

Job 19

Job 19:1–29

“My Redeemer is Alive!”

Outline of Chapter 19:

- vv. 1–5 “How long will you torment me?”
- vv. 6–12 “God has wronged me; He has kindled His anger against me.”
- vv. 13–19 “Those whom I know have turned against me.”
- vv. 20–22 “Pity me, my friends!”
- vv. 23–27 “I know my Redeemer is alive, and I will see Him apart from my flesh.”
- vv. 28–29 “You, my friends, ought to fear to final judgment!”

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Introduction: In Job 19, Job answers some of the objections of Bildad and then delivers the stirring passage: “I know my Redeemer lives! And at the last, He will take His stand on this earth. Even after my skin is destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God!” (Job 19:25–26). That Job is conflicted about his situation becomes quite clear in this chapter. The point that he is confused as well as in pain is made perspicuous in these next few verses. But beyond this, Job has hope, which is what is most amazing. He cannot explain why he is where he is, but Job knows that he will be vindicated by God, his Redeemer, Who will take His stand upon the earth (i.e., *dust*) that Job will soon find himself a part of.

Summary of Job 19: Job, at the beginning, will express his hurt at their personal attacks. Even though both Eliphaz and Bildad spoke in the previous chapters of this unnamed, third person, there was no doubt in anyone’s mind that they were speaking of Job. Job tells them that he is hurt and humiliated. In v. 4, Job, for a moment, allows the possibility that perhaps he has unknowingly sinned—but there is no way that they would know what that sin is, and he, by definition, would not know what he has done. Then Job tells them that God has wronged him. He, Job, has called out to God for an explanation, for some understanding of what has transpired, and God has not answered him. This means that God has either wrongly allowed Job to be harmed or is wrong in that He has not made it clear to Job was his fault was in all of this. In v. 8, God has made it impossible for Job to move forward—he is walled up and surrounded by darkness. Job has no idea what has transpired. It is obvious to all that God has stripped away the human glory that Job had enjoyed (v. 9)—but He has done so without explanation. God treats Job as an adversary, it is though God has staged an all out attack upon Job, and Job has no allies to fall back on. Job’s descriptions of the pain that God has caused him call to the compassion of his associates, not to their reproach. Even though he cannot offer them a plausible reason for his pain, Job implies that is no reason for his friends to treat him with the unkindness that they have manifested.

Then, for several verses, he tells how the various acquaintances of his life now treat him—his own personal servant has to be begged to do anything for him, young children that he does not know, but only sees, speak badly of him. Then, in a climax of emotions, he points to his own three friends—in particular, to Bildad—and remarks how they have mistreated him, and begs them to take pity upon him.

Beginning with v. 20, Job speaks what God has done to him, and asks them plaintively, “Why do you continue to persecute as God has—aren’t you satisfied enough by viewing me in the pain that I am in and suffering that I am enduring? Isn’t that enough for you?” (a paraphrase of v. 22). Excuse the triteness of this saying, but Job essentially asks them, “Is it necessary for you to kick me while I’m down?”

Job then asks that his words be inscribed permanently, and it is unclear whether he is speaking of his entire series of speeches and arguments, or whether he is simply offering a line for his tombstone or upon some permanent monument of rock. Keil and Delitzsch reject the latter interpretation, but their primary—but unstated—reasoning is that it reeks havoc with their decastring organization. After Job asks that his words be engraved in a rock, he builds to a crescendo, proclaiming that he knows his Redeemer—who lives and who is coming after him—and that He will take a stand upon the dust where Job’s body has gone to its complete circuit (from dust to dust).

In the end of this chapter, Job turns the tables on his accusers, and asks them *who will they go after* or *how will they go after him* if he has died and finds himself face-to-face with the Lord? Job has full confidence that he will be vindicated in death, and that his impending death will place him before God as a friend. Then Job warns them that they will face certain punishment for their behavior towards him, as the wrath of God will bring to them the sword, which will strike them in judgment.

The Open Bible offers a shorter condensation of this chapter: *Job pleads with his friends to change their attitude toward him. They need to realize that his misfortune comes from god’s action, not from some sin that he has committed (vv. 6–12). Despairing of support from his friends and loved ones (vv. 13–22), Job makes his strongest statements yet that God himself will one day declare Job’s righteousness, if not in this life, then in the next (vv. 25–27). He does not know how this will happen, but he does not doubt that God, the Redeemer, will act on his behalf.*¹

In this introduction, I need to pay homage to one of my many sources: Albert Barnes. In vv. 25–27, Barnes was faced with a difficulty that his heart wished to be resolved one way, but reason and God’s Word pointed a different explanation than he desired. Barnes chose the reasoning and God’s Word over his predisposition. Such theological humility is to be applauded, and gives me one more reason to quote from Barnes as extensively as I do.

Now, there are several ways to organize this chapter. Keil and Delitzsch claim that what we have from v. 7 through v. 20 are five decastrings. A decastring refers to ten lines of poetry and I will organize this chapter according to their notions at the end of this chapter. As they put it in their commentary, this does not do much damage to the overall construction of this chapter. Their reason for so organizing the book goes to Job’s statement in v. 3a: “[These ten times you have insulted me.](#)”

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“How Long Will You Torment Me?”

Literally:

Smoother English rendering:

And so answered Job and so he said,

Job 19:1 **Then Job answered and said,**

Then Job answered saying,

Throughout this second portion of the book of Job, each of his three associates will speak, and then Job will answer each one. In other words, we don’t have each person taking a turn, and Job speaks every fourth turn; he speaks (essentially) in his own defense every other time.

¹ *The Open Bible*; the New Living Translation; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; ©1996, p. 693.

**“How long will you [all] cause my soul sorrow
and [how long will] you [all] crush me in
words?”**

Job
19:2

**“How long will you torment my soul
and crush me with words?”**

“How long will you continue to torment me and to crush me with your words?”

This verse begins simply enough.

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	How long will ye grieve my soul? Or crush me with words?
NASB	“How long will you torment me [lit., <i>my soul</i>], And crush me with words?”
NEB	How long will you exhaust me and pulverize me with words?
NRSV	“How long will you torment me, and break me in pieces with words?”
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	Till when do ye afflict my soul, And bruise me with words?

We begin this verse with *ʾân* (אָן) [pronounced *awn*], which means *where*; with regards to time it means *to what point*; with *ʿad*, it means *how long*. Strong’s #575 BDB #33. With this is the directional (or locative) *hê* in the Hebrew. The *hê* locale often indicates direction and essentially answers the question *where?* The pronunciation of the word does not change. This is followed by the 2nd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect of *yâgâh* (יָגַח) [pronounced *yaw-GAW*], which means *to suffer*. This verb is not found in the Qal. In the Hiphil, it means *to cause grief, to cause sorrow, to make someone suffer, to afflict, to torment*. Strong’s #3013 BDB #387. This is followed by *my soul*.

Then we have the *wâw* conjunction followed by the 2nd person masculine plural, Piel imperfect (1st person masculine singular suffix) of *dâkâʿ* (דָּכָא) [pronounced *daw-KAW*], which means *to crush*. Not found in Qal. Barnes describes this as *crushing, breaking in pieces*; like a breaking rocks with repeated blows from a hammer. Strong’s #1792 BDB #193. They had crushed him, as if with repeated blows with a hammer.² The *how long* of the previous line is carried with this, continuing the question. This is followed by the *bêyth* preposition and the feminine plural noun *millâh* (מִלָּה) [pronounced *mil-LAW*], which means *speeches, sayings or words*. Strong’s #4405 BDB #576. The use of *bêyth* is often similar to the Greek preposition *en* (ἐν), which means *in*, but can be used to mean *by means of, with*. **And you [all] have humiliated me in [or, by means of] words.**

What I would have expected in Job is that each of his associates would make some points and that Job would refute these points. However, this has been the exception and not the rule. However, in this verse, we have a direct response to Bildad’s first question: **“How long [until] you place an end to words? Consider [that] and after, we will speak.”** (Job 18:2). Bildad asks Job how long he will verbally dance around his guilt, so Job asks him right back, **“How long will you humiliate and torment me with words?”** This did not answer Bildad’s question, obviously, but it was a definite response to it.

**These ten times you humiliate me
you [all] are not ashamed—you do wrong to
me.**

Job
19:3

**These ten times you have humiliated me;
you [all] are not ashamed .**

You all continue to humiliate me and you do this unabashedly.

First, let’s see what others have done:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	<These ten times> have ye reviled me, Shameless, ye wrong me.
JPS (Tanakh)	Time and again you humiliate me, And are not ashamed to abuse me.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	These ten times you have reproached me; Without being ashamed, you astound me.
NASB	“These ten times you have insulted me, You are not ashamed to wrong me.

² Paraphrased from *Barnes’ Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 314.

REB You have insulted me now a dozen times and shamelessly wronged me.
 The Septuagint You [all] speak against me; you [all] do not feel for me, but you bear hard upon me.
 Young's Literal Translation These ten times ye put me to shame, ye blush not. Ye make yourselves strange to me—

in the Hebrew, we begin this verse with *these ten times*. That last word is our old buddy *pā'am* (פַּעַם) [pronounced *PAW-gahm*], which means *beat, foot, anvil, occurrence, time*; which is obviously a pretty unusual array of meanings. Then connection here is that you have a succession of events which indicates that time is passing. For us and the movies for many years, it was the ticking of a clock. For the ancients, it might be the sound of footsteps or horse clomps or the banging of an anvil. Strong's #6471 BDB #821. Obviously, if you do the counting, there have not been a literal ten speeches from Job's three associates, but only five. However, it seemed like *ten* (okay, it is simply an expression). We find this expression used literally, when God referred to Israel's testing of him (Num. 14:22). We find this expression used in a third way in Dan. 1:20 (Nebuchadnezzar finds Daniel to be 10 X better than the magicians and conjurers in his realm). It is also used in exaggeration (Gen. 31:7, 41 Lev. 26:26 1 Sam. 1:10).

The first verb is the 2nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (with a 1st person singular suffix) of *kâlam* (כָּלַם) [pronounced *kaw-LAHM*], which means *to humiliate, to disgrace, to mortify, to shame, to disgrace*. The original Qal meaning of this verb was *to wound* (i.e., *to pierce, to cut*); however, we do not find this in the Qal form. In the Hiphil, it means *to reproach, to hurt some one, to treat shamefully, to injure, to put someone to shame*. We had a similar association of words when I was in high school—to *cut low* meant *to humiliate*. A similar use today: *to cut one down to size*. This is a very strong word for *humiliation*; the result is wounding. Strong's #3637 BDB #483. *These ten times you [all] have humiliated me.*

Then we have the negative and the 2nd person masculine singular of *bôwsh* (בוֹשָׁה) [pronounced *bôsh*], which means *to be anxious, ashamed, disconcerted, discouraged, apprehensive, disappointed, to be ashamed, disconcerted, disappointed, confounded*. Strong's #954 BDB #101. It is a tough word to put a one word meaning to. In any case, it is a proper and natural response that someone would have when they have done something which is wrong or shameful. The negative means that these three (particularly Bildad) don't have the natural response of being ashamed of what they have done to Job with their words.

Then we immediately have the 2nd person masculine plural, Hiphil (or possibly Qal) imperfect of *hâkar* (הִכָּר) [pronounced *haw-KAHR*], which means *to cause me to wonder, to wrong me*. Its meaning is quite dubious, as we have no cognates to give us a clue and it is found only here. Barnes spends over a quarter of a page on this word, and concludes that it means *to be stiff or rigid with stupor*, the idea being, to look upon the suffering of someone else without feeling or compassion.³ Strong's #1970 BDB #229. We might take this as an infinitive, and translate it that way, the two verbs coming together like this. The translation: *You are not ashamed to do wrong to me.*

McGee suggests that Job not answer his friends at all. In this, he makes an important point. It is our nature to run around and try to justify ourselves. Someone says something bad about us, and we feel as though we have to run them down and give them our side of the story, along with anyone else they may have spoken to. You don't have to do that. What other people think of us is not really an issue. What God thinks of you, that is important—what people think of you, not so important.

McGee adds: *I thank God for giving me the gift of preaching and teaching, but I will be very frank with you and say that it is a dangerous gift to have, because it puts you up where you can be shot at and where you can be criticized. People have asked me from time to time, "Why don't you defend yourself? Why don't you write a little book to defend yourself?" The answer is that I don't need to. As someone has stated it, your friends who know you don't need an explanation and your enemies wouldn't believe you anyway.*⁴

³ Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 314, and he further references Schultens or Rosenmüller.

⁴ J. Vernon McGee; Job; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1977; p. 107.

Now here, Job did need to answer these companions of his, not for the purpose of justifying himself, but to slowly and logically work through some options with regards to his own life and what God has allowed to be done to him. Job will come to some theological conclusions which were quite revolutionary for his time (and he will come to those conclusions in this chapter). He will actually revolutionize some of the most important theological issues at the end of this chapter, something which few if any theologians appreciate. This does not mean that before the time of Job, one thing was true, and after the time of Job, that became false and something else became true. In Scripture there is such a thing known as progressive revelation—God did not reveal His entire plan in the first 10 chapters of Genesis. Some things bit by bit, including our bodily resurrection, which Job comes upon as he reasons with his friends.

**And furthermore certainly, I have erred,
with me remains my error.**

Job
19:4

**Furthermore, [if] I certainly committed a sin
unknowingly,
my error abides with me.**

And if I have made an error, then that error is my concern rather than yours.

First, let's see what others have done:

JPS (Tanakh)	If indeed I have erred, My error remains with me.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	And if I have really erred, My error rests with myself.
NASB	"Even if I have truly erred, My error lodges with me.
NIV	If it is true that I have gone astray, my error remains my concern alone.
Olshausen ⁵	Yea, certainly I have erred, I am fully conscious of my error.
The Septuagint	Certainly I have erred in truth (but the error abides with me).
Young's Literal Translation	And also—truly, I have erred, With me doth my error remain.

We begin this verse with the wâw conjunction and then the conjunction ʿaph (אף) [pronounced *ahf*] and it means *in fact, furthermore, also, yea, even, indeed*. Strong's #637 BDB #64. Then we have the adverb ʿāmʿnām (אמן) [pronounced *awm*^e-NAWM], which means *certainly, no doubt, indeed, surely, most assuredly, unequivocally, for sure, for certain*. A change of the first vowel point gives us the same word used as an interrogative instead. Strong's #551 BDB #53. Then we have our first verb, the 1st person singular, Qal perfect of shâgâh (שגה) [pronounced *shaw*-GAWH], which means *to err, to go astray*; it can also mean *to commit a sin unknowingly*. Strong's #7686 BDB #993. This makes for a very awkward translation: **And furthermore, certainly, I have erred,...** You will note that there is no *if* in this line; that is placed by interpretation rather than by translation (if we remove the letters נ (mēm) and ו (nûwn) from the middle of ʿāmʿnām (and their vowel points), then we have an *if*. However, because of the difficulty of making sense of this phrase, most translators, early and more recent ones, have taken this to be an hypothetical antecedent clause (Keil and Delitzsch suggest we examine Job 7:20 11:18). Barnes: *Admitting that I have erred, it is my own concern. You have not a right to reproach and revile me in this manner.*⁶

You may or may not recall that Job, back in Job 6:24, implored his friends, **"Teach me, and I will be silent; and show me how I have erred."** He's changed his mind here—first off, his friends have no idea what is occurring, nor have they offered him any suggestion as to what he has done wrong—they have only said that it is obvious that he has done wrong. But more importantly, this shouldn't be their concern anyway.

In the second line, we have the phrase *with me* followed by the 3rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect of lîyn (לין) [pronounced *leen*], which means *to lodge, to abide, to remain*. Strong's #3885 BDB #533. The subject of the verb is the feminine singular noun which means *an error*. It is only found in this passage and there are a couple of similar words which mean *apostate, turning back* (see Strong's #7728, 4878). This along with the rendering in the

⁵ I don't know who the hell this guy is either, but Keil and Delitzsch mention him (and this translation) in Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 427.

⁶ Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 315.

Septuagint is how we determine the meaning of this word. Strong's #4879 BDB #1000. This gives us: [With me abides my error](#). The Septuagint lacks the suffix *my*.

Keil and Delitzsch give the sense as: *...and if I have really erred..., I shall have to expiate it, without your having on this account any right to take upon yourselves the office of God and to treat me uncharitably; or,...my transgression remains with me, without being communicated to another, i.e., without having any influence over you or others to lead you astray or involve you in participation of the guilt.*⁷

The Less Literal Translations of Job 19:4

I am not 100% happy about the translation. Therefore, let me offer you a few of the less literal translations, which may help to firm up our understanding of this verse:

CEV	Even if I have sinned, you haven't been harmed.
God's Word™	Even if it were true that I've made a mistake without realizing it, my mistake would affect only me.
NJB	Even if I had gone astray, my error would still be my own affair.
NLT	And even if I have sinned, that is my concern, not yours.
TEV	Even if I have done wrong, how does that hurt you?

The idea behind what Job says in this verse is that, if this is some unknown sin to him, then how on earth can he tell them what it is, and how do they expect to discover it for themselves? Kelly comments: *Even granting the truth of the friends' charge, it would still prove nothing...even if he had sinned (which he does not admit), it still would affect only himself and be his own affair, not the business of his friends.*¹

Barnes: *I must abide the consequences of the error*, is what Job is saying in the second line. There appear to be two senses in which this can be taken: (1) Job is reproving his friends for their invasive, improper and meddling with his concerns; and, (2) it is up to Job to bear the consequences of his actions, and he was willing to do so. *He was willing to meet all the fair results of his own conduct.*²

It is not the concern of Job's friends to act as judge and jury in his situation. They were not in the sort of position which demanded them to determine Job's sins and what should be done about them. Busybodied Christians can learn from this. When you come into contact with another believer who is suffering, it is not your business to act as his judge and jury. It is highly unlikely that God called upon you to expose their sins to them.

As David later wrote: [Let those who rejoice at my distress be ashamed and humiliated altogether. Let those be clothed with shame and dishonor who magnify themselves over me](#) (Psalm 35:26). This neatly segues into the next verse of Job...

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[If indeed against me you lift up \[yourselves\] and you \[all\] make an argument against me— \[that is\] my disgrace—](#)

Job
19:5

[If indeed you magnify \[yourselves\] against me and render a decision against me \[which is\] my humiliation—](#)

[If you indeed magnify yourselves against me as well as rebuke and correct me—a personal disgrace—](#)

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

JPS (Tanakh)

[Though you are overbearing toward me, Reproaching me with my disgrace,...](#)

⁷ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 427.

Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	If ye will really magnify yourselves against me, And prove my reproach to me:...
NASB	"If indeed you vaunt yourselves against me, And prove my disgrace to me,...
NEB	But if indeed you lord it over me and try to justify the reproaches leveled at me,...
The Septuagint	But alas, for you magnify yourselves against me, and insult me with reproach. [Obviously, v. 4 was included, as it is integral to v. 5 in the Septuagint.
TEV	You think you are better than I am, and regard my troubles as proof of my guilt.
Young's Literal Translation	If, truly, over me ye magnify yourselves, And decide against me my reproach;...

This verse does begin with the hypothetical particle (*if*) and the adverb *ʾâm^enâm* (אָמְנָם) [pronounced *awm^e-NAWM*] again; *ʾâm^enâm* means *certainly, no doubt, indeed, surely, most assuredly, unequivocally, for sure, for certain*. Strong's #551 BDB #53. We then have *against me* and the 2nd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect of *gâdal* (גָּדַל) [pronounced *gaw-DAWHL*], which, in the Qal, means *to grow strong, to become great, to grow up, to become mighty*. In the Hiphil, it means *to make great, to make high, to lift up*. This appears to be used in pretty much a reflexive way here. Strong's #1431 BDB #152. This gives us: **If indeed against me you [all] lift up [yourselves]**. Job's friends, because they were not under any sort of pain or discipline, came on as though they were superior to Job. They had all the answers and Job should have all the questions. You no doubt have known people like this—they have no self-worth unless they can tear those down around them. **For I said, "May they not rejoice over me, who, when my foot slips, would magnify themselves against me."** (Psalm 38:16). David, apparently, had suffered something quite similar to this: **For it is not an enemy who reproaches me—then I could bear it. Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me—then I could hide myself from him. But it is you, a man who is my equal—my companion and my close friend** (Psalm 55:12–13).

The second line begins with the *wâw* conjunction and the 2nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect of *yâkach* (יָכַח) [pronounced *yaw-KAHK*], which means *to make a cause clear,⁸ to adjudge, to prove, to render a decision, to correct, to rebuke, to refute, to reprove*. Strong's #3198 (and #3197) BDB #406. Again, we have *against me*, which is followed by the feminine singular noun *cher^epâh* (כֶּרַעַת) [pronounced *kher-PAW*], which means *a reproach, a taunt, scorn, shame, disgrace*. Strong's #2781 BDB #357. With the 1st person suffix, this means: **...and you [all] make a cause clear against me—[resulting in] my disgrace**. Paraphrasing McGee: Just because Job knows that his friends are wrong, this does not mean that he is automatically right. Just because two sides of an argument are presented, that does not mean that one side is wrong and the other is right.

Barnes offers the sense of this passage: *"All these calamities came from God. He has brought them upon me in a sudden and mysterious manner. In these circumstances, you ought to have pity upon me...instead of magnifying yourselves against me, setting yourselves up as censors and judges, overwhelming me with reproaches and filling my mind with pain and anguish, you ought to show to me the sympathy of a friend."* The phrase, "magnify yourselves," refers to the fact that they had assumed a tone of superiority and an authoritative manner, instead of showing the compassion due to a friend in affliction.⁹

The enclitic particle in the next verse ties vv. 5 and 6 together.

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"God Has Wronged Me; He Has Kindled His Anger Against Me."

**know then that Eloah has wronged me
and His net against me He has encompassed.**

Job
19:6

**know then that God has wronged me
and He has encircled about me His net.**

please realize that God has wronged me and he has cast His net over me.

Let's see how others have rendered this:

⁸ This is from *Barnes' Notes*, Baker Books, ©1996; Vol. III, p. 224.

⁹ *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 315.

JPS (Tanakh)	Yet know that God has wronged me; He has thrown up siege works around me.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	Know then that Eloah has wronged me, And has compassed me with His net.
NASB	Know then that God has wronged me, And has closed His net around me.
The Septuagint	Know then that it is the Lord that has troubled [me] and He has raised His bulwark against me.
Young's Literal Translation	Know now, that God turned me upside down, And His net against me hath set round.

We begin this verse with the 2nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative of *to know* along with the enclitic particle *ʿêphôw* (אֵפֹה) [pronounced *ay-FOH*] and it means *then*. Strong's #645 BDB #66. It is this particle which ties this and the previous verse together. Then we have the conjunction *that* and the *ʿêlôhah* (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced *el-OH-hah*], a word for God or deity found primarily in this book of Job. Keil and Delitzsch transliterate it *Eloah*. Strong's #433 BDB #43. God is the subject of the verb which followed, which is the 3rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect (with a 1st person suffix) of *ʿâvath* (אָוַת) [pronounced *gaw-VAHTH*], which properly means *to bend, to make crooked, to make curved*; it had come to mean *to overthrow, to deal with perversely, to make crooked, to subvert, to falsify, to pervert, to turn upside down*. Rotherham offers *overthrown, wronged, subverted* as possible renderings. We find this same word in Job 8:3 where Bildad asked, [Does God pervert justice, or the Almighty pervert what is right?](#) Strong's #5791 BDB #736. This gives us: [Know, then, that Eloah has dealt perversely \[with\] me...](#) Job uses some pretty strong language here. God has treated him unfairly; God has falsified the evidence against him; God has turned his world upside down; God has overthrown Job. Job was in a state of great prosperity and God has completely reversed that.

