job 3:5.

If one know them If they are recognized. Or, more probably, this means “they,” i.e., each one of them, “are familiar with the terrors of the shadow of death,” or with the deepest darkness. By this rendering the common signification of the word **rkæ**^{<5234>} will be retained, and the translation will accord with the general sense of the passage. The meaning is, that they are familiar with the blackest night. They do not dread it. They dread only the light of day. To others the darkness is terrible; to them it is familiar. The word rendered “shadow of death” in the latter part of this verse, is the same as in the former. It may mean in both places the gloomy night that resembles the shadow, of death. Such a night is “terrible” to most people, to them it is familiar, and they feel secure only when its deep shades are round about them.

^{<RB18>}**Job 24:18.** *He is swift as the waters* Noyes renders this, “They are as swift as the skiff upon the waters.” Dr. Good, “Miserable is this man upon the waters.” Wemyss, “Such should be as foam upon the waters.” Le Clerc says that there is scarcely any passage of the Scriptures more obscure than this, and the variety of rendering adopted will show at once the perplexity of expositors. Rosenmuller supposes that the particle of comparison ([~k|-]) is to be understood, and that the meaning is, “he is as a light thing upon the waters;” and this probably expresses the true sense. It is a comparison of

the thief with a light boat, or any other light thing that moves gently on the face of the water, and that glides along without noise. So gently and noiselessly does the thief glide along in the dark. He is rapid in his motion, but he is still. It is not uncommon to describe one who is about to commit crime in the night as moving noiselessly along, and as taking every precaution that the utmost silence should be preserved. So Macbeth, when about to commit murder, soliloquizes:

Now o'er the one half world Nature seems dead — And withered
murder, Alarm'd by his sentinel, the wolf, Who's howl'd his
watch, thus with his stealthy pace, With Tarquin's ravishing strides,
towards his design Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set
earth, Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear The very
stones prate of my whereabouts.

I do not know, however, that this comparison of a thief, with a light object on the waters, is to be found any where else, but it is one of great beauty. The word rendered “swift” | qac^{<47081>} may denote either that which is swift, or that which is light. In <23067> Isaiah 30:16, it is applied to a fleet horse. Here it may be rendered, “He is as a light thing upon the face of the waters.”

Their portion is cursed in the earth That is, their manner of life, their way of obtaining a livelihood, is deserving of execration. The result of humble toil and honest labor may be said to be blessed; but not the property which they acquire. Rosenmuller and Noyes, however, suppose that the word “portion” here refers to their habitation, and that the idea is, they have their dwelling in wild and uncultivated places; they live in places that are cursed by sterility and barrenness. The Hebrew will bear either construction. The word *lot*, as it is commonly understood by us, may perhaps embrace both ideas. “Theirs is a cursed lot on earth.”

He beholdeth not the way of the vineyards That is, they do not spend their lives in cultivating them, nor do they derive a subsistence from them. They live by plunder, and their abodes are in wild retreats, far away from quiet and civilised society. The object seems to be to describe marauders, who make a sudden descent at night on the possessions of others, and who have their dwellings far away from fields that are covered with the fruits of cultivation.

<8349> **Job 24:19.** *Drought and heat consume the snow-waters* Margin, “violently take;” see the notes at <8067> Job 6:17. The word rendered

“consume,” and in the margin “violently take” **לזב**^{h1497}, means properly to strip off, as skin from the flesh; and then to pluck or tear away by force; to strip, to spoil, to rob. The meaning here is, that the heat seems to seize and carry away the snow waters — to bear them off, as a plunderer does spoil. There is much poetic beauty in this image. The “snow-waters” here mean the waters that are produced by the melting of the snow on the hills, and which swell the rivulets in the valleys below. Those waters, Job says, are borne along in rivulets over the burning sands, until the drought and heat absorb them all, and they vanish away; see the beautiful description of this which Job gives in ^{<8165>}Job 6:15-18. Those waters vanish away silently and gently. The stream becomes smaller and smaller as it winds along in the desert until it all disappears. So Job says it is with these wicked people whom he is describing. Instead of being violently cut off; instead of being hurried out of life by some sudden and dreadful judgment, as his friends maintained, they were suffered to linger on calmly and peaceably — as the stream glides on gently in the desert — until they quietly disappear by death — as the waters sink gently in the sands or evaporate in the air. The whole description is that of a peaceful death as contradistinguished from one of violence.

So doth the grave those who have sinned There is a wonderful terseness and energy in the original words here, which is very feebly expressed by our translation. The Hebrew is **לְאֹבֵד**^{h7585} **אֶפְרַיִם**^{h2398}; “the grave, they have sinned.” The sense is correctly expressed in the common version. The meaning is, that they who have sinned die in the same quiet and gentle manner with which waters vanish in the desert. By those who have sinned, Job means those to whom he had just referred — robbers, adulterers, murderers, etc., and the sense of the whole is, that they died a calm and peaceful death; see the notes at ^{<8213>}Job 21:13, where he advances the same sentiment as here.

^{<8221>}**Job 24:20.** *The womb shall forget him* His mother who bare him shall forget him. The idea here seems to be, that he shall fade out of the memory, just as other persons do. He shall not be overtaken with any disgraceful punishment, thus giving occasion to remember him by a death of ignominy. At first view it would seem to be a calamity to be soon forgotten by a mother; but if the above interpretation be correct, then it means that the condition of his death would be such that there would be no occasion for a mother to remember him with sorrow and shame, as she

would one who was ignominiously executed for his crimes. This interpretation was proposed by Mercer, and has been adopted by Rosenmuller, Noyes, and others. It accords with the general scope of the passage, and is probably correct. Various other interpretations, however, have been proposed, which may be seen in Good, and in the *Critici Sacri*.

The worm shall feed sweetly on him As on others. He shall die and be buried in the usual manner. He shall lie quietly in the grave, and there return to his native dust. He shall not be suspended on a gibbet, or torn and devoured by wild beasts; but his death and burial shall be peaceful and calm; see the notes at ^{<K21>}Job 21:26; 19:26.

He shall be no more remembered As having been a man of eminent guilt, or as ignominiously punished. The meaning is, that there is nothing marked and distinguishing in his death. There is no special manifestation of the divine displeasure. There is some truth in this, that the wicked cease to be remembered. People hasten to forget them; and having done no good that makes them the objects of grateful reminiscence, their memory fades away. This, so far from being a calamity and a curse, Job regards as a favor. It would be a calamity to be remembered as a bad man, and as having died an ignominious death.

And wickedness shall be broken as a tree Evil here or wickedness | w[^{<15766>}, means an evil or wicked man. The idea seems to be, that such a man would die as a tree that is stripped of its leaves and branches is broken down. He is not like a green tree that is violently torn up by the roots in a storm, or twisted off in a tempest, but like a dry tree that begins to decay, and that falls down gently by its own weight. It lives to be old, and then quietly sinks on the ground and dies. So Job says it is with the wicked. They are not swept away by the divine judgments, as the trees of the forest are torn up by the roots or twisted off by the tornado.

^{<K21>}**Job 24:21.** *He evil entreateth the barren* The woman who has no children to comfort or support her. He increases her calamity by acts of cruelty and oppression. To be without children, as is well known, was regarded, in the patriarchal ages, as a great calamity.

And doeth not good to the widow See the notes at ^{<K21>}Job 24:3. Notwithstanding all this, he is permitted to live in prosperity, and to die without any visible tokens of the divine displeasure.

Job 24:22. *He draweth also the mighty with his power* The word here rendered draweth **Ēvæ**^{<4900>}, means to draw; and then, to lay hold of, to take, to take away, and, hence, to remove, to destroy; ^{<4918>}Psalm 28:3; ^{<4921>}Ezekiel 22:20. The idea here seems to be, that his acts of oppression and cruelty were not confined to the poor and the defenseless. Even the great and the mighty were also exposed, and he spared none. No one was safe, and no rights could be regarded as secure. The character here described is one that pertains to a tyrant, or a conqueror, and Job probably meant to describe some such mighty man, who was regardless alike of the rights of the high and the low.

He riseth up When he rises up; that is, when he enters on an enterprise, or goes forth to accomplish his wicked purposes.

And no man is sure of life From the dread of him even the great and mighty have no security. This language will well describe the character of an Oriental despot. Having absolute power, no man, not even the highest in rank, can feel that his life is safe if the monarch becomes in any way offended. Yet, Job says that even such a despot was permitted to live in prosperity, and to die without any remarkable proof of the divine displeasure.

Job 24:23. *Though it be given him to be in safety* That is, God gives him safety. The name God is often understood, or not expressed. The meaning is, that God gives this wicked man, or oppressor, safety. He is permitted to live a life of security and tranquility.

Whereon he resteth Or, rather, “And he is sustained, or upheld” — ^{<4817>}[æ]. The meaning is, that he is sustained or upheld by God.

Yet his eyes are upon their ways “And the eyes of God are upon the ways of such men.” That is, God guards and defends them. He seems to smile upon them, and to prosper all their enterprises.

Job 24:24. *They are exalted for a little while* This was the proposition which Job was maintaining. His friends affirmed that the wicked were punished for their sins in this life, and that great crimes would soon meet with great calamities. This Job denies, and says that the fact was, that they were “exalted.” Yet he knew that it was to be but for a little time, and he believed that they would, at no distant period, receive the proper reward of their deeds. He maintains, however, that their death

might be tranquil and easy, and that no extraordinary proof of the divine displeasure would be perceived in the manner of their departure.

But are gone and brought low Margin, “not.” Hebrew $\hat{y}a\hat{a}e$ ^{<h369>} — “and are not;” compare ^{<0423>}Genesis 42:13. “The youngest is this day with our father, and one is not;” ^{<0370>}Genesis 37:30. “The child is not, and I, whither shall I go?” That is, the child is dead; compare the expression Troja fuit. The meaning here is, that they soon disappear, or vanish.

They are taken out of the way as all other They die in the same manner as other people do, and without any extraordinary expressions of the divine displeasure in their death. This was directly contrary to what his friends had maintained. The Hebrew word here $xp\hat{a}e$ ^{<1702>} means, “to gather”, “to collect”; and is often used in the sense of “gathering to one’s fathers,” to denote death.

And cut off as the tops of the ears of corn Of wheat, barley, or similar grain. Corn, in the sense in which the word is commonly used in this country, was not known in the time of Job. The allusion here is to the harvest. When the grain was ripe, it seems they were in the habit of cutting off the ears, and not of cutting it near the root, as we do. The body of the stalk was left, and, hence, there is so frequent allusion in the Scriptures to stubble that was burned. So, in Egypt, the children of Israel were directed to obtain the stubble left in the fields, in making brick, instead of having straw furnished them. The meaning of Job here is, that they would not be taken away by a violent death, or before their time, but that they would be like grain standing in the field to the time of harvest, and then peacefully gathered; compare ^{<0734>}Psalms 73:4.

^{<0325>}**Job 24:25.** “And if it be not so now, who will make me a liar? A challenge to anyone to prove the contrary to what he had said. Job had now attacked their main position, and had appealed to facts in defense of what he held. He maintained that, as a matter of fact, the wicked were prospered, that they often lived to old age, and that they then died a peaceful death, without any direct demonstration of the divine displeasure. He boldly appeals, now, to anyone to deny this, or to prove the contrary. The appeal was decisive. The fact was undeniable, and the controversy was closed. Bildad (Job 25) attempts a brief reply, but he does not touch the question about the facts to which Job had appealed, but utters a few vague and irrelevant proverbial maxims, about the greatness of God, and is silent.

His proverbs appear to be exhausted, and the theory which he and his friends had so carefully built up, and in which they had been so confident, was now overthrown. Perhaps this was one design of the Holy Spirit, in recording the argument thus far conducted, to show that the theory of the divine administration, which had been built up with so much care, and which was sustained by so many proverbial maxims, was false. The overthrow of this theory was of sufficient importance to justify this protracted argument, because:

- (1) it was and is of the highest importance that correct views should prevail of the nature of the divine administration; and
- (2) it is of special importance in comforting the afflicted people of God.

Job had experienced great aggravation, in his sufferings, from the position which his friends had maintained, and from the arguments which they had been able to adduce, to prove that his sufferings were proof that he was a hypocrite. But it is worth all which it has cost; all the experience of the afflicted friends of God, and all the pains taken to reveal it, to show that affliction is no certain proof of the divine displeasure, and that important ends may be accomplished by means of trial.

NOTES ON JOB 25

Job 25:2. *Dominion and fear are with him* That is, God has a right to rule, and he ought to be regarded with reverence. The object of Bildad is to show that He is so great and glorious that it is impossible that man should be regarded as pure in his sight. He begins, therefore, by saying, that he is a Sovereign; that he is clothed with majesty, and that he is worthy of profound veneration.

He maketh peace in his high places “High places,” here refer to the heavenly worlds. The idea is, that he preserves peace and concord among the hosts of heaven. Numerous and mighty as are the armies of the skies, yet he keeps them in order and in awe. The object is to present an image of the majesty and power of that Being who thus controls a vast number of minds. The phrase does not necessarily imply that there had been variance or strife, and that then God had made peace, but that he preserved or kept them in peace.

Job 25:3. *Is there any number of his armies?* The armies of heaven; or the hosts of angelic beings, which are often represented as arranged or marshalled into armies; see the notes at ^{<2300>}Isaiah 1:9. The word which is used here is not the common one which is rendered “hosts,” ^{<16635>}abx, but is ^{<1416>}dWdG which means properly a troop, band, or army. It may here mean either the constellations often represented as the army which God marshals and commands, or it may mean the angels.

And upon whom doth not his light arise? This is designed evidently to show the majesty and glory of God. It refers probably to the light of the sun, as the light which he creates and commands. The idea is, that it pervades all things; that, as controlled by him, it penetrates all places, and flows over all worlds. The image is a striking and sublime one, and nothing is better fitted to show the majesty and glory of God.

Job 25:4. *How then can man be justified with God?* see ^{<1847>}Job 4:17,18; 15:15,16. Instead of meeting the facts to which Job had appealed, all that Bildad could now do was to repeat what had been said before. It shows that he felt himself unable to dispose of the argument, and yet that he was not willing to confess that he was vanquished.

Or how can he be clean? This sentiment had been expressed by Job himself, ^{<814>}Job 14:4. Perhaps Bildad meant now to adopt it as undoubted truth, and to throw it back upon Job as worthy of his special attention. It has no bearing on the arguments which Job had advanced, and is utterly irrelevant except as Bildad supposed that the course of argument maintained by Job implied that he supposed himself to be pure.

^{<821>}**Job 25:5.** *Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not* Or, behold even the moon shineth not. That is, in comparison with God it is dark and obscure. The idea is, that the most beautiful and glorious objects become dim and fade away when compared with him. So Jerome renders it, *Ecce luna etiam non splendet*. The word here rendered “shineth” **l hā**^{<h166>} frequently means to pitch or remove a tent, and is a form of the word **l hā**^{<h168>} uniformly rendered tent or tabernacle. Some have supposed that the meaning here is, that even the moon and the stars of heaven — the bright canopy above — were not fit to furnish a tent or dwelling for God. But the parallelism seems to demand the usual interpretation, as meaning that the moon and stars faded away before God. The word **l hā**^{<h168>} derives this meaning, according to Gesenius, from its relation to the word **l l ā**^{<h1984>}, to be clear or brilliant, from the mutual relation of the pe-’aleph and ‘ayin-’ayin verbs. The Arabic has the same meaning.

Yea, the stars are not pure in his sight That is, they are not bright in comparison with him. The design is to show the glory of the Most High and that nothing could be compared with him; see the notes at ^{<818>}Job 4:18.

^{<821>}**Job 25:6.** *How much less man* See ^{<819>}Job 4:19. Man is mentioned here as a worm; in ^{<819>}Job 4:19 he is said to dwell in a house of clay and to be crushed before the moth. In both cases the design is to represent him as insignificant in comparison with God.

A worm **hmri**^{<h7415>}; see ^{<805>}Job 7:5. The word is commonly applied to such worms as are bred in putridity, and hence, the comparison is the more forcible.

And the son of man Another mode of speaking of man. Any one of the children of man is the same. No one of them can be compared with God; compare the notes at ^{<1001>}Matthew 1:1.

Which is a worm [I WORM⁴⁸⁴³⁸; compare the notes at ²⁰¹⁸Isaiah 1:18. This word frequently denotes the worm from which the scarlet or crimson color was obtained. It is, however, used to denote the worm that is bred on putrid substances, and is so used here; compare ²¹⁶³Exodus 16:20; ²³⁴¹Isaiah 14:11; 66:24. It is also applied to a worm that destroys plants. ³⁰⁴¹Jonah 4:7; ¹⁵³⁹Deuteronomy 28:39. Here it means, that man is poor, feeble, powerless. In comparison with God he is a crawling worm. All that is said in this chapter is true and beautiful, but it has nothing to do with the subject in debate. Job had appealed to the course of events in proof of the truth of his position. The true way to meet that was either to deny that the facts existed as he alleged, or to show that they did not prove what he had adduced them to establish. But Bildad did neither; nor did he ingenuously confess that the argument was against him and his friends. At this stage of the controversy, since they had nothing to reply to what Job had alleged, it would have been honorable in them to have acknowledged that they were in error, and to have yielded the palm of victory to him. But it requires extraordinary candor and humility to do that; and rather than do it, most people would prefer to say something — though it has nothing to do with the case in hand.

NOTES ON JOB 26

Job 26:2. *How hast thou helped him that is without power?* It has been doubted whether this refers to Job himself, the two friends of Bildad, or to the Deity. Rosenmuller. The connection, however, seems to demand that it should be referred to Job himself. It is sarcastical. Bildad had come as a friend and comforter. He had, also, in common with Eliphaz and Zophar, taken upon himself the office of teacher and counsellor. He had regarded Job as manifesting great weakness in his views of God and of his government; as destitute of all strength to bear up aright under trials, and now all that he had done to aid one so weak was found in the impertinent and irrelevant generalities of his brief speech. Job is indignant that one with such pretensions should have said nothing more to the purpose. Herder, however, renders this as if it related wholly to God, and it cannot be denied that the Hebrew would bear this:

“Whom helpst thou? Him who hath no strength? Whom dost thou vindicate? Him whose arm hath no power? To whom give counsel? One without wisdom? Truly much wisdom hast thou taught him.”

How savest thou the arm that hath no strength? That is, your remarks are not adapted to invigorate the feeble. He had come professedly to comfort and support his afflicted friend in his trials. Yet Job asks what there was in his observations that was fitted to produce this effect? Instead of declaiming on the majesty and greatness of God, he should have said something that was adapted to relieve an afflicted and a troubled soul.

Job 26:3. *How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom?* As he had undertaken to give counsel to another, and to suggest views that might be adapted to elevate his mind in his depression, and to console him in his sorrows, he had a right to expect more than he had found in his speech.

And how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is? The word rendered “the thing as it is” **הַיָּשׁוּר**^{<8454>} denotes properly a setting upright, uprightness — from **hvy**; then help, deliverance, ^{<8163>}Job 6:13; purpose, undertaking, enterprise, ^{<8162>}Job 5:12; then counsel, wisdom, understanding, ^{<8106>}Job 11:6; 12:16. Here it is synonymous with reason, wisdom, or truth. The word rendered “plentifully” **ברב**^{<47230>} means “for multitude,” or

abundantly, and the sense here is, that Bildad had made extraordinary pretensions to wisdom, and that this was the result. This short, irrelevant speech was all; a speech that communicated nothing new, and that met none of the real difficulties of the case.

Job 26:4. *To whom hast thou uttered words?* Jerome renders this, *Quem docere voluisti?* “Whom do you wish to teach?” The sense is, “Do you attempt to teach me in such a manner, on such a subject? Do you take it that I am so ignorant of the perfections of God, that such remarks about him would convey any real instruction?”

And whose spirit came from thee? That is, by whose spirit didst thou speak? What claims hast thou to inspiration, or to the uttering of sentiments beyond what man himself could originate? The meaning is, that there was nothing remarkable in what he had said that would show that he had been indebted for it either to God or to the wise and good on earth.

Job 26:5. *Dead things* Job here commences his description of God, to show that his views of his majesty and glory were in no way inferior to those which had been expressed by Bildad, and that what Bildad had said conveyed to him no real information. In this description he far surpasses Bildad in loftiness of conception, and sublimity of description. Indeed, it may be doubted whether for grandeur this passage is surpassed by any description of the majesty of God in the Bible. The passage here has given rise to much discussion, and to a great variety of opinion. Our common translation is most feeble, and by no means conveys its true force. The object of the whole passage is to assert the universal dominion of God. Bildad had said (Job 25) that the dominion of God extended to the heavens, and to the armies of the skies; that God surpassed in majesty the splendor of the heavenly bodies; and that compared with him man was a worm. Job commences his description by saying that the dominion of God extended even to the nether world; and that such were his majesty and power that even the shades of the mighty dead trembled at his presence, and that hell was all naked before him. The word *apr*,^{†17496}, so feebly rendered “dead things,” means the shades of the dead; the departed spirits that dwell in Sheol; see the word explained at length in the notes at ³¹⁴⁹Isaiah 14:9. They are those who have left this world and who have gone down to dwell in the world beneath — the great and mighty conquerors and kings; the illustrious dead of past times, who have left the world and are congregated in the land of Shades. Jerome renders it, “gigantes,” and

the Septuagint, **γίγαντες** — giants; from a common belief that those shades were larger than life. Thus, Lucretius says:

Quippe et enim jam tum divum mortalia secla Egregias animo facies
vigilante videbant; Et magis in somnis, mirando corporis aucter —
Rer. Nat. ver. 1168.

The word “shades” here will express the sense, meaning the departed spirits that are assembled in Sheol. The Chaldee renders it, **ayrbg** — mighty ones, or giants; the Syriac, in like manner, giants.

Are formed The Syriac renders this, are killed. Jerome, gemunt — groan; Septuagint, “Are giants born from beneath the water, and the neighboring places?” What idea the authors of that version attached to the passage it is difficult to say. The Hebrew word used here **ל** **Wj** ^{<1234>}, from **ל** **Wj** ^{<1234>}, means to twist, to turn, to be in anguish — as in child birth; and then it may mean to tremble, quake, be in terror; and the idea here seems to be, that the shades of the dead were in anguish, or trembled at the awful presence, and under the dominion of God. So Luther renders it — understanding it of giants — Die Riesen angsteten sich unter den Wassern. The sense would be well expressed, “The shades of the dead tremble, or are in anguish before him. They fear his power. They acknowledge his empire.”

Under the waters The abode of departed spirits is always in this book placed beneath the ground. But why this abode is placed beneath the waters, is not apparent. It is usually under the ground, and the entrance to it is by the grave, or by some dark cavern; compare Virgil’s Aeniad, Lib. vi. A different interpretation has been proposed of this verse, which seems better to suit the connection. It is to understand the phrase **tj** **æe** ^{<1878>} “under,” as meaning simply beneath — “the shades beneath;” and to regard the word **pyimæ** ^{<1325>} waters as connected with the following member:

*“The shades beneath tremble;
The waters and the inhabitants thereof”*

Thus explained, the passage means that the whole universe is under the control of God, and trembles before him. Sheol and its Shades; the oceans and their inhabitants stand in awe before him.

And the inhabitants thereof Of the waters — the oceans. The idea is, that the vast inhabitants of the deep all recognize the power of God and tremble

before him. This description accords with that given by the ancient poets of the power and majesty of the gods, and is not less sublime than any given by them.

<8316> **Job 26:6.** *Hell* Hebrew **לַמַּוְתַּי**^{h7585}, Sheol; Greek **ᾠδης** <86> Hades.

The reference is to the abode of departed spirits — the nether world where the dead were congregated; see the notes at <8317> Job 10:21,22. It does not mean here, as the word hell does with us, a place of punishment, but the place where all the dead were supposed to be gathered together.

Is naked before him That is, he looks directly upon that world. It is hidden from us, but not from him. He sees all its inhabitants, knows all their employments, and sways a scepter over them all.

And destruction Hebrew **בְּאֲבַדּוֹן**^{h11}, Abaddon; compare <8318> Revelation 9:11, “And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.” The Hebrew word means destruction, and then abyss, or place of destruction, and is evidently given here to the place where departed spirits are supposed to reside. The word in this form occurs only here and in <8319> Proverbs 15:11; <8320> Psalm 88:11; <8321> Job 26:6, in all which places it is rendered destruction. The idea here is, not that this is a place where souls are destroyed, but that it is a place similar to destruction — as if all life, comfort, light, and joy, were extinguished.

Hath no covering There is nothing to conceal it from God. He looks down even on that dark nether world, and sees and knows all that is there. There is a passage somewhat similar to this in Homer, quoted by Longinus as one of unrivaled sublimity, but which by no means surpasses this. It occurs in the Iliad, xx. 61-66:

Εδδειςεν δ' ὑπενερθεν αναξ ενερων Αιδωνευς , etc.

*Deep in the dismal regions of the dead
Th' infernal monarch reared his horrid head,
Leaped from his throne, lest Neptune's arm should lay
His dark dominions open to the day,
And pour in light on Pluto's drear abodes,
Abhorred by men, and dreadful e'en to gods. — Pope*

<8322> **Job 26:7.** *He stretcheth out the north* This whole passage is particularly interesting as giving a view of the cosmology which prevailed

in those early times. Indeed, as has been already remarked, this poem, apart from every other consideration, is of great value for disclosing to us the prevailing views on the subject of astronomy, geography, and many of the arts, at a much earlier period than we have an account of them elsewhere. The word north here denotes the heavens as they appear to revolve around the pole, and which seem to be stretched out as a curtain. The heavens are often represented as a veil, an expanse, a curtain, or a tent; see the notes at ^{<2304>}Isaiah 34:4; 40:22. *Over the empty place* I [^{<4821>}æ^{<4841>} WhTo], “Upon emptiness, or nothing.” That is, without anything to support it. The word used here WhTo^{<4841>} is one of those employed ^{<0002>}Genesis 1:2, “And the earth was without form and void.” But it seems here to mean emptiness, nothing. The north is stretched out and sustained by the mere power of God.

And hangeth the earth upon nothing.” It has nothing to support it. So Milton:

“And earth self-balanced from her center hung.” There is no certain evidence here that Job was acquainted with the globular form of the earth, and with its diurnal and annual revolutions. But it is clear that he regarded it as not resting on any foundation or support; as lying on the vacant air, and kept there by the power of God. The Chaldee Paraphrast, in order to explain this, as that Paraphrase often does, adds the word waters. “He hangeth the earth aym ywl [upon the waters, with no one to sustain it.” The sentiment here expressed by Job was probably the common opinion of his time. It occurs also in Lucretius:

Terraque ut in media mundi regione quiescat
 Evallescere paullatim, et decrescere, pondus Convenit;
 atque aliam naturam subter habere,
 Et ineunte aevo conjunctam atque uniter aptam
 Partibus aeriis mundi, quibus insita vivit
 Propterea, non est oneri, neque deprimit auras;
 Ut sua quoique homini nullo sunt pondere membra,
 Nec caput est oneri collo, nec denique totum
 Corpus in pedibus pondus sentimus inesse. — v. 535.

In this passage the sense is, that the earth is self-sustained; that it is no burden, or that no one part is burdensome to another — as in man the limbs are not burdensome, the head is not heavy, nor the whole frame burdensome to the feet. So, again, Lucretius says, ii. 602:

*Hanc, veteres Grajum docti cecinere poetae,
Aeris in spatio magnam pendere —
Tellurem, neque posse in terra sistere terram.*

— “*in ether poised she hangs,
Unpropt by earth beneath.*”

So Ovid says:

*Ponderibus librata suis.
Self-poised and self balanced.*

And again, Fastor, vi. 269:

*Terra pilae similis, nullo fulcimine nixa,
Aere subjecto tam grave pendet onus.*

From passages like this occurring occasionally in the classic writers, it is evident that the true figure of the earth had early engaged the attention of people, and that occasionally the truth on this subject was before their minds, though it was neither worked into a system nor sustained then by sufficient evidence to make it an article of established belief. The description here given is appropriate now; and had Job understood all that is now known of astronomy, his language would have been appropriate to express just conceptions of the greatness and majesty of God. It is proof of amazing power and greatness that he has thus “hung” the earth, the planets, the vast sun himself, upon nothing, and that by his own power he sustains and governs all.

~~18318~~ **Job 26:8.** *He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds* That is, he seems to do it, or to collect the waters in the clouds, as in bottles or vessels. The clouds appear to hold the waters, as if bound up, until he is pleased to send them drop by drop upon the earth.

And the cloud is not rent under them The wonder which Job here expresses is, that so large a quantity of water as is poured down from the clouds, should be held suspended in the air without seeming to rend the cloud, and falling all at once. His image is that of a bottle, or vessel, filled with water, suspended in the air, and which is not rent. What were the views which he had of the clouds, of course it is impossible now to say. If he regarded them as they are, as vapors, or if he considered them to be a more solid substance, capable of holding water, there was equal ground for wonder. In the former case, his amazement would have arisen from the

fact, that so light, fragile, and evanescent a substance as vapor should contain so large a quantity of water; in the latter case, his wonder would have been that such a substance should distil its contents drop by drop. There is equal reason for admiring the wisdom of God in the production of rain, now that the cause is understood. The clouds are collections of vapors. They contain moisture, or vapor, which ascends from the earth, and which is held in suspension when in small particles in the clouds; as, when a room is swept, the small particles of dust will be seen to float in the room. When these small particles are attracted, and form masses as large as drops, the air will no longer sustain them, and they fall to the earth. Man never could have devised a way for causing rain; and the mode in which it is provided that large quantities of water shall be borne from one place to another in the air, and made to fall when it is needed, by which the vapors that ascend from the ocean shall not be suffered to fall again into the ocean, but shall be carried on to the land, is adapted to excite our admiration of the wisdom of God now, no less than it was in the time of Job.

Job 26:9. *He holdeth back the face of his throne* That is, he does not exhibit it — he covers it with clouds. The idea seems to be, that God sometimes comes forth and manifests himself to mankind, but that he comes encompassed with clouds, so that his throne cannot be seen. So in **Psalm 18:11,**

“He made darkness his secret place, his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.”

God is often represented as encompassed with clouds, or as accompanied with tempests.

And spreadeth his cloud upon it That is, so that it cannot be seen. There is much poetic beauty in this image. It is, that the clouds are made to conceal the splendor of the throne of God from the sight of man, and that all their sublimity and grandeur, as they roll on one another, and all their beauty when painted with so many colors in the evening, are designed to hide that throne from mortal eyes. No one sees God; and though it is manifest that he is every where employed, and that he comes forth with amazing grandeur in the works of creation and providence, yet he is himself invisible.

<1830> **Job 26:10.** *He hath compassed the waters with bounds* The word rendered “compassed” gwj <h2328>, means to describe a circle — to mark out with a compass; and the reference is to the form of the horizon, which appears as a circle, and which seems to be marked out with a compass. A similar idea Milton has beautifully expressed in his account of the creation:

“Then staid the fervid wheels, and in his hand He took the golden compasses, prepared In God’s eternal store, to circumscribe This universe, and all created things: One foot he centered, and the other turned Round through the vast profundity obscure; And said, ‘Thus far extend thy bounds, This be thy just circumference, O world!’”
— Paradise Lost, B. vii.

In the passage before us, we have a statement of the ancient views of geography, and of the outer limits of the world. The earth was regarded as a circular plane, surrounded by waters, and those waters encompassed with perpetual night. This region of night — this outer limit of the world, was regarded as at the outer verge of the celestial hemisphere, and on this the concave of heaven seemed to rest. See Virgil, Geor. i. 247.

*Illie, ut perhibent, aut intempesta silet nox
Semper, et obtenta densantur, nocte tenebrae;
Aut redit a nobis Aurora, diemque redicited*

No maps are preserved constructed at so early an age as the time of Job; but maps have been constructed from the descriptions in Strabo, Herodotus, and others, which furnish illustrations of the prevailing views on the subject of geography in their times. The oldest geographical writer among the Romans is Mela, who lived in the reign of Claudius, and who died 54 A.D. In his work, *De Situ Orbis*, he gives a description of the world according to the prevailing views, and probably embodied the results of former investigations and discoveries. “We find him adopting, in its fullest extent, the belief of a circumambient ocean; and when he speaks of the high earth in this middle part of it, and describes the sea as going under and washing round it, we are led to believe, that he viewed the earth as a sort of cone, or as a high mountain raised by its elevation above the abyss of waters. Having made a vague division of the world into East, West, and North, he distributed it into five zones, two temperate, one torrid, and two frigid. Only the first two were habitable; and that on the South was inaccessible to man, on account of the torrid regions intervening. According to this system, however, there was on that side another earth, inhabited by

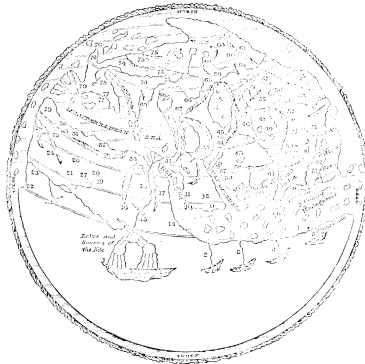
people whom he calls Antichthones, from their opposite position with respect to that part which we inhabit. The form and boundaries of the known and habitable earth are thus delineated: The Mediterranean, with its branches of the Straits, the Euxine, and the Palus Moeotis; its great tributaries, the Nile and the Tanais — these combine, in his conception, to form the grand line by which the universe is divided. The Mediterranean itself separates Europe from Africa; and these continents are bounded on the East, the former by the Tanais, the latter by the Nile; all beyond or to the East of these limits was Asia.” The following cut is probably a correct representation of his system, and gives the view of the world which prevailed in his time.



The ancient Arabs supposed the earth to be encompassed with an ocean. This ocean was called the “sea of darkness;” and the Northern sea was regarded as particularly pitchy and gloomy, and was called “the sea of pitchy darkness.” Edrisi, a distinguished Arabic geographer of the middle ages, supposed that the land floated on the sea, only a part of it appearing above the water, like an egg, floating in the water.

A map of the world, constructed during the Crusades, and embodying the views of the world prevailing then, exhibits the world, also, as surrounded by a dark ocean on every side — *mare tenebrosum* — and may be introduced as an illustration of this passage in Job. It is the map of Sanudo, annexed to Bongar’s “*Gesta Dei per Francos*.” In this map, Jerusalem, according to the prevailing views, “is placed in the center of the world, as the point to which every other object is to be referred; the earth is made a circle, surrounded by the ocean, the shores of which are represented as every where nearly equidistant from that spiritual capital, the site of which is, indeed, remarkable for its relation to the three continents, Asia, Europe, and Africa. Persia stands in its proper place; but India, under the modifications of Greater and Lesser, is confusedly repeated at different points, while the river Indus is mentioned in the text as the Eastern

boundary of Asia. To the North, the castle of Gog and Magog, an Arabian feature, crowns a vast range of mountains, within which, it is said, that the Tartars had been imprisoned by Alexander the Great. The Caspian appears, with the bordering countries of Georgia, Hyrcania, and Albania; but these features stand nearly at the Northern boundary of the habitable earth. Africa has a sea to the South, stated, however, to be inaccessible, on account of the intensity of the heat. The European countries stand in their due place, not even excepting Russia and Scandinavia, though some oversights are observable in the manner in which the two are connected together.”



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|---|---------------------------------|
| 1 Mountains of the 18 Al-Sanod (Upper 30 parts of Persia) | 62 Marand (Mogor) |
| 2 Mees and Sources of the Nile | 63 Levant (Bosnia) |
| 3 Borsana (kingdom of Aethiopia) | 64 Egeerod |
| 4 Al-Zang (Zanguee or Kingdom of Aethiopia) | 65 Al-Sina |
| 5 Al-Sak (Sakia) | 66 Al-Sinuzis (Khorazm) |
| 6 Al-Wak (Wakia) | 67 Indian Sea |
| 7 Sennar (Sennar) | 68 Turkestan (Turkey) |
| 8 Al-Gom (Gom) | 69 Albania |
| 9 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 70 Mithra (Mithra) |
| 10 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 71 Caucasus |
| 11 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 72 Caucasus (probably Caucasus) |
| 12 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 73 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 13 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 74 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 14 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 75 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 15 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 76 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 16 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 77 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 17 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 78 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 18 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 79 Caucasus (Germany) |
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| 30 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 91 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 31 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 92 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 32 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 93 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 33 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 94 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 34 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 95 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 35 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 96 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 36 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 97 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 37 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 98 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 38 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 99 Caucasus (Germany) |
| 39 Al-Mulla (Mulla) | 100 Caucasus (Germany) |

A similar view prevails among the modern Egyptians.

“Of geography, the Egyptians, in general, and with very few exceptions, the best instructed among them, have scarcely any knowledge. Some few of the learned venture to assert that the earth is a globe, but they are opposed by a great majority of the ‘Oolama. The common opinion of all the Moos’lims is, that the earth is an almost plane expanse, surrounded by the ocean, which they say is encompassed by a chain of mountains called Cka’f.” Lane’s Modern Egyptians, vol. i. p. 281.

A similar view of the world prevails, also, now among the Independent Nestortans, which may be regarded as the ancient prevailing opinion in Persia, handed down by tradition.

“According to their views of geography,” says Dr. Grant, “the earth is a vast plain, surrounded by the ocean, in which a leviathan plays around, to keep the water in motion, and prevent its becoming stagnant and putrid; and this leviathan is of such enormous length, that his head follows his tail in the circuit round the earth! That I had crossed the ocean, where I must have encountered the monster, was a thing almost incredible.” The Nestortans, p. 100.

In ancient times, it was regarded as impossible to penetrate far into the sea surrounding the earth, on account of the thick darkness, and it was believed that after sailing for any considerable distance on that sea, the light would wholly fail. In the ninth century, the Arabic historians tell us, that the brothers Almagurim sailed from Lisbon due west, designing, if possible, to discover the countries beyond the “sea of darkness.” For ten or eleven days, they steered westward; but, seeing a storm approaching, the light faint, and the sea tempestuous, they feared that they had come to the dark boundaries of the earth. They turned, therefore, south, sailed twelve days in that direction, and came to an island which they called Ganam, or the island of birds, but the flesh of these birds was too bitter to be eaten. They sailed on twelve days further, and came to another island, the king of which assured them that their pursuit was vain; that his father had sent an expedition for the same purpose; but that, after a month’s sail, the light had wholly failed, and they had been obliged to return. A great amount of interesting and valuable information, on the ancient views of the geography of the world, may be seen in the Encyclopedia of Geography, vol. i. pp. 9-68. It is not easy to ascertain what were the exact views in the time of Job, but it is quite probable, from the passage before us, that the earth was supposed to be surrounded by an ocean, and that the outer limits were encompassed with deep and impenetrable darkness.

Until the day and night come to an end Margin, “end of light with darkness.” The true meaning is, to the confines of light and darkness. To the end, or extremity **tyl kTjæ** ^{48503>} — perfection, completions) of the light with the darkness; that is, where the light terminates in the darkness. Where that limit was, or how the sun was supposed to pass around it, or

could pass over it, without illuminating it, it is now impossible to ascertain. The prevailing views on geography and astronomy must have been very obscure, and there must have been many things which they could not pretend to comprehend or explain.



<8381> **Job 26:11.** *The pillars of Heaven tremble* That is, the mountains, which seem to bear up the heavens. So, among the ancients. Mount Atlas was represented as one of the pillars of heaven. Virgil speaks of “Atlas whose brawny back supports the skies.” And Hesiod, ver. 785, advances the same notion:

*“Atlas, so hard necessity ordains,
Great, the ponderous vault of stars sustains
Not far from the Hesperides he stands,
Nor from the load retracts his head or hands.”*

The word “reproof” in this verse refers to the language of God, as if spoken in anger to rebuke the mountains or the earth. Perhaps the reference is to thunder, to storms, and to winds, which seem to be the voice of God; compare <8381> Psalm 29:3-8. Similar descriptions of the majesty and glory of God abound in the Scriptures, where he speaks to the earth, the mountains, the hills, and they tremble. Thus, in <8381> Psalm 104:32;

*He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth;
He toucheth the hills, and they smoke.*

So in <8381> Habakkuk 3:10:

The mountains saw thee, and they trembled; The overflowing of the water passed by; The deep uttered his voice, and lift up his hands on high.

So in ^{<34065>}Nahum 1:5,

“The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his presence.”

^{<4832>}**Job 26:12.** *He divideth the sea with His power* Herder renders this:

*By his power he scourgeth the sea,
By his wisdom he bindeth its pride.*

Jerome (Vulgate), “By his power the seas are suddenly congregated together The Septuagint, “By his power — ^{<2664>}κατεπαυσε ^{<3588>}την ^{<2281>}θαλασσαν — he makes the sea calm.” Luther, Vor seiner Kraft wird das Meer plötzlich ungestum — “By his power the sea becomes suddenly tempestuous.” Noyes renders it, “By his power he stilleth the sea.” This is undoubtedly the true meaning. There is no allusion here to the dividing of the sea when the Israelites left Egypt; but the ideals, that God has power to calm the tempest, and hush the waves into peace. The word used here [^{<17280>}gæ means, to make afraid, to terrify; especially, to restrain by threats; see the notes at ^{<2815>}Isaiah 51:15; compare ^{<3815>}Jeremiah 31:35. The reference here is to the exertion of the power of God, by which he is able to calm the tumultuous ocean, and to restore it to repose after a storm — one of the most striking exhibitions of omnipotence that can be conceived of.

By his understanding By his wisdom.

He smiteth through He scourges, or strikes — as if to punish.

The proud The pride of the sea. The ocean is represented as enraged, and as lifted up with pride and rebellion. God scourges it, rebukes it, and makes it calm.

^{<4833>}**Job 26:13.** *By his spirit* The word spirit here is either synonymous with wisdom, referring to the wisdom by which God made the heavens; or with breath — meaning, that he did it by his own command. There is no evidence that Job refers to the Third Person of the Trinity — the Holy Spirit — as being especially engaged in the work of creation. The word

spirit is often used to denote one's self; and the meaning here is, that God had done it. This was one of the exhibitions of his power and skill.

He hath garnished the heavens He has formed the stars which constitute so beautiful an ornament of the heavens.

His hand hath formed the crooked serpent Or, rather, the fleeing serpent — *vj n*,^{<15175>} *j œ B*,^{<1281>}; see the notes at ^{<270>}Isaiah 27:1. There can be no doubt that Job refers here to one of the constellations, which it seems was then known as the serpent or dragon. The practice of forming pictures of the heavens, with a somewhat fanciful resemblance to animals, was one of the most early devices of astronomy, and was evidently known in the time of Job; compare the notes at ^{<309>}Job 9:9. The object was, probably, to aid the memory; and though the arrangement is entirely arbitrary, and the resemblance wholly fanciful, yet it is still continued in the works of astronomy, as a convenient help to the memory, and as aiding in the description of the heavenly bodies. This is probably the same constellation which is described by Virgil, in language that strikingly resembles that here used by Job:

*Maximus hic flexu sinuoso elabitur anguis
Circum, perque duas in morem fluminis Arctos,
Arctos oceani metuentes sequore tingi. — Geor. i. 244.*

*Around our pole the spiry Dragon glides,
And, like a winding stream, the Bears divides;
The less and greater, who by Fate's decree
Abhor to die beneath the Southern sea. — Dryden*

The figure of the Serpent, or “the Dragon,” is still one of the constellations of the heavens, and there can be little doubt that it is the same that is referred to in this ancient book. On the celestial globes it is drawn between the Ursa Major and Cepheus, and is made to embrace the pole of the ecliptic in its convolutions. The head of the monster is under the foot of Hercules; then there is a coil tending eastwardly about 17 degrees north of Lyra; then he winds northwardly about 14 degrees to the second coil, where he reaches almost to the girdle of Cepheus; then he loops down and makes a third coil somewhat in the shape of the letter “U,” about 15 degrees below the first; and then he holds a westerly course for about 13 degrees, and passes between the head of the Greater and the tail of the Lesser Bear. The constellation has 80 stars; including four of the second magnitude, seven of the third, and twelve of the fourth. The origin of the

name given to this constellation, and the reason why it was given, are unknown. It has been supposed that the Dragon in his tortuous windings is symbolic of the oblique course of the stars, and particularly that it was designed to designate the motion of the pole of the equator around the pole of the ecliptic, produced by the precession of the equinoxes. It may be doubted, however, whether this is not a refinement; for the giving of a name for such a cause must have been based on knowledge much in advance of that which was possessed when this name was given.

Mythologists say, that Draco was the watchful dragon which guarded the golden apples in the garden of the Hesperides, near Mount Atlas, in Africa, and which was slain by Hercules. Juno is said to have taken the Dragon up to heaven, and to have made a constellation of him, as a reward for his faithful services. The origin of the division of the stars into constellations is now unknown. It has been known from the earliest times, and is found in all nations; and it is remarkable that about the same mode of division is observed, and about the same names are given to the constellations. This would seem to indicate that they had a common origin; and probably that is to be found in Chaldea, Arabia, or Egypt. Sir Isaac Newton regards Egypt as the parental point; Sir William Jones, Chaldea; Mr. Montucla, Arabia. There is probably no book earlier than this of Job, and the mention here of the names of the constellations is probably the first on record. If so, then the first intimation that we have of them was from Arabia; but still it may have been that Job derived his views from Egypt or Chaldea. The sense in the passage before us is, that the greatness and glory of God are seen by forming the beautiful and the glorious constellations that adorn the sky.

Job 26:14. *Lo, these are parts of his ways* This is a small portion of his works. We see only the outlines, the surface of his mighty doings. This is still true. With all the advances which have been made in science, it is still true that we see but a small part of his works. What we are enabled to trace with all the aids of science, compared with what is unseen and unknown, may be like the analysis of a single drop of water compared with the ocean.

But how little a portion is heard of him? Or, rather, “But what a faint whisper have we heard of him!” Literally, “What a whisper of a word,” — **hm**,^{<h100>} **xmv**,^{<h102>} **rbd**,^{<h107>}. The word **xmv** means a transient sound rapidly passing away; and then a whisper; see the notes at ^{<h02>}Job 4:12. A “whisper of a word” means a word not fully and audibly spoken, but which is

whispered into the ear; and the beautiful idea here is, that what we see of God, and what he makes known to us, compared with the full and glorious reality, bears about the same relation which the gentlest whisper does to words that are fully spoken.

The thunder of his power who can understand? It is probable that there is here a comparison between the gentle “whisper” and the mighty “thunder;” and that the idea is, if, instead of speaking to us in gentle whispers, and giving to us in that way some faint indications of his nature, he were to speak out in thunder, who could understand him? If, when he speaks in such faint and gentle tones, we are so much impressed with a sense of his greatness and glory, who would not be overwhelmed if he were to speak out as in thunder? Thus explained, the expression does not refer to literal thunder, though there is much in the heavy peal to excite adoring views of God, and much that to Job must have been inexplicable. It may be asked, even now, who can understand all the philosophy of the thunder? But with much more impressiveness it may be asked, as Job probably meant to ask, who could understand the great God, if he spoke out with the full voice of his thunder, instead of speaking in a gentle whisper?

NOTES ON JOB 27

Job 27:1. *Job continued* Margin, as in Hebrew “added to take up.” Probably he had paused for Zophar to reply, but since he said nothing he now resumed his argument.

His parable A parable properly denotes a comparison of one thing with another, or a fable or allegorical representation from which moral instruction is derived. It was a favorite mode of conveying truth in the East, and indeed is found in all countries; see the notes at ^{<413>}Matthew 13:3. It is evident, however, that Job did not deliver his sentiments in this manner; and the word rendered “parable” here ^{<4912>} *l v̄m* means, as it often does, a sententious discourse or argument. The word is used in the Scriptures to denote a parable, properly so called; then a sententious saying; an apothegm; a proverb; or a poem or song; see the notes at ^{<2344>}Isaiah 14:4. It is rendered here by the Vulgate, *parabolam*; by the Septuagint, *πρωμιω* — “Job spake by preface;” Luther, *fuhr fort* — Job continued; Noyes, *discourse*; Good, *high argument*. The meaning is, that Job continued his discourse; but there is in the word a reference to the kind of discourse which he employed, as being sententious and apothegmatical.

Job 27:2. *As God liveth* A form of solemn adjuration, or an oath by the living God. “As certainly as God lives.” It is the form by which God himself often swears; see ^{<2446>}Ezekiel 14:16; 33:11, and is often employed by others; ^{<9118>}1 Samuel 20:3; 25:26.

Who hath taken away my judgment Who hath rejected my cause, or who has refused me justice; that is, who has treated me as though I was guilty, and withholds from me relief. The language is forensic, and the idea is, that he would make his solemn appeal to him, even though he had rejected his cause. Perhaps there is implied here more than the solemnity of an ordinary oath. A man might be supposed to be willing to make his appeal to one who had shown himself friendly or favorable to him, but he would manifest more reluctance to making his appeal in an important case to a judge who had decided against him, especially if that decision was regarded as severe, and if that judge had refused to hear what he had to say in self-defense. But Job here says, that such was his confidence in his own sincerity and truth,

that he could make his appeal to God, even though he knew that he had hitherto gone against him, and treated him as if he were guilty.

Who hath vexed my soul Margin, as in Hebrew “made my soul bitter.” That is, who has greatly afflicted me; compare ^{<12427>}2 Kings 4:27, margin, and ^{<8103>}Ruth 1:20.

^{<8203>}**Job 27:3.** *And the spirit of God is in my nostrils* As long as I live. The “spirit of God” here means the breath that God breathed into man when he created him, ^{<0007>}Genesis 2:7. It would seem probable that there was an allusion to that fact by the language here, and that the knowledge of the way in which man was created was thus handed down by tradition.

^{<8204>}**Job 27:4.** *My lips shall not speak wickedness* This solemn profession made on oath might have done something to allay the suspicions of his friends in regard to him, and to show that they had been mistaken in his character. It is a solemn assurance that he did not mean to vindicate the cause of wickedness, or to say one word in its favor; and that as long as he lived he would never be found advocating it.

Nor my tongue utter deceit I will never make any use of sophistry; I will not attempt to make “the worse appear the better reason;” I will not be the advocate of error. This had always been the aim of Job, and he now says that no circumstance should ever induce him to pursue a different course as long as he lived. Probably he means, also, as the following verse seems to imply, that no consideration should ever induce him to countenance error or to palliate wrong. He would not be deterred from expressing his sentiments by any dread of opposition, or even by any respect for his friends. No friendship which he might have for them would induce him to justify what he honestly regarded as error.

^{<8205>}**Job 27:5.** *God forbid hl yl j* ^{<h2486>} (HSN-8705). “Far be it from me.” Literally, “Profane be it to me;” that is, I should regard it as unholy and profane; I cannot do it.

That I should justify you That I should admit the correctness of your positions, and should concede that I am an hypocrite. He was conscious of integrity and sincerity, and nothing could induce him to abandon that conviction, or to admit the correctness of the reasoning which they had pursued in regard to him. Coverdale (1535 A.D.) has given this a correct translation, “God forbid that I should grant your cause to be right.”

Till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me I will not admit that I am insincere and hypocritical. This is the language of a man who was conscious of integrity, and who would not be deprived of that consciousness by any plausible representations of his professed friends.

Job 27:6. *My righteousness I hold fast* I hold on to the consciousness of integrity and uprightness. I cannot, will not, part with that. Job had lost his property, his health, and his domestic comforts, but he had in all this one consolation — he felt that he was sincere. He had been subjected to calamity by God as if he were a wicked man, but still he was resolved to adhere to the consciousness of his uprightness. Property may leave a man; friends may forsake him; children may die; disease may attack him; slander may assail him; and death may approach him; but still he may have in his bosom one unfailing source of consolation; he may have the consciousness that his aim has been right and pure. That nothing can shake; of that, no storms or tempests, no malignant foe, no losses or disappointment, no ridicule or calumny, can deprive him.

My heart shall not reproach me That is, as being insincere, false, hollow.

So long as I live Margin, “from my days.” So the Hebrew — μῶφ^{h317}. Vulgate in omni vita mea. Septuagint, “I am not conscious to myself of having done anything amiss” — ατοπα ^{<824>} πραξας ^{<4238>}; compare the notes at ^{<404>}1 Corinthians 4:4. The idea is, that he had a consciousness of integrity, and that he meant to maintain it as long as he lived.

Job 27:7. *Let mine enemy be as the wicked* This is probably said that he might show that it was not his intention to justify the wicked, and that in all that he had said it was no part of his purpose to express approbation of their course. His friends had charged him with this; but he now solemnly disclaims it, and says that he had no such design. To show how little he meant to justify the wicked, he says that the utmost that he could desire for an enemy would be, that he would be treated as he believed the wicked would be. A similar expression occurs in ^{<749>}Daniel 4:19,

“My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies;”

that is, calamities are coming upon thee indicated by the dream, such as you would desire on your foes; so in ^{<0051>}Judges 5:31. After the mother of Sisera had anxiously looked for the return of her son from the battle,

though he was then slain, the sacred writer adds, “So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord.” Thus, when a traitor is executed it is common for the executioner to hold up his head and say, “So let all the enemies of the king die.” Job means to say that he had no sympathy with wicked people, and that he believed that they would be punished as certainly and as severely as one could desire his enemy to suffer. Schnurrer supposes that by the enemy here he refers to his friends with whom he had been disputing; but this is to give an unnecessarily harsh construction to the passage.

Job 27:8. *For what is the hope of the hypocrite?* The same sentiment which Job here advances had before been expressed by Bildad; see it explained in the notes at ^{<K813>}Job 8:13 following It had also been expressed in a similar manner by Zophar, Notes, ^{<K816>}Job 20:5, and had been much insisted on in their arguments. Job now says that he fully accords with that belief. He was not disposed to defend hypocrisy; he had no sympathy for it. He knew, as they did, that all the joy of a hypocrite would be temporary, and that when death came it must vanish. He wishes that his remarks should not be construed so as to make him the advocate of hypocrisy or sin, and affirms that he relied on a more solid foundation of peace and joy than the hypocrite could possess. It was by explanations and admissions such as these that the controversy was gradually closed, and when they came fully to understand Job, they felt that they had nothing which they could reply to him.

Though he hath gained — [^{<X8E>}^{h1214>}]. The Vulgate renders this, *si avarè rapiat* — “if he avariciously seizes upon.” The Septuagint, ^{<3754>}ὅτι ^{<3754>}επεχει — that he persisteth. Dr. Good, “That he should prosper;” and so Wemyss. The Hebrew word [^{<X8E>}^{h1214>}] means properly, to cut or dash in pieces; then to tear in pieces, or to plunder or spoil; then to cut off, to bring to an end, etc. It is applied to the action of a weaver, who, when his web is finished, cuts off the thrum that binds it to the beam. The web is then finished; it is all woven, and is then taken from the loom. Hence, it is elegantly used to denote the close of life, when life is woven or finished — by the rapid passing of days like the weavers shuttle (^{<K816>}Job 7:6), and when it is then, as it were, taken out of the loom; see this figure explained in the notes at ^{<2382>}Isaiah 38:12. This is the idea here, that life would be cut off like the weaver’s web, and that when that was done the hope of the hypocrite would be of no value.

When God taketh away his soul When he dies. There has been much perplexity felt in regard to the Hebrew word here rendered “taketh away” — **hl y;**^{<17953>}. A full explanation may be seen in Schultens and Rosenmuller. Some suppose it is the future from **l vn** for **l vy** — meaning to draw out, and that the idea is, that God draws out this life as a sword is drawn out of a sheath. Others, that it is from **hl v** — to be secure, or tranquil, or at rest: and that it refers to the time when God shall give rest in the grave, or that the meaning of the word **hl v** here is the same as **l l v** or **l vn** — to draw out; see Gesenius on the word **hl v**. Schnurrer conjectures that it is derived from **l av** — to ask, to demand, and that the form here is contracted from the future **l avy**. But the common supposition is, that it means to draw out — in allusion to drawing out a sword from a scabbard — thus drawing life or the soul from the body.

<1829> **Job 27:9.** *Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?*

Coverdale has rendered this (<1828> Job 27:8,9) so as to make excellent sense, though not strictly in accordance with the original. “What hope hath the hypocrite though he have great good, and though God give him riches after his heart’s desire? Doth God hear him the sooner, when he crieth unto him in his necessity?” The object of the verse is to show the miserable condition of a wicked man or a hypocrite. This is shown by the fact which Job asserts, that God will not hear his cry when he feels his need of aid, and when he is induced to call upon him. This is true only when his object in calling upon God is merely for help. If he has no relentings for his sin, and no real confidence in God; if he calls upon him in trouble, intending to return to his sins as soon as the trouble is over, or if such is the state of his mind that God sees that he would return to his sins as soon as his calamities cease, then he cannot be expected to hear him. But if he comes with a penitent heart, and with a sincere purpose to forsake his sins and to devote himself to God, there is no reason to doubt that he would bear him. The argument of Job is in the main sound. It is, that if a man wishes the favor of God, and the assurance that he will hear his prayer, he must lead a holy life. A hypocrite cannot expect his favor: compare the notes at <3015> Isaiah 1:15.

<1870> **Job 27:10.** *Will he delight himself in the Almighty?* A truly pious man will delight himself in the Almighty. His supreme happiness will be found in God. He has pleasure in the contemplation of his existence, his

perfections, his law, and his government. Coverdale renders this, “Hath he such pleasure and delight in the Almighty that he dare always call upon God?” The idea of Job is that a hypocrite has not his delight in the Almighty; and, therefore, his condition is not such as he would defend or choose. Job had been charged with defending the character of the wicked and with maintaining that they were the objects of the divine favor. He now says that he maintained no such opinion. He was aware that the only real and solid happiness was to be found in God, and he knew that a hypocrite would not find delight there. This is true to the letter. A hypocrite has no real happiness in God. He sees nothing in the divine perfections to love; nothing in the divine plan affections. The hypocrite, therefore, is a miserable man. He professes to love what he does not love; tries to find pleasure in what his heart hates; mingles with a people with whom he has no sympathy, and joins in services of prayer and praise which are disgusting and irksome to his soul. The pious man rejoices that there is just such a God as Yahweh is. He sees nothing in him which he desires to be changed, and he has supreme delight in the contemplation of his perfections.

Will he always call upon God? That is, he will not always call upon God. This is literally true. The hypocrite pray:

(1) when he makes a profession of religion;

(2) on some extraordinary occasion — as when a friend is sick, or when he feels that he himself is about to die, but he does not always maintain habits of prayer.

He suffers his business to break in upon his times for prayer; neglects secret devotion on the slightest pretence, and soon abandons it altogether. One of the best tests of character is the feeling with which we pray, and the habit which we have of calling on God. The man who loves secret prayer has one of the most certain evidences that he is a pious man; compare the notes at ^{<8316>}Job 20:5.

^{<8271>}**Job 27:11.** *I will teach you by the hand of God* Margin, “or, being in.” Coverdale, “In the name of God.” So Tindal, Noyes, “Concerning the hand of God.” Good, “Concerning the dealings of God.” The Chaldee renders it *ahl a taybw* — “By the prophecy of God.” Luther, “I will teach you by the hand of God.” The idea evidently is, that Job would instruct them by what God had done. He would appeal to his works, and to

the dispensations of his providence; and by the indications of wisdom and skill which were to be found there, he would derive important lessons for their instruction on the great principles of his administration. Accordingly, in the remainder of this chapter, he makes his appeal to what actually occurs in the dispensations of Providence, and in the next, he refers to various scientific subjects, evincing the wisdom which God had shown in the mineral kingdom. The hand is the instrument by which we accomplish anything, and hence, it is used here to denote what God does.

That which is with the Almighty will I not conceal That is, I will appeal to his works, and show what traces of wisdom there are in them.

Job 27:12. *Behold, all ye yourselves have seen it* You have had an opportunity of tracing the proofs of the wisdom of God in his works.

Why then are ye thus altogether vain Why is it that you maintain such opinions — that you evince no more knowledge of his government and plans — that you argue so inconclusively about him and his administration! Why, since you have had an opportunity of observing the course of events, do you maintain that suffering is necessarily a proof of guilt, and that God deals with all people, in this life, according to their character? A close observation of the course of events would have taught you otherwise. Job proceeds to state what he supposes to be the exact truth on the subject, and particularly aims, in the following chapter, to show that the ways of God are inscrutable, and that we cannot be expected to comprehend them, and are not competent to pronounce upon them.

Job 27:13. *This is the portion of a wicked man with God* There has been much diversity of view in regard to the remainder of this chapter. The difficulty is, that Job seems here to state the same things which had been maintained by his friends, and against which he had all along contended. This difficulty has been felt to be very great, and is very great. It cannot be denied, that there is a great resemblance between the sentiments here expressed and those which had been maintained by his friends, and that this speech, if offered by them, would have accorded entirely with their main position. Job seems to abandon all which he had defended, and to concede all which he had so warmly condemned. One mode of explaining the difficulty has been suggested in the “Analysis” of the chapter. It was proposed by Noyes, and is plausible, but, perhaps, will not be regarded as satisfactory to all. Dr. Kennicott supposes that the text is imperfect, and

that these verses constituted the third speech of Zophar. His arguments for this opinion are:

- (1) that Eliphaz and Bildad had each spoken three times, and that we are naturally led to expect a third speech from Zophar; but, according to the present arrangement, there is none.
- (2) that the sentiments accord exactly with what Zophar might be expected to advance, and are exactly in his style; that they are expressed in “his fierce manner of accusation,” and are “in the very place where Zophar’s speech is naturally expected.”

But the objections to this view are insuperable. They are:

- (1) The entire want of any authority in the manuscripts, or ancient versions, for such an arrangement or supposition. All the ancient versions and manuscripts make this a part of the speech of Job.
- (2) If this had been a speech of Zophar, we should have expected a reply to it, or an allusion to it, in the speech of Job which follows. But no such reply or allusion occurs.
- (3) If the form which is usual on the opening of a speech, “And Zophar answered and said,” had ever existed here, it is incredible that it should have been removed. But it occurs in no manuscript or version; and it is not allowable to make such an alteration in the Scripture by conjecture.

Wemyss, in his translation of Job, accords with the view of Kennicott, and makes these verses (^{<82713>}Job 27:13-23) to be the third speech of Zophar. For this, however, he alleges no authority, and no reasons except such as had been suggested by Kennicott. Coverdale, in his translation of the Bible (1553 A.D.), has inserted the word “saying” at the close of ^{<82712>}Job 27:12, and regards what follows to the end of the chapter as an enumeration or recapitulation of the false sentiments which they had maintained, and which Job regards as the “vain” things (^{<82712>}Job 27:12) which they had maintained. In support of this view the following reasons may be alleged:

- (1) It avoids all the difficulty of transposition, and the necessity of inserting an introduction, as we must do, if we suppose it to be a speech of Zophar.
- (2) It avoids the difficulty of supposing that Job had here contradicted the sentiments which he had before advanced, or of conceding all that his friends had maintained.

(3) It is in accordance with the practice of the speakers in this book, and the usual practice of debaters, who enumerate at considerable length the sentiments which they regard as erroneous and which they design to oppose.

(4) It is the most simple and natural supposition, and, therefore, most likely to be the true one. Still, it must be admitted, that the passage is attended with difficulty; but the above solution is, it seems to me, the most plausible. *This is the portion* This is what he receives; to wit, what he states in the following verses, that his children would be cut off.

And the heritage of oppressors What tyrants and cruel people must expect to receive at the hand of God.

◀8714▶ **Job 27:14.** *If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword* That is, they shall be slain in war. The first calamities which it is here said would come upon a man, relate to his family (◀8714▶ Job 27:14-18); the next are those that would come upon himself, ▶8719▶ Job 27:19-23. All the sentiments here expressed are found in the various speeches of the friends of Job, and, according to the interpretation suggested above, this is designed to represent their sentiments. They maintained that if a wicked man was blessed with a numerous family, and seemed to be prosperous, it was only that the punishment might come the more heavily upon him, for that they certainly would be cut off; see ▶8819▶ Job 18:19,20; 20:10.

And his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread This sentiment was advanced by Zophar, ▶8810▶ Job 20:10; see the notes at that verse.

◀8715▶ **Job 27:15.** *Those that remain of him* Those that survive him.

Shall be buried in death Hebrew “shall be buried BY death” *twm*, ▶4194▶, that is, “Death shall be the grave-digger” — or, they shall have no friends to bury them; they shall be unburied. The idea is highly poetical, and the expression is very tender. They would have no one to weep over them, and no one to prepare for them a grave; there would be no procession, no funeral dirge, no train of weeping attendants; even the members of their own family would not weep over them. To be unburied has always been regarded as a dishonor and calamity (compare the notes at ▶3149▶ Isaiah 14:19), and is often referred to as such in the Scriptures; see ▶4111▶ Jeremiah 8:2; 14:16; 16:4,6. The passage here has a striking resemblance to ▶4218▶ Jeremiah 22:18,19 —

“They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah! my brother! or, Ah! sister! They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah! lord! or, Ah! his glory! With the burial of an ass shall he be buried, Drawn out and east beyond the gates of Jerusalem.”

And his widows shall not weep The plural here — “widows” — is a proof that polygamy was then practiced. It is probable that Job here alludes to the shrieks of domestic grief which in the East are heard in every part of the house among the females on the death of the master of the family, or to the train of women that usually followed the corpse to the grave. The standing of a man in society was indicated by the length of the train of mourners, and particularly by the number of wives and concubines that followed him as weepers. Job refers to this as the sentiment of his friends, that when a wicked man died, he would die with such evident marks of the divine displeasure, that even his own family would not mourn for him, or that they would be cut off before his death, and none would be left to grieve.

^{<1876>}**Job 27:16.** *Though he heap up silver as the dust* That is, in great quantities — as plenty as dust; compare ^{<1107>}1 Kings 10:27, “And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones.”

And prepare raiment Oriental wealth consisted much in changes of raiment. Sir John Chardin says that in the East it is common to gather together immense quantities of furniture and clothes. According to D’Herbelot, Bokteri, an illustrious poet; of Cufah in the ninth century, had so many presents made him in the course of his life, that when he died he was found possessed of an hundred complete suits of clothes, two hundred shirts, and five hundred turbans. compare ^{<1519>}Ezra 2:69, and ^{<1170>}Nehemiah 7:70 see Bochart Hieroz. P. II. Lib. iv. c. xxv. p. 617. This species of treasure is mentioned by Virgil;

Dives equom, dives pictai vestis et auri. — Aeneid ix. 26.

The reason why wealth consisted so much in changes of raiment, is to be found in the fondness for display in Oriental countries, and in the fact that as fashions never change there, such treasures are valuable until they are worn out. In the ever-varying fashions of the West such treasures are comparatively of much less value.

As the clay As the dust of the streets; or as abundant as mire.

Job 27:17. *The just shall put it on* The righteous shall wear it. It shall pass out of the hands of him who prepared it, into the hands of others. The meaning is, that the wicked, though they become rich, would not live to enjoy their ill-gotten gains. These two verses contain a beautiful illustration of what Dr. Jebb calls the introverted parallelism — where the fourth member answers to the first, and the third to the second:

*“Though he heap up silver as the dust,
And prepare raiment as the clay,
The just shall put it (raiment) on,
And the innocent shall divide the silver.”*

A similar instance occurs in **Matthew 7:6**:

“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, Neither cast ye your pearls before swine, Lest they (the swine) trample them under their feet. And (the dogs) turn again and rend you.”

For a full illustration of the nature of Hebrew poetry, the reader may consult DeWette, *Einleitung in die Psalmen*, translated in the *Biblical Repository*, vol. iii. pp. 445ff, and Nordheimer’s *Hebrew Grammar*, vol. ii. pp. 319ff; see also the *Introduction to Job*, Section V.

The innocent shall divide the silver That is, the righteous shall come into possession of it, and divide it among themselves. The wicked who had gained it shall not be permitted to enjoy it.

Job 27:18. *He buildeth his house as a moth* The house which the moth builds is the slight fabric which it makes for its own dwelling in the garment which it consumes. On this verse compare **Job 8:14**. The dwelling of the moth is composed of the materials of the garment on which it feeds, and there may be an allusion here not only to the fact that the house which the wicked reared for themselves would be temporary, and that it would soon pass away like the dwelling of the moth, but that it was obtained — like the dwelling of the moth — at the expense of others. The idea of frailty, however, and of its being only a very temporary habitation, is probably the main thought in the passage. The allusion here is to the moth-worm as it proceeds from the egg, before it is changed into the chrysalis, aurelia, or nymph.

“The young moth, upon leaving the egg which a papilio has lodged upon a piece of stuff, or a skin well dressed, and commodious for

her purpose, immediately finds a habitation and food in the nap of the stuff, or hair of the skin. It gnaws and lives upon the nap, and likewise builds with it its apartment, accommodated both with a front door and a back one: the whole is well fastened to the ground of the stuff, with several cords and a little glue. The moth sometimes thrusts her head out of one opening, and sometimes out of the other, and perpetually demolishes all about her; and when she has cleared the place about her, she draws out all the stakes of the tent, after which she carries it to some little distance, and then fixes it with her slender cords in a new situation.” Burder.

It is to the insect in its larvæ or caterpillar state that Job refers here, and the slightness of the habitation will be easily understood by anyone who has watched the operations of the silkworm, or of the moths that appear in this country. The idea is, that the habitation which the wicked constructed was temporary and frail, and would soon be left. The Chaldee and Syriac render this “the spider;” and so does Luther — Spinne. The slight gossamer dwelling of the spider would well correspond with the idea here expressed by Job.

And as a booth A tent, or cottage.

That the keeper maketh That one who watches vineyards or gardens makes as a temporary shelter from the storm or the cold at night. Such edifices were very frail in their structure, and were designed to be only temporary habitations; see the subject explained in the notes at ~~2008~~ Isaiah 1:8. Niebuhr, in his description of Arabia, p. 158, says,

“In the mountains of Yemen they have a sort of nest on the trees, where the Arabs sit to watch the fields after they have been planted. But in the Kehama, where they have but few trees, they build a light kind of scaffolding for this purpose.”

Mr. Southey opens the fifth part of his *Curse of Kehama* with a similar allusion:

*“Evening comes on: — arising from the stream
Homeward the tall flamingo wings his flight;
And when he sails athwart the setting beam,
His scarlet plumage glows with deeper light.*

*The watchman, at the wish'd approach of night
Gladly forsakes the field, where he all day,
To scare the winged plunderers from their prey,
With shout and sling, on yonder clay-built height,
Hath borne the sultry ray.*

<1879> **Job 27:19.** *The rich man* That is, the rich man who is wicked.

Shall lie down Shalt die — for so the connection demands.

But he shall not be gathered In an honorable burial. The slain in battle are gathered together for burial; but he shall be unburied. The expressions “to be gathered,” “to be gathered to one’s fathers,” frequently occur in the Scriptures, and seem to be used to denote a peaceful and happy death and an honorable burial. There was the idea of a happy union with departed friends; of being honorably placed by their side in the grave, and admitted to companionship with them again in the unseen world; compare <10218> Genesis 25:8; 35:29; 49:29,33; <04713> Numbers 27:13; <16251> Deuteronomy 32:50; <01210> Judges 2:10; <12221> 2 Kings 22:20. Among the ancients, the opinion prevailed that the souls of those who were not buried in the customary manner, were not permitted to enter Hades, or the abodes of the dead, but were doomed to wander for an hundred years upon the banks of the river Styx. Thus, Homer (Iliad, 23 71, following) represents the spirit of Patroclus as appearing to Achilles, and praying him that he would commit his body with proper honors to the earth. So Palinurus is represented by Virgil (Aeneid, vi. 365) as saying, “Cast earth upon me, that I may have a calm repose in death.” The Hindoos, says Dr. Ward, believe that the souls of those who are unburied wander about and find no rest. It is possible that such views may have prevailed in the time of Job. The sentiment here is, that such an honored death would be denied the rich man of oppression and wickedness.

He openeth his eyes, and he is not That is, in the twinkling of an eye he is no more. From the midst of his affluence he is suddenly cut off, and hurried away in a moment.

<18721> **Job 27:20.** *Terrors-take hold on him as waters* That is, as suddenly and violently as angry floods; compare the notes at <18184> Job 18:14.

A tempest stealeth him away He is suddenly cut off by the wrath of God. A tempest comes upon him as unexpectedly as a thief or robber comes at night. Death is often represented as coming upon man with the silence of a

thief, or the sudden violence of a robber at midnight; see the note at ^{<8217>}Job 21:17; compare ^{<1042>}Matthew 24:42-44.

^{<872>}**Job 27:21.** *The east wind carrieth him away* He is swept off as by the violence of a tempest. Severe storms are represented in this book as coming from the East; compare the notes at ^{<815>}Job 15:2. The ancients believed that people might be carried away by a tempest or whirlwind; compare ^{<23116>}Isaiah 41:16; see also Homer, *Odyssey* xx. 63ff:

*“Snatch me, ye whirlwinds far from human race,
Test through the void illimitable space;
Or if dismounted from the rapid cloud,
Me with his whelming wave let Ocean shroud!” — Pope*

Compare the notes at ^{<812>}Job 30:22. The parallelism here would seem to imply that the wind referred to was violent, but it is possible that the allusion may be to the burning winds of the desert, so well known in the East, and so frequently described by travelers. The Vulgate here renders the Hebrew word ^{<46921>}מַיִם בֹּרְחִים, ventus urens, “burning wind;” the Septuagint in like manner, ^{<2742>}καυσων; the Syriac simply wind. This east wind, or burning wind, is what the Arabians call Samum. It is a hot wind which passes over the desert, and which was formerly supposed to be destructive of life. More recent travelers however, tell us that it is not fatal to life, though exceedingly oppressive.

And as a storm See ^{<889>}Psalms 58:9.

Hurleth him out of his place Takes him entirely away, or removes him from the earth.

^{<872>}**Job 27:22.** *For God shall cast upon him* That is, God shall bring calamities upon him, or cast his thunderbolts upon him, and shall not pity him.

He would fain flee He would gladly escape from the wrath of God, but he is unable to do it.

^{<872>}**Job 27:23.** *Men shall clap their hands at him* That is, they shall combine to drive him out of the world, and rejoice when he is gone. The same sentiment was also expressed by Bildad, ^{<818>}Job 18:18:

*“He shall be driven from light into darkness,
And chased out of the world.”*

There can be no doubt, I think, that Job alludes to that sentiment, and that his object in quoting it is to show its incorrectness. He does not indeed go into a formal reply to it in the following chapters, but he seems to consider that he had already replied to it by the statements which he had made, and which showed the incorrectness of the views which his friends had taken. He had demonstrated in the previous chapters that their main position was incorrect, and he asks (in ~~1871~~ Job 27:12 of this chapter), how it was possible that they could hold such sentiments as these, in the midst of all the facts which surrounded them? The whole current of events was against their opinion, and in the close of this chapter he enumerates the sentiments which they had advanced, which he regarded as so strange, and which he felt that he had now shown to be erroneous. In deed, they seem to have regarded themselves as confuted, for they were silent. Job had attacked and overthrown their main position, that people were treated according to their character in this life, and that consequently extraordinary sufferings were proof of extraordinary guilt, and, that being overthrown, they had nothing more to say. Having silenced them, and shown the error of the opinions which he has here enumerated, he proceeds in the following chapters to state his own views on important topics connected with the providence of God, mainly designed to show that we are not to expect fully to comprehend the reason of his dispensations.

NOTES ON JOB 28

Job 28:1. *Surely there is a vein for silver* Margin, “mine” Coverdale renders this, “There are places where silver is molten.” Prof. Lee renders it, “There is an outlet for the silver,” and supposes it means the coming out or separation of the silver from the earthy particles by which it is surrounded in the ore, not the coming out from the mine. The word rendered “vein” αχῖνῶ^{<4416>} means properly a going forth, as the rising of the sun, <4916> Psalm 19:6; the promulgation of an edict <27025> Daniel 9:25; then a place of going forth — as a gate, door; <36211> Ezekiel 42:11; 43:11, and thence a mine, a vein, or a place of the going forth of metals; that is, a place where they are procured. So the Septuagint here, Ἔστι^{<2076>} γαρ^{<1063>} αργυρίου^{<694>} τοπος^{<5117>} ὅθεν^{<3606>} γίνεται^{<1096>} — “there is a place for silver whence it is obtained.” The idea here is that man had evinced his wisdom in finding out the mines of silver and working them. It was one of the instances of his skill that he had been able to penetrate into the earth, and bring out the ore of the precious metals, and convert it to valuable purposes.

And a place for gold A workshop, or laboratory, for working the precious metals. Job says, that even in his time such a laboratory was a proof of the wisdom of man. So now, one of the most striking proofs of skill is to be found in the places where the precious metals are purified, and worked into the various forms in which they are adapted to ornament and use.

Where they fine it — qqzē^{<42212>}. The word used here qqzē^{<42212>} means properly to bind fast, to fetter; and then to compress, to squeeze through a strainer; and hence, to strain, filter; and thence to purify — as wine that is thus filtered, or gold that is purified <3833> Malachi 3:3. It may refer here to any process of purifying or refining. It is commonly done by the application of heat. One of the instructive uses of the book of Job is the light which it throws incidentally on the state of the ancient arts and sciences, and the condition of society in reference to the comforts of life at the early period of the world when the author lived. In this passage it is clear:

- (1) that the metals were then in general use, and
- (2) that they were so worked as to furnish, in the view of Job a striking illustration of human wisdom and skill.

Society was so far advanced as to make use not only of gold and silver, but also of copper and brass. The use of gold and silver commonly precedes the discovery of iron, and consequently the mention of iron in any ancient book indicates a considerably advanced state of society. It is of course, not known to what extent the art of working metals was carried in the time of Job, as all that would be indicated here would be that the method of obtaining the pure metal from the ore was understood. It may be interesting, however, to observe, that the art was early known to the Egyptians, and was carried by them to a considerable degree of perfection. Pharaoh arrayed Joseph in vestures of fine linen, and put a chain of gold about his neck; ^{<0442>}Genesis 41:42, and great quantities of gold and silver ornaments were borrowed by the Israelites of the Egyptians, when they were about to go to the promised land. Gold and silver are mentioned as known in the earliest ages; compare ^{<0021>}Genesis 2:11,12; 41:42; ^{<0213>}Exodus 20:23; ^{<0235>}Genesis 23:15,16. Iron is also mentioned as having been early known; ^{<0022>}Genesis 4:22. Tubal Cain was instructor in iron and brass. Gold and silver mines were early worked in Egypt, and if Moses was the compiler of the book of Job, it is possible that some of the descriptions here may have been derived from that country, and at all events the mode of working these precious metals was probably the same in Arabia and Egypt. From the mention of ear rings, bracelets, and jewels of silver and gold, in the days of Abraham, it is evident that the art of metallurgy was known at a very remote period. Workmen are noticed by Homer as excelling in the manufacture of arms, rich vases, and other objects inlaid or ornamented with vessels:

Πηλειδης δ' αιπς αλλα τιθει ταχυτηνος αεθλα , Αργιρεπι
κρατηρα τετυγμαιον — Iliad xxiii. 741.

His account of the shield of Achilles (Iliad xviii. 474) proves that the art of working in the precious metals was well known in his time; and the skill required to delineate the various objects which he describes was such as no ordinary artisan, even at this time, could be supposed to possess. In Egypt, ornaments of gold and silver, consisting of rings, bracelets, necklaces, and trinkets, have been found in considerable abundance of the times of Osirtasen I, and Thothmes III, the contemporaries of Joseph and of Moses. Diodorus (i. 49) mentions silver mine of Egypt which produced 3,200 myriads of minae. The gold mines of Egypt remained long unknown, and their position has been ascertained only a few years since by M. Linant and M. Bonomi. They lie in the Bisharee desert, about seventeen days' journey

to the South-eastward from Derow. The matrix in which the gold in Egypt was found is quartz, and the excavations to procure the gold are exceedingly deep. The principal excavation is 180 feet deep. The quartz thus obtained was broken by the workmen into small fragments, of the size of a bean, and these were passed through hand mills made of granitic stone, and when reduced to powder the quartz was washed on inclined tables, and the gold was thus separated from the stone. Diodorus says, that the principal persons engaged in mining operations were captives, taken in war, and persons who were compelled to labor in the mines, for offences against the government. They were bound in fetters, and compelled to labor night and day. "No attention," he says, "is paid to these persons; they have not even a piece of rag to cover themselves; and so wretched is their condition, that every one who witnesses it, deploras the excessive misery which they endure. No rest, no intermission from toil, are given either to the sick or the maimed; neither the weakness of age, nor women's infirmities, are regarded; all are driven to the work with the lash, until, at last, overcome with the intolerable weight of their afflictions, they die in the midst of their toil." Diodorus adds, "Nature indeed, I think, teaches that as gold is obtained with immense labor, so it is kept with difficulty, creating great anxiety, and attended in its use both with pleasure and with grief." It was perhaps, in view of such laborious and difficult operations in obtaining the precious metals, and of the skill which man had evinced in extracting them from the earth, that Job alluded here to the process as a striking proof of human wisdom. On the early use of the metals among the ancient Egyptians, the reader may consult with advantage, Wilkinson's "Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians," vol. iii. pp. 215ff.

~~8302~~ **Job 28:2.** *Iron* As has been remarked above, iron was early known, yet probably its common use indicates a more advanced state of civilization than that of gold and silver. The Mexicans were ignorant of the use of iron, though ornaments of gold and silver elegantly worked abounded among them. Iron is less easily discovered than copper, though more abundant, and is worked with more difficulty. Among the ancient nations, copper was in general use long before iron; and arms, vases, statues, and implements of every kind were made of this metal alloyed and hardened with tin, before iron came into general use. Tubal Cain is indeed mentioned (~~0042~~ Genesis 4:22) as the "instructor of every artificer in brass and iron," but no direct mention is made of iron arms (~~04516~~ Numbers 35:16) or tools (~~0275~~ Deuteronomy 27:5), until after the departure from Egypt. According

to the Arundelian Marbles, iron was known one hundred and eighty-eight years before the Trojan war, about 1370 years B.C.; but Hesiod, Plutarch, and others, limit its discovery to a much later period. Homer, however, distinctly mentions its use, Iliad xxiii. 262:

ἡ δε γυναικας ευζωνας , πολιον τε σιδηρον .

That by the “sideros” of the poet is meant iron, is clear, from a simile which he uses in the Odyssey, derived from the quenching of iron in water, by which he illustrates the hissing produced in the eye of Polyphemus by piercing it with the burning stake:

*“And as when armorers temper in the ford
The keen edged pole-axe or the shining sword,
The red-hot metal hisses in the lake,
Thus in the eye-ball hissed the plunging stake.”*
—*Odyssey ix. 391; Pope*

Iron is mentioned in the time of Og king of Bashan, 1450 B.C. It was at first, however, regarded as of great value, and its use was very limited. It was presented in the temples of Greece as among the most valuable offerings, and rings of iron have been found in the tombs of Egypt that had been worn as ornaments, showing the value of the metal. One of the reasons why this metal comes so slowly into use, and why it was so rare in early times, was the difficulty of smelting the ore, and reducing it to a malleable state “Its gross and stubborn ore,” says Dr. Robertson (America, B. iv.) “must feel twice the force of fire, and go through two laborious processes, before it becomes fit for use.” It was this fact which made it to Job such a proof of the wisdom of man that he had invented the process of making iron, or of separating it from the earthy portions in which it is found.

Is taken out of the earth Margin, “dust.” The form in which iron is found is too well known to need description. It is seldom, if ever, found in its purity, and the ore generally has so much the appearance of mere earth, that it requires some skill to distinguish them.

And brass hvWj n] ^{7h5154<}. Brass is early and frequently mentioned in the Bible (^{<0002>}Genesis 4:22; ^{<02518>}Exodus 25:3; 26:11, et al.), but there is little doubt that copper is meant in these places. Brass is a compound metal, made of copper and zinc — containing usually about one third of the weight in zinc — and it is hardly probable that the art of compounding this was early

known; compare the notes at ^{<K12b>} Job 20:24. Dr. Good renders this, “And the rock poureth forth copper.” Coverdale, “The stones resolved to metal.” Noyes, “The stone is melted into copper.” Prof. Lee, “Also the stone (is taken from the earth) from which one fuseth copper.” The Hebrew is, literally, “And stone is poured out **qyxy** copper.” The Septuagint renders it, “And brass is cut like stones;” that is, is cut from the quarry. The word “stone” here in the Hebrew ^{<h68>} **ba**, means, doubtless, “ore” in the form of stone; and the fact mentioned here, that such ore is fused into the ^{<h5154>} **hvwj nj**, is clear proof that copper is intended. Brass is never found in ore, and is never compounded in the earth. A similar idea is found in Pliny, who probably uses the word “aes” to denote copper, as it is commonly employed in the ancient writings. *Aes fit ex lapide aerso, quem vocant Cadmiam; et igne lapides in nes solvantur.* Nat. Hist. XXXiv. 1:22. On the general subject of ancient metallurgy, see Wilkinsoh’s *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, vol. iii. chapter ix.

^{<K2b>} **Job 28:3.** *He setteth an end to darkness* That is, man does. The reference here is undoubtedly to the operations of mining, and the idea is, that man delves into the darkest regions; he goes even to the outer limits of darkness; he penetrates everywhere. Probably the allusion is derived from the custom of carrying torches into mines.

And searcheth out all perfection Makes a complete search; examines everything; carries the matter to the utmost. The idea is not that he searches out all perfection — as our translation would seem to convey; but that he makes a complete and thorough search — and yet after all he does not come to the true and highest wisdom.

The stones of darkness The last stone, says Herder, in the mining investigations in the time of Job; the corner or boundary stone, as it were, of the kingdom of darkness and night. Prof. Lee supposes that there is allusion here to the fact that stones were used as “weights,” and that the idea is, that man had ascertained the “exact weight” of the gross darkness, that is, had taken an accurate admeasurement of it, or had wholly investigated it. But this solution seems far-fetched. Schultens supposes the center of the earth to be denoted by this expression. But it seems to me that the words “stone” and “darkness” are to be separated, and that the one is not used to qualify the other. The sense is, that man searches out everything; he perfectly and accurately penetrates everywhere, and

examines all objects; “the stone” bā ,^{<h68>} that is, the rocks, the mines; “the darkness” l pād ^{<h652>}, that is, the darkness of the cavern, the interior of the earth; “and the shadow of death” twml jkæ ,^{<h657>} that is, the most dark and impenetrable regions of the earth. So it is rendered by Coverdale: “The stones, the dark, and the horrible shadow.”

~~<830>~~ **Job 28:4.** *The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant* It would be difficult to tell what idea our translators affixed to this sentence, though it seems to be a literal version of the Hebrew. There has been a great variety of rendering given to the passage. Noyes translates it:

*“From the place where they dwell they open a shaft,
Unsupported by the feet,
They are suspended, they swing away from men.”*

Herder:

*“A flood goeth out from the realm of oblivion,
They draw it up from the foot of the mountain,
They remove it away from men.”*

According to this, the meaning, Herder says, would be, that “the dwelling of the forgotten would be the kingdom of the dead, and at greater depth than the deepest mines have reached. Streams break forth from the river of eternal oblivion beneath, and yet are overcome by the miners, pumped dry, and turned out of the way. “Yet I confess,” says he, “the passage remains obscure to my mind.” Coverdale renders it,

“With the river of water parteth he asunder the strange people, that knoweth no good neighborhood; such as are rude, unmannerly, and boisterous.”

The Septuagint renders it,

“The channels of brooks are choked up with sand; when to such as know not the right way strength is unavailing, and they are removed from among men.”

The difficulty of interpreting the passage has been felt by every expositor to be great; and there are scarcely two expositions alike. There can be no doubt that Job refers to mining operations, and the whole passage should be explained with reference to such works. But the obscurity may possibly arise from the fact that mining operations were then conducted in a manner

different from what they are now, and the allusion may be to some custom which was then well understood, but of which we now know nothing. A plausible interpretation, at least, has been furnished by Gesenius, and one which seems to me to be more satisfactory than any other. An explanation of the words in the passage will bring out this view. The word rendered “breaketh out” xrpæ ^{<h1655>} means to break, rend, tear through — and here refers to the act of breaking through the earth for the purpose of sinking a shaft or pit in a mine. The word rendered “flood” ljæ ^{<h15158>} means properly a stream or brook; then a valley in which a brook runs along; and here Gesenius supposes it means a shaft or pit of a mine. It may be called a [*nachal*), or valley, from the resemblance to a gully which the water has washed away by a mountain-torrent.

From the inhabitant This conveys evidently no idea as it now stands. The Hebrew is j[ri] ^{<h15973>} rwg ^{<h1481>}. The word rwg ^{<h1481>}, from which rwg ^{<h1481>} is derived, means to sojourn for a time, to dwell, as a stranger or guest; and the phrase here means, “away from any dweller or inhabitant;” that is, from where people dwell, or from the surface of the ground as the home of men; that is, under ground. Or the idea is, that it is done where no one could dwell. It could not be the abode of man.

Even the waters forgotten of the foot The words “even the waters” are supplied by the translators. The Hebrew is jkae ^{<h17911>} mi ^{<h14480>} igr ^{<h17272>}, and refers to being unsupported by the foot. They go into a place where the foot yields no support, and they are obliged to suspend themselves in order to be sustained.

They are dried up llæ ^{<h1809>}. The word llæ ^{<h1809>}, from which this is derived, means to hang down, to be pendulous, as boughs are on a tree, or as a bucket is in a well. According to this interpretation, the meaning is, that they “hang down” far from men in their mines, and swing to and fro like the branches of a tree in the wind.

They are gone away from men The word [we] ^{<h15128>}, from [we] ^{<h15128>}, means to move to and fro, to waver, to vacillate. Gr. and Latin νευω ^{<h3506>}, *nuo*, Germ. “nicken,” to nod backward and forward. The sense here is, that, far from the dwellings of people, they “wave to and fro” in their deep mines, suspended by cords. They descend by the aid of cords, and not by a firm foothold, until they penetrate the deep darkness of the earth. Other interpretations may be seen, however, defended at length in Schultens, and

in Rosenmuller — who has adopted substantially that of Schultens — in Dr. Good, and in other commentaries. Few passages in the Bible are more obscure.

Job 28:5. *As for the earth, out of it cometh bread* That is, it produces food, or the materials for bread. The idea of Job seems to be, that it was proof of great wisdom and skill on the part of man that he had carried the arts of agriculture so far. The earth in producing grain, and the arts of husbandry, were illustrative of wisdom and skill, but they did not impart the wisdom about the government of God which was desired. That was reserved to be imparted more directly by God himself, **Job 28:23ff.**

And under it is turned up as it were fire That is, on being turned up it discloses precious stones that seem to glow like coals of fire. This is the obvious sense of this passage, though a different interpretation has been given by most expositors. Job is speaking of mining. He describes the search for, gold, and silver, and precious stones. He says that one of the wonders of wisdom in the earth is, that it produces nutritious grain; another, that when the same earth is turned up it seems to rest on a bed of fire. The dark ground is made to glow by the quantity of jewels that are disclosed, and its deep recesses seem to be on fire. There is no reference here, therefore, as it seems to me. to any volcanic agency, or to any belief that the earth rests on a sea of fire. The idea has been expressed in Sergeant's "Mine:"

*“Wheresoe'er our footsteps turn,
Rubies blush and diamonds burn.”*

Luther has given to the passage a different sense. Man bringet auch Feuer unten aus der Eerie, da oben Speise auf wachst — “They bring fire from the earth beneath, where food grows up above.” Coverdale, “He bringeth food out of the earth; that which is under he consumeth with fire.” Herder, “And underneath it is changed as by fire.” Dr. Good, “Below it (the earth) windeth a fiery region.”

