

Job 6

Job 6:1–30

Outline of Chapter 6:

- Vv. 1–7 **Job complains of the pain that he is suffering**
- Vv. 8–13 **Why is God keeping Job alive?**
- Vv. 14–21a **The analogy to the refreshment of the torrents**
- Vv. 21b–30 **What Job’s friends have to say does not apply to his situation**

Charts:

- v. 7 **Job 6:2–7**
- v. 20 **The Various Possible Meanings of Bôwsh**

Introduction: In Job 6–7, Job speaks, now that Eliphaz has finished. It doesn’t appear as though Job addresses much of what Eliphaz said directly, but more with the inference of Eliphaz—the inference that Job has some sin or sins for which he is being punished severely. My guess here, based upon human behavior, is that since Eliphaz did not directly attack Job or accuse him of sinful behavior, Job will not respond to him as though he did—that is, Job will not tell Eliphaz, “You are dead wrong about me and this is why.” Instead, Job speaks as though the things which Eliphaz said concerned a hypothetical case.

What Job noticed immediately is that there was nothing from Eliphaz by way of sympathy for the situation that Job found himself in. Job has never faced such pain and anguish before and the sight of his friends made him think that he would receive some sympathy and understanding. Job does agree that the horrific trials that he is being put through is at the hand of God (v. 4), but that the pain and suffering that he is at the mercy of is not the result of some equally horrible sin or sins (vv. 2–4). Job desires in this chapter that God remove him from this life to end his suffering or remove him from this suffering (vv. 8–13).

Job then complains about his friends who have ostensibly come to console him. After hearing what Eliphaz had to say, Job realized that their agenda was quite different from what he expected (v. 14). In fact, Job draws a long analogy between his friends and the torrents which vanish (vv. 15–21). When he saw his friends afar off, he looked to them as a caravan would look to a torrent of rushing water in their travels—for refreshment and sustenance. However, with what Eliphaz said, it is as though that torrent of water suddenly dried up. Finally, at the end of the chapter, Job speaks more directly against this friends. Even though Eliphaz is the only one who has spoken, Job speaks to all of them, as they have certainly all come to the same conclusion that Eliphaz had. Job essentially tells them that what Eliphaz had to say does not address the problem nor did it offer Job any consolation.

[<<Return to Chapter Outline>>](#)

[<<Return to the Chart Index>>](#)

Job Complains of the Pain That He Is Suffering

Literally:

Smoother English rendering:

Then Job answered and so he said:

Job 6:1 Then Job answered Eliphaz by saying,

We set up a pattern with this chapter: one of Job’s friends will speak, then Job will answer them. So far, as Oriental custom would have it, Job quietly listened to the inferences of his friend Eliphaz; and now he will respond

**“If only weighed [were] my provoked anger
and my ruin—in scales lifted up together.** Job 6:2

**“If only the anger I have provoked God to
was weighed—
along with my personal ruin—in a balance
together.**

Since there are several ways this could be translated, let me show you what others have done first:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Oh, that my impatience <i>and</i> vexation might be [thoroughly] weighed, and all my calamity be laid up over against them in the balances once against the other [to see if my grief is unmanly]!
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Oh that weighed were my vexation, And my engulfing ruin—into the balances they would lift up all at once!
Keil and Delitzsch	Oh that my vexation were but weighed, And they would put my suffering in the balance against it!
NAB	Ah, could my anguish but be measured and my calamity laid with it in the scales,...
NJB	If only my misery could be weighed, and all my ills be put together on the scales.
NIV	“If only my anguish could be weighted and all my misery be placed on the scales!”
REB	If only the grounds for my resentment might be weighed, and my misfortunes placed with them on the scales.
<i>The Septuagint</i>	Oh that one would indeed weigh the wrath that is upon me, and take up my griefs in a balance together!
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	O that my provocation were thoroughly weighed, And my calamity in balances They would lift up together!

V. 2 begins with the conjunction *lû* (לו) [pronounced *lue*] and it means *O that, would that, if only, if*. Strong's #3863 BDB #530.

The subject of the verse is translated *vexation* by Owen and Rotherham and *provocation* by Young. We looked at this word in the last chapter—it is the masculine singular substantive *ka'as* (כַּאֲ) [pronounced *KAH-gahs*]; which means *provoked anger* (this is a reference to God's anger; the personal possessive pronominal suffix means that this is the provoked anger against Job). What I want you to understand about this noun in the case of Job is that this is not a reference to what he has done to provoke God; this is a reference to the obvious anger of God against Job; certainly it may have been provoked by Job, but we are emphasizing the wrath itself and not its cause. Strong's #3708 BDB #495.

We don't know what the second noun is, as it is a possible error, so we will go with the word *ruin*. The deal is that it only occurs here and one slight change of one letter would causes it to be the more familiar word for *ruin, calamity*. The word which we find in the Massoretic text is *hayyâh* (חַיָּה) [pronounced *hay-YAW*], which is Strong's #1962 BDB #217. What is should probably by is *havvâh* (חַוָּה) [pronounced *hahv-VAW*], which is Strong's #1942 BDB #217. A poor manuscript, or a slight mistake in copying could account for writing a *yôwd* instead of a *wâw*. This could also be regional difference in spelling. Since the only reference to this possible error is found in BDB (at least of my own personal reference books), I thought that I should explain so that even a person who does not know any Hebrew can understand what the problem was. My own problem is that either noun is in the feminine singular, but the verb in the next verse demands a masculine singular.

The verb is the Qal infinitive absolute of *weigh*. Strong's #8254 BDB #1053. An infinitive absolute often acts as a noun, but here it behaves like a verb.

The word for *balance* is in the dual, which is what would be expected (making *scales* a good rendering), preceded by the preposition for *in*. This makes me think that one of these words refers to his committed sins—or that which provoked God to wrath; and the other refers to the outcome of his life so far—the personal ruin he has experienced. The entire concept of a balance is you compare the weight on one object with the weight of a known. What is known is the horrible things which have happened to Job. What acts as the unknown is whatever set God off to

cause these calamities to occur to Job. Job asks that these two things be placed in balance to see if they really do balance out. He is certain that whatever he has done is not equal to the pain he has suffered—and he is absolutely right. Later, Job asks for his integrity to be weighed (Job 31:6).

The final verb is the 3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect of *to lift, to bear, to carry* (Strong's #5375 BDB #669); followed by the adverb *together* (Strong's #3162 BDB #403).

**“For now more than sand of seas it would be heavier;
therefore, my words have been swallowed up.**

Job 6:3

**“For then my grief would be heavier than the sand of the seas;
causing my words to be swallowed up.**

The *mîn* preposition precedes *sand of seas*; this generally means *out of, out from*; here it means *more than*. Strong's #4480 BDB #577.

Another reason why my interpretation concerning the scales and the things placed in the balance above is correct is that the verb *to be heavy* is in the 3rd person masculine singular; that is, only one of these things weighs more than the sand of the seas—Job's personal grief and troubles. I am not certain whether to use *it* as the subject here or *sand of seas*. Let me give you what others have done:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea;
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	For now beyond the sand of the seas would it be heavy,...
KJV	For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea.
NAB	They would now outweigh the sands of the sea!
NJB	But they outweigh the sands of the seas;
NRSV	For then it would be heavier than the sand of the sea;
REB	For they would outweigh the sands of the sea.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	For now, than the sands of the sea it is heavier.

You will notice that the better translations stay with the singular subject and the less literal translations, as they so often do, give this verse a spin or an interpretation. The subject of the verb is *it*, referring back to his anguish as well as to the provoked anger of God, in v. 2. As I have mentioned, in this verse, the verb for *heavier, outweigh* is in the masculine singular and *calamity, ruin* of v. 2 is in the feminine singular. So what we are looking back to is *my provoked anger*; i.e., what that noun refers to is the *wrath of God*; not *what* caused the anger of God. The subject is not *sand of seas* because the preposition preceding *sand of seas* would be out of place—that is, the *mîn* preposition shouldn't be there if *sand of the sea* is the subject. It should be pretty obvious that the *sand of the sea* refers to something in great abundance or something of great weight. **Now God gave Solomon wisdom and very great discernment and breadth of heart, like the sand that is on the seashore** (I Kings 4:29).

Now let's look at that last line:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	...therefore my word would have been rash <i>and wild</i> .
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	On this account, my words have wandered.
Keil and Delitzsch	Therefore my words are rash.
KJV	...therefore my words are swallowed up. (So also Noyes)
NASB	Therefore my words have been rash (So also Young)
The Septuagint	...but, as it seems, my words are vain.

The last line is translated “Therefore, my words are rash” by Owen, Young and the NASB. It begins with the preposition *ʿal* (אֲל) [pronounced *ahl*] prefixed to the adverb *kên* (כֵּן) [pronounced *kayn*], and together, they take on a meaning of their own. They mean *upon the ground of such conditions, therefore, on this account, on account*. It is an idiom used in conversation replying to an objection, which states the ground upon which the answer is made. [*ʿal* = Strong's #5921 BDB #752]. Strong's #3651 BDB #485.

The verb is the Qal perfect of *lûa* (לִּיאַ) [pronounced *loo-AHQ*], which means *to swallow*; although it is only found in Job 6:3 Obad. 16.* This word has been given a variety of renderings: *rash* (Gesenius, Keil and Delitzsch, *vain* (Luther, the Septuagint) and even *grief* and *evil*. However, the cognates of this word indicate that *to swallow up* is the best rendering. Strong's #3886 BDB #534.

What Job is doing is referring back to what he had said in chapter 3. In Job 3, he told his friends that he wished he had never been born or, in the alternative, that God would remove his life. These words would have seemed rash to his friends. In vv. 2–3a, he explains why he said what he did in Job 3. Job states these things, as his misery and pain were unappreciated and not fully understood by his friends. Job just wants his friends to grasp the depth of his personal suffering before simply condemning him as under discipline from God. He did not make it absolutely clear as to how terrible his personal suffering had been; so what he had said in Job 3 was lost on his friends. “Therefore, I will not restrain my mouth; I will speak in the anguish of my spirit. I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.” (Job 7:11).

In these two verses, he elicits the sympathy of his friends. “If only my provoked anger and my ruin were weighed in scales lifted up together. For now it would be heavier, more than sand of seas; therefore, my words had been swallowed up.” That last line is a colloquialism, similar to our phrase, *we were choked with grief*. We were so overwhelmed with sorrow, that we could not speak. Psalm 77:4b has a similar phrasing: *I am so troubled that I cannot speak*.

**“For arrows of [the] Almighty with me;
which poison [is] drinking my spirit—
terrors of God array themselves [against]
me!**

Job 6:4

**“For the arrows of the Almighty with me;
whose poison is drinking up my spirit—
the terrors of God array themselves against
me!**

Job again describes what it is like being him. His friends apparently do not recognize how serious the pain and difficulty are for Job. Job alludes to this again in Job 16:13: “His arrows surround me. Without mercy, He splits my kidneys open; He pours out my gall on the ground.” Poisoned arrows were a weapon of the ancient world, the poison being of such a concentration that even a superficial wound would result in death. *In the Odyssey, i. 200, seq. We read of Ulysses that he went to Ephyra, a city of Thessaly, to obtain from Ilus, the son of Mermer, deadly poison, that he might smear it over the iron point of his arrows. The pestilence which produced so great a destruction in the Grecian camp is also said by Homer (Iliad I.48) to have been caused by arrows shot from the bow of Apollo.*¹ David also complained of being struck by the arrows from God in Psalm 38:2; and one of the sons of Korah had complaints of being struck by God as well: “I was afflicted and about to die from my youth on; I suffer Your terrors; I am overcome. Your burning anger has passed over me; Your terrors have destroyed me.” (Psalm 88:15–16).

Both Job and Eliphaz agree that these arrows of pain are from God. Job has not been wounded by a man; the hand of God in the magnitude of his suffering, is obvious. The things which occurred to Job could not have been by the hand of man. Therefore, interestingly enough, Job and his friends can only point toward God as the cause of Job's pain. Job, however, does not have a clue as to why. “Have I sinned? What have I done to You, O watcher of men? Why have You set me as Your target, so that I am a burden to myself?” (Job 7:20).

As for the last line, Barnes writes: *The word which is rendered “set in array” (עָרַךְ) properly denotes the drawing up of a line for battle; and the sense is here, that all these terrors seem to be drawn up in battle array, as if on purpose to destroy him. No expression could more strikingly describe the condition of an awakened sinner, though it is not certain that Job used it precisely in this sense. The idea as he used it is, that all that God commonly employed to produce alarm seemed to be drawn up as in a line of battle against him.*²

¹ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 173. This notion as a true historical concept is supported by *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; ©1972; p. 208.

² Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 173.

McGee sums up the past couple verses with: *Job is making a plaintive plea. He says, "I can't even tell you how terrible my grief is. I can't explain to you this awful thing that has happened to me." You can see that Eliphaz had not helped him at all. Just to say, "You have some secret sin and the thing for you to do now is to confess and get right with God," is not always the correct thing to say.*³

**“Does a wild ass brays because of grass?
If an ox lows because his fodder;**

Job 6:5

**“Does a wild ass brays because of grass?
Does an ox bellow because his fodder?”**

The translation appears to be right; here are what others have done:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Does the wild ass bray when he has grass? Or does the ox low over his fodder?
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Doth the wild ass bray over grass? Or loweth the ox over his fodder [strictly, mixed fodder]?
KJV	Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass? or loweth the ox over his fodder?
The Septuagint	What then? will the wild ass bray for nothing, if he is not seeking food? or again, will the ox low at the manger, when he has fodder?
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Brayeth a wild ass over tender grass? Loweth an ox over his provender?

My point at using these particular translations is that they are generally the most accurate. It is obvious that Job is asking does an ass bray when he had grass? When an ox has food, does he low? Hell if I know. I don't know if this is a question which expects a *yes* or *no* answer. And part of the problem is that I did not know what it means for an animal to *low*; however, this is to make a sound like a cow—a moo, if you will. Barnes explains this verse: *The meaning of Job here is, that he did not complain without reason; and this he illustrates by the fact that the wild animal that had a plentiful supply of food would be gentle and calm, and that when its bray was heard it was proofs that it was suffering. So Job says that there was a reason for his complaining. He was suffering; and perhaps he means that his complaint was just as natural, and just as innocent, as the braying of the ass for its food.*⁴ I certainly hope the commentaries can help here. The NIV Study Bible concurs: *Job claims the right to bray and bellow, since he has been wounded by God and offered tasteless food [see v. 6] (words) by his friends.*⁵ McGee: *Job says, "I am crying out and you can see my misery and you show no pity at all. You act as if I'm not in trouble. I wouldn't be crying out if I weren't." He points out that the long-eared donkey out in the field doesn't bray for something to eat when he is eating grass. So Job is saying that he wouldn't be crying out if there were nothing hurting him. He says, "I'm hurting and I'm hurting bad."*⁶ **“Yet does not one in a heap of ruins stretch out his hand; or, in his disaster therefore, cry out for help?”** (Job 30:24).

