

Job 5

Job 5:1–27

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Introduction: It is interesting, but much of Job 5, which is a continuation of Job 4, is doctrinally accurate, even though misapplied by Eliphaz. One of the passages which Bob Thieme has taught several times, dealing with God’s protection is found here (Job 5:19–27). Even the Apostle Paul quotes from this chapter. There are several notable passages taken from this chapter with which many of us are familiar.

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Affliction and Man

Literally:

**“Please call; [is] there [in existence]
anyone answering you?
And to which out from [the] holy ones will
you turn [and face]?”**

Job 5:1

Smoother English rendering:

**“Call out, if you will; is there even anyone in
existence who will answer you?
And to which of the holy ones will you turn?”**

After *please call*, we have an interrogative particle and then the substantive *yêsh* (יֵשׁ) [pronounced *yaysh*], which means *being, substance, existence*. It often acts as a substantive plus the absolute status quo verb *to be*; e.g., *[if] there be* (I Sam. 20:8), *there is* (Esther 3:8), *there shall be* (Jer. 31:6). However, this acts not as a mere copula [pronounced *KOP-ye-la*], but existence is emphasized. In the KJV, the verbal portion of this is often italicized. Strong’s #3426 BDB #441.

This is followed by the masculine singular, Qal active participle (with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix) of the verb *to answer*. Strong’s #6030 BDB #772. Barnes: *The expression here used...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...“If there be any that will answer thee.” If there is any one 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 dealing towards thee.”...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 eh could get no one of “the saints” to assist him in the argument. ...he may mean to intimate that he [Job] 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 any one 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.¹ The language used in this first verse is ironically similar to the language used in a court of law. Eliphaz suggests to Job to find anyone to who he could appeal his case; any court that would even listen to him. Eliphaz has no idea that they are in court right at this moment and that they are the chief witnesses.

The second line begins with a conjunction, the preposition *to*, and an interrogative particle. The adjective acting as a substantive *holy ones* is preceded by the *mîn* preposition, which means *out of*. The final verb is the 2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative of *pânâh* (פָּנֵה) [pronounced *paw-NAWH*], which means *to turn*. The key to this is the word *face* (the conjugate is the noun for *face*). This can mean *to turn one's face away from* and *to turn one's face towards*. Strong's #6437 BDB #815.

Job is in all of this pain and Eliphaz asks him to who can he turn to (other than the friends who are there). It is ironic that Eliphaz suggests that Job cannot go to the angels for assistance, as the angels are carefully observing Job right at that moment. Eliphaz tells Job that he cannot appeal to the angels in his condition. Besides, Eliphaz has already pointed out that even God places no trust in His holy ones. Throughout this ordeal, it is likely that Job called out to God many times in his pain. [How long, O Y^ehowah, will I call for help and You will not hear? I cry out to You, "Violence!" and yet You will not deliver me](#) (Habak. 1:2). What Job needs is a mediator, someone to stand between himself and God; someone who is equal to both God and to Job. Insofar as Eliphaz is concerned, it is useless for Job to turn to an angel or any intermediary, as it is simple to see that God is right and Job is wrong—what is there to mediate? Job doesn't see it that way. ["There is no mediator between us, Who may lay his hand upon us both."](#) (Job 9:33).

"For taunting provocation kills an unteachable fool; and passion slays a deluded one.

Job 5:2

"For taunting provocation kills the unteachable fool; and passion will slay the deluded.

This second verse begins with the conjunction *kîy* (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*] which means *when, that, for, because*. It is used as an explicative, an explanatory, a justificatory or a causal conjunction. Strong's #3588 BDB #471. This is followed by the *lâmed* preposition (*to, for*) and the adjective for *foolish* which acts here as a substantive. This word means more than simply *foolish*; this is a person who despises wisdom and discipline. This refers to a person who is unteachable—it doesn't matter if it is presented hypothetically or whether this person is disciplined severely in order to make a point. Strong's #191 BDB #17.

The verb is the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *to kill, to slay*. The substantive which follows immediately is *ka'as* (כָּאָס) [pronounced *KAH-gahs*], which means *taunting provocation*. This word does not mean *wrath* (which causes Barnes to be confused about the meaning of this verse). We do not find this rendered as *the wrath of God* anywhere; when used in conjunction with God, it refers to God being provoked (noun—Deut. 32:19 verb—I Kings 16:13, 26 II Kings 17:11). This word comes from a verb which means *to provoke*. Strong's #3708 BDB #495. This line should be rendered: [For taunting provocation kills an unteachable fool](#). You may wonder how we determine which is the subject and which is the object of the verb here. The subject, object and verb are all in the 3rd person masculine singular. First off, Hebrew sentences are generally ordered just the opposite of ours; i.e., they generally begin with the direct object and end with the subject. However, this is not always the case. The key here is actually in the next line, which parallels this line.

The second line begins with a conjunction and the Qal active participle of *pâthâh*, which means *to be enticed, to be deceived, to beguile*. Barnes suggests that the verb is applied to one whose lips or mouth is open and is, therefore, *open-hearted, ingenuous* (not ingenious), *unsuspicious*; one who is easily influenced by others.² I think that we could get away with *one who has been deceived* and possibly *self-deluded one*. The participle means that this verb behaves as a substantive here. Strong's #6601 BDB #834.

¹ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 155.

² Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 157.

This is followed by the 3rd person feminine singular, Hiphil imperfect of the verb *mûwth* (מִוֹת) [pronounced *mooth*]. In the Hiphil, this means *to kill, to destroy, to put to death, to execute*. Strong's #4191 BDB #559. This verb is followed by the substantive *qin-âh* (קִינְאָה) [pronounced *kin-AWH*], which is generally rendered *zeal, jealousy, ardour, envy*. It means *passion*, if one understands this apart from any sexual connotation. An artist is passionate about his art; a dedicated teacher is passionate about his subject matter; a classical musician shows a passion for his music. Strong's #7068 BDB #888. We know that it is the subject because it is in the feminine singular like the verb. The parallelism between the two lines allows us to correctly arrange the subject, verb and object in the previous line as well.

Eliphaz is saying that a person is blind-sided by his own passion. Without naming Job specifically, Eliphaz is implying that Job's emotional confusion due to his pain and his stubborn hard-headedness have deluded him and kept him from the truth.

**“I [even I] have seen an unteachable fool
take root;
then his habitation decayed suddenly.**

Job 5:3

**I have seen it for myself: unteachable fools
are uprooted,
and then their homes are in sudden ruin.**

We will look at a couple of translations here, since there is a bit of disagreement concerning this verse:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	I have seen the foolish taking root, and then hath his home decayed in a moment.
NAB	I have seen a fool spreading his roots, but his household suddenly decayed.
NJB	I have seen the senseless taking root, when a curse fell suddenly on his house.
NRSV	I have seen fools taking root, but suddenly I cursed their dwelling.
Owen's Translation	I have seen a fool taking root, but I cursed his dwelling suddenly.
REB	I have seen it for myself: fools uprooted, their homes in sudden ruin.
The Septuagint	And I have seen foolish ones taking root: but suddenly their habitation was devoured.
R.B. Thieme	I have seen the foolish settling down; and his home has decayed in a moment.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	—I have seen the perverse taking root, And I mark his habitation straightway,...

Only REB and *Young's Translation* seem to have been cognizant of the fact that there is the extra personal pronoun *I* found in the beginning of this verse. I commend the REB for recognizing that and giving it an excellent up-to-date rendering.

The verb for *take root* is the Hiphil participle of *shârash* (שָׂרַשׁ) [pronounced *shaw-RAHSH*] and it makes *to take root, to root out* (i.e., to pull out by the roots). Although I really like the translation of the Revised English Bible here, apparently, *taking root* is more accurate, as per the same usage of the verb in the Hiphil in Psalm 80:9 Isa. 27:6. Strong's #8327 BDB #1057.

The second line is begun with the *wâw* consecutive and the word for *dwelling* is different than we have seen before. It is the word *nâveh* (נֶבֶה) [pronounced *naw-VEH*], and it means *abode of a shepherd, abode of a shepherd's flocks, habitation* (the main translation in the KJV). It is used for the *habitation* of a nation (Psalm 79:7 Prov. 3:33 Isa. 32:18). It's first use is in Ex. 15:13 (which is the only time it is found in the Pentateuch). For right now, let's go with *area [or region] of habitation*. Strong's #5116 BDB #627.

The word found in the Massoretic text for *curse* is *qâ^bva^bv* (קָבַעַ) [pronounced *kaw^b-VA^BV*] and it simply means *curse*. This particular word is found only in Num. 22–25 and nowhere else in the Bible (Strong's #6895 BDB #866). Therefore, most translators have assumed that this is a corruption of the text³ and that the word should be *nâqab* (נָקַב) [pronounced *naw-KA^BV*], a word which has several distinct meanings (like our English word *strike*). It can mean *to pierce* (II Kings 18:21 Isa. 36:6) and it can mean *to curse, to blaspheme* (Num. 23:8 Prov. 11:26); the

³ Owen's, who follows the Massoretic text closely, renders this *cursed*; but points out that the Septuagint is significantly different. BDB points out that this is a corruption of the original text (*The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon*; Hendrickson, ©1996, p. 866).

connection being the cutting through of something or someone. Strong #5344 BDB #666. Because I believe the text to have been corrupted, the translation was altered accordingly.

Eliphaz has seen the unteachable settle into an area, take root, prosper a bit, and suddenly, because of the kind of people they are, the entire area around them is destroyed. Barnes: *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 not evidence of the divine favour; 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.*⁴ This is in part confirmed by Scripture: **The curse of Y^ehowah is on the house of the evil; but He blesses the dwelling of the righteous** (Prov. 3:33). **You are righteous, O Y^ehowah, that I would plead a case with You. Indeed I would discuss matters of justice with You. Why has the way of the wicked prospered? Why are all those who deal in treachery at ease? You have planted them, and they have taken root; they grow and they have produced fruit. You are near to their lips, but far from their mind. But You know me, O Y^ehowah, and You see me and You have examined my heart toward You. Drag them off like sheep for the slaughter and set them apart for a day of carnage! (Jer. 12:1–3). I have seen a violent, wicked man, spreading himself like a luxuriant tree in its native soil; then he passed away, and, observe, he was no more. I sought for him, but he could not be found (Psalm 37:35–36). Therefore, his calamity will come suddenly; instantly he will be broken and there will be no healing (Prov. 6:15). Salvation [or, deliverance] is far from the recalcitrant ones, because they do not seek Your statutes (Psalm 119:155).**

Now, the truth of the matter is that the unrighteous may prosper and we may never see them fall. Furthermore, it is also true that the righteous may be under unwarranted tribulation as well. Life just isn't as simple as the unrighteous suffer and the righteous are blessed.

**“His sons are far from safety
and they crush themselves in the gate
and no deliverer.**

Job 5:4

**“His sons are far from safety
and they caused themselves to be crushed
in the gate and there is one to deliver them.**

The first verb is an interesting one: *râchaq* (רָחַק) [pronounced *raw-KHAHK*] means *to become far, to become distant, to be distant, to abstain from, to send far away*. Strong's #7368 BDB #934. The subject of the verb is *his sons*.

The object of the verb is *yêsha'* (יְשׁוּ) pronounced *YAY-shah* or *YAY-shahg*], and it is rendered *safety* or *salvation* in the KJV (II Sam. 22:3 Job 5:4, 11 Psalm 12:5 18:2 Habak. 3:13, 18). This is the masculine noun; there is also the corresponding feminine noun which is also rendered *salvation*. (see Strong's #3444 BDB #447). Strong's #3468 BDB #447.

The second verb is the Hithpael imperfect of *dâkâ'* (דָּכָא) [pronounced *daw-KAW*], which means *to crush, to pulverize*. We have seen this verb in Job 4:19 (recall how I have mentioned that this book seems to have a more limited vocabulary than most books). As mentioned before, this verb is found only in poetry—i.e., the Psalms, Job, Jeremiah and Isaiah. Same for the adjective. Strong's #1792 BDB #193. The Hithpael is the intensive reflexive, so this means that they crush themselves, strictly speaking. Their actions result in this occurring, so this does not mean that they pull the gate in on themselves, but that that is what occurs for all intents and purposes. So that we understand what is being said here, it is at the gate of a city where commerce was transacted, where public speakers often spoke, and where public trials were held. Because of their actions, they were subject to the judgments and reprimands of the courts. Although Barnes suggests that they would be the victims of oppression,⁵ the implication here is that they are justly condemned and crushed by the legal system.