Job 28:6. *The stones of it are the place* Among the stones of the earth sapphires are found. “The situation of the sapphire is in alluvial soil, in the vicinity of rocks, belonging to the secondary floetz trap formation, and imbedded in gneiss.” Jameson. “The sapphire occurs in considerable abundance in the granitic alluvion of Matura and Saffragam, in Ceylon.” Davy.

Sapphires Compare the note at ^{<2541>}Isaiah 54:11. The sapphire is a precious stone, usually of a blue color, though it is sometimes yellow, red, violet, green, or white. In hardness it is inferior to the diamond only:

*“In unroll’d tufts, flowers purpled, blue and white,
Like sapphire, pearl, in rich embroidery.” — Shakespeare*

*“He tinctures rubies with their rosy hue,
And on the sapphire spreads a heavenly blue.” — Blackmore*

The mineral is, next to the diamond, the most valuable of the precious stones. The most highly prized varieties are the crimson and carmine red; these are the “Oriental ruby” of the traveler, and next to the diamond are the most valuable jewels hitherto discovered. The blue varieties — the sapphire of the jeweler — are next in value to the red. The yellow varieties — the “Oriental Topaz” of the jeweler — are of less value than the blue or true sapphire. Edinburgh Encyclopedia, article “Mineralogy.”

And it hath dust of gold Margin, or “gold ore.” Literally, “The dusts of gold are in it.” Gold is often found in the form of dust. It is obtained by washing it from the sand, and passing it over a fleece of wool, to which the gold adheres.

^{<8307>}**Job 28:7.** *There is a path which no fowl knoweth* That is, a path in searching for gold and precious stones. The miner treads a way which is unseen by the bird of keenest vision. He penetrates into the deep darkness of the earth. The object of Job is to show the wisdom and the intrepidity of man in penetrating these dark regions in searching for sapphires and gold. The most far-sighted birds could not find their way to them. The most intrepid and fearless beasts of prey dared not adventure to those dangerous regions. The word rendered “fowl” ^{<45861>}fyl æ means either a ravenous beast, ^{<2112>}Jeremiah 12:9, or more commonly a ravenous bird; see the notes at ^{<2341>}Isaiah 46:11. According to Bochart, Hieroz. P. 11. L. 11. c. viii. p. 195, the word here denotes a rapacious bird of any kind; a bird which has a keen vision.

Which the vulture’s eye hath not seen The vulture is distinguished for the remarkable keenness of its vision. On the deserts of Arabia, it is said, when a camel dies, there is almost immediately discerned far in the distant sky, what seems at first to be a mere speck. As it draws nearer it is perceived to be a vulture that had marked the camel as he fell, and that comes to prey upon it. This bird is proverbial for the keenness of its sight.

Job 28:8. *The lion's whelps* The lion that ventures into the most dangerous places in pursuit of prey, has not dared to go where man has gone in pursuit of precious stones and gold. On the words used here to designate the lion, see Bochart Hieroz P. 1. Lib. iii. c. 1.

Job 28:9. *He putteth forth his hand* That is, the miner in securing the precious metals and gems.

Upon the rock Margin, "flint." The word used here *vymLj æ*⁴²⁴⁹⁶ occurs also in ⁴⁹⁴⁴⁸Psalm 104:8. ⁴⁸⁸¹⁵Deuteronomy 8:15; 32:13. It means "flint, silex;" and the idea is, that the miner approaches the hardest substances. He penetrates even the flint in searching for precious stones. Dr. Good renders it, "Sparry ore." Michaelis renders the same word in ⁴⁸⁷¹⁵Deuteronomy 7:15, porphyry, or red granite. The idea is that nothing, however difficult, not even cutting down the hardest rocks, deters the miner from pursuing his work.

He overturneth the mountains by the roots That is, he digs under them, and they fall. The root of a mountain means its base or foundation. The following passage from Pliny (Hist. Nat. XXXiii. c. iv. 21) furnishes an admirable illustration of this passage: Tamen in silice facilius existimatur labor. Est namque terra ex quodam argillae genere glarae mixta, Candidam vocant, prope inexpugnabilis. Cuneis eam ferreis aggrediuntur, et iisdem malletis; nihilque durius putant, nisi quod inter omnia auri lama durissima est. Peracto opere cervices fornicum ab ultimo caedunt, dantque signum ruinae, eamque solus intelligit in cacumine montis pervigil. Hic voce, ictuque, repente operarios revocari jubet, pariterque ipse devolat. Mons fractus cadit in scse Iongo fragore, qui concipi humana mente non possit, et flatu incredibili. Spectant victores ruinam naturae.

Job 28:10. *He cutteth out rivers among the rocks* That is, in his operations of mining, he cuts channels for the water to flow off through the rocks. This was done, as it is now, for the purpose of drawing off the water that accumulates in mines.

His eye seeth every precious thing Every valuable mineral or precious stone that lies imbedded in the rocks. It is evident from this, that mining operations were carried to a considerable extent in the time of Job. The art of thus penetrating the earth, and laying open its secret treasures, indicate an advanced stage of society — a stage much removed from barbarism.

Job 28:11. *He bindeth the floods from overflowing* Margin, *Weeping*

The Hebrew also is “from weeping” **ykbj**^{חלובים}; referring to the water which trickles down the shaft of the mine. The idea is, that even the large streams which break out in such mines, the fountains and springs which the miner encounters in his operations, he so effectually restrains that they do not even trickle down or “weep” on the sides of the shaft, but it is left perfectly dry. This is necessary in opening mines of coal or minerals, and in making tunnels or other excavations. Yet anyone who has passed into a coal mine, through a tunnel, or into any one of the deep natural caves of the earth, will see how difficult it is to close all the places where water would trickle down. It is in fact seldom done; and if done literally in the time of Job, it indicates a very advanced state of the art of mining. In sinking a shaft, it is often necessary to pass at different depths through strata of earth where the water oozes out in abundance, and where the operations would be necessarily suspended if it could not be stopped or drawn off. The machinery necessary for this constitutes a considerable part of the expense of mining operations.

And the thing that is hid he bringeth forth to light The concealed treasures; the gold and gems that are buried deep in the earth. He brings them out of their darkness, and converts them to ornament and to use. This ends the description which Job gives of the operations of mining in his time. We may remark in regard to this description:

(1) that the illustration was admirably chosen. His object was to show that true wisdom was not to be found by human science, or by mere investigation. He selects a case, therefore, where man had shown the most skill and wisdom, and where he had penetrated farthest into darkness. He penetrated the earth; drove his shaft through rocks; closed up gushing fountains, and laid bare the treasures that had been buried for generations in the regions of night. Yet all this did not enable him fully to explain the operations of the divine government.

(2) The art of mining was carried to a considerable degree of perfection in the time of Job. This is shown by the fact that his description would apply very well to that art even as it is practiced now. Substantially the same things were done then which are done now, though we cannot suppose with the same skill, or to the same extent, or with the same perfection of machinery.

(3) The time when Job lived was in a somewhat advanced period of society. The art of working metals to any considerable extent indicates such an advance. It is not found among barbarous tribes, and even where the art is to a considerable extent known, it is long before men learn to sink shafts in the earth, or to penetrate rocks, or to draw off water from mines.

(4) We see the wisdom and goodness which God has shown in regard to the things that are most useful to man. Those things which are necessary to his being, or which are very desirable for his comfort, are easily accessible; those which are less necessary, or whose use is dangerous, are placed in deep, dark, and almost inaccessible places. The fruits of the earth are near to man; water flows every where, and it is rare that he has to dig deep for it; and when found by digging, it is a running fountain, not soon exhausted like a mine of gold; and iron, also, the most valuable of the metals, is usually placed near the surface of the earth. But the pearl is at the bottom of the ocean; diamonds and other precious stones are in remote regions or imbedded in rocks; silver runs along in small veins, often in the fissures of rocks, and extending far into the bowels of the earth. The design of placing the precious metals in these almost inaccessible fissures of the rocks, it is not difficult to understand. Had they been easily accessible, and limited in their quantity, they would long since have been exhausted — causing at one time a glut in the market, and at others absolute want. As they are now, they exercise the utmost ingenuity of man, first to find them, and then to procure them; they are distributed in small quantities, so that their value is always great; they furnish a convenient circulating medium in all countries; they afford all that is needful for ornament.

(5) There is another proof of wisdom in regard to their arrangement in the earth, which was probably unknown in the time of Job. It is the fact that the most useful of the metals are found in immediate connection with the fuel required for their reduction, and the limestone which facilitates that reduction. This is now perfectly understood by mineralogists, and it is an instance of the goodness of God, and of the wisdom of his arrangements, which ought not to be disregarded or overlooked. They who wish to examine this subject more at length, may find some admirable views in Buckland's *Geology and Mineralogy* (Bridgewater Treatises), vol. i. pp. 392-415.

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~~ **Job 28:12.** *But where shall wisdom be found?* That is, the full understanding of the plans of God — for this is the point of inquiry. The

object of Job is to show that it is not to be found in the most profound science; by penetrating to the farthest extent of which man was capable in the earth, nor by any human investigations whatever. None of these things revealed the great plans of the Almighty in reference to his moral government, and particularly to the points which engrossed the attention of Job and his friends. Where true wisdom is to be found he proceeds to state in the subsequent verses.

<8813> **Job 28:13.** *Man knoweth not the price thereof* The word rendered “price” עֵר [ע⁶¹⁸⁷] means properly that which is set in a pile or row, or which is arranged in order. Here it means preparation, equipment — that is, anything put in order, or ready, <0770> Judges 17:10. It is also used in the sense of estimation or valuation, <8815> Leviticus 5:15,18. The word “price” here, however, seems to form no proper answer to the question in the previous verse, as the question is, “where” wisdom is to be found, not what is its “value.” Many expositors have, therefore, introduced a different idea in their interpretation. Dr. Good renders it, “Man knoweth not its source.” Prof. Lee, “Man knoweth not its equal.” Herder, “Man knoweth not the seat thereof.” Coverdale, “No man can tell how worthy a thing she is.” The Septuagint renders it, “Man knoweth not — ὁδον <3598> αὐτης <846> — her way.” But the word used here is not employed to denote a “place” or “way,” and the true interpretation doubtless is, that Job does not confine himself to a strict answer of the question proposed in <8812> Job 28:12, but goes on to say that man could not buy it; he could neither find it, nor had he the means of purchasing it with all the wealth of which he was the owner.

Neither is it found in the land of the living That is, it is not found among human beings. We must look to a higher source than man for true wisdom; compare <2381> Isaiah 38:11; 53:8.

<8814> **Job 28:14.** *The depth saith* This is a beautiful personification. The object of this verse and the following is, to show that wisdom cannot be found in the deepest recesses to which man can penetrate, nor purchased by anything which man possesses. It must come from God only. The word “depth” here μωθ[η] <8415> means properly a wave, billow, surge; then a mass of waters, a flood, or the deep ocean, <8817> Deuteronomy 8:7; <0071> Genesis 7:11; <8816> Psalm 36:6; and then a gulf, or abyss. It refers here to the sea, or ocean; and the idea is, that its vast depths might be sounded, and true wisdom would not be found there.

Job 28:15. *It cannot be gotten for gold* Margin, “fine gold shall not be given for it.” The word which is here rendered “gold.” and in the margin “fine gold” **dwgs**^{†15458}, is not the common word used to denote this metal. It is derived from **rgæ**^{†15462}, to “shut,” to “close,” and means properly that which is “shut up” or “enclosed;” and hence, Gesenius supposes it means pure gold, or the most precious gold, as that which is shut up or enclosed with care. Dr. Good renders it “solid gold,” supposing it means that which is condensed, or beaten. The phrase occurs in nearly the same form **bhz**^{†12091} **rgæ**^{†15462}, “gold shut up,” Margin,) in **1 Kings** 6:20,21; 7:49,50; 10:21; **2 Chronicles** 4:21,22; 9:20, and undoubtedly denotes there the most precious kind of gold. Its relation to the sense of the verb “to shut up” is not certain. Prof. Lee supposes that the idea is derived from the use of the word, and of similar words in Arabic, where the idea of heating, fusing, giving another color, changing the shape, and thence of fixing, retaining, etc., is found; and that the idea here is that of fused or purified gold. Michaelis supposes that it refers to “native” gold that is pure and unadulterated, or the form of gold called “dendroides,” from its shooting out in the form of a tree — “baumartig gewachsenes Gold” (from the Arabic, “a tree”). It is not known, however, that the Hebrew word **rgs** was always used to denote a tree. There can be no doubt that the word denotes “gold” of a pure kind, and it may have been given to it because gold of that kind was carefully “shut up” in places of safe keeping; but it would seem more probable to me that it was given to it for some reason now unknown. Of many of the names now given by us to objects which are significant, and which are easily understood by us, it would be impossible to trace the reason or propriety, after the lapse of four thousand years.

Neither shall silver be weighed That is, it would be impossible to weigh out so much silver as to equal its value. Before the art of coining was known, it was common to weigh the precious metals that were used as a medium of trade; compare **Genesis** 23:16.

Job 28:16. *The gold of Ophir* Uniformly spoken of as the most precious gold; see the notes at **Job** 22:24.

With the precious onyx The onyx is a semi-pellucid gem, with variously colored veins or zones. It is a variety of the chalcedony. The Arabic word denotes that which was of two colors, where the white predominated. The

Greeks gave the name “onyx” (ονυξ) to the gem from its resemblance to the color of the thumbnail; see Passow.

Or the sapphire See the notes at ^{<8816>}Job 28:6.

^{<8817>}**Job 28:17.** *The gold and the crystal* A crystal, in chemistry, is an inorganic body which, by the operation of affinity, has assumed the form of a regular solid, terminated by a number of plane and smooth surfaces. It is round in various forms and sizes, and is composed of a great variety of substances. The common “rock crystal” is a general name for all the transparent crystals of quartz, particularly of limpid or colorless quartz. “Webster.” The word used here ^{࡙>}tykllkz] occurs nowhere else in the Bible. It is from ^{ࡗ>}hkz;, to be clean, pure; and is given to the crystal on account of its transparency. In Arabic the word means either glass or crystal. Jerome translates it, “vitrum” — glass; the Septuagint ^{Â>}υαλος — crystal, or the “lapis crystallinus.” Hesychius says that the crystal denotes ^{ப>}λαμπρον κρυος — “clear ice” or, ^{௝>}λιθον τιμιον — “a precious stone.” There is no reason to suppose that “glass” was known so early as this, and the probability is that the word here denotes something like the rock crystal, having a strong resemblance to the diamond, and perhaps then regarded as nearly of equal value. It cannot be supposed that the relative value of gems was then understood as it is now.

Jewels of fine gold Margin, “vessels.” The Hebrew word ^{ห>}yl K] properly means vessels, or instruments. It may refer here, however, to ornaments for the person, as it was in that way chiefly that gold was employed.

^{<8818>}**Job 28:18.** *No mention shall be made of coral* That is, as a price by which to purchase wisdom, or in comparison with wisdom. The margin here is, “Ramoth” — retaining the Hebrew word ^{ᰯ>}hmar;. Jerome renders it, “excelsa” — exalted or valuable things. So the Septuagint, ^{ക>}Μετewρα — exalted or sublime things; as if the word were from ^{࡙>}μwr;, to be exalted. According to the rabbis, the word here means “red coral.” It occurs also in ^{ຄ>}Ezekiel 27:16, where it is mentioned as a valuable commodity in merchandise in which Syria traded with Tyre, and occurs in connection with emeralds, purple, brodered work, fine linen, and agate. The coral is a well known marine substance, not valued now as if it were a precious stone, but probably in the time of Job regarded as of value sufficient to be reckoned with gems. It was not rare, though its uses were

not known. As a beautiful object, it might at that time deserve to be mentioned in connection with pearls. It is now found in abundance in the Red Sea, and probably that which was known to Job was obtained there. Shaw says, "In rowing gently over it (the port Tor), while the surface of the sea was calm, such a diversity of "Madrepores Furuses," and other marine vegetables, presented themselves to the eye, that we could not forbear taking them, as Pliny (L. xiii. cap. 25) had done before us, for a forest under water. The branched Madrepores particularly contributed very much to authorize the comparison, for we passed over several that were eight or ten feet high, growing sometimes pyramidal like the cypress, and at other times had their branches more open and diffused, like the oak; not to speak of others which, like the creeping plants, spread themselves over the bottom of the sea;" Travels, p. 384, Ed. Oxford, 1738. It should be added, however, that there is no absolute certainty that Job referred here to coral. The Hebrew word would suggest simply that which was "exalted in value," or of great price; and it is not easy to determine to what particular substance Job meant to apply it.

Or of pearls **vyb̄ḡ**^{<h1378>}. This word occurs nowhere else, though **vyb̄ḡ** **ḡ**^{<h417>}, is found in ^{<h331>}Ezekiel 13:11,13; 38:22, where it means hailstones, or pieces of ice. Perhaps the word here means merely "crystal" — resembling ice. So Umbreit Gesenius, and others, understand it. Prof. Lee supposes that the word used here denotes that which is "aggregated" and then what is "massive," or "vast;" see his note on this place. Jerome renders it, "eminentia" — exalted, lofty things; the Septuagint retains the word without attempting to translate it — **γαβις** — and the fact that they have not endeavored to render it, is a strong circumstance to show that it is now hopeless to attempt to determine its meaning.

Above rubies The ruby is a precious stone of a carmine red color, sometimes verging to violet. There are two kinds of rubies, the oriental or corundum, and the spinelle. The ruby is next in hardness to the diamond, and approaches it in value. The oriental ruby is the same as the sapphire. The ruby is found in the kingdom of Pegu, in the Mysore country, in Ceylon, and in some other places, and is usually imbedded in gneiss. It is by no means certain, however, that the word used here **yn̄p̄**^{<h6443>} means rubies. Many of the rabbis suppose that "pearls" are meant by it; and so Bochart, Hieroz. ii. Lib. v. c. 6,7, understands it. John D. Michaelis understands it to mean "red corals," and Gesenius concurs with this opinion. Umbreit

renders it, “Perlen” — “pearls.” The word occurs in ^{<21815>}Proverbs 3:15; 8:11; 20:15; 31:10; ^{<21417>}Lamentations 4:7. In the Proverbs, as here, it is used in comparison with wisdom, and undoubtedly denotes one of the precious gems.

^{<33819>}**Job 28:19.** *The topaz* The topaz is a precious stone, whose colors are yellow, green, blue, and red. Its natural place is in various primitive rocks, such as the topaz-rock, gneiss, and clay-slate. It is found in the granite and gneiss districts of Mar and Cairnaorta, in Cornwall, in Brazil, and in various other places. The most valuable stones of this kind now known are those which are found in Brazil. This gem is much prized by jewelers, and is considered as one of the more beautiful ornamental stones. The Hebrew word **hdfp̄** ^{<16357>}, occurs in ^{<12817>}Exodus 28:17; 39:10; ^{<45813>}Ezekiel 28:13. and in this place only. It is uniformly rendered topaz. It is not improbable that the English word “topaz,” and the Greek **τοπαζιον** ^{<5116>}, are derived from this, by a slight transposition of the letters — **hdfp̄**. The Vulgate and the Septuagint render this “topaz.”

Of Ethiopia Hebrew **vWK** ^{<13568>} — “Cush.” Coverdale here renders it, “India.” On the meaning of this word, and the region denoted by it, see the notes at ^{<23111>}Isaiah 11:11. It may mean either the part of Africa now known as Ethiopia, or Abyssinia and Nubia; the southern part of Arabia, or the Oriental Cush in the vicinity of the Tigris. It is better, since the word has such ambiguity, to retain the original, and to translate it “Cush.” For anything that appears, this may have denoted, in the time of Job, the southern part of Arabia. It is known that the topaz was found there. Thus, Pliny says, Lib. XXXvii. 32, Reperta est — in Arabiae insula, quae Citis vocatur; in qua Troglodytae praedones, diutius fame — prossi cum herbas radicesque effoderant, eruerunt topazion.

^{<33821>}**Job 28:20.** *Whence then cometh wisdom?* This question is now repeated from ^{<33812>}Job 28:12, in order to give it greater emphasis. It is designed to fix the attention on the inquiry as one which found no solution in the discoveries of science, and whose solution was hidden from the most penetrating human intellect.

^{<33821>}**Job 28:21.** *It is hid from the eyes of all living* That is, of all people, and of all animals. Man has not found it by the most sagacious of all his discoveries, and the keenest vision of beasts and fowls has not traced it out.

And kept close Hebrew “concealed.”

From the fowls of the air Compare the notes at ^{<8307>}Job 28:7. Umbreit remarks, on this passage, that there is attributed to the fowls in Oriental countries a deep knowledge, and an extraordinary gift of divination, and that they appear as the interpreters and confidants of the gods. One cannot but reflect, says he, on the personification of the good spirit of Ormuzd through the fowls, according to the doctrine of the Persians (Compare Creutzer’s *Symbolik* Thessalonians 1. s. 723); upon the ancient fowlking (Vogelkonig) Simurg upon the mountain Kap, representing the highest wisdom of life; upon the discourses of the fowls of the great mystic poet of the Persians, Ferideddin Attar, etc. Among the ancient Greeks and Romans, also, a considerable part of their divinations consisted in observing the flight of birds, as if they were endowed with intelligence, and indicated coming events by the course which they took; compare also, ^{<2103>}Ecclesiastes 10:20, where wisdom or intelligence is ascribed to the birds of the air. “Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bed-chamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.”

^{<8322>}**Job 28:22.** *Destruction* This is a personification which is exceedingly sublime. Job had spoken of the wonderful discoveries made by science, but none of them had disclosed true wisdom. It had not been discovered in the shaft which the miner sank deep in the earth; in the hidden regions which he laid open to day, nor by the birds that saw to the farthest distance, or that were regarded as the interpreters of the will of the gods. It was natural to ask whether it might not have been discovered in the vast profound of the nether world — the regions of death and of night; and whether by making a bold appeal to the king that reigned there, a response might not be heard that would be more satisfactory. In ^{<8324>}Job 28:14, the appeal had been made to the sea — with all its vast stores; here the appeal is to far deeper regions — to the nether world of darkness and of death. On the word used here ^{<h11>}wōbāe, “destruction,” see the notes at ^{<8316>}Job 26:6. It is employed here, as in that place, to denote the nether world — the abode of departed spirits — the world where those are who have been destroyed by death, and to which the destruction of the grave is the entrance.

And death Death is used here to denote “Sheol,” or the abode of the spirits of the dead. The sense is, that those deep and dark regions had simply heard the distant report of wisdom but they did not understand it, and that

if one went down there it would not be fully revealed to him. Perhaps there is an allusion to the natural expectation that, if one could go down and converse with the dead, he could find out much more than can be known on earth. It was to be presumed that they would understand much more about the unseen and future world, and about the plans and government of God, than man can know here. It was on this belief, and on the hope that some league or alliance could be made with the dead, inducing them to communicate what they knew, that the science of necromancy was founded; see the notes at ~~2389~~Isaiah 8:19.

We have heard the fame thereof We have heard the report of it, or a rumor of it. The meaning is, that they did not understand it fully, and that if man could penetrate to those dark regions, he could not get the information which he desired. Wisdom is still at such an immense distance that it is only a report, or rumor of it, which has reached us.

~~2392~~**Job 28:23.** *God understandeth the way thereof* These are doubtless the words of Job. The meaning is, that the reason of the divine dispensations could be known only to God himself. He had given no clew by which man could discover this. He might carry his investigations far into the regions of science; he could penetrate the earth, and look on the stars, but still all his investigations fell short of disclosing the reasons of the divine dispensations. The secret was lodged in his bosom, and he only could communicate it where and when he pleased. It may be added here, that this is as true now as it was in the time of Job. Man has carried the investigations of science almost infinitely further than he had then, but still by the investigations of science he has by no means superseded the necessity of revelation, or shed light on the great questions that have, in all ages, so much perplexed the race. It is only by direct communication, by his word and by his Spirit, that man can be made to understand the reason of the divine doings, and nothing is better established by the course of events than the truth on which Job here so much insists, that science cannot answer the questions of so much interest to man about the divine government.

~~2394~~**Job 28:24.** *For he looketh to the ends of the earth* That is, God sees and knows everything. He looks upon the whole universe. Man sees objects dimly; he sees but a few, and he little understands the bearing of one thing or another.

Job 28:25. *To make the weight for the winds* That is, to weigh the winds and to measure the waters — things that it would seem most difficult to do. The idea here seems to be, that God had made all things by measure and by rule. Even the winds — so fleeting and imponderable — he had adjusted and balanced in the most exact manner, as if he had “weighed” them when he made them. The air has “weight,” but it is not probable that this fact was known in the time of Job, or that he adverted to it here. It is rather the idea suggested above, that the God who had formed everything by exact rule, and who had power to govern the winds in the most exact manner, must be qualified to impart wisdom.

And he weigheth the waters Compare the notes at ^{<3402>}Isaiah 40:12ff. The word rendered “weigheth” in this place ^{<48505>}ִכְּאֵ means either to “weigh,” or to “measure,” ^{<3402>}Isaiah 40:12. As the “measure” here is mentioned, it rather means probably to adjust, to apportion, than to weigh. The waters are dealt out by measure; the winds are weighed. The sense is, that though the waters of the ocean are so vast, yet God has adjusted them all with infinite skill, as if he had dealt them out by measure; and having done this, he is qualified to explain to man the reason of his doings.

Job 28:26. *When he made a decree for the rain* A statute or law ^{<42706>}qj ם by which the rain is regulated. It is not sent by chance or hazard. It is under the operation of regular and settled laws. We cannot suppose that those laws were understood in the time of Job, but the fact might be understood that the rain was regulated by laws, and that fact would show that God was qualified to impart wisdom. His kingdom was a kingdom of settled law and not of chance or caprice, and if the rain was regulated by statute, it was fair to presume that he did not deal with his people by chance, and that afflictions were not sent without rule; compare the notes at ^{<41815>}Job 5:6.

And a way A path through which the rapid lightning should pass — referring, perhaps, to the apparent “opening” in the clouds in which the lightning seems to move along.

The lightning of the thunder The word “lightning” here ^{<42385>}zyzj properly means “an arrow,” from ^{<42385>}zzj , obsolete, to pierce through, to transfix, to perforate; and hence, the lightning — from the rapidity with which it passes — like an arrow. The word “thunder” ^{<41696>}l wq means voices, and

hence, “thunder,” as being by way of eminence the voice of God; compare ^{<1918>}Psalm 29:3-5. The whole expression here means “the thunder-flash.” Coverdale renders this, “when he gave the mighty floods a law;” but it undoubtedly refers to the thunderstorm, and the idea is, that he who controls the rapid lightning, regulating its laws and directing its path through the heavens, is qualified to communicate truth to people, and can explain the great principles on which his government is administered.

^{<1887>}**Job 28:27.** *Then did he see it* That is, then did he see wisdom. When in the work of creation he gave laws to the rain and the thunder storm; when he weighed out the winds and measured out the waters, then he saw and understood the principles of true wisdom. There is a remarkable similarity between the expression here and ^{<1887>}Proverbs 8:27-30,

“When he prepared the heavens, I (wisdom) was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth; when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the foundations of the deep; when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth; then I was by him as one brought up with him; I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.”

And declare it Margin, “number.” The word ^{<1508>}רָפָא means, however, rather to “declare,” or to “narrate;” and the idea is, that even then he made known to intelligent beings the true principles of wisdom, as consisting in the fear of the Lord, and in suitable veneration for the Most High. “In what way” this was made known, Job does not say; but there can be no doubt of the fact to which he adverts, that even in his time the great principles of all real wisdom were made known to created intelligences, as consisting in profound veneration of God, in a willingness to bow under his dispensations, and to confide in him.

He prepared it Made it a matter of “thought” and “inquiry” to find out what was real wisdom, and communicated it in a proper way to his creatures. The idea is, that it was not the result of chance, nor did it spring up of its own accord, but it was a matter of “intelligent investigation” on the part of God to know what constituted true wisdom. Probably, also, Job here means to refer to the attempts of man to investigate it, and to say that its value was enhanced from the fact that it had even required “the search

of God” to find it out. Beautiful eulogiums of Wisdom may be seen in the Apocryphal book Ecclesiasticus, of which the following is a specimen:

Wisdom shall praise herself, And shall glory in the midst of her people. In the congregation of the Most High shall she open her mouth, And triumph before his power. I came out of the mouth of the Most High, And covered the earth as a cloud. I dwell in high places, And my throne is in a cloudy pillar. I alone compassed the circuit of heaven, And walked in the bottom of the deep. In the waves of the sea, and in all the earth, And in every people and nation, I got a possession. He created me from the beginning, before the world, And I shall never fall. *Ecclus. 24*

~~1838~~ **Job 28:28.** *And unto man he said* At what time, or how, Job does not say. Prof. Lee supposes that this refers to the instruction which God gave in Paradise to our first parents; but it may rather be supposed to refer to the universal tenor of the divine communications to man, and to all that God had said about the way of true wisdom. The meaning is, that the substance of all that God had said to man was, that true wisdom was to be found in profound veneration of him.

The fear of the LORD, that is wisdom The word “Lord” here is improperly printed in small capitals, as if the word were *hwDy*^{h3068} — Yahweh. The original word is, however, *wnda*^{<h136>} — Adonai; and the fact is worthy of notice, because one point of the argument respecting the date of the book turns on the question whether the word Yahweh occurs in it; see the notes at ~~1819~~ Job 12:9. The fear of the Lord is often represented as true wisdom; ~~2007~~ Proverbs 1:7; 14:27; 15:33; 19:23; ~~1910~~ Psalm 111:10, et al. The meaning here is, that real wisdom is connected with a proper veneration for God, and with submission to him. We cannot understand his ways. Science cannot conduct us up to a full explanation of his government, nor can the most profound investigations disclose all that we would wish to know about God. In these circumstances, true wisdom is found in humble piety; in reverence for the name and perfections of God; in that veneration which leads us to adore him, and to believe that he is right, though clouds and darkness are round about him. To this conclusion Job, in all his perplexities, comes, and here his mind finds rest.

And to depart from evil is understanding To forsake every evil way must be wise. In doing that, man knows that he cannot err. He walks safely who

abandons sin, and in forsaking every evil way he knows that he cannot but be right. He may be in error when speculating about God, and the reasons of his government; he may be led astray when endeavoring to comprehend his dealings; but there can be no such perplexity in departing from evil. There he knows he is right. There his feet are on a rock. It is better to walk surely there than to involve ourselves in perplexity about profound and inscrutable operations of the divine character and government. It may be added here, also, that he who aims to lead a holy life, who has a virtuous heart, and who seeks to do always what is right, will have a clearer view of the government and truth of God, than the most profound intellect can obtain without a heart of piety; and that without that, all the investigations of the most splendid talents will be practically in vain.

NOTES ON JOB 29

Job 29:1. *Moreover, Job continued his parable* See the notes at **Job 27:1**. It is probable that Job had paused to see if anyone would attempt a reply. As his friends were silent, he resumed his remarks and went into a more full statement of his sufferings. The fact that Job more than once paused in his addresses to give his friends an opportunity to speak, and that they were silent when they seemed called upon to vindicate their former sentiments, was what particularly roused the wrath of Elihu and induced him to answer; **Job 32:2-5**.

Job 29:2. *Oh that I were* Hebrew “Who will give?” a common mode of expressing a wish; compare **Job 6:8; 11:5; 13:5; 23:3**.

As in months past O that I could recall my former prosperity, and be as was when I enjoyed the protection and favor of God. Probably one object of this wish was that his friends might see from what a state of honor and happiness he had been brought down. They complained of him as impatient. He may have designed to show them that his lamentations were not unreasonable, when it was borne in mind from what a state of prosperity he had been taken, and to what a condition of woe he had been brought. He, therefore, goes into this extended description of his former happiness, and dwells particularly upon the good which he was enabled then to do, and the respect which was shown him as a public benefactor. A passage strikingly similar to this occurs in Virgil, *Aeneid* viii. 560:

*O mihi praeteritos referat si Jupiter annos!
Quails eram, cum primam aciem Praeneste sub ipsa
Stravi, scutorumque incendi victor acervos.*

*“O would kind heaven my strength and youth recall,
Such as I was beneath Praeneste’s wall;
There where I made the foremost foes retire,
And set whole heaps of conquered shields on fire!”*

Job 29:3. *When his candle shined upon my head* Margin, or, “lamp;” compare Notes **Job 18:6**. It was remarked in the note on that place, that it was common to have lamps or lights always burning in a house or tent. When Job speaks of the lamps shining “on his head,” the allusion is probably to the custom of suspending a lamp from the ceiling — a custom

which prevails among the wealthy Arabs. “Scott.” Virgil speaks of a similar thing in the palace of Dido:

— *Dependent lychni laquearibus aureis Incensi.*
Aeneid i. 726.

“*From gilded roofs depending lamps display*
Nocturnal beams that imitate the day.” — *Dryden*

See, also Lucretius, ii. 24. Indeed the custom is common everywhere and the image is a beautiful illustration of the divine favor — of light and happiness imparted by God, the great source of blessedness from above. The Hebrew word rendered “shined” | | **šē**^{h1984} has been the occasion of some perplexity in regard to its form. According to Ewald, Hebrew Gram. p. 471, and Gesenius, Lex, it is the Hiphil form of | | **šē**^{h1984} — to shine, the He preformative being dropped. The sense is, “In his causing the light to shine.” Others suppose that it is the infinitive of the Qal, with a pleonastic suffix; meaning “when it shined;” i.e., the light. The sense is essentially the same; compare Schultens and Rosenmuller in loco.

And when by his light Under his guidance and direction.

I walked through darkness “Here is reference probably to the fires or other lights which were carried before the caravans in their nightly travels through the deserts.” “Noyes.” The meaning is, that God afforded him protection, instruction, and guidance. In places, and on subjects that would have been otherwise dark, he counselled and led him. He enjoyed the manifestations’ of the divine favor; his understanding was enlightened, and he was enabled to comprehend subjects that would have been otherwise perplexing and difficult. He refers, probably, to the inquiries about the divine government and administration, and to the questions that came before him as a magistrate or an umpire — questions that he was enabled to determine with wisdom.

<830>**Job 29:4.** *As I was in the days of my youth* The word here rendered “youth” **ānj ō**^{h2779}, properly means “autumn — from” **ānjē**^{h2778}, to “pluck, pull,” as being the time when fruits are gathered. Then it means that which is mature; and the meaning here is probably “mature” or “manly” — “As I was in the days of my ripeness;” that is, of my vigor or strength. The whole passage shows that it does not mean “youth,” for he goes on to describe the honor and respect shown to him when in mature life. So the Septuagint

— ὅτε ^{<3753>} ημην ^{<2252>} επιβριθων ὄδους ^{<3598>} — “When I made heavy or laded my ways,” an expression referring to autumn as being laden with fruit. So we speak of the spring, the autumn, and the winter of life, and by the autumn denote the maturity of vigor, experience, and wisdom. So the Greeks used the word *οπωρα* ^{<3703>}, Pindar, Isthm. 2,7,8; Nem. 5,10, Aeschyl. Suppl. 1005,1022. So Ovid:

Excessit Autumnus posito fervore juventae Maturus, mitisque inter juvenemque senemque; Temperie medius, sparsis per tempora canis. Inde senilis hiems tremulo venit horrida passu. Aut spoliata suos, aut. quos habet, alba capillos. — Metam. 15. 200.

The wish of Job was, that he might be restored to the vigor of mature life, and to the influence and honors which he had then, or rather, perhaps, it was that they might have a view of what he was then, that they might see from what a height he had fallen, and what cause he had of complaint and grief.

When the secret of God was upon my tabernacle The meaning of this language is not clear, and considerable variety has obtained in the interpretation. The Septuagint renders it, “When God watched over — *επισκοπη* ^{<1984>} *εποιειτο* — my house.” Vulgate, “When God was secretly in my tabernacle.” Noyes, “When God was the friend of my tent.” Coverdale renders the whole, “As I stood when I was wealthy and had enough; when God prospered my house.” Umbreit, Als noch traulich Gott in meinem Zette weilte — “When God remained cordially in my tent.” Herder, “When God took counsel with me in my tent.” The word rendered “secret” *dwθ* ^{<45475>}, means a “couch” or “cushion” on which one reclines, and then a divan, or circle of friends sitting together in consultation; see the word explained in the notes at ^{<8158>}Job 15:8. The idea here probably is, that God came into his tent or dwelling as a friend, and that Job was, as it were, admitted to the secrecy of his friendship and to an acquaintance with his plans.

^{<8916>}**Job 29:5.** *When the Almighty was yet with me* Job regarded God as withdrawn from him. He now looked back with deep interest to the time when he dwelt with him.

^{<8916>}**Job 29:6.** *When I washed my steps with butter* On the word rendered “butter,” see the notes at ^{<23715>}Isaiah 7:15. It properly means curdled milk. Umbreit renders it, Sahne; cream. Noyes, milk, and so Wemyss. The

Septuagint, “When my ways flowed with butter” — **βουτυρω** . So Coverdale, “When my ways ran over with butter.” Herder, “And where I went a stream of milk flowed on.” The sense may be, that cream or butter was so plenty that he was able to make use of it for the most common purposes — even for that of washing his feet. That butter was sometimes used for the purpose of anointing the feet — probably for comfort and health — as oil was for the head, is mentioned by Oriental travelers. Hassilquist (Travels in Palestine, p. 58), speaking of the ceremonies of the priests at Magnesia on holy Thursday, says,

“The priest washed and dried the feet, and afterward besmeared them with butter, which it was alleged was made from the first milk of a young cow.”

Bruce says that the king of Abyssinia daily anointed his head with butter. Burder in Rosenmuller’s *alte u. neue Morgenland*, in loc. It is possible that this use of butter was as ancient as the time of Job, and that he here alludes to it, but it seems more probable that the image is designed to denote superfluity or abundance; and that where he trod, streams of milk or cream flowed — so abundant was it round him. The word rendered “steps” **Ēyl h**,^{<h1978>} does not properly denote “the feet” but “the tread, the going, the stepping.” This sense corresponds with that of the other member of the parallelism.

And the rock poured me out rivers of oil Margin, “with me.” The idea is, that the very rock near which he stood, seemed to pour forth oil. Instead of water gushing out, such seemed to be the abundance with which he was blessed, that the very rock poured out a running stream of oil. Oil was of great value among the Orientals. It was used as an article of food, for light, for anointing the body, and as a valuable medicine. To say, then, that one had abundance of oil, was the same as to say that he had ample means of comfort and of luxury. Perhaps by the word “rock” here, there is an allusion to file places where olives grew. It is said that those which produced the best oil grew upon rocky mountains. There may be, also, an allusion to this in ^{<16213>}Deuteronomy 32:13: “He made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock.” Prof. Lee, and some others, however, understand here by the rock, the press where oil was extracted from olives, and which it is supposed was sometimes made of stone.

Job 29:7. *When I went out to the gate* The “gate” of a city was a place of public concourse, and where courts were usually held. Job speaks here as a magistrate, and of the time when he went forth to sit as a judge, to try causes.

When I prepared my seat in the street That is, to sit as a judge. The seat or tribunal was placed in the street, in the open air, before the gate of the city, where great numbers might be convened, and hear and see justice done. The Arabs, to this day, hold their courts of justice in an open place, under the heavens, as in a field or a market-place. Norden’s Travels in Egypt, ii. 140. There has been, however, great variety of opinion in regard to the meaning of this verse. Schultens enumerates no less than ten different interpretations of the passage. Herder translates it:

*“When from my house I went to the assembly,
And spread my carpet in the place of meeting.”*

Prof. Lee translates it, “When I went forth from the gate to the pulpit, and prepared my seat in the broad place.” He supposes that Job refers to occasions when he addressed the people, and to the respect which was shown him then. Dr. Good renders it, “As I went forth, the city rejoiced at me.” It is probable, however, that our common version has given the true signification. The word rendered “city” *trq*,^{<47176>} is a poetic form for *hyrḡi*^{<47151>} “city,” but does not frequently occur. It is found in ^{<4188>}Proverbs 8:3; 9:3,14; 11:11. The phrase “upon the city” — Hebrew *l [ʿ]*^{<45921>} *trq*,^{<47176>} — or, “over the city,” may refer to the fact that the gate was in an elevated place, or that it was the chief place, and, as it were, over or at the head of the city. The meaning is, that as he went out from his house toward the gate that was situated in the most important part of the city, all did him reverence.

Job 29:8. *The young men saw me, and hid themselves* That is, they retired as if awed at my presence. They gave place to me, or reverently withdrew as I passed along.

And the aged arose, and stood up They not merely rose, but they continued to stand still until I had passed by. “This is a most elegant description, and exhibits most correctly the great reverence and respect which was paid, even by the old and the decrepit, to the holy man, in passing along the streets, or when he sat in public. They not only rose,

which in men so old was a great mark of distinction, but they stood; and they continued to do it, though the attempt was so difficult.” Lowth. The whole image presents a beautiful illustration of Oriental manners, and of the respect paid to a man of known excellence of character and distinction.

Job 29:9. *The princes refrained talking* As a mark of respect, or in awe of his presence.

And laid their hand on their mouth To lay the finger or the hand on the mouth is every where an action expressive of silence or respect; Notes, **Job 21:5.**

“In one of the subterranean vaults of Egypt, where the mummies lie buried, they found in the coffin an embalmed body of a woman, before which was placed a figure of wood, representing a youth on his knees, laying a finger on his mouth, and holding in his other hand a sort of chafing dish, which was placed on his head, and in which, without doubt, had been some perfumes.” Maillet.

Job 29:10. *The nobles* Margin, “The voice of the nobles was hid.” Literally, this may be rendered, “as to the voice the nobles hid themselves;” or the phrase here employed **לִשְׁמֵרָם** **דַּיְגִין** (HDN-2244) may be rendered, “the voice of the nobles was hid” — it being common in the Hebrew when two nouns come together, of different numbers and gender, for the verb to conform to the latter. Rosenmuller. The word “nobles” here is to be understood in the sense of “counsellors,” or men of rank. They would now be called “Emirs,” or “Sheiks.”

And their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth They were so awed by my presence that they could not speak.

Job 29:11. *When the ear heard me.* A personification for “they who heard me speak, blessed me.” That is, they commended or praised me.

And when the eye saw me All who saw me.

It gave witness to me That is, the fixed attention to what he said and the admiration which was shown by the eyes of the multitudes, were witnesses of the respect and honor in which he was held. Gray has a beautiful expression similar to this when he says,

“He reads his history in a nation’s eyes.”

Job 29:12. *Because I delivered the poor that cried* This is spoken of himself as a magistrate or judge — for the whole description relates to that. The meaning is, that when the poor man, who had no means of employing counsel, brought his cause before him, he heard him and delivered him from the grasp of the oppressor. He never made an appeal to him in vain; compare ^{<2013>}Proverbs 21:13; 24:11,12.

And the fatherless The orphan who brought his cause before him. He became the patron and protector of those whose natural protectors — their parents — had been removed by death; compare the notes at ^{<2017>}Isaiah 1:17.

And him that had none to help him The poor man who had no powerful patron. Job says that, as a magistrate, he particularly regarded the cause of such persons, and saw that justice was done them — a beautiful image of the administration of justice in patriarchal times. This is the sense in which our translators understood this. But the parallelism seems rather to require that this should be applied to the fatherless who had no one to aid him, and the Hebrew, by understanding the waw (w) conjunctive as meaning “when,” will bear this construction. So it is understood by Rosenmuller, Umbreit, Herder, and Noyes.

Job 29:13. *The blessing of him that was ready to perish ...* Of the man who was falsely accused, and who was in danger of being condemned, or of him who was exposed to death by poverty and want.

And I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy By becoming her patron and friend; by vindicating her cause, and saving her from the oppressive exactions of others; compare ^{<2017>}Isaiah 1:17.

Job 29:14. *I put on righteousness* Or “justice” — as a magistrate, and in all his transactions with his fellow-men. It is common to compare moral conduct or traits of character with various articles of apparel; compare the notes at ^{<2015>}Isaiah 11:5; 61:10.

And it clothed me It was my covering; I was adorned with it. So we speak of being “clothed with humility;” and so, also, of the “garments of salvation.”

My judgment Or rather justice — particularly as a magistrate.

Was as a robe The word “robe” **l y[m]**^{h4598} denotes the “mantle” or outer garment that is worn by an Oriental. It constitutes the most elegant part of his dress; Notes at ^{<3101>}Isaiah 6:1. The idea is, that his strict justice was to him what the full flowing robe was in apparel. It was that for which he was best known; that by which he was distinguished, as one would be by an elegant and costly robe.

And a diadem Or, “turban”. The word used here **āynik**^{<h6797>} — is from **ānæ**^{<h6801>}, to roll, or wind around, and is applied to the turban, because it was thus wound around the head. It is applied to the mitre of the high priest (^{<3105>}Zechariah 3:5), and may also be to a diadem or crown. It more properly here, however, denotes the “turban,” which in the East is an essential part of dress. The idea is, that he was fully clad or adorned with justice.

^{<8915>}**Job 29:15.** *I was eyes to the blind* An exceedingly beautiful expression, whose meaning is obvious. He became their counsellor and guide.

And feet was I to the lame I assisted them, and became their benefactor. I did for them, in providing a support, what they would have done for themselves if they had been in sound health.

^{<8916>}**Job 29:16.** *I was a father to the poor* I took them under my protection, and treated them as if they were my own children.

And the cause which I knew not I searched out This is according to the interpretation of Jerome. But the more probable meaning is, “the cause of him who was unknown to me, that is, of the stranger, I searched out.” So Rosenmuller, Herder, Umbreit, and Good. According to this, the sense is, that, as a magistrate, he gave particular attention to the cause of the stranger, and investigated it with care. It is possible that Job here designs specifically to reply to the charge brought against him by Eliphaz in ^{<8216>}Job 22:6ff. The duty of showing particular attention to the stranger is often inculcated in the Bible, and was regarded as essential to a character of uprightness and piety among the Orientals.

^{<8917>}**Job 29:17.** *And I brake the jaws of the wicked* Margin, “jaw-teeth, or, grinders.” The Hebrew word **h[L]tæ**^{h4973}, the same, with the letters transposed, as **ty[tl m]**, is from **[tl]**, to “bite” — and means “the biters,”

the grinders, the teeth. It is not used to denote the jaw. The image here is taken from wild beasts, with whom Job compares the wicked, and says that he rescued the helpless from their grasp, as he would a lamb from a lion or wolf.

And plucked Margin, “cast.” The margin is a literal translation, but the idea is, that he violently seized the spoil or prey which the wicked had taken, and by force tore it from him.

Job 29:18. *Then I said* So prosperous was I, and so permanent seemed my sources of happiness. I saw no reason why all this should not continue, and why the same respect and honor should not attend me to the grave.

I shall die in my nest I shall remain where I am, and in my present comforts, while I live. I shall then die surrounded by my family and friends, and encompassed with honors. A “nest” is an image of quietness, harmlessness, and comfort. So Spenser speaks of a nest:

*Fayre bosome! fraught with virtue’s richest treasure,
The nest of love, the lodging of delight,
The bowre of bliss, the paradise of pleasure.
— Sonnet LXXVI*

The image here expresses the firm hope of a long life, and of a peaceful and tranquil death. The Septuagint renders it, “My age shall grow old like the trunk of a palm tree” — *στελεχος φοινικος* ^{<5404>} — I shall live long; compare Bochart, Hieroz. P. ii. Lib. vi. c. v. p. 820, for the reason of this translation.

And I shall multiply my days as the sand Herder renders this, “the Phoenix;” and observes that the Phoenix is obviously intended here, only through a double sense of the word, the figure of the bird is immediately changed for that of the palm-tree. The rabbis generally understand by the word here rendered “sand” *l wj* ^{<4234>} the Phoenix — a fabulous bird, much celebrated in ancient times. Osaia in the book “Bereshith Rabba,” or Commentary on Genesis, says of this bird, “that all animals obeyed the woman (in eating the forbidden fruit) except one bird only by the name of *l wj* ^{<4234>}, concerning which it is said in Job, ‘I will multiply my days as the *l ytk*.’” Jannai adds to this, that

“this bird lives a thousand years, and in the end of the thousand years, a fire goes forth from its nest, and burns it up, but there remains, as it were, an egg, from which again the members grow, and it rises to life:”

compare Nonnus in Dionys. Lib. 40. Martial, Claudian, and others in Bochart, Hieroz. P. ii. Lib. vi. c. v. pp. 818-825. But the more correct rendering is, doubtless, the common one, and it is usual in the Scriptures to denote a great, indefinite number, by the sand; ^{<10217>}Genesis 22:17; ^{<100712>}Judges 7:12; Hab. 1:9. A comparison similar to this occurs in Ovid, Metam. Lib. xiv. 136ff:

— *Ego pulveris hausti*
Ostendens cumulum, quot haberet corpora pulvis,
Tot mihi natales contingere vana rogavi.

The meaning is, that he supposed his days would be very numerous. Such were his expectations — expectations so soon to be disappointed. Such was his condition — a condition so soon to be reversed. The very circumstances in which he was placed were fitted to beget a too confident expectation that his prosperity would continue, and the subsequent dealings of God with him should lead all who are in similar circumstances, not to confide in the stability of their comforts, or to suppose that their prosperity will be uninterrupted. It is difficult, when encompassed with friends and honors, to realize that there ever will be reverses; it is difficult to keep the mind from confiding in them as if they must be permanent and secure.

^{<18299>}**Job 29:19.** *My root was spread out by the waters* Margin, as the Hebrew, “opened.” The meaning is, that it was spread abroad or extended far, so that the moisture of the earth had free access to it; or it was like a tree planted near a stream, whose root ran down to the water. This is an image designed to denote great prosperity. In the East, such an image would be more striking than with us. Here green, large, and beautiful trees are so common as to excite little or no attention. In such a country as Arabia, however, where general desolation exists, such a tree would be a most beautiful object, and a most striking image of prosperity; compare DeWette on ^{<19003>}Psalm 1:3.

And the dew lay all night upon my branch In the absence of rain — which seldom falls in deserts — the scanty vegetation is dependent on the dews

that fall at night. Those dews are often very abundant. Volney (Travels i. 51) says,

“We, who are inhabitants of humid regions, cannot well understand how a country can be productive without rain, but in Egypt, the dew which falls copiously in the night, supplies the place of rain.” See, also, Shaw’s Travels, p. 379.

“To the same cause also (the violent heat of the day), succeeded afterward by the coldness of the night, we may attribute the plentiful dews, and those thick, offensive mists, one or other of which we had every night too sensible a proof of. The dews, particularly, (as we had the heavens only for our covering), would frequently wet us to the skin.”

The sense here is, as a tree standing on the verge of a river, and watered each night by copious dews, appears beautiful and flourishing, so was my condition. The Septuagint, however, renders this, “And the dew abode at night on my harvest” — και ^{<2532>} δροσος αυλισθησεται ^{<835>} εν ^{<1722>} τω ^{<3588>} θερισμω ^{<2326>} μου ^{<3450>}. So the Chaldee — *al fw ydxj b tybw*. A thought, similar to the one in this passage, occurs in a Chinese Ode, translated by Sir William Jones, in his works, vol. ii. p. 351:

*Vide illius aquae rivum
Virides arundines jucunde luxuriant!
Sic est decorus virtutibus princeps noster!*

*“Seest thou yon stream, around whose banks
The green reeds crowd in joyous ranks?
In nutrient virtue and in grace,
Such is the Prince that rules our race.” — Dr. Good*

^{<890>}**Job 29:20.** *My glory was fresh in me* Margin, “new.” “As we say, the man shall not overlive himself.” Umbreit. The idea is, that he was not exhausted; he continued in vigor and strength. The image is probably taken from that suggested in the previous verse — from a tree, whose beauty and vigor were continued by the waters, and by the dew that lay on its branches.

And my bow An emblem of vigor and strength. The ancients fought with the bow, and hence, a man who was able to keep his bow constantly

drawn, was an image of undiminished and unwearied vigor; compare ^{<1424>}Genesis 49:24: “But his bow abode in strength.”

Was renewed in my hand Margin, as in Hebrew “changed.” The meaning is, that it constantly renewed its strength. The idea is taken from a tree, which “changes” by renewing its leaves, beauty, and vigor; ^{<2390>}Isaiah 9:10; compare ^{<1847>}Job 14:7. The sense is that his bow gathered strength in his hand. The figure is very common in Arabic poetry, many specimens of which may be seen in Schultens in loco.

^{<832>}**Job 29:21.** *Unto me men gave ear* Job here returns to the time when he sat in the assembly of counsellors, and to the respectful attention which was paid to all that he said. They listened when he spoke; they waited for him to speak before they gave their opinion; and they were then silent. They neither interrupted him nor attempted a reply.

^{<832>}**Job 29:22.** *After my words they spake not again* The highest proof which could be given of deference. So full of respect were they that they did not dare to dispute him; so sagacious and wise was his counsel that they were satisfied with it, and did not presume to suggest any other.

And my speech dropped upon them That is, like the dew or the gentle rain. So in ^{<631E>}Deuteronomy 32:2:

*My doctrine shall drop as the rain;
My speech shall distil as the dew,
As the small rain upon the tender herb,
And as the showers upon the grass.*

So Homer speaks of the eloquence of Nestor,

Του και απο γλωσσης μελιτος γλυκιων ρην αυδη .

“Words sweet as honey from his lips distill’d.” — Pope

So Milton, speaking of the eloquence of Belial, says,

— Though his tongue Dropt manna, and could make the worse
appear The better reason, to perplex and dash Maturest counsels.

— Paradise Lost, B. ii.

The comparison in the Scriptures of words of wisdom or persuasion, is sometimes derived from honey, that drops or gently falls from the comb. Thus, in ^{<118B>}Proverbs 5:3:

*For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honey-comb,
And her mouth is smoother than oil,*

So in ^{<2041>}Song of Solomon 4:11:

*Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb;
Honey and milk are under thy tongue.*

^{<1822>}**Job 29:23.** *And they waited for me as for the rain* That is, as the dry and thirsty earth waits for the rain. This is a continuation of the beautiful image commenced in the previous verse, and conveys the idea that his counsel was as necessary in the assemblies of people as the rain was to give growth to the seed, and beauty to the landscape.

And they opened their mouth wide Expressive of earnest desire; compare ^{<18913>}Psalm 119:131: "I opened my mouth and panted."

As for the latter rain The early and the latter rains are frequently spoken of in the Scriptures, and in Palestine and the adjacent regions are both necessary to the harvest. The early, or autumnal rains, commence in the latter half of October, or the beginning of November, not suddenly, but by degrees, so as to give the husbandman an opportunity to sow his wheat and barley. The rains come mostly from the west, or southwest, continuing for two or three days at a time, and failing especially during the nights. During the months of November and December, they continue to fall heavily; afterward they return only at longer intervals, and are less heavy; but at no period during the winter do they entirely cease to occur. Rain continues to fall more or less during the month of March, but it is rare after that period. The latter rains denote those which fall in the month of March, and which are so necessary in order to bring forward the harvest, which ripens early in May or June. If those rains fail, the harvest materially suffers, and hence, the expressions in the Scriptures, that "the husbandman waits for that rain;" compare ^{<1847>}James 5:7; ^{<2165>}Proverbs 16:15. The expression, "the early and the latter rain" seems, unless some material change has occurred in Palestine, not to imply that no rain fell in the interval, but that those rains were usually more copious, or were especially necessary, first for sowing, and then for bringing forward the harvest. In the interval between the "latter" and the "early" rains — between March and October — rain never falls, and the sky is usually serene; see Robinson's *Bibl. Researches*, vol. ii. pp. 96-100. The meaning here is, that they who were assembled in counsel,

earnestly desired Job to speak, as the farmer desires the rain that will bring forward his crop.

Job 29:24. *If I laughed on them they believed it not* There is considerable variety in the interpretation of this member of the verse. Dr. Good renders it, "I smiled upon them, and they were gay." Herder, If I laughed at them, they were not offended." Coverdale, "When I laughed, they knew well it was not earnest." Schultens, "I will laugh at them, they are not secure." But Rosenmuller, Jun. et Trem., Noyes and Umbreit, accord with the sense given in our common translation. The Hebrew literally is, "Should I laugh upon them, they did not confide;" and, according to Rosenmuller, the meaning is, "Such was the reverence for my gravity, that if at any time I relaxed in my severity of manner, they would scarcely believe it, nor did they omit any of their reverence toward me, as if familiarity with the great should produce contempt." Grotius explains it to mean, "Even my jests, they thought, contained something serious." The word used here, however **qj æ**^{<17832>}, means not only to laugh or smile upon, but; to laugh at, or deride; **psalm**^{<18316>} Psalm 52:6: **Job**^{<18311>} Job 30:1; compare **Job**^{<18322>} Job 5:22; 39:7; 22:19. It seems to me, that the sense is that so great was his influence, that he was able to control them even with a smile, without saying a word; that if, when a measure was proposed in debate, he should even smile, though he said nothing, they would have no confidence in it, but would at once abandon it as unwise. No higher influence than this can be well conceived, and this exposition accords with the general course of remark, where Job traces along the various degrees of his influence until he comes to this, the highest of them all.

And the light of my countenance they cast not down His smile of favor on an undertaking, or his smile at the weakness or want of wisdom of any thing proposed, they could not resist. It settled the matter. They had not power by their arguments or moral courage to resist him even if he did not say a word, or even to change the aspect of his countenance. A look, a token of approbation or disapprobation from him, was enough.

Job 29:25. *I chose out their way* That is, I became their guide and counsellor. Rosenmuller and Noyes explain this as meaning, "When I came among them;" that is, when I chose to go in their way, or in their midst. But the former interpretation better agrees with the Hebrew, and with the connection. Job is speaking of the honors shown to him, and one of the highest which he could receive was to be regarded as a leader, and to have

such respect shown to his opinions that he was even allowed to select the way in which they should go; that is, that his counsel was implicitly followed.

And sat chief Hebrew “Sat head.” He was at the head of their assemblies.

And dwelt as a king in the army As a king, surrounded by a multitude of troops, all of whom were subservient to his will, and whom he could command at pleasure. It is not to be inferred from this, that Job was a king, or that he was at the head of a nation. The idea is, merely, that the same respect was shown to him which is to a monarch at the head of an army.

As one that comforteth the mourners In time of peace I was their counsellor, and in time of war they looked to me for direction, and in time of affliction they came to me for consolation. There were no classes which did not show me respect, and there were no honors which they were not ready to heap on me.

It may seem, perhaps, that in this chapter there is a degree of self-commendation and praise altogether inconsistent with that consciousness of deep unworthiness which a truly pious man should have. How, it may be asked, can this spirit be consistent with religion? Can a man who has any proper sense of the depravity of his heart, speak thus in commendation of his own righteousness, and recount with such apparent satisfaction his own good deeds? Would not true piety be more distrustful of self, and be less disposed, to magnify its own doings? And is there not here a recalling to recollection of former honors, in a manner which shows that the heart was more attached to them than that of a man whose hope is in heaven should be? It may not be possible to vindicate Job in this respect altogether, nor is it necessary for us to attempt to prove that he was entirely perfect. We are to remember, also, the age in which he lived; we are not to measure what he said and did by the knowledge which we have, and the clearer light which shines upon us. We are to bear in recollection the circumstances in which he was placed, and perhaps we shall find in them a mitigation for what seems to us to exhibit such a spirit of self-reliance, and which looks so much like the lingering love of the honors of this world. Particularly we may recall the following considerations:

(1) He was vindicating himself from charges of enormous guilt and hypocrisy. To meet these charges, he runs over the leading events of his life, and shows what had been his general aim and purpose. He reminds

them, also, of the respect and honor which had been shown him by those who best knew him — by the poor the needy, the inhabitants of his own city, the people of his own tribe. To vindicate himself from the severe charges which had been alleged against him, it was not improper thus to advert to the general course of his life, and to refer to the respect in which he had been held. Who could know him better than his neighbors? Who could be better witnesses than the poor whom he had relieved; and the lame, the blind, the sorrowful, whom he had comforted? Who could better testify to his character than they who had followed his counsel in times of perplexity and danger? Who would be more competent witnesses than the mourners whom he had comforted?

(2) It was a main object with Job to show the greatness of his distress and misery, and for this purpose he went into an extended statement of his former happiness, and especially of the respect which had been shown him. This he contrasts beautifully with his present condition, and the colors of the picture are greatly heightened by the contrast. In forming our estimate of this chapter, we should take this object into the account, and should not charge him with a design to magnify his own righteousness, when his main purpose was only to exhibit the extent and depth of his present woes.

(3) It is not improper for a man to speak of his former prosperity and happiness in the manner in which Job did. He does not speak of himself as having any merit, or as relying on this for salvation. He distinctly traces it all to God (<sup>^{R&P>}Job 29:2-5), and says that it was because he blessed him that he had enjoyed these comforts. It was not an improper acknowledgment of the mercies which he had received from his hand, and the remembrance was fitted to excite his gratitude. And although there may seem to us something like parade and ostentation in thus dwelling on former honors, and recounting what he had done in days that were past, yet we should remember how natural it was for him, in the circumstances of trial in which he then was, to revert to past scenes, and to recall the times of prosperity, and the days when he enjoyed the favor of God.

(4) It may be added, that few people have ever lived to whom this description would be applicable. It must have required uncommon and very remarkable worth to have made it proper for him thus to speak, and to be able to say all this so as not to be exposed to contradiction. The description is one of great beauty, and presents a lovely picture of patriarchal piety, and of the respect which then was shown to eminent virtue and worth. It is

an illustration of the respect that will be, and that ought to be, shown to one who is upright in his dealings with people, benevolent toward the poor and the helpless, and steady in his walk with God.

NOTES ON JOB 30

Job 30:1. *But now they that are younger than I* Margin, “of fewer days.” It is not probable that Job here refers to his three friends. It is not possible to determine their age with accuracy, but in ^{<1850>}Job 15:10, they claim that there were with them old and very aged men, much older than the father of Job. Though that place may possibly refer not to themselves but to those who held the same opinions with them, yet none of those who engaged in the discussion, except Eliphaz (^{<1856>}Job 32:6), are represented as young men. They were the contemporaries of Job; men who are ranked as his friends; and men who showed that they had had opportunities for long and careful observation. The reference here, therefore, is to the fact that while, in the days of his prosperity, even the aged and the honorable rose up to do him reverence, now he was the object of contempt even by the young and the worthless. The Orientals would feel this much. It was among the chief virtues with them to show respect to the aged, and their sensibilities were especially keen in regard to any indignity shown to them by the young.

Whose fathers I would have disdained Who are the children of the lowest and most degraded of the community. How deep the calamity to be so fallen as to be the subject of derision by such men!

To have set with the dogs of my flock To have associated with my dogs in guarding my flock. That is, they were held in less esteem than his dogs. This was the lowest conceivable point of debasement. The Orientals had no language that would express greater contempt of anyone than to call him a dog; compare ^{<1838>}Deuteronomy 23:18; ^{<1978>}1 Samuel 17:43; 24:14; ^{<1088>}2 Samuel 3:8; 9:8; 16:9; ^{<1183>}2 Kings 8:13; Note ^{<2118>}Isaiah 66:3.

Job 30:2. *Yea, whereto might the strength of their hands profit me* There has been much difference of opinion respecting the meaning of this passage. The general sense is clear. Job means to describe those who were reduced by poverty and want, and who were without respectability or home, and who had no power in any way to affect him. He states that they were so abject and worthless as not to be worth his attention; but even this fact is intended to show how low he was himself reduced, since even the most degraded ranks in life did not show any respect to one who had been

honored by princes. The Vulgate renders this, “The strength — virtue — of whose hands is to me as nothing, and they are regarded as unworthy of life.” The Septuagint, “And the strength of their hands what is it to me? Upon whom perfection — συντελεια ^{<4930>} — has perished.” Coverdale, “The power and strength of their hands might do me no good, and as for their age, it is spent and passed away without any profit.” The literal translation is, “Even the strength of their hands, what is it to me?” The meaning is, that their power was not worth regarding. They were abject, feeble, and reduced by hunger — poor emaciated creatures, who could do him neither good nor evil. Yet this fact did not make him feel less the indignity of being treated by such vagrants with scorn.

In whom old age was perished Or, rather, in whom vigor, or the power of accomplishing, anything, has ceased. The word j l k ^{<h3624>}, means “completion,” or the act or power of finishing or completing anything. Then it denotes old age — age as “finished” or “completed;” ^{<883b>} Job 5:26. Here it means the maturity or vigor which would enable a man to complete or accomplish anything, and the idea is, that in these persons this had utterly perished. Reduced by hunger and want, they had no power of effecting anything, and were unworthy of regard. The word used here occurs only in this book in Hebrew (^{<883b>} Job 5:26; 30:2), but is common in Arabic; where it refers to the “wrinkles,” the “wanness,” and the “austere aspect” of the countenance, especially in age. See “Castell’s Lex.”

^{<881b>} **Job 30:3.** *For want and famine* By hunger and poverty their strength is wholly exhausted, and they are among the miserable outcasts of society. In order to show the depth to which he himself was sunk in public estimation, Job goes into a description of the state of these miserable wretches, and says that he was treated with contempt by the very scum of society, by those who were reduced to the most abject wretchedness, and who wandered in the deserts, subsisting on roots, without clothing, shelter, or home, and who were chased away by the respectable portion of the community as if they were thieves and robbers. The description is one of great power, and presents a sad picture of his own condition.

They were solitary Margin, or, “dark as the night.” Hebrew dWml Gae ^{<41565>}. This word properly means “hard,” and is applied to a dry, stony, barren soil. In Arabic it means a hard rock. “Umbreit.” In ^{<881b>} Job 3:7, it is applied to a night in which none are born. Here it seems to denote a countenance, dry, hard, emaciated with hunger. Jerome renders it, “steriles.” The

Septuagint, *αργονος* ^{<73>} — “sterile.” Prof. Lee, “Hardly beset.” The meaning is, that they were greatly reduced — or dried up — by hunger and want. So Umbreit renders it, “gantz ausgedorrt — altogether dried up.”

Fleeing into the wilderness Into the desert or lonely wastes. That is, they “fled” there to obtain, on what the desert produced, a scanty subsistence. Such is the usual explanation of the word rendered “flee” — *qræ* ^{<h6207>}. But the Vulgate, the Syriac, and the Arabic, render it “gnawing,” and this is followed by Umbreit, Noyes, Schultens, and Good. According to this the meaning is, that they were “gnawers of the desert;” that is, that they lived by gnawing the roots and shrubs which they found in the desert. This idea is much more expressive, and agrees with the connection. The word occurs in Hebrew only in this verse and in ^{<8307>}Job 30:17, where it is rendered “My sinews,” but which may more appropriately be rendered “My gnawing pains.” In the Syriac and Arabic the word means to “gnaw,” or “corrode,” as the leading signification, and as the sense of the word cannot be determined by its usage in the Hebrew, it is better to depend on the ancient versions, and on its use in the cognate languages. According to this, the idea is, that they picked up a scanty subsistence as they could find it, by gnawing roots and shrubs in the deserts.

In the former time Margin, “yesternight.” The Hebrew word *vma*, ^{<h570>} means properly last night; the latter part of the preceding day, and then it is used to denote night or darkness in general. Gesenius supposes that this refers to “the night of desolation,” the pathless desert being strikingly compared by the Orientals with darkness. According to this, the idea is not that they had gone but yesterday into the desert, but that they went into the shades and solitudes of the wilderness, far from the homes of men. The sense then is, “They fled into the night of desolate wastes.”

Desolate and waste In Hebrew the same word occurs in different forms, designed to give emphasis, and to describe the gloom and solitariness of the desert in the most impressive manner. We should express the same idea by saying that they hid themselves in the “shades” of the wilderness.

^{<8304>}**Job 30:4.** *Who cut up mallows* For the purpose of eating. Mallows are common medicinal plants, famous for their emollient or softening properties, and the size and brilliancy of their flowers. It is not probable, however, that Job referred to what we commonly understand by the word mallows. It has been commonly supposed that he meant a species of plant,

called by the Greeks Hallimus, a sunfish plant, or “salt wort,” growing commonly in the deserts and poor land, and eaten as a salad. The Vulgate renders it simply “herbas;” the Septuagint, $\alpha\lambda\iota\mu\alpha$. The Hebrew word, according to Umbreit, means a common salad of a saltish taste, whose young leaves being cooked, constituted food for the poorer classes. The Hebrew word $\text{j } \text{מַלַּח}$ ^{<#4408>} is from $\text{j } \text{ל} \text{מַלַּח}$ ^{<#4414>}, “salt,” and properly refers to a marine plant or vegetable.

By the bushes Or among the bushes; that is, that which grew among the bushes of the desert. They wandered about in the desert that they might obtain this very humble fare.

And juniper-roots The word here rendered “juniper” מִטְרֵי ^{<#7574>}, occurs only in this place, and in ^{<#1808>}1 Kings 19:4,5; ^{<#9004>}Psalm 120:4. In each place it is rendered “juniper.” In 1 Kings it is mentioned as the tree under which Elijah sat down when he fled into the wilderness for his life; In ^{<#9004>}Psalm 120:4, it is mentioned as a material for making coals. “Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.” It is rendered “juniper” by Jerome, and by the rabbis. The verb $\text{בָּקַעַ$ ^{<#7537>} occurs in ^{<#3008>}Micah 1:13, where it is rendered “bind,” and means to bind on, to make fast; and probably the plant here referred to received its name in some way from the notion of “binding” — perhaps because its long, flexible, and slender twigs were used for binding, or for “withes.” There is no evidence, however, that the “juniper” is in any case intended. It denotes a species of “broom — spartium junceum” of Linn., which grows abundantly in the deserts of Arabia. It is the “Genista raetam” of Forskal. “Flora” Egypt. Arab. p. 214. It has small variegated blossoms, and grows in the water-courses of the Wadys. Dr. Robinson (Bibl. Researches, i. 299) says,

“The Retem is the largest and most conspicuous shrub of these deserts, growing thickly in the water-courses and valleys. Our Arabs always selected the place of encampment (if possible) in a place where it grew, in order to be sheltered by it at night from the wind; and, during the day, when they often went on in advance of the camels, we found them not unfrequently sitting or sleeping under a bush of Retem, to protect them from the sun. It was in this very desert, a day’s journey from Beersheba, that the prophet Elijah lay down and slept beneath the same shrub. The roots are very bitter,

and are regarded by the Arabs as yielding the best charcoal. The Hebrew name μtr ,^{<h7574>}, is the same as the present Arabic name.”

Burckhardt remarks, that he found several Bedouins in the Wady Genne collecting brushwood, which they burned into charcoal for the Egyptian market, and adds that they preferred for this purpose the thick roots of the shrub Rethem, which grew there in abundance. Travels in Syria, p. 483. It could have been only those who were reduced to the utmost penury and want that could have made use of the roots of this shrub for food, and this is doubtless the idea which Job means to convey. It is said to have been occasionally used for food by the poor. See Gesenius, Lex.; Umbreit in loc., and Schultens. A description of the condition of the poor, remarkably similar to this, occurs in Lucan, Lib. vii.;

— *Cernit miserabile vulgus*
In pecudum cecidisse cibos, et carpere dumos
Et morsu spoliare nemus.

Biddulph (in the collection of Voyages from the Library of the Earl of Oxford, p. 807), says he had seen many poor people in Syria gather mallows and clover, and when he had asked them what they designed to do with it, they answered that it was for food. They cooked and ate them. Herodotus, viii. 115, says, that the army of Xerxes, after their defeat, when they had consumed all the grain of the inhabitants in Thessaly, “fed on the natural produce of the earth, stripping wild and cultivated trees alike of their bark and leaves, to such an extremity of famine were they come.”

^{<h316>}**Job 30:5.** *They were driven forth from among men* As vagabonds and outcasts. They were regarded as unfit to live among the civilized and the orderly, and were expelled as nuisances.

(They cried after them as after a thief.) The inhabitants of the place where they lived drove them out with a loud outcry, as if they were thieves and robbers. A class of persons are here described who were mere vagrants and plunderers, and who were not allowed to dwell in civilized society, and it was one of the highest aggravations of the calamities of Job, that he was now treated with derision by such outcasts.

^{<h316>}**Job 30:6.** *To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys* The word here rendered “cliffs” $\times\text{Wr}$ [^{<h6178>}] denotes rather “horror,” or something “horrid,” and the sense here is, that they dwelt in “the horrer of valleys;” that is, in horrid

valleys. The idea is that of deep and frightful glens, where wild beasts ranged, far from the abodes of men, and surrounded by frightful wastes. The word rendered “valleys” **l j æe** ^{<45158>} means properly a brook, stream, water-course — what is now called a wady; a place where the winter torrents run, but which is usually dry in summer; see the notes at ^{<18165>} Job 6:15.

In caves of the earth Margin, as in Hebrew “holes.” Septuagint “Whose houses are — **τρογυλαι** petroon ^{<4074>} — caverns of the rocks;” that is, who are “Troglodytes.” Caves furnished a natural dwelling for the poor and the outcast, and it is well known that it was not uncommon in Egypt, and in the deserts of Arabia, to occupy such caves as a habitation; see Diod. Sic. Lib. iii. xiv. and Strabo, Lib. 16.

And in the rocks The caverns of the rocks. Dr. Richardson found a large number of such dwellings in the vicinity of Thebes, many of which were large and beautifully formed and sculptured with many curious devices. Mr. Rich, also, saw a large number of such caves not far from Mousal. Residence in Koordistan, vol. ii. p. 94.

^{<1810>} **Job 30:7.** *Among the bushes* Coverdale, “Upon the dry heath went they about crying.” The Hebrew word is the same which occurs in ^{<18104>} Job 30:4, and means bushes in general. They were heard in the shrubbery that grew in the desert.

They brayed **qhæe** ^{<45101>}. The Vulgate renders this, “They were concealed.” The Septuagint, “Amidst sweet sounds they cry out.” Noyes, “They utter their cries.” The Hebrew word properly means to “bray.” It occurs only here and in ^{<18105>} Job 6:5, where it is applied to the ass. The sense here is, that the voices of this vagrant and wretched multitude was heard in the desert like the braying of asses.

Under the nettles Dr. Good, “Under the briars.” Prof. Lee, “Beneath the broom-pea.” Noyes, “Under the thorns.” The Hebrew word **l wrj** ; ^{<42738>}, occurs only here and in ^{<18109>} Zephaniah 2:9, and ^{<18161>} Proverbs 24:31, in each of which places it is rendered “nettles.” It is probably derived from **l wh = rrt**, to burn, to glow, and is given to nettles from the burning or prickling sensation which they produce. Either the word nettles, thistles, or thorns, would sufficiently answer to its derivation. It does not occur in the Arabic. Castell. Umbreit renders it, “unter Dornen — under thorns.”

They were gathered together Vulgate, “They accounted it a delicacy to be in a thorn-hedge.” The word used here **j p&**^{h5596} means “to add;” and then to be added or assembled together. The idea is, that they were huddled together quite promiscuously in the wild-growing bushes of the desert. They had no home; no separate habitation. This description is interesting, not only as denoting the depth to which Job had been reduced when he was the object of contempt by such vagrants, but as illustrative of a state of society existing then.

Job 30:8. *They were children of fools* The word rendered “fools” **l bn**^{h5036}, means,

(1) stupid, foolish; and

(2) abandoned, impious; compare **1 Samuel 25:3,25.**

Here it means the worthless, the refuse of society, the abandoned. They had no respectable parentage. Umbreit, “A brood of infamy.” Coverdale, “Children of fools and villains.”

Children of base men Margin, as in Hebrew, “men of no name.” They were men of no reputation; whose ancestors had in no way been distinguished; possibly meaning, also, that they herded together as beasts without even a name.

They were viler than the earth Gesenius renders this, “They are frightened out of the land.” The Hebrew word **hak** means “to chide, to upbraid,” and then in the niphil “to be chidden away,” or “to be driven off.” The sense is, as an impious and low-born race they were driven out of the land.

Job 30:9. *And now am I their song* See **Job 17:6**; compare **Psalms 69:12**, “I was the song of the drunkards;” **Lamentations 3:14**, “I was a derision to all my people, and their song all the day.” The sense is, that they made Job and his calamities the subject of low jesting, and treated him with contempt. His name and sufferings would be introduced into their scurrilous songs to give them pith and point, and to show how much they despised him now.

Yea, I am their by-word See the notes at **Job 17:6**.

Job 30:10. *They abhor me* Hebrew, They regard me as abominable.

They flee far from me Even such an impious and low born race now will have nothing to do with me. They would consider it no honor to be associated with me, but keep as far from me as possible.

And spare not to spit in my face Margin, “withhold not spittle from.” Noyes renders this “Before my face;” and so Luther Wemyss, Umbreit, and Prof. Lee. The Hebrew may mean either to spit in the face, or to spit “in the presence” of anyone. It is quite immaterial which interpretation is adopted, since in the view of Orientals the one was considered about the same as the other. In their notions of courtesy and urbanity, he commits an insult of the same kind who spits in the presence of another which he would if he spit on him. Are they not right? Should it not be so considered every where? Yet how different their views from the more refined notions of the civilized Occidentals! In America, more than in any other land, are offences of this kind frequent and gross. Of nothing do foreigners complain of us more, or with more justice; and much as we boast of our intelligence and refinement, we should gain much if in this respect we would sit down at the feet of a Bedouin Arab, and incorporate his views into our maxims of politeness.

Job 30:11. *Because he hath loosed my cord* According to this translation, the reference here is to God, and the sense is, that the reason why he was thus derided and contemned by such a worthless race was, that God had unloosed his cord. That is, God had rendered him incapable of vindicating himself, or of inflicting punishment. The figure, according to this interpretation, is taken from a bow, and Job means to say that his bow was relaxed, his vigor was gone, and they now felt that they might insult him with impunity. But instead of the usual reading in the Hebrew text *rt̄y*,^{†13499} — “my nerve,” another reading *rt̄y*,^{†13499} — “his nerve,” is found in the qeri (margin). This reading has been adopted in the text by Jahn, and is regarded as genuine by Rosenmuller, Umbreit, and Noyes. According to this, the meaning is, that the worthless rabble that now treated him with so much contempt, had relaxed all restraint, and they who had hitherto been under some curb, now rushed upon him in the most unbridled manner. They had cast off all restraint arising from respect to his rank, standing, moral worth, and the dread of his power, and now treated him with every kind of indignity.

And afflicted me By the disrespect and contempt which they have evinced.

They have also let loose the bridle before me That is, they have cast off all restraint — repeating the idea in the first member of the verse.

Job 30:12. *Upon my right hand rise the youth* The right hand is the place of honor, and therefore it was felt to be a greater insult that they should occupy even that place. The word rendered “youth” **יְיָ אֶפְרַיִם**^{th6526} occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew Scriptures. It is probably from **יָרָע**^{th6524}, “to sprout, germinate, blossom”; and hence, would mean “a progeny,” and would be probably applied to beasts. It is rendered by Jerome, “calamities;” by the Septuagint, “Upon the right hand of the progeny, or brood (**βλαστού**^{<986>}), they rise,” where Schleusner conjectures that **βλαστοι** should be read, “On the right hand rise a brood or progeny.” Umbreit renders it, “eine Brut ... a brood.” So Rosenmuller, Noyes, and Schultens. The idea then is, that this rabble rose up, even on his right hand, as a brood of wild animals — a mere rabble that impeded his way.

They push away my feet Instead of giving place for me, they jostle and crowd me from my path. Once the aged and the honorable rose and stood in my presence, and the youth retired at my coming, but now this worthless rabble crowds along with me, jostles me in my goings, and shows me no manner of respect; compare **אֲרָבָה**^{th898} Job 29:8.

And they raise up against me the ways of their destruction They raise up against me destructive ways, or ways that tend to destroy me. The figure is taken from an advancing army, that casts up ramparts and other means of attack designed for the destruction of a besieged city. They were, in like manner, constantly making advances against Job, and pressing on him in a manner that was designed to destroy him.

Job 30:13. *They mar my path* They break up all my plans. Perhaps here, also, the image is taken from war, and Job may represent himself as on a line of march, and he says that this rabble comes and breaks up his path altogether. They break down the bridges, and tear up the way, so that it is impossible to pass along. His plans of life were embarrassed by them, and they were to him a perpetual annoyance.

They set forward my calamity Luther renders this part of the verse, “It was so easy for them to injure me, that they needed no help.” The literal translation of the Hebrew here would be, “they profit for my ruin;” that is,

they bring as it were profit to my ruin; they help it on; they promote it. A similar expression occurs in ^{<3015>}Zechariah 1:15, “I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction;” that is, they aided in urging it forward. The idea here is, that they hastened his fall. Instead of assisting him in any way, they contributed all they could to bring him down to the dust.

They have no helper Very various interpretations have been given of this phrase. It may mean, that they had done this alone, without the aid of others; or that they were persons who were held in abhorrence, and whom no one would assist; or that they were worthless and abandoned persons. Schultens has shown that the phrase, “one who has no helper,” is proverbial among the Arabs, and denotes a worthless person, or one of the lowest class. In proof of this, he quotes the Hamasa, which he thus translates, Videmus vos ignobiles, pauperes, quibus nullus ex reliquis hominibus adjutor. See, also, other similar expressions quoted by him from Arabic writings. The idea here then is, probably, that they were so worthless and abandoned that no one would help them — an expression denoting the utmost degradation.

^{<3014>}**Job 30:14.** *They came upon me as a wide breaking-in of waters* The Hebrew here is simply, “Like a wide breach they came,” and the reference may be, not to an inundation, as our translators supposed, but to an irruption made by a foe through a breach made in a wall. When such a wall fell, or when a breach was made in it, the besieging army would pour in in a tumultuous manner, and cut down all before them; compare ^{<3013>}Isaiah 30:13. This seems to be the idea here. The enemies of Job poured in upon him as if a breach was made in a wall. Formerly they were restrained by his rank and office, as a besieging army was by lofty walls; but now all these restraints were broken down, and they poured in upon him like a tumultuous army.

In the desolation they rolled themselves upon me. Among the ruins they rolled tumultuous along; or they came pitching and tumbling in with the ruins of the wall. The image is taken from the act of sacking a city, where the besieging army, having made a breach in the wall, would seem to come tumbling into the heart of the city with the ruins of the wall. No time would be wasted, but they would follow suddenly and tumultuously upon the breach, and roll tumultuously along. The Chaldee renders this as if it referred to the rolling and tumultuous waves of the sea, and the Hebrew

would admit of such a construction, but the above seems better to accord with the image which Job would be likely to use.

Job 30:15. *Terrors are turned upon me* As if they were all turned upon him, or made to converge toward him. Everything suited to produce terror seemed to have a direction given it toward him. Umbreit, and some others, however, suppose that God is here referred to, and that the meaning is, "God is turned against me terrors drive as a storm against me." The Hebrew will bear either construction; but it is more emphatic and impressive to suppose it means that everything adapted to produce terror seemed to be turned against him.

They pursue my soul as the wind Margin, my principal one. The word "they" here, refers to the terrors. In the original text, the word *ādæ*⁴⁷²⁹¹ agrees with *hhLBæ*⁴¹⁰⁹¹, terrors understood, for this word is often used as a collective noun, and with a singular verb, or it may agree with *thak* — "each one of the terrors persecutes me." There is more difficulty about the word rendered "soul" in the text, and "principal one" in the margin — *hbydi*⁷¹⁵⁰⁸². It properly means willingness, voluntariness, spontaneity; then a free-will offering, a voluntary sacrifice; then largeness, abundance. Rosenmuller renders it, "My vigor." Noyes, "My prosperity," and so Coverdale. Jerome, "My desire," and the Septuagint, "My hope passes away as the wind." Schultens translates it, "They persecute my generous spirit as the wind." It seems probable that the word refers to a generous, noble nature; to a large and liberal soul, evincing its magnanimity in acts of generosity and hospitality; and the idea seems to be, that his enemies rushed against that generous nature like a tempest. They wholly disregarded it, and a nature most generous and noble was exposed to the fury of the storm.

And my welfare Hebrew my salvation; or my safety.

As a cloud As a cloud vanishes and wholly disappears.

Job 30:16. *And now my soul is poured out upon me* So in ⁴⁹⁰⁴⁴Psalm 42:4, "I pour out my soul in me." We say that one is dissolved in grief. The language is derived from the fact that the soul in grief seems to lose all firmness or consistence. The Arabs style a fearful person, one who has a watery heart, or whose heart melts away like water. Noyes.

Job 30:17. *My bones are pierced in me* The bones are often represented in the Scriptures as the seat of acute pain; ^{<802>}Psalm 6:2; 22:14; 31:10; 38:3; 42:10; ^{<143>}Proverbs 14:30; compare ^{<801>}Job 20:11. The meaning here is, that he had had shooting or piercing pains in the night, which disturbed and prevented his rest. It is mentioned as a special aggravation of his sufferings that they were “in the night” — a time when we expect repose.

And my sinews take no rest; see the word here rendered sinews explained in the note at ver. 3. The word literally means gnawers, and hence, the teeth. The Vulgate renders it, qui me comedunt, non dormiunt, “they who devour me do not slumber.” The Septuagint, **νευρα μου** ^{<3450>} — my sinews, or arteries. Schleusner. Luther, “They who gnaw me.” Coverdale, Sinews. I see no reason to doubt that the teeth or the jaws are meant, and that Job refers to the violent pain in the tooth, among the acutest pains to which the body is subject. The idea is, that every part of the body was diseased and filled with pain.

Job 30:18. *By the great force of my disease* The words “of my disease” are not in the Hebrew. The usual interpretation of the passage is, that in consequence of the foul and offensive nature of his malady, his garment had become discolored or defiled — changed from being white and clear to filthiness and offensiveness. Some have understood it as referring to the skin, and as denoting that it was so affected with the leprosy, that he could scarcely be recognized. Umbreit supposes it to mean, “Through the omnipotence of God has my white robe of honor been changed into a narrow garment of grief” — *trauerkleid*. Dr. Good renders it, “From the abundance of the acrimony;” that is, of the fierce or acrimonious humor, “it is changed into a garment for me.” Coverdale, “With all their power have they changed my garment, and girded me therewith, as it were with a coat.” Prof. Lee, “With much violence doth my clothing bind me.” According to Schultens, it means, “My affliction puts itself on in the form of my clothing;” and the whole passage, that without and within, from the head to the feet, he was entirely diseased. His affliction was his outer garment, and it was his inner garment — his mantle and his tunic. The Hebrew is difficult. The phrase rendered “by the great force,” means, literally, “by the multitude of strength” — and may refer to the strength of disease, or to the strength of God, or to the force with which his garment girded him. The word rendered “is changed” —

cpjē^{<12664>}, is from **cpjē**^{<12664>}, to seek, to search after in the Qal; in the Hithpael, the form used here, to let oneself be sought; to hide oneself; to disguise one's self; ^{<1178>}1 Kings 20:38. According to this, it would mean that his garment was disguised; that is, its appearance was changed by the force of his disease. Gesenius. Jerome renders it, "In their multitude, my garment is consumed; the Septuagint, "With great force he took hold of my garment." Of these various interpretations, it is impossible to determine which is the correct one. The prevailing interpretation seems to be, that by the strength of his disease his garment was changed in its appearance, so as to become offensive, and yet this is a somewhat feeble sense to give to the passage. Perhaps the explanation of Schultens is the best, "By the greatness of power, pain or disease has become my garment; it girds me about like the mouth of my tunic." He has shown, by a great variety of instances, that it is common in Arabic poetry to compare pain, sickness, anxiety, etc., to clothing.

It bindeth me about as the collar of my coat The collar of my tunic, or under garment. This was made like a shirt, to be gathered around the neck, and the idea is, that his disease fitted close to him, and was gathered close around him.

^{<8319>}**Job 30:19.** *He hath cast me into the mire* That is, God has done it. In this book the name of God is often understood where the speaker seems to avoid it, in order that it may not be needlessly repeated. On the meaning of the expression here, see the notes at ^{<8381>}Job 9:31.

And I am become like dust and ashes Either in appearance, or I am regarded as being as worthless as the mire of the streets. Rosenmuller supposes it means, "I am more like a mass of inanimate matter than a living man."

^{<8311>}**Job 30:20.** *I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me* This was a complaint which Job often made, that he could not get the ear of God; that his prayer was not regarded, and that he could not get his cause before him; compare ^{<8338>}Job 13:3,19ff, and ^{<8270>}Job 27:9.

I stand up Standing was a common posture of prayer among the ancients; see ^{<8121>}Hebrews 11:21; ^{<1084>}1 Kings 8:14,55; ^{<4012>}Nehemiah 9:2. The meaning is, that when Job stood up to pray, God did not regard his prayer.

Job 30:21. *Thou art become cruel to me* Margin, turned to be. This language, applied to God, seems to be harsh and irreverent, and it may well be inquired whether the word cruel does not express an idea which Job did not intend. The Hebrew word רַזַּקָאֶ ^{<4393>}, is from an obsolete root רַזַּק — not found in Hebrew. The Arabic root, nearly the same as this, means to break with violence; to rout as an enemy; then to be enraged. In the Syriac, the primary idea is, that of a soldier, and thence it may refer to such acts of violence as a soldier commonly commits. The word occurs in Hebrew in the following places, and is translated in the following manner. It is rendered “cruel” in ^{<6323>}Deuteronomy 32:33; ^{<8321>}Job 30:21; ^{<3189>}Proverbs 5:9; 11:17; 12:10; 17:11; 27:4; ^{<2389>}Isaiah 13:9; ^{<2463>}Jeremiah 6:23; 50:42; 30:14; and fierce in ^{<8110>}Job 41:10. Jerome renders it, mutatus mihi in crudelem — “thou art changed so as to become cruel to me;” the Septuagint renders it, $\alpha\nu\epsilon\lambda\eta\mu\omicron\nu\omega\varsigma$ ^{<415>} — unmerciful; Luther, Du bist mir verwandelt in einem Grausamen — “thou art changed to me into a cruel one;” and so Umbreit, Noyes, and translators generally. Perhaps the word fierce, severe or harsh, would express the idea; still it must be admitted that Job, in the severity of his sufferings, is often betrayed into language which cannot be a model for us, and which we cannot vindicate.

With thy strong hand Margin, the strength. So the Hebrew. The hand is the instrument by which we accomplish anything; and hence, anything which God does is traced to his hand.

Thou opposest thyself against me — $\mu\text{פֶּאֶ}$ ^{<17852>}. The word $\mu\text{פֶּאֶ}$ ^{<17852>}, means to lie in wait for anyone; to lay snares; to set a trap; see ^{<8169>}Job 16:9, where the same word occurs, and where it is rendered “who hateth me,” but where it would be better rendered he pursues, or persecutes me. The meaning is, that God had become his adversary, or had set himself against him. There was a severity in his dealings with him as if he had become a foe.

Job 30:22. *Thou liftest me up to the wind* The sense here is, that he was lifted up as stubble is by a tempest, and driven mercilessly along. The figure of riding upon the wind or the whirlwind, is common in Oriental writers, and indeed elsewhere. So Milton says,

“They ride the air in whirlwind.”

So Addison, speaking of the angel that executes the commands of the Almighty, says,

“Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm.”

