

Job 18

Job 18:1–21

Bildad's Second Speech: the Fate of the Wicked Man is Exactly Like the Fate of Job

Outline of Chapter 18:

- vv. 1–4 "I am tired of listening to you speak; do you think we are stupid?"
- vv. 5–15 Terrible things happen to the wicked
- vv. 16–21 How others view what has happened to the wicked

Charts:

- v. 2 Why Does Bildad Use the 3rd Person Plural?
- v. 4 The Correct Interpretation of Job 18:4a
- v. 5 Today's English Version of Job 18:4–5
- v. 10 The Open Bible's Translation of Job 18:8–10
- v. 13 The New Jerusalem Bible Translation of Job 18:11–13

Introduction: In Job 18, Bildad goes off on Job, just as Eliphaz did. Bildad has just listened to a speech by each of his friends and a long speech after each of those by Job. Bildad is a bottom line kinda guy (comparatively speaking). He is briefer than the others; although not brief by our standards. But he makes his point and moves on. Therefore, he is bored with all of this and irritated at having to wait so long for his turn. His speech here and in Job 8 begin the same way—with a complaint at how long the others took to say what they had to say. We might guess that Bildad is the youngest of the four,¹ and therefore the one with the least to say and the more impatient to say it. Herein, Bildad will tell what God does to the wicked; his implication being that Job belongs in that classification.

Because, from a superficial examination, what Bildad says appears to be one note, we often write him off as having little to say. He has less to say than the others, but this does not mean that he simply says one thing in 21 verses and then shuts up. Bildad has a myriad of observations to make, along with a little sarcasm, which is often missed. By the time we finish with this chapter, you will understand fully almost everything that Bildad has to say, along with the reasoning behind it.

The second discourse by Bildad is made up almost in its entirety of a string of proverbial expressions, showing what befalls the wicked. The purpose of what Bildad says proves that the wicked must be punished, as well as graphically portray the various calamities that would fall upon such a one. The obvious inference is when all of these things appear to fall upon one man, it is a foregone conclusion that the man is wicked. Bildad's speech wanders from specific proverbs when he states certain calamities which describe Job and Job alone, so that Bildad's inference cannot be mistaken.²

McGee: *Bildad...really hasn't anything new to contribute at all. You will recall that he is a traditionalist. He has a lot of old sayings and proverbs that he strings along like a string of beads. He will do that again here. He has a whole series of epigrams and pious platitudes and slick clichés. Some of them are good, but none of them throw light on Job's case.*³

We may easily divide this chapter into two or three sections. In section one, Bildad berates Job for his long-winded answer, as, in Bildad's eyes, Job takes him for being stupid. Job's remarks insult his intelligence and belittle him

¹ The only problem with this supposition is that we would expect Bildad to be the last to speak if he were the youngest, and not the second.

² Paraphrased from *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 304.

³ J. Vernon McGee; *Job*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1977; p. 101.

and his two companions. He concludes that portion by saying, “Can your long-winded speeches contradict that which is clear and permanent?”

In part two, Bildad gives an extended view of what would happen to the wicked man, culminating in very specific incidents which befell Job himself. Bildad begins with generalities—e.g., “His own scheme brings him down.”—and then launches into specific experiences of Job: “His skin is devoured by disease...He is torn from the security of his tent...brimstone rains down on his home.” (Job 18:13a, 14a, 15b). Even though Bildad speaks of the wicked man in the third person, there is no doubt that he is speaking about Job.

In the final portion of Bildad’s speech, he speaks of how Job (the wicked man) will be viewed by others. First he will be forgotten (v. 17), leaving no one of his family behind (vv. 16, 19); and the few who remember are completely appalled by his fate (v. 20–21). “Undoubtedly, these [homes which were destroyed] are the dwellings of the wicked; and this is the place of a man who does not know God.” (Job. 18:21).

Barnes sums up these last two sections as follows: *[This is a]...highly wrought description of the calamities which must come upon a wicked man...His light in his dwelling would be put out (ver. 5,6); his own plans would destroy him, and he would be taken in a net which he himself had spread (ver. 7, 8); he would soon be seized by robbers, who would spring a net unexpectedly upon him (ver. 9, 10); terrors on every side would alarm him (ver. 11); he would be brought to the king of terrors, and brimstone would be sprinkled on his dwelling (ver. 14, 15); he would be like a tree whose roots and branches were dead (ver. 16); his memory would perish from the earth (ver. 17), and he would be chased out of the world (ver. 18); his family and name would become extinct, so that there would be no one to perpetuate his memory on earth (ver. 19); and they who should come after him would be astonished at the total rain which had come upon the wicked man.*⁴ The NIV Study Bible sums up Bildad’s point of view even more succinctly: *Bildad is absolutely certain that every wicked person gets paid in full in this life, for his wicked deeds.*⁵

The Open Bible gives us an excellent and brief summation of this chapter: *Bildad rails against Job with a graphic picture of the terrible fate of the wicked. All of this is true. God holds us accountable for our actions. But Bildad’s fault, as with the others, is threatening an innocent sufferer with God’s judgments against evil persons.*⁶

Author’s note: You may notice that I have become more set in the translations which I use. I have access to over 20 translations of the Old Testament and over 25 of the New. Given that choice, and given the fact that I do not want to quote each and every one of them for each and every verse, the primary purpose being to warm us up for the exegesis of said verse, I have to carefully choose between them. I have always had two mainstays: the NASB and *Young’s Literal Translation*. The former is easily the best cross between a modern English translation combined with a careful word-by-word translation of the Hebrew and the Greek. If you own only one Bible, this should be it. Young is probably the most excruciatingly precise, literal translation of the Old and New Testaments. Rotherham also has a reasonably literal translation, which I often throw in, as Rotherham attempts to be slightly more literary than Young, yet maintain a strong literal translation (in other words, Rotherham approaches the Bible as a piece of literature as well). Keil and Delitzsch also provide a very good literal and literary translation of Scripture as well. The only weakness of Rotherham, Keil and Delitzsch and Young is that their translations delve into the Old English, which is more and more difficult for the young person to apprehend. Therefore, I often revise Keil and Delitzsch’s translation, changing the *thee’s* and *thou’s* into *you’s*; *art* becomes *are*; and *dwellest* is changed into *dwell*. I often do the same to Barnes when I use his translation. I can get away with this because all three of them are in heaven and don’t mind their translations being updated.

However, there is more to this than simply a literal rendering. Let’s say a literal rendering does not make any sense—then I often quote the translation from God’s Word™ because, of the very modern English translations, this is the only one which seems to pay any attention to the original text. Although theologically I lean in the same direction as the translators of the CEV; and philosophically, I fully understand the reason for the TEV (the most

⁴ *Barnes’ Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 304. In fact, this paragraph by Barnes is often the totality of what would be presented by some pastors if they even taught this portion of God’s Word.

⁵ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 744.

⁶ *The Open Bible*; the New Living Translation; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; ©1996, p. 692.

simplistic rendering of Scripture), there are times when these versions stray so much from the original text that it blows your mind. It's like the translators decide, "Oh, hell, I don't know what this Hebrew is trying to say; what would I remark at a time like this?" Once and awhile, when you view the original text and place it next to the corresponding verse in the CEV, TEV or the NLT, you wonder what exactly did they have in mind? Is there any kind of a correspondence between the original text and the translation, apart from their relative locations? This is not to say that the CEV, TEV or the NLT do not have their place. The TEV, although too imaginative at times, also has a very simple and limited vocabulary, making it suitable for many. The NLT, although it suffers from some of the same problems, is a very good work of literature. One of the marvelous aspects of the KJV is that its phrasing was powerful and dynamic (obviously, much of this had to do with being the Word of God). However, it was so, not at the expense of a literal translation, but revealed great scholarship both from the point of view of the original languages and the grand Old English that it was translated into. Although I certainly hesitate at placing the NLT in a class with the KJV, from a literary standpoint, it is quite good and well-phrased.

Finally, there are two other specialty translations which I like to quote from: the Septuagint and *The Jewish Bible* (the JPS). First of all, we are dealing with manuscripts originally written three and four thousand years ago. The Septuagint, although an extremely uneven translation, was translated from manuscripts which were only a few hundred years old and represented manuscripts written perhaps a thousand or two years earlier (and, in some cases, only a few hundred years earlier). Therefore, it is very likely that, in many cases, they had access to more accurate manuscripts (although textual criticism was in its pre-infancy stage then). And because some theologians had a reasonable grasp of the ancient Hebrew, they were often more qualified to place a meaning on words which would have otherwise stumped us. Now, I must admit that I do not delve deeply into the Greek when giving the Septuagint rendering; I depend heavily upon Brenton's English translation of same. Only when we have a strong difference between the Greek and Hebrew do I go into the Greek (which, unfortunately, is sometimes impossible, as my Greek lexicons (I have at least four) have most of the Koine Greek words and a few classical and Doric Greek words, but they do not have every single Greek word found in the Septuagint; therefore, even having the Greek to work from, I often can't do much with it.

Finally, I like to use *The Jewish Bible* because it is important to see how our Jewish cousins read Scripture. The Tanakh is a reasonable rendering from the Hebrew—they occasionally make use of the Septuagint—and they occasionally offer a slant or a point of view that I might have missed (although, this is only occasionally).

If you would like to compare the various English translations in more than a superficial way, I have an article which does that very thing.

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

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

"I Am Tired of Listening to You Speak; Do You Think We Are Stupid?"

Literally:

Smoother English rendering:

And so answered Bildad the Shuhite and so he said,

Job 18:1 **Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said,**

Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said,

Recall that Bildad appears to be younger and less patient than Eliphaz. In his first speech, he jumped all over Job and he does so in this second one as well. He feels as though Job is wasting his time and that Job is speaking to them as if they were stupid—therefore, Bildad is offended by what Job says. He will imply to Job that the proof is in the pudding—i.e., this is what happens to the wicked, and, "Oh, by the way, this is what has happened to you." However, Bildad will not say that, but it will be implied throughout.

Bildad gives three speeches: Job 8, 18 and 25. Chapters 8 and 18 are among the shortest chapters in the book of Job; however, Bildad's final speech will be the shortest chapter of this book (6 verses).

**“How long will you place snares for words?
You [all] will consider and after, we will speak.** Job 18:2 **“How long [until] you place an end to words?
Consider [that] and after, we will speak.**

**“How long will you hunt for words?
Think about that, and then, perhaps, afterwards, we can speak.**

Others render this verse thus:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	How long will ye make a perversion of words? Ye should understand, and <afterwards> we could speak.
JPS (Tanakh)	How long? Put an end to talk! Consider, and then we shall speak.
Keil and Delitzsch	How long will you hunt for words? Attend, and afterwards we will speak.
KJV	How long <i>will it be before</i> ye make an end of words? Mark, and afterwards we will speak.
NASB	“How long will you hunt for words? Show understanding and then we can talk.”
NIV	When will you end these speeches? Be sensible, and then we can talk.
REB	How soon will you bridle your tongue? Show some sense, and then we can talk.
The Septuagint	How long will you continue? Wait, that we also may speak.
<i>Young’s Lit. Translation</i>	When do ye set an end to words? Consider ye, and afterwards do we speak.

This verse begins with the preposition *ʿad* (אד) [pronounced *ad*] which means *as far as, until*. Strong’s #5704 BDB #723. This is combined with the adverb *ʾân* (אן) [pronounced *awn*], which means *where; with regards to time it means to what point*. Strong’s #575 BDB #33. With the adverb is the direct *hê*. All together, this means *how long?* *ʿAd* = Strong’s #5704 BDB #723. *ʾÂn* = Strong’s #575 BDB #33. Then we have the 2nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect of *sîym* (סיו) [pronounced *seem*] which means *to put, to place, to set*. Strong’s #7760 BDB #962. The 2nd person masculine plural is interesting—Bildad appears to be speaking not only to Job but to the other two as well. However, the Syriac and Vulgate codices have this as a 2nd person masculine singular, which is what we would have expected. According to Barnes, it is not unusual in the Hebrew to speak to one person, but to refer to him in the plural⁷ (I don’t know that I buy that). There are, of course, several other theories: (1) Bildad was speaking to Eliphaz and to Zophar for not jumping in and catching Job in his flaws as he made them (absolutely a ridiculous theory, inasmuch as their debate was mannered and orderly). (2) Bildad was referring to Job and anyone who took his side, making the assumption that this debate was being observed by many (also a bad theory—these are Job’s friends and they are not the least bit supportive of Job; therefore, it would be ridiculous to think that passing strangers would be taking Job’s side. (3) That Bildad was referring to Job and his wife (also a poor thought, as Job’s wife has already made her sentiments clear: “Curse God and die!” (Job 2:9). (4) Rosenmüller suggests that Bildad is referring to Job and to others of his general ilk (even though they would not be present—these are those who have hidden sins and whom God is disciplining). These are all fairly lame theories. Let me explain what is going on: Bildad is going out of his way to not speak about Job directly—after these next couple of verses, Bildad no longer uses the second person—he uses the 3rd person throughout vv. 6–21. The idea is that he appears as though he is addressing both Job and Eliphaz, both of whom are long-winded by comparison. That is simply Bildad’s way of not addressing Job directly and individually. In Job 8, when Bildad addressed Job directly, it was by way of encouraging Job to reveal and repent from his sin—so that no one could hate Job. However, in this chapter, Bildad really lays into Job, and therefore couches everything in the 3rd person; except for this verse, where he uses the 3rd person plural. Let’s take this in points:

Why Does Bildad Use the 3rd Person Plural?