**“Can the tasteless thing be eaten with no
salt?
[Is] there any taste in slime of purslane?”**

Job 6:6

**“Can the tasteless thing be eaten with no
salt?
[Is] there any taste in slime of purslane?”**

Barnes: *The literal truth of this no one can doubt, insipid food cannot be relished, nor would it long sustain life...Certain things went together, and were necessary companions. One cannot be expected without the other; one is incomplete without the other. Insipid food requires salt in order to make it palatable...there was a reason for his complaints, as there was for adding salt to unsavoury food.*⁷ I think I have a further grasp of what Job means with the first line. Some things naturally go together—dull food and salt; so certainly one would expect sin and discipline to be found together. However, what is he saying in the second line?

The Amplified Bible Or is there any flavor in the white of an egg?

³ *Job*; J. Vernon McGee, ©1977, p. 53.

⁴ *Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 173.

⁵ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 731.

⁶ *Job*; J. Vernon McGee, ©1977, p. 52.

⁷ *Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 174.

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Or is there any taste in the white of an egg? [or, “the juice of a purslain,” an insipid salad]
NRSV	...or is there any flavor in the juice of mallows?
Owen's Translation	Or is there any taste in slime of purslane?
The Septuagint	...or again, is there taste in empty words?
The Vulgate	...or, can any one taste that which being tasted produces death?
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Is there sense in the drivel of dreams?

We obviously don't know what the final Hebrew word means, but I can give you the rest of the sentence. The second line begins with the hypothetical particle which generally is translated *if*, but after a negative clause, it emphasizes a contrasted idea. Strong's #518 BDB #49. Job just said that you add salt to tasteless things; and then he adds, “or am I wrong that such and such is tasteless?”

The second word is the substantive of existence or being—*or is there, or does there exist*. Strong's #3426 BDB #441. Then we have the most interesting word *ṭa'am* (ט א מ) [pronounced *TAH-ahm* or *TAH-gahm*] and it means both *taste* (Ex. 16:31 Num. 11:8) and *discretion* (Psalm 119:66 Prov. 11:22); we have a similar use of the word *taste* in English; a person can have good taste in clothing, for example. This is also the word translated *behavior* in I Sam. 21:13 Psalm 34:0. My guess is that this is a word which changed slightly in its meaning over the centuries of use from the earlier times of Job and Moses to the later times of David. Strong's #2940 BDB #381.

The next word is remarkable, as we only find it in this verse and in I Sam. 21:13, where David allows *drool* or *spit* to drip down into his beard. I say that because the word *ṭa'am* from above shows up in those two verses as well. In other words, this word means *spittle*. Strong's #7388 BDB #938.

It is the final substantive which BDB confidently identifies as a plant with thick, slimy juice; but most translators admit that we do not know what this was exactly. We find it only in this verse. Young chooses the translation *dreams* as the word is similar to the word for *dreams* (that is Strong's #2472 BDB #321). Gesenius says that context requires that this is some unsavoury and/or insipid kind of food. He and Barnes both spell it *purslain* and use that as more of an example rather than the unquestionable rendering. Gesenius says that Job speaks contemptuously of this thick, unsavory, insipid broth as one would speak of foolish speech (referring to what Eliphaz has said). Gesenius also suggests the white of an egg—if we look at this as the uncooked white of an egg, then we have a grasp as to how unsavory of a food this is—no amount of salt would make it palatable and no amount of Eliphaz's speech would make his position palatable. Strong's #2495 BDB #321. The idea here is that even with salt, this is unpalatable. What Job is saying is that, so given, he has a sin nature and has committed a sin or three; that does not make his suffering palatable. If I commit a sin and then am disciplined, I can understand that. The two go together and I should expect it. However, if I commit a sin and my children are taken away from me; my businesses are destroyed; I am inflicted with a loathsome, painful disease; and all I have left in the world is a bitchy wife who wants me to curse God and die—knowing that I committed that sin does not make the result palatable. And no amount of speech by Eliphaz will ever make his position palatable to Job—it would be like adding a lot of seasoning to a broth made from the uncooked whites of eggs. It could not be eaten. This verse has nothing to do with Job's appetite being ruined or food tasting like slime to him.

Keil and Delitzsch offer a slightly different view of this second line. There are some foods that, with the right amount of seasoning or preparation, they can be palatable. Fried okra come first to mind; or eggplant Parmesan. Although I have personally never been a very fussy eater, okra to me is borderline food at best. There are some kinds of suffering that one can enjoy, having faith in God that these things will soon be removed. Let me start out with something simple. There are times throughout the school year where I would lose my voice to allergies and have to stay at home. My suffering was minimal and I was able to accomplish a great deal while at home. Perhaps not the best of examples, so let me try another: if I lay off of exercising for a week or two and then go back, I will experience pain a day or two after the exercising session—but it is a good kind of pain; even though I am hurting, it feels good. Now for the much tougher illustration: we might be suffering financial difficulties; we may have a co-worker or family member who is causing us grief. As long as we have not done anything to provoke these problems (being financially irresponsible or intentionally provoking to co-worker), we can enjoy these sufferings, knowing that God has brought them to us for our benefit and that He will remove them at the proper time. That is

the point of Keil and Delitzsch; Job's suffering is undeserved, but it isn't a temporary suffering of minor consequence which he knows that God will remove in a few days. His suffering is not palatable and there is nothing that will make it palatable.

**“It has refused to touch my soul;
they [are] like a languishing of my food.) [Or,
(My soul refuses to touch of these things,
they are as a diseased-languishing of my
food.)]**

Job 6:7

**“I have no appetite for that;
such food is repugnant to me!**

Sometimes, the only way to get the grasp of a statement is to first see what other translators have done:

Albert Barnes <i>The Amplified Bible</i>	The things which my soul abhors to touch Are become my sorrowful food. [These afflictions] my soul refuses to touch! Such things are like diseased food to me [sickening and repugnant]!
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	My soul hath refused to touch, Those things are like disease in my food.
Keil and Delitzsch	That which my soul refused to touch, the same is as my loathsome food.
NASB	“My soul refuses to touch <i>them</i> ; They are like loathsome food to me.”
NEB	Food that should nourish me sticks in my throat, and my bowels rumble with an echoing sound.
NJB	The very things my appetite revolts at are now my diet in sickness.
NIV	I refuse to touch it; such food makes me ill.
REB	Such food sticks in my throat, and my bowels rumble like an echo.
The Septuagint	For my wrath cannot cease; for I perceive my food as the smell of a lion <i>to be</i> loathsome.
TEV <i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	I have no appetite for food like that, and everything I eat makes me sick! My soul is refusing to touch! They <i>are</i> as my sickening food.

At first, I assumed the subject of the first line was *my soul*, as it is a feminine singular as is the main verb. The first verb is the Piel perfect of mā`ên (אָנֵן) [pronounced *maw-AIN*], and it means, in the Piel, *to refuse*; in the Qal, it might mean *to be distasteful*. This is the same word used of the pharaoh when he *refused* to obey commandments of God. Strong's #3985 BDB #549. This verb is immediately followed by the lamed preposition and the Qal infinitive construct of nâga' (נָגַע) [pronounced *naw-GAHG*], which means *to touch, to reach out and touch*. Strong's #5060 BDB #619. Now, here is the problem: *my soul* follows nâga' and nâga' is in the construct. So this literally reads: **It has refused to touch my soul**; or **It refused a touching of my soul**. It would refer back to the most recent feminine singular substantive, which would be whatever was unpalatable from the previous verse.

When it comes to the infinitive construct, I am reading two different things. Zodhiates says that an infinitive construct can accept a subject and an object. The subject is identified by a pronominal suffix. This is why many translators render *my soul* as the subject of the sentence. Gibson writes that the infinitive construct can act just like a verb prior to the object. That is, the substantive which follows is the object of the verb. When we express *my soul* as the subject, we no longer have an object for a verb which appears to require one. This is the tact which Rotherham takes. I prefer to keep *my soul* as the object, although it is a bit unwieldy.

The second line begins with the 3rd person masculine plural pronoun, which often implies the use of the verb *to be*. The second word is the masculine singular construct of d^evay (דָּבַי) [pronounced *d^evay*], a word we find used only twice in Scripture—here and Psalm 41:3.* Young renders this as *sickening* and then as *pestilence*; Rotherham: *disease* (both times); KJV: *sorrowful, languishing*; NKJV: *loathsome, illness*; NASB: *loathsome, illness*; *The Amplified Bible*: *diseased, languishing*. The adjectival cognate, found only in Isa. 1:5 Jer. 8:18 Lam. 1:22*, usually is rendered *faint* (Strong's #1742 BDB #188). Therefore, I am going to go with *languishing*. Strong's #1741 BDB #188. This is preceded by the prefixed preposition *like, as* (not mentioned in Owens' book). The final word here is the word for *bread*; which, by extension, also means *food*. It has the suffixed personal pronoun.

Strong's #3899 BDB #536. This literally reads: [they \[are\] like a languishing of my food](#). If *my soul* is seen as the subject, this verse could be read: [My soul refuses to touch of these things, \[they are\] as a languishing of my food](#).

In reading the translation in *Barnes Notes*, I noticed that this was translated as one flowing sentence, and not as two lines. This intrigued me. *They or these things* was presented as the object of the verb. *My soul* was the subject. I don't know what translation he uses or if this is his own, but he renders this: [The things that my soul refused to touch are as my sorrowful meat](#).⁸ This is a word-for-word rendering, with the supplied words in italics; the order has been changed to give more with typical English usage.

I realize that I have given you several ways to translate this; the meaning is not too different from one to another. Now we have the problem of determining just exactly what this means. I am going to depart somewhat from what others have done with this verse and translate this parenthetically. The reason for that is that Job inserts that this is food that he would not eat. This is not his lack of appetite, as was mentioned back in Job 3:24, but her personal revulsion of the food mentioned. The analogy is continued, however. The idea of whatever sin he has committed in his life has caused this to all occur is unpalatable to him; in fact, his soul is not touched by such an inference.

One of the few unfortunate things about a verse-by-verse handling of the Scriptures is that we lose the flow. So let's now put these verses together with a short running commentary:

Job 6:2-7	
<p>“If only my provoked anger were weighed and my ruin were lifted up together on scales. For now more than sand of seas it would be heavier.</p> <p>Therefore, my words have been swallowed up. For arrows of the Almighty are with me; whose poison is drinking my spirit— terrors of God array themselves against me! Would a wild ass bray when he has grass? Would an ox bellow if he has fodder? Can the tasteless thing be eaten with no salt? Is there any taste in slime of purslane? (My soul refuses to touch of these things, they are as a disease of my food).” (vv. 2-7)</p>	<p>Job asks that the anger which he provoked due to whatever sin he has committed be weighed in the balance against the ruin he has suffered—the ruin that he has suffered would be heavier—as if he had tossed the sand of the seas on that side of the scale. The distress that Job feels has him completely choked up. He recognizes that God's arrows are the weapons which are against him. Job is not crying out in pain for no reason. He knows that discipline accompanies sin. This does not make his suffering any more palatable. The options which have been presented by implication by Eliphaz are repugnant to Job—he refuses to accept as he would refuse that horrid food. No amount of salt (speech) would make the position of Eliphaz palatable.</p>

[<<Return to Chapter Outline>>](#)

[<<Return to the Chart Index>>](#)

Why Is God Keeping Job Alive?

[“Would that my request would come and will God grant me my hope.](#)

Job 6:8

[“I wish that my request would arrive and that God would grant me what I desire.](#)

V. 8 begins with the pronominal interrogative *mîy* (מִי) [pronounced *mee*], which is generally translated *who*. It can also be used to express a wish (Ex. 16:3), e.g., *would that some one would, would that there were*. Strong's #4310 BDB #566.

The second main verb is the Qal imperfect of *nâthan* (נָתַן) [pronounced *naw-THAHN*], which means *give, grant, place, put, set*. Strong's #5414 BDB #678.

⁸ *Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 175.

Tiq^êvâh (תִּקְוָה) [pronounced *tick^ê-VAW*] and it can mean *cord* (Joshua 2:18, 21), *an outcome hoped for* (Job 8:13 17:15 Prov. 10:28 Ezek. 19:5); or *the basis or ground for hope* (Job 4:6 Psalm 71:5). Strong's #8615 BDB #876. What Job is asking for is Job returns to his request of chapter 3, asking God to remove the suffering and pain in whatever way possible, even if it is by death. The content of Job's hope is found in the next verse. *This state of feeling is not uncommon—where sorrows become so accumulated and intense that a man desires to die. It is no evidence, however, of a preparation for death. The wicked are more frequently in this state than the righteous. They are overwhelmed with pain; they see no hope of deliverance from it and they impatiently wish that the end had come. They are stupid about the future world, and either suppose that the grave is the end of their being, or that in some undefinable way they will be made happy hereafter. The righteous, on the other hand, are willing to wait until God shall be pleased to release them, feeling that He has some good purpose in all that they endure, and that they do not suffer on Eliphaz pang too much.*⁹

**“And God would willingly choose
and He would pulverize me;
He would cause His hand to let go
and He would cut me off.**

Job 6:9

**“And that God would willingly choose to
pulverize me;
And that He would let go of His grip on me
and that He would cut me off.**

The first verb is the 3rd person singular, Hiphil imperfect jussive of yâ'al (אָל) [pronounced *yaw-AHL*] and we will translate this *would be willing, would willingly chose*. A longer explanation (which this word requires), can be found in Deut. 1:5 (I may want to place it here instead). Strong's #2974 BDB #383. The jussive further involves volition in the 3rd person. When it is a superior to an underling, it may represent a command, instruction or the granting of permission. In the other direction, the jussive would be a request, a prayer or a request for permission.¹⁰

The second verb is the 3rd person singular, 1st person suffix, Piel imperfect of a verb that we have seen several times in this book (it or a cognate): dâkâ' (דָּכָא) [pronounced *daw-KAW*], and it means *to crush, to pulverize*. Strong's #1792 BDB #193. The Piel is the intensive stem. Personally, if it were me, this would have been in the infinitive so that this verse would read: *And God would be willing to pulverize me*. However, Job strings these together with conjunctions instead.

Then we have a poetic parallel of verb tenses that we miss in the English. The third verb is the 3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect jussive of nâthar (נָתַר) [pronounced *naw-THAHR*], which means *to spring up, start up, to be free, to let loose, to unfasten*. Here it means *to cause to loosen, to let go*. Strong's #5425 BDB #684. Why do we know that *God* is the subject and not *His hand*? *God* is in the masculine singular and *hand* is in the feminine singular.