Job is quite confused and upset over what has occurred—he has served God faithfully throughout his life and has steered his children towards God. He has no set of hidden sins that he has committed. However, it appears as though God has initiated a full-scale attack against him without any provocation. Back in Job 16:9, Job appears to blame Satan for his ills (this is a debated point, by the way), and here he is blaming God. Job is riddled by pain and disease. His mind will experience these great moments of clarity and spiritual revelation; and he will also lose these moments of previous clarity as well. He is human, and he is under suffering much greater than you or I could imagine. God the Holy Spirit uses him throughout this book, and Job has said and Job will say some very remarkable things. At this point in time, it appears to Job as though God has wronged him and has thrown His net over him. Previously, in a moment of great spiritual clarity, Job seemed to realize that it was Satan who had attacked him. In this passage, he blames God. It is not a matter of contradiction (and many spiritual men disagree with my interpretation of Job 16:9); it is a matter of Job's illness and his confusion. God the Holy Spirit uses Job to speak the truth, but not everything that Job says is a great spiritual revelation from God.¹⁰ This is one reason why passages in the book of Job can be so difficult to interpret.

In the second line, we have the *wâw* conjunction and the masculine noun *mâtsôwd* (מַצֹּד) [pronounced *maw-TZOHD*], which means *siege works, hunting implement, net*. In this passage it is *mâtsûwd* (מַצֹּד) [pronounced *maw-TZOOD*]. It appears that the meaning as *stronghold* or *siege works* is dubious, due to the problems of the text in Eccles. 9:14. Therefore, we can probably go with *net* and feel comfortable. I have actually oversimplified the problem with this word. Strong's #4686 BDB #844. Bildad had used, in the previous chapter, many of the words referring to nets and traps and the like, so Job throws in another word that Bildad left out (see Job 18:8–10), essentially agreeing, in part with Bildad, that he, Job, was trapped by God. God had thrown a net over him.

We have the phrase *against me* again, which could be rendered *about me, around me*. The final word is the 3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect of the verb *nâqaph* (נָקַף) [pronounced *naw-KAHF*], which means *to go around, to compass about, to complete a circuit, to encompass*. Strong's #5362 BDB #668. This gives us: [And his net about me He has encompassed.](#)

Keil and Delitzsch: *If [Job's companions]...really maintain that he is suffering on account of flagrant sins, he meets them on the ground of this assumption with the assertion that God has wrong him...and has case His net...over*

¹⁰ Recall that even Eliphaz had some things to say which were spiritually accurate and important in Job 5:17–26; he simply misapplied it.

him...so that he is indeed obliged to endure punishment...[this] conclusion which he hurls into their face [is]...one they themselves have provoked.¹¹

When I read this, I pictured a net being used by a hunter-trapper to capture an animal. Freeman, in his *Manners and Customs of the Bible*, suggests otherwise. He tells us that there was an ancient means of combat practiced by the Persians, Goths and Romans. Some combatants would carry a sword and shield while others carried a net and a trident. The latter warrior would attempt to throw his net over the head of his enemy. When he succeeded, he immediately drew the net around the neck of his enemy using a noose which was attached to the net, pulled him to the ground, and then killed him with the trident. Of course, if he failed, he would possibly be killed unless he was able to successfully throw the net again. Freeman suggests that Job was aware of this method of battle and that God had thrown his net over Job and had brought him to the ground, leaving him completely at God's mercy.¹²

Vv. 5–6 should be taken together; therefore, after we exegete the next verse, I will offer up a couple of the translations which I don't often quote from below so that you can get the feel of the flow of what Job is saying.

Job's three companions have taken an attitude against him and they have used his humiliation and disgrace as evidence that they are in the right and that he is fallen before them. Job suddenly makes the statement that God has wronged him and, making a reference to what Bildad had said in Job 18:8–10, God has thrown His net around Job. V. 7 continues the thought of these two verses.

**Behold, I cry out, 'Violence!' and I am not answered;
I call aloud and there [is] no [proper] judicial verdict.**

Job
19:7

**Listen! I cry out, 'Violence!', but I am not [heard, nor am I] answered;
I call out [for justice] but there [is] no justice.**

**Listen, I have been calling out, 'Injustice!', but either God does not hear me or He does not answer;
I call aloud for justice, but no proper judicial verdict is rendered.**

Here is an unusual bit of poetry; there are two wâw conjunctions in this verse and neither one introduces a new line, per se (unless you divided this into four lines rather than two). Let's first see what others have done:

JPS (Tanakh)	I cry "Violence!" but am not answered; I shout, but can get no justice.
NASB	"Behold, I cry, 'Violence!' but I get no answer; I shout for help, but there is no justice.
The Septuagint	Behold, I laugh at reproach; I will not speak nor will I cry out, but nowhere [is] there judgment.
Young's Literal Translation	Lo, I cry out—violence, and am not answered, I cry aloud, and there is no judgment.

Job begins the v. 7 with the hên (יְהִי) [pronounced *hayn*], which means *lo!, behold, observe, look, look here, get this, listen, listen up*. Strong's #2005 BDB #243. This is followed by the 1st person, Qal imperfect of tsâ'âq (צָעַק) [pronounced *tsaw-GAHK*], which means *to cry, to cry out, to call*. Strong's #6817 BDB #858. What Job cries out is the masculine singular noun châmâç (חַמָּאֵץ) [pronounced *khaw-MAWS*], which means *violence, wrong, cruelty*. This is the word that we find in Gen. 6 which prompts God to flood the earth. Strong's #2555 BDB #329. Job uses this word to refer to what God has done to him. **Listen, I cry out, "Violence!"**

This line is continued with the wâw conjunction, the negative, and the 1st person, Niphal imperfect of 'ânâh (עָנָה) [pronounced *gaw-NAWH*], which means *to answer, to respond*. In the Niphal, it means *to be answered, to be refuted, to be heard and answered*. Strong's #6030 BDB #772. Literally: **But I am not answered**. We have a very similar line in Habak. 1:2: **"How long, O Jehovah, will I call for help and You will not hear? I cry to You, 'Violence!'"**

¹¹ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 427–428.

¹² Quoted and paraphrased from *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 211.

yet you do not deliver.” (also see Psalm 22:2). Job himself will make a similar complaint in Job 30:20a: “I call out to You for help, but You do not answer me.” (see also Job 30:35).

The second line begins with the 1st person Piel imperfect of *shâra* (שָׁרָה) [pronounced *shaw-RAHG*], which means *to call out for help, to cry out for help*. The second portion of this verse indicates that *help* is not what Job calls for, but for a proper judicial decision. Strong’s #7769 (& #7773) BDB #1002. This is followed by the *wâw* conjunction, the substantive of negation, *ʾayin* (אֵין) [pronounced *AH-yin*], which means *naught, nothing*; or it can be used as a particle of negation; *no, not*. It refers to *the condition of being not = without*. We often render it *there is no*. Strong’s #369 BDB #34. The final word in this verse is the masculine singular noun *mishpâṭ* (מִשְׁפָּט) [pronounced *mish-PAWT*], which means *judgement, a verdict rendered by a judge, a judicial decision, a judicial sentence, the judgement of the court*; as well as *the act of deciding a case, the place where a judgement is rendered*. We might shortcut this with the translation *justice*; but the idea is that no proper judgment has been rendered concerning Job and his situation. He is being treated as though he was convicted of something, but there was never a trial and never a proper verdict handed down. Strong’s #4941 BDB #1048. This gives us: **I call out [for justice] and there [is] no justice.** Or, **I call aloud, but there is no justice.** Job will say about the same thing in Job 30:28: “I go about mourning without comfort; I stand up in the assembly and cry for help.” (see Job 30:24 Psalm 5:1–2 as well).

Job is fully aware of the evidence against him—the evidence against him is the punishment which he seems to be under. However, that is not right. Paul and Peter were both placed in jail—does this mean that they were lawless and out of God’s will?¹³ Job calls out that he has been violated—that God has exercised violence and cruelty against him—but without cause. There has been no trial; there has been no proper verdict handed down. The evidence was not weighed carefully. God has crushed Job and Job has called out for God to properly give him justice.

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Vv. 5–6 make up the protasis and apodosis of a conditional clause (an *if...then...* statement), so they need to be read together. V. 7 continues the thought which neatly segues to v. 8, which is a new section.

Job 19:5–7	
Very Literal	If indeed against me you lift up [yourselves] and you [all] make an argument against me—[that is] my disgrace— know then that Eloah has wronged me and His net against me He has encompassed. Behold, I cry out, ‘Violence!’ and I am not answered; I call aloud and there [is] no [proper] judicial verdict.
Moderately literal	If indeed you magnify [yourselves] against me and render a decision against me [which is] my humiliation— know then that God has wronged me and He has encircled about me His net. Listen! I cry out, ‘Violence!’, but I am not [heard, nor am I] answered; I call out [for justice] but there [is] no justice.
God’s Word™	If you are trying to make yourselves look better than me by using my disgrace as an argument against me, then I want you to know that God has wronged me and surrounded me with his net. Indeed, I cry, ‘Help! I’m being attacked!’ but I get no response, I call for help, but there is no justice.

¹³ In the case of Peter, no; and in the case of Paul, near the end of his life, yes.

Job 19:5–7	
NJB	<p style="text-align: center;">But, whereas you take this superior attitude and claim that my disgrace is my own fault, I tell you that God has wronged me and enveloped me in his net. If I protest against such violence, I am not heard, if I appeal against it, judgement is never given.</p>
NLT	<p style="text-align: center;">“You are trying to overcome me, using my humiliation as evidence of my sin, but it is God who has wronged me. I cannot defend myself, for I am like a city under siege. “I cry out for help, but no one hears me. I protest, but there is no justice.”</p>
NRSV	<p style="text-align: center;">If indeed you magnify yourselves against me and make my humiliation an argument against me, know then that God has put me in the wrong, and closed his net around me. Even when I cry out, ‘Violence!’ I am not answered; I call aloud, but there is no justice.</p>

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Keil and Delitzsch: *He cries aloud...He finds, however, neither with God nor among men any response of sympathy and help; he cries for help [but he does not receive]...justice, i.e., the right of an impartial hearing and verdict.*¹⁴ Barnes: *[Job] could obtain justice from no one; God would not interpose to remove the calamities which he had brought upon him, and his friends would do no justice to his motives and character.*¹⁵ In the verses to follow, Job will elaborate as to how it is that he has received no justice in this matter from God (vv. 8–12; in v. 13, he segues from God being unjust in His actions toward him to the injustice he has suffered with friends, relatives and associates (vv. 14–19); finally, he tells his friends face to face that they have shown him no justice either (vv. 20–21).

**My way, He has walled up and I cannot pass;
and upon my pathways darkness he places.**

Job
19:8

**He has walled up my way—I cannot pass over
[or through];
and He places [extreme] darkness along my
pathways.**

**God has walled in my way—I cannot pass over this wall or through it;
He has placed extreme darkness along my pathways.**

The construction of the next several verses is quite interesting, and God’s Word™ offers what appears to be a unique perspective: each line, they begin with *He*, referring back to God. For seven consecutive lines, vv. 8–11, Job lists what God has done to him. Then he speaks about his relationships with his family and servants (vv. 13–19). God’s Word™ drives this home with the way that they translated these verses. On the one hand, they have, in the English, emphasized words which are not emphasized in the original (*He*); on the other hand, they quickly convey the separation of thought and argument which Job presents.¹⁶

¹⁴ Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 428.

¹⁵ *Barnes’ Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 315.

¹⁶ I should mention that most of the translations begin each verse with *He* or *His*, but, because of the formatting found in God’s Word™, it stands out more. Furthermore, their translation of the verses which follow also stand out visually to the reader (they will be quoted at length near the end of these passages).

Let's first, before we go any further, see what others have done:

JPS (Tanakh) NASB	He has barred my way, I cannot pass; He has laid darkness upon my path. "He has walled up my way so that I cannot pass; And He has put darkness on my paths."
The Septuagint	I am fenced round about, and can by no means escape; he has set darkness before my face.
TEV	God has blocked the way, and I can't get through; he has hidden my path in darkness.
Young's Literal Translation	My way He hedged up, and I pass not over, And on my paths darkness He placeth.

We begin v. 8 with *my way* and then the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect of *gâdar* (גָּדַר) [pronounced *gaw-DAHR*], which means *to wall up, to wall off, to build a wall*. Strong's #1443 BDB #154. As in the previous two lines (not verses), there was a *wâw* conjunction in the middle of the line; so it is here. Then we have the negative and the 1st person Qal imperfect of *ʿâḇvar* (אָבַר) [pronounced *gaw^b-VAHR*], which means *to pass over, to pass through, to pass, to go over*. Strong's #5674 BDB #716. This gives us: *My way, He has walled off and I cannot pass over [or, through]*. Job's life went on a certain path, and suddenly, he finds himself walled off from that path. God has placed a wall in Job's way and Job has no choices now as to his own direction. Throughout most of our lives, we generally feel that we have a lot of options as to what we can do—we have a variety of friends to chose from, a variety of colleges that we can attend, a variety of jobs that we can take. However, Job, over these past few weeks of his life has felt as though he had no real options as to the direction that he could go in. [*This line speaks*] of the obstruction of his plans, rather than of spiritual darkness or distress.¹⁷

One of the lies perpetrated by popular Christianity is that once you become a believer, everything is going to be alright. Your life will suddenly be joyous and vibrant, with problems that can easily be solved with God's help. And if you are a dour Christian, then there is something obviously wrong with your walk. This is all PR and poppycock. These are lies perpetuated by people who have never read Scripture. We've been studying Job—his life has not been joyous and vibrant as of late. We have had occasion to quote from David in the psalms, indicating that he knew sorrow intimately. A portion of Jeremiah's life mirrored that of Israel when Israel was under discipline: *I am the man who has seen affliction because of the rod of His wrath. He has driven me and made me walk in darkness and not in light. Surely against me, He has turned His hand repeatedly all the day. He has caused my flesh and my skin to waste away; He has broken my bones. He has besieged and encompassed me with bitterness and hardship. In dark places, He has made me dwell, like those who have long been dead. He has walled me in so that I cannot go out; He has made my chains heavy. Even when I cry out and call for help, He shuts out my prayer. He has blocked my ways with hewn stone; He has made my paths crooked. He is like a bear lying in wait to me, or like a lion in hidden. He has turned aside my ways and He has torn me to pieces. He has made me desolate. He bent His bow and set me as a target for the arrow. He made arrows of His quiver to enter my kidneys. I have become a laughingstock to all my people, a song of mocking all day long. He has filled me with bitterness, He has made me drunk with wormwood and He has broken my teeth with gravel. He has made me cower in the dust and my soul has been rejected from peace. I have forgotten happiness. So I say, "My strength has perished and my hope from Jehovah."* (Lam 3:1–16). My point is, becoming a believer does not make your life a sudden joyride. Now, so that I don't make you think just the opposite is true—there are a lot of things that occur when you become a believer. There are degenerate habits that you either no longer have a taste for, or that you voluntarily give up in obedience to God. Being that you are generally your own worst enemy, making these kinds of changes often results in a life which is happier and more fulfilling. Furthermore, having a relationship with the God Who created the universe is not without its benefits.

In the second line, we have the *wâw* conjunction again, the preposition *ʿal* (עַל) [pronounced *gʻal*], which means *upon, beyond, against*. Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752. Then we have the feminine plural of *nâthîy^b* (נִתְיָב) [pronounced *naw-THE^bV*], which means *path, pathway*. Strong's #5410 BDB #677. Affixed to this is the 1st person suffix. Then we have one of the many words for *darkness* (or, *extreme darkness*—Strong's #2822 BDB #365) and the very common verb *to place, to set* in the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect. This gives us: *and*

¹⁷ Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 315.

upon my paths, He places [extreme] darkness. The concept here of extreme darkness to Job means that not only is Job walled in along this path, but he cannot see his way along this path. The darkness refers to uncertainty and inexplicable occurrences and pains which Job has faced.

With this line, there is also an interesting change. Prior to this, every action of God has been spoken of in the perfect tense—a completed action. Now, we have the imperfect tense, which generally refers to an incomplete action or a continuous or ongoing action. God continues to place darkness along Job's path. He first walled Job in, but He continues placing darkness about Job. Barnes likens this to a traveler, who, on his journey, is suddenly confronted with trees and rocks or various obstructions so that he cannot go any further (imagine walking into a forest which becomes too thick to go any further; or to a impassable river). And then, when faced with these obstructions, everything goes dark. This is the imagery that Job presents as representative of this point in his life.¹⁸

**My glory from upon me he has stripped
and so He removes [the] crown of my head.**

Job
19:9

**He has stripped my [honor and] abundance
from me
and He removed the crown from my head.**

**He has stripped my honor and abundance from me;
He has removed the crown from my head.**

This verse looks fairly simple on the surface, but we will glance at a couple of other translations first:

NASB

“He has stripped my honor from me, And removed the crown from my head.”

The Septuagint

And he has stripped me of my glory, and has taken the crown from my head.

TEV

He has taken away all my wealth and destroyed my reputation.

Young's Literal Translation

Mine honour from off me He hath stripped, And He turneth the crown from my head.

Job, as you will recall, was a rich and successful man whom God had greatly blessed in all ways. In this verse, he makes reference to his *glory* or *honor*, which is the masculine singular noun *kâ^bvôwd* (כֹּבֶד) [pronounced *kaw²-VODE*]. This can also mean *abundance*, which is certainly applicable here. Strong's #3519 BDB #458. Then we have *from upon me* and the 3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect of *pâshaṭ* (פָּשַׁט) [pronounced *paw-SHAHT*], which means *to remove one's clothing, to flay, to remove the skin*. In the Hiphil, this means *to cause someone to strip off their garments*. Strong's #6584 BDB #832. **He has stripped my honor [glory and abundance] from upon me.** The picture painted here is God has not simply removed Job's honor, glory and abundance, but he has stripped it off Job's back as though flaying his back with an ancient whip. This is akin to taking the skin off of Job's back with a whip.

In the next line, we have the *wâw* consecutive, which is often used to continue to action of the previous line, and the 3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil¹⁹ imperfect of *ṣûwr* (סוּר) [pronounced *soor*], which means *to turn aside, to depart, to go away*. In the Hiphil, it means *to cause to depart, to remove*. Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693. This is followed by *crown of my head*. This is a symbol of Job's honor, glory and abundance. He wasn't necessarily a king or anything like that—it is simply an expression of the removal of his glory. There is a parallel verse in Psalm 89:44: **And You have made his splendor to cease and cast his throne to the ground.**

**He breaks me down round about and so I
depart;
and so He pulls up as a stake my hope.**

Job
19:10

**He breaks me down from round about and I
depart [from this life];
and He pulls up my hopes as a wooden [tent]
stake.**

¹⁸ From *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 315.

¹⁹ Owen has *Qal*, however it is the Hiphil (see *The Englishman's Hebrew Concordance of the Old Testament*, George Wigram; Hendrickson Publishers, ©1997; p. 877.

**He crushes me from all sides until I depart from this life;
He pulls up my confidence and hope as if they were tent stakes.**

This verse also appears to be fairly simple; other translators have rendered it:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	He hath ruined me on every side, and I am gone, And he hath taken away—like a tree—my hope.
JPS (Tanakh)	He tears down every part of me; I perish; He uproots my hope like a tree.
NASB	“He breaks me down on every side, and I am gone; And He has uprooted my hope like a tree.”
NEB	On every side he beats me down and I am gone; he has pulled up my tent-rope [or, <i>he has uprooted my hope</i>] like a tree.
The Septuagint	He has torn me round about and I am gone; and He has cut off my hope like a tree.
TEV	He batters me from every side. He uproots my hope and leaves me to wither and die.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	He breaketh me down round about, and I go, And removeth like a tree my hope.

We begin this verse with the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect (plus a 1st person singular suffix) of *nâthats* (נָתַתְּ) [pronounced *naw-THAHTS*], which means *to pull down, to tear down, to break down*. This is a word generally used of cities, towns and houses. Strong's #5422 BDB #683. This is followed by the adverb *çâvîv* (כָּאֵלֶּיךָ) [pronounced *saw^b-VEE^BV*], which means *around, surrounding, circuit, round about, encircle*. Strong's #5439 BDB #686. Job follows this with a *wâw* consecutive and then the 1st person singular, Qal imperfect of *hâlak* (הָלַכְתִּי) [pronounced *haw-LAHK^e*], which means *to go, to come, to depart, to walk*. Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229. When Job says that he is departing, it refers to departing from this life. Neither Job nor his friends expected him to live much longer. This gives us: **He breaks me down round about and so I depart [from this life].**

In the second line, we have the *wâw* consecutive again and the 3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect of *nâçâ* (נָצַח) [pronounced *naw-SAHÇ*], which means *to journey, to depart*. However, the basic meaning of *nâçâ* is to pull up the stakes of a tent (in preparation to move out). It denotes the pulling up the stakes of a tent, and this is how it is used here. Strong's #5265 BDB #652. What is pulled up is the masculine singular noun *êts* (עֵץ) [pronounced *gayts*], which means *tree, wood, wood stake*. Given the verb, this would be better rendered *wooden stake* rather than *tree*. Strong's #6086 BDB #781. What follows is *my hope*, which is the feminine singular noun *tîq^evâh* (תִּקְוָה) [pronounced *tik^e-VAW*], which means *hope, expectation, that which is waited for, that which is expectantly looked for*. Strong's #8615 BDB #876. **And so He pulls up my hope as a wooden stake.** Job's hope and confidence were uprooted by God as simply as pulling up a tent stake. Notice how this is different from Job 14:7: **“For there is hope for a tree, when it is cut down, it will sprout again, and its shoots will not fail.”** However, what we have in this passage is a tent stake which is completely pulled out of the ground. There won't be any additional growth from that spot.

The hope to which Job is referring is *his hopes of an honoured old age, and of a continuance of his prosperity, [which] had been wholly destroyed. This does not refer to his religious hope—as the word hope is often used now—but to his desire of future comfort and prosperity in this life.*²⁰

**And so He kindles against me His nostril [or,
anger]
and so counts me to Him as His adversaries.**

Job
19:11

**God has kindled His anger against me
and He has counted me as His adversaries.**

God kindles His anger against me, counting me as one of His adversaries.

Let's first see what others have done. I work primarily out of Owen's *Analytical Key to the Old Testament*, and it is obvious that his rendering isn't altogether literal:

²⁰ *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 316.*

The Complete Jewish Bible	“Inflamed with anger against me, he counts me as one of his foes.”
JPS (Tanakh)	He kindles His anger against me; He regards me as one of His foes.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	He kindled His wrath against me, And He regarded me as one of His foes.
NASB	“He has also kindled His anger against me, And considered me as His enemy.”
Owen’s Translation	And He has kindled against me His wrath and counts me as his adversary.
The Septuagint	And he has dreadfully handled me in anger, and has counted me for an enemy.
TEV	God is angry and rages against me; he treats me like his worst enemy.
Young’s Literal Translation	And He kindleth against me His anger, And reckoneth me to Him as His adversaries.

As you can see, we don’t have much disagreement here—not even with the Greek. We begin with a wâw consecutive and a 3rd person Hiphil imperfect of chârâh (חָרָה) [pronounced *khaw-RAWH*], which means *to kindle, to become angry*. In the Hiphil, it means *to cause to burn, to kindle*. This is an oft times used anthropopathism—God does not get angry; but the picture here is God sees this, and he gets a little mad; He thinks about it, and He gets a little more angry; He thinks about it some more, and He begins to seethe and burn with anger. Just as I learned in the cub scouts, you begin a fire with some paper, which ignites some small twigs, which ignites some larger branches, which ignites the logs. This verb obviously must be in the imperfect, as this is a continued action of one’s anger building up. But, let me emphasize, this is an anthropopathism; God’s character does not allow for Him to seethe with anger; this is language of accommodation so that we can have a human understanding of God’s actions. We have all been upset over a situation that, when given time to reflect upon it, have become more and more angry. Every time we think about it some more, we get angrier. That is the meaning of this verb—it is just like kindling a fire. Strong’s #2734 BDB #354. This is followed by *against me* and then the masculine singular noun ʾaph (אֵפ) [pronounced *ahf*], which literally means *nose, nostril*, (see Gen. 2:7 3:19 7:22 19:1 24:47) but is also translated *face, brow, anger*. However, as we sometimes find in the Hebrew, a part of the body can stand for a particular emotion, and ʾaph seems to correlate well with the substantive *anger* (Gen. 27:45 30:2 39:19 44:18). The idea is then when a person was angry with you, the tilt of his head revealed his nostril or nose as being the most prominent feature. Strong’s #639 BDB #60. Job does not offer an explanation *why* for this; he simply tells us that God has become angry with him. **And so he kindles against me His nostril [or, anger].**

In the second line, we have the wâw consecutive again and the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect (with a 1st person masculine singular suffix) of châshaʿb (חָשַׁב) [pronounced *khaw-SHAHBV*], which means *to think, to regard, to account, to count, to determine, to calculate*. Strong’s #2803 BDB #362. Bildad used this verb twice in Job 18:2–3. Then we have the phrase *to me* followed by the kaph preposition (*like, as*) and the masculine plural of tsar (צַר) [pronounced *tsahr*], which means *adversary, foe*. Strong’s #6862 BDB #865. Literally, this gives us: **And so He has counted me as His adversaries.** Job does not consider himself to be adversary of God; however, God treats him as He treats His adversaries. God, when making up a list of His enemies, has placed Job on that list. Back in Job 13:24, Job said, **“Why have You caused Your face(s) to be hidden and count me with respect to enmity to You?”** Keil and Delitzsch suggest: *His wrath to kindle against him, and regarded him in relation to Himself as His opponents, therefore as one of them. Perhaps, however, the expression is intentionally intensified here, in contrast with ch. 13:24: he, the one, is accounted by God as the host of His foes; He treats him as if all hostility to God were concentrated in him.*²¹

McGee: *[Job] says that God is treating him very harshly and that there must be an explanation for it. The purpose of God must be different from the explanation that his friends give to him, but Job confesses he doesn’t know what that purpose is.*²² Barnes hits the nail on the head when he points out that Job does not see himself at enmity with God, but that it appears to all as though that is what is occurring. God *treats* him as though he is an enemy.²³

²¹ Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 428.