1. Bildad appears to be younger than Job and Eliphaz.
2. Bildad takes careful steps to avoid addressing Job directly when it comes to browbeating him.
3. Bildad believes that Job is guilty of great evils, even though he has no idea what these evils would be.
4. Bildad thinks that it is clear that Job has done something dreadfully wrong—his proof is the things which

⁷ Barnes’ Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 304.

Why Does Bildad Use the 3rd Person Plural?

- have happened to Job.
5. However, since Bildad does not want to attack Job directly out of feigned respect, he carefully couches his language so that he does not address Job directly in a negative way.
 6. Therefore, Bildad uses the 3rd person plural here, which would take in Job, Eliphaz and Zophar for being long-winded (although Bildad's real problem is with Job, because he disagrees with Job's perspective of things).
 7. Throughout the remainder of the chapter, when Bildad speaks negatively of Job, it will be in the 3rd person. I guess he is simply waiting for that moments where he can look at Job and say, "Thou art the man!"
 8. In other words, two of the previous theories are partially correct. Bildad is addressing Job directly, but he is couching it in the 3rd person plural; and he is addressing Job and Eliphaz, although he really is not addressing Eliphaz.

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

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

What they are placing is the masculine plural construct of qenets (קֶנֶטִים) [pronounced *KEH-nets*], which means a *snare, a net*. Strong's #7078 BDB #890. This is followed by *for words*, giving us: [How long you will set traps for words?](#) For most translations, this makes sense; however, when you look at Young's translation and the JPS, you may wonder, from whence did they get their rendering? Easy to explain. Historically, it was thought that qenets was a mistake and that the word should have been qêts (קֵטִים) [pronounced *kayts*], which means *end* (usually of time). Strong's #7093 BDB #893. This would give us: [How long until you will set an end for words?](#) The final problem of this line is that we would not expect a construct to occur prior to the lamed preposition.

The next line begins with the 2nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect of bîyn (בִּינְוּ) [pronounced *bean*], which means *to discern, to perceive, to consider, to understand, to reconsider, to think something over carefully*. Strong's #995 BDB #106. This is followed by *and after we will speak*, giving us: [You \[all\] will consider \[this\] \[or, think this over carefully\] and afterwards, we will speak](#). Barnes concurs with Schultens, that this means "Speak distinctly, clearly and intelligently; or consider and weigh our arguments." Job has simply laid traps for and captured a bunch of words, but all the words in the world will not put an end to what is obvious to Bildad: Job has sinned and God is punishing him for it. Job can complain all that he wants and fish for as much sympathy as he wants, but he needs to address the arguments which have been put forth that he is under severe discipline from God. To Bildad's way of thinking, Job has never really and properly addressed that point of view.

If we don't give this verse too much thought, we can consider that Bildad has asked Job, "Just how long do you intend to carry on? You just let us know when you're finished so that we may speak as well." He said essentially the same thing in Job 8:2: ["How long will you say these \[things\]? Furthermore, the words from your mouth are a mighty wind."](#)

McGee: *To state it very bluntly, Bildad is saying, "Job, if you would shut up, then we could speak. You should quit talking and start listening. You have been doing the talking when you should have been listening to us." Actually, all of them, Job and his friends, could have refrained from talking and been listening. But they were not prepared for the voice of God at this time. God is preparing Job to hear his voice, and later he will listen.*⁸

**Why are we counted like mammal?
We are defiled in your eyes?**

Job
18:3

**Are we accounted as cattle?
[Are] we defiled in your eyes?**

**Do you think of us as ignorant beasts?
Are we that unclean in your sight?**

⁸ J. Vernon McGee; *Job*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1977; p. 101.

Let's look at some other renderings first:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Wherefore are we accounted like beasts? Or appear stupid in thine eyes?
JPS (Tanakh)	Why are we thought of as brutes, Regarded by you as stupid?
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	Why are we accounted as beasts, And narrow-minded in your eyes?
KJV (Scofield)	Why are we counted as beasts, <i>and</i> reputed vile in your sight?
NASB	"Why are we regarded as beasts, As stupid in your eyes?"
The Septuagint	Why are we silent before you like beasts?
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Wherefore have we been reckoned as cattle? We have been defiled in your eyes!

This verse begins with the adverb *maddu'a* (מַדּוּעַ) [pronounced *mah-DOO-ahg*], which means *why, wherefore, on what account*. Strong's #4069 BDB #396. Then we have the 1st person plural, Niphal perfect of *châsha^v* (חָשַׁב) [pronounced *khaw-SHAHBV*], again, which means *to think, to account, to count, to determine, to calculate*. Strong's #2803 BDB #362. We have the preposition *like* and the definite article and the feminine singular noun *b^ehêmâh* (בְּהֵמָה) [pronounced *b^ehay-MAW*], which means *mammal, beast, animal, cattle*. It is often used in the collective sense (a singular standing for a plural). Strong's #929 BDB #96. Asaph makes a similar statement in Psalm 73:22 (*Then I was senseless and ignorant; I was like a beast before You*). The thought of this verse is, "Why are we treated in your remarks as if we have no sense, and were unworthy of sound argument in reply to what we say?"

In the second line, we have the inference that the question is continued. We begin with the 1st person plural, Niphal perfect of *ṭâmâh* (טָמְאוּ) [pronounced *taw-MAW*], whose meanings are given in BDB as *to be stopped up, to be stupid, to be regarded as unclean*. This verb is found in the Niphal only. Given its only other use in Lev. 11:43, I think that we should go with *to be defiled, to be unclean*.⁹ Strong's #2933 BDB #380. The sense is that Bildad and his friends are so unclean as to not even warrant Job's attention or respect. This is followed by *in your eyes*. Bildad conveys shock that Job would regard him as being this stupid and unclean as to not be given the true scoop on his sin.

The final phrase is *in your eyes*; in the Greek and the Syriac, *your* is singular; in the Hebrew, it is plural. The thought of this verse is, "Why are we treated in your remarks as if we have no sense, and were unworthy of sound argument in reply to what we say?"¹⁰ Job's tenor and arguments made it clear that he considered them to be along the intellect level of an unclean beast. This is not how Job viewed his friends (although he now viewed them with less warmth than he did the first seven days of their visit). The point that Bildad is actually making is that Job's explanation, arguments and complaints are so lame, and so ignore the truth of the situation, that he is acting as though his friends had not a real though among them.

McGee: *Bildad asks Job why he holds them in such contempt and why they are vile in his sight. The answer is obvious. This is the way they have been looking at Job. That is why I say that at this point it is a stand-off between Job and his friends. I think they have been glaring at each other during this debate. These men who had come to him as his friends are no longer his friends.*¹¹

**Tearing His soul in His nostril [or, anger]—
for your sake?—
earth is forsaken?
And moved is a rock from his place?**

Job
18:4

**Tearing His soul in His anger—
for your sake is the earth forsaken?
And is a rock moved from its place?**

⁹ According to Rotherham, it is written *stupid* but read *unclean* in this verse (Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 511). I don't know about that, but it reads *unclean* in my Hebrew Bible.

¹⁰ *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 305.

¹¹ J. Vernon McGee; *Job*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1977; p. 101.

**Does God tear His own soul in His anger?
Has he forsaken the earth because of you?
Are huge cliffs moved from their places because of you?**

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

JPS (Tanakh)	You who tear yourself to pieces in anger— Will earth's order be disrupted [lit., <i>the earth be abandoned</i>] for your sake? Will rocks be dislodged from their place?
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	You are he who tears himself in his anger; Shall the earth become desolate for your sake, And a rock remove from its place?
NASB	O you who tear yourself [lit., <i>he tears himself</i>] in your anger— For your sake is the earth to be abandoned, Or the rock to be moved from its place?
NKJV	You! who tear yourself in anger, Shall the earth be forsaken for you? Or shall the rock be removed from its place?
NLT	You may tar your hair out in anger, but will that cause the earth to be abandoned? Will it make rocks fall from a cliff?
Owen's Translation	Who tear himself in his anger for your sake? Shall be forsaken the earth? Or removed the rock out of its place.
The Septuagint	Anger has possessed you; for what if you should die—would [the earth] under heaven be desolate [or, <i>would Hades be tenantless if you died</i>]? or will the mountains be overthrown from their foundations?
Young's Lit. Translation	(He is tearing himself in his anger.) For thy sake is earth forsaken? And removed is a rock from its place?

We begin this verse with the Qal active participle of *târaph* (תָּרַף) [pronounced *taw-RAHF*], which means *to tear, to rend, to pluck*. This means *to tear into pieces like a wild animal*. Strong's #2963 BDB #382. Bildad is doing what Job did. When Job answered Eliphaz, he didn't deal with each and every argument that Eliphaz presented; he simply used a number of words that Eliphaz had used to indicate that he had been listening. Bildad does the same thing. Job used this word in Job 16:9, and now Bildad uses it as well. This is followed by *his soul*; the word is the feminine singular noun *nepesh* (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced *NEH-fesh*], which means *soul, life, living being, desire*. Strong's #5315 BDB #659. Affixed to *soul* is the 3rd person masculine suffix. This is followed by *in his anger*. Actually, the word is *'aph* (אָפ) [pronounced *ahf*], which means *nose, nostril*, but is also translated *face, brow, anger*. Strong's #639 BDB #60. All three of these words were used by Job in Job 16. This gives us, literally, *Tearing his soul in his nostril or tearing his soul in his anger...* This appears to be the end of the first line. So that we integrate this properly with the book of Job, it is important to recognize that Bildad is not simply pulling phrases out of the air. Job has already said, “*Why should I take my flesh in my teeth?*” in Job 13:14a; and, “*He tears me in His wrath.*” in Job 16:9a. Bildad is addressing these things which Job has said; he comments: “*God is tearing Himself in His anger?*”

Then we have a lot of stuff going on—we have the *ha* interrogative, the *lâmed* preposition, another preposition with the 2nd person masculine singular suffix. The word is *l'ma'an* (לְמַעַן) [pronounced *l'-MAH-ghan*], and it means *for the sake of, on account of, to the intent of, to the intent that, to the purpose that, in order that*. The suffix adds in the concept of *your* and the interrogative particle tells us that this is a question. Strong's #4616 BDB #775. If taken as part of the previous phrase, we have: *Tearing His soul in His anger for your sake?* Capitalizing the *his's* is a matter of interpretation and not translation. I think that this phrase *for your sake* kind of goes with what comes before and what follows after. It might even be taken as a separate line.

Now, certainly Job, when he spoke, expressed a rage and an anger of his own. Bildad is simply saying that Job, by his own rage, has torn himself up. Or so is Keil and Delitzsch's interpretation (as well as many others, including Barnes). Obviously, if you examine most of the translations, almost all of them speak of Job's anger in Job 18:4a. But, I want you to note that, with the exception of one time in this verse, Bildad does not refer to Job in the 2nd person singular in this chapter—only by faulty interpretation/translation does Bildad refer to Job in the 2nd person

singular. Because this verse is incorrectly translated and incorrectly interpreted, let me explain what is really going on here:

The Correct Interpretation of Job 18:4a

This appears to be speaking about God, although many have made it about Job (notice that in the Septuagint, all of this first line is in the 2nd person). On the other hand, if you will examine Young's and Rotherham's renderings, even though Rotherham interprets this as a 2nd person, he still owns up to the fact that it is in the 3rd. Job has already stated that God's rage has hunted him down and has torn him to pieces. In Job 16:11–14, God hands Job over to then unjust and then

Job:16:11–14:

God delivers me over to the unjust
and He throws me [headlong] into the hands of the malevolent.
I was at ease [in prosperity] and then He shattered me.
Then He grabbed my neck and broke me [into pieces].
For himself, he has set me up as a target;
his many [soldiers] surround me.
He pierces my kidneys
and he does not have compassion [for me];
he pours out my bile upon the earth.
He breaks through me, a breach in addition to breach;
He runs upon me like a soldier.

