

THE BOOK OF JOB

Some things are to be premised in the general concerning this book before I come to the particulars.

1. That this was no fiction or parable, as some have dreamed, but a real history, which is sufficiently evident, both from the whole contexture of the book, wherein we have an exact and distinct account of the places, persons, and things here mentioned, with their several circumstances; and especially the succeeding penmen of Holy Scripture, who mention him as a real and eminent example of piety and patience, as **#Eze 14:14 Jas 5:11**.

2. That this is a canonical book of Scripture, which is manifest both from the style and matter of it, and from the tacit approbation given to it by Ezekiel and James, in the places now cited, and from that quotation taken from it as such, **#1Co 3:19**, and from the unanimous consent of the church, both of Jews and Christians, in all ages.

3. The time in which Job lived, and these things were said and done, most probably was before Moses, and in the days of the ancient patriarchs. This may be gathered,

1. From his long life, which, by comparing **#Job 1** with **#Job 42:16**, could not want much of two hundred years; whereas, after Moses, men's lives were far shorter, as is manifest.

2. From that considerable knowledge of God and of the true religion which then remained among divers Gentiles, which after Moses's time was in a manner quite extinguished.

3. From the sacrifices here commonly used; whereas, after the giving of the law, all sacrifices were confined to the place of the tabernacle or temple, to which even the Gentiles were to repair when they would sacrifice to God.

4. From the way of God's imparting his mind to the Gentiles at this time by dreams and visions, agreeably to God's method in those ancient times; whereas afterward those discoveries were withdrawn from the Gentiles, and appropriated to the people of Israel.

5. Because there is not the least mention in this book of the children of Israel, neither of their grievous afflictions in Egypt, nor of their glorious deliverance out of it, though nothing could have been more seasonable or suitable to the matter which is here discoursed between Job and his friends.

4. The penman of this book is not certainly known, nor is it material for us to know; for it being agreed who is the principal author, it is of no moment by what hand or pen he wrote it. But most probably it was either,

1. Job himself, who was most capable of giving this exact account; who as in his agony he wished that his words and carriage were written in a book, **#Job 19:23,24**, so possibly, when he was delivered from it, he satisfied his own and others' desires therein. Only what concerns his general character, **#Job 1:1**, and the time of his death, **#Job 42:16,17**, was added by another hand; the like small additions being made in other books of Scripture. Or,

2. Elihu, which may seem to be favoured by **#Job 32:15,16**. Or,

3. Moses, who when he was in the land of Midian, where he had opportunity of coming to the knowledge of this history and discourse, and considering that it might be very useful for the comfort and direction of God's Israel, who was now oppressed in Egypt, did by his own inclination, and the direction of God's Spirit, commit it to writing. And whereas the style seems to be unlike to that of Moses in his other writings, that is not strange, considering the differing nature of the books, this being almost all poetical, and the other merely historical, for the most part, or plain precepts or exhortations. And for the Arabic words here used, it must be remembered that Moses lived forty years in Midian, which was a part of Arabia, in which he must needs learn that language.

JOB CHAPTER 1

Job's country, and sincere holiness: his children; their feasts; and his religious care for them, **#Job 1:1-5**. Satan's appearance before God: God's character of Job, **#Job 1:6-8**. Satan imputeth Job's goodness to his prosperity; and so obtaineth leave to afflict him in

his goods, #**Job 1:9-12**. Job's oxen, sheep, camels, and servants destroyed, #**Job 1:13-17**. His sons and daughters perish, #**Job 1:18,19**. Job, with his mantle rent, head shaved, and upon the ground, worshippeth; blesseth God; sinneth not, #**Job 1:20-22**.

Ver. 1.

The land of Uz was either in Edom, called *the land of Uz*, #**La 4:21**, or in some part of Arabia, not far from the Chaldeans and Sabeans, as this chapter witnesseth; so called probably from Uz, one of Esau's posterity, #**Ge 36:28 Jer 25:20**.

That man was perfect; not legally or exactly, as he confesseth, #**Job 9:20**; but comparatively to such as were partial in their obedience to God's commands, and as to his sincere intentions, hearty affections, and constant and diligent endeavours to perform all his duties to God and men.

Upright, Heb. *right*; exact and regular in all his dealings with men; one of an unblamable conversation, doing to others as he would have others to deal with him.

One that feared God; one truly pious, and devoted to God's worship and service.

Eschewed evil, i.e. carefully avoiding all sin against God or men.

Ver. 2.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 3.

Camels in these parts were very numerous, as is manifest from #**Jud 7:12 1Ch 5:21**, and from the plain testimonies of Aristotle and Pliny, and very useful, and proper both for carrying of burdens in these hot and dry countries, as being able to endure thirst much better than other creatures, and for service in war.

She-asses were preferred before he-asses, as serving for the same uses as they did, and for breeding and milk also; but he-asses also may be included in this expression, which is of the feminine gender, because the greatest part of them (from which the denomination is usually taken) were she-asses.

The greatest, i.e. one of the richest.

Of all the men of the east, to wit, that lived in those parts; such general expressions being commonly understood with such limitations.

Ver. 4.

His sons went and feasted, to testify and maintain their brotherly love.

Every one his day; not every day of the week and of the year; which would have been burdensome and tedious to them all, and gross luxury and epicurism, which holy Job would not have permitted; but each his appointed day, whether his birthday, or the first day of the month, or any other set time, it matters not.

Ver. 5.

When the days of their feasting were gone about; when each of them had had his turn, which peradventure came speedily, though not immediately one after another; and there was some considerable interval before their next feasting time.

Job sent and sanctified them, i.e. he exhorted and commanded them to sanctify themselves for the following work, to wit, by purifying themselves from all ceremonial and moral pollution, as the manner then was, #Ex 19:10, and by preparing themselves by true repentance for all their sins, and particularly such as they had committed in their time of feasting and jollity, and by fervent prayers to make their peace with God by sacrifice.

Rose up early in the morning; thereby showing his ardent zeal in God's service, and his impatience till God was reconciled to him and to his children.

It may be that my sons have sinned: his zeal for God's glory, and his true love to his children, made him jealous; for which he had cause enough from the corruption of man's nature, the frailty and folly of youth, the many temptations which attend upon feasting and jollity, and the easiness of sliding from lawful to forbidden delights.

And cursed God; not in the grossest manner and highest degree, which it is not probable either that they should do, now especially when they had no provocation to do it, as being surrounded with blessings and comforts which they were actually enjoying, and not

yet exercised with any affliction, or that Job should suspect it concerning them; but *despised* and *dishonoured* God; for both Hebrew and Greek words signifying cursing, are sometimes used to note only reviling, or detracting, or speaking evil, or setting light by a person. Thus what is called *cursing one's father or mother*, #Ex 21:17, is elsewhere called *setting light by them*, as #De 27:16 Eze 22:7. See also #2Pe 2:10 Jude 1:8, and many other places.

In their hearts; by slight and low thoughts of God, by neglecting or forgetting to give God the praise and glory of the mercies which by his favour they enjoyed, by taking more hearty delight in their feasts and jollity than in the service and fruition of God; for these and such-like distempers of heart are most usual in times of prosperity and jollity, as appears by common experience, and by the many Divine cautions we have against them, as #De 6:11,12 Ho 2:8, and elsewhere. And these miscarriages, though inward and secret, Job calls by such a hard name as usually signifies cursing, by way of aggravation of their sin, which peradventure they were too apt to slight as a small and trivial miscarriage.

This did Job continually, i.e. it was his constant course at the end of every feasting time.

Ver. 6.

There was a day, i.e. a certain time appointed by God.

The sons of God, i.e. the holy angels, so called #Job 38:7 Da 3:25,28, because of their creation by God, as Adam also was, #Lu 3:38, and for their great resemblance of him in power, and dignity, and holiness, and for their filial affection and obedience to him.

Before the Lord, i.e. before his throne, to receive his commands, and to give him an account of their negotiations. Compare #1Ki 22:19 Zec 4:14 Lu 1:19. But you must not think that these things were really done, and that Satan was mixed with the holy angels, or admitted into the presence of God in heaven, to maintain such discourses as this with the blessed God, or that he had formal commission and leave to do what follows; but it is only a parabolical representation of that great truth, that God by his wise

and holy providence doth govern all the actions of men and devils to his own ends; it being usual with the great God to condescend to our shallow capacities, and to express himself, as the Jews phrase it, in the language of the sons of men, i.e. in such manner as men use to speak and may understand.

Satan came also among them; being forced to come, and give up his account.

Ver. 7.

God being here represented as Judge, rightly begins with an inquiry, as the ground of his further proceedings, as he did **#Ge 3:9 4:9.**

From going to and fro in the earth; where by thy permission I range about, observing with great diligence all the dispositions and actions of men, and working in them and among them as far as I have liberty and opportunity.

Ver. 8.

Hast thou taken notice of him, and his spirit and carriage? and what hast thou to say against him?

Ver. 9.

i.e. Sincerely and freely, and out of pure love and respect to thee? No. It is policy, not piety, that makes him good; he doth not serve thee, but serveth himself of thee, and is a mere mercenary, serving thee for his own ends.

Ver. 10.

Made a hedge about him, i.e. defended him by thy special care and providence from all harms and inconveniencies; which is able to oblige and win persons of the worst tempers.

His house; his children and servants.

Ver. 11.

Put forth thine hand, to wit, in way of justice and severity, as that phrase is used, **#Isa 5:25 Eze 25:7,13,16.**

Touch, i.e. afflict or destroy, as this word is used, **#Ge 26:11 Ru 2:9 Ps 105:15 Zec 2:8.**

He will curse thee to thy face; he who is now so forward to serve and bless thee, will then openly and boldly blaspheme thy

name, and reproach thy providence, as unjust and unmerciful to him.

Ver. 12.

All that he hath is in thy power; I give thee full power and liberty to deal with his wife, children, servants, and all his estate, whatsoever thy wit or malice shall prompt thee to do.

Upon himself; his person, body or soul.

From the presence of the Lord, i.e. from that place where God was represented as specially present, being forward and greedy to do the mischief which he had permission to do.

Ver. 13.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 14.

i.e. Beside the oxen, therefore both were taken away together.

Ver. 15.

The Sabians; a people of Arabia, who led a wandering life, and lived by robbery and spoiling of others, as Strabo and other heathen writers note.

I only am escaped alone to tell thee; whom Satan spared no less maliciously than he destroyed the rest, that Job might have speedy and certain intelligence of his calamity.

Ver. 16.

While he was yet speaking; before he could have time to compose his disturbed mind, and to digest his former loss, or indeed to swallow his spittle, as he expresseth it, **#Job 7:19.**

The fire of God; a terrible flame of fire sent from God in an extraordinary manner, to intimate that both God and men were his enemies, and all things conspired to his ruin.

Is fallen from heaven, i.e. from the air, which is oft called heaven, as hath been noted again and again, whereof Satan is the prince, **#Eph 2:2.**

Ver. 17.

The Chaldeans, who also lived upon the spoil, as Xenophon and others observe.

Made out three bands, that they might come upon them several ways, and nothing might be able to escape them.

Ver. 18.

i.e. Feasting after their manner, and, as Job generally feared and suspected, sinning against God, **#Job 1:5**, which was a dreadful aggravation of the judgment.

Ver. 19.

From the wilderness; whence the fiercest winds came, as having most power in such open places. See **#Jer 4:11 13:24**.

Smote the four corners; in which the chief strength of the house did consist. It smote these either all together, or rather successively, one immediately after another, being possibly a whirlwind, which comes violently and suddenly, whirling about in a circle, and being driven about by the power of the devil, which is very great.

The young men; his sons in their youth, and his daughters also, as appears from the sequel.

Ver. 20.

Then Job arose from his seat, whereon he was sitting in a disconsolate posture.

Rent his mantle, to testify his deep sense of and just sorrow for the heavy hand of God upon him, and his humiliation of himself under his hand. See **#Ge 37:34**. *Shaved his head*, i.e. caused the hair of his head to be shaved or cut off, which was then a usual ceremony in mourning, of which see **#Ezr 9:3 Isa 15:2 22:12 Jer 7:29 41:5 Mic 1:16**.

Fell down upon the ground, in way of self-abhorrency, and humiliation, and supplication unto God.

And worshipped, to wit, God, who is expressed in the following verse, and who is the only object of religious worship. Instead of cursing God, which Satan said he would do, he adored him, and gave him the glory of his sovereignty, and of his justice, and of his goodness also, in this most severe dispensation.

Ver. 21.

I brought none of these things which I have now lost with me, when I came out of my mother's womb into the world but I received them from the hand and favour of that God who hath now required his own again. I still have all that substance wherewith I was born, and have lost only things without and beside myself.

Naked shall I return thither; I shall be as rich when I die as I was when I was born, and therefore have reason to be contented with my condition, which also is the common lot of all men.

Thither, i.e. into my mother's womb, which in the former clause is understood properly, but in this figuratively, of the earth, which is our common mother, as it is called by many authors, out of whose belly we were taken, and into which we must return again, **#Ge 3:19 Ec 12:7**. And as our mother's womb is called

the lower parts of the earth, #Ps 139:15, so it is not harsh if reciprocally the lower parts of the earth be called our mother's womb. Nor is it strange that the same phrase should be taken both properly and metaphorically in the same verse; for so it is **#Mt 8:22, let the dead spiritually bury the dead corporally**. See also **#Le 26:21,24 Ps 18:26, &c.**

The Lord hath taken away; he hath taken away nothing but his own, and what he so gave to me that he reserved the supreme dominion and disposal of in his own hand. So I have no cause to murmur or complain of him. Nor have I reason to fret and rage against the Chaldeans, and Sabeans, and other creatures, who were only God's instruments to execute his wise and holy counsel.

The name of the Lord, i.e. the Lord; God's name being often put for God himself, as **#Ps 44:5 48:10 Ps 72:18,19 Da 2:19,20**; as names are put for men, **#Ac 1:15 Re 3:4**. The sense is, I have no cause to quarrel with God, but much cause to bless and praise him that he did give me such blessings, and suffered me to enjoy them more and longer than I deserved; and that he hath vouchsafed to afflict me, which I greatly needed for my soul's good, and which I take as a token of his love and faithfulness to me, and therefore ministering more matter of comfort than grief to me; and that he hath left me the comfort of my wife, and yet is pleased to continue

to me the health of my body, and a composed mind, and a heart to submit to his good pleasure; and that he hath reserved and prepared such a felicity for me, whom no Chaldeans or Sabeans, no men nor devils, can take away from me; of which see **#Job 19:25**.

Ver. 22.

i.e. Under all these pressures; or, in all that he said or did upon these sad occasions;

Job sinned not, to wit, in such manner as the devil presaged that he would, and as is expressed in the following words. As Christ saith, **#Joh 9:3**, *Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents*, to wit, so as you imagine, in an eminent or extraordinary degree. But both here and there human infirmities are excepted, of which Job oft acknowledgeth himself to be guilty. Nor was the question between God and Satan, whether Job had any sin in him, but whether he was a hypocrite, or would blaspheme God; which is here denied and disproved.

Nor charged God foolishly, Heb.

nor imputed folly to God, i.e. so far was he from blaspheming God, that he did not entertain any dishonourable thought of God, as if he had done any thing unworthy of his infinite wisdom, or justice, or goodness, but heartily approved of and acquiesced in his good pleasure, and in his righteous, though sharp, proceedings against him.

JOB CHAPTER 2

Satan's second appearance before God: Job's character continuing the same, condemneth Satan, **#Job 2:1-3**. Satan judgeth him not sufficiently tried, unless his body suffer; and so obtaineth leave to hurt his body, but not touch his life, **#Job 2:4-6**. Job, smote with boils, scrapeth himself, and sitteth down in ashes, **#Job 2:7,8**. His wife's folly; he reproveth her, acknowledging God's sovereignty and former mercies, **#Job 2:9,10**. His three friends, and their sorrow, **#Job 2:11-13**.

Ver. 1.

Again there was a day; another set time some convenient space after the former calamities. Of this and the two next verses **See Poole "Job 1:6", See Poole "Job 1:7", See Poole "Job 1:8"**.

Ver. 2.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 3.

Still, notwithstanding all his trials and tribulations, and thy malicious suggestion to the contrary, he holdeth fast his integrity, i.e. he continues to be the same perfect and upright man which he was before. All thy endeavours to pull away his integrity have made him only to hold it the faster.

Thou movedst me, i.e. didst persuade me, and prevailed with me to do it. But this, as the rest of this representation, is not to be understood properly, as if God could be moved by any of his creatures to alter his purposes, which are all eternal and unchangeable, and especially by Satan, as if God would gratify him by granting his desires; but the design of these words is to signify, both the devil's restless malice in promoting man's misery, and God's permission of it for his own wise and holy ends.

Without cause, i.e. without any special provocation, whereby he, more than others, deserved such heavy punishments; which also Job himself oft allegeth for his justification, although he doth not deny himself to be a sinner, as is apparent from **#Job 7:20,21 9:2 13:23,26**; nor that sin deserves judgments. Or, without any such cause as thou didst allege, which was his hypocrisy. Or, *in vain*, as this word is used, **#Pr 1:17 Eze 6:10**, and elsewhere. So it is not referred to God's destroying him, but to Satan's moving God so to do. And so this place may be thus rendered exactly according to the Hebrew, and thou hast moved me to destroy him in vain, or without effect, or to no purpose, i.e. thou hast lost thy design and expectation therein, which was to take away his integrity, which in spite of all thy art and malice he still holdeth fast.

Ver. 4.

The design of these words is plain, which is to detract from Job, and to diminish that honour and praise which God gave to Job, by

pretending that he had done no more than the meanest men commonly do by the law of self-reservation. And it is as clear that this was a proverbial speech then in use, wherein if there be some difficulty to understand it at this distance of time, it is no more than the common lot of many other proverbs, the sense, and especially the grounds, whereof are frequently unknown to persons of other nations and after-times. Moreover, it is known that in those ancient times, though they had some money, yet the main of their estate lay in cattle, of which the skins were a considerable part, and their chief traffic lay in the exchange of one commodity for another; and, among other things, it cannot be questioned but that they did commonly exchange skins of one kind for skins of another sort, according to their several inclinations or occasions. So the meaning may be this, As men willingly and commonly give one skin in exchange for another skin, and one commodity for another. So (the Hebrew particle *vau* being oft so used as a note of comparison, as it is #Pr 17:3 25:3,23,25,27)

all that a man hath, his house, cattle, children, will he give, and that most willingly, for his life, i.e. to redeem or save his own life. Or rather thus,

skin for skin, might then be a proverb, like that of ours, *Body for body*, when one man is so far obliged for another. And we have some such expressions among us; as when we say of a man who doth some dangerous action, *His skin*, i.e. his body, *will pay for it*, i.e. it may cost him his life. And this proverb might be taken,

1. From sacrifices, in which there was *skin for skin*, i.e. the skin of a beast for, or instead of, the skin or body of the man, which deserved to be used as the beast was, and which was saved or preserved by the suffering of the beast, which was accepted by God instead of the man, and by which the man's sins were expiated. Or,

2. From hostages or ransoms, wherein one man was given for or instead of another. So now the sense may be this, Any man will give *skin for skin*, i.e. the skin, or body, or life of another, whether man or beast, to save his own;

yea, all that a man hath, whether goods or persons, such as Job hath lost,

will he give for his life. Job is not much hurt nor concerned so long as his own skin is whole and safe. Others thus, *Skin upon* (for so the Hebrew particle *behad* is sometimes used, as #2Ki 4:5 Am 9:10; as also the Greek particle *anti*, which answers to it, is understood #Joh 1:16, *grace for grace*, i.e. grace upon grace, or all kinds or degrees of grace) *skin, and all that a man hath*, (so all these words belong to the price which a man pays; now follows what he hath or expecteth to have for it,) will he give for his life, i.e. in exchange for his life, or to save his life. This also is a plausible interpretation, only it is not very probable that the same Hebrew particle *behad* should be used in two so differing senses in the same verse, in the former part to signify *upon*, (which if this sacred writer had meant, he would likely have expressed it rather by that other Hebrew particle *al*, which is commonly so used, than by this, which is so ambiguous, and seldom so taken, and otherwise used in this very verse,) and in the latter to signify *for*, or *instead of*. However the sense is plainly this, This is so far from being an evidence of Job's sincere and generous piety, that it is only an act of deeper hypocrisy and mere self-love; he is well enough contented with the loss of his estate, and children too, so long as he sleeps in a whole skin; and he is well pleased that thou wilt accept of all these as a sacrifice or ransom in his stead; and it is not true patience and humility which makes him seem to bear his crosses so submissively, as depth of policy, that by his feigned carriage he may appease thy wrath against him, and prevent those further plagues which, for his hypocrisy and other sins, of which he is conscious, he fears thou wilt otherwise bring upon his own carcass; as will plainly appear upon further trial.

Ver. 5.

Touch, i.e. smite him, not slightly, but to the quick, and to the bones and marrow, so as he may feel pain and anguish indeed, which is oft expressed by reaching to the bones, as #Ps 6:2 32:3 51:8.

Ver. 6.

Do not attempt to take away his life, which I will not suffer thee to do.

Ver. 7.

Like those inflicted upon the Egyptians, which are expressed by the same word, and threatened to apostate Israelites, **#De 28:27**, whereby he was made loathsome to himself and to his nearest relations, **#De 19:13,19**, and a visible monument of Divine displeasure, and filled with tiring and consuming pains in his body, and no less torment and anguish in his mind.

From the sole of his foot unto his crown; in all the outward parts of his body. His tongue he spared, that it might be capable of venting those blasphemies against God which he expected and desired.

Ver. 8.

He took him a potsherd; partly to allay the itch which his ulcers caused; and partly to squeeze out or take away that purulent matter which was under them, or flowed from them, and was the great cause of his torment. And this he did not with soft linen cloths, either because he had not now a sufficient quantity of them for so much use, or because therein he must have had the help of others, who abhorred to come near him, **#Job 19:13-15**; nor with his own hands or fingers, which were also ulcerous, and so unfit for that use; and besides he loathed to touch himself: but with potsherds, either because they were next at hand, and ready for his present use; or in token of his repentance and deep humiliation under God's heavy hand, which made him decline all things which favoured of tenderness and delicacy.

Among the ashes, Heb. *in dust or ashes*, as mourners used to do; of which see **#Job 42:6 Jon 3:6 Mt 11:21**.

Ver. 9.

The devil spared *his wife* with cruel intent to be the instrument of his temptations, and the aggravation of Job's misery, by unnatural unkindness to him, which is declared **#Job 19:17**, and elsewhere.

Dost thou still retain thine integrity? art thou yet so weak to persist in the practice of piety, when it is not only unprofitable to thee, but the chief occasion of all these thy insupportable miseries, and when God himself not only forsakes and leaves thee in this helpless and hopeless condition, but is turned to be thy greatest enemy?

Curse God, and die; seeing thy blessing of God availeth thee so little, it is time to change thy note, Curse God, and die, i.e. reproach him to his face, and tell him of his injustice and unkindness to thee, and that he loves his enemies, and hates his friends; and that will provoke him to take away thy life, and so end thy torments. Or, Curse God, though though die for it. But although this word sometimes signifies *cursing*, as **#Job 1:11 1Ki 21:10**, yet most properly and generally it signifies *blessing*; and so it may very well be understood here as a sarcastical or ironical expression, such as there are many in Scripture, as **#Ec 11:9 La 4:21**, and in all authors. And so the sense may be this, *Bless God, and die*; i.e. I see thou art set upon blessing of God; thou blessest God for giving, and thou blessest God for taking away, and thou art still blessing of God for thy loathsome and tormenting diseases, and he rewards thee accordingly, giving thee more and more of that kind of mercy for which thou blessest and praisest him. Go on therefore in this thy pious and generous course, and die as a fool dieth, and carry this reputation to thy grave, that thou hadst not common sense in thee to discern between good and evil, between thy friends and thy foes. Or rather, Awake out of this stupidity and lethargy, and give over this absurd and unreasonable practice; and as God gives thee no help nor comfort, let him lose thy praises and service. And this being her sense, it is not strange he reproveth her so sharply for it. And yet it seems hard to think that Job's wife should arrive at that height of impudence and impiety, as in plain terms to bid him curse God.

Ver. 10.

As one of the foolish women, i.e. like a rash, and inconsiderate, and weak person that dost not understand nor mind what thou sayest. Or, like a wicked and most profane person; for such are frequently called fools in Scripture, as **#Ps 14:1 74:18**, and everywhere in the Proverbs.

Shall we poor worms give laws to our supreme Lord and Governor, and oblige him always to bless and favour us, and never to afflict us? And shall not those great, and manifold, and long-continued mercies, which from time to time God hath freely and graciously given us, compensate for these short afflictions? Ought we not to bless God for those mercies which we did not

deserve, and contentedly to bear those corrections which we deserve and need, and (if it be not our own fault) may get much good by.

In all this did not Job sin with his lips, by any reflections upon God, by any impatient or unbecoming expressions.

Ver. 11.

They were persons then eminent for birth and quality, for wisdom and knowledge, and for the profession of the true religion, being probably of the posterity of Abraham, and akin to Job, and living in the same country with him.

Ver. 12.

Afar off, to wit, at some convenient distance from him; whom they found sitting upon the ground, either in the open air, or within his own house.

Knew him not; his countenance being so fearfully changed and disfigured by his boils.

Sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven; either upon the upper part of their heads, which look towards heaven; or cast it up into the air, so as it should fall upon their heads, as they did **#Ac 22:23**. See **#Jos 6:6 Ne 9:1 La 2:10**.

Ver. 13.

Sat down with him upon the ground, in the posture of mourners condoling with him.

Seven days and seven nights was the usual time of mourning for the dead, **#Ge 1:10 1Sa 31:13**, and therefore proper both for Job's children, who were dead, and for Job himself, who was in a manner dead whilst he lived. But we must not fancy that they continued in this place and posture so long together, which no laws of religion or civility required of them, and the necessities of nature could not bear; but only that they spent a great or the greatest part of that time in sitting with him, and silent mourning over him. And so such general expressions are frequently understood, as **#Lu 2:37 24:53 Ac 20:31**.

None spake a word to him; either,

1. About any thing. Or rather,

2. About his afflictions, and the causes of them. The reason of this silence was, partly the greatness of their grief for him, and their surprise and astonishment at his condition; partly, because they thought it convenient to give him some further time to vent his own sorrows; and partly, because as yet they knew not what to say to him: for though they had ever esteemed him to be a truly wise and godly man, and came with full purpose to comfort him; yet the prodigious greatness of his miseries, and that hand and displeasure of God which they manifestly perceived in them, made them at a stand, and to question Job's sincerity; so that they could not comfort him as they had intended, and yet were loth to grieve him with those convictions and reproofs which they thought he greatly needed. And here they stuck till Job gave them occasion to speak their minds.

JOB CHAPTER 3

Job curseth the day and services of his birth, **#Job 3:1-12**. The ease and honours of death, **#Job 3:13-19**. Life in anguish matter of complaint, **#Job 3:20-24**. What he feared is now come upon him, **#Job 3:25,26**.

Ver. 1.

He spake freely and boldly, as this phrase is used, **#Pr 31:8,9 Eph 6:19**, and elsewhere,

and cursed his day, to wit, his birthday, as is evident from **#Job 3:3**, which is called simply a man's *day*, **#Ho 7:5**; which also some others, through the same infirmity, and in the same circumstances, have cursed, as we see, **#Jer 20:14**. In vain do some men endeavour to excuse this and the following speeches of Job, who afterwards is reprov'd by God and severely accuseth himself for them, **#Job 38:2 40:4 42:3,6**. And yet he doth not proceed so far as to curse or blaspheme God, but makes the devil a liar in his prognostics. But although he doth not break forth into direct and downright reproaches of God, yet he makes secret and indirect reflections upon God's providence. His curse was sinful, both because it was vain, being applied to an unreasonable thing, which was not capable of blessing and cursing, and to a day that was past, and so out of the reach of all curses; and because it was applied to one of God's creatures, all which were and are in

themselves very good, and pronounced blessed by God; and so they are, if we do not turn them into curses; and because it casts a blame upon God for bringing that day, and for giving him that life which that day brought into the world. He pronounceth that day an unhappy, woeful, and cursed day, not in itself, but with respect to himself.

Ver. 2.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 3.

Let the remembrance of that day be utterly lost; yea, I heartily wish that it had never been. Such wishes are apparently foolish and impatient, and yet have been sometimes forced from wise and good men in grievous distresses, not as if they expected any effect of them, but only to show their abhorrency of life, and to express the intolerableness of their grief, and to give some vent to their passions. In which it was said with joy and triumph, as happy tidings. Compare #Jer 20:15. Conceived; or rather, brought forth, as this word is used, #1Ch 4:17; for the time of conception is unknown commonly to women themselves, and doth not use to be reported among men, as this day is supposed to be.

Ver. 4.

I wish the sun had never risen upon that day to make it day, or, which is all one, that it had never been; and whensoever that day returns, I wish it may be black, and gloomy, and uncomfortable, and therefore execrable and odious to all men.

From above, i.e. from heaven; either,

1. By causing the light of the sun which is in heaven to shine upon it. So it agrees both with the foregoing and following branches of this verse. Or,

2. By blessing and favouring it, or by giving his blessings to men upon it. Let it be esteemed by all an unlucky and comfortless day. Or, Let not God require it, i. e. bring it again in its course, as other days return. In this sense God is said to require that which is past, #Ec 3:15. Compare #Job 3:3,6.

Ver. 5.

Darkness and the shadow of death, i.e. a black and dark shadow, like that of the place of the dead, which is a land of darkness, and where the *light is darkness*, as Job explains this very phrase, **#Job 10:21,22**; or so gross and palpable darkness, that by its horrors and damps may take away men's spirits and lives.

Stain it, i.e. take away its beauty and glory, and make it abominable, as a filthy thing. Or,

challenge it, i.e. take and keep the entire possession of it, so as the light may not have the least share in it.

Terrify it, to wit, the day, i.e. men in it. Let it be always observed as a frightful and dismal day.

Ver. 6.

Let darkness seize upon it, i. e. constant and extraordinary darkness, without the least glimmering of light from the moon or stars.

Joined unto the days of the year, i.e. reckoned as one, or a part of one, of them. The night is distinguished from the artificial day, but it is a part of the natural day, which consists of twenty-four hours. Or rather, *let it not rejoice among the days*, &c. Joy here, and terror, **#Job 3:5**, are poetically and figuratively ascribed to the day or night with respect to men, who either rejoice or are affrighted in it. Let it be a sad, and as it were a funeral, day.

Let it not come into the number of the months, i.e. to be one of those nights which go to the making up of the months.

Ver. 7.

Solitary, i.e. destitute of all society of men meeting and feasting together, which commonly was done at night, suppers being the most solemn meals among divers ancient nations. See **#Mr 6:21 Lu 14:16 Joh 12:2 Re 19:9,17**.

Let no joyful voice; neither of the bride and bridegroom, nor any that celebrate their nuptials, or any other merry solemnity.

Ver. 8.

That curse the day, i.e. their day, to wit, their birthday; for the pronoun is here omitted for the metre's sake; for this and the

following chapters are written in verse, as all grant. So the sense is, when their afflictions move them to curse their own birthday, let them remember mine also, and bestow some curses upon it. Or the day of their distress and trouble, which sometimes is called simply the day, as **#Ob 1:12**. Or the day of the birth or death of that person, whose funerals are celebrated by the hired mourners, who in their solemn lamentations used to curse the day that gave them such a person, whom they should so suddenly lose; and therefore it had been better never to have enjoyed him, and to curse the day in which he died as an unlucky and execrable day. Or, *the day*, i.e. the daylight; which to some persons is a hateful thing, and the object of their curses, namely, to lewd persons and thieves, to whom *the morning light is even as the shadow of death*, **#Job 24:17**; as also to persons oppressed with deep melancholy, as it is here implied, **#Job 3:20**. So the sense is this, They who use to curse the day only, but generally love and bless the night, yet let this night be as abominable and execrable to them as the day-time generally is.

Who are ready to raise up their mourning; who are brimful of sorrow, and always ready to pour out their cries, and tears, and complaints, and with them curses, as men in great passions frequently do; or, such mourning men, or mourning women, whose common employment it was, and who were hired to mourn, and therefore were always ready to do so upon funeral occasions; of which see **#2Ch 35:25 Jer 9:17,18,20 Eze 30:2 Joe 1:15 Am 5:16 Mt 9:23**. And this sense suits with the use of the last word in Hebrew writers, of which a plain and pertinent instance is given by the learned Mercer. But because that word is commonly used in another sense for the leviathan, both in this book and elsewhere in Scripture, as **#Ps 74:14 104:26 Isa 27:1**, and because this very phrase of *raising the leviathan* is used afterward, **#Job 41:25**, others render the words thus, *who are prepared or ready to raise the leviathan*. It is evident that the leviathan was a great and dreadful fish, or sea monster, though there be some disagreement about its kind or quality, and that the raising of or endeavouring to catch the leviathan was a dangerous and terrible work, as is plain from **#Job 41**. And therefore those seamen who have been generally noted for great swearers and cursers, especially when their passions of rage or fear are raised,

being now labouring to catch this sea monster, and finding themselves and their vessel in great danger from him, they fall to their old trade of swearing and cursing, and curse the day wherein they were born, and the day in which they ventured upon this most hazardous and terrible work. Others understand this *leviathan* mystically, as it is used #**Isa 27:1**, for the great enemy of God's church and people, called there also *the dragon*, to wit, the devil, whom the magicians both now do, and formerly did, use to raise with fearful curses and imprecations. Not as if Job did justify this practice, but only it is a rash and passionate wish, that they who pour forth so many curses undeservedly, would bestow their deserved curses upon this day.