²² J. Vernon McGee; *Job*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1977; p. 109.

²³ *Barnes’ Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 317.

**Together enter His troops
and so they lift up against me their way
and so they encamp round about my tent.**

Job
19:12

**His troops come in together
and they have lifted up their road against me
and have encamped [as adversaries] around
my tent.**

**His armies have united against me
and they have constructed an attack route to me;
they have encamped around my tent as adversaries.**

This is the last line of a section. Let's see what others have done first:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	<Together> enter his troops, And have cast up, against me, their mound, And have encamped all around my tent;
God's Word™	His troops assemble against me. They build a ramp to attack me and camp around my tent.
JPS (Tanakh)	His troops advance together; They build their road toward me And encamp around my tent.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	His troops came together, And threw up their way against me, And encamped around my tent;
NASB	"His troops come together, And build up their way against me, And camp around my tent."
NEB	His raiders gather in force [the Hebrew adds, <i>they raise an earthwork against me</i>] and encamp about my tent.
The Septuagint	His troops also came upon me with one accord, those lying in wait compassed my ways.
TEV	He sends his army to attack me; they dig trenches and lay siege to my tent.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	Come in do His troops together, And they raise up against me their way, And encamp round about my tent.

The first word in this verse is the adverb *yachad* (יַחַד) [pronounced *YAH-khahd*], which means *together, alike, all together*. Strong's #3162 BDB #403. This is followed by the verb *to go in, to come in, to enter*. The verb is in the 3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect. The subject is the masculine plural noun which follows: *g^edūwd* (גִּדְוּד) [pronounced *g^eDOOD*], which means *band, troop, division, detachment*. Strong's #1416 BDB #151. This gives us: **His troops come in together**. Recall Keil and Delitzsch's position, that perhaps the vocabulary of the previous verse suggests that God does not simply treat Job as an enemy, but as any enemy army—this line further confirms that suggestion—God has sent an entire army against Job. Job is not thinking of simply the Chaldeans or Sabeans who had attacked and robbed him of his property, but to the calamities as a whole which had come upon him.²⁴

In the second line, we have the *wâw* consecutive followed by the 3rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect of *çelâh* (חָלָה) [pronounced *seh-LAW*], which means *to lift up, to elevate, to exalt [with one's voice], to gather, to cast up [into a heap]*. Strong's #5542 BDB #699. This is followed by *against me* and then the masculine singular noun (with a masculine plural suffix) *derek^e* (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced *DEH-rek^e*] and it means *way, distance, road, journey, manner, course*. Strong's #1870 BDB #202. This gives us: **They have lifted up against me their road**. In their attack upon Job, they have first built up a road over which they may travel against him in this assault. You will note the similarities and differences with the Septuagint. At times like these, one isn't sure whether the translator of the Hebrew into the Greek decided to paraphrase or whether his Hebrew text was significantly different. There must be a way of attack—in the modern world, if memory serves, Russia at one time built six lane highways leading to and dead-ending at Afghanistan (I recall hearing this in church over twenty years ago, so I don't know if I have the story straight). But the deal is simply this: if Russia was going to attack any of the Middle Eastern countries, it would need to have roads on which to drive. In the ancient world, sometimes to get into a fortress, or to attack a walled city, a ramp would be constructed to facilitate the attack. This is what Job was speaking of.

²⁴ Paraphrased from *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 316.

In the final line of this verse, we have the wâw consecutive followed by the 3rd person plural, Qal imperfect chânah (הִנָּח) [pronounced *khaw-NAW*] properly means *to incline*; it is used primarily *to pitch a tent, to encamp*. Strong's #2583 BDB #333. This is followed by the adverb which means *round about, surrounding, around*. Finally, we have the lâmed preposition (*to, for*) and *my tent*. The final line reads: **And so they have encamped surrounding my tent**. There is just really no way to work the lâmed preposition into the translation.

I realize that for some of you, when I throw out all of this Hebrew at you, it sometimes sticks to nothing. However, throughout the past couple of verses, we have all of the verbs in the imperfect tense (beginning with the middle of v. 19). The imperfect tense is one of incomplete action or action which is ongoing or action which is occurring in the present time. All that God has done against Job in the past couple of verses are an ongoing attack upon Job, which is continuous, which occupies his every thought and action.

Job is filled with great internal conflict at this point. He knows that what his friends have stated—that he has sinned greatly and is receiving just recompense for it—is unequivocally wrong. Even if he had committed some unknown sin, it would not make sense for God to have attacked Job the way He has. However, this viewpoint places God as arbitrarily and unjustly attacking Job without sufficient reason, which also, even though Job takes that position, makes little sense.²⁵

What I particularly enjoyed, because it stood out from the other translations, is what God's Word™ did. Even though, in the Hebrew, the word *He* is not used specifically (which is superfluous, but used to show emphasis), we have a series of verses where we have God acting or His agents are acting in His behalf (the last verse). This is followed by several verses where Job speaks of his family, friends, acquaintances, and spoken of. In keeping with the spirit of their translation, I will make a couple of small changes in the last couple verses so that you can see the shift in emphasis, yet how a theme is carried through in each section (I will mark the changed verses with an asterisk—most of the changes involve a simple reordering of the words):

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God's Word™: A Translation of Job 19:8–19	
Job 19:8–12: What God is doing to Job	<p>“God has blocked my path so that I can't go on. He has made my paths dark. He has stripped me of my honor. He has taken the crown off my head. He beats me down on every side until I'm gone. He uproots my hope like a tree. He is very angry at me. He considers me to be his enemy. His troops assemble against me. They build a ramp to attack me and camp around my tent.</p>
Job 19:13–19: How Job's friends and family treat him	<p>“My brothers stay far away from me. My friends are complete strangers to me. My relatives and my closest friends have stopped coming. My house guests have forgotten me. My female slaves consider me to be a stranger. I am like a foreigner to them. My slave I call, but he doesn't answer, though I beg him.* My wife is offended by my breath.* My own children I stink to.*</p>

²⁵ paraphrased in part from *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; p. 1342.

God's Word™: A Translation of Job 19:8–19	
	Even young children despise me. If I stand up, they make fun of me. All my closest friends are disgusted with me. Those I love have turned against me.
Job 19:20–22 Job's plea to his associates	"I am skin and bones, and I have escaped only by the skin of my teeth. Have pity on me, my friends! Have pity on me because God's hand has struck me down. Why do you pursue me as God does? Why are you never satisfied with my flesh?
Now, I need to point out that the translation of God's Word™ above did play a little fast and loose with the Hebrew in order to make their literary point (which I do not begrudge them—I am simply pointing this out). Although most of the verses in the first section begin with <i>He</i> , that is not the case in the Hebrew, nor is 3 rd person masculine singular pronoun found anywhere in that section. However, from the repetition of the 3 rd person masculine singular verbs, we can reasonably infer such an emphasis—in literature, this is called <i>repetitio</i> or, simply, <i>repetition</i> .	
There are a lot of neat segues in this chapter. Here, we have moved from God to those around Job. However, we simply don't move from one to the next, but v. 13a has elements of both the previous section and the section to come (if you look back at the translation of God's Word™, you will notice that they glossed this over, as they went with a literary style instead). However, it should read: He has put my brothers far from me, giving us elements of both first and section sections quoted above.	

(Also see [Keil and Delitzsch's Decastich Organization of Job 19](#))

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“Those Whom I Know Have Turned Against Me.”

To this catalogue of hopeless effects, Job now adds a recital of his complete alienation from all human means of help.²⁶ In the next few verses, Job will tell how his brothers have forsaken him, his acquaintances are estranged from him, his friends have forgotten him, the maids that lived in his house count him as a stranger, his servants will not answer his call, his wife is a stranger to him. Even the young children have despised him.²⁷

**My brothers from beside me He has removed
 and those I know have become certainly
 estranged from me.**

Job
 19:13

**He has moved far off my brothers [who were]
 beside me;
 and my acquaintances have become quite
 estranged from me.**

**He has moved far from me my brothers who were once beside me;
 because of Him, my acquaintances have become estranged from me.**

Let's see what some of have done with this verse, and then we will unravel it:

JPS (Tanakh)

He alienated my kin from me; My acquaintances disown me.

²⁶ *The Layman's Bible Commentary, Vol. 8*, Balmer H. Kelly, John Knox Press, ©1962, p. 100.

²⁷ Quoted and paraphrased from J. Vernon McGee; *Job*; Thru the Bible Books; ©El Camino Press, 1977; p. 109.

Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	My brothers He has removed far from me, And my acquaintances are quite estranged from me.
NASB	“He has removed my brothers far from me, And my acquaintances are completely estranged from me.”
The Septuagint	My brothers have stood aloof from me; they have recognized strangers instead of me.
Young's Literal Translation	My brethren from me He hath put far off, And mine acquaintances surely Have been estranged from me.

We begin this verse with *my brothers*, which signals to us a change in the literary emphasis. Then we have two prepositions and the 1st person suffix. The prepositions are *mê'al* (לַעֲלֵי) [pronounced *may-GAHL*], from the preposition *min* (מִן) [pronounced *min*] denotes separation (*away from, out from, out of from*) [Strong's #4480 BDB #577]; and the preposition is the preposition *'al* (עַל) [pronounced *gah/*] which means, primarily, *upon, against, above*. Strong's #5920, 5921 BDB #752. Together, they generally mean *from upon, from over, from by*. However, because *'al* is the hardest working preposition in the Hebrew language, it has many different uses, meaning that any compound will have a wide variety of uses. The two together can also mean *from beside, from attachment to, from companionship with, from accompanying [in a protective manner], from adhesion to*. The verb which ties this section of Job 19 to the previous section is the 3rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect of *râchaq* (רָחַק) [pronounced *raw-KHAHK*] means *to become far, to become distant, to be distant, to move a far off from, to abstain from, to send far away*. In the Hiphil, we have a transitive use of this verb (found here): *to remove, to go far off, to place far off*; and there is also the intransitive meaning: *to go away far*. Strong's #7368 BDB #934. This gives us: *My brothers from beside me He has placed far off [or, He has removed]*. The transition of this half verse is not literary genius by any means, it is simply Job speaking about what God has done to him to the results of what God has done to him by combining both in the same line. It is unclear as to whether Job is referring to his literal brothers or whether this refers to his most intimate friends from his former life.

In the next line, we have the *wâw* conjunction and the masculine plural, Qal active participle of *yâda'* (יָדָעַ) [pronounced *yaw-DAHG*], which means *to know*. As a masculine plural participle, this stands in for the people that Job knows; the 1st person suffix makes certain that this is personalized. *Ones I know* is a reasonable rendering; *my acquaintances* appears to be the literal rendering of choice. Strong's #3045 BDB #393. Then we have the adverb *'akē* (אָכֵן) [pronounced *ahkē*], and it means *surely, certainly, no doubt, only, only this once*. Strong's #389 BDB #36. The verb is the 3rd person plural, Qal perfect of *zûwr* (זָוַר) [pronounced *zoor*], which means *estranged, separated, disengaged, alienated, sequestered, unauthorized*. Strong's #2114 BDB #266. This is followed by *from me*, giving us: *And those I know are certainly estranged from me*. With this line, the ones to follow will be lines which could be begun with *my this* or *my that*.

Barnes: *What an accurate description is this of what often occurs! In prosperity a man will be surrounded by friends; but as soon as his prosperity is stripped away, and he is overwhelmed with calamity, they withdraw, and leave him to suffer alone. Proud of his acquaintance before, they now pass him by as a stranger, or treat him with cold civility, and when he needs their friendship, they are gone.*²⁸

One of the things that you will find, as a believer, even when you do everything right, you will have enemies; and, quite often, these enemies will be other believers. Those who have done the most vicious, underhanded things toward me throughout my adult life have generally been believers. I have been verbally attacked, slandered and gossiped about by believers; as well as received personal attacks of one sort or another by believers. *Because of all my adversaries, I have become a reproach, especially to my neighbors, and an object of dread to my acquaintances; those who see me in th street flee from me* (Psalm 31:11). *My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague; and my kinsmen stand afar off* (Psalm 38:11). *I have become estranged from my brothers and an alien to my mother's sons* (Psalm 69:8; see also Psalm 88:8).

²⁸ Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 317.

**Have left [me] my near ones
and my known ones have forgotten me.** Job 19:14 **Those near me have forsaken [me];
and those known by me have forgotten me.**

**Those near to me have forsaken me
and those I once knew no longer act as though they know me.**

We have a repeat of the verb *to know* from the last verse in this one; but first, let's see how others have translated this verse:

JPS (Tanakh)	My relatives are gone; My friends have forgotten me.
Keil and Delitzsch	My kinfolk fail, And those that knew me have forgotten me.
NASB	"My relatives have failed, And my intimate friends have forgotten me."
The Septuagint	My nearest of kin have not acknowledged me, and they that know my name have forgotten me.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	Ceased have my neighbors And my familiar friends have forgotten me

We begin this verse with the 3rd person plural, Qal perfect of *châdal* (לָדַח) [pronounced *khaw-DAHL*], which means *to cease and desist, to leave off, to cease, to leave, to forsake*. Strong's #2308 BDB #292. The subject of this verb is an adjective—the masculine plural of *qârôḇ* (קָרֹב) [pronounced *kaw-ROḶV*], which means *near, contiguous, imminent, near in relation*. Strong's #7138 BDB #898. With this is a 1st person suffix, giving us: **Those near me have left**. These refer to those to whom Job once felt close to.

In the second line we have the *wâw* conjunction and the masculine plural, Pual participle of *to know* again. The Pual is the passive of the Piel (intensive) stem and likewise emphasizes an accomplished state. Literally, this would be *and those of my knowing* or *and those known by me*. The verb is the 3rd person plural, Qal perfect (with a 1st person suffix) of *shâkach* (שָׁכַח) [pronounced *shaw-KAHKH*], which means *to forget; to forget and leave*. Strong's #7911 BDB #1013. **And those knowing me have forgotten me**. There is a contrast between the two words here—the subject (which is a verb) and the verb. It is the poetic thought, *those whom I once knew have forgotten about me*; one might even stretch this further to say, *those whom I once knew act as though they do not know me*.

**Visitors of my house and my maidservants for
an alien they count me;
a foreigner I have become in their eyes.** Job 19:15 **Visitors to my house and my female slaves
regard me [as] an alien;
I have become a foreigner in their eyes.**

**Those who are temporary residents of my household and even my female slaves regard me as a
stranger;
I have become an alien or a foreigner to them.**

The 15th verse has been rendered thus:

JPS (Tanakh)	My dependents and maidservants regard me as a stranger; I am an outsider to them.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	The slaves of my house and my maidens, They regard me as a stranger, I am become a perfect stranger in their eyes.
NASB	"Those who live in my house and my maids consider me a stranger. I am a foreigner in their sight."
NIV	My guests and my maidservants count me a stranger; they look upon me as an alien.
The Septuagint	My household, and my maidservants, I was a stranger before them.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	Sojourners of my house and my maids, For a stranger reckon me;

You will not that there is not a lot of agreement on that first word—*slaves, dependents, guests, household, sojourners*. It is the masculine plural construct, Qal active participle of *gûwr* (גִּוּר) [pronounced *goor*], which means

to sojourn, to [temporarily] reside, to visit. Properly, we would render this, as a participle, *visitors, temporary residents, sojourners*. The JPS obviously took this a step further to call them dependents. Keil and Delitzsch chose, because of the context, to call them *slaves* instead, admitting to a wider application, but especially to *domestics*. The continual use of this word in such passages as Ex. 12:49 Lev. 16:29 17:10, 12, 13 etc., all of which refer to a *stranger sojourning* somewhere, indicates that this is not necessarily a regular house guest or family member. Strong's #1481 BDB #157. *These could be guests, strangers, servants, clients, or tenants.*²⁹ This is followed by *my house*, which refers to Job's estate, which is then followed by *and my maidservants*.

Then we have the lamed preposition and the masculine singular, Qal active participle of zûwr (זור) [pronounced *zoor*] again; and it means *estranged, separated, disengaged, alienated, sequestered unauthorized*. As a participle, this is generally rendered *stranger*, although *one estranged* and *alien* are also good renderings. Strong's #2114 BDB #266. The verb is our old buddy châshâ^v (חַשַׁב) again [pronounced *khaw-SHAHBV*]. Recall this means *to think, to regard, to account, to count, to determine, to calculate*. It is in the 2nd person masculine plural and it has a 1st person suffix. Strong's #2803 BDB #362. Altogether, this first line reads: **Visitors of my house and my maidservants [or, female slaves] regard me [as] an alien.** Keil and Delitzsch: *These people, who ought to thank him for taking them into his house, regard him as one who does not belong to it; he is looked upon by them as a perfect stranger (יַגְרִי), as an intruder from another country.*³⁰

Job was a very rich man and, although all of his wealth is gone, he still has some of the trappings, such as a large household or estate, which probably consists of several homes (or tents). For whatever reason, there are people who stay at his estate who do not appear to be his slaves, but those who have passed through and stopped at Job's temporarily. Whether these are itinerant workers or guests, this is not clear; however, they regard Job as an alien or as a foreigner.

The second line begins with the masculine singular adjective nâk^erîy (נָכַר) [pronounced *nawck^e-REE*], and it means *foreign, alien*. Strong's #5237 BDB #648. This is followed by the 1st person singular, Qal perfect of *to be* followed by *in their eyes*. **I have become a foreigner in their eyes.** Some of the guests at Job's estate would have been foreigners. Just as a rich person in River Oaks might have a gardener or a servant or a cook who is from another country, Job certainly had some such persons at his estate. Job may also have guests (or those of his house may have guests) from other countries. To stay there, they had all become dependent upon Job's hospitality and generosity. However, they now treat Job as if he is the foreigner, as the one who speaks a different language, as the one whose function at the household is now become superfluous.

**To my servant, I call, and he does not answer;
with my mouth I must appeal to him [and his
graciousness].**

Job
19:16

**I call out to my servant and he does not
answer [me];
I must appeal to him [and his graciousness]
with my mouth.**

**I call out to my personal attendant, but he does not respond;
I must speak to him as an inferior appealing to his graciousness.**

Let's see what others have done with v. 16:

JPS (Tanakh)	I summon my servant but he does not respond; I must myself entreat him.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	I call to my servant and he does not answer, I am obliged to entreat him with my mouth.
NASB	"I call to my servant, but he does not answer, I have to implore him with my mouth."
The Septuagint	I called my servant, and he did not listen; and my mouth entreated [him].
Young's Literal Translation	To my servant I have called, And he doth not answer, With my mouth I make supplication to him.

²⁹ Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 317.

³⁰ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 429.

We begin with *To my servant I call...* This is followed by the wâw conjunction, the negative, and the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of ʿânâh (אָנָה) [pronounced *gaw-NAWH*], which means *to answer, to respond*. We had this same word back in v. 7. Strong's #6030 BDB #772. *I call out to my servant and he does not answer [me]*. The person to whom Job is referring is not just any male servant, but to his personal attendant. This is why it is found in the masculine singular. The other option would be that Job had only one male servant, and that is highly unlikely for one who was formerly of the richest men in the world.

The second line begins with, *with my mouth*. Then we have the 1st person singular, Hithpael imperfect of chānan (חָנַן) [pronounced *khaw-NAHN*], which means *to bend, to stoop over, to show favor, to show grace as a superior would do on behalf of an inferior, to show mercy, to be gracious*. Here, this word is in the Hithpael imperfect; which is continuous, reflexive intensive action. It is generally translated *besought, to make supplication, to entreat*. However, all of these translations are rather dated. A better rendering would be *petition for grace, make a request for grace, appeal for grace, to entreat for mercy, to make a request as an inferior for something from a superior, to ask for gracious treatment*. This is generally followed by a lāmed preposition, which is not necessarily translated. Strong's #2603, 2589 BDB #335. *With my mouth, I must request mercy [from] him*. The idea is that Job has a personal servant who really can't be bothered by Job. Because of what Job has endured, the personal servant no longer responds to Job—Job must beg him to receive any sort of kindness or regard. Keil and Delitzsch: *His servant, who otherwise saw every command in his eyes, and was attent upon his wink, now not only does not come at his call, but does not return him any answer...if he [Job], now in such need of assistance, desires any service from him, he is obliged (fut. with the sense of being compelled)...to entreat him with his mouth,...to beg of any one for one's self...therefore to implore...as a more significant expression of that which is loud and intentional.*³¹

Job, despite his pain and suffering, has been the master of segue throughout this particular chapter. He smoothly shifted from God being his enemy (vv. 8–12), to those around him being alienated from him (vv. 14–19); the transitional verse contained elements of both. In this verse, Job speaks of persuading his former personal servant with his mouth, and in the next, he will speak of his breath being offensive to his wife.

**My spirit is alienated to my woman
[or, my breath is repulsive to my wife]
and I am loathsome [or, profane] to sons of my
[mothers?] womb.**

Job
19:17

**My spirit is alienated from my wife
[my breath is repulsive to my wife];
and I am loathsome to the sons of my
[mother's] womb.**

**My wife no longer cares for me;
she finds my breath offensive.
I am considered loathsome by members of my own family as well.**

We will first see what others have done:

JPS (Tanakh)	My odor is repulsive to my wife; I am loathsome to my children.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	My breath is offensive to my wife, And my stench to my own brothers.
NASB	"My breath is offensive to my wife, And I am loathsome to my own brothers."
The Septuagint	And I appealed to my wife and earnestly entreated the sons of my concubines,...
Young's Literal Translation	My spirit is strange to my wife, And my favours to the sons of my <i>mother's</i> womb.

Now, before I launch into this, I want to let you know that I like the rendering "My breath is offensive [or, *odious*] to my wife."—in fact, I prefer this rendering. Now let's see what we have in the Hebrew: the first word in this verse is the very common feminine noun rūwach (רוּחַ) [pronounced *ROO-ahkh*], which means *wind, breath, spirit, apparition*. Generally speaking, it either stand for *breath* or for the electrical impulses running through their brain. Strong's #7307 BDB #924. So here, it could go either way.

³¹ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 430.