Job is torn into pieces. Bildad here simply refers to what Job has already said. Job has indicated that God has attacked him fiercely, and apparently without reason or provocation. God is unreasonably upset over Job. Somehow, God has uncontrollable anger and it is poured out upon Job. Given how this verse actually reads in the Hebrew, it is more reasonable to interpret this as, *What, is God torn up in anger for your sake?* Or, the other third party involved here could be Satan—*Is Satan torn up in anger because of you?* I think the point that Bildad is making is “How are you so important, Job, as to have either God or Satan torn up in anger over you—particularly as you have committed no horrible sins?” In the remainder of this verse, Bildad will explain just how silly that notion is.

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

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

What follows is the 3rd person feminine singular, Niphal imperfect of *ʿāzaʿ* (אָזַע) [pronounced *aw-ZA^BV*], which means *to leave, to forsake* in the Qal, and *to be forsaken* in the Niphal (or passive) stem. Strong's #5800 BDB #736. The subject of the verb follows, which is *ʿeret* (עֵרֶץ) [pronounced *EH-rets*], which means *earth (all or a portion), land*. Strong's #776 BDB #75. This gives us: **Tearing his soul in his anger; for your sake, earth is forsaken?** What Bildad is saying is, “Are the laws of nature and the laws of God suspended for you, Job? Does God forsake the earth and His work in the earth because of you?” The thinking here is, “If this is an attack by Satan, did God simply pack up and move out? Is God allowing an attack on you by Satan, despite the fact that you are righteous and blameless? What—did God just leave the earth for awhile?” You will note the tremendous sarcasm that Bildad expresses—the sarcasm that we often miss in most English translations.

The third line begins with the *wāw* conjunction, the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *ʿāthaq* (אָתַק) [pronounced *gaw-THAHK*], which means *to move, to advance, to proceed*. Strong's #6275 BDB #801. The subject of the verb follows, which is the masculine singular noun *tsûwr* (צוּר) [pronounced *tzoor*] means *rock, cliff*. Strong's #6697 BDB #849. Then we have *from his* and the masculine singular noun *mâqôwm* (מִקוֹמ) [pronounced *maw-KOHHM*], which means *place*. Strong's #4725 BDB #879. This gives us: **[The] rock moves from its place.** The idea is that a mountain or a cliff of its own accord moves from where it was. This also does not come out of nowhere. It is simply the natural order of things. Job has already stated, “**But the falling mountain withers and the rock moves from its place.**” (Job 14:18). Bildad answers, “Are you sure about that? Aren't you making yourself out to be a bit too important here?”

Now the Greek is entirely different in this final line of v. 4. The verb is *katastréphō* (καταστρέφω) [pronounced *kat-as-TREF-oh*], which means *to turn upside down, to upset, to overturn*. We get our word *catastrophe* from this verb. Strong's #2690. What appears to be the subject is *mountain*; then we have *from themeliōn*, which is from

themelios (θεμελιος) [pronounced *them-el-EE-os*], which means *foundation*. Strong's #2310. It is not that different—it means *a mountain is overturned from its place*.

The gist of all this is that Job is speaking to his friends as if they were ignorant fools; he might as well convince them that God has abandoned the earth or a mountain has moved from one place to another (on its own). Barnes: [Bildad]...*accuses Job of insufferable pride and arrogance, as if even the most firm principles of the divine administration were to be changed to accommodate him.*¹²

Because Keil and Delitzsch take this as Bildad referring to Job being torn up in anger, that Bildad is saying, “Can you, in your rage against yourself, effect any true change in the established divine order of the world? Will God forsake the earth (or, will the earth, designed by God to be inhabited, somehow become desolate?). Will you, in your anger, cause a cliff to move from off of its foundation?”¹³ Barnes offers a similar interpretation: “*Shall every thing be made to give way for you? Are you the only man in the world, and of so much importance, that the earth is to be made vacant for you to dwell in? Are the interests of all others to be sacrificed for you, and is ever thing else to give place for you? Are all the laws of God’s government to be made to yield rather than that you should be punished? ...Shall the most firm and immutable things give way for your special accommodation? Shall the most important and settled principles of the divine administration be made to bend on your account?*”¹⁴

However, as has been explained, these interpretations are reasonable, apart from the fact that most of the first phrase of this verse is in the 3rd person masculine singular. Job has claimed that God is enraged with him and without a reason, and Bildad answers: “Tearing His soul apart in His anger—for your sake? Will God, in this anger, also abandon the earth? Will God, in this anger, overturn a cliff?” Bildad actually does not use the name or title of God anywhere in this verse. He is actually leaving this open for any powerful being, even Satan, to fit into the interpretation here. “Satan is tearing his soul apart in anger—for your sake? Will Satan, in this anger, abandon the earth? Will he overturn a cliff in this anger?” In other words, what Job has proposed is foolish. No one is as worked up over Job in anger as Job has asserted.

Barnes rightly concludes this verse with: *These were not the principles and feelings of Job; and great injustice was done to him by this supposition. He was disposed to be submissive in the main to the divine arrangement. But this will describe the feelings of many a man of pride, who supposes that the divine arrangement should be made to bend for his special accommodation, and that the great, eternal principles of justice and right should give way rather than that he should be dealt with as common sinners are, and rather than that he should be cast into hell. Such men wish a special place of salvation for themselves. They are too proud to be saved as others are. They complain in their hearts that they are made to suffer, to lose their property, to be sick, to die—as others do. They would wish to be treated with special mercy, and to have special enactments in their favour, and would have the eternal laws of right made to bend for their special accommodation. Such is the price of the human heart.*¹⁵

McGee’s interpretation of this verse: *Bildad is asking, “Do you think God is going to run His universe just to suit you?...Job, cannot you show some sense so that we may come to an understanding here? Do you think that your contempt for us as incompetent and your rage at divine dealings with you are going to release you now from the trap you are in?”*¹⁶

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

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

Terrible Things Happen to the Wicked

¹² Barnes’ Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 304.

¹³ Paraphrased from Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 417.

¹⁴ Barnes’ Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 305.

¹⁵ Barnes’ Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 305.

¹⁶ J. Vernon McGee; Job; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1977; p. 102.

**Furthermore, [the] light of corrupt ones is
extinguished
and does not shine a flame of fire.**

Job
18:5

**Nevertheless, the light of the lawless is
extinguished
and the spark of his fire will not shine.**

**Those who are corrupt will still see their light extinguished
and the spark of their fire no longer shines.**

With this verse, we begin a new theme which will take us to the end of the chapter—the theme is *what will happen to the evil man?* Certainly, we need to see what’s up with the other translations first:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Even the light of the lawless shall go out,— Neither shall shine the flame of his fire;
JPS (Tanakh)	Indeed, the light of the wicked fails; The flame of his fire does not shine.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	Notwithstanding, the light of the wicked will be put out, And the glow of his fire does not shine.
NASB	“Indeed, the light of the wicked goes out, And the flame [lit., <i>spark</i>] of his fire gives no light.”
NLT	The truth remains that the light of the wicked will be snuffed out. The sparks of their fire will not glow.
The Septuagint	But the light of the ungodly will be quenched, and their flame will not go up.
<i>Young’s Lit. Translation</i>	Also, the light of the wicked is extinguished. And there doth not shine a spark of his fire.

We begin this verse with the adverb *gam* (גַּם) [pronounced *gahm*], which means *also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover*. In this passage, the TEV renders this *still*, which is an inspired rendering. Strong’s #1571 BDB #168. This is followed by *[the] light of* and the masculine plural adjective *râshâ’* (רָשָׁעִים) [pronounced *raw-SHAWG*], which means, when rendered as a substantive, *malevolent ones, lawless ones, criminals, the corrupt*. Strong’s #7563 BDB #957. What will happen to the *light of the corrupt* is the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *dâ’ak* (דָּאָק) [pronounced *daw-GAHK*], and it means *to go out, to be extinguished* when speaking of a lamp. Strong’s #1846 BDB #200. **Furthermore, [the] light of corrupt ones will be extinguished.** Not all of what Bildad has to say is completely out of line with divine viewpoint. Prov. 13:9 reads: **The light of the righteous one rejoices, but the lamp of the wicked one goes out.** Prov. 24:20: **For there will be no future for the evil man; the lamp of the wicked will be put out.** Job will later ask, “How often is the lamp of the wicked put out? How often does calamity fall upon them? Does God apportion destruction in His anger?” (Job 21:17).

Now, let’s tie that to what Bildad has already said. Bildad has just asked Job if the world should turn topsy turvy over him. Has God abandoned the earth? Is a cliff to be moved from here to there? Then Bildad swiftly, almost clumsily, speaks of the ungodly man—corrupt man. “God did not abandon the world. Here is what we should expect—the corrupt man’s light should be extinguished. If God is in control, then we should see the wicked die.” His point being that Job is wicked and Job is dying. This is what we should expect and there is nothing in Bildad’s immediate periphery—including Job—which suggests anything different. “The world has not been turned on its end; God has not abandoned us. Let me explain what happens to the man who is corrupt and who is evil.” Certainly Bildad has gone on to plow a fresh furrow, but he is still in the same field.

Today’s English Version of Job 18:4–5

More than most translations, the Good News Bible (a.k.a. Today’s English Version) ties together vv. 4 and 5 so that they sound like a cohesive whole:

You are only hurting yourself with your anger.
Will the earth be deserted because you are angry?
Will God move mountains to satisfy you?
The wicked man’s light will still be put out;
its flame will never burn again.

Because Bildad does go from one topic to the next in these two verses (from speaking to Job directly to speaking applicable proverbs), almost every translation breaks these verses up and places a section heading over v. 5. Whereas, this is an accurate appraisal, it does not show the train of thought which Bildad follows. The adverb at the beginning of v. 5, *gam*, neatly segues us from Bildad's petulance to Bildad's platitudes. TEV, by translating *gam* as simple word *still*, properly conveys this segue.

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

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

The second line begins with the wâw conjunction and a negative and the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *nâgah* (נָגַהּ) [pronounced *naw-GAH*], which means *to shine* (in the Qal) and *to enlighten* (in the Hiphil). Strong's #5050 BDB #618. This, with the negative, complements the verb *to extinguish* in the previous line. What *does not shine* is the masculine construct of *shâ'vîy* (שֵׁבִי) [pronounced *shaw^h-VEE^hV*], which probably means *spark, fire, flame*. Strong's #7632 BDB #985. This is followed by the feminine singular noun *'esh* (אֵשׁ) [pronounced *aysh*], which means *fire*. Strong's #784 BDB #77. [And the spark of his fire will not shine.](#)

To Bildad, this is all quite simple: the spark and fire of a corrupt person will eventually be extinguished. *The prosperity of the evil person will turn to ruin.*¹⁷ This is obviously what has happened to Job. You would expect a younger, more vigorous man to put forth this argument, as he is, without stating it, a person who is blessed by God due to his goodness, as his flame is burning vigorously. Job's flame is obviously about to go out.¹⁸

Light is dark in his tent and his lamp above him will be extinguished.	Job 18:6	The light in his tent is dark and his lamp above him is extinguished.
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**The light in his own dwelling is changed to darkness
as the lamp hanging above him goes out.**

The other translators rendered this verse as follows:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	The light shall be dark in his dwelling, and his lamp beside him shall be put out.
JPS (Tanakh)	The light in his tent darkens, His lamp fails him.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	The light becomes dark in his tent And his lamp above him is extinguished.
NASB	"The light in his tent is darkened, And his lamp goes out above him.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	The light hath been dark in his tent, And his lamp over him is extinguished.

We had the word *light* in the previous verse; here is it followed by 3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect of *châshak* (חָשַׁק) [pronounced *khaw-SHAHK^h*], which means *to grow dark, to be dark*. Strong's #2821 BDB #364.

Then, in the second line, we begin with the masculine singular noun *nêr* (נֵר) [pronounced *nair*], which means *lamp*. Strong's #5216 BDB #632. Then we have the phrase *over him* and the Qal imperfect of *extinguish* again. This is the opposite of what happens to the righteous. [For You light my lamp; Jehovah my God illumines my darkness](#) (Psalm 18:28).

Whether it is night or day, when inside our houses, makes very little difference to us. In the ancient world, once the sun went down and the lamp went out in one's tent or dwelling, that pretty much ended all activity. It would be pitch dark inside someone's dwelling. There are no street lights, not even large picture windows to let the moonlight in. This is Job's life—it has come to an abrupt halt. He has nowhere to go and nothing more to do—the light in his own dwelling has gone out; the lamp used to provide light which hangs in the tent has been extinguished. *The*

¹⁷ Paraphrased from Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 419.