Coverdale renders this verse, “In times past thou didst set me up on high, as it were above the wind, but now hast thou given me a very sore fall.” Rosenmuller thinks that the image here is not taken from straw or chaff that is driven by the wind, but that the meaning of Job is, that he is lifted up and borne aloft like a cloud. But the image of chaff or straw taken up by the whirlwind and driven about, seems best to accord with the scope of the passage. The idea is, that the tempest of calamity had swept everything away, and had driven him about as a worthless object, until he was wasted away and ruined. It is possible that Job refers in this passage to the sand-storm which occurs sometimes in the deserts of Arabia. The following description of such a storm by Mr. Bruce (vol. 4:pp. 553,554), will furnish an illustration of the force and sublimity of the passage. It is copied from Taylor’s Fragments, in Calmet’s Dictionary, vol. 3:235:

“On the fourteenth,” says Bruce, “at seven in the morning, we left Assa Nagga, our course being due north. At one o’clock we alighted among some acacia trees at Waadiel Halboub, having gone twenty-one miles. We were here at once surprised and terrified by a sight, surely one of the most magnificent in the world. In that vast expanse of desert from west and to northwest of us, we saw a number of prodigious pillars of sand at different distances, at times moving with great celerity, at others stalking on with a majestic slowness; at intervals we thought they were coming in a very few minutes to overwhelm us, and small quantities of sand did actually more than once reach us. Again they would retreat so as to be almost out of sight — their tops reaching to the very clouds. There the tops often separated from the bodies; and these, once disjoined, dispersed in the air, and did not appear more. Sometimes they were broken near the middle, as if struck with a large cannon shot. About noon they began to advance with considerable swiftness upon us, the wind being very strong at north. Eleven of them ranged alongside of us about the distance of three miles. The greatest diameter of the largest appeared to me at that distance as if it would measure two feet. They retired from us with a wind at southeast, leaving an impression upon my mind to which I can give

no name, though surely one ingredient in it was fear, with a considerable deal of wonder and astonishment. It was in vain to think of flying; the swiftest horse, or fastest sailing ship, could be of no use to carry us out of this danger, and the full persuasion of this riveted me as if to the spot where I stood, and let the camels gain on me so much in my state of lameness, that it was with some difficulty I could overtake them.

“The whole of our company were much disheartened, except Idris, and imagined that they were advancing into whirlwinds of moving sand, from which they should never be able to extricate themselves; but before four o’clock in the afternoon these phantoms of the plain had all of them fallen to the ground and disappeared. In the evening we came to Waadi Dimokea, where we passed the night, much disheartened, and our fear more increased, when we found, upon wakening in the morning, that one side was perfectly buried in the sand that the wind had blown above us in the night.

“The sun shining through the pillars, which were thicker, and contained more sand, apparently, than any of the preceding days, seemed to give those nearest us an appearance as if spotted with stars of gold. I do not think at any time they seemed to be nearer than two miles. The most remarkable circumstance was, that the sand seemed to keep in that vast circular space, surrounded by the Nile on our left, in going round by Chaigie toward Dougola, and seldom was observed much to the eastward of a meridian, passing along the Nile through the Magizan, before it takes that turn; whereas the simoom was always on the opposite side of our course, coming upon us from the southeast.

“The same appearance of moving pillars of sand presented themselves to us this day in form and disposition like those we had seen at Waadi Halboub, only they seemed to be more in number, and less in size. They came several times in a direction close upon us, that is, I believe, within less than two miles. They began, immediately after sunrise, like a thick wood, and almost darkened the sun; his rays shining through them for near an hour, gave them an appearance of pillars of fire.”

“If my conjecture,” says Taylor, “be admissible, we now see a magnificence in this imagery, not apparent before: we see how

Job's dignity might be exalted in the air; might rise to great grandeur, importance, and even terror, in the sight of beholders; might ride upon the wind, which bears it about, causing it to advance or to recede; and, after all, when the wind diminishes, might disperse, dissipate, melt this pillar of sand into the undistinguished level of the desert. This comparison seems to be precisely adapted to the mind of an Arab; who must have seen, or have been informed of, similar phenomena in the countries around him."

And dissolvest my substance Margin, or wisdom. The word rendered "dissolvest," means to melt, to flow down, and then to cause to melt, to cause to pine away and perish; ^{<2340>}Isaiah 64:7. It is applied to a host or army that appears to melt away; ^{<0946>}1 Samuel 14:16. It is also applied to one who seems to melt away with fear and terror; ^{<0255>}Exodus 15:15; ^{<0809>}Joshua 2:9,24. Here the meaning probably is, that God caused Job to melt away, as it were, with terrors and alarms. He was like one caught up in a whirlwind, and driven along with the storm, and who, in such circumstances, would be dissolved with fear. The word rendered "substance" **hYvWT** ^{<08454>} has been very variously interpreted. The word, as it is written in the text, means help, deliverance, purpose, enterprise, counsel, or understanding; see ^{<0862>}Job 5:12; 6:13; 11:6. But by some, and among others. Gesenius, Umbreit, and Noyes, it is supposed that it should be read as a verb, **hwvt** from **hwv** — to fear. According to this, the meaning is, "thou terrifiest me." This agrees better with the connection; is more abrupt and emphatic, and is probably the true interpretation.

^{<0802>}**Job 30:23.** *For I know that thou wilt bring me to death* This is the language of despair. Occasionally Job seems to have had an assurance that his calamities would pass by, and that God would show himself to be his friend on earth (compare the notes at ^{<0825>}Job 19:25ff), and at other times he utters the language of despair. Such would be commonly the case with a good man afflicted as he was, and agitated with alternate hopes and fears. We are not to set these expressions down as contradictions. All that inspiration is responsible for, is the fair record of his feelings; and that he should have alternate hopes and fears is in entire accordance with what occurs when we are afflicted. Here the view of his sorrows appears to have been so overwhelming, that he says he knew they must terminate in death.

The phrase “to death” means to the house of the dead, or to the place where the dead are. Umbreit.

And to the house appointed for all living The grave; compare ~~8107~~ Hebrews 9:27. That house or home is “appointed” for all. It is not a matter of chance that we come there, but it is because the Great Arbiter of life has so ordained. What an affecting consideration it should be, that such a house is designated for all! A house so dark, so gloomy, so solitary, so repulsive! For all that sit on thrones; for all that move in the halls of music and pleasure; for all that roll along in splendid carriages; for all the beautiful, the happy, the vigorous, the manly; for all in the marts of business, in the low scenes of dissipation, and in the sanctuary of God; for every one who is young, and every one who is aged, this is the home! Here they come at last; and here they lie down in the narrow bed! God’s hand will bring them all there; and there will they lie until his voice summons them to judgment!

~~8812~~ **Job 30:24.** *Howbeit he will not stretch out his hand to the grave* Margin, heap. In our common version this verse conveys no very clear idea, and it is quite evident that our translators despaired of giving it a consistent sense, and attempted merely to translate it literally. The verse has been rendered by every expositor almost in his own way; and though almost no two of them agree, yet it is remarkable that the versions given are all beautiful, and furnish a sense that agrees well with the scope of the passage. The Vulgate renders it, “But not to their consumption wilt thou send forth their hand; and if they fall, thou wilt save them.” The Septuagint,” For O that I could lay violent hands on myself, or beseech another, and he would do it for me Luther renders it, “Yet he shall not stretch out the hand to the charnelhouse, and they shall not cry before his destruction.” Noyes:

*“When he stretcheth out his hand, prayer availeth nothing,
When he bringeth destruction, vain is the cry for help.”*

Umbreit renders it:

*Nur mog’ er nicht an den zerstornten Haufen
Hand anlegen! Oder müssen jene selbst in ihrem Tode schreien?*

*“Only if he would not lay his hand upon the heaps of the destroyed!
Or must these also cry out in their death?”*

According to this interpretation, Job speaks here in bitter irony. “I would gladly die,” says he, “if God would only suffer me to be quiet when I am dead.” He would be willing that the edifice of the body should be taken down, provided the ruins might rest in peace. Rosenmuller gives the same sense as that expressed by Noyes. Amidst this variety of interpretation, it is by no means easy to determine on the true meaning of the passage. The principal difficulty in the exposition lies in the word **y[B]**^{h1164}, rendered in the text “in the grave,” and in the margin “heap.” If that word is compounded of the preposition **B** and **y[æ]**⁴⁵⁸⁵⁶, it means literally, “in ruins, or in rubbish” — for so the word **y[æ]**⁴⁵⁸⁵⁶ is used in ^{<3001>}Micah 1:6; ^{<2488>}Jeremiah 26:18; ^{<3182>}Micah 3:12; ^{<19701>}Psalms 79:1; ^{<1042>}Nehemiah 4:2,10. But Gesenius supposes it to be a single word, from the obsolete root **h[b]**, Chaldee **a[b]**, “to pray, to petition”; and according to this the meaning is,

“Yea, prayer is nought when he stretches out his hand; and in his (God’s) destruction, their cry availeth not.”

Prof. Lee understands the word (**y[b]**) in the same sense, but gives a somewhat different meaning to the whole passage. According to him the meaning is,

“Nevertheless, upon prayer thou wilt not lay thine hand; surely, when he destroyeth, in this alone there is safety.”

Schultens accords very nearly in the sentiment expressed by Umbreit, and renders it,

“Yet not even in the tomb would he relax his hand, if in its destruction an alleviation were there.”

This sentiment is very strong, and borders on impiety, and should not be adopted if it is possible to avoid it. It looks as if Job felt that God was disposed to pursue his animosity even into the regions of the dead, and that he would have pleasure in carrying on the work of destruction and affliction in the ruins of the grave. After the most careful examination which I have been able to give of this difficult passage, it seems probable to me that the following is the correct sense. Job means to state a general and important principle — that there was rest in the grave. He said he knew that God would bring him down there, but that would be a state of repose. The hand of God producing pain, would not reach there, nor would the

sorrows experienced in this world be felt there, provided there had been a praying life. Notwithstanding all his afflictions, therefore, and his certain conviction that he would die, he had unwavering confidence in God. Agreeably to this, the following paraphrase will convey the true sense. “I know that he will bring me to the grave. Nevertheless *Ēaæ*^{<h389>}, over the ruins *y[B]*^{<h1164>} — of my body, the ruins in the grave — “he will not stretch out his hand” — to afflict me there or to pursue those who lie there with calamity and judgment; if in his destruction *dypi*^{<h6365>} — in the destruction or desolation which God brings upon people — among them (HSN-8705) — among those who are thus consigned to the ruins of the grave — there is prayer [*Wv*]^{<h7769>}; if there has been supplication offered to him, or a cry for mercy has gone up before him.” This paraphrase embraces every word of the original; saves the necessity of attempting to change the text, as has been often done, and gives a meaning which accords with the scope of the passage, and with the uniform belief of Job, that God would ultimately vindicate him, and show that he himself was right in his government.

^{<h3125>}**Job 30:25.** *Did not I weep ...* Job here appeals to his former life, and says that it had been a characteristic of his life to manifest compassion to the afflicted and the poor. His object in doing this is, evidently, to show how remarkable it was that he was so much afflicted. “Did I deserve,” the sense is, “such a hard lot? Has it been brought on me by my own fault, or as a punishment for a life where no compassion was shown to others?” So far from it, he says, that his whole life had been distinguished for tender compassion for those in distress and want.

In trouble Margin, as in Hebrew, hard of day. So we say, “a man has a hard time of it,” or has a hard lot.

^{<h3126>}**Job 30:26.** *When I looked for good* When I supposed that respect would be shown me; or when I looked forward to an honored old age. I expected to be made happy and prosperous through life, as the result of my uprightness and benevolence; but, instead of that, calamity came and swept all my comforts away. He experienced the instability which most people are called to experience, and the divine dealings with him showed that no reliance could be placed on confident plans of happiness in this life.

^{<h3127>}**Job 30:27.** *My bowels boiled* Or rather, My bowels boil — for he refers to his present circumstances, and not to the past. It is clear that by

this phrase he designs to describe deep affliction. The bowels, in the Scriptures, are represented as the seat of the affections. By this is meant the upper bowels, or the region of the heart and the lungs. The reason is, that deep emotions of the mind are felt there. The heart beats quick; or it is heavy and pained; or it seems to melt within us in the exercise of pity or compassion; compare the notes at ^{<2361>}Isaiah 16:11. The idea here is, that the seat of sorrow and of grief was affected by his calamities. Nor was the feeling slight. His emotions he compared with agitated, boiling water. It is possible that there is an allusion here to the inflammatory nature of his disease, producing internal heat and pain; but it is more probable that he refers to the mental anguish which he endured.

The days of affliction prevented me literally, “have anticipated me” — for so the word prevent was formerly used, and so it is uniformly used in the Bible; see the notes at ^{<8182>}Job 3:12; compare ^{<19590>}Psalms 59:10; 79:8; 88:13; 119:148; ^{<5415>}1 Thessalonians 4:15. There is in the Hebrew word ^{<46923>}יָדָא the idea that days of anguish came in an unexpected manner, or that they anticipated the fulfillment of his plans. All his schemes and hopes of life had been anticipated by these overwhelming sorrows.

^{<8818>}**Job 30:28.** *I went mourning* Or rather, “I go,” in the present tense, for he is now referring to his present calamities, and not to what was past. The word rendered “mourning,” however ^{<46937>}רָדַף, means here rather to be dark, dingy, tanned. It literally means to be foul or turbid, like a torrent, ^{<8186>}Job 6:16; then to go about in filthy garments, as they do who mourn, Job v. 11; ^{<2442>}Jeremiah 14:2; then to be dusky, or of a dark color, or to become dark. Thus, it is applied to the sun and moon becoming dark in an eclipse, or when covered with clouds, ^{<2428>}Jeremiah 4:28; ^{<3110>}Joel 2:10; 3:15; ^{<3116>}Micah 3:6. Here it refers to the fact that, by the mere force of his disease, his skin had become dark and swarthy, though he had not been exposed to the burning rays of the sun. The wrath of God had burned upon him, and he had become black under it. Jerome, however, renders it moerens, mourning. The Septuagint, “I go groaning (^{<4728>}στενων) without restraint, or limit” — ^{<427>}ανευ ^{<5392>}φριμου. The Chaldee translates it ^{<4728>}מַקְוָא, “black.”

Without the sun Without being exposed to the sun; or without the agency of the sun. Though not exposed, he had become as dark as if he had been a day-laborer exposed to a burning sun.

I stood up Or, I stand up.

And cried in the congregation I utter my cries in the congregation, or when surrounded by the assembled people. Once I stood up to counsel them, and they hung upon my lips for advice; now I stand up only to weep over my accumulated calamities. This indicates the great change which had come upon him, and the depth of his sorrows. A man will weep readily in private; but he will be slow to do it, if he can avoid it, when surrounded by a multitude.

Job 30:29. *I am a brother to dragons* That is, my loud complaints and cries resemble the doleful screams of wild animals, or of the most frightful monsters. The word “brother” is often used in this sense, to denote similarity in any respect. The word “dragons” here ^{<48577>} *yNIT æ*, denotes properly a sea-monster, a great fish, a crocodile; or the fancied animal with wings called a dragon; see the notes at ^{<29322>} Isaiah 13:22. Gesenius, Umbreit, and Noyes, render this word here jackals — an animal between a dog and a fox, or a wolf and a fox; an animal that abounds in deserts and solitudes, and that makes a doleful cry in the night. So the Syriac renders it an animal resembling a dog; a wild dog. Castell. This idea agrees with the scope of the passage better than the common reference to a sea-monster or a crocodile.

“The Deeb, or Jackal,” says Shaw, “is of a darker color than the fox, and about the same bigness. It yelps every night about the gardens and villages, feeding upon roots, fruit, and carrion.”
Travels, p. 247, Ed. Oxford, 1738.

That some wild animal, distinguished for a mournful noise, or howl, is meant, is evident; and the passage better agrees with the description of a jackal than the hissing of a serpent or the noise of the crocodile. Bochart supposes that the allusion is to dragons, because they erect their heads, and their jaws are drawn open, and they seem to be complaining against God on account of their humble and miserable condition. Taylor (Concord.) supposes it means jackals or thoes, and refers to the following places where the word may be so used; ^{<9419>} Psalm 44:19; ^{<29322>} Isaiah 13:22; 34:13; 35:7; 43:20; ^{<24111>} Jeremiah 11:11; 10:22; 49:33; 51:37; ^{<29418>} Lamentations 4:3; ^{<3001>} Micah 1:8; ^{<3003>} Malachi 1:3.

And a companion to owls Margin, ostriches. The word companion here is used in a sense similar to brother in the other member of the parallelism, to

denote resemblance. The Hebrew, here rendered owls, is, literally, daughters of answering, or clamor — **tBæ** ^{<41323>} **hn[yæ** ^{<42284>}. The name is given on account of the plaintive and mournful cry which is made. Bochart. Gesenius supposes, however, that it is on account of its greediness and gluttony. The name “daughters of the ostrich.” denotes properly the female ostrich. The phrase is, however, put for the ostrich of both sexes in many places; see Gesenius on the word **hn[yæ** ^{<42284>}; compare the notes at ^{<2312>} Isaiah 13:21. For a full examination of the meaning of the phrase, see Bochart, Hieroz. P. ii. L. 2. cap. xiv. pp. 218-231; see also ^{<48913>} Job 39:13-17. There can be little doubt that the ostrich is here intended, and Job means to say that his mourning resembled the doleful noise made by the ostrich in the lonely desert. Shaw, in his Travels, says that during the night “they [the ostriches) make very doleful and hideous noises; which would sometimes be like the roaring of a lion; at other times it would bear a nearer resemblance to the hoarser voice of other quadrupeds, particularly of the bull and the ox. I have often heard them groan as if they were in the greatest agonies.”

^{<48318>} **Job 30:30.** *My skin is black upon me;* see ^{<48318>} Job 30:28. It had become black by the force of the disease.

My bones are burnt with heat The bones, in the Scriptures, are often represented as the seat of pain. The disease of Job seems to have pervaded the whole body. If it was the elephantiasis (see the notes at ^{<48318>} Job 2:7,8), these effects would be naturally produced.

^{<48318>} **Job 30:31.** *My harp also is turned to mourning* What formerly gave cheerful sounds, now gives only notes of plaintiveness and lamentation. The harp was probably an instrument originally designed to give sounds of joy. For a description of it, see the notes at ^{<2312>} Isaiah 5:12.

And my organ The form of what is here called the organ, is not certainly known. The word **bgw** ^{<45748>} is doubtless from **bgæ** ^{<45689>}, “to breathe, to blow”; and most probably the instrument here intended was the pipe. For a description of it, see the notes at ^{<2312>} Isaiah 5:12. This instrument, also, was played, as would appear, on joyous occasions, but Job now says that it was turned to grief. All that had been joyous with him had fled. His honor was taken away; his friends were gone; they who had treated him with reverence now stood at a distance, or treated him with contempt; his health was departed, and his former appearance, indicating a station of affluence,

was changed for the dark complexion produced by disease, and the instruments of joyousness now gave forth only notes of sorrow.

NOTES ON JOB 31

Job 31:1. *I made a covenant with mine eyes* The first virtue of his private life to which Job refers is chastity. Such was his sense of the importance of this, and of the danger to which man was exposed, that he had solemnly resolved not to think upon a young female. The phrase here, “I made a covenant with mine eyes,” is poetical, meaning that he solemnly resolved. A covenant is of a sacred and binding nature; and the strength of his resolution was as great as if he had made a solemn compact. A covenant or compact was usually made by slaying an animal in sacrifice, and the compact was ratified over the animal that was slain, by a kind of imprecation that if the compact was violated the same destruction might fall on the violators which fell on the head of the victim. This idea of cutting up a victim on occasion of making a covenant, is retained in most languages. So the Greek ὀρκία ^{<3727>}, τεμνειν ^{<5114>}, τεμνειν ^{<5114>} σπονδας ^{<786>}, and the Latin icere foedus — to strike a league, in allusion to the striking down, or slaying of an animal on the occasion. And so the Hebrew, as in the place before us, tyrB] ^{†h1285} trkē ^{†h3772} — to cut a covenant, from cutting down, or cutting in pieces the victim over which the covenant was made; see this explained at length in the notes at ^{<8016>} Hebrews 9:16. By the language here, Job means that he had resolved, in the most solemn manner, that he would not allow his eyes or thoughts to endanger him by improperly contemplating a woman.

Why then should I think upon a maid?” Upon a virgin — I [æ ^{†h5921>} hl WtB] ^{†h1330>}; compare ^{<1165>} Proverbs 6:25, “Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids;” see, also, the fearful and solemn declaration of the Saviour in ^{<1163>} Matthew 5:28. There is much emphasis in the expression used here by Job. He does not merely say that he had not thought in that manner, but that the thing was morally impossible that he should have done it. Any charge of that kind, or any suspicion of it, he would repel with indignation. His purpose to lead a pure life, and to keep a pure heart, had been so settled, that it was impossible that he could have offended in that respect. His purpose, also, not to think on this subject, showed the extent of the restriction imposed on himself. It was not merely his intention to lead a chaste life, and to avoid open sin, but it was to maintain a pure heart, and not to suffer the mind to become

corrupted by dwelling on impure images, or indulging in unholy desires. This strongly shows Job's piety and purity of heart, and is a beautiful illustration of patriarchal religion. We may remark here, that if a man wishes to maintain purity of life, he must make just such a covenant as this with himself — one so sacred, so solemn, so firm, that he will not suffer his mind for a moment to harbor an improper thought. "The very passage of an impure thought through the mind leaves pollution behind it;" and the outbreking crimes of life are just the result of allowing the imagination to dwell on impure images. As the eye is the great source of danger (compare ^{<1018>}Matthew 5:28; ^{<1024>}2 Peter 2:14), there should be a solemn purpose that that should be pure, and that any sacrifice should be made rather than allow indulgence to a wanton gaze: compare ^{<1047>}Mark 9:47. No man was ever too much guarded on this subject; no one ever yet made too solemn a covenant with his eyes, and with his whole soul to be chaste.

^{<830>}**Job 31:2.** *For what portion of God is there from above?* Or, rather, "What portion should I then have from God who reigns above?" Job asks with emphasis, what portion or reward he should expect from God who reigns on high, if he had not made such a covenant with his eyes, and if he had given the reins to loose and wanton thoughts? This question he himself answers in the following verse, and says, that he could have expected only destruction from the Almighty.

^{<830>}**Job 31:3.** *Is not destruction to the wicked?* That is, Job says that he was well aware that destruction would overtake the wicked, and that if he had given indulgence to impure desires he could have looked for nothing else. Well knowing this, he says, he had guarded himself in the most careful manner from sin, and had labored with the greatest assiduity to keep his eyes and his heart pure.

And a strange punishment — ^{rkn},^{<5235>}. The word used here, means literally strangeness — a strange thing, something with which we were unacquainted. It is used here evidently in the sense of a strange or unusual punishment; something which does not occur in the ordinary course of events. The sense is, that for the sin here particularly referred to, God would interpose to inflict vengeance in a manner such as did not occur in the ordinary dealings of his providence. There would be some punishment adopted especially to this sin, and which would mark it with his special displeasure. Has it not been so in all ages? The Vulgate renders it, alienatio, and the Septuagint translates it in a similar manner —

απαλλοτριωσις — and they seem to have understood it as followed by entire alienation from God; an idea which would be every where sustained by a reference to the history of the sin referred to by Job. There is no sin that so much poisons all the fountains of pure feeling in the soul, and none that will so certainly terminate in the entire wreck of character.

<8304> **Job 31:4.** *Doth he not see my ways?* This either means that God was a witness of all that he did — his thoughts, words, and deeds, and would punish him if he had given indulgence to improper feelings and thoughts; or that since God saw all his thoughts, he could boldly appeal to him as a witness of his innocence in this matter, and in proof that his life and heart were pure. Rosenmuller adopts the latter interpretation; Herder seems to incline to the former. Umbreit renders it, “God himself must be a witness that I speak the truth.” It is not easy to determine which is the true meaning. Either of them will accord well with the scope of the passage.

<8305> **Job 31:5.** *If I have walked with vanity* This is the second specification in regard to his private deportment. He says that his life had been sincere, upright, honest. The word vanity here is equivalent to falsehood, for so the parallelism demands, and so the word *ady*, <47723> is often used; <49118> Psalm 12:3; 41:7; <12201> Exodus 23:1; <47851> Deuteronomy 5:20; compare <20113> Isaiah 1:13. The meaning of Job here is, that he had been true and honest. In his dealings with others he had not defrauded them; he had not misrepresented things; he had spoken the exact truth, and had done that which was without deception or guile.

If my foot hath hastened to deceit That is, if I have gone to execute a purpose of deceit or fraud. He had never, on seeing an opportunity where others might be defrauded, hastened to embrace it. The Septuagint renders this verse, “If I have walked with scoffers — *μετα* <3326> *γελοιαστων* — and if my foot has hastened to deceit.”

<8306> **Job 31:6.** *Let me be weighed in an even balance* Margin, him weigh me in balances of justice. That is, let him ascertain exactly my character, and treat me accordingly. If on trial it be found that I am guilty in this respect, I consent to be punished accordingly. Scales or balances are often used as emblematic of justice. Many suppose, however, that this verse is a parenthesis, and that the imprecation in verse 8, relates to verse 5, as well as to verse 7. But most probably the meaning is, that he consented to have his life tried in this respect in the most exact and rigid manner, and was

willing to abide the result. A man may express such a consciousness of integrity in his dealings with others, without any improper self-reliance or boasting. It may be a simple fact of which he may be certain, that he has never meant to defraud any man.

Job 31:7. *If my step hath turned out of the way* The path in which I ought to walk — the path of virtue.

And mine heart walked after mine eyes That is, if I have coveted what my eyes have beheld; or if I have been determined by the appearance of things rather than by what is right, I consent to bear the appropriate punishment.

And if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands To have clean hands is emblematic of innocence; ^{<1870>}Job 17:9; ^{<1924>}Psalm 24:4; compare ^{<1072>}Matthew 27:24. The word blot here means stain, blemish: ^{<2004>}Daniel 1:4. The idea is, that his hands were pure, and that he had not been guilty of any act of fraud or violence in depriving others of their property.

Job 31:8. *Then let me sow, and let another eat* This is the imprecation which he invokes, in case he had been guilty in this respect. He consented to sow his fields, and let others enjoy the harvest. The expression used here is common in the Scriptures to denote insecurity of property or calamity in general; see ^{<1336>}Leviticus 26:16: “And ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it;” compare ^{<1530>}Deuteronomy 28:30; ^{<1093>}Amos 9:13,14.

Yea, let my offspring be rooted out Or, rather, “Let what I plant be rooted up.” So Umbreit, Noyes, Schultens, Rosenmuller, Herder, and Lee understand it. There is no evidence that he here alludes to his children, for the connection does not demand it, nor does the word used here require such an interpretation. The word *μῦαξ* — means properly shoots; that is, what springs out of anything — as the earth, or a tree — from *αξ*; ^{<13318>} — to go out, to go forth. It is applied to the productions of the earth in ^{<2405>}Isaiah 42:5; 34:1, and to children or posterity, in ^{<2724>}Isaiah 22:24; 61:9; 65:23; ^{<1825>}Job 5:25; 21:8. Here it refers evidently to the productions of the earth; and the idea is, that if he had been guilty of dishonesty or fraud in his dealings, he wished that all that he had sowed should be rooted up.

Job 31:9. *If mine heart have been deceived by a woman* If I have been enticed by her beauty. The word rendered “deceived” *ἔκλυε*; ^{<16601>} means to open, to expand. It is then applied to that which is open or ingenuous; to

spirit of Job toward a wife who is represented in the early part of this book as manifesting few qualities which could win the heart of an husband? There is no expression of impatience at her temper and her words on the part of Job, and he here speaks of it as the most serious of all calamities that could happen; the most painful of all punishments, that that same wife should be reduced to a condition of servitude and degradation.

Job 31:11. *For this is an heinous crime* This expresses Job's sense of the enormity of such an offence. He felt that there was no palliation for it; he would in no way, and on no pretence, attempt to vindicate it.

An iniquity to be punished by the judges A crime for the judges to determine on and decide. The sins which Job had specified before this, were those of the heart; but here he refers to a crime against society — an offence which deserved the interposition of the magistrate. It may be observed here, that adultery has always been regarded as a sin "to be punished by the judges." In most countries it has been punished with death; see the notes at ~~4815~~ John 8:5.

Job 31:12. *For it is a fire that consumeth to destruction* This may mean that such an offence would be a crime that would provoke God to send destruction, like a consuming fire upon the offender (Rosenmuller and Noyes), or more likely it is designed to be descriptive of the nature of the sin itself. According to this, the meaning is, that indulgence in this sin tends wholly to ruin and destroy a man. It is like a consuming fire, which sweeps away everything before it. It is destructive to the body, the morals, the soul. Accordingly, it may be remarked that there is no one vice which pours such desolation through the soul as licentiousness. See Rush on the Diseases of the Mind. It corrupts and taints all the fountains of morals, and utterly annihilates all purity of the heart. An intelligent gentleman, and a careful observer of the state of things in society, once remarked to me, that on coming to the city of Philadelphia, it was his fortune to be in the same boarding-house with a number of young men, nearly all of whom were known to him to be of licentious habits. He has lived to watch their course of life; and he remarked, that there was not one of them who did not ultimately show that he was essentially corrupt and unprincipled in every department of morals. There is not any one propensity of man that spreads such a withering influence over the soul as this; and, however it may be accounted for, it is certain that indulgence in this vice is a certain evidence

that the whole soul is corrupt, and that no reliance is to be placed on the man's virtue in any respect, or in reference to any relation of life.

And would root out all mine increase By its desolating effects on my heart and life. The meaning is, that it would utterly ruin him; compare ^{<2153>}Luke 15:13,30. How many a wretched sensualist can bear testimony to the truth of this statement! How many a young man has been wholly ruined in reference to his worldly interests, as well as in reference to his soul, by this vice compare Proverbs 7: No young man could do a better service to himself than to commit the whole of that chapter to memory, and so engrave it on his soul that it never could be forgotten.

^{<8813>}**Job 31:13.** *If I did despise the cause of my man-servant* Job turns to another subject, on which he claimed that his life had been upright. It was in reference to the treatment of his servants. The meaning here is, "I never refused to do strict justice to my servants when they brought their cause before me, or when they complained that my dealings with them had been severe."

When they contended with me That is, when they brought their cause before me, and complained that I had not provided for them comfortably, or that their task had been too hard. If in any respect they supposed they had cause of complaint, I listened to them attentively, and endeavored to do right. He did not take advantage of his sower to oppress them, nor did he suppose that they had no rights of any kind. It is evident, from this, that Job had those who sustained to him the relation of servants; but whether they were slaves, or hired servants, is not known. The language here will agree with either supposition, though it cannot be doubted that slavery was known as early as the time of Job. There is no certain evidence that he held any slaves, in the proper sense of the term, nor that he regarded slavery as right; compare the notes at ^{<1003>}Job 1:3. He here refers to the numerous persons that had been in his employ in the days of his prosperity, and says that he had never taken advantage of his power or rank to do them wrong.

^{<8814>}**Job 31:14.** *What then shall I do when God riseth up?* That is, when he rises up to pronounce sentence upon people, or to execute impartial justice. Job admits that if he had done injustice to a servant, he would have reason to dread the divine indignation, and that he could have no excuse. "I tremble," said President Jefferson, speaking of slavery in the United States "when I remember that God is just!" Notes on Virginia.

And when he visiteth When he comes to inspect human conduct. Umbreit renders it “when he punishes.” The word visit is often used in this sense in the Scriptures.

~~4815~~ **Job 31:15.** *Did not he that made me in the womb make him?* Had we not one and the same Creator, and have we not consequently the same nature? We may observe in regard to this sentiment,

(1.) That it indicates a very advanced state of view in regard to man. The attempt has been always made by those who wish to tyrannize over others, or who aim to make slaves of others, to show that they are of a different race, and that in the design for which they were made, they are wholly inferior. Arguments have been derived from their complexion, from their supposed inferiority of intellect, and the deep degradation of their condition, often little above that of brutes, to prove that they were originally inferior to the rest of mankind. On this the plea has been often urged, and oftener felt than urged, that it is right to reduce them to slavery. Since this feeling so early existed, and since there is so much that may be plausibly said in defense of it, it shows that Job had derived his views from something more than the speculations of people, and the desire of power, when he says that he regarded all people as originally equal, and as having the same Creator. It is in fact a sentiment which people have been practically very reluctant to believe, and which works its way very slowly even yet on the earth; compare ~~4175~~ Acts 17:26.

(2.) This sentiment, if fairly embraced and carried out, would soon destroy slavery everywhere. If people felt that they were reducing to bondage those who were originally on a level with themselves — made by the same God, with the same faculties, and for the same end; if they felt that in their very origin, in their nature, there was that which could not be made mere property, it would soon abolish the whole system. It is kept up only where people endeavor to convince themselves that there is some original inferiority in the slave which makes it proper that he should be reduced to servitude and be held as property. But as soon as there can be diffused abroad the sentiment of Paul, that “God hath made of one blood all nations of men,” (~~4175~~ Acts 17:26), or the sentiment of the patriarch Job, that “the same God made us and them in the womb,” that moment the shackles of the slave will fall, and he will be free. Hence it is apparent, how Christianity, that carries this lesson on its fore-front, is the grand remedy

for the evils of slavery, and needs only to be universally diffused to bring the system to an end.

And did not one fashion us in the womb? Margin, Or, did he not fashion us in one womb? The Hebrew will bear either construction, but the parallelism rather requires that given in the text, and most expositors agree in this interpretation. The sentiment is, whichever interpretation be adopted, that they had a common origin; that God would watch over them alike as his children; and that, therefore, they had equal rights.

^{<8816>}**Job 31:16.** *If I have withheld the poor from their desire* Job now turns to another class of virtues, regarded also as of great importance in the patriarchal ages, kindness to the poor and the afflicted; to the fatherless and the widow. He appeals to his former life on this subject; affirms that he had a good conscience in the recollection of his dealings with them, and impliedly declares that it could not have been for any deficiency in the exercise of these virtues that his calamities had come upon him. The meaning here is, that he had not denied to the poor their wish. If they had come and desired bread of him, he had not withheld it; see ^{<8820>}Job 22:7.

Or caused the eyes of the widow to fail That is, I have not frustrated her hopes, or disappointed her expectations, when she has looked intently upon me, and desired my aid. The “failing of the eyes” refers to failing of the object of their expectation; or the expression means that she had not looked to him in vain; see ^{<8812>}Job 11:20.

^{<8817>}**Job 31:17.** *Or have eaten my morsel myself alone* If I have not imparted what I had though ever so small, to others. This was in accordance with the Oriental laws of hospitality. It is regarded as a fixed law among the Arabians, that the guest shall always be helped first, and to that which is best; and no matter how needy the family may be, or how much distressed with hunger, the settled laws of hospitality demand that the stranger-guest shall have the first and best portion. Dr. Robinson, in his “Biblical Researches,” gives an amusing instance of the extent to which this law is carried, and the sternness with which it is executed among the Arabs. In the journey from Suez to Mount Sinai, intending to furnish a supper for the Arabs in their employ, he and his fellow-travelers had bought a kid, and led it along to the place of their encampment. At night the kid was killed and roasted, and the Arabs were anticipating a savory supper. But those of whom they had bought the kid, learned in some way

that they were to encamp near, and naturally concluded that the kid was bought to be eaten, and followed them to the place of encampment, to the number of five or six persons.

“Now the stern law of Arabian hospitality demands, that whenever a guest is present at a meal, whether there be much or little, the first and best portion must be laid before the stranger. In this instance the five or six guests attained their object, and had not only the selling of the kid, but also the eating of it, while our poor Arabs, whose mouths had long been watering with expectation, were forced to take up with the fragments.” Vol. 1:118.

There is often, indeed, much ostentation in the hospitality of the Orientals, but the law is stern and inflexible.

“No sooner,” says Shaw (Travels, vol. 1:p. 20), “was our food prepared, than one of the Arabs, having placed himself on the highest spot of ground in the neighborhood, called out thrice with a loud voice to all their brethren, the sons of the faithful, to come and partake of it; though none of them were in view, or perhaps within a hundred miles of them.”

The great law of hospitality Job says he had carefully observed, and had not withheld what he had from the poor and the fatherless.

~~48318~~ **Job 31:18.** *For from my youth he was brought up with me* This verse is usually regarded as a parenthesis, though very various expositions have been given of it. Some have understood it as denying that he had in any way neglected the widow and the fatherless, and affirming that the orphan had always, even from his youth, found a father in him, and the widow a guide. Others, as our translators, suppose that it is a parenthesis thrown in to indicate his general course of life, although the imprecation which he makes on himself, if he had neglected the widow and the orphan, is found in ~~48312~~ Job 31:22. Luther reads the two previous verses as questions, and this as an answer to them, and so also do Rosenmuller and Noyes. Umbreit regards this verse as a parenthesis. This is probably to be considered as the correct interpretation, for this better agrees with the Hebrew than the other proposed. It implies a denial of having neglected the widow and the orphan, but the full expression of his abhorrence of a charge of having done so, is to be found in the strong language in ~~48312~~ Job 31:22. The unusual

Hebrew word **ל דָּעַ**⁴¹⁴³¹ stands probably for **ym[l dg** — “he was brought up with me.” This form of the word does not elsewhere occur.

As with a father That is, he always found in me one who treated him as a father. The meaning is, that he had always had under his care those who were orphans; that from his very youth they had been accustomed to look up to him as a father; and that they had never been disappointed in him. It is the language of one who seems to have been born to rank, and who had the means of benefiting others, and who had done it all his life. This accords also with the Oriental notions of kindness — requiring that it should be shown especially to the widow and the fatherless.

I have guided her Margin, “That is, the widow.” The meaning is, that he had been her counsellor and friend.

From my mother's womb This cannot be literally true, but it means that he had done it from early life; or as we would say, he had always done it.

Job 31:19. *If I have seen any perish ...* He turns to another virtue of the same general class — that of providing for the poor. The meaning is clear, that he had always assisted the poor and needy.

Job 31:20. *If his loins have not blessed me* This is a personification by which the part of the body that had been clothed by the benevolence of Job, is supposed to speak and render him thanks.

Job 31:21. *If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless* That is, if I have taken advantage of my rank, influence, and power, to oppress and injure him.

When I saw my help in the gate The gate of a city was a place of concourse; a place where debates were held, and where justice was administered. Job speaks here of that part of his life when he was clothed with authority as a magistrate, or when he had power and influence as a public man. He says that he had never abused this power to oppress the fatherless. He had never taken advantage of his influence to injure them, because he saw he had a strong party under his control, or because he had power enough to carry his point, or because he had those under him who would sustain him in an oppressive measure. This is spoken with reference to the usually feeble and defenseless condition of the orphan, as one who is

deprived of his natural protector and who is, therefore, liable to be wronged by those in power.

Job 31:22. *Then let mine arm* The strong language which Job uses here, shows his consciousness of innocence, and his detestation of the offences to which he here refers, ^{<8916>}Job 31:16-22. The word rendered “arm” here *ā t k*, ^{<13802>} means properly the shoulder. ^{<23407>}Isaiah 46:7; 49:22; ^{<4409>}Numbers 7:9; compare the notes at ^{<23114>}Isaiah 11:14. There is no instance, it is believed, unless this is one, in which it means arm, and the meaning here is, that he wished, if he had been guilty, his shoulder might separate from the blade. So Herder, Rosenmuller, Umbreit, and Noyes render it; and so the Vulgate and the Septuagint.

From my shoulder-blade The scapula — the flat bone to which the upper arm is attached. The wish of Job is, that the shoulder might separate from that, and of course the arm would be useless. Such a strong imprecation implies a firm consciousness of innocence.

And mine arm The word arm here denotes the forearm — the arm from the elbow to the fingers.

From the bone Margin, “the chanelbone.” Literally, “from the reed” — *hnq*, ^{<17070>}. Umbreit renders it, Schneller als ein Rohr — quicker than a reed. The word *hnq*, ^{<17070>} means properly a reed, cane, calamus (see the notes at ^{<23424>}Isaiah 43:24), and is here applied to the upper arm, or arm above the elbow, from its resemblance to a reed or cane. It is applied, also, to the arm or branch of a chandelier, or candlestick, ^{<10251>}Exodus 25:31, and to the rod or beam of a balance, ^{<23416>}Isaiah 46:6. The meaning here is, that he wished that his arm should be broken at the elbow, or the forearm be separated from the upper arm, if he were guilty of the sins which he had specified. There is allusion, probably, and there is great force and propriety in the allusion, to what he had said in ver. 21:

“If his arm had been lifted up against an orphan, he prayed that it might fall powerless.”

Job 31:23. *For destruction from God was a terror to me* The destruction which God would bring upon one who was guilty of the crime here specified, awed and restrained me. He was deterred from this crime of oppressing the fatherless by the fear of God. He could have escaped the judgment of people. He had power and influence enough not to dread the

penalty of human law. He could have done it in such a way as not to have been arraigned before any earthly tribunal, but he remembered that the eye of God was upon him, and that he was the avenger of the fatherless and the widow.

And by reason of his highness On account of his majesty, exaltation, glory.

I could not endure אלו⁴³⁸⁰⁸ יקו⁴³²⁰¹ — I could not; that is, I could not do it. I was so much awed by his majesty; I had such a veneration for him, that I could not be guilty of such an offence.

⁴³⁸²⁴**Job 31:24.** *If I have made gold my hope* That is, if I have put my trust in gold rather than in God; if I have fixed my affections with idolatrous attachment on riches rather than on my Maker. Job here introduces another class of sins, and says that his conscience did not charge him with guilt in respect to them. He had before spoken mainly of social duties, and of his manner of life toward the poor, the needy, the widow, and the orphan. He here turns to the duty which he owed to God, and says that his conscience did not charge him with idolatry in any form. He had indeed been rich, but he had not fixed his affections with idolatrous attachment on his wealth.

Or have said to fine gold The word used here מטק,⁴³⁸⁰⁰ is the same which is employed in ⁴³⁸¹⁶Job 28:16, to denote the gold of Ophir. It is used to express that which was most pure — from the verb מטק⁴³⁷⁹⁹ — to hide, to hoard, and then denoting that which was hidden, hoarded, precious. The meaning is, that he had not put his trust in that which was most sought after, and which was deemed of the highest value by people.

⁴³⁸²⁵**Job 31:25.** *If I have rejoiced because my wealth was great* That is, if I have rejoiced as if I might now confide in it, or put my trust in it. He had not found his principal joy in his property, nor had he attempted to find in that the happiness which he ought to seek in God.

And because mine hand had gotten much Margin, found. Prof. Lee translates this, “When as a mighty man my hand prevailed.” But the usual interpretation is given in our translation, and this accords better with the connection. The word found better expresses the sense of the Hebrew than gotten, but the sense is not materially varied.

Job 31:26. *If I beheld the sun when it shined* Margin, light. The Hebrew word רְוָח^{<h216>} properly means light, but that it here means the sun is manifest from the connection, since the moon occurs in the parallel member of the sentence. Why the word light is used here rather than sun, can be only a matter of conjecture. It may be because the worship to which Job refers was not primarily and originally that of the sun, the moon, or the stars, but of light as such, and that he mentions this as the essential feature of the idolatry which he had avoided. The worship of light in general soon became in fact the worship of the sun — as that is the principal source of light. There is no doubt that Job here refers to idolatrous worship, and the passage is particularly valuable, as it describes one of the forms of idolatry then existing, and refers to some of the customs then prevalent in such worship. The word light is used, also, to denote the sun in ^{<1872>}Job 37:21; compare ^{<2384>}Isaiah 18:4; ^{<3184>}Habakkuk 3:4. So, also, Homer speaks of the sun not only as λαμπρον ^{<2986>} φαιος ἡελιοιο — bright light of the sun, but simply as φαιος — light. Odyssey r. 335. The worship here referred to is that of the heavenly bodies, and it is known that this existed in the early periods of the world, and was probably one of the first forms of idolatry. It is expressly mentioned by Ezekiel as prevailing in his time, ^{<1816>}Ezekiel 8:16, “And they worshipped the sun toward the east.” That it prevailed in the time of Moses, is evident from the caution which he gives in ^{<1849>}Deuteronomy 4:19; compare ^{<1235>}2 Kings 23:5. It is well known, also, that the worship of the heavenly bodies was common in the East, and particularly in Chaldea — near to which Job is supposed to have lived, and it was a remarkable fact that one who was surrounded with idolaters of this description had been enabled always to keep himself pure. The principle on which this worship was founded was, probably, that of gratitude. People adored the objects from which they derived important benefits, as well as deprecated the wrath of those which were supposed to exert a malignant influence. But among the objects from which people derived the greatest benefits were the sun and moon, and hence, they were objects of worship. The stars, also, were supposed to exert important influences over people, and hence, they also early became objects of adoration. An additional reason for the worship of the heavenly bodies may have been, that light was a natural and striking symbol of the divinity, and those shining bodies may have been at first honored as representatives of the Deity. The worship of the heavenly bodies was called Sabaism, from the Hebrew word אֲבָרָה^{<16635>} — host, or army — as being the worship of the hosts of heaven.

It is supposed to have had its origin in Persia, and to have spread thence to the West. That the moon was worshipped as a deity, is abundantly proved by the testimony of the ancient writers. Hottinger, Hist. Orient. Lib. 1:c. 8, speaking of the worship of the Zabaists, adduces the testimony of Ali Said Vaheb, saying that the first day of the week was devoted to the sun; the second to the moon; the third to Mars, etc. Maimonides says that the Zabaists worshipped the moon, and that they also said that Adam led mankind to that species of worship. Mor. Nev. P. 3: Clemens Alexandr. says (in Protrept.) **και** ^{<2532>} **προσεκινησαν** ^{<2795>} **ἡλιον** ^{<2246>} **ὥς** ^{<5613>} **ινδοι, και** ^{<2532>} **σεληνην** ^{<4582>} **ὥς** ^{<5613>} fruges. Curtius says of the people of Lybia (Liv. iv. in Melp.) **θυουσι** ^{<2380>} **de** ^{<1161>} **heelioo** ^{<2246>} **kai** ^{<2532>} **oeleenee** **mounoisi** . Julius Caesar says of the Germans, that they worshipped the moon, Lib. 6: de B. G. p. 158. The Romans had a temple consecrated to the moon, Tacit. Ann. Lib. 15: Livy, L. 40: See Geor. Frid. Meinhardi Diss. de SelenolatRIA, in Ugolin's Thesau. Sacr. Tom. 23:p. 831ff. Indeed, we have a proof of the worship of the moon in our own language, in the name given to the second day of the week — Monday, i.e. moon-day, implying that it was formerly regarded as devoted to the worship of the moon. The word “beheld” in the passage before us must be understood in an idolatrous sense. “If I have looked upon the sun as an object of worship.” Schultens explains this passage as referring to splendid and exalted characters, who, on account of their brilliance and power, may be compared to the sun at noon-day, and to the moon in its brightness. But the more obvious and common reference is to the sun and moon as objects of worship.

Or the moon walking in brightness Margin, bright. The word “walking,” here applied to the moon, may refer either to its course through the heavens, or it may mean, as Dr. Good supposes, advancing to her full; “brightly, or splendidly progressive.” The Septuagint renders the passage strangely enough. “Do we not see the shining sun eclipsed? and the moon changing? For it is not in them.”

^{<8817>} **Job 31:27.** *And my heart hath been secretly enticed* That is, away from God, or led into sin.

Or my mouth hath kissed my hand Margin, my hand hath kissed my mouth. The margin accords with the Hebrew. It was customary in ancient worship to kiss the idol that was worshipped; compare ^{<1198>} 1 Kings 19:18,

“I have left me seven thousand in Israel — and every mouth which hath not kissed him.”

See, also, ^{<817D>}Hosea 13:2. The Muslims at the present day, in their worship at Mecca, kiss the black stone which is fastened in the corner of the Beat Allah, as often as they pass it, in going round the Caaba. If they cannot come near enough to kiss it, they touch it with the hand, and kiss that. An Oriental pays his respects to one of a superior station by kissing his hand and putting it to his forehead. Paxton. See the custom of kissing the hand of a Prince, as it exists in Arabia, described by Niebuhr, Reisebeschreib. 1, S. 414. The custom prevailed, also, among the Romans and Greeks. Thus, Pliny (Hist. Nat. 28:2) says, Inter adorandum dexteram ad osculum referimus, et totum corpus circumagimus. So Lucian in the book, ^{<4012>}περι ορχησεως, says, “And the Indians, rising early, adore the sun — not as we, kissing the hand — την ^{<3588>}χειρα ^{<5495>}κυσσαντες — think that our vow is perfect.” The foundation of the custom here alluded to, is the respect and affection which is shown for one by kissing; and as the heavenly bodies which were worshipped were so remote that the worshippers could not have access to them, they expressed their veneration by kissing the hand. Job means to say, that he had never performed an act of homage to the heavenly bodies.

^{<882D>}**Job 31:28.** *This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge*

Note ver. 11. Among the Hebrews idolatry was an offence punishable by death by stoning; ^{<617D>}Deuteronomy 17:2-7. It is possible, also, that this might have been elsewhere in the patriarchal times a crime punishable in this manner. At all events, Job regarded it as a heinous offence, and one of which the magistrate ought to take cognizance.

For I should have denied the God that is above The worship of the heavenly bodies would have been in fact the denial of the existence of any Superior Being. This, in fact, always occurs, for idolaters have no knowledge of the true God.

^{<881D>}**Job 31:29.** *If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me* Job

here introduces another class of offences, of which he says he was innocent. The subject referred to is the proper treatment of those who injure us. In respect to this, he says that he was entirely conscious of freedom from exultation when calamity came upon a foe, and that he had never even wished him evil in his heart. The word “destruction” here,

means calamity, disappointment, or affliction of any kind. It had never been pleasant to him to see one who hated him suffer. It is needless to remark how entirely this accords with the New Testament. And it is pleasant to find such a sentiment as this expressed in the early age of the world, and to see how the influence of true religion is at all times the same. The religion of Job led him to act out the beautiful sentiment afterward embodied in the instructions of the Savior, and made binding on all his followers;

<1054> Matthew 5:44. True religion will lead a man to act out what is embodied in its precepts, whether they are expressed in formal language or not.

Or lifted up myself Been elated or rejoiced.

When evil found him When calamity overtook him.

<833> **Job 31:30.** *Neither have I suffered my mouth* Margin, as in Hebrew, palate. The word is often used for the mouth in general, and especially as the organ of the voice from the use and importance of the palate in speaking. <1087> Proverbs 8:7. “For my palate *Ēj e* <2441> speaketh truth.” It is used as the organ of taste, <821> Job 12:11; compare 6:30; <4393> Psalm 119:103.

By wishing a curse to his soul It must have been an extraordinary degree of piety which would permit a man to say this with truth, that he had never harbored a wish of injury to an enemy. Few are the people, probably, even now, who could say this, and who are enabled to keep their minds free from every wish that calamities and woes may overtake those who are seeking their hurt. Yet this is the nature of true religion. It controls the heart, represses the angry and revengeful feelings, and creates in the soul an earnest desire for the happiness even of those who injure us.

<833> **Job 31:31.** *If the men of my tabernacle* The men of my tent; or those who dwell with me. The reference is doubtless to those who were in his employ, and who, being constantly with him, had an opportunity to observe his manner of life. On this verse there has been a great variety of exposition, and interpreters are by no means agreed as to its meaning. Herder connects it with the previous verse, and renders it,

“No! my tongue uttered no evil word, Nor any imprecation against him, When the men of my tent said, ‘O that we had his flesh, it would satisfy us.’”

That is, though he were the bitterest enemy of my house, and all were in open violence. Noyes translates it,

“Have not the men of my tent exclaimed, ‘Who is there that hath not been satisfied with his meat?’”

Umbreit supposes that it is designed to celebrate the benevolence of Job, and that the meaning is, that all his companions — the inmates of his house — could bear him witness that not one of the poor was allowed to depart without being satisfied with his hospitality. They were abundantly fed, and their needs supplied. The verse is undoubtedly to be regarded as connected, as Ikenius supposes, with the following, and is designed to illustrate the hospitality of Job. His object is to show that those who dwelt with him, and who had every opportunity of knowing all about him, could never say that the stranger was not hospitably entertained. The phrase, “If the men of my tabernacle said not,” means, that a case never occurred in which they could not make use of the language which follows, they never could say that the stranger was not hospitably entertained.

Oh that we had The phrase *yml*^{h4310} *tæ*^{h5414}, commonly means, “O that” — as the Latin *Utinam* — implying a wish or desire. See ^{<18923>}Job 19:23; 31:35. But here the phrase seems to be used in the sense of “Who will give, or who will show or furnish” (compare ^{<18140>}Job 14:4); and the sense is,

“Who will refer to one instance in which the stranger has not been hospitably entertained?”

Of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied Or, rather, “Who will refer to an instance in which it can be said that we have not been satisfied from his flesh, i.e. from his table, or by his hospitality?” The word *flesh* here cannot mean, as our translation would seem to imply, the flesh of Job himself, as if it were to be torn and lacerated with a spirit of revenge, but that which his table furnished by a generous hospitality. The Septuagint renders this, “If my maid-servants have often said, O that we had some of his flesh to eat! while I was living luxuriously.” For a great variety of opinions on the passage, see Schultens in loc. The above interpretation of Ikenius is the most simple, natural, and obvious of any which have been proposed, and is adopted by Schultens and Rosenmuller.

Job 31:32. *The stranger did not lodge in the street* This is designed to illustrate the sentiment in the previous verse, and to express his consciousness that he had showed the most generous hospitality.

But I opened my doors to the traveler Margin, or way. The word used here **j rāb**^{<h734>} means properly way, path, road; but it also denotes those who travel on such a way; see **<h734>** Job 6:19, “The troops of Tema looked,” Hebrew **j rāb**^{<h734>} **amyTe**^{<h8485>} — the ways, or paths of Tema; that is, those who traveled in those paths. Vulgate here, viatori. Septuagint, “To everyone that came” — **παντι**^{<h3956>} **ελθοντι**^{<h2064>}. This was one of the methods of hospitality — the central and crowning virtue among the Arabs to this day, and among the Orientals in all ages. Among the boasts of hospitality, showing the place which this virtue had in their estimation, and the methods by which it was practiced, we may refer to such expressions as the following: “I occupy the public way with my tent;” that is, to every traveler without distinction, my tent is open and my table is spread. “He makes the public path the place for the cords of his tent;” that is, he fixed the pins and cords of his tent in the midst of the public highway, so that every traveler might enter. These examples are quoted by Schultens from the Hamasa. Another beautiful example may be taken from the same collection of Arabic poems. I give the Latin translation of Schultens:

Quam saepe latratum imitanti viatori, cui resonabat echo Suscitavi
ignem, cujus lignum luculentum Properusque surrexi ad eum, ut
praedae mihi loco esset, Prae metu ne populus mens eum ante me
occuparet.

That is, “How often to the traveler, imitating the bark of the dog, and the echo of whose voice was heard, have I kindled a fire, the shining wood of which I quick raised up to him, as one would hasten to the prey, in fear lest someone of my own people should anticipate me in the privileges and rites of hospitality.” The allusion to the imitation of the barking of a dog here, refers to the custom of travelers at night, who make this noise when they need a place of rest. This sound is responded to by the dogs which watch around the tents of their masters, and the sound is the signal for a general rush to show hospitality to the stranger. Burckhardt, speaking of the inhabitants of the Houran — the country east of the Jordan, and south of Damascus, says,

“A traveler may alight at any house he pleases; a mat will be immediately spread for him, coffee made, and a breakfast or dinner set before him. In entering a village it has often happened to me, that several persons presented themselves, each begging that I would lodge at his house. It is a point of honor with the host never to receive the smallest return from a guest. Besides the private habitations, which offer to every traveler a secure night’s shelter, there is in every village the Medhafe of the Sheikh, where all strangers of decent appearance are received and entertained. It is the duty of the Sheikh to maintain this Medhafe, which is like a tavern, with the difference that the host himself pays the bill. The Sheikh has public allowance to defray these expenses, and hence a man of the Houran, intending to travel about for a fortnight never thinks of putting a single para in his pocket; he is sure of being every where well received, and of living better, perhaps, than at his own home.” Travels in Syria, pp. 294, 295.

Job 31:33. *If I covered my transgressions as Adam* That is, if I have attempted to hide or conceal them; if, conscious of guilt, I have endeavored to cloak my sins, and to appear righteous. There has been great variety of opinion about the meaning of this expression. The margin reads it, “After the manner of men.” Luther, renders it, “Have I covered my wickedness as a man” — Habe ich meine Schalkheit wie ein Mensch gedeckt. Coverdale, “Have I ever done any wicked deed where through I shamed myself before men.” Herder, “Did I hide my faults like a mean man.” Schultens, “If I have covered my sin as Adam.” The Vulgate, Quasi homo — “as a man.” The Septuagint, “If when I sinned unwillingly (ἀκούστως — inadvertently, undesignedly) I concealed my sin.” Noyes, “After the manner of men.” Umbreit, Nach Menschenart — “After the manner of men.” Rosenmuller, As Adam. The Chaldee, **ṣḏak**, meaning, as Rosenmuller remarks, as Adam; and the Syriac, As men. The meaning may either be, as people are accustomed to do when they commit a crime — referring to the common practice of the guilty to attempt to cloak their offences, or to the attempt of Adam to hide his sin from his Maker after the fall; **Gen 3:7,8.** It is not possible to decide with certainty which is the correct interpretation, for either will accord with the Hebrew. But in favor of the supposition that it refers to the effort of Adam to conceal his sin, we may remark,

(1.) That there can be little or no doubt that that transaction was known to Job by tradition.

(2.) It furnished him a pertinent and striking illustration of the point before him.

(3.) The illustration is, by supposing that it refers to him, much more striking than on the other supposition.

It is true that people often attempt to conceal their guilt, and that it may be set down as a fact very general in its character; but still it is not so universal that there are no exceptions. But here was a specific and well-known case, and one which, as it was the first, so it was the most sad and melancholy instance that had ever occurred of an attempt to conceal guilt. It was not an attempt, to hide it from man — for there was then no other man to witness it; but an attempt to hide it from God. From such an attempt Job says he was free.

By hiding mine iniquity in my bosom By attempting to conceal it so that others would not know it. Adam attempted to conceal his fault even from God; and it is common with people, when they have done wrong, to endeavor to hide it from others.

~~183134~~ **Job 31:34.** *Did I fear a great multitude* Our translators have rendered this as if Job meant to say that he had not been deterred from doing what he supposed was right by the fear of others; as if he had been independent, and had done what he knew to be right, undeterred by the fear of popular fury, or the loss of the favor of the great. This version is adopted also by the Vulgate, by Herder, and substantially by Coverdale and Luther.

Another interpretation has, however, been proposed, and is adopted by Schultens, Noyes, Good, Umbreit, Dathe, and Scott, which is, that this is to be regarded as an imprecation, or that this is the punishment which he invoked and expected if he had been guilty of the crime which is specified in the previous verses. The meaning then would be “Then let me be confounded before the great multitude! Let the contempt of families cover me with shame! Let me keep silence, and let me never appear abroad!” The Hebrew will admit of either construction, and either of them will accord well with the connection. The latter, however, regarding it as an imprecation, seems to me to be preferable, for two reasons:

(1) It will accord more forcibly with what he had said in the previous verse. The sense then would be, as expressed by Patrick,

“If I have studied to appear better than I am, and have not made a free confession, but, like our first parent, have concealed or excused my faults, and, out of self-love, have hidden mine iniquity, because I dread what the people will say of me, or am terrified by the contempt into which the knowledge of my guilt will bring me with the neighboring families, then am I content my mouth should be stopped, and that I never stir out of my door any more.”

(2) This interpretation seems to be required, in order to make a proper close of his remarks. The general course in this chapter has been to specify an offence, and then to utter an imprecation if he had been guilty of it. In the previous verses he had specified crimes of which he had declared himself innocent; but unless this verse be so regarded, there is no invocation of any corresponding punishment if he had been guilty. It seems probable, therefore, that this verse is so to be regarded. According to this, the phrase “Did I fear a great multitude” means, “Then let me be terrified by a multitude — by the opinions of the world, and let this be the punishment of my sin. Since by the fear of others I was led to hide my sin in my bosom, let it be my lot to lose all popular favor, and feel that I am the object of public scorn and contempt!”

Or did the contempt of families terrify me Let the contempt of families crush me; let me be despised and abhorred by them. If I was led to hide sins in my bosom because I feared them, then let me be doomed to the total loss of their favor, and become wholly the object of their scorn.

That I kept silence Or let me keep silence as a punishment. That is, let me not be admitted as a counsellor, or allowed to express my sentiments in the public assemblies.

And went not out at the door That is, “Let me not go out at the door. Let me be confined to my dwelling, and never be allowed to appear in public, to mingle in society, to take part in public affairs — because by the fear of the world I attempted to hide my faults in my bosom. Such a punishment would be appropriate to such an offence. The retribution would be no more than a suitable recompense for such an act of guilt — and I would not shrink from it.”

Job 31:35. *O that one would hear me!* This refers undoubtedly to God. It is, literally, “Who will give to me one hearing me;” and the wish is that which he has so often expressed, that he might get his cause fairly before God. He feels assured that there would be a favorable verdict, if there could be a fair judicial investigation; compare the notes at ^{<1813>}Job 13:3.

Behold, my desire is Margin, “Or, my sign is that ‘the Almighty will answer me.’” The word rendered in the text desire, and in the margin sign, (tau (t)), means properly a mark, or sign, and is also the name of the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Then the word means, according to Gesenius (Lex.), a mark, or cross, as subscribed to a bill of complaint; hence, the bill itself, or, as we should say, the pleading. According to this, Job means to say that he was ready for trial, and that there was his bill of complaint, or his pleading, or his bill of defense. So Herder renders it, “See my defense.” Coverdale, “Lo, this is my cause.” Miss Smith renders it, “Behold my gage!” Umbreit, Meinel Kagschrift — My accusation. There can be no doubt that it refers to the forms of a judicial investigation, and that the idea is, that Job was ready for the trial. “Here” says he, “is my defense, my argument, my pleading, my bill! I wait that my adversary should come to the trial.” The name used here as given to the bill or pleading (tau (t), mark, or sign), probably had its origin from the fact that some mark was affixed to it — of some such significance as a seal — by which it was certified to be the real bill of the party, and by which he acknowledged it as his own. This might have been done by signing his name, or by some conventional mark that was common in those times.

That the Almighty would answer me That is, answer me as on trial; that the cause might be fairly brought to an issue. This wish he had frequently expressed.

And that mine adversary, God; regarded as the opposite party in the suit.

Had written a book Or, would write down his charge. The wish is, that what God had against him were in like manner entered in a bill or pleading that the charge might be fairly investigated. On the word book, compare the notes at ^{<1812>}Job 19:23. It means here a pleading in court, a bill, or charge against anyone. There is no irreverence in the language here. Job is anxious that his true character should be investigated, and that the great

matter at issue should be determined; and he draws his language & illustrations from well-known practices in courts of law.

Job 31:36. *Surely, I would take it upon my shoulder* That is, the book or bill which the Almighty would write in the case. Job says that he has such confidence that what God would record in his case would be in his favor, such confidence that he had no charge of hypocrisy against him, and that he who knew him altogether would not bring such an accusation against him, that he would bear it off triumphantly on his shoulders. It would be all that he could desire. This does not refer to what a judge would decide if the cause were submitted to him, but to a case where an opponent or adversary in court should bring all that he could say against him. He says that he would bear even such a bill on his shoulders in triumph, and that it would be a full vindication of his innocence. It would afford him the best vindication of his character, and would be that which he had long desired.

And bind it as a crown to me I would regard it as an ornament — a diadem. I would bind it on my head as a crown is worn by princes, and would march forth exultingly with it. Instead of covering me with shame, it would be the source of rejoicing, and I would exhibit it every where in the most triumphant manner. It is impossible for anyone to express a more entire consciousness of innocence from charges alleged against him than Job does by this language.

Job 31:37. *I would declare unto him the number of my steps* That is, I would disclose to him the whole course of my life. This is language also appropriate to a judicial trial, and the meaning is, that Job was so confident of his integrity that he would approach God and make his whole course of life known to him.

As a prince would I go near unto him With the firm and upright step with which a prince commonly walks. I would not go in a base, cringing manner, but in a manner that evinced a consciousness of integrity. I would not go bowed down under the consciousness of guilt, as a self-condemned malefactor, but with the firm and elastic foot-tread of one conscious of innocence. It must be remembered that all this is said with reference to the charges which had been brought against him by his friends, and not as claiming absolute perfection. He was accused of gross hypocrisy, and it was maintained that he was suffering the judicial infliction of heaven on

account of that. So far as those charges were concerned, he now says that he could go before God with the firm and elastic tread of a prince — with entire cheerfulness and boldness. We are not, however, to suppose that he did not regard himself as having the common infirmities and sinfulness of our fallen nature. The discussion does not turn at all on that point.

Job 31:38. *If my land cry against me* This is a new specification of an offence, and an imprecation of an appropriate punishment if he had been guilty of it. Many have supposed that these closing verses have been transferred from their appropriate place by an error of transcribers, and that they should have been inserted between ^{<18123>}Job 31:23,24 — or in some previous part of the chapter. It is certain that ^{<18135>}Job 31:35-37 would make an appropriate and impressive close of the chapter, being a solemn appeal to God in reference to all the specifications, or to the general tenor of his life; but there is no authority from the MSS. to make any change in the present arrangement. All the ancient versions insert the verses in the place which they now occupy, and in this all versions agree, except, according to Kennicott, the Teutonic version, where they are inserted after ver. 25. All the MSS. also concur in the present arrangement. Schultens supposes that there is manifest pertinency and propriety in the present arrangement. The former specification, says he, related mainly to his private life, this to his more public conduct; and the design is to vindicate himself from the charge of injustice and crime in both respects, closing appropriately with the latter. Rosenmuller remarks that in a composition composed in an age and country so remote as this, we are not to look for or demand the observance of the same regularity which is required by the modern canons of criticism. At all events, there is no authority for changing the present arrangement of the text. The meaning of the phrase “if my land cry out against me” is, that in the cultivation of his land he had not been guilty of injustice. He had not employed those to till it who had been compelled to do it, nor had he imposed on them unreasonable burdens, nor had he defrauded them of their wages. The land had not had occasion to cry out against him to God, because fraud or injustice had been done to any in its cultivation; compare ^{<10410>}Genesis 4:10; ^{<18111>}Habakkuk 2:11.

Or that the furrows likewise thereof complain Margin, weep. The Hebrew is, “If the furrows weep together,” or “in like manner weep.” This is a beautiful image. The very furrows in the field are personified as weeping on account of injustice which would be done them, and of the burdens which

would be laid on them, if they were compelled to contribute to oppression and fraud.

Job 31:39. *If I have eaten the fruits thereof* Margin, strength. The strength of the earth is that which the earth produces or which is the result of its strength. We speak now of a “strong soil “ — meaning that it is capable of bearing much.

Without money Hebrew “without silver “ — silver being the principal circulating medium in early times. The meaning here is, “without paying for it;” either without having paid for the land, or for the labor. “Or have caused the owners thereof.” Margin, the soul of the owners thereof to expire, or breathe out. The Hebrew is, “If I have caused the life of the owners [or lords) of it to breathe out.” The meaning is, if I have appropriated to myself the land or labor of others without paying for it, so that their means of living are taken away. He disclaims all injustice in the case. He had not deprived others of their land by violence or fraud, so that they had no means of subsistence.

Job 31:40. *Let thistles grow;* ^{<OR&B>}Genesis 3:18. Thistles are valueless; and Job is so confident of entire innocence in regard to this, that he says he would be willing, if he were guilty, to have his whole land overrun with noxious weeds.

And cockle Cockle is a well known herb that gets into wheat or other grain. It has a bluish flower, and small black seed, and is injurious because it tends to discolor the flour. It is not certain by any means, however, that this is intended here. The margin is, noisome weeds. The Hebrew word **hvaβ** ^{<h890>} is from **vab** ^{<h887>}, “to have a bad smell, to stink,” and was given to the weed here referred to on that account, compare ^{<34B>}Isaiah 34:3. The cockle however, has no unpleasant odor, and the word here probably means noxious weeds. So it is rendered by Herder and by Noyes. The Septuagint has **βατος** ^{<942>}, bramble; the Vulgate, spina, thorn; Prof. Lee, prunus sylvestris, “a bramble resembling the hawthorn;” Schultens, labrusca, wild vine.

The words of Job are ended That is, in the present speech or argument; his discussions with his friends are closed. He spoke afterward, as recorded in the subsequent chapters, but not in controversy with them. He had vindicated his character, sustained his positions, and they had nothing to

reply. The remainder of the book is occupied mainly with the speech of Elihu, and with the solemn and sublime address which God himself makes.

NOTES ON JOB 32

Job 32:1. *So these three men ceased to answer Job* Each had had three opportunities of replying to him, though in the last series of the controversy Zophar had been silent. Now all were silent; and though they do not appear in the least to have been convinced, or to have changed their opinion, yet they found no arguments with which to sustain their views. It was this, among other things, which induced Elihu to take up the subject.

Because he was righteous in his own eyes Umbreit expresses the sense of this by adding, “and they could not convince him of his unrighteousness.” It was not merely because he was righteous in his own estimation, that they ceased to answer him; it was because their arguments had no effect in convincing him, and they had nothing new to say. He seemed to be obstinately bent on maintaining his own good opinion of himself in spite of all their reasoning, and they sat down in silence.

Job 32:2. *Then was kindled the wrath* Wrath or anger is commonly represented as kindled, or as burning.

Of Elihu The name Elihu **WhyI ä**^{<h453>} means, “God is he”; or, since the word He **aWh**^{<h1931>} is often used by way of eminence to denote the true God or YAHWEH, the name is equivalent to saying, “God is my God,” or “my God is JEHOVAH.” On what account this name was given to him, is now unknown. The names which were anciently given, however, were commonly significant, and it was not unusual to incorporate the name of God in those given to human beings. See the notes at ^{<2300>}Isaiah 1:1. This name was probably given as an expression of piety on the part of his parents.

The son of Barachel The name Barachel **I akJē**^{<h1292>} means “God blesses,” and was also probably given as expressive of the piety of his parents, and as furnishing in the name itself a valuable motto which the child would remember. Nothing more is known of him than the name; and the only propriety of remarking on the philology of the names arises from the fact that they seem to indicate the existence of piety, or of the knowledge of God, on the part of the ancestors of Elihu.

The Buzite Buz was the second son of Nahor, the brother of Abraham, ^{<1221>}Genesis 22:20,21. A city of the name Buz is mentioned in ^{<2573>}Jeremiah 25:23, in connection with Dedan and Tema, cities of Arabia, and it is probable that Barachel, the father of Elihu, was of that city. If this name was given to the place after the son of Nahor, it will follow that Elihu, and consequently Job, must have lived after the time of Abraham.

Of the kindred of Ram Of Ram nothing is certainly known. The Chaldee renders this *tsyng ʾm μtrna* of the race of Abraham. Some have supposed that the Ram mentioned here is the same as the ancestor of David mentioned in ^{<849>}Ruth 4:19, and in the genealogical table in ^{<1008>}Matthew 1:3,4, under the name of Aram. Others suppose that he was of the family of Nahor, and that the name is the same as *μra* ^{<h758>} mentioned in ^{<1221>}Genesis 22:21. Thus, by aphaeresis the Syrians are called *ymiræ* ^{<421>}, (^{<1215>}2 Chronicles 22:5), instead of *μymya*, as they are usually denominated; compare ^{<1189>}2 Kings 8:29. But nothing certain is known of him who is mentioned here. It is worthy of observation that the author of the book of Job has given the genealogy of Elihu with much greater particularity than he has that of either Job or his three friends. Indeed, he has not attempted to trace their genealogy at all. Of Job he does not even mention the name of his father; of his three friends he mentions merely the place where they dwelt. Rosenmuller infers, from this circumstance, that Elihu is himself the author of the book, since, says he, it is the custom of the Turks and Persians, in their poems, to weave in, near the end of the poem, the name of the author in an artificial manner. The same view is taken by Lightfoot, *Chronica temporum et ord. Text. V.T.* A circumstance of this kind, however, is too slight an argument to determine the question of the authorship of the book. It may have been that Elihu was less known than either of the other speakers, and hence, there was a propriety in mentioning more particularly his family. Indeed, this fact is morally certain, for he is not mentioned, as the others are, as the “friend” of Job.

Because he justified himself Margin, his soul. So the Hebrew; the word *vpp*, ^{<45315>}, soul, being often used to denote oneself.

Rather than God Prof. Lee renders this, “justified himself with God;” and so also Umbreit, Good, and some others. And so the Vulgate renders it: — coram Deo. The Septuagint renders it, *εναντιον* ^{<1726>} *κυριου* ^{<2962>} — against the Lord; that is, rather than the Lord. The proper translation of the

Hebrew **μyhl a** ^{<h430>} is undoubtedly more than God: and this was doubtless the idea which Elihu intended to convey. He understood Job as vindicating himself rather than God; as being more willing that aspersions should be cast on the character and government of God, than to confess his own sin.

<830> Job 32:3. *Because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job* They held Job to be guilty, and yet they were unable to adduce the proof of it, and to reply to what he had said. They still maintained their opinion, though silenced in the argument. They were in that state of mind, not uncommon, in which they obstinately held on to an opinion which they could not vindicate, and believed another to be guilty, though they could not prove it.

<830> Job 32:4. *Now Elihu had waited* Margin, as in Hebrew, expected Job in words. The meaning is plain, that he had waited until all who were older than himself had spoken.

Because they were elder than he Margin, as in Hebrew, older for days. It appears that they were all older than he was. We have no means of determining their respective ages, though it would seem probable that Eliphaz was the oldest of the three friends, as he uniformly spoke first.

<830> Job 32:6. And Elihu — “said, I am young” Margin, few of days. The Hebrew is, “I am small **ry[k** ^{<h6810>} of days;” that is, I am inexperienced. We have no means of ascertaining his exact age, though it is evident that there was a considerable disparity between them and him.

And ye are very old **vyvj** ^{<h3453>}. The word used here is probably derived from the obsolete root **vww**, “to be white, hoary”; and hence, to be hoary-headed, or aged; compare **<867> 2 Chronicles 36:17**. The whole of the discourses of the friends of Job seem to imply that they were aged men. They laid claim to great experience, and professed to have had opportunities of long observation, and it is probable that they were regarded as sages, who, by the long observation of events, had acquired the reputation of great wisdom.

Wherefore I was afraid He was timid, bashful, diffident.

And durst not show you mine opinion Margin, feared. He had that diffidence to which modesty prompts in the presence of the aged. He had

formed his opinion as the argument proceeded, but he did not deem it proper that one so young should interfere, even when he thought he perceived that others were wrong.

Job 32:7. *I said, Days should speak* The aged ought to speak. They have had the advantage of long observation of the course of events; they are acquainted with the sentiments of past times; they may have had an opportunity of conversing with distinguished sages, and it is to them that we look up for counsel. This was eminently in accordance with the ancient Oriental views of what is right; and it is a sentiment which accords with what is obviously proper, however little it is regarded in modern times. It is one of the marks of urbanity and true politeness; of the prevalence of good breeding, morals, and piety, and of an advanced state of society, when respect is shown to the sentiments of the aged. They have had the opportunity of long observation. They have conversed much with people. They have seen the results of certain courses of conduct, and they have arrived at a period of life when they can look at the reality of things, and are uninfluenced now by passion. Returning respect for the sentiments of the aged, attention to their counsels, veneration for their persons, and deference for them when they speak, would be an indication of advancement in society in modern times; and there is scarcely anything in which we have deteriorated from the simplicity of the early ages, or in which we fall behind the Oriental world, so much as in the want of this.

Job 32:8. *But there is a spirit in man* This evidently refers to a spirit imparted from above; a spirit from the Almighty. The parallelism seems to require this, for it responds to the phrase “the inspiration of the Almighty” in the other hemistich. The Hebrew expression here also seems to require this interpretation. It is, **j** ~~we~~^{<h7307>} **allh**^{<h1931>}, the Spirit itself; meaning the very Spirit that gives wisdom, or the Spirit of inspiration. He had said, in the previous verse, that it was reasonable to expect to find wisdom among the aged and the experienced. But in this he had been disappointed. He now finds that wisdom is not the attribute of rank or station, but that it is the gift of God, and therefore it may be found in a youth. All true wisdom, is the sentiment, is from above; and where the inspiration of the Almighty is, no matter whether with the aged or the young, there is understanding. Elihu undoubtedly means to say, that though he was much younger than they were, and though, according to the common estimate in which the aged and the young were held, he might be supposed to have much less

acquaintance with the subjects under consideration, yet, as all true wisdom came from above, he might be qualified to speak. The word “spirit” here, therefore, refers to the spirit which God gives; and the passage is a proof that it was an early opinion that certain men were under the teachings of divine inspiration. The Chaldee renders it *ydv tmvn*, a spirit of prophecy.

And the inspiration of the Almighty The breathing” of the Almighty — *hmvn*^{<45397>} *yDae*^{<4706>}. The idea was, that God breathed this into man, and that this wisdom was the breath of God; compare ^{<4007>}Genesis 2:7; ^{<4312>}John 20:22. Septuagint, *πvon*^{<4157>}, breath, breathing.

^{<4821>}**Job 32:9.** *Great men are not always wise* Though wisdom may in general be looked for in them, yet it is not universally true. Great men here denote those who are distinguished for rank, age, authority.

Neither do the aged understand judgment That is, they do not always understand it. The word judgment here means right, truth. They do not always understand what is the exact truth in regard to the divine administration. This is an apology for what he was about to say, and for the fact that one so young should speak. Of the truth of what he here said there could be no doubt, and hence, there was a propriety that one who was young should also be allowed to express his opinion on important subjects.

^{<4821>}**Job 32:11.** *I gave ear to your reasons* Margin, “understandings.” The meaning is, that he had given the most respectful attention to the views which they had expressed, implying that he had been all along present, and had listened to the debate.

Whilst ye searched out what to say Margin, as in Hebrew, words. It is implied here that they had bestowed much attention on what they had said. They had carefully sought out all the arguments at their command to confute Job, and still had been unsuccessful.

^{<4822>}**Job 32:12.** *There was none of you that convinced Job* There was no one to produce conviction on his mind, or rather, there was no one to reprove him by answering him — *j kye*^{<43198>} *hnf*^{<46030>}. They were completely silenced: and had nothing to reply to the arguments which he had advanced, and to his reflections on the divine government.

^{<4823>}**Job 32:13.** *Lest ye should say, We have found out wisdom* That is, this has been permitted and ordered in such a manner that it might be

manifest that the truths which are to convince him come from God and not from man. You were not permitted to refute or convince him, for if you had been you would have been lifted up with pride, and would have attributed to yourselves what belongs to God. This is in accordance with the entire drift of the book, which is to introduce the Almighty himself to settle the controversy when human wisdom failed. They could not arrogate to themselves the claim that they had found out wisdom. They had been completely silenced by Job; they had no power to drive him from his positions; they could not explain the divine dealings so as to settle the great inquiry in which they had been engaged. Elihu proposes to do it, and to do it in such a way as to show that it could be accomplished only by that wisdom which is from above.

God thrusteth him down, not man These are the words of Elihu. The meaning is, “God only can drive Job from his position, and show him the truth, and humble him. The wisdom of man fails. The aged, the experienced, and the wise have been unable to meet his arguments and bring him down from the positions which he has taken. That work can be done only by God himself, or by the wisdom which he only can give.” Accordingly Elihu, who proposes to meet the arguments of Job, makes no appeal to experience or observation; he does not ground what he says on the maxims of sages or the results of reflection, but proposes to adduce the precepts of wisdom which God had imparted to him; ~~8304~~ Job 33:4,6. Other interpretations have, however, been given of this verse, but the above seems to me the most simple, and most in accordance with the scope of the passage.

~~8324~~ **Job 32:14.** *Now, he hath not directed his words against me* Margin, “ordered.” The meaning of this expression is, “I can approach this subject in a wholly dispassionate and unprejudiced manner. I have had none of the provocations which you have felt; his harsh and severe remarks have not fallen on me as they have on you, and I can come to the subject with the utmost coolness.” The object is to show that he was not irritated, and that he would be under no temptation to use words from the influence of passion or any other than those which conveyed the simple truth. He seems disposed to admit that Job had given some occasion for severe remarks, by the manner in which he had treated his friends.

Neither will I answer him with your speeches They also had been wrong. They had given way to passion, and had indulged in severity of language,

rather than pursued a simple and calm course of argument. From all this, Elihu says he was free, and could approach the subject in the most calm and dispassionate manner. He had had no temptation to indulge in severity of language like theirs, and he would not do it.

<8321> **Job 32:15.** *They were amazed* There also are the words of Elihu, and are designed to express his astonishment that the three friends of Job did not answer him. He says that they were completely silenced, and he repeats this to call attention to the remarkable fact that men who began so confidently, and who still held on to their opinion, had not one word more to say. There is some reason to suppose, from the change of person here from the second to the third, that Elihu turned from them to those who were present, and called their attention to the fact that the friends of Job were completely silenced. This supposition, however, is not absolutely necessary, for it is not uncommon in Hebrew poetry to change from the second person to the third, especially where there is any censure or rebuke implied; compare <83804> Job 18:4.

They left off speaking Margin, “removed speeches from themselves.” The marginal reading accords with the Hebrew. The sense is the same as in the common version, though the Hebrew is more poetic. It is not merely that they ceased to speak, but that they put words at a great distance from them. They could say absolutely nothing. This fact, that they were wholly silent, furnished an ample apology for Elihu to take up the subject.



<8327> **Job 32:17.** *I also will show mine opinion* In this language, as in <8316> Job 32:6, there is a delicate expression of modesty in the Hebrew which does not appear in our translation. It is $\bar{a}a\bar{e}$ ^{<h637>} $yn\bar{e}$ ^{<h589>} — even I. “Even one so young, and so humble as I, may be permitted to express my sentiments, when the aged and the great have nothing more to say. It will be no improper intrusion for even me to speak when no other one more aged and honorable desires to.” In all this we may discern a degree of courtesy, and a delicate sense of propriety, which may be commended to

the imitation of all, and especially to the young. In the manners of the pious men whose biography is recorded in the Bible, there is a degree of refinement, delicacy, and courtesy, in their treatment of others, such as will seldom be found even in the most elevated walks of life, and such as religion only can produce. The outward form may be obtained by the world; the living principle is found only in the heart which is imbued with love to God and man.

Job 32:18. *For I am full of matter* Margin, as in Hebrew words.” The three friends of Job had been silenced. They had not one word more to say. Elihu says that the reverse was true of him. He was full of words, and felt constrained to speak. It was not because he forced himself to do it, nor because he did it as a mere matter of duty, but he was so impressed with the subject that it would be a relief for him to give utterance to his views.

The spirit within me Referring, probably, to the conviction that it was the divine Spirit which urged him to speak; see the notes at **Job 32:8**; compare **Job 33:4**. A similar constraint in regard to the necessity of speaking, when under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is expressed in **Jeremiah 20:9**,

“His word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay;”

compare Introduction to Isaiah Section 7. (3.) The phrase “within me” is in the margin, as in Hebrew my belly — where the belly is spoken of as the seat of the mind; see **Job 15:2**. We speak of the head as the seat of the intellect, and the heart as the seat of the affections. The Hebrews were much in the habit of representing the region of the heart as the seat of all mental operations.

Job 32:19. *Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent* Margin, as in Hebrew, “is not opened” — **al o j tæ**. The reference is to a bottle, in which there is no opening, or no vent for the fermenting wine to work itself off. It is usual to leave a small hole in barrels and casks when wine, cider, or beer is fermenting. This is necessary in order to prevent the cask from bursting. Elihu compares himself to a bottle in which new wine had been put, and where there was no vent for it, and when in consequence it was ready to burst. That new wine is here intended is apparent from the connection, and has been so understood by the ancient versions. So Jerome renders it, Mustum, must, or new wine. The Septuagint, **ασκος**

γλευκος ^{<1098>} ζεων ^{<2204>} δεδεμενος ^{<1210>} — “a bottle filled with sweet wine, fermenting, bound;” that is, which has no vent.

It is ready to burst like new bottles The Septuagint renders this, “As the rent (ερρηγος) bellows of a smith.” Why this version was adopted. it is not easy to say. The comparison would be pertinent, but the version could not be made from the present Hebrew text. It is possible that the copy of the Hebrew text which the Septuagint had may have read: μyvρh — “artificers,” instead of: μyvδj — new, and then the meaning would be, “as the bottles, or skins of artificers;” that is, as their bellows, which were doubtless at first merely the skins of animals. The reference of Elihu, however, is undoubtedly to skins that were used as bottles, and new skins are mentioned here as ready to burst, not because they were more likely to burst than old ones — for that was by no means the case — but because new and unfermented wine would naturally be placed in them, thus endangering them. Bottles in the east, it is well known, are usually made of the skins of goats; see the notes at ^{<4197>} Matthew 9:17.

The process of manufacturing them at present is this: The skins of the goats are striped off whole except at the neck. The holes at the feet and tail are sewed up. They are first stuffed out full, and strained by driving in small billets and chips of oak wood; and then are filled with a strong infusion of oak bark for a certain time, until the hair becomes fixed, and the skin sufficiently tanned. They are sold at different prices, from fifteen up to fifty piastres. Robinson’s Bibli. Research. ii. 440. Elihu, perhaps, could not have found a more striking illustration of his meaning. lie could no longer restrain himself, and he gave utterance, therefore, to the views which he deemed so important. The word “belly” in this verse ^{^fB,^{<h990>}} is rendered by Umbreit and Noyes, bosom. It not improbably has this meaning and the reference is to the fact that in the East the words are uttered forth much more ab imo pectore, or are much more guttural than with us. The voice seems to come from the lower part of the throat, or from the bosom, in a manner which the people of Western nations find it difficult to imitate.

^{<8221>}**Job 32:20.** *I will speak, that I may be refreshed* Margin, “breathe.” The meaning is, that he would then have room to breathe again; he would feel relieved.

^{<8221>}**Job 32:21.** *Let me not, I pray you* This is not to be regarded as an address to them, or a prayer to God, but as an expression of his

determination. It is similar to the phrase which we use when we say, “may I never do this;” implying the strongest possible purpose not to do it. Elihu means to say that on no account would he use partiality or flattery in what he said.

Accept any man’s person Treat any with partiality. That is, “I will not be influenced by rank, age, wealth, or personal friendship, in what I say. I will state the truth impartially, and will deliver my sentiments with entire freedom;” see the phrase explained in the notes at ^{<833>}Job 13:8.

Neither let me give flattering titles unto man The word used here ^{<365>}hnk, — not used in Qal, but found only in Piel), means to address in a friendly and soothing manner; to speak kindly to anyone, ^{<345>}Isaiah 44:5; 45:4; and then to flatter. That is, undoubtedly, its meaning here. Elihu says he did not know how to flatter anyone. He meant to state the exact truth; to treat each one impartially; and not to be influenced by the rank or wealth of those whom he addressed. He meant to deal in plain and simple truth.

^{<822>}**Job 32:22.** *For I know not to give flattering titles* I do not know how to flatter. It is not in my character; it has not been my habit. “In so doing.” These words are not in the Hebrew, and they greatly mar the sense, and give a different idea from that which was intended by the speaker.

My Maker would soon take me away Or, rather, “My Maker will soon take me away.” That is, “I know that I must soon be removed, and must stand before my Maker. I must give an account for all that I say. Knowing that I am to go to the realities of another state of being, I cannot flatter people. I must tell them the exact and simple truth.” There could be no better preventive of flattery than this. The conviction that we are soon to appear before God, where all are on a level, and where every mask will be stripped off, and everything appear as it is, would prevent us from ascribing to others qualities which we know they do not possess, and from giving them titles which will only exalt them in their own estimation, and hide the truth from their minds. Titles which properly belong to men, and which pertain to office, religion does not forbid us to confer — for the welfare of the community is promoted by a proper respect for the names and offices of those who rule. But no good end is answered in ascribing to men titles as mere matters of distinction, which serve to keep before them the idea of their own talents or importance; or which lead them to forget that they like others are soon to be “taken away,” and called to give up their account in

another world. The deep conviction that we are all soon to try the realities of a bed of death and of the grave, and that we are to go to a world where there is no delusion, and where the ascription of qualities to us here which do not belong to us will be of no avail, would prompt to a wish to state always the simple truth. Under that conviction, we should never so ascribe to another any quality of beauty, strength, or talent, any name or title, as to leave him for one moment under a deception about himself. If this rule were followed, what a change would it produce in the social, the political, the literary, and even the religious world!

NOTES ON JOB 33

Job 33:1. *Wherefore, Job, I pray thee* In the next chapter he addresses the three friends of Job. This is addressed particularly to him.

My speeches Hebrew, “my words” — **hLmi**^{h4405}. This is the usual word in the Aramaen languages to express a saying or discourse, though in Hebrew it is only a poetic form. The meaning is, not that he would address separate speeches, or distinct discourses, to Job, but that he called on him to attend to what he had to say.

Job 33:2. *My tongue hath spoken in my mouth* Margin, “palate.” The meaning is, that since he had ventured to speak, and had actually commenced, he would utter only that which was worthy to be heard. This is properly the commencement of his argument, for all that he had before said was merely an introduction. The word palate — “in my palate” **Ēj e**^{A2441} is used here because of the importance of that organ in the act of speaking. Perhaps also, there may be reference to the fact that the Hebrews made much more use of the lower organs of enunciation — the palate, and the throat, than we do, and much less use of the teeth and lips. Hence, their language was strongly guttural.

Job 33:3. *My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart* I will speak in sincerity. I will utter nothing that shall be hollow and hypocritical. What I speak shall be the real suggestion of my heart — what I feel and know to be true. Perhaps Elihu was the more anxious to make this point entirely clear, because the three friends of Job might be supposed to have laid themselves open to the suspicion that they were influenced by passion or prejudice; that they had maintained their opinions from mere obstinacy and not from conviction; and that they had been sometimes disposed to cavil. Elihu claims that all that he was about to say would be entirely sincere.

Shall utter knowledge clearly Shall state things just as they are, and give the true solution of the difficulties which have been felt in regard to the divine dealings. His object is to guard himself wholly from the suspicion of partiality.

Job 33:4. *The Spirit of God hath made me;* see the notes at **Job 32:8**. There is an evident allusion in this verse to the mode in which man was created, when God breathed into him the breath of life and he became a living being; **Genesis 2:7**. But it is not quite clear why Elihu adverts here to the fact that God had made him, or what is the bearing of this fact on what he proposed to say. The most probable supposition is, that he means to state that he is, like Job, a man; that both were formed in the same way — from the same breathing of the Almighty, and from the same clay (**Job 33:6**); and that although he had undertaken to speak to Job in God's stead (**Job 33:6**), yet Job had no occasion to fear that he would be overawed and confounded by the Divine Majesty. He had dreaded that, if he should be permitted to bring his case before him (**Notes, Job 33:7**), but Elihu says that now he would have no such thing to apprehend. Though it would be in fact the same thing as carrying the matter before God — since he came in his name, and meant to state the true principles of his government, yet Job would be also really conducting the cause with a man like himself, and might, unawed, enter with the utmost freedom into the statement of his views.

Job 33:5. *If thou canst answer me* The meaning of this verse is this: “The controversy between you and me, if you choose to reply, shall be conducted in the most equitable manner, and on the most equal terms. I will not attempt, as your three friends have done, to overwhelm you with reproaches; nor will I attempt to overawe you as God would do, so that you could not reply. I am a man like yourself, and desire that if anything can be said against what I have to advance, it should be offered with the utmost fairness and freedom.”

Stand up That is, “maintain your position, unless you are convinced by my arguments. I wish to carry nothing by mere authority or power.”