The fourth verb is the 3rd person singular, 1st person suffix, Piel imperfect of bâtsa' (בָּטַס) [pronounced *baw-TZAHG*], which is a most interesting word in the Hebrew, being rendered both *to cut off, to break off, to gain by violence* (Isa. 38:12 Ezek. 22:12 Habak. 2:9); and *to perfect, to complete, to finish* (Isa. 10:12 Lam. 2:17 Zech. 4:9). Although it appears as though we have an homonym here, the deal is that bâtsa' comes from the a word comes from a weaver, who, when *finished* with his work, *cuts off* the web between the thrum (whatever the hell that is) and the loom. Strong's #1214 BDB #130. The sense here in which this word is used is even a more careful analogy than we see at first. God has begun this work against Job, and Job is asking that God just go ahead and finish this work and pulverize him.

Do you see the parallelism in tenses? 3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect jussive followed by a 3rd person singular, 1st person suffixed, Piel imperfect and then this is repeated in the third and fourth lines. Job is making an earnest request for God, from His own volition, to totally pulverize Job, to let loose of His earthly grip on Job, to cut him off. Job is in so much pain that he asks to be separated from this earth and from God. He just wants to be put out of his misery. The Scripture deals with people as they really are—even God's people are not sugar-coated or sanitized. We have had several believers in the past who have cried out just as Job did in this

⁹ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 175.

¹⁰ This is all taken from *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; pp 2277–2278.

verse. Moses, after the umpteenth complaint of the people during the exodus, cried out to God, “I alone am not able to carry all this people, because it is too heavy for me. So, if You are going to deal with me in this way, please kill me immediately and do not let me see my wretchedness.” (Num. 11:14–15). When Elijah was fleeing from Jezebel and he felt as though all his hope was gone, we read: *But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness and he came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, “It is enough; now, O Y^ehowah, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers.”* (I Kings 19:4). Or recall the evangelist Jonah, sitting under the gourd plant, miserable because the Assyrians responded to the gospel. “Therefore now, O Y^ehowah, please take my life from me, for death is better to me than life.” (Jonah 4:3). Job will ask of God to kill him or to back off. “I waste away; I will not live forever. Leave me alone, for my days are but a breath.” (Job 7:16).

**“And still it should be my comfort
and I would spring forth in anguish
He would not spare
for I have not concealed words of a Holy
One.**

**“Yet I should be comforted and I should
endure in anguish;
He would not spare me in this way [removing
Job] for I have not concealed the words of
the Holy One.**

Job 6:10

This may sound like this is diametrically opposed to what he said before; but Job, in the previous verse, tells us how bad it hurts. He desires total separation from God just to make the pain stop. However, that request comes completely from a position of pain. Here he presents his request based upon his own character and actions. The general idea of this verse is not difficult; the individual nuts and bolts are.

The Amplified Bible

Then should I still have consolation; yes, I should leap *for joy* amid unsparing pain [though I shrink from it], that I have not concealed *or* denied the words of the Holy One!

The Emphasized Bible

So might it still be my comfort And I might exult in the anguish he would not spare,—That I had not concealed the sayings of the Holy One.

NAB

Then I should still have consolation and could exult through unremitting pain, because I have not transgressed the commands of the Holy One.

NASB

But it is still my consolation, And I rejoice in unsparing pain, that I have not denied the Words of the Holy One.

NEB

For that would bring me relief, and in the face of unsparing anguish I would leap for joy. [the Hebrew adds: I have not denied the words of the Holy One]

NJB

This thought, at least, would give me comfort (a thrill of joy in unrelenting pain), that I never rebelled against the Holy One’s decrees.

REB

That would bring me relief, and in the face of unsparing anguish I would leap for joy, for I have never denied the words of the Holy One.

The Septuagint

Let the grave be my city, upon the walls of which I have leaped: I will not spare from it; for I have not denied the holy words of my God.

Young’s Lit. Translation

And yet it is my comfort, (And I exult in pain—He doth not spare), That I have not hidden The sayings of the Holy One.

As you can see, there is a fair amount of difference here in interpretation. The first verb is the 3rd person feminine singular Qal imperfect jussive of the verb *to be* (which is also translated *to have*, *to bring* in the KJV, but we will stick to *to be*). Strong’s #1961 BDB #224. We will use *should* to express the jussive.

I don’t know the Hebrew well enough to recognize what makes *my comfort* a predicate nominative as opposed to the subject of the verse. However, we will go with the crowd and translate this as: **And still, it should be my comfort.** At first, the comfort and consoling of his friends was all that Job had to look forward to. **Now, when Job’s three friends heard of all this adversity that had come upon him, they came each one from his own place...and they made an appointment together to come to sympathize with him and to comfort him** (Job 2:11a, 11c). However, since Job did not receive any real comfort from his friends, his comfort now is taken in his desire for God to finish the job and remove him completely from this life (v. 9).

Along with this we have the adverb ʿôwd (עוּד) [pronounced *gôhd*], which means *still, yet, again, besides, in addition to*. Strong's #5750 BDB #728.

The second verb is the 1st person, Piel imperfect voluntative [I don't know what a voluntative is—this comes from Owen and I can't find it in any other grammar book] of a verb which occurs only here and has no cognates to help determine its meaning. Therefore, no one really knows what this means. The same Chaldean word means *to grow warm, to glow, to burn*. The Arabic equivalent is applied to a horse which beats the earth with his feet and then leaps. Gesenius goes with this meaning, as does the Septuagint; so we will hesitatingly go with the renderings *leaped, spring forth*. Strong's #5539 BDB #698. This is followed by the prepositional phrase *in anguish*, giving us **And still, it should be my comfort and I will spring forth (?) in anguish**. As we have seen, the Bible is a book which deals with real people and real emotions. David cried out: **I am ready to fall and my sorrow [or, pain] is continually before me** (Psalm 38:17). Barnes extrapolates slightly on this word for *springs forth*, and interprets it more as a *jumping for joy*, if you will. So, when it comes to just exactly what this phrase means, I will hesitatingly go with Barnes, who wrote: *Job would exult or rejoice, if he was permitted to die; he would triumph even in the midst of his sorrow, if he might lie down and expire*.¹¹

Then we have two verbs with two negatives, expressing a very strong statement. The first is the 3rd person, Qal imperfect of *châmal* (חָמַל) [pronounced *khaw-MAHL*] means *to spare, to have compassion*. Strong's #2550 BDB #328. What is difficult is that there is no intervening conjunction or adverb. We jump right into **He will not spare [or, have compassion]**.

Now we have the conjunction *for, because, that* (Strong's #3588 BDB #471) followed by the negative and the 1st person singular, Piel perfect of *kâchad* (כָּחַד) [pronounced *kaw-KHAHD*], which means *to hide, to conceal, to remove*. Strong's #3582 BDB #470.

The last phrase is: **words of a Holy One**. Now to interpret this. I got rather free with the second verb and rendered this: **"Yet I should be comforted and I should endure in anguish; He would not spare me in this way [removing Job] for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One."** What Job is saying is that he realizes that he should be comforted and that he should endure his anguish and that God was not going to remove him from this life because he has not concealed God's Word. Paul, when he left Ephesus, said something similar (apart from the wishing that he were dead): **"I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."** (Acts 20:20–21). Job amplified his testimony in Job 23:11–12: **"My foot has held fast to His path; I have kept His way and I have not turned aside from Him. I have not departed from the command of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food."** Now that is an interesting statement! That indicates that there was perhaps a limited revealed Word of God in the time of Job. We do not know if it was written or whether Job received it orally (God did speak to Job, as we will see at the end of this book). There are two areas in which Christians fail—they fail to be filled with the Holy Spirit (and by this, I do not mean some goofy, charismatic experience), but they fail to name their sins to God on the regular basis, thus losing the filling of the Spirit and not regaining it for long periods of time; and they fail to recognize the importance of God's Word taught to them on a daily basis, verse-by-verse. **Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path** (Psalm 119:105). **"For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."** (Mark 8:38).

**"What [is] my strength that I should wait?
And what is my end that I should prolong my
soul?"** Job 6:11

**"Do I have the strength to wait on God?
And what is my end hold that I should
prolong my life?"**

This verse begins with an interrogative and the masculine substantive of *kôwach* (כֹּחַ) [pronounced *COE-ahkh*], which means *strength, power*. Strong's #3581 BDB #470. There is no verb in this portion of the first line and it is followed by the *kîy* conjunction, mentioned above (Strong's #3582 BDB #471).

¹¹ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 176.

Then we have the Piel imperfect of *yâchal* (יָחַל) [pronounced *yaw-KHAHL*], which generally means *wait* in the Niphal and *await* in the Piel. Strong's #3176 BDB #403.

The second line begins with the interrogative again and the word *end* with the 1st person suffix, followed by the *kîy* conjunction again and the 1st person singular, Hiphil imperfect of *'ârak*^e (אָרַךְ) [pronounced *aw-RAHK*], which means *to be long*. In the Hiphil, it means *to postpone anger, to live long, to prolong, to be patient, to continue long, to tarry long*. We will go with *prolong*, although I am not 100% comfortable with that. Strong's #748 BDB #73. This is followed by the word for *soul* and the personal pronoun suffix.

Surprisingly enough, there are a number of opinions as to what this last line means. Barnes lists several interpretations, among them: *what is the limit of my strength? How long can I keep from murmuring during my trials?* etc.¹² However, what is meant is quite simple. Job asks what is there left in his life that he should remain alive. He has little or no physical strength left. He has no family and no influence; he is just a pathetic, sickly and broken man. So what is still remaining in his life that he should prolong it?

Job does not see patience as what he should be striving for at this time. He asks, *what is the point of remaining on this earth right now?* He sees his life as being completely over, with the exception of his death. Job is not speaking of suicide; he just feels as it should be his time for God to take him. Essentially, one of the reasons for expecting this is that his own personal strength is not enough to keep him alive. Such a quandary is often the experience of the believer. There are times when believers feel as though God should grant them another ten years of life (they have wasted the vast majority of the previous 50 or 60, so they want another decade to waste); but there are times when a believer is tired of this life—he feels as though there is nothing to look forward to and that his ministry is over—and desires for God to take him. This was Job's position. *With no human resources left, Job considers his condition hopeless.*¹³ However, God takes us out at the perfect time. We have a spiritual gift or gifts which we are to employ to the time of our death, regardless of the limit of the impact on others. Let me give you a concrete example. There are widows who have become estranged from their children, who have no one remaining in the world, who are weak, infirm, and barely have the strength and the financial wherewithal to proceed even another day in their lives. If they are alive, then God still has a plan for their lives. Perhaps they feel that all they can do is pray for others—and so, that is what they should be doing. We sorely underestimate the importance and the strength of prayer. Nothing glorifies God as does a frail, helpless older woman praying on behalf of a pastor or a church, and God will bless and strengthens that pastor or that church on the basis of the prayers of this woman. God's plan is perfect and His timing is perfect. Furthermore, God specializes in the hopeless and the helpless. **The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For consider your calling, brothers, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to discredit the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame to things which are strong; and the base things of the world and the despised. God has chosen the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are, that no man should boast before God (I Cor. 1:25–29). And God said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I would rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore, I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong (II Cor. 12:9–10).** It is up to us to hold onto and to use whatever it is that He has given us, whether it be a few more days on this earth or whatever. When it is the exact right time for us to die, then God will remove us. Let us look at the particular case before us: how could Job have possibly known that his life, and, in particular, his trials at this point in his life, would be the centerpiece for the heart of the Bible, where the character and actions of God are freely discussed and where His perfection stands firm as a testimony for thousands of generations to come. Let us completely recognize that what Job thought was important, the bulk of his life up until that point, is but given a few verses in the Bible; but his sufferings and the words of he and his friends are the mainstays of the book of Job—a book which will stand for all time as one of the earliest recordings of God's truth and a source of encouragement, strength, inspiration and help to men throughout four or five millenniums.

¹² See *Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books, ©1996; pp. 176–177. These are not direct quotes, by the way, but paraphrases of interpretations which are given.

¹³ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 731.

Barnes makes an interesting point here: *Job had hitherto borne his trials without apprehension that he would lose his constancy of hope, or his confidence in God. He here seems to apprehend that his constancy might fail, and he therefore wishes to die before he should be left to dishonour God. He asks, therefore, what strength he had that he should hope to be able to sustain his trials much longer.*¹⁴

**“Is my strength is a strength of stones? [No]
Is my flesh bronze? [No]**

Job 6:12

**“Am I as strong as stones? No.
Is my flesh like bronze? Hell, No.**

Both lines begin with the hypothetical particle 'îm (אִם) [pronounced *eem*], which usually means *if*. However, this can also be used as an interrogative particle. Still, this does not give us an easy rendering. In rhetoric, this is used to expect a negative answer. Strong's #518 BDB #49.

Job is stating that he is not strong enough to endure what he has been placed under. In the previous verse, he doubts that there remains anything in his life which requires him to hold on to life; and in this verse he says that he hasn't the strength to hold on to his life. Barnes comments on the first line: *That is, like a rampart or fortification made of stones, or like a craggy rock that can endure assaults made upon it. A rock will bear the beatings of the tempest, and resist the flood, but how can frail man do it? The idea of Job is, that he had no strength to bear up against these accumulated trials.*¹⁵

With respect to the second line, Barnes wrote: *The meaning of Job is plain. He had flesh like others. His muscles, and nerves, and sinews, could not bear a constant force applied to them, as if they were made of brass or iron. They must give way; and he apprehended that he would sink under these sorrows, and be left to use language that might dishonour God. At all events, he felt that these great sorrows justified the strong expressions which he had already employed.*¹⁶

**“[Is] not my help in me? [no!]
And abiding success [or, deliverance] is
driven from me.**

Job 6:13

**“Is there any help left in me
and is not deliverance driven away from me?**

We had better look at several translations here:

Albert Barnes	Alas, my help is not in myself! Deliverance has fled from me.
<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Is it not that I have no help in myself, and that wisdom is quite driven from me?
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Is there any help at all in me? Is not abiding success driven from me?
KJV	Is not my help in me? and is wisdom driven quite from me?
NAB	Have I no helper, and has advice deserted me?
NEB	Oh how shall I find help within myself? The power to aid myself is put out of my reach.
NJB	Can I support myself on nothing? Has not all help deserted me?
NIV	Do I have power to help myself, now that success has been driven from me?
NRSV	In truth I have no help in me, and any resources is riven from me.
Owen's Translation	Is it? I have no hope (help) in me and abiding success is driven from me.
REB	Oh how shall I find help within myself now that success has been put beyond my reach?
The Septuagint	Or have I not trusted upon Him? But help is from me.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Is not my help with me, And substance driven from me?

Except for the Septuagint, most translations pretty much agree on the first and second *me*.

¹⁴ Barnes' Notes, *Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 176.

¹⁵ Barnes' Notes, *Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 177.

¹⁶ Barnes' Notes, *Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 177.

