

# Job 13

## Job 13:1–28

### Outline of Chapter 13:

- Vv. 1–5 **Job has listened to his friends and they have nothing to say**
- Vv. 6–12 **God would show their views to be worthless**
- Vv. 13–19 **Job affirms his faith and asks his friends to listen to him**
- Vv. 20–28 **Job speaks directly to God**

**Introduction:** In Job 13, Job will lash out more directly against his associates. He will call them worthless physicians who smear him with lies and claims that God will reprove them. Then, just as Job did in his previous speech, he stops speaking directly to his friends and speaks to God directly (from Job 13:20–14:22). My only personal confusion is why did those who split up the chapters not end chapter 13 at v. 19, and begin Job 14 at v. 20? At the end of this chapter, Job will then begin to speak about man in general, and that will take us into Job 14.

NIV: *Job feels that his counselors have become completely untrustworthy...He calls them quacks...and accuses them of showing partiality to God (since God is stronger than Job) by telling lies about Job...Someday God will examine and punish them for their deception.*<sup>1</sup> Now Barnes takes a slightly different approach here, saying, *This part of the discourse may be regarded somewhat as trial of skill; or an attempt to show that he could speak of God in strains as sublime as they could and that the maxims which he had treasured up were quite as well calculated to exalt God as theirs were...[Job then] expresses his earnest desire to transfer his cause to the tribunal of the Almighty. This he wishes because he believes that God would be just, and because his friends were manifestly so severe in their judgments...[Job then cautions his friends that their wisdom would be found in silence]...[and finally] He makes his appeal, in the most solemn manner, to God. He urges the most earnest protestations of his innocence, and affirms that it is his intention to trust in God, though he should slay him.*<sup>2</sup>

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## Job Has Listened to His Friends and They Have Nothing to Say

Literally:

Smoother English rendering:

**"Behold, all [this] my eye has seen  
my ear has heard and then understood with  
regards to it.** Job 13:1

**"Listen, my eye has seen and my ear has  
heard and understood all of this.**

This verse begins with the interjection *hên* (הֵן) [pronounced *hayn*], which means *lo, behold*; and, more freely, *observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out*. Strong's #2005 BDB #243. In the Syriac and the Vulgate codices, *all* is followed by *this*. *All this* refers to all the acts of a sovereign God which Job named in Job 12:13–25. The verb is in the feminine singular and it matches the feminine singular of *my eye*.

The only difficult portion of the verse to translate is the last couple of words. We have the 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular (to match with *my ear*), Qal imperfect of the verb *bîyn* (בִּין) [pronounced *bean*], which means *discern, perceive, consider, understand*. Strong's #995 BDB #106. What is difficult is that this verb is followed by the *lâmed* preposition (*to, for, with regards to*), a preposition which does not necessarily require a rendering here; and the feminine singular suffix, which would be rendered *it*. I would have expected that this suffix would match the *all* at the beginning of the verse. Just to show you what others have done with the second line:

<sup>1</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 739.

<sup>2</sup> *Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 243.

Albert Barnes	Mine ear hath heard and understood it.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Mine ear hath heard and understood it;
Keil and Delitzsch	Mine ear hath heard and marked it.
NASB	“My ear has heard and understood it.”
The Septuagint	...and mine ear has heard it.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Heard hath mine ear, and it attendeth to it.

Therefore, Job is not referring back to all of the things which his friends said, but he is referring back to his contention of the previous chapter—he understands the concept of the sovereignty of God. “Listen, my eye has seen and my ear has heard and understood all of this...Whom among all these does not know that the hand of Y<sup>e</sup>hovah has done all this!” (Job 13:1, 12:9).

**“As your knowledge, I know—[even] I;  
I [am] not inferior I to you.**

Job 13:2

**“I know what you know.  
I am not inferior to you.**

This verse begins with the comparative substantive/preposition *k<sup>e</sup>* (כֵּ) [pronounced *k<sup>e</sup>*], which means *like, as, according to*. No Strong's # BDB #453. This is followed by the substantive *da'ath* (דַּאֲתָ) [pronounced *DAH-ahth*], which means *knowledge, skill, discernment, wisdom*. Strong's #1847 BDB #395. This is followed by the Qal perfect of *yâda* (יָדָעַ) [pronounced *yaw-DAHÇ*], a verb which means *to know*. Strong's #3045 BDB #393. Then we have the adverb *gam* (גַּם) [pronounced *gahm*] which means *also, in addition to, moreover, furthermore*. Strong's #1571 BDB #168. This is followed by the emphatic personal pronoun, which carries with it the implication of the verb *to be*. It is difficult to determine whether this belong with the first line or the second (the second line has a second masculine, singular 1<sup>st</sup> person pronoun as well).

This is followed by a negative and the Qal active participle 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*. The various translators render this *inferior* (KJV, NASB, NJB, NRSV, Owen), *fall short* (REB, NAB, Rotherham), *stand back behind* (Keil and Delitzsch) and *fallen* (the ever literal Young). Strong's #5307 BDB #656. This is followed once again by the personal pronoun (twice in one verse is quite a lot). The last phrase is the preposition *mîn* (מִן) (usually *more than*) in the book of Job with the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix. Literally, this reads: “As your knowledge, I know, even I; not fallen I more than you.”

Job has just let loose with some of the knowledge of his, so that there is no confusion as to his credentials in the area of wisdom. He had knowledge of God which was not just equivalent to his friends, but superior to them..“But I have intelligence as well as you; I am not inferior to you.” (Job 12:3).

**“But I to Almighty would speak  
and to argue my case to God, I desire.**

Job 13:3

**“But I would speak to Almighty  
and I desire to argue my case with God.**

The preposition used both times is *`el* (אֵל) [pronounced *eI*], which means *in, into, toward, unto, to, regarding*. Direction is the key to this preposition. Strong's #413 BDB #39. In the immediate context, one might make a case that this preposition should be rendered *regarding*; Job will tell his friends that their arguments and statements concerning God are messtup. However, in the overall context, Job wants to confront God directly; he is completely nonplussed over his pain and suffering. In this respect, he has no interest in speaking *for* God or *regarding* God—he desires to speak *to* God.

The last verb in this line is the Qal imperfect of *châphêts* (יָפַח) [pronounced *khaw-FATES*], which means *to incline, to be favorable* (intransitive meanings), *to will, to desire, to favor one, to delight in one, to love someone* (when the verb is directed towards a person). Strong's #2654 BDB #342.

You will notice how Job becomes increasingly bold here. Back in Job 9:3, he said: “If one wished to dispute with Him, he could not answer Him once in a thousand.” Now Job is ready to argue his case to God. Job will desire

to speak to God several times throughout this book: “Oh that I knew where I might find Him that I might come to His throne. I would present my case before Him and fill my mouth with arguments. I would learn the words which He would answer and perceive what He would say to me.” (Job 23:3–5). I know that many commentators fault Job and perhaps one could. I am just hesitant at this point, knowing that I would not have the strength, faith and fortitude that Job has under these same circumstances.

**“However, you, a smearing of lies;  
physicians of worthlessness, all of you.**

Job 13:4

**“However, you have smeared God and  
myself and this situation with lies;  
you are all worthless physicians.**

This verse begins with the wâw conjunction and the strong adversative adverb ʿûlâm (עֲלָם) [pronounced oo-LAWM], which means *but, but indeed, yet, however*; it is a very strong adversative. The wâw conjunction just moves the action along, so to speak. Although sprinkled throughout the historical books (e.g., Gen. 28:19 48:19 Ex. 9:16 1Kings 20:23), ʿûlâm is found primarily in the book of Job\* (1:11 2:5 5:8 11:5 12:7 13:3–4 14:18 17:10 33:1). Strong’s #199 BDB #19.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural personal pronoun is followed by the Qal active participle, masculine plural construct of ṭâphal (טָפַל) [pronounced *taw-FAHL*], which means *to smear, to plaster, to stick, to glue*; metaphorically it is used *plaster over with lies* or *to cover over with lies*. Strong’s #2950 BDB #381. Barnes: *The word lies here seems to be used in a large sense, to denote sophisms, false accusations, errors. They maintained false positions; they did not see the exact truth in respect to the divine dealings, and to the character of Job. They maintained strenuously that Job was a hypocrite, and that God was punishing him for his sins. They maintained that God deals with men in exact accordance with their character in this world, all of which Job regarded as false doctrine, and asserted that they defended it with sophisticated arguments invented for the purpose, thus they could be spoken of as ‘forgers of lies.’*<sup>3</sup>

Then Job describes his associates as *physicians of* and he uses the substantive ʿēlîyl (עֲלִייל) [pronounced *el-EEL*], whose meaning is unclear, but it is probably close to *worthless, feeble, poor, weak, insufficient*. Strong’s #457 BDB #47. Barnes: *They had come to give him consolation, but nothing that they had said had imparted comfort. They were like physicians sent for to visit the sick, who could do nothing when they came.*<sup>4</sup>

**“Who would give a keeping of silence, you  
would be silent;  
and it would be to you [plural] for wisdom.**

Job 13:5

**“Why don’t you all just shut the hell up?  
You would appear to be a lot wiser.**

This verse begins with the interrogative mîy (מִי) [pronounced *mee*], which is generally translated *who*. It can also be used to express a wish (Ex. 16:3), e.g., *O that, would that some one would, would that there were*. Strong’s #4310 BDB #566. This is followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of the verb nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced *naw-THAHN*]. Here is how the various translators have dealt with these two words: *oh that* (NASB, Owen, Rotherham, Young). These two words together are a common phrase, which means, literally, *who will give?* BDB allows for it to be rendered *oh that there were*. Strong’s #5414 BDB #678.

This is followed by the doubling of the verb chârash (חָרַשׁ) [pronounced *chaw-RAHSH*], which means *to be silent, to exhibit silence*. It first occurs in the Hiphil infinitive absolute and then in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect. The Hiphil infinitive absolute presents a verb in the active voice with causative action, used as a verbal noun, generally used as a complement of affirmation. Strong’s #2790 BDB #361. When Job’s friends first arrived, they were silent and commiserated with Job silently, not knowing what to say, Job having incurred greater devastation than one could ever imagine. When they began to speak, they revealed a distinct lack of compassion and understanding. Barnes: *Since you can say nothing that is adapted to give comfort, or to explain the true state*

<sup>3</sup> Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 253.

<sup>4</sup> Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 253.

of the case, it would be wise to say nothing.<sup>5</sup> I have found that people seem a lot more intelligent of they just sit quietly. Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is counted prudent (Prov. 17:28).

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## God Would Show Their Views to Be Worthless

**“Please listen (and heed) my reasoning and matters (of controversy) of my [two] lips, attend to.”** Job 13:6

**“Please listen to my reasoning and pay careful attention to the controversial matters which I will discuss.”**

We have a parallelism where we do not repeat any verbs, verb forms or nouns. This verse begins with the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperative of *shâma* (שָׁמַע) [pronounced *shaw-MAHG*], which is the simple word for *listen*. It is also used in the sense of: *to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, listen and take heed to, listen and take not of, listen and be cognizant of* (Gen. 3:17 39:10 Ex. 3:18). Here, we have the latter usage. Strong's #8085 BDB #1033. The particle of entreaty follows.

What Job asks his associates to listen to is his *tôkachath* (תִּוְכַחֲתוּ) [pronounced *toh-KAH-khath*], which means *reasoning, argument, reproof*. It can be (1) *the act of arguing of disagreeing*; (2) *arguing down, contradicting, speaking in opposition*; (3) *a rebuke with a correction*; (4) *a punishing or chastening*. Strong's #8433 BDB #407.

In the second line, Job leads with the masculine plural of *rîyâv* (רִיב) [pronounced *ree<sup>b</sup>v*] which means *strife, dispute, controversy, legal contentions*. This also can mean a *forensic cause, an argument used in public discussion or debate, matters of controversy*. Strong's #7379 BDB #936.

The second verb is the Hiphil imperative of *qâsha<sup>b</sup>v* (קָשָׂה) [pronounced *kaw-SHAH<sup>B</sup>V*], which means *incline, attend to, give attention to, be caused to attend to*. Strong's #7181 BDB #904. Job will spoken to by Elihu, who represents God, and he will be told to essentially do the same thing (Job 33:1).