Job 33:6. *Behold, I am according to thy wish in Gods stead* Margin, as in Hebrew “mouth.” The mouth is that by which we express our desires, and the word here is equivalent to wish. Some have, however, rendered this differently. Umbreit translates it, *ich bin, wie du, von Gott* — I am, as thou art, from God. So Noyes, “I, like thee, am a creature of God.” Wemyss, “I am thine equal in the sight of God.” Coverdale, “Behold, before God am I even as thou, for I am fashioned and made even of the same mould.” The Vulgate renders it, “Behold God made me as he made thee; and of the same clay am I formed.” So the Septuagint, “From clay am

I formed as well as thou, and we are formed from the same.” This interpretation seems to be demanded also by the parallelism, where he says that he was made of the same clay with Job; that is, that he was a man like him. Still, it seems to me, that the fair and obvious meaning of the Hebrew is that which is expressed in our common version. The Hebrew is, ^{h2005} *he* ^{h589} *ynæ* ^{h6310} *hp,* ^{h410} *I æ* — “lo, I am, according to thy mouth (word, or wish) for God;” that is, I am in his place; I speak in his name; I am so commissioned by him that you may regard yourself as in fact speaking to him when you address his ambassador. This will also accord with what is said in ^{h337} Job 33:7, and with what Job had so earnestly desired, that he might be allowed to bring his cause directly before God; see the notes at ^{h337} Job 13:3.

I also am formed out of the clay Margin, “cut.” The figure is taken from the act of the potter, who cuts off a portion of clay which he moulds into a vessel, and there is manifest allusion here to the statement in Genesis, that God made man of the dust of the ground. The meaning in this connection is, “Though I am in the place of God, and speak in his name, yet I am also a man, made of the same frail material as yourself. In me, therefore, there is nothing to overawe or confound you as there would be if God spake himself.”

^{h337} **Job 33:7.** *Behold my terror shall not make thee afraid* Job had earnestly desired to carry his cause directly before God, but he had expressed the apprehension that he would overawe him by his majesty, so that he would not be able to manage his plea with the calmness and self-possession which were desirable. He had, therefore, expressed it as his earnest wish, that if he were so permitted, God would not take advantage of his majesty and power to confound him; see the notes at ^{h337} Job 13:21. Elihu now says, that the wish of Job in this could be amply gratified. Though he spake in the name of God, and it might be considered that the case was fairly carried before him, yet he was also a man. He was the fellow, the equal with Job. He was made of the same clay, and he could not overawe him as the Almighty himself might do. There would be, therefore, in his case all the advantage of carrying the cause directly up to God, and yet none of the disadvantage which Job apprehended, and which must ensue when a mere man undertook to manage his own cause with the Almighty.

Neither shall my hand be heavy upon, thee Alluding, evidently, to what Job had said, ^{<18132>}Job 13:21, that the hand of God was heavy upon him, so that he could not conduct his cause in such a manner as to do justice to himself. He had asked, therefore (see the notes at that place), as a special favor, if he was permitted to carry his cause before God, that his hand would be so far lightened that he could be able to state his arguments with the force which they required. Elihu says now that that wish could be gratified. Though he was in the place of God, yet he was a man, and his hand would not be upon him to crush him down so that he could not do justice to himself. The noun rendered “hand” *ākā*,^{<h405>} does not elsewhere occur. The verb *ākā*,^{<h404>} occurs once in ^{<3185>}Proverbs 16:26, where it is rendered “craveth” — “He that laboreth, laboreth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him” — where the margin is boweth unto. The word in Arabic means to lead a beast of burden; to bend, to make to bow under a lead; and then to impel, to urge on; and hence, it means, “his mouth, i.e., hunger, impels, or urges him on to labor.” In like manner the meaning of the word here *pkā*, MAY be a lead or burden, meaning “my lead, i.e., my weight, dignity, authority, shall not be burdensome or oppressive to you.” But the parallel place in ^{<18132>}Job 13:21, is “hand,” and that meaning seems to be required here. Kimchi supposes it is the same as *ākā*,^{<370>} — hand, and the Septuagint has so rendered it, ^{<3588>}ἡ ^{<5495>}χειρ ^{<3450>}μου. In the view of the speech of Elihu thus far, we cannot but remark that there is much that is unique, and especially that he lays decided claim to inspiration. Though speaking for God, yet he was in human nature, and Job might speak to him as a friend, unawed and unterrified by any dread of overwhelming majesty and power. On what grounds Elihu based these high pretensions does not appear, and his claim to them is the more remarkable from his youth. It does not require the aid of a very lively imagination to fancy a resemblance between him and the Lord Jesus — the great mediator between God and man — and were that mode of interpretation which delights to find types and figures every where a mode that could be vindicated, there is no character in the Old Testament that would more obviously suggest that of the Redeemer than the character of Elihu. His comparative youth, his modesty, his humility, would suggest it. The fact that he comes in to utter his sentiments where age and wisdom had failed to suggest the truth, and when pretending sages were confounded and silenced, would suggest it. The fact that he claims to be in the place of God, and that a cause might be managed before him as if it were before

God and yet that he was a man like others, and that no advantage would be taken to overawe by mere majesty and power, are all circumstances that would constitute a strong and vivid resemblance. But I see no evidence that this was the design of the introduction of the character of Elihu, and interesting as the comparison might be, and desirable as it may seem that the book of Job should be found to contain some reference to the great work of mediation, yet the just and stern laws of interpretation exclude such a reference in the absence of proof, and do not allow us to luxuriate in the conceptions of fancy, however pious the reflections might be, or to search for typical characters where the Spirit of inspiration has not revealed them as such, however interesting or edifying might be the contemplation.

Job 33:8. *Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing* Margin, as in Hebrew “ears.” This shows that Elihu had been present during the debate, and had attentively listened to what had been said. He now takes up the main point on which he supposed that Job had erred — the attempt to justify himself. He professes to adduce the very words which he had used, and disclaims all design of judging from mere hearsay.

Job 33:9. *I am clean* I am pure and holy.

Without transgression Job had not used these very expressions, nor had he intended to maintain that he was absolutely free from sin; see **Job 9:20**. He had maintained that he was not chargeable with the transgressions of which his three friends maintained that he was guilty, and in doing that he had used strong language, and language which even seemed to imply that he was without transgression; see **Job 9:30; 10:7; 13:23; 16:17**.

I am innocent The word used here **āj æ** ⁴²⁶⁴³ is from the verb **āpjæ** ⁴²⁶⁵³ — to cover, to protect; and also, as a secondary meaning, from the Arabic, to rub, to wipe off; to wash away; to lave. Hence, it denotes that which is rubbed clean, washed, pure — and then innocent. The word occurs only in this place. It is not the exact language which Job had used, and there seems to be some injustice done him in saying that he had employed such language. Elihu means, doubtless, that he had used language which implied this, or which was equivalent to it.

Job 33:10. *Behold, he findeth occasions against me* That is, God. This is not exactly the language of Job, though much that he had said had seemed to imply this. The idea is, that God sought opportunity to oppose

him; that he was desirous to find in him some ground or reason for punishing him; that he wished to be hostile to him, and was narrowly on the watch to find an opportunity which would justify his bringing calamity upon him. The word rendered “occasions” — **haWnTJ**^{<18569>}, is from **aWn**^{<15106>}, in the Hiphil, **aWn**^{<15106>} — to refuse, decline; to hinder, restrain, ^{<0816>}Numbers 30:6,9,12; and hence, the noun means, a holding back, a withdrawal, an alienation; and hence, the idea is, that God sought to be alienated from Job. The Vulgate renders it, “He seeks complaints (quærales) against me.” The Septuagint, **μεμψιν** — accusation. Umbreit, Feindschaft, enmity. So Gesenius and Noyes. “He counteth me for his enemy.” This is language which Job had used; see ^{<1891>}Job 19:11.

^{<1831>}**Job 33:11.** *He putteth my feet in the stocks* This also is language which Job had used; see ^{<1817>}Job 13:27. “He marketh all my paths;” in ^{<1817>}Job 13:27, “Thou lookest narrowly unto all my paths;” see the notes at that verse.

^{<1812>}**Job 33:12.** *Behold, in this thou art not just* In this view of God, and in these reflections on his character and government. Such language in regard to the Deity cannot be vindicated; such views cannot be right. It cannot be that he wishes to be the foe of man; that he watches with a jealous eye every movement with a view to find something that will justify him in bringing heavy calamities upon his creatures, or that he sets himself as a spy upon the way in which man goes, in order to find out something that shall make it proper for him to treat him as an enemy. It cannot be denied that Job had indulged in language making substantially such representations of God, and that he had thus given occasion for the reproof of Elihu. It can as little be denied that such thoughts frequently pass through the minds of the afflicted, though they do not express them in words, nor is it less doubtful that they should be at once banished from the soul. They cannot be true. It CANNOT be that God thus regards and treats his creatures; that he wishes to find “occasion” in them to make it proper for him to bring calamity upon them, or that he desires to regard them as his foes.

I will answer thee That is, I will show that this view is unjust.” This he does in the subsequent verses by stating what he supposes to be the real design of afflictions, and by showing that God in these trials had a good and benevolent object.

That — yK^{h3588}. Rather, “because,” or “for.” The object is not to show that God was greater than man — for that could not be a matter of information, but to show that because he was far above man he had great and elevated objects in his dealings with him, and man should submit to him without a complaint.

God is greater than man The meaning of this is, that man should suppose that God has good reasons for all that he does, and that he might not be qualified to understand the reason of his doings. He should therefore acquiesce in his arrangements, and not call in question the equity of the divine dealings. In all our trials it is well to remember that God is greater than we are. He knows what is best; and though we may not be able to see the reason of his doings, yet it becomes us to acquiesce in his superior wisdom.

Job 33:13. *Why dost thou strive against him?* By refusing to submit to him, and by calling in question his wisdom and godness.

For he giveth not account of any of his matters Margin, as in Hebrew “answereth not.” The idea is, that it is as useless as it is improper to contend with God. He does his own pleasure, and deals with man as he deems best and right. The reason of his doings he does not state, nor has man any power to extort from him a statement of the causes why he afflicts us. This is still true. The reason of his doings he does not often make known to the afflicted, and it is impossible to know now the causes why he has brought on us the calamity with which we are visited. The general reasons why men are afflicted may be better known now than they were in the time of Elihu, for successive revelations have thrown much light on that subject. But when he comes and afflicts us as individuals; when he takes away a beloved child; when he cuts down the young, the vigorous, the useful, and the pious, it is often impossible to understand why he has done it. All that we can do then is to submit to his sovereign will, and to believe that though we cannot see the reasons why he has done it, yet that does not prove that there are no reasons, or that we may never be permitted to understand them. We are required to submit to his will, not to our own reason; to acquiesce because he does it, not because we see it to be right. If we always understood the reasons why he afflicts us, our resignation would be not to the will of God, but to our own knowledge of what is right; and God, therefore, often passes before us in clouds and thick darkness to see whether we have sufficient confidence in him to believe

that he does right, even when we cannot see or understand the reason of his doings. So a child reposes the highest confidence in a parent, when he believes that the parent will do right, though he cannot understand why he does it, and the parent does not choose to let him know. May not a father see reasons for what he does which a child could not understand, or which it might be proper for him to withhold from him?

Job 33:14. *For God speaketh once* The object of what is here said is, to show the reason why God brings affliction upon people, or to explain the principles of his government which Elihu supposed had been sadly misunderstood by Job and his friends. The reason why he brings affliction, Elihu says, is because all other means of reclaiming and restraining people fail. He communicates his will to them; he speaks to them again and again in dreams and visions; he warns them of the error of their course (**Job 33:14-17**), and when this is all ineffectual he brings upon them affliction. He lays them upon their bed where they must reflect, and where there is hope that they may be reclaimed and reformed, **Job 33:18-28**.

Yea, twice He does not merely admonish him once. He repeats the admonition when man refuses to hear him the first time, and takes all the methods which he can by admonition and warning to withdraw him from his wicked purpose, and to keep him from ruin.

Yet man perceiveth it not Or, rather, "Although he does not perceive it or attend to it." Though the sinner is regardless of the admonition, yet still God repeats it, and endeavors to save him from the commission of the crimes which would lead him to ruin. This is designed to show the patience and forbearance of God, and how many means he takes to save the sinner from ruin. Of the truth of what Elihu here says, there can be no difference of opinion. It is one of the great principles of the divine administration that the sinner is often warned, though he heeds it not; and that God sends repeated admonitions even when people will not regard them, but are bent on their own ruin.

Job 33:15. *In a dream* This was one of the methods by which the will of God was made known in the early periods of the world; see the notes at **Job 4:12-17**. And for a fuller account of this method of communicating the divine will, see the introduction to Isaiah, section 7 (2).

In a vision of the night Notes, **Job 4:13**; compare the introduction to Isaiah, section 7 (4).

When deep sleep falleth upon men This may be designed to intimate more distinctly that it was from God. It was not the effect of disturbed and broken rest; not such fancies as come into the mind between sleeping and waking, but the visitations of the divine Spirit in the profoundest repose of the night. The word rendered “deep sleep” ⁴⁸⁶³⁹hmDēJæ is one that denotes the most profound repose. It is not merely sleep, but it is sleep of the soundest kind — that kind when we do not usually dream; see the notes at ⁴⁸⁰¹³Job 4:13. The Chaldee has here rendered it correctly, atqm[atnyv — sleep that is deep. The Septuagint renders it, ^{<1171>}δεινος ^{<5401>}φοβος — dread horror. The Syriac renders this verse, “Not by the lips does he teach; by dreams and visions of the night,” etc.

In slumberings upon the bed The word rendered “slumberings” ⁴¹⁸⁵⁷²hmWnTJ means a light sleep, as contradistinguished from very profound repose. Our word slumber conveys the exact idea. The meaning of the whole is, that God speaks to people when their senses are locked in repose — alike in the profound sleep when they do not ordinarily dream, and in the gentle and light slumbers when the sleep is easily broken. In what way, however, they were to distinguish such communications from ordinary dreams, we have no information. It is scarcely necessary to remark that what is here and elsewhere said in the Scriptures about dreams, is no warrant for putting any confidence in them now as if they were revelations from heaven.

⁴⁸³¹⁶**Job 33:16.** *Then he openeth the ears of men* Margin, as in Hebrew “revealeth,” or “uncovereth.” The idea is, that he then reveals to the ear of man important admonitions or counsels. He communicates valuable truth. We are not to understand this as saying that the sleeper actually hears God speak, but as the ear is the organ of hearing, it is employed here to denote that God then communicates His will to human beings. In what way he had access to the souls of people by dreams, it is impossible to explain.

And sealeth their instruction literally, “In their admonition he seals;” or he affixes a seal. The idea is, that he makes the admonition or instruction as secure as if a seal were affixed to it. A seal ratified or confirmed a contract, a will, or a deed, and the sense here is, that the communications of God to the soul were as firm as if they had been ratified in like manner. Or possibly it may mean, that the warnings of God were communicated to the soul like a sealed letter or message unknown to any other; that is, were made privately to the individual himself in the slumbers of the night. Others have understood the word rendered instruction, as denoting castigation, or

punishment, and according to that explanation the meaning would be, that he announces to them certain punishment if they continued in sin; he made it as certain to them as if it were ratified by a seal. So Rosenmuller and Mercer. Schultens supposes it to be equivalent to inspires them, or communicates instruction by inspiration as if it were confirmed and ratified by a seal. He observes that the Arabic word *hhatham* is often used in the Koran, meaning to inspire. The Septuagint renders it, αυτους ^{<846>} εξεφοβησεν ^{<5399>} — “he terrifies them” — where they evidently read μτϰ ^{h2856} instead of μτϰ ^{h2856}. The sense is, that God communicates warnings to people on their beds, in a manner as solemn and impressive as if it were ratified with a seal, and made as secure as possible.

<8317> **Job 33:17.** *That he may withdraw man from his purpose* Margin, “work.” The sense is plain. God designs to warn him of the consequences of executing a plan of iniquity. He alarms him by showing him that his course will lead to punishment, and by representing to him in the night visions, the dreadful woes of the future world into which he is about to plunge. The object is to deter him from committing the deed of guilt which he had contemplated, and to turn him to the paths of righteousness. Is it unreasonable to suppose that the same thing may occur now, and that God may have a purpose in the dreams which often visit the man who has formed a plan of iniquity, or who is living a life of sin? It cannot be doubted that such people often have alarming dreams; that these dreams are such as are fitted to deter them from the commission of their contemplated wickedness; and that in fact they not unfrequently do it. What shall hinder us from supposing that God intends that the workings of the mind when the senses are locked in repose, shall be the means of alarming the guilty, and of leading them to reflection? Why should not mind thus be its own admonisher, and be made the instrument of restraining the guilty then, as really as by its sober reasonings and reflections when awake? Many a wicked man has been checked in a career of wickedness by a frightful dream; and not a few have been brought to a degree of reflection which has resulted in sound conversion by the alarm caused on the mind by having the consequences of a career of wickedness traced out in the visions of the night. The case of Colonel Gardiner cannot be forgotten — though in that instance it was rather “a vision of the night” than a dream. He was meditating an act of wickedness. and was alone in his room awaiting the appointed hour. In the silence of the night, and in the solitude of his room, he seemed to see the Savior on the cross. This view,

however, it may be accounted for, restrained him from the contemplated act of wickedness, and he became an eminently pious man; see Doddridge's Life of Colossians Gardiner. The mind, with all its faculties, is under the control of God, and no one can demonstrate that he does not make its actings, even in the wanderings of a dream, the designed means of checking the sinner, and of saving the soul.

And hide pride from man Probably the particular thing which Elihu here referred to, was pride and arrogance toward God; or an insolent bearing toward him, and a reliance on one's own merits. This was the particular thing in Job which Elihu seems to have thought required animadversion, and probably he meant to intimate that all people had such communications from God by dreams as to save them from such arrogance.

<8318> **Job 33:18.** *He keepeth back his soul from the pit* The word soul in the Hebrew is often equivalent to self, and the idea is, that he keeps the man from the pit in this manner. The object of these warnings is to keep him from rushing on to his own destruction. The word rendered "pit" — **tj æ**^{<47845>} properly means a pit, or pitfall, in which traps are laid for wild animals; <4075> Psalm 7:15; 9:15; then a cistern that is miry; <1081> Job 9:31; a prison, <2514> Isaiah 51:14; then the grave, or sepulchre, as being often a cavern; <8713> Job 17:13; <9101> Psalm 30:9; see <8333> Job 33:28,30. It evidently means here the grave, and the sense is, that God thus warns people against pursuing a course of conduct which would lead them to destruction, or would speedily terminate their lives.

And his life from perishing by the sword Margin, "passing by." The meaning of the Hebrew may be, "to keep his life from passing away by the sword;" as if the sword were the means by which the life or soul passed from the body. The word rendered sword here — **j l æ**^{<47973>} is from **j l æ**^{<47971>} — to send, cast, hurl, and the reference is rather to something sent, as of an arrow, dart, javelin, than to a sword. The sense is not materially varied, and the idea referred to is that of a violent death. The meaning is, that God by these warnings would keep a man from such a course of life as would lead to a death by violence — either by punishment for his crime, or by being cut off in war.

<8319> **Job 33:19.** *He is chastened also with pain* As another means of checking and restraining him from the commission of sin. When the warnings of the night fail, and when he is bent on a life of sin, then God

lays him on a bed of pain, and he is brought to reflection there. There he has an opportunity to think of his life, and of all the consequences which must follow from a career of iniquity. This involves the main inquiry before the disputants. It was, why people were afflicted. The three friends of Job had said that it was a full proof of wickedness, and that when the professedly pious were afflicted it was demonstrative of insincerity and hypocrisy. Job had called this position in question, and proved that it could not be so, but still was at a loss why it was. Elihu now says, that affliction is a part of a disciplinary government; that it is one of the means which God adopts, when warnings are ineffectual, to restrain people and to bring them to reflection and repentance. This appears to have been a view which was almost entirely new to them.

And the multitude of his bones with strong pain The bones, as has before been remarked, it was supposed might be the seat of the acutest pain; see the notes at ^{<1807>}Job 30:17; compare ^{<1801>}Job 20:11; 7:15; 30:30. The meaning here is, that the frame was racked with intense suffering in order to admonish men of sin, to save them from plunging into deeper transgression, and to bring them to repentance.

^{<1831>}**Job 33:20.** *So that his life abhorreth bread* It is a common effect of sickness to take away the appetite. Elihu here regards it as a part of the wholesome discipline of the sufferer. He has no relish for the comforts of life.

And his soul dainty meat Margin, “meat of desire.” The Hebrew is, “food of desire.” The word rendered “meat” ^{<1878>}*kamæ* does not denote animal food only, but any kind of food. So the Old English word meat was used. The idea is, that the sick man loathes the most delicate food. It is a part of his discipline that the pleasure which he had in the days of his health is now taken away.

^{<1832>}**Job 33:21.** *His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen* He wastes away. His flesh, once vigorous, beautiful, and fair, now disappears. This is not a mere description of the nature of his sickness, but it is a description of the disciplinary arrangements of God. It is an important part of his affliction, as a part of the discipline, that his flesh vanishes, and that his appearance is so changed that he becomes repulsive to the view.

And his bones that were not seen, stick out His bones were before invisible. They were carefully concealed by the rounded muscle, and by the fat which

filled up the interstices, so that they were not offensive to the view. But now the protuberances of his bones can be seen, for God has reduced him to the condition of a skeleton. This is one of the common effects of disease, and this shows the strength of the discipline which God contemplates. The parts of the human frame which in health are carefully hid from the view, as being unsightly, become now prominent, and can be hidden no longer. One design is to humble us; to take away the pride which delighted in the round and polished limb, the rose on the cheek, the ruby lip, and the smooth forehead; and to show us what we shall soon be in the grave.

<832> **Job 33:22.** *Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave* That is, he himself does, for the word soul is often used to denote self.

And his life to the destroyers — **twm**^{<4191>}. literally, “to those causing death.” The interpretation commonly given of this is, “the angels of death” who were supposed to come to close human life; compare <1246> 2 Samuel 24:16,17. But it probably refers to diseases and pangs as having power to terminate life, and being the cause of the close of life. The meaning is, that the afflicted man comes very near to those acute sufferings which terminate life, and which by personification are here represented as the authors of death.

<832> **Job 33:23.** *If there be a messenger with him* This part of the speech of Elihu has given rise to scarcely less diversity of opinion, and to scarcely less discussion, than the celebrated passage in <832> Job 19:25-27. Almost every interpreter has had a special view of its meaning, and of course it is very difficult, if not impossible, to determine its true sense. Before the opinions which have been entertained are specified, and an attempt made to determine the true sense of the passage, it may be of interest to see how it is presented in the ancient versions, and what light they throw on it. The Vulgate renders it, “If there is for him an angel speaking, one of thousands, that he may announce the righteousness of the man; he will pity him, and say, Deliver him that he descends not into corruption: I have found him in whom I will be propitious to him” — *inveni in quo ei propitius*. The Septuagint translators render it, “If there be a thousand angels of death (**αγγελου**)^{<32>} **θανατηφοροι**, not one of them can (mortally) wound him (**τροση**) **αυτον** ^{<846>}. If he determine in his heart to turn to the Lord, when he shall have shown man his charge against him, and shown his folly, he will support him that he may not fall to death, and renew his body, like

plastering on a wall (ὡσπερ)^{<5618>} αλοιφην επι^{<1909>} τοιχου^{<5109>}, and will fill his bones with marrow, and make his flesh soft like an infant.” The Chaldee renders it, “If there is merit atwkz in him, an angel is prepared, a comforter (afyl qyp, Paraclete,) (Greek, παρακλητος)^{<3875>}, one among a thousand accusers ayrgyfɤ, Greek κατηγορος^{<2725>}, that he may announce to man his rectitude. And he spares him, and says, Redeem him, that he may not descend to corruption; I have found a ransom.” Schultens has divided the opinions which have been entertained of the passage into three classes. They are,

I. The opinions of those who suppose that by the messenger, or angel, here, there is reference to a man. Of those who hold this opinion, he enumerates no less than seven classes. They are such as these:

- (1) those who hold that the man referred to is some distinguished instructor sent to the sick to teach them the will of God, an opinion held by Munster and Isidorus;
- (2) those who refer it to a prophet, as Junius et Tremillius:
- (3) Codurcus supposes that there is reference to the case of Abimelech, who was made sick on account of Sarah, and that the man referred to was a prophet, who announced to him that God was righteous; Genesis 20.

The 4th and 5th cases slightly vary from these specified.

- (6) Those who hold that Elihu referred to himself as being the angel, or messenger, that God had sent to make known to Job the truth in regard to the divine government, and the reason why he afflicts people. Of this opinion was Gusset, and we may add that this is the opinion of Umbreit.
- (7) Those who suppose that some faithful servant of God is intended, without specifying who, who comes to the sick and afflicted, and announces to them the reason of the divine dispensations.

II. The second class of opinions is, that an angel is referred to here, and that the meaning is, that God employs angelic beings to communicate His will to people, and especially to the afflicted — to make known to them the reason why they are afflicted, and the assurance that he is willing to show mercy to them if they will repent. Of those who hold this, Schultens mentions

- (1) the Septuagint which renders it, “the angels of death;”
- (2) the Chaldee Paraphrast, who understands it of the comforting angel” — the Paraclete;
- (3) the opinion of Mercer, who supposes it to refer to a good angel, who, though there be a thousand of a contrary description, if he announces the will of God, and shows the true reason why He afflicts people, may be the means of reclaiming them;
- (4) the opinion of Clerc, who regards it as a mere hypothesis of Elihu, saying that on the supposition that an angel would thus visit people, they might be reclaimed;
- (5) the opinion of Grotius, who supposes it refers to angels regarded as mediators, who perform their office of mediation in two ways — by admonishing people, and by praying for them. This was also the opinion of Maimonides.
- (6) The opinion of Jerome, who supposes that it refers to the angel standing in the presence of God, and who is employed by him in admonishing and correcting mankind.

III. The third class of opinions consists of those who refer it to the Messiah. Of those who have held this opinion, the following may be mentioned: Cocceius — of course; Calovins, Sehmidius, and Augustine. Amidst this diversity of sentiment, it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine the real meaning of the passage. The general sentiment is indeed plain. It is, that God visits people with affliction in order to restrain them from sin, and to correct them when they have erred. It is not from hostility to them; not from mere justice; not because he delights in their sufferings; and not because he wishes to cut them off. They may suffer much and long, as Job had done. without knowing the true reason why it was done. They may form erroneous views of the design of the divine administration, and suppose that God is severe and harsh. But if there shall come a messenger, in such circumstances, who shall explain the reason of the divine dealings, and show to the sufferer on what principles God inflicts pain; and if the sufferer shall hear the message, and acquiesce in the divine dealings, then God would be willing to be merciful. He would say that he was satisfied; the object of the affliction was accomplished, and he would restore the afflicted to health, and bestow upon him the most satisfactory evidences of

his own favor. An examination of the particular words and phrases occurring in the passage, may elucidate more clearly this general idea, and lead us to its true interpretation. The word translated “messenger” **Ēal** **אֵל** ^{<h4397>}, is that which is usually employed to denote an angel. It means, properly, one who is sent, from **āal**, to send; and is applied

(1) to one sent, or a messenger, see ^{<h1014>}Job 1:14; compare ^{<h969>}1 Samuel 16:19;

(2) to a messenger sent from God, as e.g.,

(a) to angels, since angels were employed on messages of mercy or judgment to mankind, ^{<h230>}Exodus 23:20; ^{<h246>}2 Samuel 24:16,

(b) to a prophet as sent from God, ^{<h1013>}Haggai 1:13; ^{<h300>}Malachi 3:1;

(c) to a priest; ^{<h2116>}Ecclesiastes 5:6; ^{<h3007>}Malachi 2:7. It is rendered here by Jerome, angel, and by the Septuagint, angels bringing death.

So far as the word is concerned, it may apply to any messenger sent from God — whether an angel, a prophet, or the Messiah; anyone who should be commissioned to explain to man the reason why afflictions were sent, and to communicate the assurance that God was ready to pardon.

An interpreter That is, an angel-interpreter, or a messenger who should be an interpreter. The word **xWI** ^{<h3887>} is from **xWI** ^{<h3887>} “to stammer”; to speak in a barbarous tongue; and then in Hiphil, to cause to understand a foreign language, or to explain; to interpret. Hence, it means one who explains or interprets that which was obscure; and may mean here one who explains to the sufferer the true principles of the divine administration, or who interprets the design of the divine dealings. In ^{<h423>}2 Chronicles 32:31, it is rendered “ambassadors” — referring to the ambassadors that came from Babylon to Hezekiah — rendered in the margin, interpreters; in ^{<h3427>}Isaiah 43:27, it is rendered teachers, in the margin interpreters, referring to the religions teachers of the Jews, or those who were appointed to explain the law of God. Gesenius supposes that it means here the same as intercessor, or internuncius, and that the phrase denotes an interceding angel, or one interceding with God for people. But there is no instance in which the word **xWI** ^{<h3887>} is so employed, and such an interpretation is not demanded by the connection here. The idea involved in the word here is immediately explained by Elihu himself. The word denotes one who would “show unto

man his uprightness;” that is, who would be able to vindicate the righteousness of God, and explain his dealings. This word, also, may therefore be applicable to a prophet, a sage, an angel, or the Messiah — to anyone who would be able to explain and interpret the divine dealings. So far as the language is concerned, there is no reason why it should not be applied to Elihu himself.

One among a thousand Such an one as you would scarcely hope to find among a thousand; that is, one who was endowed with a knowledge of the ways of God, and who was qualified for this work in a much more eminent manner than the mass of people. We have now a similar phrase to denote a man eminent for wisdom, learning, skill, or moral worth. This language is such as would most properly be applicable to a human messenger. One would hardly think of making such distinctions among angelic beings, or of implying that any one of them might not be qualified to bear a message to man, or that it was necessary to make such a selection as is implied by the phrase here to explain the dealings of God.

To show unto man his uprightness This is the office which the interpreting-messenger was to perform. The “uprightness” referred to here, I suppose, is that of God, and means the rectitude of his doings; or, in a more general sense, the justness of his character, the equity of his administration. So explained, it would mean that the messenger would come to show that God is worthy of confidence; that he is not harsh, stern, severe, and cruel. The afflicted person is supposed to have no clear views on this point, but to regard God as severe and unmerciful. Elihu in this undoubtedly had Job in his eye, as entertaining views of God which were far from correct. What was necessary, he said, was, that someone would come who could show to the sufferer that God is worthy of confidence, and that his character is wholly upright. Prof. Lee interprets this as referring wholly to the Messiah, and as denoting the “righteousness which this Mediator is empowered to give or impute to those who duly seek it; and thus, as a Mediator, between God and man, to make it out as their due, by means of the ransom so found, offered, and accepted.” Noyes explains it as meaning “his duty;” that is, “what reason and religion require of a man in his situation; repentance, submission, and prayer to God for pardon.” But it seems to me more natural to refer it to the great principles of the divine government, as being worthy of confidence. Those principles it was desirable should be so explained as to inspire such confidence, and particularly this was what Elihu supposed was needed by Job. On the whole, then, it seems probable

that Elihu, in this passage, by the messenger which he mentions, referred to someone who should perform the office which he himself purposed to perform — some man well acquainted with the principles of the divine administration; who could explain the reasons why people suffer; who could present such considerations as should lead the sufferer to true repentance; and who could assure him of the divine mercy. The reasons for this interpretation may be summed up in few words. They are:

- (1) That this is all that is fairly and necessarily implied in the language, or such an interpretation meets the obvious import of all the expressions, and leaves nothing unexplained.
- (2) It accords with what Elihu supposed to be the views of Job. He regarded him as having improper apprehensions of the government of God, and of the reasons why afflictions were sent upon him. He had patiently listened to all that he had to say; had heard him give utterance to much that seemed to be in the spirit of complaint and murmuring; and it was manifest to Elihu that he had not had right apprehensions of the design of trials, and that they had not produced the proper effect on his mind. He still needed someone — an interpreter sent from God — to explain all this, and to present such views as should lead him to put confidence in God as a God of mercy and equity.
- (3) It accords with the character which Elihu had assumed, and which he all along maintained. He professed to come from God, ^{<8338>}Job 32:8. He was in the place of God, ^{<8336>}Job 33:6. He came to explain the whole matter which had excited so long and so warm a debate — a debate to which he had attentively listened, and where neither Job nor his friends had stated the true principles of the divine administration. To represent himself now as having a clew to the reason why God afflicts people in this manner, and as being qualified to explain, the perplexing subject, was in accordance with the character which he maintained.

(4) It accords with the effect which he wished to produce on the mind of Job. He wished to bring him to confide in God; to show him that all these mysterious dealings were designed to bring him back to his Creator, and to restore peace and confidence to his agitated and troubled bosom.

While Elihu, therefore, advances a general proposition, I doubt not that he meant to represent himself as such a messenger sent from God; and though in the whole of his speech he manifested almost the extreme of modesty,

yet he regarded himself as qualified to unravel the mystery. That it refers to the Messiah cannot be demonstrated, and is improbable because

(1) It is nowhere applied to him in the New Testament — a consideration not indeed decisive, but of some force, since it is not very safe to apply passages to him from the Old Testament without such authority. At least, the general rule is to be repudiated and rejected, that every passage is to be supposed to have such a reference which can be possibly made to apply to him, or where the language can be made to describe his person and offices.

(2) The work of the “interpreter,” the “angel,” or “messenger,” referred to here, is not that of the Messiah. The effect which Elihu says would be produced would be, that the life of the sufferer would be spared, his disease removed, and his flesh restored with infantile freshness. But this is not the work which the Redeemer came to perform, and is not that which he actually does.

(3) The subject here discussed is not such as is applicable to the work of the Messiah. It is here a question solely about the design of affliction. That was the point to be explained; and explanation was what was needed, and what was proposed to be done. But this is not the special work of the Messiah. His was a much larger, wider office; and even if this had been his whole work, how would the reference to that have met the point under discussion? I am inclined, therefore, to the opinion, that Elihu had himself particularly in his view, and that he meant to represent himself as at that time sustaining the character of a messenger sent from God to explain important principles of his administration.

~~<8324>~~ **Job 33:24.** *Then he is gracious unto him* That is, on the supposition that he hears and regards what the messenger of God communicates. If he rightly understands the reasons of the divine administration, and acquiesces in it, and if he calls upon God in a proper manner (~~<8326>~~ Job 33:26), he will show him mercy, and spare him. Or it may mean, that God is in fact gracious to him by sending him a messenger who can come and say to him that it is the divine purpose to spare him; that he is satisfied, and will preserve him from death. If such a messenger should come, and so announce the mercy of God, then he would return to the rigoar of his former days, and be fully restored to his former prosperity. Elihu refers probably to some method of communication, by which the will of God was

made known to the sufferer, and by which it was told him that it was God's design not to destroy, but to discipline and save him.

Deliver him Hebrew, [דפּ⁴⁶³⁰⁸], “redeem him”. The word used here [דפּ⁴⁶³⁰⁸] properly means “to let loose, to cut loose”; and then “to buy loose”; that is, “to redeem, to ransom for a price.” Sometimes it is used in the general sense of freeing or delivering, without reference to a price, compare ⁴⁸⁷⁰⁸Deuteronomy 7:8; ⁴⁴⁵²¹Jeremiah 15:21; ⁴⁵⁸⁰²Psalm 34:22; ⁴⁸¹²³Job 6:23; but usually there is a reference to a price, or to some valuable consideration, either expressed or implied; compare the notes at ²³⁸⁸Isaiah 43:3. Here the appropriate idea is expressed, for it is said, as a reason for redeeming or rescuing him, “I have found a ransom.” That is, the “ransom” is the valuable consideration on account of which he was to be rescued from death.

From going down to the pit The grave, the world of darkness. Notes, ⁴⁸³¹⁸Job 33:18. That is, he would keep him alive, and restore him again to health. It is possible that by the word pit here, there may be a reference to a place of punishment, or to the abodes of the dead as places of gloom and horror especially in the case of the wicked but the more probable interpretation is, that it refers to death alone.

I have found That is, there is a ransom; or, I have seen a reason why he should not die. The idea is, that God was looking for some reason on account of which it would be proper to release the sufferer, and restore him to the accustomed tokens of his favor and that such a ransom had now appeared. There was now no necessity why those sufferings should be prolonged, and he could consistently restore him to health.

A ransom Margin, or, “an atonement.” Hebrew, רפּקו⁴³⁷²⁴. On the meaning of this word, see the notes at ²³⁸⁸Isaiah 43:3. The expression here means that there was something which could be regarded as a valuable consideration, or a reason why the sufferer should not be further afflicted, and why he should be preserved from going down to the grave. What that price, or valuable consideration was, is not specified; and what was the actual idea which Elihu attached to it, it is now impossible with certainty to determine. The connection would rather lead us to suppose that it was something seen in the sufferer himself; some change done in his mind by his trials; some evidence of acquiescence in the government of God, and some manifestation of true repentance, which was the reason why the stroke of

punishment should be removed, and why the sufferer should be saved from death. This might be called by Elihu “a ransom” — using the word in a very large sense. There can be no doubt that such “a fact” often occurs. God lays his hand on his erring and wandering children. He brings upon them afflictions which would consign them to the grave, if they were not checked. Those afflictions are effectual in the case. They are the means of true repentance; they call back the wanderer; they lead him to put his trust in God, and to seek his happiness again in him; and this result of his trials is a reason why they should extend no further. The object of the affliction has been accomplished, and the penitence of the sufferer is a sufficient reason for lightening the hand of affliction, and restoring him again to health and prosperity. This is not properly an atonement, or a ransom, in the sense in which the word is now technically used, but the Hebrew word used here would not be inappropriately employed to convey such an idea. Thus, in ^{<1233>}Exodus 32:30, the intercession of Moses is said to be that by which an atonement would be made for the sin of the people. “Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin; and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement ^{rpk<4372>}, from ^{rpk<4372>}, for your sin.” Here, it is manifest that the act of Moses in making intercession was to be the public reason, or the “ransom,” why they were not to be punished. So the boldness, zeal, and fidelity of Phinehas in resisting idolatry, and punishing those who had been guilty of it, are spoken of as the atonement or ransom on account of which the plague was stayed, and the anger of God removed from his people; ^{<452>}Numbers 25:12,13, “Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace — because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement ^{rpk<4372>} for the children of Israel.” Septuagint, **εξίλασατο** . In this large sense, the sick man’s repentance might be regarded as the covering, ransom, or public reason why he should be restored. That word literally means that which covers, or overlays any thing; and then an atonement or expiation, as being such a covering. See Genesis 20.16; ^{<1233>}Exodus 21:30. Cocceius, Calovius, and others suppose that the reference here is to the Messiah, and to the atonement made by him. Schultens supposes that it has the same reference by anticipation — that is, that God had purposed such a ransom, and that in virtue of the promised and pre-figured expiation, he could now show mercy. But it cannot be demonstrated that Elihu had such a reference; and though it was undoubtedly true that God designed to show mercy to people only through that atonement, and that it was, and is, only by this that release is ever given to a sufferer, still, it does not follow that Elihu fully understood this.

The general truth that God was merciful, and that the repentance of the sick man would be followed by a release from suffering, was all that can reasonably be supposed to have been understood at that period of the world. Now, we know the reason, the mode, and the extent of the ransom; and taking the words in their broadest sense, we may go to all sufferers, and say, that they may be redeemed from going down to the dark chambers of the eternal pit, for God has found a ransom. A valuable consideration has been offered, in the blood of the Redeemer, which is an ample reason why they should not be consigned to hell, if they are truly penitent.

◀◀◀ **Job 33:25.** *His flesh shall be fresher than a child's* Margin, "childhood." The meaning is obvious. He would be restored again to health. The calamity which had been brought upon him for purposes of discipline, would be removed. This was the theory of Elihu in regard to afflictions, and he undoubtedly meant that it should be applied to Job. If he would now, understanding the nature and design of affliction, turn to God, he would be recovered again, and enjoy the health and rigor of his youth. We are not to suppose that this is universally true, though it is undoubtedly often a fact now, that if those who are afflicted become truly penitent, and call upon God, the affliction will be removed. It will have accomplished its object, and may be withdrawn. Hence, they who pray that their afflictions may be withdrawn, should first pray that they may accomplish on their own hearts the effect which God designs, producing in them penitence, deadness to the world, and humiliation, and then that his hand may be withdrawn.

He shall return to the days of his youth That is, to health and rigor.

◀◀◀ **Job 33:26.** *He shall pray unto God ...* That is, when he fully understands the design of affliction; and when his mind is brought to a proper state of penitence for his past conduct, then he will find God merciful and ready to show him kindness.

And he shall see his face with joy The face of God. That is, he shall be able to look up to him with peace and comfort. This language is similar to that which is so frequently employed in the Scriptures, in which God is said to lift upon us the light of his countenance. The meaning here is, that the afflicted man would be again permitted to look by faith on God, being reconciled to him, and would see in his face no indication of displeasure.

For he will render unto man his righteousness He will deal with him in justice and equity. When he sees evidence of penitence, he will treat him accordingly; and if in the afflicted man he discerns true piety, he will regard and treat him as his friend. The meaning is, that if there is in the sufferer any sincere love to God, he will not be indifferent to it, but will treat him as possessing it. This is still true, and universally true. If there is in the heart of one who is afflicted any real piety, God will not treat him as an impenitent sinner, but will manifest his mercy to him, and show to him the favors which he confers only on his friends.

~~8327~~ **Job 33:27.** *He looketh upon men* Margin, “or, he shall look upon men, and say, I have sinned.” Umbreit renders this, Nun singt er jubelnd zu den Menschen — “now he sings joyfully among men.” So Noyes, “He shall sing among men, and say.” Prof. Lee “He shall fully consider or pronounce right to men, so that one shall say, I have sinned.” Coverdale, “Such a respect hath he unto men. Therefore let a man confess and say, I have offended.” The Septuagint renders it, Eira Εἶτα ^{<1534>} τοτε ^{<5119>} απομεμψεται ανθρωπος ^{<444>} αυτος ^{<846>} εαυτω ^{<1438>}, “then shall a man blame himself,” etc. These various renderings arise from the difference of signification attached to the Hebrew word רָוַן ^{<17789>}. According to our interpretation, it is derived from רָוַן ^{<17892>}, “to sing,” and then the meaning would be, “he sings before men,” and thus the reference would be to the sufferer, meaning that he would have occasion to rejoice among men. See Gesenius on the word. According to the other view, the word is derived from רָוַן ^{<17789>}, “to look round”; “to care for, or regard”; and according to this, the reference is to God, meaning that he carefully and attentively observes people in such circumstances, and, if he sees evidence that there is true penitence, he has compassion and saves. This idea certainly accords better with the scope of the passage than the former, and it seems to me is to be regarded as correct.

And if any say, I have sinned Hebrew “And says,” that is, if the sufferer, under the pressure of his afflictions, is willing to confess his faults, then God is ready to show him mercy. This accords with what Elihu purposed to state of the design of afflictions, that they were intended to bring people to reflection, and to be a means of wholesome discipline. There is no doubt that he meant that all this should be understood by Job as applicable to himself, for he manifestly means to be understood as saying that he had not

seen in him the evidence of a penitent mind, such as he supposed afflictions were designed to produce.

And perverted that which was right That is, in regard to operations and views of the divine government. He had held error, or had cherished wrong apprehensions of the divine character. Or it may mean, that he had dealt unjustly with people in his contact with them.

And it profited me not The word used here *hwv*,^{<47737>} means properly to be even or level; then to be equal, or of like value; and here may mean, that he now saw that it was no advantage to him to have done wickedly, since it brought upon him such a punishment, or the benefit which he received from his life of wickedness was no equivalent for the pain which he had been called to suffer in consequence of it. This is the common interpretation. Rosenmuller, however, suggests another, which is, that he designs by this language to express his sense of the divine mercy, and that it means “my afflictions are in no sense equal to my deserts. I have not been punished as I might justly have been, for God has interposed to spare me.” It seems to me, however, that the former interpretation accords best with the meaning of the words and the scope of the passage. It would then be the reflection of a man on the bed of suffering, that the course of life which brought him there had been attended with no advantage, but had been the means of plunging him into deserved sorrows. from which he could be rescued only by the grace of God.

Job 33:28. *He will deliver his soul* Margin, “He hath delivered my soul.” There are various readings here in the text, which give rise to this diversity of interpretation. The present reading in the text is *vpñ*,^{<45315>} — “my soul”; and according to this, it is to be regarded as the language of the sufferer celebrating the mercy of God, and is language which is connected with the confession in the previous verse, “I have sinned; I found it no advantage; and he hath rescued me from death.” Many manuscripts, however, read *vpñ*,^{<45315>} — “his soul”; and according to this, the language would be that of Elihu, saying, that in those circumstances God would deliver him when he made suitable confession of his sin. The sense is essentially the same. The Vulgate has, “He will deliver his soul;” the Septuagint, “Save my soul.”

From going into the pit Notes ^{<45318>} Job 33:18.

And his life shall see the light Here there is the same variety of reading which occurs in regard to the word soul. The present Hebrew text is *yj æ*^{<2416>} “my life”; many manuscripts read *yj æ*^{<2416>}, “his life.” The phrase “to see the light” is equivalent to live. Death was represented as going down into regions where there was no ray of light. See ^{<1885>}Job 3:5; 10:21,22.

^{<1889>}**Job 33:29.** *Lo, all these things worketh God* That is, he takes all these methods to warn people, and to reclaim them from their evil ways.

Oftentimes Hebrew as in the margin, twice, thrice. This may be taken either as it is by our translators, to denote an indefinite number, meaning that God takes frequent occasion to warn people, and repeats the admonition when they disregard it, or more probably Elihu refers here to the particular methods which he had specified, and which were three in number.

First, warnings in the visions of the night, ^{<1834>}Job 33:14-17.

Second, afflictions, ^{<1839>}Job 33:19-22.

Third, the messenger which God sent to make the sufferer acquainted with the design of the affliction, and to assure him that he might return to God, ^{<1833>}Job 33:23-26. So the Septuagint understands it, which rendered it, hodous^{<3598>} *τρεις*^{<5140>} — three ways, referring to the three methods which Elihu had specified.

^{<1833>}**Job 33:30.** *To bring back his soul from the pit* To keep him from descending to the grave, and to the dark world beneath. He takes these methods of warning people, in order that they may not bring destruction on themselves. See ^{<1838>}Job 33:18.

To be enlightened with the light of the living That he may still enjoy life, and not descend to the world of shades.

^{<1835>}**Job 33:31.** *Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me ...* Elihu designs to intimate that he had much more to say which demanded close attention. He begged, therefore, that Job would hear him patiently through.

^{<1835>}**Job 33:32.** *If thou hast anything to say, answer me* In the previous verse, Elihu had asked that Job would hear all that he had to say. Yet here, in view of what he had said, he asks of him that if there were any thing from which he dissented, he would now express his dissent. We may suppose that he paused at this part of his speech, and as what he had said

related particularly to Job, he felt that it was proper that he should have an opportunity to reply.

For I desire to justify thee I would do you justice. I would not pervert what you have said, or attribute to you any wrong opinions or any improper motives. Perhaps there may be included also a wish to vindicate him, if he possibly could. He did not desire to dispute for the sake of disputing, or to blame him if he could avoid it, but his aim was the truth; and if he could, he wished to vindicate the character of Job from the aspersions which had been cast upon it.

Job 33:33. *If not, hearken unto me ...* If nothing has been said from which you dissent, then listen to me, and I will explain further the perplexing subject which has excited so much discussion. These remarks of Elihu imply great confidence in the truth of what he had to say, but they are not arrogant and disrespectful. He treats Job with the utmost deference; is willing to hear all that could be said in opposition to his own views, and is desirous of not wounding his feelings or doing injustice to his cause. It may be supposed that he paused here, to give Job an opportunity to reply, but as he made no remarks, he resumed his discourse in the following chapter. The views which he had expressed were evidently new to Job, and were entirely at variance with those of his three friends, and they appear to have been received by all with profound and respectful silence.

NOTES ON JOB 34

Job 34:1. *Furthermore, Elihu answered and said* That is, evidently, after a pause to see if Job had anything to reply. The word answered in the Scriptures often means “to begin a discourse,” though nothing had been said by others; see ^{<882>}Job 3:2; ^{<2340>}Isaiah 14:10; ^{<3010>}Zechariah 1:10; 3:4; 4:11,12. Sometimes it is used with reference to a subject, meaning that one replied to what could be suggested on the opposite side. Here it maybe understood either in the general sense of beginning a discourse, or more probably as replying to the sentiments which Job had advanced in the debate with his friends.

Job 34:2. *Hear my words, O ye wise men* Addressing particularly the three friends of Job. The previous chapter had been addressed to Job himself. He had stated to him his views of the design of affliction, and he had nothing to reply. He now addresses himself to his friends, with a particular view of examining some of the sentiments which Job had advanced, and of showing where he was in error. He addresses them as “wise men,” or sages, and as endowed with “knowledge,” to conciliate their attention, and because he regarded them as qualified to understand the difficult subject which he proposed to explain.

Job 34:3. *For the ear trieth words* Ascertains their meaning, and especially determines what words are worth regarding. The object of this is, to fix the attention on what he was about to say; to get the ear so that every word should make its proper impression. The word ear in this place, however, seems not to be used to denote the external organ, but the whole faculty of hearing. It is by hearing that the meaning of what is said is determined, as it is by the taste that the quality of food is discerned.

As the mouth tasteth meat Margin, as in Hebrew “palate.” The meaning is, as the organ of taste determines the nature of the various articles of food. The same figure is used by Job in ^{<821>}Job 12:11.

Job 34:4. *Let us choose to us judgment* That is, let us examine and explore what is true and right. Amidst the conflicting opinions, and the sentiments which have been advanced, let us find out what will abide the test of close investigation.

Job 34:5. *For Job hath said, I am righteous* see ^{<18318>}Job 13:18, “I know that I shall be justified;” compare ^{<18230>}Job 23:10,11, where he says, if he was tried he would come forth as gold. Elihu may have also referred to the general course of remark which he had pursued as vindicating himself.

And God hath taken away my judgment This sentiment is found in ^{<18270>}Job 27:2; see the notes at that place.

Job 34:6. *Should I lie against my right?* These are also quoted as the words of Job, and as a part of the erroneous opinions on which Elihu proposes to comment. These words do not occur, however, as used by Job respecting himself, and Elihu must be understood to refer to what he regarded as the general strain of the argument maintained by him. In regard to the meaning of the words, there have been various opinions. Jerome renders them, “For in judging me there is falsehood — mendacium est; my violent arrow (the painful arrow in me) is without any sin.” The Septuagint, “He (the Lord) hath been false in my accusation” — **εψευσσας δε ^{<1161>} τω ^{<3588>} κριματι ^{<2917>} μου ^{<3450>}** —” my arrow is heavy without transgression.” Coverdale, “I must needs be a liar, though my cause be right.” Umbreit renders it, “I must lie if I should acknowledge myself to be guilty.” Noyes, “Though I am innocent, I am made a liar.” Prof. Lee, “Should I lie respecting my case? mine arrow is mortal without transgression.” That is, Job said he could not lie about it; he could use no language that would deceive. He felt that a mortal arrow had reached him without transgression, or without any adequate cause. Rosenmuller renders it, “However just may be my cause, I appear to be a liar.” That is, he was regarded as guilty, and treated accordingly, however conscious he might be of innocence, and however strenuously he might maintain that he was not guilty. The meaning probably is, “I am held to be a liar. I defend myself; go over my past life; state my course of conduct; meet the accusations of my friends, but in all this I am still held to be a liar. My friends so regard me — for they will not credit my statements, and they go on still to argue as if I was the most guilty of mortals. And God also in this holds me to be a liar, for he treats me constantly as if I were guilty. He hears not my vindication, and he inflicts pain and woe upon me as if all that I had said about my own integrity were false, and I were one of the most abandoned of mortals, so that on all hands I am regarded and treated as if I were basely false.” The literal translation of the Hebrew is, “Concerning my judgment (or my cause) I am held to be a liar.”

My wound is incurable Margin, as in Hebrew “arrow.” The idea is, that a deadly arrow had smitten him, which could not be extracted. So in Virgil:

Haeret lateri letalis arundo. Aeneid iv. 73.

The image is taken from an animal that had been pierced with a deadly arrow.

Without transgression Without any sin that deserved such treatment. Job did not claim to be absolutely perfect; he maintained only that the sufferings which he endured were no proper proof of his character; compare ^{<810>}Job 6:4.

^{<810>}**Job 34:7.** *What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water?*

A similar image occurs in ^{<81516>}Job 15:16. The idea is, that he was full of reproachful speeches respecting God; of the language of irreverence and rebellion. He indulged in it as freely as a man drinks water; gathers up and imbibes all the language of reproach that he can find, and indulges in it as if it were perfectly harmless.

^{<818>}**Job 34:8.** *Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity* That is, in his sentiments. The idea is, that he advocated the same opinions which they did, and entertained the same views of God and of his government. The same charge had been before brought against him by his friends; see the notes at Job 21.

^{<819>}**Job 34:9.** *For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself in God* That is, there is no advantage in piety, and in endeavoring to serve God. It will make no difference in the divine dealings with him. He will be treated just as well if he lives a life of sin, as if he undertakes to live after the severest rules of piety. Job had not used precisely this language, but in ^{<822>}Job 9:22, he had expressed nearly the same sentiment. It is probable, however, that Elihu refers to what he regarded as the general scope and tendency of his remarks, as implying that there was no respect paid to character in the divine dealings with mankind. It was easy to pervert the views which Job actually entertained, so as to make him appear to maintain this sentiment, and it was probably with a special view to this charge that Job uttered the sentiments recorded in Job 21; see the notes at that chapter.

Job 34:10. *Therefore hearken unto me* Elihu proceeds now to reply to what he regarded as the erroneous sentiments of Job, and to show the impropriety of language which reflected so much on God and his government. Instead, however, of meeting the facts in the case, and showing how the actual course of events could be reconciled with justice, he resolves it all into a matter of sovereignty, and maintains that it is wrong to doubt the rectitude of the dealings of one so mighty as God. In this he pursues the same course substantially which the friends of Job had done, and does little more to solve the real difficulties in the case than they had. The facts to which Job had referred are scarcely adverted to; the perplexing questions are still unsolved, and the amount of all that Elihu says is, that God is a sovereign, and that there must be an improper spirit when people presume to pronounce on his dealings.

Ye men of understanding Margin, as in Hebrew men of “heart.” The word heart is used here as it was uniformly among the Hebrews; the Jewish view of physiology being that the heart was the seat of all the mental operations. They never speak of the head as the seat of the intellect, as we do. The meaning here is, that Elihu regarded them as sages, qualified to comprehend and appreciate the truth on the subject under discussion.

Far be it from God Hebrew **hl yl j** ; ^{<12486>} — “profane, unholy.” It is an expression of abhorrence, as if the thing proposed were profane or unholy: ^{<1121>}1 Samuel 20:2; ^{<11825>}Genesis 18:25; ^{<15246>}Joshua 24:16. The meaning here is, that the very idea that God would do wrong, or could patronize iniquity, was a profane conception, and was not to be tolerated for a moment. This is true enough, and in this general sentiment, no doubt, Job would himself have concurred.

Job 34:11. *For the work of a man shall he render unto him* He shall treat each man as he deserves — and this is the essence of justice. Of the truth of this, also, there could have been no question. Elihu does not, indeed, apply it to the case of Job, but there can be little doubt that he intended that it should have such a reference. He regarded Job as having accused God of injustice, for having inflicted woes on him which he by no means deserved. He takes care, therefore, to state this general principle, that with God there must be impartial justice — leaving the application of this principle to the facts in the world, to be arranged as well as possible. No one can doubt that Elihu in this took the true ground, and that the great principle is to be held that God can do no wrong, and that all the facts in

the universe must be consistent with this great principle, whether we can now see it to be so or not.

Job 34:12. *Yea, surely God will not do wickedly* So important does Elihu hold this principle to be, that he repeats it, and dwells upon it. He says, “it surely 𐤀𐤍𐤌𐤁^{<h551>} must be so.” The principle must be held at all hazards, and no opinion which contravenes this should be indulged for one moment. His ground of complaint against Job was, that he had not held fast to this principle, but, under the pressure of his sufferings, had indulged in remarks which implied that God might do wrong.

Neither will the Almighty pervert judgment As Elihu supposed Job to have maintained; see 𐤁𐤓𐤁𐤅 Job 34:5. To “pervert judgment” is to do injustice; to place injustice in the place of right.

Job 34:13. *Who hath given him a charge over the earth?* That is, he is the great original Proprietor and Ruler of all. He has derived his authority to govern from no one; he is under subjection to no one, and he has, therefore, an absolute right to do his own pleasure. Reigning then with absolute and original authority, no one has a right to call in question the equity of what he does. The argument of Elihu here, that God would do right, is derived solely from his independence. If he were a subordinate governor, he would feel less interest in the correct administration of affairs, and might be tempted to commit injuries to gratify the feelings of his superior. As he is, however, supreme and independent, he cannot be tempted to do wrong by any reference to a superior will; as the universe is that which he has made, and which belongs to him, every consideration would lead him to do right to all. He can have no partiality for one more than another; and there can be no one to whom he would desire to do injustice — for who wishes to injure that which belongs to himself? Prof. Lee, however, renders this, “Who hath set a land in order against him?” He supposes that the remark is designed to show the folly of rebelling against God. But the former interpretation seems better to accord with the scope of the argument.

Or who hath disposed the whole world? Who has arranged the affairs of the universe? The word rendered “world,” usually means the habitable earth, but it is employed here in the sense of the universe, and the idea is, that God has arranged and ordered all things, and that he is the supreme and absolute Sovereign.

Job 34:14. *If he set his heart upon man* Margin, as in Hebrew “upon him” — meaning “man.” That is, if he fixes his attention particularly on him, or should form a purpose in regard him. The argument seems to be this. “If God wished such a thing, and should set his heart upon it, he could easily cut off the whole race. He has power to do it, and no one can deny him the right. Man has no claim to life, but he who gave it has a right to withdraw it, and the race is absolutely dependent on this infinite Sovereign. Being such a Sovereign, therefore, and having such a right, man cannot complain of his Maker as unjust, if he is called to pass through trials.” Rosenmuller, however, supposes this is to be taken in the sense of severe scrutiny, and that it means, “If God should examine with strictness the life of man, and mark all his faults, no flesh would be allowed to live. All would be found to be guilty, and would be cut off.” Grotius supposes it to mean, “If God should regard only himself; if he wished only to be good to himself — that is, to consult his own welfare, he would take away life from all, and live and reign alone.” This is also the interpretation of Umbreit, Schnurrer, and Eichhorn. Noyes regards it as an argument drawn from the benevolence of God, meaning if God were severe, unjust, and revengeful, the earth would be a scene of universal desolation. It seems to me, however, that it is rather an argument from the absolute sovereignty or power of the Almighty, implying that man had no right to complain of the divine dealings in the loss of health, property, or friends; for if he chose he might sweep away the whole race, and leave the earth desolate.

If he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath The spirit of man is represented as having been originally given by God, and as returning to him when man dies; ²¹¹⁷Ecclesiastes 12:7, “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”

Job 34:15. *All flesh shall perish together* If God chose, he would have a right to cut down the whole race. How then shall people complain of the loss of health, comforts, and friends, and presume to arraign God as if he were unjust?

Job 34:16. *If now thou hast understanding hear this* This appears to be addressed to Job. The discourse before this had been directed to his three friends, but Elihu appears here to have turned to Job, and to have made a solemn appeal to him, whether this were not so. In the subsequent verses he remonstrates with him about his views, and shows him that what

he had said implied severe reflections on the character and government of God.

Job 34:17. *Shall even he that hateth right govern?* Margin, as in Hebrew “bind.” That is, shall he bind by laws. The argument in this verse seems to be an appeal to what must be the conviction of mankind, that God, the Great Governor of the universe, could not be unjust. This conviction, Elihu appears to have supposed, was so deep in the human mind, that he might appeal even to Job himself for its truth. The question here asked implies that it would be impossible to believe that one who was unjust could govern the universe. Such a supposition would be at variance with all the convictions of the human soul, and all the indications of the nature of his government to be found in his works.

And wilt thou condemn him that is most just? The great and holy Ruler of the universe. The argument here is, that Job had in fact placed himself in the attitude of condemning him who, from the fact that he was the Ruler of the universe, must be most just. The impropriety of this he shows in the following verses.

Job 34:18. *Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked?* The argument here is this: “There would be gross impropriety in arraiging the conduct of an earthly monarch, and using language severely condemning what he does. Respect is due to those of elevated rank. Their plans are often concealed. It is difficult to judge of them until they are fully developed. To condemn those plans, and to use the language of complaint, would not be tolerated, and would be grossly improper. How much more so when that language relates to the Great, the Infinite God, and to his eternal plans!” It may be added here, in accordance with the sentiment of Elihu, that people often indulge in thoughts and language about God which they would not tolerate respecting an earthly monarch.

Job 34:19. *How much less to him that accepteth not the person of princes* To accept the person of anyone is to treat him with special favor on account of his rank, his wealth, or from favoritism and partiality. This God often disclaims in respect to himself; (compare **Galatians 2:6**; **Acts 10:34**; **2 Chronicles 19:7**; **Romans 2:11**; **Ephesians 6:9**; **Colossians 3:25**), and solemnly forbids it in others; see **James 2:1,3,9**; **Leviticus 19:15**; **Deuteronomy 1:17**; **16:19**. The meaning here is, that God is entirely impartial in his administration, and treats all as

they ought to be treated. He shows favor to no one on account of wealth, rank, talent, office, or joyous apparel, and he excludes no one from favor on account of poverty, ignorance, or a humble rank in life. This it seems was an admitted sentiment in the time of Elihu, and on the ground of the fact that it was indisputable, he strongly argues the impropriety of calling in question the equity of his administration in language such as that which Job had used.

For they all are the work of his hands He regards them all as his creatures. No one has any special claim on him on account of rank, talent, or wealth. Every creature that he has made, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, may expect that impartial justice will be done him, and that his external circumstances will not control or modify the divine determinations in regard to him, or the divine dealings toward him.

Job 34:20. *In a moment shall they die* That is, the rich and the great. They pass suddenly off the stage of action. They have no power to compel God to favor them, and they have no permanency of existence here which can constitute a claim on his special favor. Soon they will lie undistinguished in the dust. All are in his hand; and when he wills it, they must lie down in the dust together. He exempts none from death; spares none on account of beauty, rank, wealth, talent, or learning, but consigns all indiscriminately to the grave—showing that he is disposed to treat them all alike. This is urged by Elihu as a proof that God has no partiality, but treats all people as being on the same level — and there is no more striking illustration of this than is furnished by death. All die. None are spared on account of title, wealth, rank, beauty, age, or wisdom. All die in a manner that shows that he has no favoritism. The rich man may die with a malady as painful and protracted as the poor man; the beautiful and accomplished with a disease as foul and loathsome as the beggar. The sad change that the body undergoes in the tomb is as repulsive in the one case as in the other; and amidst all the splendor of rank, and the magnificence of dress and equipage, God intends to keep the great truth before the minds of people, that they are really on a level, and that all must share at his hand alike.

And the people shall be troubled They shall be shaken, agitated, alarmed. They dread impending danger, or the prospect of sudden destruction.

At midnight The image here is probably taken from an earthquake, or from a sudden onset made by a band of robbers on a village at night. The essential thought is that of the suddenness with which God can take away

the mighty and the mean together. Nothing can resist him, and as he has this absolute control over people, and deals with all alike, there is great impropriety in complaining of his government.

And the mighty Margin, "They shall take away the mighty." The idea is, that the great shall be removed — to wit, by sudden death or by overwhelming calamity. The arguement of Elihu in this passage (^{<38348>}Job 34:18-20) is, that it would be esteemed great presumption to arraign the conduct of a prince or king, and it must be much more so to call in question the doings of him who is so superior to princes and kings that he shows them no partiality on account of their rank, but sweeps them away by sudden calamity as he does the most humble of mankind. *Without hand* That is, without any human instrumentality, or without the use of any visible means. It is by a word — by an expression of his will — by power where the agency is not seen. The design is, to show that God can do it with infinite ease.

^{<38421>}**Job 34:21.** *For his eyes are upon the ways of man* None can escape from his notice; compare ^{<38412>}Psalms 139:2,3.

^{<38422>}**Job 34:22.** *There is no darkness* No dark cavern which can furnish a place of concealment. The guilty usually take refuge in some obscure place where people cannot detect them. But Elihu says that man has no power of concealing himself thus from God.

Nor shadow of death A phrase here signifying deep darkness; see it explained in the notes at ^{<38415>}Job 3:5.

Where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves That is, where they may conceal themselves so as not to be detected by God. They may conceal themselves from the notice of man; they may escape the most vigilant police; they may elude all the officers of justice on earth. But they cannot be hid from God. There is an eye that sees their lurking places, and there is a hand that will drag them forth to justice.

^{<38423>}**Job 34:23.** *For he will not lay upon man more than right* Very various translations have been given of this verse. According to our common version, it means that God will not deal with man in such a manner as to give him just reason for calling in question the rectitude of the divine dealings. He shall in no case receive more than his sins deserve, so as to give him cause for complaint. This is undoubtedly a correct

sentiment; but it may be doubted whether it is the sense conveyed by the original. Umbreit renders it:

*Denn er braucht auf einem Mann nicht lang zu achten
Um ihm vor Gott in das Gericht zu ziehen.*

“For he needs not long to regard a man in order to bring him before God in judgment” — meaning that he has all power; that he can at once see all his character; and that he can bring him at once to his bar. This translation undoubtedly accords with the general scope of the argument. Noyes renders it:

*He needeth not attend long to a man,
To bring him into judgment before God.*

Wemyss renders it in a similar way:

*He has no need of laborious inquiry,
In order to convict men at his tribunal.*

Rosenmuller gives a similar sense to the passage. According to this, the meaning is, that there is no need that God should give long attention to a man, or go into a protracted investigation, in order that he may bring him to judgment. He knows him at a glance. He can at once convict him, and can decide the case in a moment without danger of error. Human tribunals are under a necessity of long and patient investigation, and then are often deceived; but no such necessity, and no such danger, pertains to God. This interpretation agrees with the scope of the passage (compare the notes at ~~48324~~ Job 34:24), and seems to me to be correct. The Hebrew literally is, “For not upon man will he place (scil. his mind or attention) long that he should go before God in judgment;” that is, there is no need of long and anxious investigation on his part, in order that he may prove that it is right for him to cut man off. He may do it at once, and no one has a right to complain.

~~48324~~ **Job 34:24.** *He shall break in pieces* He crushes or destroys the great. He is not intimidated by their wealth, their rank, or their number.

Without number Margin, more correctly, “searching out.” That is, he does it without the protracted process of a judicial investigation. The Hebrew word used here *rqj* ⁴²⁷¹⁴ means properly “a searching out,” “an examination”; and the meaning here is, that there is no need of his going into a protracted investigation into the lives of wicked people before he brings them to punishment. He sees them at once; knows all their conduct,

and may proceed against them without delay. Hence, it is that he comes often in such a sudden manner, and cuts them off. A human tribunal is under a necessity of examining witnesses and of attending to all the palliating circumstances, before it can pronounce a sentence on an offender. But it is not so with God. He judges at once and directly, and comes forth therefore in a sudden manner to cut down the guilty.

And set others in their stead Place others in the situation which they now occupy. That is, he can with the utmost ease make entire revolutions among people.

Job 34:25. *Therefore he knoweth their works* Or, “Because he knoweth their works.” The word ⁴³⁶⁵Ke here rendered “therefore” is evidently used as denoting that since or because he was intimately acquainted with all which they did, he could justly bring vengeance upon them without long investigation.

And he overturneth them in the night literally, “he turneth night;” meaning, probably, he turns night upon them; that is, he brings calamity upon them. The word “night” is often used to denote calamity, or ruin. Umbreit understands it in the sense of “turning about the night;” that is, that they had covered up their deeds as in the night, but that God “so turns the night about” as to bring them to the light of day. The Vulgate renders it “et ideireo inducit noctem,” “and therefore he brings night;” that is, he brings adversity and ruin. This is probably the correct interpretation.

So that they are destroyed Margin, “crushed.” The idea is, that when God thus brings adversity upon them, they are prostrated beneath his power.

Job 34:26. *He striketh them as wicked men* literally, “Under the wicked, or on account of the wicked, he smites them.” That is, he deals with them “as if” they were wicked; he regards and treats them as such. He deals with them “under” the general character of wicked people, and punishes them accordingly.

In the open sight of others Margin, as in Hebrew “in the place of beholders.” The idea is, that it is done openly or publicly. Their sins had been committed in secret, but they are punished openly. The manifestation of the divine displeasure is in the presence of spectators, or is so open and public, that it cannot but be seen. It is very probable that in all this description Elihu had his eye upon the public calamities which had come

upon Job, and that he meant to include him among the number of mighty men whom God thus suddenly overturned.

Job 34:27. *Because they turned back from him* Margin, “from after him.” That is, they receded, or went away from God.

And would not consider any of his ways They would not regard or attend to any of his commands. The word way, in the Scriptures, is often used to denote “religion.” A “way” denotes the course of life which one leads; the path in which he walks. The “ways of God” denote his course or plan, his precepts or laws; and to depart from them, or to disregard them, is only another mode of saying that a man has no religion.

Job 34:28. *So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him* — Their character is that of oppressors. They take away the rights of the poor; strip away their property without any just claims, and cause them to pour out their lamentations before God.

And he heareth the cry of the afflicted They oppress the poor so that they appeal unto him, but God hears their cry, and brings punishment upon the oppressor. This is “a general remark” thrown in here, meaning that God “always” regards the cry of the oppressed. Its bearing on the case before us is, that God hears the appeal which the oppressed make to him, and as a consequence brings calamity upon those who are guilty of wrong.

Job 34:29. *When he giveth quietness* That is, when God designs to give rest, comfort, ease, or prosperity in any way to a man. The Hebrew word used here may refer to any kind of ease, rest, or peace. The idea which Elihu intends to convey is, that God has all things under his control, and that he can bring prosperity or adversity upon an individual or a nation at his own pleasure.

Who then can make trouble? literally, “Who can condemn, or hold guilty” — [*væ*¹⁷⁵⁶¹]. The sense is, that no one can overwhelm him with the consciousness of guilt, to whom God intends to give the peace resulting from his favor and friendship. Or, no one can bring calamities upon a man “as if” he were guilty, or so as to “show” that he is guilty, when God intends to treat him as if he were not. This is as true now as it was in the time of Elihu. When God designs to give peace to a man’s soul, and to impart to him the evidence that his sins are forgiven, there is no one who can excite in his mind the conviction of guilt, or take away the comfort that

God gives. When he designs to “treat” a man as if he were his friend, and to impart to him such evidences of his favor as shall convince the world that he is his friend, there is no one who can prevent it. No one can so calumniate him, or so prejudice the world against him, or so arrest the descending tokens of the divine favor, as to turn back the proof of the favor of God; compare ^{<1667>}Proverbs 16:7.

And when he hideth his face To “hide the face,” is a common expression in the Scriptures to denote calamity, distress, and the want of spiritual comfort, as the expression “to lift up the light of the countenance” is a common phrase to denote the opposite; compare ^{<8824>}Job 13:24.

Who then can behold him? An expression denoting that no one can then have cheering and elevating views of God. No one can then have those clear conceptions of his character and government which will give peace to the soul. “This” is also as true now as it was in the time of Elihu. We are dependent on God himself for any just views of his own character, for any elevating and purifying conceptions of his government and plans, and for any consolation flowing in upon our souls from the evidence that he is our friend.

Whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only The same truth pertains to nations and to individuals. The same laws respecting the sources of peace and happiness apply to both. Both are alike dependent on God, and neither can secure permanent peace and prosperity without him. Both are alike at his sovereign disposal; and neither can originate permanent sources of prosperity. This, too, is as true now as it was in the time of Elihu. Nations are more prone to forget it than individuals are, but still it is a great truth which should never be forgotten, that neither have power to originate or perpetuate the means of happiness, but that both are alike dependent on God.

^{<8829>}**Job 34:30.** *That the hypocrite reign not* All this is done to prevent wicked men from ruling over the people. The remarks of Elihu had had respect much to princes and kings, and he had shown that however great they were, they were in the hands of God, and were wholly at his disposal. He “now” says that the design of his dealings with them was to prevent their oppressing their fellow-men. The general scope of the remarks of Elihu is, that God is the universal Sovereign; that he has all people under his control, and that there are none so powerful as to be able to resist his will. The remark in this verse is thrown in, not as illustrating this general

sentiment, but to show what was “in fact” the aim for which he thus interposed — to save people from being oppressed and crushed by those in authority.

Lest the people be ensnared Hebrew “From their being snarers of the people.” He thrusts down the mighty, in order that they may not be left to take the people as wild beasts are taken in the toils. They were disposed to make use of their power to oppress others, but God interposes, and the people are saved. For a fuller view of this verse, see the remarks of Rosenmuller.

~~33961~~ **Job 34:31.** *Surely it is meet to be said unto God* It is evident that this verse commences a new strain of remark, and that it is designed particularly to bring Job to proper reflections in view of what had occurred. There has been, however, much diversity of opinion about the meaning of this and the following verses. Schultens enumerates no less than “fifteen” different interpretations which have been given of this verse. The “general” meaning seems to be, that a man who is afflicted ought to submit to God, and not to murmur or complain. He ought to suppose that there is some good reason for what God does, and to be resigned to his will, even where he cannot “see” the reason of his dispensations. The drift of all the remarks of Elihu is, that God is a great and inscrutable Sovereign; that he has a right to reign, and that man should submit unqualifiedly to him. In this passage he does not reproach Job harshly. He does not say that he had been guilty of great crimes. He does not affirm that the sentiments of the three friends of Job were correct, or maintain that Job was a hypocrite. He states a “general” truth, which he considers applicable to all, and says that it becomes all who are afflicted to submit to God, and to resolve to offend no more; to go to God with the language of humble confession, and when everything is dark and gloomy in the divine dealings to implore “his” teachings, and to entreat him to shed light on the path. Hence, he says, “It is meet or proper to use this language before God. It becomes man. He should presume that God is right, and that he has some good reasons for his dealings, though they are inscrutable. Even when a sufferer is not to be reckoned among the most vile and wicked; when he is conscious that his general aim has been to do right: and when his external character has been fair, it is to be “presumed to be possible” that he may have sinned. He may not have wholly known himself. He may have indulged in things that were wrong without having been scarcely conscious of it. He may have loved the world too much; may have fixed his affections

with idolatrous attachment on his property or friends; may have had a temper such as ought not to be indulged; or he may have relied on what he possessed, and thus failed to recognize his dependence on God. In such cases, it becomes man to have so much confidence in God as to go and acknowledge “his right” to inflict chastisement, and to entreat him to teach the sufferer “why” he is thus afflicted.”

I have borne chastisement The word “chastisement” is not in the Hebrew. The Hebrew is simply — **acn**^{<h5375>}, “I have borne,” or “I bear.” Umbreit renders it, “I repent.” Some word like “chastisement” or “punishment” must be understood after “I have borne.” The idea evidently is, that a man who is afflicted by God, even when he cannot see the reason “why” he is afflicted, and when he is not conscious that he has been guilty of any particular sin that led to it, should be willing to regard it as “a proof” that he is guilty, and should examine and correct his life. But there is a great variety of opinion in regard to the meaning of this passage — no less than fifteen different interpretations being enumerated by Schultens.

I will not offend any more **al o**^{<h3808>} **l bje**^{<h2254>} — “I will not act wickedly; I will no more do corruptly.” The sense is, that his afflictions should lead him to a resolution to reform his life, and to sin no more. This just and beautiful sentiment is as applicable to us now as it was to the afflicted in the time of Elihu. It is a common thing to be afflicted. Trial often comes upon us when we can see no particular sin which has led to it, and no special reason why we should be afflicted rather than others. We should, however, regard it as a proof that there is something in our hearts or lives which may be amended, and should endeavor to ascertain what it is, and resolve to offend no more. Anyone, if he will examine himself carefully, can find sufficient reasons why “he” should be visited with the rod of chastisement, and though we may not be able to see why others are preserved from such calamities, yet we can see that there are reasons in abundance why we should be recalled from our wanderings.

^{<h3432>}**Job 34:32.** *That which I see not, teach thou me* That is, in regard to my errors and sins. No prayer could be more appropriate than this. It is language becoming every one who is afflicted, and who does not see clearly the reason why it is done. The sense is, that with a full belief that he is liable to error and sin, that he has a wicked and deceitful heart, and that God never afflicts without reason, he should go to him and ask him to show him “why” he has afflicted him. He should not complain or repine; he

should not accuse God of injustice or partiality; he should not attempt to cloak his offences, but should go and entreat him to make him acquainted with the sins of heart and life which have led to these calamities. Then only will he be in a state of mind in which he will be likely to be profited by trials.

If I have done iniquity, I will do no more Admitting the possibility that he had erred. Who is there that cannot appropriately use this language when he is afflicted?

^{<8363>}**Job 34:33.** *Should it be according to thy mind?* Margin, as in Hebrew “from with thee” — μ [^{†5973>}]. There has been much diversity of opinion in regard to the meaning of this verse. It is exceedingly obscure in the original, and has the appearance of being a proverbial expression. The general sense seems to be, that God will not be regulated in his dealings by what may be the views of man, or by what man might be disposed to choose or refuse. He will act according to his own views of what is right and proper to be done. The phrase, “should it be according to thy mind,” means that it is not to be expected that God will consult the views and feelings of man rather than his own.

He will recompense it He will visit with good or evil, prosperity or adversity, according as he shall judge to be right.

Whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose Whatever may be your preferences or wishes. He will act according to his own views of right. The idea is, that God is absolute and independent, and does according to his own pleasure. He is a just Sovereign, dispensing his favors and appointing calamity, not according to the will of individual people, but holding the scales impartially, and doing what “he” esteems to be right.

And not I Rosenmuller, Drusius, DeWette, and Noyes, render this, “And not he,” supposing that it refers to God, and means that the arrangements which are to affect people should be as “he” pleases, and not such as “man” would prefer. Umbreit explains it as meaning, “It is for you to determine in this matter, not for me. You are the person most interested. I am not particularly concerned. Do you, therefore, speak and determine the matter, if you know what is the truth.” The Vulgate renders it, “Will God seek that from thee because it displeases thee? For thou hast begun to speak, not I: for if thou knowest anything better, speak.” So Coverdale, “Wilt thou not give a reasonable answer? Art thou afraid of anything,

seeing thou beganst first to speak, and not I?" The great difficulty of the whole verse may be seen by consulting Schultens, who gives no less than "seventeen" different interpretations, which have been proposed — his own being different from all others. He renders it, "Lo, he will repay you in your own way; for thou art full of sores — *namquesubulceratus es*:" which, indeed, thou hast chosen, and not I — and what dost thou know? speak." I confess that I cannot understand the passage, nor do any of the interpretations proposed seem to be free from objections. I would submit the following, however, as a paraphrase made from the Hebrew, and differing somewhat from any interpretation which I have seen, as possibly expressing the true sense of the whole verse. "Shall it be from thee that God will send retribution on it (that is, on human conduct), because thou refusest or art reluctant, or because it is not in accordance with thy views? For thou must choose, and not I. Settle this matter, for it pertains particularly to you, and not to me, and what thou knowest, speak. If thou hast any views in regard to this, let them be expressed, for it is important to know on what principles God deals with men."

~~836~~ **Job 34:34, 35.** *Let men of understanding* Margin, as in Hebrew "heart." The "heart," as there has been frequent occasions to remark, in the Scriptures is often used to denote the seat of the mind or soul, as the head is with us. Rosenmuller, Umbreit, and Noyes, render this passage as if it were to be taken in connection with the following verse, "Men of understanding will say, and a wise man who hears my views will unite in saying, 'Job has spoken without knowledge, and his words are without wisdom.'" According to this, the two verses express a sentiment in which Elihu supposes every wise man who had attended to him would concur, that what Job had said was not founded in knowledge or on true wisdom.

~~836~~ **Job 34:36.** *My desire is* Margin, "or, "my father, let Job be tried.'" This variation between the text and the margin, arises from the different interpretations affixed to the Hebrew word *hba*,^{<h15>}. The Hebrew word commonly means "father," and some have supposed that that sense is to be retained here, and then it would be a solemn appeal to God as his Father — expressing the earnest prayer of Elihu that Job might be fully tried. But the difficulties in this interpretation are obvious:

(1) Such a mode of appeal to God occurs nowhere else in the book, and it is little in the spirit of the poem. No particular reason can be assigned why that solemn appeal should be made here, rather than in many other places.

(2) The name “Father,” though often given to God in the Scriptures, is not elsewhere given to him in this book.

The probability is, therefore, that the word is from *hba*,^{<h14>} — “to breathe after, to desire,” and means that Elihu “desired” that Job should have a fair trial. No other similar form of the word, however, occurs. The Vulgate renders it, “Pater mi, my father;” the Septuagint, “But learn, Job, no more to make reply like the foolish;” the Chaldee, *anybx* — “I desire.”

May be tried That his views may be fully canvassed and examined. He had expressed sentiments which Elihu thought should not be allowed to pass without the most careful examination into their truth and bearing. “Unto the end.” In the most full and free manner; that the matter should be pursued as far as possible, so that it might be wholly understood. Literally, it means “forever” — *d[æ j xæ]*^{<570>}^{<531>}.

Because of his answers for wicked men Because of the views which he has expressed, which seem to favor the wicked. Elihu refers to the opinions advanced by Job that God did not punish people in this life, or did not deal with them according to their characters, which “he” interpreted as giving countenance to wickedness, or as affirming the God was not the enemy of impiety. The Vulgate renders this, “My Father, let Job be tried to the end; do not cease from the man of iniquity;” but the true meaning doubtless is, that Job had uttered sentiments which Elihu understood to favor the wicked, and he was desirous that every trial should be applied to him which would tend to correct his erroneous views.

^{<357>}**Job 34:37.** *For he addeth rebellion unto his sin* To the sin which he has formerly committed and which has brought these trials upon him, he now adds the sin of complaining and rebellion against God. Of Job, this was certainly not true to the extent which Elihu intended, but it is a very common case in afflictions. A man is visited with calamity as a chastisement for his sins. Instead of searching out the cause why he is afflicted, or bowing with resignation to the superior wisdom of God when he cannot “see” any cause, he regards himself as unjustly dealt with; complains of the government of God as severe, and gives “occasion” for a severer calamity in some other form. The result is often that he is visited with severe affliction, and is made to see both his original offence and the accumulated guilt which has made a new form of punishment necessary.

He clappeth his hands amongst us To clap the hands is either a signal of applause or triumph, or a mark of indignation, ^{<10410>}Numbers 24:10, or of derision, ^{<18723>}Job 27:23. It seems to be used in some such sense here, as expressing contempt or derision for the sentiments of his friends. The meaning is, that instead of treating the subject under discussion with a calm spirit and a disposition to learn the truth and profit by it, he had manifested in relation to the whole matter great disrespect, and had conducted like one who attempts to silence others, or who shows his contempt for them by clapping his hands at them. It is scarcely necessary to say, that, notwithstanding all the professed candor and impartiality of Elihu, this is a most unfair representation of the general spirit of Job. That he had sometimes given vent to improper feelings there can be no doubt, but nothing had occurred to justify this statement.

And multiplieth his words against God That is, his arguments are against the justice of his government and dealings. In the special phrase used here — he multiplieth “words,” Elihu means, probably, to say, that there was more of “words” than of argument in what Job had said, and that he was not content even with expressing his improper feelings once, but that he piled words on words, and epithet on epithet, that he might more fully give utterance to his reproachful feelings against his Maker.

NOTES ON JOB 35

Job 35:1. *Elihu spake* Hebrew, חנף, ^{חנף} “And he answered”; the word “answer” being used, as it is often in the Scriptures, to denote the commencement of a discourse. We may suppose that Elihu had paused at the close of his second discourse, possibly with a view to see whether there was any disposition to reply.

Job 35:2. *Thinkest thou this to be right?* This is the point which Elihu now proposes to examine. He, therefore, solemnly appeals to Job himself to determine whether he could himself say that he thought such a sentiment correct.

That thou saidst, My righteousness is more than God's Job had nowhere said this in so many words, but Elihu regarded it as the substance of what he had said, or thought that what he had said amounted to the same thing. He had dwelt much on his own sincerity and uprightness of life; he had maintained that he had not been guilty of such crimes as to make these calamities deserved, and he had indulged in severe reflections on the dealings of God with him; compare ^{Job 9:30-35; 10:13-15}. All this Elihu interprets as equivalent to saying, that he was more righteous than his Maker. It cannot be denied that Job had given occasion for this interpretation to be put on his sentiments, though it cannot be supposed that he would have affirmed this in so many words.

Job 35:3. *For thou saidst* Another sentiment of a similar kind which Elihu proposes to examine. He had already adverted to this sentiment of Job in ^{Job 34:9}, and examined it at some length, and had shown in reply to it that God could not be unjust, and that there was great impropriety when man presumed to arraign the justice of the Most High. He now adverts to it again in order to show that God could not be benefited or injured by the conduct of man, and that he was, therefore, under no inducement to treat him otherwise than impartially.

What advantage will it be unto thee? see the notes at ^{Job 34:9}. The phrase “unto thee,” refers to Job himself. He had said this to himself; or to his own soul. Such a mode of expression is not uncommon in the Scriptures.

And, What profit shall I have if I be cleansed from my sin Margin, “or, by it” more than by my sin.” The Hebrew will admit of either of these interpretations, and the sense is not materially varied. The idea is, that as to good treatment or securing the favor of God under the arrangements of his government, a man might just as well be wicked as righteous. He would be as likely to be prosperous in the world, and to experience the tokens of the divine favor. Job had by no means advanced such a sentiment; but he had maintained that he was treated “as if” he were a sinner; that the dealings of Providence were “not” in this world in accordance with the character of people; and this was interpreted by Elihu as maintaining that there was no advantage in being righteous, or that a man might as well be a sinner. It was for such supposed sentiments as these, that Elihu and the three friends of Job charged him with giving “answers” for wicked people, or maintaining opinions which went to sustain and encourage the wicked; see ~~834~~ Job 34:36.

~~834~~ **Job 35:4.** *I will answer thee* Margin, “return to thee words.” Elihu meant to explain this more fully than it had been done by the friends of Job, and to show where Job was in error.

And thy companions with thee Eliphaz, in ~~821~~ Job 22:2, had taken up the same inquiry, and proposed to discuss the subject, but he had gone at once into severe charges against Job, and been drawn into language of harsh crimination, instead of making the matter clear, and Elihu now proposes to state just how it is, and to remove the objections of Job. It may be doubted, however, whether he was much more successful than Eliphaz had been. The doctrine of the future state, as it is revealed by Christianity, was needful to enable these speakers to comprehend and explain this subject.

~~835~~ **Job 35:5.** *Look unto the heavens, and see* This is the commencement of the reply which Elihu makes to the sentiment which he had understood Job to advance, and which Eliphaz had proposed formerly to examine. The general object of the reply is, to show that God is so great that he cannot be affected with human conduct, and that he has no interest in treating people otherwise than according to character. He is so exalted that their conduct cannot reach and affect his happiness. It ought to be “presumed,” therefore, since there is no motive to the contrary, that the dealings of God with people would be impartial, and that there “would” be an advantage in serving him — not because people could lay him under “obligation,” but because it was right and proper that such advantage should accrue to them.

To impress this view on the mind, Elihu directs Job and his friends to look to the heavens — so lofty, grand, and sublime; to reflect how much higher they are than man; and to remember that the great Creator is “above” all those heavens, and “thus” to see that he is so far exalted that he is not dependent on man; that he cannot be affected by the righteousness or wickedness of his creatures; that his happiness is not dependent on them, and consequently that it is to be presumed that he would act impartially, and treat all people as they deserved. There “would” be, therefore, an advantage in serving God.

And behold the clouds Also far above us, and seeming to float in the heavens. The sentiment here is, that one view of the astonishing display of wisdom and power above us must extinguish every feeling that he will be influenced in his dealings as people are in theirs, or that he can gain or suffer anything by the good or bad behavior of his creatures.

Job 35:6. *If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him?* This should not be interpreted as designed to justify sin, or as saying that there is no evil in it, or that God does not regard it. That is not the point or scope of the remark of Elihu. His object is to show that God is not influenced in his treatment of his creatures as people are in their treatment of each other. He has no “interest” in being partial, or in treating them otherwise than they deserve. If they sin against him his happiness is not so marred that he is under any inducement to interpose “by passion,” or in any other way than that which is “right.”

Job 35:7. *If thou be righteous, what givest thou him?* The same sentiment substantially as in the previous verses. It is, that God is supreme and independent. He does not desire such benefits from the services of his friends and is not so dependent on them; as to be induced to interpose in their favor, in any way beyond what is strictly proper. It is to be presumed, therefore, that he will deal with them according to what is right, and as it is right that they should experience proofs of his favor, it followed that there “would be” advantage in serving him, and in being delivered from sin; that it “would be” better to be holy than to lead a life of transgression. This reasoning seems to be somewhat abstract, but it is correct, and is as sound now as it was in the time of Elihu. There is no reason why God should not treat people according to their character. He is not so under obligations to his friends, and has not such cause to dread his foes; he does not derive so much benefit from the one, or receive such injury from the other, that he is

under any inducement to swerve from strict justice; and it follows, therefore, that where there ought to be reward there will be, where there ought to be punishment there will be, and consequently that there is an advantage in being righteous.

☞ **Job 35:8.** *Thy wickedness may hurt a Man as thou art* That is, it may injure him, but not God. He is too far exalted above man, and too independent of man in his sources of happiness, to be affected by what he can do. The object of the whole passage (☞ Job 35:6-8) is, to show that God is independent of people, and is not governed in his dealings with them on the principles which regulate their conduct with each other. One man may be greatly benefited by the conduct of another, and may feel under obligation to reward him for it; or he maybe greatly injured in his person, property, or reputation, by another, and will endeavor to avenge himself. But nothing of this kind can happen to God. If he rewards, therefore, it must be of his grace and mercy, not because he is laid under obligation; if he inflicts chastisement, it must be because people deserve it, and not because God has been injured. In this reasoning Elihu undoubtedly refers to Job, whom he regards as having urged a “claim” to a different kind of treatment, because he supposed that he “deserved” it. The general principle of Elihu is clearly correct, that God is entirely independent of human beings; that neither our good nor evil conduct can effect his happiness, and that consequently his dealings with us are those of impartial justice.

☞ **Job 35:9.** *By reason of the multitude of oppressions they make the oppressed to cry* It is not quite easy to see the connection which this verse has with what goes before, or its bearing on the argument of Elihu. It seems however, to refer to the “oppressed in general,” and to the fact, to which Job had himself adverted (☞ Job 24:12), that people are borne down by oppression and that God does not interpose to save them. They are suffered to remain in that state of oppression — trodden down by people, crushed by the armor of a despot, and overwhelmed with poverty, sorrow, and want, and God does not interpose to rescue them. He looks on and sees all this evil, and does not come forth to deliver those who thus suffer. This is a common case, according to the view of Job; this was his own case, and he could not explain it, and in view of it he had indulged in language which Elihu regarded as a severe reflection on the government of the Almighty. He undertakes, therefore, to “explain the reason” why

people are permitted thus to suffer, and why they are not relieved. In the verse before us, he states “the fact,” that multitudes “do” thus suffer under the arm of oppression — for that fact could not be denied; in the following verses, he states “the reason” why it is so, and that reason is, that they do not apply in any proper manner to God, who could “give songs in the night,” or joy in the midst of calamities, and who could make them acquainted with the nature of his government as intelligent beings, so that they would be able to understand it and acquiesce in it. The phrase “the multitude of oppressions” refers to the numerous and repeated calamities which tyrants bring upon the poor, the down-trodden, and the slave. The phrases “to cry” and “they cry out,” refer to the lamentations and sighs of those under the arm of the oppressor. Elihu did not dispute the truth of “the fact” as it was alleged by Job. That fact could not then be doubted any more than it can now, that there were many who were bowed down under burdens imposed by hard-hearted masters, and groaning under the government of tyrants, and that all this was seen and permitted by a holy God. This fact troubled Job — for he was one of this general class of sufferers; and this fact Elihu proposes to account for. Whether his solution is satisfactory, however, may still admit of a doubt.