The verb is the feminine singular, Qal perfect of זָוַר (זָוַר) [pronounced *zoor*], which may look familiar to you, as Job has used it twice already in this one chapter, and it is generally translated *to be estranged, to be separated, to be alienated*. Although not found all that often as a verb in the Old Testament, it does show up nearly 70 times as a participle (admittedly a verb, but used as a substantive). Strong's #2114 BDB #266. It also appears to be the case that it means *to press down and out, to compress* (Judges 6:38 Job 39:15 Isa. 59:5). Strong's #2115 BDB #266. Even Strong gave it its own number. We also have a cognate for this second meaning, giving more credence to a second meaning (see Strong's #2213 BDB #267). However, several translations at this point say that this means *to be offensive, to be loathsome, to be odious*. Now this is not a long jump from *estrangement or separation*. That is, there is nothing wrong with a word having a formal meaning, and then having a colloquial or informal meaning as well, which is not but a stone's throw from the original meaning. The problem is that זָוַר is only used here in this way. We do not find it anywhere else used to mean this. We have a cognate for this meaning found once in Scripture (Num. 11:20), and, although its use there is appropriate, it is also questioned (and I quite frankly do not know whether the problem really comes back to this use of the verb or whether there is something more to it). To make things worse, we cannot back up this beloved rendering of זָוַר and its cognate in either Num. 11:20 or Job 19:17 with the Greek; the Greek translation seems to be off in another place altogether in both instances (and their problem may simply be with the other two homonyms and not really knowing what to do with this particular usage. Now, I know that many of you would like me to simply state that this is the way it is, and that's it. I just can't do that with this translation. I prefer the *odious breath* translation, but must admit that the other rendering does not do damage to this context either. To strike up a compromise, it would not be unreasonable for Job, given his intelligence, to be using a play on words, to be both saying that *my breath is odious to my wife* and *my spirit has become estranged from my wife*.

Now, you may have thought that we were done with that thought above—not yet—what follows is *to (or, for) my woman (or, wife)*. With the meaning *to become estranged, to be alienated*, we would expect the *mîn* preposition, which means *from*. We have the *lâmed* preposition instead. Where זָוַר (Strong's #2114) is found as a main verb, it is generally followed by *mîn* (exception: Psalm 69:8). However, here, when we expect a *mîn*, we get a *lâmed*, which goes along with the *odious breath* renderings. Formally: *My spirit is alienated to my woman*; less formally: *My breath has become repulsive to my wife*.

Keil and Delitzsch give us the medical view: *If one considers that the elephantiasis, although its proper pathological symptom consists in an enormous hypertrophy of the cellular tissue of single distinct portions of the body, still easily, if the bronchia are drawn into sympathy, or if (what is still more natural) putrefaction of the blood with a scorbutic ulcerous formation in the mouth comes on, has difficulty of breathing (ch. 7:15) and stinking breath as its result, as also a stinking exhalation and the discharge of a stinking fluid from the decaying limbs if connected with it.*³²

And already, we are in the second half of this verse. We begin with the *wâw* conjunction, as is generally the case, and the 1st person singular, Qal perfect of *chânan* (חָנַן) [pronounced *khaw-NAHN*], which means *to be polluted, to be profane*. Again, we have a problem with the rendering—this verb with this meaning is found here and only here. Its homonym, *chânan* (חָנַן) [pronounced *khaw-NAHN*], means *to show grace, to be gracious*; obviously not the word for this verse. Although we have at least one pair of homonyms in the Hebrew with antithetical meanings, I doubt that we have a second, particularly when that second is found only here. Strong's #2610 BDB #337. What is supposed, at least by me, is that this is possibly the verb *chânêph* (חָנַף) [pronounced *khaw-NAYF*], which means *to be polluted, to be profane*. Strong's #2610 BDB #337. Keil and Delitzsch spend about a page on this very verb (*chânan*, not *chânêph*), and although they take the rendering *And my stench to my own brethren, they say, we may also translate: "My stinking is offensive," etc., or: "I stink to the children of my body."...*; and this translation is not only **not** hazardous in a book that so abounds in derivations from the dialects, but it furnishes a thought that is as closely as possible connected with v. 17a.³³ To be quite frank with you, I did not grasp much of what they argued about—I was only able to understand their conclusion. The gist of all this is that: (1) this could very likely be a

³² Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 430.

³³ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 431 (emphasis mine).

strange word from a foreign, yet similar dialect; and (2) it is unlikely that the vocabulary form of that word is *chânan*.³⁴

After all of this, it might be a good idea to understand just whom Job is speaking about. Literally, what follows our second problematic verb of this verse is *to sons of my womb*. *Beṭen* (בֶּטֶן) [pronounced *BEH-ten*] primarily means womb, and, so far in the Bible, has been used in no other way (Gen. 25:23–24 30:2 36:27 are all of the prior references).³⁵ The last word (a feminine singular noun) is *beṭen* (בֶּטֶן) [pronounced *BEH-ten*], and should be generally rendered *belly, stomach* when in reference to a man (Judges 3:21 Job 15:2 20:15, 20 32:19) or a woman who is not pregnant (Num. 5:21–22); and *womb* when it is in reference to a pregnant woman (Gen. 25:23–24 30:2 Deut. 28:4 Job 1:21). By application, this can even mean *inside of someone* (Job 32:18). Strong's #990 BDB #105. This cannot refer to Job's children, because they all died (Job 1:18–19; which the three allude to—8:4 15:30 18:16a).³⁶ Grandchildren are a possibility, but there is no mention of grandchildren, either in the introduction or in the epilogue—if there were grandchildren, it would be most reasonable that they perished with their parents. It is possible that these are children of Job's mistresses (if he had any—that is never clearly explained). It would not be unheard of for a man to have a mistress of one of his female servants (Abram and Hagar illustrate that to some degree).³⁷ As you will note, most of the translators either inserted *mother's* prior to womb, or translated this phrase as though that was there. The most reasonable interpretation is that, when Job refers to these who are of *his womb*, he may simply be referring to relatives on his side of the family.³⁸ Another even more reasonable explanation is that, when he uses the phrase *my womb*, he is speaking of his mother's womb, from which he came, and is therefore making reference to his literal brothers and to, perhaps, his side of the family in general. He is loathe to speak ill of his wife, although everyone, including his wife and the members of his own family, treat him with contempt.

**Even young children despise in me;
I take a stand and so they speak in me.**

Job
19:18

**Even young children despise me;
I rise up and they speak against me.**

**I am despised even by young children;
when I simply rise up, they speak against me.**

Let's see what others have done first:

JPS (Tanakh)	Even youngsters disdain me; When I rise, they speak against me.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	Even boys act contemptuously towards me; If I will rise up, they speak against me.
NASB	"Even young children despise me; I rise up and they speak against me."
The Septuagint	But they rejected me forever; whenever I rise up, they speak against me.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	Also sucklings have despised me, I rise, and they speak against me.

We begin this verse with the adverb *gam* (גַּם) [pronounced *gahm*], which means *also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover*. Strong's #1571 BDB #168. Then we have the masculine plural noun *ʿăvîyl* (אֲוִיִּל) [pronounced *gûh-VEEL*], which means *a young boy*. I am certain that you do not recall, but we had the exact same word in Job 16:11, and yet we rendered it *unjust, unrighteous one*. Although this word only shows up three times in

³⁴ And, who knows, maybe Job is speaking tongue-in-cheek here; his children (or whoever is to follow) should treat him with grace, but they treat him as one who is to be abhorred.

³⁵ It is also found in Num. 5:22, 27 Deut. 7:13 28:4, 11, 18, 33 30:9; these are **all** the references to it in the Torah.

³⁶ Barnes, on the other hand, because of the common use of *beṭen* to refer to one's womb or loins, says that Job is appealing to his wife by their previous common bond, the love of their children (*Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 318). However, the rest of the sentence does not appear to be an appeal, but another line speaking of further estrangement.

³⁷ Keil and Delitzsch poo poo this notion, based upon Job being as moral as he is; Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 432.

³⁸ See Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 431–432 for a plethora of interpretations of just this one short phrase.

Scripture (Job 16:11 19:18 21:11), there are ample cognates for each meaning to allow for it to refer to a *young boy* or a *suckling child*; and there are several cognates (in fact, even more so), to allow for this to mean *unjust one*, *unrighteous one*.³⁹ And, who knows, Job seems to have been using a lot of homonyms in this chapter—perhaps he is doing that on purpose. Perhaps he is implying that they are unrighteous for doing so? Beginning this verse with *gam* makes it more likely that Job is referring to *young children* as opposed to the *unrighteous*. Certainly the unrighteous would despise Job; but little children? *Even little children*, he tells us here. Strong's #5759 & #5960 BDB #732.

The verb is going to be easier—it is the 3rd person plural, Qal perfect of *mâ`aç* (מָאַחַ) [pronounced *maw-AHS*], which means *reject, despise, lightly esteem, refuse*. Strong's #3988 BDB #549. This is followed by *in me* or *against me* or *with me*. We find it followed by *bêyth* (ב) also in Isa. 7:15; strictly speaking, it appears as though we would not translate the preposition. **Even young children despise me**. Most of those who read or hear this live in a society which worships the youth and excuses a great many of their sins because of their exterior beauty. Job came from a patriarchal society, when the elders were honored and respected because of their age, experience and wisdom. For Job to be disrespected by young people was the ultimate insult of his society.⁴⁰

The second line begins with *I rise up, I stand up, I take a stand*. Then we have the *wâw* consecutive and the 3rd person plural, Piel imperfect of *dâ`var* (דַּבַּר) [pronounced *daw^b-VAHR*], which means *to speak, to declare, to proclaim, to announce*. In the Piel, it is stronger and the intensification is dependent upon the context. it can be rendered *to promise, to propose [marriage], to speak kindly of, to plot against, to destroy*. Again, like many of the words used by Job, this could take on different meanings. We will render this *to speak against me* (which includes the preposition which follows). Strong's #1696 BDB #180. This gives us: **I take a stand (or, I rise up) then they speak against me**.

**They abhor me,
all men of my couch and this one I love,
they have been turned in me.**

Job
19:19

**All of the men of my counsel [or, circle of
acquaintances]—and this one I love—abhor
me;
they have [acting upon one another] turned
against me.**

**All those in my circle of friends—even Bildad, this one I love—abhor me
and have turned themselves against me.**

We have a problem in number in this verse, which may not be obvious from the translations:

JPS (Tanakh)	All my bosom friends detest me; Those I love have turned against me.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	All my confidential friends abhor me; And those whom I loved have turned against me.
NASB	"All my associates [lit., <i>the men of my council</i>] abhor me, And those I love have turned against me.
Owen's translation	Abhor me all the men of my circle of familiar friends and this one whom I love have turned against me.
The Septuagint	They that saw me abhorred me; the very persons whom I had loved, rose up against me.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	Abominate me do all the men of my counsel, And those I have loved, Have been turned against me.

We begin this verse with the 3rd person plural, Piel perfect of *tâ`av* (תָּאַב) [pronounced *taw-ĠAH^{BV}*], which means *to be abhorred, to be corrupt, to regard as an abomination*. Strong's #8581 BDB #1073. The subject of the verb follows—we begin with *all of [the]* and the masculine plural construct of *math* (מַת) [pronounced *math*], which

³⁹ Check *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*; Hendrickson Publishers; ©1996; p. 732.

⁴⁰ Paraphrased from *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 745.

means *male, man, male offspring*; however, there is not an emphasis here upon sex or gender. Strong's #4962 BDB #607. This is affixed to the masculine singular noun *çôwd* (סֹד) [pronounced *sohd*], which properly means *a couch, a cushion*. In general, it is used to mean *a council, counsel*, because it refers to people sitting around in a group for conversation (Jer. 6:11 15:17). Strong's #5475 BDB #691. These are those that Job hung with on Sunday afternoon, to drink beer, order pizza, watch the game, and do some real male bonding ("What, is the referee blind? That was in!").

Then Job adds *and this one I have loved*. He is referring to the men around him, which is at least his three companions, and there are hints that there are others there as well. *And this one I have loved* refers to Bildad, to whom Job is responding. The plural verbs refer to Bildad in particular and his other two companions as well. What we don't find in the Hebrew is a pause, but Job took a breath between this and the following verb—so what we have is a main verb, its subject (*those of Job's counsel and this one that he has loved*), and another main verb referring back to the same subject.

The final verb is the 3rd person plural, Niphal perfect of *hâphak*^e (פָּהַק) [pronounced *haw-FAHK^e*], which means *to turn, to overturn*; in the Niphal, it means *to turn aside, to turn oneself, to change oneself, to turn against, to be overturned*. Strong's #2015 BDB #245. This ends with the *bêyth* preposition and the 1st person suffix (*with me, in me, against me*). **They have been turned against me** (the Niphal is usually passive); or, **They have turned [themselves] against me**. The Niphal is the passive of the Qal stem, but it can also refer to an action in a state of progress or development; therefore we add in the word *being*. It can express adjectival ideas and it can, in plural forms, stress the individual effect upon each member of the group. All of these connotations are apropos here. Job's three associates, formerly his three friends, have turned against him. Each one has helped to cause the other two to become more and more turned against Job. This is a state that they are all in now. Keil and Delitzsch: *Those to whom he has made known his most secret plans...now abhor him; and those whom he has...become attached to, and to whom he has shown his affection,—he says this with an allusion to the three—have turned against him. They gave tokens of their love and honour to him, when he was in the height of his happiness and prosperity, but they have not even shown any sympathy with him in his present form of distress*⁴¹ Psalm 55:12–13: **For it is not an enemy who reproaches me, then I could bear it, nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me—then I could hide myself from him. But it is you, a man, my equal, my companion and my familiar friend.**

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“Pity Me, My Friends!”

**In my skin and in my flesh cleave my bone
and so I escape in skin of my teeth.**

Job
19:20

**My bones cling to my skin and to my flesh;
I have escaped [death only] by the skin of my
teeth.**

**My skin barely covered my skeleton;
I have escaped death only by the skin of my teeth.**

Let's see what others have done, and then try to make some sense of this:

JPS (Tanakh)
NASB

My bones stick to my skin and flesh; I escape with the skin of my teeth.
“My bone clings to my skin and my flesh, And I have escaped *only* by the skin of my teeth.

The Septuagint
Young's Literal Translation

My flesh is corrupt under my skin, and my bones are held in [my] teeth.
To my skin and to my flesh Cleaved hath my bone, And I deliver myself with the skin of my teeth,...

⁴¹ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 433.

As is often found throughout Scripture, the subject comes later on in the sentence. We begin here with the direct objects, *bêyth* and *my skin* (also used by Bildad in Job 18:13); it should be rendered *in my skin, by my skin*. After this we have *and in my flesh* or *and by my flesh*. The verb is the 3rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect of *dâ^bvaq* (דָּבַק) [pronounced *daw^b-VAHK*], which means *to cling, to cleave, to hold close, to keep close, to adhere*. When followed by the *bêyth* preposition, the rendering of *to cling to* or *to adhere to* seems to be reasonable (Deut. 11:22 30:20 Job 19:20). Strong's #1692 BDB #179. In the Greek, we have instead, *esapêsan* (ἐσάπησαν) which appears to be related to *sêpō* (σήπω) [pronounced *SAY-poh*], which means *to corrupt*. However, it is not so designated in my Greek lexicons—that is, I cannot find a connection between the two words, outside of the fact that they appear to mean the same thing as per Brenton's translation of the Septuagint. Strong's #4595. However, Keil and Delitzsch shed some light on this, saying that *esapêsan* is an erroneous rendering, close in meaning to *râqê^bv* (רָקַע) [pronounced *raw-KAY^bV*], which means *to rot*.⁴² Notice that there is the *resh* (ר) instead of the *daleth* (ד), and that the *bêyth* (ב) and the *qârâ* (ק) are switched. *Râqê^bv*, by the way is Strong's #7537 BDB # 955.

The subject of this verse the feminine singular noun *ʿetsem* (עֵצֶם) [pronounced *eh-TSEM*], which means *bone, substance, self*. Strong's #6106 BDB #782. This gives us: **My bone has clung to my skin and to my flesh**. That Job's body had been struck with severe, obvious illnesses is found throughout the book of Job (2:7–8 16:8 33:21). Given Job's sickness and resultant emaciation, his skin probably barely covered his bones, making the form of his bones probably very visible.

The second line begins with the *wâw* consecutive and the 1st person singular, Hithpael imperfect of *mâlaṭ* (מָלַח) [pronounced *maw-LAHT*], which means *to slip away, to slip through, to slip past, to escape*. The Hithpael is the reflexive of the Piel. Strong's #4422 BDB #572. This is followed by the *bêyth* preposition and the *gōwr* (עוֹר) [pronounced *gohr*], which means *skin*. This is the same word as the one above. Strong's #5785 BDB #736. This noun is affixed to the feminine plural of *shên* (שֵׁן) [pronounced *shayn*], which means *teeth*. Strong's #8127 BDB #1042. This gives us: **And I have escaped [myself] by the skin of my teeth**. The only meaning I can imagine giving this portion of this verse is the common colloquialism of today (or of the not too distance past), when we say, "I just escaped by the skin of my teeth," meaning that we barely escaped something. Here, Job is reasonably speaking of death. Now, of course this sort of meaning could have arisen from the Bible and not be the original meaning of this verse.

You should be aware that this is not the meaning given to this phrase by Keil and Delitzsch and others before them. (1) They suggest first that Job is claiming to have escaped only with his teeth in tact (the *skin* referring to his *gums*). They poo poo this theory, because *gums* are not *skin* (*in any language, they assert*); and Job, because of his horrible breath (v. 17), his mouth, gums and teeth were probably in the same condition as the rest of him was. They say that his *offensive breath...does not admit of the idea of healthy gums, and especially if it be the result of a scorbutic ulceration of the mouth*. (2) The second suggestion is: "*I am escaped from it with my teeth naked*" [lit., *with the being naked of my teeth*], i.e., *with teeth that are no longer covered, standing forward uncovered*. The slight change of the translation results from substituting a rho (ר) for a *wâw* (ו). Although Keil and Delitzsch accept this explanation as being *pathologically satisfactory*, they reject it on linguistic grounds. (3) Keil and Delitzsch settle on the idea that Job is suffering from periosteum, which is a mouth and gum disease. *His flesh is in part hypertrophically swollen, in part fearfully wasted away; the gums especially are destroyed and wasted away from the teeth, only the periosteum round about the teeth is still left to him, and single remnants of the covering of his loose and projecting teeth*. Job escaping *with skin of his teeth* strikes me as being an unnatural use of the words. (4) They also offer the interpretation (which I did above), that this is a *proverbial phrase for "I have with great care and difficulty escaped the extreme."* *The Open Bible* agrees, saying that it means *with the thinnest of margins*.⁴³ Keil and Delitzsch reject this meaning because the phrase, *skin of my teeth*, is so closely related to Job's diseases. [This] *declaration perfectly corresponds to the description of the disease*. (5) They conclude: *there is even nothing left to him of sound skin except the skin of his teeth, wasted away to a skeleton, and become both to sight and smell a loathsome object;—such is the sufferer the friends have before them,—one who is tortured, besides, by a dark conflict which they only make more severe,—one who now implores them for pity, and because he has no*

⁴² Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 433.

⁴³ *The Open Bible*; the New Living Translation; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; ©1996, p. 693.

*pity to expect from man, presses forward to a hope which reaches beyond the grave.*⁴⁴ The main problem with the final interpretation is that the skin near Job's teeth should be in no better shape than the skin of his body, the descriptions found herein being no doubt accurate to some degree. (6) Barnes mentions Herder's explanation (Herder as translated by Marsh⁴⁵): "...and scarcely the skin in my teeth have I brought away as a spoil," the meaning being, a wild beast had taken him in its teeth and he escaped with barely the skin covering his bones. Barnes dismisses this as unsupported by the Hebrew. (7) Poole suggests that Satan left Job's mouth untouched, so that he would be better able to blaspheme God when the pain and pressure got to be too much. Although I at first poo poed this idea (to myself); with more examination, it seems pretty clever (Schultens also offers this suggestion). (8) Schultens also offers that Job's entire body, apart from his mouth, were exhausted and disease-ridden; his mouth functioned well enough to talk and breathe (otherwise, he would immediately expire). (9) One possible explanation for this phrase comes from the Schultens echoed by the NIV Study Bible, which suggests that it means Job's teeth have fallen out; that all that remain to him are his gums (this is Schultens' favorite).⁴⁶ (10) I personally lean toward either a colloquial interpretation of this phrase or the suggestion that Satan left enough of Job's mouth in tact so that he could speak and complain and blaspheme God.

**Show grace [to] me, show grace [to] me,
you—my associates
for a hand of Eloah has touched me.**

Job
19:21

**Be gracious to me, be gracious to me,
you, my associates—
for the hand of God has touched me.**

**Please show graciousness to me, you, my associates,
because God has struck me.**

In this next verse, the translation, and therefore, the interpretation will be considerably easier.

Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O you my friends, For the hand of Eloah has touched me.
NASB	"Pity me, pity me, O you my friends, For the hand of God has struck me."
The Septuagint	Pity me, pity me, O friends; for it is the hand of the Lord that has touched me.
Young's Literal Translation	Pity me, pity me, ye my friends, For the hand of God hath stricken against me.

Keil and Delitzsch: [With this verse] *Job takes up a strain we have not heard previously. His natural strength becomes more and more feeble, and his voice weaker and weaker. It is a feeling of sadness that prevails in the preceding description of suffering, and now even stamps the address to the friends with a tone of importunate entreaty which shall, if possible, affect their heart.*⁴⁷

Job does not want to argue with his friends—he hurts too badly and has little to say in his own defense which they will believe. Now, you will note the amazing agreement in the different translations (the JPS is so similar that I did not even list it). However, what we have seen in the past is that an agreement in translation is not a guarantee of a good and accurate translation. Job begins with the 2nd person masculine plural, 1st person singular suffix, Qal imperative of *chānan* (יָנַן) [pronounced *khaw-NAHN*], which means *to bend, to stoop over, to show favor, to show grace as a superior would do on behalf of an inferior, to show mercy, to be gracious*. Strong's #2603, 2589 BDB #335. "**Show grace to me; show grace to me,**" he pleads. Now, you will note up until now, most of the conversation has either been speaking of some unnamed 3rd person (always referring to Job, however) and Job speaking about himself and his own pains. This is a rare instance where he addresses his three friends directly and passionately. He adds to this the 2nd person masculine plural pronoun, and then the masculine plural noun *rēa'* (רֵעִי) [pronounced *RAY-ahg'*], which means *associate, neighbor, colleague, fellow, acquaintance*. It is a

⁴⁴ Paraphrased and quoted from Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 433.

⁴⁵ Two old Bible guys.

⁴⁶ These last four explanations came from *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 319.

⁴⁷ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 434.

person with whom you come into contact. This is *not* the word for *friend*; Job cannot bear to look at these men who have verbally torn him limb from limb and call them friends. Strong's #7453 BDB #945.

Then Job uses the explanatory conjunction (*for, that, because*) and a *hand of Eloah [God]*..., followed by the feminine singular, Qal perfect of *nâga* (נָגַח) [pronounced *naw-GAHG*], which means *to touch, to reach out and touch*. This verb is very similar to another verb which means *to strike down, to kill*; this verb is not quite as strong, but there is a potential for harm indicated. The subsequent *bêyth* preposition can refer either to the means of touching someone or to that person who is touched (*nâga* is often followed by a preposition). Strong's #5060 BDB #619. The 3rd person feminine refers back to the *hand* of God as the subject. Here, we have the *bêyth* preposition and the 1st person singular suffix. Translation: *...for [the] hand of Eloah [reached out and] touched me [lit., against me]*. Recall Job 1:11, where Satan urges God, *“Put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will certainly curse You to Your face.”* Later, after Job had lost all that he had, and still did not curse God, God allowed Satan to attack Job directly: *“Observe, he is in your hand; spare only his life.”* (Job 2:6b).

Job begs these men, his former friends—men he now calls *associates*—to show him some pity, some mercy, some grace. He has been beat down by God. Why do they want to make it even worse? With this verse, *Job takes up a strain we have not heard previously. His natural strength becomes more and more feeble, and his voice weaker and weaker. It is a feeling of sadness that prevails in the preceding description of suffering, and now even stamps the address to the friends with a tone of importunate entreat which shall, if possible, affect their heart. They are indeed his friends...impelled towards him by sympathy they are come, and at least stand by him while all other men flee from him. They are to therefore grant him favour...in the place of right; it is enough that the hand of Eloah has touched him...they are not to make the divine decree heavier to him by their uncharitableness.*⁴⁸

**For why do you pursue me as God
and from my flesh, are you not satisfied?**

Job
19:22

**Why do you persecute me as [does] God
and aren't you satiated on account of my
flesh?**

**Is there some reason why you are persecuting me as God has?
Aren't you satiated enough by simply viewing the horrible suffering of my flesh?**

Let's first see what the others have done:

JPS (Tanakh)	Why do you pursue me like God, Maligning me insatiably? [Lit., “You are not satisfied with my flesh.”]
NASB	“Why do you persecute me as God does, And are not satisfied with my flesh?
The Septuagint	Wherefore do ye persecute me as also the Lord, and are not satisfied with my flesh?
Young's Literal Translation	Why do you pursue me as God? And with my flesh are not satisfied?