The final line begins with a conjunction and a negative and it has no main verb; just a participle which stands for a substantive. **And no deliverer.**

⁴ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 157.

⁵ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 158.

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.⁶ And not only will Job listen to the entirety of what Eliphaz has to say, but he will also allow his other two friends to have their say as well. How different this is from the way we argue in the Western world today. We hear but one point that we disagree with and we jump in immediately, interrupting the speaker in order to express our each and every thought as it occurs. When two people do this, they just continue to raise the volume, even though it is obvious that neither one is listening to the other.

As has been mentioned, one great blessing in the ancient world is the abundance of children and a great posterity. Job's children were all dead. Their manner of death was different than that described by Eliphaz here, but Eliphaz is giving an example, similar enough to Job so that it is clear that he is speaking about Job; however, different enough to give the appearance of neutrality on his part. That is, his attack on the character of Job is done with tact. He is making suggestions or implications. *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. 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.*⁷ In a prayer of imprecation (something most pastor totally ignore), David asks for God to take revenge upon an enemy of his by attacking him and his children: **Let his days be few and let another take his office. Let his children be fatherless and his wife a widow. Let his children wander about and beg and let them seek sustenance far from their ruined homes. Let the creditor seize all that he has and let strangers plunder the product of his labor. Let there be no grace to extend to him nor any to be gracious to his fatherless children. Let his posterity be cut off; in a following generation, let their name be blotted out** (Psalm 109:8–13). Job agrees that the sons of a wicked man are subject to discipline from God: **"This is the portion of the recalcitrant from God, and the inheritance tyrants receive from the Almighty: Though his sons are many, they are destined for the sword; and his descendants will not be satisfied with bread. His survivors will be buried because of the plague and their widows will not be able to weep."** (Job 27:13–15). Therefore, Y^ehowah does not take pleasure in their young men, nor does He have pity on their orphans or their widows. Fore every one of them is godless and an evildoer and every mouth is speaking foolishness. In all this, His anger does not turn away and His hand is still stretched out (Isa. 9:17).

Zophar also mentions a person's sons—he says that the sons of a righteous man behave in a certain way, implying that Job's were killed for a reason. **"His sons are gracious to the poor and his hands give back his wealth."** (Job 20:10). The implication is also that Job was parsimonious about his wealth.

**"Whose harvest the hungry eat,
and even out of thorns, he takes it;
and a snare breathes heavily [i.e., desires]
their wealth.**

Job 5:5

**"Whose harvest the hungry eat,
and even out of thorns, he takes it;
and the thirsty desires their wealth.**

The Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate differs considerably from what we have in the Hebrew. *For what they have collected, the just shall eat; but they shall not be delivered out of calamities; let their strength be utterly exhausted* (the Septuagint). *For what they have collected, the just will eat. They will not be taken from evil men. The might will draw them off* (the Septuagint).⁸ *Because the hungry eat up his harvest and the armed man will take him by violence and the thirsty will drink up their riches* (the Latin Vulgate).

The general meaning is not too difficult. The first couple lines mean that the person who is on the wrong side of God will not enjoy the fruits of his own labor. Whoever takes away the produce takes it all—he is not even

⁶ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 158.

⁷ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 158.

⁸ I have a version of the Septuagint with the English translation: *The Septuagint with Apocrypha*; Sir Lancelot C.L. Brenton; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1992; p. 668. This second English translation is from the NKJV Bible, Wide Margin Reference Edition; Thomas Nelson Publishers; ©1994; p. 445. The Latin Vulgate, translated into English, is also from the NKJV Bible.

dissuaded by the thorns; whatever produce is found there, he takes. Zophar makes a similar statement concerning the rich and God's discipline of them: "He returns what he has attained and cannot swallow it; as to the riches of his trading, He cannot enjoy. For he has oppressed and forsaken the poor and he has seized a house which he did not build." (Job 20:18–19). Job agrees that if he is to fault, then God should punish him: "Let me sow and another eat; and let my crops be uprooted." (Job 21:8). And for those who were God's and have turned away, it is true. "You will sow but you will not reap. You will tread the olive buy you will not anoint yourself with oil. And you will tread the grapes, but you will not drink wine." (Joel 6:15).

When examining the Hebrew words, one by one, it is sometimes difficult to determine at which point do you break and move into the next line. The rule of thumb is the wâw conjunction or the wâw consecutive—they determine where the breaks in the lines are in the Hebrew, whereas, for us, we often hold thoughts together in the same line by using a conjunction.

The first two lines say that not only do the hungry eat this person's harvest but they even go into the thorn areas and remove whatever is edible from those areas as well. James Freeman explains that once the wheat had been harvested and separated from the chaff, that it was sometimes covered by thorn bushes in order to keep the animals from eating the grain. This simply states that the grain was seized and taken despite the covering of the thorn bushes.⁹ It is possible that this second line should read: *and he takes [this harvest] into the granaries.*¹⁰ Eliphaz phrases all of this in the hypothetical third person, but he is referring to Job. Who else do they know has had his wealth so severely removed? Eliphaz is tactful, but there is no question but that this all applies to Job in particular.

The third line is causing me some difficulty, primarily due to the verb and the uncertainty of the subject. Let's see what others have done:

Albert Barnes	And the thirsty swallow up their wealth.
<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	...the snare opens for [his wealth].
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	And the snare gapeth for their substance.
KJV	...and the robber swalloweth up their substance.
NKJV	And a snare snatches their substance.
NAB	...and the thirsty shall swallow their substance.
NASB	And the schemer [lit., whose] is eager for their wealth.
NEB	...the stronger man seizes it from the panniers, panting, thirsting for their wealth.
NJB	...and covetous people thirst for their possessions.
NIV	...and the thirsty pant after his wealth.
NRSV	...and the thirsty pant after their wealth.
Owen's Translation	...and pant (as thirsty ones) a snare their wealth.
REB	[...what they have harvested others hungrily devour], panting thirsting for their wealth, stronger men seize it from the panniers. (Until I read this line, I had been quite impressed with much of the Revised English Bible).
The Septuagint	...let their strength be utterly exhausted. ¹¹
The Septuagint	...The might shall draw them off. ¹²
The Vulgate	...and the thirsty will drink up her riches.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	And the designing swallowed their wealth.

You can tell that this verse gave me trouble because rarely do I list almost every translation in my possession.

⁹ *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; ©1972; p. 208.

¹⁰ Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971; Kregel Publications; p. 503.

¹¹ I had to double check to make certain I was in the right verse here. This is according to an English translation which I have of the Septuagint: *The Septuagint with Apocrypha*; Sir Lancelot C.L. Brenton; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1992; p. 668.

¹² This is according to my NKJV, Wide Margin Reference Edition; Thomas Nelson Publishers; ©1994; p. 445.

None of this will be easy. We will begin with the subject of this line. This is the masculine singular tsammîym (𐤒) [pronounced *txam-MEEM*], which possibly means a *snare*, a *trap*. BDB calls the meaning doubtful and the word is found only here and in Job 18:9. The Syriac and the Vulgate given the rendering as *the thirsty ones* (the word for *thirsty ones* is similar to the word found here). This would reverse the subject and the object. Barnes writes: *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."*¹³ Strong's #6782 BDB #855.

The main verb is the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect of *shâ'aph* (𐤑 𐤒 𐤔) [pronounced *shaw-AHF*], and this word is listed in BDB with two divergent meanings. On the one hand, BDB lists the meanings *to gasp*, *to pant* (as a woman in labor); and also *to crush*, *to trample down* (Isa. 42:14). Gesenius renders this word *to breath hard*, *to pant* and adds that it is spoken of an enraged person in Isa. 42:14; of a person in haste (Eccl. 1:5), therefore meaning *to hasten*. Gesenius also offers *to catch at with open mouth*, as the air (Jer. 2:24 14:6). Poetically, Gesenius offers that this word is a noose or a trap lying in wait for anyone. Finally, Gesenius claims that *panting after* can also be a reference to thirsting for a person's blood, a metaphor taken from wild beasts (see Psalm 56:2, 3; 57:4 Amos 8:4). This verb is only found in the Qal stem and only in 14 passages, so we might be able to get a grasp of its meaning by looking at each passage:

- Job 5:5 (perfect) ...and their wealth **shâ'aph-ed** thirsty ones. [or] ...a snare **shâ'aph-ed** their wealth.
 Job 7:2 (imperfect) ...as a slave **shâ'aph's** shade...
 Job 36:20 (imperfect) Do not **shâ'aph** the night.
 Psalm 56:1–2 (perfect) Be gracious to me, O God, for men have **shâ'aph-ed** me; all day long those opposing me oppress me. My enemies have **shâ'aph-ed** me all day long; for many fight against me proudly.
 Psalm 57:3 (participle) He will send from heaven and deliver me. He will put to shame those **shâ'aph-ing** me.
 Psalm 119:131 (imperfect) I will open my mouth then I will **shâ'aph**, because I long for Your commandments.
 Eccl. 1:5 (participle) And the sun rises and the sun goes down and from its place **shâ'aph-ing** where rising.
 Isa. 42:14 (imperfect) I have held my peace for a long time; I have kept still and restrained myself. Like a woman in travail, I will cry out, I will gasp and I will **shâ'aph** now.

From these renderings, I think that it would be safe to say that the root of *shâ'aph* is *to breath heavily*, *to pant*; and, by way of application, the many things which breathing heavily might point to. Women breathe heavily when giving birth, men and women breathe heavily in sexual union (giving rise to the meaning *desire*); people breathe heavily while running and after running (see Eccl. 1:5 here). In our context, *desire* is the likely derived meaning. Strong's #7602 BDB #983.

Now after all of that, the idea is rather simple: it doesn't matter how rich you are; your wealth is no protection when God has decided to afflict you. We will see this in the book of the Judges: *Wherever they went, the hand of Y^ehowah was against them for evil, as Y^ehowah had spoken and as Y^ehowah had sworn to them, so that they were severely distressed* (Judges 2:15). Eliphaz is careful throughout to always refer to this hypothetical example in the third person. He doesn't come right out and tell Job that this is what is happening to him.

Barnes comments: *I have no doubt that Eliphaz meant impliedly to allude to the case of Job, 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.*¹⁴

¹³ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 159.

¹⁴ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 159.

**“For misfortune [as the result of iniquity]
does not come from dust
nor does trouble sprout out from the
ground.**

Job 5:6

**“For misfortune which is the result of
iniquity does not come up from dust
nor does trouble just sprout up out of the
ground.**

The subject is ʾāwen (אָוֵן) [pronounced *AW-wen*], which appears to mean either *iniquity* or the *misfortune resulting from iniquity*. Barnes says something about this meaning *nothingness* or *vanity*, but I don't buy that.¹⁵ Strong's #205 BDB #19.

The second subject is ʿāmāl (אָמַל) [pronounced *aw-MAWL*], which usually means *wearisome labor* or *misery*. It can also mean *trouble* (context would guide us). Strong's #5999 (and #5998) BDB #765.

What Eliphaz is saying again is quite clear: misery and pain and misfortune do not just grow out of the ground; they all occur for a reason. **“According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity and those who sow trouble, harvest the same.”** (Job 4:8). As the NIV Study Bible puts it: *Unlike a weed, trouble must be sown and cultivated.*¹⁶ Or as Barnes more eloquently puts it: *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 Job that it was improper to murmur, and that he should commit his cause to a God of infinite power and wisdom....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...that they are ordered in infinite wisdom, and that they always have a design.*¹⁷

The actual words which Eliphaz uses here are directly related to sinfulness without him coming right out and saying that Job is suffering tremendously through his sinful and evil behavior. Eliphaz is wrong in this estimation. We face trouble, pain, misery and discomfort only because we live on planet earth, the devil's world. Some people certainly experience less pain and suffering than do others, but there is no one who gets out of this life without feeling pain. It is a part of living in the devil's world.