Job 35:10. *But none saith* That is, none of the oppressed and down-trodden say. This is the solution which Elihu gives of what appeared so mysterious to Job, and of what Elihu regarded as the source of the bitter complaints of Job. The solution is, that when people are oppressed they do not apply to God with a proper spirit, and look to him that they may find relief. It was a principle with Elihu, that if when a man was afflicted he would apply to God with a humble and penitent heart, he would hear him, and would withdraw his hand; see this principle fully stated in **Job 33:19-26**. This Elihu now says, was not done by the oppressed, and this, according to him, is the reason why the hand of God is still upon them.

Where is God my Maker That is, they do not appeal to God for relief. They do not inquire for him who alone can help them. This is the reason why they are not relieved.

Who giveth songs in the night Night, in the Scriptures, is an emblem of sin, ignorance, and calamity. Here “calamity” is particularly referred to; and the idea is, that God can give joy, or impart consolation, in the darkest season of trial. He can impart such views of himself and his government as to cause the afflicted even to rejoice in his dealings; he can raise the song of

praise even when all external things are gloomy and sad; compare ^{<4165>}Acts 16:25. There is great beauty in this expression. It has been verified in thousands of instances where the afflicted have looked up through tears to God, and their mourning has been turned into joy. Especially is it true under the gospel, that in the day of darkness and calamity, God puts into the mouth the language of praise, and fills the heart with thanksgiving. No one who has sought comfort in affliction with a right spirit has found it withheld, and all the sad and sorrowful may come to God with the assurance that he can put songs of praise into their lips in the night of calamity; compare ^{<4301>}Psalms 126:1,2.

^{<4851>}**Job 35:11.** *Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth* Who is able to teach us more than the irrational creation; that is, in regard to the nature and design of affliction. They suffer without knowing why. They are subjected to toil and hardships; endure pain, and die, without any knowledge why all this occurs, and without any rational view of the government and plans of God. It is not, or need not be so, says Elihu, when man suffers. He is intelligent. He can understand why he is afflicted. He has only to make use of his superior endowments, and apply to his Maker, and he will see so much of the reason of his doings that he will acquiesce in the wise arrangement. Perhaps there is an implied reflection here on those who suffered generally, as if they manifested no more intelligence than the brute creation. They make no use of intellectual endowments. They do not examine the nature of the divine administration, and they do not apply to God for instruction and help. If they should do so, he would teach them so that they would acquiesce and rejoice in his government and dealings. According to this view, the meaning is, that if people suffer without relief and consolation, it is to be attributed to their stupidity and unwillingness to look to God for light and aid, and not at all to his injustice.

^{<4852>}**Job 35:12.** *There they cry* They cry out in the language of complaint, but not for mercy.

Because of the pride of evil men That is, of their own pride. The pride of men so rebellious, and so disposed to complain of God, is the reason why they do not appeal to him to sustain them and give them relief. This is still as true as it was in the time of Elihu. The pride of the heart, even in affliction, is the true reason with multitudes why they do not appeal to God, and why they do not pray. They have valued themselves on their independence of spirit. They have been accustomed to rely on their own

resources. They have been unwilling to recognize their dependence on any being whatever. Even in their trials, the heart is too wicked to acknowledge God, and they would be ashamed to be known to do what they regard as so weak a thing as “to pray.” Hence, they complain in their afflictions; they linger on in their sufferings without consolation, and then die without hope. However inapplicable, therefore, this solution of the difficulty may have been to the case of Job, it is “not” inapplicable to the case of multitudes of sufferers. “Many of the afflicted have no peace or consolation in their trials — no ‘songs in the night’ — BECAUSE THEY ARE TOO PROUD TO PRAY!”

Job 35:13. *Surely God will not hear vanity* A vain, hollow, heartless petition. The object of Elihu here is to account for the reason why sufferers are not relieved — having his eye, doubtless, on the case of Job as one of the most remarkable of the kind. The solution which he here gives of the difficulty is, that it is not consistent for God to hear a prayer where there is no sincerity. Of the “truth” of the remark there can be no doubt, but he seems to have taken it for granted that all prayers offered by unrelieved sufferers are thus insincere and hollow. This was needfull in his view to account for the fact under consideration, and this he “assumes” as being unquestionable. Yet the very point indispensable to make out his case was, that “in fact” the prayers offered by such persons were insincere.

Job 35:14. *Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him* This is addressed to Job, and is designed to entreat him to trust in God. Elihu seems to refer to some remark that Job had made, like that in **Job 23:8ff**, where he said that he could not come near him, nor bring his cause before him. If he went to the east, the west, the north, or the south, he could not see him, and could get no opportunity of bringing his cause before him: see the notes at that place. Elihu here says that though it is true in fact that God is invisible, yet this ought not to be regarded as a reason why he should not confide in him. The argument of Elihu here — which is undoubtedly sound — is, that the fact that God is invisible should not be regarded as any evidence that he does not attend to the affairs of people, or that he is not worthy of our love.

Judgment is before him He is a God of justice, and will do that which is right.

Therefore trust him Though he is invisible, and though you cannot bring, your cause directly before him. The word which is used here **l Wj** ^{<h2342>}, from **l Wj** ^{<h2342>} means “to turn around”; to twist; to be firm — as a rope is that is twisted; and then to wait or delay — that is, to be firm in patience. Here it may have this meaning, that Job was to be firm and unmoved, patiently waiting for the time when the now invisible God would interpose in his behalf, though he could not now see him. The idea is, that we may trust the “invisible God,” or that we should patiently “wait” for him to manifest himself in our behalf, and may leave all our interests in his hands, with the feeling that they are entirely safe. It must be admitted that Job had not learned this lesson as fully as it might have been learned, and that he had evinced an undue anxiety for some public “manifestation” of the favor and friendship of God, and that he had not shown quite the willingness which he should have done to commit his interests into his hands, though he was unseen.

^{<h3515>}**Job 35:15.** *But now, because it is not so* This verse, as it stands in our authorized translation, conveys no intelligible idea. It is evident that the translators meant to give a literal version of the Hebrew, but without understanding its sense. An examination of the principal words and phrases may enable us to ascertain the idea which was in the mind of Elihu when it was uttered. The phrase in the Hebrew here **hT[æ yKi** ^{<h258>} **yäæ** ^{<h369>} may mean, “but now it is as nothing,” and is to be connected with the following clause, denoting, “now it is comparatively nothing that he has visited you in his anger;” that is, the punishment which he has inflicted on you is almost as nothing compared with what it might have been, or what you have deserved. Job had complained much, and Elihu says to him, that so far from having cause of complaint, his sufferings were as nothing — scarcely worth noticing, compared with what they might have been.

He hath visited in his anger Margin, i.e. “God.” The word rendered “hath visited” **rqp** ^{<h485>} means to visit for any purpose — for mercy or justice; to review, take an account of, or investigate conduct. Here it is used with reference to punishment — meaning that the punishment which he had inflicted was trifling compared with the desert of the offences.

Yet he knoweth it not Margin, i.e., “Job.” The marginal reading here is undoubtedly erroneous. The reference is not to Job, but to God, and the idea is, that he did not “know,” that is, did not “take full account” of the

sins of Job. He passed them over, and did not bring them all into the account in his dealings with him. Had he done this, and marked every offence with the utmost strictness and severity, his punishment would have been much more severe.

In great extremity The Hebrew here is $\text{vpæ}^{\langle 46580 \rangle} \text{dāw}^{\langle 713966 \rangle}$. The word $\text{vpæ}^{\langle 46580 \rangle}$ occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew. The Septuagint renders it $\text{παραπτώμα}^{\langle 3900 \rangle}$, “offence.” and the Vulgate “scelus,” i.e., “transgression.” The authors of those versions evidently read it as if it were $[\text{vpæ}^{\langle 46588 \rangle}]$, iniquity; and it may be that the final ‘ayin ([]) has been dropped, like wv for $\text{adj}^{\langle 47723 \rangle}$, in $\langle 4851 \rangle$ Job 15:31. Gesenius, Theodotion and Symmachus in like manner render it “transgression.” Others have regarded it as if from vwp “to be proud,” and as meaning “in pride” or “arrogance;” and others, as the rabbis generally, as if from vwp , to “disperse,” meaning “on account of the multitude,” scil. of transgressions. So Rosenmuller, Umbreit, Luther, and the Chaldee. It seems probable to me that the interpretation of the Septuagint and the Vulgate is the correct one, and that the sense is, that he “does not take cognizance severely $\text{dāw}^{\langle 713966 \rangle}$ of transgressions;” that is, that he had not done it in the case of Job. This interpretation agrees with the scope of the passage, and with the view which Elihu meant to express — that God, so far from having given any just cause of complaint, had not even dealt with him as his sins deserved. Without any impeachment of his wisdom or goodness, his inflictions “might” have been far more severe.

$\langle 48516 \rangle$ **Job 35:16.** *Therefore* In view of all that Elihu had now said, he came to the conclusion that the views of Job were erroneous, and that he had no just cause of complaint. He had suffered no more than he had deserved; he might have obtained a release or mitigation if he had applied to God; and the government of God was just, and was every way worthy of confidence. The remarks of Job, therefore, complaining of the severity of his sufferings and of the government of God, were not based on knowledge, and had in fact no solid foundation.

NOTES ON JOB 36

Job 36:1. *Elihu also proceeded* Hebrew added — *ās̄p̄*⁴³²⁵⁴. Vulgate “addens;” Septuagint, *ἠροσθεῖς* — “adding, or proceeding.” The Hebrew commentators remark that this word is used because this speech is “added” to the number which it might be supposed he would make. There had been “three” series of speeches, by Job and his friends, and in each one of them Job had spoken three times. Each one of the three friends had also spoken thrice, except Zophar, who failed to reply when it came to his turn. Elihu had also now made three speeches, and here he would naturally have closed, but it is remarked that he “added” this to the usual number.

Job 36:2. *Suffer me a little* Even beyond the regular order of speaking; or, allow me to go on though I have fully occupied my place in the “number” of speeches. Jarchi remarks that this verse is “Chaldaic,” and it is worthy of observation that the principal words in it are not those ordinarily used in Hebrew to express the same thought, but are such as occur in the Chaldee. The word rendered “suffer” *rtk̄*⁴³⁸⁰³ has here a signification which occurs only in Syriac and Chaldee. It properly means in Hebrew: to “surround,” in a hostile sense; ⁴⁷²⁴⁸Judges 20:43; ⁴⁹²⁷²Psalms 22:12; then in Hiph. to crown oneself. In Syriac and Chaldee, it means “to wait” — perhaps from the idea of going round and round — and this is the meaning here. He wished them not to remit their attention, but to have patience with what he would yet say.

And I will show thee that Margin, “there are yet words for God.” The Hebrew is, “And I will show you that there are yet words for God;” that is, that there were yet many considerations which could be urged in vindication of his government. The idea of Elihu is not so much that “he” had much to say, as that in fact there was much that “could be” said for him. He regarded his character and government as having been attacked, and he believed that there were ample considerations which could be urged in its defense. The word which is here rendered “I will show thee” *hwj*⁴²³³¹, is also Chaldee in its signification. It is from *hwj*⁴²³³¹ (Chald.) not used in the Qal, but it occurs in other forms in the Chaldee portion of the Scriptures; see ⁴⁷⁰¹¹Daniel 2:11,16,24,27. The use of these Chaldee words is

somewhat remarkable, and perhaps may throw some light on the question about the time and place of the composition of the book.

Job 36:3. *I will fetch my knowledge from afar* What I say shall not be mere commonplace. It shall be the result of reflection on subjects that lie out of the ordinary range of thought. The idea is, that he did not mean to go over the ground that had been already trodden, or to suggest such reflections as would occur to anyone, but that he meant to bring his illustrations from abstruser matters, and from things that had escaped their attention. He in fact appeals to the various operations of nature — the rain, the dew, the light, the instincts of the animal creation, the vicissitudes of the seasons, the laws of heat and cold, and shows that all these prove that God is inscrutably wise and gloriously great.

And will ascribe righteousness to my Maker That is, I will show that these things to which I now appeal, “prove” that he is righteous, and is worthy of universal confidence. Perhaps, also, he means to contrast the result of his reflections with those of Job. He regarded him as having charged his Maker with injustice and wrong. Elihu says that it was a fixed principle with him to ascribe righteousness to God, and that he believed it could be fully sustained by an appeal to his works. Man should “presume” that his Maker is good, and wise, and just; he should be “willing” to find that he is so; he should “expect” that the result of the profoundest investigation of his ways and works will prove that he is so — and in such an investigation he will never be disappointed. A man is in no good frame of mind, and is not likely to be led to any good result in his investigations, when he “begins” his inquiries by believing that his Maker is unjust, and who “prosecutes” them with the hope and expectation that he will find him to be so. Yet do people never do this?

Job 36:4. *For truly my words shall not be false* This is designed to conciliate attention. It is a professed purpose to state nothing but truth. Even in order to vindicate the ways of God he would state nothing but what would bear the most rigid examination. Job had charged on his friends a purpose “to speak wickedly for God;” to make use of unsound arguments in vindicating his cause, (see the notes at **Job 13:7,8**), and Elihu now says that “he” will make use of no such reasoning, but that all that he says shall be founded in strict truth.

He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee This refers undoubtedly to Elihu himself, and is a claim to a clear understanding of the subject. He did not doubt that he was right, and that he had some views which were worthy of their attention. The main idea is, that he was of “sound” knowledge; that his views were not sophistical and captious; that they were founded in truth, and were worthy, therefore, of their profound attention.

Job 36:5. *Behold, God is Mighty* This is the first consideration which Elihu urges, and the purpose seems to be to affirm that God is so great that he has no occasion to modify his treatment of any class of people from a reference to himself. He is wholly independent of all, and can therefore be impartial in his dealings. If it were otherwise; if he were dependent upon human beings for any share of his happiness, he might be tempted to show special favor to the great and to the rich; to spare the mighty who are wicked, though he cut off the poor. But he has no such inducement, as he is wholly independent; and it is to be presumed, therefore, that he treats all impartially; see the notes at **Job 35:5-8**.

And despiseth not any None who are poor and humble. He does not pass them by with cold neglect because they are poor and power. less, and turn his attention to the great and mighty because he is dependent on them.

He is mighty in wisdom Margin, “heart.” The word “heart” in Hebrew is often used to denote the intellectual powers; and the idea here is, that God has perfect wisdom in the management of his affairs. He is acquainted with all the circumstances of his creatures, and passes by none from a defect of knowledge, or from a want of wisdom to know how to adopt his dealings to their condition.

Job 36:6. *He preserveth not the life of the wicked* Elihu here maintains substantially the same sentiment which the three friends of Job had done, that the dealings of God in this life are in accordance with character, and that strict justice is thus maintained.

But giveth right to the poor Margin, “or afflicted.” The Hebrew word often refers to the afflicted, to the humble, or the lowly; and the reference here is to the “lower classes” of society. The idea is, that God deals justly with them, and does not overlook them because they are so poor and feeble that they cannot contribute anything to him. In this sentiment Elihu was undoubtedly right, though, like the three friends of Job, he seems to have adopted the principle that the dealings of God here are according to the

“characters” of people. He had some views in advance of theirs. He saw that affliction is designed for “discipline” (Job 33); that God is willing to show mercy to the sufferer on repentance; that he is not dependent upon human beings, and that his dealings “cannot” be graduated by any reference to what he would receive or suffer from people; but still he clung to the idea that the dealings of God here are a proof of the character of the afflicted. What was mysterious about it he resolved into sovereignty, and showed that man “ought” to be submissive to God, and to “believe” that he was qualified to govern. He lacked the views which Christianity has furnished, that the inequalities that appear in the divine dealings here will be made clear in the retributions of another world.

Job 36:7. *He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous* That is, he constantly observes them, whether they are in the more elevated or humble ranks of life. Even though he afflicts them, his eye is upon them, and he does not forsake them. It will be remembered that one of the difficulties to be accounted for was, that they who professed to be righteous are subjected to severe trials. The friends of Job had maintained that such a fact was in itself proof that they who professed to be pious were not so, but were hypocrites. Job had verged to the other extreme, and had said that it looked as if God had forsaken those that loved him, and that there was no advantage in being righteous; notes, **Job 35:2.** Elihu takes a middle ground, and says that neither was the correct opinion. It is true, he says, that the righteous are afflicted, but they are not forsaken. The eye of God is still upon them, and he watches over them, whether on the throne or in dungeons, in order “to bring good results” out of their trials.

But with kings are they on the throne That is, if the righteous are in the state of the highest earthly honor and prosperity, God is with them, and is their protector and friend. The same thing Elihu, in the following verses, says is true respecting the righteous, when they are in the most down-trodden and depressed condition.

Yea, he doth establish them for ever The meaning of this is, that they are regarded by God with favor. When righteous kings “are” thus prospered, and have a permanent and peaceful reign, it is God who gives this prosperity to them. They are under his watchful eye, and his protecting hand.

Job 36:8. *And if they be bound in fetters* That is, if the righteous are thrown into prison, and are subjected to oppressions and trials, or if they are chained down, as it were, on a bed of pain, or crushed by heavy calamities, the eye of God is still upon them. Their sufferings should not be regarded either as proof that they are hypocrites, or that God is regardless of them, and is indifferent whether people are good or evil. The true solution of the difficulty was, that God was then accomplishing purposes of discipline, and that happy results would follow if they would receive affliction in a proper manner.

Job 36:9. *Then he showeth them their work* What their lives have been. This he does either by a messenger sent to them (^{<8373>}Job 33:23), or by their own reflections (^{<8377>}Job 33:27), or by the influences of his Spirit leading them to a proper review of their lives. The object of their affliction, Elihu says, is to bring them to see what their conduct has been, and to reform what has been amiss. It should not be interpreted either as proof that the afflicted are eminently wicked, as the friends of Job maintained, or as furnishing an occasion for severe reflections on the divine government, such as Job had indulged in. It is all consistent with an equitable and kind administration; with the belief that the afflicted have true piety — though they have wandered and erred; and with the conviction that God is dealing with them in mercy, and not in the severity of wrath. They need only recal the errors of their lives; humble themselves, and exercise true repentance, and they would find afflictions to be among even their richest blessings.

Transgressions that they have exceeded Or, rather, “he shows them their transgressions that they have been very great”; that they have made themselves great, mighty, strong — ^{<8376>}rb6e^{<8396>}. The idea is, that their transgressions had been allowed to accumulate, or to become strong, until it was necessary to interpose in this manner, and check them by severe affliction. All this was consistent, however, with the belief that the sufferer was truly pious and might find favor if he would repent.

Job 36:10. *He openeth also their ear to discipline* To teaching; or he makes them willing to learn the lessons which their afflictions are designed to teach; coral). See the notes at ^{<8316>}Job 33:16.

Job 36:11. *If they obey and serve him* That is, if, as the result of their afflictions, they repent of their sins, seek his mercy, and serve him in time to come, they shall be prospered still. The design of affliction, Elihu says,

is, not to cut them off, but to bring them to repentance. This sentiment he had advanced and illustrated before at greater length; see the notes at ~~832~~ Job 33:23-28. The object of all this is, doubtless, to assure Job that he should not regard his calamities either as proof that he had never understood religion — as his friends maintained; or that God was severe, and did not regard those that loved and obeyed him — as Job had seemed to suppose; but that there was something in his life and conduct which made discipline necessary, and that if he would repent of that, he would find returning prosperity, and end his days in happiness and peace.

~~832~~ **Job 36:12.** *But if they obey not* If those who are afflicted do not turn to God, and yield him obedience, they must expect that he will continue their calamities until they are cut off.

They shall perish by the sword Margin, as in Hebrew “pass away.” The word rendered “sword” ~~j l æ~~⁴⁷⁹⁷³ means properly “anything sent” — as a spear or an arrow — “a missile” — and then an instrument of war in general. It may be applied to any weapon that is used to produce death. The idea here is, that the man who was afflicted on account of the sins which he had committed, and who did not repent of them and turn to God, would be cut off. God would not withdraw his hand unless he acknowledged his offences. As he had undertaken the work of discipline, he could not consistently do it, for it would be in fact “yielding” the point to him whom he chastised. This “may” be the case now, and the statement here made by Elihu may involve a principle which will explain the cause of the death of many persons, even of the professedly pious. They are devoted to gain or amusement; they seek the honors of the world for their families or themselves, and in fact they make no advances in piety, and are doing nothing for the cause of religion. God lays his hand upon them at first gently. They lose their health, or a part of their property. But the discipline is not effectual. He then lays his hand on them with more severity, and takes from them an endeared child. Still, all is ineffectual. The sorrow of the affliction passes away, and they mingle again in the frivolous and busy scenes of life as worldly as ever, and exert no influence in favor of religion. Another blow is needful, and blow after blow is struck; but nothing overcomes their worldliness, nothing makes them devotedly and sincerely useful, and it becomes necessary to remove them from the world.

They shall die without knowledge That is, without any true knowledge of the plans and government of God, or of the reasons why he brought these

afflictions upon them. In all their sufferings they never “saw” the design. They complained, and murmured, and charged God with severity, but they never understood that the affliction was intended for their own benefit.

<8361> **Job 36:13.** *But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath* By their continued impiety they lay the foundation for increasing and multiplied expressions of the divine displeasure. Instead of confessing their sins when they are afflicted, and seeking for pardon: instead of returning to God and becoming truly his friends, they remain impenitent, unconverted, and are rebellious at heart. They complain of the divine government and plans, and their feelings and conduct make it necessary for God further to interpose, until they are finally cut off and consigned to ruin. Elihu had stated what was the effect in two classes of persons who were afflicted. There were those who were truly pious, and who would receive affliction as sent from God for purposes of discipline, and who would repent and seek his mercy; <8361> Job 36:11. There were those, as a second class, who were openly wicked, and who would not be benefited by afflictions, and who would thus be cut off, <8362> Job 36:12. He says, also, that there was a third class — the class of hypocrites, who also were not profited by afflictions, and who would only by their perverseness and rebellion heap up wrath. It is “possible” that he may have designed to include Job in this number, as his three friends had done, but it seems more probable that he meant merely to suggest to Job that there was such a class, and to turn his mind to the “possibility” that he might be of the number. In explaining the design and effect of afflictions, it was at least proper to refer to this class, since it could not be doubted that there WERE people of this description.

They cry not when he bindeth them They do not cry to God with the language of penitence when he binds them down by calamities; see <8368> Job 36:8.

<8364> **Job 36:14.** *They die in youth* Margin, “Their soul dieth.” The word “soul” or “life” in the Hebrew is used to denote oneself. The meaning is, that they would soon be cut down, and share the lot of the openly wicked. If they amended their lives they might be spared, and continue to live in prosperity and honor; if they did not, whether openly wicked or hypocrites. they would be early cut off.

And their life is among the unclean Margin, “Sodomites.” The idea is, that they would be treated in the same way as the most abandoned and vile

of the race. No special favor would be shown to them because they were “professors” of religion, nor would this fact be a shield against the treatment which they deserved. They could not be classed with the righteous, and must, therefore, share the fate of the most worthless and wicked of the race. The word rendered “unclean” *vdeq*; ^{<h6945>} is from *vdaq*; ^{<h6942>}, “to be pure or holy”; and in Hiph. to regard as holy, to consecrate, or devote to the service of God, as e.g. a priest; ^{<h12341>} Exodus 28:41; 29:1. Then it means to consecrate or devote to “any” service or purpose, as to an idol god. Hence, it means one consecrated or devoted to the service of Astarte, the goddess of the Sidonians or Venus, and as this worship was corrupt and licentious, the word means one who is licentious or corrupt compare ^{<h5238>} Deuteronomy 23:18; ^{<h11424>} 1 Kings 14:24; ^{<h13321>} Genesis 38:21,22. Here it means the licentious, the corrupt, the abandoned; and the idea is, that if hypocrites did not repent under the inflictions of divine judgment, they would be dealt with in the same way as the most abandoned and vile. On the evidence that licentiousness constituted a part of the ancient worship of idols, see Spencer “de Legg. ritual Hebraeorum.” Lib. ii. cap. iii. pp. 613, 614, Ed. 1732. Jerome renders this, “intereffeminatos.” The Septuagint strangely enough has: “Let their life be wounded by angels.”

^{<h8315>} **Job 36:15.** *He delivereth the poor in his affliction* Margin, “or afflicted.” This accords better with the usual meaning of the Hebrew word *yni*; ^{<h6041>} and with the connection. The inquiry was not particularly respecting the “poor,” but the “afflicted,” and the sentiment which Elihu is illustrating is, that when the afflicted call upon God he will deliver them. The object is to induce Job to make such an application to God that he might be rescued from his calamities, and be permitted yet to enjoy life and happiness.

And openeth their ears Causes them to understand the nature of his government, and the reasons why he visits them in this manner: compare ^{<h8316>} Job 33:16,23-27. The sentiment here is a mere repetition of what Elihu had more than once before advanced. It is his leading thought; the “principle” on which he undertakes to explain the reason why God afflicts people, and by which he proposes to remove the difference between Job and his friends.

In oppression This word expresses too much. It refers to God, and implies that there was something oppressive, harsh, or cruel in his dealings. This is

not the idea of Elihu in the language which he uses. The word which he uses here **xj bæ**^{<43006>} means “that which crushes”; then straits, distress. affliction. Jerome, “in tribulatione.” The word “affliction” would express the thought.

<43316> Job 36:16. *Even so would he have removed thee* That is, if you had been patient and resigned, and if you had gone to him with a broken heart. Having stated the “principles” in regard to affliction which he held to be indisputable, and having affirmed that God was ever ready to relieve the sufferer if he would apply to him with a proper spirit, it was natural to infer from this that the reason why Job “continued” to suffer was, that he did not manifest a proper spirit in his trials. Had he done this, Elihu says, the hand of God would have been long since withdrawn, and his afflictions would have been removed.

Out of the strait into a broad place From the narrow, pent up way, where it is impossible to move, into a wide and open path. Afflictions are compared with a narrow path, in which it is impossible to get. along; prosperity with a broad and open road in which there are no obstructions; compare **<49189>** Psalm 18:19; 31:8. “And that which should be set on thy table.” Margin, “the rest of thy table.” The Hebrew word **tj æ**^{<45183>} — from **j We**^{<45117>}, “to rest,” and in Hiph. to set down, to cause to rest) means properly a “letting,” or “settling down;” and then that which is set down — as e.g. food on a table. This is the idea here. that the food which would be set on his table would be rich and abundant; that is, he would be restored to prosperity, if he envinced a penitent spirit in his trials, and confessed his sins to God. The same image of piety occurs in **<49215>** Psalm 23:5, “Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.”

<43317> Job 36:17. *But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked* Rosenmuller explains this as meaning, “If under divine inflictions and chastisements you wish to imitate the obduracy of the wicked, then the cause and the punishment will mutually sustain them selves; that is, the one will be commensurate with the other.” But it is not necessary to regard this as a “supposition.” It has rather the aspect of; an affirmation, meaning to express the fact that Job “had,” as Elihu feared, envinced the same spirit in his trials which the wicked do. He had not seen in him evidence of penitence and of a desire to return to God, but had heard complaints and murmurings, such as the wicked indulge in. He had “filled up,” or

“fulfilled,” the judgment of the wicked; that is, he had in no way come short of the opinion which “they” expressed of the divine dealings. Still it is possible that the word “if” may be here understood, and that Elihu means merely to state that if Job should manifest the same spirit with the wicked, instead of a spirit of penitence, he would have reason to apprehend the same doom which they experience.

Judgment and justice take hold on thee Margin, “or, should uphold thee.” The Hebrew word here rendered “take” — **Ēmāē**^{<18551>}, is from **Ēmāē**^{<18551>} — “to take hold of, to obtain, to hold fast, to support.” Rosenmuller and Gesenius suppose that the word here has a “reciprocal” sense, and means they take hold of each other, or sustain each other. Prof. Lee renders it, “Both judgment and justice will uphold this;” that is, the sentiment which he had just advanced, that Job had filled up the judgment of the wicked. Urbrett renders it, “If thou art full of the opinion of the wicked, then the opinion and justice will rapidly follow each other.”

*Doch worm du yell bist yon des Frevlers Urtheil,
So werden Urthoil und Gericht schnell auf einander folgen.*

According to this the meaning is, that if Job held the opinions of wicked people, he must expect that these opinions would be rapidly followed by judgment, or that they would go together, and support each other. This seems to me to be in accordance with the connection, and to express the thought which Elihu meant to convey. It is a sentiment which is undoubtedly true — that if a man holds the sentiments, and manifests the spirit of the wicked, he must expect to be treated as they are.

<18318> Job 36:18. *Because there is wrath* That is, the wrath of God is to be dreaded. The meaning is, that if Job persevered in the spirit which he had manifested, he had every reason to expect that God would suddenly cut him off. He might now repent and find mercy, but he had shown the spirit of those who were rebellions in affliction, and if he persevered in that, he had nothing to expect but the wrath of God.

With his stroke With his smiting or chastisement; compare **<18318>** Job 34:26.

Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee Margin, “turn thee aside.” The meaning is, that a great ransom could not prevent him from being cut off. On the meaning of the word ransom, see the notes at **<18324>** Job 33:24. The idea here is, not that a great ransom could not deliver him “after” he was

cut off and consigned to hell — which would be true; but that when he had manifested a spirit of insubmission a little longer, nothing could save him from being cut off from the land of the living. God would not spare him on account; of wealth, or rank, or age, or wisdom. None of these things would be a “ransom” in virtue of which his forfeited life would be preserved.

Job 36:19. *Will he esteem thy riches?* That is God will not regard thy riches as a reason why he should not cut you off, or as a ransom for your forfeited life. The reference here must be to the fact that Job “had been” a rich man, and the meaning is, either that God would not spare him because he “had been” a rich man, or that if he had now all the wealth which he once possessed, it would not be sufficient to be a ransom for his life.

Nor all the forces of his strength Not all that gives power and influence to a man — wealth, age, wisdom, reputation, authority, and rank. The meaning is, that God would not regard any of these when a man was rebellious in affliction, and refused in a proper manner to acknowledge his Maker. Of the truth of what is here affirmed, there can be no doubt. Riches, rank, and honors cannot redeem the life of a man. They do not save him from the grave, and from all that is gloomy and revolting there. When God comes forth to deal with mankind, he does not regard their gold, their rank, their splendid robes or palaces, but he deals with them as “men” — and the “happy,” the beautiful, the rich, the noble, moulder back, under his hand, to their native dust in the same manner as the most humble peasant. How forcibly should this teach us not to set our hearts on wealth, and not to seek the honors and wealth of the world as our portion!

Job 36:20. *Desire not the night* That is, evidently, “the night of death.” The darkness of the night is an emblem of death, and it is not uncommon to speak of death in this manner; see **John 9:4**, “The night cometh, when no man can work.” Elihu seems to have supposed that Job might have looked forward to death as to a time of release; that so far from “dreading” what he had said would come, that God would cut him off at a stroke, it might be the very thing which he desired, and which he anticipated would be an end of his sufferings. Indeed Job had more than once expressed some such sentiment, and Elihu designs to meet that state of mind, and to charge him not to look forward to death as relief. If his present state of mind continued, he says, he would perish under the “wrath” of God; and death in such a manner, great as might be his sufferings here, could not be desirable.

When people are cut off in their place On this passage, Schultens enumerates no less than “fifteen” different interpretations which have been given, and at the end of this enumeration remarks that he “waits for clearer light to overcome the shades of this night.” Rosenmuller supposes it means, “Long not for the night, in which nations go under themselves;” that is, in which they go down to the inferior regions, or in which they perish. Noyes renders it, “To which nations are taken away to their place.” Urnbroil renders it, “Pant not for the night, to go down to the people who dwell under thee;” that is, to the Shades, or to those that dwell in Sheol. Prof. Lee translates it, “Pant not for the night, for the rising of the populace from their places.” Coverdale, “Prolong not thou the time, until there come a night for thee to set other people in thy stead.” The Septuagint, “Do not draw out the night, that the people may come instead of them;” that is, to their assistance. Dr. Good “Neither long thou for the night, for the vaults of the nations underneath them;” and supposes that the reference is to the “catacombs,” or mummy-pits that were employed for burial-places. These are but specimens of the interpretations which have been proposed for this passage, and it is easy to see that there is little prospect of being able to explain it in a satisfactory manner. The principal difficulty in the passage is in the word rendered “cut off,” **hl** ^{<15927>}, which means “to go up, to ascend,” and in the incongruity between that and the word rendered in their place **tj** ^{<18478>} **æe**, which literally means “under them.” A literal translation of the passage is, “Do not desire the night to ascend to the people under them;” but I confess I cannot understand the passage, after all the attempts made to explain it. The translation given by Umbreit, seems best to agree with the connection, but I am unable to see that the Hebrew would bear this. See, however, his Note on the passage. The word **hl** ^{<15927>} he understands here in the sense of “going away,” or “bearing away,” and the phrase the “people under them,” as denoting the “Shades” in the world beneath us. The whole expression then would be equivalent to a wish “to die” — with the expectation that there would be a change for the better, or a release from present sufferings. Elihu admonishes Job not to indulge such a wish, for it would be no gain for a man to die in the state of mind in which he then was.

^{<18921>} **Job 36:21.** *Take heed, regard not iniquity* That is, be cautious that in the view which you take of the divine government, and the sentiments which you express, you do not become the advocate of iniquity. Elihu apprehended this from the remarks in which he had indulged, and regarded

him as having become the advocate of the same sentiments which the wicked held, and as in fact manifesting the same spirit. It is well to put a man who is afflicted on his guard against this, when he attempts to reason about the divine administration.

For this hast thou chosen rather than affliction That is, you have chosen rather to give vent to the language of complaint, than to bear your trials with resignation. “You have chosen rather to accuse divine Providence than to submit patiently to his chastisements.” “Patrick.” There was too much truth in this remark about Job; and it is still not an uncommon thing in times of trial, and indeed in human life in general. People often prefer iniquity to affliction. They will commit crime rather than suffer the evils of poverty; they will be guilty of fraud and forgery to avoid apprehended want. They will be dishonest to their creditors rather than submit to the disgrace of bankruptcy. They will take advantage of the widow and the fatherless rather than suffer themselves. “Sin is often preferred to affliction;” and many are the people who, to avoid calamity, would not shrink from the commission of wrong. Especially in times of trial, when the hand of God is laid upon people, they “prefer” a spirit of complaining and murmuring to patient and calm resignation to the will of God. They seek relief even in complaining; and think it “some” alleviation of their sufferings that they can “find fault with God.” “They who choose iniquity rather than affliction, make a very foolish choice; they that ease their cares by sinful pleasures, escape their troubles by sinful projects, and evade sufferings for righteousness’ sake by sinful compliances against their consciences; these make a choice they will repent of, for there is more evil in the least sin than in the greatest affliction.” Henry.

Job 36:22. *Behold, God exalteth by his power* The object of Elihu is now to direct the attention of Job to God, and to show him that he has evinced such power and wisdom in his works, that we ought not to presume to arraign him, but should bow with submission to his will. He remarks, therefore, that God “exalts,” or rather that God is “exalted,” or “exalts himself” **bgæ**⁴¹⁷⁶⁸² by his power. In the exhibition of his power, he thus shows that he is great, and that people ought to be submissive to him. In support of this, he appeals, in the remainder of his discourse, to the “works” of God as furnishing extraordinary proofs of power, and full demonstration that God is exalted far above man.

Who teacheth like him? The Septuagint renders this, *δυναστης* ^{<1413>} — “Who is so powerful as he?” Rosenmuller and Umbreit render it Lord: “Who is Lord like him?” But the Hebrew word *hry*, ^{<h3384>} properly means “one who instructs,” and the idea is, that there is no one who is qualified to give so exalted conceptions of the government of God as he is himself. The object is to direct the mind to him as he is revealed in his works, in order to obtain elevated conceptions of his government.

~~<882>~~ **Job 36:23.** *Who hath enjoined him his way?* Who hath prescribed to him what he ought to do? Who is superior to him, and has marked out for him the plan which he ought to pursue? The idea is, that God is supreme and independent; no one has advised him, and no one has a right to counsel him. Perhaps, also, Elihu designs this as a reproof to Job for having complained so much of the government of God, and for being disposed, as he thought, to “prescribe” to God what he should do.

Who can say, Thou hast wrought iniquity? Thou hast done wrong. The object of Elihu is here to show that no one has a right to say this; no one could, in fact, say it. It was to be regarded as an indisputable point that God is always right, and that however dark his dealings with people may seem, the “reason” why they are mysterious “never is, that God is wrong.”

~~<882>~~ **Job 36:24.** *Remember that thou magnify his work* Make this a great and settled principle, to remember that God is “great” in all that he does. He is exalted far above us, and all his works are on a scale of vastness corresponding to his nature, and in all our attempts to judge of him and his doings, we should bear this in remembrance. He is not to be judged by the narrow views which we apply to the actions of people, but by the views which ought to be taken when we remember that he presides over the vast universe, and that as the universal Parent, he will consult the welfare of the whole. In judging of his doings, therefore, we are not to place ourselves in the center, or to regard ourselves as the “whole” or the creation, but we are to remember that there are other great interests to be regarded, and that his plans will be in accordance with the welfare of the whole. One of the best rules for taking a proper estimate of God is that proposed here by Elihu — to remember that HE IS GREAT.

Which men behold The Vulgate renders this, “de quo cecinerunt viri” — “concerning which men sing.” The Septuagint, *ὧν* ^{<3739>} *ἡρξαν* *ανδρες* ^{<435>} — “over which men rule.” Schultens accords with the

Vulgate. So Coverdale renders it, “Whom all men love and praise.” So Herder and Noyes understand it, “Which men celebrate with songs.” This difference of interpretation arises from the ambiguity of the Hebrew word *ryvæ*^{<47891>} some deriving it from *rṯv*^{<47791>}, “to go round about, and then to survey, look upon, examine”; and some from *ryvæ*^{<47891>}, “to sing, to celebrate.” The word will admit of either interpretation, and either will suit the connection. The sense of “seeing” those works, however, better agrees with what is said in the following verse, and perhaps better suits the connection. The object of Elihu is not to fix the attention on the fact that people “celebrate” the works of God, but to turn “the eyes to the visible creation,” as a proof of the greatness of the Almighty.

^{<48325>}**Job 36:25.** *Every man may see it* That is, every man may look on the visible creation, and see proofs there of the wisdom and greatness of God. All may look on the sun, the moon, the stars; all may behold the tempest and the storm; all may see the lightning and the rain, and may form some conception of the majesty of the Most High. The idea of Elihu here is, that every man might trace the evidences that God is great in his works.

Man may behold it afar off His works are so great and glorious that they make an impression even at a vast distance. Though we are separated from them by a space which surpasses the power of computation, yet they are so great that they fill the mind with vast conceptions of the majesty and glory of their Maker. This is true of the heavenly bodies; and the more we learn of their immense distances from us, the more is the mind impressed with the greatness and glory of the visible creation.

^{<48326>}**Job 36:26.** *Behold, God is great, and we know him not* That is, we cannot fully comprehend him; see the notes at ^{<48107>}Job 11:7-9.

Neither can the number of his years be searched out That is, he is eternal. The object of what is said here is to impress the mind with a sense of the greatness of God, and with the folly of attempting fully to comprehend the reason of what he does. Man is of a few days, and it is presumption in him to sit in judgment on the doings of one who is from eternity. We may here remark that the doctrine that there is an Eternal Being presiding over the universe, was a doctrine fully held by the speakers in this book — a doctrine far in advance of all that philosophy ever taught, and which was unknown for ages in the lands on which the light of revelation never shone.

Job 36:27. *For he maketh small the drops of water* Elihu now appeals, as he proposed to do, to the works of God, and begins with what appeared so remarkable and inexplicable, the wisdom of God in the rain and the dew, the tempest and the vapor. That which excited his wonder was, the fact in regard to the suspension of water in the clouds, and the distilling of it on the earth in the form of rain and dew. This very illustration had been used by Eliphaz for a similar purpose (Notes, **Job 5:9,10**), and whether we regard it as it “appears” to people without the light which science has thrown upon it, or look at the manner in which God suspends water in the clouds and sends it down in the form of rain and dew, with all the light which has been furnished by science, the fact is one that evinces in an eminent degree the wisdom of God. The word which is rendered “maketh small” [**rae**^{h1639}], means properly “to scrape off, to detract, to diminish, to take away from.” In Piel, the form used here, it means, according to Gesenius, “to take to one self, to attract;” and the sense here, according to this, is, that God attracts, or draws upward the drops of water. So it is rendered by Herder, Noyes, Umbreit, and Rosenmuller. The idea is, that he “draws up” the drops of the water to the clouds, and then pours them down in rain. If the meaning in our common version be retained, the idea would be, that it was proof of great wisdom in God that the water descended in “small drops,” instead of coming down in a deluge; compare the notes at **Job 26:8**.

They pour down rain That is, the clouds pour down the rain.

According to the vapour thereof — **dae**^{h108}. The idea seems to be, that the water thus drawn up is poured down again in the form of a “vapory rain,” and which does not descend in torrents. The subject of admiration in the mind of Elihu was, that water should evaporate and ascend to the clouds, and be held there, and then descend again in the form of a gentle rain or fine mist. The reason for admiration is not lessened by becoming more fully acquainted with the laws by which it is done than Elihu can be supposed to have been.

Job 36:28. *Upon man abundantly* That is, upon many people. The clouds having received the ascending vapor, retain it, and pour it down copiously for the use of man. The arrangement, to the eye even of one who did not understand the scientific principles by which it is done, is beautiful and wonderful; the beauty and wonder are increased when the laws by which it is accomplished are understood. Elihu does not attempt to explain

the mode by which this is done. The fact was probably all that was then understood, and that was sufficient for his purpose. The Septuagint has given a translation of this verse which cannot be well accounted for, and which is certainly very unlike the original. It is, “But when the clouds east a shade over the dumb creation, he impresseth a care on beasts, and they know the order for retiring to rest — *κοιτης* ^{<2845>} *ταξιυ* ^{<5010>}. At all these things is not their understanding confounded? And is not thy heart starting from thy body?”

^{<839>}**Job 36:29.** *Also, can any understand the spreadings of the clouds?*

The out spreading — the manner in which they expand themselves over us. The idea is, that the manner in which the clouds seem to “spread out,” or unfold themselves on the sky, could not be explained, and was a striking proof of the wisdom and power of God. In the early periods of the world, it could not be expected that the causes of these phenomena would be known. Now that the causes “are” better known, however, they do not less indicate the wisdom and power of God, nor are these facts less fitted to excite our wonder. The simple and beautiful laws by which the clouds are suspended; by which they roll in the sky; by which they spread themselves out — as in a rising tempest, and by which they seem to unfold themselves over the heavens, should increase, rather than diminish, our conceptions of the wisdom and power of the Most High.

Or, the noise of his tabernacle Referring, doubtless, to thunder. The clouds are represented as a tent or pavilion spread out for the dwelling of God (compare the notes at ^{<2402>}Isaiah 40:22), and the idea here is, that the noise made in a thunder-storm is in the unique dwelling of God. Herder well expresses it, “The fearful thunderings in his tent,” compare ^{<1981>}Psalms 18:11 —

He made darkness his secret place, His pavilion round about him
were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.

The sense here is, who can understand and explain the cause of thunder? The object of Elihu in this is, to show how great and incomprehensible is God, and nature furnishes few more impressive illustrations of this than the crash of thunder.

^{<839>}**Job 36:30.** *Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it* That is, upon his tabernacle or dwelling-place — the clouds. The allusion is to lightning, which flashes in a moment over the whole heavens. The image is

exceedingly beautiful and graphic. The idea of “spreading out” the light in an instant over the whole of the darkened heavens, is that which Elihu had in his mind, and which impressed him so forcibly. On the difficulty in regard to the translation of the Septuagint here, see Schleusner on the word ἦδω .

And covereth the bottom of the sea Margin, “roots.” The word roots is used to denote the bottom, as being the lowest part of a thing — as the roots of a tree. The meaning is that he covers the lowest part of the sea with floods of waters; and the object of Elihu is to give an exalted conception of the greatness of God, from the fact that his agency is seen in the highest and the lowest objects. He spreads out the clouds, thunders in his tabernacle, diffuses a brilliant light over the heavens, and at the same time is occupied in covering the bottom of the sea with the floods. He is Lord over all, and his agency is seen every where. The highest and the lowest objects are under his control, and his agency is seen above and below. On the one hand, he covers the thick and dense clouds with light; and on the other, he envelopes the depth of the ocean in impenetrable darkness.

Job 36:31. *For by them judgeth he the people* By means of the clouds, the rain, the dew, the tempest, and the thunderbolt. The idea seems to be, that he makes use of all these to execute his purposes on mankind. He can either make them the means of imparting blessings, or of inflicting the severest judgments. He can cause the tornado to sweep over the earth; he can arm the forked lightning against the works of art; he can withhold rain and dew, and spread over a land the miseries of famine.

He giveth meat in abundance That is, by the clouds, the dew, the rain. The idea is, that he can send timely showers if he chooses, and the earth will be clothed with plenty. All these things are under his control, and he can, as he pleases, make them the means of comfort to man, or of punishing him for his sins; compare ^{<4951>}Psalm 65:11-13.

Job 36:32. *With clouds he covereth the light* The Hebrew here is, ^{<45021>}י [ǣ] ^{<42709>}אֶכָּא — “upon his hands.” Jerome, “In manibus abscondit lucem,” “he hideth the light in his hands.” Septuagint, ^{<1909>}Επι χειρων ^{<5501>}εκαλυψε φως — “he covereth the light in his hands.” The allusion is, undoubtedly, to the lightning, and the image is, that God takes the lightning in his hands, and directs it as he pleases. There has been great

variety however, in the exposition of this verse and the following. Schultens enumerates no less than “twenty-eight” different interpretations, and almost every commentator has had his own view of the passage. It is quite evident that our translators did not understand it, and were not able to make out of it any tolerable sense. What idea they attached to the two verses (^{<18362>}Job 36:32,33), it would be very difficult to imagine, for what is the meaning (^{<18363>}Job 36:33) of the phrase, “the cattle also concerning the vapor?” The general sense of the Hebrew appears to be, that God controls the rapid lightnings which appear so vivid, so quick, and so awful; and that he executes his own purposes with them, and makes them, when he pleases, the instruments of inflicting punishment on his foes. The object of Elihu is to excite admiration of the greatness of God who is “able” thus to control the lightning’s flash, and to make it an obedient instrument in his hands. The particular expression before us, “By his hands he covereth the light,” seems to mean that he seizes or holds the lightning in his hands (Herder), or that he covers over his hands with the lightning (Umbreit), and has it under his control. Prof. Lee supposes that it means, that he holds the lightning in the palms of his hands, or between his two hands, as a man holds a furious wild animal which he is about to let loose for the purpose of destroying. With this he compares the expression of Shakespeare, “Cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of war. There can be no doubt, I think, that the phrase means that God has the lightning under his control that it is in his hands, and that he directs it as he pleases. According to Umbreit (Note) the allusion is to the “double use” which God makes of light, in one hand holding the lightning to destroy his foes, and in the other the light of the sun to bless his friends, as he makes use of the rain either for purposes of destruction or mercy. But this idea is not conveyed in the Hebrew.

And commandeth it not to shine The phrase “not to shine” is not in the Hebrew, and destroys the sense. The simple idea in the original is, “he commandeth it;” that is, he has it under his control, directs it as he pleases, makes use even of the forked lightning as an instrument to execute his pleasure.

By the cloud that cometh betwixt The words “the cloud” are also inserted by our translators, and destroy the sense. There is no allusion to a cloud, and the idea that the light is intercepted by any object is not in the original. The Hebrew word [gæ >^{<hr293>} means “in occurring, in meeting, in striking upon,” (from [gæ >^{<hr293>} — to strike upon, to impinge to fall upon, to light

upon), and the sense here would be well expressed' by the phrase "in striking." The idea is exactly that which we have when we apply the word "strike" or "struck" to lightning, and the meaning is, that he gives the lightning commandment "in striking," or when "it strikes." Nothing could better answer the purpose of an illustration for Elihu in exciting elevated views of God, for there is no exhibition of his power more wonderful than that by which he controls the lightning.

Job 36:33. *The noise thereof showeth concerning it* The word "noise" here has been inserted by our translators as a version of the Hebrew word [אֵלֶּיךָ], and if the translators attached any idea to the language which they have used, it seems to have been that the noise attending the lightning, that is, the thunder, furnished an illustration of the power and majesty of God. But it is not possible to educe this idea from the original, and perhaps it is not possible to determine the sense of the passage. Herder renders it, "He pointeth out to them the wicked." Prof. Lee, "By it he announceth his will." Umbreit, "He makes known to it his friend;" that is, he points out his friend to the light, so that it may serve for the happiness of that friend. Noyes, " He uttereth to him his voice; to the herds and the plants." Rosenmuller, " He announces what he has decreed against people, and the flocks which the earth has produced." Many other expositions have been proposed, and there is no reasonable ground of hope that an interpretation will be arrived at which will be free from all difficulty. The principal difficulty in this part of the verse arises from the word [אֵלֶּיךָ], rendered in our version, "The noise thereof." This may be from [אֵלֶּיךָ], and may mean a noise, or outcry, and so it is rendered here by Gesenius, "He makes known to him his thunder, i.e., to man, or to his enemies." Or the word may mean "his friend," as the word [אֵלֶּיךָ] is often used; $\text{Job 2:11; 19:21; Proverbs 27:17; Song of Solomon 5:16; Hosea 3:1}$. Or it may denote "will, thought, desire;" Psalm 139:2,17 . A choice must be made between these different meanings according to the view entertained of the scope of the passage. To me it seems that the word "friend" will better suit the connection than anyone of the other interpretations proposed. According to this, the idea is, that God points out "his friends" to the lightning which he holds in his hand, and bids it spare them. He has entire control of it, and can direct it where he pleases, and instead of sending it forth to work indiscriminate

destruction, he carefully designates those on whom he wishes it to strike, but bids it spare his friends.

The cattle also concerning the vapour Margin, “that which goeth up.” What idea the translators attached to this phrase it is impossible now to know, and the probability is, that being conscious of utter inability to give any meaning to the passage, they endeavored to translate the “words” of the original as literally as possible. Coverdale evidently felt the same perplexity, for he renders it, “The rising up thereof showeth he to his friends and to the cattle.” Indeed almost every translator and expositor has had the same difficulty, and each one has proposed a version of his own. Aa examination of the “words” employed is the only hope of arriving at any satisfactory view of the passage. The word rendered “cattle”

חנאֲחִי ^{<h4735>}, means properly:

(1) expectation, hope, confidence; ^{<3236>}Ezekiel 28:26; ^{<5002>}Ezra 10:2;

(2) a gathering together, a collection, as

(a) of waters, ^{<0010>}Genesis 1:10; ^{<0079>}Exodus 7:19,

(b) a gathering together, a collection, or company of people, horses, etc. — a caravan. So it may possibly mean in ^{<1008>}1 Kings 10:28, where interpreters have greatly differed.

The word “cattle,” therefore, by no means expresses its usual signification. That would be better expressed by “gathering, collecting,” or “assembling.” The word rendered also אָאֵ ^{<h637>}, denotes:

(1) also, even, more, besides, etc., and

(2) “the nose,” and then “anger” — from the effect of anger in producing hard breathing, ^{<0224>}Proverbs 22:24; ^{<1522>}Deuteronomy 32:22; 29:20.

Here it may be rendered, without impropriety, “anger,” and then the phrase will mean, “the collecting, or gathering together of anger.” The word rendered “vapour” חל ^{<h5927>} — if from חל ^{<h5927>}, means that which “ascends,” and would then mean anything that ascends — as smoke, vapor; or as Rosenmuller supposes, what “ascends” or “grows” from the ground — that is, plants and vegetables, And so Umbreit, “das Gewachs” — “plants of any kind.” “Note.” But with a slight variation in the pointing חל ^{<h5766>} — instead of חל ^{<h5927>}, the word means “evil, wickedness,

iniquity” — from our word “evil;” ~~1820~~ Job 24:20; 6:29; 11:14; 13:7; and it may, without impropriety, be regarded as having this signification here, as the points have no authority. The meaning of the whole phrase then will be, “the gathering, or collecting of his wrath is upon evil, i.e., upon the wicked;” and the sense is, that while, on the one hand, God, who holds the lightning in his hands, points out to it his friends, so that they are spared; on the other hand the gathering together, or the condensation, of his wrath is upon the evil. That is, the lightnings — so vivid, so mighty, and apparently so wholly beyond law or control, are under his direction, and he makes them the means of executing his pleasure. His friends are spared; and the condensation of his wrath is on his foes. This exposition of the passage accords with the general scope of the remarks of Elihu, and this view of the manner in which God controls even the lightning, was one that was adapted to fill the mind with exalted conceptions of the majesty and power of the Most High.

NOTES ON JOB 37

Job 37:1. *At this also* That is, in view of the thunderstorm, for it is that which Elihu is describing. This description was commenced in ^{<837D>}Job 36:29, and is continued to ^{<837E>}Job 37:5, and should not have been separated by the division into chapters. Elihu sees a tempest rising. The clouds gather, the lightnings flash, the thunder rolls, and he is awed as with the conscious presence of God. There is nowhere to be found a more graphic and impressive description of a thunder-storm than this; compare Herder on Hebrew Poetry, vol. i., 85ff, by Marsh, Burlington, 1833.

My heart trembleth With fear. He refers to the palpitation or increased action of the heart produced by alarm.

And is moved out of his place That is, by violent palpitation. The heart seems to leave its calm resting place, and to burst away because of fright. The increased action of the heart under the effects of fear, as described here by Elihu, has been experienced by all. The “cause” of this increased action is supposed to be this. The immediate effect of fear is on the extremities of the nerves of the system, which are diffused ever the whole body. The first effect is to prevent the circulation of the blood to the extremities, and to drive it back to the heart, and thus to produce paleness. The blood thus driven back on the heart produces an increased action there to propel it through the lungs and the arteries, thus causing at the same time the increased effort of the heart, and the rapid action of the lungs, and of course the quick breathing and the palpitation observed in fear. See Scheutzer, *Physica. Sacra*, “in loc.” An expression similar to that which occurs here, is used by Shakespeare, in *Macbeth*:

*“Why do I yield to that suggestion,
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,
And make ray seated heart knock at my ribs
Against the use of nature.”*

Job 37:2. *Hear attentively* Margin, as in Hebrew “hear in hearing;” that is, bear with attention. It has been supposed by many, and not without probability, that the tempest was already seen rising, out of which God was to address Job (Job 38), and that Elihu here calls the special attention of his

hearers to the gathering storm, and to the low muttering thunder in the distance.

The noise of his voice Thunder is often represented as the voice of God, and this was one of the most natural of all suppositions when its nature was little understood, and is at all times a beautiful poetic conception; see the whole of Psalm 29. The word rendered “noise” *zgrō*^{<47267>}, means properly “commotion,” that which is fitted to produce perturbation, or disquiet (see <48817>Job 3:17,26; <23418>Isaiah 14:3), and is used here to denote the commotion, or “raging” of thunder.

And the sound The word used here *hgh*,^{<41899>} means properly a “muttering growling” — as of thunder. It is often used to denote sighing, moaning, and meditation, in contradistinction from clear enunciation. Here it refers to the thunder which seems to mutter or growl in the sky.

<48374>**Job 37:3.** *He directeth it under the whole heaven* It is under the control of God, and he directs it where he pleases. It is not confined to one spot, but seems to be complaining from every part of the heavens.

And his lightning Margin, as in Hebrew “light.” There can be no doubt that the lightning is intended.

Unto the ends of the earth Margin, as in Hebrew “wings.” The word wings is given to the earth from the idea of its being spread out or expanded like the wings of a bird; compare <48813>Job 38:13; <24012>Ezekiel 7:2. The earth was spoken of as an expanse or plain that had corners or boundaries (see the notes at <23112>Isaiah 11:12; 24:16; 42:5), and the meaning here is, that God spread the lightning at pleasure over the whole of that vast expanse.

<48374>**Job 37:4.** *After it a voice roareth* After the lightning; that is, the flash is seen before the thunder is heard. This is apparent to all, the interval between the lightning and the hearing of the thunder depending on the distance. Lucretius, who has referred to the same fact, compares this with what occurs when a woodman is seen at a distance to wield an axe. The glance of the axe is seen long before the sound of the blow is heard:

Sed tonitrum fit uti post antibus accipiamus, Fulgere quam cernunt oculi, quia semper ad aures Tardius adveniunt, quam visum, quam moveant res. Nunc etiam licet id cognoscere, caedere si quem Ancipiti videas ferro procul arboris actum. Ante fit, ut cernas ictum,

quam plaga per aures Det sonitum: Sic fulgorem quoque cernimus ante. — Lib. vi.

He thundereth with the voice of his excellency That is, with a voice of majesty and grandeur.

And he will not stay them That is, he will not hold back the rain, hail, and other things which accompany the storm, when he begins to thunder. “Rosenmuller.” Or, according to others, he will not hold back and restrain the lightnings when the thunder commences. But the connection seems rather to demand that we should understand it of the usual accompaniments of a storm — the wind, hail, rain, etc. Herder renders it, “We cannot explore his thunderings.” Prof. Lee, “And none can trace them, though their voice be heard.” According to him, the meaning is, that “great and terrific as this exhibition of God’s power is, still the progress of these, his ministers, cannot be followed by the mortal eye.” But the usual interpretation given to the Hebrew word is that of “holding back,” or “retarding,” and this idea accords well with the connection.

~~1837b~~ **Job 37:5.** *God thundereth marvelously* He thunders in a wonderful manner. The idea is, that the voice of his thunder is an amazing exhibition of his majesty and power.

Great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend That is, not only in regard to the thunder and the tempest, but in other things. The description of the storm properly ends here, and in the subsequent verses Elihu proceeds to specify various other phenomena, which were wholly incomprehensible by man. The reference here to the storm, and to the other grand and incomprehensible phenomena of nature, is a most appropriate introduction to the manifestation of God himself as described in the next chapter, and could not but have done much to prepare Job and his friends for that sublime close of the controversy.

The passage before us (~~1837c~~ Job 36:29-33; 37:1-5), is probably the earliest description of a thunderstorm on record. A tempest is a phenomenon which must early have attracted attention, and which we may expect to find described or alluded to in all early poetry. It may be interesting, therefore, to compare this description of a storm, in probably the oldest poem in the world, with what has been furnished by the masters of song in ancient and modern times, and we shall find that in sublimity and beauty the Hebrew poet will suffer nothing in comparison. In one respect, which constitutes

the chief sublimity of the description. he surpasses them all: I mean in the recognition of God. In the Hebrew description. God is every where in the storm He excites it; he holds the lightnings in both hands; he directs it where he pleases; he makes it the instrument of his pleasure and of executing his purposes. Sublime, therefore, as is the description of the storm itself, furious as is the tempest; bright as is the lightning: and heavy and awful as is the roar of the thunder, yet the description derives its chief sublimity from the fact that “God” presides over all, riding on the tempest and directing the storm as he pleases. Other poets have rarely attempted to give this direction to the thoughts in their description of a tempest, if we may except Klopstock, and they fall, therefore, far below the sacred poet. The following is the description of a storm by Elihu, according to the exposition which I have given:

Who can understand the outspreading of the clouds, And the fearful thunderings in his pavilion? Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it; He also covereth the depths of the sea. By these he executeth judgment upon the people, By these he giveth food in abundance. With his hands he covereth the lightning, And commandeth it where to strike. He pointeth out to his friends — The collecting of his wrath is upon the wicked. At this also my heart palpitates, And is moved out of its place. Hear, O hear, the thunder of his voice! The muttering thunder that goes from his mouth! He directeth it under the whole heaven. And his lightning to the end of the earth. After it, the thunder roareth; He thundereth with the voice of his majesty, And he will not restrain the tempest when his voice is heard. God thundereth marvelously with his voice; He doeth wonders, which we cannot comprehend.

The following is the description of a Tempest by Aeschylus, in the Prometh. Desm., beginning,

— Χθων σεσαλευται; Βρυχια δ’
ηχω παραμυκαται Βροντης , etc.

— “I feel in very deed The firm earth rock: the thunder’s deepening roar Rolls with redoubled rage; the bickering flames Flash thick; the eddying sands are whirled on high; In dreadful opposition, the wild winds Rend the vex’d air; the boisterous billows rise Confounding earth and sky: the impetuous storm Rolls all its terrible fury.”
“Potter.”

Ovid's description is the following:

Aethera conscendit, vultumque sequentia traxit Nubila; queis
nimbos, immistaque fulgura ventis Addidit, et tonitrus, et inevitabile
fulmen. — Meta. ii.

The description of a storm by Lucretius, is the following:

Praeterea persaepe niger quoque per mare nimbus Ut picis e coelo
demissum flumen, in undas Sic cadit, et fertur tenebris, procul et
trahit atram Fulminibus gravidam tempestatem, atque procellis.
Ignibus ac ventis cum primus ipse repletus: In terris quoque ut
horrescant ae tecta requirant. Sic igitur sutpranostrum caput esso
putandum est Tempestatem altam. Neque enim caligine tanta
Obruerat terras, nisi inaedificata superne Multa forent multis
exempto nubila sole. — Lib. vi.

The well-known description of the storm by Virgil is as follows:

Nimborum in patriam, loca foeta furentibus austris, Aeoliam venit.
Hic vasto Rex Aeolus antro Luctantis ventos tempestatesque
sonoras Imperio premit, ac vinelis et carcere frenat. Illi indignantes,
magno cum murmure, montis Circum claustra fremunt. Celsa sedet
Aeolus arce, Sceptra tenens: molliitque animos, et temperat iras. —
Venti, velut agmine facto. Qua data petra, ruunt, et terras turbine
perflant. Incubuere mari, totumque a sedibus imis, Una Eurusque
Notusque ruunt, creberque procelis Africus, et vastos volvunt ad
litora fluctus. — Aeneid i. 51-57, 82-86.

One of the most sublime descriptions of a storm to be found any where, is furnished by Klopstock. It contains a beautiful recognition of the presence and majesty of God, and a most tender and affecting description of the protection which his friends experience when the storm rushes by. It is in the *Fruhlingsfeier* — a poem which is regarded by many as his masterpiece. A small portion of it I will transcribe:

Wolken stromen herauf!
Sichtbar ist; der komant, der Ewige!
Nun schweben sie, rauschen sie, wirbeln die Winde!
Wie beugt sich der Wald! Wie hebet sich det Strom!
Sichtbar, wie du es Sterblichen seyn kannst,
Ja, das bist du, sichtbar, Unendlicher!

*Zurnest du, Herr,
Weil Nacht dein Gewand ist?
Diese Nacht ist Segen der Erde.
Vater, du Zurnest nicht!*

*Seht ihr den Zeugendes Nahen, den zucken den Strahi?
Hort ihr Jehovah's Donner?
Hort ihr ihn? hort ihr ihn.
Der erschütternden Donner des Herrn?*

*Herr! Herr! Gott!
Barmhertzig, und gnadig!
Angebetet, gepriesen,
Sey dein herrlicher Name!*

*Und die Gowitterwinde! Sie tragen den Donner!
Wie sie rauschen! Wie sie mit lawter
Woge den Wald du: chstromen!
Und nun schwiegen sie. Langsam wandelt
Die schwartze Wolke.*

*Seht ihr den neurn Zeugen des Nahen, den fliegenden Strahl!
Horet ihr hoch in Wolke den Donner dex Herrn?
Er ruft: Jehova! Jehova!
Und der geschmetterte Wald dampft!*

*Abet nicht unsre Hutte
Unser Vater gebot
Seinem Verderber,
Vor unsrer Hutte voruberzugehn!*

Job 37:6. *For he saith to the snow* That is, the snow is produced by the command of God, and is a proof of his wisdom and greatness. The idea is, that; the formation of snow was an illustration of the wisdom of God, and should teach people to regard him with reverence. It is not to be supposed that the laws by which snow is formed in the atmosphere were understood in the time of Elihu. The fact that it seemed to be the effect of the immediate creation of God, was the principal idea in the mind of Elihu in illustrating his wisdom. But it is not less fitted to excite our admiration of his wisdom now that the laws by which it is produced are better understood; and in fact the knowledge of those laws is adapted to elevate our conceptions of the wisdom and majesty of Him who formed them. The investigations and discoveries of science do not diminish the proofs of the Creator's wisdom and greatness. but every new discovery tends to change

blind admiration to intelligent devotion; to transform wonder to praise. On the formation of snow, see the notes at ^{<8882>}Job 38:22.

Be thou on the earth There is a strong resemblance between this passage and the sublime command in ^{<8008>}Genesis 1:3, “And God said, Let there be light, and there was light.” Each of them is expressive of the creative power of God, and of the ease with which he accomplishes his purposes.

Likewise to the small rain Margin, “and to the shower of rain, and to the showers of rain of his strength.” The word which is used here in the Hebrew $\mu\nu\beta$,^{<h1653>}, means “rain” in general, and the phrase “small rain” $\mu\nu\beta$,^{<h1653>} $r f\alpha\epsilon$,^{<h4306>}, seems to be used to denote the “rain” simply, without reference to its violence, or to its being copious. The following phrase, “the great rain of his strength” $\mu\nu\beta$,^{<h1653>} $r f\alpha\epsilon$,^{<h4306>} $\zeta[\sigma]$ ^{<h5797>} refers to the rain when it has increased to a copious shower. The idea before the mind of Elihu seems to have been that of a shower, as it commences and increases until it pours down torrents, and the meaning is, that alike in the one case and the other, the rain was under the command of God, and obeyed his will. The whole description here is that which pertains to winter, and Elihu refers doubtless to the copious rains which fell at that season of the year.

^{<8307>}**Job 37:7.** *He sealeth up the hand of every man* That is, in the winter, when the snow is on the ground, when the streams are frozen, and when the labors of the husbandman cease. The idea of “sealing up the hand” is derived from the common purpose of a seal, to make fast, to close up, to secure (compare the notes at ^{<8807>}Job 9:7; 33:16), and the sense is, that the hands can no more be used in ordinary toil. Every man in the snow and rain of winter is prevented from going abroad to his accustomed toil, and is, as it were, sealed up in his dwelling. The idea is exquisitely beautiful. God confines human beings and beasts in their houses or caves, until the winter has passed by.

That all men may know his work The Septuagint renders this, “That every man may know his own weakness” — $\alpha\theta\epsilon\nu\epsilon\iota\alpha\nu$ ^{<769>}. Various interpretations have been given of the passage, but our common version has probably expressed in the main the true sense, that God thus interrupts the labors of man, and confines him in his home, that he may feel his dependence on God, and may recognize the constant agency of his Creator. The Hebrew literally is “For the knowledge of all the men of his making;” that is, that all the people whom he has created may have

knowledge. The changing seasons thus keep before us the constant evidence of the unceasing agency of God in his works, and prevent the feeling which we might have, if everything was uniform that the universe was under the control of “fate.” As it is, the succession of the seasons, the snow, the rain, the dew, and the sunshine, all bear marks of being under the control of an intelligent Being, and are so regulated that we need not forget that his unceasing agency is constantly round about us. It may be added, that when the farmer in the winter is laid aside from his usual toil, and confined to his dwelling, it is a favorable time for him to meditate on the works of God, and to acquaint himself with his Creator. The labors of man are thus interrupted; the busy affairs of life come to a pause, and while nature is silent around us, and the earth wrapped in her fleecy mantle forbids the labor of the husbandman, everything invites to the contemplation of the Creator, and of the works of his hands. The winter, therefore, might be improved by every farmer to enlarge his knowledge of God, and should be regarded as a season wisely appointed for him to cultivate his understanding and improve his heart.

^{<830>}**Job 37:8.** *Then the beasts go into dens* In the winter. This fact appears to have been early observed, that in the season of cold the wild animals withdrew into caves, and that many of them became torpid. This fact Elihu adverts to as an illustration of the wisdom and greatness of God. The proof of his superintending care was seen in the fact that they withdrew from the cold in which they would perish, and that provision is made for their continuance in life at a time when they cannot obtain the food by which they ordinarily subsist. In that torpid and inactive state, they need little food, and remain often for months with almost no nourishment.

^{<830>}**Job 37:9.** *Out of the south* Margin, “chamber.” Jerome, “ab interioribus — from the interior,” or “inner places.” Septuagint, **εκ** ^{<1537>} **τρυφειων** — “from their chambers issue sorrows” — **οθυνας**. The Hebrew word used here **rdj**, ^{<2315>} denotes properly “an apartment,” or “chamber,” especially an inner apartment, or a chamber in the interior of a house or tent: ^{<0433>}Genesis 43:30; ^{<0749>}Judges 16:9,12. Hence, it means a bed-chamber, ^{<0047>}2 Samuel 4:7, or a female apartment or harem, ^{<2104>}Song of Solomon 1:4; 3:4. In ^{<809>}Job 9:9, it is connected with the “south” — “the chambers of the south” (see the notes at that place), and means some remote, hidden regions in that quarter. There can be little doubt that the word “south “ is here also to be understood, as it stands in contrast with a

word which properly denotes the north. Still there may have been reference to a supposed opinion that whirlwinds had their origin in deep, hollow caves, and that they were owing to the winds which were supposed to be pent up there, and which raged tumultuously until they broke open the doors of their prison, and then poured forth with violence over the earth; compare the description of the storm in Virgil, as quoted above in ^{<3570>} Job 37:5. There are frequent allusions in the Scriptures to the fact that whirlwinds come from the South; see the notes at ^{<2900>} Isaiah 21:1; compare ^{<3014>} Zechariah 9:14. Savary says of the south wind, which blows in Egypt from February to May, that it fills the atmosphere with a fine dust, rendering breathing difficult, and that it is filled with an injurious vapor. Sometimes it appears in the form of a furious whirlwind, which advances with great rapidity, and which is highly dangerous to those who traverse the desert. It drives before it clouds of burning sand; the horizon appears covered with a thick veil, and the sun appears red as blood. Occasionally whole caravans are buried by it in the sand. It is possible that there may be reference to such a whirlwind in the passage before us; compare Burder, in Rosenmuller's *Alte u. neue Morgenland*. No. 765.

The whirlwind See the notes at ^{<3019>} Job 1:19; 30:22.

And cold out of the north Margin, "scattering" winds. The Hebrew word used here **hrzm**^{<34215>} means literally, "the scattering," and is hence used for the north winds, says Gesenius which scatter the clouds, and bring severe cold. Umbreit thinks the word is used to denote the north, because we seem to see the north winds strewed on the clouds. Probably the reference is to the north wind as scattering the snow or hail on the ground. Heated winds come from the south; but those which scatter the snow, and are the source of cold, come from the north. In all places north of the equator it is true that the winds from the northern quarter are the source of cold. The idea of Elihu is, that all these things are under the control of God, and that these various arrangements for heat and cold are striking proofs of his greatness.

^{<3570>} **Job 37:10.** *By the breath of God frost is given* Not by the violent north wind, or by the whirlwind of the south, but God seems to "breathe" in a gentle manner, and the earth is covered with hoary frost. It appears in a still night, when there is no storm or tempest, and descends upon the earth as silently as if it were produced by mere breathing. Frost is congealed or frozen dew. On the formation and cause of dew, see the notes

at ~~4838~~ Job 38:28. The figure is poetical and beautiful. The slight motion of the air, even when the frost appears, seems to be caused by the breathing of God.

And the breadth of the waters is straitened That is, is contracted by the cold; or is frozen over. The waters are “compressed” into a solid mass ~~qx~~~~164~~, or are in a state of “pressure” or “compression” — or so the word used here means. What were before expanded rivers or arms of the sea, are now compressed into solid masses of ice. This, also, is proof of the greatness and power of God, for though the cause was not understood by Elihu, yet there was no doubt that it was produced by his agency. Though the laws by which this occurs are now better understood than they were then, it is no less clearly seen that it is by his agency; and all the light which we obtain in regard to the laws by which these things occur, only serve to exalt our conceptions of the wisdom and greatness of God.

~~4871~~ **Job 37:11.** *Also by watering* Very various interpretations have been given of this phrase. Herder renders it, “His brightness rendeth the clouds.” Umbreit, Und Heiterkeit vertreibt die Wolke — “and serenity or clearness drives away the clouds.” Prof. Lee, “For irrigation is the thick cloud stretched out.” Rosenmuller, “Splendor dispels the clouds.” Luther, “The thick clouds divide themselves that it may be clear.” Coverdale, “The clouds do their labor in giving moistness.” The Vulgate, “The grain desires the clouds,” and the Septuagint, “The cloud forms the chosen” — ~~εκλεκτον~~ ^{<1588>}. This variety of interpretation arises from the uncertainty of the meaning of the original word — ~~yri~~ ^{†4737}. According to the Chaldee and the rabbis, this word means “clearness, serenity” of the heavens, and then the whole clause is to be rendered, “serenity dispelleth the cloud.” Or the word may be formed of the preposition **B**, and ~~yri~~ ^{†4737}, meaning “watering” or “rain,” the same as **j r f**. The word does not occur elsewhere in Hebrew, and hence, it is not easy to determine its meaning. The weight of authority is in favor of serenity, or clearness — meaning that the thick, dark cloud is driven away by the serenity or clearness of the atmosphere — as where the clear sky seems to light up the heavens and to drive away the clouds. This idea seems, also, to be demanded by the parallelism, and is also more poetical than that in the common version.

Wearieth Or removes, or scatters. The verb used here **j r æ** ^{†2959} occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures, though nouns derived from the verb are

found in ^{<1014>}Isaiah 1:14, rendered “trouble,” and ^{<1012>}Deuteronomy 1:12, rendered “cumbrance.” In Arabic it means “to cast down, to project,” and hence, to lay upon as a burden. But the word may mean to impel, drive forward, and hence, the idea that the dark thick cloud is propelled or driven forward by the serenity of the sky. This “appears” to be so, and hence, the poetic idea as it occurred to Elihu.

He scattereth his bright cloud Margin, “the cloud of his light.” The idea seems to be, that “his light,” that is, the light which God causes to shine as the tempest passes off, seems to scatter or disperse the cloud. The image before the mind of Elihu probably was, that of a departing shower, when the light seems to rise behind it, and as it were to expel the cloud or to drive it away. We are not to suppose that this is philosophically correct, but Elihu represents it as it appeared, and the image is wholly poetical.

^{<8572>}**Job 37:12.** *And it is turned round about* The word here rendered “it” ^{<1931>}אֵלֶּה may refer either to the “cloud,” and then it will mean that it is driven about at the pleasure of God; or it may refer to God, and then it will mean that “he” drives it about at pleasure. The sense is not materially varied. The use of the Hebrew participle rendered “turned about” (in Hithpael), would rather imply that it refers to the cloud. The sense then is, that it turns itself round about — referring to the appearance of a cloud in the sky that rolls itself about from one place to another.

By his counsels By the counsels or purposes of God. It is not by any agency or power of its own, but it is by laws such as he has appointed, and so as to accomplish his will. The object is to keep up the idea that God presides over, and directs all these things. The word which is rendered “counsels” ^{<458>}הַלְבִּיטָא means properly a “steering, guidance, management,” ^{<1114>}Proverbs 11:14. It is usually applied to the act of steering, as a vessel, and then to prudent management, wise counsel, skillful measures. It is rendered “wise counsels,” and “counsels,” ^{<1005>}Proverbs 1:5; 11:14; 12:5; 24:6, and “good advice,” ^{<1108>}Proverbs 20:18. It does not elsewhere occur in the Scriptures. The word is derived from ^{<1256>}לְבִי, “a rope,” or ^{<1256>}לְבִי, “a sailor, pilot,” and hence, the idea of “steering,” or “directing.” The meaning is, that the movements of the clouds are entirely under the “direction” of God, as the vessel is of the pilot or helmsman. The Septuagint appears not to have understood the meaning of the word, and have not attempted to translate it. They retain it in their

version, writing it, **θηβουλαθωθ** , showing, among other instances, how the Hebrew was “pronounced” by them.

That they may do whatsoever he commandeth them; see ^{<1971>}Psalm 147:17,18. The idea is, that even the clouds, which appear so capricious in their movements, are really under the direction of God, and are accomplishing his purposes. They do not move at haphazard, but they are under the control of one who intends to accomplish important purposes by them. Elihu had made this observation respecting the lightning (^{<1971>}Job 36:30-33), and he now says that the same thing was true of the clouds. The investigations of science have only served to confirm this, and to show that even the movements of the clouds are regulated by laws which have been ordained by a Being of infinite intelligence.

^{<1971>}**Job 37:13.** *He causeth it to come* That is, the rain, or the storm. It is entirely under the hand of God, like the lightning (^{<1971>}Job 36:30), and designed to accomplish his purposes of mercy and of justice.

Whether for correction Margin, as in Hebrew “a rod.” The rod is often used as an emblem of punishment. The idea is, that God, when he pleases, can send the rain upon the earth for the purpose of executing punishment. So he did on the old world (^{<1971>}Genesis 7:11,12), and so the overflowing flood is often now sent to sweep away the works of man, to lay waste his fields, and to cut off the wicked.

Or for his land When necessary to render the land productive. He waters it by timely rains. It is called “his land,” meaning that the earth belongs to the Lord, and that he cultivates it as his own; ^{<1971>}Psalm 24:1.

Or for mercy In kindness and benignity to the world. But for this, the earth would become baked and parched, and all vegetation would expire. The idea is, that the rains are entirely under the control of God, and that he can make use of them to accomplish his various purposes — to execute his judgments, or to express his benignity and love. These various uses to which the lightning, the storm, and the rain could be made subservient under the divine direction. seem to have been one of the main ideas in the mind of Elihu, showing the supremacy and the majesty of God.

^{<1971>}**Job 37:14.** *Hearken unto this, O Job* That is, to the lesson which such events are fitted to convey respecting God.

Stand still In a posture of reverence and attention. The object is to secure a calm contemplation of the works of God, so that the mind might be filled with suitable reverence for him.

^{<88715>}**Job 37:15.** *Dost thou know when God disposed them?* That is, the winds, the clouds, the cold, the snow, the sky, etc. The question refers to the manner in which God arranges and governs them, rather than to the time when it was done. So the Hebrew implies, and so the connection demands. The question was not whether Job knew “when” all this was done, but whether he could explain “how” it was that God thus arranged and ordered the things referred to. Elihu asks him whether he could explain the manner in which the balancings of the clouds were preserved; in which the lightnings were directed; in which his garments were warm, and in which God had made and sustained the sky? The Septuagint renders this, “We know that God hath disposed his works that he hath made light out of darkness.”

And caused the light of his cloud to shine That is, Canst thou explain the cause of lightning? Canst thou tell how it is that it seems to break out of a dark cloud? Where has it been concealed? And by what laws is it now brought forth? Elihu assumes that all this was done by the agency of God, and since, as he assumes to be true, it was impossible for people to explain the manner in which it was done, his object is to show that profound veneration should be shown for a God who works in this manner. Somewhat more is known now of the laws by which lightning is produced than there was in the time of Job; but the question may still be asked of man, and is as much fitted to produce awe and veneration as it was then, whether he understands the way in which God produces the bright lightning from the dark bosom of a cloud. Can he tell what is the exact agency of the Most High in it? Can he explain all the laws by which it is done?

^{<88716>}**Job 37:16.** *Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds?* That is, Dost thou know how the clouds are poised and suspended in the air? The difficulty to be explained was, that the clouds, so full of water, did not fall to the earth, but remained suspended in the atmosphere. They were poised and moved about by some unseen hand. Elihu asks what kept them there; what prevented their falling to the earth; what preserved the equilibrium so that they did not all roll together. The phenomena of the clouds would be among the first that would attract the attention of man, and in the early

times of Job it is not to be supposed that the subject could be explained. Elihu assumes that they were held in the sky by the power of God, but what was the nature of his agency, he says, man could not understand, and hence, he infers that God should be regarded with profound veneration. We know more of the facts and laws respecting the clouds than was understood then, but our knowledge in this, as in all other things, is fitted only to exalt our conceptions of the Deity, and to change blind wonder into intelligent adoration. The causes of the suspension of the clouds are thus stated in the Edinburgh Encyclopedia, Art. Meteorology: “When different portions of the atmosphere are intermixed so as to produce a deposition of moisture;” (compare the notes at ~~4833~~ Job 38:28), “the consequence will be the formation of a cloud. This cloud, from its increased specific gravity, will have a tendency to sink downward; and were the lower strata of the air of the same temperature with the cloud, and saturated with moisture, it would continue to descend until it reached the surface of the earth — in the form of rain, or what is commonly called mist. In general, however, the cloud in its descent passes through a warmer region, when the condensed moisture again passes into a vapor, and consequently ascends until it reaches a temperature sufficiently low to recondense it, when it will begin again to sink. This oscillation will continue until the cloud settles at the point where the temperature and humidity are such as that the condensed moisture begins to be dissipated, and which is found on an average to be between two and three miles above the surface of the earth.” By such laws the “balancing” of the clouds is secured, and thus is shown the wisdom of Him that is “perfect in knowledge.”

The wondrous works of him that is perfect in knowledge Particularly in the matter under consideration. He who can command the lightning, and hold the clouds suspended in the air, Elihu infers must be perfect in knowledge. To a Being who can do this, everything must be known. The reasoning of Elihu here is well-founded, and is not less forcible now than it was in the time of Job.

~~4837~~ **Job 37:17.** *How thy garments are warm* What is the reason that the garments which we wear produce warmth? This, it would seem, was one of the philosophical questions which were asked at that time, and which it was difficult to explain. Perhaps it has never occurred to most persons to ask this apparently simple question, and if the inquiry were proposed to them, plain as it seems to be, they would find it as difficult to give an answer as Elihu supposed it would be for Job. Of the fact here referred to

that the garments became oppressive when a sultry wind came from the south, there could be no dispute. But what was the precise difficulty in explaining the fact, is not so clear. Some suppose that Elihu asks this question sarcastically, as meaning that Job could not explain the simplest matters and the plainest facts; but there is every reason to think that the question was proposed with entire seriousness, and that it was supposed to involve real difficulty. It seems probable that the difficulty was not so much to explain why the garments should become oppressive in a burning or sultry atmosphere, as to show how the heated air itself was produced. It was difficult to explain why cold came out of the north (^{<1870>}Job 37:9); how the clouds were suspended, and the lightnings caused (^{<1871>}Job 37:11,15,16); and it was not less difficult to show what produced uncomfortable heat when the storms from the north were allayed; when the earth became quiet, and when the breezes blowed from the south. This would be a fair question for investigation, and we may readily suppose that the causes then were not fully known.

When he quieteth the earth When the piercing blast from the north dies away, and the wind comes round to the south, producing a more gentle, but a sultry air. It was true not only that the whirlwind came from the south (^{<1870>}Job 37:9,) but also that the heated burning air came also from that quarter, (^{<125>}Luke 12:55. We know the reason to be that the equatorial regions are warmer than those at the north, and especially that in the regions where Job lived the air becomes heated by passing over extended plains of sand, but there is no reason to suppose that this was fully understood at the time referred to here.

^{<1871>}**Job 37:18.** *Hast thou with him spread out the sky?* That is, wert thou employed with God in performing that vast work, that thou canst explain how it was done? Elihu here speaks of the sky as it appears, and as it is often spoken of, as an expanse or solid body spread out over our heads, and as sustained by some cause which is unknown. Sometimes in the Scriptures it is spoken of as a curtain (Notes, ^{<242>}Isaiah 40:22); sometimes as a “firmament,” or a solid body spread out (Septuagint, ^{<1016>}Genesis 1:6,7); sometimes as a fixture in which the stars are placed (Notes, ^{<234>}Isaiah 34:4), and sometimes as a scroll that may be rolled up, or as a garment, (^{<1925>}Psalms 102:26. There is no reason to suppose that the true cause of the appearance of an expanse was understood at that time, but probably the prevailing impression was that the sky was solid and was a fixture in which the stars were held. Many of the ancients supposed that

there were concentric spheres, which were transparent but solid, and that these spheres revolved around the earth carrying the heavenly bodies with them. In one of these spheres, they supposed, was the sun; in another the moon; in another the fixed stars; in another the planets; and it was the harmonious movement of these concentric and transparent orbs which it was supposed produced the “music of the spheres.”

Which is strong Firm, compact. Elihu evidently supposed that it was solid. It was so firm that it was self-sustained.

And as a molten looking-glass As a mirror that is made by being fused or cast. The word “glass” is not in the original, the Hebrew denoting simply “seeing,” or a “mirror” יָרֵא⁴¹⁷²⁰⁹. Mirrors were commonly made of plates of metal highly polished; see the notes at 23823 Isaiah 3:23; compare Wilkinson’s *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, vol. iii. p. 365. Ancient mirrors were so highly polished that in some which have been discovered at Thebes the luster has been partially restored, though they have been buried for many centuries. There can be no doubt that the early apprehension in regard to the sky was, that it was a solid expanse, and that it is often so spoken of in the Bible. There is, however, no direct declaration that it is so, and whenever it is so spoken of, it is to be understood as popular language, as we speak still of the rising or setting of the sun, though we know that the language is not philosophically correct. The design of the Bible is not to teach science, but religion, and the speakers in the Bible were allowed to use the language of common life — just as scientific men in fact do now.

8876 **Job 37:19.** *Teach us what we shall say unto him* This seems to be addressed to Job. It is the language of Elihu, implying that he was overawed with a sense of the majesty and glory of such a God. He knew not in what manner, or with what words to approach such a Being, and he asks Job to inform him, if he knew.

We cannot order our speech by reason of darkness Job had repeatedly professed a desire to bring his cause directly before God, and to argue it in his presence. He felt assured that if he could do that, he should be able so to present it as to obtain a decision in his favor; see the notes at 8133 Job 13:3,18-22. Elihu now designs, indirectly, to censure that confidence. He says that he and his friends were so overawed by the majesty of God, and felt themselves so ignorant and so ill qualified to judge of him and his works, that they would not know what to say. They were in darkness.

They could not understand even the works of his hands which were directly before them, and the most common operations of nature were inscrutable to them. How then could they presume to arraign God? How could they manage a cause before him with any hope of success? It is scarcely necessary to say, that the state of mind referred to here by Elihu is that which should be cultivated, and that the feelings which he expresses are those with which we should approach the Creator. We need someone to teach us. We are surrounded by mysteries which we cannot comprehend, and we should, therefore, approach our Maker with profound reverence and submission

◀872▶ **Job 37:20.** *Shall it be told him that I speak?* Still the language of profound awe and reverence, as if he would not have it even intimated to God that he had presumed to say anything in regard to him, or with a view to explain the reason of his doings.

If a man speak That is, if he attempt to speak with God; to argue a case with him; to contend with him in debate; to oppose him. Elihu had designed to reprove Job for the bold and presumptuous manner in which he had spoken of God, and for his wish to enter into a debate with him in order to vindicate his cause. He now says, that if anyone should attempt this, God had power at once to destroy him; and that such an attempt would be perilous to his life. But other interpretations have been proposed, which may be seen in Rosenmuller, Umbreit, and Lee.

Surely he shall be swallowed up Destroyed for his presumption and rashness in thus contending with the Almighty. Elihu says that on this account he would not dare to speak with God. He would fear that he would come forth in his anger, and destroy him. How much man by nature instinctively feels, when he has any just views of the majesty of God, that he needs a Mediator!

◀872▶ **Job 37:21.** *And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds* Either the lightning that plays on the clouds in an approaching tempest, or a glorious light spread over the sky on the approach of God. There is reason to believe that as Elihu delivered the sentiments recorded in the close of this chapter, he meant to describe God as if he were seen to be approaching, and that the symbols of his presence were discovered in the gathering tempest and storm. He is introduced in the following chapter with amazing sublimity and grandeur to speak to Job and his friends, and to

close the argument. He comes in a whirlwind, and speaks in tones of vast sublimity. The tokens of his coming were now seen, and as Elihu discerned them he was agitated, and his language became abrupt and confused. His language is just such as one would use when the mind was overawed with the approach of God — solemn, and full of reverence, but not connected, and much less calm than in his ordinary discourse. The close of this chapter, it seems to me, therefore, is to be regarded as spoken when the tempest was seen to be gathering, and when in awful majesty God was approaching, the lightnings playing around him, the clouds piled on clouds attending him, the thunder reverberating along the sky, and an unusual brightness evincing his approach; Notes, ^{<8572>}Job 37:22. The idea here is, that people could not steadfastly behold that bright light. It was so dazzling and so overpowering that they could not gaze on it intently. The coming of such a Being strayed in so much grandeur, and clothed in such a light, was fitted to overcome the human powers.

But the wind passeth, and cleanseth them The wind passes along and makes them clear. The idea seems to be, that the wind appeared to sweep along over the clouds as the tempest was rising, and they seemed to open or disperse in one part of the heavens, and to reveal in the opening a glory so bright and dazzling that the eye could not rest upon it. That light or splendor made in the opening cloud was the symbol of God, approaching to wind up this great controversy, and to address Job and his friends in the sublime language which is found in the closing chapters of the book, The word rendered “cleanseth” *rhē*,^{<42891>} means properly to shine, to be bright; and then to be pure or clean. Here the notion of shining or brightness is to be retained; and the idea is, that a wind appeared to pass along, removing the cloud which seemed to be a veil on the throne of God, and suffering the visible symbol of his majesty to be seen through the opening; see the notes at ^{<8319>}Job 26:9, “He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it.”

^{<8572>}**Job 37:22.** *Fair weather* Margin, “gold,” The Hebrew word *bhz*,^{<42091>} properly means “gold,” and is so rendered by the Vulgate, the Syriac, and by most versions. The Septuagint renders it, *νεψη χρυσαυγουντα* , “clouds shining like gold.” The Chaldee, *ayntsa*, the north wind, Boreas. Many expositors have endeavored to show that gold was found in the northern regions (see Schultens, “in loc.”); and it is not difficult so to establish that fact as to be a confirmation of what is here said, on the

supposition that it refers literally to gold. But it is difficult to see why Elihu should here make a reference to the source where gold was found, or how such a reference should be connected with the description of the approaching tempest, and the light which was already seen on the opening clouds. It seems probable to me that the idea is wholly different and that Elihu means to say that a bright, dazzling light was seen in the northern sky like burnished gold, which was a fit symbol of the approaching Deity. This idea is hinted at in the Septuagint, but it has not seemed to occur to expositors. The image is that of the heavens darkened with the tempest, the lightnings playing, the thunder rolling, and then the wind seeming to brush away the clouds in the north, and disclosing in the opening a bright, dazzling appearance like burnished gold, that bespoke the approach of God. The word is never used in the sense of “fair weather.” An ancient Greek tragedian, mentioned by Grotius, speaks of golden air — χρυσωπος αιθηρ . Varro also uses a similar expression — aurescit aer, “the air becomes like gold.” So Thomson, in his Seasons:

But yonder comes the powerful king of day Rejoicing in the east.
The lessening cloud. The kindling azure, and the mountain's brow,
Illumed with fluid gold, his near approach Betoken glad. —
Summer

Out of the north That is, the symbol of the approaching Deity appears in that quarter, or God was seen to approach from the north. It may serve to explain this, to remark that among the ancients the northern regions were regarded as the residence of the gods, and that on the mountains in the north it was supposed they were accustomed to assemble. In proof of this, and for the reasons of it, see the notes at ^{<23413>} Isaiah 14:13. From that region Elihu sees God now approaching, and directs the attention of his companions to the symbols of his advent. It is this which fills his mind with so much consternation, and which renders his discourse so broken and disconnected. Having, in a manner evincing great alarm, directed their attention to these symbols, he concludes what he has to say in a hurried manner, and God appears, to close the controversy.