**“Do you [all] for God an injustice speak? And for Him will you speak a deceit?”** Job 13:7

**“Do you speak injustice on behalf of God? And on behalf of Him do you speak deceitfully?”**

**“Do you [all] for God speak [or, promise]? An injustice! And for Him you will speak [or, promise]? [That is] deceit!”** Job 13:7 alternate

**“Do you all make promises for God? An injustice! And on His behalf will you make promises? That is deceit!”**

This verse, like the next two, begin with the interrogative particle, which is different from the one in v. 5. This is more equivalent to the upside down question mark in Spanish. Strong's #none BDB #209. We have the verb *dâ<sup>b</sup>var* (דָּבַר) [pronounced *daw<sup>b</sup>-VAHR*], repeated twice in the Piel imperfect, where it can mean *to promise* (as well as *to speak*). Strong's #1696 BDB #180. This is followed by the feminine singular substantive *‘av<sup>o</sup>lâh* (אָוֹלָה) [pronounced *gahv<sup>o</sup>-LAW*], which is generally translated *iniquity* in the KJV, the actual meaning may be closer to *injustice*. Young and Rotherham both go in for two different forms of *perverse*. Gesenius, although listing this as a separate entry, gives the informal definition *wickedness*. BDB reads *injustice, unrighteousness, wrong*. I will go with *injustice* for right now. Note that this is probably translated in your Bible as an adjective or an adverb, however, it is a noun. Strong's #5766 BDB #732. We have a couple of different possibilities in rendering this: **“Do you all speak for God? An injustice!”** or **“Do you all promise for God? An injustice!”** or **“Do you all speak [that which is]**

<sup>5</sup> Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 253.

**unjust for God?”** Barnes: *Will you maintain unjust principles with a view to honour or to vindicate God? Job refers doubtless to the positions which they had defended in regard to the divine administration—principles which he regarded as unjust, though they had employed them professedly in vindicating God. The sense is, that unjust principles ought not to be advanced to vindicate God. The great cause of truth and justice should always be maintained, and even in attempting to vindicate the divine administration, we ought to make use of no arguments which are not based on that which is right and true...it is wrong to employ a sophistical argument on any subject; and in reasoning on the divine character and dealings, when we come, as we often do, to points which we cannot understand, it is best to confess it. God asks no weak or sophistical argument in his defence; still less can he be pleased with an argument, though in defence of his government, which is based on unjust principles.*<sup>6</sup>

Job later says: **“My lips will not speak unjustly nor will my tongue mutter deceit.”** (Job 27:4). As far as Job knows, he is not speaking lies—however, his friends are not speaking insincerely either. Both Job and his friends are speaking what they believe to be the truth. We are the ones who must determine what is truth (and we will be helped a great deal by Elihu at the end of this book).

The second line continues the question, although there is no interrogative. It begins with the phrase *and for Him* and the Piel imperfect of the same verb is found. The last word again is a feminine singular substantive *rēmīyyāh* (רַמְיָאָה) [pronounced *r<sup>e</sup>-mee-YAW*], which is rendered by BDB as *treachery, deceit*. The verbal cognate allows for the rendering *misleading, deception*. Young and Rotherham both go with *deceit*, which seems quite reasonable. The KJV generally goes with *deceit*, although we have a couple of times where it is rendered *slothful* in Proverbs 12:24, 27. Strong’s #7423 BDB #941. **“And do you for Him promise? [that is] deceit!”** or **“And for Him do you promise [or speak] deceit?”** I personally lean toward the alternate version of this verse.

Keil and Delitzsch: *What God does is in every case right because God does it. He here recognises an object truth, which cannot be denied, even in favour of God...God is the God of truth, and will therefore be neither defended nor honoured by any perverting of the truth. By such pious lies the friends involve themselves in guilt, since in opposition to their better knowledge they regard Job as unrighteous, and blind themselves to the incongruities of daily experience and the justice of God.*<sup>7</sup>

Barnes: *Everything in speaking of God, should be true, pure, and sound. Every argument should be free from any appearance of sophism, and should be such as will bear the test of the most thorough examination. No honour is done to God by sophistical arguments, nor can he be pleased when such arguments are employed even to vindicate and honour his character.*<sup>8</sup>

In either case, the friends of Job have told Job just exactly what God will do in certain circumstances. All Job has to do is the straighten out his act and go to God with a contrite heart and God will take care of everything. It is as though they never realized that Job has tried that. Job is a man of God and no doubt upon the sinking in of all of his sorrows, he certainly went to God again and again, asking if he had done something that he needs forgiveness for. This is not recorded, mind you, but a normal man of God would have done this first. If I am in serious pain, the first thing that comes to my mind is *what have I done wrong?* Actually, in most instances, I already know—it is not something that I need to think much about.

**“Do you lift up His face(s)  
when, for the God, you find fault?”**

Job 13:8

**“Do you think God is pleased when you  
discover fault in me?”**

Let’s first see what others have done with this verse:

Albert Barnes

Will you be partial to his person? Will ye contend for God?

<sup>6</sup> Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; pp. 253–254.

<sup>7</sup> Keil & Delitzsch’s Commentary on the Old Testament; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. IV, p. 375.

<sup>8</sup> Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 254.

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Will you show partiality to Him [be unjust to me in order to gain favor with Him]? Will you act as special pleaders for God?
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Even for him would ye be partial? Or for God would ye [so] plead?
Keil and Delitzsch	Will ye be partial for Him, Or will ye play the part of God's advocates?
KJV	Will ye accept his person? will ye contend for God?
NAB	Is it for him that you show partiality? Do you play advocate on behalf of God?
NIV	Will you show him partiality? Will you argue the case for God?
NJB	[Do you mean to defend God by prevarication and by dishonest argument,] and, taking his side like this, appoint yourselves as his advocates?
Owen's Translation	Toward him will you show partiality or for God will you plead the case?
REB	Must you take God's part, putting his case for him?
TEV	Are you trying to defend him? Are you going to argue his case in court?
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	His face do ye accept, if for God ye strive?

I must admit that I really like the flow of thought as given in the New Jerusalem Bible: *Do you mean to defend God by prevarication and by dishonest argument, and, taking his side like this, appoint yourselves as his advocates?*

This verse begins with the interrogative and the masculine plural *faces* (always in the plural in the Hebrew); affixed is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix. This is followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Piel imperfect of *nâsâ'* (נָשָׂא) [pronounced *naw-SAW*]. This verb has four different Piel meanings: (1) *to lift up, to exalt, to desire anything greatly*; (2) *to help, to aid, often by gifts*; (3) *to offer gifts*; (4) *to take away*. Although we find this used often in the Qal *to lift up* the head or hands; this is not found except for here in the Piel. Strong #5375 (and Strong's #4984) BDB #669. This gives us "*Do you lift up His face(s)?*" This will cause me to give quite a different rendering and interpretation than you have seen. Job is saying that through their deceitful arguments and promises, do they actually cause God to be happy; does it lift His countenance? Barnes sees this entirely differently, and I include his thoughts out of respect: *...will you be partial to him? The language is such as is used in relation to courts of justice, where a judge shows favour to one or the parties on account of birth, rank, wealth, or personal friendship. The idea here is, "will you, from partiality to God, maintain unjust principles, and defend positions which are really untenable?" There was a controversy between Job and God. Job maintained that he was punished too severely; that the divine dealings were unequal and disproportioned to his offences. His friends, he alleges, have not done justice to the arguments which he had urged, but had taken sides with God against him, no matter what he urged or what he said. So little disposed were they to do justice to him and to listen to his vindication, that no matter what he said, they set it all down to impatience, rebellion, and insubmission. They assumed that he was wrong, and that God was wholly right in all things.*<sup>9</sup> Now, I do want to pause right here. I don't think that this is the case that Job is making. If it were simply a matter of choosing between Job's side and God's side, then there is nothing to that—it would make sense to choose God's side. The actual problem is in their arguments. Job is confused as to why all of this has befallen him and he does not recognize any reason in his life—i.e., he cannot recall any great sin or sins—which would bring upon him all of this grief. Had Job's associates brought to his attention the reason or some arguments which explained this to him, he would have listened and he would have taken note. However, his friends are even more clueless than he. So the key is not that his friends have taken God's side against him, but that they have advanced arguments which are fallacious on God's behalf. Barnes: *Their position was, that God dealt with men strictly according to their character; and that no matter what they suffered, their sufferings were the exact measure of their ill desert. Against this position, they would hear nothing that Job could say, and they maintained it by every kind of argument which was at their command—whether sound or unsound, sophistical or solid...they were determined to vindicate God [and their erroneous percept of God, regardless of the fallaciousness of their arguments].*<sup>10</sup>

The second line is literally *if (or, when) to (or, for) the God* and the Qal imperfect of *rîy<sup>b</sup>v* (רִיב) [pronounced *ree<sup>b</sup>v*], which means *debate, contend, dispute*. This also has a legal meaning, which would be apropos in Job: *to conduct a case or suit against someone; to make a complaint against one; and, in the abstract, to find fault with someone.*

<sup>9</sup> Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 254.

<sup>10</sup> Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 254.

Strong's #7378 BDB #936. This gives us: **"Do you lift up His face when you for God find fault."** Job's friends have been prying into his life, making accusations, holding Job up before God as a wrong guy, and Job asks if this is a pleasure to God. There are some lawyers, criminal and corporate, who will argue any position and take any tact which is in favor or their client. The concept of right and wrong and justice is limited to their fiduciary relationship to their client. They can excuse the tactics and arguments that they use, laying the final determination of justice upon a judge or jury. We cannot defend god from that sort of a position, nor can we point to the hope which is in our souls by pointing out that which is clever yet false. If God is to choose between a fallacious argument on His behalf or no argument at all, He would choose the latter.

Barnes: *[Job's friends] did not understand the principles of his administration. Their views were narrow, their information limited, and their arguments either common-place or unsound. According to this interpretation, the emphasis will be on the word, "ye"—"will ye contend for God?" The whole verse may mean, "God is not to be defended by mere partiality, or favour. Solid arguments only should be employed in his cause. Such you have not used, and you have shown yourselves to be entirely unfitted for this great argument." The practical inference which we should draw from this is, that are arguments in defence of the divine administration, should be solid and sound. They should not be mere declamation, or mere assertion. They should be such as will become the great theme, and such as will stand the test of any proper trial that can be applied to reasoning. There are arguments which will "vindicate all God's ways to men;" and to search them out should be one of the great employments of our lives. If ministers of the gospel would always abide by these principles, they would often do much more than they do now to commend religion to the sober views of mankind. No men are under greater temptations to use weak or unsound arguments than they are. They feel it to be their duty at all hazards to defend the divine administration. They are in circumstances where their arguments will not be subjected to the searching process which an argument at the bar will be, where a keen and interested opponent is on the alert, and will certainly sift every argument which is urged. Either by inability to explain the difficulties of the divine government, or by indolence in searching out arguments, or by presuming on the ignorance and dullness of their hearers, or by a pride which will not allow them to confess their ignorance on any subject, they are in danger of attempting to hide a difficulty which they cannot explain, or of using arguments and resorting to reasoning, which would be regarded as unsound or worthless any where else. A minister should always remember that sound reasoning is as necessary in religion as in other things, and that there are always some men who can detect a fallacy or see through sophistry. With what diligent study then should the ministers of the gospel prepare for their work! How careful should they be, as the advocates of god and his cause in a world opposed to him, to find out solid arguments, to meet with candour every objection, and to convince men by sound reasoning, that god is right! Their work is to convince, not to denounce; and if there is any office of unspeakable responsibility on earth, it is that of undertaking to be the advocates of God.<sup>11</sup> For me, it is appalling enough to read a fallacious dissertation of a series of arguments supporting some theological position, whether that position be true or false. That is, a position is stated and Scripture is quoted which does not really support that position. However, it is even more disconcerting to read an argument presented by one to the unsaved world, and for that argument to be fallacious. Some sharp unbeliever will recognize the fallacies in the arguments presented and answer these arguments and you stand there looking more foolish than you would have, had you just said, "I don't know the answer to that."*

**"Will it be well when He thoroughly  
investigates you [all]?  
Or if as a deception against a man, can you  
[mockingly] deceive (against) Him?"**

Job 13:9

**"How well would you fare if He thoroughly  
investigated any of you?  
Do you think you could deceive Him as you  
would a man?"**

We had better look at a couple of other renderings first:

Albert Barnes

Would it be well for you if he should thoroughly search you? Can you deceive him as man may be deceived?