**“For man is born to exhausting labor
and sons of sparks fly upward.**

Job 5:7

**“Still man is born to human misery just as
surely as sparks fly upward.**

Once and awhile, Eliphaz says something which is dead-on accurate, and these last couple verses are. This verse, in particular, is such a poetic sounding verse that it will be nice to see how others have rendered it:

Albert Barnes	For though man is born unto trouble	As the sparks elevate their flight;
<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	But man is born to trouble	as the sparks <i>and</i> the flame fly upward.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Though man to trouble were born,	As sparks on high do soar...
KJV	Yet man is born unto trouble,	as the sparks fly upward.
NAB	But man himself begets mischief,	as sparks fly upward.
NJB	It is people who breed trouble for themselves	as surely as eagles fly to the height.
NIV	Yet man is born to trouble	as surely as sparks fly upward.
REB	...yet man is born to trouble,	as surely as bird fly upwards.
The Septuagint	...yet man is born to labour,	and <i>even</i> so the vulture's young seek the high places.
The Vulgate	Man is born to labour,	and the bird to flight.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	For man to misery is born,	And the sparks go high to fly.

As a preliminary statement, I like the implication of the NIV. This is a bit more obscure in meaning and the NIV seems to have captured Eliphaz's intent here. The *wāw* conjunction acts as a close copulative, tying the two

¹⁵ Barnes' Notes, *Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 159.

¹⁶ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 730.

¹⁷ Barnes' Notes, *Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 159.

phrases together in such a way that the naturalness of the latter also applies to the former statement as well. All men are born into trouble; as mentioned in the previous verse, this is not a result of personal sin—even though we all sin and we all cause ourselves pain and misery because we sin—but man will suffer and feel pain even apart from sin. Our Lord, throughout His life on this earth, felt pain, both physical and emotional, but quite apart from His death for our sins. He had no old sin nature, no imputed sin and no personal sin. And if He felt pain, then we should expect to feel pain as well. He was subjected to exhausting labor, as well we should expect in our lives.

The second line begins with the familiar *wâw* conjunction, but I believe the meaning to be comparative, allowing it to be translated *as*. The second noun in this line is the word *resheph* (רֶשֶׁף) [pronounced *REH-shef*] and this means *flame, spark, or fire bolt*. Strong's #7565 BDB #958. However, this is preceded by a masculine plural construct of the word *bên* (בְּנֵי) [pronounced *bane*]. No translator that I know actually translates this word; only Rotherham alludes to this in a footnote and Keil and Delitzsch certainly mention it. We saw this word back in Job 1:6 in reference to the sons of God (the angels of God). It means *son*. Strong's #1121 BDB #119. As you have seen above, this second line has received a wealth of renderings, but that was not an exhaustive list. The Chaldean codices read: *sons of demons*; the Syriac reads: *Sons of birds*; Schulten: *glittering javelins* and Arius Montanus, *sons of the live coal*. The NIV Study Bible explains: *Lit., "sons of Resheph." In Canaanite mythology, Resheph was a god of plague and destruction. "(Sons of) Resheph" is used as a poetic image in the OT for fire (SS 8:6), bolts of lightning (Ps. 78:48) and pestilence (Dt. 32:24; Hab 3:5).*¹⁸ As Keil and Delitzsch point out, *sons of flame* is a cleaver, poetic and apropos name for *sparks*, which fly up from the flames.

Just as sparks fly upward into heaven, so is man born into trouble. It is just an uncontrovertible fact of nature. Job concurs with this statement some time later: "**Man, who is born of woman, has a short life and one filled with turmoil.**" (Job 14:1). This view of man and his life is introduced early into Scripture, as our Lord said to Adam: "**Cursed is the ground because of you. In toil, you will eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns a thistles it will grow for you and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face, you will eat bread till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken. For you are dust and to dust you will return.**" (Gen. 3:17b–19). David wrote: **Observe, I was brought forth in iniquity and in sin, my mother conceived me (Psalm 51:5). As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years; or, if due to strength, eighty years. Yet their pride is labor and sorrow, for soon it is gone and we fly away (Psalm 90:10).**

Keil and Delitzsch write: *Misfortune does not grow out of the ground like weeds; it is rather established in the divine order of the world, as it is established in the order of nature that sparks of fire should ascend.*¹⁹ McGee: *I don't think it is even debatable that the human family has adversity, calamity, sorrow, distress, anxiety, worry, and disturbance. All one needs to do is pick up the newspaper and read a partial report of the human family: fires, accidents, tragedies, wars, rumors of war. The song says, "Nobody knows the trouble I've seen," but really everyone does know because all people have trouble. We do not all have the same color, we are not all the same size, or the same sex, or have the same blood type, or the same I.Q., but we all have trouble. No one is exempt or immune or can get inoculated for trouble. Tears are universal. In fact, the word sympathy means to suffer together, and that is the human symphony today—the suffering of mankind. In fact, a Hebrew word for man is *enash*, meaning "the miserable." That's man. There is nothing sure but death and taxes, we are told. We can add to this another surety: trouble. "Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." The sparks fly upward according to a universal law, the law of thermodynamics. It isn't by chance or by luck. The updraft caused by heat on a cool night causes the sparks to fly upward.*²⁰

McGee adds to this: *Sometimes trouble comes to a child of God because of a stupid blunder. A woman once told me, "My husband is my cross." Well, no matter how bad he is, he is not her cross. She is the one who said yes. It was her stupid blunder.*²¹

¹⁸ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 730.

¹⁹ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. IV, p. 297.

²⁰ *Job*; J. Vernon McGee, ©1977, p. 48.

²¹ *Job*; J. Vernon McGee, ©1977, p. 49.

Zodhiates writes: [Verses 6 and 7] ...are a vivid illustration of man's depravity. Eliphaz is wrong, however, in his assumption that this explained Job's suffering. The sinfulness of mankind (original sin) explains only the existence of sorrow and suffering. What Eliphaz was unaware of was that God was permitting this affliction to come on Job for a purpose other than his mere sinful nature, namely the purifying and strengthening of Job's faith.²²

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God's Character and Actions

**“Yet, I—even I—would seek God
and to God would I place my cause.**

Job 5:8

**“On the other hand, this is what I would do:
I would seek God
and I would place my cause before God.**

This verse begins with the strong adversative *ʾûlâm* (אֲלַא) [pronounced oo-LAWM] which means *but, but indeed, yet*. Strong's #199 BDB #19. Eliphaz carefully cloaks his language when speaking of Job, but when he refers to himself, he is emphatic. It is like saying, “Look, on the other hand, this is what I would do.” Placing a sub-heading prior to this verse does destroy the connection between vv. 7–8; just as the separation of verses is man-made, so are my sub-headings. However, what Eliphaz is saying is that because man's state is one of turmoil and trouble, then he should go to God under these circumstances. What he means to say is, “Job, you are in a hell of a mess and you are probably the reason why. If I were you, then I would go immediately to God and state my case to Him and He will straighten you out—that is, if we can't.”

The first verb, in the 1st person, Qal imperfect is *dârash* (דָּרַשׁ) [pronounced dah-RAWSH], which means *to seek, to make inquiries concerning, to consult, to investigate, to study, to follow, to inquire*. This word is used often for man *seeking or making inquiry* of God (Gen. 25:22 || Kings 8:8 Psalm 105:4). Strong's #1875 BDB #205. Eliphaz is not telling Job to go and place his case before God. He is telling Job to seek God or to turn to God from his sin. It never even occurs to Eliphaz that Job may have a case here; that Job may have a reason to complain; that Job is not receiving a just recompense for his hidden evil life. What he knows is that when Job takes himself to God, then Job will be forced to leave behind whatever activity has got him into this mess in the first place.

The second line begins with the *wâw* conjunction, and the preposition *ʿel* (עַל) [pronounced e], and it means *in, into, unto, regarding, to*. Strong's #413 BDB #19. Then we have *Elohim*.

The second verb is our old friend *sîym* (סִיַּם) [pronounced seem] which means *to put, to place, to set*. It also can mean *to make, to transform into* (Psalm 104:3). The verb in this passage is rendered: *commit* by [Owens, KJV, REB and NRSV], *place* (NASB), *lay* (NIV, NJB), and *would state* (NAB); *Lay* or *place* are both acceptable renderings in this context. Strong's #7760 BDB #962.

The final word is the very rare *dib^orâh* (דִּבְרָא) [pronounced div^o-RAW], found only in Job 5:8 Psalm 110:4 Eccl. 3:18 7:14 8:2 (and Dan 2:30 4:17, as the Chaldean equivalent).^{*} It is built upon the word for *word* and it means *cause, reason, manner*. Strong's #1700 BDB #184.

Eliphaz is telling Job that if he has a problem, then he needs to take it before God. Eliphaz doesn't think that Job will go to God and straighten God out on this matter; he knows that God will straighten out Job and bring before Job his horrible sin. Bildad suggests the same thing: “**If you would seek God and implore the compassion of the Almighty.**” (Job 8:5). Zophar agrees: “**If you would direct your heart right and spread out your hand to Him.**” (Job 11:13). And, Job concurs with them, and says, “**But I would speak to the Almighty and I desire to argue with God...Though He slay me, I will place my confidence in Him. Nevertheless, I will argue my ways before Him**” (Job 13:3, 15; see also 23:4 Jer. 12:1). This will be the topic of Job 40–42. For God has told us: “**Call upon Me in the day of trouble and I will rescue you and you will honor Me.**” (Psalm 50:15).

²² *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; p 1318.

**“Doing great things, and not searchable,
extraordinary things as far as innumerable.**

Job 5:9

**“A Doer of great, unsearchable things,
innumerable and extraordinary things.**

This verse begins with the Qal active participle of the verb *ʿâsâh* (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *gaw-SAWH*] which means *to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form*. In the Qal active participle, it can mean *a doer, a maker, doing, making*. Strong's #6213 BDB #793. I hope that you have noticed that we are seeing many of the same verbs and nouns over and over in this book of Job.

Generally, I would end this line and begin another with the conjunction, but the construction of the two lines, which both begin with a participle and are both followed by a negative construct, indicates a parallel construction, which would imply that they should be separated elsewhere. This is in accord with all other translators that I am aware of.

The verb is followed by the noun for *great things*, which is followed by a conjunction and the negative construct *ʿayin* (אֵין) [pronounced *AH-yin*]; in the construct, it is often used as a particle of negation. The final word in that line is *chêqer* (חֵקֵר) [pronounced *KHAY-ker*], which is *the thing searched out or searched for*. This is something which lies outside of man's ordinary observation. When used with the negative, this becomes an interesting study. Many of the miracles which are done by God do not have to conflict with the laws of nature. As we have discussed, many of the miracles which were performed in Egypt were mighty uses of the laws of nature (which God Himself decreed in the first place). They are called unsearchable because the observers cannot find out how they were done. This does not mean that these miracles were illusionary; they were real miracles, but often with natural, but unsearchable, causes. Strong's #2714 BDB #350.

Some codices, the Septuagint, the Vulgate and the Syriac, begin the second line with the conjunction *and*.

The second verb, also used as a substantive, is the feminine plural, Niphal participle of *pâlâ'* (פָּלְאוּ) [pronounced *paw-LAW*] which is generally refers to God performing or doing marvelous and miraculous things (e.g., Ex. 3:20 34:10). It means *to do that which is extraordinary, to do that which is unusually difficult*. This is often used to describe God's most unusual works (Ex. 3:20 34:10 Joshua 3:5). In the participle, this becomes a substantive (Ex. 3:10 Neh. 9:17 Job 37:14) or a predicate nominative (with the implied verb *to be*) (II Sam. 1:26 Psalm 118:23 Prov. 30:18). The greatest difficulty that we have with this verb is that we do not have a corresponding verb in the English, and therefore it requires several words to translate it as a verb. Strong's #6381 BDB #810.