With God is terrible majesty This is not a declaration asserting this of God in general, but as he then appeared. It is the language of one who was overwhelmed with his awful majesty, as the brightness of his presence was seen on the tempest.

~~1872~~ **Job 37:23.** *Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out* See the notes at ~~1810~~ Job 11:7-9. This sentiment accords with all that Elihu had said, and indeed is what he designed particularly to enforce. But it has a special emphasis here, where God is seen approaching in visible splendor, encompassed with clouds and tempests, and seated on a throne of burnished gold. Such a God, Elihu says, it was impossible to comprehend. His majesty was overwhelming, The passage is much more impressive and solemn, and accords much better with the original, by omitting the words which our translators have introduced and printed in italics. It would then be,

The Almighty! — We cannot find him out! Great in power, and in justice, and in righteousness!

Thus, it expresses the overwhelming emotion, the awe, the alarm produced on the mind of one who saw God approaching in the sublimity of the storm.

He is excellent in power He excels, or is vast and incomprehensible in power.

And in judgment That is, in justice.

And in plenty of justice Hebrew, “in multitude of righteousness.” The meaning is, that there was an overflowing fulness of righteousness; his character was entirely righteous, or that trait abounded in him.

He will not afflict Or, he will not oppress, he will not crush. It was true that he “did afflict” people, but the idea is, that there was not harshness or oppression in it. He would not do it for the mere sake of producing affliction, or when it was not deserved. Some manuscripts vary the reading here so as to mean “he will not answer;” that is, he will not give any account of what he does. The change has relation only to the points, but the above is the usual interpretation, and accords well with the connection.

~~1872~~ **Job 37:24.** *Men do therefore fear him* There is reason why they should fear him, or why they should treat him with reverence.

He respecteth not any that are wise of heart He pursues his own plans, and forms and executes his own counsels. He is not dependent upon the suggestions of people, and does not listen to their advice. In his schemes he is original and independent, and people should therefore regard him with

profound veneration. This is the sum of all that Elihu had to say — that God was original and independent; that he did not ask counsel of people in his dealings; that he was great, and glorious, and inscrutable in his plans; and that people therefore should bow before him with profound submission and adoration. It was to be presumed that he was wise and good in all that he did, and to this independent and almighty Sovereign man ought to submit his understanding and his heart. Having illustrated and enforced this sentiment, Elihu, overwhelmed with the awful symbols of the approaching Deity, is silent, and God is introduced to close the controversy.

NOTES ON JOB 38

Job 38:1. *Then the Lord answered Job* This speech is addressed particularly to Job, not only because he is the principal personage referred to in the book, but particularly because he had indulged in language of murmuring and complaint. God designed to bring him to a proper state of mind before he appeared openly for his vindication. It is the purpose of God, in his dealings with his people, “to bring them to a proper state of mind” before he appears as their vindicator and friend, and hence, their trials are often prolonged, and when he appears, he seems at first to come only to rebuke them. Job had indulged in very improper feelings, and it was needful that those feelings should be subdued before God would manifest himself as his friend, and address him in words of consolation.

Out of the whirlwind The tempest; the storm — probably that which Elihu had seen approaching, ^{<8872>}Job 37:21-24. God is often represented as speaking to people in this manner. He spake amidst lightnings and tempests on Mount Sinai (^{<12916>}Exodus 19:16-19), and he is frequently represented as appearing amidst the thunders and lightnings of a tempest, as a symbol of his majesty; compare ^{<12913>}Psalms 18:9-13; ^{<313>}Habakkuk 3:3-6. The word here rendered “whirlwind” means rather “a storm, a tempest.” The Septuagint renders this verse, “After Elihu had ceased speaking, the Lord spake to Job from a tempest and clouds.”

Job 38:2. *Who is this* Referring doubtless to Job, for he is specified in the previous verse. Some have understood it of Elihu (see Schultens), but the connection evidently demands that it should be understood as referring to Job. The object was, to reprove him for the presumptuous manner in which he had spoken of God and of his government. It was important before God manifested his approval of Job, that he should declare his sense of what he had said, and show him how improper it was to indulge in language such as he had used.

That darkeneth counsel That makes the subject darker. Instead of explaining the reason of the divine dealings, and vindicating God from the objections alleged against him and his government, the only tendency of what he had said had been to make his government appear dark, and severe, and unjust in the view of his friends. It might have been expected of

Job, being a friend of God, that all that he said would have tended to inspire confidence in him, and to explain and vindicate the divine dealings; but, God had seen much that was the very reverse. Even the true friends of God, in the dark times of trial, may say much that will tend to make people doubt the wisdom and goodness of his government, and to prejudice the minds of the wicked against him.

By words without knowledge Words that did not contain a true explanation of the difficulty. They conveyed no light about his dealings; they did not tend to satisfy the mind, or to make the subject more clear than it was before. There is much of this kind of speaking in the world; much that is written, and much that fails from the lips in debate, in preaching, and in conversation, that explains nothing, and that even leaves the subject more perplexed than it was before. We see from this verse that God does not and cannot approve of such “words.” If his friends speak, they should vindicate his government; they should at least express their conviction that he is right; they should aim to explain his doings, and to show to the world that they are reasonable. If they cannot do this, they should adore in silence. The Savior never spoke of God in such a way as to leave any doubt that his ways could be vindicated, never so as to leave the impression that he was harsh or severe in his administration, or so as to lend the least countenance to a spirit of murmuring and complaining.

Job 38:3. *Gird up now thy loins like a man* To gird up the loins, is a phrase which has allusion to the mode of dress in ancient times. The loose flowing robe which was commonly worn, was fastened with a girdle when men ran, or labored, or engaged in conflict; see the notes at **Matthew 5:38-41**. The idea here is,

“Make thyself as strong and vigorous as possible; be prepared to put forth the highest effort.”

God was about to put him to a task which would require all his ability — that of explaining the facts which were constantly occurring in the universe. The whole passage is ironical. Job had undertaken to tell what he knew of the divine administration, and God now calls upon him to show his claims to the office of such an expositor. So wise a man as he was, who could pronounce on the hidden counsels of the Most High with so much confidence, could assuredly explain those things which pertained to the visible creation. The phrase “like a man” means boldly, courageously; compare the notes at **1 Corinthians 16:13**.

I will demand of thee, and answer thou me Margin, as in Hebrew, “make me known.” The meaning is, “I will submit some questions or subjects of inquiry to you for solution. Since you have spoken with so much confidence of my government, I will propose some inquiries as a test of your knowledge.”

Job 38:4. *Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?*

The first appeal is to the creation. The question here, “Where wast thou?” implies that Job was not present. He had not then an existence. He could not, therefore, have aided God, or counselled him, or understood what he was doing. How presumptuous, therefore, it was in one so short-lived to sit in judgment on the doings of him who had formed the world! How little could he expect to be able to know of him! The expression, “laid the foundations of the earth,” is taken from building an edifice. The foundations are first laid, and the super-structure is then reared. It is a poetic image, and is not designed to give any intimation about the actual process by which the earth was made, or the manner in which it is sustained.

If thou hast understanding Margin, as in Hebrew “if thou knowest.” That is, “Declare how it was done. Explain the manner in which the earth was formed and fixed in its place, and by which the beautiful world grew up under the hand of God.” If Job could not do this, what presumption was it to speak as he had done of the divine administration!

Job 38:5. *Who hath laid the measures thereof* That is, as an architect applies his measures when he rears a house.

If thou knowest Or rather, “for thou knowest.” The expression is wholly ironical, and is designed to rebuke Job’s pretensions of being able to explain the divine administration.

Or who hath stretched the line upon it As a carpenter uses a line to mark out his work; see the notes at ^{<2387>}Isaiah 28:17. The earth is represented as a building, the plan of which was laid out beforehand, and which was then made according to the sketch of the architect. It is not, therefore, the work of chance or fate. It is laid out and constructed according to a wise plan, and in a method evincing infinite skill.

Job 38:6. *Whereupon are the foundations* Margin, “sockets.” The Hebrew word ^{<h134>}דָּא means “a basis,” as of a column, or a pedestal; and

then also the foundation of a building. The language here is evidently figurative, comparing the earth with an edifice. In building a house, the securing of a proper foundation is essential to its stability; and here God represents himself as rearing the earth on the most permanent and solid basis. The word is not used in the sense of sockets, as it is in the margin.

Fastened Margin, “made to sink.” The margin rather expresses the sense of the Hebrew word [בִּטְּחָה^{<h2883>}]. It is rendered “sink” and “sunk” in ^{<991>}Psalm 69:2,14; 9:15; ^{<2111>}Lamentations 2:9; ^{<4916>}Jeremiah 38:6,22; “drowned” in ^{<1214>}Exodus 15:4; and were settled in ^{<1025>}Proverbs 8:25. The word does not elsewhere occur in the Scriptures, and the prevailing sense is that of “sinking,” or “settling down,” and hence, to “impress” — as a seal “settles down” into wax. The reference here is to a foundation-stone that sinks or settles down into clay or mire until it becomes solid.

Or who laid the corner stone thereof Still an allusion to a building. The cornerstone sustains the principal weight of an edifice, as the weight of two walls is concentrated on it, and hence, it is of such importance that it should be solid and firmly fixed. The question proposed for the solution of Job is, On what the earth is founded? On this question a great variety of opinions waft entertained by the ancients, and of course no correct solution could be given of the difficulty. It was not known that it was suspended and held in its place by the laws of gravitation. The meaning here is, that if Job could not solve this inquiry, he ought not to presume to sit in judgment on the government of God, and to suppose that he was qualified to judge of his secret counsels.

^{<881>}**Job 38:7.** *When the morning-stars* There can be little doubt that angelic beings are intended here, though some have thought that the stars literally are referred to, and that they seemed to unite in a chorus of praise when another world was added to their number. The Vulgate renders it, “astra matutina, morning-stars;” the Septuagint, “ὅτε ^{<3753>} ἐγενήθηναυ ^{<1096>} αστρα ^{<798>} —”when the stars were made:” the Chaldee, “the stars of the zephyr,” or “morning” — rpx ybkwk. The comparison of a prince, a monarch, or an angel, with a star, is not uncommon; compare the notes at Isaiah 14. The expression “the morning-stars” is used on account of the beauty of the principal star which, at certain seasons of the year, leads on the morning. It is applied naturally to those angelic beings that are of distinguished glory and rank in heaven. That it refers to the angels, seems to be evident from the connection; and this interpretation is demanded in

order to correspond with the phrase “sons of God” in the other member of the verse.

Sang together United in a grand chorus or concert of praise. It was usual to celebrate the laying of a cornerstone, or the completion of an edifice, by rejoicing; see ^{<3047>}Zechariah 4:7; ^{<4510>}Ezra 3:10.

And all the sons of God Angels — called the sons of God from their resemblance to him, or their being created by him.

Shouted for joy That is, they joined in praise for so glorious a work as the creation of a new world. They saw that it was an event which was fitted to honor God. It was a new manifestation of his goodness and power; it was an enlargement of his empire; it was an exhibition of benevolence that claimed their gratitude. The expression in this verse is one of uncommon, perhaps of unequalled beauty. The time referred to is at the close of the creation of the earth, for the whole account relates to the formation of this world, and not of the stars. At that period, it is clear that other worlds had been made, and that there were holy beings then in existence who were of such a rank as appropriately to be called “morning-stars” and “sons of God.” It is a fair inference therefore, that the “whole” of the universe was not made at once, and that the earth is one of the last of the worlds which have been called into being. No one can demonstrate that the work of creation may not now be going on in some remote part of the universe, nor that God may not yet form many more worlds to be the monuments of his wisdom and goodness, and to give occasion for augmented praise. Who can tell but that this process may be carried on forever, and that new worlds and systems may continue to start into being, and there be continually new displays of this inexhaustible goodness and wisdom of the Creator? When this world was made, there was occasion for songs of praise among the angels. It was a beautiful world. All was pure, and lovely, and holy. Man was made like his God, and everything was full of love. Surveying the beautiful scene, as the world arose under the plastic hand of the Almighty — its hills, and vales, and trees, and flowers, and animals, there was occasion for songs and rejoicings in heaven. Could the angels have foreseen, as perhaps they did, what was to occur here, there was also occasion for songs of praise such as would exist in the creation of no other world. This was to be the world of redeeming love; this the world where the Son of God was to become incarnate and die for sinners; this the world where an immense host was to be redeemed to praise God in a song

unknown to the angels — the song of redemption, in the sweet notes which shall ascend from the lips of those who shall have been ransomed from death by the great work of the atonement.

Job 38:8. *Or who shut up the sea with doors* This refers also to the act of the creation, and to the fact that God fixed limits to the raging of the ocean. The word “doors” is used here rather to denote gates, such as are made to shut up water in a dam. The Hebrew word properly refers, in the dual form which is used here **tl D**, ^{<h1817>}, to “double doors,” or to folding doors, and is also applied to the gates of a city; ^{<R85>}Deuteronomy 3:5; ^{<O237>}1 Samuel 23:7; ^{<2451>}Isaiah 45:1. The idea is, that the floods were bursting forth from the abyss or the center of the earth, and were checked by placing gates or doors which restrained them. Whether this is designed to be a poetic or a real description of what took place at the creation, it is not easy to determine. Nothing forbids the idea that something like this may have occurred when the waters in the earth were pouring forth tumultuously, and when they were restrained by obstructions placed there by the hand of God, as if he had made gates through which they could pass only when he should open them. This supposition also would accord well with the account of the flood in ^{<O071>}Genesis 7:11, where it is said that “the fountains of the great deep were broken up,” as if those flood-gates had been opened, or the obstructions which God had placed there had been suffered to be broken through, and the waters of their own accord flowed over the world. We know as yet too little of the interior of the earth, to ascertain whether this is to be understood as a literal description of what actually occurred.

When it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb All the images here are taken from child-birth. The ocean is represented as being born, and then as invested with clouds and darkness as its covering and its swaddling-bands. The image is a bold one, and I do not know that it is any where else applied to the formation of the ocean.

Job 38:9. *When I made the cloud the garment thereof* Referring to the garment in which the new-born infant is wrapped up. This image is one of great beauty. It is that of the vast ocean just coming into being, with a cloud resting upon it and covering it. Thick darkness envelopes it, and it is swathed in mists; compare ^{<O002>}Genesis 1:2, “And darkness was upon the face of the deep.” The time here referred to is that before the light of the sun arose upon the earth, before the dry land appeared, and before annuals

and people had been formed. Then the new-born ocean lay carefully enveloped in clouds and darkness under the guardian care of God. The dark night rested upon it, and the mists hovered over it.

<8880> **Job 38:10.** *And brake up for it my decreed place* Margin, “established my decree upon it.” So Herder, “I fixed my decrees upon it.” Luther renders it, “Da ich ihm den Lauf brach mit meinem Damm” — “then I broke its course with my barrier.” Umbreit renders it, “I measured out to it my limits;” that is, the limits or bounds which I judged to be proper. So the Vulgate, “Circumdedi illud terminis meis” — “I surrounded it with my limits,” or with such limits as I chose to affix. The Septuagint renders it, “I placed boundaries to it.” Coverdale, “I gave it my commandment.” This is undoubtedly the sense which: the connection demands; and the idea in the common version, that God had broken up his fixed plans in order to accommodate the new-born ocean, is not in accordance with the parallelism. The Hebrew word *rbæ*^{<17665>} indeed commonly means “to break, to break in pieces.” But, according to Gesenius, and as the place here demands, it may have the sense of measuring off, defining, appointing, “from the idea of breaking into portions;” and then the sense will be, “I measured for it (the sea) my appointed bound.” This meaning of the word is, however, more probably derived from the Arabic, where the word *shapar* means to measure with the span (Castell), and hence, the idea here of measuring out the limits of the ocean. The sense is, that God measured out or determined the limits of the sea. The idea of breaking up a limit or boundary which had been before fixed, it is believed, is not in the text. The word rendered “my decreed place” *qj õ*^{<2706>} refers commonly to a law, statute, or ordinance, meaning originally anything that was “engraved” *qqjæ*^{<2710>} and then, because laws were engraved on tablets of brass or stone, any statute or decree. Hence, it means anything prescribed or appointed, and hence, a “bound,” or “limit;” see the notes at <8880> Job 26:10; compare <3183> Proverbs 8:29, “When he gave to the sea his decree *qj õ*^{<2706>} that the waters should not pass his commandment.” The idea in the passage before us is, that God fixed the limits of the ocean by his own purpose or pleasure.

And set bars Doors were formerly fastened, as they are often now, by cross-bars; and the idea here is, that God had inclosed the ocean, and so fastened the doors from where, it would issue out, that it could not pass.

<8881> **Job 38:11.** *And said, Hitherto shalt thou come* This is a most sublime expression, and its full force can be felt only by one who has stood on the shores of the ocean, and seen its mighty waves roll toward the beach as if in their pride they would sweep everything away, and how they are checked by the barrier which God has made. A voice seems to say to them that they may roll in their pride and grandeur so far, but no further. No increase of their force or numbers can sweep the barrier away, or make any impression on the limits which God has fixed.

And here shall they proud waves be stayed Margin, as in Hebrew, “the pride of thy waves.” A beautiful image. The waves seem to advance in pride and self-confidence, as if nothing could stay them. They come as if exulting in the assurance that they will sweep everything away. In a moment they are arrested and broken, and they spread out humbly and harmlessly on the beach. God fixes the limit or boundary which they are not to pass, and they lie prostrate at his feet.

<8882> **Job 38:12.** *Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days* That is, in thy lifetime hast thou ordered the light of the morning to shine, and directed its beams over the world? God appeals to this as one of the proofs of his majesty and power — and who can look upon the spreading light of the morning and be insensible to the force and beauty of the appeal? The transition from the ocean to the morning may have been partly because the light of the morning is one of the striking exhibitions of the power of God, and partly because in the creation of the world the light of the sun was made to dawn soon after the gathering together of the waters into seas; see <0000>Genesis 1:10,14. The phrase “since thy days,” implies that the laws determining the rising of the sun were fixed long before the time of Job. It is asked whether this had been done since he had an existence, and whether he had an agency in effecting it — implying that it was an ancient and established ordinance long before he was born.

Caused the day-spring to know his place The day-spring *rj see* <47837> means the “aurora, the dawn, the morning.” The mention of its “place” here seems to be an allusion to the fact that it does not always occupy the same position. At one season of the year it appears on the equator, at another north, and at another south of it, and is constantly varying its position. Yet it always knows its place. It never fails to appear where by the long-observed laws it ought to appear. It is regular in its motions, and is

evidently under the control of an intelligent Being, who has fixed the laws of its appearing.

Job 38:13. *That it might take hold of the ends of the earth* Margin, as in Hebrew “wings.” Wings are in the Scriptures frequently given to the earth, because it seems to be spread out, and the expression refers to its extremities. The language is derived from the supposition that the earth was a plain, and had limits or bounds. The idea here is, that God causes the light of the morning suddenly to spread to the remotest parts of the world, and to reveal everything which was there.

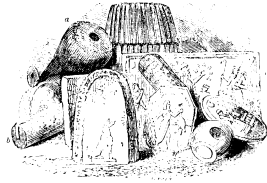
That the wicked might be shaken out of it Out of the earth; that is, by the light which suddenly shines upon them. The sense is, that the wicked perform their deeds in the darkness of the night, and that in the morning light they flee away. The effect of the light coming upon them is to disturb their plans, to fill them with alarm, and to cause them to flee. The idea is highly poetic. The wicked are engaged in various acts of iniquity under cover of the night. Robbers, thieves, and adulterers, go forth to their deeds of darkness as though no one saw them. The light of the morning steals suddenly upon them, and they flee before it under the apprehension of being detected.

“The dawn,” says Herder, “is represented as a watchman, a messenger of the Prince of heaven, sent to chase away the bands of robbers.”

It may illustrate this to observe that it is still the custom of the Arabs to go on plundering excursions before the dawn. When on their way this faithful watchman, the aurora, goes out to spread light about them, to intimidate them, and to disperse them; compare the notes at **Job 24:13-17**.

Job 38:14. *It is turned as clay to the seal* A great variety of interpretations has been given to this passage. Schultens enumerates no less than twenty, and of course it is not easy to determine the meaning. The Septuagint renders it, “Didst thou take clay of the earth, and form an animal, and place on the earth a creature endowed with speech?” Though this would agree well with the connection, yet it is a wide departure from the Hebrew. The reference is, undoubtedly, to some effect or impression produced upon the earth by the light of the morning, which bears a resemblance, in some respects, to the impression produced on clay by a seal. Probably the idea is, that the spreading light serves to render visible

and prominent the forms of things, as the seal when impressed on clay produces certain figures.



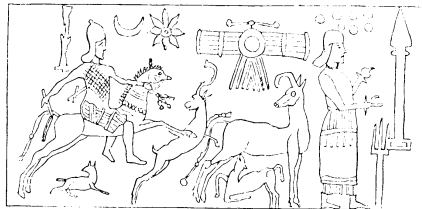
Babylonian Seal.
a. Babylonian cylinders; A, cylinder with modern handle fitted to it; c, c, wax impression.

One form of a Babylonian seal was an engraved cylinder, fixed on an axle, with a handle in the manner of a garden roller, which produced the impression “by being rolled on the softened wax. Mr. Rich (Second Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon, p. 59) remarks,

“The Babylonian cylinders are among the most interesting and remarkable of the antiques. They are from one to three inches in length; some are of stone, and others apparently of paste or composition of various kinds. Sculptures from several of these cylinders have been published in different works. Some of them have cuneiform writing,” (for the “arrow-headed” character, p. 48),

“but it has the remarkable peculiarity that it is reversed, or written from right to left, every other kind of cuneiform writing being incontestably to be read from left to right. This can only be accounted for by supposing that they were intended to roll off impressions. The cylinders are said to be chiefly found in the ruins of Jabouiga. The people of America are fond of using them as amulets, and the Persian pilgrims who came to the shrines of Ali and Hossein frequently carry back with them some of these curiosities.”

The following cut will greatly assist in furnishing an idea of the impression produced by one of the cylinder-seals in the possession of Mr. Rich.



Impression from a Cylinder Seal.

It may be observed, also, in the explanation of the passage, that clay was often used for the purpose of a seal in Oriental countries. The manner in which it was used was to daub a mass of it over the door or lock of a house, a caravansera, a room, or any place where anything valuable was deposited, and to impress upon it a rude seal. This indeed would not make the goods safe from a robber, but it would be an indication that the place is not to be entered, and show that if it had been entered it was by violence; compare ^{<4276>}Matthew 27:66. This impression on clay would be produced by the “revolving” or Babyionian seal, by turning it about, or rolling it on clay, and thus bringing the figures out prominently, and this will explain the passage here. The passing of the light over the earth in the morning, seems to be like rolling a cylinder-seal on soft clay. It leaves distinct impressions; raises up prominent figures; gives form and beauty to what seemed before a dark undistinguished mass. The word rendered “it is turned” ^{<4215>}Ἐπέ, means properly “it turns itself”— and the idea is that, like the revolving seal, it seems to roll over the face of the earth, and to leave a distinct and beautiful impression. Before, the face of the earth was obscure. Nothing, in the darkness of the night, could be distinguished. Now, when the dawn arises and the light spreads abroad, the figures of hills, and trees, and tents, and cities, rise before it as if a seal had been rolled on yielding clay. The image is one, therefore, of high poetic character, and of great beauty. If this be the correct interpretation, the passage does not refer to the revolution of the earth on its axis, or to any change in appearance or form which it assumes when the wicked are shaken out of it, as Schultens supposes, but to the beautiful change in appearance which the face of the earth seems to undergo when the aurora passes over it.

And they stand as a garment This passage is perhaps even more difficult than the former part of the verse. Prof. Lee renders it, “And that men be set up as if accoutred for battle,” and according to him the idea is, that people, when the light shines, set themselves up for the prosecution of their designs. Coverdale renders it,

“Their tokens and weapons hast thou turned like clay, and set them up again as the changing of a garment.”

Grotius supposes it means that things by the aurora change their appearance and color like a variegated garment. The true idea of the passage is probably that adopted by Schultens, Herder, Umbreit, Rosenmuller, and Noyes, that it refers to the beautiful appearance which

the face of nature seems to put on when the morning light shines upon the world. Before, all was dark and undistinguished. Nature seemed to be one vast blank, with no prominent objects, and with no variety of color. When the light dawns on the earth, the various objects — the hills, trees, houses, fields, flowers, seem to stand forth, or to raise themselves up bxyē^{A3320}, and to put on the appearance of gorgeous and variegated vestments. It is as if the earth were clothed with beauty, and what was before a vast blank were now arrayed in splendid vestments. Thus understood, there is no need of supposing that garments were ever made, as has been sometimes supposed, with so much in-wrought silver and gold that they would “stand upright themselves.” It is a beautiful conception of poetry — that the spreading light seems to clothe the dark world with a gorgeous robe, by calling forth the objects of creation from the dull and dark uniformity of night to the distinctness of day.

<3815> **Job 38:15.** *And from the wicked their light is withholden* While the light thus spreads over the earth, rendering every object beautiful and blessing the righteous, light and prosperity are withheld from the wicked; see the notes at <3847> Job 24:17. Or, the meaning may be, that when the light shines upon the world, the wicked, accustomed to perform their deeds in the night, flee from it, and retreat to their dark hiding-places.

And the high arm Of the wicked. The arm is a symbol of strength. It is that by which we accomplish our purposes, and the idea here is, that the haughty power of the oppressor shall be crushed. The connection here seems to be this. In <3812> Job 38:12-14, there is a beautiful description of the light, and of its effects upon the appearance of natural objects. It was such as to clothe the world with beauty, and to fill the heart of the pious with gladness. In order now to show the greatness of the punishment of the wicked, it is added that all this beauty will be hidden from them. They will be driven away by the light into their dark hiding-places, and will be met there with the withdrawal of all the tokens of prosperity, and their power will be crushed.

<3816> **Job 38:16.** *Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?* The word here rendered “springs” Ἐκρη^{A5033}, occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures. It is rendered by the Vulgate “profunda,” the deep parts; and by the Septuagint πηγην^{<4077>} — “fountains.” The reference seems to be to the deep fountains at the bottom of the sea, which were supposed to supply it with water. A large portion of the water of the ocean is indeed conveyed to

it by rivers and streams that run on the surface of the earth. But it is known, also, that there are fountains at the bottom of the ocean, and in some places the amount of water that flows from them is so great, that its action is perceptible at the surface. One such fountain exists in the Atlantic ocean near the coast of Florida.

Or hast thou walked in the search of the depth? Or, rather, in the deep places or caverns of the ocean. The word rendered “search” here rqj e⁴²⁷¹⁴, means “searching,” investigation, and then an object that is to be searched out, and hence, that which is obscure, remote, hidden. Then it may be applied to the deep caverns of the ocean, or the bottom of the sea. This is to man unsearchable. No line has been found long enough to fathom the ocean, and of course what is there is unknown. It is adduced, therefore, with great propriety as a proof of the wisdom of God, that he could look on the deep caverns of the ocean, and was able to search out all that was there. A sentiment similar to this occurs in Homer, when speaking of Atlas:

“ὄατε θαλασσης; Πασης βενθεα οιδεν. Odyssey 1:5.

“Who knows the depths of every sea.”

<8887> **Job 38:17.** *Have the gates of death been opened unto thee* That is, the gates of the world where death reigns; or the gates that lead to the abodes of the dead. The allusion here is to “Sheol,” or “Hades,” the dark abodes of the dead. This was supposed to be beneath the ground, and was entered by the grave, and was inclosed by gates and bars; see the notes at <8802> Job 10:21,22. The transition from the reference to the bottom of the sea to the regions of the dead was natural, and the mind is carried forward to a subject further beyond the ken of mortals than even the unfathomable depths of the ocean. The idea is, that God saw all that occurred in that dark world beneath us, where the dead were congregated, and that his vast superiority to man was evinced by his being able thus to penetrate into, and survey those hidden regions. It is common in the classic writers to represent those regions as entered by gates. Thus, Lucretius, i. 1105,

— *Haec rebus erit para janua leti,
Hae se turba foras dabit omnis materai.*

— *“The doors of death are open,
And the vast whole unbounded ruin whelms.” — Good.*

So Virgil, Aeneid ii. 661,

— *Pater isti janua leto,*

“The door of death stands open.”

Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death? The doors which lead down to the gloomy realms where death spreads its dismal shades. This expression is more emphatic than the former, for the word *twm| kæ*^{<4675>} “shadow of death,” is more intensive in its meaning than the word *twm|*^{<44194>}, “death.” There is the superadded idea of a deep and dismal shadow; of profound and gloomy darkness; see the word explained in the notes at <8875> Job 3:5; compare <8802> Job 10:21,22. Man was unable to penetrate those gloomy abodes and to reveal what was there; but God saw all with the clearness of noon-day.

<8888> **Job 38:18.** *Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth?* How far the earth extends. To see the force of this, we must remember that the early conception of the earth was that it was a vast plain, and that in the time of Job its limits were unknown. One of the earliest and most obvious inquiries would naturally be, What was the extent of the earth? By what was it bounded? And what was the character of the regions beyond those which were then known? All this was hidden from man at that time, and God, therefore, asks with emphasis whether Job had been able to determine this great inquiry. The knowledge of this is put on the same foundation as that of the depths of the sea, and of the dark regions of the dead, and in the time of Job the one was as much unknown as the other. God, who knew all this, must, therefore, be infinitely exalted above man.

<8889> **Job 38:19.** *Where is the way where light dwelleth?* Or, rather, where is the way or path to the place where light dwells? Light is conceived of as coming from a great distance, and as having a place which might be regarded as its home. It comes in the morning, and is withdrawn at evening, and it seems as if it came from some far distant dwelling-place in the morning to illuminate the world, and then retired to its home in the evening, and thus gave place for darkness to visit the earth. The idea is this,

“Dost thou know, when the light withdraws from the world, to what place it betakes itself as its home? Canst thou follow it to its distant abodes, and tell where they are? And when the shadows of night come forth, and take its place, canst thou tell whence they come; and when they withdraw again in the morning, canst thou

follow them, and tell where they are congregated together to abide?”

The thought is highly poetic, and is not to be taken literally. The meaning is, that God only could know what was the great fountain of light, and where that was; and the question substantially may be asked of man with as much force and propriety now as in the time of Job. Who knows what is the great fountain of light to the universe? Who knows what light is? Who can explain the causes of its rapid flight from world to world? Who can tell what supplies it, and prevents it from being exhausted? Who but God, after all the discoveries of science, can fully understand this?

And as for darkness, where is the place thereof? Darkness here is personified. It is represented as having a place of abode as coming forth to take the place of light when that is withdrawn, and again as retiring to its dwelling when the light reappears.

⌘ **Job 38:20.** *That thou shouldest take it to the bounds thereof* Margin, “or, at.” The sense seems to be this: God asks Job whether he was so well acquainted with the sources of light, and the place where it dwelt, that he could take it under his guidance and reconduct it to its place of abode.

And that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof? The same idea is repeated here. Light has a home; a place of abode. It was far distant — in some region unknown to man. Did Job know the way in which it came, and the place where it dwelt so well, that he could conduct it back again to its own dwelling? Umbreit, Noyes, and Herder, suppose that this is to be understood ironically.

*“For thou hast reached its boundaries!
For then knowest the path to its dwelling!”*

But it has been commonly regarded as a question, and thus understood it accords better with the connection.

⌘ **Job 38:21.** *Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born?* This may either be a question, or it may be spoken ironically. According to the former mode of rendering it, it is the same as asking Job whether he had lived long enough to understand where the abode of light was, or whether he had an existence when it was created, and knew where its home was appointed. According to the latter mode, it is keen sarcasm.

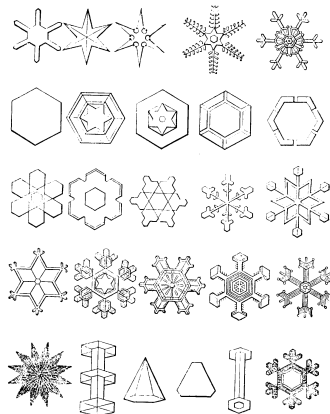
“Thou must know all this, for thou art so old. Thou hast had an opportunity of observing all this, for thou hast lived through all these changes, and observed all the works of God.”

This latter method of interpreting it is adopted by Umbreit, Herder, Noyes, Rosenmuller, and Wemyss. The former, however, seems much better to accord with the connection, and with the dignity and character of the speaker. It is not desirable to represent God as speaking in the language of irony and sarcasm unless the rules of interpretation imperatively demand it.

~~882~~ **Job 38:22.** *Hast thou entered into the treasures of snow?* Snow is here represented as something which is laid up like treasure, and kept in reserve for use when God shall require it. Silver and gold were thus laid up for occasions when they would be wanted, and the figurative sentiment here is, that snow and hail were thus preserved for the use to which the Almighty might devote them, or for those great occasions when it would be proper to bring them forth to execute his purposes. Of course, it was to be expected that God would speak in the language which people commonly used when speaking of his works, and would not go into a philosophical or scientific explanation of the phenomena of nature. His object was not to teach science, but to produce a solemn impression of his greatness, and that is secured by such an appeal whether the laws of nature are understood or not. The simple appeal to Job here is, whether he could explain the phenomena of snow and hail? Could he tell how they were formed? Whence they came? Where they were preserved, and how they were sent forth to execute the purposes of God? The idea is, that all that pertained to the snow was distinctly understood by God, and that these were facts which Job did not know of, and which he could not explain. The effect of time and of scientific investigation, in this as in other cases to which reference is made in this book, has been only to increase the force of this question. The effect of the discoveries which are made in the works of God is not to diminish our sense of his wisdom and majesty, but to change mere wonder to praise; to transform blind amazement to intelligent adoration. Every new discovery of a law of nature is fitted more to impress the mind with awe, and at the same time it becomes the basis of a new act of intelligent confidence in God. This is true of snow as of other things. In the time and country of Job it came doubtless from the north. Vast quantities seemed to be poured forth from those regions at certain seasons of the year, as if it were reserved there in vast store-houses, or treasuries. Science has, however, told us that it is congealed vapor formed in the air,

by the vapor being frozen there before it is collected into drops large enough to form hail. In the descent of the vapor to the earth it is frozen and descends in the numerous variety of crystallized forms in which the flakes appear. Perhaps there is nothing more fitted to excite pleasing conceptions of the wisdom of God — not even the variety of beauty in flowers — than the various forms of crystals in which snow appears. Those crystals present an almost endless variety of forms, Descartes and Dr. Hook were among the first whose minds seem to have been drawn to the figures of the crystals in snow, and since their investigations the subject has excited great interest in others. Captain Scoresby, who gave much attention to this subject and to other arctic phenomena, has given a delineation of 96 of these crystals. He adds,

“The extreme beauty and the endless variety of the microscopic objects perceived in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, are perhaps fully equalled, if not surpassed, in both particulars of beauty and variety, by the crystals of snow. The principal configurations are the stelliform and the hexagonal; though almost every variety of shape of which the generating angle of 60 degrees and 120 degrees are susceptible, may, in the course of a few years’ observation, be discovered. Some of the general varieties in the figures of the crystals may be referred to the temperature of the air; but the particular and endless modifications of the same classes of crystals can only be referred to the will and pleasure of the First Great Cause, whose works, even the most minute and evanescent, and in regions the most remote from human observation, are altogether admirable.” See the Edinburgh Encyclopedia, “Snow.”



Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail As if the hail were reserved in storehouses, like the weapons of war, to be called forth when God should please, in order to execute his purposes. Hail — so well known in its nature and form — consists of masses of ice or frozen vapor, falling from the clouds in showers or storms. These masses consist of little spherules united, but not all of the same consistence; some being as hard and solid as perfect ice, others soft like frozen snow. Hail-stones assume various figures; some are round, others angular, others pyramidal, others flat, and sometimes they are stellated, with six radii, like crystals of snow — Encyclopedia as quoted in Webster's Dictionary. Snow and hail are formed in the clouds when they are at an elevation where the temperature is below 32 degrees. The particles of moisture become congealed and fall to the earth. When the temperature below the clouds is more than 32 degrees, the flakes of snow often melt, and descend in the form of rain. But hailstones, from their greater solidity and more rapid descent, often reach the earth even when the temperature is much higher; and hence, we have storms of hail in the summer. The difference in the formation of snow and hail is, that in the former case the vapor in the clouds is congealed before it is collected into drops; in the case of hail, the vapor is collected into drops or masses, and then frozen.

“If we examine,” says Mr. Leslie, “the structure of a hailstone, we shall perceive a snowy kernel encased by a harder crust. It has very nearly the appearance of a drop of water suddenly frozen, the particles of air being driven from the surface toward the center, where they form a spongy texture. This circumstance suggests the probable origin of hail, which is perhaps occasioned by rain falling through a dry and very cold stratum of air” — Edinburgh Encyclopedia, “Meteorology.”

All the facts about the formation of hail were unknown in the time of Job, and hence, God appeals to them as evidence of his superior wisdom and greatness, and in proof of the duty of man to submit to him. These phenomena, which were constantly occurring, man could not explain; and how much less qualified, therefore, was he to sit in judgment on the secret counsels of the Almighty! The same observation may be made now, for though science has done something to explain the laws by which snow and hail are formed, yet those discoveries have tended to enlarge our conceptions of the wisdom of God, and have shown us, to an extent which was not then suspected, how much is still unknown. We see a few of the

laws by which God does these things, but who is prepared to explain these laws themselves, or to tell why and how the particles of vapor arrange themselves into such beautiful crystallized forms?

Job 38:23. *Which I have reserved* As if they were carefully treasured up to be brought forth as they shall be needed. The idea is, that they were entirely under the direction of God.

The time of trouble Herder “the time of need.” The meaning probably is, that he had kept them in reserve for the time when he wished to bring calamity on his enemies, or that he made use of them to punish his foes; compare the notes at **Job 36:31-33**.

Against the day of battle and war Hailstones were employed by God sometimes to overwhelm his foes, and were sent against them in time of battle; see **Joshua 10:11**; **Exodus 9:22-26**; **Psalm 18:12,13**; compare the notes at **Isaiah 29:6**.

Job 38:24. *By what way is the light parted* The reference here is to the light of the morning, that seems to come from one point, and to spread itself at once over the whole earth. It seems to be collected in the east, or, as it were, condensed or concentrated there, and then to divide itself, and to expand over the face of the world. God here asks Job whether he could explain this, or show in what manner it was done. This was one of the subjects which might be supposed early to excite inquiry, and is one which can be as little explained now as then. The causes of the propagation of light, which seems to proceed from a center and to spread rapidly in every direction, are perhaps as little known now as they were in the time of Job. Philosophy has done little to explain this, and the mode in which light is made to travel in eight minutes from the sun to the earth — a distance of ninety million miles — and the manner in which it is “divided” or “parted” from that great center, and spread over the solar system, is as much of a real mystery as it was in the days of Job, and the question proposed here may be asked now with as much emphasis as it was then.

Which scattereth the east wind upon the earth According to this translation, the idea would be that somehow light is the cause of the east wind. But it may be doubted whether this is the true interpretation, and whether it is meant to be affirmed that light has any agency in causing the wind to blow. Herder renders it:

*“When doth the light divide itself,
When the east wind streweth it upon the earth?”*

According to this, the idea would be that the light of the morning seemed to be borne along by the wind. Umbreit renders it, “Where is the way upon which the east wind flows forth upon the earth?” That is, the east wind, like the light, comes from a certain point, and seems to spread abroad over the world; and the question is, whether Job could explain this? This interpretation is adopted by Rosenmuller and Noyes, and seems to be demanded by the parallelism, and by the nature of the case. The cause of the rapid spreading of the wind from a certain point of the compass, was involved in as much obscurity as the propagation of the light, nor is that cause much better understood now. There is no reason to suppose that the spread of the light, has any particular agency in causing the east wind, as our common version seems to suppose, nor is that idea necessarily in the Hebrew text. The east wind is mentioned here either because the light comes from the east, and the wind from that quarter was more naturally suggested than any other, or because the east wind was remarkable for its violence. The idea that a strong east wind was somehow connected with the dawn of day or the rising of the sun, was one that prevailed, at least to some extent, among the ancients. Thus, Catullus (lxiv. 270ff) says:

*Hic qualis flatu placidum mare matutino
Horrificans zephyrus proclivas incitat undas
Aurora exoriente, vagi sub lumina solis.*

~~18825~~ **Job 38:25.** *Who hath divided a water-course for the overflowing of waters* That is, for the waters that flow down from the clouds. The idea seems to be this, that the waters of heaven, instead of pouring down in floods, or all coming down together, seemed to flow in certain canals formed for them; as if they had been cut out through the clouds for that purpose. The causes of rain, the manner in which water was suspended in the clouds, and the reasons why the rain did not come down altogether in floods, early attracted attention, and gave occasion to investigation. The subject is more than once referred to in this book; see the notes at ~~18218~~ Job 26:8.

Or a way for the lightning of thunder For the thunder-flash. The idea is this: a path seems to be opened in the dark cloud for the passage of the flash of lightning. How such a path was made, by what agency or by what laws, was the question proposed for inquiry. The lightning seemed at once

to burst through the dark cloud where there was no opening and no sign of a path before, and pursue its zig-zag journey as if all obstructions were removed, and it passed over a beaten path. The question is, who could have traced out this path for the thunder-flash to go in? Who could do it but the Almighty? And still, with all the light that science has cast on the subject, we may repeat the question.

~~3826~~ **Job 38:26.** *To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is* This is designed to heighten the conception of the power of God. It could not be pretended that this was done by man, for the rain was caused to fall in the desolate regions where no one dwelt. In the lonely desert, in the wastes remote from the dwellings of people, the rain is sent down, evidently by the providential care of God, and far beyond the reach of the agency of man. There is very great beauty in this whole description of God as superintending the falling rain far away from the homes of people, and in those lonely wastes pouring down the waters, that the tender herb may spring up, and the flowers bloom under his hand. All this may seem to be wasted, but it is not so in the eye of God. Not a drop of rain falls in the sandy desert or on the barren rock, however useless it may seem to be, that is not seen to be of value by God, and that is not designated to accomplish some important purpose there.

~~3827~~ **Job 38:27.** *To satisfy the desolate and waste ground* As if it lifted an imploring voice to God, and he sent down the rain to satisfy it. The desert is thus like a thirsty pilgrim. It is parched, and thirsty, and sad, and it appeals to God, and he meets its needs, and satisfies it.

Or to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth In the desert. There God works alone. No man is there to cultivate the extended wilds, and yet an unseen agency is going forward. The grass springs up; the bud opens; the leaf expands; the flowers breathe forth their fragrance as if they were under the most careful cultivation. All this must be the work of God, since it cannot even be pretended that man is there to produce these effects. Perhaps one would be more deeply impressed with a sense of the presence of God in the pathless desert, or on the boundless prairie, where no man is, than in the most splendid park, or the most tastefully cultivated garden which man could make. In the one case, the hand of God alone is seen; in the other, we are constantly admiring the skill of man.

~~1838~~ **Job 38:28.** *Hath the rain a father?* That is, it is produced by God and not by man. No one among men can claim that he causes it, or can regard it as his offspring. The idea is, that the production of rain is among the proofs of the wisdom and agency of God, and that it is caused in a way that demonstrates his own agency. It is not by any power of man; and it is not in such a way as to constitute a relation like that between a father and a son. The rain is often appealed to in this book as something whose cause man could not explain, and as demonstrating the wisdom and supremacy of God. Among philosophic and contemplative minds it would early excite inquiry, and give occasion for wonder. What caused it? Whence came the water which fell? How was it suspended? How was it borne from place to place? How was it made to descend in drops, and why was it not poured down at once in floods? Questions like these would early excite inquiry, and we are not to suppose that in the time of Job science was so far advanced that they could be answered; see the notes at ~~1838~~ Job 26:8; compare ~~1837~~ Job 38:37 of this chapter. The laws of the production of rain are now better understood, but like all other laws discovered by science, they are adapted to elevate, not to diminish, our conceptions of the wisdom of God. It may be of interest, and may serve to explain the passages in this book which refer to rain, as illustrating the wisdom of God, to state what is now the commonly received theory of its cause. That theory is the one proposed by Dr. James Hutton, and first published in the Philosophical Transactions of Edinburgh, in 1784. In this theory it is supposed that the cause consists in the vapor that is held dissolved in the air, and is based on this principle — “that the capacity of the air for holding water in a state of vapor increases in a greater ratio than its temperature;” that is, that if there are two portions of air which would contain a certain quantity of water in solution if both were heated in an equal degree, the capacity for holding water would be alike; but if one of them be heated more than the other, the amount of water which it would hold in solution is not exactly in proportion to the heat applied, but increases much more rapidly than the heat. It will hold much more water when the temperature is raised than is proportionate to the amount of heat applied. From the experiments which were made by Sanssure and others, it was found that while the temperature of the air rises in arithmetical progression, the dissolving power of the air increases nearly in geometrical progression; that is, if the temperature be represented by the figures 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, etc., the capacity for holding moisture will be nearly represented by the figures 2, 8, 16, 32, 64, etc. Rain is caused in the following manner. When two portions of air of different

temperature, and each saturated with moisture, are intermixed, the quantity of moisture in the air thus intermixed, in consequence of the decrease of temperature, will be greater than the air will contain in solution, and will be condensed in a cloud or precipitated to the earth. This law of nature was of course unknown to Job, and is an arrangement which could have been formed only by the all-wise Author of nature; see “Edin. Ency., Art. Meteorology, p. 181.”

Or who hath begotten the drops of the dew? Who has produced them — implying that they were caused only by the agency of God. No one among mortals could claim that he had caused the dew to fall. God appeals to the dew here, the causes of which were then unknown, as an evidence of his wisdom and supremacy. Dew is the moisture condensed from the atmosphere, and that settles on the earth. It usually falls in clear and calm nights, and is caused by a reduction of the temperature of that on which the dew falls. Objects on the surface of the earth become colder than the atmosphere above them, and the consequence is, that the moisture that was suspended in the atmosphere near the surface of the earth is condensed — in the same way as in a hot day moisture will form on the outside of a tumbler or pitcher that is filled with water. The coldness of the vessel containing the water condenses the moisture that was suspended in the surrounding atmosphere. The cold, therefore, which accompanies dew, precedes instead of following it. The reason why the surface of the earth becomes cooler than the surrounding atmosphere at night, so as to form dew, has been a subject of considerable inquiry. The theory of Dr. Wells, which is now commonly adopted, is, that the earth is continually radiating its heat to the high and colder regions of the atmosphere; that in the daytime the effects of this radiation are not sensible, being more than counterbalanced by the greater influx of heat from the direct influence of the sun; but that during the night, when the counteracting cause is removed, these effects become sensible, and produce the reduction of temperature which causes dew. The surface of the earth becomes cool by the heat which is radiated to the upper regions of the atmosphere, and the moisture in the air adjacent to the surface of the earth is condensed. This occurs only in a clear and calm night. When the sky is cloudy, the clouds operate as a screen, and the radiation of the heat to the higher regions of the atmosphere is prevented, and the surface of the earth and the surrounding atmosphere are kept at the same temperature; see the Edinburgh Encyclopedia, “Meteorology,” pp. 185-188. Of course, these

laws were unknown to Job, but now that they are known to us, they constitute no less properly a proof of the wisdom of God.

<1832> **Job 38:29.** *Out of whose womb came the ice?* That is, who has caused or produced it? The idea is, that it was not by any human agency, or in any known way by which living beings were propagated.

And the hoary frost of heaven Which seems to fall from heaven. The sense is, that it is caused wholly by God; see the notes at <1870> Job 37:10.

<1881> **Job 38:30.** *The waters are hid as with a stone* The solid ice is laid as a stone upon them, wholly concealing them from view.

And the face of the deep is frozen Margin, “taken.” The idea is, they seem to take hold of one another *dkæt*^{<13920>}; they hold together, or cohere. The formation of ice is thus appealed to as a proof of the wisdom of God, and as a thing which Job could not explain. No man could produce this effect; nor could Job explain how it was done.

<1881> **Job 38:31.** *Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?* The seven stars. On the meaning of the word used here *hmyki*^{<13598>}, see the notes at <1891> Job 9:9. In regard to the meaning of the word rendered “sweet influences,” there has been considerable variety of interpretation. The Septuagint renders it, “Dost thou understand the band (*δεσμον*)^{<1199>} of Pleiades?” The Hebrew word *hndfemæ*^{<14575>} is naturally derived from a word signifying “pleasures,” or “delights” *ˆd[m*, from *dnæ*^{<16029>}, “to be soft, or pliant; to enjoy pleasure or delight”; hence, the word “Eden”), and then it would mean, as in our translation, the delightful influences of the Pleiades; or the influences supposed to be produced by this constellation in imparting happiness, particularly the pleasures enjoyed in the spring time, when that constellation makes its appearance. But Gesenius supposes that the word is derived from *dnæ*^{<16029>}, “to bind,” and that it is used by transposition for *twdn[m*. It would then refer to the “bands of Pleiades,” and the question would be whether Job had created the band which united the stars composing that constellation in so close union; whether he had bound them together in a cluster or bundle. This idea is adopted by Rosenmuller, Umbreit, and Noyes. Herder renders it, “the brilliant Pleiades.” The word “bands” applied to the Pleiades is not unfrequently used in Persian poetry. They were spoken of as a band or ornament for the forehead — or

compared with a headband made up of diamonds or pearls. Thus, Sadi, in his *Gullstan*, p. 22, (Amsterdam, 1651), speaking of a garden, says, "The earth is strewed, as it were, with emeralds, and the bands of Pleiades appear upon the boughs of the trees." So Hafiz, another Persian poet, says, in one of his odes, "Over thy songs heaven has strewed the bands of the Pleiades as a seal of immortality." The Greenlanders call the Pleiades *killukturset*, a name given to them because they appear to be bound together. "Egede's Account of the Greenland Mission, p. 57;" see Rosenmuller, "Alte u. neue Morgenland, No. 768." There seems, however, no good reason for departing from the usual meaning of the word, and then the reference will be to the time when the Pleiades or the seven stars make their appearance — the season of spring. Then the winter disappears; the streams are unlocked; the earth is covered with grass and flowers; the air is sweet and balmy; and a happy influence seems to set in upon the world. There may be some allusion here to the influence which the stars were supposed to exert over the seasons and the affairs of this world, but it is not necessary to suppose this. All that is required in the interpretation of the passage is, that the appearance of certain constellations was connected with certain changes in the seasons; as with spring, summer, or winter. It was not unnatural to infer from that fact, that the constellations exerted an influence in causing those changes, and hence, arose the pretended science of astrology. But there is no necessary connection between the two. The Pleiades appear in the spring, and seem to lead on that joyous season. These stars, so closely set together, seem to be bound to one another in a sisterly union (Herder), and thus joyously usher in the spring. God asks Job whether he were the author of that band, and had thus united them for the purpose of ushering in happy influences on the world.

Or loose the bands of Orion In regard to this constellation, see the notes at ^{<800>}Job 9:9. The word bands here has been supposed to refer to the girdle with which it is usually represented. Orion is here described as a man girded for action, and is the pioneer of winter. It made its appearance early in the winter, and was regarded as the precursor of storms and tempests; see the quotations in the notes at ^{<800>}Job 9:9. Thus appearing in the autumn, this constellation seems to lead on the winter. It comes with strength. It spreads its influence over the air, the earth, the waters, and binds everything at its pleasure. God here asks Job whether he had power to disarm this giant; to unloose his girdle; to divest him of strength; to control the seasons? Had he power over summer and winter, so as to cause

them to go or come at his bidding, and to control all those laws which produced them?

Job 38:32. *Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season?* Margin, “the twelve signs;” that is, the twelve signs of the zodiac. There has been much diversity of opinion about the meaning of this word. It occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures, and of course it is not easy to determine its signification. The Septuagint retains the word $\mu\alpha\xi\sigma\upsilon\rho\omega\theta$, without attempting to translate it. Jerome renders it, “Luciferum — Lucifer,” the morning-star. The Chaldee, $awl\ zm\ yr\ fv$ — the constellations of the planets. Coverdale, “the morning-star;” and so Luther renders it. Rosenmuller, “signa celestia” — the celestial signs, and so Herder, Umbreit, Gesenius, and Noyes, “the zodiac.” Gesenius regards the word $hr\ zmae$ ⁴⁴²¹⁶, as the same as $hl\ zmae$ ⁴⁴²⁰⁸, properly “lodgings, inns;” and hence, the “lodgings” of the sun, or the places or “houses” in which he appears in the heavens, and thus as meaning the signs in the zodiac. Most of the Hebrew interpreters adopt this view, but it rests on no certain foundation, and as we are not certain as to the meaning of the word, the only safe way is to retain the original, as is done in our common version. I do not see how it is possible to determine its meaning with certainty, and probably it is to be regarded as a name given to some constellation or cluster of stars supposed to exert an influence over the seasons, or connected with some change in the seasons, which we cannot now accurately understand.

Or canst thou guide Arcturus? On the constellation “Arcturus” $vyl\ ae$ ⁴⁸⁹⁰⁶, see the notes at ⁴⁸⁹⁹⁹Job 9:9. The word rendered “guide” in the text, is in the margin “guide them.” The Hebrew is, “and *aish* upon (or near — $l\ ae$ ⁴⁸⁹²¹) her sons, canst thou lead them?” Herder and Umbreit render it, “And lead forth the Bear with her young,” or her children. The reference is to the constellation Arcturus, or Ursa Major, in the northern sky. The “sons” referred to are the stars that accompany it, probably the stars that are now called the “tail of the bear.” “Umbreit.” Another interpretation is suggested by Herder, which is that this constellation is represented as a nightly wanderer — a mother, who is seeking her lost children, the stars that are no longer visible, and that thus revolves around the heavens. But the probable reference is to the constellation conducted round and round the pole as by some unseen hand, like a mother with her children, and the question is, whether Job had skill and power to do this? God appeals to it as a manifestation of his majesty and power, and as far above the skill of

man. Who ever looked upon that beautiful constellation and marked its regular revolutions, without feeling that its position and movements were such as God only could produce?

☞ **Job 38:33.** *Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven?* The laws or statutes by which the motions of the heavenly bodies are governed. These were wholly unknown in the time of Job, and the discovery of some of those laws — for only a few of them are yet known — was reserved to be the glory of the modern system of astronomy. The suggestion of the great principles of the system gave immortality to the name Copernicus; and the discovery of those laws in modern times has conferred immortality on the names of Brahe, Kepler, and Newton. The laws which control the heavenly bodies are the most sublime that are known to man, and have done more to impress the human mind with a sense of the majesty of God than any other discoveries made in the material universe. Of course, all those laws were known to God himself, and he appeals to them in proof of his greatness and majesty. The grand and beautiful movements of the heavenly bodies in the time of Job were fitted to produce admiration; and one of the chief delights of those that dwelt under the splendor of an Oriental sky was to contemplate those movements, and to give names to those moving lights. The discoveries of science have enlarged the conceptions of man in regard to the starry heavens far toward immensity; have shown that these twinkling lights are vast worlds and systems, and at the same time have so disclosed the laws by which they are governed as to promote, where the heart is right, intelligent piety, and elevate the mind to more glorious views of the Creator.

Canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth? That is, “dost thou assign the dominion of the heavens over the earth?” The reference is, undoubtedly, to the influence of the heavenly bodies upon sublunary objects. The exact extent of that cannot be supposed to have been known in the days of Job, and it is probable that much more was ascribed to the influence of the stars on human affairs than the truth would justify. Nor is its extent now known. It is known that the moon has an influence over the tides of the ocean; it may be that it has to some extent over the weather; and it is not impossible that the other heavenly bodies may have some effect on the changes observed in the earth which is not understood. Whatever it is, it was and is all known to God, and the idea here is, that it was a proof of his immense superiority over man.

Job 38:34. *Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?* That is, canst thou command the clouds so that they shall send down abundant rain? Bouillier supposes that there is an allusion here to the incantations which were pretended to be practiced by the Magi, by which they claimed the power of producing rain at pleasure; compare ^{<3442>}Jeremiah 14:22,

“Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles (the idols that they worship) that can cause rain? Art not thou he, O Lord our God?”

The idea is, that it is God only who can cause rain, and that the control of the clouds from which rain descends is wholly beyond the reach of man.

Job 38:35. *Canst thou send lightnings?* That is, lightning is wholly under the control of God. So it is now; for after all that man has done to discover its laws, and to guard against it, yet still man has made no advances toward a power to wield it, nor is it possible that he ever should. It is one of the agencies in the universe that is always to be under the divine direction, and however much man may subsidize to his purposes wind, and water, and steam, and air, yet there can be no prospect that the forked lightning can be seized by human hands and directed by human skill to purposes of utility or destruction among people; compare the notes at ^{<3351>}Job 36:31-33.

And say unto thee, Here we are Margin, “Behold us.” That is, we are at your disposal. This language is derived from the condition, of servants presenting themselves at the call of their masters, and saying that they stood ready to obey their commands; compare ^{<3001>}1 Samuel 3:4,6,9; ^{<3008>}Isaiah 6:8.

Job 38:36. *Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts?* There is great variety in the interpretation of this passage. Jerome renders it, *Quis posuit in visceribus heminis sapientiam? Vel quis dedit gallo intelligentiam?*

“Who hath put wisdom in the inner parts of man? Or who has given to the cock intelligence?”

Just as strangely, the Septuagint has:

“Who hath given to women skill in weaving, and a knowledge of the art of embroidering?”

One of the Targums renders it,

“Who has given to the woodcock intelligence that he should praise his Master?”

Herder renders it,

“Who gave understanding to the flying clouds, Or intelligence to the meteors of the air?”

Umbreit,

“Who placed wisdom in the dark clouds? Who gave understanding to the forms of the air?”

Schultens and Rosenmuller explain it of the various phenomena that appear in the sky — as lightning, thunder, meteoric lights, etc. So Prof. Lee explains the words as referring to the “tempest” and the “thunder-storm.” According to that interpretation, the idea is, that these phenomena appear to be endowed with intelligence, There is proof of plan and wisdom in their arrangement and connection, and they show that it is not by chance that they are directed. One reason assigned for this interpretation is, that it accords with the connection. The course of the argument, it is remarked, relates to the various phenomena that appear in the sky — to the lightnings, tempests, and clouds. It is unnatural to suppose that a remark would be interposed here respecting the intellectual endowments of man, when the appeal to the clouds is again (^{<48837>}Job 38:37) immediately resumed. There can be no doubt that there is much weight in this observation, and that the connection demands this interpretation, and that it should be adopted if the words which are used will admit of it. The only difficulty relates to the words rendered “inward parts,” and “heart.” The former of these **h j f u**^{<42910>} according to the Hebrew interpreters, is derived from **j** **𐤒**^{<42902>}, “to cover over, to spread, to besmear”; and is hence given to the veins, because covered with fat. It occurs only in this place, and in ^{<4516>}Psalms 51:6, “Behold thou desirest truth in the inward parts,” where it undoubtedly refers to the seat of the affections or thoughts in man. The verb is often used as meaning to daub, overlay, or plaster, as in ^{<4544>}Leviticus 14:42; ^{<4523>}Ezekiel 22:28; 13:12,14. Schultens, Lee, Umbreit, and others, have recourse in the explanation to the use of the Arabic word of the same letters with the Hebrew, meaning to wander, to make a random shot, etc., and thence, apply it to lightning, and to meteors. Umbreit

supposes that there is allusion to the prevalent opinion in the East that the clouds and the phenomena of the air could be regarded as furnishing prophetic indications of what was to occur; or to the custom of predicting future events by the aspects of the sky. It is a sufficient objection to this, however, that it cannot be supposed that the Almighty would lend his sanction to this opinion by appealing to it as if it were so. After all that has been written on the passage, and all the force of the difficulty which is urged, I do not see evidence that we are to depart from the common interpretation, to wit, that God means to appeal to the fact that he has endowed man with intelligence as a proof of his greatness and supremacy. The connection is, indeed, not very apparent. It may be, however, as Noyes suggests, that the reference is to the mind of Job in particular, and to the intelligence with which he was able to perceive, and in some measure to comprehend, these various phenomena. The connection may be something like this:

“Look to the heavens, and contemplate these wonders. Explain them, if possible; and then ask who it is that has so endowed the mind of man that it can trace in them such proofs of the wisdom and power of the Almighty. The phenomena themselves, and the capacity to contemplate them, and to be instructed by them, are alike demonstrations of the supremacy of the Most High.”

Understanding to the heart To the mind. The common word to denote “heart” — **bl e**⁴³⁸²⁰ is not used here, but a word **ywkç**,⁴⁷⁹⁰⁷ from **hkv** meaning “to look at, to view”; and hence, denoting the mind; the intelligent soul. “Gesenius.”

Job 38:37. *Who can number the clouds?* The word here rendered “clouds” **qj æc**⁴⁷⁸³⁴ is applied to the clouds as made up of “small particles” — as if they were composed of fine dust, and hence, the word number is applied to them, not as meaning that the clouds themselves were innumerable, but that no one could estimate the number of particles which enter into their formation.

In wisdom By his wisdom. Who has sufficient intelligence to do it?

Or who can stay the bottles of heaven? Margin, as in Hebrew “cause to lie down.” The clouds are here compared with bottles, as if they held the water in the same manner; compare the notes at **Job 26:8**. The word rendered “stay” in the text, and in the margin “cause to lie down,” is

rendered by Umbreit, “pour out,” from an Arabic signification of the word. Gesenius supposes that the meaning to “pour out” is derived from the idea of “causing to lie down,” from the fact that a bottle or vessel was made to lie down or was inclined to one side when its contents were poured out. This explanation seems probable, though there is no other place in the Hebrew where the word is used in this signification. The sense of pouring out agrees well with the connection.

~~3388~~ **Job 38:38.** *When the dust groweth into hardness* Margin, “is poured, or, is turned into mire.” The words used here relate often to metals, and to the act of pouring them out when fused, for the purpose of casting. The proper idea here is, “when the dust flows into a molten mass;” that is, when wet with rain it flows together and becomes hard. The sense is, that the rain operates on the clay as heat does on metals, and that when it is dissolved it flows together and thus becomes a solid mass. The object is to compare the effect of rain with the usual effect in casting metals.

And the clods cleave fast together That is, they are run together by the rain. They form one mass of the same consistency, and then are baked hard by the sun.

~~3389~~ **Job 38:39.** *Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion?* The appeal here is to the instincts with which God has endowed animals, and to the fact that he had so made them that they would secure their own food. He asks Job whether he would undertake to do what the lion did by instinct in finding his food, and by his power and skill in seizing his prey. There was a wise adaptation of the lion for this purpose which man could neither originate nor explain.

Or fill the appetite of the young lions Margin, as in Hebrew “life.” The word life is used here for hunger, as the appetite is necessarily connected with the preservation of life. The meaning here is,

“Wouldst thou undertake to supply his needs? It is done by laws, and in a manner which thou canst not explain. There are in the arrangement by which it is accomplished marks of wisdom which far surpass the skill of man to originate, and the instinct and power by which it is done are proof of the supremacy of the Most High.”

No one can study the subject of the instincts of animals, or become in the least acquainted with Natural History, without finding every where traces of the wisdom and goodness of God.

~~838~~ **Job 38:40.** *When they couch in their dens* For the purpose of springing upon their prey.

And abide in the covert to lie in wait? The usual posture of the lion when he seeks his prey. He places himself in some unobserved position in a dense thicket, or crouches upon the ground so as not to be seen, and then springs suddenly upon his victim. The common method of the lion in taking his prey is to spring or throw himself upon it from the place of his ambush, with one vast bound and to inflict the mortal blow with one stroke of his paw. If he misses his aim, however, he seldom attempts another spring at the same object, but deliberately returns to the thicket in which he lay in concealment. See the habits of the lion illustrated in the Edinburgh Encyclopedia, "Mazology."

~~838~~ **Job 38:41.** *Who provideth for the raven his food?* The same thought is expressed in ~~470~~ Psalm 147:9,

He giveth to the beast his food, And to the young ravens which cry.

Compare ~~405~~ Matthew 6:26. Scheutzer ("in loc.") suggests that the reason why the raven is specified here rather than other fowls is, that it is an offensive bird, and that God means to state that no object, however regarded by man, is beneath his notice. He carefully provides for the needs of all his creatures.

When his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat Bochart observes that the raven expels the young from the nest as soon as they are able to fly. In this condition, being unable to obtain food by their own exertions, they make a croaking noise, and God is said to hear it, and to supply their needs. "Noyes." There are various opinions expressed in regard to this subject by the rabbinical writers, and by the ancients generally. Eliezer (cap. 21) says that, "When the old ravens see the young coming into the world which are not black, they regard them as the offspring of serpents, and flee away from them, and God takes care of them." Solomon says that in this condition they are nourished by the flies and worms that are generated in their nests, and the same opinion was held by the Arabian writers, Haritius, Alkuazin, and Damir. Among the fathers

of the church, Chrysostom, Olympiodorus, Gregory, and Isidorus, supposed that they were nurtured by dew descending from heaven. Pliny (Lib. x. c. 12) says, that the old ravens expel the strongest of their young from the nest, and compel them to fly. This is the time, according to many of the older commentators, when the young ravens are represented as calling upon God for food. See Scheutzer, *Physica Sacra*, “in loc.” and Bochart, *Hieroz.* P. ii. L. ii. c. ii. I do not know that there is now supposed to be sufficient evidence to substantiate this fact in regard to the manner in which the ravens treat their young, and all the circumstances of the place before us will be met by the supposition that young birds seem to call upon God, and that he supplies their needs. The last three verses in this chapter should not have been separated from the following. The appeal in this is to the animal creation, and this is continued through the whole of the next chapter. The proper place for the division would have been at the close of ~~Job~~ Job 38:38, where the argument from the great laws of the material universe was ended. Then commences an appeal to his works of a higher order — the region of instinct and appetites, where creatures are governed by other than mere physical laws.

NOTES ON JOB 39

Job 39:1. *Knowest thou, the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth?* That is, the particular season when the mountain goats bring forth their young. Of domestic animals — the sheep, the tame goat, etc., the habits would be fully understood. But the question here relates to the animals that roamed at large on inaccessible cliffs; that were buried in deep forests; that were far from the dwellings and observation of people; and the meaning is, that there were many facts in regard to such points of Natural History which Job could not explain. God knew all their instincts and habits, and on the inaccessible cliffs, in the deep dell, in the dark forest, he was with them, and they were the objects of his care. He not only regarded the condition of the domestic animals that had been brought into the service of man, and where man perhaps might be disposed to claim that they owed much of their comfort to his care, but he regarded also the wild, wandering beast of the mountain, where no such pretence could be advanced. The providence of God is over them; and in the periods of their lives when they seem most to need attention, when every shepherd and herdsmen is most solicitous about his flocks and herds, then God is present, and his care is seen in their preservation. The particular point in the inquiry here is, not in regard to the time when these animals produced their young or the period of their gestation, which might probably be known, but in regard to the attention and care which was needful for them when they were so far removed from the observance of man, and had no human aid. The “wild goat of the rock” here referred to, is, doubtless, the Ibex, or mountain goat, that has its dwellings among the rocks, or in stony places. The Hebrew term is **אֲרָבָה**, ^{h3277} from **אָרַב**, ^{h3276} “to ascend, to go up.” They had their residence in the lofty rocks of mountains; ¹⁹⁴¹⁸ Psalm 104:18. “The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats.” Hebrew “For the goats of the rocks” — **אֲרָבָה** ^{h3277} **אֲרָבָה** ^{h5553}. So in ¹⁹²¹² 1 Samuel 24:2 (3), “Saul went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats,” that is, where were the wild goats — **אֲרָבָה** ^{h3277}. For a description of the wild goat, see Bochart, Hieroz. P. i. Lib. iii. c. xxiii. The animal here referred to is, doubtless, the same which Burckhardt saw on the summit of Mount Catharine, adjacent to Mount Sinai, and which he thus describes in his Travels in Syria, p. 571:

“As we approached the summit of the mountain (Catharine, adjacent to Mount Sinai), we saw at a distance a small flock of mountain goats feeding among the rocks. One of our Arabs left us, and by a widely circuitous route endeavored to get to the leeward of them, and near enough to fire at them. He enjoined us to remain in sight of them, and to sit down in order not to alarm them. He had nearly reached a favorable spot behind a rock, when the goats suddenly took to flight. They could not have seen the Arab, but the wind changed, and thus they smelt him. The chase of the *beden*, as the wild goat is called, resembles that of the chamois of the Alps, and requires as much enterprise and patience. The Arabs make long circuits to surprise them, and endeavor to come upon them early in the morning, when they feed. The goats have a leader who keeps watch, and on any suspicious smell, sound, or object, makes a noise, which is a signal to the flock to make their escape. They have much decreased of late, if we may believe the Arabs; who say that fifty years ago, if a stranger came to a tent, and the owner of it had no sheep to kill, he took his gun and went in search of a *beden*. They are, however, even now more common here than in the Alps, or in the mountains to the east of the Red Sea. I had three or four of them brought to me at the convent, which I bought at three-fourths of a dollar each. The flesh is excellent, and has nearly the same flavor as that of the deer. The Bedouins make water bags of their skins, and rings of their horns, which they wear on their thumbs. When the *beden* is met with in the plains, the dogs of the hunters easily catch him; but they cannot come up with him among the rocks, where he can make leaps of 20 feet.”

Or Canst thou mark when the hinds do calve? The reference here is to the special care and protection of God manifested for them. The meaning is, that this animal seems to be always timid and apprehensive of danger, and that there is special care bestowed upon an animal so defenseless in enabling it to rear its young. The word *hinds* denotes the deer, the fawn, the most timid and defenseless, perhaps, of all animals.

Job 39:2. *Canst thou number the months ...* That is, as they wander in the wilderness, as they live in inaccessible crags and cliffs of the rocks, it is impossible for man to be acquainted with their habits as he can with those of the domestic animals.

Job 39:3. *They bow themselves* literally, they curve or bend themselves; that is, they draw their limbs together.

They cast out their sorrows That is, they cast forth the offspring of their pains, or the young which cause their pains. The idea seems to be, that they do this without any of the care and attention which shepherds are obliged to show to their flocks at such seasons. They do it when God only guards them; when they are in the wilderness or on the rocks far away from the abodes of man. The leading thought in all this seems to be, that the tender care of God was over his creatures, in the most perilous and delicate state, and that all this was exercised where man could have no access to them, and could not even observe them.

Job 39:4. *Their young ones are in good liking* Hebrew “they are fat;” and hence, it means that they are strong and robust.

They grow up with corn Herder, Gesenius, Noyes, Umbreit, and Rosenmuller render this, “in the wilderness,” or “field.” The proper and usual meaning of the word used here רב^{ch1250} is corn (grain); but in Chaldee it has the sense of open fields, or country. The same idea is found in the Arabic, and this sense seems to be required by the connection. The idea is not that they are nurtured with grain, which would require the care of man, but that they are nurtured under the direct eye of God far away from human dwellings, and even when they go away from their dam and return no more to the place of their birth. This is one of the instances, therefore, in which the connection seems to require us to adopt a signification that does not elsewhere occur in the Hebrew, but which is found in the cognate languages.

They go forth, and return not unto them God guards and preserves them, even when they wander away from their dam, and are left helpless. Many of the young of animals require long attention from man, many are kept for a considerable period by the side of the mother, but the idea here seems to be, that the young of the wild goat and of the fawn are thrown early on the providence of God, and are protected by him alone. The particular care of Providence over these animals seems to be specified because there are no others that are exposed to so many dangers in their early life.

“Every creature then is a formidable enemy. The eagle, the falcon, the osprey, the wolf, the dog, and all the rapacious animals of the cat kind, are in continual employment to find out their retreat. But

what is more unnatural still, the stag himself is a professed enemy, and she [the hind] is obliged to use all her arts to conceal her young from him, as from the most dangerous of her pursuers.”

“Goldsmith’s Nat. His.”

^{<830>}**Job 39:5.** *Who hath sent out the wild ass free?* For a description of the wild ass, see the notes at ^{<8112>}Job 11:12. On the meaning of the word rendered “free” **yvpj** ^{<12670>}; see the notes at ^{<2806>}Isaiah 58:6. These animals commonly

“inhabit the dry and mountainous parts of the deserts of Great Tartary, but not higher than about latitude 48 degrees. They are migratory, and arrive in vast troops to feed, during the summer, on the tracts to the north and east of the sea of Aral. About autumn they collect in herds of hundreds, and even thousands, and direct their course southward toward India to enjoy a warm retreat during winter. But they more usually retire to Persia, where they are found in the mountains of Casbin; and where part of them remain during the whole year. They are also said to penetrate to the southern parts of India, to the mountains of Malabar and Gelconda. These animals were anciently found in Palestine, Syria, Arabia Deserta, Mesopotamia, Phrygia, and Lycaonia, but they rarely occur in those regions at the present time, and seem to be almost entirely confined to Tartary, some parts of Persia and India, and Africa. Their manners resemble those of the wild horse. They assemble in troops under the conduct of a leader or sentinel; and are extremely shy and vigilant. They will, however, stop in the midst of their course, and even suffer the approach of man for an instant, and then dart off with the utmost rapidity. They have been at all times celebrated for their swiftness. Their voice resembles that of the common ass, but is shriller.” “Rob. Calmet.”

The Onager or wild ass is doubtless

“the parent stock from which we have derived the useful domestic animal, which seems to have degenerated the further it has been removed from its parent seat in Central Asia. It is greatly distinguished in spirit and grace of form from the domestic ass. It is taller and more dignified; it holds the head higher, and the legs are more elegantly shaped. Even the head, though large in proportion

to the body, has a finer appearance, from the forehead being more arched; the neck by which it is sustained is much longer, and has a more graceful bend. It has a short mane of dark and woolly hair; and a stripe of dark bushy hair also runs along the ridge of the back from the mane to the tail. The hair of the body is of a silver gray, inclining to flaxen color in some parts, and white under the belly. The hair is soft and silken, similar in texture to that of the camel.”
— The Pictorial Bible.

It is of this animal, so different in spirit, energy, agility, and appearance, from the domestic animal of that name, that we must think in order to understand this passage. We must think of them fleet as the wind, untamed and unbroken, wandering over vast plains in groups and herds, assembled by thousands under a leader or guide, and bounding off with uncontrollable rapidity on the approach of man, if we would feel the force of the appeal which is here made. God asks of Job whether he — who could not even subdue and tame this wild creature — had ordained the laws of its freedom; had held it as a captive, and then set it at liberty to exult over boundless plains in its conscious independence. The idea is, that it was one of the creatures of God, under no laws but such as he had been pleased to impose upon it, and wholly beyond the government of man.

Or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass? As if he had been once a captive, and then set free. The illustration is derived from the feeling which attends a restoration to liberty. The freedom of this animal seems to be as productive of exhilaration as if it had been a prisoner or slave, and had been suddenly emancipated.

^{<8906>}**Job 39:6.** *Whose house I have made* God had appointed its home in the desert.

And the barren land his dwellings Margin, as in Hebrew “salt places.” Such places were usually barren. ^{<89734>}Psalm 107:34, “He turneth a fruitful land into barrenness.” Hebrew “saltness.” Thus, Virgil, Geor. ii. 238-240:

*Salsa antem tellus, et quae, perhibetur amara.
Frugibus infelix: ea nec mansuescit arando;
Nec Baccho genus, aut pomis sua nomina servat.*

Compare Pliny, Nat. His. 31,7, ^{<8923>}Deuteronomy 29:23.

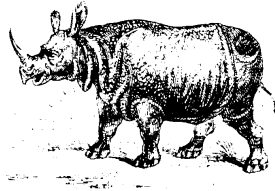
<830> **Job 39:7.** *He scorneth the multitude of the city* That is, he sets all this at defiance; he is not intimidated by it. He finds his home far away from the city in the wild freedom of the wilderness.

Neither regardeth he the crying of the driver Margin, “exacter.” The Hebrew word properly means a collector of taxes or revenue, and hence, an oppressor, and a driver of cattle. The allusion here is to a driver, and the meaning is, that he is not subject to restraint, but enjoys the most unlimited freedom.

<830> **Job 39:8.** *The range of the mountains is his pasture* The word rendered “range” רWty, <43491>, means properly a “searching out,” and then that which is obtained by search. The word “range” expresses the idea with sufficient exactness. The usual range of the wild ass is the mountains. Pallas, who has given a full description of the habits of the Onager, or wild ass, states, that it, especially loves desolate hills as its abode. “Acts of the Society of Sciences of Petersburg, for the year 1777.

<830> **Job 39:9.** *Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee?* In the previous part of the argument, God had appealed to the lion, the raven, the goats of the rock, the hind, and the wild ass; and the idea was, that in the instincts of each of these classes of animals, there was some special proof of wisdom. He now turns to another class of the animal creation in proof of his own supremacy and power, and lays the argument in the great strength and in the independence of the animal, and in the fact that man had not been able to subject his great strength to the purposes of husbandry. In regard to the animal here referred to, there has been great diversity of opinion among interpreters, nor is there as yet any one prevailing sentiment. Jerome renders it “rhinoceros;” the Septuagint, **μονοκερως**, the “unicorn;” the Chaldee and the Syraic retain the Hebrew word; Gesenius, Herder, Umbreit, and Noyes, render it the “buffalo;” Schultens, “alticornem;” Luther and Coverdale, the “unicorn;” Rosenmuller, the “onyx,” a large and fierce species of the antelope; Calmet supposes that the rhinoceros is intended; and Prof. Robinson, in an extended appendage to the article of Calmet (art. Unicorn), has endeavored to show that the wild buffalo is intended. Bochart, also, in a long and learned argument, has endeavored to show; that the rhinoceros cannot be meant. Hieroz. P. i. Lib. iii. chapter xxvi. He maintains that a species of antelope is referred to, the “rim” of the Arabs. DeWette (Com. on <49221> Psalm 22:21) accords with the opinion of Gesenius, Robinson, and others, that the animal referred to is

the buffalo of the Eastern continent, the “bos bubalus” of Linnaeus, an animal which differs from the American buffalo only in the shape of the horns and the absence of the dewlap. The word which occurs here, and which is rendered “unicorn” $\mu\alpha\epsilon\jmath$ ⁷¹²¹⁴ or $\mu\alpha\epsilon\jmath$ ⁷¹²¹⁴, is used in the Scriptures only in the following places, where in the singular or plural it is uniformly rendered “unicorn,” or “unicorns” — ⁰²²²Numbers 23:22; ¹³⁹⁷Deuteronomy 33:17; ¹³⁰⁹Job 39:9,10; ⁰²²¹Psalms 22:21; 29:6; 92:10; and ²³⁴⁷Isaiah 34:7. By a reference to these passages, it will be found that the animal had the following characteristics:



(1) It was distinguished for its strength; see ¹³⁹¹Job 39:11 of this chapter. ⁰²²²Numbers 23:22, “He (that is, Israel, or the Israelites) hath as it were the strength of a unicorn — $\mu\alpha\epsilon\jmath$ ⁷¹²¹⁴. In ⁰²⁴⁸Numbers 24:8, the same declaration is repeated. It is true that the Hebrew word in both these places $hp[\text{w}0$ ¹⁸⁴⁴³ may denote rapidity of motion, speed; but in this place the notion of strength must be principally intended, for it was of the power of the people, and their ability manifested in the number of their hosts, that Balaam is speaking. Bochart, however (Hieroz. P. i. Lib. iii. c. xxvii.), supposes that the word means, not strength, or agility, but height, and that the idea is, that the people referred to by Balaam was a lofty or elevated people. If the word means strength, it was most appropriate to compare a vast host of people with the vigor and force of an untamable wild animal. The idea of speed or of loftiness does not so well suit the connection.

(2) It was an animal that was not subjected to the service of tilling the soil, and that was supposed to be incapable of being so trained. Thus, in the place before us it is said, that he could not be so domesticated that he would remain like the ox at the crib; that he could not be yoked to the plow; that he could not be employed and safely left to pursue the work of the field; and that he could not be so subdued that it would be safe to attempt to bring home the harvest by his aid. From all these declarations, it is plain that he was regarded as a wild and untamed animal; an animal that was not then domesticated, and that could not be employed in husbandry. This characteristic would agree with either the antelope, the onyx, the

buffalo, the rhinoceros, or the supposed unicorn, With which of them it will best accord, we may be able to determine when all his characteristics are examined.

(3) The strength of the animal was in his horns. This was one of his special characteristics, and it is evidently by this that he is designed to be distinguished. ^{<6317>}Deuteronomy 33:17, “ His glory is like the firstling of a bullock, and his horns like the horns of unicorns.” ^{<1920>}Psalms 92:10, “My horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn.” ^{<1922>}Psalms 22:21, “Thou hast heard me (saved me) from the horns of the unicorns.” It is true, indeed, as Prof. Robinson has remarked (Calmet, art. “Unicorn”), the word **μαεῖ** ^{<17214>} has in itself no reference to horns, nor is there in the Hebrew an allusion any where to the supposition that the animal here referred to has only one horn. Wherever, in the Scriptures, the animal is spoken of with any allusion to this member, the expression is in the plural, “horns.” The only variation from this, even in the common version, is in ^{<1920>}Psalms 92:10, where the Hebrew is simply, “My horn shalt thou exalt like an unicorn, “where the word horn, as it stands in the English version, is not expressed. There is, indeed, in this passage, some obvious allusion to the horns of this animal, but all the force of the comparison will be retained if the word inserted in the ellipsis is in the plural number. The horn or horns of the **μαεῖ** ^{<17214>} were, however, beyond question, the principal seat of strength, and the instruments of assault and defense. See the passage in ^{<6317>}Deuteronomy 33:17,

“With them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth.”

(4) There was some special majesty or dignity in the horns of this animal that attracted attention, and that made them the proper symbol of dominion and of royal authority. Thus, in ^{<1920>}Psalms 92:10, “My horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn,” where the reference seems to be to a kingly authority or dominion, of which the horn was an appropriate symbol. These are all the characteristics of the animal referred to in the Scriptures, and the question is, With what known animal do they best correspond? The principal animals referred to by those who have examined the subject at length are, the onyx or antelope; the buffalo; the animal commonly referred to as the unicorn, and the rhinoceros. The principal characteristic of the unicorn was supposed to be, that it had a long, slender horn projecting from the forehead; the horn of the rhinoceros is on the snout, or the nose.

I. In regard to the antelope, or the “rim” of the modern Arabs, supposed by Bochart to be the animal here referred to, it seems clear that there are few characteristics in common between the two animals. The onyx or antelope is not distinguished as this animal is for strength, nor for the fact that it is especially untamable, nor that its strength is in its horns, nor that it is of such size and proportions that a comparison would naturally be suggested between it and the ox. In all that is said of the animal, we think of one greater in bulk, in strength, in untamableness, than the onyx; an animal more distinguished for conquest and subduing other animals before him. Bochart has collected much that is fabulous respecting this animal, from the rabbis and the Arabic writers, which it is not needful here to repeat; see the Hieroz. P. i. Lib. iii. c. xxvii.; or Scheutzer, Physi. Sac. on ~~Numbers~~ Numbers 23:22.

II. The claims of the “buffalo” to be regarded as the animal here referred to, are much higher than those of the onyx, and the opinion that this is the animal intended is entertained by such names as those of Gesenius, DeWette, Robinson, Umbreit, and Herder. But the objections to this seem to me to be insuperable, and the arguments are not such as to carry conviction. The principal objections to the opinion are

(1) that the account in regard to the horns of the $\mu\alpha\epsilon\eta$ ^{h7214} by no means agrees with the fact in regard to the bison, or buffalo. The buffalo is an animal of the cow kind (Goldsmith), and the horns are short and crooked, and by no means distinguished for strength. They do not in fact surpass in this respect the horns of many other animals, and are not such as would occur ordinarily as the prominent characteristic in their description. It is true that there are instances where the horns of the wild buffalo are large, but this does not appear to be the case ordinarily. Mr. Pennant mentions a pair of horns in the British Museum, which are six feet and a half long, and the hollow of which will hold five quarts. Lobo affirms that some of the horns of the buffalo in Abyssinia will hold ten quarts; and Dillon saw some in India that were ten feet long. But these were manifestly extraordinary cases.

(2) The animal here referred to was evidently a stronger and a larger animal than the wild ox or the buffalo. “The Oriental buffalo appears to be so closely allied to our common ox, that without an attentive examination it might be easily mistaken for a variety of that animal. In point of size, it is rather superior to the ox; and upon an accurate inspection, it is observed to

differ in the shape and magnitude of the head, the latter being larger than in the ox.” “Robinson, in Calmet.” The animal here referred to was such as to make the contrast particularly striking between him and the ox. The latter could be employed for labor; the former, though greatly superior in strength, could not.

(3) The $\mu\alpha\epsilon\jmath$ ⁷²¹⁴, it was supposed, could not be tamed and made to subserve domestic purposes. The buffalo, however, can be made as serviceable as the ox, and is actually domesticated and employed in agricultural purposes. Niebuhr remarks that he saw buffalo not only in Egypt, but also at Bombay, Surat, on the Euphrates, Tigris, Orontes, and indeed in all marshy regions and near large rivers. Sonnini remarks that in Egypt the buffalo, though but recently domesticated, is more numerous than the common ox, and is there equally domestic, and in Italy they are known to be commonly employed in the Pontine marshes, where the fatal nature of the climate acts on common cattle, but affects buffalo less. It is true that the animal has been comparatively recently domesticated, and that it was doubtless known in the time of Job only as a wild, savage, ferocious animal; but still the description here is that of an animal not only that was not then tamed, but obviously of one that could not well be employed in domestic purposes.

We are to remember that the language here is that of God himself, and that therefore it may be regarded as descriptive of what the essential nature of the animal was, rather than what it was supposed to be by the persons to whom the language was addressed. One of the principal arguments alleged for supposing that the animal here referred to by the $\mu\alpha\epsilon\jmath$ ⁷²¹⁴ was the buffalo, is, that the rhinoceros was probably unknown in the land where Job resided, and that the unicorn was altogether a fabulous animal. This difficulty will be considered in the remarks to be made on the claims of each of those animals.

III. It was an early opinion, and the opinion was probably entertained by the authors of the Septuagint translation, and by the English translators as well as by others, that the animal here referred to was the unicorn. This animal was long supposed to be a fabulous animal, and it has not been until recently that the evidences of its existence have been confirmed. These evidences are adduced by Rosenmuller, “Morgenland, ii. p. 269, following,” and by Prof. Robinson, “Calmet, pp. 908,909.” They are, summarily, the following:

(1) Pliny mentions such an animal, and gives a description of it, though from his time for centuries it seems to have been unknown. “His. Nat. 8,21.” His language is,

Asperrimam autem feram monocerotem reliquo corpore equo similem, capite cervo, pedibus elephanti, cauda apro, mugitu gravi, uno cornu nigro media fronte cubitorum duum eminente. Hanc feram vivam negant capi.

“The unicorn is an exceeding fierce animal, resembling a horse as to the rest of his body, but having the head like a stag, the feet like an elephant, and the tail like a wild boar; its roaring is loud; and it has a black horn of about two cubits projecting from the middle of the forehead.”

(2) The figure of the unicorn, in various attitudes, according to Niebuhr, is depicted on almost all the staircases in the ruins of Persepolis. “Reisebeschreib. ii. S. 127.”

(3) In 1530, Ludovice de Bartema, a Roman patrician, visited Mecca under the assumed character of a Mussulman, and among other curiosities that he mentions, he says,

“On the other side of the caaba is a walled court, in which we saw two unicorns that were pointed out to us as a rarity; and they are indeed truly remarkable. The larger of the two is built like a three-year-old colt, and has a horn upon the forehead about three ells long. This animal has the color of a yellowish-brown horse, a head like a stag, a neck not very long, with a thin mane; the legs are small and slender like those of a hind or roe; the hoofs of the fore feet are divided, and resemble the hoofs of a goat. Rosenmuller. “Alte u. neue Morgenland, No. 377. Thessalonians ii. S. 271, 272.”

(4) Don Juan Gabriel, a Portuguese colonel, who lived several years in Abyssinia, assures us that in the region of Agamos, in the Abyssinian province of Darners, he had seen an animal of the form and size of a middle-sized horse, of a dark, chestnut-brown color, and with a whitish horn about five spans long upon its forehead; the mane and tail were black, and the legs long and slender. Several other Portuguese, who were placed in confinement upon a high mountain in the district Namna, by the Abyssinian king Saghedo, related that they had seen at the mountain

several unicorns feeding. These accounts are confirmed by Lobe, who lived for a long time as a missionary in Abyssinia.

(5) Dr. Sparrman the Swedish naturalist, who visited the Cape of Good Hope and the adjacent regions in 1772-1776, gives, in his *Travels*, the following account: Jacob Kock an observing peasant on Hippopotamus river, who had traveled over a considerable part of Southern Africa, found on the face of a perpendicular rock, a drawing made by the Hottentots of an animal with a single horn. The Hottentots told him that the animal there represented was very like the horse on which he rode, but had a straight horn upon the forehead. They added, that these one-horned animals were rare; that they ran with great rapidity, and that they were very fierce.

(6) A similar animal is described as having been killed by a party of Hottentots in pursuit of the savage Bushmen in 1791. The animal resembled a horse, was of a light grey color, and with white stripes under the jaw. It had a single horn directly in front, as long as one's arm, and at the base about as thick. Toward the middle the horn was somewhat flattened, but had a sharp point; it was not attached to the bone of the forehead, but was fixed only in the skin. The head was like that of the horse, and the size about the same. These authorities are collected by Rosenmuller, "*Alte u. neue Morgenland*," vol. ii. p. 269ff, ed. Leipz. 1818.

(7) To these proofs one other is added by Prof. Robinson. It is copied from the *Quarterly Review* for Oct. 1820 (vol. xxiv. p. 120), in a notice of Frazer's *Tour through the Himalaya mountains*. The information is contained in a letter from Maj. Latter, commanding in the rajah of Sikkim's territories, in the hilly country east of Nepaul. This letter states that the unicorn, so long considered as a fabulous animal, actually exists in the interior of Thibet, where it is well known to the inhabitants.

"In a Thibetian manuscript," says Maj. Latter, "containing the names of different animals, which I procured the other day from the hills, the unicorn is classed under the head of those whose hoofs are divided: it is called the one-horned "tso'po."

Upon inquiring what kind of an animal it was, to our astonishment, the person who brought the manuscript described exactly the unicorn of the ancients; saying that it was a native of the interior of Thibet, about the size of a tattoo (a horse from twelve to thirteen hands high,) fierce and

extremely wild; seldom if ever caught alive, but frequently shot; and that the flesh was used for food. They go together in herds, like wild buffalo, and are frequently to be met with on the borders of the great desert, in that part of the country inhabited by wandering Tartars.’

(8) To these proofs I add another, taken from the Narrative of the Rev. John Campbell, who thus speaks of it, in his “Travels in South Africa,” vol. ii. p. 294.