*The Emphasized Bible*

Would it be well when he searched you out? Or as one might jest with a mortal would ye jest with him?

<sup>11</sup> Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 255.

Keil and Delitzsch	Would it be pleasant if He should search you out, Or can ye jest with Him, as one jesteth with men?
NASB	“Will it be well when He examines you? Or will you deceive Him as one deceives a man?”
NJB	How would you fare, if he were to scrutinize you? Can he be duped as mortals are duped?
Young's Lit. Translation	Is it good that He doth search you, If, as one mocketh at a man, ye mock at Him?

There are a couple of things which should be noted. You first notice that I do not always use the Septuagint's version. There are two simple reasons—one, I don't always feel like tearing it apart in the Greek as I do the Hebrew, as the Hebrew is the language of the original text; and, two, it is only a translation. We have seen enough of other translations to recognize that a translation can be pretty far afield of the real thing.

In this verse, we see that there are two completely different renderings; the one naming deception as the key idea in the second line seems, at least superficially, to be the most reasonable. This first line begins with an interrogative and the adjective used as a substantive for *well, good, pleasant, agreeable*. (Strong's #2896 BDB #373). The verb is implied, giving us: *would it be good?* The conjunction means *that, for, when, because*. (Strong's #3588 BDB #471). The first actual verb is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *châqar* (חָקַר) [pronounced *khaw-KAHR*], which means *to search out, to search for, to thoroughly investigate*. Strong's #2713 BDB #350. The untranslated word for a direct object follows, with the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix. This gives us: **“Would it be good if He carefully investigates you?”** Job's friends have superficially examined Job and they don't know what he has done wrong—they only assume that it is pretty terrible. Job asks them how they would fair under the microscope. Would their lives, their moral character, their decisions hold up under careful scrutiny? Barnes: *Would it be well for you if he should go into an investigation of your character, of of the arguments which you adduce? The idea is, that if god should make such an investigation, the result would be highly unfavourable to them.*<sup>12</sup>

The second line begins with the particle *im* (אִם) [pronounced *eem*], which could be an hypothetical particle (and, therefore, means *if, when, since, though*, an interrogative particle, and therefore meaning *or*. Strong's #518 BDB #50. Here the particle is used as a disjunctive particle, giving us two alternatives. On the one hand, Job asks his associates if they could bear up under the scrutiny of God, or if, then Job uses the kaph prefixed preposition and the Hiphil infinitive construct of the verb *tâlal* (לָלַל) [pronounced *taw-LAHL*], which means *to deceive, to mock*; this is not a word that necessarily means two different things, it refers to someone whose deception is so foolish as to mock the person who is being deceived. Here, Job says that his friends would mock God by their attempted deception of Him. Strong's #8524, 2048 BDB #1068, 251.

What follows the verb is the *bêyth* preposition (*in, at, by, with, against*) and the word *man*. This is followed by the Hiphil imperfect of *tâlal* once again, the *bêyth* preposition, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix. The words should be rendered: **“Or as a deception against a man can you [mockingly] deceive (against) Him?”** The idea is that, just as they can deceive one another and even themselves, do they have the temerity to think that they can deceive God? What is difficult to relay in the translation is the inference of *mocking*; when Job's friends attempt to deceive God, they mock His omniscience and His character. **Do not be deceived; God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap** (Gal. 6:7). Obviously, it is possible to deceive any man; it is impossible to deceive God. Barnes: *You may conceal your thoughts and motives from man, but you cannot from God. You may use arguments that may impose upon man—you may employ fallacies and sophisms which he cannot detect, but every such effort is vain with God.*<sup>13</sup>

One of the principles implied here, and certainly taught elsewhere, is that we stand or fall before God apart from the judgment of others. What others think of us or think they know about us is inconsequential. Our opinions of others is equally inconsequential. We are not placed on this earth to evaluate the spiritual lives of other believers. **“Do not judge, so that you are not judged yourselves. For in the way that you judge, you will also be judged, and**

<sup>12</sup> Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 255.

<sup>13</sup> Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 256.



by your standard of measure, it will be measured out to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but you do not notice the log which is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and, observe, the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly enough to take the speck out of your brother's eye." (Matt. 7:1–5). Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master, he stands or falls; and stand he will, for the Lord is able to make him stand (Rom. 14:4).

**“A refutation He will refute you;  
if in the secret you are lifting up [your] faces. Job 13:10**

**“God will certainly refute you if you have  
privately taken joy [in my suffering].**

We begin this verse with the Hiphil infinitive absolute of *yâkach* (נָכַח) [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 to resolve a conflict, to render a decision*. However, here it is used with the direct object *you*, which changes its meaning. Then it means *to correct, to rebuke, to refute, to reprove*. Strong's #3198 (and #3197) BDB #406. This is followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect of the same verb.

This second line is quite difficult; let me give you some other renderings:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	...if ye are secretly partial.
Dr. George R. Noyes	...if you secretly have respect to persons.
NEB	[He will most surely expose you] if you take his part by falsely accusing me.
TEV	Even though your prejudice is hidden, [he will reprimand you].
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	...if in secret ye accept faces.

My main problem with this verse and these translations is that what Job is saying doesn't seem to internally jive. That is, Job is promising an very strong rebuke or refutation to his friends from God if they are showing partiality toward someone or something? It just seems incongruous and out of place.

This is followed by the hypothetical particle, the *bêyth* preposition, definite article and the masculine substantive of *çêther* (סֵתֶר) [pronounced *SAY-ther*], which means *a covering, a hiding place, secrecy, privately*. Strong's #5643 BDB #512. This gives us: **“A refutation He will refute you, if, in secrecy,...”** What follows is the masculine plural of *pânîym* (פָּנִים) [pronounced *paw-NEEN*], which means *face* (it is always found in the plural). Strong's #6440 BDB #815.

The next verb is disputed. It is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural of *nâsâ'* (נָסַא') [pronounced *naw-SAW*], which has several different Qal meanings: It means (1) *to take up, to lift up*; (2) *to lift up someone's head* (this is used in a favorable way; i.e., it is used to mean *to make one cheerful or merry*; (3) *to lift up one's own countenance*, i.e., *to be cheerful, full of confidence*, (4) *to bear, to carry*, (5) *to lift up in a balance*, i.e., *to weigh carefully*; (6) *to bear one's sin or punishment*, and there are some very similar related meanings as well. Strong #5375 (and Strong's #4984) BDB #669. What they have done is privately or secretly *lifted [their] faces*. They thought themselves to be right and they were happy about it, at Job's expense.<sup>14</sup> Job's situation should have elicited from them great sorrow and commiseration. Rather than jumping all over Job for what they have assumed him to have done wrong, their sympathy should have been with Job. As the Bible said: To his own master he stands or falls.

<sup>14</sup> I should mention that in the Syriac and Vulgate codices, we have the verb which means *to turn [away] one's face*. So it is possible that Job is accusing his friends of having privately turned against him. However, that doesn't hold water either, as it is pretty obvious that his friends have turned against him. There is no need for secrecy in that regard.

**“Will not His majesty [or, rising up] terrify  
you  
and His dread fall upon you?”**

Job 13:11

**“Aren’t you concerned about His rising up  
against you and suddenly coming upon you  
and terrifying you?”**

This verse begins with the interrogative and the negative along with the feminine singular of  $s^{\text{e}}\text{êth}$  (נָשׂוּ) [pronounced  $s^{\text{e}}\text{-AYTH}$ ], and its meanings are (1) *a raising up, an uprising, a lifting up* (Gen. 4:7 [dubius] Job 41:17), (2) *eminence, a place rising up on the skin* (Ex. 13:2, 10, 19); (3) *excellency, majesty* (Gen. 49:3 Job 13:11); and (4) *a sentence or decree of a judge* (Habak. 1:7—others take this to be pride). Ges. Strong’s #7613 BDB #673.

Next is the Piel imperfect of  $bâ'ath$  (נָפַח) [pronounced *baw-AHTH* or *baw-GAHTH*]; it means *to fall upon, to fall upon suddenly* and therefore *to startle*. Strong’s #1204 BDB #129. This gives us: **“Will not His majesty [or rising up] terrify you?”** The meaning is, **“Aren’t you concerned about His rising up against you and suddenly coming upon you and terrifying you?”** Job points out that they are taking a big chance in their attitude and behavior toward him. Their callous disregard of what they have known to be true of Job in the past, their presumption of his guilt, should cause them to be fearful of a God Who knows the hearts of men.

As throughout all of the book of Job, we continue to have parallels to our Lord and His walk upon this earth. The men of our Lord’s time, those who persecuted Him, even though they could find no wrong in Him, presumed His guilt and desired that He be punished for the things that He said. Liberal Christians—that is, those who belong to a *Christian* denomination but, for the most part, have not placed their reliance for salvation completely upon Jesus Christ—do not recognize what our Lord said and did. They seem to have no clue whatsoever as to the powerful things that He said. They view Him as a man Who taught a higher morality than the Law, which, is, in itself, incorrect. One Jewish person with whom I corresponded correctly pointed out that in the main of His teachings, Jesus taught just what was in the Law. People are firstly confused about that. They think that what our Lord taught in the Sermon on the Mount, for instance, was different from that which we find in the Torah. Jesus taught things here which were in opposition to the traditions of man and in opposition to the false religion of the Jews, but what He taught was in full accordance with the spirit and the letter of the Law (as He was the Author of the Torah). However, what Liberal Christians (and liberal theologians) are most confused about is just Who Christ presented Himself to be. They either ignore certain passages in the New Testament or they do not even realize. Most Jews, on the other hand, are much smarter about Who Jesus was than most liberal theologians. A liberal theologian will often call Jesus, *Jesus Christ*, as though that were His first and last name. A Jew would never do that; a Jew will call Him *Jesus*—never *Jesus Christ*—because a Jew actually knows what that means. The liberal theologian who calls Jesus, *Jesus Christ*; the blasphemer who takes His name in vain, are both confessing great spiritual truths without realizing it. And the truth that they confess the Jew recognizes as either being the truth or blasphemous. **And it came to pass while He was praying alone, that the disciples were with Him, and He questioned them, saying, “Who do the multitudes say that I am?” And they answered and said, “John the Baptizer; but others, say Elijah; and others say that one of the prophets of old has risen again.” And He aid to them, “But who do you say that I am?” And Peter answered and said, “The Christ [or, Messiah] of God.” But He warned them, and instructed them not to tell this to anyone, saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and scribes and be killed and be raised up on the third day.” (Luke 9:18–22). “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him will the Son of man be ashamed when He comes in His glory, and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.” (Luke 9:26). A Jew during the time of our Lord and a Jew today cannot hear these words and remain neutral. A Jew cannot hear these words and grant that Jesus was a great teacher, a good teacher, or maybe even a prophet. Jesus made it absolutely clear as to Who He was. Either He was lying, He was a total nutcase, or He was the unique Son of God, the Creator of the Universe. But what *good prophet* or what *good teacher* would teach that He was the unique Son of God? That is absolutely illogical. **“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life, and it is these that bare witness of Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life.” (John 5:39–40). They said, therefore to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.” (John 6:28–29). John 14:6: Jesus said to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.” John 11:31–34a, 37–38: The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, “I showed you many good works from the Father—for which of them are you stoning me?” The Jews answered Him, “For a good work, we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because you, being a man, make Yourself out to be God!” Jesus answered them, “...If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe****

Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and understand the Father is in Me, and I am in the Father.”