The first preposition and interrogative together mean *why* (they are literally *for why*); they are followed by the 2nd person masculine plural, 1st person singular suffix, Qal imperfect of *râdaph* (רָדַף) [pronounced *raw-DAHf*], which means *to pursue, to follow after, to chase with hostile intent, to persecute*. Strong's #7291 BDB #922. This is followed by *k^omô* (כִּמּוֹ) [pronounced *k^omoe*], which appears to be equivalent to the prefixed preposition *kaph*. It means *like, as, when*. Strong's #3644 BDB #455. Then we have the name of *God (Eloah)* as found throughout most of the book of Job. Translation: *Why do you persecute me as God?* Job has already addressed God directly and asked Him why He was pursuing Job: *“Why do You hide Your face and consider me Your enemy? Will you cause a driven leaf to tremble? Will you pursue the dry chaff?”* (Job 13:24–25). In this verse, he asks his friends the same question.

The second line continues the question, and says, literally, *and from my flesh, are you not satiated?* The final verb is the 2nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect of *sâ^bva* (סָבַע) [pronounced *saw^b-VAHG*], which means *to satisfy, to fill, to satiate*. Strong's #7646 BDB #959. I want you to understand what Job has just said to them.

⁴⁸ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 434.

These three men think that Job has committed some horrible sin and they are pecking away at him to determine what that sin is, as well as to put him to shame for this sin. They can simply look at him and realize the severe pain and suffering that he has gone through. Job asks them, “Aren’t you satiated with the destruction to my flesh that you observe? Do you need to kick me while I’m down to be satisfied?” It’s as though someone has filled himself on a 14 course banquet, is stuffed, and then notices that a beggar has his only piece of bread, and the first person is not satiated unless he takes that piece of bread from the beggar for himself. Job’s epidermis is riddled with cancerous growth; he is in pain whether he stands, sits or lies. He is covered with open wounds. Job asks, *Isn’t this enough? Is there more suffering and pain that you believe I should endure?* Essentially, Job takes this past the idea of being right or wrong—that aside, hasn’t he endured enough for his friends? Do they need to observe more suffering on his part? Barnes: “*Are [you] not content that my body is subjected to unexpressible torments, and is wholly wasting away, but add to this the torment of the soul. Why is it not enough that my body is thus tormented without adding the severer tortures of the mind?*”⁴⁹

Also realize that Job’s friends have nothing to gain by Job’s suffering. Job had not wronged them. He had committed no offense toward them—in fact, the offense with which he is allegedly charged is completely unknown to them. They can’t even cry revenge. However, Job’s friends are behaving toward him as if he had caused them grain harm or suffering. They want to see him suffer more than he has, which is difficult to even imagine.

Application: there are times when you are to be judgmental. If you have children or if you have a position of authority over others. If your profession opinion of someone is officially (not casually) requested, then you have a duty to honestly and carefully evaluate the behavior and abilities of that person. However, we are not called upon to lay our judgments upon others and to, even worse yet, gossip about our judgments of others to other people. I have personally been the brunt of some strong gossip on two extended occasions, which combined to place great personal pressure upon me and it eventually change my life dramatically in ways that the original gossips would never have guessed.

I have personally known a lot of people in jail. The fact that they were in jail has never been a reason to, in my contact with them, to insist that they deserve what punishment they are getting and to rub their noses in it. This may seem silly, but this is what Job’s friends are doing to him and with much less reason. It is never your business to gossip about co-workers, relatives, friends, pastors, your children’s teachers, your children’s coach, or pretty much anyone else. You may think that it is a harmless pastime, but it is condemned as a sin, just like murder, just like adultery, just like blasphemy.

Keil and Delitzsch add a bit of insight to this—Job’s friends appear to have taken upon themselves, in their own eyes, God’s work. God is obviously, for whatever reason, beating down Job, and now Job’s friends appear to be usurping God’s judicial authority in this matter, and *they act towards him as if they were superhuman...and therefore inhumanly, since they, who are but his equals, look down upon him from an assumed and false elevation.*⁵⁰

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⁴⁹ Barnes’ Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 320.

⁵⁰ Quoted and paraphrased from Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 434.

“I Know My Redeemer Is Alive, and I Will See Him Apart from My Flesh.”

With this verse and going through v. 27, we begin what the NIV Study Bible calls *the best-known and most-loved passage in the book of Job*.⁵¹ Given the great pain in which Job found himself, and the unexplained circumstances, Job nevertheless left us with some incredible statements of faith and insight.

**Who gives now were written my words;
who gives now in a tablet and they were
engraved.**

Job
19:23

**Oh that my words were now recorded;
oh that they would be inscribed in a tablet.**

**I would ask that my words be now recorded
and that they be inscribed in a book.**

Let's see what others have done with this:

JPS (Tanakh)	Oh that my words were written down, Would they were inscribed in a record,...
KJV	Oh, that my words were now written! Oh, that they were printed in a book;
NASB	“Oh that my words were written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book!
The Septuagint	For oh that my words were written, and that they were recorded in a book forever,...
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	Who doth grant now, That my words may be written? Who doth grant that in a book they may be graven?

As you no doubt notice, Young gives a more verbal beginning, which is the more literal rendering, as you would expect from him. We begin with the interrogative particle *mîy* (מִי) [pronounced *mee*], which is generally translated *who*. Some think that this could be translated occasionally *how* or *in what way*. If so, this is the exception and not the rule. Strong's #4310 BDB #566. With this, we have the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *nâthan* (נָתַן) [pronounced *naw-THAHN*], which means *to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set*. Literally, it means *who will give...* With the interrogative *mîy* (מִי) [pronounced *mee*], it can also be used to express a wish (Ex. 16:3), e.g., *O that, would that some one would, would that there were*. (*Mîy* = Strong's #4310 BDB #566). Strong's #5414 BDB #678. This is followed by the enclitic particle *êphôw* (אֵפֹה) [pronounced *ay-FOH*], which means *then, here, now*. Strong's #645 BDB #66. Literally, this gives us *who gives now*. It is reasonable to render this *Oh that now* or *would that now*. Then we have the *wâw* conjunction (which is unexpected to me) and the 3rd person masculine plural, Niphal perfect of *to write, to chronicle*. Then what follows is *my words*, the subject of the verb. This gives us: **Oh that my words were now chronicled** or **Oh that my words were now recorded**. You will note that I ignored the *wâw* conjunction (only Young above gave a passing mention to it, rendering it *that*). Job is asking for a third party to step in and examine what has been said and to evaluate it from a neutral perspective, perhaps a few years removed.

The second line repeats the *mîy yîthên* (מִי יִתֵּן) [pronounced *mee-ye-e-THAYN*], but there is no *êphôw* and no conjunction. Then we have in the *çêpher* (סֵפֶר) [pronounced *SAY-fur*] and it means *book, document, writing, scroll, tablet*. We do not actually know the material upon which writing was done during the time of Job (more discussion to follow in the next verse). This particular word, found once in Gen. 5:1, and then 200 times after that, does not really emphasize the material from which a scroll, tablet, or book was made, but emphasizes more that it was a *writing receptor*, just as an *engraving tool* emphasizes its function rather than the material from which it is made. Given what we theorize about the writing materials during the time of Job, this might most accurately be rendered *tablet*. Strong's #5612 BDB #706. Freeman tells us that ancient books were made of linen, cotton cloth, the inner bark of trees, skins or leaves of papyrus (from whence we derive our word *paper*). Books made of cloth or skin were rolled up. We do not know what was used in the time of Job, but there is no reason to suppose that writing and a medium for writing did not exist.

Then we have the conjunction (its use here is inexplicable to me—was it misplaced?) followed by the 3rd person masculine plural, Hophal imperfect of *châqâq* (קָטַק) [pronounced *khaw-KAK*], which means *to cut in, to decree*,

⁵¹ The NIV Study Bible; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 745.

to *inscribe*. In the Hophal, this means *to engrave, to inscribe*. It does not mean to be *printed* (as per the KJV) in the way that we understand it. The kindred word in Arabic, *shafar*, means *to scratch, to scrape*; and hence, *to engrave, to write, to record*, but with engraving tools more than with the writing tools with which we are familiar. It refers more to the process of cutting into something or engraving something with an engraving tool, as one would engrave letters on a tablet or lead or stone. Strong's #2710 BDB #349. **Oh that [these words] on a tablet be engraved.**

Barnes: *[This] is the language of a man who felt that injustice was done him by his friends, and that he was not likely to have justice done him by that generation. He was charged with hypocrisy; his motives were called in question; his solemn appeals, and his arguments to assert his innocence, were disregarded; and in this state of mind he expresses the earnest wish that his expressions might be permanently recorded, and go down to far distant times. He desired that what he had said might be able to judge between him and his accusers, and to know the justice of his cause. The desire thus expressed has been granted, and a more permanent record has been made than if, in accordance with his request, his sentiments had been engraved on lead or stone.*⁵²

Job realizes that those around him are not going to judge him fairly and his wish is that these words be recorded for posterity, that he might be vindicated in the future. I should mention that there are two ways to take this portion of what Job has to say—is he asking for all of his words—these speeches and arguments—to be recorded and later examined, or is he asking for a few lines—the ones to follow in particular—to be inscribed on his tombstone? In this verse, it appears as though he is asking for the former, yet in the next verse, it appears to be the latter.

Keil and Delitzsch: *[Because Job's friends have made the] ...assumption that his suffering must be the retributive punishment of heinous sins, they lay sins to his charge of which he is not conscious, and which he never committed. Against these uncharitable and groundless accusations he wishes...that the testimony of his innocence, to which they will not listen, might be recorded in a book for posterity.*⁵³

In a stylus of iron and lead for ever in the rock they were graven. Job 19:24 **[Oh that my words] were engraved forever in a stone with a stylus of iron and lead .**

Oh that my words might be permanently recorded in stone, using a writing instrument which will both engrave and preserve the writing.

Job continues the same thought in this verse (it should have probably been the third line of v. 23). He does not carry with it *Oh that*, although that certainly is implied. Let's first see what others have done:

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	That <with a stylus of iron and [with] lead> <For all time—in the rock> they could be graven!
God's Word™	I wish they were forever engraved on a rock with an iron stylus and lead.
JPS (Tanakh)	Incised on a rock forever With iron stylus and lead!
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	With an iron pen, filled in with lead, Graven in the rock for ever.
NASB	"That with an iron stylus and lead They were engraved in the rock forever!"
REV	...incised with an iron tool and filled with lead, carved in rock as a witness! [or, for ever]
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	With a pen of iron and lead— For ever in a rock they may be hewn.

It is uncertain whether vv. 23 and 24 are complementary in a way that they are two sides of the same coin; or whether they refer to different methods of recording. In v. 23, it appears in most English translations as though we have the less permanent method of recording things in those days—inscribing whatever on a scroll of some sort; and that in v. 24, we have the much more permanent recording methods of the ancient world. The possibility is

⁵² *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 320. The *lead and stone* reference is covered in v. 24.

⁵³ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 435.

that perhaps Job is asking first for his set of arguments to be recorded for posterity, and in this verse, he asks that what he is about to say should be following be recorded, perhaps even on his tombstone or upon some permanent monument. However, we could be speaking of the same recording mediums in both verses.

In this verse, we actually cut into a stone, and apparently it is made more readable by the use of lead. What we find here is whatever sort of an instrument was used to actually engrave the stone, and then lead was used (or some compound similar to lead) to make the engraving stand out. The engraving instrument is said to be made of iron, which is the word *bar^ezel* (בַּרְזֶל) [pronounced *bar^e-ZELL*]. We have a minor problem here, as historians generally place the use of iron in the ancient Near East around the 12th century B.C., yet this word is used as far back as Gen. 4:22, and it is found several times in the book of Job (19:24 20:24 28:2 40:18 41:27). Whether it technically refers to iron, or whether it was a word for something hard, and was given a more specialized meaning later is unknown to me. In any case, this word is used figuratively (Deut. 4:20 28:23 I Kings 8:51 Jer. 11:4), as well as literally for *iron, iron-ore, stone containing iron*; as well as specifically *iron* in such passages as II Chron. 2:7, 14 Ezek. 22:18, 20 27:12. I personally subscribe to a theory of history where technology is gained, then lost, gained then lost; and varies from people to people. The Dark Ages are an example of a time period during which the technologies of previous generations were lost in part. Strong's #1270 BDB #137.

Since Job has asked for his words to be inscribed in a permanent monument, all of a sudden he has something dramatic and incredible to say. What we have in the next three verses is incredible and reveals that God the Holy Spirit guided the words of Job for at least this short section. Job said that his words should be cut into a rock and preserved and here, Job gives us something which absolutely should be preserved forever. Because of the importance of what Job has to say, I suspect that there has also been some corruption of the original text as well (in fact, some translators go so far as to call some of the text here and there *unintelligible*). Bear this in mind as we exegete the next several verses.

Barnes records this information for us, which I have paraphrased in the next several paragraphs: For their permanent records, the ancients used a variety of materials, ranging from stone, plates of metal, leaves, bark, skin and papyrus. According to Pliny,⁵⁴ *Lib. xiii. 11*, “[Early] man first began to write on the leaves of the palm, or upon the bark of certain trees, but later preserved their public documents in leaden volumes [or rolls], and those of a private nature were on wax or linen.” In 1699, Montfaucon purchased an ancient book in Rome which was composed entirely of lead. It was 4”X3”, with two pieces that formed the cover, and the six leaves were also of lead. There was a stick which was inserted through the rings, which helped to hold the book together; also there were hinges and nails. Freeman tells us that *the volume contained Egyptian gnostic figures and inscriptions in Greek and Etruscan characters*.⁵⁵ Freeman further tells us that *in a temple in the Carian city of Caidus, erected in honor of Hades and Persephone, about the fourth century before Christ, the women were in the habit of depositing thin sheets of lead on which were written the names of persons they hated, together with their misdeeds. They also inscribed on the lead tablets imprecations against those who had thus injured them. Many of these tablets were discovered in 1858 when excavations were made in the ruins of the temple. They are now in the British Museum*.⁵⁶

It appears unlikely that Job was referring to leaden tablets. There was a custom of cutting letters into stone, and then the indentations were filled with molten lead, as there are indications that some of letters cut into Assyrian monuments had been filled with metal. M. Botta indicates that the letters which had been cut into the pavement slabs of Khorsabad appear as though they had once been filled with copper.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ I am assuming that this is Pliny, the elder, who was an ancient historian of note roughly during the time of Christ. World Book Encyclopedia speaks disparagingly of his historical works, implying that they are of little worth today with regards to ancient history, apart from their value in indicating the state of scientific knowledge during Pliny's time. *The World Book Encyclopedia*; ©1983 by World Book, Inc.; Vol. 15, p. 509.

⁵⁵ *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 211.

⁵⁶ *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 212.

⁵⁷ *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; reprinted in 1972 by Logos International; p. 212. He further references Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii, p. 188.

We know from the Bible that God wrote the Law on tablets of stone, and when Moses broke them, Moses engraved a second set on stone tablets (Ex. 34:4, 28). Joshua also copied parts of the Law on a stone altar at Mount Ebal (Joshua 8:32). Although these things occurred several centuries after the time of Job, Freeman tells us that this medium of recording important truths or events was very common in ancient times. Freeman goes on to mention the Moabite stone, which he says is the oldest Semitic inscription of importance so far discovered. It give the Moabite account of the conflict found in II Kings 2.

The more enduring documents, those which were treaties, laws and recorded alliances, were often inscriptions made upon brass. Many public document were written upon large tablets. An engraving tool, a small, sharp-pointed piece of iron or steel, occasionally tipped with diamond, was used to write upon brass and other hard substances.

As we have discussed, the book of Job reaches deep into the ancient past; he was probably alive roughly half-way between the time of the flood and Abraham. That the art of engraving upon metal or rock was known at that time is certain; whether the lighter materials of vellum, papyrus, bark or leaves is unknown. We have ample evidence of such engravings made upon stone in the area that Job lived in (although the time period of these engravings may not correspond with his life). There is a three hour march along the Wady Mokatta and the Wady Sheikh, bordering the upper regions of the Sinai mountains. The rocks along this march are abrupt cliffs, 20–30 feet high. Apparently some portions of these cliffs have fallen, and for miles, there are rocks covered with ancient inscriptions.⁵⁸

By the time that I got to Barnes' commentary on Job, I had produced 11½ pages on the next three verses. Barnes appropriately comments: *There are few passages in the Bible which have excited more attention than this, or in respect to which the opinions of expositors have been more divided. The importance of the passage (ver. 25–27) has contributed much to the anxiety to understand its meaning since, if it refers to the Messiah, it is one of the most valuable of all the testimonials now remaining of the early faith on that subject.*⁵⁹ Then Barnes spends nine pages on this passage himself.

**And I [even] I know my Redeemer, living and
Last
upon dust he will stand.**

Job
19:25

**And I, [even] I know that my Redeemer,
the Living One and the Last One,
will take a stand upon the ground.**

**Besides, I know that my Redeemer, Who is alive and Who will come after—
that He will take a stand on this earth.**

There are times when Job suddenly says something of such great importance that it is staggering. This is what we have in vv. 25–27. Let's see what others have done first:

Barnes (slightly updated)	For I know that my Avenger lives, And that hereafter, He will stand upon the earth;
JPS (Tanakh)	But I know that my Vindicator lives; In the end He will testify on earth—
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	And I know: my Redeemer lives, And as the last One, He will arise from the dust.
NASB	"And as for me, I know that my Redeemer [or, <i>Vindicator, defender</i>] lives, And at the last [or, <i>as the Last</i>] He will take his stand on the earth [lit., <i>dust</i>]."
NEB	But in my heart I know that my vindicator lives and that he will rise last to speak in court;...
NIV	I know that my Redeemer [or, <i>Defender</i>] lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth [or, <i>upon my grave</i>].
NJB	I know that I have a living Defender and that he will rise up last, on the dust of the earth.

⁵⁸ These last several paragraphs were taken from *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; pp. 321–323. Of special note on pp. 321–322 are reproductions of Assyrian records (one done upon clay, another upon stone), as well as a reproduction of writing done upon papyrus. Barnes, in his work, goes into much greater detail as to what was found on these rocks, which is quite interesting from an historical perspective, but does little to impact the exegesis of this chapter.

⁵⁹ *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 324.

NKJV	For I know <i>that</i> my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth;.
NRSV	For I know that my Redeemer [or, <i>Vindicator</i>] lives, and that at the last he [or, <i>that he the Last...</i>] will stand upon the earth [Heb., <i>dust</i>];
The Septuagint	For I know He is eternal Who is about to deliver me; to raise up upon the earth....
The Targum ⁶⁰	I know that my Redeemer lives, and hereafter His redemption will arise [become a reality] over the dust [into which I will be dissolved],...
Von Hoffmann ⁶¹	I know, however, my Redeemer is living, and hereafter He will stand forth upon the earth...
Vulgate	For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the last day I will rise from the earth;...
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	That—I have known my Redeemer, the Living and the Last, For the dust he doth rise.

This verse begins with the wâw conjunction and the 1st person, personal pronoun, followed by the 1st person singular, Qal perfect of *to know*. This gives us: *And I, [even] I have known*. Barnes, concerning this word, with a view toward what is coming, writes: *I am certain. On that point, Job desires to express the utmost confidence. His friends might accuse him of hypocrisy they might charge him with want of piety, and he might not be able to refute all that they said,; but in the position referred to here, he would remain fixed, and with this firm confidence, he would support his soul. It was this which he wished to have recorded in the eternal rocks, that the record might go down to future times. If after ages should be made acquainted with his name and his sufferings if they should hear of the charges brought against him and of the accusations of impiety which had been so harshly and unfeelingly urged, he wished that this testimony might be recorded, to show that he had unwavering confidence in God. He wished this eternal record to be made, to show that he was not a rejecter of truth; that he was not an enemy of God; that he had affirm confidence that God would yet come forth to vindicate him, and would stand up as his friend. It was a testimony worthy of being held in everlasting remembrance, and one which has had, and will have, a permanency much greater than he anticipated.*⁶²

Then we have the Qal active participle of gâ`al (גָּאֵל) [pronounced *gaw-AHL*], the verb for *redeem, purchase*. The verb is so ancient as to its origins, that its original meaning is lost to antiquity, if it were any different. There are several implications here—near relationship and payment, which is why this is sometimes rendered *kinsman-redeemer*. In the Qal participle, it means *redeemer, avenger, kinsman, kinsman-redeemer*. *Redeemer* appears to be our best rendering. However, this is an odd word for Job to use. Strong's #1350 BDB #145. This is a statement of great emphasis and it jumps out at you. First of all, Job has spent a great portion of this chapter speaking of how his relations and acquaintances have moved away from him, and then he uses this word, which implies a relationship. Then he uses the 1st person, personal pronoun, when it is unnecessary. Then Job uses a verb as a noun (which is not *that* unusual); but he follows the verbal noun with an adjective, rather than with a verb. *Redeemer* is followed by the masculine singular adjective chay (חַי) [pronounced *KHAH-ee*], which means *living, alive*. Strong's #2416 BDB #311. Because chay is in the pausal form, we know that it is the end of this line. It is probably most accurate to insert the verb *to be*, although nothing is distorted by rendering this adjective as a verb. This gives us: *And I [even] I know my Redeemer lives*. However, this could also be: *And I know my Redeemer, [Who is] living and [Who is] to come,...* or: *And I know my Redeemer, [the] Living One and [the] Last One,...* There is Someone to Whom Job appeals, Whom Job says is alive, Who will vindicate or redeem Job. Job's friends have crushed him into the dust; the things which have happened to Job have him sitting on the dust in pain. Job knows that his Redeemer is alive, the One Who will purchase him; the One Who will vindicate him. He recognizes that this is of such great importance as to say it immediately after speaking of making a permanent recording upon rock or iron. This would have been a fitting verse to inscribe upon Job's tombstone, whether or not that was his intent here.

We will study in detail **Boaz and the Doctrine of the Kinsman-Redeemer** in Ruth 4:10. However, the short version is this:

⁶⁰ Slightly modernized from Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 438.

⁶¹ *Von Hoffmann* is one of the translators quoted by Keil and Delitzsch in their commentary on Job.

⁶² *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 325.