The last phrase is prepositional, acting as an adjectival phrase. It begins with the preposition *ʿad* (עַד) [pronounced *gad*], which means *as far as, until*. Strong's #5704 BDB #723. This is followed by the negative construct and the noun *miç^ephâr* (מִסְפָּר) [pronounced *mis^e-FAWR*], which means *number, counted, numerical total*. With the negational construct, it means *innumerable*. Strong's #4557 BDB #708.

Eliphaz has pointed to God, so he must say some holy things. In this verse, he appends his pointing to God by telling Job that God is a doer of marvelous, extraordinary things. This is accurate. As we have seen, many of Eliphaz's accurate statements and are echoed by Job: “[It is God] **Who does great things, unfathomable and wondrous works without number.**” (Job 9:10; see also Psalm 78:4 111:2 145:3). Zophar also will say: “Can you discover the depths of God? Can you discover the limits of the Almighty?” (Job 11:7). The Psalmist, David, echoes these thoughts: **Many, O Y^ehowah God, are the wonders which You have done and Your thoughts toward us. There is one to compare with You. If I would declare and speak of them, they would be too numerous to count** (Psalm 40:5).

Let's bring these last few verses together: **“For misfortune which is the result of iniquity does not come up from dust nor does trouble just sprout up out of the ground. Still man is born to human misery just as surely as sparks fly upward. On the other hand, this is what I would do: I would seek God and I would place my cause before God. A Doer of great, unsearchable things, innumerable and extraordinary things.”** (Job 5:6–9). Barnes writes: *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...perhaps there can be found nowhere a more beautiful argument to lead men to put confidence in God...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? 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 animalculæ, 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...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 is composed. In certain parts of it, every slight motion of the telescope presents new 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 ore 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...Now, were we o 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 millions of miles every minute, would require one thousand six hundred and forty years before it could traverse this mighty interval...Yet there is reason also to believe that the Milky Way, of which our system forms a part, is no more than a single nebula, of which several thousands of 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 enables us to descry in the heavens. Three thousand nebulæ have already been discovered...Yet, all this may be as nothing compared with the parts of the universe which we are unable to discover.²³

**"The [one] giving rain upon faces of earth
and sending rains upon faces of open fields. Job 5:10**

**"He is the One Who gives rain upon the
earth
and He sends rain to the open fields.**

I want you to read *Young's Translation*, as it is unusual for Young: **Who is giving rain on the face of the land, and is sending waters on the out-places.** The word for *rain* and *waters* is the same; the first occurrence is in the singular and the second is in the plural. Young rarely translates the same word in too many different ways; however, here he does.

Elihu also waxes poetic on the rain brought by God: "For He [God] draws up the drops of water. They distill rain from the mist which the clouds pour down; they drip upon man abundantly. Can anyone understand the spreading of the clouds or the thundering of His pavilion? For to the snow, He says, 'Fall on the earth.' And to the downpour and the rain, 'Be strong.' He seals the hand of every man, that all men may know His work....out of the south comes the storm, and out of the north the cold. From the breath of God, ice is made and the expanse of the waters is frozen. Also with moisture, He loads the thick cloud; He disperses the cloud of His lightning and it changes direction, turning around by His guidance, that it may do whatever He commands it on the face of the inhabited earth." (Job 36:27–29 37:6–7, 9–12).

²³ Barnes' Notes, *Job*, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; pp. 160–162.

Barnes: *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 worth to be confided in. This enumeration 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 send 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 earth would soon die.*²⁴ Even today, with weathermen whose college degrees are in meteorology, who have equipment of great scientific sophistication, and even today, when it comes to predicting the weather, the weather of the previous day is generally a better predictor than any weatherman. My point is not that God is capricious, or that there is no rhyme nor reason to weather patterns and to rain, but that the rain appears to be a gift from God, the lack of which has severely impacted the mid-Eastern world.

**“To a placing of lowly ones to high;
and mourning ones are lifted safety.**

Job 5:11

**“He places the grace-oriented ones on high
and those who mourn are brought to safety.**

The verb *to place, to set* (in the Qal infinitive construct) is followed by the masculine plural adjective of *shâphâl* (שָׁפַל) [pronounced *shaw-PHAWL*], and it originally meant **low** (*in height*), *debased, modest*. I believe that this word became a technical word for **grace-oriented types**. Strong’s #8217 BDB #1050.

The main verb in the next line is the Qal perfect of *sâga^bv* (סָגַב) [pronounced *saw-GAH^BV*], which means *to be high, to be lifted up, to be exalted, to be set securely on high*. Strong’s #7682 BDB #960.

The subjected, mourners, is a Qal participle of a verb which means *to mourn*. As a participle, this verb acts as a substantive. Barnes gives us some insight on this particular word: *The word rendered “those which mourn”...—qâdar (קָדַר) [pronounced kaw-DAHR] means ...to be turbid or foul as a torrent, 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.*²⁵ Strong’s #6937 BDB #871.

Where those who mourn are lifted to is called *yêsha[‘]* (יָשַׁע) [pronounced *YAY-shah* or *YAY-shahg*]; we looked at this verb back in v. 4. It should be translated *safety* or *salvation*. Strong’s #3468 BDB #447.

Eliphaz describes God according to the functions which he perceives God as having. Again, he is accurate. He just does not realize that this statement should be applied directly to Job. We all have perceptions of people and their status in life—from an early age, we learn to look down on some people and look up to others. It’s been said that a woman generally marries equal to or above her own perceived status. We are much more affected by this than we think we are. But God is no respecter of persons. There are people who we would not give the time of day to today because we perceive them as being so far below us who will live in a mansion in heaven, and we will be (happily) picking cotton in their fields. For many of the spiritual gifts, our spiritual status and our use of these gifts is unseen by the general public. Those who have the gift of prayer are never seen praying, yet their spiritual impact may be ten times yours. Their prayers may be moving mountains and yours aren’t even reaching the ceiling of your house because you are out of fellowship. Now they may be poor, dress poorly, and have a vocation that you would not even consider if starving, yet these are human standards. **He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with princes—with the princes of His people** (Psalm 113:7–8). **“Y^howah makes poor and rich; He brings low and He also exalts. He raises the poor from the dust. He lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with nobles and to inherit a seat of honor.”** (I Sam. 2:7–8a). **“But the greatest among you will be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; and whoever humbles himself**

²⁴ Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 162.

²⁵ Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 163.

will be exalted.” (Matt. 23:11–12). “He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their heart; He has brought down rulers from thrones. And He has exalted those who were humble.” (Luke 1:52–53).

However, to take this in context, what Eliphaz is describing is things which he has observed himself with his own eyes. That is the gist of his argument—therefore, even though what he said was accurate, what he meant was different and not meaningful. *The sense here is plain...he 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, honour, 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.*²⁶

“Frustrating plans [and purposes] of sagacious (or farsighted) ones and their hands do not make wise [choices] [or, do not make an enterprise].

Job 5:12

“He frustrates plans and purposes of those who deem themselves sagacious and farsighted with the result that they do not achieve what they had planned to achieve.

Young and Owen both differ greatly on this verse, so let’s see what others have done:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	He frustrates the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise or anything of [lasting] worth.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Who doth frustrate the schemes of the crafty, That their hands cannot achieve abiding success.
NASB	He frustrates the plotting of the shrewd, So that their hands cannot attain success.
NJB	...he frustrate the plans of the artful so that they cannot succeed in their intrigues.
NIV	He thwarts the plans of the crafty, so that their hands achieve no success.
Owen’s Translation	He frustrates devices of crafty ones and do not achieve their hands abiding success.
The Septuagint	...frustrating the counsels of the crafty and their hands shall not perform the truth;
<i>Young’s Lit. Translation</i>	Making void thoughts of the subtle, And their hands do not execute wisdom.

This verse continues an enumeration of the activities of God. It begins with the Hiphil participle (correctly rendered only by the Septuagint and Young’s above) of the most interesting verb *pârar* (פָּרַר) [pronounced *paw-RAHR*], which means *to break, to violate (a covenant), to frustrate* in the Hiphil; *to be made ineffective, to be frustrated* in the Hophal; *to be split or divided* in the Hithpoel; and *to divide* in the Poel. Strong’s #6331 and 6565 BDB #830.

What is frustrated is the *mach^êshâ^bvâh* (מַחְשָׁבֵי) [pronounced *mahkh-SHAW^B-vawth*] [or, *mah-KHĀSHEH-veh*, New Englishman’s Concordance; or, *makh-ash-EH-beth*, Strong’s]. This is from whence (I think) we derive the word *machinations*. It means *thoughts, plans, purposes*. Strong’s #4284 BDB #364. What is that old saying—*man makes plans and the gods laugh?*

The KJV gives three different renderings for the adjective *‘ârûm* (עָרֹם) [pronounced *gaw-ROOM*]: *subtle* (Gen. 3:1), *crafty* (Job 5:12 15:5) and *prudent* (Prov. 12:16, 23 13:16 14:8, 15, 18 22:3 27:12).^{*} Although an adjective, this is generally found as a substantive and what we need is a good definition which can be easily interpreted as an admirable trait. Let me suggest *forethoughtful, precognitive, anticipatory, farsighted, sagacious, prepared*. My leanings are towards a person who is both *insightful* and is *farsighted*. This is certainly Satan, who is the most brilliant of all created creatures; yet this could also apply to a man with great *foresight and insight*. This would be just the antithesis of a person who would act on impulse (like Peter of the New Testament). Strong’s #6175 (& 6191?) BDB #791.

The *wâw* conjunction introduces the results of God frustrating the plans of the farsighted ones. The subject is *their hands* and the verb is the particle of negation combined with the Qal imperfect of our good friend *‘âsâh* (אָשָׂה)

²⁶ Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 163.

[pronounced *ǰaw-SAWH*] which means *to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form*. Strong's #6213 BDB #793. The second clause should be: **and their hands do not make...**

The final noun is the feminine singular of *tûshîyâh* (תּוֹשִׁיָּה) [pronounced *too-shee-YAW*]; the KJV gives the following renderings: *enterprise, anything, substance, sound wisdom, wisdom, that which is, the thing as it is, working*. This word is found in Job 5:12 6:13 11:6 12:16 26:3 30:22 Prov. 2:7 3:21 8:14 18:1 Isa. 28:29 Micah 6:9.* What is interesting is that many of these words are not found in the Pentateuch, or in any of the historical books, but they are found in Job and Proverbs and then here or there. My thinking is that these were words peculiar to a different region and that Job was possibly first studied seriously by Solomon, who wrote many of the proverbs. This is simply a theory at this point. BDB gives the possible meanings *sound, efficient, wisdom, abiding success*. Although we would normally go with the renderings *wisdom* or *the application of wisdom to experience*, this time this word is the result of one's wisdom, and therefore should be rendered *enterprise, purpose, undertaking*. Strong's #8454 BDB #444.

I believe that we have a problem in this translation insofar as this implies that the person whose plans are being frustrated is somehow inherently evil. That may be ascertained perhaps by the general context, but not necessarily by the words which are used in this particular verse. Taken by itself, this verse, if anything, makes God seem capricious, putting to nought the foresight and wisdom of man. It is the general context which alerts us to the fact that sin has been imputed by Eliphaz. The fact that God frustrates the plans of the recalcitrant is often alluded to in Scripture. **And it came to pass when our enemies heard that it was known to us and that God had frustrated their plan, then all of us returned to the wall, each one to his work** (Neh. 4:15). **Y^ehowah frustrates the counsel of the nations; He brings to naught the plans of the peoples** (Psalm 33:10). **"You can devise a plan, but it will be thwarted; you may state a proposal, but it will not stand."** (Isa. 8:10). **"The spirit of the Egyptians will be demoralized within them; and I will confound their strategy so that they will resort to idols and them that mutter."** (Isa. 19:3). And Job agree with what Eliphaz has to say, up to a point: **"[God] makes the nations great and then destroys them; He spreads out the nations, then leads them away. He deprives of intelligence the chiefs of the earth's people and makes them wander in a pathless way."** (Job 12:23–24). *The general sense is, that artful and designing men—men who work in the dark, and who form secret purposes of evil, are disappointed and foiled.*²⁷

**"Capturing wise ones in their prudence
and purpose of twisted ones is hastened
along.**

Job 5:13

**"He captures the wise in their own prudence
and the counsel of the twisted is hurried
along.**

The *wise*, in this verse, is the masculine plural of *châkâm* (חַכָּמִים) [pronounced *khah-KAWM*], which means *wise*. Here, it is used as a substantive for *wise men*. Strong's #2450 BDB #314. It has no negative connotation, except by the context. The noun at the end of this verse is a cognate of the adjective *ʿârûm* (עָרוּם) [pronounced *aw-ROOM* or *ǰaw-ROOM*] from above. So, although this is given the more malignant translation *craftiness, subtlety, shrewdness*; we will go with *prudence*. Strong's #6193 BDB #791.