One of the most dramatic moments of the New Testament is found in Luke 4:17–21: **And the scroll of the prophet Ilsaiah was handed to Him, and He opened the scroll and found the place where it stood written, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.” And He closed the book, and He gave it back to the attendance, and He sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed upon Him. And He began to say to them, “Today, this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”** You may reject Jesus as a liar or as a man who is completely and totally out of his mind; but you cannot reject Him as God and as the Messiah and yet still allow that He was perhaps a good man and a good teacher. That is completely and totally illogical. A good teacher would not lie about Who He is. A prophet would not be that confused as to who he is.

The Jews of the time of Christ had no confusion as to Who He said He was. **The Jews said to Him, “Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets; and You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word, he shall never taste of death.’ Certainly You are not greater than our father Abraham, who has died? The prophets died also; who do You make Yourself out to be?”** Jesus answered, **“If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father Who glorifies Me, of Whom you say, ‘He is our God’; and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him, and if I say that I do not know Him, I would be a liar like you—but I do know Him, and I diligently guard His Word. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it and was glad.”** The Jews therefore said to Him, **“You are not yet fifty years old, and You have seen Abraham?”** Jesus said to them, **“Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was, I existed eternally [lit., I am].”** Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple (John 8:52–59).

**“Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel My called upon one: I am He, I am the first, I am also the last. Certainly My hand founded the earth and My right hand spread out the heavens. When I called to them, they stood together...Come near to Me, listen to this: From the first, I have not spoken in secret. From the time it took place, I was there. And now, Lord Y<sup>h</sup>owah has sent Me and His Spirit.”** (Isa. 48:12–13, 16). **And when I [John] saw Him [Jesus], I fell at His feet as a dead man. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last and the living One; and I was dead, and observe, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and Hades.”** (Rev. 1:17–18).

There are some who wonder why are there four gospels? Why don't we have just one historical record of our Lord as we do of the church in the book of Acts? There are several reasons: (1) In the mouth of two or three witnesses, a truth is established. We have four historical records for four very different men who all testify to the same Jesus. Historians look for two things in an historical record: (a) was the author a primary source, or, how close to the primary source was the author; and, (b) is there any corroboration from other sources? We have two sources who were primary sources: Matthew and John. Both observed our Lord face to face, day in and day out for three years. Both saw Him in His resurrection body. Mark received much of his information from Peter, who was an eyewitness. It is possible that Mark was directed by Peter to record all of this and it is possible that through the sermons of Peter, Mark, as his ally, took copious notes. Luke was an historian on a par with Josephus—except that he was more accurate (I know some historians will grimace to hear that). He gathered his information from a variety of sources: historical records (my educated guess is that he used both the books of Matthew and Mark as source material, as well as primary and secondary sources in order to put together the most complete and the only chronological gospel. Luke was a Greek doctor, John was a Jewish fisherman and the only Apostle who had a clue throughout most of our Lord's ministry (although Peter would occasionally shine); Mark was a Jew as well as a loser and a failure in the eyes of Paul (for awhile, anyway); and Matthew was one who knew the most Old Testament Scripture, and who was seen by many as a trader to his Jewish roots due to his occupation as a tax collector. We have four different men from four different backgrounds who corroborate the claims and historicity of Jesus Christ. The sheer massive numbers of New Testament documents and the testimony of these four witnesses is enough to convince any impartial historian that the Jesus of the Bible is the historical Jesus of Nazareth; and therefore, His claims to be the Son of the Living God, His claim to be the Messiah stand as a testimony to Who He was or condemn him as a liar or mentally deranged. There are enough historical records

for you to make this call. One of my favorite quotes concerning our Lord comes from C.S. Lewis, who wrote: *I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people of say about Him: "I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God." That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the son of God: or else a madman or something worse... You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.*<sup>15</sup>

I have gone off on a tangent, so let me return to my original point. Job stood accused before his friends without a reason. Jesus stood accused before His people of blasphemy, but without a reason, as He demonstrated through His teaching and through His miracles that He was the Messiah Who had been promised. Job warns his friends of sudden terror which would befall them for their misjudgment. Our Lord warned the Israelites of His day of making the same miscalculation concerning His person. **And He kept on saying to them, "You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world; I am not of this world. I said, therefore to you, that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am [He], you will die in your sins."** (John 8:23–24). **But He looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written, 'The stone which the builders rejected, this became the chief cornerstone?' Every one who falls on that Stone will be broken to pieces; but one whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust."** (Luke 20:17–18). I know what is in my own heart. I know that I would have no salvation apart from what Jesus Christ did for me on the cross. No matter what standards a religion sets (unless they have no standards), I personally would not make the cut. People who have known me for a long time, know that in my youth and early adulthood, I did quite a number of things which were unquestionably sinful. As I get older, my sins have become more refined and less observable, but I continue to sin. If not for my Lord, I would spend my eternity in hell. It is what I deserve, but it is not what I will get, because God is gracious, loving and I can depend upon Him because He is a just God Who requires absolute justice.

Let's examine the second line, which is parallel to the first. The subject of the sentence is the masculine singular of *pachad* (פָּחַד) [pronounced *PAH-khahd*] means *fear, dread, a thing which is feared, that which is feared*. Strong's #6343 BDB #808. With it is the masculine singular suffix, allowing us to render this *His dread* or *a dread of Him*. The verb means simply *to fall* (Strong's #5307 BDB #656). What follows is the prepositional phrase *upon you*. Job asks his friends that if they accuse him unjustly, aren't they concerned about God's dealings with them? **"Do not judge, or else you will be judged. For in the way that you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured out to you. And why do you look at the speck in your prother's eye, but you do not notice the log that is in your own? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and, observe, the log is in your own eye?"** (Matt. 7:1–4).

**"Your memorial [sayings] [are] memorable  
recitations of ashes;  
with reference to backbones of clay [are]  
your backbones.**

Job 13:12

**"Your memorial sayings are memorable  
recitations of ashes;  
with reference to backbones of clay are your  
backbones [i.e., you are spineless].**

The idea behind this verse is simple—the reasoning and logic of Job's three associates are faulty. However, let's look more carefully at the translation:

*The Amplified Bible*

Your memorable sayings are proverbs of ashes [valueless]; your defenses are defenses of clay [and will crumble].

*The Emphasized Bible*

Are not your memorable sayings proverbs of ashes? Breastworks of clay your breastworks?

<sup>15</sup> Josh McDowell; *A Ready Defense*; ©1990; Here's Life Publishers; p 241–242, who quoted from *Mere Christianity*; C.S. Lewis; New York; Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. ©1960, pp. 40–41.

Keil and Delitzsch            Your memorable words are proverbs of dust, You strongholds are become strongholds of clay!

Dr. George R. Noyes        Your maxims are parables of ashes; Your ramparts are ramparts of clay.

Young's Lit. Translation    Your remembrances are similes of ashes, For high places of clay your heights.

The first word is the masculine plural of zikkârôwn (זִכָּרוֹן) [pronounced *zik-kaw-ROHN*], which means *a memorial, a remembrance*; the Passover was to be a *memorial* to the Jewish people (Ex. 12:14 13:9). Stones were left stacked in a certain way to leave a remembrance of God's intervening (Ex. 28:12 Joshua 4:7). The same word is used in Esther of a book of *records* (Esther 6:1). What Job refers to specifically is Bildad's recalling of the wisdom from the past. Strong's #2146 BDB #272. What Job likens this wisdom of the past to is *mâshâl* (מָשָׁל) [pronounced *maw-SHAWL*], which means *parable, proverb, discourse, memorable recitation*. *Mâshâl* refers more to a short, often poetic, easily-remembered point of doctrine. One of the more important aspects of this word, is its quality of being remembered. Therefore, I will translate this *memorable recitation*. Here, in Psalm 78:2, *mâshâl* refers to a *comparison* or *an analogy*. Strong's #4912 BDB #605. It is in the construct and modified by the word for *ashes*; the very same ashes referred to in many of the burnt offerings. I'm not certain if anyone has explored this, but this is one of the few times that we have words specifically used in the Levitical offerings. Let me hazard an explanation. What these men have offered up to Job are worthless and meaningless. After awhile in the history of the nation of Israel, the sacrifices and memorials offered up by the people had become meaningless. As Thieme often said, "Ritual without reality is meaningless." This scene is so similar to Christ suffering before the Jewish people without a lawful reason, and the people have brought nothing of meaning before Him as God. **"But go and learn what this means: 'I desire compassion and not sacrifice'; for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."** (Matt. 9:13). When sacrifices are brought before God, but the one making the offering has no idea as to what he is doing; when Cain brought before God the works of his hands; when man brings before God his own works instead of God's righteousness in Jesus Christ—these things are as worthless before God as the opinions and views of Job's friends to him.

The second line begins with the lamed prefixed preposition (*to, for, with reference to*) and the masculine plural construct of *ga<sup>b</sup>v* (גַּב) [pronounced *gah<sup>b</sup>v*], and this is a word that I should tell you means *fortress* and just leave it at that, but it is one of the more unusual words in the Old Testament which seems to have a different meaning wherever it is found. BDB and Gesenius at first list the meaning as *anything convex, curved, gibbous*; e.g., *a back, a mound*, and then they go to town with almost each and every different occurrence of the word, given meanings like *the back of animals, of man; back of a shield, bulwark, fortress, a vaulted house, a vault, a rim, the circumference of a wheel, the eyebrow, bow of the eye, back or surface of the altar*. I might adjust that ever so little to mean *the backbone, the structure, the basic strength and structure of the thing in context*. However, because of Lev. 14:9, the passage where we have a reference to *eyebrows*, we cannot get away from the fact that this does refer to something *curvaceous* as well. This is a word which may have metamorphosed from being that which was curved to the structure of something. Strong's #1354 BDB #146. What follows is the word *clay* and *ga<sup>b</sup>v* again. This gives us, *with a reference to backbones of clay [are] your backbones*. The arguments of Job's friends had no strength and their proposing these arguments before a broken man also showed a distinct lack of backbone. Barnes: *...the arguments behind which they entrenched themselves were like clay. They could not resist an attack made upon them, but would be easily thrown down, like mud walls. Grotius renders it, "Your towers [of defence] are tumuli of clay."* Rosenmüller remarks on the verse, *that the ancients were accustomed to inscribe sentences of valuable historical facts on pillars. If these were engraved on stone, they would be permanent; if on pillars covered with clay, they would soon be obliterated. On a pillar or column at Alexandria, the architect cut his own name at the base deep in the stone. On the plaster or stucco with which the column was covered, he inscribed the name of the person to whose honour it was reared. The consequence was, that that name became soon obliterated; his own then appeared, and was permanent...the apothegms and maxims behind which they entrenched themselves were like mud walls, and could not withstand an attack.*<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 257.

## Job Affirms His Faith and Asks His Friends to Listen to Him

**“Be silent away [or, on account of] me  
and I, [even] I will speak;  
and let whatever pass over me.**

Job 13:13

**“Be silent away on account of me  
and I, even I will speak  
then let come what may.**

I guess the listings in Owen’s book along with his translation made this verse seem more difficult than it is. I have listed a few translations below:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Quietly let me alone, that I may speak out, Then let come on me what may.
Keil and Delitzsch	Leave me in peace, and I will speak, And let what will come on me.
Dr. George R. Noyes	Hold your peace, and let me speak—And then let any thing come upon me.
The Septuagint	[Be silent that I may speak, and cease from anger,
TEV	Be quiet and let me have a chance to speak, and let the results be what they will.
<i>Young’s Lit. Translation</i>	Keep silent from me, and I speak, And pass over me doth what?

The first verb is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil imperative of *chârash* (חָרַשׁ) [pronounced *chaw-RAHSH*], which means *to be silent, to exhibit silence*. Strong’s #2790 BDB #361. The *mîn* preposition is next, which can mean *away from, on account of*. The key generally is *separation*, although I don’t see that as clearly here. Strong’s #4480 BDB #577. Affixed is the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular suffix. This is followed by a *wâw* conjunction and the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, voluntative Piel imperfect of *dâ<sup>b</sup>var* (דַּבַּר) [pronounced *daw<sup>b</sup>-VAHR*], which means *to speak, to declare, to proclaim, to announce*. Strong’s #1696 BDB #180. This is followed by the emphatic use of the personal pronoun *I*.