Ver. 9.

Let the stars, which are the glory and beauty of the night, to render it amiable and delightful to men,

be covered with thick darkness, and that both in the evening twilight, as is here expressed, when the stars begin to arise and shine forth; and also in the further progress of the night, even till the morning begins to dawn, as the following words imply.

Let it look for light, but have none; let its darkness be aggravated with the disappointment of its hopes and expectations of light. He ascribes sense or reasoning to the night, by a poetical fiction usual in all writers.

The dawning of the day, Heb. *the eyelids of the day*, i.e. the morningstar, which ushers in the day, and the beginning, and consequently the progress, of the morning light, and the day following. Let this whole natural day, consisting of night and day, be blotted out of the catalogue of days, as he wished before.

Ver. 10.

Because it shut not up, to wit, the night or the day; to which those things are ascribed which were done by others in them, as is frequent in poetical writings, such as this is. Or, *he*, i.e. God; whom in modesty and reverence he forbears to name. Yet he doth not curse God for his birth, as the devil presaged, but only wisheth that the day of his birth might have manifest characters of a curse impressed upon it. *Shut not up the doors*; that it might either never have conceived me, or at least never have brought me forth.

Mother's; which word is here fitly supplied, both out of #**Job 1:21 31:18**, where it is expressed; and by comparing other places where it is necessarily to be understood, though *the womb* only be mentioned, as #**Job 10:19 Ps 58:3 Isa 48:8 Jer 1:5**.

Nor hid sorrow from mine eyes, because it did not keep me from entering into this miserable life, and seeing, i.e. feeling, or experiencing, (as that word is oft used,) those bitter sorrows under which I now groan.

Ver. 11.

From the womb, i.e. as soon as ever I was born, or come out of the womb. And the same thing is expressed in other words, which is an elegancy usual both in the Hebrew and in other languages.

Ver. 12.

Why did the knees prevent me? why did the midwife or nurse receive me, and lay me upon her knees, and did not suffer me to fall upon the bare ground, and there to lie, in a neglected and forlorn condition, till merciful death had taken me out of this miserable world, into which the cruel kindness of my mother and midwife hath betrayed me?

Why the breasts that I should suck? Why did the breasts prevent me, (which may be fitly understood out of the former member,) to wit, from perishing through hunger, or supply me, that *I should have what to suck?* Seeing my mother had not a miscarrying womb, but did unhappily bring me forth why had she not dry breasts? or why were there any breasts for me which I might suck? Thus Job most unthankfully and unworthily despiseth and traduceth these wonderful and singular mercies of God towards poor helpless infants, because of the present inconveniencies which he had by means of them.

Ver. 13.

Quiet; free from all those torments of my body and mind which now oppress me.

Ver. 14.

With kings; I had then been as happy as the proudest monarchs, who after all their great achievements and enjoyments go down into their graves, where I also should have been sweetly reposed.

Which built desolate places for themselves; which, to show their great wealth and power, or to leave behind them a glorious name, rebuilt ruined cities, or built new cities and palaces, and other monuments, in places where before there was mere solitude and wateness.

Ver. 15.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 16.

Hidden; undiscerned and unregarded.

Untimely birth; born before the due time, and therefore extinct.

I had not been, to wit, in the land of the living, of which he here speaketh.

As infants which never saw light; being stifled and dead before they were born.

Ver. 17.

There, i.e. in the grave, which though not expressed, yet is clearly implied in the foregoing verses.

The wicked cease from troubling; the great oppressors and troublers of the world cease from all those vexations, rapines, and murders which here they procured.

There the weary be at rest; those who were here molested and tired out with their tyrannies, now quietly sleep with them, or by them.

Ver. 18.

The prisoners rest together, i.e. one as well as another; they who were kept in the strongest chains and closest prisons, and condemned to the most hard and miserable slavery, rest as well as those who were captives in much better circumstances. Or,

in like manner, (as this word oft signifies,) as those oppressors and oppressed do.

The oppressor, or, *exacter, or taskmaster,* who urgeth and forceth them by cruel threatenings and stripes to greater diligence in the works to which they are condemned. See #Ex 3:7 5:6,10,13. Job meddles not here with their eternal state after death, or the

sentence and judgment of God against wicked men, of which he speaks hereafter; but only speaks of their freedom from worldly troubles, which is the only matter of his complaint and present discourse.

Ver. 19.

The small and great, i.e. persons of all qualities and conditions, whether higher or lower.

Are there, in the same place and state, all those kinds of distinctions and differences being for ever abolished.

Ver. 20.

Heb. *Wherefore* (for what cause, or use, or good) *doth he* (i.e. God, though he forbear to name him, out of that holy fear and reverence which still he retained towards him) *give light?* either the light of the sun, which the living only behold, **#Ec 6:5 7:11**; or the light of life, as may seem both by the next words, and by comparing **#Ps 56:13**, and because death is off set forth by the name of darkness, as life by the name of light. These are strong expostulations with God, and quarrelling with his providence and with his blessings; but we must consider that Job was but a man, and a man of like passions and infirmities with other men, and now in grievous agonies, being not only under most violent, and yet continual, torments of body, but also under great disquietments of mind, and the deep sense of God's displeasure, and was also left to himself, that he might see what was in his heart, and that all succeeding ages might have in him an illustrious example of man's infirmity, and the necessity of God's grace to help them in time of need. And therefore it is no wonder if his passions boil up and break forth in some indecent and sinful expressions.

Unto the bitter in soul; unto such to whom life itself is very bitter and burdensome. Why doth he obtrude his favours upon those who abhor them?

Ver. 21.

i.e. Desire and pray for it with as much earnestness as men dig for treasure. But it is observable that Job durst not lay violent hands upon himself, nor do any thing to hasten or procure his death; but notwithstanding all his miseries and complaints, he was contented

to wait all the days of his appointed time, till his change came, **#Job 14:14.**

Ver. 22.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 23.

Why is light given? these words are conveniently supplied out of **#Job 1:20**, where they are, all the following words hitherto being joined in construction and sense with them.

Whose way is hid, to wit, from him who knows not his way, i.e. which way to turn himself, what course to take to comfort himself in his miseries, or to get out of them; what method to use to please and reconcile that God who is so angry with him, seeing his sincere and exact piety, to which God is witness, doth not satisfy him; or what the end of these calamities will be.

Whom God hath hedged in; not with a hedge of defence, like that **#Job 1:10**, but of offence and restraint, i.e. whom God hath put as it were in prison or pound, or like cattle in grounds enclosed with a high and strong hedge, over or through which they cannot get; so that he can see no way nor possibility to escape, but all refuge fails him.

Ver. 24.

Before I eat, Heb. *before the face of my bread*, i.e. either when I am going to eat, or rather, all the time whilst I am eating, (for so this phrase is used **#Ps 72:5**, *before the face of the sun*, &c.; that is, as we translate it, *as long as the sun endureth*.) I fall into bitter passions of sighing and weeping; partly because my necessity and duty obligeth me to eat, and so to support this wretched life, which I long to lose; and principally because of my uninterrupted pains of body, and horrors of my mind, which mix themselves with my very meat, and do not afford me one quiet moment. Compare **#Ps 102:9**.

My roarings, i.e. my loud outcries, more befitting a lion than a man, which yet extremity of grief forceth from me. Compare **#Ps 22:1 32:3**.

Like the waters, i.e. with great abundance, and irresistible violence, and incessant continuance, as waters flow in a river, or when they break the banks, and overflow the ground.

Ver. 25.

This is another reason why he is weary of his life, and why he repents that ever he was born, because he never enjoyed any solid and secure comfort.

The thing which I greatly feared is come upon me. Heb. *I feared a fear*, (i.e. a danger or mischief in one kind or other, the act being here put for the object, as *joy* and *love* are oft put for the things rejoiced in, or loved, and here fear for the thing feared. Or, *I feared with fear*, i.e. *I feared greatly*,) *and it came*. Even in the time of my peace and prosperity I was full of fears, considering the variety of God's providences, the course and changeableness of this vain world, the infirmities and contingencies of human nature and life, God's justice, and the sinfulness of all mankind. And these fears of mine were not vain, but are justified by my present calamities. So that I have never enjoyed any sound tranquillity since I was born; and therefore it hath not been worth my while to live, since all my days have been evil, and full of vexation and torment, either by the fear of miseries, or by the sufferance of them.

Ver. 26.

The three expressions note the same thing, which also was signified in the next foregoing verse, to wit, that even in his prosperous days he never was secure or at rest from the torment of fear and anxiety. Others, I did not misbehave myself in prosperity, abusing it by presumption, and security, and voluptuousness, whereby I might have provoked God thus to afflict me; but I lived soberly and circumspectly, walking humbly with God, and working out my salvation with fear and trembling, little expecting that God would be so fierce an enemy against me.

Yet trouble came, Heb. *and trouble came*, as I feared it would. So between fear and calamity my whole life hath been miserable, and I had reason to repent of it.

JOB CHAPTER 4

Eliphaz speaketh, though it will grieve Job, #**Job 4:1,2**. Job had instructed and strengthened others in their sorrows, but now fainted himself, #**Job 4:3-5**. Eliphaz reproacheth him with his confidence in his uprightness, which he now suspecteth; for that God's judgments were not against the righteous, but the wicked, #**Job 4:6-11**. His fearful visions, #**Job 4:12-16**. The righteousness of God; the angels charged with folly; the vanity of man, #**Job 4:17-21**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Wilt thou be grieved? or, (without a note of interrogation,) *thou wilt be grieved*. Our words will undoubtedly vex thee, and not comfort thee, as we intended and desired to do. We must not use words of comfort, but of sharp reproof, which will be irksome to thee; and this makes me desire to be silent, if it were possible.

Who can withhold himself from speaking, when he hears such unreasonable and ungodly words coming from such a person as thou art, whereby thou dost accuse thy Maker, and reproach his providence, and contemn his blessings? No man who hath any respect to God, or love to thee, can forbear reproving thee.

Ver. 3.

Thou hast instructed many; teaching them those lessons which thou hast not learned, and wilt not practise, to wit, patiently to bear afflictions, and to submit to God's will and providence in all things, which thou most shamefully refuseth to do.

Thou hast strengthened the weak hands, by administering supports and comforts and counsels to such as were unable to bear their burdens, or to do their duty.

Ver. 4.

Him that was falling; ready to sink under their pressures, or to fall from God, or into sin, (as that word is used, #**1Co 10:12 Ga 6:2**, and elsewhere,) through despondency and distrust of God's providence and promise, or through impatience.

The feeble knees; such as were weak-hearted, and fainting under their trials. See #Isa 35:3 Da 5:6 Heb 12:12.

Ver. 5.

Now it is come, i.e. the evil which thou didst fear, #Job 3:25, and which was come upon those whom thou didst so comfort.

Thou faintest; thou allowest in thyself what thou wouldst not bear in others. What in them was a vice, in thee, it seems, is become a virtue. Thou art wise for others, but not for thyself; a good physician to cure others, but not thyself; quick-sighted to see the faults of others, but blind to thine own.

It toucheth thee; it is now come to be thine own case.

Ver. 6.

So the sense is, We now plainly see what was the nature and complexion of thy fear of God, thy confidence in him, the uprightness of thy ways, and thy hope in God's mercy, which thou didst make show and boast of, and for which thou wast become so famous. Thy present carriage discovereth to thyself and others that it was but mere talk and appearance, and there was nothing sound and sincere in it. In thy prosperity it was easy to make a splendid profession of religion; but men are best known by affliction, and this now showeth of what metal thou art made; for now thou dost cast off thy fear of God, and all thy confidence and hope in him, and hast let go that integrity of thy ways which hitherto thou didst seem to hold fast; whereas true piety is uniform, and constant, and stedfast in all varieties of conditions, and under all trials and temptations. But this translation removes the *and* from its proper place, and changeth the order of the words, which is this in the Hebrew, *thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways*, which words may be restored to their own order, and with that variation our translation may stand, and this seems to be the true sense. And so here are four distinct questions, *Is not this thy fear? Is not this thy confidence? Is not this thy hope? Is not this the uprightness of thy ways?* But others make only two questions, and render the words either thus, *Is not (or rather, was not) thy fear (of God) thy confidence?* and *the uprightness of thy ways thy hope?* i.e. Did not thy fear of God, and *the integrity of thy life*, of which thou didst make such eminent profession, proceed only from the love of

thyself, and of this present world? and from thy *confidence and hope* that God would bless and prosper thee for it? For now when God withdraws his favour and blessings from thee, thy religion is vanished, and thou hast cast off all fear and reverence of God, as thy impious speeches show. Or thus, Would *not thy fear be thy confidence*, and the uprightness of thy ways thy hope? i.e. If thou hadst indeed that *fear* and integrity to which thou pretendest, it would give thee good ground of hope and confidence in the midst of all thy distresses, and thou wouldst not so faint and sink under thy calamities, as now thou dost, for want of a solid foundation of true piety. But both these translations, besides other inconveniences, stumble at the same stone, and pervert the order of the words in the Hebrew text, of which see before; which is not to be allowed without some kind of necessity, which is not in this case.

Ver. 7.

Give me one example hereof out of all thy experience or reading.

Who ever perished, i.e. was so utterly undone, as thou art, so miserably afflicted by such unparalleled and various judgments from God and men, all conspiring against thee?

Being innocent; who had not by his wickedness provoked so merciful a God to do that which is so unusual, and in some sort unpleasing to himself. Therefore thou art guilty of some great, though secret, crimes, and thy sin hath now found thee out, and hath brought down these stupendous plagues upon thee.

Where were the righteous cut off by the sickle of Divine vengeance before his time, which is like to be thy case? His judgment herein was rash and false, but not without some appearance of truth; for God had made many promises, not only of spiritual and eternal, but also of temporal, blessings, to all that should faithfully serve and obey him, which accordingly he did from time to time confer upon them, as we see by the examples of Noah, Lot, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and doubtless many others which had lived in or before their days. And this was God's usual method under all the times of the Old Testament, as we see by the people of Israel, who were generally either in a happy and flourishing, or in an afflicted and miserable, state, according to

their obedience to God, or their apostacy from him. And therefore it is not strange that they fell into this mistake. But allowing for this mistake, and the consequence of it, his uncharitable opinion of Job, the method which he useth with Job is commendable, and to be imitated by others in their dealing with persons in sickness or affliction; for he doth not flatter him in his sins, nor immediately and unseasonably apply comforts to him, but endeavours to convince him of his sins, and to bring him to repentance, as the only regular way to his remedy.

Ver. 8.

As thou hast never seen any example of a righteous man cut off, so on the contrary I have seen many examples of wicked men cut off for their wickedness. Or, *As far as I have observed; or, But as I have seen or experienced.*

They that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness; they that designedly and industriously work wickedness, first plotting and preparing themselves for it, and then continuing to pursue and execute it, as husbandmen first plough up and prepare the ground, and then cast in the seed. Compare **#Pr 22:8 Ho 10:13.**

Reap the same, i.e. *iniquity*, or such trouble or injury (for so also the Hebrew word avert signifies) as they cause to others. Or, the fruit of their iniquity, the just recompence and punishment of it, which is oft called sin or iniquity, as **#Ge 4:7 Nu 12:2 16:26 32:23.** Compare **#Ga 6:7,8.**

Ver. 9.

By the blast of God, to wit, *of his nostrils*, as it here follows, i.e. by his anger, which in men shows itself in the nostrils, by hot and frequent breathings there, and therefore by an anthropathy is ascribed to God; by a secret, and oft undiscerned, but mighty and powerful, judgment of God, by which they are blasted and blown away as chaff by the wind, as the phrase is, **#Ps 1.**

Ver. 10.

The voice of the fierce lion; *understand vanisheth, or perisheth*, out of **#Job 4:9;** or, is restrained, or suppressed, as may be gathered out of the following branch of this verse.

The teeth of the young lions are broken; which is true literally; the lions when taken having most commonly their teeth broken, as

ancient and modern writers relate. But this is here mystically meant of wicked and powerful tyrants, who are oft and fitly compared to *lions*, #Eze 32:2 38:13 2Ti 4:17, who though for a time they persecute and oppress other men, yet in due time they are restrained, and broken, and crushed in pieces by the mighty power of God appearing against them in some eminent judgments. Possibly he may secretly accuse Job, or his children, or both, that being persons of great wealth and power in those parts, they had wickedly abused it to ruin their neighbours, and therefore were justly cut off.

Ver. 11.

The old lion perisheth for lack of prey; because they cannot go abroad to seek it, and their young ones either cannot find or do not bring it to them. See #Ps 49:14,15 119:10.

Are scattered abroad; gone from their dens several ways to hunt for prey, and can find none.

Ver. 12.

Now, Heb. *and*, or *moreover*, I will further convince thee by a vision which I had relating to such matters as these. That here follows a relation of a vision is apparent from the punctual description of all its circumstances. To think as some do, that this was but a fiction and artifice which Eliphaz used, that his words might have more authority with Job, or that this was a diabolical delusion, seems to be both uncharitable and unreasonable, partly because Eliphaz, though under a mistake concerning Job's case, was doubtless a wise and good man, and therefore would not needlessly make himself a liar for Job's conviction; and partly from the matter of this vision, which is no way suitable to the nature or designs of the devil, but holy and agreeable to the Divine majesty and purity, and useful for men's instruction, and humiliation, and reformation. It was therefore a Divine vision, which in that age and state of the church, before the Holy Scriptures were written, was the usual way of God's discovery of his mind to those that sought to him.

A thing, Heb. *a word*, to wit, from God, as #Pr 13:13, a doctrine or message.

Was secretly brought to me, Heb. *was stolen, or brought by stealth into me*, i.e. privately and secretly, as the word of God used to come to the prophets, being spoken in their ear, as it was to Samuel, #1Sa 9:15; and the like to Moses, so as Pharaoh, though present, could not hear nor observe it, #Ex 11:1, with a low and still voice, a secret whisper. This is opposed to the more public delivery of God's word by the prophets to the people, which was done by crying aloud, #Isa 48:1.

Mine ear received, i.e. I heard.

A little thereof, or, a parcel thereof, i.e. of God's word; not of that particular word which God had now delivered to Eliphaz, which doubtless God would so speak, that he to whom he directed his speech might hear it all, and Eliphaz certainly would be as careful not to lose a syllable of it; but a parcel of God's word in general, which this indeed was. And withal, this may be a modest and humble expression, arising from a deep sense of his own infirmity, and the small measure of his knowledge of Divine things, whereof he knew only some little fragments and parcels, as Paul said, *We know but in part*, #1Co 13:9. As if he had said, Many, I doubt not, have more familiar acquaintance with God, and more full revelations from God, than I can pretend to, but a little of that treasure God hath been pleased to impart to me.

Ver. 13.

In thoughts; in the midst of my thoughts, or by reason of my thoughts, my perplexing thoughts. the word properly signifies a *branch*, and thence a thought, as #1Ki 18:21, which proceeds from the mind as branches from a tree, and a *perplexing thought*, which is entangled like the branches of a tree. These thoughts were the occasion of the following fear.

From the visions of the night: this may belong either to the *thoughts* last mentioned, or to the *fear* following; both which did arise

from the visions of the night, i.e. from the great importance and the terribleness of such visions, whereof probably he had had former experience, and now had an expectation of another of them, which God had raised and wrought in him, to prepare him the better for the reception of it. *Visions* differed from *dreams*

herein, that God imparted his mind to a man in dreams when he was asleep but in *visions* when they were awake. And these visions sometimes happened by day, as #Lu 1:22 Ac 10:17 Ac 26:19, but most frequently by night, whence we read of *vision* or *visions of the night*, as #Ge 46:2 Job 20:8 33:15. And such this was, which made it the more terrible.

When deep sleep falleth on men; in the dead of the night, when men usually are in a deep sleep; though Eliphaz was not now asleep, as appears from the nature of a vision, and from the following words.

Ver. 14.

Fear came upon me; either caused by the apparition following; or sent by God to humble him, and to prepare him for the more diligent attention to, reverent reception of; and ready compliance with, the Divine message.

Ver. 15.

Then, Heb. *and*, or *for*, as this particle is oft used. So this was the reason of the foregoing thoughts and fear.

A spirit; an angel in some visible shape, otherwise he could not have discerned it, nor would have been affrighted at it.

The hair of my flesh, i.e. of my body, as flesh is taken, #Ge 2:24 Ps 16:9 119:120.

Stood up, through that excessive horror caused by so glorious, unusual, and terrible a presence; which God used to excite in men upon such occasions, to convince them that it was not a vain imagination or illusion, but a real vision and revelation, and that from God.

Ver. 16.

It stood still; having passed by him to and again he made a stand, as one that had some business with him, and addressed himself to speak to him.

I could not discern the form thereof; to wit, exactly and distinctly, so as to know what or who it was.

An image was before mine eyes; I saw some corporal or visible resemblance, though in a confused manner.

There was silence: the spirit, which possibly had made some noise with his motion, now standing still made no noise; all other persons and things about me were silent, and I also kept in my voice and breath as much as I could, that I might distinctly hear what I perceived the spirit was speaking to me. In the Hebrew the words run thus, *silence and a voice* (i.e. a silent, or still, or low voice, by a very common figure, called *hendiadis*) *I heard*.

Ver. 17.

The sense is, Thou, O Job, dost presumptuously accuse God for dealing harshly and unrighteously with thee, in sending thee into the world upon such hard terms, and punishing all innocent and righteous man with such unparalleled severity; but consider things calmly within thyself; if God and thou come to a trial before any equal judge, canst thou think that thou wilt go away justified, and the great God shall be condemned? No righteous man will punish another without cause, or more than he deserves; and therefore if God do so with thee, as thy words imply, he is less just than a man; which is blasphemous and absurd to imagine.

Shall a man; a great and mighty man, as this word signifies, a man eminent for wisdom, or justice, or power, or any other perfections, such as thou art thought by thyself or others to be; who therefore might expect more favour than a poor miserable and contemptible man, which the word *enosch*, used in the former branch, signifies. So he anticipates this objection which Job might make.

Be more pure than his Maker? an unanswerable argument against Job. He made thee, and that for himself and his own glory, and therefore hath an unquestionable right to deal with thee, and dispose of thee, the work of his hands, as he sees fit. *Woe to him that striveth with his maker!* #Isa 45:9. Besides, he made man just and pure; if any man have any thing of justice or purity in him, it is derived from God, the undoubted and only fountain of it; and therefore it must necessarily be in God in a far more eminent degree.

Ver. 18.

Behold; this deserves thy serious consideration. These and the following words seem to be the words of Eliphaz, explaining the

former vision, and applying it to Job's case, and enforcing it by further arguments.

In his servants, i.e. in his angels, as appears both by the next words of this verse, where they are called by way of explication and restriction his angels; and by the next verse, where men are opposed to them. They are called *his servants* by way of eminency, that general name being here appropriated to the chief of the kind, as is very usual in all authors in like cases; and withal, to intimate that sovereign dominion which the great God hath over the glorious angels, and much more over men, by virtue whereof he hath an unquestionable authority to treat them according to his good pleasure. And these God is said to *put no trust in*, because he could not be confident that they, if left to themselves, and destitute of the succours of his power and grace, would continue to be loyal, and faithful, and serviceable to him, and would not revolt from him, as some of their brethren had done. And for this cause God was pleased, after some time of trial, to give some special and further grace, either by Christ or otherwise, whereby they should be infallibly confirmed in the state of grace and felicity.

His angels he charged with folly, or, *with vanity*, i.e. he discerned folly and vanity in the angelical natures when he had first made them; which although he saw and pronounced them, no less than the visible creatures, **#Ge 1**, to be very good in themselves, and free from the least degree or tincture of sin; yet, comparing them with himself, and considering them in themselves alone, he saw something of folly and vanity in their very natures, because they were creatures, and therefore subject to manifold changes; and, among others, to fall from God, or into sin, as it appeared by the sad experience of some of them. Seeing therefore the angels, which so far exceed mankind in wisdom, and strength, and purity, and justice, and all other perfections, do fall incomparably short of God in these things, it is most absurd, as well as impious, to think that man is more just or pure than God, as was said, **#Job 4:17**, and as thou, O Job, seemest to surmise. Others, nor (Heb. *and* not; the negative particle being repeated out of the former branch of the verse, as it is **#Ps 9:18 Pr 17:26**, and elsewhere) *in his angels*, in whom (both which particles are frequently understood, as hath been proved before) *he put light*, or

splendour, to wit, singular wisdom and purity, beyond what he put in man.

Ver. 19.

How much less, understand, *doth he put trust in them*, &c.! Or, *How much more*, understand, doth he charge folly on them, &c.! Either of these supplements are natural and easy, being fetched out of the former verse, and necessary to make the sense complete. The sense is, What strange presumption then is it, for a foolish and mortal man to pretend to a higher privilege than the angels do, to make himself more just than God, or to exalt himself above or against God, as thou dost! *On them*, i.e. on men, as it follows, who, though they have immortal spirits, yet those spirits dwell in mortal bodies, which are great debasements, and clogs, and encumbrances, and snares to them; and which are here called

houses, (because they are the receptacles of the soul, and the places of its settled and continual abode,) and

houses of clay, and *earthly houses*, #2Co 5:1; partly because they were made of *clay*, or *earth*, #Ge 2:7 1Co 15:47; and partly to note their great frailty and mutability; whereas the angels are free spirits, unconfined to such carcasses, and dwell in celestial, and glorious, and everlasting mansions.

Whose foundation is in the dust; whose *very foundation*, no less than the rest of the building, is

in the dust; who as they dwell in dust and clay, so they had their foundation or original from it, and they must return to it, #Ec 12:7; and, as to their bodies, lie down and sleep in it, #Da 12:2, as in his *long home*, #Ec 12:5, and the only continuing city which he hath in this world.

Which are crushed, Heb. *they crush them*, i.e. they are or will be crushed; the active verb used impersonally, as it is #Job 7:3 24:20 Pr 6:30 Lu 12:20.

Before the moth, i.e. sooner than a moth is crushed, which is easily done by a gentle touch of the finger. An hyperbolical expression. So the Hebrew word *liphne*, commonly signifying place, doth here note time, as it is used #Ge 27:7 29:26 36:31. Or, *at the face*, or *appearance*, of a moth. No creature is so weak and

contemptible but one time or other it may have the body of man in its power, as the worms, the moths' cousin-germans, have in the grave. But he instanceth in a *moth* rather than a worm, because it is the weaker of the two, and because it better agrees with the similitude of a house, in which moths commonly are more frequent, and powerful, and mischievous than worms. How then canst thou think, O Job, to contend with thy Maker, that must become a prey to such small and impotent creatures?

Ver. 20.

From morning to evening; either,

1. Speedily, between morning and evening, like the grass; they flourish in the morning, and in the evening are cut off, **#Ps 90:5,6**.

Or rather,

2. *All the day long*, as the phrase is, **#2Co 11:25**. There is not a moment wherein man is not sinking and drawing on towards death and corruption.

For ever; as to human appearance and the course of nature, as many such like passages are to be understood in this book; or in reference to this present. and worldly life, which when once lost is never recovered, **#Job 16:22 Ps 39:13**.

Without any regarding it, Heb. *without putting the heart to it*; the word heart being understood there, as also **#Job 23:6 34:23 Isa 41:20**, as may appear by comparing **#1Sa 9:20 2Sa 18:3 Isa 41:22 57:1**, where the same phrase is used, and the word *heart* expressed. The meaning is either,

1. Yet few or no men that survive them lay it to heart as they should do. Or,

2. They perish beside the expectation of all men, when both themselves and others thought their mountain was so strong that it could not be removed. Or rather,

3. This is so common a thing for all men, though never so high and great, to perish in this manner, that no man heeds it, but passeth it by as a general accident not worthy of observation. Otherwise, *no man procuring or furthering it*, Heb. *without any man's putting the hand to it*, i.e. they perish of themselves, without any violent hand.

Ver. 21.

Whatsoever is really or by common estimation excellent in men, all their natural, and moral, and civil accomplishments, as high birth, great riches, power, and wisdom, &c.; these are so far from preserving men from perishing, as one would think they should do, that they perish themselves, together with those houses of clay in which they are lodged.

Which is in them go away; or, *go away* (i.e. die and perish, as that phrase is oft used as **#Ge 15:15 Jos 23:14 Job 10:21 Ps 58:9 Ec 12:5 Mt 26:21**) *with*, (as *beth* is oft used) *them*; it doth not survive them.

Without wisdom: either,

1. Like fools. Wise men and fools die alike, **#Ec 2:16**. Or,
2. They never attain to perfect wisdom, to that wisdom which man once had, much less to that wisdom which is in God, which Job conceiveth he hath; otherwise he would not so boldly censure the counsels and works of God as unrighteous or unreasonable, because his human and narrow capacity cannot fully understand them. Moreover, as *folly* is oft put for unrighteousness and wickedness, so is wisdom for justice and goodness; which is so known, that it is needless to prove it; and so by wisdom here may be meant that perfect justice and purity which Job arrogated to himself, and which Eliphaz here denies to all men, **#Job 4:17**, &c.

JOB CHAPTER 5

Wrath foolish: the wicked miserable, **#Job 5:1-5**. Evil cometh not by chance; it is natural to our condition, **#Job 5:6,7**. This is our motive to prayer and trust in God, **#Job 5:8**; whose unsearchable power and wisdom are against the high and crafty, for the relief of the poor, **#Job 5:9-16**. Their happiness whom God correcteth, and God's gracious care of such, **#Job 5:17-27**.

Ver. 1.

Call now, i.e. invite, or make proclamation, as this word is oft used, as **#De 20:10 Jud 12:1 Jer 2:2 3:12 7:2**. Call them all as it were by their names; consult the whole catalogue of them all, which thou didst ever know or hear of.

If there be any, to wit, of the saints, as it follows.

That will answer thee, i.e. comply with thee, answer thy desires or expectations; try if there be any one saint that will defend or allow thee in these bold expostulations with God; or, as it is in the Hebrew,

if there be any that doth answer thee, i.e. whose opinion or disposition and carriage is answerable or like to thine. So *answering* is sometimes used, as **#Pr 27:19 Ec 10:19**. Thou wilt find many fools or wicked men, as it follows, **#Job 5:2**, to answer or imitate thee in their speeches and carriages, but not one of the saints like thee; which deserves thy serious consideration, and gives thee just cause to question thine integrity.

The saints; either,

1. The angels, who are sometimes called *saints*, as **#Job 15:15 Da 8:13 Zec 14:5**, because they are eminently and perfectly holy; or rather,

2. Holy men, as appears both from the word, which most commonly is so used, and from the opposition of the *foolish man* to these, **#Job 5:2**, and because the example of men was more proper and effectual for Job's conviction than of angels.

Wilt thou turn, or *look?* look about thee, view them all, and see if thou canst find one like thee.

Ver. 2.

Either,

1. The wrath of God; or rather,

2. A man's own wrath, fretting, and impatience, and indignation; which kills men, partly, naturally, as it preys upon a man's spirit, and wasteth him inwardly, and so hastens his death, of which see **#Pr 14:30 17:22**; partly, morally, as it prompts him to those rash, and furious, and wicked actions which may procure his death; and partly, meritoriously, as it provoketh God to cut him off, and to bring upon him those further and severe strokes which he mentions in the following words.

The foolish man; either,

1. The rash and inconsiderate man, who doth not ponder things impartially; but, like a man mad, rageth against God, and torments himself and all that hear him. Or,

2. The ungodly man, who is frequently called a *fool* in Scripture language, and who is here opposed to the saints, #**Job 5:1**.

Envy: he taxeth Job, who spoke with great envy at those that were never born, or were in their graves, #**Job 3:10,12**, &c.

The silly one; properly, the man who, for want of true wisdom, is soon deceived with false opinions, and appearances, and present things; which is thy case, O Job. The sense of the verse may be this, I perceive, O Job, that thou art full of envy at wicked men, who at present are, or seem to be, in a happier condition than thou; and of wrath against God, who denies thee that mercy, and loads thee with afflictions; and this shows thee to be a foolish and weak man. For those men, notwithstanding their present prosperity, are doomed to great and certain misery, as it here follows. And so this verse coheres with the following as well as the foregoing verses.

Ver. 3.