In the second line, the verb is the 3rd person feminine singular, Niphal perfect of *mâchar* (מָחַר) [pronounced *maw-KHAHR*], which means *to hasten, to hurry, to make haste*; its transitive use is *to prepare quickly, to bring quickly, to do quickly*. Strong's #4116 BDB #554.

What is hastened is the feminine singular construct of *ʿêtsâh* (עֵצָה) [pronounced *ǰay-TZAW*], which means *counsel, purpose*. Strong's #6098 BDB #420. This noun is attached to the masculine plural, Niphal participle of the verb *twist*; therefore, we can render this *the twisted ones*, or simply, *the twisted*. Strong's #6617 BDB #836.

Now that we have unraveled that verse, it may be instructive to see what other translators have done:

Albert Barnes

Who taketh the wise in their own craftiness, And precipitateth the counsels of intriguers.

²⁷ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 163.

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	He catches the [so-called] wise in their own trickiness, and the counsel of the schemers is brought to a quick end.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Who captureth the wise in their own craftiness, Yea the headlong counsel of the crooked;
NAB	He catches the wise in their own ruses, and the designs of the crafty are routed.
NASB	He captures the wise by their own shrewdness And the advice of the cunning is quickly thwarted.
NJB	He traps the crafty in the snare of their own trickery, throws the plans of the cunning into disarray.
NRSV	He takes the wise in their own craftiness; and the schemes of the wily are brought to a quick end.
REB	...he traps the cunning in their own craftiness, and the schemers' plans are thrown into confusion.
<i>The Septuagint</i>	...who takes the wise in their wisdom, and subverts the counsel of the crafty.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Capturing the wise in their subtlety, And the counsel of wrestling ones was hastened.

I must admit that prior to studying this chapter, I knew that Paul had quoted from it, but I did not know from which verse. There were a half a dozen verses which I first exegeted and thought that they were likely the ones, but this is the verse. Furthermore, not only is this quoted in the New Testament, but this is the only verse in the entire book of Job which is incontrovertibly quoted in the New Testament. In I Corinthians, Paul wrote: **Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become foolish that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. For it stands written, "He—the One Who catches the wise in their craftiness." And, again [from Scripture]: The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are useless. So, then, let no one boast in men** (I Cor. 3:18–21a Job 5:13 Psalm 94:11). Isaiah also records something very similar which was spoken by God: **"Therefore, observe, I will once again deal marvelously with this people, terrifyingly marvelous; and the wisdom of their wise men will perish and the discernment of their discerning men will be concealed."** (Isa. 29:14).

Superficially, one might be concerned that the only quote from the book of Job comes from Eliphaz rather than from Job. After all, Job was right and his friends were wrong, right? Wrong. What Eliphaz had to say was generally quite accurate, as we have seen. We have found Scripture throughout which supports the statements which Eliphaz made. His only problem is that he misapplied truth. He operated from a false assumption. No matter how carefully crafted the argument and how accurate the various premises involved, if there is but one incorrect premise, then the argument as a whole cannot stand. Therefore, the basic application of what Eliphaz had to say was incorrect. This is why God said to Eliphaz: **"My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends, because you have not spoken of Me what is right as My servant Job has."** (Job 42:7b). However, the many particulars of Eliphaz are accurate—and this will be true of their other two friends as well. Therefore, it is reasonable for Paul to quote from Eliphaz.

Now, to take this digression one step further: all of what Job had to say was not accurate either. What was accurate is that he recognized that he was not being disciplined for some horrible hidden sin. Therefore, most of what Job had to say was absolutely accurate. However, even he admitted that he did not speak 100% of the truth 100% of the time. **"Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge? Therefore, I have declared that which I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know...therefore, I retract, and I change my mind in dust and ashes."** (Job 42:3, 6). So when do we know what is being said in Job is accurate and when do we know it is inaccurate? Essentially, the premise of the three friends of Job is inaccurate, yet much of what they have to say is accurate. Most of what Job says is accurate, except that he did not, until chapter 42, grasp the reason for his most fundamental question: "Why am I suffering now?"

Finally, what about the inerrancy of Scripture? God's Word assures us that Job and his three friends were true historical characters; that Job suffered as this book said he suffered; and that Job and his three friends said what they said. The scene in heaven is also an accurate depiction of historical events, besides teaching us what our accuser does in his spare time. This does not mean that each and every statement of Job and his three friends is accurate any more than it means that the arguments of Satan in the first two chapters are accurate. One of the

purposes of a pastor teacher is to guide you through a book like this, and, through the original languages, the context and related Scripture, teach you that which is true and reveal that which is false.

Man tends to be inordinately proud of his meager accomplishments, particularly when one of these accomplishments turns out to be successful. In fact, I have noticed then when a man is successful, he takes all or most of the credit; and when he fails, he generally blames God. One area wherein some see themselves as being particularly wise is in the realm of religion. Those who are atheistic often have great and carefully thought out arguments against the existence of God. They believe that their own intellectual ability gives them the right to act as though this miracle of creation was the result of random mutations and happy coincidences which cannot be duplicated or simulated in a laboratory. Despite the fact that the temperature of the earth and the careful ratio of water to other elements and compounds make just the general environment of the earth probably unduplicated in the entire universe, they often suppose that life has spontaneously erupted from non-life throughout the universe, resulting in potentially many planets with the miracle of life on them. However, despite their inflated wisdom, they are still subject to the laws of God and the motivation of their wisdom, their unbelief and disinterest in things spiritual, will be their ultimate end, their ultimate trap. *“The wise men are put to shame. They are terrified and caught; observe, they have rejected the word of Y^howah and what kind of wisdom do they have? Therefore, I will give their wives to others, their fields to new owners, because from the least even to the greatest, even one of greedy for gain, from the prophet even to the priest. Every one produces lies.”* (Jer. 8:8–10). Bildad: *“His vigorous stride is shortened and his own scheme brings him down. For he is thrown into the net by his own feet and he steps on the webbing.”* (Job 18:7–8). *He has dug a pit and hollowed it out and he has fallen into the hole which he made. His mischief will return upon his own head and his violence will descend upon his own crown* (Psalm 7:15–16). Barnes: *...and when his net springs, it may include himself as well as those for whom he set it.*²⁸

In the second line, Eliphaz asserts that these purposes and plans of men who see themselves as wise last a relatively short time because God brings them to a swift end. The implication is that Job is one of these people. He thought that he was wise, that he was successful due to his own wisdom and now God has caught him in his own craftiness; God has now brought Job to his swift end. Now Job fully realizes that he cannot get by God. *“[God is] wise in heart and mighty in strength; who has defied Him without harm?”* (Job 9:4).

Our lives should not be characterized by human craftiness but by the doctrine of God. *As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming* (Eph. 4:14).

**“By day they meet darkness
and in the noondays, they grope as to the
night.** Job 5:14

**“By day they meet darkness
and in the noondays, they grope as to the
night.**

It might be better to see all of these verses together now:

Job 5:6–14	
Literally	Less literally:
<p>“For misfortune [as the result of iniquity] does not come from dust nor does trouble sprout out from the ground. For man is born to misery and sons of sparks fly upward. Yet, I—even I—would seek God and to God would I place my cause. Doing great things, and not searchable, extraordinary</p>	<p>“For misfortune which is the result of iniquity does not come up from dust nor does trouble just sprout up out of the ground. Still, man is born to human misery just as surely as sparks fly upward. On the other hand, this is what I would do: I would seek God and I would place my cause before God—</p>

²⁸ Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 164.

<p>things as far as innumerable. The [one] giving rain upon faces of earth and sending rains upon faces of open fields. To a placing of lowly ones to high; and mourning ones are lifted safety. Frustrating plans [and purposes] of sagacious (or farsighted) ones and their hands do not make wise [choices] [or, do not make an enterprise]. Capturing wise ones in their prudence and purpose of twisted ones is hastened along. By day they meet darkness and in the noondays, they grope as to the night.”</p>	<p>The Doer of great, unsearchable things, innumerable and extraordinary things. He is the One Who gives rain upon the earth and He sends rain to the open fields. He places the grace-oriented ones on high and those who mourn are brought to safety. He frustrates plans and purposes of those who deem themselves sagacious and farsighted with the result that they do not achieve what they perceive as wise choices. He captures the wise in their own prudence and the counsel of the twisted is hurried along. By day they meet darkness and in the noondays, they grope as to the night.“</p>
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What is being said is that by comparison to God, the plans and thoughts of men are like wandering around aimlessly in the darkness. They have ideas, they do things, and, in the realm of mankind, it seems as though they are exceptionally wise; however, in comparison to God’s plans, they are groping about in the dark. **Job concurs with this:** “They grope in darkness with no light and He makes them stagger like a drunken man...He will not escape from darkness; the flame will wither his shoots and by the breath of His mouth he will go away...Others have been with those who rebel against the light; they do not want to know its ways nor abide in its paths. The murderer arises at [pre-]dawn; he kills the poor and the needy and at night he is as a thief. And the eye of the adulterer waits for the twilight, saying, ‘No eye will see me.’ And he disguises his face.” (Job 12:25 15:30). **“And this is the judgment, that the Light is come into the world and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light and does not come to the Light, so that their deed will not be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, that his deeds may be manifest as having been wrought in God...For a little while longer, the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, that darkness may not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. While you have the Light, believe in the Light, in order that you may become sons of Light.”** (John 3:19 12:35a–36).

**“Then He delivers out from a sword
 out from their mouth
 and away from the hand of the mighty
 the destitute.**

Job 5:15

**“Then He delivers the destitute out from the
 sword and out from their mouth
 and out from the grip of the strong.**

Owen and Young are quite different here, so let’s examine a few translations:

Albert Barnes	And he saveth from the sword, from their mouth, And from the hand of the mighty, the poor.
<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	But [God] saves [the fatherless] from the sword of their mouth, and the needy from the hand of the mighty.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	But he saveth from the sword, out of their mouth, And out of the hand of the strong the needy.
NAB	But the poor from the edge of the sword and from the hand of the mighty, he saves.
NEB	He saves the destitute from their greed, and the needy from the grip of the strong.
NJB	He rescues the bankrupt from their jaws, and the needy from the grasp of the mighty.
NIV	He saves the needy from the sword in their mouth, he saves them from the clutches of the powerful.
NRSV	But he saves the needy from the sword of their mouth, from the hand of the mighty.

REB ...he saves the destitute from their greed, and the needy from the clutches of the strong.

The Septuagint ...and let them perish in war, and let the weak escape from the hand of the mighty.

Young's Lit. Translation And He saveth the wasted from their mouth, And from a strong hand the needy,...

On this verse, I do not know how free-form some of these translations got what they got. Literally, Noyes seems to have the closest rendering. At first, the problem appeared to be the first substantive: in the original text, we have the consonants $\text{chr}^{\text{b}}\text{v}$. Three thousand years after this was written, vowels were added. These manuscripts with the added vowels is called the Massoretic text. We have three very similar words who vary only by vowel points. (1) The word *sword* is $\text{chere}^{\text{b}}\text{v}$ (בְּרֵחַ) [pronounced *khe-RE^bV*] (Strong's #2719 BDB #352). We also have the word *chôreb* (בְּרֵחַ) [pronounced *khoh-RE^bV*], which means *extreme dryness, drought, heat*. Strong's #2721 BDB #351. Finally, we have the word *chârê^bv* (בְּרֵחַ) [pronounced *khaw-RABV*], and it means *waste, desolation*. Strong's #2720 BDB #351. Because *mouth of the sword* is so common in the Hebrew, this is what we normally find. However, none of the alternate readings really help us out here.