That last line is quite interesting, as we have several phrases which are similar today: *what will be will be; come what may*. This phrase begins with the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, voluntative Qal imperfect of *‘â<sup>b</sup>var* (עָבַר) [pronounced *aw-BAHR*], which means *to pass over, to pass through, to pass, to go over*. In the Hiphil, this would mean *to cause to pass over, to transmit, to send over, to conduct over*. We will add in the word *let* to convey the voluntative. Strong’s #5674 BDB #716. This is followed by the prepositional phrase *over me* and the interrogative *mâh* (מָה) [pronounced *maw*] and it means *what, how*. It can also function as an indefinite pronoun and be rendered *anything, something, whatever*. Strong’s #4100 BDB #552. I will treat this as the subject. Barnes: *Allow me to express my sentiments, whatever may be the consequences to myself. One cannot but be forcibly reminded by this verse of the remark of the Greek philosopher, “Strike, but hear me.”*<sup>17</sup>

We have to be deft in examining what Job has to say. We know that later on in this book, he will be rebuked by Elihu and God for some of the things which he says. Therefore, we must be alert to that. However, this and the next chapter will only conclude the first round of talks. There will be two more rounds of discourses and Job will speak after each one of his friends speak. So far, Job has not said anything which is way out of line doctrinally. Other expositors have hit him pretty hard for some of the things that he has said, but I would feel rather nervous about doing so, knowing that I couldn’t take one-tenth the pressure that Job faces. I don’t tend to look upon this verse as rhetorical; he has just insulted his friends, telling them that their arguments were structurally unsound and I am thinking that one of his friends was about to interrupt and Job says this. Now, *interrupt* is more of a modern idea. Job is in pain, he is suffering, although his mind is apparently quite in tact (Satan didn’t want a moment of Job’s grief and pain to go unnoticed). However, his speech may be impaired and his strength failing, which would make it seem as though he has come to the end of what it is he has to say. His friends would be eager to jump in, and Job, his mind going off on another direction, stops them before another round of speeches can begin.

**“For what reason should I take up my flesh  
in my teeth  
and place my soul in my hand?**

Job 13:14

**“Why on earth would I take up my own  
flesh in my teeth  
and place my soul in my own hand [by  
antagonizing God with my sins]?**

<sup>17</sup> Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 257.

In reading this verse, I was stumped from the get go; so let me give you some translations, although I expect they will be quite similar:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	In any case I will take up my flesh in my teeth, And my life will I put in my hand.
<i>The Septuagint</i>	[Be silent that I may speak, and cease from anger,] while I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in my hand.
Schultens	Whatever may be the event, I will take my flesh in my teeth, and my life in my hand.
TEV	I am ready to risk my life.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth? And my soul put in my hand?

This verse begins with the the preposition ʿal (אֲל) [pronounced *al*], which means *upon, against, concerning, in accordance with*; it is followed by the interrogative mâh, again, which means, when preceded by the preposition ʿal at the beginning of a quote, *upon what, upon what ground, wherefore, why, for what reason?* Strong's #4100 BDB #552. The verb is the 1<sup>st</sup> person, Qal imperfect of nâsâ' (נָשָׂא) [pronounced *naw-SAW*], which means *to take up, to life up, to bear one's sin or punishment*. Strong #5375 (and Strong's #4984) BDB #669. The phrase that follows is *my flesh in [or, by, with] my teeth*. This gives us: **"For what reason should I take up my flesh in my teeth?"** This is obviously a saying which I am going to relate to wild animals, which were more prevalent and dangerous in the day of Job. Job asks why he should take up his own flesh in his teeth as an attacking wild animal would do. If Job has sinned and committed all these terrible acts and is being punished for them, why the heck would he continue being tormented by God by continuing to commit these sins? He might as well take up his own flesh with his teeth, as if attacked by a wild animal. Job has more sense than that. If all he needs to do is go to God and if all he needs to do is to ask forgiveness and turn away from this sin or these sins, he would have done that a long time ago. If he is to blame for what has come upon him, then Job has taken up his own flesh with his teeth, and he is smart enough to back off here.

Before I get into the second phrase, I suddenly had a thought. I know that Job is presented as poetry, and perhaps it is. However, as a teacher, I have noticed a change in the slang, proceeding from shortened one syllable words to even letters, which indicates a long intellectual slide in our youth. Would it not be feasible that some men typically thought in pairs or triples of thoughts. That is, their reasoning tended to include either two thoughts or two ways of expressing the same thought? I am not referring to Solomon, who no doubt studied Job and used his style of discourse to write the prose of Proverbs; however, I am thinking of Job and his friends whose speech tends to incorporate two and three thoughts at a time with each sentence, these thoughts being strung together with wâw consecutives and wâw conjunctions. I don't know that I would stake my life on this theory or that I would know just how widespread it is, but I see it as a very reasonable hypothesis.

The second line begins with *and my soul* which is followed by the 1<sup>st</sup> person, Qal imperfect of sîym (סִיַּם) [pronounced *seem*] which means *to put, to place, to set*. Strong's #7760 BDB #962. This is followed by the phrase *in my palm*. The noun is the feminine singular of kaph (כַּף) [pronounced *kaf*], which means *palm, hollow or flat of the hand, sole of the foot and even bowl*. Strong's #3709 BDB #496. Continuing the question of the previous line, this would be: **"And for what reason would I place my soul in my hand?"** Job is about to speak to God—he has asked his friends not to speak. He is willing to let come what may and now reassures them that he would not take his own flesh in his mouth nor would he place his destiny and his life in his own hand. Many believers have learned to allow God to have control of our lives, albeit grudgingly.<sup>18</sup>

**"Behold, He is slaying me;  
for Him I will wait;  
only, my ways to His face(s) I will make clear  
(or, prove).**

Job 13:15

**"You have observed that God is slaying me;  
yet for Him I will wait for my death;  
only this time, I will state my case to His face.**

V. 15 is majestic in the KJV, so I want to give some of the translations before I work on it:

<sup>18</sup> I should mention that we have similar phrasing in Juges 12:3 I Sam. 19:5 Psalm 119:109.

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Lo! he may slay me [yet] for him will I wait,—
Keil and Delitzsch	Behold, He slayeth me—I wait for Him; I will only prove my way before Him.
KJV	Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; but I will maintain mine own ways before him.
Dr. George R. Noyes	Lo! let him slay me; I will trust in him; I will vindicate my ways before him.
NASB	Though He slay me, I will hope in Him. Nevertheless I will argue my ways before Him.
NEB	If he would slay me, I should not hisitate; I should still argue my cause to his face.
NIV	Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him; I will surely defend my ways to his face.
NIV (alternate)	He will surely slay me; I have no hope—yet I will.
NJB	...let him kill me if he will; I have no other hope than to justify my conduct in his eyes.
NKJV	Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him.
NRSV	See, he will kill me; I have no hope; but I will defend my ways to his face.
REB	If he wishes to slay me, I have nothing to lose; I shall still defend my conduct to his face.
The Septuagint	Though the Mighty One, as He has begun, may subdue me, yet I will speak and maintain my cause before Him.
TEV	I have lost all hope, so what if God kills me? I am going ot state my case to him.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Lo, He doth slay me—I wait not! Only, my ways unto His face I argue.

As you can see, there are a variety of ways of translating this verse, from the most powerful and stirring NKJV to the mundane and ignoble NJB. Everyone has a point of view and previous prejudices. For me, when I have memorized and am stirred by the translation of th KJV, I personally hate to let such a translation go. However, I have to go in whatever direction the original text takes me. What is stated in the Authorized version may be a marvelous and quite moving sentiment, and an admirable one to be made by any believer in Jesus Christ who is udner pressure, we still have to go in whatever way the translation takes us.

We begin with the interjection *hên* (הִנֵּה) [pronounced *hayn*], which means *lo, behold*. More freely, it would be rendered *observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out*. Strong's #2005 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243. Then we have the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *qâṭal* (לָחַץ) [pronounced *kaw-TAHL*], which means *to slay*, and it is found only in this passage, Job 24:14 and Psalm 139:19.\* We have a similar verb in the Chaldean, with a slight change in the vowel pointing (Strong's #6992 BDB #1111). Strong's #6991 BDB #881. The 1<sup>st</sup> person suffix is affixed to this verb. “Behold, He is killing me!”

Here is where we have some discrepancies in the original. The Masoretic text here has *lô'* (לֹא), which is a negative; however, in one early printed edition of the Masoretic text we have *lô* (לוֹ) [pronounced *low*], which means *to Him* (or, *for, with regards to, with respect to Him*). You will note that insofar as we are concerned, there is no difference in the pronunciation—a pronunciation of aleph (א) is not given in any of the lexicons or concordances. We find the latter rendering in the Aramaic, Syrian and Vulgate codices—that is, it is translated as *to* (or, *for*) *Him*, and not as a negative. It is as though the copyist were taking dictation after a long a grueling session. One read and the other listened. The Masorites list fifteen places where we find the word *not* written instead of *for [or, to] him*. Ex. 21:8 Lev. 11:21 25:30 I Sam. 2:3 II Sam. 16:18 Psalm 100:4 139:16 Job 13:15 41:4 Ezra 4:2 Prove. 19:7 26:2 Isa. 9:2 63:9; on the other hand, we have several instances where *lô* was written instead of *lô'* (I Sam. 2:16 20:2 Job 6:21).

There are all kinds of goofy cults and religions out there who think that Scripture was willy nilly changed to suit whatever generation had it in their hands. I have been told by an astrologer that all the Biblical references to astrology and numerology were removed from the Bible by various religious councils. I was taught by those who adhere to reincarnation that these same mysterious religious councils removed all references to reincarnation from the Bible as well. The more *intellectual* expositors even maintain that the Torah was not original with Moses, but that it was really a compilation of various writings over a period of as much as a thousand years, and strung together in such a way as to support the religions notions of that time period. However, in verse such as this, we get a true grasp of how important and how revered the Scripture really was. For whatever reason, the Israelites believed this verse to be *for Him will I wait*, even though it was written *not will I wait*. As I mentioned we find the



correct rendering in the Aramaic, Syrian and Vulgate codices and in one of the early printed editions; however, this is written *not will I wait* and read *for Him will I wait*. Now, if another rendering was theologically more acceptable and the Jews were in the habit of changing, appending and modifying Scripture to fit their own personal whims of the day, things like this just wouldn't have occurred. It would have been changed, and, several generations, we wouldn't even know such a discrepancy even existed. However, it was written incorrectly one time in a manuscript which became a primary source of subsequent manuscripts, and the Jews kept the incorrect text, but read what should have been there for hundreds upon hundreds of years. These were a reverent people who recognized the power and the holiness of God's Word. They were not about to change any of it. What we have here instead are those who play fast and loose with the rules—those who are astrologers, those who believe in reincarnation—who totally distort Who Jesus Christ is, despite having the testimony of four witnesses (actually seven or eight, if you include the writers of the epistles). You must realize that if they preach a different Jesus than the one Who is testified to by several eyewitnesses, that they will not be adverse to making claims about the Bible to support their own philosophical views. It is tiny verses like this that make us realize that the Israelites did not make wholesale changes of Scripture to suit their religious beliefs; they had a respect for God's Word and a fear of God. Now, if someone wants to believe in numerology, astrology, reincarnation and in any other false system of religion or philosophy, that is their prerogative. However, why on earth do they have to make fallacious claims that Jesus and the Bible also agree with them? Why can't they just stand upon their own beliefs and say, *Jesus may have taught this or that, or the Bible teaches this or that, but here's what I believe*. Why must they think that it is important for Jesus or the Bible to line up with their belief system? I will tell you why: deep inside their souls, they know the Bible is the Word of God; they know that Jesus is someone unlike anyone else who has ever lived on this earth—perhaps, deep down, they even know He is the Unique Son of God. And they desperately want credence to be given to their beliefs and to their philosophy, so they grasp at straws in hopes that someone else will think that their beliefs have some Biblical basis. It is a simple matter of making God in their own image. This is, at worst, self-worship; and, at best, self-delusion.