I have oft observed it in my experience. Having severely rebuked Job for his transports of passion and intemperate speeches against God, he now returns to his former argument, and proves that such dreadful and destructive judgments of God do not befall the righteous, but the wicked, as he observed, #**Job 4:7,8**. Withal, he answers an objection concerning the present and seeming prosperity of the wicked, which he confesseth that he himself had sometimes observed.

The foolish, i. e. the wicked man, who is quite destitute of true, i.e. of spiritual and heavenly, wisdom.

Taking root; not only prosperous for the present, but, as it seemed, from all secure for the future, being strongly fortified with power, and riches, and children too, so as there was no appearance nor danger of a change.

Suddenly; in a moment, besides and before mine, and his own, and all other men's expectation.

I cursed; either,

1. I judged that he was a cursed creature, notwithstanding all his prosperity; and I foresaw and foretold it by the rules of Scripture, or the direction of God's Spirit, that he would certainly sooner or later be stripped of all his blessings, and have God's curse fall heavily upon him. Or rather,

2. I saw and perceived, by the event which followed his prosperity, that he was a man accursed of God. For he speaks not in these words of what his estate constantly was, even in the midst of his happiness, though even then he was really accursed; but of what it was by a sudden change.

His habitation; or, as the Hebrew word signifies, *his pleasant or commodious habitation*; persons or things in it, or belonging to it, being comprehended in that word by a usual metonymy.

Ver. 4.

His children; whose greatness and happiness he designed in all his enterprises, supposing that his family was and would be established for ever.

Are far from safety, i.e. are exposed to great dangers and calamities in this life, and can neither preserve themselves, nor the great inheritance which their fathers got and left for them. Thus to be far from peace, **#La 3:17**, is to be involved in desperate troubles.

In the gate, i.e. in the place of judicature; to which they are brought for their offences, and where they will find severe judges, and few or no friends; partly because, being wickedly educated, and trusting to their own greatness, they were insolent and injurious to all their neighbours; and partly because those many persons whom their powerful fathers defrauded or oppressed do seek for justice, and the recovery of their rights, which they easily obtain against such persons as plainly declared by their actions that they neither feared God nor revered him, and therefore were hated by all sorts of men.

Neither is there any to deliver them; they can find no advocates nor assistants, who are either able or willing to help them; but, like Ishmael, *as their hand was formerly against every man*, so now *every man's hand is against them*.

Ver. 5.

Whose harvest, which they now justly and confidently expect to reap, after all their cost and labour for that end, but are sadly and suddenly disappointed; which is a great aggravation of their misery.

The hungry, i.e. the poor, whose necessities make them greedy and ravenous to eat it all up; and from whom he can never recover it, nor any thing in recompence of it.

Out of the thorns, i.e. out of the fields, notwithstanding the strong thorn hedges wherewith it is enclosed and fortified, and all other dangers or difficulties which may be in their way. They will take it, though they be scratched and wounded by the thorns about it. *The robbers*; so called from their long hair, which such persons nourished, either because of their wild and savage kind of life, which made them neglect the trimming of their hair and body; or that they might look more terribly, and so affright all those who should endeavour to oppose them. Or, *the thirsty*, as the word may signify from another root. And so it answers well to the hungry, in the former branch. *Swalloweth up greedily*, and so as there is no hope of recovering it.

Ver. 6.

Although, or *for*, or rather, *because*. So the following words may contain a reason why he should *seek unto God*, as he exhorts him, **#Job 5:8**. Or, *surely*, as that particle is oft used. And so it is a note of his proceeding to another argument.

Affliction, or *iniquity*, as this word oft signifies; and of this the following sentence is true. And so this first branch speaks of sin, and the next branch of trouble, which is the fruit of sin; and both sin and trouble are said to come from the same spring. But this word signifies also *affliction*, or *misery*, or *trouble*, as **#Ps 90:10 Pr 12:21**; which seems most proper here, both because it is so explained by the following words,

trouble; and again, *trouble*, **#Job 5:7**, the same thing being repeated in several words, as is usual in Holy Scripture; and because the great thing which troubled Job, and the chief matter of these discourses, was Job's afflictions, not his sins. *Cometh not forth of the dust*; it springs not up by chance, as herbs which grow

of their own accord out of the earth; or, it comes not from men or creatures here below; but it comes from a certain and a higher cause, even from God, and that for man's sins; and therefore thou shouldst seek to him for redress, as it follows, **#Job 5:8**.

Ver. 7.

i.e. He is so commonly exposed to many and various troubles, as if he were born to no other end. Affliction is become in some sort natural and proper to man, and it is, together with sin, transmitted from parents to children, as their most certain and constant inheritance; God having allotted this portion to mankind for their sins. And therefore thou takest a wrong course in complaining so bitterly of that which thou shouldst patiently bear, as the common lot of mankind; and thy right method is to seek unto God, who inflicts it, and who only can remove it.

As the sparks fly upward, i.e. as naturally and as generally *as the sparks of fire fly upward*, which do so universally and constantly. Heb. *and the sparks*, &c. But the particle *and* is oft used comparatively for *as*, as **#Job 12:11 14:11 34:3 Pr 25:21 Mr 9:49**.

Ver. 8.

If I were in thy condition; and therefore I would advise thee to the same course.

Seek unto God, to wit, by prayer, and humiliation, and submission, imploring his pardon, and favour, and help, and not repine at him, and accuse his providence, as thou dost.

Would I commit my cause, i.e. commend my afflicted condition to him by fervent prayer, and resign myself and all my concerns to him, and humbly hope for relief from him. Or, *propound my matters*, i.e. make known my afflictions and requests to him; or, put or dispose my words, i.e. pray to him, and pour out my complaints before him.

Ver. 9.

Here Eliphaz enters upon a discourse of the infinite perfection and greatness of God's nature and works; which he doth partly as an argument to enforce the exhortation to *seek and commit his cause to God*, **#Job 5:8**, because God was infinitely able, either to punish him yet far worse, if he continued to provoke him, or to

raise him from the dust, if he humbly addressed himself to him; and partly that by a true representation of God's excellency and glory, and of that vast disproportion which was between God and Job, he might both convince Job of his great sin in speaking so boldly and irreverently of him, and prevent his relapse into the same miscarriage.

Unsearchable; either such things as we may not boldly and curiously search into, #De 29:29 Ro 11:33 Col 2:18; or such as by searching we cannot find out, #Job 11:7; such as we cannot thoroughly understand, either the works themselves, or God's way and manner of doing them, or God's designs or ends in doing them. And therefore, O Job, thou art guilty of great impiety and folly to censure the ways and works of God as unreasonable, #Job 3:11,20, because thou dost not fully understand the nature and use of them.

Marvellous things; which (though common, as the following works are, and therefore neglected and despised, yet) are just matter of wonder even to the wisest men.

Ver. 10.

He beginneth with this ordinary and obvious work of God, in which he implies that there is something unsearchable and wonderful, as indeed there is in the rise of it from the earth, in the strange hanging of that heavy body in the air, and in the distribution of it as God sees fit, #Am 4:7; and how much more in the secret counsels and hidden paths of Divine Providence, which Job took the liberty to censure!

Waters; either fountains and rivers, which is another great and wonderful work of God; or rather, rain water, as the following words imply; the same thing being repeated in other words, after the manner.

Upon the fields, or, *upon all places abroad*, i.e. which have no covering to keep out the rain.

Ver. 11.

These words contain either,

1. A declaration of God's end in giving rain, which is to enrich those who were poor, or mourning for the drought, by sending rain, and making their lands fruitful; or rather,

2. Another example of God's great and wonderful works. And the infinitive verb is here put for the indicative, *he setteth up*, &c., which is very frequent in the Hebrew, as **#Ps 56:13 Zec 3:4 12:10**. He giveth this instance to comfort and encourage Job to seek to God, because he can raise him out of his greatest depths, and useth to raise others in the like condition.

That those which mourn may be exalted to safety, notwithstanding all the craft and power of their enemies.

Ver. 12.

Of the crafty; such as are cunning to work evil, and to cover it with fair pretences, as hypocrites use to do, and as Job's friends charged him with doing: God breaks the hopes and designs of such men; as he hath now blasted thy expectation, and taken away thy outward happiness, which was the thing thou didst design in taking up the profession of religion.

Their enterprise; or, *any thing*; or, *what is solid or substantial*; or, *wisdom*, i.e. their wise counsel or crafty design. They cannot execute their cunning contrivances.

Ver. 13.

The wise in their own craftiness; wicked men, who are wise to do evil, and wise in the opinion of the world, he not only deceiveth in their hopes and counsels, but turns them against themselves; as we see in Ahithophel, Haman, &c. *The froward*, or *perverse*, or *wrestlers*; such as wind and turn every way, as wrestlers do, and will leave no means untried to accomplish their counsels. *Is carried headlong*, i.e. is tumbled down and broken, and that by their own precipitation and haste. Their malice cannot have the patience to proceed wisely and leisurely against God's church and people, but makes them eager and venturous, and so to make more haste than good speed in their wicked designs.

Ver. 14.

i.e. In plain things they run into gross mistakes and errors, and commonly choose those counsels and courses which are worst for themselves.

Darkness oft notes misery, but here ignorance or error, as it is also used #**Job 12:25 37:19**, and elsewhere.

Grope, like blind men to find their way, not knowing what to do.

Ver. 15.

The poor, or *helpless*; who therefore flee to God for refuge.

From their mouth, or,

from the sword which cometh out of their mouth, i.e. from all their censures, slanders, threatenings, deceitful insinuations, false swearings of witnesses, unrighteous sentences of corrupt judges, whereby their good names, or estates, or lives may be exposed to the utmost hazards. And this is fitly opposed to the sword of the hand, implied in the next branch of the verse. Or, *from the sword by their mouths*, i.e. by those wicked men's own words against the godly, which God wonderfully overruleth to the working out of their deliverance.

Ver. 16.

So this poor man obtaineth what he in some measure hoped or expected from God, to whom he committed his cause; and other poor men will be encouraged by his example to place their hope in God.

Iniquity, i. e. wicked men; the abstract for the concrete, as *pride*, *deceit*, *injustice*, are put for proud, deceitful, and unrighteous men, #**Jer 13:9 2Pe 3:13**.

Stoppeth her mouth, i.e. they are silenced and confounded, being convicted of their own wickedness and folly, and finding that not only the poor are got out of their nets and snares, in which they thought that they had them fast, but also the oppressors themselves are insnared in them; and all this by sudden and unexpected means.

Ver. 17.

Behold; for what I am saying, though most true, will not be believed without serious consideration.

Happy is the man whom God correcteth, Heb. *blessednesses* (i.e. various and great happiness, as the plural number implies) belong to that man whom God rebukes, to wit, with strokes, #**Job**

33:16,19. Those afflictions are so far from making thee miserable, as thou complainest, that they are, and will be, if thou dost thy duty, the means of thy happiness: which, though a paradox to the world, is frequently affirmed in Holy Scripture; and the reason of it is plain, because they are pledges of God's love, which no man can buy too dear; and though bitter, yet necessary physic to purge out that sin which is deeply fixed in all men's natures, and thereby to prevent far greater, even infinite and eternal, miseries; without respect to which this proposition could not be true or tolerable. And therefore it plainly shows that good men in those ancient times of the Old Testament had the prospect, and belief, and hope of everlasting blessedness in heaven after this life.

Despise not thou, i.e. do not abhor it as a thing pernicious and intolerable, nor refuse it as a thing useless and unprofitable, nor slight it as a mean and unnecessary thing; but, on the contrary, prize it highly, as a favour and vouchsafement of God; for such negative expressions oft imply the contrary, as **#1Th 5:20 1Ti 4:12.** See **#Pr 10:2 17:21.**

Of the Almighty; or, *of the all-sufficient God*, who is able to support and comfort thee in thy troubles, and to deliver thee out of them, and to add more calamities to them, if thou art obstinate and incorrigible.

Ver. 18.

Bindeth up, to wit, the wounds, as good surgeons use to do when they have dressed them, in order to their healing. Compare **#Ps 147:3 Eze 34:4.** The sense is, Though he hath seen it fit to wound thee, yet he will not always grieve thee, but will in due time release thee from all thy miseries. Therefore despair not.

Ver. 19.

He shall deliver thee, to wit, if thou seekest to him by prayer and repentance.

Six, i.e. manifold or repeated; as *six* is used for many, **#Pr 6:16.**

There shall no evil touch thee, to wit, so as to undo or destroy thee, as touching is used, **#Jos 9:19 Heb 11:28 1Jo 5:18.** See also **#Ge 26:11,29 2Sa 14:10 Ps 105:15 Zec 2:8.** Thou shalt have a good issue out of all thy troubles, though they are both great and many.

Ver. 20.

In famine; which Job might be thought to fear, as being so poor that he needed his friends' contributions for his relief.

From death; from that terrible kind of death.

These things he utters with more confidence, partly because the rewards or punishments of this life were more constantly distributed to men in the Old Testament according to their good or bad behaviour than now they are; and partly because it was his particular opinion, that great afflictions were the constant fruits and certain evidences of a man's wickedness; and consequently, that great mercies and deliverances should infallibly follow upon true repentance and godliness.

Ver. 21.

Hid, i.e. protected, as in some secret and safe place.

From the scourge of the tongue, i.e. from false accusations and virulent slanders and reproaches, either by diverting their tongues to other persons or things, or by clearing thy integrity.

Neither shalt thou be afraid; thou shalt have no cause to fear it, because God will secure thee in it and from it.

When it cometh, to wit, upon others; near thee, or round about thee.

Ver. 22.

Thou shalt not only be *redeemed from famine*, #Job 5:20, and *not fear destruction*, #Job 5:21, but thou shalt laugh at them; not with a laughter of scorn and contempt, as this word is used, #Job 39:18 Ps 2:4 37:13; (for God's judgments are to be entertained with reverence and godly fear;) but with a laughter of joy and triumph, arising from his just security and confidence in God's watchful and gracious providence, which will either keep him from it or in it, or do him much good by it.

The beasts, i.e. the wild beasts, which were numerous and mischievous in those parts. See #De 28:26 1Sa 17:34 Jer 7:33.

Ver. 23.

Thou shalt be free from any annoyance by stones, either in thy walking or other postures, or in thy ploughing, as if they had made

an inviolable league with thee. Stones may be, and in these stony countries were, hurtful to men many ways; either by bruising or hurting their feet when they walked barefoot, as the manner then was; or by giving them occasion of stumbling, or slipping, and falling; or by falling upon a man from a rock, or higher ground, as sometimes it hath happened; or filling his grounds, so as to hinder his ploughing, and make his lands unfruitful. Nay, the stones shall not only cease to be hurtful, but they shall be useful and beneficial to thee; they shall, as it were, present themselves to thee when thou hast occasion, either to sling them at thine enemies, as then was usual, **#Jud 20:16 2Ch 26:14**, or to make fences to thy ground, or to build a house. This is a bold metaphor, but such are frequent, as in other authors, so also in Scripture, as **#Isa 28:15 Ho 2:18**.

The beasts of the field; either,

1. The wild beasts; and then this is an addition to the former privilege; they shall not hurt thee, **#Job 5:22**; nay, they shall befriend thee, as being at peace with thee, here, **#Job 5:23**. Or,
2. The tame beasts, who otherwise may be refractory and hurtful to a man, many having been killed by them.

Ver. 24.

Thou shalt know, by certain and constant experience,

that thy tabernacle, i.e. thy habitation, as it follows, including also the inhabitants, children, or friends and servants,

shall be in peace; shall enjoy great safety from all their enemies, and concord among themselves, and prosperity in all their concerns; all which are comprehended under the sweet name of

peace. Visit thy habitation, i.e. manage and order thy family, and all thy domestic affairs and worldly concerns, with care and diligence. *Visiting* is oft used for regarding or taking care of, as **#Ge 21:1 Ru 1:6 Ps 8:4 80:14**.

Shalt not sin; either by unrighteousness in thy dealings with thy family or others, or by neglecting God and his service in thy family, or by winking at any sin in thy domestics which thou canst hinder. But because he speaks not here of Job's duty, but of his

privilege, and that in outward and worldly things, it seems better rendered by others,

and thou shalt not err, or *miscarry*, or *miss thy way or mark*, as this very word is used below, #**Job 24:19 14:16 Jud 20:16**; thou shalt not be disappointed of thy hopes, or blasted in thy endeavours, but shalt succeed in them. Or, *and thou shalt not wander*, or *be a wanderer*, having no house in which to put his head, which Job might have some ground to fear; but thou shalt have a *habitation* of thy own, which thou shalt visit and manage as thou didst before.

Ver. 25.

Thou shalt know; partly by assurance from God's promises, and the impressions of his Spirit; and partly by experience in due time.

Thy seed shall be great; thy posterity, which God will give thee instead of those which thou hast lost, shall be high, and honourable, and powerful. Or, *shall be many*.

Thine offspring; which shall come out of thy own loins as branches out of a tree, as the word signifies. And this word seems added to the former to restrain and explain it, by showing that he did not speak of his spiritual seed, as Abraham's seed is in part understood, but of the fruit of his own body. *As the grass of the earth*; both for its plentiful increase, and for its flourishing greenness.

Ver. 26.

In a full age; in a mature and old, but vigorous, age, as the word implies. Thou shalt not be cut off by a hand of violence before thy time, as thy sons and other wicked men have been; but shalt die in a *good old age*, as did Abraham, #**Ge 25:8**, and Moses, #**De 34:7**.

As a shock of corn cometh in; *as a heap or stack of corn is brought in*, to wit, to the barn. Heb. *ascendeth*, or *riseth*; which word is very proper and usual in this case; for a stack of corn is said to rise, when by the addition of new heaps and handfuls it is raised to a higher pitch. Or, *is cut off*, as this same word is used, #**Ps 102:24**. *Cut me not off*, &c., Heb. *Make me not to ascend*; and thus it is fitly used both of the corn, which when it is cut up ascends, or is lifted up from the earth, on which it lay, and is advanced into stacks and high heaps, either in the barn or in the

field; and of man, who when he dies *his spirit goeth upward* to heaven, as is implied even there where in the person of an epicure it is questioned, #Ec 3:21.

In his season; in harvest, when the corn is ripe.

Ver. 27.

It is not my single opinion, but my brethren concur with me, as thou wilt hear from their own mouths. This is no rash or hasty conceit, but what we have learned by deep consideration and hard study, long experience and diligent observation, both of God's word, so far as he hath been pleased to reveal himself, and of the course and methods of his providence and dealing with men in the world.

Know thou it; for to us thou seemest by thy words and carriage to be wholly, or in a great part, ignorant of these things. *For thy good;* let the advantage which will come unto thee by following this counsel remove thy prejudice against it.

JOB CHAPTER 6

Job's answer: he wisheth his troubles were duly weighed, for then would his complaints appear just, #Job 6:1-7: prayeth for death; his hope in it, #Job 6:8-10. He is unable to bear up under his burden, #Job 6:11,12. He vindicateth himself against his friends, and reproveth them, #Job 6:13-30.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

My grief; either,

1. My calamity, as it follows, or the cause or matter of my grief; the act being put for the object, as is usual, *fear for the thing feared*, &c., and the same thing being here repeated in differing words. Or,

2. My sorrow; or, *my wrath*, or *rage*, as thou didst call it, #Job 5:2. So his wish is, that his *sorrow or wrath* were laid in one scale of the balances, and his

calamity in the other, that so it might be known whether his sorrow or wrath was greater than his misery, as was pretended.

Were thoroughly weighed; were fully understood and duly considered. Thy harsh rebukes and censures of my impatience, and hypocrisy, and wickedness, proceedeth from thy ignorance or insensibleness of my insupportable calamities. I desire no favour from thee. But oh that I had a just and equal judge, that would understand my case, and consider whether I have not just cause for such bitter complaints; or, at least, whether the greatness of my burden should not procure some allowance to my infirmity, if I should speak something indecently and unadvisedly, and protect me from such severe censures!

Laid in the balances together; either,

1. *Together with my grief;* or rather,

2. **Together** with any the most heavy thing to be put into the other scale, as with the sand, &c., as is expressed in the next verse; where also the particle *it*, being of the singular number, showeth that there was but one thing to be weighed with the sand.

Ver. 3.

It would be heavier, i.e. my grief or calamity,

than the sand of the sea, which is heavier than dry sand.

Swallowed up, as this verb is used, **#Pr 20:25 Ob 1:16.** My voice and spirit faileth me. So far am I from speaking too liberally of it, for which I am now accused, that I cannot find nor utter words sufficient to express my sorrow or misery; but my groanings are such as cannot be uttered, as is said in another case, **#Ro 8:26.** When I would express it, the words stick in my throat, and I am forced, as it were, to swallow them up.

Ver. 4.

Arrows; so he fitly calls his afflictions, because, like arrows, they came upon him swiftly and suddenly, one after another, and that from on high, and they wounded him deeply and deadly.

Of the Almighty; so he calls them, either generally, because all afflictions come from him; or particularly, because God's hand was in a singular manner eminent and visible in his miseries, **#Job**

1; or yet more especially, because they were immediately shot by God into his spirit, as it follows.

Are within me; besides those evils which are past, #Job 1, there are other miseries that are constant and fixed in me, the sharp pains of my body, and dismal horrors of my mind.

The poison whereof; implying that these arrows were more keen and pernicious than ordinary, as being dipped in God's wrath, as the barbarous nations then and since used to dip their arrows in poison, that they might not only pierce, but burn up and consume the vital parts.

Drinketh up my spirit, i.e. exhausteth and consumeth, either,

1. My vital spirits, together with my blood, the seat of them, and my heart, the spring of them, as poison useth to do. But I doubt the Hebrew word *ruach* is never used in that sense. Or,

2. My soul, which is commonly *the spirit*, my mind and conscience. So he tells them, that besides the miseries which they saw, he felt others, and far greater, though invisible, torments in his soul, which if they could see, they would have more pity for him. And in this sense this place is and may very well be otherwise rendered, *whose poison my spirit*

drinketh up, i.e. my soul sucks in the venom of those calamities, by apprehending and applying to itself the wrath of God manifested and conveyed by them.

The terrors of God; either,

1. Great terrors; or,

2. God's terrible judgments; or rather,

3. These terrors which God immediately works in my soul, either from the sense of his wrath accompanying my outward troubles, or from the sad expectation of longer and greater torments.

Set themselves in array; they are like a numerous and well-ordered army, under the conduct of an irresistible general, who designs and directs them to invade me on every side.

Ver. 5.

Thou wonderest that my disposition and carriage is so greatly altered from what it was, **#Job 4:3-5**, but thou mayst easily learn the reason of it from the brute beasts, the ass and ox, who when they have convenient and common food, are quiet and contented; but when they want that, they will resent it, and complain in their way by braying or lowing: see **#Jer 14:6**. And therefore my carriage is agreeable to those common principles of nature which are both in men and beasts, by which their disposition and deportment is generally suitable to their condition. It is no wonder that you complain not, who live in ease and prosperity; nor did I, when it was so with me; but if you felt what I feel, you would be as full of complaints as I am.

Ver. 6.

Can or do men use to eat unsavoury meats with delight, or without complaint? This is either,

1. A reflection upon Eliphaz's discourse, as unsavoury, which could not give him any conviction or satisfaction. But his censure of Eliphaz's speech begins not till **#Job 6:14**, and then it proceeds. Or rather,

2. A justification of Job's complaints (of which both the foregoing and following verses treat) by another argument. Men do commonly complain of their meat when it is but unsavoury, how much more when it is so bitter as mine is! which is implied here, and expressed in the next verse; where the sense here begun is completed, and this general proposition is accommodated to Job's condition.

In the white of an egg, Heb. *in the white of a yolk*, i.e. which encompasseth the yolk of an egg.

Ver. 7.

Heb. *As the sicknesses or sorrows of my meat*, i.e. as my sorrowful meat, which I am constrained to eat with grief of heart. The particle *as*, either,

1. Notes not the similitude, but the truth of the thing, as it is oft used, as hath been formerly noted and proved. So the sense is, that such meat as formerly he should have abhorred to touch, either for the quality of it, or for his tears or ulcerous matter which mixed

themselves with it, he was now forced by the necessities of nature, and his own poverty, to eat. Or,

2. Implies that the following words are not to be understood properly, but metaphorically. And so the sense may be this, Those grievous afflictions, which according to the principles and common inclinations of human nature I dreaded the very touch and thought of, they are now my daily, though sorrowful, bread; I am forced constantly to feed upon them; as other persons in great afflictions are said to be *fed with bread of tears*, #Ps 80:5, and to *eat ashes like bread*, #Ps 102:9. Others make this a censure of Eliphaz's words, as ungrateful and loathsome to him. But that sense seems neither to agree with the words of this verse, nor with its scope and coherence with the former, of which **See Poole "Job 6:6"**.

Ver. 8.

My request, i.e. the thing which I have so passionately desired, and, notwithstanding all your vain words and weak arguments, do still justly continue to desire, to wit, death, as is expressed #Job 6:9, and more largely #Job 3.

Ver. 9.

To destroy me; to end my days and calamities together. *That he would let loose his hand*; which is now as it were bound up or restrained from giving me that deadly blow which I desire. Oh that he would restrain himself and his hand no longer, but let it fall upon me with all its might, so as to

cut me off as it follows.

Ver. 10.

The thoughts of my approaching death would comfort me in all my sorrows. This would solace me more than life, with all that worldly safety, and glory, and happiness which thou hast advised me to seek unto God for.

I would harden myself in sorrow, i.e. I would bear up myself with more courage and patience under all my torments with the hopes of my death, and that blessedness into which I know I shall after death be admitted, as he more fully speaks, #Job 19:26,27, whereas now I pine away in lingering and hopeless miseries. Or, *I would burn* (i.e. I am content to burn) *in sorrow*. Or, *I would pray*

(as this word signifies in Hebrew writers; and *praying* may be here put for praising or worshipping of God, as it is frequently used in Scripture) *in, or for, my sorrow or pain*; then I would worship God, and say, Blessed be the Lord's name for these afflictions, as I did for the former, **#Job 1:20,21**.

Let him not spare; but let him use all severity against me, so far as to cut me off, and not suffer me to live any longer; which will seem to me a cruel kind of patience towards me.

Of the Holy One, i.e. of God, who is frequently called *the Holy One* in Scripture, as **#Isa 40:25 Isa 57:15 Hab 3:3**, and is so in a most eminent and peculiar manner. The sense is, Therefore I do not fear death, but desire it; and that not only to be freed from my present troubles, but also and especially to put me into the possession of the happiness of the next life; of which I am assured, because I have in good measure performed the conditions of that covenant upon which he hath promised it; for as for

the words of God, i.e. that light of sacred truths and precepts which he hath been pleased to impart to me,

I have not concealed them, neither from myself by shutting mine eyes against them, or suffering my prejudices, or passions, or worldly interests to blind my mind, lest I should see them, as you think I have done; nor from others; but as I myself have stedfastly believed them, and not wilfully and wickedly departed from them, so I have endeavoured to teach and commend them to others, and have not been ashamed nor afraid boldly to profess and preach the true religion in the midst of heathens who are round about me. And therefore I know that if God doth cut me off, it will be in mercy, and I shall be a gainer by it. Some translate and distinguish the verse thus. *Yet this is my comfort, (though, or when, I scorch with pain, and he, i.e. God, doth not spare me, but afflicts me most severely,) that I have not concealed the words of God, but have professed and practised them.*

Ver. 11.

My strength is so small and spent, that although I may linger a while in my torments, yet I cannot live long, and therefore it is vain and absurd for me to hope for such a restitution of my

strength and prosperity as thou hast promised to me, **#Job 5:22**, &c.; and therefore I justly pray that God would take away my life.

What is mine end? either,

1. What is the end or period of my miseries? when may I expect it? I see no end of them; I know not how long I may pine and linger in them. Therefore, Lord, take me speedily away. Or,

2. What is the end of my life? or what is death to me? It is not terrible, but comfortable, as he said, **#Job 6:10**. I need not those vain consolations which thou givest me of being kept from death, **#Job 6:20**, or having life continued and health restored. Death is not the matter of my fear, but of my desire.

That I should prolong my life, to wit, by my seeking to God for it, as thou advisest me, **#Job 5:8**. Why should I desire or endeavour the prolonging of my life? Or, *that I should lengthen out my desire*, to wit, of life, and those comforts of life which thou hast propounded to me. I desire not to live longer, though in the greatest splendour and prosperity, but to be dissolved, and to be with my God and Redeemer, **#Job 19:25**. The Hebrew word *nephesh*, here rendered *soul* or *life*, oft signifies *desire*, as **#Ge 23:8 De 23:24 Pr 23:2 Ec 6:9**.

Ver. 12.

I am not made of stone or brass, but of flesh and blood, as others are; and therefore I am utterly unable to endure these miseries longer, and can neither hope for nor desire any continuance of my life, or restoration of my former happiness, but only wish for that death which is the common refuge of all miserable persons, as I said, **#Job 3:17,18**.

Ver. 13.

Though I have no strength in my body, or outward man, yet I have some help and support within me, or in my inward man, even the conscience of my own innocency and piety, notwithstanding all your bitter accusations and censures, as if I had no integrity, **#Job 4:6**.

Is wisdom driven quite from me? If I have no strength in my body, have I therefore no wisdom or judgment left in my soul? Am I therefore unable to judge of the vanity of thy discourse, and

of the truth of my own case? Have I not common sense and discretion? Do not I know my own condition, and the nature and degree of my sufferings, better than thou dost? Am not I a better judge whether I have integrity or no than thou art? But this verse is rendered otherwise, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew words, *What if I have no help in me*, (i.e. if I cannot help myself, if my outward condition be helpless and hopeless, as I confess it is,)

is wisdom driven quite from me? Have I therefore lost my understanding and common reason? Cannot I judge whether it is more desirable for me to live or to die, whether I am a hypocrite or no, whether your words have truth and weight in them or no, whether you take the right method in dealing with me, whether you deal mercifully and sincerely with me, or no? Yet again, (because the construction and sense of these words is judged very difficult,) this verse may be joined with the following, and rendered thus, *What if there be no help in me*, (or, if I be not able to bear my miseries,) *and if counsel be driven from me*, so that I know not what to do, or how to help or ease myself? or, *and subsistence, or power of subsisting, be driven or taken away from me*, so that I can neither help myself out of my troubles, nor subsist under them? yet *to the afflicted pity should be showed, &c.*

Ver. 14.

To him that is afflicted, Heb. *to him that is melted or dissolved with afflictions*, or in the furnace of afflictions; that is, in extreme miseries; for such persons are said to be melted, as **#Ps 22:14 107:26 119:28 Na 2:10**.

From his friend: his friend, such as thou, O Eliphaz, pretendest to be to me, should show kindness, benignity, and compassion in his judgment of him, and carriage towards him, and not pass such unmerciful and heavy censures upon him, nor load him with reproaches.

But he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty; but thou hast no love or pity for thy neighbour and friend; which is a plain evidence that thou art guilty of that which thou didst charge me with, even with the want of the fear of God; for didst thou truly fear God, thou couldst not, and durst not, be so unmerciful to thy

brother, both because God hath severely forbidden and condemned that disposition and carriage, and because God is able to punish thee for it, and mete unto thee the same hard measure which thou meetest to me. But this verse is and may be otherwise rendered, *Should a reproach* (for so the Hebrew *chesed* oft signifies) be laid *upon him that is afflicted by his friend*, even that *he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty*? Should my friend have fastened such a reproach upon me, than which none is worse, that I am an impious man, and destitute of the fear of God, #Job 4:6-8. This he mentions, as that which was most grievous and intolerable to him.

Ver. 15.

My brethren, i.e. my kinsmen or three friends; for though Eliphaz only had spoken, the other two showed their approbation of his discourse, or, at least, of that part of it which contained his censure of Job's person and state.

Have dealt deceitfully; under a pretence of friendship and kindness dealing unrighteously and unmercifully with me, and adding to these afflictions which they said they came to remove.

As the stream of brooks, which quickly vanish, and deceive the hopes of the thirsty traveller.

Ver. 16.

Which in winter, when the traveller neither needs nor desires it, are full of water, then congealed by the frost.

Wherein the snow is hid; either,

1. Under which the water, made of snow, which formerly fell, and afterwards was dissolved, lies hid. So he implies that he speaks not of those brooks which are fed by a constant spring, but of them which are filled by accidental and extraordinary falls of water, or snow melted, which run into them. Or,

2. Wherein there is abundance of snow mixed with or covered by the ice; or, *in which the snow covers itself*, i.e. where is snow upon snow; which gives the traveller hopes, that when he comes that way in summer, he shall find good store of water here for his refreshment.

Ver. 17.

When the weather grows milder, and the frost and snow is dissolved.

When it is hot; in the hot season of the year, when waters are most refreshing and necessary.

Out of their place; in which the traveller expected to find them to his comfort, but they are gone he knows not whither.