Furthermore, the only modification that we find in the codices is that the Aramaic, Syriac and Vulgate read “the sword of” rather than “the sword out from.”

With this verse, Eliphaz moves in a slightly different direction. He begins speaking of God's care and goodness and protection. The connection here is that there are evil and cunning men out in the world (v. 14) and there are the poor and the helpless (v. 15). The evil and the cunning takes advantage of those who are weaker than they. However, God is a champion to the poor and God is not respecter of person—therefore, God frustrates the cunning by means of their own schemes and God protects the poor and the defenseless. *All my bones will say, “Y^ehowah, who is like You, the One delivering the afflicted from him who is too strong for him and the afflicted and the needy from his who robs him?”* (Psalm 35:10). Elihu: “He does not keep the wicked alive, but He gives justice to the afflicted. He delivers the afflicted in their affliction and opens their ears in adversity.” (Job 36:6, 15). For God has said of the poor: “If you afflict him at all; if he does cry out to Me, I will certainly hear his cry. Furthermore, My anger will be kindled and I will kill you with the sword and your wives will become widows and your children fatherless.” (Ex. 22:23–24). *He who mocks the poor reproaches his Maker. He who rejoices at calamity will not go unpunished* (Prov. 17:5). *Do not rob the poor because he is poor or crush the afflicted at the gate, for Y^ehowah will plead their case and take the life of those who rob them* (Prov. 22:22).

“And so hope will be to the frail [and
helpless]
and injustice has shut her mouth.

Job 5:16

“And so the frail and helpless will find hope
and injustice will not engulf them.

In these two verses, we have two different words for the *down-trodden*; and because of their proximity, it might do us good to look at them. The first word, from v. 15 is the masculine singular adjective (used here as a substantive) $\text{e}^{\text{b}}\text{v}^{\text{y}}\text{ô}^{\text{n}}$ (יְבֹיֵן) [pronounced *ebv^e-YOHN*], and it means *in want, needy, poor, destitute, bankrupt*. Strong's #34 BDB #2. The second word, from this verse is *dal* (דָּל) [pronounced *dahl*], and it means *weak, low, thin, poor, frail, needy, helpless*. There is more here than mere financial lack. It is spoken of cows in Gen. 41:19, who certainly are often without cash; but that is not the point of that verse. They were *malnourished and frail*. Strong's #1800 (masc.) #1803 (Fem.) BDB #195.

Barnes: *[The poor] are not left in a said and comfortless condition. They are permitted to regard God as their protector and friend, and to look forward to another and a better world.*²⁹ “[God] raises the poor from the dust; He lifts the beggar from the dung heap to make them set with nobles and to inherit a seat of honor. The pillars of the earth are Y^ehowah's, and He set the world upon them.” (I Sam. 2:8). “The afflicted and needy are seeking water, but there is none; and their tongue is parched with thirst. I, Y^ehowah, will answer them Myself as the God of Israel I will not forsake them.” (Isa. 41:17). The Spirit of the Lord Y^ehowah is upon me, because Y^ehowah has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives

²⁹ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 165.

and freedom to prisoners, to proclaim the favorable year of Y^ehowah and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn (Isa. 61:1–2). At one time, Job was just the antithesis of being destitute and frail; however, now, that is where he is and Eliphaz reminds him how God takes care of the frail, helpless poor. Now Job is destitute and God should take care of him.

Concerning the phrase, **and injustice has shut her mouth**; the poor are victims of crime and they are often taken advantage of because they are poor. Some are taken advantage of in the street and others are taken advantage of in court (at the gates). Here, this injustice is corrected as it is not allowed to speak. Barnes: *the wicked are confounded when they see al their plans foiled, and find themselves entangled in the snares which they have laid for others.*³⁰

Let me paraphrase Barnes: Recall that Eliphaz is speaking from the observations of his own life. This is what he has seen. Those who are evil and cunning eventually pay the price and those who are honest and have integrity are raised up by God. This is an observation made by the wise in every society. We have the true saying today that *honesty is the best policy*. That is, cunning, intrigue and underhanded business dealings will sooner or later cause his downfall. So, even if a person were acting only out of self interest and no higher motive, he would still be better off by making his business dealings honest, straightforward, and by acting with great personal integrity.³¹

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God Reproves and God Heals

**“Observe, happinesses of a man—God
reproves him;
therefore, do not despise the chastening of
the Almighty.** Job 5:17

**“Observe the happiness of a man whom God
has reproved;
therefore, do not despise the chastening of
the Almighty.**

The second name for God which is found here is shadday (שׁדַּי) [pronounced *shahd-DAH-ee*], which is generally translated *Almighty, the Almighty One*. There is reason to believe that this means *the many-breasted one* as the word for *breast* in the Hebrew is shad (שׁד) [pronounced *shahd*] (Strong’s #7699 BDB #994) and there are two or three other words in the Hebrew related to *breast* which have the same root. What is involved here is provision, ability to provide, care and love. However, let me also point out that the word for *to do violence to* is shâdad (שׁדַּד) [pronounced *shah-DAHd*] (Strong’s #7703 BDB #994). Therefore, we have the inference of dealing violently; and this would make sense. A mother will provide and protect her own, to the point of committing serious violence, if necessary. God does the same. For those who constantly reject him, for those who put their hands on His people—those are on the receiving end of His violence. This is a most marvelous name for God, revealing two important, yet superficially contradictory, characteristics. Interestingly enough, this name for God occurs 31 times in the book of Job and only 17 more times throughout the rest of Scripture (beginning in Gen. 17:1). Strong’s #7706 BDB #994.

As you have noticed, Eliphaz is skirting the issue and not saying just exactly what is on his mind. He knows that Job is suffering and the reason is some hidden sin. Now he becomes a bit more direct—when a man is reproved by God, that man should rejoice, because the process of being reproved brings him happiness. What Eliphaz is saying is absolutely correct. **“Happy is the man whom You chasten, O Y^ehowah, and the one You teach out from Your Law.”** (Psalm 94:12). **My son, do not reject the discipline of Y^ehowah or loathe His reproof; for whom Y^ehowah loves He reproves, even as a father reproves the son in whom he delights** (Prov. 3:11–12). Or as the writer of Hebrews wrote: **And you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons: My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of Y^ehowah nor faint when you are reproved by Him. For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines and He scourges every son whom He receives** (Heb. 12:5–6 Prov. 3:11–12 from the Septuagint).

³⁰ Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 165.

³¹ Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 165.

“Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline. Become fired up and change your attitude.” (Rev. 3:19). However, he is misapplying it here. He assumes that Job is under discipline and, in matter of fact, Job is not being corrected by God. McGee writes: *I have heard this verse quoted again and again. Isn't it true? Of course, it is true, but Eliphaz was using it as a personal dig against Job. Chastening is not always the reason that God's people suffer...[this] is a nice way of saying, “You are having trouble because you've done wrong and God is correcting you.” Well, that could be, but it may not be. Who are you to make such a judgment? Do you have a telephone into heave? Has the Lord revealed some secret to you? There are people who like to speak ex cathedra and they are not even the Pope! Some people think they have the last word on everything. Listen, friend, you cannot always speak into the problem of someone else and someone else cannot always speak into your problem either. Although the statement of Eliphaz is true, it does not apply to Job.*³²

When Eliphaz tells Job that happiness is to the person whom God reproves—we have all had spankings and, if we have any kind of a memory at all, recall how traumatic they were. However, it was that spanking that was part and parcel to developing our character and our concept of right and wrong. It was that spanking and training which kept most of us from a life of crime or a life of misery because we have dedicated ourselves to personal gratification. It is the result of love that a parent spanks and disciplines when necessary.

**“For He Himself wounds and He will bind;
He strikes and His hands heal.**

Job 5:18

**“For He Himself wounds and He will bind;
He strikes and His hands heal.**

Much of what Eliphaz says is absolutely true. God does discipline us; He does chastise us—He does cause us pain—but, when we turn away from our evil, He heals us. **“See now that I, I am He and there is no god besides Me. I is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heals; and there is no one who can deliver out of My hand.”** (Deut. 32:39). **“Y^ehowah causes death and He makes alive. He brings down to Sheol and He raises up. Y^ehowah makes poor and rich; He brings low and He also exalts.”** (I Sam. 2:6–7). **Y^ehowah binds up the fracture of His people and He heals the bruise that He has inflicted** (Isa. 30:26b). **“Come, let us return to Y^ehowah, for He has torn us, but He will heal us. He has wounded us, but He will bandage us.”** (Hosea 6:1). This is not unlike the parent disciplining the child; however, a parent certainly should not discipline a child so that he inflicts wounds which must be healed. However, when God disciplines us, there are times that it is extremely painful and oft times it may leave a scar. There are times when I have been disciplined by God that I can still recall the pain. Again, the problem with Eliphaz is that he is misapplying this true doctrine to Job. Job is not being disciplined.

The NIV Study Bible separates vv. 6–16 into a hymn and calls vv. 17–26 as a separate poem. I see these as making different points. So far in this chapter, Eliphaz has made several points: a fool or a recalcitrant might prosper for a short time, but God will remove the trappings of prosperity from them (vv. 2–5). When a person suffers hardship and calamity, this is not just something which pops up out of the ground; it is not the result of capricious and arbitrary fate (v. 6). Job cannot appeal to the angels about his life—and man in his life is born to trouble—so he should appeal to God, the Ruler of the Universe (vv. 1, 7–16). If God has disciplined Job, He will also heal him (if Job goes to Him) (vv. 17–18). Finally, in the next few verses, we will have what may be considered a poem—an inspired poem, if you will. What Eliphaz has said throughout this chapter is absolutely accurate. We can go to any verse of this chapter and apply it as God's Word as I have shown you verses throughout Scripture which express a similar sentiment. Now he will speak of God's protection and deliverance—and again, he will be dead on accurate.

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³² Job; J. Vernon McGee, ©1977, pp. 50–51.

A Poem of God's Protection

**“In six disasters, He will deliver you;
and in seven, evil will not [reach out and]
touch you.** Job 5:19

**“In six disasters, He will deliver you;
and in seven, evil will not reach out and
touch you.**

The first substantive in this verse is the feminine plural of tsârâh (צָרָה) [pronounced *tzaw-RAW*], and it means *anguish, adversity, affliction, travail, trouble* and *distress* in the singular; in the plural it means *troubles, distresses, disasters, afflictions, adversities*. I mention that, as its masculine cognate seems to have a slightly different meaning in the singular as opposed to the plural. Strong's #6869 BDB #865.

One of the figures of speech which we find throughout Scripture, but not in our present-day speech is this formula *in six...and in seven*. This can be taken in several ways. The simplest understanding of this phrase is that God delivers in many ways. In Prov. 6:16, we read: **There are six things which Y^ehowah hates; in fact, seven which are an abomination to Him.** In this poem, as well as in Prov. 6:16, seven items will be mentioned. The key in Prov. 6 is that God abhors all evil—it is by nature an abomination to His perfect character. In our passage of Job, Eliphaz will enumerate seven disasters of life, but the principle is that God will deliver us from all disasters of life, whether enumerated here or not. (see also Job 33:29 40:5 Prov. 30:15, 18, 21, 29 Eccles. 11:2 Amos 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13 2:1, 4, 6 Micah 5:5). When one wants to get more technical, *six* is the number of man and *seven* is the number of completeness and perfection. In all things pertaining to life on this earth, God will protect us; and in all attacks, whether seen or unseen, whether from man or from angel, God will protect us. McGee calls the following list a complete spectrum of the trouble of man.

The second verb is the Qal imperfect of nâga' (נָגַח) [pronounced *naw-GAHG*], which means *to touch, to reach out and touch*. This verb is very similar to another verb which means *to strike down, to kill*; this verb is not quite as strong, but there is a potential for harm indicated. Strong's #5060 BDB #619.

Again, this is true and has been taught from Bob Thieme's pulpit several times. There is a principal of protection by God. The big point being made by Eliphaz is that God is disciplining Job, for which Job should be thankful; and God protects His Own from disaster. **Many are the afflictions of the righteous but Y^ehowah delivers him out of them all** (Psalm 34:19). **For a righteous man falls seven times and he rises again but the recalcitrant stumbles in calamity** (Prov. 24:16).