What follows this disputed reading is the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular, Piel imperfect of *yâchal* (יָחַל) [pronounced yaw-KHAHL], which means *to wait, to await* in the Piel. Implicit in the meaning of this verb is the idea of *trust*; one waits because he has trust in the one he is waiting for. Strong's #3176 BDB #403. This gives us *for Him I will wait*; it makes less sense to render this *I will not wait*, which is what is found in the Masoretic text.

The third line begins with the adverb *ʾakē* (אָכֵּ) [pronounced ahk<sup>e</sup>], and it means *surely, certainly, no doubt, only, only this once*. Here, it would be given the latter two renderings. Strong's #389 BDB #36. This is followed by *my ways to His face(s)*; and the Hiphil imperfect of *yâkach* (יָכַח) [pronounced yaw-KAHK], a verb found often in the book of Job, and which means *to decide, to make a cause clear,*<sup>19</sup> *to adjudge, to prove, to render a decision*. Strong's #3198 (and #3197) BDB #406. This gives us: **“Behold, He is slaying me; for Him I will wait; only, my ways to His face(s) I will make clear (or, prove).”** My interpretation of this is different than I suspect that you will find elsewhere. God is obviously killing Job—Job and his friends will all agree to that (although, we know differently). Job will wait for God to finish the job—then he will speak to God face to face and bring his case before God in the court of heaven. In context, and in front of his friends, he will again approach God in prayer and bring his case before God. NIV: *No matter what happens, Job intends to seek vindication from God and believes that he will receive it.*<sup>20</sup> Barnes: *“God may so multiply my sorrows and pains that I cannot survive them...If...it should so happen that my sufferings should be so increased that I should die, yet I will do it.”*<sup>21</sup>

Barnes (again): *The sentiments here expressed is one of the noblest that could fall from the lips of man. It indicates unwavering confidence in God, even in death. It is the determination of a mind to adhere to him, though he should strip away comfort after comfort, and though there should be no respite to his sorrows until he should sink down in death. This is the highest expression of piety, and this it is the privilege of the friends of god to experience. When professed earthly friends become cold towards us, our love for them also is chilled. Should they leave and forsake us in the midst of suffering and want, and especially should they leave us on a bed of death, we should cease to confide in them. But not so in respect to God. Such is the nature of our confidence in him, that*

<sup>19</sup> This is from *Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 224.

<sup>20</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 739.

<sup>21</sup> *Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1*; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 258.

though he takes away comfort after comfort, though our health is destroyed and our friends are removed, and though we are led down into the valley and the shadow of death, yet still we never lose our confidence in him. We feel that all will yet be well. We look forward to another state, and anticipate the blessedness of another and a better world. Reader, can you in sincerity lift the eye toward God, and say to him, “Though Thou does slay me, though comfort after comfort is taken away, though the waves of trouble roll over me, and though I go down into the valley of the shadow of death, yet I will trust in Thee;—thine I will be even then, and when all is dark I will believe that God is right, and just, and true, and good, and will never doubt that he is worth of my eternal affection and praise?”<sup>22</sup>

**“Furthermore, He to me [is] for deliverance  
for not before His face(s) a godless [man]  
will come.**

Job 13:16

**“Furthermore, He is my deliverance  
for the godless man will not approach in His  
sight.**

In v. 15, Job began to speak of his defense before God and he continues in the same vein in this verse. He begins with the adverb gam (גַּם) [pronounced *gahm*] which means *also, in addition to, moreover, furthermore*. Strong’s #1571 BDB #168. This is followed by the masculine singular pronoun hūw (הוּא) [pronounced *hoo*], which should be translated *he [is]*.<sup>23</sup> Strong’s #1931 BDB #214. What follows is the phrase *to me to (or, for) salvation (or, deliverance)*. Job is not afraid to face God—even though he knows that God has done this to him, he also knows that God is his final deliverance and his final salvation. Particularly in his present physical state with all of the hardship that he has endured, death to Job is a welcome deliverance from his present pain to God. **“For there the upright would reason with Him and I will be delivered forever from my Judge.”** (Job 23:7). Paul wrote: **For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ** (Phil. 1:19). **Then you will say on that day, “I will give thanks to You, O Yehowah, for, although You were angry with me, Your anger is turned away; and You now comfort me. Observe, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. For Y<sup>h</sup>owah God is my strength and my song, and He has become my deliverance.”** (Isa. 12:1–2). **For His anger is but for a moment; His grace is for a lifetime. Weeping may last for the night, but a shout of joy in the morning** (Psalm 30:5). **“For a brief moment, I forsook you, but with great compassion, I will gather you. In an outburst of anger, I hid My face from you for a moment, but with everlasting grace, I will have compassion upon you,” says Y<sup>h</sup>owah your Redeemer** (Isa. 54:7–8).

Barnes: *“He is unto me for salvation,” that is, “I put my trust in him, and he will save me. The opportunity of appearing before God, and of maintaining my cause in his presence, will result in my deliverance from the charges which are alleged against me. I shall be able there to show that I am not a hypocrite, and God will become my defender.”*<sup>24</sup>

Then we have the sentence, *for not before His face(s) a godless (or, profane) [man] shall come*. At the end of this verse we have the adjective chānēph (חַנְפֵּה) [pronounced *khaw-NAYF*], which means *profane, irreligious, godless*; and therefore, *heathen, apostate*. Gesenius renders this *profane, impious*. For those with a limited vocabulary, *godless* is good; for those whose vocabulary is more extensive, we will go with *profane*. Here, chānēph is used as a substantive, hence the insertion of the word *man*. Strong’s #2611 BDB #338. Job knows that he will be able to approach God as a man of God, and that the godless cannot approach Him. Barnes: *“For an hypocrite shall not come before him.” This seems to be a proverb, or a statement of a general and indisputable principle. Job admitted this to be true. Yet he expected to be able to vindicate himself before God, and this would prove that he was not an hypocrite—on the general principle that a man who was permitted to stand before God and to obtain his favour, could not be an unrighteous man. To God he looked with confidence; and god, he had no doubt, would be his defender. This fact would prove that he could not be an hypocrite, as his friends maintained.*<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 259.

<sup>23</sup> It is mistakenly called a demonstrative adjective in Owens.

<sup>24</sup> Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 260.

<sup>25</sup> Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 260.

**“Listen a listening to my word and to my  
declaration in your ears,**

Job 13:17

**“Give a careful listen to and heed my words  
and to my declaration in your ears,**

We have the verb *shâma'* (שָׁמַעַ) [pronounced *shaw-MAH*] used twice at the beginning of this verse. It means *to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, listen and take heed to, listen and take not of, listen and be cognizant of*. Strong's #8085 BDB #1033. It is first found in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperative and secondly in the Qal infinitive absolute. A verb used twice like this is emphatic. I have given a literal word-for-word rendering, but that does not convey the strength implied by the syntax. This is followed by the phrase *and [to] my declaration in your [plural] ears*. Job feels as though his audience is waning, that they are off thinking of their own arguments, so he is going to grab them by the shirt collar and bring them back. Barnes: *[listen to] the declaration which I have made of my innocence. He refers to his solemn declaration...that he had unwavering confidence in God, and that even should God slay him he would put confidence in him.*<sup>26</sup> Job is about to begin a public prayer to God. I must admit to having some problems with this, insofar as I recall some public prayers are used to get a particular viewpoint across without having to face debate on the issue (except perhaps by a fellow prayer warrior). However, this is a somewhat different situation. Job is in serious pain—physical and emotional—and his desire to speak to God is heartfelt and sincere. The fact that his friends are there just happen to be the circumstances in which he finds himself. I don't normally break off into a long prayer in front of friends of mine; but then I have never been in the pain and under the stress that Job finds himself. Given Job's sincere religious pre-disposition and his internal and external suffering, his going to God directly, even with his friends being there, is a fairly natural thing to do.

**“Behold, please, I have prepared an appeal;  
I know that I [even] I will be vindicated.**

Job 13:18

**“Listen, if you will, to the appeal which I  
have prepared;  
I know that I will be vindicated.**

Job is about to break out into prayer and he will appeal directly to God, as he did before. He wants his associates to listen carefully to him. The first verb is the Qal perfect of *'ârak* (אַרַךְ) [pronounced *aw-RAK'*], which means *to set in order, to arrange in order, to set in a row*. A simpler, more modern rendering might be *to prepare*. Strong's #6186 BDB #789. What Job has prepared is *mîsh<sup>e</sup>pâṭ* (מִשְׁפָּט) [pronounced *mish<sup>e</sup>-PAWT* or *meesh<sup>e</sup>-PAWT*], which is very consistently translated *judgement* throughout the KJV, with a several notable exceptions (Gen. 18:25 40:13 Ex. 15:25 21:9 26:30 Lev. 5:10 9:16 Num. 9:3, 14 15:16, 24). Gesenius has the most organized way of dealing with this: (1) *judgement; (a) the act of judging; (b) the place of judgment; (c) a forensic cause, the setting forth of a cause, to appeal a judgment; (d) the sentence of a judge; (e) the fault or crime one is judged for; (2) a right, that which is just, lawful according to law; (a) a law, a statute; a body of laws; (b) that which is lawfully due a person, a privilege, a legal privilege, the right of redemption, the right of primogeniture; (c) a manner, a custom; (d) a fashion, a kind, a plan*. The key to the choice of meaning here is the fact that Job is not the one judging, but he is the one under judgment; therefore, to him, this word means *appeal*. Strong's #4941 BDB #1048. Barnes suggests: *“I now set in ordre my cause; I enter on the pleading; I am confident that I shall so present it as to be declared righteous.”*<sup>27</sup> Several times, Job will prepare a case before God: **“Oh, that I knew where I might find Him; that I might come to His seat! I would present my case before Him and fill my mouth with arguments.”** (Job 23:3–4).

Job begins the second line with the Qal perfect of *I know* and the phrase *that I [even] I* and the Qal imperfect of *tsâdaq* (צָדַק) [pronounced *tsaw-DAHK*], and it means *to be righteous, to be just, to be justified*. It can also mean *to have a just cause, to speak the truth, to be vindicated*. Strong's #6663 BDB #842. My only concern here, and perhaps it is premature, but that his emphasis in the second line is upon himself and not upon his vindication. He could have doubled the verb, as he did in the previous verse; but he doubled the use of the personal pronoun *I*. How innocent Job feels that he is could be debated. However, he does not feel as though his guilt is in proportion to his pain. **“According to Your knowledge, I am indeed not guilty; yet there is no deliverance from Your hand.”** (Job 10:7).

<sup>26</sup> Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 260.

<sup>27</sup> Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 260.

Nor does God hold Job in contempt; recall what God said to Satan: “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, revering God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to ruin him without cause.” (Job 2:3b). Barnes distinguishes here between being declared righteous before the Law and *justification*, where we are declared righteous apart from our sins. I don’t know that we need to split those kinds of hairs here. Job is a believer and he is a believer who had matured enough for God to hold him up before Satan as a man of righteousness. God has declared Job righteous before Satan. And, we will see, that even in this righteousness, Job falls short of perfection. Furthermore, Job allows for the possibility that he has committed a sin or series of sins for which he needs forgiveness. “Why then don’t You pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity?” (Job 7:21).

**“Who [is] he [who] finds fault with me?**

**For then I would be caused to be silent and I would expire.** Job 13:19

**“Who can find fault with me?**

**This would cause me to be silent and I would breathe my last.**

The structure of the first sentence is a little difficult. Let’s look at some other renderings first:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Who is it that shall contend with me? For now if I should hold my peace why! I should breathe my last!
Keil and Delitzsch	Who then can contend with me? Then, indeed, I would be silent and expire.
NIV	Can anyone bring charges against me? If so, I will be silent and die.
REB	Who is there that can make a case against me so that I should be reduced to silence and death?
The Septuagint	For who is he that shall pleased with me, that I should now be silent, and faint?
TEV	Are you coming to accuse me, God? If you do, I am ready to be silent and die.
<i>Young’s Lit. Translation</i>	Who is he that doth strive with me? For now I keep silent and gasp.