Ver. 18.

i.e. The course of those waters is changed, they are gone out of their channel, flowing hither and thither, till they be quite consumed; as it here follows.

Ver. 19.

The troops, as this word is used, #Ge 37:25 Isa 21:13. Heb. *the ways*, put for *the travellers in the ways*, by a usual metonymy. And so it must needs be meant here, and in the next clause, because the following verse, *They were confounded*, &c., plainly showeth that he here speaks of persons, not of senseless things. *Tema:* this place and

Sheba were both parts of the hot and dry country of Arabia, in which waters were very scarce, and therefore precious and desirable, especially to travellers, who by their motion, and the heat to which they were exposed, were more hot and thirsty than other men.

The companies; as before, *the troops*. And thus he speaks, because men did not there travel singly, as here we do, but in troops and companies, for their greater security against wild beasts and robbers, of which they had great store.

Ver. 20.

They were confounded, i.e. the troops and companies. Because they had hoped; they comforted themselves with the expectation of water there to quench their thirst.

Were ashamed; as having deceived themselves and others with vain and false hopes.

Ver. 21.

He gives the reason why he charged them with deceitfulness, and compared them to these deceitful brooks. *Nothing*, or, *as nothing*; the note of similitude being oft understood. Heb. *as not*, i.e. you are to me as if you had not been, or as if you had never come to me, for I have no benefit nor comfort from you and your discourse, but only an increase of my misery.

Ye see my casting down, and are afraid: when you come near to me, and perceive my great and manifold calamities, you stand as it were at a distance; you are shy of me, and afraid for yourselves, either lest my sores or breath should infect you; or lest some further plagues-should come upon me, wherein yourselves for my sake, or because you are in my company, should be involved; or lest I should be burdensome to you, and need and call for your charitable contribution to support myself and the small remainders of my poor family, or for your helping hand to assist and save me from mine enemies, who may possibly fall upon me in this place, as the Chaldeans and Sabeans did upon my servants and cattle elsewhere; which is implied in the next verses. So far are you from being true friends and comforts to me, as you would seem to be.

Ver. 22.

Did I say? or, *Is it because I said?* Is this, or what else is the reason why you are afraid of me, or alienated from me? *Bring unto me*; give me something for my support or relief. Did either my former covetousness or my present necessity make me troublesome or chargeable to you? Give a reward for me; either to the judge before whom I am brought and accused, that he may give a favourable sentence in my behalf; or to the enemy who hath taken me captive. Or, *give a gift for me*, i.e. for my use or need. Did I send for you to come and visit me for this end? nay, did you not come of your own accords. Why then are you thus unmerciful to me? Methinks you might at least have given me good and comfortable words, which is the easiest and cheapest part of a friend's work, when I desired and expected nothing else from you.

Ver. 23.

Deliver me by power and the force of your arms, as Abraham delivered Lot.

Redeem me by price, or ransom.

Ver. 24.

Teach me; instead of censuring and reproaching, instruct and convince me by solid arguments.

I will hold my tongue; I will patiently hear and gladly receive your counsels; or, I will be silent; I will neither contradict you, nor complain of my own griefs. Compare **#Job 40:4,5 Pr 30:32**.

Wherein I have erred, i.e. my mistakes and miscarriages.

Ver. 25.

Right words, i.e. the words of truth or solid arguments, have a marvellous power to convince and persuade a man; and if yours were such, I should readily yield to them.

Your arguing reprove; or, *your arguing argue*. There is no truth in your assertions, nor weight in your arguments, and therefore are they of no account or power with me.

Ver. 26.

Do ye imagine to reprove words? i.e. do you think that all your arguments are solid and unanswerable, and all my answers are but idle and empty words? Or do you think it is sufficient to cavil and quarrel with some of my words and expressions, without considering the merits of the cause, and the truth of my condition, or giving an allowance for human infirmity, or for my extreme misery, which may easily force from me some indecent expressions?

Of one that is desperate; of a poor miserable, hopeless, and helpless man; for the words of such persons are commonly neglected and despised, although there be truth and great weight in them. See **#Ec 9:16**. And such are generally thought to speak from deep passions and prejudices, more than from reason and judgment.

Which are as wind, i.e. which you esteem to be like the wind, vain and light, without solid substance, making a great noise with little sense, and to little purpose. But this last branch of the verse may be, and by many is, rendered otherwise, *and do ye imagine* (which is to be repeated out of the former clause, as is very usual in Scripture) *the words of one that is desperate to be but wind*, i.e.

empty and vain? Do you take me for a desperate and distracted man, that knows not or cares not what he saith, but only speaks what comes first into his mind and mouth? The *wind* is oft used to express vain words, as #**Job 15:2 Jer 5:13**; and vain things, #**Job 7:7 Pr 11:29**. Some render the whole verse thus, *Do you in your arguings think, or ought you to think, the discourses of a dejected, or desponding, or sorely afflicted man (such as I am) to be but words and wind*, i.e. vain and empty? as indeed the discourses of such persons use to be esteemed by such as are in a higher and more prosperous condition. But you should judge more impartially, and more mercifully. Possibly the verse may be rendered thus, *Do you think to reprove the speeches of a desperate, or dejected, or miserable man (such as I am, and you use me accordingly) with (the preposition being very frequently omitted and understood in the Hebrew tongue) words and with (for the Hebrew prefix *lamed* oft signifies *with*, as hath been formerly proved) wind?* You think any words or arguments will be strong enough against one in my circumstances. So it agrees with the foregoing verse.

Ver. 27.

Yea; your words are not only vain, and useless, and uncomfortable to me, but also grievous and pernicious.

Ye overwhelm, Heb. *you rush or throw yourselves* upon him. For words in *hiphil* are oft put reciprocally as Hebricians know. You fall upon him with all your might, and say all that you can devise to charge and grieve him. A metaphor from wild beasts, that fall upon their prey to hold it fast and devour it. You load him with censures and calumnies.

The fatherless, or, *the desolate*, i.e. me, who am deprived of all my dear children, and of all my estate; forsaken by my friends, and by my heavenly Father; which should have procured me your pity rather than your censure.

Ye dig a pit for your friend; or, *you feed or feast* (for so this Hebrew word is oft used, as #**2Sa 3:35 2Ki 6:23 Job 40:15**) *upon your friend*, i.e. you insult and triumph over me whom sometimes you owned for your friend.

Ver. 28.

Look upon me; be pleased either,

1. To look upon my countenance, if it betrays any fear or guilt, as if I spoke contrary to my own conscience. Or rather,

2. To consider me and my cause further and better than you have done, that you may give a more true and righteous judgment concerning it.

Is evident unto you; you will plainly discover it. A little further consideration and discourse will make it manifest, and I shall readily acknowledge it.

Ver. 29.

Turn from your former course of perverse judgment; lay aside passion and prejudice against me; let me beg your second thoughts and a serious review of my case.

Let it not be iniquity, to wit, in your thoughts or debates; I beg not your favour, but your justice; judge according to right, and do not conclude me to be wicked, because you see me to be miserable, as you have falsely and unjustly done. Or, *there shall be no iniquity*, to wit, in my words which I have spoken, and which I am further about to speak; which you will find upon the review.

In it, i.e. in this cause or matter between you and me; the relative without the antecedent, which is frequent in the Hebrew language. You will find the right to be on my side.

Ver. 30.

Consider again, and more thoroughly examine, if there be any untruth or iniquity in what I have already said, or shall further speak to you.

My taste. i.e. my judgment, which discerns and judgeth of words and actions as the taste or palate doth of meats.

Perverse things, i.e. false opinions or sinful expressions. I am not so bereft of common understanding, as not to be able to distinguish between good and evil; and therefore if I have uttered, or should utter, any perverse words, I should apprehend them to be so as well as you do.

JOB CHAPTER 7

Our times are like those of hirelings, restless and hopeless. Death desirable. His days are as a weaver's shuttle; his life is as wind; and he was consumed out of this world, and should appear in it no more, #**Job 7:1-10**. Therefore he will speak to God, #**Job 7:11,12**: is tired out and weary of life, #**Job 7:13-16**. Man unworthy of God's notice, #**Job 7:17-19**. He confesseth his sin, and prayeth for forgiveness, #**Job 7:20,21**.

Ver. 1.

Is there not a certain and short time limited by God wherein man shall live in this sinful, and vain, and miserable world, after which he shall live in a holier and happier place and state? and is it a crime in me to desire that God would give me some ease and respite for the present, and bring me to that blessed and joyful period?

Like the days of an hireling; whose time is limited and short, being but for a few years, #**Isa 16:14 21:16**, and sometimes but for days, #**Job 14:6 Mt 20:1,2**, and whose condition is full of toil and hardship.

Ver. 2.

The shadow, i.e. the sun-set, or the night, the time allotted for his rest and repose, #**Ps 104:23**. And why may not I also desire the time of my rest?

The reward of his work, Heb. *his work*; which is oft put for the reward of it, as #**Le 19:13 Isa 40:10 49:4**. Or, the end of his work.

Ver. 3.

This so respects not so much the desire and expectation of a hired servant, which is expressed #**Job 7:2**, as the ground and reason of it, which is plainly implied there, to wit, his hard toil and service, which makes him thirst after rest.

I am made to possess; God, by his sovereign power and providence, hath given me this as my lot and inheritance. *Months*; so he calls them rather than days, to note either the irksomeness and tediousness of his affliction, whereby every day seemed a month to him; or their length and continuance, which, as some infer from hence, had now been upon him some months.

Of vanity; empty and unsatisfying, or false and deceitful, not giving me that ease and rest which they promised me, and I expected.

Wearisome nights: he mentions nights, because that is the saddest time for sick and miserable persons; the darkness and solitude of the night being of themselves uncomfortable, and giving them more opportunity for solemn and sorrowful thoughts and reflections upon their own miseries.

Ver. 4.

When I lie down, to get some rest and sleep. *The night*, Heb. *the evening*; the part put for the whole, as it is **#Ge 1:5**.

To and fro; from side to side in the bed, as men in grievous pains of body or anxiety of mind use to be.

Unto the dawning of the day; so this Hebrew word is used also @**1Sa 30:17**; Ps 119:147.

Ver. 5.

Clothed, i.e. covered all over as with a garment.

With worms; which oft breed and break forth in divers parts of living bodies, as history and experience witnesseth, and which were easily bred out of Job's corrupted flesh and sores.

Clods of dust; either the dust of the earth upon which he lay, which his sores would quickly lick up; or the scabs of his sores, which by degrees mouldered away into dust.

My skin is broken, by ulcers breaking forth in all parts of it.

Ver. 6.

The time of my life hastens to a period; and therefore vain are those hopes which you give me of a restitution to my former prosperity in this world.

A weaver's shuttle, which passeth in a moment from one end of the web to the other.

Without hope, to wit, of enjoying any good day here.

Ver. 7.

He turneth his speech to God, as appears from **#Job 7:8,12,14**.

Wind, i.e. vain, **#Isa 47:13 Ho 8:7**; quickly passing away, so as never to come again, as is said, **#Ps 78:39**.

See good, i.e. enjoy (for so seeing is sometimes used, as **#Ps 34:12 Jer 17:6**) good, to wit, in this world, as my friends flatter me. Compare **#Job 14:12 19:26,27**.

Ver. 8.

Shall see me no more in this mortal state; I shall never return to this life again.

Thine eyes are upon me, and I am not: either,

1. If thou dost but cast one angry look upon me, *I am not*, i.e. I am a dead man. So that phrase is used **#Ge 5:24 42:13 44:20 Ps 103 16 Jer 31:15**. Or,

2. *When thine eyes shall be upon me* (i.e. when thou shalt look for me to do me good, thou wilt find that) *I am not*, that I am dead and gone, and incapable of that bounty and goodness which thou givest to men in this world. Compare **#Job 7:21 Ps 10:15 Jer 50:20**.

Ver. 9.

The cloud is consumed; being dried up or dissolved by the heat of the sun.

Vanisheth away; never returneth again.

Shall come up no more, to live a natural, mortal life amongst men. For that he doth not deny a future life is manifest from **#Job 19:25**, &c.

Ver. 10.

He shall return no more, to enjoy his house and possessions again; he shall no more be seen and known in his former habitation and condition by his friends and neighbours. The

place put for the men of the place, as **#Job 8:18 20:9 Ps 37:10**.

Ver. 11.

Since my life is by the common condition of mankind so vain and short, and, when once lost, without all hopes of recovery, and withal extremely miserable, I will plead with God for pity and relief before I die; knowing that I must now speak, or else for ever

after hold my peace, as to requests of this nature. I will not smother my bitter anguish within my own breast, which will make it intolerable, but I will give it vent, and ease myself by pouring forth complaints, and expostulating with my God, who, as I hope, will hear and help me one way or other.

Ver. 12.

Am I so great, and powerful, and dangerous a creature, that thou needest to use extraordinary power and violence to rule and subdue me? Am I as fierce and unruly as the sea, which, if thou didst not set a watch over it, and bounds to it, would overwhelm the earth, and destroy mankind upon it? Or am I a vast and ungovernable sea monster, which, if thou didst not restrain it by thy powerful providence, would overturn ships, and destroy men in them, and devour all the lesser fishes? Have I behaved myself towards thee, or towards men, with such rage and violence, as to need such chains to be put upon me? Or is my strength so great as that of the sea, which can endure so many and long storms one after another, and yet can subsist under them and after them? or of a whale, that can laugh at darts and spears? as is said, **#Job 41:29**. No, Lord, thou knowest that I am but a poor weak creature, which thou canst crush with the least touch of thy finger, without these violent and unsupportable pains and miseries; and that I have not been so fierce and boisterous in my carriage as to need or deserve these extraordinary calamities.

That thou settest a watch over me; that thou shouldst guard and restrain me with such heavy and unexampled miseries, lest I should break into rebellion against thee, or into cruelty towards men.

Ver. 13.

By giving me sweet and quiet sleep, which may take off the sense of my torments for that while.

Ver. 14.

With sad and dreadful dreams, arising either from that melancholy humour which is now so fixed in me, and predominant over me, or from the devil's malice, who by thy permission disturbs me in this manner; so that I am afraid to go to sleep, and my remedy proves as bad as my disease.

Visions are the same thing with dreams; for there were not only day visions, which were offered to men's sight when they were awake; but also night visions, which were presented to men's fancy in their sleep and dreams. See #Ge 28:12 41:1,2 Da 2:1,31 4:5,10.

Ver. 15.

Chooseth; not simply and in itself, but comparatively, rather than such a wretched life.

Strangling; the most violent, so it be but a certain and sudden death.

Rather than my life, Heb. *than my bones*, i.e. than my body, formerly the soul's dear and desired companion; or than to be in the body, which commonly consists of skin, and flesh, and bones, but in Job was in a manner nothing but a bundle of boiles; for his skin was every where broken, and his flesh was quite consumed, as he oft complains, and his bones also were not free from pain and torment; for as Satan's commission reached to Job's *bones*, #Job 2:5, so doubtless his malice and wicked design would engage him to execute it to the utmost.

Ver. 16.

I loathe it, to wit, my life, last mentioned. I would not live away in this world if I might, no, not in prosperity, for even such a life is but vanity, much less in this extremity of misery. Or, *let me not live for ever*, lingering in this miserable manner, as if thou wouldst not suffer me to die, but hadst a design to perpetuate my torments. Or, *let me not live out mine age*, or the full time of my life, which by the course of nature I might do; for so the Hebrew word *olam* is oft used; but cut me off, and that speedily.

Let me alone, i.e. withdraw thy hand from me; either,

1. Thy supporting hand, which preserves my life, and suffer me to die; or rather,
2. Thy correcting hand, as this same phrase is used, 7:19.

My days are vanity; either,

1. My life is in itself, and in its best estate, a most vain, unsatisfying, uncertain thing; do not add this evil to it to make it miserable. Or,

2. My life is a vain, decaying, and perishing thing, it will of itself quickly vanish and depart, and doth not need to be forced from me by such exquisite torments.

Ver. 17.

What is there in that poor, mean, contemptible creature called man, *miserable man*, as this word signifies, which can induce or incline thee to take any notice of him, to show him such respect, or to make such account of him? Man is not worthy of thy favour, and he is below thy anger. It is too great a condescension to thee, and too great an honour for man, that thou wilt contend with him, and draw forth all thy forces against him, as if he were a fit match for thee; whereas men use to neglect and slight mean adversaries, and will not do them the honour to fight with them. Compare **#1Sa 24:14**. Therefore do not, O Lord, thus dishonour thyself, nor magnify me. I acknowledge that even thy corrections are mercies and honours; but, Lord, let me be no more so honoured.

Set thine heart upon him, i.e. have any regard to him, so far as to afflict him, which though it be grievous in itself, especially when it is aggravated as mine is, yet unto thy people it is a great mercy and blessing, as being highly necessary and useful to humble them, and purge them from sin, and prepare them for glory; as, on the contrary, those wicked men whom thou dost despise and hate, and design to destroy, thou dost forbear to punish or afflict them.

Ver. 18.

Visit him; to wit, punish or chasten him, as the word *to visit*, or *visiting*, is oft used, as **#Ex 20:5 32:34 34:7**. *Every morning*, i.e. every day. But he mentions the morning, either because that is the beginning of the day, and so is put synecdochically for the whole day, as the *evening*, **#Job 7:4**, is put for the whole night; or he speaks of God after the manner of men, who rest and sleep in the night, but in the morning rise and go about their business, and visit or inspect those persons and things which they have a respect for or care of.

Try him, i.e. afflict him, which is oft called trying, because it doth indeed try a man's faith, and patience, and perseverance. But this and the former verse may possibly be otherwise understood, not of afflictions, but of mercies. Having declared his loathing of life, and his passionate desire of death, and urged it with this consideration, that the *days* of his life were mere *vanity*, he now pursues it with this expostulation. What is man, that vain, foolish creature, that thou shouldst *magnify*, or *regard*, or *visit him*, (to wit, with thy mercy and blessings, of which those words are commonly used, i.e. that thou shouldst so far honour and regard him, as by thy visitation to preserve his spirit, or hold his soul in life,) and

try him? which God doth not only by afflictions, but also by prosperity and outward blessings, which commonly detect a man's hypocrisy, and discover that corruption which before lay hid in his heart. Therefore, O Lord, do not thus magnify and visit me with thy mercy, but take away my life.

Ver. 19.

How long will it be ere thou withdraw thy afflicting hand from me?

Till I swallow down my spittle, i.e. for a little time; or that I may have a breathing time: a proverbial expression, like that Spanish proverb, *I have not time or liberty to spit out my spittle*. Or this expression may have respect to Job's distempered and calamitous condition, wherewith he was so overwhelmed, that he either had not strength, or could not take heed, to spit out his spittle, as he should have done, but swallowed it down, as sick and melancholy persons often do.

Ver. 20.

I have sinned: although I am innocent and free from those crying sins, for which my friends suppose thou hast sent this uncommon judgment upon me; yet if thou be strict to mark what is amiss, I freely confess that I am a sinner, and therefore obnoxious to thy justice, and I humbly beg thy pardon for it, as it follows, **#Job 3:21**; and therefore accept of this confession.

What shall I do unto thee, to satisfy thy justice, or regain thy favour? I can do nothing to purchase or deserve it, and therefore

implore thy mercy to pardon my sins. *O thou preserver of men*; O thou who, as thou wast the Creator of man, delightest to be, and to be called, the Preserver and Saviour of men; and that waitest to be kind and gracious to men from day to day, as occasion requires; do not deal with me in a way contrary to thy own nature and name, and to the manner of thy dealing with all the rest of mankind. Otherwise, *O thou observer of men*; thou who dost exactly know and diligently observe all men's inward motions and outward actions; and therefore if thou shalt be severe to mark mine iniquities, as thou seemest to be, I have not what to say or do unto thee: compare **#Job 9:3,15,29 14:4**.

As a mark against thee; into which thou wilt shoot all the arrows of thy indignation.

I am a burden to myself, i.e. I am weary of myself, and of my life, being no way able to resist or endure the assaults of so potent an adversary.

Ver. 21.

Seeing thou art so gracious to others, so ready to preserve and pardon them, why may not I hope for the same favour from thee? If thou dost not speedily help me, it will be too late, I shall be dead, and so incapable of those blessings which thou usest to give to men in the land of the living. When thou shalt diligently seek for me, that thou mayst show favour to me, thou wilt find that I am dead and gone, and so wilt lose thy opportunity: help therefore speedily.

JOB CHAPTER 8

Bildad's reproof: Job's words said to be as wind: God just in all his ways, and in his dealings towards Job's children: if he would pray to God, and was indeed pure and upright, God would arise for him, **#Job 8:1-7**. For this he appealeth to the history of ancient times, which declare the bad end of the hypocrite, **#Job 8:8-19**, and the hope and joy of the upright, **#Job 8:20-22**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

i.e. Boisterous and violent, swelling and furious, opposing all persons and things that stand in thy way, not sparing either God or men.

Ver. 3.

God, Heb. *the mighty God*, as this word signifies; *the almighty or all-sufficient God*, as the next name of God here implies. These names are emphatically used, to prove that God cannot deal unjustly or falsely with men, because he hath no need of it, nor temptation to it, being self-sufficient for his own happiness, and being able by his own invincible power to do whatsoever pleaseth him; unless men will impudently say that God doth falsely for mere love to falsehood, without any necessity of it, or advantage to himself by it, than which nothing can be more absurd and ridiculous; for this makes him worse than the vilest of men, who act unjustly and falsely because they cannot otherwise accomplish their designs.

Pervert judgment, i.e. overthrow the course of justice in giving judgment, or judge unrighteously. No, this is inconsistent with God's nature, which is essentially and necessarily just, and with his office of Governor of the world, **#Ge 18:25**.

Ver. 4.

What though thou wast in a great measure innocent, thy children, upon whom a great part of these calamities fell, might be guilty of great sins; and therefore God is not unrighteous in these proceedings.

He hath cast them away, expelled, or cast them out, (to wit, out of the world, or out of his favour; as a man gives his wife a bill of divorce, of which this word is used,) *by means* (Heb. *by the hand*, which is oft so used) *of their wickedness*. Or, *hath left them in the hand of their sin*, to wit, to be punished by it and for it. Compare **#Nu 32:23**, *Your sin shall find you out*.

Ver. 5.

But, God hath spared thee, whom he might justly have destroyed with thy children, and thou art yet capable of his favour, if thou seek for it; and therefore cease from these causeless and unthankful complaints.

Seek unto God betimes, Heb. *rise early to seek him*, i.e. if thou wouldst seek him speedily, early, and diligently. See **#Job 5:8 7:18,21**. But this may be understood of the time past; and this verse being connected with the next, may be thus rendered and understood, *If thou hadst sought* (for the future tense in the Hebrew is oft put for the past) *unto God betimes*, (as thou didst seem to do, **#Job 1:5**) *and made supplication to the Almighty; if withal thou hadst been pure and upright*, i.e. if thy prayers had been accompanied with purity and uprightness of heart and life, they should have been heard and answered. But because thou didst regard iniquity in thy heart, therefore God would not hear and did not answer thy prayers, but answered thee with a curse instead of a blessing, as he useth to deal with hypocrites.

Ver. 6.

If thou wert in truth what thou pretendest, and hast been thought by others, to be,

pure and upright, i.e. of a sincere heart and blameless life towards God and men. But God's severe dealing with thee is an evident token, that notwithstanding all thy fair shows, thou art but a hypocrite and secret sinner. And this sense may seem to agree both with the same charge brought in against Job by Eliphaz, **#Job 4:6,7**, and with the following discourse, particularly with **#Job 8:13,20**. Or thus, *If thou wouldst be pure and upright*, i.e. if thou wouldst join reformation to thy supplication. And this sense may seem best to suit with the foregoing verse, according to the common translation.

Awake for thee, i.e. bestir himself to help thee, as being his faithful friend and servant, whom he could not in honour or justice forsake; whereas now he shows a deep sleep, and wholly neglects thee, and turneth a deaf ear to all thy prayers; which showeth what opinion he hath of thee.

The habitation, i.e. the concerns of thy house and family; a usual metonymy.

Of thy righteousness; either,

1. Which thou hast got and managed with righteousness; so he calls it by way of supposition; if it were so, God would prosper thee accordingly. But because thou dost not prosper, it gives us

cause to suspect that thou hast got thy estate by fraud and oppression. Or,

2. Which thou shalt now manage with justice, and not wrongfully, as thou hast done.

Ver. 7.

The sense is either,

1. Though thou hadst possessed but very little at first, yet God would have wonderfully blessed and increased thy estate; whereas now God hath brought thee down from a great estate almost to nothing; which is an evidence of his displeasure, and thy hypocrisy. Or,

2. Though the beginning of thy future fortunes, or though what thou hast left, be now very small, yet if thou dost repent and seek God, it shall vastly increase.

Ver. 8.

Of the former age, i.e. of our predecessors, who had the advantage of longer life and more experience, besides more frequent revelations from God, than we have; who also will be more impartial judges of this cause than we may be thought to be. Inform thyself from them by the instructions which they left, either in word or writing, what their opinion was about the manner of God's dealings with men.

Prepare thyself to the search of their fathers; do not slightly, but seriously and industriously, search the ancient records.

Ver. 9.

But of yesterday; but lately born, and therefore have but little knowledge and experience, as it follows.

Our days upon earth are a shadow: this is meant either,

1. Of their lives in particular, which were far shorter than the lives of their ancestors, the patriarchs, whose long lives gave them opportunity to know and see the course of God's providence towards good and bad men, and the differing ends and issues of their lives. Or,

2. Of men's lives in general; which being very short, men's observation reacheth but to very few events in comparison of

those which may be known by the records and testimony of all former ages.

Ver. 10.

Assuredly they will inform thee that it is as we say.

Out of their heart; not partially, but sincerely, speaking their inward thoughts; not rashly, but from deep consideration; not by hearsay from others, but their own knowledge and experience.

Ver. 11.

Without mire, i.e. if it be not in moist and miry ground. This and what follows he mentions as it were in the person of those ancients to whom he had referred him, of whom he saith that they would give him such instructions as these.

The flag; or, *the grass*; or, *the meadow*, as this word is used, **#Ge 41:2**, i.e. the grass of a meadow, But our translation seems the best, because it is compared with other herbs.

Ver. 12.

Yet in his greenness; whereby it promiseth long continuance.

Not cut down; though no man cut it down, it withereth of itself, and will save a man the labour of cutting or plucking it up. It gives not a man so much warning that he can cut it down in time, as other green herbs do, but suddenly withereth.

Before any other herb, i.e. sooner than other herbs, or in their presence, or they surviving; in which sense it seems to be said that Ishmael died *in the presence of his brethren*, **#Ge 25:18**; the rest of the herbs looking upon it, and admiring this sudden change. For actions of sense and understanding are oft ascribed to lifeless creatures, both in Scripture and other authors.

Ver. 13.

Of all that forget God, i.e. of wicked men, who are branded with this same character, **#Ps 9:17 50:22**; or hypocrites, as the next words explain it, who are described by their first and fundamental miscarriage, which is, that they *forget*, i.e. neglect, forsake, and despise, (for so this phrase is commonly understood, as **#De 6:12 8:11 32:18 Jer 2:32 23:27**) *God*, i.e. his presence, and commands, and worship, and providence; and therefore break forth into manifold sins. But by their paths he doth not understand the

course of their actions, or manner of their living; but the events which befall them, called their paths objectively, because they are the paths of God, or the methods of his providence, or manner of his dealing with them. Now this may be accommodated to the foregoing similitude in this manner: Such is the prosperity of wicked men, because it wants the solid foundation of their piety, and of God's promise and blessing consequent thereupon, it quickly vanisheth into nothing.

The hypocrite's hope shall perish, i.e. he shall lose what he hoped for (*hope* being oft put for its object,) even uninterrupted and abiding felicity, and with it all hope of restitution.

Ver. 14.

i.e. Whose wealth and outward glory, which is the matter of his *hope* and *trust*, shall be cut off, i.e. suddenly and violently taken away from him. *Whose hope shall be irksome or tedious to him*, by the succession of earnest expectation and great disappointment.

A spider's web; which though it be formed with great art and industry, and may do much mischief to others, yet is most slender and feeble, and easily swept down or pulled in pieces, and unable to defend the spider that made it. The application is obvious.

Ver. 15.

He, either the spider, or rather, the wicked man signified by it,

shall lean upon his house, i.e. he shall trust to the multitude and strength of his children and servants. and to his wealth, all which come under the name of a man's house in Scripture use.

It shall not stand, i.e. not be able to uphold itself, nor him that trusted to it.

He shall hold it fast; or, *he shall take fast hold of it*; not to uphold it, but to strengthen and uphold himself by it, as it is in the former branch.

Ver. 16.

He; either,

1. The perfect man, here understood out of **#Job 8:20**, where it is expressed; or rather,

2. The hypocrite, of whom he hath hitherto treated, to whom this and the following verses very well agree; whom he before compared to a rush, and then to a spider's web, and now to a tree, which is of a more solid substance, and more durable; as if he said, As some wicked men are quickly cut off in the very beginnings of their prosperity, so there are others who seem to be more firmly grounded, and yet they also at last come to ruin.

Is green, i.e. flourisheth in the world.

Before the sun; either,

1. Publicly, and in the view of all men, who observe it with admiration, and applause, and envy: compare #2Sa 12:12. Or rather,

2. Notwithstanding all the scorching heat of the sun, which quickly withers the rushes and herbs, of which he spake before, but doth only cherish and refresh the tree. And so doth many a wicked man secure himself, and thrive and prosper even in times of great danger and trouble, and in spite of all opposition.

His branch; or, *his branches*; the singular number for the plural; either,

1. Properly, and so this belongs to the description of a flourishing tree, by the spreading of its branches here, as by the depth of its root, #Job 8:17. Or,

2. Metaphorically, to wit, his children, which are here mentioned as additions, not only to his comfort, but also to his strength and safety.

In his garden; a place where it is defended from those injuries to which the trees of the field are subject from men and beasts, and where, besides the natural advantages common to all trees, it hath peculiar helps from the art and industry of men, by whom it is watered and assisted as need requires. So he supposeth this man to be placed in the most desirable circumstances.

Ver. 17.

About the heap, to wit, of stones, which word may be here understood out of the latter branch of the verse, as is very usual in

Scripture use. This circumstance of the tree is added to signify, either,

1. Its firmness and strength, that it was not in loose and sandy ground, which a violent wind might overthrow, but in solid and hard ground, within which were many stones, which its numerous and spreading roots embrace, folding and interweaving themselves severally about several stones. Or,

2. Its singular and extraordinary growth, in spite of all disadvantages and oppositions; that even stony ground, which is very prejudicial to trees, #Mt 13:5, doth not hinder its growth, but only add to its strength. So God and man seem to conspire, and all things concur, to secure and perpetuate this man's happiness. Some render the words, *His roots are wrapped, or folded, or spread about, or beside, a spring*, as the Hebrew *gal* sometimes signifies, as #Jos 15:19 So 4:12, i.e. a moist ground, which is much to its advantage: see #Ps 1:3 Jer 17:8. *Seeth he*, i.e. the tree whose roots he last mentioneth, reacheth thither, spreadeth himself so far, takes the advantage of that place for the strengthening of itself. *Seeing* is oft put for enjoying, and is frequently attributed to lifeless things, by a known figure, called *prosopopeia*. *The place*, Heb. *the house*, which is oft used for a place; as #2Sa 6:17 1Ki 8:6. Others render the words thus, *he looketh upon the house of stones*, i.e. made of stones for greater beauty and strength. He standeth proudly, and looketh boldly upon its owner's house, nigh unto which it is placed, even in his garden, as was said before.

Ver. 18.

If he; either God, who is the Saviour of good men, and the Destroyer of the wicked; or the owner; or any other man; for this is an indefinite speech, and may be taken passively and impersonally; which is very common in the holy text and language.

From his place, in which he was planted.

Then it, i.e. the place; to which denying him and seeing him are here ascribed figuratively, as we have oft seen.

I have not seen thee, i.e. I do not know nor remember that ever thou wast planted here. He shall be so utterly extirpated and

destroyed, that there shall be no footstep, nor name, nor memorial of him left there.

Ver. 19.

This is the joyful and happy issue of the flourishing course, state, and condition (which is frequently called a way) of this tree, or of the hypocrite, manifestly represented by it, and expressed **#Job 8:13**. It is a sarcasm or irony, and is to be understood contrariwise of his sad and unhappy end.

Out of the earth shall others grow, i.e. out of the same earth or place shall another tree grow; which could not be if there had been but a stump of it left, though under ground. So it notes the total extirpation of the tree, and of the hypocrite, that his person and all his children and family shall be utterly extinct, and so a stranger shall come into his place, and enjoy the fruit of his labours. But the words are and may be otherwise rendered very agreeably to the Hebrew text, *and out of other ground they* (i.e. plants or trees, of which he is here speaking) *shall grow*, or others *shall grow*, or *plants shall grow*; the noun being contained in the verb. So the sense is, This tree shall be rooted up, and the very ground of it so cursed, that nothing shall grow or thrive in it; but other ground shall be fruitful, and other trees that stood round about it shall stand still and flourish in their places. His design in all this is to prove Job to be a hypocrite, because he meets with their lot, which is total destruction.