With regards to evil touching us: **No testing has overtaken you but such as is common to man and God is faithful, Who will not allow you to be tested beyond what you are able to endure, but with the testing, He will also provide the way out, so that you may be able to endure it** (1 Cor. 10:13). **No evil will befall you, nor will any plague come near your dwelling place** (Psalm 91:10). **Do not be afraid of sudden fear nor of the onslaught of the wicked when it comes, for Y^ehowah will be your confidence and He will keep your foot from being caught** (Prov. 3:25–26). The sense is that calamity may befall us, but we will not be utterly cast down. That is, God will deliver us from all evil which comes upon us.

**“In famine, He will redeem you from death;
and in war, from hands of a sword.** Job 5:20

**“In famine, He will redeem you from death;
and in war, from the mighty sword.**

The first verb is the Qal perfect of pādâh (פָּדָה) [pronounced *paw-DAWH*], which means *to ransom, to purchase, to redeem*; often time, it is used to purchase land, slaves, or to provide enough money so that a person is not killed. Strong's #6299 BDB #804. God has purchased us with the blood of His Son, so that we are shielded during periods of economic depression. **Observe, the eye of Y^ehowah is on those who fear and revere Him, on those who trust in His grace to deliver their soul from death and to keep them alive in famine [economic depression]** (Psalm 33:18–19). **Y^ehowah sustains the righteous and Y^ehowah knows the days of the blameless—their inheritance will be forever. They will not be upset in the time of evil and in the days of famine [or, economic depression] they will enjoy abundance** (Psalm 37:17b–19). **“For I will certainly rescue you, and you will not fall by**

the sword, but you will have your life as booty, because you have trusted in Me,” declares Y^ehowah (Jer. 39:18). Though a large army encamp against me, my heart will not fear. Though war rise against me, I am confident (Psalm 27:3). One of the difficult things for a new Christian to grasp is that we are not at the mercy of the trends of our nation. If God’s purpose for our life is to live through an economic depression, He will see to it that we are nourished and sustained.

The mouth of the sword is a phrase used of the sword as it devours the lives of those it strikes. The redeeming from the hands of the sword indicates that the sword has one who is wielding it for the purpose of destruction toward the person in question; God protects from that. The *hands* of the sword personifies the sword and gives it definition and purpose—that is, when we are attacked by evil, this is not just some random attack. As a believer, Satan has specific attacks which he launches upon us. This is an attacker who has you in particular in mind when he is wielding the sword.

I came from the generation which seemed to feel that war for any reason was wrong. Here, we are told that during periods of war, God protects us as well. It doesn’t matter if we are in the front lines, in the midst of an invaded country—we are protected here as well. The believer has no reason to fear a nuclear war, invasion by a foreign country or military service.

**“In a scourge of a tongue, you will be hidden;
and you will not fear havoc [or, violence] when it comes.**

Job 5:21

**“You will be protected from verbal sins;
and you will not fear street rioting and looting (and other forms of violence) when it comes.**

The word *scourge* means *whip*. This is the same word that is used when God scourges men through *calamities and punishment* (Isa. x.26 Job ix.23).³³ Strong’s #7752 BDB #1002. *Here 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 the Nile.”*³⁴

In this verse, we have two very different types of attack. Interestingly enough, we have another passage where God’s protection is guaranteed under these same two situations. *You hide them in the secret place of Your presence from the conspiracies of man. You keep them secretly in a shelter from the strife of tongues. Blessed by Y^ehowah for He has made marvelous His grace to me in a besieged city* (Psalm 31:20–21). In the first attack, we are protected from verbal sins. *They speak emptiness to one another with flattering lips and they speak with a double heart. May Y^ehowah root out and destroy all flattering lips, the tongue which speaks arrogant things* (Psalm 12:2–3). We do not have to respond or retaliate or defend ourselves. I was subjected to this where I worked at one time. There were three people who I worked with who would spend a significant amount of their time running me down (along with several other people); to the best of my knowledge, all of them were believers, and God gave them time to realize what they were doing was wrong and He disciplined them and moved them out.

What we will not fear is *shôd* (שׂוּד or שׂוּד) [pronounced *shohd*], which means *havoc, (domestic)*³⁵ *violence, devastation, ruin, national disaster*. My feeling is that this would refer to intense national unrest, such as street rioting and looting, and general lawlessness. This works well with Isa. 51:19 Ezek. 45:9 Joel 1:15 Habak. 1:3, and less well with Psalm 12:5 Prov. 24:2. To grasp why it works with one and not another, civil unrest and strife was not as often the cause in the old world for rioting, looting and rape. These things usually accompanied attacks from without. Strong’s #7701 BDB #994. *Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me. Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me* (Psalm 23:4). *Y^ehowah is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? Y^ehowah is the defense of my life—whom should I dread? When evildoers came upon me to devour my flesh, my adversaries and my enemies, they stumbled and fell* (Psalm 27:1–2). *You will not*

³³ *Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 167.*

³⁴ *Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 167.*

³⁵ *Domestic* in terms of one’s particular city or country.

be afraid of the terror by night or of the arrow that flies by day (Psalm 91:5). “You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind has trusted in You.” (Isa. 16:3).

**“With respect to havoc [or, destruction] and
hunger, you will laugh;
and you will not fear to beasts of the earth.**

Job 5:22

**“With respect to havoc [or, destruction] and
hunger, you will laugh;
and you will not fear to beasts of the earth.**

With respect to the first phrase, allow me to paraphrase Barnes: *You will be perfectly safe and happy. When destruction and famine approach you, you smile with conscious security.*³⁶

The word generally translated *famine* in this verse is not the same as the word in v. 20; it actually means *hunger* and is an Aramaism. Barnes claims that it means *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.*³⁷ This word could possibly stand in for any sort of privation. This word is only found here and in Job 30:3 and its verbal cognate is found in Ezek. 17:7.* Strong's #3720 BDB #495.

In these verses, we have the same word for *havoc and destruction*, and the same word for *fear*. The word in vv. 21–22 is *yârê'* (יָרֵא) [pronounced *yaw-RAY*] means *fear, fear-respect, reverence, to have a reverential respect*. Its only use, however, is not strictly in the sense of *reverential fear*. In both verses, it is found in the Qal imperfect and with the particle of negation, and it simply means *to fear, to be afraid*. Strong's #3372 BDB #431.

At this period of time, as was implied by the five different words for *lion* earlier in the previous chapter, wild animals were a serious concern and deadly dangerous. Whereas few of us can relate to this as a serious problem, it would be like stepping into one of the more natural areas of Africa. More of us could relate as this would be like wandering into one of the worse areas of a major city at night. **You will tread upon the lion and cobra; you will trample down the young lion and the serpent** (Psalm 91:13). This protection afforded by God is almost prophetic of the place of animals in the millennium. **“And I will make a covenant of peace with them and I will eliminate harmful beasts from the land, so that they may live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.”** (Ezek. 34:25). **“In that day, I will also make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, the birds of the sky and the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land and I will make them lie down in safety.”** (Hosea 2:18). **And He [Jesus Christ] was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were continually ministering to Him** (Mark 1:13). I will not quote the passage from the end of the book of Mark about handling snakes as that was added to Scripture after the fact.

**“For your covenant [is] with stones of the
field;
and beasts of the field are at peace with you.**

Job 5:23

**“For your covenant is with the stones of the
field;
and wild animals are at peace with you.**

At first, I thought that this was a reference to stones as weapons of war and weapons used for self protection. However, most commentators³⁸ put a different, and more accurate, spin on this. In an agricultural society, one requires soil which is not filled with stones. My brother and his wife, in order to plant a tree or anything else in their yard at their first home, dropped the shovel wherever they wanted said tree, dug out the rock that was invariably there, and dropped in the tree. **“Then you will strike every fortified city and every choice city and fell every good tree and stop up all springs of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones.”** (II Kings 3:19). **And he dug it all**

³⁶ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 168.

³⁷ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 168 (he quotes an extra-Biblical source at this point).

³⁸ Barnes offers a much different interpretation; that a man's traveling would not be hindered by stones. Although he didn't say it, a road paved carefully with stones is easier to travel upon than a road with errant stones jutting up here or there. In the former case, one would be in league with the stones and in the latter, at odds with same. However, the Bible specifically calls them the *stones of the field* and not *stones of the road*; hence making the more common interpretation the most likely.

around, removing its stones, and planted it with the choicest vine (Isa. 5:2a). “And others fell upon the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil.” (Matt. 13:5).

Furthermore, as it says here, the wild animals are at peace with you. This does not mean that you can go out and pet lions or handle poisonous snakes, as some religious types are wont to do—we are shielded from many of the dangers of life due to our relationship with Jesus Christ; and, in the Old Testament, due to their relationship to Y^ehowah (Who is Jesus Christ).

“And you will know that your tent [is] at
peace
and you will personally examine [or, inspect] Job 5:24
your habitation and you will miss nothing [or,
you will not sin].

“And you will know that your home is safe
and secure;
and you will personally examine and
inventory your home and it will be intact.

The verb in v. 23 is the Hophal perfect of *shâlam* (שָׁלַם) [pronounced *shaw-LAHM*], and it means *to be in a covenant of peace, to have a peace treaty with, to be at peace with* (Qal meanings), *to live in peace with* (Hophal), *to cause to be at peace with, to make peace with* (Hiphil). Strong's #7999 BDB #1023.

In this verse, we have the substantive cognate *shâlôwm* (שְׁלוֹם) [pronounced *shaw-LOHM*], which means *completeness, soundness, welfare, peace, safe, secure*. This is not the only noun cognate for the verb, by the way. Strong's #7965 BDB #1022. God protects our home and our possessions.

The first noun is *ʾohel* (אֹהֶל) [pronounced *OH-hel*], and it means *tent, tabernacle, house*; although we look upon it as a temporary dwelling, it was the main dwelling of nomadic groups of people. Strong's #168 BDB #13. The first noun in the second line is *nâveh* (נֶבֶה) [pronounced *naw-VEH*], and it means *abode of a shepherd, abode of a shepherd's flocks, habitation, area [or region] of habitation*. We looked at this word back in v. 3 of this chapter. Strong's #5116 BDB #627.

The first verb in line two is the 2nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect of *pâqad* (פָּקַד) [pronounced *paw-KAHD*] and it means *to personally examine, to personally attend to, to personally number*. The key is **personal contact** of some sort. We examined this in great detail in Num. 4:32 (and Lev. 26:16). Strong's #6485 BDB #823

The second verb in line two is the 2nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *châṭâʾ* (חָטָא) [pronounced *khaw-TAW*], and this is the word generally translated *sin*. It also means *transgress, miss, miss the mark, err, deviate, stray from, go astray from*. I will go with the rendering *miss* in this verse. Judges 20:16 uses this word for a slinger missing a target. Prov. 19:2 uses this for *making a misstep, stumbling, falling*. Strong's #2398 BDB #306.

The meaning here is a bit difficult. At first I thought that you will inventory your home's contents and you will not be missing anything; that is, you will not be robbed by outside or inside forces. But that seems somewhat trivial and a misuse of the verb *châṭâʾ*. I am leaning more toward a “whole-life” inventory, as it were, and not becoming sinful in that examination—however, I am not overly thrilled with that interpretation either. Because I am not keen on either of my interpretations, allow me to quote from Barnes, who makes a more eloquent case for the former interpretation: *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...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.* Then Barnes speaks directly to that use of *châṭâʾ*: *Here the original sense of the Hebrew word should be retained, meanings that he would not miss the way to his dwelling; that is, that he would be*

permitted to return to it in safety...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 a stony way, but who is permitted to visit his home without missing it or being disappointed.³⁹ In defense of this interpretation, let me point out that we are dealing with nomadic peoples. They don't build a house on 2100 Maple St. and live there for ten years. They move their tents sometimes nightly, sometimes monthly, traversing land which is unfamiliar to them. Therefore, the idea of being able to find one's own tent and to find everything in tact in a dangerous world is reasonable.