¹⁸ Barnes has a very unusual take on this verse concerning the fire representing Arab hospitality. Since the imagery throughout the Bible is somewhat different, I'm going to stay with Scripture on this. However, see *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 306 in case you are interested.

putting out of a lamp is to the Orientals an image of utter desolation. It is the universal custom to have a light burning in their houses at night.¹⁹

**Restrained steps of his strength
and throws him down his counsel.**

Job
18:7

**His powerful steps are restricted;
and his own counsel throws him down.**

**His strong walk through life is restrained and restricted;
his own counsel takes him down.**

Let's see what others have done:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	The steppings of his strength are hemmed in, And his own counsel casteth him down;
God's Word™	"His healthy stride is shortened, and his own planning trips him up."
JPS (Tanakh)	His iniquitous strides are hobbled, His schemes overthrow him.
NASB	"His vigorous stride [lit., <i>steps of his strength</i>] is shortened, And his own scheme brings him down."
NIV	The vigor of his step is weakened; his own schemes throw him down.
The Septuagint	Let the meanest of men spoil his goods, and let his counsel deceive [him]
TEV	His steps were firm, but now he stumbles; he falls—a victim of his own advice.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Straitened are the steps of his strength, And case him down doth his own counsel.

Only Young indicates that this verse begins with a verb—the 3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect of tsârar (צָרַר) [pronounced *tsaw-RAHR*], which means *to bind, to tie up, to be restricted, to be cramped, to be restrained*. Tsârar does have a passive meaning, although it is not found in the passive (Niphal) stem. Strong's #6887 BDB #864. The subject of the verb is the masculine plural construct of tsa'ad (צָאֵד) [pronounced *TZAH-ghad*], which means *a step*. Tsa'ad can be used figuratively for one's course of life, walk through life or fortune. Strong's #4703 BDB #857. With this is 'own (אוֹן) [pronounced *ohn*], which means *strength, power, vigor, substance, wealth*. Strong's #202 BDB #20. The 3rd person masculine suffix is affixed to 'own, giving us: **His powerful steps are restrained [or, restricted]...**

Job was a powerful and rich man. You take a man who is the head of a major corporation and lives in a mansion, and you have certain feelings concerning that person. He seems powerful and vigorous. You take the same man, put him in rags and have him begging for dollars, and you often avoid eye contact; he seems weak and impotent. Bildad is saying that Job's once powerful walk through life has been suddenly restrained and restricted.

Job, in his power and strength, took long, powerful, confident strides. He walked like a man in charge. His movement through life was unhindered. Now, he has been transformed. His body is falling apart and when he moves, it is with pain. He takes small, careful steps, probably looking down. Job is a beaten man. He no longer walks confidently from one project to another, or from one set of possessions to another; he walks slowly, carefully, deliberately, and with small steps, with every attempt made not to increase the pain in his body; and he goes from one place to sit down in agony to another.

It is amazing how much the Hebrew language can say with two or three words. The next half of this verse is only three words, the first being the wâw conjunction. Then we have the 3rd person feminine singular, Hiphil imperative (with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix) of shâlak^e (שָׁלַךְ) [pronounced *shaw-LAHK^e*], which means *to throw, to cast, to fling*. It is found only in the Hiphil and the Hophal. Strong's #7993 BDB #1020. The subject of the verb is the feminine singular noun 'êtsâh (עֵצָה) [pronounced *gay-TZAW*], which means *counsel, advice, wisdom, purpose*. Strong's #6098 BDB #420. The 3rd person masculine singular suffix is affixed to 'êtsâh, giving us: **And**

¹⁹ *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 306. Barnes adds that in modern Egypt (which would have been the mid 1800's for him), a lamp is left burning all night in every house and apartment, rich or poor. He writes *It is not improbable that this custom prevailed in former times in Arabia, as it does now in Egypt; and this consideration will give increased beauty and force to this passage.*

his [own] counsel throws him down. Job was once this powerful man, the head of a major corporation, the head of a large, prosperous family—respected and whose opinion was valued. Now, his own counsel, his own ideas, his own wisdom has cast him down. Along the same lines, Eliphaz claimed that God overthrew such a one: “He frustrates the plotting of the shrewd so that their hands cannot attain success; He captures the wise by their shrewdness and the advice of the cunning is quickly thwarted.” (Job 5:12–13). Bildad, like Eliphaz, speaks of Job in the third person—in other words, he does not attack Job directly, but by implication.

**For he is cast into a net in [or, by] his [own]
feet
and on a lattice-work he walks.**

Job
18:8

**For he is cast into a net by his [own] feet;
and he walks on a lattice-work [snare].**

**His own feet take him into the net
and he walks onto a snare of mesh.**

Let's first see what others have done:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	For he is thrust into a net by his own feet, And <upon a trap> he marcheth.
JPS (Tanakh)	He is led by his feet into the net; He walks onto the toils.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	For he is driven into the net by his own feet, And he walks over a snare.
NASB	“For he is thrown into the net by his own feet. And he steps on the webbing.”
NIV	His feet thrust him into a net and he wanders into its mesh.
The Septuagint	His foot also has been caught in a snare; let it be entangled in a net.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	For he is sent into a net by his own feet, And on a snare he doth walk habitually.

With begin this verse with the explanatory conjunction and the 3rd person masculine singular, Pual perfect of *shâlach* (שָׁלַח) [pronounced *shaw-LAHKH*], which means *to send, to send forth, to send away, to dismiss, to deploy*. The Pual is the passive of the Piel, which is the *accomplished intensive* stem. We could render this *he was sent forth, he had been sent forth; he has been cast away, cast aside; he has been dismissed; he has been let go, set free*. According to Keil and Delitzsch, the subject of the verb is not just *betrayed into* but *driven into* [the net], quoting Judges 5:15 to support their view. Strong's #7971 BDB #1018. This is followed by *in a* and the feminine singular noun *resheth* (רֶשֶׁת) [pronounced *REH-sheth*], which means *net*. It is taken from a verb which means *to seize, to take as a possession*. Strong's #7568 BDB #440. This is followed by the *bêyth* preposition again (which can mean *in*; but it also can mean *by means of*) and *his feet*. Altogether, this gives us: **For he is sent away in a net [or, cast into a net] by [means of] his own feet**. The point Bildad is making is that Job himself walked knowingly into the net in which he finds himself. One associate of mine use to always make the remark, *it's his own damn fault—he brought it on himself*. It is a fact that we are our own worst enemies—Bildad is stating that Job put himself in the place where he finds himself. Still, like Eliphaz, he keeps it all in the 3rd person.

In the second line, we begin with the *wâw* conjunction, the preposition *on* or *upon* and the feminine singular noun *s^{ab}vâkâh* (שֶׁבַעֲבָכָה) [pronounced *s^{ab}vaw-KAW*], which means *a lattice work, something woven, a net, a network*. The concept is simple; this is a woven something or something put together as a lattice. Context tells us what is being referred to. Strong's #7639 BDB #959. This is followed by the very simple verb *to walk, to march*, in the 3rd person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect. The Hithpael is the reflexive of the Piel. It is intensive (and sometimes seen as an accomplished state) and it is something that one does to oneself. **And he [himself] walks onto a net [or, lattice-work]**. In order to capture large animals, man has dug out deep pits and then covered them with a *lattice-work* of light branches and leaves, so that the lion, tiger or elephant which walks across will fall through the lattice work and into the pit. This is what is referred to here. Bildad is simply repeating: *it's your own damn fault; it's your own damn fault*.

Barnes: *He is caught in his own tricks, as if he had spread a net or dug a pitfall for another, and had fallen into it himself. The meaning is, that he would bring ruin upon himself while he has plotting the ruin of others.*²⁰ Job will

²⁰ Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 307.

disagree with Bildad's opinion in Job 19:6: "Know then that God has wronged me and He has closed His net around me."

Now the fact that most people are their own worst enemies is found in Scripture. Psalm 9:15: *The nations have sunk down in the pit which they have made; in the net which they hid, their own foot has been caught.* Psalm 35:8: *Let destruction come upon him unawares; and let the net which he hid catch himself.*

Now, slightly off the subject, but pertinent to some. Believers will have enemies—particularly growing believers. Now, certainly some people have enemies because personally, they're jerks. However, if you are a believer who is growing in God's Word, you will have enemies—guaranteed—and some, you won't see coming. God's Word makes some promises to us concerning these enemies: I just quoted Psalm 35:8; let me quote 35:7–8: *For without cause they hid their net for me; without cause they dug a pit for my soul. Let' destruction come upon him unawares and let the net which he hid catch himself; into that very destruction, let him fall.* Psalm 57:6: *They have prepared a net for my steps. My soul is bowed down; they dug a pit before me; they themselves have fallen into the middle of it.* It does not matter how honorably you live your life—you will have enemies. David often prayed concerning these enemies. He himself did not take personal revenge upon them, but he did call upon God to do so: *Keep me, O Jehovah, from the hands of the wicked; preserve me from violent men who have purposed to trip my feet. The proud have hidden a trap for me and cords; they have spread a net by the wayside; they have set snares for me. I said to Jehovah, "You are my God. Give ear, O Jehovah, to the voice of my supplications. O Jehovah Lord, the strength of my salvation, You have covered my head in the day of battle. Do not grant, O Jehovah, the desires of the wicked; do not promote his evil plots; do not promote their exaltation."* As for the head of those who surround me, may the mischief of their lips cover them. *May burning coals fall upon them. May they be cast into the fire into deep pits from which they cannot rise* (Psalm 140:4–10). For those who have found themselves under attack from enemies: *Jehovah has made Himself know; He has executed judgment in the work of his own hands, the wicked are snared* (Psalm 9:16). And: *His own iniquities will capture the wicked and he will be held with the cords of his sin* (Prov. 5:22). And the marvelous thing about dealing with your enemies: you do not have to do a thing. You do not have to plot their destruction, run them down with gossip, pull sneaky and underhanded tricks on them. In fact, that sort of activity will prevent God from properly dealing with them. All you have to do is to step back and watch. God takes care of your enemies. God takes vengeance upon your enemies.

**Seizes in a heel a trap;
lays hold on him a snare.**

Job
18:9

**A trap seizes [him] by the heel;
a snare lays hold on him.**

**The trap will seize his heel
and a snare grabs a hold of him.**

First, here's what others have done:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	There catcheth him—by the heel—a gin, There holdeth him fast—a noose;
JPS (Tanakh)	The trap seizes his heel; The noose tightens on him.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	The traps hold his heel fast, the noose binds him.
NASB	"A snare seizes <i>him</i> by the heel, <i>And</i> a trap snaps shut on him.
The Septuagint	And let snares com upon him; he will strengthen those that thirst for his destruction.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Seize on the heel doth a gin, Prevail over him do the designing.

We begin this verse with the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *to seize, to grasp, to hold* (a word used at least twice by Job in the previous two chapters). Then we have the bēyth preposition and the word *heel*, and then the subject, which is *snare, trap, bird trap*; which gives us: **A trap seizes [him] by the heel.** Due to the speed of some animals, ancient man's only way to capture an animal for food was to outsmart the animal. Obviously, ancient man did not have guns and, in many cases, spears and arrows proved either ineffective or unsuitable to the prey. Therefore, as you see in this passage, there were a myriad of animal traps.²¹ This refers to the type of

²¹ Uncharacteristic of *Barnes Notes* are a set of drawings which were taken from Beni Hassan (Egypt?) which illustrate how animals were taken in the wild in ancient Egypt (*Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker

trap which springs up and captures the animal in a snare, net or noose which would spring up and catch the animal by the foot or neck.

In the second line, we begin with the 3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect apocopated verb *châzaq* (חַזַּק) [pronounced *khaw-ZAHK*], whose root means *to fasten upon, to seize, to grow firm*. It has four different meanings in the Qal: it means (1) *to tie up, to bind*; (2) *to hold fast, to adhere to, to be stuck to*; (3) *to be strong, firm, to strengthen, to increase in prosperity*; and, (4) when followed by *לְ*, *to be urgent (with someone), to press, to coerce, to be persistent (with someone)*. In the Hiphil, *châzaq* means *to take, to strengthen, to repair, to hold fast*. Strong's #2388 BDB #304. Then we have the preposition *upon, against, by* with the 3rd person masculine singular suffix, followed by the subject of this verse, which is *tsammîym* (צַמִּיַם) [pronounced *txam-MEEM*], which means *a snare, a trap*. BDB calls the meaning doubtful and the word is found only here and in Job 5:5. Taken as meaning *a snare, a trap* here is quite reasonable, as well as contextually sound, which is perhaps how its meaning was determined. That rendering, unfortunately, is less than satisfactory for Job 5:5.²² Giving this word any other meaning here is completely out of context, as v. 10 continues with the same theme. Strong's #6782 BDB #855. This gives us: **A snare holds fast upon him.**

The general idea is that Job has stepped into a trap and that trap holds him fast. In the previous verse, it was a trap that he laid himself (according to Bildad). He may try to argue that he is not in a trap, but that is pretty obvious to everyone else around him.