Ver. 20.

Heb. *God will not despise or reject*, i.e. he will not deny them his help, as appears by the opposite and following branch of the verse; he will not suffer them to be utterly lost. *Help*, i.e. deliver them out of their troubles. Hence it may seem that thou, O Job, art not a perfect or upright man, but an evil-doer. But this is certain, if for the future thy heart and way be not perfect, and thou dost not cease to do evil, thou wilt be utterly and irrecoverably lost; as, on the contrary, if thou dost repent and reform, he will help and deliver thee, and restore thee to thy former glory and happiness; which promise, though it be not here expressed, is sufficiently implied in the contrary threatening, as is evident from the following words, which plainly suppose it, and have a reference to

it; such ellipses of contraries being not unusual in Scripture, as we shall see hereafter, especially in the Book of the Proverbs.

Ver. 21.

And what I have said in general of all perfect men, shall be made good to thee, if thou be such a one; God will not forsake time, nor desist from doing thee good,

till he fill, &c., i.e. God will give thee such abundant matter of rejoicing, that thy heart shall not be able to hold it, but it shall break out at thy mouth and lips.

Ver. 22.

They that hate thee, that rejoice in thy calamities, shall be wholly covered with shame, shall be utterly confounded, when they shall observe thee, whom they have despised and insulted over, to be so wonderfully and surprisingly restored to thy former or a greater felicity.

Of the wicked; either particularly of thy enemies, who dealt so unworthily and wickedly with thee; or more generally of all wicked men. Having showed what good God would do to the perfect man, he now declares the contrary portion of the wicked; and as he said that God would not help them, **#Job 8:20**, so here he adds, that God will bring not only them, but their house, i.e. their family and estate, to nought.

JOB CHAPTER 9

Job's answer: man cannot stand in judgment with God, because of his justice, wisdom, and power, which are unsearchable, **#Job 9:1-11**. All help or reason against God is vain; nor can we answer him; but must supplicate to our Judge, **#Job 9:12-15**. God's sovereignty, and our vileness before him, **#Job 9:16-21**. The godly are punished as well as the wicked by general calamities and wicked oppression, **#Job 9:22-24**. His time swift; his sorrows bitter: if wicked, he could not clear himself; nor would God hold him innocent, **#Job 9:25-31**; yet wisheth for a daysman, and a removal of Divine terror; then would he before God maintain his innocency, **#Job 9:32-35**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

I know it is so, to wit, as you say, that God is just in all his ways, that he doth ordinarily bless the righteous, and punish the wicked.

But how should man be just? Heb. *and how*, &c.? i.e. and I know that no man is absolutely just, or can defend his righteousness, if God be severe to mark what is amiss in him.

With God; either,

1. Being compared with God; or,
2. Before God, as the same phrase is taken, #1Sa 2:26 Ps 130:3, if he be brought before God's tribunal to debate the matter with him.

Ver. 3.

If God be pleased to contend (to wit, in judgment; debate or plead; for so this word is oft used, as #Ho 2:2 4:1 Mic 6:1; compare #Isa 45:9) with man.

One of a thousand; either to one accusation or argument among a thousand which God shall produce against him, or one time *of a thousand*. So far will he be from being able to maintain his own innocency against God, if God set himself against him as his adversary.

Ver. 4.

Wise in heart; either,

1. Really and profoundly wise; or,
2. Wise in his mind or understanding, which in Hebrew is oft called *the heart*, as #Pr 2:10 6:32 Ho 4:11, because the Hebrews make *the heart* the seat of the understanding, or of the reasonable soul. The sense is, He is infinitely wise, and so knows all things, and searcheth all men's hearts and ways, and discovers a multitude of sins which men's short-sighted eyes cannot see; and therefore can charge them with innumerable evils where they thought themselves innocent, and sees far more malignity than men could discern in their sins: and men cannot conceal any of their sins from him, nor cheat him, as they may other men, with

crafty devices and evasions; so that there is no contending with him.

Mighty in strength, i.e. omnipotent; and therefore if men contumaciously persist in contending with him after they are convicted and condemned, he can easily crush them. So that whether men contend with God by wisdom or by strength, (which are the two ways of one man's contending with another,) God will be conqueror.

Who hath hardened himself against him, i.e. obstinately contended with him? Or, *spoken hard things towards him*; quarrelling with him, opposing and reproaching God's providence towards him as hard and unjust. Compare **#Jude 1:15**.

Hath prospered, Heb. *hath been at peace*, i.e. hath not provoked God to his own destruction. A common figure, called *meiosis*, whereby more is understood than is expressed.

Ver. 5.

He proceedeth to give particular evidences of the Divine power and wisdom, which he mentioned **#Job 9:4**.

And they know not, i.e. suddenly and unexpectedly, ere they were aware of it. *They*, i.e. the mountains, to which he ascribes sense and knowledge figuratively, as hath been oft noted. *In his anger*; in token of his displeasure with men that lived upon them, or near them.

Ver. 6.

The earth, i.e. great portions of it, by earthquakes, or by removing islands, which sometimes hath been done.

The pillars thereof, i.e. the strength or the strongest parts of it, the mountains, yea, the deep and inward parts of it, which, like pillars, supported those parts which appear to our view, and yet have been discovered and overturned by earthquakes.

Ver. 7.

He speaks either,

1. Of that which God can do; or rather, (as he doth in the foregoing and following instances,)

2. Of what God actually doth; and that either,

1. Ordinarily; and so he gives laws to the sun that it shall not rise, but at such times, and to such places, and in such manner as he hath appointed; as that it shall rise constantly at its set time, and never disorderly; that it shall not rise for divers months together in some parts of the world, &c. Or rather,

2. Extraordinarily; (for of such works of God he discourseth in this place;) and so it may note either some stop given to the sun for a small season, like that in Joshua's time; which might have been, though it be not recorded; or some extraordinary tempest or dark season, wherein *the morning is made darkness*, as the phrase is, **#Am 4:13**; compare **#Am 5:8**; wherein the sun doth not at all appear, (as it was for many days together, **#Ac 27:20**) and consequently is to those places and persons as if he were not risen. For things in Scripture are oft said to *be*, or not to *be*, when they appear or disappear; of which some instances have been formerly given, and more we shall have hereafter, in their proper places. *Sealeth up the stars*, i.e. as it were, covereth and shutteth them up that they may not shine, as in dark and dismal tempests, like that now mentioned, **#Ac 27:20**, when *neither sun nor stars appeared for many days*.

Ver. 8.

Alone, i.e. by his own single power, without any other: help.

Spreadeth out the heavens: he spread them out like a curtain, **#Ps 104:1,2**; and he in a manner spreads them again every day, i.e. keeps them spread for the comfort and benefit of this lower world, and doth not roll and fold them up, as he will do in due time: see **#Isa 34:4 2Pe 3:10 Re 6:14**. Or, *boweth down the heavens*, as the same Hebrew verb is rendered, **#Ps 18:9**. So it is a further description of a black-and tempestuous season, wherein the heavens seem to be brought down and nearer to the earth.

Treadeth upon the waves of the sea, i.e. represseth and ruleth them when they rage and are tempestuous; for treading upon any thing signifies in Scripture use power and dominion over it; as **#De 33:29 Job 40:12 Ps 60:12 Ps 91:13 Lu 10:19**

Ver. 9.

Maketh; either,

1. Created them; or rather,

2. Ordereth and disposeth them, as the word *making* is sometimes used in Scripture; governeth their rising and setting, and all their influences.

Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south: these he names as stars or constellations of greatest note and eminency; for so they are both in Scripture and other authors, and such as have, or are thought to have, a special influence in raising storms and tempests; but under them lie seems to comprehend all the stars, which as they were created by God, so are under his government. Arcturus is a northern constellation, near that called the Bear, which riseth to us about the beginning of September, and by its rising produceth (as Pliny affirms) horrible storms and tempests. Orion is a more southerly constellation, that ariseth to us in December, and is noted by astronomers for raising fearful winds and tempests, both by sea and land. The Pleiades is a constellation not far from Orion, and near that called the Bull, which we call the Seven Stars: to us it riseth at the beginning of the spring, and by its rising causeth rains and tempests, and therefore is unwelcome to mariners at sea. *By the chambers (or inmost and secret chambers, as the word signifies) of the south,* he seems to understand those stars and constellations which are towards the southern pole, which are fitly called *inward chambers*, because they are for the most part hid and shut up (as chambers commonly are) from these parts of the world, and do not rise or appear to us till the beginning of summer, when they also raise southerly winds and tempests, as astronomers observe.

Ver. 10.

Which words were produced by Eliphaz, **#Job 5:9**, (where they are explained,) and are here repeated by Job, to show his agreement with him therein.

Ver. 11.

He goeth, i.e. he worketh by his providence in ways of mercy or judgment.

By me; or, *besides* or *before me*; in my presence.

I see him not; I see the effects, but I cannot understand the causes or grounds of his actions, for they are incomprehensible by me, or by any other men: for though he speaks only in his own

person, yet he means it of all men; that such is the weakness of men's understandings, that they cannot search out God's counsels and ways: see #Ac 17:27 Ro 11:33.

He passeth on also; he goeth from place to place, from one action to another. He speaks of God after the manner of men.

Ver. 12.

If he determine to take away from any man his children, or servants, or estate, as he hath done from me, who is able to restrain him from doing it? or who dare presume to reprove him for it? And therefore far be it from me to quarrel with God, whereof you untruly accuse me.

Ver. 13.

i.e. If God resolve not to withdraw his rod and stroke, the effect of his anger. Or without *if*, which is not in the Hebrew,

God will not withdraw his anger, i.e. not forbear to punish, neither because any man can overpower and restrain him, nor for fear lest he should rebuke him for proceeding to punish, as is implied by comparing this verse with the former.

The proud helpers, i.e. those men who shall undertake to uphold and defend him whom God intends to punish and destroy; who are fitly called *proud helpers*, because this is a most proud, and insolent, and presumptuous act, to oppose themselves to the Lord God Almighty, and to his counsels and courses: or, (as it is in the Hebrew,) *helpers of pride*, because they give assistance to that man who carries himself proudly and stoutly towards God under his correcting hand: or, (as some translate it,) *the helpers of Egypt*, or the Egyptian helpers, i.e. the most potent helpers; for Egypt was in Job's time a powerful and flourishing kingdom, and not far from Job's country. And the word *rahab*, here rendered *pride*, is elsewhere put for *Egypt*, as #Ps 87:4 Isa 51:9; and (as some take it) #Job 26:12.

Do stoop under him, i.e. shall fall and be crushed by him; and consequently they who are helped by him must fall with them.

Ver. 14.

Since no creature whatsoever can resist his power, and no man living can search out or comprehend his counsels and ways; how

can I, who am a poor, contemptible, dispirited creature, contend with him?

Answer him, i.e. answer his allegations and arguments produced against me.

Choose out my words to reason with him, Heb. *choose my words with* (or *before*, or *against*, as this particle is used, #**De 9:7 Ps 94:16 Pr 30:31**) him, i.e. shall I try whether God or I can choose fitter words, or stronger arguments? or shall I contend with him, and expect to get the better of him by using choice, and forcible, and elegant words, as one man doth with another?

Ver. 15.

Though I were righteous; though I had a most just cause, and were not conscious to myself of any sin.

Yet would I not answer, i.e. I durst not undertake to plead my cause against him, or maintain my integrity before him, because he knows me better than I know myself, and because I am wholly in his hands, and at his mercy.

I would make supplication to my Judge, to wit, that he would hear me meekly, and judge favourably of me and my cause, and not according to the rigours of his justice.

Ver. 16.

If I had called, i.e. prayed, as this word is commonly used, to wit, unto my Judge, for a favourable sentence, as he now said, and therefore it was needless here to mention the object of his calling or prayer.

Yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice; I could not believe that God had indeed granted my desire, though he had done it; because I am so infinitely below him, and obnoxious to him, and still full of the tokens of his displeasure; and therefore should conclude that it was but a pleasant dream or fancy, and not a real thing: compare #**Ps 126:1**.

Ver. 17.

This is the reason of his foregoing diffidence, that even when God seemed to answer him in words, yet the course of his actions towards him was of a quite contrary nature and tendency.

With a tempest; as with a tempest, i.e. unexpectedly, violently, and irrecoverably.

Without cause; not simply without any desert of his, or as if he had no sin in him, for he oft declares the contrary; but without any evident or special cause of such singular afflictions, i.e. any peculiar and extraordinary guilt, such as my friends charge me with.

Ver. 18.

My pains and miseries are continual, and I have not so much as a breathing time free from them. My afflictions are not only long and uninterrupted, but also exceeding sharp and violent, contrary to the common course of God's providence.

Ver. 19.

If my cause were to be decided by power,

lo, he is strong, i.e. stronger than I. If I would contend with him in a way of right, there is no superior judge that can summon him and me together, and appoint us a time of pleading before him, and oblige us both to stand to his sentence; and therefore I must be contented to sit down with the loss.

Ver. 20.

If I plead against God mine own righteousness and innocency, God is so infinitely wise and just, that he will find sufficient matter of condemnation from my own words, though spoken with all possible care and circumspection; or he will discover so much wickedness in me of which I was not aware, that I shall be forced to join with him in condemning myself.

If I say, I am perfect; if I were perfect in my own opinion; if I thought myself completely righteous and faultless, it, i.e. my own mouth, as he now said, or,

he, i.e. God, who is easily understood by comparing this with the former verses, where the same he is oft mentioned,

shall also prove me perverse.

Ver. 21.

i.e. Though God should acquit me in judgment, and pronounce me perfect or righteous,

yet would I not know, i.e. regard or value, (as that word is oft used,) *my soul*, i.e. my life; as the soul frequently signifies, as #Ge 19:17 Job 2:6 Joh 10:15,17; and as it is explained in the following branch, where *life* is put for soul, and despising for not knowing: and so the same thing is repeated in differing words, and the latter clause explains the former, which was more dark and doubtful, according to the usage of sacred Scripture. So the sense is, Though God should give sentence for me, yet I should be so overwhelmed with the dread and terror of the Divine Majesty, that I should be weary of my life. And therefore I abhor the thoughts of contending with my Maker, whereof you accuse me; and yet I have reason to be weary of my life, and to desire death. Or thus, *If I say, I am perfect*, as the very same Hebrew words are rendered, #Job 9:20, i.e. if I should think myself perfect,

yet I would not know, i.e. not acknowledge,

my soul; I could not own nor plead before God the perfection and integrity of my soul, but would only make supplication to my Judge, as he said, #Job 9:15, and flee to his grace and mercy; *I would abhor*, or *reject*, or *condemn my life*, i.e. my conversation. So the sense is, I would not insist upon nor trust to the integrity, either of my soul and heart, or of my life, so as to justify myself before the pure and piercing eyes of the all-seeing God.

Ver. 22.

In the other things which you have spoken of God's greatness, justice, &c., I do not contend with you, but this one thing I do and must affirm against you.

Therefore I said it; I did not utter it rashly, but upon deep consideration. God sends afflictions promiscuously upon good and bad men. Compare #Ps 73:2 Ec 9:2 Jer 12:1, &c.

Ver. 23.

If the scourge slay suddenly; either,

1. If some common and deadly judgment come upon a people, which destroys both good and bad. Or,
2. If God inflicts some grievous and unexpected stroke upon an innocent person, as it follows. *He will laugh at the trial of the innocent*; as he doth at the destruction of the wicked, #Ps 2:4. His

outward carriage is the same to both; he neglects the innocent, and seems not to answer their prayers, and suffers them to perish with others, as if he took pleasure in their ruin also. But withal, he intimates the matter and cause of his laughter or complacency which God takes in their afflictions, because to them they are but *trials* of their faith, and patience, and perseverance, which tends to God's honour, and their own eternal advantage.

Ver. 24.

The earth, i.e. the possession and dominion of men and things on earth.

Is given, to wit, by God, the great Lord and Disposer of it, by his providence.

Into the hand of the wicked; into their power. As good men are scourged, #Job 9:23, so the wicked are advanced and prospered, in this world.

He covereth the faces of the judges thereof, i.e. he blinds their eyes, that they cannot discern between truth and falsehood, justice and unrighteousness. He. Who? Either,

1. The wicked last mentioned, who either by power or by gifts corrupts the officers of justice. Or rather,

2. God, whom the pronoun he designed all along this chapter; who is oft said to *blind the minds* of men, which he doth not positively, by making them blind, but privatively, by withdrawing his own light, and leaving them to their own mistakes and lusts. Or by *judges* he may hear mean those who are worthy of that name, and duly administer that office; whose *faces* God may be said to cover, because he removeth them from their high places into obscurity, and covers them with contempt, and in a manner passeth a sentence of condemnation and destruction upon them; *covering of the face* being the usual posture of condemned persons, and of men in great misery; of which see #Es 7:8 Ps 44:15 Isa 22:17 Jer 14:4. So the sense of this verse is, God commonly advanceth wicked men into power and honour, and casteth down men of true worth and virtue from their seats. *If not*; if it be not as I say, if God do not these things. *Where, and who is he?* either,

1. Who will confute me by solid arguments? Or,
2. Who doth these things? Who but God doth dispose of the world in this manner?

Ver. 25.

What he had said of the calamities which God usually inflicted upon good men, he now exemplifieth in himself.

My days; the days, either of my prosperity; for the time of affliction is commonly described by the *night*; or rather, of my life, as the last clause showeth; for it were an absurd and contradictious speech to say that his prosperous days saw no good.

A post; who runs or rides upon swift horses.

They see no good; I enjoy no good in them. *Seeing* is oft put for experiencing either good or evil, #**Job 7:7 Ps 34:12 Joh 3:36 Joh 8:51**.

Ver. 26.

Swift ships, Heb. *ships of desire*; which make great haste, as if they longed for their desired haven, as it is called, #**Ps 107:30**. Or, ships of pleasure; which sail more swiftly than ships of great burden.

As the eagle; which generally flies most swiftly, #**De 28:49 Jer 4:13 La 4:19**, especially when its own hunger and the sight of its prey quickens its motion.

Ver. 27.

If I say; if I resolve within myself.

I will forget my complaints; I will cease complaining.

My heaviness, Heb. *mine anger*; wherewith Job was charged by his friends, #**Job 18:4**; my angry expressions. And comfort myself; I will endeavour to take comfort.

Ver. 28.

My sorrows; or, my pains and griefs. I find all such endeavours vain; for if my griefs be suspended for a little time, yet my fears continue.

I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent; I plainly perceive that my changing my note is to no purpose; for thou, O God, (to

whom he makes a sudden apostrophe, as he doth also #**Job 9:31**) wilt not clear my innocency, by removing those afflictions which make them judge me guilty of some peat crime. Words proceeding from great impatience and despair of relief.

Ver. 29.

Heb. *I shall be wicked, or guilty, to wit, before thee.* Whether I be holy or wicked, if I dispute with thee, I shall be found guilty. Or thus, *I shall be used like a wicked man,* and punished as such. So this is opposed to his *not being held innocent, #Job 9:28,* i.e. not being acquitted or exempt from punishment. Why then should I not indulge my griefs, but restrain them? Why should I comfort myself with vain hopes of deliverance, as thou advisest me, #**Job 8:6**; or seek to God, as I was directed, #**Job 5:8**, for that ease which I see he is resolved not to give me? Why should I trouble myself with clearing mine innocency, seeing God will still hold me guilty?

Ver. 30.

If I wash myself; either,

1. Really, by sanctification, cleansing my heart and life from all filthiness; or rather,
2. Declaratively or judicially, i.e. if I clear myself from all imputations, and fully prove my innocency before men.

With snow water, i.e. as men cleanse their bodies, and as under the law they purified themselves, with water, which he here calls *water of snow,* either because by its purity and brightness it resembled snow; or because in those dry countries, where fresh and pure water was scarce, snow water was much in use; or because that water might be much used among them in some of their ritual purifications, as coming down from heaven.

Ver. 31.

In the ditch, i.e. in miry and puddle water, whereby I shall become most filthy. But as Job's washing, so God's plunging him, &c., is not understood really, as if God would make him filthy; but only judicially, that God would prove him to be a most guilty and filthy creature, notwithstanding all the professions and evidences of his purity before men.

Mine own clothes shall abhor me, i.e. I shall be so altogether filthy, that my own clothes, if they had any sense in them, would abhor to touch me: a figure called *prosopopaeia*.

Ver. 32.

He is not a man, as I am; but one infinitely superior to me in majesty, and power, and wisdom, and justice.

That I should answer him; that I should presume to debate my cause with him, or answer his allegations against me.

That we should come together, face to face, to plead upon equal terms before a superior and indifferent judge.

Ver. 33.

Daysman; or, *a reprover*; or, *a judge* or *umpire*, whose office was to reprove the guilty person. *That might lay his hand upon us both*, i.e. use his power and authority to appoint the time and place of our meeting, to order and govern us in pleading, and to oblige us to stand to his decision. The

hand is oft put for power, and laying on the hand upon another was oftentimes an act and sign of superiority and dominion.

Ver. 34.

His fear; objectively so called, i.e. the fear and dread of him, of his majesty and justice. Let him not deal with me rigorously, according to his sovereign dominion and perfect justice, but according to his wonted grace and clemency.

Ver. 35.

i.e. I would speak freely for myself, being freed from the dread of his majesty, which takes away my spirit and courage, and stoppeth my mouth.

But it is not so with me, i.e. I am not free from his terror, and therefore cannot and dare not plead my cause boldly with him; and so have no thing else to do but to case myself by renewing my complaints; as he doth in the next words. Others thus, *but I am not so with myself*, i.e. I am in a manner beside myself, distracted with the terrors of God upon me. Or rather thus, *for I am not so with myself*, or in my own conscience, as I perceive I am in your eyes, to wit, a hypocrite and ungodly man. So this is a reason why he could speak to God without slavish fear, because he was

conscious to himself of his own integrity: I have a good conscience within myself, and therefore could use boldness in speaking to God, provided he would not deal with me in strict justice, but upon the terms of grace and mercy which he hath proposed to sinners, and with allowance to human infirmities.

JOB CHAPTER 10

His life a burden; his complaint that he could not see the cause or end of God's punishment: God delighteth not to oppress; nor was his innocence, though suspected by men, hid from God, **#Job 10 1-7**. He argueth that, being God's work, in his hands, receiving all from him, God would not destroy him, **#Job 10:8-13**. His sins expose him to God's wrath, which was terrible upon him, **#Job 10:14-17**; curseth his birth: death desirable to him, **#Job 10:18-22**.

Ver. 1.

So the sense is, My soul is weary of dwelling in this rotten and miserable carcass. Or, I am from my heart, or with my very soul, weary of my life; and therefore I may be excused if I complain. Or,

My soul is cut off while I live, i.e. I am dead whilst I live; I am in a manner buried alive.

I will leave my complaint upon myself: so the sense is, I will complain, and the burden or hazard of so doing I will take upon myself, and be willing to bear it; I must give my sorrows vent, *let come on me what will*, as he saith, **#Job 13:13**. But the words may be read interrogatively, *Shall I then* (or how *can I* then) leave my complaint (i.e. give over complaining) *within* or *concerning* (as the Hebrew *al* oft signifies) *myself*? Or they may be rendered thus, *I will strengthen* (as this verb signifies, **#Ne 3:8**) *my complaint against myself*; whereby he implies that he would not complain against God so as to accuse him of injustice, but only against himself, or against his own life; or, *concerning myself*, i.e. I must renew and increase my complaints, as God renews and increases my sorrows.

I will speak in the bitterness of my soul; my extreme misery forceth my complaints from me.

Ver. 2.

Do not condemn me; or, *Pronounce me not to be a wicked man*, as my friends do; neither deal with me as such, as I confess thou mightest do by thy sovereign power and in rigorous justice. O discover my integrity by removing this stroke, for which my friends so highly censure and condemn me.

Wherefore, i.e. for what ends and reasons, and for what sins? for I am not conscious to myself of any peculiar and eminent sins by which I have deserved to be made the most miserable of all mortals.

Ver. 3.

Dost thou take any pleasure in it? Hast thou any advantage or honour by it? Dost thou think it right and just, and becoming the Ruler of the world?

That thou shouldst oppress, by thy absolute and irresistible power, without any regard to that justice, and equity, and clemency by which thou usest to govern mankind.

That thou shouldst despise, i.e. show thy contempt of them, either by denying them common favour and protection, or by destroying them.

The work of thine hands, which every workman loves and maintains.

Shine upon the counsel of the wicked, i.e. by the methods of thy providence seem to favour the courses and practices of wicked men, to whom thou givest prosperity, and success, whilst thou frownest upon me and other good men. This may have reference either to Job's friends, whose ungodly censures God seemed to approve, by continuing Job's afflictions upon him; or to the Chaldeans and Sabeans, who had succeeded in their wicked attempts upon Job; but it seems to be more generally meant of wicked men.

Ver. 4.

Of flesh, i.e. of a man, who is called *flesh*, as #Ge 6:13 Isa 40:6.

Seest thou as man seeth? Man seeth outwards only, and judgeth by appearances, and is liable to many mistakes, and cannot search out secret faults without forcing men by cruel usage to accuse

themselves: but thou needest none of these arts; thou seest my heart and mine uprightness, which my friends do not see, who therefore are more excusable in charging me with hypocrisy: but thou knowest all things, thou needest not examine me by tortures, as thou now dost, **#Job 10:6**. *For thou knowest that I am not wicked*, as he saith, **#Job 10:7**, and therefore do not thou deal with me as if I were wicked.

Ver. 5.

Man's time is short and uncertain, and therefore he must improve his time whilst he hath it, and diligently search out the crimes of malefactors, and punish them whilst he may, lest by death he lose the opportunity of doing justice, and the criminal get out of his power. But it is not so with thee, thou art eternal and unchangeable, and seest at one view all men's hearts, and all their actions present and to come; and therefore thou dost not need to proceed with me in this manner, by making so long and so severe a scrutiny into my heart and life.

Ver. 6.

Keeping me so long as it were upon the rack to compel me to accuse myself, as men sometimes do.

Ver. 7.

I am not wicked, i.e. a hypocrite, or an ungodly man, as my friends account me; and therefore deal not with me as such.

There is none that can deliver out of thine hand: the sense is, either,

1. Thou dost not need to keep me fast in thy prison, lest I should make an escape, or any should rescue me out of thy hands, which none can do; therefore take off thy hand from me. Or,

2. If thou dost not help and deliver me, none else can do it; therefore do not thou fail me; which, considering God's merciful nature, is a good argument. If any man oppress another, he may have relief from thee, who art higher than his oppressor, **#Ec 5:8**; but thou art the supreme and uncontrollable Ruler of the world, and therefore thou must needs do right, **#Ge 18:25**; and therefore do not thou oppress me. **See Poole "Job 10:3"**. above, **#Job 10:4**.

Ver. 8.

Together round about, i.e. all of me; all the faculties of my soul, and all the parts of my body, which are now overspread with sores and ulcers; I am wholly thy creature and workmanship, made by thee and for thee.

Thou dost destroy me, or *swallow me up*, to wit, without cause, or any eminent provocation of mine; as if thou didst delight in doing and undoing, in making and then destroying thy creatures; which doth not become thy wisdom or goodness.

Ver. 9.

As the clay, i.e. of the clay; the note of similitude here expressing the truth of things, as it doth #**Joh 1:14**, and elsewhere, as hath been before observed. Or, as a potter maketh a vessel of the clay; and so this may note both the frailty of man's nature, which of itself decays and perisheth, and doth not need such violent shocks and storms to overthrow it; and the excellency of the Divine artifice, commended from the meanness of the materials out of which it was made; which is an argument why God should not destroy it.

Wilt thou bring me into dust again? wilt thou now causelessly and violently destroy thy own work? But the words are and may be read without an interrogation, and

thou wilt bring me into dust again, out of which I was made: I must die by the course of nature, and by the sentence of thy law; and therefore whilst I do live give me some ease and comfort.

Ver. 10.

Thus he modestly and accurately describes God's admirable work in making man out of a small and liquid, and as it were milky, substance, by degrees congealed and condensed into that exquisite frame of man's body.

Ver. 11.

Clothed me, i.e. covered my inward and more noble parts; which, as philosophers and physicians observe, are first formed. So he proceeds in describing man's formation gradually.

With bones and sinews; which are the stay and strength of the body; and some of them, as the skull and ribs, enclose and defend its vital and most noble parts.

Ver. 12.

Thou didst not only give me a curious body, but also a living and a reasonable soul: thou didst at first give me life, and then maintain it in me; both when I was in the womb, (which is a marvellous work of God,) and afterward, when I was unable to do any thing to preserve my own life.

Favour, or *benignity*, or *bounty*, or *mercy*, or *kindness*; which is here, as oft elsewhere, put for its fruits or effects. Thou didst not give a mere life, but many other favours necessary, or convenient, or belonging to it, such as nourishment by the breast, education, knowledge, and instruction, &c.

Thy visitation, i. e. the care of thy providence watching over me for my good, and visiting me in mercy; as God's *visiting* is understood, #Ex 4:31 Lu 1:78, though elsewhere it is an act of punishment.

My spirit, i.e. my soul or life, which is liable to manifold casualties and dangers, if God did not watch over us and guard us every day and moment. Thou hast hitherto done great things for me, given me life, and the blessings of life, and daily preservations and deliverances; and wilt thou now undo all that thou hast done? and shall I, who have been such an eminent monument of thy mercy, now be made a spectacle of thy vengeance, and that without cause?

Ver. 13.

This place may be understood either,

1. Of Job's present afflictions. So the sense is this, Yet in the midst of all those manifestations of thy grace and kindness to me, thou didst retain a secret purpose of changing thy course and carriage towards me, and of bringing these dreadful calamities upon me. Or rather,

2. Of his former mercies,

these things, to wit, last mentioned;

thou hast hid them in thy heart, i.e. thou dost exactly remember them, as this phrase is used, **#Ps 119:11 Lu 2:51**. So the argument is this, Let the remembrance of thy former great favours vouchsafed to me move thee to give me further blessings, and a speedy deliverance. For this is usual both with God and men, to choose and delight to do more good to those to whom they have done much good already; which is the ground of that known passage, **#Mt 13:12**. *To him that hath shall be given. With thee*, i.e. in thy mind and heart; thou hast not forgot it: so the same thing is here repeated in other words.

Ver. 14.

If I commit the least sin, (as who is there that liveth, and sinneth not?) thou dost not wink at or pass by my sins, as thou usually dost other men's, but dost severely and diligently observe them all, that thou mayst punish them: compare **#Job 14:16 31:4**.

Thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity; I perceive thou art resolved to punish me with rigour, and that thou wilt not pardon, and pity, and help me: words of great impatience and distrust.

Ver. 15.

If I be wicked, i.e. an ungodly hypocrite, as my friends esteem me, then I am truly and extremely, and must be eternally, miserable.

Righteous, i.e. an upright and good man: so, whether good or bad, all comes to one; I have no relief.

Yet will I not lift up my head; or, yet *can I not*, &c; the future tense being used potentially; yet I have no comfort, nor confidence, or hopes of any good. *Lifting up the head or face* is oft mentioned as a sign of comfort and confidence, as **#Ps 3:3 Lu 21:28**; as, on the contrary, grief and shame are described by its dejection or casting down.

Confusion, or *reproach*, from my friends, and from others, **#Job 30:1**, &c., and from God too, who casts me off, and makes me contemptible. I have abundance of shame in the disappointment of all my hopes, and the continuance and aggravation of my misery, notwithstanding all my prayers to God to remove or mitigate it; and I am confounded within myself, not knowing what to say or do. Let my extremity move thee to pity and help me.

Ver. 16.

As a fierce lion; which hunteth after his prey with great eagerness, and when he overtakes it, falls upon it with great fury.

And again thou showest thyself marvellous upon me, Heb.

and thou returnest and showest thyself marvellous upon, or *in*, or *against me*. The lion tears its prey speedily, and so ends its torments; but thou renewest my calamities again and again, and makest my plagues wonderful, both for kind, and extremity, and continuance.

Ver. 17.

Thy witnesses, i.e. thy judgments, which are the witnesses and evidences, both of my sins, and of thy wrath. *Thy indignation*, i.e. my miseries, the effects of thine anger. These words are added to explain what he meant by renewing witnesses.

Changes and war; or, *changes and an army*; which may be a figure called *hendiadis*, for *the changes of an army*, i.e. many miseries succeeding one another, like companies of the soldiers of an army in battle; or *changes* may note the various kinds, and an army the great numbers, of his afflictions.

Ver. 18.

To wit, alive, i.e. that I had never been born alive.

Ver. 19.

I should have been, or, *Oh that I had been!* and so in the following branch,

Oh that I had been carried! For why should not these verbs of the future tense be so rendered here, as that **#Job 10:18** is, the reason being wholly the same?