Job will alter point out that this is not always the case. “The tents of the destroyers prosper and those who provoke God are secure—he whom God brings into His power...Why do the recalcitrant continue living; and further, to become powerful? Their descendants are established with them I their sight and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear; neither is the rod of God upon them.” (Job 12:6 21:7–9). There is certainly a protection afforded by God to those who are His; however, this does not mean that life is so simple as those who enjoy earthly blessings are growing, spiritual believers, and those who suffer misery and pain are either unbelievers or believers in rebellion against God. And that can be observed plainly.

“And you will know that your seed [will be] many; and your offspring as grass of the earth [or, as the shoots of the field].

Job 5:25

“And you will know that your descendants will be many; and your offspring will be as the grass of the earth.

Although the translation of this verse is fairly easy, I want to mention some of the words which are found here to those who have a linguistic interest. The word translated *offspring* is tse'ätsâ' (חַצְצָא) [pronounced *tseh-ets-AW*] is found only in Job and Isaiah and only in the plural. It means *offspring, produce* and comes from a more common verb *to go, to come out* (Strong's #3318 BDB #422). Strong's #6631 BDB #425.

The analogy to the *blades of grass* is like that of the *sand of the sea*; this is a reference to innumerable descendants. One of the great blessings of the ancient world was to have a lot of children and grandchildren. It was far superior to be the father of a city as opposed to a father of a small group of people. **How blessed is the man who fears-reveres Y^ehowah and who greatly delights in His commandments. His descendants will be mighty on the earth; the generation of the upright will be blessed** (Psalm 112:1b–2; see also Deut. 28:4). We have a similar promise for the millennial reign of our Lord: “For I will pour out water on the thirsty land and streams upon the dry ground; and I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring and my blessing upon your descendants; and they will spring up like grass among the waters.” (Isa. 44:3–4a). When chewing out the Israelites for their apostasy, God said, “I am Y^ehowah your God Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you in the way you should go. If only you had paid attention to My commandments! Then your well-being would have been like river and your righteousness like the waves of the sea. Your descendants would have been like the sand and your offspring like its grains. Their name would never be cut off or destroyed from My presence.” (Isa. 48:17b–19).

“You will come in a full age to a grave as a coming up of a shock of grain in its season.

Job 5:26

“You will come to your grave in a full age just as a shock of grain shoots up in its season.

Let's see what others have done with this verse:

The Amplified Bible

You shall come to your grave in ripe old age, and as a shock of grain goes up [to the threshing floor] in its season.

The Emphasized Bible

Thou shalt come, yet robust, to the grave, As a stack of sheaves mounteth up in its season.

NAB

You shall approach the grave in full vigor, as a shock of grain comes in at its season.

³⁹ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 169.

NASB	“You will come to the grave in full vigor, Like the stacking of grain in its season.”
NEB	You will come in sturdy old age to the grave as sheaves come in due season to the threshing-floor.
Owen's Translation	You shall come in firm strength to a grave as comes up a shock of grain in its season.
The Septuagint	And you will come to the grave like ripe corn reaped in its season, or as a heap of the corn-flour collected in proper time.
Young's Lit. Translation	Thou comest in full age unto the grave, As the going up of a stalk in its season.

You shall come to a grave is the accurate rendering of the first couple of words in the first line; however, one word has been left out. The preposition *in* is followed by a word which occurs only here and in Job 30:2 in the Bible, and BDB gives the meanings as *firm strength*, *rugged strength* (with the body vigorous and its powers unimpaired). It is similar in form the verb for *complete*, *perfect* (Strong's #3634 BDB #480). Thieme gives the meaning as being *a full age*, *at the proper time* and the parallelism in this verse would seem to indicate that. Strong's #3624 BDB #480. **For by me [Bible doctrine] your days will be multiplied and years of life will be added to you** (Prov. 9:11). **The fear-reverence of Y^ehowah prolongs life but the years of the wicked will be shortened** (Prov. 10:27). And this will be true of Job as well. **And Job died, an old man and full of days** (Job 42:17; see God's promise to Abram in Gen. 15:15). Eccles. 8:13 states the other side of the story: **But it will not be well for the evil man and he will not lengthen his days like a shadow, because he does not fear God.**

This is followed by the preposition *as*, *like* and the Qal infinitive construct of *ʿâlâh* (אָלַח) [pronounced *gaw-LAWH*] and it means *to go up*, *to ascend*, *to rise*. Here, it would mean *a rising of*, *an ascending of*, *a climbing of*, *a springing up*, *a shooting forth of*. Nothing is being stacked; vegetation is growing at the proper time. Strong's #5927 BDB #748. The analogy is the vegetation pops forth out of the ground at the proper time. Barnes relates this to harvesting the grain, which is an apt analogy, just not the one used here. *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 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.*⁴⁰ Again this was not the analogy of Eliphaz but it illustrates the point nonetheless.

To this speech of Eliphaz we can quote a parallel passage from the Proverbs: **My son, do not let them depart from your sight; keep sound wisdom and discretion so they will be life to your soul and adornment to your neck. Then you will walk in your way securely and your foot will not stumble. When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. Do not be afraid of sudden fear nor of the onslaught of the wicked when it comes. For Y^ehowah will be your confidence and He will keep your foot from being caught** (Prov. 3:21–26).

*The last trouble is death. Eliphaz speaks of death, not as an awful hideous monster, but as something welcome. There is a leveling out in death.*⁴¹

“Behold, this we have thoroughly investigated it—thus it [is]! Listen [and take heed] to this and you know [this] for yourself.”

Job 5:27

“Listen, we have carefully examined this and so the matter stands! Listen and carefully ponder what I have said, and you completely agree.”

The main verb in the first line is the first person plural (with a feminine singular suffix, corresponding to *this*), Qal perfect of *châqar* (חָקַר) [pronounced *khaw-KAHR*], and it means *to search out*, *to search for*, *to thoroughly investigate*. Strong's #2713 BDB #350.

⁴⁰ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 170.

⁴¹ Job; J. Vernon McGee, ©1977, p. 52.

This is followed by the adverb kên (כֵּן) [pronounced *ken*], which is generally rendered so. This particle is built upon the participle *to stand, to be upright, to be erect*; a very free translation might be **so this is how the matter stands**. A good short rendering would be **thus**. It can also be rendered *rightly, well, so very, so long, so often, it is so*. Strong's #3651 BDB #485.

This adverb is followed by the demonstrative adjective hîy' (הִיא) [pronounced *hee*] and this can be translated *she* or *it*. It is preceded by a definite article and often this personal pronoun is translated *it [is]*. Strong's #1931 BDB #214.

The second line begins with the Qal imperative of shâma' (שָׁמַע) [pronounced *shaw-MAH*] is the simple word for *listen* and it means *listen and obey, listen and give heed to, hearken to, be attentive to, listen and take heed to, listen and take not of, listen and be cognizant of*. It is by the context that we can determine whether it is the simple act of listening or the act of listening attentively to and obeying. Unfortunately, the very best single word for the latter meaning is the archaic *hearken*. Strong's #8085 BDB #1033. This has a feminine singular suffix, referring back to *this*—i.e., what Eliphaz has had to say.

Then Eliphaz uses the wâw conjunction and the personal pronoun *you* and the Qal imperative of yâda' (יָדַע) [pronounced *yaw-DAHG*], a verb which means *to know*. Strong's #3045 BDB #393. This is followed by the lamed preposition and the 2nd masculine singular suffix. It is difficult to give this a literal rendering at the end. I want to bypass the imperative and render this **and you will know [this] for yourself**. Let me give you a few other translator options:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Hear <i>and</i> heed it, and know for yourself [for your good].
NJB	Heed it, you will be the wiser for it!
NIV	“So hear it and apply it to yourself.”
REB	...this we have heard and know it to be true for you.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	...hearken And thou, know for thyself!

Up until this time, Eliphaz has been coy. He has referred to those under discipline in the 3rd person, giving general principles of what he felt to be truth. What Eliphaz has presented, he feels to be self-evident. Now, in this one line, he tells Job, “In case you didn’t get it, I have been talking about you!” He knows that if Job carefully has listened to what he had to say, Job will follow his instruction and be the better for it.

Barnes makes an important note concerning what Eliphaz had to say: *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 farther 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 favoured with occasional revelations, as Eliphaz claimed (chapt. iv.12, seq.), 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 heathen world. It is 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?*⁴²

⁴² Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 170.

Keil and Delitzsch: *There is no doctrinal error to be discovered in the speech of Eliphaz, and yet he cannot be considered as a representative of the complete truth of Scripture.* We have already examined the **Doctrine of Suffering** back in Job 4, but let me remind you that we suffer for several different reasons: (2) we suffer as a result of discipline by God for what wrong that we have done as believers in Jesus Christ. This will be the emphasis of the arguments of Job's three friends. (3) Mature believers suffer sometimes as a part of testing, sometimes for growth, and sometimes as a blessing, as this is the only time God can bless us in suffering. (4) Believers and unbelievers alike suffer as a natural result of their sins. That is, just as your hand burns when you touch a hot iron, certain sins have natural repercussions. For instance, adultery will result in alienation, distrust and bitterness from one's spouse. (5) Believers and unbelievers both suffer as a result of the sins of others. The injured parties in an adulterous act (including the children) suffer as a result of the act of the adulterer. Although the innocent spouse in the adultery may not have been 100% innocent, the children, who can suffer terribly because of adultery, are completely innocent in this respect. (6) Unbelievers suffer as a normal part of life. (7) Unbelievers suffer at the hand of God for hurting a believer under God's protection. (8) Unbelievers suffer so that God can reach them with the gospel. (9) It is important to realize that, generally speaking, unbelievers do not suffer at the hand of God for sinning. God is not the father of an unbeliever and therefore, God does not discipline the unbeliever for his acts of sin. However, that being said, there are times when God removes a significant number of sinful unbelievers from this world because their degeneracy has reached a saturation point. The best example of this is Sodom and Gomorrah. God destroyed these people due to their inherent evil. They were not going to believe in Jesus Christ, they would produce no offspring who would believe in Jesus Christ; they would corrupt both the believers and unbelievers around them. They were, for all intents and purposes, a cancerous growth which needed to be removed for the good of mankind in general. Whenever possible, the most effective cure for cancer is to remove the cancer in its entirety. God must sometimes do that with great masses of human beings in particular geographical areas. Their degeneracy does not have to be of the sort found in Sodom and Gomorrah, which was an area predominantly populated by homosexual rapists. They can be religious and moral as well. If they are cancerous, then there are times when God must remove them. Don't make the same mistake of Eliphaz and attribute every natural disaster to God removing a cancerous growth.

Let's go with the example I began with: adultery. Charlie Brown, an unbeliever, can commit adultery, thus causing his wife, Lucy Brown, distress, intense pain and heartache. If she is a believer, then God may step in and slap Charlie around a bit for injuring a believer with his sin. However, since Charlie is an unbeliever, God does not step in and discipline him simply for committing adultery. The natural consequences of this act of adultery could be divorce, causing pain and suffering to Charlie, the guilty party, and to Lucy. Now Lucy may have been a complete bitch to live with and it is even possible that she committed adultery first, setting off this natural chain of events. In any case, there can be a whole round of suffering for Charlie, for Lucy and for their children as a result of Charlie's adultery without God becoming involved. Now, Charlie might be positive toward God—he might have an interest in knowing God, and God might turn up the suffering somewhat to get Charlie's attention. Or, Lucy may have been completely innocent in this affair, yet she was positive toward God as God-consciousness, but rejected the gospel at that time. God may use her suffering, or even intensify her suffering, in order to turn her towards Him. Again, this is not suffering out of discipline—this is suffering for blessing. Most of us will not turn toward God unless we are suffering.

New example: Charlie may suffer from allergies as a natural genetic predisposition. His parents or grandparents had allergies; he inherited the gene combination responsible for allergic reactions, and now he suffers periodically due to an allergic reaction. There is no committed sin involved here—that is, these allergies are not going to go away if Charlie cleans up his act and quits running around o his wife—they are simply the natural result of living in a cursed world, living in bodies of sin. My point in all of this is that Eliphaz is accurate in what he has said—however, he does not give us the complete picture of why man suffers.

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