**Hiding in the ground his rope
and his trap upon a path.**

Job
18:10

**His rope is hiding in the earth
and his trap is on the path.**

**Hiding in the earth is a rope made to capture him
and there is a trap for him along the pathway.**

The other translations:

JPS (Tanakh)	The rope for him lies hidden on the ground, His snare, on the path.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	His snare lies hidden in the earth, His nets upon the path;
NASB	"A noose for him is hidden in the ground. And a trap for him on the path."
NIV	A noose is hidden for him on the ground; a trap lies in his path.
The Septuagint	His snare is hid in the earth, and that which will take him is by the path.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Hidden in the earth is his cord, And his trap on the path.

As I translated this, I thought, *there's a lot of words in this passage for traps and snares*. This is what we should expect, just as the Arabs have a lot of different words for *sand*. Hunting for food involved a number of different types of traps for different types of animals; and that is what we are dealing with here.

We begin with the Qal passive participle of *ʔaman* (אָמַן) [pronounced *taw-MAHN*], which means *to hide, to conceal*. In the Qal passive participle, this should be rendered *hidden, hiding, concealed*. Strong's #2934 BDB #380. This is followed by *in the ground (or, earth)*. Then we have the masculine noun *che^bvel* (כֶּבֶל) [pronounced *KHE^B-vel*] which generally means *rope, cord, bands*. Strong's #2256 BDB #286. This gives us: **His rope is hidden in the earth**. The masculine suffix here does not refer to ownership, but to the fact that this rope is lying in wait for Job (it's kind of like the phrase, *this bullet has got your name on it*).

Books; pp. 308–309). Given the close proximity of Egypt and the mid-eastern countries of Job and Bildad, these methods would be apropos to this passage. The various methods employed to capture animals is discussed at length in Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, vol. iii. pp. 1–81.

²² In Job 5:5, you would not even recognize the word: **His harvest, the hungry devour, and take to [a place of] thorns. And the thirsty desires their wealth**. What appears to be the case is that the reading given in Job 18:10 is correct and that the word in Job 5:5 is a typo and actually refers to *the thirsty* (or to something else).

The next line begins with the wâw conjunction and a long feminine noun which means *a catching instrument, e.g. a snare, a trap*. This word is found only here; however, its cognates pretty much help to determine its meaning. Barnes tells us that this word undoubtedly refers to a particular type of trap, now obscure, but then well-known. Strong's #4434 BDB #540. Then we have *on [or upon] a path*. This gives us: **And his catching instrument is on a path**. The masculine suffix, again, does not refer to ownership, but to the fact that the trap has Job's name on it.

McGee: *You can see that Bildad gives these little pious platitudes and works them like a geometry problem. First you take all the steps of the proof, then you come to the conclusion, and that's it. However, life is not quite like that...it is easy in life to begin with some wrong premises. If the premises are accurate, one can come up with a good deduction. But if the premises are wrong, the conclusion will also be wrong...These men are all trying to put down their formulas, but they are putting the wrong premises into their formulas. Bildad comes up with a hard and fast rule which states that Job has walked into a trap, that it has been his own doing, and that it could not be otherwise.*²³

The Open Bible's Translation of Job 18:8–10

The Open Bible has a nice rendering of this particular passage:

The wicked walk into a net. They fall into a pit that's been dug in the path. A trap grabs them by the heel. A noose tightens around them. A snare lies hidden in the ground. A rope lies coiled on their path.

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

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

**Round about startle him terrors
and scatter him to his feet.**

Job
18:11

**Terrors [jump out and] startle him [from] round
about
and cause him to be scattered to his feet.**

**Terrors jump out and startle him from all around
and cause him to run in every direction in fear.**

The other translations:

*The Emphasized Bible
God's Word™*

<Round about> terrors have startled him, And have driven him to his feet.
"Terrors suddenly pounce on him from every side and chase him every step he takes."

JPS (Tanakh)

Terrors assault him on all sides And send his feet flying.

Keil and Delitzsch (revised)

Terrors frighten him on every side, And scare him at every step.

NASB

"All around terrors frighten him, And harry him at every step.

NIV

Terrors startle him on every side and dog his every step.

NKJV

Terrors frighten him on every side, And drive him to his feet.

The Septuagint

Let pains destroy him round about and let many come around him.

Young's Lit. Translation Round about terrified him have terrors, And they have scattered him—at his feet.

We begin this verse with the adverb $\text{çâ}^{\text{b}}\text{vî}^{\text{b}}\text{v}$ (סַבִּיב) [pronounced *saw^b-VEE^bV*], which means *around, surrounding, circuit, round about, encircle*. It is affixed to the mîn preposition of separation *from round about, from every side*. Strong's #5439 BDB #686. This is followed by the 3rd person plural, Piel perfect of $\text{bâ}^{\text{c}}\text{ath}$ (תַּעֲבֹר) [pronounced *baw-ÇAHTH*] and it means *to fall upon, to fall upon suddenly* and therefore *to startle, to terrify* due to the surprise. Strong's #1204 BDB #129. With the verb is the 3rd person masculine singular suffix. What fall upon Job and therefore terrify him are the feminine plural ballâhâh (בַּלְיָהוֹת) [pronounced *bahl-law-HAW*], which means *terrors*,

²³ J. Vernon McGee; *Job*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1977; pp. 102–103.

dreadful events, calamities, destructions. Strong's #1091 BDB #117. In many ways, Bildad is simply echoing what Eliphaz has already said: “**Sounds of terror are in his ears, while at peace the destroyer comes upon him.**” (Job 15:21). Bildad alleges that Job will be constantly beset by terrors at every side, never having a feeling of security.

The second line begins with the wâw conjunction and the 3rd person plural, Hiphil perfect of pûwts (פּוּטִים) [pronounced *poots*], which means *to be dispersed, scattered*. Strong's #6327 BDB #806. **And they [the terrors] cause him to be scattered...** This is followed by *to* or *for* and the feminine plural of regel (רַגְלֵי) [pronounced *REH-gel*], which means *foot, feet*. Strong's #7272 BDB #919. Both the verb and this noun have the 3rd person masculine singular suffix. This gives us: **And they cause him to be scattered to his feet.**

Keil and Delitzsch: *Terrible thoughts...and terrible apparitions fill him with dismay, and haunt him, following upon his feet...close behind him...the idea [is] that the specters of terror pursue him at every step, and are now here, now there, and his person is, as it were, multiplied.*²⁴ Barnes: *The idea is, that he will be alarmed by such terrors: his self-composure will be dissipated, and he will “take to his heels.”*²⁵

**Is hungry his strength [or, misfortune]
and heavy misfortune ready to his side.**

Job
18:12

**His strength is stricken with hunger
and heavy misfortune is ready at his side.**

**His strength is stricken with hunger
and heavy misfortune is at his side ready to strike him down.**

The translations:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	The strength [of the wicked] shall be hunger-bitten, and calamity ready at his side if he halts.
Complete Jewish Bible	“Trouble is hungry for him, calamity ready for his fall;...”
CEV	Starving they run, only to meet disaster,...
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Let his strength be famished, And calamity be ready at his side;...
<i>God's Word™</i>	Hunger undermines his strength. Disaster is waiting beside him.
JPS (Tanakh)	His progeny hunger, Disaster awaits his wife [lit., <i>rib</i> or <i>stumbling</i>].
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	His calamity looks hunger-bitten [hungry], And misfortune is ready for his fall.
NAB	Disaster is ready at his side,...
NASB	“His strength is famished. And calamity is ready at his side.”
NIV	Calamity is hungry for him; disaster is ready for him when he falls.
NJB	Hunger become his companion, by his side Disaster stands.
NLT	Their vigor is depleted by hunger, and calamity waits for them to stumble.
REB	For all his vigour he is paralysed with fear; strong as he is, disaster awaits him.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Hungry is his sorrow, And calamity is ready at his side.

This verse begins with the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect, apocopated verb *to be*; along with the masculine singular adjective rā'êḇv (רַעֲבָ) [pronounced *raw-GAY^BV*], which means *hungry, stricken with hunger*. Strong's #7457 BDB #944. The subject of the verb is ʾōwn (אֹוֹן) [pronounced *ohn*], which means *his strength [power, vigor]* giving us: **His strength is stricken with hunger...** Bildad looks at the pathetic, illness-ridden body of Job and remarks that the strength of the wicked man is lacking strength; it is hungry for nourishment, for that which gives strength. I think that Bildad uses that last word tongue in cheek—he's being clever (for Bildad). Job's strength isn't; Job's strength hungers for strength. Barnes says that the strength of the evil person is exhausted by hunger.

On the other hand, Keil and Delitzsch suggest that a different word is actually used here, rather than the word for *strength*; they suggest that the word found here is ʾāwen (אָוֵן) [pronounced *AW-wen*], which means *iniquity*,

²⁴ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 419.

²⁵ *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 310.

misfortune resulting from iniquity. Strong's #205 BDB #19. This would give us: **His misfortune [which is a result of his iniquity] is stricken with hunger...** The meaning, therefore, would be taken as, *the misfortune that Job is experiencing [for which he is the cause] is hungry [and eating away at Job].* Although I go with the former meaning from the previous paragraph, the difference in the Hebrew text is simply a vowel point.

The second line begins with the wâw conjunction and the masculine singular noun ʿêyd (עַיֵד) [pronounced *ayd*], which means *a burden or a load [by which one is crushed], a heavy misfortune, distress, calamity.* Strong's #343 BDB #15. This is followed by the Niphal participle of kûwn (כּוּן) [pronounced *koon*], which means *to erect (to stand up perpendicular), to establish, to prepare, to be stabilized.* In the Niphal, it means *to be firmly established, to be set up, to be established, to be prepared, to be ready.* Strong's #3559 BDB #465.

This is followed by *for his* and the masculine singular noun tsela' (צֵלָע) [pronounced *TZEH-lahg'*], which means *a limping, a stumbling.* Strong's #6761 BDB #854. It could also be the noun tsâlê' (צֵלַע) [pronounced *TZAY-lawg'*], which means *rib, side.* Strong's #6763 BDB #854. You will note that the only difference between the two is the vowel pointing (the vowel pointing, due to grammatical constraints, is even different in the Hebrew manuscripts). When you see these words side-by-side, you certainly appreciate the difference of the translations. I prefer to side with the latter translation. This gives us: **And misfortune is established for his side.**

The idea, of course, is that the evil man stands right up next to misfortune and calamity—always at his side is misfortune and calamity because he is evil.

He consumes parts of his skin; consumes his limbs, a firstborn of death.	Job 18:13	It [heavy misfortune] devours pieces of his skin; the firstborn of death devours these pieces [lit., his parts].
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**Heavy misfortune devours portions of his skin;
the firstborn of death devours portions of his skin.**

This translation continues to be moderately difficult. Other Bible translations render this verse:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	By disease his strength <i>and</i> his skin shall be devoured; the first-born of death [the worst of the diseases] shall consume his limbs.
JPS (Tanakh)	The tendons under his skin are consumed, Death's first-born consumes his tendons.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised) NASB	It devours the members of his skin; The first-born of death devours his members. "His skin is devoured by disease [Heb., <i>it eats parts of his skin</i>], The first-born of death devours his limbs [or, <i>parts</i>]."
NIV	It eats away parts of his skin; death's firstborn devours his limbs.
NLT	Disease eats their skin; death devours their limbs.
The Septuagint	Let the soles of his feet be devoured; and death will consume his beauty.
TEV	A deadly disease spreads over his body and cause his arms and legs to rot.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	It consumeth the parts of his skin, Consume his parts doth death's first-born.