The first word is the prefixed interrogative particle *hê*, written here as *ha* (הַ) [pronounced *hah*], and it acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence so that you immediately recognize that what we have here is a question. Strong's #none BDB #209. Here, this is prefixed to another particle *'îm* (אִם) [pronounced *eem*], but even BDB was stumped by this particular usage. BDB, Keil and Delitzsch and Gesenius find this occurring only one other time in Num. 17:28, a passage which does not exist in the English. However, this is Num. 17:13 in the English. This particle can be hypothetical or interrogative; as an hypothetical particle, this can be used without a verb and it is used of a real condition. In examining some of the translations for this particle in the KJV (and there are many), and throwing in the negative construct which follows, I am going to render this *certainly [is] not...* What I want to convey here is an emphatic negative expressed as a question. Strong's #518 BDB #49–50.

This is followed by the feminine singular substantive. The masculine gender of this word is *'êzer* (עֲזֵר) [pronounced *GAY-zer*], and it is consistently translated *help* in the KJV. the word found in Gen. 2:18, describing the role of the woman in Adam's life and throughout the Psalms (Psalm 22:19 27:9 35:2) (Strong's #5828 BDB #740). However, this is the feminine gender *'ezrâh* (עֲזָרָה) [pronounced *gez^e-RAW*] also rendered *help* throughout the KJV. Strong's #5833 BDB #740. In examining the passages in the New Englishman's Concordance, I don't really see a difference between the words. The word *help* comes with a 1st person suffix.

The final phrase of the first line is *in me*. So far this gives us: **Certainly [is] not my help in me? No, it is not!** As you can see, this is why we have so many different ways of translating this first line. Most translators have a difficult time agreeing on how to best express this, as well as being confused as to what it is they are expressing. With respect to the translation of this first line, Barnes wrote: *The sense is, "alas! there is no help in me!" That is, "I have no strength; I must give up under these sorrows in despair." So it is rendered by Jerome, Rosenmüller, Good, Noyes, and others.*¹⁷

Let's look at the second line. We have a conjunction and the feminine singular of *tûshîyyâh* (תִּשְׁיִי) [pronounced *too-shee-YAW*], and BDB gives the renderings *sound efficient wisdom, abiding success*. They further explain that this is *wisdom which insures success*, a word often found in the wisdom literature. Strong's #8454 BDB #444. However, with respect to this word, the NASB tells us that *deliverance* is the word which we find here, at least in the more ancient versions of the Old Testament.

The remainder of the verse is: *is driven from me*. We will continue the question from the previous line and render this: **And [is] wisdom [for success] [or, deliverance] driven from me? [Yes, it has been].** However, we would better understand this verse by throwing in a negative: **And [is not] wisdom [or, deliverance] been driven away from me?**

Job is a beaten man, bereft of all inner resources. He saw no way out of his predicament. He could not envision being delivered; he had no way of perceiving that he could be somehow be delivered.

[<<Return to Chapter Outline>>](#)

[<<Return to the Chart Index>>](#)

The Analogy to the Refreshment of the Torrents

**"For the despairing one from his friend,
grace [or, kindness]
and a fear/reverence of Almighty he
forsakes.**

Job 6:14

**"Grace or kindness for the despairing one
from his friend;
or the fear/reverence of the Almighty he
might forsake.**

The masculine adjective for despairing occurs only here. It literally means *melting* therefore *collapsing, failing, despairing*. Barnes offers *one who pines away, or is consumed under calamities*. Strong's #4523 BDB #588. There is some question as to the correctness of this word. Some manuscripts have *the rejected one* instead;

¹⁷ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 177.

others write *rejected* but read *despairing*.¹⁸ It is preceded by the preposition *to, for*. Although I have put together the translation reasonably well, I would like to quote from the better translators:

Albert Barnes	To the afflicted kindness should be shown by his friend; But he has forsaken the fear of the Almighty.
<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	To him who is about to faint <i>and</i> despair, kindness is due from his friend, lest he forsake the fear of the Almighty.
Barnes' translation	To him that is afflicted pity <i>should be shown</i> from his friend; but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	The despairing [pos., rejected one] ¹⁹ from his friend should have lovingkindness, Or the reverence of the Almighty he may forsake.
NASB	"For the despairing man <i>there should be</i> kindness from his friend; Lest he forsake the fear of the Almighty.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	To a despiser of his friends is shame, And the fear of the Mighty he forsaketh.

I have no clue as to where Young came up with his translation; however, *The Emphasized Bible* and the NASB seem to have the sense of this verse—kindness and grace should be extended to the one under pressure from his friend; otherwise, he may be tempted to forsake the reverence of God.

Surprisingly enough, we have only a few friendships alluded to in the Bible; however, one of the most endearing is that between David and Jonathan. In a place where there should have been competition and possibly even enmity, David and Jonathan's love for one another is quite touching (see I Sam. 20:30–42). Job's friends were quite another matter. "I am a joke to my friends", Job cried out in Job 12:4a. David, when under discipline, said roughly the same thing. My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague; and my kinsmen stand afar off (Psalm 38:11). I looked for sympathy, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none (Psalm 69:20b). Even my close friend, in whom I trusted, who ate my bread—even he has lifted up his heel against me (Psalm 41:9). Barnes: *The design of this verse is, to reprove his friends for the little sympathy which they had shown for him. He had looked for consolation in his trials, and he had a right to expect it; but he says that he had met with just the opposite, and that his calamity was aggravated by the fact that they had dealt only in the language of severity...if there is any place where kindness should be shown, it is when a man is sinking under accumulated sorrows to the grave.*²⁰ And what is our commandment? **But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?** (I John 3:17).

With respect to the last line, Job's friends are concerned that Job is being disciplined and they do not want to stand in the way of God. They are worried that if they offer too much sympathy, that they might get a little discipline themselves. Job tells them that they will not be forsaking their reverence for God by showing him some kindness and sympathy. Even more to the point, although Job is subtle here, is that they are not going to be hit by some ricocheting discipline just because they are gracious and understanding toward the pain of Job. In fact, what they were doing in their lack of kindness toward Job was forsaking reverence for God.

"My brothers act deceitfully as a torrent bed as a stream-bed of a torrent, they pass away. Job 6:15 **"My brothers act deceitfully as a torrent bed as a stream-bed of a torrent, they pass away.**

Job refers to his friends as *brothers*, a common expression in all languages. Such a reference can either be endearing, or, as it is in this case, further emphasize their complete lack of compassion in contrast to what one would expect from a brother.

¹⁸ Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p504.

¹⁹ Three early printed editions of the Massoretic text have *rejected one*. Several write *rejected* but read *despairing*. This information is from *The Emphasized Bible*.

²⁰ *Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books, ©1996; pp. 177–178.

Rather than receiving grace at the hand of his friends, Job finds them treacherous instead. The verb is *bâgad* (בָּגַד) [pronounced *baw-GAHD*] and it is usually rendered *to behave deceitfully, to act covertly, to act fraudulently, to act in bad faith, to behave faithlessly; to oppress, to afflict*. A better rendering might be *to behave deceitfully and faithlessly*. Strong's #898 BDB #93. *I looked for the language of condolence and compassion; for something to cheer my heart, and to uphold me in my trials—as weary and thirsty travelers look for water, and are sadly disappointed when they come to the place where they expected to find it, and find the stream dried up.*²¹ McGee: *It is as if he says that he look down the road and saw his three friends coming and said to himself, “Oh thank God, here come my friends. They will understand me and they will sympathize with me.” Their sympathy would be like an oasis in the desert, but it was only a mirage.*²²

The substantive is sometimes translated in a misleading way. *Nachal* (נַחַל) [pronounced *NAHKH-al*] is often rendered *brook*. We see this as a pleasant lazy stream of water, perhaps two to ten feet across, meandering along. *Nachal* refers to a torrent of rushing water through a narrow channel. Today, probably more often than then, it could be a river which is only found during the rainy season. Since a torrent or a river tends to run through a valley area, this word is also used to refer to the valley that a river might run through. Strong's #5158 BDB #636. What is deceitful is we do not know what is in that water nor do we correctly gauge its speed from the outside. Job's friends, from the outside, appeared to be kind and gracious, coming and sitting with him for seven days—and then Eliphaz spoke and his friendship was suddenly in question.

During a heavy rain, these valleys and gullies were suddenly engulfed with water which carried away many of the plants and rocks and soil of that stream bed. And when the rainy season is over, the torrent itself passes away into nothingness. There are some areas where the rivers are a function of almost a never ending melting of snow, even when there is no rain, so that the river is always there. We don't have that sort of geography in the Land of Promise; we have drenching rains which turn some valleys into rivers; and then the rain stops and the rivers disappear. Barnes: *The simile here used is exquisitely beautiful, considered as a mere description of an actual occurrence in the deserts of Arabia. But its chief beauty consists in its exact adaptation to the case before him, and the point and pith of the reproof which it administers. “The fullness, strength, and noise of these temporary streams in winter, answer to the large professions made to Job in his prosperity by his friends. Their dryness of the waters at the approach of summer, resembles the failure of their friendship in time of affliction.” [that quote was] Scott, as quoted by Noyes...As a stream that is swelled by winter torrents, and that is dry in the summer. Such streams abound in Arabia, and in the East generally. The torrents pour down from the hills in time of rain, or when swelled by the melting of the ice; but in summer, they are dry, or their waters are lost in the sand. Even large streams are thus absorbed. The river Barrady, which waters Damascus, after passing to a short distance to the southeast of the city towards the Arabian deserts, is lost in the sand, or evaporated by the heat of the sun. The idea here is, that travellers in a caravan would approach the place where water had been found before, but would find the fountain dried up, or the stream lost in the sand; and when they looked for refreshment, they found only disappointment. Then Barnes quoted Campbell's Travels in Africa: “In desert parts of Africa it has afforded much joy to fall in running in the direction of the journey, expecting it would prove a valuable companion. Perhaps before it accompanied us two miles it became invisible by sinking into the sand; but two miles farther along it would reappear and raise hopes of its continuance; but after running a few hundred yards, would sink finally into the sand, no more again to rise.” A comparison of a man who deceives and disappoints one to such a stream is common in Arabia, and has given rise, according to Schultens, to many proverbs. Thus they say of a treacherous friend, “I put no trust in thy torrent;” and “O torrent, thy flowing subsides.” So the Scholiast on Moallakat says, “a pool or flood was called Gadyr, because travellers when they pass by it find it full of water, but when they return they find nothing there, and it seems to have treacherously betrayed them. So they say of a false man, that he is more deceitful than the appearance of water.”—referring, perhaps, to the deceitful appearance of the mirage in the sands of the desert...So with the consolations of false friends. They cannot be depended on. All their professions are temporary and evanescent.*²³ Jeremiah makes a similar analogy in Jer. 15:18: [Why has my pain been perpetual and my wound incurable? Will You indeed be to me like a deceptive stream with water that is unreliable?](#)

²¹ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 178.

²² Job; J. Vernon McGee, ©1977, p. 55.

²³ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; pp. 178–179.

**“The darkened ones by reason of ice over
them;
it hides itself [with] snow**

Job 6:16

**“The torrent beds are darkened because of
the ice over them;
the torrent hides itself under snow.**

Let's see what other translators did with this:

Albert Barnes	Which are turbid by means of the [melted] ice, In which the snow is hid [by being dissolved]
<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Which are black <i>and</i> turbid by reason of the ice, <i>and</i> in which the snow hides itself.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Which darken by reason of the cold, Over them is a covering made by the snow.
NJB	...the ice makes their waters turbid when, above them, the snow melts,...
NIV	...when darkened by thawing ice and swollen with melting snow,...
NRSV	...that run dark with ice, turbid with melting snow.
REB	They turn dark with ice and are hidden with piled-up snow.
The Septuagint	They who used to revere me, now have come against me like snow or congealed ice,...
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	That are black because of ice, By them doth snow hide itself.

There is no relative pronoun *which* or *that* to begin this verse. This verse begins with a definite article and the masculine plural, Qal active participle of qârar (קָרַר) [pronounced *kaw-RAHR*], which means *to be dark*. This literally is *the darkened ones*; it acts as a substantive, referring back to the torrent river beds. I should point out that Barnes does disagree here, and gives the renderings *turbid, muddy, foul*; rather than just *darkened*. However, there are times *darkened* is the simple rendering when the reference is to the sun being obscured, as in Joel 2:10 3:15. I believe the key here is the next phrase. Strong's #6937 BDB #871. The next couple words are *by reason [or, out from] ice*; which explains why the bottom was darkened. Although most translators place *over them* with the second line, I will leave it with the first, due to the fact that it has a masculine plural suffix. The preposition is 'al (אֲל) [pronounced *ahl*] and it means *over, upon, against, because, on the grounds of, on account of*. Strong's #5921 BDB #752.

The next line is literally *[it] hides itself snow*. The verb is the 3rd person masculine singular, Hithpael (intensive reflexive) imperfect of 'âlam (אָלַם) [pronounced *gaw-LAHM*] means *to veil from sight, to conceal*. This verb describes what is done behind closed doors, in a tent, under a veil—that is, an act which is concealed. Strong's #5956 BDB #761. Although *snow* is in the masculine singular, my thinking is that this verb is matched with *torrent* of the previous verse, just as the first verb was a reference to the *torrent beds* in the previous verse.

Job is just continuing to explain the deception of his friends, that one could not see what they had in store for him. Job's friends, at first, appeared to be an oasis to him, a refreshing bit of water in a gloomy time. However, their emotional coldness hid from Job the darkness of their souls. They provide him with no refreshment. Job is not better off now that they are there. Also, his analogy is to something which is quite cold, an interesting occurrence in the middle east. However, Barnes quotes several sources in their original languages from that same area which use similar analogies, indicating that there are times of cold and snow in the mid-east, something that I did not know. Barnes mentions the mountains of Ethiopia in particular. So for those as ignorant about geography as I, I hauled out one of my atlases and noted that the portion of Texas where I live, Humble (immediately northeast of Houston), is right on the 30° North latitude line, and it actually snows here, at least occasionally, in this flat land; and Israel is actually above the 30° latitude line, so snow in Israel must an occasional phenomena as well.

Now, I tend to go off on all of these tangents now and again, because there are certain little things which I like to be satisfied with—e.g., the analogy of snow and ice over a body of water in that area. I like to be able to trust that such a thing could occur. However, McGee often does not deal with that, but he gives the most simple and correct interpretation, almost poetic in its simplicity and accuracy: *[Job] says they are like a pool that is covered with ice*

and snow. It is deceitful. You think you can walk on it, but when you step on it, you fall through. That is the type of friends they have turned out to be.²⁴

**“In a time of they were thawed,
they had ended;
in its becoming warm,
they are extinguished from their place.**

Job 6:17

**“In time they were thawed,
they had ended;
in its becoming warm,
they are extinguished from their place.**

Again, I need to go to the translations. This verse is packed with four verbs.

Albert Barnes	In the time when they become warm, they evaporate; When the heat cometh they are dried up from their place.
<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	When they get warn, they shrink <i>and</i> disappear; when it is hot, they vanish out of their place.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	By the time they begin to thaw they are dried up, As soon as it is warm they have vanished out of their place.
Owen's Translation	In time of that they were scorched they disappear (are annihilated); when it is hot, they vanish (are made extinct) from their place.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	By the time they are warm, they have been cut off, By its being hot they have been extinguished from their place.