The Abbreviated Doctrine of the Kinsman-Redeemer³

1. The Kinsman-Redeemer is a type of Christ in the Old Testament.
2. The first time this term occurs in time is in the Book of Job, right in this passage. The implication is that this word had a meaning prior to the Law of Moses, and probably had been incorporated into the laws and customs of the peoples near the Land of Promise prior to the time of the exodus.
3. The first mention of redemption in the Old Testament is in relationship to Jehovah and His people who were enslaved to Egypt. God heard the cry of His people and went down to Egypt to both redeem and to bring them up to a land flowing with milk and honey. Ex. 3:7–8 6:6
4. The *redeemer* seems to wear several hats and is related to several things outside the meaning of the term itself (which means *to purchase, to buy, to redeem*). This is why this word is translated in so many different ways (e.g., *redeemer, kinsman, relative, kinsman-redeemer, vindicator, advocate, avenger, blood-avenger*).
5. Blood has always been related to redemption. In the New Testament, it is the price of redemption. Ex. 12:13, 23, 27 I Peter 1:18–19
6. Redemption is related to the power of God. Ex. 6:6 13:14
7. In the Law, the term *redemption* is used in relationship to property. If an Israelite became so poor that he had to sell his inheritance (his property given him by God), then the Law provided that a richer relative of his could come back and purchase the property on his behalf. Lev. 25:25
8. If something had been taken away from someone in a less than judicious way, they either appealed to a redeemer (who was related to them), or to a priest. Num. 5:8
9. A *redeemer* might pursue one who has killed a relative of his. So that those who killed in self-defense or inadvertently were not persecuted as one would a murderer, cities of refuge were set up, so that a fair trial could take place and vindicate such a one. Num. 35 Deut. 19:6–7
10. Redemption applied to people just as it is to property. If an Israelite had to sell himself into slavery due to his lack of money, his relatives could purchase him back. Lev. 25:48 Gal. 4:5
11. A *redeemer* is related to an advocate (a lawyer for the poor) in Prov. 23:10–11.
12. Essentially, the *redeemer* was the nearest male kin, who went to the aid of the defenseless and the wronged, whether his relative (or friend) had been murdered, oppressed, or simply taken advantage of. In fact, Barnes maintains that this was the origin of *chivalry*, where the strong took up the cause of the weak.⁴
13. The use of this term by Job is completely applicable, as he has been afflicted with disease, he has lost his property, he has been hunted and cruelly struck down, and he has been forsaken by his friends.
14. So that there is no confusion as to who is the personal Redeemer for us all, David calls Jehovah his Rock and his Redeemer in Psalm 19:14.
15. Asaph also called Jehovah his Redeemer: [And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the Most High God their Redeemer](#) (Psalm 78:35).
16. Jehovah the Father is distinguished from Jehovah the Son, the Holy One of Israel. [“Do not fear...I will help you,” declares Jehovah, “and your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.”](#) (Isa. 41:14a, c). [“Thus proclaims Jehovah, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, Jehovah of the Armies: “I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me.”](#) (Isa. 44:4).
17. Jehovah God, Who created the universe, is the Redeemer of Israel: [Thus proclaims Jehovah your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, “I, Jehovah, am the maker of all things, stretching out the heavens by Myself and spreading out the earth alone.”](#) (Isa. 44:24). [And all flesh will know that I, Jehovah, am your Savior, and your Redeemer, the Might One of Israel.”](#) (Isa. 49:26b; see also 48:17 54:5 60:16).
18. God, in the book of Isaiah, also promised that a *Redeemer* would come to Zion (Isa. 59:20).
19. Jesus Christ paid for our sins and He argues on our behalf as well. [And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous](#) (I John 2:1b).
20. As unbelievers, we have been sold under sin to the slave market of sin.⁵ Someone outside the slave market of sin must purchase us. Rom. 7:14
21. The redeemer must be a relative or a relation to those who are being redeemed. Lev. 25:48–49 Ruth 3:12–13
22. The redeemer mentioned in the Law, must have the ability to redeem. Ruth 4:4–6
23. Redemption is an act of free will on the part of the Redeemer. Lev. 25:25, 48 John 10:11, 18

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24. The Redeemer must pay the full redemption price. Lev. 25:27 I Peter 1:18–19
25. Jehovah of the Old Testament is the Kinsman-Redeemer for man—so He is called by David in Psalm 19:14, by Asaph in Psalm 78:35, Isaiah in Isa. 43:14 and by Jeremiah in Jer. 50:34.
26. When the proper time had come, God sent His Son, Christ Jesus, into the world to redeem those who had been cursed by the Law. Gal. 4:5
27. Christ redeemed those who were cursed under the Law by taking upon Himself their curse. Gal. 3:13
28. The price of our redemption was the death of our Lord on the cross. I Peter 1:18–19
29. Christ, in redeeming us, could do what the Mosaic Law could not. Rom. 8:2–3
30. Those whom Christ has redeemed enjoy forgiveness of sins. Eph. 1:7
31. Just as those redeemed under the Law received back their inheritance, we are also given an inheritance as part of our redemption (Eph. 1:11). The Holy Spirit was given to us as a guarantee of that inheritance (Eph. 1:14).

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The NJB gives this somewhat of a legal interpretation, calling him Job's *Defender*, calling *gâ'al* a *technical term for Job's closest relative, the avenger of blood*. Having been previously uncertain about life after death, Job states that *he will somehow see his vindication by God himself*. 'Rise up' is a *technical term for the action of defendant or judge*.⁶³ In reading the context, and understanding what it is that Job requests, he is not thinking of Jehovah Elohim as his Redeemer as we think of Jesus as our Redeemer, but Job is calling upon God to defend and vindicate him.

In the second line, we have the wâw conjunction and a second adjective—the masculine singular *ʾachărôn* (אַחֲרֹן) [pronounced *ah-kha-ROHN*] and it means *coming after, behind, later, following, last*. Strong's #314 BDB #30. You may recall that this word was used in a very different way in Job 18:20. Although several translations offer something like *And in the last days...*, we do not have *in the* nor do we have the word *days* or *day*. The verse simply begins *and last*. Then we have the preposition for *on* or *upon* followed by the masculine singular noun *ʾâphâr* (עָפָר) [pronounced *gaw-FAWR*], which means *dry earth, dust*. Strong's #6083 BDB #779. The final verb is the 3rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect of *to stand, to take a stand*. Literally, we have: *And a last [one] [or, a one coming after] upon dry earth will stand [or, take a stand or rise up]*.

With regards to the interpretation that this all occurs *at the last* or *in the last day*; this would be fine, except it doesn't say that. That there was any understanding of the *last times* during the time of Job is very debatable. That Job has come upon this on the basis of progressive revelation is also debatable, given that the only relationship between what Job is speaking of and the last times is inserted here by interpretation and by several translators. Now, that it refers to some less specific future date or time, that is a more reasonable interpretation. Barnes suggests: *The meaning is, that however long he was to suffer, however protracted his calamities were, and were likely to be, he had the utmost confidence that God would at length, or at some future time, come forth to vindicate him. The phrase, "the latter day," has now acquired a kind of a technical meaning, by which we naturally refer to it [as] the day of judgment. But there is no evidence that it has any such reference here.*⁶⁴ That this word possibly refers to God the Son or to another member of the Trinity is also reasonable interpretation and closely related to how one looks at the word *lives* or *Living [One]*.

Now, part of the problem with the translation is where I have chosen to make a separation of the two lines at the conjunction, which is generally the case. When this is done, *Last* must either be the subject of the verb, standing in for the Redeemer, or one must insert some particle or preposition in order for the word *last* to fit in (look back at the NASB's translation). However, *Living and Last* could be a title for Job's Redeemer. This would put us more

⁶³ Quoted and paraphrased from *The Complete Parallel Bible*; NRSV, REB, NAB, NJB; Oxford University Press; ©1993; p. 1083; taken from the NJB section. I modified their opinion, which was that Job formerly did not believe in life after death.

⁶⁴ *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 327.

in line with Young's translation: **And I know my Redeemer, Living and Last—He will [take His] stand upon the dust.** In describing his Redeemer, Job calls Him *Alive* (or, *Living*), and [the] *Last One*. So, I mentioned the pausal form of *chay*—you may wonder what that is all about. The difference is the vowel point (in this case, we find a long *a* (.) rather than the expected regular *a* (˘). These are vowel points added thousands of years after Job was actually written, the difference between them being rather minuscule. My point is that perhaps *Living* was not the end of that line and that what we have here is His title—*the Living and the Last*. In this way, *living* can be taken as the adjective that it is (there already is a main verb in the first line).

This portion offers us several interpretations—is Job's Redeemer, both referred to as the Living One and the Last? Is Job speaking of two, his Redeemer, who is the Living One, and another, Who is to come, called the Last? Or do we have the entire Trinity referred to: the Redeemer, the Living One, and the Last? And, what is most likely, is that Job was referring, in his own mind, to One, his Redeemer, also called the Living and the Last. However, God the Holy Spirit, knowing the Trinity, helped Job with his words so that such an interpretation—a Trinity—is possible from this verse. In other words, I doubt that is what Job had in mind (that is, I doubt that he was thinking of the Trinity when he said this, or that he even understood the Trinity), but I don't doubt that is what the Holy Spirit had in mind. An easier interpretation is one that most translators have given to this portion of Scripture. The adjectives following *my Redeemer* would normally be taken as adjectives or as nouns—most translators have translated them as though they were verbal adjectives—that is, as a Qal participle which is used as an adjective, giving us: **“...my Redeemer, [who is] living and [Who is] to come—He will take His stand upon the dust.”**

Despite these problems with the translation, it is clear that Job, apart from the Law given to Israel, still looked forward to the time that his Redeemer would stand on the dust (the indication here is that He will stand on the very dust that Job is sitting upon—that is, He will take a literal stand upon a literal earth). *Zodhiates: Job recognized more fully that he was serving the living God. By this, Job did not mean that God merely existed, or that God may have been realized on a conscious level; but Job believed that God was alive and concerned with his individual life, unlike the pagan idols who never answered the worship they were given. Knowing that his Redeemer was living and could vindicate him, Job uses the phrase “at the latter day” to refer to the time when his name would be cleared.*⁶⁵ Job has already made mention of his Redeemer in another light: **“Even now, listen, my witness is in heaven and my Advocate is on high.”** (Job 16:19).

Keil and Delitzsch: *The rescuer of his honour lives and will rise up as the last One, as one who holds out over everything, and therefore as one who will speak the final decisive word...Upon the dust in which he [Job] is soon to be laid, into which he is now soon to be changed, will He, the Rescuer of his honour, arise...the rising up of a witness...and set His divine seal to Job's own testimony thus made permanent in the monumental inscription...Oetinger's interpretation is substantially the same: “I know that He will at last come, place himself over the dust in which I have mouldered away, pronounce my cause just, and place upon me the crown of victory.”*⁶⁶

Keil and Delitzsch then offer a slightly different spin on this interpretation of this verse. The first word of this verse can be taken more as an adversative rather than a continuative, meaning that Job's innocence need not be inscribed *in the rock; on the contrary, God, the ever living One, will verify it.* In either case, *God himself will avenge Job's blood, i.e., against his accusers, who say that it is the blood of one who is guilty; over the dust of the departed He will arise, and by His majestic testimony put to silence those who regard this dust of decay as the dust of a sinner, who has received the reward of his deeds.*⁶⁷

The Keil and Delitzsch then offer another and interesting slant on this verse (which they attribute to Schlottmann and Hahn⁶⁸): that this is what Job wants immortalized, essentially as a headstone to his grave: **“I know my Redeemer, Alive and Last, will, upon this dust, take a stand.”** What would be added to this would be the next two verses as well. Keil and Delitzsch offer two objections to this interpretation: (1) It is unlikely that a quote would begin with a *wâw* conjunction; and, (2) we would expect a proclamation of innocence rather than a testimony of the

⁶⁵ *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; p. 1343.

⁶⁶ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 436.

⁶⁷ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 436.

⁶⁸ Two old Bible guys.

God to come, Who will stand upon the dust of Job's grave.⁶⁹ However, Job's call for vindication is lost in his proclamation of the coming of his Redeemer, who, by the meaning of His very Name, will vindicate Job and his name. In other words, Job, rather than inscribing, "I'm innocent, dammit" on his tombstone, he takes the high road, so to speak, and says that "I know my Redeemer, Alive and Last—He will stand upon the dust, even after my skin has gone a full circuit; furthermore, from my flesh, I will see God, Whom I will behold for my good, and my eyes see Him and no other." Job, as innocent of the sins his friends have imputed to him, expects to behold God. A man guilty of the unnamed, yet obviously heinous sins attributed to Job, would not expect to see God after death. David echos this hope in Psalm 17:15: *As for me, I will behold Your face in righteousness; I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake.* We are given a similar promise by Jesus Christ: "The pure in heart will be happy for they will see God." (Matt. 5:8; see also I Cor. 13:12 I John 3:2).

One reasonable question is, *to Whom does the Redeemer refer?* Certainly, it is one of the members of the Godhead, and either to God the Father, as the avenger of the innocent or to the Messiah to come, Who would redeem us from sin and death. Barnes: *...should it be understood as referring to God, coming forth in a public manner to vindicate the cause of Job against all the charges and accusations of his professed friends; or to God, who would appear as his vindicator at the resurrection; or to the future Messiah—the Redeemer of the body and the soul. No argument in favour of either of these interpretations can be derived from the use of the word [alone].*⁷⁰ Be aware that Scripture often has double meanings throughout; many of the prophecies have a double fulfillment near future and far future. Job in his mind was looking to God the Father to vindicate him; however, God the Holy Spirit looked forward to Christ Jesus vindicating all of us.

Now, before we launch into v. 26, I want you to know up front that many translations of Scripture refer to the meaning of this verse as uncertain at best (NRSV) and unintelligible at worst in the Hebrew (REB). Therefore, be prepared for some rough sledding ahead:

<p>And after my skin they complete [a circuit] this [I know]: and from [or, from the vantage point of] my flesh, I will see Eloah!</p>	<p>Job 19:26</p>	<p>And after they will recycle this my skin [back into dust], yet from my flesh, I will see God! [or, And after they recycle my skin back to the dust, this I know: that from my flesh, I will see God!]</p>
<p>And once my body completes this circuit of dust to dust, still, outside of my flesh, I will see God!</p>		

When I originally studied this verse a million years ago, under R. B. Thieme, I never gave it much thought—it seemed to be pretty straightforward. Job makes a reference to his flesh, which has been, for all intents and purposes, filleted, and that he will rise up in the resurrection and see God. In exegeting this verse, I must admit to losing some of my clear-cut understanding and dogmatism. I'm going to quote from a plethora of translations, as most of them—no, let me be dogmatic about this—all of them are misleading:

<p><i>The Amplified Bible</i></p>	<p>And after my skin, even this body, has been destroyed, then from my flesh <i>or</i> without it, I shall see God.</p>
<p>Barnes</p>	<p>After I shall awake, though this body be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God. [Barnes refers to this as an alternate rendering from the margin; however, my KJV's do not carry this alternate rendering]</p>
<p>Barnes</p>	<p>And though after my skin this [flesh] shall be destroyed, Yet even without my flesh shall I see God;</p>
<p>CEV</p>	<p>My flesh may be destroyed, yet from this body I will see God.</p>

⁶⁹ Keil and Delitzsch would have a third, but unuttered objection to this interpretation—it reeks havoc with their breaking up the last portion of this chapter into decastiches.

⁷⁰ *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 326.

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	And <though <after my skin is struck off> this [followeth]> Yet <apart from my flesh> shall I see God:
God's Word™	Even after my skin has been stripped off my body, I will see God in my own flesh.
Dr. Good	And, after the DISEASE hath destroyed my skin, That in my flesh I shall see God.
JPS (Tanakh)	[In the end He will testify on earth—] This, after my skin will have been peeled off. But I would behold God while still in my flesh,...
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	And after my skin, thus torn to pieces, And without my flesh I will behold Eloah,... or "And after my skin, which they tear to pieces thus, and free from my flesh, I will behold Eloah."
KJV	And <i>though</i> after my skin <i>worms</i> destroy this <i>body</i> , yet in my flesh shall I see God:
NAB	And from my flesh I shall see God; my inmost being is consumed with longing.
NASB	"Even after my skin is destroyed [lit., <i>which they have cut off</i>], Yet from my flesh I shall see God;
NEB	...and I shall discern my witness standing at my side [Hebrew is unintelligible and see my defending counsel, even God himself,...
NJB	After my awakening, he will set me close to him, and from my flesh I shall look on God.
NKJV	And after my skin is destroyed [lit., <i>struck off</i>], this <i>I know</i> , That in my flesh I shall see God,...
Noyes	And though with this skin this body he wasted away, Yet in my flesh shall I see God.
NRSV	and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then in [footnoted, <i>without</i>] my flesh I shall see God. [this is footnoted: <i>Meaning of Heb. Of this verse uncertain</i>]
NIV	And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God;
NLT	And after my body has decayed, yet in my body I will see God! [or, <i>without my body I will see God</i>]
REB	I shall discern my witness standing at my side and see my defending counsel, even God himself.
The Septuagint:	[For I know that He is eternal Who is about to deliver me, to raise up upon the earth] my skin that endures ⁷¹ these for these things have been accomplished to me of the Lord.
The Targum	...and after my skin is again made whole, this will happen; and from my flesh I will again behold God. ⁷²
Von Hoffman	...and after my skin, this surrounding, and from my flesh shall I behold God,...
Vulgate	...and again I will be enveloped with my skin, and in my flesh I will see my God,...
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	And after my skin hath compassed this <i>body</i> , Then from my flesh I see God:

Now you will note that almost every translation (the exceptions of NAB, NJB and the REB are duly noted) translated the verb as a 3rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect—that is, *skin* is taken to be the subject of the verb, albeit in the passive sense. Is this what we have in the Hebrew? Not at all. We begin, literally, with *And after my skin* which is followed by the 3rd person plural, Piel perfect of nâqaph (נָקַף) [pronounced *naw-KAHF*], which means *to go around, to compass about, to complete a circuit, to encompass*. BDB gives the meaning *strike off* for a few verses (Job 19:26 Isa. 10:34 29:1) and *go around, compass about, complete a circuit, encompass* for the other occurrences. Gesenius offers that for Isa. 10:34, it means *to cut down [a tree]*, which might reasonably involve cutting around the trunk of the tree. For this verse, he suggests that it means *destroyed*. Thieme offered *filleted* as the meaning here. The Chaldean translation says that *the skin was inflated*. Given the differences between that and the Vulgate and the Septuagint, one could easily and rightly surmise that the most ancient of translators had trouble with this verb. However, I think that we can assign a meaning here which is in keeping with its most common usage, and which fits with the context: *to complete a circuit*—in other words, what Job is saying is, *from dust to dust*—his flesh is completing the circuit of being formed from the ground (ultimately) and refers to his returning his flesh to the ground—his flesh completes a circuit. We could almost go with today's very modern rendering, *recycled*. Because this translation is somewhat different than you expected, I was able to find some

⁷¹ The meaning of this Greek word is unknown.

⁷² Again, slightly modernized from Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 438.

translators who rendered this verb similarly. Luther rendered this: *...and shall then be surrounded with this my skin*. Von Hoffman and Young both gave this a similar rendering, and the Targum hints at the meaning which I have assigned to the verb (which is, again, the common, most used understanding of the verb *nâqaph*. Although Keil and Delitzsch point to Isa. 17:6 as the other passage where this verb must be taken to mean *to strike off*, such a rendering of this verb is not required in Isa. 17:6 either. Contextually, such a verb would work in Isa. 17:6, but the idea of making a circuit around the olive tree or going around an olive tree would also work fine in that context. I was very jazzed about this interpretation until I began to ponder, *what is the subject? Who is the 3rd person masculine plural?* Strong's #5362 BDB #668.

Now, even though I have come up with a translation which Keil and Delitzsch reject, our conclusion is essentially the same. For them, the flesh is stripped away, or falls off from Job in death, which is the essential meaning of the impact of this word on this verse to them, whereas I look at the flesh at making its full circle from dust to flesh to dust, a poetic concept also incorporating the idea of Job's impending death. They further comment: *Therefore by far the majority of modern expositors have decided that Job does not indeed here avow the hope of the resurrection, but the hope of a future spiritual beholding of God, and therefore of a future life; and thus the popular idea of Hades.*⁷³ So Keil and Delitzsch's understanding of this passage would be: *"...and after my skin, which they tear to pieces thus, and free from my flesh, shall I behold Eloah."*⁷⁴

Anyway, the correct rendering of this portion of this passage is: *And after my flesh, they completed a circuit [or, compassed about] this.*⁷⁵ What appears to be the last word in this first line is the feminine singular, demonstrative adjective *this*. We have no nearby feminine singulars to which *this* could refer; it might be reasonable to suppose that Job, somehow, indicated his own body or pointed to himself as he said *this*. It could have referred to what the others had observed, that his body was decaying and it would complete the *dust to dust* circuit.

Now, in the Hebrew, *flesh* comes first, but that does not have to be the case in our understanding of the verse. It could read: *And after they complete a circuit [with] this my skin*. Our problem with this interpretation is that *this* is a feminine singular and *flesh* is masculine singular—therefore, this is the least likely explanation.

Or this could be interpreted as the NKJV interprets it, as *this* continuing the content of what Job knew and could dogmatically rely upon. Ignoring the problem with the verb, this would give us: *And after my skin has completed its circuit, this [I know], that from my flesh I will see God*. There is no *that*, although once and a great while *and* (the *wâw* conjunction) is so rendered (there is another conjunction in the Hebrew which is commonly rendered *that*).

The question still remains: *who are they?* And, furthermore, what is the Piel perfect all about? First, the easy question—the Piel stem: although the Piel stem is taken as the intensive stem, it can also refer to an accomplished or established state of being without regard to the process or to the events which brought it about. It is used to refer to verbal facts and results. This means that Job is viewing the circuit of his flesh, going from dust to dust, apart from the events and processes which brought it about, as those things are disputed. The object of the verb is passively transformed so that there is an idea of causation inherent in the meaning, although this causative aspect is not the point of emphasis.⁷⁶ Job and his three colleagues disagree about why his skin is rotting from his body, and about to make the full circuit—the Piel stem allows us to bypass that disagreement for a moment and focus on the impending circuit of the flesh (*from dust to dust*).

⁷³ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 439.

⁷⁴ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 440.

⁷⁵ Now this is significantly different from the interpretation which Keil and Delitzsch give this line. They write: *According to the usage of the Semitic languages, [this line] can only be intended of the complete destruction of the skin, which is become cracked and broken by the leprosy* (Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 439). The problem with this understanding is that it requires us to treat the main verb differently from the way it is used elsewhere in Scripture. However, what we agree upon is that Job is speaking of what will occur after his death—after his skin has been lost, as is Keil and Delitzsch's interpretation (*ibid.*).

⁷⁶ This understanding of the Piel is from *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; p. 2280.

Again, the more difficult question is, *who are they?* *Skin* is in the masculine singular—it is not the subject of the main verb. Archer suggests that *they* are worms, who decompose the body, which is reasonable, although they would have had to have been so indicated with Job's finger, as they are not mentioned in this context (it would not be impossible that they were left out by a copyist early on). The last definite plural subject goes back to v. 23—*words* (note the 3rd person masculine plural, Niphal imperfect verb—exactly what we would expect in that verse). However, here we expect a 3rd person masculine singular, Niphal verb, and Job gives us a 3rd person plural, Piel stemmed verb. Or, like we find in the Vulgate, we expect a 1st person masculine singular subject. We can't go back to v. 23 for a masculine plural subject—it's too far away and the subject *words* would make no sense here. We do not have a plural subject coming up in the near future. So, let's go back to the previous verse—is there a plural subject in there to be had? As was discussed, the first line appears to have been off times mistranslated. Most Bibles read: **For I know my Redeemer lives**, which implies that there are two verbs in that line, the second being a participle. However, there is no second verb; that final word is an adjective, which allows for, in order to most closely align ourselves with what most have done, to render that line: **For I know my Redeemer [is] living**. However, it may be more reasonably rendered: **For I know my Redeemer—the one living and the one coming after—He will take a stand upon the dust**. What this allows for is the Godhead—this allows for there to be at least two entities involved in the redemptive process, the One Living—God, the Father; and the One Coming After and the one who will take a stand upon the dust—is God the Son. Now, did Job necessarily realize this as he spoke those words? I doubt it. Did Bildad, Eliphaz or Zophar understand what he was saying exactly? I don't think so. However, God the Holy Spirit inspired Job in his speaking, so that a reference was made to a portion of the Trinity, which is further backed up with this verb which requires a plural subject. God the Holy Spirit, the One Who inspired writers of Scripture, is well aware of the Trinity, being the 3rd member of the Trinity—therefore, there are times in Scripture where a mention of the Godhead is found. One of the reasons we would expect to find this in Job, is that the name for God used in this book—*Eloah*—is singular, unlike the more often used title, *Elohim*. As was mentioned back in the first chapter of Job, *Eloah* is the title of God used almost exclusively throughout the exchange between Job and his friends, and that, given the concept of progressive revelation, Job and his friends would not be aware of the Trinity (just as the Jew in the Old Testament would not be aware of the coming Church Age and the shifting of spiritual responsibility from the nation Israel to the Church). However, since God the Holy Spirit was the co-author of Job, so to speak, we would expect to find an occasional inference of the Trinity (this verse combined with its predecessor); and when we leave Job and his three companions, we should expect the plural title, *Elohim*, to be used—which is exactly what we find in this book. In the first two chapters of Job, where the book of Job is set up, and we are in heaven, the title for God is *Elohim*, which is plural. When Elihu, God's representative, and when God both speak, *Elohim* is used as God's primary title.

This line ends with the feminine singular, demonstrative adjective *zeh* (זֶה) [pronounced *zeh*], which means *here, this, thus*. Strong's #2063, 2088, 2090 BDB #260. Job is referring to himself and what his three associates can observe of him with their own eyes. His flesh is already undergoing a transformation back to dust, as it decays while still on his living body.