This verse begins with the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of ʾakal (אָכַל) [pronounced *aw-KAHL*], which means *to eat.* It is used more frequently in a figurative sense, and means *to devour, to consume, to destroy.* Strong's #398 BDB #37. What is being consumed is the masculine plural construct of the versatile noun bad (בַּד) [pronounced *bahd*], which means *separation, by itself, alone.* However, in the plural, it can also refer to the *parts* of something, particularly those *parts which are an extension of that something.* Barnes teaches, rather, that this refers to the *framework* or the *supports* of the skin, which are the bones and physical frame over which the skin is stretched. Strong's #905 BDB #94. Here, it is *parts of* or *pieces of* the masculine singular noun gôwʿ (עוֹר) [pronounced *gohr*], which means *skin.* Strong's #5785 BDB #736. The question is what is the subject of this verb? We go backward to the nearest masculine singular noun, which is *heavy misfortune* from the previous

verse, which continues to be the subject of the next verb. This gives us: [It \[the heavy misfortune under which Job finds himself\] devours pieces of his skin.](#)

It is obvious that Job is the object of this—he sits before Bildad, his body riddled with skin cancer and other skin diseases. He had already taken to scraping off the scabs with pieces of pottery. Bildad simply observes Job, and then tells him that the misfortunes of the wicked man—the misfortunes which are a result of his iniquity; the misfortunes that he brings upon himself—will literally consume or devour pieces of his skin.

In the next line, we have a repeat of *ʾâkal* (same morphology) and what is now *consumed* is the masculine plural of bad (טָבַע) again, which, again, means *parts*. Here, we also have the masculine singular suffix as well. We may reasonably render this as *portions* or *pieces of his skin*, again, even though the word *skin* is not in the second line.

This time the subject of the verb is masculine singular construct of *b^əkôwr* (בְּכוֹר) [pronounced *b^əKOHR*], which means *firstborn*. Strong's #1060 BDB #114. This is followed by the masculine singular noun *mâveth* (מָוֶת) [pronounced *MAW-veth*], which means *death, death [as opposed to life], death by violence, a state of death, a place of death*. Strong's #4194 BDB #560. Considering this to be the *death angel* (whatever that is) or *Satan* would not be far off the mark. Death has quite obviously come for Job—at least, obviously insofar as Bildad is concerned—and here he is called *the firstborn of death*. This gives us: [The firstborn of death devours his parts \[or, pieces\].](#) A reasonable way of rephrasing this might be: [The firstborn of death devours these pieces \[of his skin\].](#)

So you understand the concept of *the firstborn of death*, the firstborn often refers to that which is the strongest and the leader. Recall what Jacob said to Reuben: ["Reuben, you are my firstborn; you are my might and the beginning of my strength. You are preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power"](#) (Gen. 49:3). Barnes: *The idea conveyed here by the "first-born of death" is the most fearful and destructive disease that death has ever engendered.* According to Schultens (referenced by Barnes), the Arabs referred to diseases as the sons of death or the children of death.²⁶ Bullinger calls the firstborn of death *the cruellest and most calamitous death [that] shall destroy him.*²⁷

The disease of death has begun to devastate the entire body of Job. Again, Bildad simply looks at Job and draws this conclusion, which, to him, is a no-brainer. Job has obviously sinned against God and God has stricken him with grotesque and devastating skin diseases. Furthermore, this statements along with the next two verses which make it obvious that Bildad is not speaking of some theoretical 3rd person, but of Job. [Then Satan...struck Job with cancerous boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head](#) (Job 2:7).

The New Jerusalem Bible Translation of Job 18:11–13	
The New Jerusalem Bible puts an interesting slant on this passage; they present these various things which attack Job's life almost as personages or gods. They refer to them as figures of Oriental mythology.	<p style="text-align: center;"> Terrors threaten him from all sides following him step by step. Hunger becomes his companion, by his side Disaster stands. Disease devours his skin, Death's First-Born gnaws his limbs. </p>

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

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

[He is torn from his tent, \[from\] his safety; and she causes him to march to \[or, for\] \[the\] king of terrors.](#)

Job
18:14

[He is torn away from his tent \[and from\] his security; and he causes him to march to the king of terrors.](#)

²⁶ Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 310.

²⁷ Figures of Speech Used in the Bible; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p 687.

He is torn away from the security of his tent and he is marched off to the king of terrors.

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

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	He shall be rooted out of his dwelling place in which he trusted, and he shall be brought to [death] the king of terrors.
<i>God's Word™</i>	He is dragged from the safety of his tent and marched off to the king of terrors.
JPS (Tanakh)	He is torn from the safety of his tent; Terror marches him to the king [viz., of the <i>Netherworld</i>].
Keil and Delitzsch	That in which he trusted is torn away out of his tent, And he must march on to the king of terrors.
NASB	"He is torn from the security of his tent [lit., <i>his tent, his trust</i>], And they [or, <i>you or she shall march</i>] march him before the king of terrors."
NIV	He is torn from the security of his tent and marched off to the king of terrors.
The Septuagint	And let health be completely banished from his tent, and let distress seize upon him with a charge from the king.
The Vulgate	...destruction will tread upon him as a king.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	Drawn from his tent is his confidence, And it causeth him to step to the king of terrors.

The subject of the verse is *Job* again, albeit hidden behind the 3rd person masculine singular. The verb is the Niphal (passive) imperfect of *nâthaq* (נָתַח) [pronounced *naw-THAHK*], which means *to pull, to draw, to tear away, to tear apart, to tear off*. In the Niphal, this means *to be torn away, to be broken, to be torn out, to be separated, to be drawn away from*. Strong's #5423 BDB #683. This is followed by *from his tent*. Then we have the masculine singular noun *beṭach* (בֵּטַח) [pronounced *BEH-tahkh*], which means *security, safety*. Strong's #983 BDB #105. This also has the masculine singular suffix. Literally, this gives us: **He is torn away from his tent, [from] his safety**. The meaning here is that *Job* was in a place of safety and security, in his tent, in his world, in his little life, and suddenly, due to his horrendous behavior (which, of course is not identified by Bildad because he only impugns this to *Job*), the Angel of Death, Satan, tears *Job* out of this world and afflicts him with torment and pain.

Barnes interprets this as: *Security shall forsake his dwelling, and he shall be subject to constant alarms. There shall be nothing there in which he can confide, and all that he relied on as sources of safety shall have fled.*²⁸

The second line begins with the *wâw* conjunction and the 3rd person feminine singular, Hiphil imperfect (with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix) of *tsâ'ad* (צָוּד) [pronounced *tzaw-ḠAHD*], which means *to step, to march*. In the Hiphil, it means *to cause to march, to make march*. Strong's #6805 BDB #857. If you envision the drill instructor from hell standing outside *Job's* tent and screaming at *Job* to get up and march in step to hell, this is the sort of thing which Bildad is conveying to *Job*. This is what has happened to *Job*. The problem is, of course, the feminine singular aspect of the verb. This corresponds with nothing in its near periphery. We would expect, of course, the masculine singular form, meaning that the one who tears *Job* from his secure tent is also the one who sets him on a march. What this causes me to believe is that one of the nearby nouns is supposed to be in the feminine singular, but is not; or there is a noun which should be in this verse or the previous one, which was left out. The next verse will also begin with a feminine singular verb. Another alternative is to render this with the neuter, which means that all which has happened has caused this. That is, the subject is of a more general sense, referring to *Job's* alleged secret and vicious sin which has put all of this into motion.

This is followed by the *lâmed* prefixed preposition, the masculine singular construct of *melek*^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced *MEH-lek*], which means *king, prince*. Strong's #4428 BDB #572. The feminine plural noun closely associated with *melek*^e is *ballâhâh* (בְּלֵיָהָה) [pronounced *bahl-law-HAW*], which means *terrors, dreadful events, calamities, destruction*. We had this noun back in v. 11. Strong's #1091 BDB #117. Literally, this gives us: **And she causes him to march to [the] king of terrors**. This *king of terrors* is probably the personification of death, called the *firstborn of death* in the previous verse. Barnes: *...the wicked man would be conducted, not merely to death, but to that kind*

²⁸ Barnes' Notes; *Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 310.

of death where a fearful king would preside—a monarch infusing terrors into his soul. There is something singularly beautiful and appropriate in the phrase, “the king of terrors.” Death is a fearful monarch. All dread him. He presides in regions of chilliness and gloom. All fear to enter those dark regions where he dwells and reigns, and an involuntary shudder seizes the soul on approaching the confines of his kingdom. Yet all must be brought there; and though man dreads the interview with that fearful king, there is no release. The monarch reigns from age to age—reigns over all. There is but one way in which he will cease to appear as a terrific king.—It is by confidence in Him who came to destroy death; that great Redeemer who has taken away his “sting,” and who can enable man to look with calmness and peace even on the chilly regions where he reigns. The idea here is not precisely that of the Roman and Grecian mythologists, of a terrific king...presiding over the regions of the dead; but it is of death personified—of death represented as a king fitted to inspire awe and terror.²⁹

God allowed several things to occur to Job and to his family. At one time, Job’s existence was seemingly safe and protected, then suddenly, it appeared as though everything went wrong. The Sabeans attacked Job’s farm and farm animals in Job 1:14–15; the Chaldeans raided Job’s camel ranch (Job 1:16–17); and the house that some of his children lived in came crashing down upon them, killing them all (Job 1:18–19). “He is torn from his tent, [from] his safety; and this act causes him to march to [or, for] [the] king of terrors.” This is not unlike what Eliphaz said to Job: “Sounds of terror are in his ears. While at peace, the destroyer comes upon him...Distress and anguish terrify him; they overpower him like a king ready for the attack” (Job 15:21, 24).

**She dwells in his tent from not his;
scattered on his habitation brimstone.**

Job
18:15

**It lives in the tent that is not [or, that is no
longer] his;
brimstone is scattered on his home.**

**Terror and misfortune live in his tent—nothing is his!
Brimstone rains down upon his home!**

First, some of the other translations:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	There shall dwell in his tent that which is none of his [family]; sulphur shall be scattered over his dwelling [to purify it after his going].
JPS (Tanakh)	It lodges in his desolate tent; Sulfur is strewn upon his home.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	Being strange to him dwell in his tent; Brimstone is strewn over his habitation.
NASB	“There dwells in his tent [a suggested reading: <i>Fire dwells in his tent</i>] nothing of his; Brimstone is scattered on his habitation.”
NLT	The home of the wicked will disappear beneath a fiery barrage of burning sulfur.
REB	Fire settles on his tent, and brimstone is strewn over his dwelling.
The Septuagint	It will dwell in his tent in his night; his excellency will be sown with brimstone.
<i>Young’s Lit. Translation</i>	It dwelleth in his tent—out of his provender, Scattered over his habitation is sulphur.

We begin this verse with the 3rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect of *shâkan* (שָׁכַן) [pronounced *shaw-KAHN*], which means *to tabernacle, to pitch a tent*. By application, it means *to dwell, to reside, to live in, to domicile at, to settle, to settle down, to dwell, to encamp, to tabernacle*. Strong’s #7931 BDB #1014. Then we have *in his tent*. Then we have the *mîn* preposition, and the negative substantive *b^olîy* (לֹא) [pronounced *b^oLEE*]. Together they mean *from want of, for lack of, on account of there being no, from the deficiency of no, so that there is no*. Although most of the translations have the rendering *without*, this, according to BDB, is the meaning when *balîy* is alone or combined with the *bêyth* preposition. Strong’s #1097 BDB #115. This is followed by the *lâmed* preposition with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix. This gives us: **She resides in his tent from nothing to him**. This is why you see such varied renderings at the end of this line. We might interpret this as: **Terror [or, misfortune] lives in his tent—[therefore] nothing is his!** The REB takes this as *fire raining down on his house*.

²⁹ Barnes’ Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 311.

In the second line, we have the 3rd person masculine singular, Pual imperfect of *zârâh* (זָרַח) [pronounced *zaw-RAW*], which means *to scatter, to winnow*. Strong's #2219 BDB #279. Then we have *upon his* and the masculine singular noun *nâveh* (נֶוֶה) [pronounced *naw-VEH*], which means *abode of a shepherd, abode of a shepherd's flocks, habitation* (the main translation in the KJV). Strong's #5116 BDB #627. The subject of the verb is the feminine singular noun *gâph^erîyth* (פְּרִי־תַיִם) [pronounced *goph^e-REETH*], which means *brimstone, sulphur*. This is apparently a foreign word and perhaps refers to a *pitch* of some sort which would contain combustible elements, e.g., sulphur. Strong's #1614 BDB #172. This gives us: brimstone is scattered on his home.

Life doesn't get much worse than this. Terror and misfortune inhabit Job's house so that there is nothing in his house which is his; furthermore, it is continually pelted with sulphur. The older son's house collapsed with all Job's sons and daughters in the house (Job 1:13, 18–19). Nothing is said about sulphur raining down from above in the first couple chapters, the idea is that this all came from above, and therefore came from God. However, we do have a direct parallel in Job 1:16: **While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you."** *Bildad interweaves distinct references to Job in his description; he knows, however, also how to conceal them under the rich drapery of diversified figures.*³⁰ *The Amplified Bible's* approach—that this sulphur is used for some sort of cleansing—is simply off-target.