For this verse I just needed enough to get started. The first word and preposition could read: *in a time, by a time, when a time, against a time*. However, the substantive *time* is in the construct, so I have added an *of* to show that. The first verb is the 3rd person plural, Pual (the passive intensive) of the verb *zâra*^{bv} (צָרָה) [pronounced *zaw-RAHBV*], which means *to be burnt, to scorch*; the meaning is dubious, as this word occurs only here. I like what Rotherham did and will also go with *thawed*. Strong's #2215 BDB #279.

The second verb is the 3rd person plural, Niphal (passive) perfect of *tsâmath* (צָמַח) [pronounced *tsaw-MAHTH*], which means *to put an end to, to exterminate*; in the passive stem: *to be annihilated, to be exterminated*. Strong's #6789 BDB #856.

In the second line we begin with the *bêyth* preposition (*in, by, with against*) and the Qal infinitive construct with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix of *châmam* (חָמַם) [pronounced *khaw-MAHM*], and it means *to be or to become warm*. Strong's #2552 BDB #328. This means *in its warming, by its becoming warm [or hot]*.

The last verb is the 3rd person plural, Niphal (passive) perfect of *dâ'ak*^e (דָּאָק) [pronounced *daw-ĠAHK*], and it means *to go out, to be extinguished* when speaking of a lamp; *to be made extinct, to dry up* when used of a torrent; *to be extinguished, to be wiped out* when speaking of assailants. Strong's #1846 BDB #200.

Barnes: *When they [the streams which disappear] are exposed to the rays of a burning sun, they evaporate. They pour down from the mountains in torrents, but when they flow into burning sands, or become exposed to the intense action of the sun, they are dried up, and disappear.*²⁵ Job is still speaking metaphorically of his friends. Just as the torrent dries up in the heat, under a little pressure, so his so-called friends dry up when Job is under a little pressure. The refreshing streams rush down from the mountains, cold from the snow, just as Job's friends came to him; and suddenly their status of refreshment ends when evaporated by the cruel pressures and calamities of Job's life.

²⁴ Job; J. Vernon McGee, ©1977, p. 55.

²⁵ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 180.

**“Ways of their journey twists;
They go up into the emptiness and perish.**

Job 6:18

**“The course of these torrents twist;
They ascend into nothingness and they
vanish.**

Job is staying with this torrent analogy for sometime now. The verb is first, but we tend to look at the subject of the sentence first, which is the masculine plural construct of *way, path*. Strong's #734 BDB #73. This is modified by the masculine singular of *derek*^e (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced *DEH-rek*^e] and it means *way, distance, road, journey, manner, course*. Strong's #1870 BDB #202. What this subject is, is the course or the path of the torrents. When traveling uphill, they are twisted and turn into nothingness (as they don't originate from melting snow).

The verb is the 3rd person masculine plural, Niphal imperfect of *lâphath* (לָפַת) [pronounced *law-FAHTH*], and it means *to twist, to turn, to grasp with a twisting motion*. The Niphal can be the passive, but it can also refer to an action which is in motion or development. Strong's #3943 BDB #542. As the streams are followed up into the hills, they twist more and more and become smaller streams of water, until they evaporate into nothingness. Barnes: *...the stream, winding along in its channels, or making new channels as it flows from the mountain, until it diminishes by evaporation, and finally comes to nothing.*²⁶

The second line is literally: **They go up into the nothing [or, emptiness] and perish**. What they go up into is *tôhû* (תוֹהוּ) [pronounced *TOE-hoo*], and it means *formlessness, confusion, unreality, nothingness, emptiness*; this is the word used in Gen. 1:2—and the earth became a *waste-place*; this word could be rendered *desolate, an empty waste, chaos, trashed*. When a nuclear weapon is detonated, the immediate area becomes *tôhû*. However, here, the torrent peters off into *nothingness*. Strong's #8414 BDB #1062. Barnes: *...those streams...deceive the traveller who hoped to find refreshment there. Streams depending on snows and storms, and having no permanent fountains, cannot be confided in. Pretended friends are like them. In times of prosperity they are full of professions, and their aid is proffered to us. But we go to them when we need their assistance, when we are like the weary and thirsty traveller, and they disappear like deceitful streams in the sands of the desert.*²⁷

With this analogy, the torrents are dangers, fraught with hidden danger, but they were twisted and when you follow them out, they take you nowhere and they themselves disappear.

**“Caravans of Tema [are caused to] look [for
them];
travelers of Sheba hope for them.**

Job 6:19

**“Caravans of Tema are caused to look for
them;
and travelers of Sheba hope for them.**

As has been mentioned before, one of the primary problems with placing the book of Job back too far into time is the use of the proper noun *têmâ'* (תֵּמַא') [pronounced *tay-MAW*], and the first time we hear of this proper name is as a son of Ishmael (Gen. 25:15). For someone to be known as a Temanite (like Eliphaz), or for a place to be known as then this would have had to occur several generations after Ishmael. Our other options are that (1) this is a different Tema; or, (2) this name is anachronistic—i.e., it was inserted by a later editor to indicate from what area Eliphaz came. (3) A third possibility is that the Temanites began early as a people and Ishmael just happened to name his son Tema. This word is found in I Chron. 1:30 Isa. 21:14 Jer. 25:23. However, if we take this as the Tema that is found throughout the Bible, then this is an area in the northern part of Edom. Strong's #8485 BDB #1066. In any case, here it probably refers to the itinerant travelers from the south.

I a confession to make here. In v. 18 and 19 we have the same word, *'ôrach* (אֹרַח) [pronounced *OH-rahkh*], and it means *path, way, highway*; it can be used figuratively, as in the *ways* of righteousness (Psalm 25:4 119:15); and it can be used for those on the path, whether it be an individual (*traveler*) or a group of people (*a caravan*). A proper noun which means traveler varies only by a vowel point (that means that it was indistinguishable in the written Hebrew language from our word); the feminine plural cognate of *'ôrach* means *caravan* (only in Gen. 37:25

²⁶ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 180.

²⁷ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 180.

Isa. 21:13—feminine. gender Strong's #736 BDB #73). Furthermore, the New Englishman's Hebrew Concordance does not treat these as different words. Strong's #734 BDB #73. Other than that, the translation here is pretty straight-forward.

We have already mentioned Sh^{eb}vâ' (שֶׁבְּוֵא) [pronounced sh^{eb}-VAW] back in Job 1:15. This is likely an area in northern Arabia (according to BDB; Barnes identifies Sh^{eb}vâ' as being in Southern Arabia and ZPEB calls it southwest Arabia). Strong's #7614 BDB #985. For both Têymâ' and She^vvâ', these are well-known areas to Job and his three friends (and, again, these might be anachronistic names). In any case, they all knew that we are speaking of travelers from other areas. The name of Eliphaz and the mention of this area to me would indicate that this was not anachronistic. Job mentioned this, as Eliphaz would have been quite familiar with the caravans from his area.

Now for the point of this verse: just as Job looked expectantly to his friends as they came up for refreshment and some relief, so do caravans and traders and travelers of other lands look to the torrents for relief and refreshment as well. They depend upon these to water themselves and their animals. However, where they expected a stream, there was one. Where Job expected comfort, there was none.

“They were disconcerted [because they were confused] because he had [complete] confidence.

They came as far as her [time] and then they were searching by digging.

Job 6:20

“They had become disconcerted [because they were confused] because one had complete confidence.

They came to that point in time and then they were searching by digging.

Let's look at a couple other translations here:

Albert Barnes	They are ashamed that they have relied on them; They come even to the place and are confused.
<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	They were confounded because they had hoped (to find water); they came here and were bitterly disappointed.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	They are ashamed that they ²⁸ had trusted, They have come up to one of them, and are confounded.
NKJV	They are disappointed because they were confident; They come here and are confused.
NASB	...but they are disappointed, for all their confidence, they reach them only to be balked.
NIV	They are distressed, because they had been confident; they arrive there, only to be disappointed.
Owen's Translation	They feel shame because they were confident. They come thither and are confounded.
<i>The Septuagint</i>	They too that trust in cities and riches shall come to shame.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	They were ashamed that one hath trusted, They have come unto it and are confounded.

At first, you would think that the first verb explains their reaction to having hope in find the raging torrents, but being unable to. However, with this verb, Job starts dealing with the problem more directly, still referring to his friends in the third person. The first verb is the 3rd person plural, Qal perfect of bôwsh (בוש) [pronounced bôsh], and BDB gives its meaning as *to be ashamed*. It also gives the meanings *disconcerted*, *disappointed*, *confounded*. The KJV primarily goes with *ashamed*, but then throws in *confounded* a few times as well. The problem that I am having is that *ashamed* and *confounded* are two different words entirely, and choosing one over the other would certainly change the meaning of any verse. In looking through the concordance on bôsh, there are times when I wonder if either of these translations are right (e.g., Judges 3:25). I am wondering if *discouraged*, *became anxious*, *impatient*

²⁸ Rotherham's note: *so should this be*; citing the Aramaic and Syriac codices.

might not be better renderings. Also, we have possibly two other, different Hebrew words for *ashamed* (Num. 12:14 II Sam. 10:5 Psalm 34:5 Isa. 33:9 Jer. 2:26) and for *confounded* (see Jer. 14:3 Ezek. 36:32). This word is found several times in conjunction with the word *trust* (Job 6:20 Psalm 22:5 25:2). About the only way that I can come up with a decent translation, is to take the possibilities and try them out. *Yes* would mean that such a meaning would be quite reasonable; *no* means that meaning just would not fit into the context; *?* or *maybe* means that it could fit, but the meaning is changed considerably or the meaning would seem forced (and *maybe* means it is more reasonable than *?*).

The Various Possible Meanings of Bôwsh								
	Anxious	Apprehensive	Ashamed, shamed	confounded, confused	disconcerted	discouraged	disappointed	impatient

Qal Perfect:

Ezra 8:22	?	yes	maybe	?	no	?	no	no
Ezra 9:6	yes	yes	maybe	no	?	no	?	no
Job 6:20	yes	?	?	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
Psalm 22:5	yes	?	yes	?	yes	yes	yes	?
Psalm 71:24	?	maybe	yes	maybe	yes	yes	yes	?
Isa. 19:9	?	maybe	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	?
Jer. 2:36	maybe	maybe	maybe	maybe	yes	yes	maybe	no
Jer. 9:19	yes	?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
Jer. 51:51	yes	yes	yes	?	yes	yes	yes	no

Qal Imperfect:

II Kings 19:26	maybe	maybe	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
Job 19:3	no	yes	yes	no	?	?	no	no
Psalm 6:10	maybe	yes	yes	maybe	yes	yes	maybe	maybe
Psalm 31:1	yes							
Hosea 13:15	?	maybe						
Micah 7:16	maybe	maybe	maybe	yes	yes	maybe	maybe	no

Hithpolel Future (Hithpael—the intensive reflexive):

Gen. 2:25	yes	yes	yes	maybe	maybe	maybe	maybe	no
-----------	-----	-----	-----	-------	-------	-------	-------	----

From the chart, so far, the most likely candidates for the meaning of bôsh are *anxious*, *ashamed*, *disconcerted*, *discouraged*; and maybe *apprehensive*, *disappointed*. The words which are the closest in meaning are *anxious*, *apprehensive* and *disconcerted*. Now, sometimes those can be the result of *shame*, *confusion*, *having been confounded*. Therefore, I will go with those for the meaning of bôwsh. Strong's #954 BDB #101.

[<<Return to Chapter Outline>>](#)

[<<Return to the Chart Index>>](#)

This verb is followed by the conjunction *when, that, for, because*. The second verb is the 3rd person masculine singular (recall the previous verb was the plural), Qal perfect of *bâṭach*. This is a very interesting word as it is only found once in the Pentateuch, four times in the Judges, nowhere in I or II Samuel, Joshua, Ruth, Nehemiah, Ezra or Esther; but it is found several times in Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah and Jeremiah. Bob Thieme used to describe this word as picking up your troubles and body slamming them on the Lord. There is a similar word in the Arabic which means *to throw one on the ground*, which is no doubt from when he got this meaning. It means *to trust, to rely upon, to have confidence in, to be secure in*; it means to essentially take everything that you have and place it in the care of Jesus Christ so that you do not have to worry about a thing. Strong's #982 BDB #105. So now Job is being less analogous and more to the point, although he is still phrasing everything in the third person. "They were disconcerted [because they were confused] because he had believed [or, he had placed his trust]." Now, let's go with the analogy at this point. They had come a long ways because there was one had absolute faith that they would find water. [Now, I should point out that *The Emphasized Bible* backs up its rendering of *they had trusted* with an affirming footnote].

The third verb is the simple word for *to go* in the 3rd person plural, Qal perfect. This is followed by the preposition *as far as* or *until* with the 3rd person feminine singular suffix. That is literally *until her*. The only feminine singular of recent note is back in v. 17, which is time. The idea is *until that point in time, or as far as that time*.

This is followed by the *wâw* consecutive and the last verb is the 3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect of *châphêr* (חָפַר) [pronounced *chaw-FAIR*], and, believe it or not, this is another word which is translated *ashamed, confused or confounded* by the KJV. This word occurs much less often in Scripture, and only in poetry. You may wonder how in the heck do we have two words in the same verse which are translated both *ashamed* and *confound*? The key is the English—the archaic (old) meaning of the word *confound* was *to make ashamed*. Gesenius gives the means as *shame mostly arising from disappointed hope*. In the Hiphil, the meaning is given by Gesenius as *put to shame, to cause dishonour*. Strong's #2659 BDB #344. Now, rather than delve into this again, there is another verb *châphar* (חָפַר) [pronounced *chaw-FAHR*], and it means *to dig, to search for, to search for by digging*. The only difference between the verbs is the vowel points, which were added several millenniums after the Scripture was originally recorded. They had come expecting to find water because of the strong faith of one; and came to there and then even searched for it by digging. Strong's #2658 BDB #343.

We live in a time of plumbing where we can turn on a faucet and have water immediately. We have no appreciation of this. For more carefully purified water, we can go to just about any store and purchase it. In the time of the Old Testament, water was not as conveniently gotten. A drought could destroy a nation. We have repeated references to droughts in the Old Testament: Gen. 41:1–49 Jer. 14:2–9 Joel 1:9–12. A drought went hand-in-hand with famine and is equivalent in our times to a depression (which we in the United States have little or no concept of; with the exception of those who lived through the Great Depression of the 30's). The difference between water and no water is the difference between the tremendous prosperity of Los Angeles and the dry bleakness of Jerusalem. They are both near the coast; they both receive very little rainfall; they are both pretty close to the same latitude. Los Angeles has prospered because they brought in a great deal of water from the north. Cut off their water from the north and they will become a desert. They will become like Jerusalem.

What we have here is two possible analogies running side-by-side. Job had looked to his friends for refreshment and comfort, as the caravans from Tema and the travelers from Sheba look to the raging torrents for refreshment and comfort—and there is no refreshment or comfort to be found. Job was certain that there must be some comfort in his friends, to the point of even digging for it.