“While in the Mashow territory, the Hottentots brought in a head different from any rhinoceros that had been previously killed. The common African rhinoceros has a crooked horn resembling a cock’s spur, which rises about nine or ten inches above the nose, and inclines backward; immediately behind this is a short thick horn. But the head they brought us had a straight horn projecting three feet from the forehead, about ten inches above the tip of the nose. The projection of this great horn very much resembles that of the fanciful unicorn in the British arms. It has a small, thick, horny substance, eight inches long, immediately behind it, and which can hardly be observed on the animal at the distance of 100 yards, and seems to be designed for keeping fast that which is penetrated by the long horn; so that this species must look like the unicorn (in the sense ‘one-horned’) when running in the field. The head resembled in size a nine-gallon cask, and measured three feet from the mouth to the ear; and being much larger than that of the one with the crooked horn, and which measured eleven feet in length, the animal itself must have been still larger and more formidable. From its weight, and the position of the horn, it appears capable of overcoming any creature hitherto known.”

A fragment of the skull, with the horn, is deposited in the Museum of the London Missionary Society. These testimonies from so many witnesses from different parts of the world, who write without concert, and yet who concur so almost entirely in the account of the size and figure of the animal, leave little room to doubt its real existence. That it is not better known, and that its existence has been doubted, is not wonderful. It is to be remembered that all accounts agree in the representation that it is an animal whose residence is in deserts or mountains, and that large parts of Africa and Asia are still unexplored. We are to remember, also, that the

giraffe has been discovered only within a few years, and that the same is true of the gnu, which until recently was held to be a fable of the ancients.

At the same time, however, that the existence of such an animal as that of the unicorn is in the highest degree probable, it is clear that it is not the animal referred to in the passage before us; for

(1) It is in the highest degree improbable that it was so well known as is supposed in the description here; and

(2) the characteristics do not at all agree with the account of the $\mu\alpha\epsilon\text{]}^{\text{ח7214}}$ of the Scriptures. Neither in regard to the size of the animal, its strength, or the strength of its horns, does it coincide with the account of that animal in the Bible.

IV. If neither of the opinions above referred to be correct, then the only remaining opinion that has weight is, that it refers to the rhinoceros. Besides the considerations above suggested, it may be added that the characteristics of the animal given in the Scriptures all agree with the rhinoceros. In size, strength, wildness, untamableness, and in the power and use of the horn, those characteristics agree accurately with the rhinoceros. The only argument of much weight against this opinion is presented by Prof. Robinson in the following language:

“The $\mu\alpha\epsilon\text{]}^{\text{ח7214}}$ was obviously an animal well known to the Hebrews, being everywhere mentioned with other animals common to the country, while the rhinoceros was never an inhabitant of the country, is nowhere else spoken of by the sacred writers, nor, according to Bochart, either by Aristotle in his treatise of animals, nor by Arabian writers.”

In reply to this we may observe:

(1) that the $\mu\alpha\epsilon\text{]}^{\text{ח7214}}$ is mentioned in the Scriptures only in seven places (see above), showing at least that it was probably an animal not very well known in that country, or it would have been alluded to more often;

(2) it is not clear that in those places it is “everywhere mentioned with other animals common to that country,” as in the passage before us there is no allusion to any domestic animal; nor is there in ^{<4232>}Numbers 23:22; 24:8; ^{<4920>}Psalm 92:10. In ^{<4221>}Psalm 22:21, they are mentioned in the same verse with “lions;” in ^{<4916>}Psalm 29:6, in connection with “calves;” and in

~~2347~~ Isaiah 34:7, with bullocks and bulls — wild animals inhabiting Idumea. But the entire account is that of an animal that was untamed and that was evidently a foreign animal.

(3) What evidence is there that the Hebrews were well acquainted, as Prof. Robinson supposes, with “the wild buffalo?” Is this animal an inhabitant of Palestine? Is it “elsewhere” mentioned in the Scriptures? Is there any more evidence from the Bible that they were acquainted with it than with the rhinoceros?

(4) It cannot be reasonably supposed that the Hebrews were so unacquainted with the rhinoceros that there could be no allusion to it in their writings. This animal was found in Egypt and in the adjacent countries, and whoever was the writer of the book of Job, there are frequent references in the book to what was well known in Egypt; and at all events, the Hebrews had lived too long in Egypt, and had had too much contact with the Egyptians, to be wholly ignorant of the existence and general character of an animal well known there, and we in fact find just about as frequent mention of it as we should on this supposition. It does not seem, therefore, to admit of reasonable doubt that the rhinoceros is referred to in the passage before us. This animal next to the elephant, is the most powerful of animals. It is usually about twelve feet long; from six to seven feet high; and the circumference of its body is nearly equal to its length. Its bulk of body, therefore, is about that of the elephant. Its head is furnished with a horn, growing from the snout, sometimes three and a half feet long. This horn is erect, and perpendicular to the bone on which it stands, and it has thus a greater purchase or power than it could have in any other position. “Bruce.” Occasionally it is found with a double horn, one above the other, though this is not common. The horn is entirely solid, formed of the hardest bony substance, and so firmly growing on the upper maxillary bone as seemingly to make but a part of it, and so powerful as to justify all the allusions in the Scriptures to the horn of the $\mu\alpha\epsilon\eta$ ^{h7214}. The skin of this animal is naked, rough, and knotty, lying upon the body in folds, and so thick as to turn the edge of a scimitar, or to resist a musket-ball. The legs are short, strong, and thick, and the hoofs divided into three parts, each pointing forward. It is a native of the deserts of Asia and Africa, and is usually found in the extensive forests which are frequented by the elephant and the lion. It has never been domesticated; never employed in agricultural purposes; and thus, as well as in size and strength,

accords with the account which is given of the animal in the passage before us. The following cut will furnish a good illustration of this animal:

“Be willing to serve thee In plowing and harrowing thy land, and conveying home the harvest, ^{<18912>}Job 39:12.

Or abide by thy crib As the ox will. The word used here ^{<13885>} means properly to pass the night; and then to abide, remain, dwell. There is propriety in retaining here the original meaning of the word, and the sense is, Can he be domesticated or tamed? The rhinoceros never has been.

^{<18910>}**Job 39:10.** *Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow?* That is, with the common traces or cords which are employed in binding oxen to the plow.

Or will he harrow the valleys after thee? The word “valleys” here is used to denote such ground as was capable of being plowed or harrowed. Hills and mountains could not thus be cultivated, though the spade was in common use in planting the vine there, and even in preparing them for seed, ^{<21025>}Isaiah 7:25. The phrase “after thee” indicates that the custom of driving cattle in harrowing then was the same as that practiced now with oxen, when the person who employs them goes in advance of them. It shows that they were entirely under subjection, and it is here implied that the ^{<17214>} could not be thus tamed.

^{<18911>}**Job 39:11.** *Wilt thou trust him?* As thou dost the ox. In the domestic animals great confidence is of necessity placed, and the reliance on the fidelity of the ox and the horse is not usually misplaced. The idea here is, that the unicorn could not be so tamed that important interests could be safely entrusted to him.

Because his strength is great? Wilt thou consider his strength as a reason why important interests might be entrusted to him? The strength of the ox, the camel, the horse, and the elephant was a reason why their aid was sought by man to do what he could not himself do. The idea is, that man could not make use of the same reason for employing the rhinoceros.

Wilt thou leave thy labour to him? Or, rather, the avails of thy labor — the harvest.

^{<18912>}**Job 39:12.** *Wilt thou believe him?* That is, wilt thou trust him with the productions of the field? The idea is, that he was an untamed and

unsubdued animal. He could not be governed, like the camel or the ox. If the sheaves of the harvest were laid on him, there would be no certainty that he would convey them where the farmer wished them.

And gather it into thy barn? Or, rather, “to thy threshing-floor,” for so the word used here $\hat{\text{r}}\text{g}\text{U}^{\text{m}637}$ means. It was not common to gather a harvest into a barn, but it was usually collected on a hard-trod place and there threshed and winnowed. For the use of the word, see $\langle 0882 \rangle$ Ruth 3:2; $\langle 0057 \rangle$ Judges 6:37; $\langle 0483 \rangle$ Numbers 18:30; $\langle 2210 \rangle$ Isaiah 21:10.

$\langle 4893 \rangle$ **Job 39:13.** *Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks?* In the previous verses the appeal had been to the wild and untamable animals of the desert. In the prosecution of the argument, it was natural to allude to the feathered tribes which resided there also, and which were distinguished for their strength or fleetness of wing, as proof of the wisdom and the superintending providence of God. The idea is, that these animals, far away from the abodes of man, where it could not be pretended that man had anything to do with their training, had habits and instincts special to themselves, which showed great variety in the divine plans, and at the same time consummate wisdom. The appeal in the following verses ($\langle 4893 \rangle$ Job 39:13-18) is to the remarkable habits of the ostrich, as illustrating the wisdom and the superintending providence of God. There has been very great variety in the translation of this verse, and it is important to ascertain its real meaning, in order to know whether there is any allusion here to the peacock, or whether it refers wholly to the ostrich. The Septuagint did not understand the passage, and a part of the words they endeavored to translate, but the others are retained without any attempt to explain them. Their version is, $\Pi \text{Πτερυξ } \text{τερπομενων } \text{νηλασσα } , \text{εαν } \text{συλλαβη } \text{ασιδα } \text{και } \text{νεσσα}$ — the wing of the exulting Neelassa if she conceives (or comprehends) the Asia and Nessa.” Jerome renders it, “The wing of the ostrich is like the wings of the falcon and the hawk.” Schultens renders it,

“The wing of the ostrich is exulting; but is it the wing and the plumage of the stork?”

He enumerates no less than twenty different interpretations of the passage. Herder renders it,

“A wing with joyous cry is uplifted yonder; Is it the wing and feather of the ostrich?”

Umbreit renders it,

“The wing of the ostrich, which lifts itself joyfully, Does it not resemble the tail and feather of the stork?”

Rosenmuller renders it,

“The wing of the ostrich exults! Truly its wing and plumage is like that of the stork!”

Prof. Lee renders it,

“Wilt thou confide in the exulting of the wings of the ostrich? Or in her choice feathers and head-plumage, when she leaveth her eggs to the earth,” etc.

So Coverdale renders it,

“The ostrich (whose feathers are fairer than the wings of the sparrow-hawk), when he hath laid his eggs upon the ground, he breedeth them in the dust, and forgetteth them.”

In none of these versions, and in none that I have examined except that of Luther and the common English version, is there any allusion to the peacock; and amidst all the variety of the rendering, and all the difficulty of the passage, there is a common sentiment that the ostrich alone is referred to as the particular subject of the description. It is certain that the description proceeds with reference only to the habits of the ostrich, and it is very evident to my mind that in the whole passage there is no allusion whatever to the peacock. Neither the scope of the passage, nor the words employed, it is believed, will admit of such a reference. There is great difficulty in the Hebrew text, which no one has been able fully to explain, but it is sufficiently clear to make it manifest that the ostrich, and not the peacock, is the subject of the appeal. The word which is rendered “peacock,” נֶפֶס^{<47443>}, is derived from נָפַח^{<47442>}, “to give forth a tremulous and stridulous sound;” and then to give forth the voice in vibrations; to shake or trill the voice; and then, as in lamentation or joy the voice is often given forth in that manner, the word comes to mean to utter cries of joy;

^{<3126>}Isaiah 12:6; 35:6; and also cries of lamentation or mourning, ^{<3129>}Lamentations 2:19. The prevailing sense of the word in the Scriptures is to rejoice; to shout for joy; to exult. The name is here given to the bird referred to, evidently from the sound which it made, and probably from its

exulting or joyful cry. The word does not elsewhere occur in the Scriptures as applicable to a bird, and there is no reason whatever, either from its etymology, or from the connection in which it is found here, to suppose that it refers to the peacock. Another reason is suggested by Scheutzer (Phys. Sac. "in loc."), why the peacock cannot be intended here. It is, that the peacock is originally an East Indian fowl, and that it was imported at comparatively a late period in the Jewish history, and was doubtless unknown in the time of Job. In ^{<1102>}1 Kings 10:22, and ^{<402>}2 Chronicles 9:21, it appears that peacocks were among the remarkable productions of distant countries that were imported for use or luxury by Solomon, a fact which would not have occurred had they been common in the patriarchal times. To these reasons to show that the peacock is not referred to here, Bochart, whose chapters on the subject deserve a careful attention (Hieroz. P. ii. L. ii. c. xvi. xvii.), has added the following:

(1) That if the peacock had been intended here, the allusion would not have been so brief. Of so remarkable a bird there would have been an extended description as there is of the ostrich, and of the unicorn and the horse. If the allusion is to the peacock, it is by a bare mention of the name, and by no argument, as in other cases, from the habits and instincts of the fowl.

(2) The word which is used here as a description of the bird referred to, ^{<1743>}נִרְ, derived from the musical properties of the bird, is by no means applicable to the peacock. It is of all fowls, perhaps, least distinguished for beauty of voice.

(3) The property ascribed to the fowl here of "exulting in the wing," by no means agrees with the peacock. The glory and beauty of that bird is in the tail, and not in the wing. Yet the wing is here, from some cause, particularly specified. Bochart has demonstrated at great length, and with entire clearness, that the peacock was a foreign fowl, and that it must have been unknown in Judea and Arabia, as it was in Greece and Rome, at a period long after the time in which the book of Job is commonly supposed to have been written. The proper translation of the Hebrew here then would be, The wing of the exulting fowls "moves joyfully" — ^{<1595>}שֵׁלֵף. The attention seems to be directed to the wing, as being lifted up, or as vibrating with rapidity, or as being triumphant in its movement in eluding the pursuer. It is not its beauty particularly that attracts the attention, but its exulting, joyful, triumphant, appearance.

Or wings and feathers unto the ostrich? Margin, “or, the feathers of the stork and ostrich.” Most commentators have despaired of making any sense out of the Hebrew in this place, and there have been almost as many conjectures as there have been expositors. The Hebrew is, **מַיִן**^{<h518>} **הַרְבָּא**^{<h84>} **הַדְּיִשְׁי**^{<h2624>} **הַחֲנֹפֶה**^{<h5133>}. A literal translation of it would be, “Is it the wing of the stork, and the plumage,” or feathers? The object seems to be to institute a comparison of some kind between the ostrich and the stork. This comparison, it would seem, relates partly to the wings and plumage of the two birds, and partly to their habits and instincts; though the latter point of comparison appears to be couched in the mere name. So far as I can understand the passage, the comparison relates first to the wings and plumage. The point of vision is that of the sudden appearance of the ostrich with exulting wing, and the attention is directed to it as in the bounding speed of its movements when in rapid flight. In this view the usual name is not given to the bird — **תְּבַאֵ**^{<h1323>} **הַחַיָּא**^{<h284>},^{<h321>} Isaiah 13:21; 34:13; 43:20; ^{<h69>}Jeremiah 50:39, but merely the name of fowls making a stridulous or whizzing sound — **נִרְ**^{<h743>}. The question is then asked whether it has the wing and plumage of the stork — evidently implying that the wing of the stork might be supposed to be adapted to such a flight, but that it was remarkable that without such wings the ostrich was able to outstrip even the fleetest animal. The question is designed to turn the attention to the fact that the ostrich accomplishes its flight in this remarkable manner without being endowed with wings like the stork, which is capable of sustaining by its wings a long and rapid flight. The other point of the comparison seems couched in the name given to the stork, and the design is to contrast the habits of the ostrich with those of this bird — particularly in reference to their care for their young. The name given to the stork is **הַדְּיִשְׁי**^{<h2624>}, meaning literally “the pious,” a name usually given to it — “avis pia,” from its tenderness toward its young — a virtue for which it was celebrated by the ancients, Pliny “Hist. Nat. x;” Aelian “Hist. An. 3, 23.” On the contrary, the Arabs call the ostrich the impious or ungodly bird, on account of its neglect and cruelty toward its young. The fact that the ostrich thus neglects its young, is dwelt upon in the passage before us (^{<h394>}Job 39:14-17), and in this respect she is placed in strong contrast with the stork. The verse then, I suppose, may be rendered thus:

“A wing of exulting fowls moves joyfully! Is it the wing and the plumage of the pious bird?”



This means that with both (in regard to the wing and the habits of the two) there was a strong contrast, and yet designing to show that what seems to be a defect in the size and rigor of the wing, and what seems to be stupid forgetfulness of the bird in regard to its young, is proof of the wisdom of the Creator, who has so made it as to be able to outstrip the fleetest horse, and to be adapted to its shy and timid mode of life in the desert. The ostrich, whose principal characteristics are beautifully and strikingly detailed in this passage in Job, is a native of the torrid regions of Arabia and Africa. It is the largest of the feathered tribes and is the connecting link between quadrupeds and fowls. It has the general properties and outlines of a bird, and yet retains many of the marks of the quadruped. In appearance, the ostrich resembles the camel, and is almost as tall; and in the East is called “the camel-bird” (Calmet). It is covered with a plumage that resembles hair more nearly than feathers; and its internal parts bear as near a resemblance to those of the quadruped as of the bird creation — Goldsmith. See also Poiret’s “Travels in the Barbary States,” as quoted by Rosenmuller, “Alte u. neue Morgenland,” No. 770. A full description is there given of the appearance and habits of the ostrich. Its head and bill resemble those of a duck; the neck may be compared with that of the swan, though it is much longer; the legs and thighs resemble those of a hen, but are fleshy and large. The end of the foot is cloven, and has two very large toes, which like the leg are covered with scales. The height of the ostrich is usually seven feet from the head to the ground; but from the back it is only four, so that the head and the neck are about three feet long. From the head to the end of the tail, when the neck is stretched in a right line, the length is seven feet. One of the wings with the feathers spread out is three feet in length. At the end of the wing there is a species of spur almost like the quill of a porcupine. It is an inch long, and is hollow, and of a bony substance. The plumage is generally white and black, though some of them

are said to be gray. There are no feathers on the sides of the thighs, nor under the wings. It has not, like most birds, feathers of various kinds, but they are all bearded with detached hairs or filaments, without consistence and reciprocal adherence. The feathers of the ostrich are almost as soft as down, and are therefore wholly unfit for flying, or to defend the body from external injury. The feathers of other birds have the web broader on one side than the other, but those of the ostrich have the shaft exactly in the middle. In other birds, the filaments that compose the feathers of the wings are firmly attached to each other, or are “hooked together,” so that they are adapted to catch and resist the air; on those of the ostrich no such attachments are found. The consequence is, that they cannot oppose to the air a suitable resistance, as is the case with other birds, and are therefore incapable of flying, and in fact never mount on the wing. The wing is used (see the notes at ^{<389B>}Job 39:18) only to balance the bird, and to aid it in running. The great size of the bird — weighing 75 or 80 pounds — would require an immense power of wing to elevate it in the air, and it has, therefore, been furnished with the means of surpassing all other animals in the rapidity with which it runs, so that it may escape its pursuers. The ostrich is made to live in the wilderness, and it was called by the ancients “a lover of the deserts.” It is shy and timorous in no common degree, and avoids the cultivated fields and the abodes of man, and retreats into the utmost recesses of the desert. In those dreary wastes its subsistence is the few tufts of coarse grass which are scattered here and there, but it will eat almost anything that comes in its way. It is the most voracious of animals, and will devour leather, glass, hair, iron, stones, or anything that is given. Valisnieri found the first stomach filled with a quantity of incongruous substances; grass, nuts, cords, stones, glass, brass, copper, iron, tin, lead, and wood, and among the rest, a piece of stone that weighed more than a pound. It would seem that the ostrich is obliged to fill up the great capacity of its stomach in order to be at ease; but that, nutritious substances not occurring, it pours in whatever is at hand to supply the void. The flesh of the ostrich was forbidden by the laws of Moses to be eaten (^{<811B>}Leviticus 11:13), but it is eaten by some of the savage nations of Africa, who hunt them for their flesh, which they regard as a dainty. The principal value of the ostrich, however, and the principal reason why it is hunted, is in the long feathers that compose the wing and the tail, and which are used so extensively for ornaments. The ancients used these plumes in their helmets; the ladies, in the East, as well as in the West, use them to decorate their persons, and they have been extensively employed also as badges of

mourning on hearses. The Arabians assert that the ostrich never drinks, and the chosen place of its habitation — the waste, sandy desert — seems to confirm the assertion. As the ostrich, in the passage before us, is contrasted with the stork, the accompanying illustrations will serve to explain the passage.



White Stork.

~~1894~~ **Job 39:14.** *Which leaveth her eggs in the earth* That is, she does not build a nest, as most birds do, but deposits her eggs in the sand. The ostrich, Dr. Shaw remarks, lays usually from thirty to fifty eggs. The eggs are very large, some of them being above five inches in diameter, and weighing fifteen pounds — Goldsmith.

“We are not to consider,” says Dr. Shaw, “this large collection of eggs as if they were all intended for a brood. They are the greatest part of them reserved for food, which the dam breaks, and disposeth of according to the number and cravings of her young ones.”

The idea which seems to be conveyed in our common version is, that the ostrich deposits her eggs in the sand, and then leaves them, without further care, to be hatched by the heat of the sun. This idea is not, however, necessarily implied in the original, and is contrary to fact. The truth is, that the eggs are deposited with great care, and with so much attention to the manner in which they are placed, that a line drawn from those in the extremities would just touch the tops of the intermediate ones (see Damir, as quoted by Bochart, “Hieroz.” P. ii. Lib. ii. c. xvii. p. 253), and that they are hatched, as the eggs of other birds are, in a great measure by the heat imparted by the incubation of the parent bird. It is true that in the hot climates where these birds live, there is less necessity for constant incubation than in colder latitudes, and that the parent bird is more frequently absent; but she is accustomed regularly to return at night, and carefully broods over her eggs. See Le Valliant, “Travels in the Interior of

Africa,” ii. 209, 305. It is true also that the parent bird wanders sometimes far from the place where the eggs are deposited, and forgets the place, and in this case if another nest of eggs is seen, she is not concerned whether they are her own or not, for she is not endowed with the power of distinguishing between her own eggs and those of another. This fact seems to have given rise to all the fables stated by the Arabic writers about the stupidity of the ostrich; about her leaving her eggs; and about her disposition to sit on the eggs of others. Bochart has collected many of these opinions from the Arabic writers, among which are the following: Alkazuinius says,

“They say that no bird is more foolish than the ostrich, for while it forsakes its own eggs, it sits on the eggs of others; from the proverb, “Every animal loves its own young except the ostrich.”

Ottomanus says,

“Every animal loves its own progeny except the ostrich. But that pertains only to the male. For although the common proverb imputes folly to the female, yet with her folly she loves her young, and feeds them, and teaches them to fly, the same as other animals.”

Damir, an Arabic writer, says,

“When the ostrich goes forth from her nest, that she may seek food, if she finds the egg of another ostrich, she sits on that, and forgets her own. And when driven away by hunters, she never returns; whence, it is that she is described as foolish, and that the proverb in regard to her has originated.

And warmeth them in dust The idea which was evidently in the mind of the translators in this passage was, that the ostrich left her eggs in the dust to be hatched by the heat of the sun. This is not correct, and is not necessarily implied in the Hebrew, though undoubtedly the heat of the sand is made to contribute to the process of hatching the egg, and allows the parent bird to be absent longer from her nest than birds in colder climates. This seems to be all that is implied in the passage.

~~8395~~ **Job 39:15.** *And forgetteth that the foot may crush them* She lays her eggs in the sand, and not, as most birds do, in nests made on branches of trees, or on the crags of rocks, where they would be inaccessible, as if she

was forgetful of the fact that the wild beast might pass along and crush them. She often wanders away from them, also, and does not stay near them to guard them, as most parent birds do, as if she were unmindful of the danger to which they might be exposed when she was absent. The object of all this seems to be, to call the attention to the uniqueness in the natural history of this bird, and to observe that there were laws and arrangements in regard to it which seemed to show that she was deprived of wisdom, and yet that everything was so ordered as to prove that she was under the care of the Almighty. The great variety in the laws pertaining to the animal kingdom, and especially their want of resemblance to what would have occurred to man, seems to give the special force and point to the argument used here.

^{<8396>}**Job 39:16.** *She is hardened against her young ones* The obvious meaning of this passage, which is a fair translation of the Hebrew, is, that the ostrich is destitute of natural affection for her young; or that she treats them as if she had not the usual natural affection manifested in the animal creation. This sentiment also occurs in ^{<2948>}Lamentations 4:3,

“The daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness.”

This opinion is controverted by Buffon, but seems fully sustained by those who have most attentively observed the habits of the ostrich. Dr. Shaw, as quoted by Paxton, and in Robinson’s Calmet, says,

“On the least noise or trivial occasion she forsakes her eggs or her young ones, to which perhaps she never returns; or if she does, it may be too late either to restore life to the one, or to preserve the lives of the others.”

“Agreeable to this account,” says Paxton, “the Arabs meet sometimes with whole nests of these eggs undisturbed, some of which are sweet and good, and others addle and corrupted; others again have their young ones of different growths, according to the time it may be presumed they have been forsaken by the dam. They oftener meet a few of the little ones, not bigger than well-grown pullets, half-starved, straggling and moaning about like so many distressed orphans for their mothers.”

Her labour is in vain without fear Herder renders this, "In vain is her travail, but she regards it not." The idea in the passage seems to be this; that the ostrich has not that apprehension or provident care for her young which others birds have. It does not mean that she is an animal remarkably bold and courageous, for the contrary is the fact, and she is, according to the Arabian writers, timid to a proverb; but that she has none of the anxious solicitude for her young which others seem to have — the dread that they may be in want, or in danger, which leads them, often at the peril of their own lives, to provide for and defend them.

Job 39:17. *Because God hath deprived her of wisdom ...* That is, he has not imparted to her the wisdom which has been conferred on other animals. The meaning is, that all this remarkable arrangement, which distinguished the ostrich so much from other animals was to be traced to God. It was not the result of chance; it could not be pretended that it was by a human arrangement, but it was the result of divine appointment. Even in this apparent destitution of wisdom, there were reasons which had led to this appointment, and the care and good providence of God could be seen in the preservation of the animal. Particularly, though apparently so weak, and timid, and unwise, the ostrich had a noble hearing (^{1839B}Job 39:18), and when aroused, would scorn the fleetest horse in the pursuit, and show that she was distinguished for properties that were expressive of the goodness of God toward her, and of his care over her.

Job 39:18. *What time she lifteth up herself on high* In the previous verses reference had been made to the fact that in some important respects the ostrich was inferior to other animals, or had special laws in regard to its habits and preservation. Here the attention is called to the fact that, notwithstanding its inferiority in some respects, it had properties such as to command the highest admiration. Its lofty carriage, the rapidity of its flight, and the proud scorn with which it would elude the pursuit of the fleetest coursers, were all things that showed that God had so endowed it as to furnish proof of his wisdom. The phrase "what time she lifteth up herself," refers to the fact that she raises herself for her rapid flight. It does not mean that she would mount on her wings, for this the ostrich cannot do; but to the fact that this timid and cowardly bird would, when danger was near, rouse herself, and assume a lofty courage and bearing. The word here translated "lifteth up" *arm*,⁴⁷⁵⁴ means properly "to lash, to whip," as a horse, to increase its speed, and is here supposed by Gesenius to be used as

denoting that the ostrich by flapping her wings lashes herself up as it were to her course. All the ancient interpretations, however, as well as the common English version, render it as if it were but another form of the word $\mu\omega\text{r}$ ^{<47312>}, to raise oneself up, or to rise up, as if the ostrich aroused herself up for her flight. Herder renders it, "At once she is up, and urges herself forward." Taylor (in Calmet) renders it:

"Yet at the time she haughtily assumes courage; She scorneth the horse and his rider."

The leading idea is, that she rouses herself to escape her pursuer; she lifts up her head and body, and spreads her wings, and then bids defiance to anything to overtake her.

She scorneth the horse and his rider In the pursuit. That is, she runs faster than the fleetest horse, and easily escapes. The extraordinary rapidity of the ostrich has always been celebrated, and it is well known that she can easily outstrip the fleetest horse. Its swiftness is mentioned by Xenophon, in his *Anabasis*; for, speaking of the desert of Arabia, he says, that ostriches are frequently seen there; that none could overtake them; and that horsemen who pursued them were obliged soon to give over, "for they escaped far away, making use both of their feet to run, and of their wings, when expanded, as a sail, to waft them along." Marmelius, as quoted by Bochart (see above), speaking of a remarkable kind of horses, says, "that in Africa, Egypt, and Arabia, there is but one species of that kind which they call the Arabian, and that those are produced only in the deserts of Arabia. Their velocity is wonderful, nor is there any better evidence of their remarkable swiftness, than is furnished when they pursue the camel-bird." It is a common sentiment of the Arabs, Bochart remarks, that there is no animal which can overcome the ostrich in its course. Dr. Shaw says, "Notwithstanding the stupidity of this animal, its Creator hath amply provided for its safety by endowing it with extraordinary swiftness, and a surprising apparatus for escaping from its enemy. 'They, when they raise themselves up for flight, laugh at the horse and his rider.' They afford him an opportunity only of admiring at a distance the extraordinary agility, and the stateliness likewise of their motions, the richness of their plumage, and the great propriety there was in ascribing to them an expanded, quivering wing. Nothing, certainly, can be more entertaining than such a sight; the wings, by their rapid but unwearied vibrations, equally serving them for sails and for oars; while their feet, no less assisting in conveying them out

of sight, are no less insensible of fatigue.” “Travels,” 8vo., vol. ii. p. 343, as quoted by Noyes. The same representation is confirmed by the writer of a voyage to Senegal, who says,

“She sets off at a hand gallop; but after being excited a little, she expands her wings, as if to catch the wind, and abandons herself to a speed so great, that she seems not to touch the ground. I am persuaded she would leave far behind the swiftest English courser”
— Rob. Calmet.

Buffon also admits that the ostrich runs faster than the horse. These unexceptionable testimonies completely vindicate the assertion of the inspired writer. The proofs and illustrations here furnished at considerable length are designed to show that the statements here made in the book of Job are such as are confirmed by all the investigations in Natural History since the time the book was written. If the statements are to be regarded as an indication of the progress made in the science of Natural History at the time when Job lived, they prove that the observations in regard to this animal had been extensive and were surprisingly accurate. They show that the minds of sages at that time had been turned with much interest to this branch of science, and that they were able to describe the habits of animals with an accuracy which would do the highest credit to Pliny or to Buffon. If, however, the account here is to be regarded as the mere result of inspiration, or as the language of God speaking and describing what he had done, then the account furnishes us with an interesting proof of the inspiration of the book. Its minute accuracy is confirmed by all the subsequent inquiries into the habits of the animal referred to, and shows that the statement is based on simple truth. The general remark may here be made, that all the notices in the Bible of the subjects of science — which are indeed mostly casual and incidental — are such as are confirmed by the investigations which science in the various departments makes. Of what other ancient book but the Bible can this remark be made?

~~839~~ **Job 39:19.** *Hast thou given the horse strength?* The incidental allusion to the horse in comparison with the ostrich in the previous verse, seems to have suggested this magnificent description of this noble animal — a description which has never been surpassed or equalled. The horse is an animal so well known, that a particular description of it is here unnecessary. The only thing which is required is an explanation of the phrases used here, and a confirmation of the particular qualities here

attributed to the war-horse, for the description here is evidently that of the horse as he appears in war, or as about to plunge into the midst of a battle. The description which comes the nearest to this before us, is that furnished in the well known and exquisite passage of Virgil, Georg. iii. 84ff:

— turn, si qua sonum procul arma dedere, Stare loco
nescitedmientauribns, et tremitartus, Collectumq; premens volvit
sub naribusignem. Densa.iuba,et dextrojectata recumbat in armo.
At duplex agitur, per lumbos spina; cavatque Tellurem,et
solidograviter sonat ungulacornu.

*“But at the clash of arms, his ear afar
Drinks the deep sound, and vibrates to the war;
Flames from each nostril roll in gathered stream,
His quivering limbs with restless motion gleam;*

*O'er his right shoulder, floating full and fair,
Sweeps his thick mane, and spreads his pomp of hair;
Swift works his double spine; and earth around
Rings to his solid hoof that wears the ground.” — Sotheby*

Many of the circumstances here enumerated have a remarkable resemblance to the description in Job. Other descriptions and correspondences between this passage and the classic writers may be seen at length in Bochart, “Hieroz.” P. i. L. i.c. viii.; in Scheutzer, “Physica Sacra, in loc.,” and in the “Scriptorum variorum Sylloge (Vermischte Schriften,” Goetting. 1782), of Godofr. Less. A full account of the habits of the horse is also furnished by Michaelis in his “Dissertation on the most ancient history of horses and horse-breeding,” etc. Appendix to Art. clxvi. of the Commentary of the Laws of Moses, vol. ii. According to the results of the investigations of Michaelis, Arabia was not, as is commonly supposed, the native country of the horse, but its origin is rather to be sought in Egypt; and in the account which is given of the riches of Job, ~~ROMS~~ Job 1:3; 42:12, it is remarkable that the horse is not mentioned. It is, therefore, in a high degree probable that the horse was not known in his time as a domestic animal, and that, in his country at least, it was employed chiefly in war.

Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? There seems to be something incongruous in the idea of making thunder the clothing of the neck of a horse, and there as been considerable diversity in the exposition of the passage. There is evidently some allusion to the mane, but exactly in what

respect is not agreed. The Septuagint renders it, “Hast thou clothed his neck with terror” — φοβον ^{<5401>}? Jerome refers it to the “neighing” of the horse — “aut circumdabis collo ejus hinnitum” Prof. Lee renders it, “Clothest thou his neck with scorn?” Herder, “And clothed its neck with its flowing mane.” Umbreit, “Hast thou clothed his neck with loftiness?” Noyes, “Hast thou clothed his neck with its quivering mane?” Schultens, “convestis cervicem ejus tremore alacri” — “with rapid quivering;” and Dr. Good, “with the thunder-flash.” In this variety of interpretation, it is easy to perceive that the common impression has been that the mane is in some way referred to, and that the allusion is not so much to a sound as of thunder, as to some motion of the mane that attracted attention. The mane adds much to the majesty and beauty of the horse, and perhaps it was in some way decorated by the ancients so as to set it off with increased beauty. The word which is used here, and which is rendered “thunder” hm[^{<47483>} tæ], is from the verb μ[^{<47481>} æ], meaning to rage, to roar, as applied to the sea, ^{<4961>} Psalm 96:11; 98:7, and then to thunder. It has also the idea of trembling or quaking, ^{<4275>} Ezekiel 27:35, and also of provoking to anger, ^{<4006>} 1 Samuel 1:6. The verb and the noun are more commonly referred to thunder than anything else, ^{<48704>} Job 37:4,5; 40:9; ^{<4024>} 2 Samuel 22:14; ^{<49210>} 1 Samuel 2:10; 7:10; ^{<49813>} Psalm 18:13; 29:3; 77:18; 104:7; ^{<2916>} Isaiah 29:6. A full investigation of the meaning of the passage may be seen in Bochart, “Hieroz.” P. i. Lib. ii. c. viii. It seems to me to be very difficult to determine its meaning, and none of the explanations given are quite satisfactory. The word used requires us to understand the appearance of the neck of the horse as having some resemblance to thunder, but in what respect is not quite so apparent. It may be this; the description of the war-horse is that of an animal fitted to inspire terror. He is compared for battle; impatient of restraint; rushing forward into the thickest of the fight; tearing up the earth; breathing fire from his nostrils; and it was not unnatural, therefore, to compare him with the tempest. The majestic neck, with the erect and shaking mane, is likened to the thunder of the tempest that shakes everything, and that gives so much majesty and tearfulness to the gathering storm, and the description seems to be this — that his very neck is fitted to produce awe and alarm, like the thunder of the tempest. We are required, therefore, it seems to me, to adhere to the proper meaning of the word; and though in the coolness of criticism there may appear to be something incongruous in the application of thunder to the neck of the horse, yet it might not appear to be so if we saw such a war-

horse — and if the thought, not an unnatural one, should strike us, that in majesty and fury he bore a strong resemblance to an approaching tempest.

^{<1831>}**Job 39:20.** *Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper?* Or, rather, “as a locust” — **hBr**^{<1697>}**ḥæ**. This is the word which is commonly applied to the locust considered as gregarious, or as appearing in great numbers (from **hbr**^{<17235>}, “to be multiplied”). On the variety of the species of locusts, see Bochart “Hieroz.” P. ii. Lib. iv. c. 1ff The Hebrew word here rendered “make afraid” **v[æ]**^{<17493>} means properly “to be moved, to be shaken,” and hence, to tremble, to be afraid. In Hiphil, the form used here, it means to cause to tremble, to shake; and then “to cause to leap,” as a horse; and the idea here is, Canst thou cause the horse, an animal so large and powerful, to leap with the agility of a locust? See Gesenius, “Lex.” The allusion here is to the leaping or moving of the locusts as they advance in the appearance of squadrons or troops; but the comparison is not so much that of a single horse to a single locust, as of cavalry or a company of war-horses to an army of locusts; and the point of comparison turns on the elasticity or agility of the motion of cavalry advancing to the field of battle. The sense is, that God could cause that rapid and beautiful movement in animals so large and powerful as the horse, but that it was wholly beyond the power of man to effect it. It is quite common in the East to compare a horse with a locust, and travelers have spoken of the remarkable resemblance between the heads of the two. This comparison occurs also in the Bible; see ^{<2014>}Joel 2:4,

“The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen so shall they run;”

^{<1817>}Revelation 9:7. The Italians, from this resemblance, call the locust “cavaletta,” or little horse. Sir W. Ouseley says,

“Zakaria Cavini divides the locusts into two classes, like horsemen and footmen, ‘mounted and pedestrian.’”

Niebuhr says that he heard from a Bedouin near Bassorah, a particular comparison of the locust with other animals; but he thought it a mere fancy of the Arabs, until he heard it repeated at Bagdad. He compared the head of a locust to that of a horse, the breast to that of a lion, the feet to those of a camel, the belly with that of a serpent, the tail with that of a scorpion,

and the feelers with the hair of a virgin; see the Pictorial Bible on ²⁰¹⁴ Joel 2:4.

The glory of his nostrils is terrible Margin, as in Hebrew, “terrors.” That is, it is fitted to inspire terror or awe. The reference is to the wide-extended and fiery looking nostrils of the horse when animated, and impatient, for action. So Lucretius, L. v.:

Et fremitum patulis sub naribus edit ad arma.

So Virgil, “Georg.” iii. 87:

Collectumque premens voluit sub naribus ignem.

Claudian, in iv. “Consulatu Honorii.”

Ignescent patulae nares.

¹⁸³²**Job 39:21.** *He paweth in the valley* Margin, “or, His feet dig.” The marginal reading is more in accordance with the Hebrew. The reference is to the well known fact of the “pawing” of the horse with his feet, as if he would dig up the ground. The same idea occurs in Virgil, as quoted above:

caavatque

Tellurem, et solido graviter solar ungula cornu.

Also in Apollonius, L. iii. “Argonauticon:”

ὥς δ' ἀρηϊός ἵππος, ἠλδομένος πολεμίοιο,
Σκαρθμῶ ἐπιχρεμέθων κρούει πέδον .

*“As a war-horse, impatient for the battle,
Neighing beats the ground with bis hoofs”*

He goeth on to meet the armed men Margin, “armor.” The margin is in accordance with the Hebrew, but still the idea is substantially the same. The horse rushes on furiously against the weapons of war.

¹⁸³²**Job 39:22.** *He mocketh at fear* He laughs at that which is fitted to intimidate; that is, he is not afraid.

Neither turneth he back from the sword He rushes on it without fear. Of the fact here stated, and the accuracy of the description, there can be no doubt.

~~18923~~ **Job 39:23.** *The quiver rattleth against him* The quiver was a case made for containing arrows. It was usually slung over the shoulder, so that it could be easily reached to draw out an arrow. Warriors on horseback, as well as on foot, fought with bows and arrows, as well as with swords and spears; and the idea here is, that the war-horse bore upon himself these instruments of war. The rattling of the quiver was caused by the fact that the arrows were thrown somewhat loosely into the case or the quiver, and that in the rapid motion of the warrior they were shaken against each other. Thus, Virgil, Aeneid ix. 660:

— *pharetramque fuga sensere sonantem.*

Silius, L. 12:

Plena tenet et resonante pharetra.

And again:

Turba ruunt stridentque sagittiferi coryti.

So Homer (“Iliad, a.”), when speaking of Apollo:

Τοξ’ ὠμοισιν ἔχων, ἀμφηρεφεα τε φαρετρην
 Ἐκλανγξαν δ’ ἀρ’ οἰστοι ἐπ’ ὠμων χωομενοιο .

See Seheutzer’s “Phys. Sac., in loc.”

~~18924~~ **Job 39:24.** *He swalloweth the ground* He seems as if he would absorb the earth. That is, he strikes his feet into it with such fierceness, and raises up the dust in his prancing, as if he would devour it. This figure is unusual with us, but it is common in the Arabic. See Schultens, “in loc.,” and Bochart, “Hieroz.,” P. i. L. ii. c. viii. pp. 143-145. So Statius:

*Stare loco nescit, pereunt vestigia mille
 Ante fugam, absentemque ferit gravis ungula campum,
 Th’ impatient courser pants in every’ vein,
 And pawing seems to beat the distant plain;
 Hills, vales, and floods, appear already cross’d,
 And ere he starts a thousand steps are lost. — Pope*

Neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet This translation by no means conveys the meaning of the original. The true sense is probably expressed by Umbreit. “He standeth not still when the trumpet soundeth; “that is, he becomes impatient; he no longer confides in the voice of the

rider and remains submissive, but he becomes excited by the martial clangor, and rushes into the midst of the battle. The Hebrew word which is employed $\hat{m}æ^{h539}$ means properly “to prop, stay, support”; then “to believe, to be firm, stable”; and is that which is commonly used to denote an act of “faith,” or as meaning “believing.” But the original sense of the word is here to be retained, and then it refers to the fact that the impatient horse no longer stands still when the trumpet begins to sound for battle.

⌘ Job 39:25. *He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha* That is, “When the trumpet sounds, his voice is heard “as if” he said, Aha — or said that he heard the sound calling him to the battle.” The reference is to the impatient neighing of the war horse about to rush into the conflict.

And he smelleth the battle afar off That is, he snuffs, as it were, for the slaughter. The reference is to the effect of an approaching army upon a spirited war-horse, as if he perceived the approach by the sense of smelling, and longed to be in the midst of the battle.

The thunder of the captains literally, “the war-cry of the princes.” The reference is to the loud voices of the leaders of the army commanding the hosts under them. In regard to the whole of this magnificent description of the war-horse, the reader may consult Bochart, “Hieroz.” P. i. L. ii. c. viii., where the phrases used are considered and illustrated at length. The leading idea here is, that the war-horse evinced the wisdom and the power of God. His majesty, energy, strength, impatience for the battle, and spirit, were proofs of the greatness of Him who had made him, and might be appealed to as illustrating His perfections. Much as people admire the noble horse, and much as they take pains to train him for the turf or for battle, yet how seldom do they refer to it as illustrating the power and greatness of the Creator; and, it may be added, how seldom do they use the horse as if he were one of the grand and noble works of God!

⌘ Job 39:26. *Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom* The appeal here is to the hawk, because it is among the most rapid of the birds in its flight. The particular thing specified is its flying, and it is supposed that there was something special in that which distinguished it from other birds. Whether it was in regard to its speed, to its manner of flying, or to its habits of flying at periodical seasons, may indeed be made a matter of inquiry, but it is clear that the particular thing in this bird which was adapted to draw the attention, and which evinced especially the wisdom of God, was connected

with its flight. The word here rendered “hawk,” xnc⁴⁵³²² is probably generic, and includes the various species of the falcon or hawk tribe, as the jet-falcon, the goshawk, the sparrow hawk, the lanner, the saker, the hobby, the kestrel, and the merlin. Not less than one hundred and fifty species of the hawk, it is said, have been described, but of these many are little known, and many of them differ from others only by very slight distinctions. They are birds of prey, and, as many of them are endowed with remarkable docility, they are trained for the diversions of falconry — which has been quite a science among sportsmen. The falcon, or hawk, is often distinguished for fleetness. One, belonging to a Duke of Cleves, flew out of Westphalia into Prussia in one day; and in the county of Norfolk (England) one was known to make a flight of nearly thirty miles in an hour. A falcon which belonged to Henry IV. of France, having escaped from Fontainebleau, was found twenty-four hours after in Malta, the space traversed being not less than one thousand three hundred and fifty miles; being a velocity of about fifty-seven miles an hour, on the supposition that the bird was on the wing the whole time. It is this remarkable velocity which is here appealed to as a proof of the divine wisdom. God asks Job whether he could have formed these birds for their rapid flight. The wisdom and skill which has done this is evidently far above any that is possessed by man.

And stretch her wings toward the south Referring to the fact that the bird is migratory at certain seasons of the year. It is not here merely the rapidity of its flight which is referred to, but that remarkable instinct which leads the feathered tribes to seek more congenial climates at the approach of winter. In no way is this to be accounted for, except by the fact that God has so appointed it. This great law of the winged tribes is one of the clearest proofs of divine wisdom and agency.

<8327> **Job 39:27.** *Doth the eagle mount up at thy command?* Margin, as in Hebrew, “by thy mouth.” The meaning is, that Job had not power to direct or order the eagle in his lofty flight. The eagle has always been celebrated for the height to which it ascends. When Ramond had reached the summit of Mount Perdu, the highest of the Pyrenees, he perceived no living creature but an eagle which passed above him, flying with inconceivable rapidity in direct opposition to a furious wind. “Edin. Ency.” “Of all animals, the eagle flies highest; and from thence the ancients have given him the epithet of “the bird of heaven.” “Goldsmith.” What is particularly

worth remarking here is, the accuracy with which the descriptions in Job are made. If these are any indications of the progress of the knowledge of Natural History, that science could not have been then in its infancy. Just the things are adverted to here which all the investigations of subsequent ages have shown to characterize the classes of the feathered creation referred to.

And make her nest on high

“The nest of the eagle is usually built in the most inaccessible cliff of the rock, and often shielded from the weather by some jutting crag that hangs over it.” “Goldsmith.”

“It is usually placed horizontally, in the hollow or fissure, of some high and abrupt rock, and is constructed of sticks of five or six feet in length, interlaced with pliant twigs, and covered with layers of rushes, heath, or moss. Unless destroyed by some accident, it is supposed to suffice, with occasional repairs, for the same couple during their lives.” “Edin. Ency.”

~~1872B~~ **Job 39:28.** *She dwelleth and abideth on the rock*

“He rarely quits the mountains to descend into the plains. Each pair live in an insulated state, establishing their quarters on some high and precipitous cliff, at a respectful distance from others of the same species.” “Edin. Ency.”

They seem to occupy the same cliff, or place of abode, during their lives; and hence, it is that they are represented as having a permanent abode on the lofty rock. In Damir it is said that the blind poet Besar, son of Jazidi, being asked, if God would give him the choice to be an animal, what he would be, said that he would wish to be nothing else than an “alokab,” a species of the eagle, for they dwelt in places to which no wild animal could have access. Scheutzer, “Phys. Sac. in loc.” The word rendered “abideth” means commonly “to pass the night,” and here refers to the fact that the high rock was its constant abode or dwelling. By night as well as by day, the eagle had his home there.

Upon the crag of the rock Hebrew, “Upon the tooth of the rock” — from the resemblance of the crag of a rock to a tooth.

<832D> **Job 39:29.** *From, thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off*

“When far aloft, and no longer discernible by the human eye, such is the wonderful acuteness of its sight, that from the same elevation it will mark a hare, or even a smaller animal, and dart down on it with unerring aim.” “Edin. Ency.”

“Of all animals, the eagle has the quickest eye; but his sense of smelling is far inferior to that of the vulture. He never pursues, therefore, but in sight.” “Goldsmith.”

This power of sight was early known, and is celebrated by the ancients. Thus, Homer, ρ’ . verse 674.

— ὥστ’ αἰετος οὐρανὸν ἔφασι
ὄξυστον δερκεσθαι ὑποῦρανιων πετηενων .

“As the eagle of whom it is said that it enjoys the keenest vision of all the fowls under heaven.”

So Aelian, II. L. i. 32. Also Horace “Serm.” L. i. Sat. 3:

— *tam cernit acutum*
Quam aut aquila, aut serpens Epidaurus.

The Arabic writers say that the eagle can see “four hundred parasangs.” “Damir,” as quoted by Scheutzer. It is now ascertained that birds of prey search out or discern their food rather by the sight than the smell. No sooner does a camel fall and die on the plains of Arabia, than there may be seen in the far-distant sky apparently a black speck, which is soon discovered to be a vulture hastening to its prey. From that vast distance the bird, invisible to human eye, has seen the prey stretched upon the sand and immediately commences toward it its rapid flight.

<832D> **Job 39:30.** *Her young ones also suck up blood* The word used here [I & 15966] occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures. It is supposed to mean, to sup up greedily; referring to the fact that the young ones of the eagle devour blood voraciously. They are too feeble to devour the flesh, and hence, they are fed on the blood of the victim. The strength of the eagle consists in the beak, talons, and wings; and such is their power, that they are able to convey animals of considerable size, alive, to their places of abode. They often bear away in this manner, lambs, kids, and the young of

the gazelle. Three instances, at least, are known, where they have carried off children. In the year 1737, in Norway, a boy upward of two years of age was carried off by an eagle in the sight of his parents. Anderson, in his history of Iceland, asserts that in that island children of four and five years of age have experienced the same fate; and Ray mentions that in one of the Orkneys an infant of a year old was seized in the talons of an eagle, and conveyed about four miles to its eyry. “Edin. Ency.” The principal food of the young eagle is blood. The proof of this fact may be seen in Scheutzer’s “Phys. Sac., in loc.”

And where the slain are, there is she Hebrew, “the slain;” referring perhaps primarily to a field of battle — where horses, camels, and human beings, lie in confusion. It is not improbable that the Savior had this passage in view when he said, speaking of the approaching destruction of Jerusalem,

“For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together;” ^{<4ES>}Matthew 24:28.

Of the fact that they thus assemble, there can be no doubt. The “argument” in proof of the wisdom and majesty of the Almighty in these references to the animal creation, is derived from their strength, their instincts, and their special habits. We may make two remarks, in view of the argument as here stated:

(1) One relates to the remarkable accuracy with which they are referred to. The statements are not vague and general, but are minute and characteristic, about the habits and the instincts of the animals referred to. The very things are selected which are now known to distinguish those animals, and which are not found to exist in the same degree, if at all, in others. Subsequent investigations have served to confirm the accuracy of these descriptions, and they may be taken now as a correct account even to the letter of the natural history of the different animals referred to. If, therefore, as has already been stated, this is to be regarded as an indication of the state of natural science in the time of Job. it shows quite an advanced state; if it is not an indication of the existing state of knowledge in his time, if there was no such acquaintance with the animal creation as the result of observation, then it shows that these were truly the words of God, and are to be regarded as direct inspiration. At all events, the statement was evidently made under the influence of inspiration, and is worthy of the origin which it claims.

(2) The second remark is, that the progress of discovery in the science of natural history has only served to confirm and expand the argument here adverted to. Every new fact in regard to the habits and instincts of animals is a new proof of the wisdom and greatness of God and we may appeal now, with all the knowledge which we have on these subjects, with unanswerable force to the habits and instincts of the wild goats of the rock, the wild ass, the rhinoceros, the ostrich, the horse, the hawk, and the eagle, as each one furnishing some striking and special proof of the wisdom, goodness, superintending providence and power of the great Creator.

NOTES ON JOB 40

<840> Job 40:1. *Moreover, the LORD answered Job* The word “answered” is used here as it is often in the Scriptures, not to denote a reply to what had been immediately said, but to take up or continue an argument. What God said here was designed as a reply to the spirit which Job had so frequently manifested.

<840> Job 40:2. *Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him?* Gesenius renders this, “Contending shall the reprover of God contend with the Almighty?” Prof. Lee, “Shall one by contending with the Almighty correct this?” On the grammatical construction, see Gesenius on the word **rwSyi**^{h3250}, and Rosenmuller and Lee, “in loc.” The meaning seems to be this:

“Will he who would enter into a controversy with the Almighty now presume to instruct him? He that was so desirous of arguing his cause with God, will he now answer?”

All the language used here is taken from courts, and is such as I have had frequent occasion to explain in these notes. The reference is to the fact that Job had so often expressed a wish to carry his cause, as before a judicial tribunal, directly up to God. He had felt that if he could get it there, he could so argue it as to secure a verdict in his favor; that he could set arguments before the Almighty which would secure a reversal of the fearful sentence which had gone out against him, and which had caused him to be held as a guilty man. God now asks whether he who had been so anxious to have a legal argument, and to carry his cause himself before God — a man disposed to litigation before God **byri**^{h7378} — was still of the same mind, and felt himself qualified to take upon himself the office of an instructor, a corrector, an admonisher **rwSyi**^{h3250} of God? He had the opportunity now, and God here paused, after the sublime exhibition of his majesty and power in the previous chapters, to give him an opportunity, as he wished, to carry his cause directly before him. The result is stated in **<840> Job 40:3,4.** Job had now nothing to say.

He that reproveth God Or rather, “He that is disposed to carry his cause before God,” as Job had often expressed a wish to do. The word used here

j kꜥ⁴³¹⁹⁸ is often employed, especially in Hiphil, in a “forensic sense,” and means “to argue, to show, to prove” anything; then “to argue down, to confute, to convict;” see ^{<10125>}Job 6:25; 13:15; 19:5; 32:12; ^{<10117>}Proverbs 9:7,8; 15:12; 19:25. It is evidently used in that sense here — a Hiphil participle **j kꜥ**⁴³¹⁹⁸ — and refers, not to any man in general who reproves God, but to Job in particular, as having expressed a wish to carry his cause before him, and to argue it there.

Let him answer it Or rather, “Let him answer him.” That is, Is he now ready to answer? There is now an opportunity for him to carry his cause, as he wished, directly before God. Is he ready to embrace the opportunity, and to answer now what the Almighty has said? This does not mean, then, as the common version would seem to imply, that the man who reproves God must be held responsible for it, but that Job, who had expressed the wish to carry his cause before God, had now an opportunity to do so. That this is the meaning, is apparent from the next verses, where Job says that he was confounded, and had nothing to say.

^{<8401>}**Job 40:4.** *Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer thee?*

“Instead of being able to argue my cause, and to vindicate myself as I had expected, I now see that I am guilty, and I have nothing to say.”

He had argued boldly with his friends. He had, before them, maintained his innocence of the charges which they brought against him, and had supposed that he would be able to maintain the same argument before God. But when the opportunity was given, he felt that he was a poor, weak man; a guilty and miserable offender. It is a very different thing to maintain our cause before God, from what it is to maintain it before people; and though we may attempt to vindicate our own righteousness when we argue with our fellow-creatures, yet when we come to maintain it before God we shall be dumb. On earth, people vindicate themselves; what will they do when they come to stand before God in the judgment?

I will lay mine hand upon my mouth An expression of silence. Catlin, in his account of the Mandan Indians, says that this is a common custom with them when anything wonderful occurs. Some of them laid their hands on their mouths and remained in this posture by the hour, as an expression of astonishment at the wonders produced by the brush in the art of painting; compare the notes at ^{<10205>}Job 21:5; 29:9.

Job 40:5. *Once have I spoken* That is, in vindicating myself. He had once spoken of God in an irreverent and improper manner, and he now saw it.

But I will not answer I will not now answer, as I had expressed the wish to do. Job now saw that he had spoken in an improper manner, and he says that he would not repeat what he had said.

Yea, twice He had not only offended once, as if in a thoughtless and hasty manner, but he had repeated it, showing deliberation, and thus aggravating his guilt. When a man is brought to a willingness to confess that he has done wrong once, he will be very likely to see that he has been guilty of more than one offence. One sin will draw on the remembrance of another; and the gate once open, a flood of sins will rush to the recollection. It is not common that a man can so isolate a sin as to repent of that alone, or so look at one offence against God as not to feel that he has been often guilty of the same crimes.

But I will proceed no further Job felt doubtless that if he should allow himself to speak again, or to attempt now to vindicate himself, he would be in danger of committing the same error again. He now saw that God was right; that he had himself repeatedly indulged in an improper spirit, and that all that became him was a penitent confession in the fewest words possible. We may learn here:

(1) That a view of God is fitted to produce in us a deep sense of our own sins. No one can feel himself to be in the presence of God, or regard the Almighty as speaking to him, without saying, “Lo I am vile? There is nothing so much fitted to produce a sense of sinfulness and nothingness as a view of God.

(2) The world will be mute at the day of judgment. They who have been most loud and bold in vindicating themselves will then be silent, and will confess that they are vile, and the whole world “will become guilty before God.” If the presence and the voice of God produced such an effect on so good a man as Job, what will it not do on a wicked world?

(3) A true penitent is disposed to use but few words; “God be merciful to me a sinner,” or, “lo, I am vile,” is about all the language which the penitent employs. He does not go into long arguments, into metaphysical

distinctions, into apologies and vindications, but uses the simplest language of confession, and then leaves the soul, and the cause, in the hands of God.

(4) Repentance consists in stopping where we are, and in resolving to add no more sin. “I have erred,” is its language. “I will not add to it, I will do so no more,” is the immediate response of the soul. A readiness to go into a vindication, or to expose oneself to the danger of sinning again in the same way, is an evidence that there is no true repentance. Job, a true penitent, would not allow himself even to speak again on the subject, lest he should be guilty of the sin which he had already committed.

(5) In repentance we must be willing to retract our errors, and confess that we were wrong — no matter what favorite opinions we have had, or how tenaciously and zealously we have defended and held them. Job had constructed many beautiful and eloquent arguments in defense of his opinions; he had brought to bear on the subject all the results of his observation, all his attainments in science, all the adages and maxims that he had derived from the ancients, and from a long contact with mankind, but he was now brought to a willingness to confess that his arguments were not solid, and that the opinions which he had cherished were erroneous. It is often more difficult to abandon opinions than vices; and the proud philosopher when he exercises repentance has a more difficult task than the victim of low and debasing sensuality. His opinions are his idols. They embody the results of his reading, his reflections, his conversation, his observation, and they become a part of himself. Hence, it is, that so many abandoned sinners are converted, and so few philosophers; that religion spreads often with so much success among the obscure and the openly wicked, while so few of the “wise men of the world” are called and saved.

Job 40:6. *Then answered the Lord unto Job out of the whirlwind* See the notes at **Job 38:1**. God here resumes the argument which had been interrupted in order to give Job an opportunity to speak and to carry his cause before the Almighty, as he had desired, see **Job 40:2**. Since Job had nothing to say, the argument, which had been suspended, is resumed and completed.

Job 40:7. *Gird up thy loins now like a man* An expression taken from the ancient mode of dress. That was a loose, flowing robe, which was secured by a girdle when traveling, or when one entered upon anything requiring energy; see the notes at **Matthew 5:38-41**. The meaning here

is, "Prepare thyself for the highest effort that can be made. Put forth all your strength, and explain to me what will now be said;" compare the notes at ^{<2342>}Isaiah 41:21.

I will demand of thee Hebrew "I will ask of thee." That is, I will submit some questions to you to be answered.

And declare thou unto me Hebrew "Cause me to know." That is, furnish a satisfactory answer to these inquiries, so as to show that you understand the subject. The object is to appeal to the proofs of divine wisdom, and to show that the whole subject was far above human comprehension.

^{<840>}**Job 40:8.** *Wilt thou disannul my judgment?* Wilt thou "reverse" the judgment which I have formed, and show that it should have been different from what it is? This was implied in what Job had undertaken. He had complained of the dealings of God, and this was the same as saying that he could show that those dealings should have been different from what they were. When a man complains against God, it is always implied that he supposes he could show why his dealings should be different from what they are, and that they should be reversed.

Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous? Or, rather, probably, "Wilt thou show that I am wrong because thou art superior in justice?" Job had allowed himself to use language which strongly implied that God was improperly severe. He had regarded himself as punished far beyond what he deserved, and as suffering in a manner which justice did not demand. All this implied that "he" was more righteous in the case than God, for when a man allows himself to vent such complaints, it indicates that he esteems himself to be more just than his Maker. God now calls upon Job to maintain this proposition, since he had advanced it, and to urge the arguments which would prove that "he" was more righteous in the case than God. It was proper to demand this. It was a charge of such a nature that it could not be passed over in silence, and God asks, therefore, with emphasis, whether Job now supposed that he could institute such an argument as to show that he was right and his Maker wrong.

^{<841>}**Job 40:9.** *Hast thou an arm like God?* The arm is the symbol of strength. The question here is, whether Job would venture to compare his strength with the omnipotence of God?

Or canst thou thunder with a voice like him? Thunder is a symbol of the majesty of the Most High, and is often spoken of as the voice of God; see Psalm 29. The question here is, whether Job could presume to compare himself with the Almighty, whose voice was the thunder?

Job 40:10. *Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency* That is, such as God has. Put on everything which you can, which would indicate rank, wealth, power, and see whether it could all be compared with the majesty of God; compare ¹⁹⁴⁰Psalm 104:1,

“O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty.”

Job 40:11. *Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath* That is, as God does. Show that the same effects can be produced by “your” indignation which there is in his. God appeals here to the effect of his displeasure in prostrating his foes as one of the evidences of his majesty and glory, and asks Job, if he would compare himself with him, to imitate him in this, and produce similar effects.

And behold every one that is proud, and abase him That is, “look” upon such an one and bring him low, or humble him by a look. It is implied here that God could do this, and he appeals to it as a proof of his power.

Job 40:12. *And tread down the wicked in their place* Even in the very place where they are, crush them to the dust, as God can. It is implied that God was able to do this, and he appeals to it as a proof of his power.

Job 40:13. *Hide them in the dust together;* compare ²⁰⁰Isaiah 2:10. The meaning seems to be, that God had power to prostrate the wicked in the dust of the earth, and he calls upon Job to show his power by doing the same thing.

And bind their faces in secret The word “faces” here is probably used (like the Greek *πρισωπα*) to denote “persons.” The phrase “to bind them,” is expressive of having them under control or subjection; and the phrase “in secret” may refer to some secret or safe place — as a dungeon or prison. The meaning of the whole is, that God had power to restrain and control the haughty and the wicked, and he appeals to Job to do the same.

Job 40:14. *Then will I also confess unto thee ...* If you can do all this, it will be full proof that you can save yourself, and that you do not need the

divine interposition. If he could do all this, then it might be admitted that he was qualified to pronounce a judgment on the divine counsels and dealings. He would then show that he had qualifications for conducting the affairs of the universe.

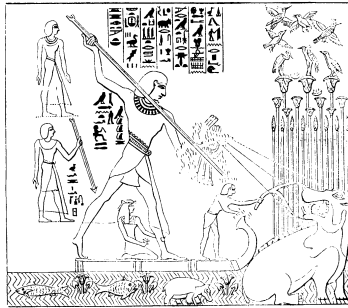
Job 40:15. *Behold now behemoth* Margin, “or, the elephant, as some think.” In the close of the argument, God appeals to two animals as among the chief of his works, and as illustrating more than any others his power and majesty — the behemoth and the leviathan. A great variety of opinions has been entertained in regard to the animal referred to here, though the “main” inquiry has related to the question whether the “elephant” or the “hippopotamus” is denoted. Since the time of Bochart, who has gone into an extended examination of the subject (“Hieroz.” P. ii. L. ii. c. xv.), the common opinion has been that the latter is here referred to. As a “specimen” of the method of interpreting the Bible which has prevailed, and as a proof of the slow progress which has been made toward settling the meaning of a difficult passage, we may refer to some of the opinions which have been entertained in regard to this animal. They are chiefly taken from the collection of opinions made by Schultens, “in loc.” Among them are the following:

- (1) That wild animals in general are denoted. This appears to have been the opinion of the translators of the Septuagint.
- (2) Some of the rabbis supposed that a huge monster was referred to, that ate every day “the grass of a thousand mountains.”
- (3) It has been held by some that the wild bull was referred to. This was the opinion particularly of Sanctius.
- (4) The common opinion, until the time of Bochart, has been that the elephant was meant. See the particular authors who have held this opinion enumerated in Schultens.
- (5) Bochart maintained, and since his time the opinion has been generally acquiesced in, that the “riverhorse” of the Nile, or the hippopotamus, was referred to. This opinion he has defended at length in the “Hieroz.” P. ii. L. v. c. xv.
- (6) Others have held that some “hieroglyphic monster” was referred to, or that the whole description was an emblematic representation, though without any living original. Among those who have held this sentiment,

some have supposed that it is designed to be emblematic of the old Serpent; others, of the corrupt and fallen nature of man; others, that the proud, the cruel, and the bloody are denoted; most of the “fathers” supposed that the devil was here emblematically represented by the behemoth and the leviathan; and one writer has maintained that Christ was referred to!

To these opinions may be added the supposition of Dr. Good, that the behemoth here described is at present a genus altogether extinct, like the mammoth, and other animals that have been discovered in fossil remains. This opinion is also entertained by the author of the article on “Mazology,” in the Edinburgh Encyclopaedia, chiefly for the reason that the description of the “tail” of the behemoth (^{<1807>}Job 40:17) does not well accord with the hippopotamus. There must be admitted to be some plausibility in this conjecture of Dr. Good, though perhaps I shall be able to show that there is no necessity for resorting to this supposition. The word “behemoth” **תְּבַחֲמוֹת**^{<1930>}, used here in the plural number, occurs often in the singular number, to denote a dumb beast, usually applied to the larger kind of quadrupeds. It occurs very often in the Scriptures, and is usually translated “beast,” or collectively “cattle.” It usually denotes land animals, in opposition to birds or reptiles. See the Lexicons, and Taylor’s “Hebrew Concordance.” It is rendered by Dr. Nordheimer (Hebrews Con.) in this place, “hippopotamus.” The plural form is often used (compare ^{<1524>}Deuteronomy 32:24; ^{<1827>}Job 12:7; ^{<2124>}Jeremiah 12:4; ^{<3127>}Habakkuk 2:17; ^{<1510>}Psalms 50:10), but in no other instance is it employed as a proper name. Gesenius supposes that under the form of the word used here, there lies concealed some Egyptian name for the hippopotamus, “so modified as to put on the appearance of a Semitic word. Thus, the Ethiopian “pehemout” denotes “water-ox,” by which epithet (“bomarino”) the Italians also designate the hippopotamus.” The translations do not afford much aid in determining the meaning of the word. The Septuagint renders it, **θηρία**^{<2342>}, “wild beasts;” Jerome retains the word, “Behemoth;” the Chaldee, **אֲנַחְבַּ**, “beast;” the Syriac retains the Hebrew word; Coverdale renders it, “cruelbeast;” Prof. Lee, “the beasts;” Umbreit, “Nilpferd,” “Nile-horse;” and Noyes, “river-horse.” The only method of ascertaining, therefore, what animal is here intended, is to compare carefully the characteristics here referred to with the animals now known, and to find in what one these characteristics exist. We may here safely “presume” on the entire accuracy of the description, since we have found the previous

descriptions of animals to accord entirely with the habits of those existing at the present day. The illustration drawn from the passage before us, in regard to the nature of the animal, consists of two parts:



EGYPTIAN SPEARING HIPPOPOTAMUS.

(1) The “place” which the description occupies in the argument. That it is an “aquatic” animal, seems to follow from the plan and structure of the argument. In the two discourses of YAHWEH (Job 38—41), the appeal is made, first, to the phenomena of nature (Job 38); then to the beasts of the earth, among whom the “ostrich” is reckoned (^{<831>}Job 39:1-25); then to the fowls of the air (^{<832>}Job 39:26-30); and then follows the description of the behemoth and the leviathan. It would seem that an argument of this kind would not be constructed without some allusion to the principal wonders of the deep; and the fair presumption, therefore, is, that the reference here is to the principal animals of the aquatic race. The argument in regard to the nature of the animal from the “place” which the description occupies, seems to be confirmed by the fact that the account of the behemoth is immediately followed by that of the leviathan — beyond all question an aquatic monster. As they are here grouped together in the argument, it is probable that they belong to the same class; and if by the leviathan is meant the “crocodile,” then the presumption is that the river-horse, or the hippopotamus, is here intended. These two animals, as being Egyptian wonders, are everywhere mentioned together by ancient writers; see Herodotus, ii. 69-71; Diod. Sic. i.35; and Pliny, “Hist. Nat.” xxviii. 8.

(2) The character of the animal may be determined from the “particular things” specified. Those are the following:

(a) It is an amphibious animal, or an animal whose usual resort is the river, though he is occasionally on land. This is evident, because he is mentioned as lying under the covert of the reed and the fens; as abiding in marshy places, or among the willows of the brook, (^{<842>}Job 40:21,22), while at

other times he is on the mountains, or among other animals, and feeds on grass like the ox, ^{<1805>}Job 40:15,20. This account would not agree well with the elephant, whose residence is not among marshes and fens, but on solid ground.

(b) He is not a carnivorous animal. This is apparent, for it is expressly mentioned that he feeds on grass, and no allusion is made to his at any time eating flesh, ^{<1805>}Job 40:15,20. This part of the description would agree with the elephant as well as with the hippopotamus.

(c) His strength is in his loins, and in the navel of his belly, ^{<1806>}Job 40:16. This would agree with the hippopotamus, whose belly is equally guarded by his thick skin with the rest of his body, but is not true of the elephant. The strength of the elephant is in his head and neck, and his weakest part, the part where he can be most successfully attacked, is his belly. There the skin is thin and tender, and it is there that the rhinoceros attacks him, and that he is even annoyed by insects. Pliny, Lib. viii. c. 20; Aelian, Lib. xvii. c. 44; compare the notes at ^{<1806>}Job 40:16.

(d) He is distinguished for some unique movement of his tail — some slow and stately motion, or a certain “inflexibility” of the tail, like a cedar. This will agree with the account of the hippopotamus; see the notes at ^{<1807>}Job 40:17.

(e) He is remarkable for the strength of his bones, ^{<1808>}Job 40:18,

(f) He is remarkable for the quantity of water which he drinks at a time, ^{<1809>}Job 40:23; and

(g) he has the power of forcing his way, chiefly by the strength of his nose, through snares by which it is attempted to take him, ^{<1809>}Job 40:24.

These characteristics agree better with the hippopotamus than with any other known animal; and at present critics, with few exceptions, agree in the opinion that this is the animal which is referred to. As additional reasons for supposing that the “elephant” is not referred to, we may add:

(1) that there is no allusion to the proboscis of the elephant, a part of the animal that could not have failed to be alluded to if the description had pertained to him; and

(2) that the elephant was wholly unknown in Arabia and Egypt.

The hippopotamus (ἵπποποταμός) or “river horse” belongs to the mammalia, and is of the order of the “pachydermata,” or thick-skinned animals. To this order belong also the elephant, the tapirus, the rhinoceros, and the swine. “Edin. Ency.,” art. “Mazology.” The hippopotamus is found principally on the banks of the Nile, though it is found also in the other large rivers of Africa, as the Niger, and the rivers which lie between that and the Cape of Good Hope. It is not found in any of the rivers which run north into the Mediterranean except the Nile, and there only at present in that portion which traverses Upper Egypt; and it is found also in the lakes and fens of Ethiopia. It is distinguished by a broad head; its lips are very thick, and the muzzle much inflated; it has four very large projecting curved teeth in the under jaw, and four also in the upper; the skin is very thick, the legs short, four toes on each foot inverted with small hoofs, and the tail is very short. The appearance of the animal, when on land, is represented as very uncouth, the body being very large, flat, and round, the head enormously large in proportion, the feet as disproportionably short, and the armament of teeth in its mouth truly formidable. The length of a male has been known to be seventeen feet, the height seven, and the circumference fifteen; the head three feet and a half, and the mouth about two feet in width. Mr. Bruce mentions some in the lake Tzana that were twenty feet in length. The whole animal is covered with short hair, which is more thickly set on the under than the upper parts. The general color of the animal is brownish. The skin is exceedingly tough and strong, and was used by the ancient Egyptians for the manufacture of shields. They are timid and sluggish on land, and when pursued they betake themselves to the water, plunge in, and walk on the bottom, though often compelled to rise to the surface to take in fresh air. In the day-time they are so much afraid of being discovered, that when they rise for the purpose of breathing, they only put their noses out of the water; but in rivers that are unfrequented, by mankind they put out the whole head. In shallow rivers they make deep holes in the bottom to conceal their bulk. They are eaten with avidity by the inhabitants of Africa. The following account of the capture of a hippopotamus serves greatly to elucidate the description in the book of Job, and to show its correctness, even in those points which have formerly been regarded as poetical exaggerations. It is translated from the travels of M. Kuppell, the German naturalist, who visited Upper Egypt, and the countries still further up the Nile, and is the latest traveler in those regions (“Reisen in Nubia, Kordofan, etc.,” Frankf. 1829, pp. 52ff).

“In the province of Dongola, the fishermen and hippopotamus hunters form a distinct class or caste; and are called in the Berber language Hauait (pronounced “Howowit.”) They make use of a small canoe, formed from a single tree, about ten feet long, and capable of carrying two, and at most three men. The harpoon which they use in hunting the hippopotamus has a strong barb just back of the blade or sharp edge; above this a long and strong cord is fastened to the iron, and to the other end of this cord a block of light wood, to serve as a buoy, and aid in tracing out and following the animal when struck. The iron is then slightly fastened upon a wooden handle, or lance, about eight feet long. The hunters of the hippopotamus harpoon their prey either by day or by night; but they prefer the former, because they can then better parry the ferocious assaults of the enraged animal. The hunter takes in his right hand the handle of the harpoon, with a part of the cord; in his left the remainder of the cord, with the buoy. In this manner he cautiously approaches the creature as it sleeps by day upon a small island, or he watches at night for those parts of the shore where he hopes the animal will come up out of the water, in order to feed in the fields of grain. When he has gained the desired distance (about seven paces), he throws the lance with his full strength; and the harpoon, in order to hold, must penetrate the thick hide and into the flesh. The wounded beast commonly makes for the water, and plunges beneath it in order to conceal himself; the handle of the harpoon falls off, but the buoy swims, and indicates the direction which the animal takes. The harpooning of the hippopotamus is attended with great danger, when the hunter is perceived by the animal before he has thrown the harpoon. In such cases the beast sometimes rushes, enraged, upon his assailant, and crushes him at once between his wide and formidable jaws — an occurrence that once took place during our residence near Shendi. Sometimes the most harmless objects excite the rage of this animal; thus; in the region of Amera, a hippopotamus once craunched in the same way, several cattle that were fastened to a water-wheel. So soon as the animal has been successfully struck, the hunters hasten in their canoe cautiously to approach the buoy, to which they fasten a long rope; with the other end of this they proceed to a largo boat or bark, on board of which are their companions. The rope is now drawn in; the pain thus occasioned by the barb of the harpoon excites the rage of the

animal, and he no sooner perceives the bark, than he rushes upon it; seizes it, if possible, with his teeth; and sometimes succeeds in shattering it, or oversetting it. The hunters, in the meantime, are not idle; they fasten five or six other harpoons in his flesh, and exert all their strength, by means of the cords of these, to keep him close alongside of the bark, in order thus to diminish, in some measure, the effects of his violence. They endeavor, with a long sharp iron, to divide the "ligamentum lugi," or to beat in the skull — the usual modes in which the natives kill this animal. Since the carcass of a full-grown hippopotamus is too large to be drawn out of the water without quite a number of men, they commonly cut up the animal, when killed, in the water, and draw the pieces ashore. In the whole Turkish province of Dongola, there are only one or two hippopotami killed annually. In the years 1821-23, inclusive, there were nine killed, four of which were killed by us. The flesh of the young animal is very good eating; when full grown, they are usually very fat, and their carcass is commonly estimated as equal to four or five oxen. The hide is used only for making whips, which are excellent; and one hide furnishes from three hundred and fifty to five hundred of them. The teeth are not used. One of the hippopotami which we killed was a very old male, and seemed to have reached his utmost growth. He measured, from the snout to the end of the tail, about fifteen feet, and his tusks, from the root to the point, along the external curve, twenty-eight inches. In order to kill him, we had a battle with him of four hours long, and that too in the night. Indeed, he came very near destroying our large bark, and with it, perhaps, all our lives. The moment he saw the hunters in the small canoe, as they were about to fasten the long rope to the buoy, in order to draw him in, he threw himself with one rush upon it, dragged it with him under water, and shattered it to pieces. The two hunters escaped the extreme danger with great difficulty. Out of twenty-five musketballs which were fired into the monster's head, at the distance of five feet, only one penetrated the hide and the bones near the nose; so that every time he breathed he snorted streams of blood upon the bark. All the other balls remained sticking in the thickness of his hide. We had at last to employ a small cannon, the use of which at so short a distance had not before entered our minds; but it was only after five of its balls, fired at the distance of a few feet, had mangled, most shockingly, the head and

body of the monster, that he gave up the ghost. The darkness of the night augmented the horrors and dangers of the contest. This gigantic hippopotamus dragged our large bark at will in every direction of the stream; and it was in a fortunate moment for us that he yielded, just as he had drawn the bark among a labyrinth of rocks, which might have been so much the more dangerous, because, from the great confusion on board, no one had observed them. Hippopotami of the size of the one above described cannot be killed by the natives, for want of a cannon. These animals are a real plague to the land, in consequence of their voraciousness. The inhabitants have no permanent means of keeping them away from their fields and plantations; all that they do is to make a noise during the night with a drum, and to keep up fires in different places. In some parts the hippopotami are so bold that they will yield up their pastures, or places of feeding, only when a large number of persons come rushing upon them with sticks and loud cries.”

The method of taking the hippopotamus by the Egyptians was the following:

“It was entangled by a running noose, at the extremity of a long line wound upon a reel, at the same time that it was struck by the spear of the chasseur. This weapon consisted of a broad, flat blade, furnished with a deep tooth or barb at the side, having a strong rope of considerable length attached to its upper end, and running over the notched summit of a wooden shaft, which was inserted into the head or blade, like a common javelin. It was thrown in the same manner, but on striking, the shaft fell and the iron head alone remained in the body of the animal, which, on receiving the wound, plunged into deep water, the rope having been immediately let out. When fatigued by exertion, the hippopotamus was dragged to the boat, from which it again plunged, and the same was repeated until it became perfectly exhausted: frequently receiving additional wounds, and being entangled by other nooses, which the attendants held in readiness, as it was brought within their reach.” Wilkinson’s “Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians,” vol. iii. pp. 70,71.

Which I made with thee That is, either “I have made him as well as you, have formed him to be a fellow-creature with thee,” or, “I have made him near thee “ — to wit, in Egypt. The latter Bochart supposes to be the true interpretation, though the former is the more natural. According to that, the meaning is, that God was the Creator of both; and he calls on Job to contemplate the power and greatness of a fellow-creature, though a brute, as illustrating his own power and majesty. The annexed engraving — the figures drawn from the living animal — shows the general appearance of the massive and unwieldy hippopotamus. The huge head of the animal, from the prominency of its eyes, the great breadth of its muzzle, and the singular way in which the jaw is placed in the head, is almost grotesque in its ugliness. When it opens its jaws its enormously large mouth and tongue, pinkish and fleshy, and armed with tusks of most formidable character, is particularly striking. In the engraving hippopotami are represented as on a river bank asleep, and in the water, only the upper part of the head appearing above the surface, and an old animal is conveying her young one on her back down the stream.

He eateth grass as an ox This is mentioned as a remarkable property of this animal. The “reasons” why it was regarded as so remarkable may have been:

- (1) that it might have been supposed that an animal so huge and fierce, and armed with such a set of teeth, would be carnivorous, like the lion or the tiger; and
- (2) it was remarkable that an animal that commonly lived in the water should be graminivorous, as if it were wholly a land animal.

The common food of the hippopotamus is “fish.” In the water they pursue their prey with great swiftness and perseverance. They swim with much force, and are capable of remaining at the bottom of a river for thirty or forty minutes. On some occasions three or four of them are seen at the bottom of a river, near some cataract, forming a kind of line, and seizing upon such fish as are forced down by the violence of the stream. “Goldsmith.” But it often happens that this kind of food is not found in sufficient abundance, and the animal is then forced on land, where it commits great depredations among plantations of sugar cane and grain. The fact here adverted to, that the food of the hippopotamus is grass or herbs, is also mentioned by Diodorus — *Κατανεμεται τον <3588> τε <5037> σιτον <4621> και <2532> τον <3588> χορτον <5528>*. The same thing is mentioned

also by Sparrmann, “Travels through South Africa,” p. 563, German Translation.

Job 40:16. *Lo now, his strength is in his loins* The inspection of the figure of the hippopotamus will show the accuracy of this. The strength of the elephant is in the neck; of the lion in the paw; of the horse and ox in the shoulders; but the principal power of the river-horse is in the loins; compare ^{<3401>}Nahum 2:1. This passage is one that proves that the elephant cannot be referred to.

And his force is in the navel of his belly The word which is here rendered “navel” ^{<18306>}*ryrîv* means properly “firm, hard, tough,” and in the plural form, which occurs here, means the “firm,” or “tough” parts of the belly. It is not used to denote the “navel” in any place in the Bible, and should not have been so rendered here. The reference is to the muscles and tendons of this part of the body, and perhaps particularly to the fact that the hippopotamus, by crawling so much on his belly among the stones of the stream or on land, acquires a special hardness or strength in those parts of the body. This clearly proves that the elephant is not intended. In that animal, this is the most tender part of the body. Pliny and Solinus both remark that the elephant has a thick, hard skin on the back, but that the skin of the belly is soft and tender. Pliny says (“Hist. Nat.” Lib. viii. c. 20), that the rhinoceros, when about to attack an elephant, “seeks his belly, as if he knew that that was the most tender part.” So Aelian, “Hist.” Lib. xvii. c. 44; see Bochart, as above.

Job 40:17. *He moveth his tail like a cedar* Margin, “setteth up.” The Hebrew word ^{<12654>}*xpê* means “to bend, to curve;” and hence, it commonly denotes “to be inclined, favorably disposed to desire or please.” The obvious meaning here is, that this animal had some remarkable power of “bending” or “curving” its tail, and that there was some resemblance in this to the motion of the cedar-tree when moved by the wind. In “what” this resemblance consisted, or how this was a proof of its power, it is not quite easy to determine. Rosenmuller says that the meaning is, that the tail of the hippopotamus was “smooth, round, thick, and firm,” and in this respect resembled the cedar. The tail is short — being, according to Abdollatiph (see Ros.), about half a cubit in length. In the lower part, says he, it is thick, “equalling the extremities of the fingers;” and the idea here, according to this, is, that this short, thick, and apparently firm tail, was bent over by the will of the animal as the wind bends the branches of the

cedar. The point of comparison is not the “length,” but the fact of its being easily bent over or curved at the pleasure of the animal. Why this, however, should have been mentioned as remarkable, or how the power of the animal in this respect differs from others, is not very apparent. Some, who have supposed the elephant to be here referred to, have understood this of the proboscis. But though “this would be” a remarkable proof of the power of the animal, the language of the original will not admit of it. The Hebrew word **bnz**; ^{<h2180>} is used only to denote the tail. It is “possible” that there may be here an allusion to the unwieldy nature of every part of the animal, and especially to the thickness and inflexibility of the skin and what was remarkable was, that notwithstanding this, this member was entirely at its command. Still, the reason of the comparison is not very clear. The description of the movement of the “tail” here given, would agree much better with some of the extinct orders of animals whose remains have been recently discovered and arranged by Cuvier, than with that of the hippopotamus. Particularly, it would agree with the account of the ichthyosaurus (see Buckland’s “Geology, Bridgewater Treatise,” vol. i. 133ff), though the other parts of the animal here described would not accord well with this.

The sinews of his stones are wrapped together Good renders this, “haunches;” Noyes, Prof. Lee, Rosenmuller, and Schultens, “thighs;” and the Septuagint simply has: “his sinews.” The Hebrew word used here **dj pæ**; ^{<h644>} means properly “fear, terror,” ^{<h2516>} Exodus 15:16; ^{<h831>} Job 13:11; and, according to Gesenius, it then means, since “fear” is transferred to cowardice and shame, anything which “causes” shame, and hence, the secret parts. So it is understood here by our translators; but there does not seem to be any good reason for this translation, but there is every reason why it should not be thus rendered. The “object” of the description is to inspire a sense of the “power” of the animal, or of his capacity to inspire terror or dread; and hence, the allusion here is to those parts which were fitted to convey this dread, or this sense of his power — to wit, his strength. The usual meaning of the word, therefore, should be retained, and the sense then would be, “the sinews of his terror,” that is, of his parts fitted to inspire terror, “are wrapped together;” are firm, compact, solid. The allusion then is to his thighs or haunches, as being formidable in their aspect, and the seat of strength. The sinews or muscles of these parts seemed to be like a hard-twisted rope; compact, firm, solid, and such as to defy all attempts to overcome them.

Job 40:18. *His bones are as strong pieces of brass* The circumstance here adverted to was remarkable, because the common residence of the animal was the water, and the bones of aquatic animals are generally hollow, and much less firm than those of land animals. It should be observed here, that the word rendered “brass” in the Scriptures most probably denotes “copper.” Brass is a compound metal, composed of copper and zinc; and there is no reason to suppose that the art of compounding it was known at as early a period of the world as the time of Job. The word here translated “strong pieces” *qypā*,^{<h650>} is rendered by Schultens “alvei — channels,” or “beds,” as of a rivulet or stream; and by Rosenmuller, Gesenius, Noyes, and Umbreit, “tubes” — supposed to allude to the fact that they seemed to be hollow tubes of brass. But the more common meaning of the word is “strong, mighty,” and there is no impropriety in retaining that sense here; and then the meaning would be, that his bones were so firm that they seemed to be made of solid metal.

Job 40:19. *He is the chief of the ways of God* In size and strength. The word rendered “chief” is used in a similar sense in ^{<020>}Numbers 24:20, “Amalek was the first of the nations;” that is, one of the most powerful and mighty of the nations.

He that made him can make his sword approach unto him According to this translation, the sense is, that God had power over him, notwithstanding his great strength and size, and could take his life when he pleased. Yet this, though it would be a correct sentiment, does not seem to be that which the connection demands. That would seem to require some allusion to the strength of the animal; and accordingly, the translation suggested by Bochart, and adopted substantially by Rosenmuller, Umbreit, Noyes, Schultens, Prof. Lee, and others, is to be preferred — “He that made him furnished him with a sword.” The allusion then would be to his strong, sharp teeth, hearing a resemblance to a sword, and designed either for defense or for the purpose of cutting the long grass on which it fed when on the land. The propriety of this interpretation may be seen vindicated at length in Bochart, “Hieroz.” P. ii. Lib. v. c. xv. pp. 766, 762. The *άρπη* i.e. the sickle or scythe, was ascribed to the hippopotamus by some of the Greek writers. Thus, Nicander, “Theriacon,” verse 566:

Ἡ ηἰππον, τον Νειλοσ ὑπερ Σαιν αιθαλοεσσαν
 Βοσκει , αρουρησιν δε κακην επιβαλλεται. — ἀρπη

Ὁν θις πασσαγε θε Σχολιαστ ρεμαρκο, “Θε ἄρπη , means a sickle, and the teeth of the hippopotamus are so called — teaching that this animal consumes (τρωγει ^{<5176>}) the harvest.” See Bochart also for other examples. A slight inspection of the “cut” will show with what propriety it is said of the Creator of the hippopotamus, that he had armed him with a sickle, or sword.

^{<841>}**Job 40:20.** *Surely the mountains bring him forth food* That is, though he lies commonly among the reeds and fens, and is in the water a considerable portion of his time, yet he also wanders to the mountains, and finds his food there. But the point of the remark here does not seem to be, that the mountains brought forth food for him, but that he gathered it “while all the wild beasts played around him, or sported in his very presence.” It was remarkable that an animal so large and mighty, and armed with such a set of teeth, should not be carnivorous, and that the wild beasts on the mountains should continue their sports without danger or alarm in his very presence. This fact could be accounted for partly because the “motions” of the hippopotamus were so very slow and clumsy that the wild beasts had nothing to fear from him, and could easily escape from him if he were disposed to attack them, and partly from the fact that he seems to have “preferred” vegetable food. The hippopotamus is seldom carnivorous, except when driven by extreme hunger, and in no respect is he formed to be a beast of prey. In regard to “the fact” that the hippopotamus is sometimes found in mountainous or elevated places, see Bochart.

^{<842>}**Job 40:21.** *He lieth under the shady trees* Referring to his usually inactive and lazy life. He is disposed to lie down in the shade, and especially in the vegetable growth in marshy places on the banks of lakes and rivers, rather than to dwell in the open field or in the upland forest. This account agrees well with the habits of the hippopotamus. The word here and in ^{<842>}Job 40:22 rendered “shady trees” *hax*, ^{<6628>}, is by Gesenius, Noyes, Prof. Lee, and Schultens, translated “lotus,” and “wild lotus.” The Vulgate, Syriac, Rosenmuller, Aben-Ezra, and others, render it “shady trees.” It occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures, and it is difficult, therefore, to determine its meaning. According to Schultens and Gesenius, it is derived from the obsolete word *lax*, “to be thin, slender;” and hence, in Arabic it is applied to the “wild lotus” — a plant that grows abundantly on the banks of the Nile, and that often serves the wild beasts of the desert for a place of retreat. It is not very important whether it be rendered the

“lotus,” or “shades,” though the probable derivation of the word seems to favor the former.

In the covert of the reed It is well known that reeds abounded on the banks of the Nile. These would furnish a convenient and a natural retreat for the hippopotamus.

And fens hXKi^{th1207} — “marsh, marshy places.” This passage proves that the elephant is not here referred to. He is never found in such places.

<842> **Job 40:22.** *The shady trees* Probably the “lote-trees;” see the note at <842> Job 40:21. The same word is used here.

The willow-trees of the brook Of the “stream,” or “rivulet.” The Hebrew word ljæ^{h5158} means rather “a wady;” a gorge or gulley, which is swollen with torrents in the winter, but which is frequently dry in summer; see the notes at <8065> Job 6:15. Willows grew commonly on the banks of rivers. They could not be cultivated in the desert; <2317> Isaiah 15:7.

<842> **Job 40:23.** *Behold he drinketh up a river* Margin, “oppresseth.” The margin expresses the proper meaning of the Hebrew word, qvæ^{h6231}. It usually means to oppress, to treat with violence and injustice; and to defraud, or extort. But a very different sense is given to this verse by Bochart, Gesenius, Noyes, Schultens, Umbreit, Prof. Lee, and Rosenmuller. According to the interpretation given by them the meaning is, “The stream overfloweth, and he feareth not; he is secure, even though Jordan rush forth even to his mouth.” The reference then would be, not to the fact that he was greedy in his mode of drinking, but to the fact that this huge and fierce animal, that found its food often on the land, and that reposed under the shade of the lotus and the papyrus, could live in the water as well as on the land, and was unmoved even though the impetuous torrent of a swollen river should overwhelm him. The “names” by which this translation is recommended are a sufficient guarantee that it is not a departure from the proper meaning of the original. It is also the most natural and obvious interpretation. It is impossible to make good sense of the phrase “he oppresseth a river;” nor does the word used properly admit of the translation “he drinketh up.” The word “river” in this place, therefore rhn^{h5104}, is to be regarded as in the nominative case to qvæ^{h6231}, and the meaning is, that when a swollen and impetuous river rushes along and bears all before it, and, as it were, “oppresses” everything in its course,

he is not alarmed; he makes no effort to flee; he lies perfectly calm and secure. What was “remarkable” in this appears to have been, that an animal that was so much on land, and that was not properly a fish, should be thus calm and composed when an impetuous torrent rolled over him. The Septuagint appears to have been aware that this was the true interpretation, for they render this part of the verse, *Εαν γενηται πλημμυρα*, etc. — “Should there come a flood, he would not regard it.” Our common translation seems to have been adopted from the Vulgate — “Ecceabsorbabit fluvium.”

He trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth Or, rather, “He is confident [i.e. unmoved) though Jordan should rush forth to his mouth.” The idea is, that though the whole river Jordan should seem to pour down upon him as “if” it were about to rush into his mouth, it would not disturb him. Even such an impetuous torrent would not alarm him. Being amphibious, he would not dread what would fill a land animal with alarm. There is no evidence that the hippopotamus was ever found in the river Jordan, nor is it necessary to suppose this in order to understand this passage. The mention of the Jordan shows indeed that this river was known to the writer of this book, and that it was probably written by someone who resided in the vicinity. In speaking of this huge foreign animal, it was not unnatural to mention a river that was familiarly known, and to say that he would not be alarmed should such a river rush suddenly and impetuously upon him. Even though the hippopotamus is an inhabitant of the Nile, and was never seen in the Jordan, it was much more natural to mention this river in this connection than the Nile. It was better known, and the illustration would be better understood, and to an inhabitant of that country would be much more striking. I see no reason, therefore, for the supposition of Bechart and Rosenmuller, that the Jordan here is put for any large river. The illustration is just such as one would have used who was well acquainted with the Jordan — that the river horse would not be alarmed even though such a river should pour impetuously upon him.

~~812~~ **Job 40:24.** *He taketh it with his eyes* Margin, “Or, will any take him in his sight, or, bore his nose with a gin!” From this marginal reading it is evident that our translators were much perplexed with this passage. Expositors have been also much embarrassed in regard to its meaning, and have differed much in their exposition. Rosenmuller supposes that this is to be regarded as a question, and is to be rendered, “Will the hunter take him while he sees him?” — meaning that he could not be taken without some

snare or guile. The same view also is adopted by Bochart, who says that the hippopotamus could be taken only by some secret snare or pitfall. The common mode of taking him, he says, was to excavate a place near where the river horse usually lay, and to cover it over with reeds and canes, so that he would fall into it unawares. The meaning then is, that the hunter could not approach him openly and secure him while he saw him, but that some secret plan must be adopted to take him. The meaning then is, “Can he be taken when he sees the hunter?”

His nose pierceth through snares Or rather, “When taken in snares, can anyone pierce his nose?” That is, Can the hunter even then pierce his nose so as to put in a ring or cord, and lead him wherever he pleases? This was the common method by which a wild animal was secured when taken (see the notes at ~~2372~~ Isaiah 37:29), but it is here said that this could not be done to this huge animal. He could not be subdued in this manner. He was a wild, untamed and fierce animal, that defied all the usual methods by which wild beasts were made captive. In regard to the difficulty of taking this animal, see the account of the method by which it is now done, in the notes at ~~1815~~ Job 40:15. That account shows that there is a striking accuracy in the description.

NOTES ON JOB 41

Job 41:1. *Canst thou draw out* As a fish is drawn out of the water. The usual method by which fish were taken was with a hook; and the meaning here is, that it was not possible to take the leviathan in this manner. The whole description here is of an animal that lived in the water.

Leviathan Much has been written respecting this animal, and the opinions which have been entertained have been very various. Schultens enumerates the following classes of opinions in regard to the animal intended here.

1. The opinion that the word leviathan is to be retained, without attempting to explain it — implying that there was uncertainty as to the meaning. Under this head he refers to the Chaldee and the Vulgate, to Aquila and Symmachus, where the word is retained, and to the Septuagint, where the word Δρακοντα ^{<1404>}, “dragon,” is used, and also the Syriac and Arabic, where the same word is used.
2. The fable of the Jews, who mention a serpent so large that it encompassed the whole earth. A belief of the existence of such a marine serpent or monster still prevails among the Nestorians.
3. The opinion that the whale is intended.
4. The opinion that a large fish called “Mular,” or “Musar,” which is found in the Mediterranean, is denoted. This is the opinion of Grotius.
5. The opinion that the crocodile of the Nile is denoted.
6. The opinion of Hasaeus, that not the whale is intended, but the “Orca,” a sea-monster armed with teeth, and the enemy of the whale.
7. Others have understood the whole description as allegorical, as representing monsters of iniquity; and among these, some have regarded it as descriptive of the devil! See Schultens. To these may be added the description of Milton:

— that sea-beast
 Leviathan, which God of all his works
 Created hug’st that swim the ocean-stream,
 Him, haply, slumb’ring on the Norway foam,

The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff
 Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
 With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
 Moors by his side under the lee, while night
 Invests the sea, and wished morn delays. — *Paradise Lost*, B. i.

For a full investigation of the subject, Bochart may be consulted, “*Hieroz.*” P. ii. Lib. v. c. xvi — xviii. The conclusion to which he comes is, that the crocodile of the Nile is denoted; and in this opinion critics have generally, since his time, acquiesced. The opinions which are entitled to most attention are those which regard the animal here described as either the whale or the crocodile. The objections to the supposition that the whale is intended are such as the following:

(1) that the whale tribes do not inhabit the Mediterranean, much less the rivers which empty into it — with which alone it is supposed Job could have been acquainted.

(2) that the animal here described differs from the whale in many essential particulars. “This family of marine monsters have neither proper snout nor nostrils, nor proper teeth. Instead of a snout, they have a mere spiracle, or blowing-hole, with a double opening on the top of the head; and for teeth, a hard expanse of horny laminae, which we call whalebone, in the upper jaw. The eyes of the common whale, moreover, instead of answering the description here given, are most disproportionately small, and do not exceed in size those of the ox. Nor can this monster be regarded as of fierce habits or unconquerable courage; for instead of attacking the larger sea-animals for plunder it feeds chiefly on crabs and medusas, and is often itself attacked by the ork or grampus, though less than half its size.” “*Dr. Good.*” These considerations seem to be decisive in regard to the supposition that the animal here referred to is the whale. In fact, there is almost nothing in the description that corresponds with the whale, except the size.

The whole account, on the contrary, agrees well with the crocodile; and there are several considerations which may be suggested, before we proceed with the exposition, which correspond I with the supposition that this is the animal intended. They are such as these:

(1) The crocodile is a natural inhabitant of the Nile and of other Asiatic and African rivers, and it is reasonable to suppose that an animal is referred to

that was well known to one who lived in the country of Job. Though the Almighty is the speaker, and could describe an animal wholly unknown to Job, yet it is not reasonable to suppose that such an unknown animal would be selected. The appeal was to what he knew of the works of God.

(2) The general description agrees with this animal. The leviathan is represented as wild, fierce, and ungovernable; as of vast extent, and as terrible in his aspect; as having a mouth of vast size, and armed with a formidable array of teeth; as covered with scales set near together like a coat of mail, as distinguished by the fierceness of his eyes, and by the frightful aspect of his mouth; as endowed with great strength, and incapable of being taken in any of the ordinary methods of securing wild beasts. This general description agrees well with the crocodile. These animals are found in the rivers of Africa, and also in the southern rivers of America, and are usually called the alligator. In the Amazon, the Niger, and the Nile, they occur in great numbers, and are usually from eighteen to twenty-seven feet long; and sometimes lying as close to each other as a raft of timber. "Goldsmith." The crocodile grows to a great length, being sometimes found thirty feet long from the tip of the snout to the end of the tail; though its most usual length is about eighteen or twenty feet.

"The armor, with which the upper part of the body is covered, may be numbered among the most elaborate pieces of Nature's mechanism. In the full-grown animal it is so strong and thick as easily to repel a musket-ball. The whole animal appears as if covered with the most regular and curious carved work. The mouth is of vast width, the gape having a somewhat flexuous outline, and both jaws being furnished with very numerous, sharp-pointed teeth. The number of teeth in each jaw is thirty or more, and they are so disposed as to alternate with each other when the mouth is closed. The legs are short, but strong and muscular. In the glowing regions of Africa, where it arrives at its full strength and power, it is justly regarded as the most formidable inhabitant of the rivers." Shaw's "Zoology," vol. iii. p. 184.

The crocodile seldom, except pressed with hunger, or for the purpose of depositing its eggs, leaves the water. Its usual method is to float along the surface, and seize whatever animals come within its reach; but when this method fails, it then goes nearer the bank. There it waits, among the sedges, for any animal that may come down to drink, and seizes upon it,

and drags it into the water. The tiger is thus often seized by the crocodile, and dragged into the river and drowned.

(3) A third reason for supposing that the crocodile is here intended, arises from the former conclusion concerning the “behemoth,” ~~1805~~ Job 40:15, following. The description of the leviathan immediately follows that, and the presumption is that they were animals that were usually found inhabiting the same district of country. If, therefore, the behemoth be the hippopotamus, there is a presumption that the leviathan is the crocodile — an inhabitant of the same river, equally amphibious, and even more terrible. “And this consideration,” says the Editor of the Pictorial Bible, “is strengthened, when we consider that the two animals were so associated by the ancients. Some of the paintings at Herculaneum represent Egyptian landscapes, in which we see the crocodile lying among the reeds, and the hippopotamus browsing upon the plants on an island. So also in the famous Mosaic pavement at Praeneste, representing the plants and animals of Egypt and Ethiopia, the river-horse and the crocodile are associated in the same group, in the river Nile.” The crocodile was formerly found in abundance in Lower Egypt and the Delta, but it now limits the extent of its visits northward to the districts about Manfaloot, and the hippopotamus is no longer seen in Lower Ethiopia. Neither the hippopotamus nor the crocodile appear to have been eaten by the ancient Egyptians. Pliny mentions the medicinal properties of both of them (xxviii. 8). and Plutarch affirms that the people of Apollinopolis used to eat the crocodile (“de Isid.” s. 50); but this does not appear to have been a usual custom. Herodotus says that “some of the Egyptians consider the crocodile sacred, while others make war upon it; and those who live about Thebes and the lake Moeris (in the Arsinoite “nome”), hold it in great veneration,” ii. 69. In some cases the crocodile was treated with the greatest respect, and kept up at considerable expense; it was fed and attended with the most scrupulous care; geese, fish, and various meats were dressed purposely for it; they ornamented its head with earrings and its feet with bracelets and necklaces of gold and artificial stones; it was rendered tame by kind treatment, and after death the body was embalmed in a sumptuous manner. This was particularly the case in the Theban, Ombite, and Arsinoite nomes, and at a place now called Maabdeh, opposite the modern town of Manfaloot, are extensive grottoes cut far into the limestone mountain, where numerous crocodile mummies have been found, perfectly preserved and evidently embalmed with great care. In other parts of Egypt, however,

the animal was held in the greatest abhorrence, and so they lost no opportunity of destroying it. See Wilkinson's "Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians," vol. iii. pp. 75ff. The engraving opposite represents Egyptian crocodiles ("Crocodylus vulgaris") disporting themselves on the banks of the Nile, or basking in the sun — one of their favorite practices. The figures were drawn from living animals. The word here rendered "leviathan" ^{h3882} **lwy** occurs only in this place and in ^{h3882} Job 3:8; ^{h3867} Psalm 74:14; 104:26; ^{h3882} Isaiah 27:1. In all these places it is rendered leviathan, except in ^{h3882} Job 3:8, where it is rendered in the text, "their mourning," in the margin, "leviathan;" see the notes at that verse, and compare the notes at ^{h3882} Isaiah 27:1. The connection of the word with the root is not certainly known. Gesenius regards it as derived from ^{h3867} **lwy** ; , to join oneself to anyone, and then to wreath, to fold, to curve; and in Arabic "to weave, to twist," as a wreath or garland; and that the word is applied to an animal that is "wreathed," or that gathers itself "in folds" — a "twisted animal." In ^{h3882} Job 3:8, the word is used to denote some huge, untamable, and fierce monster, and will agree there with the supposition that the crocodile is intended; see the notes at that place. In ^{h3867} Psalm 74:14. the allusion is to Pharaoh, compared with the leviathan, and the passage would agree best with the supposition that the allusion was to the crocodile. The crocodile was an inhabitant of the Nile, and it was natural to allude to that in describing a fierce tyrant of Egypt. In ^{h3867} Psalm 104:26, the allusion is to some huge animal of the deep, particularly of the Mediterranean, and the language would apply to any sea-monster. In ^{h3882} Isaiah 27:1. the allusion is to the king and tyrant that ruled in Babylon, as compared with a dragon or fierce animal; compare the notes on that passage, and Revelation 12. Any of these passages will accord well with the supposition that the crocodile is denoted by the word, or that some fierce, strong, and violent animal that could involve itself, or that had the appearance of an extended serpent, is referred to. The resemblance between the animal here described and the crocodile, will be further indicated by the notes at the particular descriptions in the chapter.

With an hook Implying that the animal here referred to was aquatic, and that it could not be taken in the way in which fish were usually caught. It is known now that the crocodile is occasionally taken with a hook, but this is not the usual method, and there is no evidence that it was practiced in the time of Job. Herodotus says that it was one of the methods which were used in his time.

“Among the various methods,” says he, “that are used to take the crocodile, I shall relate only one which deserves most attention; they fix a hook (*αγγκιστρον* ^{<44>}) on a piece of swine’s flesh, and suffer it to float into the middle of the stream. On the banks they have a live hog, which they beat until it cries out. The crocodile, hearing the noise, makes toward it, and in the way encounters and devours the bait. They thus draw it on shore, and the first thing they do is to fill its eyes with clay; it is thus easily manageable, which it otherwise would not be.” B. ii. 70.

“The manner of taking it in Siam is by throwing three or four strong nets across a river at proper distances from each other, so that if the animal breaks through the first, it may be caught by one of the rest. When it is first taken it employs the tail, which is the grand instrument of its strength, with great force; but after many unsuccessful struggles, the animal’s strength is at length exhausted. Then the natives approach their prisoner in boats, and pierce him with their weapons in the most tender parts, until he is weakened with the loss of blood.” “Goldsmith.”

From ancient sculptures in Egypt, it appears that the common method of attacking the crocodile was with a spear, transfixing it as it passed beneath the boat in shallow water, See Wilkinson’s “Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians,” vol. iii. pp. 75ff The most common method of taking the crocodile now is by shooting it. “Pococke.” it is quite clear, therefore, that, agreeably to what is said in the passage before us, the common method of taking it was not by a hook, and it is probable that in the time of Job this method was not practiced.

Or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down Or rather, “Canst thou sink his tongue with a cord?” — that is, Canst thou tame him by a thong or bit thrust into his mouth? “Gesenius.” The idea is that of “pressing down” the tongue with a cord, so that he would be tractable.

^{<184D>}**Job 41:2.** *Canst thou put a hook into his nose* Or rather, a “rope,” or “cord.” The word used here *^wogjae* ^{<100>} means “a caldron,” or “kettle” (^{<184D>}Job 41:20), also a reed, or bulrush, growing in marshy places, and thus a rope made of reeds, a rush-cord. The idea is, that he could not be led about by a cord, as tame animals may be. Mr. Vansittart, however, supposes that the words here are expressive of ornaments, and that the

allusion is to the fact mentioned by Herodotus, that the crocodile was led about by the Egyptians as a divinity, and that in this state it was adorned with rings and various stately trappings. There can be no doubt that such a fact existed, but this does not accord well with the scope of the passage here. The object is to impress the mind of Job with a sense of the strength and untamableness of the animal, not to describe the honors which were paid to it.

Or bore his jaw through with a thorn Or with a ring. The word here properly means a thorn, or thorn-bush, ^{<8314>}Job 31:40; ^{<1109>}Proverbs 26:9; and then also a ring that was put through the nose of an animal, in order to secure it. The instrument was probably made sharp like a thorn or spike, and then bent so as to become a ring; compare ^{<2372>}Isaiah 37:29. Mr. Bruce, speaking of the manner of fishing in the Nile, says that when a fisherman has caught a fish, he draws it to the shore, and puts a strong iron ring into its jaw. To this ring is fastened a rope by which the fish is attached to the shore, which he then throws again into the water. “Rosenmuller.”

^{<8403>}**Job 41:3.** *Will he make many supplications unto thee?* In the manner of a captive begging for his life. That is, will he quietly submit to you? Prof. Lee supposes that there is an allusion here to the well-known cries of the dolphin when taken; but it is not necessary to suppose such an allusion. The idea is, that the animal here referred to would not tamely submit to his captor.

Will he speak soft words unto thee? Pleading for his life in tones of tender and plaintive supplication.

^{<8403>}**Job 41:4.** *Will he make a covenant with thee?* That is, will he submit himself to thee, and enter into a compact to serve thee? Such a compact was made by those who agreed to serve another; and the idea here is, that the animal here referred to could not be reduced to such service — that is, could not be tamed.

Wilt thou take him for a servant for ever? Canst thou so subdue him that he will be a perpetual slave? The meaning of all this is, that he was an untamable animal, and could not be reduced, as many others could, to domestic use.

Job 41:5. *Wilt thou play with him as with a bird?* A bird that is tamed. The art of taming birds was doubtless early practiced, and they were kept for amusement. But the leviathan could not thus be tamed.

Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens? For their amusement. For such purposes doubtless, birds were caught and caged. There is great force in this question, on the supposition that the crocodile is intended. Nothing could be more incongruous than the idea of securing so rough and unsightly a monster for the amusement of tender and delicate females.

Job 41:6. *Shall thy companions make a banquet of him?* This is one of the “vexed passages” about which there has been much difference of opinion. Gesenius renders it, “Do the companions (“i.e.” the fishermen in company) lay snares for him?” So Noyes renders it. Dr. Harris translates it, “Shall thy partners spread a banquet for him?” The Septuagint renders it, “Do the nations feed upon him?” The Vulgate, “Will friends cut him up?” that is, for a banquet. Rosenmuller renders it, “Will friends feast upon him?” The word rendered “thy companions” **rBj æ**⁴²⁷¹ means properly those joined or associated together for any purpose, whether for friendship or for business. It may refer here either to those associated for the purpose of fishing or feasting. The word “thy” is improperly introduced by our translators, and there is no evidence that the reference is to the companions or friends of Job, as that would seem to suppose. The word rendered “make a banquet” **hrK**⁴³⁷³⁸ is from **hrK**⁴³⁷³⁸, “to dig,” and then to make a plot or device against one — derived from the fact that a “pitfall” was dug to take animals (⁴⁹⁷⁵Psalm 7:15; 57:6; compare ⁴⁸⁶⁷Job 6:27); and according to this it means, “Do the companions, “i.e.” the fishermen in company, lay snares for him?” The word, however, has another signification, meaning to buy, to purchase, and also to give a feast, to make a banquet, perhaps from the idea of “purchasing” the provisions necessary for a banquet. According to this, the meaning is, “Do the companions, “i.e.” those associated for the purpose of feasting, make a banquet of him?” Which is the true sense here it is not easy to determine. The majority of versions incline to the idea that it refers to a feast, and means that those associated for eating do not make a part of their entertainment of him. This interpretation is the most simple and obvious.

Shall they part him among the merchants? That is, Shall they cut him up and expose him for sale? The word rendered “merchants” **yni** **ak**⁴³⁶⁶⁹ means

properly “Canaanites.” It is used in the sense of “merchants, or traffickers,” because the Canaanites were commonly engaged in this employment; see the notes at ^{<2218>}Isaiah 23:8. The crocodile is never made a part of a banquet, or an article of traffic.

^{<840>}**Job 41:7.** *Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons?* Referring to its thickness and impenetrability. A common method of taking fish is by the spear; but it is here said that the leviathan could not be caught in this manner. The common method of taking the crocodile now is by shooting him; see the notes at ^{<840>}Job 41:1. Nothing is more remarkable in the crocodile than the thick and impenetrable skin with which it is covered; and the description here will agree better with this animal than with any other.

Or his head with fish spears The word here rendered “fish-spears” | x[^{<16767>}tex] means properly a “tinkling, clanging,” as of metal or arms, and then any tinkling instrument. Here it evidently refers to some metal spear, or harpoon, and the name was given to the instrument on account of its clanging noise. The Septuagint renders this strangely, referring it to the “Phenicians,” or merchants mentioned in the previous verse — “With their whole fleet they could not carry the first skin of his tail, nor his head in their fishing-barks.”

^{<840>}**Job 41:8.** *Lay thine hand upon him* Prof. Lee renders this, very improperly, as it seems to me, “Lay thine hand on thy mouth respecting him,” supposing it means that he should be awed into silence by dread of the animal referred to. But the meaning of the passage evidently is, “Endeavor to seize him by laying the hand on him, and you will soon desist from the fearful conflict, and will not renew it.”

Remember the battle Remember what a fearful conflict will ensue. Perhaps there is an allusion to some fact fresh in the mind of Job, where such an attempt had been made to secure the leviathan, attended with fearful disaster to those who had made the attempt.

Do no more Or, rather, “Thou wilt not do it again.” That is, he would be deterred from ever renewing the attempt, or the conflict would be fatal to him.

^{<840>}**Job 41:9.** *Behold, the hope of him is in vain* That is, the hope of taking him is vain.

Shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him? So formidable is his appearance, that the courage of him who would attack him is daunted, and his resolution fails. This agrees well also with the crocodile. There is perhaps scarcely any animal whose appearance would be more likely to deter one from attacking him.

◀8410▶ **Job 41:10.** *None is so fierce that dare stir him up* No one has courage to rouse and provoke him.

Who then is able to stand before me? The meaning of this is plain. It is, “If one of my creatures is so formidable that man dare not attack it, how can he contend with the great Creator? This may perhaps be designed as a reproof of Job. He had expressed a desire to carry his cause before God, and to urge argument before him in vindication of himself. God here shows him how hopeless must be a contest with the Almighty. Man trembles and is disarmed of his courage by even the sight of one of the creatures of God. Overpowered with fear, he retires from the contemplated contest, and flees away. How then could he presume to contend with God? What hope could he have in a contest with him?”

◀8411▶ **Job 41:11.** *Who hath prevented me?* As this verse is here rendered, its meaning, and the reason why it is introduced, are not very apparent. It almost looks, indeed, as if it were an interpolation, or had been introduced from some other place, and torn from its proper connection. Dr. Harris proposes to remove the principal difficulty by translating it,

“Who will stand before me, yea, presumptuously? Whatsoever is beneath the whole heaven is mine. I cannot be confounded at his limbs and violence, Nor at his power, or the strength of his frame.”

It may be doubted, however, whether the original will admit of this translation. Rosenmuller, Umbreit, and Noyes, unite in supposing the meaning to be, “Who has done me a favor, that I must repay him?” But perhaps the true idea of the passage may be arrived at by adverting to the meaning of the word rendered “prevented” — $\mu\delta\alpha\phi$ ⁴⁶⁹²³. It properly means in Piel, to go before; to precede; to anticipate, ⁴⁹⁷¹³Psalm 17:13; 119:148. Then it means to rush upon suddenly; to seize; to go to meet anyone either for succor, ⁴⁹⁵¹¹Psalm 59:11, or for a different purpose. ²³⁷⁷³Isaiah 37:33, “No shield shall come up against her.” $\mu\delta\alpha\phi$ ⁴⁶⁹²³ “i.e.” against the city. So ⁴⁸¹⁷⁷Job 30:27, “The days of affliction prevented me.” A similar meaning

occurs in the Hiphil form in ^{<3090>}Amos 9:10, “The evil shall not overtake us nor prevent us;” that is, shall not rush upon us as if by anticipation, or when we are off our guard. If some idea of this kind be supposed to be conveyed by the word here, it will probably express the true sense. “Who is able to seize upon me suddenly, or when I am off my guard; to anticipate my watchfulness and my power of resistance so as to compel me to recompense him, or so to overmaster me as to lay me under obligation to confer on him the favors which he demands?” There may be an allusion to the manner in which wild beasts are taken, when the hunter springs his gin suddenly, anticipates the power of the animal, rushes unexpectedly upon him, and compels him to yield. God says that no one could thus surprise and overpower him. Thus explained, the sentiment agrees with the argument which the Almighty is presenting. He is showing his right to reign and do all his pleasure. He appeals, in proof of this, to his great and mighty works, and especially to those specimens of the animal creation which “man” could not tame or overcome. The argument is this: “If man cannot surprise and subdue these creatures of the Almighty, and compel “them” to render him service, how can he expect to constrain the Creator himself to be tributary to him, or to grant him the favors which he demands?”

Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine That is, “All belong to me; all are subject to me; all are mine, to be conferred on whom I please. No one can claim them as his own: no one can wrest them from me.” This claim to the proprietorship of all created things, is designed “here” to show to Job that over a Being thus supreme man could exert no control. It is his duty, therefore, to submit to him without a complaint, and to receive with gratitude what he chooses to confer.

^{<3412>}**Job 41:12.** *I will not conceal his parts* This is the commencement of a more particular description of the animal than had been before given. In the previous part of the chapter, the remarks are general, speaking of it merely as one of great power, and not to be taken by any of the ordinary methods. A description follows of the various parts of the animal, all tending to confirm this general impression, and to fill the hearer with a deep conviction of his formidable character. The words rendered, “I will not conceal,” mean, “I will not be silent;” that is, he would speak of them. The description which follows of the “parts” of the animal refers particularly to his mouth, his teeth, his scales, his eyelids, his nostrils, his neck, and his heart.

Nor his comely proportion The crocodile is not an object of beauty, and the animal described here is not spoken of as one of beauty, but as one of great power and fierceness. The phrase used here ^{h2433}ִיְיָ ^{h6187}ֶרְלֵ means properly “the grace of his armature,” or the beauty of his armor. It does not refer to the beauty of the animal as such, but to the armor or defense which it had. Though there might be no beauty in an animal like the one here described, yet there might be a “grace” or fitness in its means of defense which could not fail to attract admiration. This is the idea in the passage. So Gesenius, Umbreit, and Noyes render it.

^{h8413}**Job 41:13.** *Who can discern the face of his garment?* literally, “Who can reveal the face, i.e. the appearance, of his garment?” This “garment” is undoubtedly his skin. The meaning seems to be, “His hard and rough skin is his defense, and no one can so strip off that as to have access to him.” The word rendered “discover” ^{h1540}חִלַּץ means “to make naked”; then “to reveal”; and the idea is, that he cannot be made naked of that covering, or deprived of it so that one could attack him.

Or who can come to him with his double bridle? Margin, “within” Gesenius renders this, “The doubling of his jaws;” that is. his double row of teeth. Umbreit, “His double bit.” Noyes, “Who will approach his jaws?” So Rosenmuller. Schultens and Prof. Lee, however, suppose it means that no one can come near to him and “double the bit” upon him, “i.e.” cast the bit or noose over his nose, so as to secure him by doubling it, or passing it around him. The former seems to me to be the true meaning. “Into the doubling of his jaws, who can enter?” That is, Who will dare approach a double row of teeth so formidable?” The word rendered “bridle” ^{h7448}סָרִי means properly a curb or halter, which goes over a horse’s nose, and hence, a bit or bridle. But it may be used to denote the interior of the mouth, the jaws, where the bit is placed, and then the phrase denotes the double row of teeth of the animal. Thus, the description of the “parts of defense” of the animal is kept up.

^{h8414}**Job 41:14.** *Who can open the doors of his face?* His mouth. The same term is still used to denote the mouth — from its resemblance to a door. The idea is, that no one would dare to force open his mouth. This agrees better with the crocodile than almost any other animal. It would not apply to the whale. The crocodile is armed with a more formidable set of teeth than almost any other animal; see the description in the notes at

<8401> Job 41:1. Bochart says that it has sixty teeth, and those much larger than in proportion to the size of the body. Some of them, he says, stand out; some of them are serrated, or like a saw, fitting into each other when the mouth is closed; and some come together in the manner of a comb, so that the grasp of the animal is very tenacious and fearful; see a full description in Bochart.

<8415> **Job 41:15.** *His scales are his pride* Margin, “strong pieces of shields.” The literal translation of this would be, “Pride, the strong of shields;” that is, the strong shields. There can be no doubt that there is reference to the scales of the animal, as having a resemblance to strong shields laid close to each other. But there is considerable variety of opinion as to its meaning. Umbreit and Prof. Lee take the word here rendered “pride” *hwʒe*^{<1465>} to be the same as *hwʒe*^{<1465>}, “back,” and then the meaning would be that his back was armed as with a shield — referring, as Prof. Lee supposes, to the dorsal fin of the whale. But there is no necessity for this supposition, and it cannot be denied that it is somewhat forced. The “connection” requires that we should understand it, not of the dorsal fin, but of the scales; for a description immediately follows in continuation of this, which will by no means apply to the fin. The obvious and proper meaning is, that the pride or glory of the animal — that on which his safety depended, and which was the most remarkable thing about him — was his “scales,” which were laid together like firm and compact shields, so that nothing could penetrate them. This description accords better with the crocodile than with any other animal. It is covered with scales, “which are so hard as to resist a musket-ball.” “Ed. Ency.” The description cannot be applied to a whale, which has no scales; and accordingly Prof. Lee supposes that the reference in this verse and the two following is not to the “scales,” but to the “teeth,” and to “the setting in of the dorsal fin!”

Shut up together Made close or compact.

As with a close seal As if they had been sealed with wax, so that no air could come between them.

<8417> **Job 41:17.** *They are joined one to another* literally, “A man with his brother;” that is, each one is connected with another. There is no natural fastening of one scale with another, but they lie so close and compact that they seem thus to be fastened down on one another; see Bochart on this verse. It is this which makes the crocodile so difficult to be killed. A

musket-ball will penetrate the skin under the belly, which is there less firmly protected; and accordingly the efforts of those who attempt to secure them are directed to that part of the body. A ball in the eye or throat will also destroy it, but the body is impervious to a spear or a bullet.

◀8418▶ **Job 41:18.** *By his neesings a light doth shine* The word rendered “neesings” means properly sneezing, and the literal sense here would be, “His sneezings, light shines.” Coverdale renders it, “His nesinge is like a glisteringe fyre.” Bochart says that the meaning is, “that when the crocodile sneezes, the breath is driven through the nostrils with such force that it seems to scintillate, or emit fire.” Probably the meaning is, that when the animal emits a sudden sound, like sneezing, the fire seems to flash from the eye. There is some quick and rapid motion of the eyes, which in the rays of the sun seem to flash fire. The sneezing of the crocodile is mentioned by Aristotle. Prof. Lee. Amphibious animals, the longer they hold their breath under water, respire so much the more violently when they emerge, and the breath is expelled suddenly and with violence. Schultens. This is the action here referred to — the strong effort of the animal to recover breath when he rises to the surface, and when in the effort the eyes seem to scintillate, or emit light.

And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning The “eyelids of the morning” is a beautiful poetic phrase quite common in Hebrew poetry. The eyes of the crocodile are small, but they are remarkable. When he lifts his head above water, his staring eyes are the first things that strike the beholder, and may then with great beauty be compared with the morning light. There is a remarkable coincidence here, in the fact that when the Egyptians would represent the morning by a hieroglyphic, they painted a crocodile’s eye. The reason assigned for this was, that before the whole body of the animal appeared, the eyes seemed to rise from the deep; see Bochart on the passage, “Hierez.,” and also Herapollo, “Hieroglyph.” i. c. 65.

◀8419▶ **Job 41:19.** *Out of his mouth go burning lamps* The word “lamps” here is probably used to denote torches, or fire-brands. The animal is here described as in pursuit of his prey on land; and the description is exceedingly graphic and powerful. His mouth is then open; his jaws are distended; his breath is thrown out with great violence; his blood is inflamed, and the animal seems to vomit forth flames. The description is of

course to be regarded as figurative. It is such as one would be likely to give who should see a fierce animal pressing on in pursuit of its prey.

And sparks of fire leap out There is an appearance like sparks of fire. The animal, with an open throat highly inflamed, seems to breathe forth flames. The figure is a common one applied to a war-horse. Thus, Ovid:

*“From their full racks the generous steeds retire,
Dropping ambrosial foam and snorting fire.” — Dr. Good*

The same thing is remarked by Achilles Tatius, of the hippopotamus, “With open nostrils, and breathing smoke like fire (πυρῳδῆ καπνὸν ^{<2586>}) as from a fountain of fire.” And in Eustathius it is said, “They have an open nostril, breathing forth smoke like fire from a furnace “ — πυρῳδῆ καπνὸν ^{<2586>}, ὡς ἐκ ^{<1537>} καμίνου ^{<2575>} πνεοντα ^{<4154>}. See Bochart.

^{<8412>}**Job 41:20.** *Out of his nostrils goeth smoke* See the quotations on ^{<8419>}Job 41:19. This appearance of the crocodile, or alligator, has been often noticed. Bertram, in his “Travels in North and South Carolina,” p. 116, says, “While I was seeking a place of rest, I encountered an alligator that in the neighboring lake rushed through the canes that grew on its banks. He inflated his enormous body, and swung his tail high in the air. A thick smoke streamed from his wide-open nostrils, with a sound that made the earth tremble.” Rosenmuller, “Alte u. neue Morgenland,” No. 778.

As out of a seething-pot A pot that is boiling. Literally, “a blown pot;” that is, a pot under which the fire is blown, or kindled.

Or caldron Any kettle. The same word is used to denote a reed or bulrush, or a rope made of reeds, ^{<2094>}Isaiah 9:14; ^{<8401>}Job 41:1.

^{<8422>}**Job 41:21.** *His breath kindleth coals* It seems to be a flame, and to set on fire all around it. So Hesiod, “Theog.” i. 319, describing the creation of the Chimera, speaks of it as

νεουσάν αμαίμακετον πυρ .

“breathing unquenchable fire,” So Virgil, “Georg.” ii. 140:

Haec loca non tauri spirantes naribus Invertere.

“Bulls breathing fire these furrows ne’er have known.” — Warton

A similar phrase is found in a sublime description of the anger of the Almighty, in ^{<B98B>}Psalm 18:8:

There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, And fire out of his mouth devoured: Coals were kindled by it.

^{<B422>}**Job 41:22.** *In his neck remaineth strength* That is, strength is “permanently residing” there. It is not assumed for the moment, but his neck is so constructed as to be the abode of strength. The word here rendered “remaineth” ^{^W} ^{<4385>}, means properly to pass the night; then to abide or dwell; and there is a designed contrast here with what is said of “sorrow” in this verse. This description of strength residing in the neck, agrees well with the crocodile; see the figure of the animal on p. 255. It is not easy, however, to see how this is applicable to the whale, as Prof. Lee supposes. The whale is endowed, indeed, with great strength, as Prof. Lee has shown, but that strength is manifested mainly by the stroke of the tail.

And sorrow is turned into joy before him Margin, “rejoiceth.” The proper meaning of the word used here ^{xWD} ^{<41750>} is “to dance, to leap, to skip;” and the sense is, that “terror dances before him.” It does not refer to the motion of the animal, as if he were brisk and rapid. but it is a poetic expression, as if terror played or pranced along wherever he came. Strength “resided” in his neck, but his approach made terror and alarm play before him wherever he went; that is, produced terror and dread. In his neck is permanent, calm strength; before him, everything trembles and is agitated. The beauty of the passage lies in this contrast between the strength and firmness which repose calmly in the neck of the animal, and the consternation which he everywhere produces, causing all to tremble as he approaches. Bochart has well illustrated this from the classic writers.

^{<B423>}**Job 41:23.** *The flakes of his flesh are joined together* Margin, “fallings.” The Hebrew word used here means anything “falling,” or “pendulous,” and the reference here is, probably, to the pendulous parts of the flesh of the animal; the flabby parts; the dew-laps. In animals commonly these parts about the neck and belly are soft, pendulous, and contribute little to their strength. The meaning here is, that in the leviathan, instead of being thus flabby and pendulous, they were compact and firm. This is strikingly true of the crocodile. The belly is, indeed, more soft and penetrable than the other parts of the body, but there is nothing like the soft and pendulous dew-laps of most animals.

Job 41:24. *His heart is as firm as a stone* As hard; as solid. Bochart remarks that the word “heart” here is not to be regarded as denoting the “courage” of the animal, as it sometimes does, but the heart literally. The statement occurs in the description of the various parts of the animal, and the object is to show that there was special firmness or solidity in every one of his members. There is special firmness or strength needed in the “hearts” of all animals, to enable them to propel the blood through the arteries of the body; and in an animal of the size of the crocodile, it is easy to see that the heart must be made capable of exerting vast force. But there is no reason to suppose that the affirmation here is made on the supposition that there is need of extraordinary strength in the heart to propel the blood. The doctrine of the circulation of the blood was not then known to mankind, and it is to be presumed that the argument here would be based on what “was” known, or what might be easily observed. The presumption therefore is, that the statement here is based on what had been “seen” of the remarkable compactness and firmness of the heart of the animal here referred to. Probably there was nothing SO unique in the heart of the crocodile that this description would be applicable to that animal alone, but it is such doubtless as would apply to the heart of any animal of extraordinary size and strength.

Yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone The mills commonly used in ancient times were hand-mills; see a description of them in the notes at **Matthew 24:41**. Why the lower stone was the hardest, is not quite apparent. Perhaps a more solid stone might have been chosen for this, because it was supposed that there was more wear on the lower than the upper stone, or because its weight would make the machine more solid and steady.

Job 41:25. *When he raiseth up himself* When he rouses himself for an attack or in self-defense.

The mighty are afraid The Vulgate renders this “anqels.” The meaning is, that he produces alarm on those who are unaccustomed to fear.

By reason of breakings they purify themselves This, though a literal translation, conveys no very clear idea, and this rendering is not necessary. The word rendered “breakings” **rby**,^{<47667>} means properly “a breaking, breach, puncture”; “a breaking down, destruction”; and then it may mean “a breaking down of the mind, i.e. terror.” This is evidently the meaning

here. “By reason of the prostration of their courage, or the crushing of the mind by alarm.” The word rendered “purify themselves” *afj*, ^{<12398>} means in the Qal, “to miss,” as a mark; “to sin; to err.” In the form of Hithpael, which occurs here, it means to miss one’s way; “to lose oneself;” and it may refer to the astonishment and terror by which one is led to miss his way in precipitate flight. “Gesenius.” The meaning then is, “They lose themselves from terror.” They know not where to turn themselves; they flee away with alarm; see Rosenmuller in loc.

^{<8412>}**Job 41:26.** *The sword of him that layeth at him* The word “sword” here *brj*, ^{<12719>} means undoubtedly “harpoon,” or a sharp instrument by which an attempt is made to pierce the skin of the monster.

Cannot hold That is, in the hard skin. It does not penetrate it.

The spear, the dart These were doubtless often used in the attempt to take the animal. The meaning is, that “they” would not hold or stick to the animal. They flew off when hurled at him.

Nor the habergeon Margin, “breastplate.” Noyes, “javelin.” Prof. Lee, “lance.” Vulgate, “thorax, breastplate.” So the Septuagint, *θώρακα* ^{<2382>}. The word used here *ῥῥῥ*, ^{<8302>}, the same as *ῥῥῥ*, ^{<8302>} (^{<9175>} 1 Samuel 17:5,38; ^{<1046>} Nehemiah 4:16; ^{<1254>} 2 Chronicles 26:14), means properly a “coat of mail,” and is so called from its shining — from *hry*, ^{<8281>}, “to shine.” It is not used in the sense of spear or javelin elsewhere, though perhaps it may have that meaning here — denoting a “bright” or “shining” weapon. This agrees best with the connection.

^{<8417>}**Job 41:27.** *He esteemeth iron as straw* He regards instruments made of iron and brass as if they were straw or rotten wood. That is, they make no impression on him. This will agree better with the crocodile than any other animal. So hard is his skin, that a musket-ball will not penetrate it; see numerous quotations proving the hardness of the skin of the crocodile, in Bochart.

^{<8418>}**Job 41:28.** *The arrow* Hebrew “the son of the bow.” So ^{<2513>} Lamentations 3:13, margin. This use of the word son is common in the Scriptures and in all Oriental poetry.

Sling-stones The sling was early used in war and in hunting, and by skill and practice it could be so employed as to be a formidable weapon; see

<0716> Judges 20:16; <0174> 1 Samuel 17:40,49. As one of the weapons of attack on a foe it is mentioned here, though there is no evidence that the sling was ever actually used in endeavoring to destroy the crocodile. The meaning is, that all the common weapons used by men in attacking an enemy had no effect on him.

Are turned with him into stubble Produce no more effect on him than it would to throw stubble at him.

<8412> **Job 41:29.** *Darts are counted as stubble* The word rendered “darts” **j tᵛ** <8455> occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures. It is from **j ty**, obsolete root, “to beat with a club.” The word here probably means clubs. Darts and spears are mentioned before, and the object seems to be to enumerate all the usual, instruments of attack. The singular is used here with a plural verb in a collective sense.

<8413> **Job 41:30.** *Sharp stones are under him* Margin, as in Hebrew, “pieces of pot sherd.” The Hebrew word **dWdJ æ** <4203>, means “sharp, pointed”; and the phrase used here means “the sharp points of a potsherd,” or broken pieces of earthenware. The reference is, undoubtedly, to the scales of the animal, which were rough and pointed, like the broken pieces of earthenware. This description would not agree with the whale, and indeed will accord with no other animal so well as with the crocodile. The meaning is, that the under parts of his body, with which he rests upon the mire, are made up of sharp, pointed things, like broken pottery.

He spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire That is, when he rests or stretches himself on the mud or slime of the bank of the river. The word used here and rendered “sharp pointed things” **xWᵛrj** <12742> means properly something “cut in;” then something sharpened or pointed; and is used to denote “a threshing sledge;” see this instrument described in the notes at <2307> Isaiah 28:27,28; 41:15. It is not certain, however, that there is any allusion here to that instrument. It is rather to anything that is rough or pointed, and refers to the lower part of the animal as having this character. The Vulgate renders this, “Beneath him are the rays of the sun, and he repositeth on gold as on clay.” Dr. Harris, Dr. Good, and Prof. Lee, suppose it refers to what the animal lies on, meaning that he lies on splinters of rock and broken stone with as much readiness and ease as if it were clay. But the above seems to me to be the true interpretation. It is that of Gesenius,

Rosenmuller, and Umbreit. Grotius understands it as meaning that the weapons thrown at him lie around him like broken pieces of pottery.

Job 41:31. *He maketh the deep to boil like a pot* In his rapid motion through it. The word “deep” **hl w&w]**^{7h4688} may refer to any deep place — either of the sea, of a river, or of mire, ¹⁹⁶⁰Psalm 69:2. It is applied to the depths of the sea, ³¹⁰⁸Jonah 2:3; ³¹⁷⁹Micah 7:19; but there is nothing in the word that will prevent its application to a large river like the Nile — the usual abode of the crocodile.

He maketh the sea The word “sea” **μy,**⁴⁵²²⁰ is often applied to a large river, like the Nile or the Euphrates; see the notes at ²³⁹⁵Isaiah 19:5.

Like a pot of ointment When it is mixed, or stirred together. Bochart supposes that there is an allusion here to the smell of musk, which it is said the crocodile has, and by which the waters through which he passes seem to be perfumed. But the allusion seems rather to be merely to the fact that the deep is agitated by him when he passes through it, as if it were stirred from the bottom like a pot of ointment.

Job 41:32. *He maketh a path to shine after him* This refers doubtless to the white foam of the waters through which he passes. If this were spoken of some monster that commonly resides in the ocean, it would not be unnatural to suppose that it refers to the phosphoric light such as is observed when the waters are agitated, or when a vessel passes rapidly through them. If it refers, however, to the crocodile, the allusion must be understood of the hoary appearance of the Nile or the lake where he is found.

One would think the deep to be hoary Homer often speaks of the sea as **πολινη θαλασσαν** — “the hoary sea.” So Apollonius, speaking of the Argonauts, Lib. i. 545:

— μακραι δ’ αιεν ελευκαινοντο κελευθοι

“the long paths were always white”

So Catullus, in Epith. Pelei:

Totaque remigio spumis incanuit unda.

And Ovid, Epis. Oeno:

— *remis eruta canet aqua.*

The rapid motion of an aquatic animal through the water will produce the effect here referred to.

Job 41:33. *Upon earth there is not his like* Hebrew, “Upon the dust.” The meaning is, that no other animal can be compared with him; or the land does not produce such a monster as this. For size, strength, ferocity, courage, and formidableness, no animal will bear a comparison with him. This can be true only of some such fierce creature as the crocodile.

Who is made without fear Margin, “Or, behave themselves with fear.” The meaning is, that he is created not to be afraid; he has no dread of others In this respect he is unlike other animals. The Septuagint renders this, “He is made to be sported with by my angels.”

Job 41:34. *He beholdeth all high things* That is, he looks down on everything as inferior to him.

He is a king over all the children of pride Referring, by “the children of pride,” to the animals that are bold, proud, courageous — as the lion, the panther, etc. The lion is often spoken of as “the king of the forest,” or “the king of beasts,” and in a similar sense the leviathan is here spoken of as at the head of the animal creation. He is afraid of none of them; he is subdued by none of them; he is the prey of none of them. The whole argument, therefore, closes with this statement, that he is at the head of the animal creation; and it was by this magnificent description of the power of the creatures which God had made, that it was intended to impress the mind of Job with a sense of the majesty and power of the Creator. It had the effect. He was overawed with a conviction of the greatness of God, and he saw how wrong it had been for him to presume to call in question the justice, or sit in judgment on the doings, of such a Being. God did not, indeed, go into an examination of the various points which had been the subject of controversy; he did not explain the nature of his moral administration so as to relieve the mind from perplexity; but he evidently meant to leave the impression that he was vast and incomprehensible in his government, infinite in power, and had a right to dispose of his creation as he pleased. No one can doubt that God could with infinite ease have so explained the nature of his administration as to free the mind from perplexity, and so as to have resolved the difficulties which hung over the various subjects which had come into debate between Job and his friends. “Why” he did not do

this, is nowhere stated, and can only be the subject of conjecture. It is possible, however, that the following suggestions may do something to show the reasons why this was not done:

(1) We are to remember the early period of the world when these transactions occurred, and when this book was composed. It was in the infancy of society, and when little light had gleamed on the human mind in regard to questions of morals and religion.

(2) In that state of things, it is not probable that either Job or his friends would have been able to comprehend the principles in accordance with which the wicked are permitted to flourish and the righteous are so much afflicted, if they had been stated. Much higher knowledge than they then possessed about the future world was necessary to understand the subject which then agitated their minds. It could not have been done without a very decided reference to the future state, where all these inequalities are to be removed.

(3) It has been the general plan of God to communicate knowledge by degrees; to impart it when people have had full demonstration of their own imbecility, and when they feel their need of divine teaching; and to reserve the great truths of religion for an advanced period of the world. In accordance with this arrangement, God has been pleased to keep in reserve, from age to age, certain great and momentous truths, and such as were particularly adapted to throw light on the subjects of discussion between Job and his friends. They are the truths pertaining to the resurrection of the body; the retributions of the day of judgment; the glories of heaven and the woes of hell, where all the inequalities of the present state may receive their final and equal adjustment. These great truths were reserved for the triumph and glory of Christianity; and to have stated them in the time of Job, would have been to have anticipated the most important revelations of that system. The truths of which we are now in possession would have relieved much of the perplexity then felt, and solved most of those questions; but the world was not then in the proper state for their revelation.

(4) It was a very important lesson to be taught to people, to bow with submission to a sovereign God, without knowing the reason of his doings. No lesson, perhaps, could be learned of higher value than this. To a proud, self-confident, philosophic mind, a mind prone to rely on its own resources, and trust to its own deductions, it was of the highest importance to

inculcate the duty of submission to “will” and to “sovereignty.” This is a lesson which we often have to learn in life, and which almost all the trying dispensations of Providence are fitted to teach us. It is not because God has no reason for what he does; it is not because he intends we shall never know the reason; but it is because it is our “duty” to bow with submission to his will, and to acquiesce in his right to reign, even when we cannot see the reason of his doings. Could we “reason it out,” and then submit “because” we saw the reason, our submission would not be to our Maker’s pleasure, but to the deductions of our own minds. Hence, all along, he so deals with man, by concealing the reason of his doings, as to bring him to submission to his authority, and to humble all human pride. To this termination all the reasonings of the Almighty in this book are conducted; and after the exhibition of his power in the tempest, after his sublime description of his own works, after his appeal to the numerous things which are in fact incomprehensible by man, we feel that God is GREAT — that it is presumptuous in man to sit in judgment on his works — and that the mind, no matter what he does, should bow before him with profound veneration and silence. These are the great lessons which we are every day called to learn in the actual dispensations of his providence; and the “arguments” for these lessons were never elsewhere stated with so much power and sublimity as in the closing chapters of the book of Job. We have the light of the Christian religion; we can look into eternity, and see how the inequalities of the present order of things can be adjusted there; and we have sources of consolation which neither Job nor his friends enjoyed; but still, with all this light, there are numerous cases where we are required to bow, not because we see the reason of the divine dealings, but because such is the will of God. To us, in such circumstances, this argument of the Almighty is adapted to teach the most salutary lessons.

NOTES ON JOB 42

Job 42:2. *I know that thou canst do everything* This is said by Job in view of what had been declared by the Almighty in the previous chapters. It is an acknowledgment that God was omnipotent, and that man ought to be submissive, under the putting forth of his infinite power. One great object of the address of the Almighty was to convince Job of his majesty, and that object was fully accomplished.

And that no thought No purpose or plan of thine. God was able to execute all his designs.

Can be withholden from thee Margin, “or, of thine can be hindered.” Literally, “cut off” — **רָצַח**^{h1219}. The word, however, means also “to cut off access to,” and then to prevent, hinder, restrain. This is its meaning here; so **וְאֵיכָבֵד** Genesis 11:6, “Nothing will be restrained **רָצַח**^{h1219} from them, which they have imagined to do.”

Job 42:3. *Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge?* This is repeated from **וְאֵיכָבֵד** Job 38:2. As used there these are the words of the Almighty, uttered as a reproof of Job for the manner in which he had undertaken to explain the dealings of God; see the notes at that verse. As repeated here by Job, they are an acknowledgment of the truth of what is there implied, that “he” had been guilty of hiding counsel in this manner, and the repetition here is a part of his confession. He acknowledges that he “had” entertained and expressed such views of God as were in fact clothing the whole subject in darkness instead of explaining it. The meaning is, “Who indeed is it, as thou saidst, that undertakes to judge of great and profound purposes without knowledge? I am that presumptuous man? I gen.”

Therefore have I uttered that I understood not I have pronounced an opinion on subjects altogether too profound for my comprehension. This is the language of true humility and penitence, and shows that Job had at heart a profound veneration for God, however much he had been led away by the severity of his sufferings to give vent to improper expressions. It is no uncommon thing for even good people to be brought to see that they have spoken presumptuously of God, and have engaged, in discussions and

ventured to pronounce opinions on matters pertaining to the divine administration, that were wholly beyond their comprehension.

Job 42:4. *Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak* This is the language of humble, docile submission. On former occasions he had spoken confidently and boldly of God; he had called in question the equity of his dealings with him; he had demanded that he might be permitted to carry his cause before him, and argue it there himself; Notes, ^{<81C>}Job 13:3,20-22. Now he is wholly changed. His is the submissive language of a docile child, and he begs to be permitted to sit down before God, and humbly to inquire of him what was truth. "This is true religion."

I will demand of thee Or rather, "I will ask of thee." The word "demand" implies more than there is of necessity in the original word *l aæ* ^{<17592>}. That means simply "to ask," and it may be done with the deepest humility and desire of instruction. That was now the temper of Job.

And declare thou unto me Job was not now disposed to debate the matter, or to enter into a controversy with God. He was willing to sit down and receive instruction from God, and earnestly desired that he would "teach" him of his ways. It should be added, that very respectable critics suppose that in this verse Job designs to make confession of the impropriety of his language on former occasions, in the presumptuous and irreverent manner in which he had demanded a trial of argument with God. It would then require to be rendered as a quotation from his own words formerly.

*"I have indeed uttered what I understood not,
Things too wonderful for me, which I know not,
(When I said) Hear now, I will speak,
I will demand of thee, and do thou teach me"*

This is adopted by Umbreit, and has much in its favor that is plausible; but on the whole the usual interpretation seems to be most simple and proper.

Job 42:5. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear* Referring to the indistinct views which we have of anything by merely hearing of it, compared with the clear apprehension which is furnished by sight. Job had had such views of God as one may obtain by being told of him; he now had such views as are furnished by the sight. The meaning is, that his views of God before were dark and obscure.

But now mine eye seeth thee We are not to suppose that Job means to say that he actually “saw” God, but that his apprehensions of him were clear and bright “as if” he did. There is no evidence that God appeared to Job in any visible form. He is said, indeed, to have spoken from the whirlwind, but no visible manifestation of YAHWEH is mentioned.

Job 42:6. *Wherefore I abhor myself* I see that I am a sinner to be loathed and abhorred. Job, though he did not claim to be perfect, had yet unquestionably been unduly exalted with the conception of his own righteousness, and in the zeal of his argument, and under the excitement of his feelings when reproached by his friends, had indulged in indefensible language respecting his own integrity. He now saw the error and folly of this, and desired to take the lowest place of humiliation. Compared with a pure and holy God, he saw that he was utterly vile and loathsome, and was not unwilling now to confess it. “And repent.” Of the spirit which I have evinced; of the language used in self-vindication; of the manner in which I have spoken of God. Of the general sentiments which he had maintained in regard to the divine administration as contrasted with those of his friends he had no occasion to repent, for they were correct (**Job 42:8**), nor had he occasion to repent “as if” he had never been a true penitent or a pious man. But he now saw that in the spirit which he had evinced under his afflictions, and in his argument, there was much to regret; and he doubtless saw that there had been much in his former life which had furnished occasion for bringing these trials upon him, over which he ought now to mourn.

In dust and ashes In the most lowly manner, and with the most expressive symbols of humiliation. It was customary in times of grief, whether in view of sin or from calamity, to sit down in ashes (see the notes at **Job 2:8**; compare **Daniel 9:3**; **Jonah 3:6**; **Matthew 11:21**); or on such an occasion the sufferer and the penitent would strew ashes over himself; compare **Isaiah 58:5**. The philosophy of this was — like the custom of wearing “black” for mourning apparel — that the external appearance ought to correspond with the internal emotions, and that deep sorrow would be appropriately expressed by disfiguring the outward aspect as much as possible. The sense here is, that Job meant to give expression to the profoundest and sincerest feelings of penitence for his sins. From this effect produced on his mind by the address of the Almighty, we may learn the following lessons:

(1) That a correct view of the character and presence of God is adapted to produce humility and penitence; compare ~~<84D>~~ Job 40:4,5. This effect was produced on the mind of Peter when, astonished by a miracle performed by the Savior which none but a divine being could have done, he said, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord;” ~~<41B>~~ Luke 5:8. The same effect; was produced on the mind of Isaiah after he had seen Yahweh of Hosts in the temple:

“Then said I, Wo is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of Hosts;” ~~<21B>~~ Isaiah 6:5.

No man can have any elevated views of his own importance or purity, who has right apprehensions of the holiness of his Creator.

(2) Such a view of the presence of God will produce what no argument can in causing penitence and humility. The friends of Job had reasoned with him in vain to secure just this state of mind; they had endeavored to convince him that he was a great sinner, and “ought” to exercise repentance. But he met argument with argument; and all their arguments, denunciations, and appeals, made no impression on his mind. When, however, God manifested himself to him, he was melted into contrition, and was ready to make the most penitent and humble confession. So it is now. The arguments of a preacher or a friend often make no impression on the mind of a sinner. He can guard himself against them. He can meet argument with argument, or can coolly turn the ear away. But he has no such power to resist God, and when “he” manifests himself to the soul, the heart is subdued, and the proud and self-confident unbeliever becomes humbled, and sues for mercy.

(3) A good man will be willing to confess that he is vile, when he has any clear views of God. He will be so affected with a sense of the majesty and holiness of his Maker, that he will be overwhelmed with a sense of his own unworthiness.

(4) The most holy men may have occasion to repent of their presumptuous manner of speaking of God. We all err in the same way in which Job did. We reason about God with irreverence; we speak of his government as if we could comprehend it; we discourse of him as if he were an equal; and when we come to have any just views of him, we see that there has been much improper boldness, much self-confidence, much irreverence of

thought and manner, in our estimation of the divine wisdom and plans. The bitter experience of Job should lead us to the utmost carefulness in the manner in which we speak of our Maker.

<806> Job 42:7. *And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job* Had the matter been left according to the record in **<806> Job 42:6**, a wholly erroneous impression would have been made. Job was overwhelmed with the conviction of his guilt, and had nothing been said to his friends, the impression would have been that he was wholly in the wrong. It was important, therefore, and was indeed essential to the plan of the book, that the divine judgment should be pronounced on the conduct of his three friends.

The LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite Eliphaz had been uniformly first in the argument with Job, and hence, he is particularly addressed here. He seems to have been the most aged and respectable of the three friends, and in fact the speeches of the others are often a mere echo of his.

My wrath is kindled Wrath, or anger, is often represented as enkindled, or burning.

For ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath This must be understood comparatively. God did not approve of all that Job had said, but the meaning is, that his general views of his government were just. The main position which he had defended in contradistinction from his friends was correct, for his arguments tended to vindicate the divine character, and to uphold the divine government. It is to be remembered, also, as Bouillier has remarked, that there was a great difference in the circumstances of Job and the three friends — circumstances modifying the degrees of blameworthiness chargeable to each. Job uttered indeed, some improper sentiments about God and his government; he expressed himself with irreverence and impatience; he used a language of boldness and complaint wholly improper, but this was done in the agony of mental and bodily suffering, and when provoked by the severe and improper charges of hypocrisy brought by his friends. What “they” said, on the contrary, was unprovoked. It was when they were free from suffering, and when they were urged to it by no severity of trial. It was, moreover, when every consideration required them to express the language of condolence, and to comfort a suffering friend.

<806> Job 42:8. *Therefore take unto you* Or, FOR yourselves.

Seven bullocks and seven rams The number “seven” was a common number in offering animals for sacrifice; see ^{<B318>}Leviticus 23:18; ^{<B32>}Numbers 29:32. It was not a number, however, confined at all to Jewish sacrifices, for we find that Balaam gave the direction to Balak, king of Moab, to prepare just this number for sacrifice. “And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven oxen and seven rams;” ^{<B31>}Numbers 23:1,29. The number “seven” was early regarded as a perfect number, and it was probably with reference to this that that number of victims was selected, with an intention of offering a sacrifice that would be complete or perfect.

And go to my servant Job An acknowledgment of his superiority. It is probably to be understood, also, that Job would act as the officiating priest in offering up the sacrifice. It is observable that no allusion is made in this book to the priestly office, and the conclusion is obvious that the scene is laid before the institution of that office among the Jews; compare the notes at ^{<B305>}Job 1:5.

And offer up for yourselves That is, by the aid of Job. They were to make the offering, though Job was evidently to be the officiating priest.

A burnt-offering Notes, ^{<B305>}Job 1:5.

And my servant Job shall pray for you In connection with the offering, or as the officiating priest. This is a beautiful instance of the nature and propriety of intercession for others. Job was a holy man; his prayers would be acceptable to God, and his friends were permitted to avail themselves of his powerful intercession in their behalf. It is also an instance showing the nature of the patriarchal worship. It did not consist merely in offering sacrifices. Prayer was to be connected with sacrifices, nor is there any evidence that bloody offerings were regarded as available in securing acceptance with God, except in connection with fervent prayer. It is also an instance showing the nature of the patriarchal “piety.” It was “presumed” that Job would be ready to do this, and would not hesitate thus to pray for his “friends.” Yet it could not be forgotten how much they had wounded his feelings; how severe had been their reproaches; nor how confidently they had maintained that he was an eminently bad man. But it was presumed now that Job would be ready to forgive all this; to welcome his friends to a participation in the same act of worship with him, and to pray for them that their sins might be forgiven. Such is religion, alike in the patriarchal age and under the gospel, prompting us to be ready to forgive

those who have pained or injured us, and making us ready to pray that God would pardon and bless them.

For him will I accept Margin, “his face,” or “person.” So the Hebrew. So in ^{<1821>}Genesis 19:21 (“margin,”) compare ^{<1820>}Deuteronomy 28:50. The word “face” is thus used to denote the “person,” or man. The meaning is, that Job was so holy and upright that God would regard his prayers.

Lest I deal with you after your folly As their folly had deserved. There is particular reference here to the sentiments which they had advanced respecting the divine character and government.

^{<1819>}**Job 42:9.** *The Lord also accepted Job* Margin, as in ^{<1818>}Job 42:8, “the face of.” The meaning is, that he accepted his prayers and offerings in behalf of his friends.

^{<1810>}**Job 42:10.** *And the Lord turned the captivity of Job* Restored him to his former prosperity. The language is taken from restoration to country and home after having been a captive in a foreign land. This language is often applied in the Scriptures to the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, and some writers have made use of it as an argument to show that Job lived “after” that event. But this conclusion is unwarranted. The language is so general that it might be taken from the return from “any” captivity, and is such as would naturally be employed in the early periods of the world to denote restoration from calamity. It was common in the earliest ages to convey captives in war to the land of the conqueror, and thus make a land desolate by the removal of its inhabitants; and it would be natural to use the language expressive of their return to denote a restoration from “any” great calamity to former privileges and comforts. Such is undoubtedly its meaning as applied to the case of Job. He was restored from his series of protracted trials to a state of prosperity.

When he prayed for his friends Or after he had prayed for his friends. It is not implied of necessity that his praying for them had any particular effect in restoring his prosperity.

Also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before Margin, “added all that” had been to “Job unto the double.” The margin is a literal translation, but the meaning is the same. It is not to be understood that this occurred at once — for many of these blessings were bestowed gradually. Nor are we to understand it in every respect literally — for he had the

same number of sons and daughters as before; but it is a general declaration, and was true in all essential respects.

Job 42:11. *Then came there unto him all his brethren ...* It seems remarkable that none of these friends came near to him during his afflictions, and especially that his “sisters” should not have been with him to sympathize with him. But it was one of the bitter sources of his affliction, and one of the grounds of his complaint, that in his trials his kindred stood aloof from him; so in ^{<1819>}Job 19:13,14, he says, “He hath put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me. My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.” It is not easy to account for this. It may have been, however, that a part were kept from showing any sympathy, in accordance with the general fact that there are always professed friends, and sometimes kindred, who forsake a man in affliction; and that a part regarded him as abandoned by God, and forsook him on that account — from a mistaken view of what they regarded as duty, that they ought to forsake one whom God had forsaken. When his calamities had passed by, however, and he again enjoyed the tokens of the divine favor, all returned to him full of condolence and kindness; part, probably, because friends always cluster around one who comes out of calamity and rises again to honor, and the other portion because they supposed that as “God” regarded him now with approbation, it was proper for “them” to do it also. A man who has been unfortunate, and who is visited with returning prosperity, never lacks friends. The rising sun reveals many friends that darkness had driven away, or brings to light many — real or professed — who were concealed at midnight.

And did eat bread with him in his house An ancient token of friendship and affection; compare ^{<1910>}Psalm 41:9; ^{<1915>}Proverbs 9:5; 23:6; ^{<1910>}Jeremiah 41:1.

And every man also gave him a piece of money This is probably one of the earliest instances in which money is mentioned in history. It is, of course, impossible now to determine the form or value of the “piece of money” here referred to. The Hebrew word **hfycqj** ^{<1719>}, occurs only in this place and in ^{<1919>}Genesis 33:19, where it is rendered “pieces of money,” and in ^{<1919>}Joshua 24:32, where it is rendered “pieces of silver.” It is evident, therefore, that it was one of the earliest names given to coin, and its use here is an argument that the book of Job is of very early origin. Had it been composed at a later age, the word “shekel,” or some word in common use

to denote money, would have been used. The Vulgate here renders the word “ovem,” a sheep; the Septuagint in like manner, **αμναδα**, “a lamb;” and so also the Chaldee. In the margin, in both the other places where the word occurs (^{<01319>}Genesis 33:19; ^{<01342>}Joshua 24:32), it is also rendered “lambs.” The reason why it is so rendered is unknown. It may have been supposed that in early times a sheep or lamb having something like a fixed value, might have been the standard by which to estimate the value of other things; but there is nothing in the etymology of the word to support this interpretation. The word in Arabic (kasat) means to divide out equally, to measure; and the Hebrew word probably had some such signification, denoting that which was measured or weighed out, and hence became the name of a certain “weight” or “amount” of money. It is altogether probable that the first money consisted of a certain amount of the precious metals “weighed out,” without being “coined” in any way. It is not an improbable supposition, however, that the figure of a sheep or lamb was the first figure stamped on coins, and this may be the reason why the word used here was rendered in this manner in the ancient versions. On the meaning of the word, Bochart may be consulted, “Hieroz.” P. i. Lib. c. xliii. pp. 433-437; Rosenmuller on ^{<01319>}Genesis 33:19; Schultens “in loco;” and the following work in Ugolin’s “Thes. Antiq. Sacr.” Tom. xxviii., “Otthonis Sperlingii Diss. de nummis non cusis,” pp. 251-253, 298-306. The arguments of Bochart to prove that this word denotes a piece of money, and not a lamb, as it is rendered by the Vulgate, the Septuagint, the Syriac, the Arabic, and by Onkelos, are briefly:

- (1) That in more than an hundred places where reference is made in the Scriptures to a lamb or a sheep, this word is not used. Other words are constantly employed.
- (2) The testimony of the rabbis is uniform that it denotes a piece of money. Akiba says that when he traveled into Africa he found there a coin which they called kesita. So R. Solomon, and Levi Ben Gerson, in their commentaries, and Kimchi, Pomarius, and Aquinas, in their Lexicons.
- (3) The authority of the Masorites in relation to the Hebrew word is the same. According to Bochart the word is the same as **fVæp** or **fVq**^{<47189>}, changing the Hebrew letter shin (v) for the Hebrew letter sin (c). The word means true, sincere, ^{<01616>}Psalm 60:6; ^{<01721>}Proverbs 22:21. According to this, the name was given to the coin because it was made of pure metal — unadulterated silver or gold. See this argument at length in Bochart.

(4) The feminine form of the noun used here shows that it does not mean a lamb — it being wholly improbable that the friends of Job would send him ewe lambs only.

(5) In the early times of the patriarchs — as early as the time of Jacob — money was in common use, and the affairs of merchandise were conducted by that as a medium; ^{<0172>}Genesis 17:12,13; 47:16.

(6) The statement in ^{<4076>}Acts 7:16, leads to the supposition that “money” is referred to by the word as used in ^{<0339>}Genesis 33:19. If, as is there supposed, the purchase of the same field is referred to in ^{<0236>}Genesis 23:16; 23:19, then it is clear that money is referred to by the word. In ^{<0236>}Genesis 23:16 it is said that Abraham paid for the field of Ephron iu Macpelah “four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.” And if the same purchase is referred to in both these places, then by a comparison of the two, it appears that the kesita was heavier than the shekel, and contained about four shekels. It is not easy, however, to determine its value.

And every one an earring of gold The word rendered “earring” ^{<6141>}מִזְרִי, may mean a ring for the nose (^{<0247>}Genesis 24:47; ^{<2321>}Isaiah 3:21; ^{<0122>}Proverbs 11:22; ^{<2123>}Hosea 2:13), as well as for the ear, ^{<0354>}Genesis 35:4. The word “ring” would better express the sense here without specifying its particular use; compare ^{<0724>}Judges 8:24,25; ^{<0252>}Proverbs 25:12. Ornaments of this kind were much worn by the ancients (compare Isaiah 3; ^{<0222>}Genesis 24:22), and a contribution of these from each one of the friends of Job would constitute a valuable property; compare ^{<0232>}Exodus 32:2,3. It was not uncommon for friends thus to bring presents to one who was restored from great calamity. See the case of Hezekiah, ^{<4223>}2 Chronicles 32:23.

^{<8212>}**Job 42:12.** *So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job* To wit, by giving him double what he had possessed before his calamities came upon him; see ^{<8210>}Job 42:10.

For he had fourteen thousand sheep ... The possessions which are here enumerated are in each instance just twice as much as he possessed in the early part of his life. In regard to their value, and the rank in society which they indicated, see the notes at ^{<8103>}Job 1:3. The only thing which is omitted here, and which it is not said was doubled, was his “household,” or “husbandry” (^{<8103>}Job 1:3, “margin”), but it is evident that this must have

been increased in a corresponding manner to have enabled him to keep and maintain such flocks and herds. We are not to suppose that these were granted to him at once, but as he lived an hundred and forty years after his afflictions, he had ample time to accumulate this property.

Job 42:13. *He had also seven sons and three daughters* The same number which he had before his trials. Nothing is said of his wife, or whether these children were, or were not, by a second marriage. The last mention that is made of his wife is in ^{<18917>}Job 19:17, where he says that “his breath was strange to his wife, though he entreated her for the children’s sake of his own body.” The character of this woman does not appear to have been such as to have deserved further notice than the fact, that she contributed greatly to increase the calamities of her husband. It falls in with the design of the book to notice her only in this respect, and having done this, the sacred writer makes no further reference to her. The strong presumption is, that the second family of children was by a second marriage. See Prof. Lee on Job, p. 26. It would not, however, have fallen in with the usual manner in which “a wife” is mentioned in the Scriptures, to represent her removal as “in any circumstances” a felicitous event, and, as it could have been represented in no other light, if it had actually occurred, it is delicately passed over in silence. Even under all these circumstances — with a former wife who was impious and unfeeling; who served only to aggravate the woes of her holy and much afflicted husband; who saw him pass through his trials without sympathy and compassion — a second marriage is not mentioned as a desirable event, nor is it referred to as one of the grounds on which Job could felicitate himself on his return to prosperity. The children are mentioned; the whole reference to the second marriage relation, if it occurred, is delicately passed over. Under no circumstances would the sacred penman mention it as an event laying the ground for felicitation.

Job 42:14. *And he called the name of the first, Jemima* It is remarkable that in the former account of the family of Job, the names of none of his children are mentioned, and in this account the names of the daughters only are designated. “Why” the names of the daughters are here specified, is not intimated. They are significant, and they are “so” mentioned as to show that they contributed greatly to the happiness of Job on the return of his prosperity, and were among the chief blessings which gladdened his old age. The name Jemima ^{h3224}hmyjyi is rendered by the

Vulgate “Diem,” and by the Septuagint, ἡμεραν ^{<2250>}, “Day.” The Chaldee adds this remark: “He gave her the name Jemima, because her beauty was like the day.” The Vulgate, Septuagint, and Chaldee, evidently regarded the name as derived from μῆρας ^{<3117>}, “day,” and this is the most natural and obvious derivation. The name thus conferred would indicate that Job had now emerged from the “night” of affliction, and that returning light shone again on his tabernacle. It was usual in the earliest periods to bestow names because they were significant of returning prosperity (see ^{<10425>}Genesis 4:25), or because they indicated hope of what would be in their time (^{<10629>}Genesis 5:29), or because they were a pledge of some permanent tokens of the divine favor; see the notes at ^{<2188>}Isaiah 8:18. Thomas Roe remarks (“Travels,” 425), that among the Persians it is common to give names to their daughters derived from spices, unguents, pearls, and precious stones, or anything which is regarded as beautiful or valuable. See Rosenmuller, “Alte u. neue Morgenland,” No. 779.

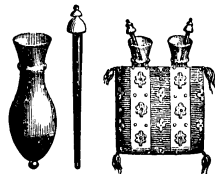


Painted Faces.

And the name of the second Kezia The name Kezia $h[yxq]$ ^{<37103>} means cassia, a bark resembling cinnamon, but less aromatic. “Gesenius.” It grew in Arabia, and was used as a perfume. The Chaldee Paraphrast explains this as meaning that he gave her this name because “she was as precious as cassia.” Cassia is mentioned in ^{<4918>}Psalms 45:8. as among the precious perfumes. “All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia.” The agreeableness or pleasantness of the perfume was the reason why the name was chosen to be given to a daughter.

And the name of the third, Keren-happuch Properly, “horn of stibium.” The “stibium” $\text{E}\omega\text{p}$ ^{<46320>}, was a paint or dye made originally, it is supposed, from sea-weed, and afterward from antimony, with which females tinged their eye-lashes; see the notes at ^{<2541>}Isaiah 54:11. It was esteemed as an ornament of great beauty, chiefly because it served to make the eye appear larger. Large eyes are considered in the East as a mark of beauty, and the painting of black borders around them gives them an enlarged appearance.

It is remarkable that this species of ornament was known so early as the time of Job, and this is one of the cases, constantly occurring in the East, showing that fashions there do not change. It is also remarkable that the fact of painting in this manner should have been considered so respectable as to be incorporated into the name of a daughter; and this shows that there was no attempt at “concealing” the habit. This also accords with the customs which prevail still in the East. With us, the materials and instruments of personal adorning are kept in the back-ground, but the Orientals obtrude them constantly on the attention, as objects adapted to suggest agreeable ideas. The “process” of painting the eye is described by a recent traveler to be this: “The eye is closed, and a small ebony rod smeared with the composition is squeezed between the lids so as to tinge the edges with the color. This is considered to add greatly to the brilliancy and power of the eye, and to deepen the effect of the long black eye-lashes of which the Orientals are proud. The same drug is employed on their eye-brows; used thus, it is intended to elongate, not to elevate the arc, so that the inner extremities are usually represented as meeting between the eyes. To Europeans the effect is at first seldom pleasing; but it soon becomes so.” The foregoing cuts give a representation of the vessels of stibium now in use.



Modern Utensils for Painting the Eye.

Job 42:15. *And their father gave them inheritance among their brethren* This is mentioned as a proof of his special regard, and is also recorded because it was not common. Among the Hebrews the daughter inherited only in the case where there was no son, Numbers 27:8. The property was divided equally among the sons, with the exception that the oldest received a double portion; see Jahn’s “Bib. Arch.” Section 168. This custom, prevailing still extensively in the East, it seems existed in the time of Job, and it is mentioned as a remarkable circumstance that he made his daughters heirs to his property with their brothers. It would also be rather implied in the passage before us that they were equal heirs.

Job 42:16. *After this Job lived an hundred and forty years* As his age at the time his calamities commenced is not mentioned, it is of course

impossible to determine how old he was when he died. The Septuagint, however, has undertaken to determine this, but on what authority is unknown. They render this verse, "And Job lived after this affliction an hundred and seventy years: so that all the years that he lived were two hundred and forty." According to this, his age would have been seventy when his afflictions came upon him; but this is a mere conjecture. Why the authors of that version have added thirty years to the time which he lived after his calamities, making it an hundred and seventy instead of an hundred and forty as it is in the Hebrew text, is unknown. The supposition that he was about seventy years of age when his calamities came upon him, is not an unreasonable one. He had a family of ten children, and his sons were grown so as to have families of their own, ~~8006~~ Job 1:4. It should be remembered, also, that in the patriarchal times, when people lived to a great age, marriages did not occur at so early a period of life as they do now. In this book, also, though the age of Job is not mentioned, yet the uniform representation of him is that of a man of mature years; of large experience and extended observation; of one who had enjoyed high honor and a wide reputation as a sage and a magistrate; and when these circumstances are taken into the account, the supposition of the translators of the Septuagint, that he was seventy years old when his afflictions commenced, is not improbable. If so, his age at his death was two hundred and ten years. The age to which he lived is mentioned as remarkable, and was evidently somewhat extraordinary. It is not proper, therefore, to assume that this was the ordinary length of human life at that time, though it would be equally improper to suppose that there was anything like miracle in the case. The fair interpretation is, that he reached the period of old age which was then deemed most honorable; that he was permitted to arrive at what was then regarded as the outer limit of human life; and if this be so, it is not difficult to determine "about" the time when he lived. The length of human life, after the flood, suffered a somewhat regular decline, until, in the time of Moses, it was fixed at about threescore years and ten, ~~9000~~ Psalm 90:10. The following instances will show the regularity of the decline, and enable us, with some degree of probability, to determine the period of the world in which Job lived. Noah lived 950 years; Shem, his son, 600; Arphaxad, his son, 438 years; Salah, 433 years; Eber, 464; Peleg, 239; Reu, 239; Serug, 230; Nahor, 248; Terah, 205; Abraham, 175; Isaac, 180; Jacob, 147; Joseph, 110; Moses, 120; Joshua, 110. Supposing, then, the age of Job to have been somewhat unusual and extraordinary, it would fall in with the period somewhere in the time between Terah and Jacob;

and if so, he was probably contemporary with the most distinguished of the patriarchs.

And saw his sons, ... To see one's posterity advancing in years and honor, and extending themselves in the earth, was regarded as a signal honor and a proof of the divine favor in the early ages. ^{<1481>}Genesis 48:11, "And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face; and lo, God hath also showed me thy seed." ^{<1776>}Proverbs 17:6, "Children's children are the crown of old men." ^{<1936>}Psalms 128:6, "Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children;" compare ^{<1975>}Psalms 127:5; ^{<1112>}Genesis 12:2; 17:5,6; ^{<1825>}Job 5:25; and the notes at ^{<2530>}Isaiah 53:10.

^{<1827>}**Job 42:17.** *So Job died, being old and full of days* Having filled up the ordinary term of human life at that period of the world. He reached an honored old age, and when he died was not prematurely cut down. He was "regarded" as an old man. The translators of the Septuagint, at the close of their version, make the following addition: "And it is written that he will rise again with those whom the Lord will raise up." This is translated out of a Syrian book. "He dwelt indeed in the land of Ausitis, on the confines of Idumea and Arabia. His first name was Jobab; and having married an Arabian woman, he had by her a son whose name was Ennon. He was himself a son of Zare, one of the sons of Esau; and his mother's name was Bosorra; so that he was the fifth in descent from Abraham. And these were the kings who reigned in Edom, over which country he also bore rule. The first was Balak, the son of Beor, and the name of his city was Dannaba. And after Balak, Jobab, who is called Job; and after him, Asom, who was governor (*ἡγεμῶν* ^{<2232>}) from the region of Thaimanitis; and after him, Adad, son of Barad, who smote Madian in the plain of Moab; and the name of his city was Getham. And the friends who came to him were Eliphaz of the sons of Esau, the king of the Thaimanites; Bildad, the sovereign (*τυραννος* ^{<5181>}) of the Saueheans; and Sopher, the king of the Manaians." What is the authority for this statement is now entirely unknown, nor is it known from where it was derived. The remark with which it is introduced, that it is written that he would be raised up again in the resurrection, looks as if it were a forgery made after the coming of the Savior, and has much the appearance of being an attempt to support the doctrine of the resurrection by the authority of this ancient book. It is, at all events, an unauthorized addition to the book, as nothing like it occurs in the Hebrew.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

We have now gone through with an exposition of the most ancient book in the world, and the most difficult one in the sacred volume. We have seen how sagacious men reason on the mysterious events of Divine Providence, and how little light can be thrown on the ways of God by the profoundest thinking, or the acutest observation. We have seen a good man subjected to severe trials by the loss of all his property and children, by a painful and loathsome disease, by acute mental sorrows, by the reproaches of his wife, by the estrangement of his surviving kindred, and then by the labored efforts of his friends to prove that he was a hypocrite, and that all his calamities had come upon him as a demonstration that he was at heart a bad man. We have seen that man struggling with those arguments; embarrassed and perplexed by their ingenuity; tortured by the keenness of the reproaches of his friends; and under the excitement of his feelings, and the pressure of his woes, giving vent to expressions of impatience and irreverent reflection on the government of God, which he afterward had occasion abundantly to regret. We have seen that man brought safely through all his trials; showing that, after all that “they” had said and that “he” had said and suffered, he was a good man. We have seen the divine interposition in his favor at the close of the controversy; the divine approbation of his general character and spirit; and the divine goodness shown him in the removal of his calamities, in his restoration to health, in the bestowment on him of double his former possessions; and in the lengthening out his days to an honored old age. In his latter days we have seen his friends coming around him again with returning affection and confidence; and a happy family growing up to cheer him in his declining years, and to make him honored in the earth. In view of all these things, and especially of the statements in the chapter which closes the book, we may make the following remarks:

(1) The upright will be ultimately honored by God and man. God may bring afflictions upon them, and they may “seem” to be objects of his displeasure; but the period will arrive when he will show them marks of his favor. This may not “always,” indeed, be in the present life, but there will be a period when all these clouds will be dissipated, and when the good, the pious, the sincere friends of God, shall enjoy the returning tokens of his friendship. If his approbation of them is declared in no intelligible way in this life, it will be at the day of judgment in a more sublime manner even than it was announced to Job; if the whole of this life should be dark with storms, yet

there is a heaven where, through eternity, there will be pure and unclouded day. In like manner, honor will be ultimately shown to the good and just by the world. At present friends may withdraw; enemies may be multiplied; suspicions may attach to a man's name; calumny and slander may come over his reputation like a mist from the ocean. But things will ultimately work themselves right. A man in the end will have all the reputation which he ought to have. He who has a character that "ought" to be loved, honored, and remembered, will be loved, honored, and remembered; and he who has such a character that he ought to be hated or forgotten, will be. It may not "always," indeed, be in the present life; but there is a current of public favor and esteem setting toward a good man while living, which always comes up to him when he is dead. The world will do justice to his character; and a holy man, if calumniated while he lives, may safely commit his character to God and to the "charitable speeches" ("Bacon,") of men, and to distant times, when he dies. But in most instances, as in the case of Job, if life is lengthened out, the calumniated, the reproached, and the injured, will find justice done them before they die. Reproaches in early or middle life will be succeeded by a fair and wide reputation in old age; the returning confidence of friends will be all the compensation which this world can furnish for the injury which was done, and the evening of life spent in the enjoyment of friendship and affection, will but precede the entrance on a better life, to be spent in the eternal friendship of God and of all holy beings.

(2) We should adhere to our integrity when passing through trials. They may be long and severe. The storm that rolls over us may be very dark, and the lightning's flash may be vivid, and the thunder deep and long. Our friends may withdraw and reproach us; those who should console us may entreat us to curse God and die; one woe may succeed another in rapid succession, and each successive stroke be heavier than the last; years may roll on in which we may find no comfort or peace; but we should not despair. We should not let go our integrity. We should not blame our Maker. We should not allow the language of complaint or murmuring to pass our lips, nor ever doubt that God is good and true. There is a good reason for all that he does; and in due time we shall meet the recompense of our trials and our fidelity. No pious and submissive sufferer ever yet failed of ultimately receiving the tokens of the divine favor and love.

(3) The expressions of divine favor and love are not to be expected in the midst of angry controversy and heated debate. Neither Job nor his friends

appear to have enjoyed communion with God, or to have tasted much of the happiness of religion, while the controversy was going on. They were excited by the discussion; the argument was the main thing; and on both sides they gave vent to emotions that were little consistent with the reigning love of God in the heart, and with the enjoyment of religion. There were high words; mutual criminations and recriminations; strong doubts expressed about the sincerity and purity of each other's character; and many things were said on both sides, as there usually is in such cases, derogatory to the character and government of God. It was only after the argument was closed, and the disputants were silenced, that God appeared in mercy to them, and imparted to them the tokens of his favor.

Theological combatants usually enjoy little religion. In stormy debate and heated discussion there is usually little communion with God and little enjoyment of true piety. It is rare that such discussions are carried on without engendering feelings wholly hostile to religion; and it is rare that such a controversy is continued long, in which much is not said on both sides injurious to God — in which there are not severe reflections on his government, and in which opinions are not advanced which give abundant occasion for bitter regret. In a heated argument a man becomes insensibly more concerned for the success of his cause than for the honor of God, and will often advance sentiments even severely reflecting on the divine government, rather than confess the weakness of his own cause, and yield the point in debate. In such times it is not an inconceivable thing that even good people should be more anxious to maintain their own opinions than to vindicate the cause of God, and would be more willing to express hard sentiments about their Maker than to acknowledge their own defeat.

(4) From the chapter before us (¹⁸²¹Job 42:11), we are presented with an interesting fact, such as often occurs. It is this: friends return to us, and become exceedingly kind “after” calamity has passed by. The kindred and acquaintances of Job withdrew when his afflictions were heavy upon him; they returned only with returning prosperity. When afflicted, they lost their interest in him. Many of them, perhaps, had been dependent on him, and when his property was gone, and he could no longer aid them, they disappeared of course. Many of them, perhaps, professed friendship for him “because” he was a man of rank, and property, and honor; and when he was reduced to poverty and wretchedness, they also disappeared of course. Many of them, perhaps, had regarded him as a man of piety; but when these calamities came upon him, in accordance with the common

sentiments of the age, they regarded him as a bad man, and they also withdrew from him of course. When there were evidences of returning prosperity, and of the renewed favor of God, these friends and acquaintances again returned. Some of them doubtless came back “because” he was thus restored. “Swallow-friends, that are gone in the winter, will return in the spring, though their friendship is of little value.” “Henry.” That portion of them who had been sincerely attached to him as a good man, though their confidence in his piety had been shaken by his calamities, now returned, doubtless with sincere hearts, and disposed to do him good. They contributed to his needs; they helped him to begin the world again they were the means of laying the foundation of his future prosperity; and in a time of real need their aid was valuable, and they did all that they could to minister consolation to the man who had been so sorely afflicted. In adversity, it is said, a man will know who are his real friends. If this is true, then this distinguished and holy patriarch had few friends who were truly attached to him, and who were not bound to him by some consideration of selfishness. Probably this is always the case with those who occupy prominent and elevated situations in life. True friendship is oftenest found in humble walks and in lowly vales.

(5) We should overcome the unkindness of our friends by praying for them; see the notes at ~~ISA~~ Job 42:8,10. This is the true way of meeting harsh reproaches and unkind reflections on our character. Whatever may be the severity with which we are treated by others; whatever charges they may bring against us of hypocrisy or wickedness; however ingenious may be their arguments to prove this, or however cutting their sarcasm and retorts, we should never refuse to pray for them. We should always be willing to seek the blessing of God upon them, and be ready to bear them on our hearts before the throne of mercy. It is one of the privileges of good people thus to pray for their calumniators and slanderers; and one of our highest honors, and it may be the source of our highest joys, is that of being made the instruments of calling down the divine blessing on those who have injured us. It is not that we delight to triumph over them; it is not that we are now proud that “we” have the evidence of divine favor; it is not that we exult that they are humbled, and that we now are exalted; it is that we may be the means of permanent happiness to those who have greatly injured us.

(6) The last days of a good man are not unfrequently his best and happiest days. The early part of his life may be harassed with cares; the middle may be filled up with trials; but returning prosperity may smile upon his old age,

and his sun go down without, a cloud. His heart may be weaned from the world by his trials; his true friends may have been ascertained by their adhering to him in reverses of fortune, and the favor of God may so crown the evening of his life, that to him, and to all, it shall be evident that he is ripening for glory. God is often pleased also to impart unexpected comforts to his friends in their old age; and though they have suffered much and lost much, and thought that they should never “again see good,” yet he often disappoints the expectations of his people, and the most prosperous times come when they thought all their comforts were dead. In the trials through which we pass in life, it is not improper to look forward to brighter and better days, as to be yet possibly our portion in this world; at all events, if we are the friends of God, we may look forward to certain and enduring happiness in the world that is to come.

(7) The book, through whose exposition we have now passed, is a most beautiful and invaluable argument. It relates to the most important subject that can come before our minds — the government of God, and the principles on which his administration is conducted. It shows how this appeared to the reflecting people of the earliest times. It shows how their minds were perplexed with it, and what difficulties attended the subject after the most careful observation. It shows how little can be accomplished in removing those difficulties by human reasoning, and how little light the most careful observation, and the most sagacious reflections, can throw on this perplexing subject. Arguments more beautiful, illustrations more happy, sentiments more terse and profound, and views of God more large and comprehensive, than those which occur in this book, can be found in no works of philosophy; nor has the human mind in its own efforts ever gone beyond the reasonings of these sages in casting light on the mysterious ways of God. They brought to the investigation the wisdom collected by their fathers and preserved in proverbs; they brought the results of the long reflection and observation of their own minds; and yet they threw scarce a ray of light on the mysterious subject before them, and at the close of their discussions we feel that the whole question is just as much involved in mystery as ever. So we feel at the end of all the arguments of man without the aid of revelation, on the great subjects pertaining to the divine government over this world. The reasonings of philosophy now are no more satisfactory than were those of Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad, and it may be doubted whether, since this book was written, the slightest advance has been made in removing the perplexities

on the subject of the divine administration, so beautifully stated in the book of Job.

(8) The reasonings in this book show the desirableness and the value of revelation. It is to be remembered that the place which the reasonings in this book should be regarded as occupying, is properly “before” any revelation had been given to people, or before any was recorded. If it is the most ancient book in the world, this is clear; and in the volume of revealed truth it should be regarded as occupying the first place in the order in which the books of revelation were given to man. As introductory to the whole volume of revelation — for so it should be considered — the book of Job is of inestimable worth and importance. It shows how “little” advance the human mind can make in questions of the deepest importance, and what painful perplexity is left after all the investigations that man can make. It shows what clouds of obscurity rest on the mind, whenever man by himself undertakes to explain and unfold the purposes of Deity. It shows how little philosophy and careful observation can accomplish to explain the mysteries of the divine dealings, and to give the mind solid peace in the contemplation of the various subjects that so much perplex man. There was no better way of showing this than that adopted here. A great and good man falls. His comforts all depart. He sinks to the lowest degree of wretchedness. To explain this, and all kindred subjects, his own mind is taxed to the utmost, and four men of distinguished sagacity and extent of observation are introduced — the representatives of the wisdom of the world — to explain the fact. They adduce all that they had learned by tradition, and all that their own observation had suggested, and all the considerations which reason would suggest to them; but all in vain. They make no advances in the explanation, and the subject at the close is left as dark as when they began. Such an effect, and such a train of discussion, is admirably fitted to prepare the mind to welcome the teachings of revelation, and to be grateful for that volume of revealed truth which casts such abundant light on the questions that so perplexed these ancient sages. Before the book of revelation was given, it was well to have on record the result of the best efforts which man could make to explain the mysteries of the divine administration.

As a specimen of early poetry, and an illustration of the early views of science and the state of the arts, of incomparable beauty and sublimity, also, this book is invaluable. Almost four thousand years have passed away since this patriarch lived, and since the arguments recorded in the book

were made and recorded. Men have made great advances since in science and the arts. The highest efforts, probably, of which the human mind is capable, have since been made in the department of poetry, and works have been produced destined certainly to live on to the consummation of all things. But the sublimity and beauty of the poetry in this book stand still unsurpassed, unrivaled. As a mere specimen of composition, apart from all the questions of its theological bearing; as the oldest book in the world; as reflecting the manners, habits, and opinions of an ancient generation; as illustrating more than any other book extant the state of the sciences, the ancient views of astronomy, geology, geography, natural history, and the advances made in the arts, this book has a higher value than can be attached to any other record of the past, and demands the profound attention of those who would make themselves familiar with the history of the race. The theologian should study it as an invaluable introduction to the volume of inspired truth; the humble Christian, to obtain elevated views of God; the philosopher, to see how little the human mind can accomplish on the most important of all subjects without the aid of revelation; the child of sorrow, to learn the lessons of patient submission; the man of science, to know what was understood in the far distant periods of the past; the man of taste, as an incomparable specimen of poetic beauty and sublimity. It will teach invaluable lessons to each advancing generation; and to the end of time true piety and taste will find consolation and pleasure in the study of the Book of Job. God grant that this effort to explain it may contribute to this result. To that God who inclined my heart to engage in the attempt to explain this ancient book, and who has given me health, and strength, and the means to prosecute the study with advantage, I now devote this exposition. I trust it may do good to others; it has been profitable and pleasant to my own soul.