Ver. 20.

My life is short, and of itself hastens apace to an end; there is no need that thou shouldst push it forward, or grudge me some ease for so small a moment.

Let me alone; or, *lay aside*, or *remove*, thy hand or anger from me.

Ver. 21.

To the place whence I shall not return into this world and life: see #**Job 7:9,10**.

Darkness and the shadow of death, i.e. a dark and dismal shade: See Poole "**Job 3:5**".

Ver. 22.

A land of darkness; either in things, without any succession of day and night, winter and summer; or among persons, where great and small are in the same condition, #**Job 3:19**.

Where the light is as darkness; where there is no difference between light and darkness, where the day is as dark as the night, where there is nothing but perpetual and uninterrupted darkness.

JOB CHAPTER 11

Zophar's reproof: Job's words too many, and false, even to mockery, in justifying himself, #**Job 11:1-4**. Should God speak, his wisdom, and justice, and all his perfections would appear infinitely greater than what Job conceived of them #**Job 11:5-10**. God knoweth man; seeth wickedness, and considereth it; but man is ignorant and foolish, and in vain pretendeth to wisdom, #**Job 11:11,12**. If Job would prepare his heart, and pray, and put away his sin, he should again lift up his head, and forget his misery, and his last days be brightest; but the wicked shall perish, #**Job 11:13-20**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Dost thou think to carry thy cause by thy long and tedious discourses, consisting of empty words, without weight or reason? Shall we by our silence seem to approve of thy errors? or shall we think thy cause the better, because thou usest more words than we do?

Ver. 3.

Thy lies, i.e. thy false opinions and assertions, both concerning thyself and thy own innocency, and concerning the counsels and

ways of God, make men hold their peace; as if thy arguments were unanswerable.

When thou mockest, both God, **#Job 10:3**, and us, and our friendly and faithful counsels, **#Job 6:14,15,25,26**,

shall no man make thee ashamed, by discovering thy errors and follies?

Ver. 4.

My doctrine, concerning God and his providence. *Pure*, i.e. true and certain.

I am clean in thine eyes; I am innocent before God; I have not sinned, either by my former actions, or by my present expressions. Thou standest wholly upon thy justification. But Zophar aggravates and perverts Job's words, for he did not deny that he was a sinner in God's sight, **#Job 7:20,21 9:2,3 10:14**, but only that he was a hypocrite or ungodly man, as they made him.

Ver. 5.

i.e. Plead with thee, according to thy desire, **#Job 9:32**, &c. He would soon put thee to silence and shame.

Ver. 6.

The secrets of wisdom, i.e. the unknown and unsearchable depths of God's wisdom and counsels in dealing with his creatures.

That they are double to that which is, i.e. that they are far more and greater (the word double being used indefinitely for manifold, or plentiful, as **#Isa 40:2 61:7 Jer 17:18 Zec 9:12**) than that which hath a being or existence, i.e. the secret wisdom of God is infinitely greater than that which is revealed to us by his word or works. The greatest part of what is known of God, is the least part of those perfections that are in him. And therefore thou dost rashly and foolishly in passing such a bold censure upon God's ways, and judging so harshly of his proceedings with thee, because thou dost not comprehend the reasons of them, and in judging thyself innocent, because thou dost not see thy sins; whereas the all-knowing God sees innumerable sins in thee, for which he may utterly destroy thee, though thou discernest them not. But the words are and must be rendered, either thus, *that* he hath *double*,

i.e. abundant, wisdom, for so this Hebrew word signifies, #**Job 6:13 12:16 Pr 2:7 3:21**; or,

that they are double to, or *in*, that *being or essence*, to wit, to God, of whom he is here speaking; or, *to the being*, i.e. to God, who calls himself by the name *I am*, #**Ex 3:14**, which signifies *being*; and who appropriates being to himself, #**Isa 45:18**, *I am, and there is none else besides me*; as elsewhere he is said to be the *only wise*, and *only Potentate*, and *only immortal being*, #**1Ti 1:17 6:15,16**. *God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth*, Heb. *God lends, or gives, or forgives, thee part of thine iniquity, or of thy punishment*; so far is he from dealing worse than thou deservest, as thou dost most falsely and wickedly accuse him.

Ver. 7.

Find out God, i.e. discover all the depths of his wisdom, and the reasons of all his actions.

Ver. 8.

Thou canst not measure the heights of the visible heavens, much less of the Divine perfections.

What canst thou do, to wit, to find him out?

What canst thou know, concerning him and his ways, which are far out of thy sight and reach?

Ver. 9.

Longer than the earth, from one end to the other.

Broader than the sea; which is called *the great and wide sea*, #**Psa 104:25**.

Ver. 10.

If he cut off, to wit, a person or a family. *Shut up in a prison*, or in the hands of an enemy. This *shutting up* is opposed to the opening of the prison doors, and to that enlargement which God is elsewhere said to give to men.

Gather together; either,

1. In a way of judgment, as a like word is used, #**Psa 26:9**, *Gather not my soul with sinners*. Or rather,

2. In a way of mercy, as this word is generally used in Scripture; this being every where promised by God to his people as an eminent mercy, that he would *gather* them *together*. So this is opposed to the former actions, and the sense of the place is, whether it pleaseth God to scatter a family, or to gather them together from their dispersions.

Who can hinder him from doing what he pleaseth and designeth with his own creatures? who can restrain him, either by giving law to him, or by force and power? or, *who can contradict or answer him*, or *object* against him, or *retort or return upon him*, i.e. charge him with injustice in such proceedings? which sense may seem to agree best both with the scope of the place and state of the question between him and Job; which was not whether any man could resist God's power, but whether he could question his justice; and with the following verse.

Ver. 11.

He knoweth vain men: though men know but little of God, and therefore are very unfit judges of all his counsels and actions; yet God knows man exactly, and his vanity, or *falsehood*, or *folly*, or rashness; for all these this word signifies. He knoweth that every man in the world is guilty of much vanity and folly, and therefore seeth sufficient reason for his severity against the best men, such as thou, O Job, fanciest thyself to be; and if thou wert so, thou hast no reason to wonder at or quarrel with his proceedings; and if thy quarrel be that he *shuts thee up*, or *cuts thee off*, when he *gathers others* under his wing and protection, whom thou thinkest or knowest to be worse than thyself, while thou dost impeach his justice, thou dost but betray thy own vanity and folly; for he knows both whom he chastiseth, and whom he spareth, and why he doth it, though he do not acquaint thee with the reasons of all his actions.

He seeth wickedness also; as he knoweth the vanity of all men, so he exactly perceiveth the wickedness of evil men, though it be covered with the veil of religion. He seeth thy evil heart, which discovers itself by such wicked and scandalous speeches against the justice and goodness of his providence, which gives him just cause to continue and increase thy miseries. Though thou art

partial, and flatterest thyself with a conceit of thy own integrity, yet he knoweth thy hypocrisy and wickedness.

Will he not then consider it? shall he only see it as an idle spectator, and not observe it as a judge, to requite and punish it?

Ver. 12.

Or, *Yet*, or *But*, *vain* or *empty man* (that foolish creature, that since the fall is void of all true wisdom and solid knowledge and judgment of the things of God) would be wise, i.e. pretends to be, and would be thought, wise, and able to pass a censure upon all God's ways and works. Or thus, *But vain man is foolish*, or *without heart*, i.e. without understanding, unable to judge aright of the ways and things of God. For a verb very like this and coming from the same root, signifies to *have one's heart taken away*, #**So 4:9**.

Though man be born; and *man is born*, i. e. he is by his birth such: this evil is now natural and hereditary, and therefore common to all men; and therefore it is not strange if Job partake of the common distemper.

Like a wild ass's colt, i.e. ignorant, and dull, and stupid, as to the knowledge of Divine things, and withal heady and untractable; and therefore very incompetent to judge of these high affairs.

Ver. 13.

O Job, thy business is not to quarrel with thy Maker, or his works, but to address thyself to him.

Prepare thine heart, to wit, to seek God, as it is expressed, #**2Ch 19:3 30:19 Ps 78:8**. *If thou prepare thy heart* by sincere repentance for all thy hard speeches of God, and sins against him, and with a pure and upright heart seek unto him; without which thy prayers will be in vain. Or,

If thou directest, or *rectifiest*, *thine heart*, turning thy bold contentions with God into humble and sincere supplications to him.

Stretch out thine hands, i.e. pray, which is here described by its usual gesture; as #**Job 15:25 Ps 88:9**.

Towards him, i.e. to God, as appears both from the nature of the thing, and from the context.

Ver. 14.

Either,

1. If thou hast in thine hand or possession any good, got by injury or oppression, as it seems they supposed that he had. Or,

2. More generally, If thou allowest thyself in any sinful practices. The *hand* is put for action, whereof it is the instrument.

Put it far away; keep thyself at a great distance, not only from such actions, but also from the very occasions and appearances of them.

Let not wickedness dwell, let it not have a quiet and settled abode, or allowance, in thy habitation, i.e. either in thyself, or in thy family; whose sins Job was obliged as far as he could to prevent or reform; as he had done, **#Job 1:5**. He saith

tabernacles, because anciently the habitations of great men consisted of several tents or tabernacles, as we see, **#Ge 24:67 31:33**.

Ver. 15.

Then shalt thou lift up thy face; which notes cheerfulness, and holy boldness and confidence; as a dejected countenance notes grief and shame. See **#Ge 4:5,6 2Sa 2:22 Job 22:26 Lu 21:28**.

Without spot; or, being *without spot*; so it is only an ellipsis of the verb substantive, which is most frequent. And this fitly follows as the ground of his confidence, because he should in this case have a clear and unspotted conscience, and a sense of his own innocency. Or, *without blemish*, as the word properly signifies, i.e. without any sense of guilt, or any shame consequent upon it, either from God or men. The ground of the expression is this, that when men's faces are spotted with dirt, they are ashamed to show them. And Job was charged by his friends as having many spots upon him, yea, such as were not the spots of God's children.

Stedfast; or, *firm*, or *fixed*; either,

1. As to his outward condition, which should be constantly prosperous. Or rather,

2. As to his mind, which should have strong and comfortable assurance of God's favour, and of his own safety and happiness. For this *steadfastness* is opposed unto that *fear* which is incident to wicked men; who, even when they are free from actual miseries, yet oftentimes are tormented with the dread of them.

Ver. 16.

Thou shalt be free from fear, because thy great and settled prosperity shall banish out of thy mind all those sad and irksome thoughts of thy former calamities, which naturally engender fears of the continuance or return of them. Persons blessed with eminent deliverances, and a happy settlement, are frequently said in Scripture to

forget their former sorrows, as **#Ge 41:51 Isa 54:4 Joh 16:21**; not that they simply forget them, but because they have no sad or frightful remembrance of them; for *remembering* and *forgetting* in Scripture do not simply note acts of the mind, but also affections and practices suitable to them, as is well known.

Remember it as waters that pass away; thou shalt remember them no more than men remember either a land-flood, which as it comes, so it goes away, suddenly, and leaves few or no footsteps or memorials behind it; or the waters of a river, which as soon as they are out of sight are out of mind, because of the new waters which immediately come in their stead.

Ver. 17.

Thine age, i.e. the remainder of thy life and time in this world.

Shall be clearer, Heb. *shall arise*. Men are said to fall into troubles, and to arise out of them.

Than the noon-day; or, *above the noon-day*, or above the sun at noon-day, when it is at its highest pitch, as well as in its greatest glory.

Thou shalt shine forth: light in Scripture commonly signifies prosperity and glory, as **#Es 8:16 Job 18:5,6 38:15 Pr 4:18**. Or, *if thou art in darkness*, as this word properly signifies, **#Job 10:22 Am 4:13**, i.e. if thou comest into any distress and trouble. *Shalt be as the morning*, i.e. that night of trouble shall certainly and speedily be followed with the morning of deliverance and

comfort, which, like the morning light, shall shine brighter and brighter until the perfect day.

Ver. 18.

i.e. Thy mind shall be quiet and free from terrors, because thou shalt have a firm and well-grounded hope and confidence in God's merciful and providential care of thee. Or, *thou shalt be confident that thou shalt have what thou hopest for*, the act, *hope*, being put for the object, as is very usual, i.e. thou shalt have assurance in and from God, that thy hopes shall not be disappointed, but fulfilled. This is opposed to that fear, **#Job 11:15**.

Thou shalt dig about thee; either to fix thy tents, which after the manner of the Arabians were removed from place to place for conveniency of pasturage for their cattle; or to find out water for thy cattle, as they did, **#Ge 26**; or to plough the ground, as he had done, **#Job 1:14**; or to make a fence about thy dwelling; for both the foregoing and following passages express his secure and safe condition.

In safety; free from dangers and the fear of them, because of God's fatherly providence watching over thee when thou canst not watch over thyself.

Ver. 19.

Desiring thy favour and friendship, because of thy great power, and riches, and eminent felicity: see **#Ge 26:26**, &c.

Ver. 20.

Fail; or *be consumed*; either with grief and fears for their sore calamities; or with long looking for what they shall never attain, as this phrase is taken, **#Ps 69:3 Jer 14:6 La 4:17**. And this shall be thy condition, O Job, if thou persistest in thine impiety.

They shall not escape; they shall never obtain deliverance out of their distresses, but shall perish in them.

As the giving up of the ghost, i.e. shall be as vain and desperate as the hope of life is in a man, when he is at the very point of death. Or, *as a puff of breath*, which is gone in a moment without all hopes of recovery.

JOB CHAPTER 12

Job's answer: his friends' self-conceit: the miserable always despised, though upright; the wicked prosper, #**Job 12:1-6**. God's power and providence is seen in his works, #**Job 12:7-11**. With the ancient is wisdom, but especially in God, and power: judges are fools, princes weak and mean, darkness light, before him, #**Job 12:12-22**; and whole nations are overruled by him, #**Job 12:23-25**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Ye are the people; you three, and you only, are *the people*, i.e. people of all people for eminency of wisdom, the only company of reasonable creatures; all others are but fools or beasts: you have engrossed all the reason of mankind; and each of you have as much wisdom as a whole people put together. It is an ironical expression, as the next verse showeth.

Wisdom shall die with you; all the wisdom and knowledge of Divine things which is in the world lives in you, and will die and be utterly lost when you die. This you think of yourselves; and this makes you so confidently and peremptorily deliver your opinions, and give laws to me and all mankind, and even to God himself.

Ver. 3.

An understanding, Heb. *a heart*; which is oft put for the *understanding*, as #**Job 34:34 Jer 5:21 Ac 8:22**; i.e. God hath given me also the knowledge and ability to judge of these matters.

I am not inferior to you in these things; which he speaketh, not in a way of vain-glorious boasting, but for the just and necessary vindication both of himself; and of that cause of God, which for the matter and substance of it he maintained rightly, as God himself attests, #**Job 42:7**.

Who knoweth not such things as these? the truth is, neither you nor I have any reason to be puffed up with our knowledge of these things; for the most foolish and barbarous nations know that God

is infinite in wisdom, and power, and justice. But this is not the question between you and me.

Ver. 4.

As one mocked of his neighbour, Heb. *I am a derision* (the infinitive being put for a noun, as is usual both in the Hebrew and other languages) *to my neighbour*, i.e. to these three, who have pretended and would be thought to be my friends and neighbours; whom therefore such carriage doth very ill become. Instead of supporting and comforting me, they make a sport and scorn of me.

Who calleth upon God, and he answereth him. This *who* belongs either,

1. To Job, who here declares his own practice in this case: When you mock me, I go to God with my complaints and prayers, and he hears me, though you will not. But this seems not to agree either with the context, or with other passages of Job; in which he constantly complains that God did not hear nor regard his prayers, nor pity and help him. Or,

2. To Job's friends; and so this is either,

1. An aggravation of their crime, that they should mock him who made a great profession of religion, who used duly to call upon God, and to receive answers from him, and therefore should have carried themselves more piously, and charitably, and compassionately towards their miserable brother. Or,

2. As the reason of their mockage of Job, because God, who neglected Job's prayers, heard theirs, and gave them those mercies for which they prayed; and therefore being themselves well and at ease, they were hard-hearted towards their poor afflicted brother, as the manner of men is. This seems to suit well with the following verse. Or,

3. As all argument against their scorning or slighting of him: God hears you when you pray, therefore you should turn your mocks of me into prayers for me; and you should pity me, whom God doth not hear when I pray; and as God hears you, so you should hear and comfort me, when I pour out my complaints to you. But these words may be brought in mimetically, as being some of their scoffing words: They say of me, *Let him call upon God, and God*

will hear him; for so they had suggested to Job, **#Job 5:8 8:5 11:13**. But this, saith Job, I take for a piece of mockery, and insulting over my miseries; for I know by sad experience, and they see the contrary, that though I call and cry again and again, yet God hath no regard to me.

The just, upright man is laughed to scorn, i.e. I, who, notwithstanding all their hard censures and reproaches, must and dare still own it, that through God's grace I am a just and upright man, am derided by them. This he repeats again, because it was very grievous and burdensome to him.

Ver. 5.

i.e. The just man last mentioned, who is upon the brink of the pit or grave, ready to fall into mischief, so as never to rise again in this world, which is my case, and the occasion of their scorn and contempt.

As a lamp despised, i.e. like a lamp or torch, which whilst it shines clearly and in a dark night is very useful and comfortable; but when it draws towards an end, and is nigh extinct, and in the light, is neglected and despised, as that which is unnecessary, and troublesome, and offensive. So the same man, who, when his feet stand fast in a prosperous condition, is magnified and adored by all, when his feet *slip* or *stumble*, as the phrase is **#Ps 94:18 Jer 13:16**, when he is in misery, is commonly forsaken and despised.

In the thought of him that is at ease, i.e. in the opinion of a man that lives in great ease and outward happiness, which generally makes persons to forget and despise those who are in affliction. But these words are a little otherwise rendered, and that agreeably to the order of the words in the Hebrew text, He (which is easily understood out of **#Job 12:4**, the just and upright man) is as *a torch despised in the opinion or thought* (as this or the like words coming from the same Hebrew root are used, **#Ps 146:4 Da 6:3 Jon 1:6**. Or, *because of the splendour*; for so this root and its derivatives elsewhere signify, as **#So 5:14 Jer 5:28 Eze 27:19**. And either of these significations agree well with the place. Or, *compared with the splendour* or greater lustre and glory) *of him that lives in tranquillity; he* (i.e. the just man) *is* (or, *because he is*;

for this may be the reason of the contempt) *ready to slip with his foot*, i.e. ready to perish.

Ver. 6.

The tabernacles of robbers prosper: thy opinion, delivered #Job 11:14, &c, is confuted by daily experience; which shows that the most wicked, and injurious, and impudent oppressors, tyrants, and robbers, are so far from meeting with those disappointments and miseries wherewith thou didst threaten them, that they commonly succeed in their cursed enterprises, and flourish in wealth and glory, and fill their houses with the goods of others which they violently took away; whereof the Chaldeans and Sabeans, #Job 1:15,17, are a present and pregnant evidence.

They that provoke God are secure; they whose common practice it is to despise and provoke God are confident and secure, live without danger or fear.

Into whose hand God bringeth abundantly; so far is God from crushing such persons, that he seems to favour them with wonderful success, and by his special and more than common providence *puts into their hands* the opportunities which they seek, and the persons and goods of other more righteous men, which they lie in wait for.

Ver. 7.

They shall teach thee, to wit, objectively, i.e. if thou observest the beasts, and their properties, and actions, and events, from them thou mayst learn this lesson. What lesson? I answer, either,

1. That which was last mentioned, #Job 12:5. God's providence doth order things in the like manner among the very beasts, and fowls, and fishes; of which the most ravenous and mischievous fare the best, whilst those which are more harmless, and serviceable, and beneficial to men meet with the hardest usage. Or,

2. That which Zophar had uttered with so much pomp and gravity, #Job 11:7-9, concerning God's infinite wisdom; which, saith Job, thou needest not go into heaven or hell to know, but thou mayst learn it even from the beasts, &c.

Ver. 8.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 9.

In all these, or, *by all these*, brute creatures, that God by his power and wisdom hath created and ordered all this which is in them, or is done by and among them.

Ver. 10.

In whose hand, i.e. at whose absolute disposal, it is to give it, or take it away, when and how it seemeth good to him.

The soul; the life, or the soul the principle of life.

Of every living thing, i.e. of all unreasonable creatures, of which he spoke #Job 12:7, opposed to man in the last words.

The breath, or, *the spirit*, as that word is commonly used, i.e. the immortal soul; which is no less a creature, and in God's power to dispose of it, than the animal soul of unreasonable creatures.

Ver. 11.

As the mouth tasteth and thereby judgeth of meats, and as it liketh or disliketh, so it receiveth or rejecteth, what is put into it; so it is the office of the ear, or rather of the mind, which hears and receives the opinions and discourses of others by the ear, not rashly to approve or condemn every thing which it hears, but diligently and thoroughly to search and try whether it be true, and so to be embraced, or false, and to be rejected. Interpreters are much puzzled about the connexion and design of these words; but they seem to be either,

1. An apology for himself, why he did not comply with their opinion and all arguments, because they did not suit with his ear or mind; and though he had considered and tried them, he could not discern any weight in them. Or rather,

2. A reproof to his friends, that they did so hastily condemn his person and his doctrine without a strict and serious inquiry. Or,

3. A preface to his following discourse; whereby he invites them to hear and judge of his words and arguments more candidly and impartially; and not to scorn that he said because of his present poverty and misery, as men at ease used to do; nor to cast away

the good for any mixture of bad with it; but calmly to weigh and debate things, both within and among themselves, and with him, that they and he too might all agree in disallowing whatsoever should appear to be false, and owning of every truth.

Ver. 12.

These words contain a concession of what Bildad had said **#Job 8:8,9**, and a joining with him in that appeal; but withal, an intimation that this wisdom was but finite, and imperfect, and liable to many mistakes; and indeed mere ignorance and folly, if compared with the Divine wisdom, of which he speaks in the next and following verses. And therefore that antiquity which they pretended for their opinion ought not to be received against the oracles or truths of the eternal and most wise God.

Ver. 13.

With him, i.e. with God; the relative being put for the antecedent, which is easily and necessarily understood out of the scope of the place, and all the following verses.

Wisdom; perfect wisdom is only in him, and all wisdom in the world cometh from him, who giveth to old or young as it pleaseth him. The ancient are not wise without his gift and grace, and with that a younger man may be wiser *than the ancients*, as David was, **#Ps 119:100**.

Counsel and understanding; *counsel*, i.e. practical wisdom to guide all the affairs of the world; and *understanding*, or a speculative knowledge of all persons and things.

Ver. 14.

He breaketh down, to wit, houses, castles, cities, which God designeth to destroy utterly.

He shutteth up; if he will shut up a man in prison, or in any straits or troubles.

There can be no opening, without God's permission and providence.

Ver. 15.

He withholdeth the waters; which are reserved in the clouds, that they may not fall upon the earth.

They dry up, i.e. the waters upon the earth, ponds, and springs, and brooks, and rivers.

Ver. 16.

He doth the things here mentioned in the foregoing and succeeding verses, and that both powerfully, so as no creature can resist and hinder him, and wisely, so as none can prevent and overreach him. The same thing he had said before, **#Job 12:13**, but he repeats it here to prepare the way for the following events, which are eminent instances both of his power and wisdom.

Are his, i.e. from or by him, and wholly subject to his disposal. That one man deceiveth another, and that the other is deceived by him, either in Divine or civil and worldly things, (which seem to be principally intended here, by comparing the following verses,) this is from God, and by the conduct of his wise and powerful providence. God giveth to the deceiver more wit, and knowledge, and art, and withal opportunity, and all favourable circumstances for his deceit. He also gives less understanding to the deceived, and withdraws from him, either wholly or in part, that common light of discretion which is his free gift; and he may justly give, or take away, as he pleaseth, and leaves him to his own ignorance and error, pride and self-conceit, and to all those prejudices, passions, and lusts which commonly corrupt men's minds, and to the power and crafts of Satan, that grand deceiver. He governs the deceiver, and sets bounds to his deceits, to whom, and when, and how far they shall extend; as is manifest from **#De 13:1 1Ki 22:20 Isa 19:14 Eze 14:9 Mt 24:24 2Th 2:11 Re 20:3,8**. He also overrules all this to his own glory, and the accomplishment of his righteous designs of trying the good, and punishing wicked men, by giving them up to believe lies. Yet God is not the cause or author of any error or sin, but only the wise and holy governor and disposer of it.

Ver. 17.

The wise *counsellors* or statesmen, by whom the affairs of kings and kingdoms are ordered, *he leadeth* away as captives in triumph, being spoiled either of that wisdom which they had, or seemed or pretended to have; or of that power and dignity which they had enjoyed.

Maketh the judges fools; partly by discovering their folly, and partly by infatuating their minds, and turning their own counsels to their ruin; of which see #2Sa 15:31 17:14,23 Isa 19:11 1Co 1:19.

Ver. 18.

He looseth the bond of kings; either,

1. Passively, whereby they are bound. He freeth them from prison or restraint. Or rather,

2. Actively, that wherewith they bind their subjects to obedience, to wit, their power and authority, and that majesty which God stamps upon kings to keep their people in awe; all which God can, and oft doth, take away from them, and freeth the people from their bonds, when it pleaseth him; of which all histories give instances. See #Da 2:21.

With a girdle; either,

1. With a girdle of dignity and glory, which was put upon the loins of men in great honour and authority, as #Isa 11:5 22:21 Jer 13:1,2. So this member of the verse is opposite to the; former, and the sense of the whole is, he either casteth down kings or raiseth them up, as he pleaseth. But the Scripture no where mentions this girdle as one of the ornaments of kings. Or rather,

2. With a servile girdle; for seeing all, both the foregoing and succeeding passages, do evidently note acts of judgment or punishments inflicted upon them, it seems improper to understand this alone of an act of God's favour to them. So the sense is, he reduceth them into a mean and servile condition; which is thus expressed, because servants did use to gird up their garments, (which after the manner of those parts and time were loose and long,) that they might be fitter for attendance upon their masters; of which see #Lu 12:37 17:8. And so this is an amplification of the former sentence. He not only deposeth them from their thrones, but brings them into bondage and slavery.

Ver. 19.

Princes; so this word, which usually signifies priests, is oft used, as #Ge 41:45 47:22,26 Ex 2:16 2Sa 8:18, compared with #1Ch 18:17.

Ver. 20.

Removeth away the speech; either,

1. By taking away or restraining the gift of utterance from them, that they should not be able to express their thoughts with such clearness and power as they used to do; which God oft doth to wise and eloquent men. Or,
2. By bringing them into such straits and troubles that they know not what to say or advise. Or,
3. By taking away their understanding, which should suggest and direct their speech, as it here follows. Or,
4. By permitting them to betray their trust, and either not to speak when they should, or to speak otherwise than they should and to use their wit and rhetoric not to direct, but to deceive, and so destroy a prince.

Of the trusty, i.e. of those wise and eloquent counsellors that were, and for their great abilities might be, trusted by the greatest princes with all their affairs.

Ver. 21.

He poureth contempt upon princes, i.e. he makes them contemptible to their subjects and others.

Weakeneth, Heb. *he looseth the girdle*; which phrase signifies weakness, as #Isa 5:27; as the girding of the girdle notes strength and power, as #Isa 22:21 45:5; both these phrases being taken from the quality of their garments, which being loose and long, did disenable a man for travel or work.

Ver. 22.

Deep things out of darkness, i.e. the most secret and crafty counsels of princes, which are contrived and carried on in the dark.

Ver. 23.

What hitherto he said of princes, he now applies to nations and people, whom God doth either increase or diminish as he pleaseth.

He enlargeth the nations; he multiplies them, so that they are forced to send forth colonies into other lands.

Straiteneth them again; or, *leadeth them in, or bringeth them back*, into their own land, and confineth them there.

Ver. 24.

The heart; which signifies either,

1. Their courage, as **#Ps 76:12**; or rather,
2. Their wisdom and counsel, as **#Job 5:13 Isa 3:4**, as the following words show.

The chief; either for place and power, or for wisdom and conduct.

Causeth them to wander in a wilderness, i.e. fills them with confusion, and uncertainty, and perplexity of mind, so that they know not how to govern themselves or their people.

Ver. 25.

They grope, like men that cannot see their way.

In the dark without light; two phrases expressing the same thing, emphatically to express their profound darkness.

Like a drunken man, who reels hither and thither without any certainty. So they sometimes take one course, and sometimes another, as resolving to try all experiments, and indeed not knowing what to do.

JOB CHAPTER 13

Job's friends not wiser than he: he would reason with God; but they were liars, and talked deceitfully for God, who would search and reprove them for accepting persons, **#Job 13:1-10**. God's excellency, and they as ashes and clay, **#Job 13:11,12**. He is resolute, being in extreme misery, and having confidence in God, before whom he would speak, and God should save him; not so with a hypocrite, **#Job 13:13-16**. He ordereth his cause to plead with God; only desireth a removal of God's hand upon him, **#Job 13:17-22**. His request to know his sins and God's purpose, since God delighteth not in our misery, **#Job 13:23-28**.

Ver. 1.

All this which either you or I have discoursed concerning the infinite power and wisdom of God, I know, both by seeing it, i.e.

by my own observation and experience, and by *hearing* it from my ancestors; so that I did not need your tedious and impertinent discourses concerning those matters.

Ver. 2.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 3.

According to thy wish, **#Job 11:5**, I had rather debate the matter with God than with you. I am not afraid of presenting my person and cause before him, who is a witness of my integrity, and would not deal so unmercifully with me as you do.

Ver. 4.

Forgers of lies, i.e. authors of false doctrine, to wit, that great afflictions are peculiar to hypocrites and wicked men.

Physicians of no value; unfaithful and unskilful; prescribing bad remedies, and misapplying good ones.

Ver. 5.

For then your ignorance and folly had been concealed, which is now manifest. Compare **#Pr 17:28**.

Ver. 6.

i.e. Attend to it, and consider it more seriously than you have done.

The pleadings of my lips, i.e. the arguments which I shall produce.

Ver. 7.

Will you utter falsehoods upon pretence of pleasing God, or of maintaining God's honour or justice? Doth he need such defences?

Ver. 8.

Will ye accept his person? not judging according to the right of the cause, but the quality of the person, as corrupt judges do.

Will ye contend, i.e. wrangle and quarrel with me, and cavil at my speeches, and pervert my meaning?

For God, i.e. that you may gratify him, or defend his rights.

Ver. 9.

Is it good? will it be to your credit and comfort?

Search you out, i.e. narrowly examine your hearts and discourses, whether you have uttered truth or falsehood, and whether your speeches proceed from true zeal for God, or from your own prejudices and passions, and from a desire to curry favour with him.

Do ye so mock him, to wit, by covering your uncharitableness and corrupt affections with pretences of piety, as if God could not discern your artifices; or by pleading his cause with weak and foolish arguments, which is a kind of mockery to him, and an injury to his cause; or by seeking to flatter him with false praises, as if he did distribute the things of this world with exact justice, prospering only the good, and severely afflicting none but wicked men?

Ver. 10.

i.e. Punish you; as this word is oft used, as hath been once and again observed.

Secretly; though it be concealed in your own breasts, and no eye see it; yea, though it be so close that your own minds and consciences, through ignorance, or inadvertency, or slothfulness, do not perceive it; yet He, who is greater than your consciences, sees and knows it.

Ver. 11.

His excellency; his infinite wisdom, which sees your secret falsehoods; and his justice and power, which can and will punish you for it.

Make you afraid of speaking rashly or falsely of his ways and counsels.

Ver. 12.

Your remembrances; either,

1. Actively, i.e. your memorials, or your discourses and arguments, by which you design to bring things to my remembrance. So he might possibly allude to that passage, **#Job 4:7. Remember, I pray thee, &c.** That and all your other mementos

are like unto ashes, i.e. contemptible and unprofitable, Heb. *are parables, or speeches, of dust, or ashes.* Or,

2. Passively; all that which is most excellent and memorable in you, your wealth, and dignity, and wit, and reputation, or whatsoever it is for which you expect or desire to be remembered, it is all but poor despicable dust and ashes. And therefore you have just reason to abhor yourselves, and to dread the Divine Majesty, as I now advised you.

Your bodies; though they be not full of sores and boils as mine is, yet they are but dust, and to dust they shall return as well as mine. Heb. *your backs*, which, being the strongest part of the body, is put for the whole body. Or, *your eminencies, or excellencies*, as this word most properly signifies, as Hebricians observe; so it answers to their memorables. All those things wherein you do, or think that you do, excel others, are but like eminencies, or lumps, or heaps of clay, vain and useless things, if compared with the excellencies of God. Or, *your heights*, i.e. your lofty discourses, are like clay, i.e. without solidity and strength.

Ver. 13.

Do not now interrupt me in my discourse; which peradventure he observed by their gestures some of them were now attempting.

That I may speak; that I may freely utter my whole mind.