Now, let's look at this portion of the analogy from another perspective: the caravans from Tema and the travelers from Sheba are Job's friends and they have come in search of the torrents, in order to water themselves and their animals, and they had come up to that point in time and were disconcerted for they had searched even by digging. Now notice the spin on this analogy: at first (vv. 15–18), Job was the one looking for water and refreshment, expecting to find it in his approaching friends; and he obviously did not. They were a mirage, a place where there had been a raging torrent and now they were dry and barren to him. Now Job uses the same scenario—the raging torrent which has disappeared, but now it is his friends who are looking for it. One of them, Eliphaz, is certain that there is some great, hidden sin of Job's which they just cannot find. This is a sin as great as a raging torrent. So

they are all disconcerted because they cannot find it; they are so certain that it is here that they are going to search for this sin by digging.

“Surely then you [all] have become [to me] nothing;

Job 6:21a

“Certainly then you all have become nothing to me.

Whenever *The Emphasized Bible* and *Young’s Translation* differ significantly, you know that this will be a difficult verse to unravel. Let’s see what others have done first:

Albert Barnes	For now ye also are nothing:
<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Now to me you are [like a dried-up brook];
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	For now you have come to him [alternate readings: to nothing, to me]
KJV	For now ye are nothing;
NKJV	For now you are nothing.
NAB	It is thus that you have now become to me;
NASB	“Indeed, you have now become such,
NEB	So treacherous have you now been to me: [you felt dismay and were afraid.] ²⁹
NJB	And this is how you how treat me, [terrified at the sight of me, you take fright.]
NIV	Now you too have proved to be of no help;
NRSV	Such you have now become to me;
REB	Just so unreliable have you now been to me;
The Septuagint	But you [all] have come to me without pity;
<i>Young’s Lit. Translation</i>	Surely now ye have become the same!

The first word is the conjunction *kîy* (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*] which means *when, that, for, because*. Strong’s #3588 BDB #471. This is followed by the adverb *‘attâh* (עַתָּה) [pronounced *gaht-TAWH*], which means *now*. Together, the words mean *for in this case, for then*; and after a protasis, *surely then* and possibly *indeed*.

The first verb is the 2nd person masculine plural (referring now clearly to his friends), Qal perfect of *Hâyâh* (הָיָה) [pronounced *haw-YAW*] which means *to be*. Strong’s #1961 BDB #224.

Now we have a problem. One school of Massorites along with 4 early printed editions we have the words *to him*. However, Chayim’s Standard printed edition and some codices have, instead *to nothing*, but they read *to him*. In some codices and in 5 early printed editions, it is read and written *to nothing*. Finally, in others, including the Septuagint and the Syriac codices, we have *to me*.³⁰ It is a judgment call here and I am going to go with *to nothing*; as this clearly fits the analogy of the torrent rivers fading to nothing. Keil and Delitzsch concur here.

This gives us the translation of the first line: **“Surely then you [all] have become [to me] nothing;”** To continue the first analogy, Job’s friends are the torrents to which he looked for refreshment and comfort and they had become nothing. He has searched for refreshment, encouragement, comfort, the things which friends bring to one in great suffering, and it is not there. Job makes several statements of this sort concerning his friends throughout: **“But you smear with lies; you are all worthless physicians. O that you would be completely silent, and that your silence would be your wisdom.”** (Job 13:4–5).

To continue the other analogy, they had looked over Job carefully for the great mistakes which he had made and they were quite disconcerted when, after searching and searching, they could not find them. They had inordinate faith that Job is guilty of something, they just can’t find it.

²⁹ I wanted to include the second line, as this translation associates the two closely, whereas I draw a subject break in the middle of this verse.

³⁰ Joseph Bryant Rotherham’s *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p504.

Now I have draw a subject break in the middle of this verse. This was a difficult thing to do. I fully understand that Job is continuing with his thought in v. 21b. However, what he is doing is leaving the analogy and speaking to his friends directly. Since vv. 14–21a were all analogous and since he is no longer speaking to his friends with a parable, this is an ideal break in terms of the subject. However, keep in mind that many translations continue the thinking, making this a transitional verse, which is at once a whole as well as a transition.

[<<Return to Chapter Outline>>](#)

[<<Return to the Chart Index>>](#)

What Job’s Friends Have to Say Does Not Apply to His Situation

“You [all] see discouragement and so you all became afraid.

Job 6:21b

You all see a man who is thoroughly discouraged and so you all became afraid.

We have some problems with the second part of v. 21 as well:

Albert Barnes	Ye see my calamity, and shrink back.
<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	You see my dismay <i>and</i> terror, and [believing me to be a victim of God’s anger] you are afraid [to sympathize with me].
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Ye see something fearful and fear.
KJV	Ye see <i>my</i> casting down, and are afraid.
NAB	You see a terrifying thing and are afraid.
NASB	“You see a terror and are afraid.”
NEB	You felt dismay and were afraid.
NJB	...terrified at the sight of me, you take fright.
NIV	You see something dreadful and are afraid.
NRSV	You see my calamity, and are afraid.
REB	...you felt dismay and took fright.
The Septuagint	...so that beholding my wound you [all] are afraid.
<i>Young’s Lit. Translation</i>	Ye see a downfall, and are afraid.

The next verb is the simple word for *to see*; it is in the 2nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect. The traditional view of the imperfect tense is that it is a reference to an incomplete or to a future action. This is true, to some extent. Sometimes the imperfect tense views a portion of an event—i.e., it focuses in on a specific portion of an event and does not concern itself with the event having already occurred or not. This is often used for on-going action, contingent action, and it can be *used to convey capability, possibility and obligation*, making it similar to the *subjection and optative moods in the Greek*.³¹

What they see is *chāthath* (תַּתְּחַת) [pronounced *khuh-THAHTH*], and this word occurs only here in the Old Testament. However, this comes from the verb *chāthath* (תַּתְּחַת) [pronounced *khaw-THAHTH*], which is generally translated *dismay, discourage* and, on occasion, *broken in pieces* and even *to be afraid*. So rather than going with *casting down, terror, or downfall*, we will go with *discouragement*. Verb: Strong’s #2865 BDB #369. Noun: Strong’s #2866 BDB #369.

The *wāw* consecutive is next followed by the 2nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect of *yârê’* (יָרֵא) [pronounced *yaw-RAY*] which means, when used with God as the object, it means *reverential fear*; when used with something else as the object, it means *to be afraid, to fear*. Strong’s #3372 BDB #431. In observing Job and his condition, the men feel fear because of how far he has fallen.³²

³¹ This was taken primarily from *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; p 2277.

³² For those who have *The Emphasized Bible* the footnote at this verse alludes to a paranomasia, and I can’t remember what that is (nor can I find it even my *New Webster’s Universal Unabridged Dictionary*, my encyclopedia, or even in Bullinger’s book.

Therefore, the last line is: “**You [all] see discouragement and so you all became afraid.**” We have left the analogy altogether. Job’s friends are concerned that lightning has struck Job and keeps striking Job and they do not want to stand too close to him. They don’t want to be hit themselves. They understand that God punishes sin; they believe that is what is occurring here. In any case, what is meant is that Job’s three friends are worried about what has happened to Job and do not want to sympathize with him too much, so that they themselves are not made to suffer in a similar fashion. It’s like spotting someone involved in an obvious sin—like holding up a convenience store—if you suddenly join this person in his crime, then you will be subject to the same criminal prosecution. These men knew that God existed and that He was a God to be feared. Therefore, they did not want to side with Job, thinking Job was far in the wrong, and receive additional discipline from God. If Job was being punished for being bad (which they assumed), then they were likely to receive the same in cursing by their sympathetic association with him—none of them wanted to take that chance. You don’t stand so close to someone who keeps getting struck by lightning. David wrote from his despair: **My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague; and my kinsmen stand afar off** (Psalm 38:11).

“For have I said, ‘Give to me’ and ‘Out from your strength, give a present for my sake’?	Job 6:22	“Have I said, ‘Give to me’? or have I said, ‘Offer me a present from your wealth’?
---	----------	---

This verse begins with the interrogative particle, which is translated by Rotherham and Young as *is it*; the NASB just adds a question mark to the end of the sentence, as it acts more as a punctuation mark than as a word. Strong’s #none BDB #209. This is followed by the preposition *kîy* and the verb for *said*. Next is the verb for *give*; in the 2nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative.

The second line begins with the *wâw* conjunction and the phrase *out from your ability*. The substantive is the masculine substantive of *kôwach* (כֹּוַח) [pronounced *KOE-ahkh*], which means *strength, power, ability*. Strong’s #3581 BDB #470.

The final verb of this verbs is the Qal imperative of *shâchad* (שָׁחַד) [pronounced *shaw-KHAHD*], which means *to bribe, to offer a bribe, to give a present*; and it is only found twice in the Old Testament: Job 6:22 and Ezek. 16:33. However, BDB points out that Isa. 47:11 probably is this same verb. Strong’s #7809 BDB #1005.

We then have the interesting preposition *ba’ad* (בְּאַד) [pronounced *BAH-’gad*], which means *for the sake of, on account of*. This has the 1st person suffix, so it can be rendered *for my sake, for the sake of me, on my account*. Strong’s #1157 (5704 with *n*) BDB #126

Now Job points out to them that he has not asked them for a handout; he has not asked them to bail him out. He recognizes that what has happened to him is of God and that it cannot be simply counteracted. People believe that when there is a problem, particularly a financial one, the way it is solved is by throwing money at it. Job has been wiped out financially—the simple solution is to give him money. He built up a fortune before and he will do it again. However, Job and his friends all know that what has happened to him is inexorably tied to the will of God in some way. Job and his friends may not know exactly why Job is on the receiving end of all of this pressure, but clearly he is. So, giving Job a loan or a handout does not solve the problem of the pressure that Job is under, as this is tied to God’s will. I.e., they all understood that if they gave Job a million dollars, it would be gone tomorrow—not because Job is incompetent in matters financial, but because God has had a hand in causing Job’s ruination. So Job has not asked them for any money. **No man by any means redeems his brother; nor can he give to God a ransom for him; for the redemption of his soul is costly and he should cease [this attempt] forever** (Psalm 49:7–8). Had Job asked them for some sort of financial assistance, then they would have reason to question what has happened to him and why has it happened. However, Job has asked nothing of their hand save kindness, graciousness and consolation.

We should look at some application at this point. It is not our business to judge others and to determine whether or nor their difficulties are a result of divine discipline or not. Now, I say that realizing that there can be several shades of this. A family member might have ruined their life with drugs and drinking and that may be obvious. It

is not up to us to allow them to bring us down as well. Our help to such individuals sometimes must be limited and sometimes it must be no help at all. There is something to “Tough Love”, as it is called; and there is no Christian or familial love in making it possible or easier for a drug addict or an alcoholic to obtain more drugs or alcohol. Sometimes you must love from afar. However, this does not mean that you should have absolutely no contact with them. Sometimes your contact might be a visit to them in jail and regular letters while they are in jail. Sometimes your contact might be taking them out for a regular meal, not once a month, but every couple days. Now, there are other situations where people have, out of their own ineptitude or out of circumstances beyond their control, found themselves in a precarious and painful position. Most of the time, we are in no position to judge why a person is where he is.

“And, ‘Deliver me from a hand of an adversary.’

And, ‘from a hand of terrifying ones, ransom me’?

Job 6:23

“Have I said, ‘Deliver me from the power of an adversary.’

And, ‘Redeem me from the power of those who terrify me,’?

The first line is interesting; Job asks to be delivered from *an adversary*. Now, this is **not** the same word used of Satan which is found in the first two chapters of Job; however the Greek word for this, found in the Septuagint, is used of Satan in Matt. 13:28, 39 and possibly Luke 10:19. Still, I would not make too much of this fact, since this same Greek word is used a number of times in the New Testament, not always referring to Satan (e.g., Col. 1:21 Rev. 11:5, 12).

The substantive following *hand* in the second line is the masculine plural adjective ‘ârîyts (אֲרִיָּט) [pronounced *aw-REETS* or *gaw-REETS*] and it means *awe-inspiring, terror striking* in terms of one’s oppressors. This is often used to describe the Chaldeans. They were a *terrifying* nation to Israel. Strong’s #6184 BDB #792.

Part of this I don’t fully grasp. Job is speaking to his friends about himself and them; he is no longer in the analogy business. This line, about redeeming him from the terrifying ones makes me wonder if he was not involved in something akin to a mortgage or if he had paid for the option to graze on the land where he was. Perhaps, in the past, with his wealth, he was a person that no one would have toyed with; and now, under the circumstances that he is in, he is at the mercy of the roving bands of people and the indigenous population of his area. My point is that I don’t know how much of this to take as implication. Barnes makes much less out of this than I do. He writes: *The meaning is, that he was in no way beholden to them; he had never called on them for assistance; and there was therefore no claim which they could now have to afflict him farther by their reflections.*³³

Job continues with this. Sometimes friends call upon other friends only for a handout. Job is making it clear that he has not asked for that. He realizes that money is not the solution for most problems. In fact, when under the hand of God, as Job is, money is not a solution at all. Some of you are experiencing financial difficulties. You are sick of your job which does not pay you nearly enough money for your lifestyle (which, in some cases, is borderline survival). You want the Publisher’s Clearing House to send you that check for \$50,000,000; you just bought ten lottery tickets because the jackpot is up to \$66,000,000 (making it a more worthwhile proposition than \$5,000,000); and you are hoping and praying that God will give you this because this will solve your main problems. Job is not foolish like you are. He realizes that money is not his solution. He is not hitting his friends up for cash, thinking that money will solve his problem. He hasn’t sinned in such a way to deserve what has happened, but he knows he is under pain from God and he doesn’t know why. He does have the presence of mind to realize that money will not solve these problems. Now, for your favorite topic: you. Your financial problems are likely self-imposed, as is the case for most people. You’ve spent money that you didn’t have; you purchased too many items that you did not need on time; you were greedy, and you got into debt over your head. You bought a house out of lust—a house that you knew you couldn’t afford under your personal circumstances. You’re not under discipline; you are not under pressure to glorify God from your position—you have handled your money foolishly and now you want God to bail you out. You saw a hot stove, you touched it, and now your hand hurts and you want God to kiss it and make it better. God has solved your problems in eternity past, but don’t think that He is just going to shower you with

³³ Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 181.

money. **If you cannot handle a small amount of money well, what makes you think that God will suddenly entrust you with a lot of money?** God has solved these problems of yours. All you need to do is to be filled with the Spirit, pursue God's Word, act honorably in all your financial dealings, particularly with those you still owe money to, stop buying things out of lust or personal therapy, and allow God to sort this out.