Now, I realize that the first half of this verse is rather abstruse and convoluted. I am going with the Hebrew which we have in our text. Given the age of the book of Job (probably the second oldest book of Scripture), it would not be unthinkable that there was some sort of damage done to the original text. Some translators have had so much trouble with this verse that their rendering is so far from the original as to seemingly come out of the imaginations of the translators (e.g., the NJB or the REB).

The book of Job is the epitome of progressive revelation. It was not but a couple of chapters ago when Job asked, **“But when a man dies and lies prostrate, and man expires, where is he? If man dies, will he live again?”** (Job 14:10, 14a). At this point in Job's life, he does not know why he is tormented so, but he knows that in his flesh he will see his Redeemer. It is marvelous that Job realizes this much, even though his severe pain and calamity is still a mystery to him.

Luckily, the second line of this verse is easier. We begin with *and from my flesh*. The preposition is *min*, which generally means *from, away from, out from*. According to Geisler and Howe, it can mean *from the vantage point of* when used with the verb *to see*. Strong's #4480 BDB #577. Then the verb is the 1st person singular, Qal imperfect of *châzâh* (חָזָה) [pronounced *khaw-ZAW*], which means *to see, to behold*. This is the word for see used

most often in poetry. Strong's #2372 BDB #302. This is followed by *Eloah* (God). Job knew that when he was resurrected, or, at least in some post-death existence, he would stand up before God, apart from his flesh or from the vantage point of his flesh, and he would see God—he was fully confident of that. Obviously, this is why most translations indicate that the translation could go either way. Now, how do we decide here or can we decide here which meaning is apropos? It's just not so simple—in v. 27, he mentions his eyes, which would indicate a resurrection body. However, in this verse, he speaks of his flesh completing a circuit (*from dust to dust*), which might reasonably represent his life beginning essentially as dust and then returning to the dust. Then the eyes would be his *spiritual* eyes, so to speak. However, if the circuit is seen as going from dust, to a human body, back to dust, back to some sort of a body, then he sees God from a resurrection body. The continued mention of his physical body in one way or another (*skin, flesh, eyes, kidneys*, the more it appears that Job is at least toying with the idea of a resurrection body.

What Job has stated here is incredible. Very early Scripture, say pre-Abraham (Genesis 12), does not really offer the consolation of a bodily resurrection. There would be some that would argue that this was not even offered to Israel, but they do not grasp the importance of Joseph's bones if they take that stance. Keil and Delitzsch comment: *At the time when the book of Job was composed, there was also neither a positive revelation nor a dogmatic confession of the resurrection of the dead, which forms the boundary of the course of this world, in existence. The book of Job, however, shows us how, from the conflict concerning the mystery of this present life, faith struggled forth towards a future solution. The hope which Job expresses is not one prevailing in his age—not one that has come to him from tradition—not one embracing mankind, or even only the righteous in general. All the above objections would be really applicable, if it were evident here that Job was acquainted with the doctrine of a beholding of God after death, which should recompense the pious for the sufferings of this present time. But such is not the case. The hope expressed is not a finished and believably appropriating hope; on the contrary, it is a hope which is first conceived and begotten under the pressure of divinely decreed sufferings, which make him appear to be a transgressor, and of human accusations which charge him with transgression. It is impossible for him to suppose that God should remain, as now, so hostilely turned from him, without ever again acknowledging him. The truth must at last break through the false appearance, and wrath again give place to love. That it should take place after his death, is only the extreme which his faith assigns to it.*⁷⁷ In other words, Job's sufferings have forced him to conceive of and believe in a bodily resurrection. Apart from such a belief, his life and his sufferings would make no sense.

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A Summation of the Interpretations of Job 19:25–26

Basic Concept	Translation	Points in Favor	Opposition to interpretation
Redeemer refers to one person, Who is described by two adjectives, and Who will take his stand in the dust.	And I, [even] I know my Redeemer, [Who is] the Living One and the Last One, He will take a stand upon the ground. And after they (?) complete a circuit [with] my skin, this [I know]: that away from my flesh, I will see God!	1. That we are speaking of the same person in v. 25 makes perfect sense. 2. The adjectives function simply as adjectives.	1. About the only way that we can reasonably translate these adjectives are like participles, which would be more what we would expect to find here. 2. A plural verb to come (v. 26 in the Hebrew) has no definable subject without some other interpretation of v. 25.

⁷⁷ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, p. 444.

A Summation of the Interpretations of Job 19:25–26

Basic Concept	Translation	Points in Favor	Opposition to interpretation
<p>Redeemer refers to one person who is described by one adjective (and generally translated as a verbal adjective); this same Redeemer is also called by a second adjective which acts as a noun in the next line.</p>	<p>And I, [even] I know my Redeemer, the Living One; even the Last One [or, <i>One to come after</i>] will take a stand upon the ground. And after they complete a circuit [with] my skin, this [I know]: that away from my flesh, I will see God!</p>	<p>1. Distinguishing between the Redeemer of line one with the <i>One Coming After</i> (as if they are two members of the Trinity) in line two is forced. This interpretation solves that problem.</p>	<p>The plural of v. 26 no longer makes sense if the Redeemer is the only One spoken of in all of v. 25. 2. The first adjective acts like a verbal participial adjective while the second acts like the subject of the next line. We would expect them to act the same.</p>
<p>Redeemer refers to one person who is described by one adjective (and generally translated as a verbal adjective); a second person is mentioned, the second adjective acting as a noun.</p>	<p>And I, [even] I know my Redeemer, the Living One; and the Last One [or, <i>One to come after</i>] will take a stand upon the ground. And after they complete a circuit [with] my skin, this [I know]: that away from my flesh, I will see God!</p>	<p>1. This is in keeping with the pausal form of the first adjective. 2. This allows for two members of the Trinity to be named, and allows for the plural verb to follow in v. 26. 3. Theologically, most Christians would like this interpretation.</p>	<p>Why would the first adjective act like a verbal adjective and the second like a noun?</p>
<p>All three members of the Trinity are alluded to here, the adjectives standing in as nouns.</p>	<p>And I, [even] I know my Redeemer, [and] the Living One and the Last One, He will take a stand upon the ground. And after they complete a circuit [with] my skin, this [I know]: that away from my flesh, I will see God!</p>	<p>1. This allows v. 26 to make sense—the plural verb now has a reasonable and easy subject to refer back to. 2. Theologically, this would appeal to many Christians.</p>	<p>1. Which member of the Trinity is which? This seems like the three members of the Godhead have to be pushed into an odd mold to make this work. 2. It doesn't make much sense to jump from the naming of the Trinity to <i>He will take a stand</i>; it just doesn't flow. 3. Referring to three members of the Trinity with different parts of speech (a participle vs. two adjectives) is unnatural.</p>

A Summation of the Interpretations of Job 19:25–26

Basic Concept	Translation	Points in Favor	Opposition to interpretation
<p>Christ Jesus is the only member of the Trinity Who is mentioned here. The <i>they</i> found in v. 26a's verb is ignored. I almost left this interpretation out, as there were so many problems with the text. However, this is the most common translation and interpretation.</p>	<p>And I [even] I know my Redeemer lives and [on the] last [day], He will take a stand upon the ground. And after my skin is destroyed, this [I know]: that from my flesh I will see God.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This is the most common way that this verse is taken. 2. This is the way that the verse makes the most sense to most people. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The word <i>lives</i> is an adjective and not a verb. 2. There is no <i>at the</i> preceding the word <i>last</i>. 3. There is no explanation for the final verb in v. 26a being a masculine plural, so that is ignored. 4. The word <i>day</i> is supplied by several translators. 5. The meaning of the verb in the third line is distorted to fit this verse. 6. Such a translation is more of an interpretation.

Conclusion: Certainly, I would like to draw a conclusion here and point to one or the other of these interpretations as unequivocally correct. Because of the grammar, I lean toward this being a reference to only one member of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, as per the first interpretation. The problem with this interpretation, as has been stated, is that the masculine plural verb in the next verse has nowhere to go for a subject. For this reason, I straddle the fence, saying that Job meant this, but the Holy Spirit allows for two members of the Trinity to be found here.

Addendum: When examining the various translations, you may have noticed that the Vulgate offered a unique approach to v. 26: *I will be enveloped with my skin, and in my flesh, I will see my God.* The Vulgate offers this as a 1st person verb, so that Job looks forward to being covered by his flesh again, prior to seeing God. This is in disagreement with the Hebrew text, but there are problems with this Hebrew text. Now, whether this was taken from an older, better text, or whether it was changed to simply make more sense is debatable; however, I think the latter case is the more likely.

Second Addendum: You will note that I also had trouble determining just how I would deal with the word *this*, which is the last word of the first line of v. 26. I like what the NKJV has done, using it to continue that which Job knows unequivocally. Taking it in this way is a reasonably literal interpretation. There were so many other issues in these two verses to deal with, that, in this table, I let that one fall by the wayside. I did cover it earlier in the exegesis, however.

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Whom I [even I] will see for myself
and my eyes have seen
and not alienated [from].
Faint my kidneys in my bosom.

Job
19:27

Whom I will see for myself
even my eyes will see [Him] and not be
alienated [from Him] [or, offensive (to Him)].
My emotions are spent within me.

Whom I will see myself—even my eyes will see Him and I will not be offensive to Him nor will I be
alienated from Him.
My emotions are exhausted within me.

Let's see what others have done first:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Whom I, even I, shall see for myself <i>and</i> on my side! And my eyes shall behold Him, and not as a stranger! My heart pines away <i>and</i> is consumed within me.
Barnes (slightly updated)	Whom I will see for myself, And my eyes will behold, and not another, Though my vitals are wasting away within me.
<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Whom I myself shall see, on my side, And mine own eyes [shall] have looked upon, and not [those of] a stranger. Exhausted are my deepest desires in my bosom!
JPS (Tanakh)	I myself, not another, would behold Him; Would see with my own eyes; My heart pines within me.
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	Whom I will behold for my good, And my eyes shall see Him and no other— My veins languish in my bosom.
NASB	Whom I myself [or, <i>on my side</i>] shall behold, And whom my eyes shall see and not another. My heart [lit., <i>kidneys</i>] faints within me [lit., <i>in my loins</i>].
NIV	I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!
Septuagint	...which I am conscious of in myself, which my eye has seen, and not another, but all have been fulfilled to me in [my] bosom.
Von Hoffmann	...whom I shall behold for myself, and my eyes see [Him], and He is not strange.
Vulgate	...Whom I myself will see, and my eyes will behold, and not another this, my hope, is laid up in my bosom.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	Whom I—I see on my side, And mine eyes have beheld, and not a stranger, Consumed have been my reins in my bosom.

We begin this verse with the relative pronoun, referring back to *God* at the end of the previous verse. Then we have the 1st person personal pronoun, which is used here for emphasis. This is followed by *I will see for myself*. Our first line: *Whom I [even I] will see for myself*. Job will not get this as a report or as a doctrine; he will see with his own eyes (as per the next line).

The second line, is, literally: *And my eyes have seen*. This is the Qal perfect of the word used more often for *to see*; however, the perfect tense can refer to a complete act in the future, without reference to its duration or to its progression. Therefore, it is legitimate to render this: *And my eyes will have seen*.

In the third line, we have the wâw conjunction, a negative and then the Qal active participle of *zûwr*, which most have rendered as a masculine singular, Qal participle. Gesenius, Hahn and Von Hoffmann render this, “...*my eyes see Him, and indeed not as an enemy [or, as an adversary]*.” Although I disagree with the rendering, the idea behind it is not far off from what Job was getting across to his three companions. He will behold God again, apart from his flesh, after death, and he will not view God in an adversarial way and God will not be his enemy either. Although this is not exactly what Job is saying, one can have this viewpoint and be reasonably close to the truth.

The verb *zûwr* (זור) [pronounced *zoor*] means *to be offensive, to be odious, to be loathsome*. Its second set of meanings are *to be estranged, to be separated, to be alienated*. This is not a masculine singular participle, but simply a participle. Strong's #2114 BDB #266. This could be just as reasonably rendered: *And [I] will not be offensive [or, Alienated]*. Or, *And not alienated from* [possibly referring back to the eyes and possibly referring back to Job himself⁷⁸]. Job, at this time, appears as though he is alienated from God—as though God has rejected him and subjected him to great pain. However, when he beholds God—when he sees God—he will not be alienated from God; he will not be offensive to God. He will not be estranged from God. Despite my abiding respect for the many translations which I quoted from, I believe that this meaning is does less damage to the context and to the word *zûwr*.

⁷⁸ Job's eyes can be metonymic for Job himself.

It is unclear whether we begin another line at this point (most translations do). We have the 3rd person plural, Qal perfect of *kâlâh* (הָלַךְ) [pronounced *kaw-LAWH*], which means *to complete, to finish, to accomplish, to be fulfilled*. In relation to time, *kâlâh* means *to be past, to go by*. A third group of meanings are *to be consumed, to be spent, to be wasted, to be destroyed, to perish, to waste away*. The latter set of meanings appear to be applicable when the subject is *soul, spirit, eyes or reins*. Strong's #3615 BDB #477. What follows is the subject of that verb, the feminine plural noun *kil'yâh* (הַיָּלֵא) [pronounced *kiP-YAWH*], which means *kidneys*. It is always in the plural and means *kidneys*, which word generally means *emotions*. Strong's #3629 BDB #480. This is followed by *in my* and the masculine singular noun *chêq* (חֵיק) [pronounced *khayk*], which means *bosom*. The idea here is this is within Job. Strong's #2436 BDB #300. Our last line would be: **My kidneys [i.e., my emotions] are spent in my bosom [i.e., within me]**. We might be a bit less literal and render this: **My emotions are spent [or, exhausted] within me**. Job is simply indicating that he is at the end of his life, his energy is running out, and he has little more to say (at least, at this time). Asaph, the psalmist wrote: **My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever** (Psalm 73:26). And David wrote: **O God, You are my God—I will seek You early. My soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You** (Psalm 63:1). Job is not so much expressing a desire, as do Asaph and David, but states a principle, but adds that he is emotionally spent; he is exhausted. He can't go on much longer.

Barnes comments on this passage (the previous 3 verses: *The great question has been, whether it refers to the Messiah, and to the resurrection of the dead, or to an expectation which Job had that God would come forth as his vindicator in some such way as he is declared afterwards to have done.*⁷⁹ What follows will be arguments for and against these three different interpretations.

The Three Interpretations of Job 19:25–27⁸⁰

Introduction: Barnes proposed that one such view is that this passage refers to the coming Messiah and the resurrection of the dead. These two doctrines, although true, do not have to go hand-in-hand in this passage. That is, one can hold to this passage referring to God the Father and to the future resurrection of the dead.⁸¹

This passage refers to the Messiah and the future resurrection of the dead:

Arguments in favor:

- Since a significant number of non-clergy believers hold to this view, and they have no ax to grind and no particular theological view to uphold, the common understanding of this passage is the reasonable one to take.

Arguments against:

- the meaning of Scripture is not determined by a popular vote. There are passages, such as I Cor. 13:1–3 and II Thess. 2:3, which have a popular interpretation which is incorrect. Not one believer in a hundred understands either passage.⁸²

⁷⁹ Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 330.

⁸⁰ Inspired mostly by Albert Barnes, Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; pp. 330–334.

⁸¹ The basic idea for this chart and all quotations in this chart came from Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; pp. 330–334.

⁸² I Cor. 13:1 is misinterpreted because the average believer cannot grasp the concept of a logical argument. I have **never** seen or heard this particular verse ever properly exegeted, and the problem is simply logic. In II Thess. 2:3, the common problem is that few people grasp that a transliteration is not the same as a translation. The Greek word ἀποστασία (*apostasy*), strictly speaking, does not mean *apostasy*.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The language of this passage is appropriate to the coming Messiah. ● It is not unlikely that some knowledge of the Messiah existed during the time of Job in Arabia (Num. 24:17 is probably the best argument in favor of such a position). ● Job attaches a great deal of importance to this passage, which would be expected when speaking of the coming Messiah. He wanted to engrave it permanently in stone, as this was the basis of his future hope. ● It is reasonable to expect some reference to the Messiah in an Old Testament book of this size. ● That Job should find the coming of the Messiah to be a comfort to him is reasonable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Few expositors offer this view, although this does not mean that, being a strongly held belief, that it is wrong. ● The KJV translators had a position which crept into the translation. It was not mistranslated, but their theological predilections colored the translation just enough to give it that completion. ● One must not lose sight of the fact that Job is stating an argument—he is taking a position which is based upon a logical argument. Appealing to the coming Messiah does not fit contextually with this passage (see Barnes’ quote below in favor of this passage referring to God the Father). ● Job’s solemnity at this point is not reason enough to take this view. ● Not every Old Testament book has a reference to the Messiah. ● Just because it is reasonable for Job to be comforted by the coming Messiah is not reason enough to so interpret this passage. ● The coming of the Messiah, whether held to or not by the four men, is not really pertinent to the arguments at hand.
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This passage refers to the resurrection (or some future existence) of the dead:

<p>Arguments in favor:</p>	<p>Arguments against:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is progressive revelation. Job’s understand of this situation forced him to take a position of a future life which would erase the injustices of the ones of this life. ● The fact that Job’s associates do not attempt to argue against a resurrection of some sort does not negate his argument. They might not have been able to argue against it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Job’s associates do not directly answer his argument in favor of a resurrection. ● Neither God nor Elihu make mention of the doctrine of resurrection at the end of this book. They do not allude to it, introduce it, admit or reject it. Why would not God the Father simply settle this matter in this way? What instead is the argument of God and Elihu? Simply the sovereignty of God, as well as the inscrutability of His ways. That God will raise up the dead and that the iniquities of this life would be righted in a future existence is not dealt with at all.

- Context, context, context. Barnes: *The book of Job is...a train of clear, consecutive reasoning. It discusses a great inquiry about the doctrines of divine Providence and the divine dealings with men. The three friends of Job maintained that God deals with men strictly according to their character in this life—that eminent wickedness is attended with eminent suffering; and that when men experience any great calamity, it is proof of eminent wickedness. All this they meant to apply to Job, and all this Job denied. Yet he was perplexed and confounded. He did not know what to do with the facts in the case; but still he felt embarrassed. All that he could say was that God would yet come forth and show himself to be the friend of those who loved him and that though they suffered now, yet he had confidence that he would appear for their relief. Now had they possessed the knowledge of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, it would have ended the whole debate. It would...have met all the difficulties of Job...[this] doctrine of the resurrection...rendered all their arguments worthless.*
- Job's inconsistencies must be taken in light of the context as well. He is in severe suffering, beyond that which most of us will ever face even in our worst hour. So that he flirts with various contradictory ideas when harassed by his associates is not inconceivable.
- Barnes sums this up fairly well: *On the supposition that the passage before us refers to [the]...doctrine [of resurrection], we have here one of the most clear and full revelations on the subject, laid far back in the early ages of the world, originating in Arabia, and entirely in advance of the prevailing views of the age, and of all that had been communicated by the Spirit of inspiration to the generations then living. It is admitted, indeed, that it was possible for the Holy Spirit to communicate that truth in its fulness and completeness to an Arabian sage...revelation...has been imparted...gradually. Obscure intimations are given at first—they are increased from time to time—the light becomes clearer, till some prophet discloses the whole truth, and the doctrine stand complete before us. Such a course we should expect to find in regard to the doctrine of the resurrection, and such is exactly the course pursued.*⁸³
- Job in several places indicates that he does not believe in the resurrection of the dead (e.g., Job 7:9–10, 21 10:7, 9, 11–12). See the chart **Progressive Revelation and the Resurrection from the Dead** below.

⁸³ I have edited this in such a way, that this appears to be Barnes final view. It was one of the arguments which he proposed in favor of this view, but it was not necessarily where his sentiments lie. *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 333.

This passage refers to God the Father:**Arguments in favor:**

- Contextually speaking, there are no valid arguments for this applying to Christ Jesus, our Redeemer from the cross.
- Barnes: *God appeared in a manner corresponding to the meaning of the words here upon the earth. He came as the Vindicator, the Redeemer, the Goël, of Job. He vindicated his cause, rebuke his friends, expressed his approbation of the sentiments of Job, and blessed him again with returning prosperity and plenty. The disease of the patriarch may have advanced, as he supposed it would. His flesh may have wasted away, but his confidence in God was not misplaced, and he came forth as his vindicator and friend...he had confidence in God, and that in the midst of his trials, he truly relied on him; and it was a sentiment worthy to be engraved in the eternal rock, and to be transmitted to future times. It was an invaluable lesson to sufferers, showing them that confidence could, and should be placed in God in the severest trials.*⁶
- Barnes: *These considerations are so weighty in my mind that they have conducted me to a conclusion, contrary I confess to what I had hoped to have reached, that this passage has no reference to the Messiah and the doctrine of the resurrection. We do not need it—for all the truths respecting the Messiah and the resurrection which we need are fully revealed elsewhere; and though this is an exquisitely beautiful passage, an piety would love ot retain the belief that it refers to the resurrection of the dead, yet truth is to be preferred to indulgence of the wishes and desires of the heart, however amiable or pious, and the desires to find certain doctrines in the 'Bible should yield to what we are constrained to believe the Spirit of inspiration actually taught. I confess that I have never been so pained at any conclusion to which I have come in the interpretation of the Bible, as in the case before us. I would like to have found a distinct prophecy of the Messiah in this ancient and venerable book. I would like to have found the faith of this eminent saint sustained by such a faith in his future advent and incarnation. I would like to have found evidence that this expectation had become incorporated in the piety of the early nations, and was found in Arabia. I would like to have found traces of the early belief of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead sustaining the souls of*

Arguments against:

- When this passage is read in the English (in almost any English translation), it is impossible to hear without thinking of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- Christ Jesus is the manifest member of the Trinity; therefore, all references to a God Who is directly involved in our lives would generally be to Him.

the patriarchal. then, as it does ours now, in tribute. But I cannot. Yet I can regard it as a most beautiful and triumphant expression of confidence in God, and as wholly worthy to be engraved, as Job desired it might be, in the solid rock for ever, that the passing traveler might see and read it; or as worthy of that ore permanent record which it has received by being “printed in a book”—by an art unknown then, and sent down to the end of the world to be read and admired in all generations.⁷

- Redeemer was a common title for God used, for instance, in relationship to God’s deliverance of Israel from their slavery to the Egyptians (Ex. 6:6 Psalm 74:2 Isa. 41:14).

This passage refers to—well, it depends:

The correct understand of this passage is that Job referred to the God the Father as his Redeemer. The complete doctrines of redemption and soteriology were unknown, but Job suggests them all. We often point to Genesis as having the seed of all important doctrines, and it does—however, the book of Job also deals with these all-important doctrines as well. Did Job and his companions believe in the resurrection from the dead? They had not really given this a great deal of thought. Job definitely toys with this doctrine here, as he had earlier with his need for a Mediator (Job 9:33). Given the concept of progressive revelation, all of these doctrines were barely in their infancy—and, in some cases, given birth to by Job in this book. So we should not expect to have them fully explained and enumerated point by point.

Now, here’s the deal: the Holy Spirit often used the authors of Scripture to reveal more than what *they* knew. In watching a television program the other evening, I heard this very passage cited at a funeral: *For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh, I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.* It was very stirring, and how could the casual listener not hear this and think of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ? God the Holy Spirit knows all the doctrines pertinent to our existence here on earth, and He knew them perfectly from eternity past. He speaks to us through Job, through Job’s words spoken hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years ago; and we recognize the truth of what Job had to say, even though Job and his friends did not fully realize this truth.

Please understand—I am not straddling a fence here. Job said and thought one thing, which his friends essentially dismissed; and when we read this passage or hear it, we think something else, because of our more perfect understanding of God’s revelation to us. *For we see now in an unburnished mirror dimly, but then, face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know fully, just as I also have been fully known* (1 Cor. 13:12). How many books in this life become *more* true and more accurate with time? Only God’s Word.⁸

Arguments in favor:

- This solves all the pro and con arguments stated above.

Arguments against:

- I haven’t read any ones worth mentioning yet.