Now, we must bear in mind that, eventually, God will take His vengeance out upon the wicked. **Upon the wicked, He will rain live coals; fire and brimstone and a burning wind will be the portion of their cup** (Psalm 11:6). However, we must properly interpret the events. There is nothing in scripture which promises that in life the wicked will get a proportional amount of discipline for the evil that they have done. God does discipline believers (for their own good); but He does not discipline unbelievers. God does not discipline children who are not His. This does not mean that God does not play a part in the lives of unbelievers. Apart from providing everything they need in order to live, God also will cause the unbeliever pain for two reasons: (1) in order to gain their attention and help them to lean toward Him; and, (2) when they attack a believer. You, as a believer, will never have to avenge yourself. If you are maligned, hurt or attacked in any way by an unbeliever (or, by another believer, for that matter), you do not need to respond in kind. God will handle that on your behalf. However, in eternity, the unbeliever is cut off from God and under eternal condemnation because they rejected His perfect and free salvation in Christ Jesus. There is no longer any sustenance and blessing from God—then, He will rain upon the wicked live coals; their portion will be fire, brimstone and a burning wind.

Quite obviously, none of this applies to Job, who is (1) a believer; and, (2) probably the spiritual atlas of his generation. Although he is quite confused by what has happened to him, he is light years ahead of his friends, who have no clue as to what is going on. His friends have assumed that Job has sinned some great and terrible sin, and is now reaping the God's vengeance; and Job does not know what has hit him.

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

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

How Others View What Has Happened to the Wicked

**From beneath his roots dry up
and above wither his branch.**

Job
18:16

**His roots dry up from beneath
and his branches above wither.**

**His roots dry up beneath
and his branches above wither.**

Let's see what others have done with this, although it appears to be a fairly easy verse:

Keil and Delitzsch
NASB

**His roots wither beneath, And above his branch is lopped off.
"His roots are dried below. And his branch is cut off above."**

³⁰ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 425.

The Septuagint **His roots will be will be dried up from beneath and his crop will fall away from above.**
Young's Lit. Translation **From beneath his roots are dried up, And from above cut off is his crop.**

It appears as though there is only one word to really examine here and that is the last word, which is the masculine singular noun qâtsîyr (קִצְיָר) [pronounced *kaw-TZEER*], which is a collective plural for *boughs* or *branches*. That is, it is in the singular, but refers to that which is plural. The reason for the disagreement in the translation is that this same word is primarily used for *harvest, harvesting, that which is harvested*. It is given the meaning of *branches* only in Job. Strong's #7105 BDB #894. A plant or a tree can be attacked in two ways; its roots can be attacked, which is what we don't see; or its branches can be attacked, which we do see. This has perhaps a couple of applications to Job. He is being attacked from the inside—his body is riddled with cancer; and he is attacked from the outside as well—by misfortune. We could also look at this as: Job, as the root of his family, is being destroyed, just as his sons and daughters were also destroyed. Throughout Scripture, we find *roots and branches* set up as analogous to *ancestors and descendants*.³¹

Although Bildad thinks that this applies to Job, it does not. Such a promise is, however, reserved for Israel: **Therefore, as a tongue of fire consumes stubble, and dry grass collapses into the flame, so their root will become like rot and their blossom blow away as dust; for they have rejected the law of Jehovah of the armies and they despise the word of the Holy One of Israel (Isa. 5:24). Ephraim is stricken, their root is dried up; they will bear no fruit. Even though they bear children, I will slay the precious ones of their womb.**" (Hosea 9:16).

His memory perishes from land Job **His memory perishes from the land**
and no name to him upon faces of [the] street. 18:17 **and [there is] no name to him on the street.**

His memory has perished from the land
and his name is no longer heard on the street.

Here is what others have done:

JPS (Tanakh) All mention of him vanishes from the earth; He has no name abroad.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised) His remembrance vanishes from the land, and he has no name far and wide on the plain.
NASB "Memory of him perishes from the earth, And he has no name abroad."
NKJV The memory of him perishes from the earth, And he has no name among the renowned [lit., *before the outside*. I.e., the distinguished or famous].
The Septuagint Let his memorial perish out of the earth and his name will be publicly cast out.
Young's Lit. Translation His memorial hath perished from the land, And he hath no name on the street.

The first word is the masculine singular noun zêker (זֵכֶר) [pronounced *ZAY-kehr*], which means *memory, remembrance, memorial*. Strong's #2143 BDB #271. The verb is the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of ʾâᵛad (אָוַד) [pronounced *aw^b-VAHD*], which means *to perish*. Strong's #6 BDB #1. One of the sad aspects of our existence on this earth is that some of us will live and die, and 20 or 30 years later, it will be as if we never lived. No one remembers us; we have left nothing behind; we have done nothing of any greatness. And for almost everyone, what we do and the impression that we leave behind will be lost completely in a couple of centuries.

In the second line, we have *and no name to him upon faces of [the]* and then we have the masculine singular noun chûts (חִוֵּט) [pronounced *khoots*], which means *outside, street*. In the plural, it means *streets*, generally speaking. Strong's #2351 BDB #299. Barnes: *Men when they meet together in highways and places of concourse—when traveler meets traveler, and caravan caravan, shall not pause to speak of him and of the loss which society has sustained by his death. It is one of the rewards of virtue that the good will speak of the upright man when he is dead; that they will pause in their journey, or in their business, to converse about him; and that the poor and the needy will dwell with affectionate interest upon their loss. This blessing, Bildad says, will be denied the wicked man. The world will not feel that they have any loss to deplore when he is dead. No great plan of benevolence has been*

³¹ Examples: *roots* referring to predecessors in Isa. 11:1, 10; and *branches* referring to *descendants* (Judges 5:14 Isa. 14:29).

arrested by his removal. The poor and the needy fare as well as they did before. The widow and the fatherless make no grateful remembrance of his name, and the world hastens to forget him as soon as possible. There is no man, except one who is lost to all virtue, who does not desire to be remembered when he is dead—by his children, his neighbours, his friends, and by the stranger who may read the record on the stone that marks his grave. Where this desire is wholly extinguished, man has reached the lowest possible point of degradation, and the last hold on him in favour of virtue has expired.³²

Bildad alleges that not only does no one remember Job, but his name will not even be spoken of. There won't be a *Job Avenue* or there won't be *The Job Wing* of the local hospital; or there will be no *Job Memorial Library*. In v. 16, the evil doers family was rooted out and removed; in this verse, even the memory of him is removed from this earth.

God gives us a promise about those who do evil: **The face of Jehovah is against evildoers, to cut off the memory of them from the earth** (Psalm 34:16). **You have rebuked the nations, You have destroyed the wicked; You have blotted out their name forever and ever** (Psalm 9:5). You see, not everything which is said by these three is altogether wrong. However, properly understood, Psalm 34:16 refers to eternity and the memory of those who chose not to believe in Christ will be removed from the earth. **May they be blotted out of the book of life and may they not be recorded with the righteous** (Psalm 69:28). On the other hand, Job has been studied, and therefore remembered, for several millenniums. **The memory of the righteous is blessed, but the name of the wicked will rot** (Prov. 10:7). By the way, for those who think that Israel is finished and that God is done with the Jew: God makes this promise concerning them: **"Can a woman forget her nursing child and have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you."** (Isa. 49:15).

McGee concludes these past several verses with: *[Bildad] is saying that disease shall waste the body of the wicked. The fire of God will destroy his habitation, and his name shall be blotted out. His family shall perish—he will have neither son nor grandson. His desolation shall astonish future generations. All of this is true of the wicked, but it is not applicable to Job. A statement can be absolutely true, and yet have no application to an individual situation. This is the reason I feel that a great deal of so-called "counseling" today is dangerous. I think there are many fine Christian psychologists; I know some of them and I would recommend [some of] them. But, candidly, many psychologists often have premises which are not accurate and for that reason they are not able to counsel. These me were trying to counsel Job, but they were not able to do so. Bildad says the wicked are going to be judges. The wicked will be blotted out. That is true. Look in our own day to the fate of Hitler and Stalin and other dictators. As they lived, they died. Although his statement is true, Job was not that kind of man by any means.*³³

**They thrust him from light unto darkness
and from a [an inhabited] world they drive him
out.**

Job
18:18

**They thrust him from light out into the
darkness
and they have driven him out from the
[inhabited] world.**

**He has been thrust out from the light into the darkness
and he has been driven out from this world.**

Let's first see how others have dealt with this verse:

JPS (Tanakh)

He is thrust from light to darkness, Driven from the world.

NASB

"He is driven from light into darkness, And chased from the inhabited world."

The Septuagint

Let one drive him from light into darkness.

Young's Lit. Translation They thrust him from light unto darkness, And from the habitable earth cast him out.

What you may miss here in the English is that the subject is a masculine plural. The verb is the masculine plural, Qal imperfect (with a 3rd person masculine singular suffix) of hâdaph (הִדַּפְּהוּ) [pronounced *haw-DAHFF*], which means

³² *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 312.

³³ J. Vernon McGee; *Job*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1977; p. 104.

to thrust out, to push out, to drive out. Strong's #1920 BDB #213. Then we have the phrase *from light unto darkness*, thus giving us: **They drive him out from light into darkness.** We might think of the subject as being Job's troubles and discipline (of course, all of this is couched in the 3rd person, so that Bildad, like Eliphaz, does not name Job directly). But the reference is to Job being driven from his previous prosperity to the calamity wherein he finds himself.

In the second line, we have the wâw conjunction, the mîn preposition, and the feminine singular noun tê^bvêl (תְּבִיל) [pronounced tay^b-VAYL], which means *the fertile and inhabited earth, the habitable globe, world*. This is the word often used in poetry in connection to the creation of the entire earth. Strong's #8398 BDB #385. The verb is the 3rd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect (3rd person masculine singular suffix) of nâdad (נָדַד) [pronounced naw-DAHD], which means *to retreat, to flee, to depart, to stray, to wander, to flutter*. In the Hiphil, this means *to chase away, to drive away*. Strong's #5074 BDB #622. **They chase him away from earth.** Job's troubles and discipline drive him from the light which he had enjoyed into darkness and they chase him off from this inhabited earth. Barnes comments: *Perhaps meaning that he should not be conducted to the grave with the slow and solemn pomp of a respectful funeral, but in a hurry—as a malefactor is driven from human life, and hastily committed to the earth. The living would be glad to be rid of him, and would chase him out of life.*³⁴

No offspring to him and no progeny in his people; and no survivor in his [temporary] dwelling places.	Job 18:19	He has no offspring nor progeny among his people; and there is no survivor [of his family] in his [vacation] dwellings.
He is no longer known among his people—he has no descendants; and he has left no one behind even in his temporary residences.		

These last few verses are fairly simple, but we will look at what others have done first anyway:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Let him have neither scion nor seed among his people, Neither any survivor in his place of sojourn:
JPS (Tanakh)	He has no seed or breed among his people, No survivor where he once lived.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	He has neither offspring nor descendant among his people, Nor is there an escaped one in his dwellings.
NASB	"He has no offspring or posterity among his people, Nor any survivor where he sojourned."
The Septuagint	He will not be known among his people nor his house preserved on the earth.
<i>Young's Lit. Translation</i>	He hath no continuator, Nor successor among his people, And none is remaining in his dwellings.

There are some important differences; plus I really like the Septuagint's take on this, although it is different from the Hebrew. We begin with the negative and the masculine singular noun nîyn (יַיִן) [pronounced neen], which means *offspring, posterity*. The KJV always renders this *son*, although it only occurs three times in Scripture (Gen. 21:23 Isa. 14:22). Young renders this *continuator*. Strong's #5209 BDB #630. This is followed by *to him*, which is often rendered *he has*. Then we have the wâw conjunction, the negative and the masculine singular noun naked (נֶקֶד) [pronounced NEH-keh^d], which means *progeny, posterity*. It is found in the same three passages as nîyn. Bullinger says that it should be *grandson*. Strong's #5220 BDB #645. Then we have *in his people or among his people*. This gives us: **No offspring to him; and no progeny among his people.** We could render this: **He has no offspring nor progeny among his people.** Bildad's general idea is correct: **For Jehovah loves justice and does not forsake His saints—they are preserved forever. But the descendants of the wicked will be cut off** (Psalm 37:28). His problem is that this does not apply to Job.

³⁴ Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 312.