One of the things which some people have no grasp of is that a lot of money is a lot of responsibility. I personally have never purchased a lottery ticket and I have had some scratch off tickets given to me as a gift that I don't believe that I even scratched off. It is not that I have some deep, abiding moral indignity concerning gambling—it is simply that I don't want that much money. That would be too unsettling and would place responsibilities upon me that I would not want. If God entrusted you with \$10,000,000, what would you do? I shouldn't have asked that question, as that certainly sent you off on some mental tangent from which you won't be reporting back for several minutes—however, so you understand what this all means: **money = responsibility**. A lot of money = a lot of responsibility. When I was first saved and a young, growing believer, I remember telling God, *bring it on; give me the prosperity test—I'll handle that*. However, what I did do is I stuck with doctrine; I kept pursuing God's Word, and, one day I awoke and realized that I was being tested by prosperity...and I didn't realize it until I was in the middle of it. Now, I don't mean that I had \$10 billion dollars dropped on my lap; however, I did have more wealth than I was accustomed to having and more than I had ever expected to have as a young person. So, maybe it is time that we studied **the Doctrine of Money—not finished yet!!**

**“Teach me and I—[even] I—will be silent.
And how have I erred? Make me
understand.**

**“Instruct me and I will certainly be silent.
Furthermore, make me understand how I am
in error.**

Job 6:24

The first verb is the 2nd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperative of yârâh (יָרָה) [pronounced yaw-*RAWH*], which means, in the Qal stem, *to throw, to shoot, to throw down, to throw out, to shoot* (in the case of a bow and arrow). However, in the Hiphil, we are dealing with the word teach, perhaps in the connection of throwing something in front of someone else(?). Both Rotherham and Young render this *show [me]* here, but that rendering does not seem to square with Deut. 10:10–11. Strong's #3384 BDB #434.

The second verb is the 1st person singular, Hiphil imperfect of chârash (חָרַשׁ) [pronounced *chaw-RAHSH*], which means *to be silent, to exhibit silence*. I should mention that this is the poetic use of this word; its use in prose is quite different (it means *to cut in, to engrave, to plough*). Strong's #2790 BDB #361.

The remainder of the sentence is pretty straightforward. The wâw conjunction followed by an interrogative particle (translated a myriad of ways, depending upon the translator) and the verb for *erred*. Finally, Job uses the Hiphil imperative of the verb *to understand*. This means he is ordering his friends *to make or to cause him to understand*. Strong's #995 BDB #106. I updated this verbiage for the last sentence in the freer translation.

We already have the divine take on this: **But Job said to his wife, “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?”** In all of this, Job did not sin with his lips (Job 2:10). However, the less said by Job, the less likely he is to sin: **When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, but he who restrains his lips is wise** (Job 10:19). **He who restrains his words has knowledge; and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding** (Job 17:27). **Do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore, let your words be few** (Eccles. 5:2).

Now what Job is asking is for Eliphaz to saying something which is constructive. Eliphaz has implied that Job has sinned and that he is being disciplined. However, Eliphaz does not know what that sin is; he has not suggestions for Job. He has nothing to say to Job which Job can actually use. Job has no trouble with listening to Eliphaz's speech if Eliphaz actually has something worthwhile and applicable to say to him. Barnes: *The sense is, “I would willingly sit and listen where truth is imparted, and where I could be enabled to see the reason of the divine dealings.*

If I could be made to understand where I have erred, I would acquiesce.”³⁴ “If you have something to say about me and my condition, please say it. I am willing to listen and I am willing to learn,” is the sense of what Job is saying. However, apart from the wisdom of what Eliphaz had to say, it did not pertain to Job’s situation.

“How words of integrity are penetratingly painful [or, vehement]; and how does a decision from you decide [anything]?”

Job 6:25

“How your words of great integrity are penetratingly painful; but how relevant to my problem is your assessment of the situation?”

The reason I have gone to two translations, is that I always felt compromised by giving What I felt the sense of the verse was at the expense of the literal rendering. The main translations which I use significantly differ on the first line of this verse for just that reason.

Albert Barnes <i>The Amplified Bible</i>	How powerful are words of truth! But what doth your reproaching demonstrate? How forcible are word of straightforward speech! But what does your arguing argue or your reproof reprove?
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	How pleasant are the sayings that are right! But what can a decision from you decide? [or, But what can a reproof from you reprove?]
Keil and Delitzsch	How forcible are words in accordance with truth! But what doth reproof from you reprove?
NKJV	How forceful are right words! But what does your arguing prove?
NAB	How agreeable are honest words; yet how unconvincing is your argument!
NASB	“Honest words are not painful, But what does your argument prove?”
NEB	How harsh are the words of the upright man! What do the arguments of wise men prove?
NJB	Fair comment can be borne without resentment, but what are your strictures aimed at?
NIV	“How painful are honest words! But what do your argument prove?”
REB	How harsh are the words of the upright! But what do your arguments prove?
The Septuagint	But as it seems, the words of a true man are vain, because I do not ask strength of you. ³⁵
TEV	Honest words are convincing, but you are talking nonsense.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	How powerful have been upright sayings, And what does reproof from you reprove?

As you can see, there is tremendous difference in that first line. V. 25 begins with the interrogative *mâh* (מַה) [pronounced *maw*], which means *what, how*. *Mâh* can also be used as an exclamatory adverb *how*; as in “**How incredible is this place!**” (Gen. 28:17b). This use is often followed by an adjective or verb. Strong’s #4100 BDB #552.

Obviously we will have a problem with the next word. However, let us deal with the subject of that verb first, as that is how we think in English. The subject is literally *words of uprightness*. The second word is the masculine substantive *yôsher* (יֹשֵׁר) [pronounced *YOE-shur*], which means *straightness, uprightness, moral integrity*. Strong’s #3476 BDB #449. Perhaps you sense a bit of irony or even sarcasm in Job’s words? Certainly, what Eliphaz has said has merit and Job can agree to that. But what bearing do these great words have on the situation of Job?

Now the tough word—the verb of this line: the main explanations given here is that this is not the Hebrew word that is in the Massoretic text, but that it differs by a letter. The one alternative found in Owen’s is that we should have the word for *smooth, agreeable* here (see the NAB and *The Emphasized Bible*), rather than the one that we do find. However, that would involve substituting a *lâmed* (ל) for a *rêysh* (ר), which would involve two changes in the letter,

³⁴ Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 182.

³⁵ Perhaps you have noticed that the Septuagint version of Job is like reading another book altogether.

so I have a hard time buying into that. The problem, I believe, is with the meaning of the word which is actually found here. The word found in this verse is the 3rd person plural, Niphal perfect of *mârats* (מַרַּטִים) [pronounced *maw-RAHTS*], which, according to BDB, means *to be sick*, but it is used more colloquially as in *this makes me sick* (see Job 16:3). This only occurs four times and the KJV gives the following disparate translations: *forcible* (Job 6:25), *grievous* (or, *strong*) (I Kings 2:8), *sore* (Micah 2:10), and *emboldeneth* (Job 16:3). The Niphal, although generally is the passive of the Qal, also expresses adjectival ideas. It can be used to describe action which is in progress or development. So, literally, this means *they have been sickened*. From the reading which I have done, the meaning of this word seems to come from the Arabic; however, this word occurs only four times in Scripture and has no cognates. One author suggests that this is related to *pârats* (פַּרַּטִים) [pronounced *paw-RAHTS*], which means *to break out, to break through*. (Strong's #6555 BDB #829). He suggests the means *to penetrate*. Perhaps we have a word which refers to something which is painful because it is so penetrating. Although I am not thrilled with this English rendering, I will at least for now, go with *painfully penetrating* until I can come up with a better substitute. Let me give you some alternatives: according to Gesenius, he goes along with Kimchi, which gives the meaning *to be strong, to be forcible*; another meaning given is *to be vehement, to be fierce*. I reject *strong* just because there are several other synonyms which could have been used to mean the same thing. However, *to be vehement* is a reasonable alternative. So that you don't have to flip through your Bibles to find these verses, let me quote them here: "And observe, there is with you Shimei ben Gera the Benjamite, of Bahuruim; now it was he who cursed me with a [feminine singular, Niphal participle of *mârats*] curse on the day I went to Mahanaim. But when he came down to me at the Jordan, I swore to him by Y^ehowah, saying, "I will not put you to death with the sword." (I Kings 2:8). "How words of integrity [3rd person plural, Niphil perfect of *mârats*]; and what you reproving to reproof from you?" (Job 6:25). "Is there no limit to your windy words? Or what [3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect of *mârats* with a 2nd person masculine singular suffix] that you answer?" (Job. 16:3). "Arise and go, for this is not place of rest because of the uncleanness that brings on destruction—a [the Niphal participle of *mârats*] destruction." (Micah 2:10). Strong's #4834 BDB #599.

After all of that, hopefully the rest of this verse won't be so difficult. We have the *wâw* conjunction, the interrogative particle (which, again, can act as an adverbial exclamatory particle) and the subject of this next verb is the Hiphil infinitive absolute of *yâkach* (יַכַּח) [pronounced *yaw-KAHK*], which means *to decide, to adjudge, to prove, to render a decision*. When there are parties involved in a dispute, it means *to hammer out a decision or an agreement*. Here the translation *assessment* might be quite accurate. Strong's #3198 BDB #406. The absolute is the normal, unqualified state of a noun or of the nominative form. This tells us that we are dealing with our subject.

This is followed by the 3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect of the same word. Eliphaz has made this unilateral assessment and Job asks him how relevant is his assessment; how accurately has Eliphaz adjudged the case at hand; how correct is Eliphaz's take on this situation? [Job] says, "What you have said is good, but it doesn't touch my case at all. You're not diagnosing my condition."³⁶

The final word is the preposition *out of, out from, from* and the 2nd person masculine plural suffix. The plural suffix means that Job recognizes that the assessment made by Eliphaz represents the feelings of all three of his friends. Job himself might have made the same assessment had the shoe been on the other foot. However, what Eliphaz had to say was very painful, but inaccurate.³⁷ There was nothing of kindness or grace in his speech; only condemnation. Words of doctrine often had this ring of truth to them to Job during that time, which could not be denied. *Job means that he was accustomed to feel their power, and to admit it on his soul. If their words were such, he would listen to them with profound attention, and in silence.*³⁸ **The words of wise men are like cattle prods, and masters of such collections are like well-driven nails; the are given by one Shepherd** (Eccles. 12:11). That which is truth touches every man's soul. They may deny it on the outside, but it touches them on the inside. The second line is idiomatic, which means: furthermore, even if what Eliphaz had to say was true in principle, it was not applicable to the situation of Job.

³⁶ Job; J. Vernon McGee, ©1977, p. 55.

³⁷ The NIV Study Bible interprets this first sentence as Job speaking of his own words; but that just does not fit well with the context.

³⁸ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 182.

McGee: *I heard of a person who went to a doctor and his case was diagnosed as arthritis. It turned out to be a cancer, but by the time the patient got into the hands of a cancer specialist, it was too late to do anything for him. That is the problem of Job. He says, "You have come and you have attempted to diagnose my case, but your diagnosis is wrong. You have said it is hidden sin, and it isn't that at all. Now if you diagnose it accurately and you have something helpful to say to me, say it and I'll listen to you."*³⁹

"Have you [all] determined to decide of speeches; and to a wind, speeches of a despairing [or, desperate] one?"

Job 6:26

"Do you see your assessment of the situation valid; and delegate the words of a desperate man as wind?"

This verse begins with the interrogative particle and the lâmed prefixed preposition. Even though the verb is last in this line, we may want to examine it first. It is the 2nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect of châsha^bv (בּ שָׁחַ) [pronounced *khaw-SHA^bV*]. The verb itself means *to determine, to calculate*; it is a verb of *thinking and planning*. Strong's #2803 BDB #362.

Again, we have the word for *decide, assess, adjudge* from above. It is found in the Hiphil infinitive construct. Therefore, it means *to decided, to assess, to judge*. Strong's #3198 BDB #406. The construct is tied to the word millâh (מִלָּה) [pronounced *mil-LAW*] and it means *speech, utterance, that which was said*. It is in the plural here. Strong's #4405 BDB #576.

The word often rendered *wind* is rûwach (רוּחַ) [pronounced *ROO-ahkh*], means *wind, breath, spirit, apparition*. Although Barnes⁴⁰ quotes a few scholars who give different interpretations at this point, *wind* is certainly the best option. Strong's #7307 BDB #924. Therefore we have: **and to a wind, speeches of a desperate one.**

My feel for this is that Job is saying something along the lines of, are you going to give me this canned crap and ignore my own desperate words? We will do this somewhat out of order. Now that we have exegeted this verse, let's see what others have done:

Albert Barnes <i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Do ye mean to censure words? The words of a man in despair are but wind. Do you imagine your words to be an argument, but the speeches of one who is desperate to be as wind? (I have mixed emotions about <i>The Amplified Bible</i> , but once and awhile it seems to grasp the meaning exactly).
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	To decide words do ye intend, When to the wind are spoken the sayings of one in despair?
Dr. Good Keil and Delitzsch NKJV	Would ye take up words for reproof, The mere venting the moans of despair? Do you think to reprove words? The words of one in despair belong to the wind. Do you intend to rebuke <i>my</i> words, And the speeches of a desperate one, <i>which are</i> as wind?
NAB NJB	Do you consider your words as proof, but the sayings of a desperate man as wind? Do you think mere words deserve censure, desperate speech that the wind blows away?
NIV	"Do you mean to correct what I say, and treat the words of a desperate man as wind?"
REB	Do you mean to argue about mere words? Surely such despairing utterance is mere wind.
The Septuagint	Neither will your reproof cause me to cease my words, for neither will I endure this sound of your speech.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	For reproof—do you reckon words? And for wind—sayings of the desperate.

³⁹ Job; J. Vernon McGee, ©1977, p. 56.

⁴⁰ Barnes does not agree with their rendering, however.

In some of the translations, particularly my less than literal one, words have been thrown in to smooth out the meaning, or to interpret the meaning. Job is telling his friends that they did not really listen to him; they did not grasp what he had to say and have delegated his words to the wind. He tells his friends that they have not paid any attention to what he said, but have behaved as though his words were just the sound of the wind. Ironically, Bildad, obviously not listening too carefully at this point, agrees with Job here. “How long will you say these things; and the words of your mouth be a might wind?” (Job 8:2). Eliphaz agrees: “Should a wise man answer with windy knowledge and fill himself with the east wind?” (Job 15:2).

In a re-read of this verse, and the context, my thinking has since changed. I believe that Job is complaining that they are examining his words too carefully. He is speaking as a man in severe pain and suffering. Everything that he says may or may not come out perfectly and without blemish or fault. They need to take this into consideration when answering him. His words, as a man in pain, belong to the wind, not to the careful analysis of his friends.

“Indeed, you would cast [lots] over the fatherless and you would bargain against your friend.

Job 6:27

“In fact, you would cast lots against the orphan; and you would bet against your friend.

Since the way of rendering this verse can be so different, depending upon the understanding of the verb, let me offer this alternative rendering as well.