Let come on me what will: for the event of my discourse with God, wherewith you threaten me, I am willing to submit myself to him, to do with me as he pleaseth; for I know he will not judge so severely and partially of me, or my words, as you do, but will accept what is good, and pass by any circumstantial defects in my person or speech, as knowing that I speak from an upright heart.

Ver. 14.

According to this translation the sense seems to be this, If you speak truth, and God punisheth none but wicked men, why doth he bring me (whom he knows to be no hypocrite, as you slander me) to that extremity of pain and misery, that I am almost constrained to tear and eat my own flesh, (which is mentioned as the character of men in great anguish, #Isa 9:20 49:26) and am ready to lay violent hands upon myself? Is it so great a crime to complain in this case, or at least to inquire into the cause of this

unwonted severity? But this sense seems not well to suit either with the foregoing or following verses, but to come in abruptly. Others therefore render the words thus,

Why should I take my flesh in my teeth, &c.? And so this may be either,

1. A reason of his ardent desire of liberty of speech, because he could hold his tongue no longer, but must needs tear himself to pieces, if he had not some vent for his grief. So this agrees well both with **#Job 13:13**, where he desired this freedom; and with **#Job 13:19**, where the same sense is expressed in plainer words. Or,

2. An antidote against despair. I perceive, O my friends, by your discourses, that you intend to drive me to utter despair, if I do not turn to God in another manner than yet I have done; which if it were true, I should certainly tear my flesh, and violently take away my own life; but I see no reason why I should give way to any such despair or desperate actions? And this also hath a good dependence upon the foregoing words, *let come on me what will*; (q.d. But I have no reason to fear such consequences as you suggest, nor to despair of a merciful audience and relief from God;) and a good connexion with those which follow, **#Job 13:15**, where he declares his hope and confidence in God. The phrase of having one's *life in his hand* notes a condition extremely dangerous, and almost desperate, as **#Jud 12:3 1Sa 19:5 28:21 Ps 119:109**.

Ver. 15.

Though God should yet more and more increase my torments, so that I could bear them no longer, but should perceive myself to be at the point of death, and without all hopes of recovery in this world.

Yet will I trust in him; or, *shall I not trust in him?* Should I despair? No, I will not. I know he is a just, and a faithful, and merciful God, and he knows that my heart is upright before him, and that I am no hypocrite.

But though I will trust in him, yet I will humbly expostulate the matter with him; *I will argue, or prove, or demonstrate my ways*, i.e. I will make a full free confession of the whole course of my

life, and I will boldly, though submissively, assert mine own integrity, which he also will, I doubt not, acknowledge. And what I have done amiss I will as freely confess, and make supplication to my Judge for the pardon of it.

Before him; before his tribunal; for I desire no other judge but him.

Ver. 16.

I rest assured that he will save me out of these miseries sooner or later, one way or other, if not with a temporal, yet with an eternal salvation after death; of which he speaks **#Job 19:25**, &c.

For; or *but*, as this particle commonly signifies; for this clause is put by way of opposition to the former, and the sense is, But if I were a hypocrite, as you allege, I durst not present myself before him to plead my cause with him, as now I desire to do, nor could I hope for any salvation from or with him in heaven.

Ver. 17.

This he desired before, **#Job 13:6**, and now repeateth, either because they manifested some neglect or dislike of his speech, and some desire to interrupt him; or because he now comes more closely to his business, the foregoing verses being mostly in way of preface to it.

My declaration, i.e. the words whereby I declare my mind.

Ver. 18.

I have ordered my cause, to wit, within myself. I have seriously and sincerely considered the state of my case, and what can be said either for me or against me, and am ready to plead my cause.

Justified, i.e. acquitted by God from that hypocrisy and wickedness wherewith you charge me, and declared a righteous and innocent person, human infirmities excepted.

Ver. 19.

Who is he that will plead with me? where is the man that will do it? nay, oh that God would do it! which here he implies, and presently expresseth.

I shall give up the ghost; my grief for God's heavy hand and find your bitter reproaches would break my heart, if I should not give it vent.

Ver. 20.

Which two he expresseth **#Job 13:21**. Then shall I boldly present myself and cause before thee.

Ver. 21.

i.e. Suspend my torments during the time of my pleading with thee, that my mind may be at liberty; and do not present thyself to me in terrible majesty, neither deal with me in rigorous justice; but hear me meekly, as one man heareth another, and plead with me upon those gracious terms wherewith thou usest to deal with mankind.

Ver. 22.

Then choose thy own method. Either do thou charge me with hypocrisy, or more than common guilt, and I will defend myself; or I will argue with thee concerning thy extraordinary severity towards me; and do thou show me the reasons of it. This proposal savoured of too great self-confidence, and of irreverence towards God; for which and suchlike speeches he is reproved by God, **#Job 38:2,3 40:2**.

Ver. 23.

That I am a sinner I confess; but that I am guilty of so many or such heinous crimes as my friends suppose I utterly deny; and if it be so, do thou, O Lord, discover it to my shame.

Make me to know my transgression and my sin, if peradventure my heart deceive me therein; for I am not conscious to myself of any enormous crime.

Ver. 24.

Hidest thou thy face, i.e. withdrawest thy favour and help which thou didst use to afford me; as this phrase is commonly used, as **#De 31:17 Ps 13:1 102:2, &c.**

Holdest me for thine enemy, i.e. dealest as sharply with me as if I were thy professed enemy.

Ver. 25.

Doth it become thy infinite and excellent majesty to use all thy might to crush such a poor, impotent, frail creature as I am, that can no more resist thy power than a leaf, or a little loose and dry straw can resist the fury of the wind or fire.

Ver. 26.

Thou writest, i.e. thou appointest or inflictest. A metaphor from princes or judges, who anciently used to write their sentence or decrees concerning persons or causes brought before them. See #Ps 149:9 Jer 22:30 Joh 19:22.

Bitter things, i.e. a terrible sentence, or most grievous punishments.

Makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth; thou dost now at once bring upon me the punishment of all my sins, not excepting those of my youth, which because of the folly and weakness of that age are usually excused or winked at, or at least but gently punished.

Ver. 27.

Thou encompassst me with thy judgments, that I may have no way or possibility to escape. When thou hast me fast in prison, thou makest a strict and diligent search into all the actions of my life, that thou mayst find matter to condemn me. Thou followest me close at the heels, either to observe my actions, or to pursue me with thy judgments, so that thou dost oft tread upon my heels, and leave the prints of thy footsteps upon them.

Ver. 28.

He; either,

1. Man, or Job, supposed to be God's adversary in this contest. So he speaks of himself in the third person, as is usual in this and other sacred books. So the sense is, *he*, i.e. this poor frail creature, this carcass or body of mine, which possibly he pointed at with his finger,

consumeth or pineth away, &c. So he mentions here the effect of God's severe proceedings against him, to wit, his consumption and utter destruction, which was making haste towards him. Or,

2. God, of whom he hitherto spoke in the second person, and now in the third person; such changes of persons being very frequent in poetical writings, such as this is. So he continueth the former discourse; and as before he mentioned God's severe inquiry into his ways, and sentence against him, so here he describes the consequence and dreadful execution of it upon him; he, i.e. God, *consumeth* (for the verb is active) me *as rottenness* consumeth that in which it is, or as a rotten thing is consumed, and as a moth which eateth a garment.

JOB CHAPTER 14

Man's natural misery, sin, and short life, our plea with God not to disturb us by his power, but suffer us to accomplish our appointed time, **#Job 14:1-6**. The other creatures decay and revive; but man, once dead, returneth not till the end of all things, **#Job 14:7-12**. He wisheth to be hid in the grave, in hopes of the resurrection, **#Job 14:13-15**; for that here God was strict in marking his iniquity, and prevailed against him, **#Job 14:16-20**. Man's misery with respect to his children, **#Job 14:21,22**.

Ver. 1.

That is born of a woman. This expression is here used, either,

1. To intimate the cause of man's misery, that he was born of a woman, a weak creature, **#1Pe 3:7**, and withal corrupt and sinful, and of that sex by which sin and calamity was brought into the world. See **#Job 15:14 Ge 3:17 1Ti 2:13,14**. Or,

2. To note the universality of the thing; every man, every mother's son, as we use to speak. Men's fathers are oftentimes unknown and uncertain, but their mothers are always definite and certain. One man was then to be born, and afterwards was born, without an earthly father, to wit, our Lord and Saviour Christ; but no man was ever born without a mother.

Of few days; a short-lived creature in himself, and therefore needs no violent hand to cut him off, because he withereth so soon of his own accord.

Full of trouble; and therefore a fitter object for Divine compassion, than for his fury or severity. He chiefly intendeth

himself; but he expresseth it thus generally, partly to relieve himself with the thoughts of the common calamities of mankind; and partly to move God with the consideration of the frailty and misery of human nature, and consequently of his condition.

Ver. 2.

He cometh forth out of his mother's womb, **#Job 1:21**.

Like a flower; which quickly groweth up and maketh a fair show, but soon withereth, or is cut down.

As a shadow; which being made by the sun, follows its motions, and is in perpetual variation, until at last it quite vanish and disappear.

Ver. 3.

Dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one; either,

1. To take thought or care about him. Or rather,
2. To observe all his ways, that thou mayst find cause of punishment. He is not a fit match for thee. It is below thee to contend with him, and to use thy infinite wisdom and power to crush him. This seems best to suit with the scope and context.

Bringest me into judgment with thee, i.e. pleadest with me by thy judgments, and thereby, in a manner, forcest me to plead with thee, without granting me those two necessary and favourable conditions, expressed **#Job 13:20,21**.

Ver. 4.

I do not say, *I am clean*, as Zophar pretendeth, **#Job 11:4**; but confess that I am a very unclean creature, and therefore liable to thy justice, if thou wilt deal rigorously with me; but remember that this is not my peculiar case, but the common lot of every man, who, coming from sinful parents, and being infected with original corruption, must unavoidably be unclean. Why then dost thou inflict such peculiar and extraordinary judgments upon me for that which is common to all men? And although my original corruption do not excuse my actual sins, yet I hope it may procure some mitigation to my punishments, and move thy Divine pity, which oft showeth itself upon such occasions. See **#Ge 8:21**.

Not one, i.e. no man can cleanse himself or any other from all sin. See #1Ki 8:46 Ps 14:3 Ec 7:21. This is the prerogative of thy grace, which therefore I humbly implore of thee.

Ver. 5.

His days; the days or (as it follows) months of his life. *Are determined*; are by thy sentence and decree limited to a certain period.

With thee, i.e. exactly known to thee, or in thy power and disposal. Thou hast appointed a certain end of his days, beyond which he cannot prolong his life; and therefore let this short life and unavoidable death suffice for man's punishment, and do not add further and sorer calamities.

Ver. 6.

Turn from him; withdraw thine afflicting hand from him.

That he may rest; that he may have some present comfort and ease. Or, *and let it cease*, to wit, the affliction, which is sufficiently implied. Others, *and let him cease*, to wit, to live, i.e. take away my life. But that seems not to agree with the following clause of this verse, nor with the succeeding verses.

Till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day; give him some respite till he finish his course, and come to the period of his life which thou hast allotted to him, as a man appoints a set time to a mercenary servant.

Ver. 7.

But man, though a far nobler creature, is in a much worse condition, and when once he loseth this present and worldly life, he never recovers it; therefore show some pity to him, and give him some comfort whilst he lives.

Ver. 8.

Wax old; begin to wither and decay.

And the stock die, to wit, in outward appearance.

Ver. 9.

Through the scent of water, i.e. by means of water. *Scent or smell* is figuratively ascribed to a tree.

Like a plant; like a tree newly planted.

Ver. 10.

Dieth, and wasteth away; his body by degrees rotting away; or, *and is cut off*, as this word is used, **#Ex 17:13 Isa 14:12.**

Where is he? i.e. he is nowhere; or, he is not, to wit, in this world, as that phrase is commonly used. See **#Job 3:16 7:8,21.**

Ver. 11.

This may be understood either,

1. By way of opposition, *the waters go or flow out of the sea*, and return thither again, **#Ec 1:7**; *and a lake or river sometimes decayeth, and drieth up*, but afterwards is recruited and replenished. *But man lieth, &c.*, as it follows. Or,

2. By way of resemblance; *As waters*, i.e. some portion of waters, fail from the sea, being either exhaled or drawn up by the sun, or received and sunk into the dry and thirsty earth, or overflowing its banks; *and as the flood, or a river, or a pond* (for the word signifies any considerable confluence of waters) in a great drought decayeth, and is dried up; in both which cases the selfsame waters never return to their former places; so it is with man. Or thus, *As when the waters fail from the sea*, i.e. when the sea forsakes the place into which it used to flow, the river, which was fed by it, **#Ec 1:7**, *decayeth and drieth up*, without all hopes of recovery; so man, when once the fountain of his radical moisture is dried up, dies, and never revives again.

Ver. 12.

Man lieth down, to wit, in his bed, the grave, or to sleep the sleep of death, as this phrase is used, **#Ge 46:30 De 31:6 2Sa 7:12 1Ki 1:21.**

Riseth not, to wit, to tills life; for he speaks not here of the life to come, nor of the resurrection of the belly after death by the Divine power; of his belief whereof he giveth sufficient evidences in divers places.

Till the heavens be no more, i.e. either,

1. Never; because the heavens, though they shall be changed in their qualities, yet shall never cease to be, as to the substance of them. And therefore everlasting and unchangeable things are

expressed by the duration of the heavens; of which see **#Ps 72:5,7,17 89:29,36,37 Mt 5:18 24:35**. Or,

2. Not until the time of the general resurrection, and the restitution of things, when these visible heavens shall pass away, and be no more, at least in the same form and manner as now they are; of which see **#Ps 102:26 Lu 21:33 2Pe 3:7,10 Re 21:1**.

Ver. 13.

In the grave; either,

1. In some dark vault under ground, such as good men hide themselves in times of persecution, **#Heb 11:38**. Lord, hide me in some hiding place from thy wrath, and all the intolerable effects of it, which are upon me; for I cannot be hid from thee, but by thee. Or,

2. In the grave, properly so called. Though I know life once lost is irrecoverable, yet I heartily desire death, rather than to continue in these torments. And if the next words and wish seem to suppose the continuance of his life, that is not strange; for he speaks like one almost distracted with his miseries, sometimes wishing one thing, sometimes another and the quite contrary, as such persons use to do. And these wishes may be understood disjunctively, I wish either that I were dead, or that God would give me life free from these torments. Or the place may be understood thus, I could wish, if it were possible, that I might lie in the grave for a time till these storms be blown over, and then be restored to a comfortable life.

That thou wouldest keep me secret; in some secret and safe place, under the shadow of thy wings and favour, that I may have some support and comfort from thee.

Until thy wrath be past; whilst I am oppressed with such grievous and various calamities; which he calls God's wrath, because they were, or seemed to be, the effects of his wrath.

A set time, to wit, to my sufferings, as thou hast done to my life, **#Job 14:5**.

Remember me, i.e. wherein thou wilt remember me, to wit, in mercy, or so as to deliver me; for it is well known that God is

frequently said to forget those whom he suffers to continue in misery, and to remember those whom he delivers out of it.

Ver. 14.

Shall he live again? i.e. he shall not, namely, in this world, as was said before. The affirmative question is equivalent to an absolute denial, as **#Ge 18:17 Ps 46:7 Jer 5:9**, and every where.

Seeing death puts an end to all men's hopes of any comfortable being here, because man once dead never returns to life, I will therefore wait on God, and hope for his favour whilst I live, and it is possible to enjoy it, and will continue waiting from time to time

until my change come, i.e. either,

1. Death, the great and last change; which is expressed by the root of this word, **#Job 10:17**. Or,

2. The change of my condition for the better, which you upon your terms encourage me to expect, and which I yet trust in God I shall enjoy; for this word properly signifies vicissitudes or changes in one's condition; and this seems to suit best with the following verse. And this change, or a comfortable life here, Job so heartily wisheth, not only from that love of life and comfort which is naturally implanted in all men, good and bad, and is not forbidden by God, which also was stronger in those Old Testament saints, when the discoveries of God's grace to sinners, and of eternal life, were much darker than now they are; but also because this would be an effectual vindication of his own integrity and good name, and of the honour of religion, both which did suffer some eclipse from Job's extreme calamities, as is evident from the discourses of his friends.

Ver. 15.

I trust there is a time coming when thou wilt grant me the mercy which now thou deniest me, to wit, a favourable hearing, when thou *wilt call* to me to speak for myself, and *I shall answer thee*; which I know will be to thy satisfaction and my comfort. Compare this with **#Job 13:22**, where the same words are used in this same sense. Or, *Thou shalt call me* out of the grave of my calamities, and *I shall answer thee*, and say, Here I am, raised out of the pit in which I was buried by thy powerful and gracious command. *To the work of thine hands*, i.e. to me, who am thy workmanship in

divers respects, from whom thou now seemest to have an aversion and abhorreny; but I doubt not thou wilt have a *desire*, i.e. show thy affection or good will to me; or a desire to look upon me, and to deliver me. Nor is it strange that Job, who lately was upon the brink of despair, doth now breathe out words of hope; such ebbings and flowings being usual, both with Job elsewhere, as **#Job 13:15,16**, and with David frequently in the Psalms, and with others of God's people.

Ver. 16.

For now; so this is a reason of his desire of death, **#Job 14:13**. Or rather, *But now*; for this seems to be added by way of opposition. I believe thou wilt pity and help me, but for the present it is far otherwise with me.

Thou, numberest my steps; thou makest a strict inquiry into all my actions, that thou mayst find out all mine errors, and punish them. Compare **#Job 13:27 31:4 34:1 Ps 56:6**.

Dost thou not watch over my sin, i.e. dost thou not watch for my haltings, or miscarriages, as if thou wast glad of an occasion to punish me? Or, *thou dost not delay the punishment of my sin*; for the same Hebrew word signifies both *sin* and its *punishments*.

Ver. 17.

Sealed up in a bag; as writings or other choice things, that they may be safely kept, and all of them brought forth upon occasion, and not one of them forgotten or lost. Compare **#De 32:44 Job 37:7 Ho 13:12**.

Thou sewest up mine iniquity, i.e. thou keepest all my sins in thy memory, and fastenest the guilt of them upon my conscience. Or, *thou addest to my sin*, one sin to another; the follies of my youth, **#Job 13:26**, to those of my riper years. Or, *thou addest to my punishment*, i.e. thou punishest me more than mine iniquities deserve, all things considered. For this sinful thought seems sometimes to have risen in Job's mind, as may be gathered from divers parts of this book; which therefore Zophar decries and disproves, **#Job 11:6**.

Ver. 18.

As when a great *mountain falls*, either by an earthquake or inundation of waters, or from any other cause, it *moulders away*

like a fading leaf, (as the Hebrew word signifies,) and never recovers its former height and stability; and as the rock, when by the violence of winds or earthquake, &c.

it is removed out of its place, and thrown down, is never readvanced; and as the waters by continual droppings, or violent and frequent assaults, *wear away*, or *break the stones to pieces*, so as they can never be made whole again; and *as thou wastest away*, to wit, by a great and violent inundation which thou sendest, *the things which grow out of the dust of the earth*, to wit, herbs, and fruits, and plants, which once washed away are irrecoverably lost, *and*, or *so*, (as this particle is oft used, i.e. in like manner, to wit, irrecoverably,) *thou destroyest the hope of man*; i.e. so when man dies, all hope of living again in this world is utterly lost: and this seems to be the plain meaning of these two verses. And as before he declared the hopelessness of man's restoration from death to this animal life, by way of opposition to such things as did rise in a manner from death to life, **#Job 14:7**, &c.; so now he declares it by way of similitude or resemblance to such things, as being once lost and gone are past all hopes of recovery.

Ver. 19.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 20.

When once thou takest away this life, it is gone for ever; for he speaks not here of man's future and eternal life in another world.

He passeth, i.e. he dieth, or is about to die. Man's death is oft called a *passage*, or a *going*, to intimate that it is not an annihilation, but only a translation of him into another place and state. His countenance; either,

1. His visage, which by death and its harbingers is quite transformed in colour and shape, as we see by daily experience.

Or,

2. The face and state of his affairs, as to worldly riches, and pleasures, and honours, all which he leaves behind him.

Sendest him away to his long home by death.

Ver. 21.

He knoweth it not; either,

1. Is ignorant of all such events; or,
2. Is not concerned nor affected with them. A dead or dying man minds not these things.

Ver. 22.

This is man's condition; he is miserable both when he dies, because he dies without hope of returning to life, as he had discoursed before; and (as he now adds) whilst he lives, *whilst his flesh is upon him, and his soul within him*; whilst the soul is clothed with or united to the body, he feels sharp

pain in his body, and bitter grief in his soul. Seeing therefore the state of man upon earth is so vain and unhappy every way, Lord, give me some comfort to sweeten my life, or take away my life from me.

JOB CHAPTER 15

Eliphaz's reproof: Job's knowledge and talk vain; he feareth not God, nor prayeth to him; but his own mouth uttered his iniquity, and should condemn him, **#Job 15:1-6**. Job not the wisest of men, **#Job 15:7,8**; nor wiser than they, who were elder than he, **#Job 15:9,10**. He despised the consolations of God, and turned away his spirit against him, **#Job 15:11-13**. The angels not clean in God's sight, much less man, **#Job 15:14-16**. A description of the ancients; their wisdom, and reports concerning destruction, and terrors on the wicked, and the causes of it, **#Job 15:17-35**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

A wise man; such as thou seemest and pretendest to be.

Vain knowledge, i.e. empty words, without any sense or solidity in them.

Fill his belly, i.e. satisfy his own mind and conscience, which being secret is compared to the inwards of the belly; as **#Job 32:19 Pr 20:27 22:18**.

With the east wind, i.e. with discourses which are not only flashy and unprofitable, and without any weight, but also boisterous and pernicious, both to himself and others; as the east wind was in those parts, #Ge 41:6 Ex 10:13 Ho 12:1.

Ver. 3.

Either to himself or others, but much hurt; which is implied by the contrary, as is usual.

Ver. 4.

Heb. *Thou makest void fear*, i.e. the fear of God, as the word is oft used

for the word of God; or piety and religion, which oft cometh under the name of fear. This may be understood either,

1. Of Job himself; that he cast off all reverence to God, by uttering such bold and reproachful expressions concerning God and his providence. Or,

2. With respect to others; that by his insolent and unworthy speeches of and carriage towards God, and by those false and pernicious principles which he had laid down; as that God dealt with men in way of absolute sovereignty, not of justice; and that he made no difference between good and bad in the course of his providence, but did equally prosper or afflict both of them; he did that which tended to the subversion of the fear and worship of God.

Restrainest prayer; as this Hebrew word signifies also, #Ps 102:1. Or, *meditation* or *speech*; which well agrees to prayer, which is accompanied with serious thoughts and expressions. The sense is, either,

1. Instead of humble and fervent prayer to God, which thy condition calleth for, thou breathest forth false and blasphemous speeches against him. Or,

2. Thou dost by thy words, and examples, and principles, as far as in thee lies, banish prayer out of the world, by making it useless and unprofitable to men.

Ver. 5.

i.e. Thy words discover the naughtiness of thy heart, and justify my charge against thee, *that thou castest off fear*, &c. Thou speakest wickedly, but craftily; thou coverest thy impious principles and passions with fair pretences of piety and respect to God, wherewith thou endeavourest to mock God, and deceive men.

Ver. 6.

My condemnation of thee is grounded upon thine own words.

Ver. 7.

Hast thou lived ever since the creation of the world, and treasured up the experiences of all ages in thy own breast, that thou speakest so arrogantly and magisterially, and with such contempt of other men? Art thou the most ancient and the wisest of all mortal men? Whom dost thou make thyself? *Before the hills*; before the earth was made and distinguished into mountains and valleys.

Ver. 8.

Hath God acquainted thee with all his secret counsels, whereby he governs the world, that thou dost pass so bold a censure upon all his designs and actions? Art thou the only wise man in the world, and we and all others but fools?

Ver. 9.

He retorts upon Job his own expressions, **#Job 12:3 13:2**.

Ver. 10.

With us, i.e. among us; either,

1. Some of us, who seem to have been very ancient from **#Job 32:7**. Or,

2. Some others with whom we have conversed, and who are of our opinion in this matter. And this they oppose to that passage of Job's, **#Job 12:12**.

Ver. 11.

Are those comforts, which we in the name, and according to the mind, and by the direction, of God have propounded to thee, upon condition of thy true repentance, **#Job 11:13,14**, &c., small and contemptible in thine eyes? Hast thou any secret and peculiar ground or way of comfort which is unknown to us, and to all other

men, except thyself; for which, or in comparison of which, thou despisest our consolations as mean and trivial? To pretend to this is vanity and impudence; and if thou hast not this, to despise and reject our comforts is horrible pride and stubbornness.

Ver. 12.

Why dost thou suffer thyself to be transported by the pride and lusts of thy heart to use such unworthy and unbecoming expressions, both concerning us, and concerning God and his providence.

What do thine eyes wink at, i.e. what dost thou aim at? What benefit dost thou expect from such words and carriages? So it is a metaphor from archers, who wink when they take their aim at a mark. Or, *why do thine eyes wink*, i.e. why dost thou look with such an angry, supercilious, and disdainful look, expressing both thy contempt of us, and thy rage against God? The eye is observed both by God and men, as the great discoverer of the heart; and *winking with the eye* is a note of a malicious mind, #Ps 35:9 Pr 6:13 10:10.

Ver. 13.

That, or for, or surely. Thy spirit, i.e. either thy breath, or thy rage, or thy soul; for all these the spirit signifies. Heb. *Thou makest thy spirit to return to*, or *to return again against*, that God from whom thou didst receive it.

Ver. 14.

What is man, Heb. *frail*, or *sick*, or *wretched man*? his mean original and corrupt nature showeth him to be unclean.

Which is born of a woman; from whom he derives infirmity, and corruption, and guilt, and the curse consequent upon it.

Righteous, to wit, in his own eyes, as thou, O Job, art.

Ver. 15.

In his saints, i.e. in his angels, as appears by comparing #Job 4:18, who are called his *saints* or *holy ones*, #De 33:2 Ps 103:20 Da 4:13,23 Mt 18:10 24:36; who though they were created holy, yet he could not be confident in them, nor they be confident in themselves that they would continue in their integrity if they were

left to themselves, and not upheld by God's special grace and assistance. See Poole "**Job 4:18**".

The heavens, Heb. *and the heavens*, i.e. either,

1. The heavens properly so called; which though they be free from those drossy mixtures which are and appear in heavenly bodies, yet are not absolutely pure, but have some spots and blemishes in them; as philosophers have discovered, and the all-seeing God knoweth. Compare #**Job 25:5**, where *the stars* are said *not to be pure*; unless *the stars* also there be metaphorically put for the angels, as they are #**Job 38:7**, and for other holy ministers of God, as #**Da 8:10 Re 1:16,20 12:1,4**.

2. The angels that dwell in heaven; heaven being oft put for its inhabitants; either for God, as #**Ps 73:9 Da 4:26 Lu 15:18,21**; or for the angels that dwell in heaven, as #**Ps 89:5 148:1,2**. So this is a repetition of the same thing in other words. And these are not *pure*, to wit, simply and perfectly, and comparatively to God; in which and such like respects God only is said to be *good*, and *wise*, and *immortal*. The angels are pure from corruption, but not from imperfection, nor from a possibility of sinning, if God should withdraw his help from them.

Ver. 16.

Who, besides his natural proneness to sin, hath contracted habits and customs of sinning, and sinneth as freely and easily, as greedily and delightfully, as frequently and abundantly, as men, especially in those hot countries, used to drink up water. But this did not Job; and therefore though the things delivered by him and the rest be true in the general, yet they commit a great error in misapplying them to Job, for which therefore they are afterwards reprov'd.

Ver. 17.

I will prove what I have affirmed, that such strokes as thine are peculiar to hypocrites and wicked men. I speak not by hearsay only, but from my own experience.

Ver. 18.

Wise men; who are most able to be witnesses and judges in these matters.

From their fathers, or *ancestors*; who diligently observed this, and carefully transmitted their own judgment and experience successively to their posterity.

Have not hid it; they judged it to be so certain and important a truth, that they would not conceal it in their own breasts, but made conscience of publishing it for the instruction and comfort of succeeding ages.

Ver. 19.

Unto whom alone the earth was given; either,

1. By the special and gracious gift of God; whereas wicked men invaded their parts of the earth, and took them away by force. Or,

2. By the choice and consent of the people, who for their great and known wisdom and virtue conferred this power and trust upon them. This he allegeth, partly to make their testimony more considerable, because these were not obscure, and mean, and foolish men, whose words are commonly despised, but the most worthy and famous men in their places and ages; and partly to contradict and confute what Job had said, #**Job 9:24**, that *the earth was given into the hand of the wicked*. By *the earth* he means either the dominion of the earth, to wit, of that part of the earth in or nigh which Job and his friends lived; or rather, the possession of the earth, i.e. of a great portion of worldly goods; or particularly, *the land*, or *that land*, (as the word properly signifies,) to wit, the land of Canaan, which was given by special gift unto Abraham, (from whom it seems most probable that both Job and his friends were descended,) and to Isaac, and to Jacob; who, though they met with some common and ordinary afflictions, yet enjoyed a great measure of comfort, and wealth, and honour, and power in the world, as the fruits of God's blessing, and of his covenant made with good men, whilst wicked men were exposed to manifold distresses and grievous calamities; all which those holy patriarchs diligently observed, and industriously imparted to their children, to encourage them to continue and proceed in the ways of true piety. But how was the earth or land given to them *alone*, as is here said?

Ans. Either,

1. Because Noah and his sons (of whom some understand these words) had the sole possession and dominion of the earth. Or,
2. Because Canaan was given to Abraham and to his seed alone; and some of Abraham's children had the dominion of, or an ample possession in, those parts where Job and his friends lived, who also seem to be in the number of them. Or,
3. Because they only had it either by God's special and gracious providence, or by the choice and approbation of the people; whereas wicked men took it by rapine and violence, without asking leave either from God or men.

No stranger, i.e. the enemy; for such are called strangers, both in Scripture, as **#Pr 5:10 Isa 1:7 Eze 11:9 28:10**, and in other authors. No person of a strange nation and disposition or religion.

Among them, i.e. through their land, as this phrase is used, **#Nu 20:18**, to wit, so as to molest, or disturb, or spoil them, as the Sabeans and Chaldeans did thee. God watched over those wise and holy men so carefully, that no enemy should invade them; and so he would have done over thee, if thou hadst been such a one.

Ver. 20.

Travaileth with pain, i.e. lives a life of care, and fear, and grief, by reason of God's wrath, and the torments of his own mind, and his manifold and dreadful outward calamities.

The number of his years is hidden, i.e. he knows not how short the time of his tyranny and life is, and therefore lives in continual fear of losing them. The number of a good man's years are also hid from him as well as they are from the wicked men; but to those this is a great torment and mischief; whereas it is not so to him. Or, *and a few years* (Heb. *a number of years*, put by a common hypallage for *years of number*; as few years are called, **#Job 16:22**, because they are soon numbered; *as men of number*, is put for a few men, **#Ge 34:30 De 4:27 33:6**) *are laid or treasured up*, i.e. are allotted to him by God's secret counsel; for God cuts off such men in the midst of their days. **#Ps 55:23**; whereas long life is promised, and commonly given, to righteous men.

To the oppressor, i.e. to the wicked man; but he names this one sort of them, the oppressors, partly, because he supposed Job to be guilty of this sin, **#Job 22:6**; partly, in opposition to what Job had affirmed of the safety and happiness of such persons, **#Job 12:6**; and partly, because such are most apt to expect and promise to themselves a longer and happier life than other men, because of their singular preservatives and advantages of life above other men.

Ver. 21.

Even when he feels no evil, he is tormented with perpetual fears and expectations of it from the sense of his own guilt, and of God's all-seeing eye and righteous judgment. See **#Le 26:36 De 28:65**.

Shall come upon him; or, *shall invade* and destroy him suddenly and unexpectedly; which is a great aggravation of it.

Ver. 22.

i.e. When he falls into trouble, he despairs of God's mercy, and of deliverance, by reason of his guilty conscience; which he speaks with particular reflection upon Job, who would receive no comfort nor matter of hope.

He is waited for of the sword, i.e. besides the calamity which is upon him, he is in constant expectation of further and greater miseries; for the sword is oft used for any grievous affliction, as **#Lu 2:35**.

Ver. 23.

His poverty is so great, that he is forced to wander hither and thither to seek for bread, and cannot find it. A just punishment for him that took away the bread and substance of others by violence.

He knoweth; he is assured of it from his own guilty conscience.

The day of darkness, i.e. the time of his total, and irrecoverable, and everlasting destruction.