Addendum: Barnes thinks that this passage should be reasonably rendered (and interpreted): *“I know that my deliverer, or avenger, lives, and that he will yet appear in some public manner on the earth; and though after the destruction of my skin, the process of corruption shall go on till all my flesh shall be destroyed, yet when my flesh is entirely wasted away, I shall see God; I shall have the happiness of seeing him for myself, and beholding him with my own eyes, even though my very vitals shall be consumed. He will come and vindicate me and my cause. I have such confidence in his justice that I do not doubt that he will yet show himself to be the friend of him who puts his trust in him.”* (Job 19:25–27).

I should point out that a future existence is not the same as being resurrected from the dead. However, I did not want to deal with differentiating these concepts in this passage (having a future existence can be exclusive of being resurrected from the dead; however, being resurrected from the dead requires a future existence).

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Keil and Delitzsch have some further comments: *Having now ended the exposition of the single expressions, we inquire whether those do justice to the text who understand it of an absolutely bodiless future beholding of God. We doubt it. Job says not merely that he, but that his eyes, shall behold God. He therefore imagines the spirit as clothed with a new spiritual body instead of the old decayed one; not so, however, that this spiritual body, these eyes which shall behold in the future world, are brought into combination with the present decaying body of flesh. But his faith is here on the direct road to the hope of a resurrection; we see it germinating an struggling towards the light.*⁸⁴

Barnes asks several questions with regards to Job's feeling about the resurrection. *How is it possible to believe that a man, in his circumstances, would ever deny the doctrine of the resurrection if he held it? How could he forget it? How could he throw out a remark that seemed to imply a doubt of it? If he had know of this, it would have been a sheet-anchor to his soul in all the storms of adversity an unanswerable argument to all that his friends advance—a topic of consolation which he could never have lost sight of, much less denied. He would have clung to that hope as the refuge of his soul, and not for one moment would he have denied it, or expressed a doubt of its truth.*⁸⁵ Barnes then goes on: *Had [resurrection] been a doctrine of those times, his friends would have understood it, and it would have reversed all their theology. Had it been understood by Elihu, he would have urged it as a reason for resignation in affliction. Had God designed that it should be known in that age, no more favourable opportunity could be conceived for the purpose than at the end of the arguments in this book. What a flood of light would it have thrown on the design of afflictions How effectually would it have rebuked the arguments of the friends of Job! And how clear is it, therefore, that God did not intend that it should then be revealed to man, but meant that it should be reserved for a more advanced state of the world, and particularly that it should be reserved as the grand doctrine of the Christian revelation.*⁸⁶ Barnes makes some good points—some very good points, in fact—but he loses sight of progressive revelation. The book of Job took place either contemporary with Abraham or perhaps a couple generations prior to Abram's. This means that the book of Genesis was less than half written, and possibly not even readily available (we actually have no clue as to what form it was in at this time). There was no other revelation. Therefore, there is no reason to think that Job or his three associates had given any thought to the doctrine of bodily resurrection. What we have in the book of Job is that Job originally thought that there was no bodily resurrection—that when we die, that's pretty much it. Then, as he endured these arguments and applied them to himself, it just did not make any sense for God to cast him aside without their being any compensation for what pain he endured. His suffering lacked meaning. Therefore, in this chapter, Job thinks about resurrection. He was uncertain before, and now it seems like the only reasonable alternative, given what he has suffered. Therefore, we will do well to quickly quote from these things which Job has said, where point toward the idea of a resurrection:

⁸⁴ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. 4, pp. 440–441.

⁸⁵ *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 332.

⁸⁶ *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 332. I must unfortunately submit to you that this is one area in particular where Barnes is very weak. He believes the doctrine of resurrection is reserved for the Church Age (see the top of p. 333, where Barnes writes, among other things, *The clear doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, is one of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity—one of the last truths of revelation, and is one of the glorious truths which seem to have been reserved for the Redeemer himself to make know to man. There are, indeed, obscure traces of it in the Old Testament. Occasionally we meet with a hint on the subject that was sufficient to excite the hopes of the ancient saints, and to lead them to suppose that more glorious truths were in reserve to be communicated by the Messiah*). Whereas this doctrine receives full and complete consideration by Paul in I Cor. 15, Joseph's instructions concerning the disposition of his body back in 2000 B.C. would make no sense apart from some rudimentary doctrine of resurrection at least. Our difference here is one of degree. Barnes sees mere hints of resurrection in the Old Testament, whereas I believe it was taught more clearly, but certainly not in the exhaustive approach of the Apostle Paul.

Progressive Revelation and Bodily Resurrection in the Book of Job	
Job 7:9–10, 21b	<p>When a cloud vanishes, it is gone So he who goes down to Sheol does not come up. He will not return to his house nor will his place know him any more. For now, I will lie down in the dust And You will seek me, but I will not be.</p>
Job 10:21–22	<p>Before I go—and I will not return— to the land of darkness and deep shadow; the land of utter gloom as darkness of deep shadow without order, and which shines as the darkness.</p>
Job 14:7, 10, 13–15	<p>For there is hope for a tree— when it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and its shoots will not fail. But man dies and lies prostrate Man expires and where is he? I wish that you would hid me in the grave; that I would be concealed until You had finished with Your rage; that You would then resurrect me at the right time and that You would remember me. After a man dies, will he live again? After all the days of my warfare and hard-service, I await the coming of my final change. You will call me and I will answer You; You will call for the work of Your hands.</p>
Job 16:18–22	<p>Earth, you will not cover my blood and [there] is no [resting] place for my cry. Furthermore, realize, my Witness [is] in heaven, and my Eyewitness [is] in the heights. My friends [are] my [life's] interpreters [or, Let my prayer come to the Lord]; my eye pours out tears to God. And He [the Eyewitness] would make a cause clear between a man and God [as] a son of man with his associate, when counted years come and I go the way [from which] I will not return.</p>
Job 19:25–27	<p>Furthermore, I, [even] I know that my Redeemer, the Living One and the Last One, will take a stand upon the ground. And after they complete a circuit [with] this my flesh, yet away from my flesh, I will see God, Whom I will see for myself even my eyes will see [Him] and not be alienated [from Him] [or, <i>offensive (to Him)</i>]. My emotions are spent within me.</p>
<p>Summation: We cannot simply point to the book of Job, rattle off a couple of passages, and say this is what is spiritual truth. First off, we are dealing with the opinions of men, who do not necessarily represent God's point of view. We cannot expect Job (or any of his friends) to necessarily be consistent in their arguments. Sometimes, man is not consistent in the things which he believes or argues. However, we can expect God to nudge Job toward spiritual truth, which, in fact, appears to be the case when one takes these passages together.</p>	

Now, let's deal one more time with Barnes' well-reasoned arguments. Resurrection, as a doctrine, was only introduced by Job. It was an important doctrine and it solved a lot of the problems and arguments that Job and his

friends were having, but what is the more important truth to get across—that we are all sinners in need of a Savior, so that even Job, a man of such righteousness, must ultimately appeal to the mercy of a just God; or, that, after we die, everything is going to be alright? God introduces the concept of resurrection, without losing sight of the fact that even Job—a man that God presents as a righteous man—is not really justified before God. What is the end result of Job’s comments on resurrection? Joseph, prior to his death in Egypt, instructs his children to preserve his bones and not to bury him in Egypt, but to bury him in the Land of Promise. Joseph knew that he would be resurrected and he desired to be resurrected in the land that God had given to him and his family. Scripture gives us a great deal to learn and to know—however, we have to start with the most basic facts and work from there. The proper procedure of being filled with the Holy Spirit is important, but this is not what should be taught to a person prior to believing in Christ. The concept that nations are a part of the plan of God, and that a one-world system prior to His return is in opposition to His plan—that is an important doctrine. However, a person must be taught first that (1) he is a sinner who cannot redeem himself; and, (2) he needs a Savior and a Redeemer—our Lord Christ Jesus—to pull him out of the Mire of his own depravity. That we will be resurrected in the last times and that we will have a resurrection body just like His—that is important; but our need of God’s grace and mercy is primary, the doctrine of resurrection is secondary. Therefore, it is given, in this very early book of the Bible, important consideration, but this will not be the primary emphasis.

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“You, My Friends, Ought to Fear to Final Judgment!”

When you say, ‘How will we pursue to him?’
and a root of a word being found in me [or, *in Him*].

Job
19:28

For you will say, ‘How will we [continue to] persecute him
For the root of the matter is found in him?’

You will say, ‘How will we be able to continue persecuting him,
seeing as how the basis of our persecution is in his decrepit human body?’

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

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Surely ye should say— Why should we persecute him? Seeing the root of the matter is found in me [possibly <i>him</i>].
<i>God’s Word™</i> JPS (Tanakh)	“You say, ‘We will persecute him! The root of the problem is found in him.’ ” You say, “How do we persecute him? The root of the matter is in him.” [JPS points out that many of the manuscripts end this with <i>me</i>].
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	You think: “How will we persecute him?” Since the root of the matter is found in me—
NASB	“If you say, ‘How shall be persecute him?’ And ‘What pretext for a case against him can we find?’ ”
The Septuagint	But if you also say, ‘What will we say before him? And so find out the root of the matter [is] in Him.
The Vulgate	Why now do you say, let us persecute him, and find ground of accusation against him?
<i>Young’s Literal Translation</i>	But ye say, ‘Why do we pursue after him?’ And the root of the matter hath been found.

We begin this verse with the conjunction *kîy* (כִּי) [pronounced *kee*], which means *when, that, for, because*. It certainly has a plethora of uses; however, these renderings are its primary use and the others do not seem to apply. Strong’s #3588 BDB #471. This is followed by *you [plural] say*. We might reasonably assume what follows is a quote from what Job would expect his friends to say after his demise. With this verse, Job has left his very inspired speech and has returned to thinking about his three companions and their relationship to him.

The quotation begins with the interrogative (and exclamatory) particle *mâh* (הַ מַּ) [pronounced *maw*], which means *what, how*. Strong's #4100 BDB #552. So Job states that they could either be asking a question or making an exclamatory statement. I assume, as it is in our English language, that this would have been obvious to the hearers by the inflection of Job's voice, and somewhat less so to the reader. This is followed by the 1st person plural, Qal imperfect of *râdaph* (רָדַף) [pronounced *raw-DAHf*], which word we had back in v. 22; it means *to pursue, to follow after, to chase with hostile intent*. It is also rendered *to persecute* because that indicates the mental attitude of those doing the pursuing. Strong's #7291 BDB #922. In this verse, it is followed by the lamed preposition, which is affixed to the 3rd person masculine suffix. This would give us: "When you say, 'How will be pursue him [with hostile intent]?' " or, "For you will say, 'How will we pursue [and persecute] him?'" The use of the 1st person verb indicates that this is what Job's companions will say when Job has died. What they have done up until this time is badmouth Job and impugn his character. At his death, they will wonder aloud, "How can we continue to impugn Job's character?"

Then we have the *wâw* conjunction and the masculine singular construct of *shôresh* (שֹׁרֶשׁ) [pronounced *SHOH-resh*], and it means *root*; the idea is firmness, permanence; it can relate to source or cause. Strong's #8328 BDB #1057. The noun it is affixed to is the masculine singular of *dâ'vâr* (דָּבָר) [pronounced *daw^p-VAWR*], which means *word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter*. It is something which proceeds from the mouth and the context determines its exact parameters. Strong's #1697 (or #1696) BDB #182. Most have interpreted this as the *root of controversy* or *the basis for the disputation* or *the ground of strife*. Barnes gives this a different view that Job was saying that he was a tree with a root, with support and life.⁸⁷ Although I certainly respect Barnes, my thinking is that this refers to the basis of their dispute.

Then this is followed by the Niphal participle of *mâtsâ'* (מָצָא) [pronounced *maw-TSAW*] and it means *to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover*. In the Niphal, Gesenius gives the meanings as *to acquire, to be found, to be present, to exist*. Strong's #4672 BDB #592. This is followed by either *in me* or *in him*. In the Hebrew, the suffix is *me*; in the Aramaic, Septuagint and Vulgate, it is *him*. Translation: *And the root [or, foundation] of the word [or, matter] is found with him*. The difference of whether this is found to be *with him* or *with me* depends upon whether this is taken as a continuation of the quote, or a break from the quote in the words of Job. "When you say, 'How will we persecute him?' yet the root of the matter is found in me"; is one way of rendering this verse. Or: "When you say, 'How will we persecute him when the root of the matter is found in him?'" Job will be face-to-face with the Lord, and his companions, who have become his accusers, will have no other basis for their persecution and humiliation of Job. Job's decrepit body will no longer afford them a reason for their verbal attack upon Job. He asks them what will they do then.

Barnes gives an extended translation of the verse: *For you will yet say, Why did we persecute him? The root of the mater was found in him—and since this will be the case, fear now that justice will overtake you for it, for vengeance will not always slumber when a friend of God is wronged.*⁸⁸

Be afraid from faces of a sword for fury [is] punishment of a sword for you to know who [or, which?] is judgment."	Job 19:29	Be in fear of facing the sword because the fury [of God is] the punishment of the sword, so that you will know who [is] judged.
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**However, once I am gone, you ought to be in fear of facing the sword
because God's fury towards you will be manifested in the punishment of the sword
so that in the end you will realized who is truly under judgment.**

Let first see what others have done with this verse:

⁸⁷ Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 335.

⁸⁸ Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 334.

<i>The Emphasized Bible</i>	Be ye afraid—on your part—of the face of the sword, Because wrath [bringeth] the punishments of the sword, To the end ye may know the Almighty. ⁸⁹
JPS (Tanakh)	Be in fear of the sword, For [your] fury is iniquity-worthy of the sword; know there is a judgment!
Keil and Delitzsch (revised)	Be afraid of the sword, For wrath meets the transgressions of the sword, That you may know there is a judgment!
NASB	“Then be afraid of the sword for yourselves, For wrath <i>brings</i> the punishment of the sword, So that you may know there is judgment.”
NEB	Beware of the sword that points at you, the sword that sweeps away all iniquity; then you will know that there is a judge [or, <i>judgement</i>].
NIV	You should fear the sword yourselves; for wrath will bring punishment by the sword, and then you will know that there is judgment [or, <i>that you may come to know the Almighty</i>]
The Septuagint	Do you also beware of deceit, for wrath will come upon law violations; and then they will know where their substance is.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	Be ye afraid because of the sword, For furious are the punishments of the sword, That ye may know that <i>there is</i> a judgment.

Job has essentially said his *goodbyes* in the previous couple of verses, but he is going to check out giving them a warning. They have told Job that he is being disciplined due to his secret sins—now he issues a warning to them. He begins with the 2nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative of the homonym *gûwr* (גור) [pronounced *goor*], which means *to dread, to be afraid of, to stand in awe of*. Now, if you have studied any of the material which I have, you know that I am rather leery of homonyms in general—it is not that they don't exist, it is that several words are given a plethora of meanings so that they correspond with whatever traditional meaning has been given to a particular passage. However, this is not the case with *gûwr*, which has three primary meanings: (1) *to temporarily reside, to sojourn, to stay temporarily*; (2) *to stir up, to strive with, to quarrel with*; and, (3) *to dread, to be in fear of*. Whereas I have my doubts about the second set of meanings, the first and third sets of meanings are no doubt accurate, as there are a plethora of passages which both demand a different meaning along with a handful of words, found in not a few passages, which are cognates. This particular verb is found four times in Job, used twice with the first set of meanings (Job 19:15 28:4), and twice with the third set (Job 19:29 41:25). Strong's #1481 BDB #158. In the imperative, this means *be afraid of, be in fear of, be in dread of*. This is obviously addressed to Job's three companions (2nd person masculine plural); what follows is what they are to be afraid of: *from faces of [the] sword*. *Be in fear from facing the sword*.

In the next line, Job explains what he means. We begin with the explanatory conjunction followed by the feminine singular noun *chêmâh* (חַמָּה) [pronounced *khay-MAW*], which means *fury, rage, heated anger*. Strong's #2534 BDB #404. Both BDB and NASB supply the verb *brings*; Young manages to get away with the simple verb *to be*. The main reason the verb would be lacking is for emphasis. What follows *wrath* is the feminine plural construct of *ʿâvôn* (עֲוֹן) [pronounced *gaw-VONE*], which means both *iniquity, crime, offense, transgression, depraved action*, as well as *the guilt, punishment from wrongdoing*. Strong's #5771 BDB #730. This is followed by *sword*. *For fury [is the] punishment of [the] sword*. Job is telling his friends that they need to be in fear of the sword, because God's wrath will come to them as the punishment of the sword.

I should mention that the Septuagint is somewhat different here. *For heated anger will come upon law violations [or, violators]*.

In the third and final line, we begin with the lamed prefixed preposition, which here is used in an unusual way. Lamed generally means *to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to*. However, lamed has several more unusual uses, one of them being *that, so that* (see Num. 11:11 Job 19:29 Isa. 10:2). This is affixed to another preposition *l'ma'an* (לְמַעַן) [pronounced *l'-MAH-gahn*], which means *for the sake of, on account of, to the intent of, to the intent that, to the purpose that, in order that*. This preposition emphasizes the cause or

⁸⁹ Rotherham points out that this is according to Fuerst, Ewald and Dillmann (i.e., old Bible guys); *judgment*, me mentions, is the rendering of several others.

purpose of the action. Strong's #4616 BDB #775. Then we have the 2nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect of *to know*, giving us: [So that you \[all\] know..](#) Then we have what appears to be the shortened version of the relative pronoun *ʾăsher* (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced *ash-ER*], which generally means *that, which, when* or *who*. In later Hebrew and in Rabbinic Hebrew, this was shortened down to simply a *sîyn* and a vowel point, which is what we have here. Strong's #834 BDB #81. This is followed by the word *dîyn* (דִּין) [pronounced *deen*], which means *judgment*. Strong's #1779 BDB #192. The word for *judgment* is spelled exactly the same way as the verb, and, to add to the confusion, the combination of these two words is written in at least three slightly different ways. According to Keil and Delitzsch, this could be the infinitive form of the verb in this passage (i.e., *to judge*). This gives us, roughly, [So that you \[all\] will know who \[is\] judged.](#) Barnes: *That there is justice; that God punishes injuries done to the character, and that he will come forth to vindicate his friends. Probably Job anticipated that when God should come forth to vindicate him, he would inflict exemplary punishment on them; and that this would be not only by words, but by some heavy judgment, such as he had himself experienced. The vindication of the just is commonly attended with the punishment of the unjust; the salvation of the friends of God is connected with the destruction of his foes. Job seems to have anticipated this in the case of himself and his friends; it will certainly occur in the great day when the affairs of this world shall be wound up in the decisions of the final judgment.*⁹⁰

The NIV Study Bible offers a completely different alternative ending ([that you may come to know the Almighty](#)); however, I have no idea where they got this from.

Job is clearly upset with his three companions and expects that they will face the wrath of God after he is gone, and then they will definitely know just who was judged. His implication is this: he is just before God; what has happened to him is completely undeserved. Therefore, if he is in such pain for no reason, they should fear great judgment from God for their own behavior. Barnes: *The idea is, that wrath or anger such as they had manifested, was proper for punishment; that such malice as they had shown was a crime that God would not suffer to escape unpunished. They had, therefore, everything to dread.*⁹¹

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As I mentioned earlier, I had promised that I would organize this chapter according to the decastichs which Keil and Delitzsch suggest. However, bear in mind that when one finds a nice neat literary pattern upon which to drop Scripture, one always runs the risk of losing some meaning in order to fit into a literary scheme. The Bible, however, is rich enough to allow for several different sets of organization (as we will see with Keil and Delitzsch as opposed to God's Word™), and that these different literary interpretations compliment rather than stand in opposition to one another. I will leave it up to you to determine just how organized this is:

Keil and Delitzsch' Decastich Organization of Job 19⁹

Job 19:2–6

How long will you [all] vex my soul,
 And crush me with your words?
 These ten times you have reproached me;
 Without being ashamed, You astound me.
 And if I have really erred,
 My error rests with me.
 If you will really magnify yourselves against me,
 And prove my reproach to me:
 Know then that Eloah has wronged me,
 And has compassed me with His net.

⁹⁰ Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 335.

⁹¹ Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 335.

Keil and Delitzsch' Decastich Organization of Job 19⁹

Job 19:7–11

Behold, I cry violence, and I am not heard;
 I cry for help, and there is no justice.
 My way He has fenced round, that I cannot pass over,
 And He has set darkness on my paths.
 He has stripped me of my honour,
 And taken away the crown from my head.
 He destroyed me on every side, then I perished,
 And lifted out as a tree my hope.
 He kindled His wrath against me,
 And He regarded me as one of His foes.

Job 19:12–15

His troops together,
 And threw up their way against me,
 And encamped around my tent.
 My brothers He has removed far from me,
 And my acquaintances are quite estranged from me.
 My kinsfolk fail,
 And those that knew me have forgotten me.
 The slaves of my house and my maidens,
 They regard me as a stranger,
 I have become a perfect stranger in their eyes.

Job 19:16–20

I call to my servant and he does not answer,
 I am obliged to entreat him with my mouth.
 My breath is offensive to my wife,
 And my stench to my own brothers.
 Even boys act contemptuously towards me;
 If I will rise up, they speak against me.
 All my confidential friends abhor me,
 And those whom I loved have turned against me.
 My bone cleaves to my skin and flesh,
 And I have escaped only with the skin of my teeth.

Job 19:21–25

Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O you, my friends,
 For the hand of Eloah has touched me.
 Wherefore do you persecute me as God,
 And are never satisfied with my flesh?
 Oh that my words were but written,
 That they were recorded in a book,
 With an iron pen, filled in with lead,
 Graven in the rock for ever!
 And I know: my Redeemer lives,
 And as the last One, He will arise from the dust.

Keil and Delitzsch' Decastich Organization of Job 19⁹

Job 19:26–29

And after my skin, thus torn to pieces,
 And without my flesh, I will behold Eloah,
 Whom I will behold for my good,
 And my eyes will see Him and no other—
 My veins languish in my bosom.
 You think, "How will we persecute him?"
 Since the root of the matter is found in me—
 Therefore be ye afraid of the sword,
 For wrath meets the transgressions of the sword,
 That you may know there is a judgment!

It may seem a little forced, but their idea of six decastichs isn't far off the mark. Compare this to **The Organization of God's Word™** previously presented.

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1. *The Layman's Bible Commentary, Vol. 8*, Balmer H. Kelly, John Knox Press, ©1962, p. 98.
2. Quoted and paraphrased from *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 315.
3. This was taken mostly from *The New Scofield Reference Bible*; Dr. C.I. Scofield; ©1967 New York-Oxford University Press; p. 763. **Boaz as Related to the Kinsman-Redeemer** is more of an original work (although little of my work is truly original).
4. This point was paraphrased from *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 326.
5. See R. B. Thieme's booklet, *The Slave Market of Sin*.
6. *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; p. 333.
7. *Barnes' Notes; Job, Volume 1*; F. C. Cook, editor; reprinted 1996 by Baker Books; pp. 333–334. Let me append this: I had never heard of Barnes prior to picking up his notes on the Old Testament (I had one volume of it which, inexplicably, was very different from the volume of the set). He is one of the most accurate and insightful theological minds that I have ever read (which accounts for the fact that I quote from him often). This passage is key—he wanted the passage to say one thing; however, in his examination of the arguments, he was forced to take a conclusion opposite of what he preferred. This is a testament to the power of God's Word as well as to the true humility of Albert Barnes. There are so few believers who are willing to change their minds when faced with the clear readings from Scripture. When a theologian is willing to reverse his position because the God of Word says something different (and this is after careful and considerable study—Barnes spent nearly six pages on this topic alone), then that theologian is a man worth listening to.
8. Let me give you some more examples, just in case you are unconvinced. In Revelation, we have the mark of the beast, 3 sets of 6 digits (or letters) which identifies us and allows us to buy or sell, which mark will be imprinted on our skin like a cross between a bar code and a tattoo. During the first several centuries, such a mark makes little or no sense. However, in this day of ID numbers and credit card numbers, and fingerprint and voice ID's, such

technology makes perfect sense (Rev. 13:13–16). Second example, in the book of Revelation, we have a very detailed description of a sizable meteor or comet making impact with our planet (Rev. 8:7–12). Again, what ancient book makes more sense as the centuries go by? I have modernized the translation somewhat.