“Indeed, you cause [a net] to fall upon the fatherless, and you dig [a pit] for your friend.”

possible
alternative to
Job 6:27

“In fact, you cause a net to fall upon the orphan, and you entrap your friend.”

We should see what the other translators have done, since they vary so much:

Albert Barnes <i>The Amplified Bible</i> Barne's Translation	Truly against the fatherless ye would spring [a net], And ye dig a pitfal for your neighbor. Yes, you would cast lots over the fatherless, and bargain for your friend. Yea, ye overwhelm [lit., cause to fall upon] the fatherless, and ye dig a <i>pit</i> for your friend.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i> Keil and Delitzsch	Surely the fatherless ye would assail, ⁴¹ And make merchandise of your friend! Ye would even cast lots for the orphan, And traffic about your friend.
KJV	Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless, and ye dig a <i>pit</i> for your friend
NKJV	Yes, you overwhelm the fatherless, And you undermine your friend.
NEB	Would you assail an orphan? Would you hurl yourselves on a friend?
NJB	Soon you will be haggling over the price of an orphan, and selling your friend at bargain price!
NIV	“You would even cast lots for the fatherless and barter away your friend.”
Owen's Translation	Indeed [or, anger] over the fatherless would you cast; and will you bargain over your friend?
REB	Would you assail an orphan? Would you make attacks on your friend?
The Septuagint	Even because ye attack the fatherless, and insult your friend.
TEV	You would even roll dice for orphan slaves and make yourselves rich off your closest friends!
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Anger on the fatherless ye cause to fall, And are strange to your friend.

The first word is given possibly as the conjunction *indeed, in fact, also, yea*, which is ʾaph (אָפּ) [pronounced *ahf*]. Strong's #637 BDB #64. It is also given to be ʾaph (אָפּ) [pronounced *ahf*], which means *nose, nostril* (Gen. 2:7 3:19 7:22 19:1 24:47). We sometimes find in the Hebrew that a part of the body can stand for a particular emotion, and ʾaph therefore also means *anger* (Gen. 27:45 30:2 39:19 44:18). The idea is then when a person

⁴¹ Rotherham affirms the rendering of this first line in a footnote, referring to the Septuagint and the Vulgate.

was angry with you, the tilt of his head revealed his nostril or nose as being the most prominent feature. Strong's #639 BDB #60. So this explains the differing beginnings of these various translators.

Then we have the preposition 'al (אֶל) [pronounced *al*], which means *upon, against, above, on the ground of (or upon the basis)* something is done. Strong's #5920, 5921 BDB #752. This is followed by the substantive *fatherless (or, orphans)*.

The verb is the 2nd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect of *nâphal* (נָפַל) [pronounced *naw-FAHL*], which means *to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply*. This word is used, in the Hiphil, to mean, among other things, *to cast lots* (I Chron. 26:14 Neh. 10:34 11:1 Esther 9:24 Psalm 22:18 Isa. 34:17). This is **not** the word used for *casting lots* in Joel 3:3 or in Obad. 1:11. Strong's #5307 BDB #656.

Therefore, for the first line, we either have: *You would cause anger to fall upon the fatherless; or In fact, you would cast [lots] against the fatherless*. Since there is often found in Hebrew poetry some sort of parallelism, the second line might be a clue as to what the first line should be. Eliphaz later accuses Job of not taking care of the helpless in his periphery (citing this as a possible reason for his pain and suffering): “*You have sent away widows without and the strength of the orphans has been crushed.*” (Job 22:9). The Law formalized the importance of care for the helpless within a nation: “*You will not afflict any widow or orphan. If you afflict him at all, if he does cry out to Me, I will certainly hear his cry and My anger will be kindled and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives will become widows and your children fatherless.*” (Ex. 22:22–24).

The second line begins with the *wâw* conjunction and 2nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect of *kârâh* (כָּרָה) [pronounced *kaw-RAW*], and this word is given two different Strong's numbers and two different meanings.⁴² I. It means *to dig*, and this is unquestionably supported by the passages Gen. 50:5 Num. 21:18 II Chron. 16:14 Psalm 7:15. However, in all of these passages, we have some sort of an object, e.g., pit, grave or well. Strong's #3738 BDB #500. II. Where we don't have an object (Deut. 2:6 Hosea 3:2), it means *to bargain, to get by trade*. This is how it is used in Job. Strong's #3739 BDB #500.

Therefore, Hebrew parallelism would demand the rendering: *In fact, you would cast [lots] against the fatherless and you would bargain against your friend*. However, let me give this a more colloquial rendering: *In fact, you would cast [lots] against the fatherless and you would bet against your friend*.

We have two colloquialisms in this verse, but of which mean different things. In the first, Job's friends are betting against the helpless (represented here by the orphan). Not only are they betting against the helpless, but they would do whatever it takes to see that the helpless fail. When you are predisposed, there is little one can say to dissuade you.

I believe that this is a colloquialism, which would mean, translated today, that Job's friends are pre-disposed to bet against Job. It is possible that he had not sinned badly enough to require the pain and suffering which he has endured, but they have placed their bets against him anyway; they are betting that he has sinned, only they just don't know what it is. Also, what is involved is an investment. When you say bet on team A over team B, you have an investment in team A. Once you have placed your bet, you want team A to prevail; your entire psyche is geared toward team A winning. Job's friends entire mindset was that Job had sinned, he was being disciplined, and that's all there was to it. That is what they bet upon and that is what they expected to occur.

What I don't want to neglect is the possibility of the alternate translation, as some liberties would be taken with two main verbs in either case. In modernizing Barne's translation, we have: “*In fact, you cause a net to fall upon the fatherless, and you dig a pit for your friend.*” Barnes notes: *The word “overwhelm”...means properly, “ye fall upon;” that is, you deal with him violently. Or, it may mean here, in the Hiphil, “you cause to fall upon,” referring to a net, and meaning, that they sprung a net for the orphan...To do this was, in Oriental countries, regarded as a crime of peculiar enormity, and is often so spoken of in the Bible...And ye dig a pit for your friend. You act toward your friend*

⁴² There are actually three disparate meanings given: (1) *to dig*; (2) *to buy, to get in trade*; and, (3) *to give a feast*. The latter meaning is required in II Kings 6:23, but the text is dubious.

as hunters do toward wild beasts. They dig a pit and cover it over with brushwood to conceal it, and the hunted animal, deceived, falls into it unawares. So you endeavour to entrap your friend. You lay a plan for it. You conceal your design. You contrive to drive him into the pit that you have made, and urge him on till you have caught him in the use of unguarded language, or driven him to vent expressions that cover him with confusion. Instead of throwing a mantle of charity over his frailties and infirmities, you make the most of every word, take it out of its proper connection, and attempt to overwhelm him in shame and disgrace.⁴³ As you see, you can see this verse in two entirely different lights and get very distinct understandings of it which are clearly different.

**“And now be willing, turn at me [or, look at me];
and to your faces, would I lie?**

Job 6:28

**“Now, look me in the eye;
would I lie right to your faces?”**

The general sense of this verse is simple: look me in the eye—I won’t lie to you. However, I do want to render it correctly. This verse begins with the wâw conjunction and the adverb *now*. Then Job throws in two imperatives. The first verb is the 2nd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperative of yâ’al (לַיָּאֵל) [pronounced yaw-AHL] and it means *be willing to*. Strong’s #2974 BDB #383.

The second imperative is the 2nd person masculine plural, Qal of pânâh (פָּאֵן) [pronounced paw-NAWH], which means *turn, to turn away from, to turn toward*. Since this is related to the face, *look* [at something] would be a reasonable rendering. Strong’s #6437 BDB #815. In this verse, it is clear that Job wants them to face him, to turn toward him, as this verb is followed by the bêyth preposition, which means *in, into, at or by*. Proximity is the key to the bêyth preposition.

The second line begins with the wâw conjunction and the prepositional phrase *upon [or, against] your faces*. This is followed by the interrogative particle which also acts, particularly in poetry, as the beginning of a rhetorical question which demands the response *no*. The verb is the Piel imperfect of *to lie*. Strong’s #3576 BDB #469. Job later reaffirms his honesty: **“My lips certainly will not speak unjustly, nor will my tongue mutter deceit...Now if it is not so, who can prove me a liar, and make my speech worthless?”** (Job 27:4 24:25).

**“Return, please, let there not be injustice.
And return my righteousness to it.**

Job 6:29

**“Reconsider your position, I respectfully
implore you—let there not be injustice
against me.
Instead, replace it with my righteousness.**

Job again addresses his friends with two imperatives. He twice uses the 2nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative of shûb (שׁוּב) [pronounced shoo^bv]; it means *return, to be caused to turn back mentally, reminisce, to return something, to restore, to bring back, to make restitution*. (Neh. 5:11 Prov. 24:12 Lam. 3:64), or *to be caused to return* (Psalm 78:38). Possibly, looking at the translations below, *reconsider* might be a viable rendering. Strong’s #7725 BDB #996. He follows this with the entreaty *I respectfully implore, I pray you, I ask of you*. Strong’s #4994 BDB #609. My problem here is that I don’t care much for the literal rendering of this word shûb; it just sounds stilted; and the alternative renderings to *return* really don’t sound correct either. So let’s see what the more imaginative of the translators have done in this respect:

Albert Barnes	Think again, let me have no more injustice; think again, for my integrity is in question.
NAB	Think it over; let there be no injustice. Think it over; I still am right.
NASB	“Desist now, let there be no injustice; Even desist, my righteousness is yet in it.
NEB	Think again, let me have no more injustice; think again, for my integrity is in question.
NJB	Relent then, no harm is done; relent then, since I am upright.
NIV	Relent, do not be unjust; reconsider, for my integrity is at stake.
NRSV	Turn, I pray, let no wrong be done. Turn now, my vindication is at stake.

⁴³ Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 183.

REB	Think again, let me have no more injustice; think again, for my integrity is in question.
The Septuagint	Sit down now, and let there not be unrighteousness and unite again with the just.
TEV	You have gone far enough. Stop being unjust. Don't condemn me. I'm in the right.

This is followed by the particle of negation and the 3rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect apocopated voluntative of the simple verb *to be*. The subject of this verb is the word *ʿavîlâh* (עוֹלָה) [pronounced *gahv²-LAW*], which means *injustice* (which can refer to injustice in terms of violent acts, unjust speech or injustice in general). Strong's #5766 BDB #732. Actually, I don't know if this should be a predicate nominative or a subject. Let's just look at those who aim to translate and not to interpret:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Return from your suspicion, I pray you, let there be no injustice; yes, return again [to confidence in me], my vindication is in it.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Reply, I pray you, let there be no perversity, Yea reply even yet my vindication is in it!
Keil and Delitzsch	Try it again, then: let there be no injustice; try it again, my righteousness still stands.
KJV	Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity; yea, return again, my righteousness <i>is</i> in it.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Turn back, I pray you, let it not be perverseness, Yea, turn back again—my righteousness <i>is</i> in it.

As you see, all these translators treat *injustice* as a predicate nominative.

The second line begins with the wâw conjunction and the Qal imperative again of *shûb^v*. This is followed by the adverb *again* and the singular masculine substantive *righteousness, rightness, vindication*. Strong's #6664 BDB #841 (with a 1st person suffix).

The final line is the bêyth preposition (*in, into, at, by, against, with*) and the 3rd person feminine singular suffix. Logically, this 3rd person feminine singular suffix would refer back *injustice*. This gives us the translation: “Return, I respectfully implore you, let there not be injustice. And return my righteousness to it.” This is almost a play on words. The first *return* is for his friends to reconsider the position which they have obviously taken, which Eliphaz has expressed, and to return to their former opinion of Job, so that there would be no injustice imputed to him. The second *return* is that they place his righteousness against the injustice—or, that they replace the injustice which they imputed to him with the proper righteousness. “Observe now, I have prepared my case; I know that I will be vindicated.” (Job 13:18). “Far be it from me that I should declare you right; till I die, I will not put away my integrity from me. I hold fast my righteousness and I will not let it go. My heart does not reproach any of my days.” (Job 27:5–6). “According to Your knowledge, I am indeed not guilty; yet there is no deliverance from Your hand.” (Job 10:7). God confirmed this in Job 2:3: “And Y^ehowah said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to ruin him without a cause.”

One of the purposes of hardship and difficulties, when placed upon the righteous man, is to improve his character. For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined (Psalm 66:10). “And I will bring the third part through the fire and refine them as silver is refined; and I will test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name and I will answer them. I will say, ‘They are My people.’ And they will say, ‘Y^ehowah is my God.’ “ (Zech. 13:9). **In this you greatly rejoice, even though now, for a little while, if necessary [and it is], that you have been distressed by various trials; that the testing of your faith is more precious than gold, which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:6–7).**

**“Is there injustice in my tongue;
Can't my palate discern a great chasm (or,
total ruination)?”** Job 6:30

**“Is there injustice in what I say?
Can't my palate discern engulfing ruin?”**

The verse begins with the interrogative particle, which is not necessarily translated. The second word is the *existence* substantive *yêsh* (יֵשׁ) [pronounced *yaysh*], which means *being, substance, existence*. *Yêsh* corresponds to the verbal substantive: *is there, does such a thing exist, is there the being*. Strong's #3426

BDB #441. We might use the colloquialism *in my mouth, on my tongue*, but they used the phrase *in my tongue*. Recall that Job has just told his friends to reconsider and to return to their former opinion of him; that he was a man of righteousness.

The second line also begins with the interrogative particle and a word for *palate* (actually, this word can stand for several interior items of the mouth). Strong's #2441 BDB #335. The verb is the 3rd masculine singular (which corresponds to *palate*), Qal imperfect of *bîyn* (בִּין) [pronounced *bean*] which means *discern, perceive, consider, understand*. We just saw this word back in v. 24. Strong's #995 BDB #106. Along with this verb, we have a negative.

What Job asks whether his palate could discern or not is *havvâh* (הַוָּאֵה) [pronounced *hahv-VAW*], which means *a great chasm, a deep pit, hell*; because of this, it can refer to *absolute ruin, engulfing calamity*. Strong's #1942 BDB #217. For those of you who have a NASB, you will notice that it gives the alternate reading (or translation) for this word as *words*; I don't know where they came up with that.

Job is saying that he knows if what he says is in direct opposition to God, that he could face God's wrath, which, if it were possible, would be greater ruin than what he is facing at this time. This final verse is *a solemn appeal to their consciences, and their own deep conviction that he was sincere...Job was qualified to discern what was true or false, sincere or hypocritical, just or unjust, in the same manner as the palate is fitted to discern the qualities of objects, whether bitter or sweet, pleasant or unpleasant, wholesome or unwholesome. His object is to invite attention to what he had to state on the subject.*⁴⁴

[<<Return to Outline>>](#)

[<<Return to the Chart Index>>](#)

[<<Site Map>>](#)

[<<Return to the Job Homepage>>](#)

[<<Return to Beginning of this Chapter>>](#)

⁴⁴ Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; pp. 183–184.