This verse begins with the pronominal interrogative *mîy* (מִי) [pronounced *mee*], which is generally translated *who*. Strong’s #4310 BDB #566. Then we have the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular pronoun *he*. I would have expected this to be followed by a participial verb, but, instead, this is immediately followed by the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect of *riy<sup>h</sup>v* (רִיב) [pronounced *ree<sup>h</sup>v*], which means *to toss, to grapple; and therefore, to debate, contend, dispute*. This also has a legal meaning, which would be apropos in Job: *to conduct a case or suit against someone; to make a complaint against one; and, in the abstract, to find fault with someone*. Strong’s #7378 BDB #936. I would think that the latter meaning is the most accurate here. This is following by the prepositional phrase *with me*, giving us: “Who [is] he [who] finds fault with me?” Barnes gives the meaning here as: “Who is there now that will take up the cause, and enter into an argument against me? I have set my cause before God. I appeal now to all to take up the argument against me, and have no fear if they do as to the result. I am confident of a successful issue, and await calmly the divine adjudication.”<sup>28</sup>

Job has not yet begun speaking to God; he will in the next verse. Here, the unusual sentence structure asks for one of his associates to step forward not *to contend with him*; but *to find fault with him*. His three friends have been contending with him since the beginning of the book of Job; however, not one of them has brought forward evidence against Job other than the circumstantial evidence of his personal circumstances. So, before Job goes to God in an open prayer, he asks any of his friends to bring a charge against him. As we quoted before in the previous verse, Job can accept that perhaps he has sinned and should be forgiven; he is asking here to have that sin pointed out to him.

The second line begins with the conjunction *kîy* (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*] and the adverb *‘attâh* (עַתָּה) [pronounced *gâht-TAWH*]. The preposition *kîy* is used for causal relationships of all kinds, both antecedent and consequent, and is generally rendered *for, because, when, that*. *‘Attâh* is an adverb of time meaning *now*. Together, however, they mean *for in this case, for then*; and after a protosis, *surely then* and possibly *indeed*. Strong’s #3588 BDB #471 (for *kîy*) and Strong’s #6258 BDB #773 (for *‘attâh*). This is followed by the Hiphil imperfect of *chârash*

<sup>28</sup> Barnes’ Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; pp. 260–261.

(שָׁתֵּט) [pronounced *chaw-RAHSH*], a verb that we have seen three times in this chapter, and it means *to be silent, to exhibit silence*. Strong's #2790 BDB #361. This gives us: **“For then, I would be caused to be silent.”**

This is followed by the simple wâw conjunction and the 1<sup>st</sup> person, Qal imperfect of gâva' (גָּוַהַ) [pronounced *gaw-VAH* or *gaw-VAHG*], which means *to expire, to perish, to die*. Strong's #1478 BDB #157. This phrase is essentially rhetorical; Job has just told his friends to keep quiet and suddenly he says this. He knows that they have no dirt on him. Job has not committed any sins that would shock anyone. He has been honorable in his marriage, with his late children, and in his business deals. His friends have nothing to bring to him by way of specific sins that he has committed, because he hasn't committed any. **Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies** (Rom. 8:33). So, Job says that he will become silent and die (due to divine discipline) if his friends bring before him a sin or series of sins that he has committed.

Keil and Delitzsch have some comments which compare the book of Job to a Greek tragedy. Those comments would be apropos here: *Repelled by men, [Job] feels all the more strongly drawn to God. He desires to carry his cause before God. He certainly considers God to be his enemy, but...he will plead his cause with God, and prove to Him his innocence...Job's disputing with God is as terrible as it is pitiable. It is terrible, because he uplifts himself, Titan-like, against God; and pitiable, because the God against which he fights is not the God he has known, but a God that he is unable to recognise,—the phantom which the temptation has presented before his dim vision instead of the true God. This phantom is still the real God to him, but in other respects in no way differing from the inexorable ruling fate of the Greek tragedy. As in this the hero of the drama seeks to maintain his personal freedom against the mysterious power that is crushing him with an iron arm, so Job, even at the risk of sudden destruction, maintains the steadfast conviction of his innocence, in opposition to a God who has devoted him, as an evil-doer, to slow but certain destruction. The battle of freedom against necessity is the same as in the Greek tragedy. Accordingly one is obliged to regard it as an error, arising from simple ignorance, when it has been recently maintained that the boundless oriental imagination is not equal to such a truly exalted task as that of representing in art and poetry of the human spirit, and the maintenance of its dignity in the conflict with hostile powers, because a task that can only be accomplished by an imagination formed with a perception of the importance of recognising ascertained phenomena. In treating this subject, the book of Job not only attains to, but rises far above, the height attained by the Greek tragedy: for, on the one hand, it brings this conflict before us in all the fearful earnestness of a death-struggle; on the other, however, it does not leave us to the cheerless delusion that an absolute caprice moulds human destiny. This tragic conflict with the divine necessity is but the middle, not the beginning nor the end, or the book; for this god of fate is not the real God, but a delusion of Job's temptation. Human freedom does not succumb, but it comes forth from the battle, which is a refining fire to it, as conqueror. The dualism, which the Greek tragedy leaves unexplained, is here cleared up. The book certainly presents much which, from its tragic character, suggests this idea of destiny, but it is not its final aim—it goes far beyond: it does not end in the destruction of its hero by fate; but the end is the destruction of the idea of this fate itself.*<sup>29</sup>

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## Job Speaks Directly to God

**“Only two things do not do with me—  
then from Your face I will not hide myself.**

Job 13:20

**“There are two things that I ask from you,  
and then from Your face I will not hide.**

We have a big change in this verse, which is not readily apparent in the English. Back in v. 17, when he says for his friends to listen carefully to him and to allow his declarations to reach their ears, he uses the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural twice in that verse. This is also true of vv. 12–13 and several previous verses. Whenever Job uses the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, whether it be in a suffix or a verb, it has always been the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural in this chapter. Suddenly, in this verse, Job switches to the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular, indicating that he is no longer speaking to his friends, but to God. Vv. 18–19 have acted as transitional verses, to move from the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural (referring to

<sup>29</sup> Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. IV, pp. 375–376.

his associates) to the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular, referring to God. We miss this in the English, because our 2<sup>nd</sup> person designations, *you, your, you're* have a number which is strictly context dependent.

This verse begins with the adverb ʾak<sup>e</sup> (אָכ) [pronounced *ahk<sup>e</sup>*], which means *surely, certainly, no doubt, only, only this once*. Here, it would be given the latter two renderings. Strong's #389 BDB #36. This is followed by the dual feminine substantive of sh<sup>e</sup>tayim (שְׁתַּיִם) [pronounced *sh<sup>e</sup>TAH-yim*], which means simply *two*. Here it means *two things*. Strong's #8147 BDB #1040. The two things which Job will request of God are (1) remove the punishment (or, to withdraw His hand) (v. 21); and, (2) to begin an explanatory dialogue with Job (v. 22).

This is followed by the negative and the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect apocopated voluntative of ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *gaw-SAWH*] which means *to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form*. In the context of Job 1:4, I think that we could get away with *prepared*. Here (Job 4:17) it means *Maker*. In the Qal active participle, it can mean *a doer, a maker, making, doing*. Strong's #6213 BDB #793. What follows is the preposition ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced *geem*], which is generally rendered *with*. Strong's #5973 BDB #767; and *with* carries with it the 1<sup>st</sup> person suffix.

Then we have the temporal adverb ʾâz (אָז) [pronounced *awz*], which means *then, at that time, in that case (when following an if or though), now, as things are; that being so*. This adverb also gives us logical progression or logical sequence, so it means *in that case, now as things are, that being so, then*. The latter rendering is particularly apropos as the apodosis of a conditional, which is how it functions here. Strong's #227 BDB #23. This is affixed to the prepositional phrase *from your [singular] face(s) I will not hide myself*. The latter verb is the 1<sup>st</sup> person, Niphal imperfect of the verb *to hide*. The Niphal stem is reflexive, from whence we get the word *myself*.

Barnes: *...he asks of God that he would withdraw his hand for a time...so that he could present his case with the full vigour of his mind and body, and so that he need not be overawed by the sense of the majesty and glory of the Most High. He wished to be free to present his cause without the impediments arising from a deeply distressing and painful malady. He wished to have his full intellectual and bodily vigour restored for a time to him, and then he was confident that he could successfully defend himself. He felt that he was now enfeebled by disease and incapacitated from making the effort for self-vindication and for maintaining...then...I will stand forth boldly and maintain my cause. I will not attempt to conceal myself, or shun the trial and the argument.*<sup>30</sup>

**“Your hand from upon me remove;  
and Your dread will not fall upon me  
suddenly [terrifying me].**

Job 13:21 **“Remove from Your hand from upon me;  
and keep the dread of You from falling upon  
me suddenly and terrifying me.**

Job asks two things of God; the first is here in v. 21—Job recognizes that it is God who is instrumental in his pain. Job doesn't know exactly why and desires to confront God with that; but he asks for God to remove the tremendous pain and pressure that he is under. This verse begins with the compound preposition mēʿal (מֵעַל) [pronounced *may-GAHL*], from the preposition min (מִן) [pronounced *min*] denotes separation (*away from, out from, out of from*) [Strong's #4480 BDB #577]; and the preposition is the preposition ʿal (עַל) [pronounced *gal*] which means, primarily, *upon, against, above*. Strong's #5920, 5921 BDB #752. Together, they mean *from upon, from over, from by*. The verb which follows is râchaq (רָחַק) [pronounced *raw-KHAHK*], and, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative, it means *to put at a distance, to remove, to place far away from oneself*. Strong's #7368 BDB #934.

In the second line, we have feminine singular of the word ʾēymâh (אֵימָה) [pronounced *ay-MAW*], which means *terror, dread, horror, fear*. Strong's #367 BDB #33. Affixed to this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular pronoun, so properly, this means *your dread*; however, it is acceptable to render this *dread of you; fear of you*. I would have expected this to be preceded by a preposition, but it is not; the meaning of this verse could just about allow the preposition from the previous line to be inserted here, giving us: *and from by dread of You*. However, to me, it would seem to be simpler to have preceded this with the preposition *with*, but that was not the case. The form of

<sup>30</sup> Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 261.

the verb explains the missing preposition—it is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Piel imperfect of bâ'ath (תַּבֵּא) [pronounced *baw-AHTH* or *baw-GAHTH*], which means *to fall upon, to fall upon suddenly* and therefore *to startle, to terrify* due to the surprise. Strong's #1204 BDB #129. If this verb were in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular, then we would expect the wording to be *and with Your dread, do not fall upon me suddenly*. However, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, *dread* is the subject of this verb. I must admit that I was first confused by this verse. I thought that perhaps the imperative of entreaty was implied. However, that is not the case. V. 21 is the first of the two things and v. 22 is the second of the two things.

Job has already made this request to God. **“Let Him remove His rod from me and let not the dread of Him terrify me. Then I would speak and I would not fear Him.”** (Job 9:34–35a). **It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of a living God** (Heb. 10:31). Barnes: *“Remove my affliction; restore me to health, and I will then enter on the argument in vindication of my cause. I am now oppressed, and broken down, and enfeebled by disease, and I cannot present it with the vigour which I might evince if I were in health...Do not so overpower me by thy severe majesty, that I cannot present my cause in a calm and composed manner.”*<sup>31</sup>

**“And You call and I [even] I will answer;  
or [if], I will speak and You will cause my  
restoration.**

Job 13:22

**“And when You call to me, I will answer;  
I will speak and You will cause me to be  
restored.**

We know that v. 22 is the second of the two things because it is also in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative of qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced *kaw-RAW*] which simply means *call, proclaim, read*. Strong's #7121 BDB #894. Job is rather bold in what he says, as well—He uses the emphatic *I* to emphasize that he, even Job, will answer God. We have four different verbs here for *speak, answer, respond*, etc. The second is the Qal imperfect of 'ânâh (אָנַח) [pronounced *gaw-NAWH*] and the official BDB definition is *to answer, to respond*. It is found well over 300 times in the Bible: Gen. 18:27 Ex. 4:1 Deut. 1:14). It does have a more technical usage which we will not go into here, but we have covered before in this book. Strong's #6030 BDB #772. Also, the implication here is that God must initiate the dialogue, which is supported throughout Scripture. When Adam and the woman sinned, God came to them. When Paul was persecuting the early Christians, Jesus came to him. King David was chosen early in life by Samuel, whom God sent to David. The Scripture abounds in situations where God goes to the unbeliever or to the fallen believer. Job requests that God come to him and initiate the dialogue. **“If I called and He answered me, I could not believe that He was listening to my voice.”** (Job 9:16).