In the next line we have the wâw conjunction and the construct of the substantive `ayin (אֵינַי) [pronounced AH-yin], which means *naught, nothing*; or it can be used as a particle of negation; *no, not*. Strong's #369 BDB #34. Just as *to him* is often rendered *he has*; we often supply a verb for this substantive and render it *there is no*. Then we have the masculine singular noun sârîyd (סַרְיָד) [pronounced saw-REED], and it means *survivor*. Strong's #8300 BDB #975. This is followed by mâgûwr (מַגּוּר) [pronounced maw-GOOR], which means *sojourning-place, dwelling-place*. The KJV gives this far too many meanings (*stranger, sojourning, pilgrimage, dwelling*), seeing that the word only occurs only ten times in Scripture. This appears to mean where someone lives temporarily or where someone visits. For some of us, this might be a vacation home. For others, this might mean mom's house back home. For others, it may be a hotel room in a city where you must travel to in order to work. Strong's #4033 BDB #158. This gives us: **And [there is] no survivor in his temporary residences [either]**. Again, the Septuagint is quite different here, and it states that he is unknown by the people wherein he lived and his home is no longer standing either. In other words, according to the Septuagint, there is nothing left behind which is indicative that he walked on this earth.

Keil and Delitzsch point out a parallelism which is found in the Hebrew, but not in the Greek. In v. 16, Job is said to be figuratively have his descendants and antecedents removed. In v. 19, that is stated directly. In v. 17, it is stated clearly that his memory is removed from this earth; in v. 18, the same thing is said figuratively.

Barnes: [Job will]...*have no one to perpetuate his name or remembrance. All this Job could not help applying to himself, as it was doubtless intended he should. The faces in this case were just such as were supposed in these proverbs about the wicked; and hence his friends could not but conclude that he was a wicked man; and hence, too, since these were undisputed maxims, Job felt so much embarrassment in answering them.*³⁵ Again, Bildad has a rough idea of what is true; he just has misapplied it: **And the offspring of Your enemies You will destroy from the earth, along with their descendants from among the sons of men (Psalm 21:10). Let his posterity be cut off; in the following generation, let their name be blotted out (Psalm 109:13).**

McGee: *Any man likes to have sons and daughters and grandchildren. They are a source of pride and satisfaction. Sometimes the wicked have more offspring than anyone else. Job, at this time, does not have one child left to him. They have all been slain. It is actually cruel for Bildad to talk in this way to Job. We shall see later on that God is going to make it up to Job and give him more children.*³⁶

Upon his day appalled, [the] following after [ones] and ones coming before have seized horror.	Job 18:20	The ones following after [or, westerners] are appalled at his day [or, fate]; and the ones coming [or, easterners] before seize horror.
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**Those in the far west will be appalled at his fate;
those who are in the far east will be seized in horror.**

Let's see what others have done first:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	<Over his day> have they been astounded who come behind, And <them who are in advance> a shudder hath seized.
JPS (Tanakh)	Generations to come will be appalled at his fate, As the previous ones are seized with horror.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	Those who dwell in the west are astonished at his day, and trembling seizes those who dwell in the east.
NASB	"Those in the west [lit., <i>who come after</i>] are appalled at his fate [lit., <i>day</i>], And those in the east [lit., <i>who have gone before</i>] are seized with horror.

³⁵ *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 312.

³⁶ J. Vernon McGee; *Job*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1977; p. 104.

The Septuagint But strangers will dwell in his possession; the last groaned for him, and wonder seized the first.

Young's Lit. Translation At his day westerns have been astonished And easterns have taken fright.

We begin this verse with ʿal (עַל) [pronounced *gahl*], which means *upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside*. Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752. With this is *his day*. It simply refers to the life that Job lived; it refers to the things which happened to Job. Most of the translators went with *at his fate* or *at his day*. In several places, in Scripture, *his day* refers to a time of destruction of the person spoken of (Psalm 37:13 Jer. 50:27, 31 Obad. 12).

Then we have the verb, which is the 3rd person plural, Niphal perfect of shāmēm (שָׁמְעוּ) [pronounced *shaw-MAIM*] has two distinct meanings: *to be desolate* and *to be appalled*. These meanings are not confined to particular stems, but can be found in all stems. Strong's #8074 BDB #1030. Recall that Job used this same word back in Job 16:7 17:6. This is typical in the responses that we find here: one responds to another by using many of the words that the first man used. Bildad does not directly address any of the arguments or the viewpoints given by Job; he indicates that he more or less listened to what Job had to say by using a few of the words which Job used.

The subject of the sentence is the masculine plural adjective ʿachārōn (אַחֲרָיוֹן) [pronounced *ah-kha-ROHN*] and it means *coming after, behind, later, following, last*. According to Keil and Delitzsch, this word is also used in conjunction with the Mediterranean Sea, and therefore connotes the idea of *western* as well.³⁷ Strong's #314 BDB #30. It is used here as a noun, and means *those who follow after*—this is the generation of men who immediately follow after Job—in fact, it is probably a reference to the generation that Bildad is a part of. A few years after Job dies, he will not be remembered. However, immediately after his death and during the end of his life, the generation of men who follow him will be appalled at his fate (I am certain that it was difficult for them to even look at Job, given his overtly grotesque appearance). First line: *Those coming after [or, those from the west] are appalled at his day [or, fate]*.

Then we have the wāw conjunction and the masculine plural adjective qad̄mōnîy (קִדְמוֹנֵי) [pronounced *kad^e-moh-NEE*], which means *former, ancient, eastern*. As the corresponding word from the previous line is used for the Mediterranean Sea, this word is used of the Dead Sea. Strong's #6931 BDB #870. The verb is the 3rd person plural, Qal perfect of ʿāchaz (אַחַז) [pronounced *aw-KHAHZ*]; and it means *to grasp, to take hold of, to take possession of*. In the Niphal, the passive stem, it means *to be given possession of, to make oneself a possessor of, to have possession of*. Strong's #270 BDB #28. What they seize is the masculine singular noun saʿar (שַׁעַר) [pronounced *SAH-gahr*], which means *horror, bristling*. Strong's #8178 BDB #972. Second line: *Those coming before [or, those from the east] have seized horror*. Those who have preceded Job in time look at what has happened to him and are also afraid. When we think of seizing horror, I believe that we would take the meaning of this differently than did Job and his associates (we would think of it as terror seizing them). Obviously, many exegetes have taken the people mentioned herein to refer to those from the east and to those from the west and that interpretation gives us the same concept, except we are not talking about different generations but men from different sides of Job and company. What would seem to make the most sense, as Bildad has maintained that subsequent generations would not remember Job, is that this refers to men from the far east and the far west. Those who have heard of what has happened to Job will be seized with terror. Barnes: *It seems to me that this accords better with the scope of the passage than the other interpretation, and avoids some difficulties which cannot be separated from the other view.*³⁸ I should point out that this interpretation does not come completely out of the blue. The *sea behind* refers to the Mediterranean Sea (Deut. 11:24 24:3 34:2). Furthermore, we find qad̄mōnîy used to refer to those of the east in other passages as well (Gen. 2:8 12:8 Job 23:8 Joel 2:20). Barnes: *The idea is that men every where would be astonished at the doom of the wicked man. His punishment would be so sudden and entire as to hold the world mute with amazement.*³⁹

³⁷ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 424.

³⁸ Barnes' *Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 313.

³⁹ Barnes' *Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 313.

Certainly these [are] dwellings of [the] unrighteous and this [is] a place of he does not know God.”

Job
18:21

Certainly, these [are] the dwelling [places] of an unrighteous one; and that this is the place of one [who] does not know God.”

Certainly, these homes are the dwellings of an unrighteous man and that this here is the place of one who does not know God and one whom God does not know.”

Let's see what others have done first of all:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Surely these are the dwellings of him that is perverse, And this is the place of him that knoweth not GOD.
JPS (Tanakh)	“These were the haunts of the wicked; Here was the place of him who knew not God.”
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	Surely thus befalls the dwellings of the unrighteous, And thus the place of him that knew not God.
NASB	“Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him who does not know God.”
The Septuagint	These are the houses of the unrighteous and this is the place of them that know not the Lord.

Young's Lit. Translation One these are tabernacles of the perverse, And this the place God hath not known.

You will note one big difference in the two translations is the subject of the second line (Young has *God* as the subject; most have the pronoun *he*). A second difference is that the Tanakh gives this last line as a quote from those who have seized horror. Observers look upon Job and exclaim what we have in this final line of Job 18.

We begin the first line with the adverb ʾak^e (אָךְ) [pronounced *ahk^e*], and it means *surely, certainly, no doubt, only, only this once*. Strong's #389 BDB #36. The second word is the plural demonstrative adjective *these* which often carries with it the force of the verb *to be*. Then we have the masculine plural construct of *mîsh^ekân* (מִשְׁכָּנַיִם) [pronounced *mish^e-KAWN*], which means *residence, dwelling place, tent, tabernacle, abode*. This is the word translated *tabernacle* throughout the end of Exodus. This is the word used more often for the *tabernacle* of God, as well as for *temporary dwelling place*. Strong's #4908 BDB #1015. His dwelling place was mentioned back at the end of v. 19, and the comment is: **These [are] certainly dwelling places of...** This is followed by the masculine singular noun ʿavvâl (אָוַוַל) [pronounced *gahv-VAWL*], which means *unjust, unrighteous one*. Strong's #5767 BDB #732. Job possibly used this word back in 16:11. This sounds very much like the observers mentioned are making these comments about Job's former dwelling place.

The second line begins with the wâw conjunction and the masculine singular demonstrative adjective *this* or *this [is]*. Then we have the masculine singular construct of *mâqôwm* (מַקְוֹמ) [pronounced *maw-KOHW*], again, which means *place*. Strong's #4725 BDB #879. Then we have the negative and the 3rd person masculine subject of the very common verb *yâda^c* (יָדָעַ) [pronounced *yaw-DAHG*], which means *to know*. Strong's #3045 BDB #393. This is followed by the masculine singular noun ʾêl (אֵל) [pronounced *ALE*], and it means *god, God, mighty one, strong, hero*. Strong's #410 BDB #42. It is because of the construct form of *place* that most translators settle on that this is *the place of he [who] does not know God*. However, it is also reasonable to assert that this is the place of one whom God does not know. The two things would go hand-in-hand. And, as we would suppose, it also makes sense that someone walks by the hovel that Job's house has been turned to (along with the houses of his children) and make these remarks. The point that Bildad is making is that anyone could walk by casually, look at the devastation that was once Job's family's homesteads, and remark, “Obviously the ones who lived here were unrighteous and they did not know God.” The NIV Study Bible rightly points out that not knowing God is almost synonymous with being unrighteous: **Listen to the word of Jehovah, O sons of Israel, For Jehovah has a case against the inhabitants of the land because there is no faithfulness or kindness or knowledge of God in the land. There is lying, deception, murder, stealing and adultery. They employ violence, so that bloodshed touches bloodshed. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have reject knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest, since you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children** (Hosea 6:1–2,

6). So Bildad takes a casual look at Job, at the destruction wreaked upon his person, and to the home of his and those of his family, homes which were now destroyed; and he thinks of Job's possessions, which have all been destroyed or stolen, and Bildad then concludes that this is indicative of an unrighteous man, of a man who does not know God.

Throughout all the Bildad had to say (and it really wasn't too much), it simply boils down to the casual observer can see that Job is far from God. And, just like Eliphaz, Bildad couches this in the third person throughout.

McGee: *So we see that Bildad gives a description of the wicked. He shows the position of the wicked and the end of the wicked. He classes Job with the wicked and tells him he is at the end of the road. He says, "This is the way it is, Job, and the description fits you." Of course, if one looks at the circumstances, one must admit that it looks as if Job does fit this description. These friends simply could not believe that what had happened to Job could have happened for some other reason. They believe that he is wicked and that he is hiding some secret sin, and they will not accept any other reason for his suffering. When Job answers them, he is going to say, "Can't you conceive it possible that God has entangled me in His net and left His action unexplained? There must be an explanation for it, but your explanation [is not]...right."*⁴⁰

Barnes: *This is the close of this harsh and severe speech. It is no wonder that Job should feel it keenly, and that he did feel it is apparent from the following chapter. A string of proverbs had been presented, having the appearance of proof, and as the result of the long observation of the course of events, evidently bearing on his circumstances, and so much in point that he could not well deny their pertinency of his condition. He was stung to the quick, and gave vent to his agonized feelings in the following chapter.*⁴¹

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

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

[<<Site Map>>](#)

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

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

⁴⁰ J. Vernon McGee; *Job*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1977; pp. 104–105.

⁴¹ *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 313.