Barnes: *This is language taken from courts of justice, and the idea is, that if God would remove his calamity, and not overawe him, and would then call on him to make a defence, he would be ready to respond to his call. The language means, “be thou plaintiff in the case, I will enter on my defence.” He speaks now to God not as to a judge but as a party, and is disposed to go to trial.*<sup>32</sup>

Before we cover the next two verbs, the lines are connected with the conjunction 'ô (וְ) [pronounced *oh*] which is usually translated *or* and sometimes *or, rather* (when a preference is implied). Here, another fundamental option is covered, so I have translated this *or [if]*. Strong's #176 BDB #14 In the second line, Job initiates the dialogue. This is the 1<sup>st</sup> person, Piel imperfect of dâ'var (דַּבַּר) [pronounced *daw<sup>b</sup>-VAHR*] once again, which means *to speak, to declare, to proclaim, to announce*. In the Piel, it is stronger and it can be translated *to promise*, although here we will stick with *speak*. Strong's #1696 BDB #180. The idea of the Piel is that Job will, despite the circumstances, be able to speak directly to God. The difference here is that Job will approach God as a defendant (v. 22a) or as the plaintiff (v. 22b). Barnes: *In any way, let the cause come to an issue. Let me open the cause, adduce my arguments, and defend my view of the subject; and then do thou respond.” The idea is, that Job desired a fair trial. He was willing that God should select his position and should either open the cause, or respond to it when he had himself opened it.*<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 261.

<sup>32</sup> Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 261.

<sup>33</sup> Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; pp. 261–262.

The final verb is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperative of *shûb* (שׁוּב) [pronounced *shoo<sup>b</sup>v*], which does not mean *to speak, to answer, to replay*; it means, in the Hiphil, *to return something, to restore, to bring back, to regain, to recover, to make restitution* (Neh. 5:11 Prov. 24:12 Lam. 3:64); or, *to reconsider, think again* (Job 6:29), or *to be caused to return* (Psalm 78:38). Strong's #7725 BDB #996. Without the fear of God, Job wants to approach God and he commands God to *make restitution* to him. This is not necessarily the material things which Job has lost, although those are certainly in view here, but his health and his relationship with God—Job asks God (commands God) to restore that to him as well. The reason that this is not translated literally by most translations is that it is a rather strong statement. Even if viewed as the imperative of entreaty, Job is expecting to speak to God and to be restored. There is a great parallel here between Job and our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord expected to be betrayed, to be abused while in custody and then to be hung upon the cross—but then He expected God the Father and God the Holy Spirit to raise Him from the dead and to not only restore Him, but to give Him much greater in His resurrection body than he had before. Job will have the same experience—he will have restored to him all that he lost and more.

Barnes at first appears to be critical of Job, but then decidedly backs off, much as I have done. *...there is a disposition to blame God which we can by no means approve, and which we are not required to approve. But let us not too harshly blame the patriarch. Let him who has suffered much and long, who feels that he is forsaken by God and by man, who has lost property and friends, and who is suffering under a painful bodily malady, if he has never had any of those feelings, cast the first stone. Let not those blame him who live in affluence and prosperity, and who have yet to endure the first severe trial of life...it would not be true to nature if the representation had been that Job was always calm, and that he never cherished an improper feeling or gave vent to an improper thought.*<sup>34</sup>

**“How many to me [are] iniquities and sins?  
My transgression and my sin cause me to  
know.**

Job 13:23

**“How many iniquities and sins have I  
committed?  
Make known to me my transgression and my  
sin.**

Job even appeals to God to reveal to him his iniquities and sins, if there are any which he should be aware of. Job's associates had implied that he has transgressed God's laws repeatedly and that the result is the state in which Job finds himself.

He begins with the kaph preposition (*like, as*), the definite article and the interrogative *mâh* (מַה) [pronounced *maw*]; with kaph, it can mean *how long, how many years, how often*. Strong's #4100 BDB #552.

Separating this into two lines is a judgment call. Job is not asking his friends to innumerate his sins. They don't know of any. He knows what he has done and Job knows what they are aware of. They cannot enumerate some list of sins or transgressions that he has committed. He turns to God and asks of God the same thing.

**“Why have You caused Your face(s) to be  
hidden  
and count me with respect to enmity to You?**

Job 13:24

**“Why have You caused Your face to be  
hidden from me  
and that You count me as any enemy to You?**

In this verse, we have the same interrogative as above with the lamed prefix, and together they mean *why*. This is followed by *Your face(s)*, and the Hiphil imperfect of *çâthar* (חָתַר) [pronounced *saw-THAHR*], which means *to hide, to conceal*. We saw the Niphal of this verb back in v. 20. Strong's #5641 BDB #711. God hiding His face from Job was a withholding of blessing and protection.

In the second line, we have Qal imperfect of *châsha* (חָשָׂה) [pronounced *khaw-SHA<sup>B</sup>V*], which means *think, account*. Strong's #2803. BDB #362. What follows is the lamed preposition and the Qal active participle of *'âya* (אָיַהּ)

<sup>34</sup> Barnes' Notes, Job, Volume 1; Baker Books, ©1996; p. 262.



(אֵי בּוֹ) [pronounced *aw-YA<sup>BV</sup>*], which means *to be at enmity, to be hostile*. As a participle, it should be rendered *enemy, being at enmity*. Strong's #340 BDB #33. This is followed by the lamed preposition and the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix.

**“A driven leaf will You terrify?  
And dry chaff will You pursue?**

Job 13:25

**“Will You terrify a wind-blown leaf?  
Will You pursue the chaff of the grain?**

This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> and last verse to begin with an interrogative particle; this time there are no affixed prepositions. Then follows the word *leaf* and the Niphal participle of *nâdach* (נִדַּחַ) [pronounced *naw-DAHKH*], which means *banish, cast away, cast down, compel, draw away*. The Niphal is the passive stem and it means specifically *to compel, to be drawn away, to be driven away*. Here, we are speaking of a leaf being driven by the wind. Strong's #5080 BDB #623. What follows is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *ʿârats* (אֲרַסְךָ) [pronounced *gaw-RAHTS*], and it means *to cause to tremble, to tremble, to terrify*. Strong's #6206 BDB #791.

The interrogative is continued to the next line with the wâw conjunction and the masculine singular of *qash* (קָשׁ) [pronounced *kahsh*], and it means *stubble, chaff, that which is flammable(?), worthless and harmless*. Strong's #7179 BDB #905. It is modified by the word *dry*; and of this dry stubble, Job asks God if He will *râdaph* it—i.e., the Qal imperfect of *râdaph* (רָדַף) [pronounced *raw-DAHF*], which means *to pursue, to follow after, to chase with hostile intent*. It is occasionally translated *persecute* because that indicates the mental attitude of those doing the pursuing. Strong's #7291 BDB #922.

Job is insignificant and he is beaten down. To God, he is nothing more than a driven leaf or dry stubble. He asks God if He will waste His time terrifying a leaf blown in the wind; would He waste His time pursuing with hostile intent dry stubble.

**“For You document against me bitter things  
and cause me to inherit the iniquities of my  
youth.**

Job 13:26

**“For You list bitter things against me  
and You cause me to inherit the iniquities of  
my youth.**

The first verb is the Qal imperfect of *kâtha<sup>b</sup>* (כָּתַבְךָ) [pronounced *kaw-THAH<sup>BV</sup>*] means *to write, to write down, to chronicle, to record, to document*. Strong's #3789 BDB #507. What God documents against Job are *bitter things* (or, *bitter experiences*). The feminine noun is *m<sup>r</sup>rôrah* (מְרַרָה) [pronounced *m<sup>r</sup>roh-RAW*], and it means *bitter thing, gall, poison*. Strong's #4846 BDB #601.

I need to be careful with the next verse and with its application. Many of us have things which we have done in our youth which are wrong and inexcusable. Job acknowledges that. That does not mean it is okay to do that which is patently wrong in your youth. There are some mistakes that you make in your youth that stay with you for the rest of your life and often affect others around you (how many children are born with various defects due to a series of youthful mistakes made in the life of the mother?). That being said, this line begins with the Hiphil imperfect of *yârash* (יָרַשׁ) [pronounced *yaw-RAHSH*] means *to possess, to take possession of, to occupy [all] geographical area—by driving out the previous occupants, to inherit, to dispossess*. In the Hiphil, this means *to cause to inherit, to cause to take possession of*. Strong's #3423 BDB #439. What follows is the phrase *iniquities of my* and the masculine plural of *n<sup>e</sup>ûrîym* (נְעוּרַיִם) [pronounced *n<sup>e</sup>g<sup>oo</sup>-REEM*], which means *youth* (it is always found in the plural, so we might render it *youthful years*). Strong's #5271 BDB #655. This makes it obvious that Job was not always an upright and just man; there were times in his youth when he committed acts of sin which were abominable, and he implies that in this verse.

**“And You place in the stocks my feet  
and You watch all my paths—  
against the roots of my feet You cut [a rut  
path].**

Job 13:27

**“You have placed my feet into stocks  
and You carefully watch all my paths—  
You have cut a path that my feet are trapped  
in.**

The first line is literally *And you place in the stocks my feet*. The second line begins with the Qal imperfect of *shâmar* (שָׁמַר) [pronounced *shaw-MAR*], which means *to keep, guard, watch, preserve*. Strong's #8104 BDB #1036. What God carefully watches is *all of [Job's] paths*.

The third line does not begin with the *wâw* conjunction, but with the preposition *'al* (עַל) [pronounced *gahl*], which means *upon, against, above*. Strong's #5920, 5921 BDB #752. Then we have the masculine plural construct of *shôresh* (שֹׁרֶשׁ) [pronounced *SHOH-res*], and it means *root*; the idea is firmness, permanence; it can relate to source or cause. We often use the expression *that is where we put our roots down*—in that way, we use the word just as the Greeks did. Strong's #8328 BDB #1057. Here, it is *the roots of my feet*. Then we have the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular (as are most or all of these verbs), Hithpael imperfect of *châqâh* (חָקַח) [pronounced *khaw-KAWH*], which means *to carve, to cut*. Strong's #2707 BDB #348. The Hithpael is the Piel reflexive. The reflexive is an interesting thought here. God is doing this to Job, not to Himself, so why the reflexive? The thinking here is that God does this to Job in accordance with God's own purposes. We have free will, and people confuse that with sovereignty. Free will is the shadow of sovereignty—having it does not mean we can sprout wings and fly. For all of us, God has cut a rut path in the soil from which our wheels cannot disengage themselves. This is not fatalism not is it predestination—we are confined within a very narrow boundary and our free will is confined by the boundary. You have children and you occasionally give this child a very limited menu of options to choose from. “You can bring your grades up and get off restriction or you can let your grades slide and remain on restriction for the next 27 years—you decide.” That is the rut path which you have cut for them. There are not an additionally twenty options to explore. In this life, God has set up a certain number of options which we can follow, and due to the weakness of our flesh, these are limited options.

Now, in v. 28, Job suddenly goes from the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular to the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular pronoun—and *he*. *Verse 28 is difficult, for...the subject changes abruptly to the third person pronoun, although an antecedent does not appear until the following verse (“man”).*<sup>35</sup> For this reason, many commentators place this verse after 14:2 or 14:3 or 14:6. For that reason, we will enter into Job 14 before we exegete this verse.

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<sup>35</sup> *The Layman's Bible Commentary, Vol. 8*, Balmer H. Kelly, John Knox Press, ©1962, p. 88.