Is ready at his hand, i.e. ready to seize upon him, or take him by the hand or shoulder like a serjeant to arrest him. The words may well be rendered, *was prepared by his hand*, i.e. by his works or actions; which being most commonly done with the hand, are oft called by that name, as **#Ex 14:31 Jud 9:16 Pr 10:4 12:24**. So the

sense is, He is conscious to himself that by his wicked life he hath prepared and stored up calamities and destruction for himself, and therefore he expected nothing less.

Ver. 24.

i.e. When trouble comes, instead of trusting, and hoping, and comforting himself in God, as good men do in such cases, as #1Sa 30:6, he is full of torment and dread of the issue of it, and concludes it will end in his utter ruin, as he hath great reason to do.

Ready to the battle; or, *prepared or furnished; or, disposed with his army round about him*, as this word seems to signify.

Ver. 25.

Now he gives the reason of all the forementioned calamities which befell him, which was his great wickedness in the time of his peace and prosperity.

He stretcheth out his hand against God, i.e. he commonly and customarily sinned against God with a high and out-stretched hand, i.e. boldly and presumptuously, as one that neither desired his favour, nor feared his anger.

Strengtheneth himself, i.e. he putteth his forces in array, as if he would fight with him.

Against the Almighty; which aggravates the madness of this poor contemptible worm that durst fight against the omnipotent God.

Ver. 26.

Runneth upon him, i.e. assaults him, or rusheth upon him with great swiftness and fury, as this phrase signifies, #Da 8:6. This *he* is either,

1. God, who was expressed twice in the last verse, and who is here produced as entering the lists and fighting with his daring adversary. Or rather,

2. The wicked man, of whom and whose sin and misery he speaks in the whole context, both before and after this; who in the last verse was introduced as preparing for the battle, and here as actually and impudently fighting with him.

Even on his neck; as a stout warrior, who cometh close to his adversary and grapples with him, and taketh him by the neck to throw him down. Compare #2Sa 2:16 Job 16:2. Or, *with his neck*. So it is a metaphor from a mad and raging bull, which runs upon his enemy with a hard and stiff neck.

Upon the thick bosses of his bucklers, i.e. even where his enemy is strongest; he is not discouraged with the enemies' thick, and strong, and eminent shields, but boldly ventures in upon them, and amongst them. Or, *with the thick bosses* (Heb. *the thickness and eminency*) of his shields, wherewith he invaded the enemy, that so he might both defend himself and offend his enemy; for the ancient shields were useful both ways, because they had a sharp iron or steel in the midst of them.

Ver. 27.

With his fatness: this is mentioned as the reason of his insolent carriage towards God, because he was fat, i.e. rich, and potent, and successful, as that expression signifies, #De 32:15 Ps 78:31 Jer 46:21. His great prosperity made him proud and secure, and regardless of God and men.

Maketh collops of fat on his flanks; his only care and study is to pamper and please himself, and obey his own mind and lusts, and in defence and pursuance of them he contends with God.

Ver. 28.

He dwelleth in desolate cities: these words may note either,

1. His tyranny and cruelty, whereby he makes the places of his abode and dominion desolate by his frequent murders, spoils, and oppressions, wherewith he destroyeth great numbers of his people, and forceth others to flee out of his reach. Or,

2. His pride, and power, and wealth; which enabled and engaged him to build desolate houses and cities for his own glory, and safety, and conveniency; of which See Poole "**Job 3:14**". Or,

3. His punishment and misery; that for his impiety towards God, and oppression of men, he was driven out of his dominions and possessions, and forced to flee into desolate places for safety and a habitation. This seems best to agree with the Hebrew words, which run thus, *But* (for so the particle *and* is commonly used, as

hath been oft said) *he shall dwell*, &c. And so this is fitly opposed to this last-mentioned prosperity, and is the beginning of the description of his misery, which is continued in the following verses.

Which are ready to become heaps; which were ready to fall, and to be turned into a heap of stones.

Ver. 29.

He shall not be rich, i. e. not abide rich, but shall become poor.

Neither shall his substance continue; what he had gotten shall be taken from him.

The perfection thereof, i.e. the perfection of his substance, or that complete estate and glory which he hath attained, shall not be continued to him and to his posterity. Or, *neither shall their perfection* (i.e. that prosperity, and wealth, and power wherein they placed their perfection or happiness) *spread itself*, or *be propagated* or *spread abroad*, but shall be diminished and taken away. It is a metaphor from a tree. Compare **#Job 8:16**.

Ver. 30.

He shall not depart out of darkness; his misery shall have no end.

The flame; God's anger and judgment upon him.

His branches; either,

1. His children; or,

2. Wealth, and power, and glory, wherewith he was encompassed, and adorned, and secured, as trees are with their branches.

Of his mouth, i.e. of God's mouth, as appears both by comparing this with **#Job 15:25**, where God is expressed as the adversary with whom this wicked wretch contendeth; and by the nature of the thing, and the whole context, all this man's calamities being manifestly the effects of God's anger; and by other places of Scripture, where the breath of God's mouth or lips are mentioned as that whereby he destroyeth wicked men; as **#Job 4:9 Isa 11:4 2Th 2:8**. And this expression intimates to us with how much facility God subdueth his enemies; he needs no arms or

instruments; his word, his blast, one act of his will, is more than sufficient to do it.

Shall he go away, Heb. *go back*, i.e. retreat and run away from God faster than he did run towards and upon him, #**Job 15:26**. So it is a continuation of the former metaphor of a battle or conflict between two persons.

Ver. 31.

In vanity, i.e. in the vain and deceitful things of this world, such as power, riches, honour, &c., of which, and of the loss of them, he had been largely discoursing; and now he subjoins a general caution to all men to take heed of running into the same error and mischief with the forementioned persons; and withal he secretly intimates Job's great sin, which was the cause of his ruin, to wit, his carnal confidence in those vain things, the wealth, and glory, and children which God had given him; from which crime he therefore vindicates himself hereafter. *For vanity*, i.e. disappointment and dissatisfaction, and the vanishing or loss of all their imaginary felicity; the same word vanity being elegantly repeated in another sense, as is usual in Scripture and all authors.

His recompence, Heb. *his exchange*; he shall exchange one vanity for another, a pleasing vanity for a vexatious vanity. But this verse is and may be rendered otherwise; the Hebrew particle *al* being here, as it is elsewhere, taken for a simple negation. Thus, *He that is deceived with vanity*, (i.e. with the vain things of this world, wherewith most men are deceived and bewitched,) *will not believe that vanity* (i.e. emptiness, and disappointment, and misery) *shall be his recompence*. And so this is an aggravation of his calamity, that it surprised him when he was confident and secure from all fears of such an event.

Ver. 32.

It shall be accomplished, to wit, that which was last mentioned, that *vanity should be his recompence*. Or, it, i.e. his branch, mentioned in the next clause of the verse, from which it is understood in this former clause, as is very usual in the Holy Scripture, *shall be consumed, or cut off*.

Before his time, i.e. when by the course of nature and common providence it might have continued and flourished much longer.

His branch; either,

1. His glory and prosperity. Or rather,

2. His children, by comparing **#Job 15:34**, where the desolation is said to fall upon all the congregation and tabernacles of these men; and so he reflects upon Job, who lost his children.

Shall not be green, i.e. shall not continue to flourish, as it had done.

Ver. 33.

He; either,

1. The wicked man, who by his sins is the author of his own ruin. Or,

2. God, who is easily understood, both from the matter and context.

Shall shake off, Heb. *shall take away by violence*.

His unripe grape, i. e. his fruit, his children, or other comforts, before their time.

As the vine, i.e. as the vine either itself droppeth, or rather loseth, its tender grapes, which are plucked off by a violent hand.

As the olive; which flourisheth much about the same time with the vine, and is commonly handled in the same manner.

Ver. 34.

The congregation, i.e. their children, and servants, and friends, and dependents.

Desolate, i.e. utterly destroyed. *Fire*, i.e. some eminent and terrible judgment of God, which is oft expressed by fire; as **#Isa 9:19 26:11**.

The tabernacles of bribery, i.e. which were either built or maintained by extortion and bribery, and suchlike unrighteous courses, whereof they thought Job guilty, **#Job 22:8**.

Ver. 35.

They conceive mischief, i.e. they devise and contrive injurious and pernicious enterprises against others.

Vanity, or iniquity, or injury, or trouble; either,

1. To others; they execute what they had contrived. Or,
2. To themselves; the mischief they designed for others falleth upon their own heads, and they reap what they sowed. *And their belly*, i.e. their inward parts, their hearts and minds. **See Poole "Job 15:2"**.

Prepareth deceit; either,

1. For others, whom they design to cheat; or,
2. For themselves, who whilst they seek to deceive others, shall find that they themselves are most deceived, as being deprived of all their desires and hopes wherewith they fed themselves, and cast into all those calamities which they thought to prevent by these artifices.

JOB CHAPTER 16

Job's answer: his friends increase his misery, **#Job 16:1-8**. His insulting enemies, **#Job 16:9-11**. God's power against him, **#Job 16:12-16**. His innocence should cry to heaven, where it was known: he wisheth to plead with God, **#Job 16:17-21**: Pleaseth himself with the prospect of death, **#Job 16:22**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

I have heard many such things; both from you, who do so odiously repeat the same things, and from divers others; for these things, though you pride and please yourselves in them, as if you had made some great and strange discoveries, are but vulgar and trivial.

Miserable comforters; instead of giving me those comforts which you pretend to do, **#Job 15:11**, and which my condition loudly calls for, you feed me with terrors, and censures, and scoffs.

Ver. 3.

When wilt thou put an end to these idle and impertinent discourses? He retorts upon him his charge against Job, **#Job 15:2,3**.

That thou answerest, to wit, so or in such manner, so censoriously, and opprobriously, and peremptorily. What secret grounds hast thou for thy confidence? Thy arguments are flashy and weak; if thou hast any stronger, produce them.

Ver. 4.

If your soul, i.e. your person, as #Ge 12:5.

I could heap up words against you, i.e. I could multiply accusations and reproaches against you, as you do against me.

Shake mine head at you; in way of derision, as this phrase is most commonly used; as #2Ki 19:21 Ps 22:7 Isa 37:22 Mt 27:39.

Ver. 5.

Strengthen you, i.e. direct, and support, and comfort you. My discourse should comfort you. The words *your grief* are here understood, either out of the foregoing clause, where they are implied; or out of the next verse, where they are expressed. Possibly the words may be thus rendered without any ellipsis, which is most natural, if the translation be true and suitable: *compassion* (for the Hebrew word *nid* comes from *nud*, which signifies to *condole*) should restrain or govern my lips, that they should avoid all speeches which may vex you, and speak only what may be to your comfort and benefit; whereas you let your tongues loose to speak whatsoever pleaseth you, or tormenteth me.

Ver. 6.

Though I speak to God by prayer, or to you in way of discourse, I find no relief. Job having reprov'd his friends for their unkind carriage towards him, and aggravated it by his resolutions to have dealt more friendly with them, if they had been in his case; now he returns to his main business, to describe and aggravate his miseries, if by any means he could move his friends to pity and help him.

What am I eased? or, what part or grain of my grief or *misery departeth from me*? I receive not one jot of ease. Neither speech nor silence do me any good.

Ver. 7.

But; or, *surely*, as this Hebrew particle most commonly signifies. *He*, i.e. God, as appears by the following words and verses.

Hath made me weary; either of complaining, or of my life.

Thou; he speaks in the second person to God, as in the former clause in the third person of God. Such change of persons are very usual in Scripture, and elsewhere.

Hast made desolate all my company; hast turned my society into desolation, by destroying my children and servants.

Ver. 8.

Thou hast filled me with wrinkles, by consuming all my fat and flesh.

Which is a witness against me; Heb. which is a witness of the reality, and greatness, and just cause of my sorrows. Or, which is *become* or *made a witness*, i.e. is produced by my friends as a witness of God's wrath, and of my hypocrisy and impiety.

Rising up in me, i.e. which is in me. Or, *rising up against me*, as witnesses use to rise and stand up against a guilty person to accuse him.

Beareth witness to my face; as witnesses are to accuse a person to his face, openly and evidently, so as any that look on my face may plainly discern it. But this clause may be rendered thus, *my leanness in my face* (i.e. which appears in my face, and causeth the wrinkles which are visible there) *riseth up against me*, and *beareth witness*, as before.

Ver. 9.

He teareth me in his wrath, Heb. *his wrath teareth me in pieces*, as a lion doth his prey.

Who hateth me, Heb. and *he hateth me*, i.e. he pursueth me with a deadly hatred and rage. Or, *and he is become mine enemy*; or, *he sets himself against me with all his might*; or, *he treats me like an implacable enemy*. *He gnasheth upon me with his teeth*; which is a gesture and sign of extreme anger and fury, as **#Ps 35:16 37:12 La 2:16**; as elsewhere of grievous pain, as **#Lu 13:28**.

Mine enemy; either,

1. God, who of a friend is now become my implacable enemy. Or,
2. Eliphaz, who deals with me more like an enemy than a friend.

Sharpeneth his eyes upon me, i.e. looks upon me with a fierce and sparkling eye, as enraged persons use to do.

Ver. 10.

They; the instruments of God's anger, my friends, as they are falsely called.

Gaped upon me with their mouth; opened their mouths wide against me; either,

1. To devour and destroy me; as a lion which falls upon his prey with open mouth, as this phrase is used, **#Ps 22:13,14**. And this they did aggravating and increasing his sorrows, whereby he was well-nigh overwhelmed. Or,
2. To scoff and deride me, as it follows, and as this phrase is most commonly used, as **#Ps 22:8 35:21**.

Reproachfully; or, *by reproach*; or in way of scorn and contempt; whereof such smiting was a sign, as **#1Ki 22:24 La 3:30 Mic 5:1**. The sign is here put for the thing signified; they despised and derided me.

They have gathered themselves together against me, i.e. they are come from several places, and met together here, not for me, or to comfort me, as they pretended, but really against me, or to torment and grieve me. Heb. *they have filled themselves*, &c. Either,

1. They have filled up their numbers, they are all *come against me*. Or,
2. They have filled their minds with evil opinions of me, and their hearts with courage and resolution to assault me, and their mouths with words and arguments against me. Compare **#Ec 8:11 Ac 5:3**.

Ver. 11.

To the ungodly; either,

1. To my friends, who act the part of the wicked, in censuring and condemning the righteous, whom God approveth, and in pleading for a false and wicked cause. Or rather,

2. To the Chaldeans and Sabeans, who were a most wicked people, living in gross contempt of God, and injuriousness to all sorts of men. For this best suits both with the first clause of the next verse, which showeth that he speaketh of Job's first afflictions, which befell him when he *was at ease*; and with Job's principal scope, which was to prove that both eminent prosperity and affliction did indifferently happen to good and bad men; and this was evident from this example, because holy Job was ruined, when these wicked people were most victorious and successful.

Ver. 12.

I lived in great peace and prosperity, which makes my present miseries more grievous to me; and therefore my complaints are excusable, and I deserve pity rather than reproach from my friends.

Broken me asunder; broken my spirit with the sense of his anger, and my body with loathsome ulcers, as also by destroying my children, a part of my own flesh or body.

Taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces; as a mighty man doth with some young stripling, when he wrestleth with him. *Set me up for his mark;* that he may shoot all his arrows into me, and that with delight, which archers have in that exercise.

Ver. 13.

His archers, i.e. his plagues or judgments, elsewhere compared to arrows, and here to archers.

He cleaveth my reins asunder with his arrows, i.e. he wounds me inwardly, and mortally, and incurably; which also is noted by pouring out the gall; such wounds being deadly.

Ver. 14.

My calamities have no interruption, but one immediately succeeds another, as it did **#Job 1**.

Like a giant, who falls upon his enemy with all his might, that he may overthrow and kill him.

Ver. 15.

i.e. I put on sackcloth sewed together, not upon my other garments, but next to my skin, as was done in great calamities; as **#2Ki 6:30**. So far am I from *stretching out my hands against God*,

whereof I am accused, **#Job 15:25**, that I have humbled myself deeply under his hand. I have willingly parted with all my wealth, and power, and glory, (as the horn oft signifies in Scripture, as **#Ps 75:5 132:17 Lu 1:69**) and been contented to lie in the dust, and to endure the contempt which God hath brought upon me.

Ver. 16.

i. e. A gross and terrible darkness. My sight is very dim and dark, as is usual in case of sore diseases, or excessive grief and weeping, **#La 2:11**; and especially in the approach of death: compare **#Ps 6:7 38:10 La 5:17**.

Ver. 17.

And all this is not come upon me for any injurious dealing with others by oppression, or deceit, or bribery, wherewith I am implicitly charged, **#Job 15:16,20,34**; but for other reasons known to God only, for I cannot discover them.

Also my prayer is pure; I do not cast off God's fear and service, as I am accused to do, **#Job 15:4**. I do still pray and worship God, and my prayer is accompanied with a sincere heart and undefiled conscience: see **#Ps 109:7 Pr 28:9 1Ti 2:8**. So that I have lived inoffensively towards God and towards men; and therefore your assertion is both uncharitable and false, that eminent afflictions are peculiar to ungodly men.

Ver. 18.

My blood, so called not actively, to wit, his own blood; but passively or objectively, i.e. the blood of others shed by him, and lying upon his conscience. The earth is said to cover that blood which lies undiscovered and unrevenged; of which **See Poole "Ge 4:10"**, **See Poole "Ge 4:11"**; **See Poole "Isa 26:21"**, But, saith Job, if I be guilty of destroying any one man by murder or oppression, as I am traduced, O Lord, let the earth disclose it; let it be brought to light, that I may suffer condign punishment for it.

My cry; either,

1. Passively, to wit, the cries and groans which I have forced from others by my oppressions; let those cries have no place to hide them. Or rather,

2. Actively, the cry of my complaints to men, or prayers to God; let them find no place in the ears or hearts of God or men, if this be true: or, *no place*, i.e. no regard, or no power or success; in which sense God's word is said not to have place in evil men, **#Joh 8:37**; and Esau not to

find place of repentance, #Heb 12:17, i.e. all his entreaties and tears could not prevail with his father to repent of and retract the blessing given from him to Jacob.

Ver. 19.

Besides the witness of men and of my own conscience, God is witness of my integrity.

Ver. 20.

My friends, who should defend me from the scorns and injuries of others,

scorn me; so this word is used **#Ps 119:51 Pr 3:34 19:28**. I pour forth my prayers and tears to God, that he would judge me according to my innocency, and plead my righteous cause against you.

Ver. 21.

Oh that either I or some faithful advocate might be admitted to plead any cause, either with God, or rather with you, before God's tribunal, God being witness and judge between us! But this verse is, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew text, otherwise translated and interpreted; either,

1. With respect to Christ, *And he* (i.e. God, last mentioned, to wit, God the Son, Christ Jesus) *will plead for a man* (i.e. for me, against whom you plead.) He modestly speaketh of himself in the third person, as is usual)

with God (to wit, with God the Father; and the Son of man (as Christ is oft called) *will plead for his friend, or companion, or neighbour*, i.e. for a man whom he hath taken into that relation to himself. It is plain that the mystery of man's redemption by Christ was known to the ancient patriarchs, as hath been oft noted before; and to Job among others, **#Job 19:25**. Or,

2. As the matter for which he prayed and cried to God, *That* (so the Hebrew *vau* is frequently used) *he* (i.e. God) *would plead*, or

judge, or give sentence for a man (i.e. for me, or in my cause) with, God, (i.e. with himself, the noun being put for the pronoun, as #Ge 2:20 4:15 Le 14:15,16, and elsewhere; or at his own tribunal, to which I have appealed,)

as a man pleadeth for his friend or neighbour with or before an earthly judge and tribunal. This seems most agreeable to the scope of the place, which was to maintain his own integrity against his friends before God.

Ver. 22.

i.e. To the state and place of the dead, whence men do not and cannot return to this life. The meaning is, My death hastens, and therefore I earnestly desire that the cause depending before God between me and my friends may be searched out and determined, that if I be guilty of these things whereof they accuse me, I may bear the shame and blame of it before all men; and if I be innocent, that I may live to see my own integrity and the credit of religion (which suffers upon this occasion) vindicated, that so I may die in peace with God, and may leave the savour of a good name behind me.

JOB CHAPTER 17

His miserable life; false friends; their punishment, #Job 17:1-5. His contempt, and sorrow, #Job 17:6,7. The righteous should be established, #Job 17:8,9; but he was given over to death, #Job 17:11-16.

Ver. 1.

My breath is corrupt, i.e. it stinks, as it doth in dying persons. Or, *my spirit is corrupted*, or spent, or lost, i.e. my vital spirits and natural powers are wasted; my soul is ready to leave the body.

My days are extinct; the lamp of my life is wasted, and upon the point of going out, and that in a snuff.

The graves, i.e. the grave; the plural number being put for the singular, as *sepulchres*, #2Ch 21:20, *cities*, #Jud 12:7, *asses*, #Zec 9:9, are put for one of each of these.

Are ready for me; open their mouths as ready to receive me. The sense and scope of this verse is the same with the former.

Ver. 2.

Do not my friends, instead of comforting, mock and abuse me, as if I had made use of religion only as a cloak to my wickedness? Heb. *If there be not mockers with me*, understand, let God do so or so to me. It is a form of an oath, which is defectively expressed, after the manner of the Hebrews. Assuredly I am in the midst of cruel mockers, which is a sore aggravation of my affliction. Thus he returns to what he had said **#Job 16:20**, and intimates the necessity and justice of his following appeal, which otherwise might be thought too bold.

Mine eye; either,

1. The eyes of my body. Do they not continue to provoke me to my face? Or rather,
2. The eye of my mind. Their provoking scoffs and reproaches do not only molest me in the day-time, when they are with me, but lodge with me in the night, and are continually in my thoughts, and break my sleep, and disturb me in dreams. And therefore if I be a little disordered, I may be excused.

Ver. 3.

He turneth his speech either to Eliphaz, who spoke last; or rather to God, as is evident from the matter and scope of the words, and from the next verse. These words contain either,

1. A humble desire to God that he would appoint him a surety, who should undertake for his friends; that they should refer the cause in difference between them to God or to some other person, who should determine the matter in God's name, and according to God's will; or that God would be his Surety, or appoint him a surety who should maintain his righteous cause against his opposers; for so this phrase is oft used, as **#Ps 119:121,122 Isa 38:14**. And some expound this, as they did **#Job 16:21**, of Christ Jesus, who was called *our Surety*, **#Heb 7:22**; *appoint, I pray thee, my Surety* (i.e. Christ, who is now) with thee, to plead my cause. Or rather,
2. An appeal from God unto God, or a kind of challenge or desire of debating his cause with God; which, though it savoureth of too much boldness and irreverence to God, yet seeing Job expresseth the same desire almost in the same manner, **#Job 9:33,34**, and is

sharply reprov'd by God for contending with him, #**Job 40:2**, I know no inconvenience of ascribing the same thing to him here. So the sense is, Because I am not able to deal with thee immediately, considering the dread of thy majesty, my only desire is, that thou wouldst deal with me upon fair and equal terms, as if thou wert a man like myself, and appoint some man who shall in thy name and stead determine the time and place for the trial of my cause with thee. And this suits well enough with the two following verses, because his friends were without understanding, #**Job 17:4**, and partial, #**Job 17:5**; therefore he desires to cease discoursing with them, and to debate his cause with God, who was just and impartial, and also would be favourable to him.

Strike hands with me, i.e. agree and promise, or be surety to me; whereof that was the usual gesture, #**Pr 6:1,2 17:18 22:26**.

Ver. 4.

Thou hast blinded the minds of my friends, that they can not see those truths which are most plain and evident to all men of sense and experience; therefore I desire a more wise and able judge.

Therefore shalt thou not exalt them, i.e. thou wilt not give them the victory over me in this contest, but wilt give sentence for me, and discharge them, and make them ashamed of their confidence in affirming falsehoods of thee, and punish them severely for their miscarriage. It is a usual figure, whereby much more is understood than is expressed.

Ver. 5.

Hereby Job chargeth them, either,

1. With flattering him with vain hopes, and promises of the return of his former prosperity, when he knew that his case was desperate. Or,

2. With flattering and befriending God, and giving a partial sentence out of respect to him; for which he reprov'd and condemn'd them before, #**Job 13:7-9**, where see the notes. Some render the words thus, *He that uttereth or declareth his mind or thoughts* (as this word signifies, #**Ps 139:2,17**) *with flattery*, or *to flatter* or deceive another.

The eyes of his children shall fail; he shall be severely punished, not only in his person, but even in his children, whose eyes shall fail with vain expectations of relief and deliverance out of those calamities which shall come upon them for this sin of their parents.

Ver. 6.

He, i.e. God, who is oft designed by this pronoun in this book.

A by-word, or *proverb*, or *common talk*. My calamities are so great and prodigious, that they fill all people with discourse, and are become proverbial to express extreme miseries. Compare #**Nu 21:27,28 De 28:37**.

And, or *but*, or *although*, as this particle is oft used.

Aforetime; so he aggravateth his present misery by the mention of his former prosperity. *Or, to their faces*, or *openly*. They do not only reproach me behind my back, but revile and mock me, and make a sport of my calamities, even to my face. *I was as a tabret*, i.e. I was the people's delight and darling, and matter of their praise, and entertained by them with applauses, and as it were with instruments of music. Or,

I am as a tabret, i.e. matter of sport and merriment to them.

Ver. 7.

By reason of sorrow; through excessive weeping and decay of spirits, which cause a dimness in the sight.

All my members are as a shadow; my body is so consumed, and my colour so wan and ghastly, that I look more like a ghost, or a shadow, than like a man.

Ver. 8.

Wise and good men, when they shall see and consider my calamities, will not be so forward to censure and condemn me as you are, but will rather stand and wonder at the depth and mysteriousness of God's counsels and judgments, which fall so heavily upon innocent men, while the worst of men prosper.

And the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite: *but, or yet*, (notwithstanding all these sufferings of good men and the astonishment which they cause,)

innocent (or religious persons shall be so far from joining their opinions, and counsels, and interests, with

hypocrites, or *profane men*, who thence take occasion to censure the afflicted person, and to reproach, and condemn, and desert the profession and practice of godliness, that they) will stir up themselves against them in holy indignation, and will oppose their wicked courses, and will prefer afflicted piety before prosperous iniquity.

Ver. 9.

Shall hold on his way, i.e. shall persist in that good way into which he hath entered, and not be turned from it by any afflictions which may befall himself or any other good men, nor by any contempt or reproach cast upon them by the ungodly by reason thereof.

He that hath clean hands, i.e. whose life and the course of his actions is holy and righteous; which is a sign that his heart also is pure and perfect.

Shall be stronger and stronger; shall not be shaken and discouraged by the grievous afflictions of the godly, nor by the bitter censures and reproaches of hypocrites or wicked men, cast upon them for that cause; but will be continued thereby, and made more constant and resolute in cleaving to God, and his ways and people, in spite of all difficulties and miseries.

Ver. 10.

Return, and come now, i.e. come now again, (as this phrase is oft used,) and renew the debate, as I see you are prepared and resolved to do, and I am ready to receive you. Or, return into yourselves, and consider my cause again; peradventure your second thoughts may be wiser.

One wise man, to wit, in this matter. None of you speak like wise or good men, but like rash and heady persons; you censure me as a rotten hypocrite, and misjudge of God's ways, and condemn the generation of God's children upon frivolous grounds.

Ver. 11.

My days; the days of my life. I am a lost and dying man, and therefore the hopes you give me of the bettering of my condition are vain and groundless.

My purposes; or, *my designs*, or

thoughts, to wit, which I had in my prosperous days, concerning myself and children, and the continuance of my happiness.

The thoughts of my heart, Heb. *the possessions of my heart*, i.e. those thoughts which in a great measure possessed my heart, which were most natural, and familiar, and delightful to me. All my thoughts, and designs, and hopes are disappointed, and come to nothing.

Ver. 12.

They; either,

1. My friends. Or,

2. My sorrows, of which he is here speaking. Or,

3. My thoughts, last mentioned. Possibly these words may be joined with them thus, *The thoughts of my heart change the night into day*.

Change the night into day; they do so incessantly pursue and disturb me, that I can no more rest and sleep in the dark and silent nights, than in the midst of the light and tumults of the day. Or,

they change the day into night, Heb. *they put the night for or instead of* (as the Hebrew *lamed* is elsewhere used) the day, i.e. they make the day as sad and dark as the night to me. So it seems best to agree with the following branch of the verse.

The light is short, i.e. the day-light, which oftentimes gives some little comfort and refreshment to men in misery, seems to be gone and fled as soon as it is begun.

Because of darkness, i.e. because of my grievous pains and torments, which follow me by day as well as by night.

Ver. 13.

If I wait; if I should give way to those hopes of my deliverance and restoration which you suggest to me.

The grave is mine house: I should be sadly disappointed; for I am upon the borders of the grave, which is the only house appointed for me, instead of that goodly house which you promise to me here upon condition of my repentance.

I have made my bed in darkness; I expect no other rest but in the dark grave, for which therefore I prepare myself.

Ver. 14.

To corruption, Heb. *to the pit* of corruption, the grave.

Thou art my father; I am near akin to time, as being taken out of thee; and thou wilt receive and embrace me, and keep me in thy house, as parents do their children.

Thou art my mother, and my sister; because of the same original, and the most strict and intimate union and conjunction between me and the worms.

Ver. 15.

Where is now my hope? and what then is become of that hope which you advised me to entertain?

My hope, i.e. the fulfilling of my hope, or the happiness which you would have me expect; hope being put for the thing hoped for, as **#Pr 13:12 1Co 9:10**.

Who shall see it? no man shall see it: it shall never be.

Ver. 16.

They; either,

1. They that would see my hope, they must go into the grave to behold it. Or rather,

2. My hopes; of which he spoke in the singular number, **#Job 17:15**, which he here changeth into the plural, as is very usual in these poetical books.

To the bars of the pit, i.e. into the closest and innermost parts of the pit: my hopes are dying, and will be buried in my grave.

When our rest together is in the dust: so the sense is, when those spectators, together with myself, shall be in our graves. Heb. *seeing that* (as this Hebrew participle *im* oft signifies; or, *certainly*,

as it is used #Nu 17:13 Job 6:13, and elsewhere) our rest shall be *together in the dust*, i.e. I and my hopes shall be buried together.

JOB CHAPTER 18

Bildad' s reproof: Job' s words many: he despised his friends; he vexed himself; but in vain, #Job 18:1-4. The calamity of the wicked, #Job 18:5-21.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Ere ye; either,

1. You my brethren. Why do you not give over discoursing with Job, who is wholly transported with rage, and not fit to be discoursed with, at least until both you and he have better considered what to say? Or rather,

2. Thou, O Job, of whom he speaks here, as also #Job 18:3, in the plural number; either because there were some other person or persons present at this debate, who by their words or gestures showed themselves favourers of Job' s cause; or because it was a common idiom of the Eastern language to speak thus of one person, especially where he was one of eminency or authority. Job' s speeches were generally longer than his friends' , and they seemed very tedious to them.

Mark; consider the matter and our words better. Or, *inform us*, Heb. *make us to understand*. Seeing thou lookest upon us as ignorant and brutish men, as it follows, do thou instruct and inform us. Cease cavilling and railing, and produce thy strong reasons, that we may consider and answer them, or yield to them.

Ver. 3.

As beasts, i.e. ignorant, blockish, and stupid men, #Job 17:4,10.

Vile, Heb. *polluted*, or *unclean*, i.e. not fit to be conversed or discoursed with; or contemptible, as such things are.

In your sight; either,

1. To your faces, or in your own hearing. Or,

2. In thy sight or judgment, O Job; so he speaks of Job in the plural number, as he did #**Job 18:2**.

Ver. 4.

He teareth himself, i.e. Job, of whom he speaks in the third person for the second, as #**Job 12:4 16:7 Ob 1:3**. Or, *O thou that tearest thyself!* Thou complainest of us for vexing thee with our speeches, when in truth thou art thy own greatest tormenter by thy own impatience and rage.

Shall the earth be forsaken, to wit, by God? Shall God give over the government of the earth, and men, and things in it, and suffer all things to fall out by chance, and promiscuously to good and bad men, without any regard to his truth, or wisdom, or justice? Shall God forbear to rule the world righteously, as he hath hitherto done, in favouring good men, and destroying the wicked?

For thee, i.e. for thy sake; or to prevent thy complaints and clamours.

Shall the rock be removed out of his place? shall the counsels of God, which are more firm and unmovable than rocks, and the whole course of his providence, be altered to comply with thy fancies or humours?

Ver. 5.

Yea; the thing is true and certain, notwithstanding thy dissatisfaction and opposition against it.

The light of the wicked shall be put out; all their glory and felicity shall perish.

The spark of his fire, i.e. their highest and brightest glory, which he calleth the spark, &c., because, like a spark, it shines briskly for a moment, but is quickly extinct.

Ver. 6.

In his tabernacle. i.e. in his family. *Instead* of his former splendour, both he and his shall fall into extremity of misery.

His candle shall be put out with him, i.e. his glory shall die with him, and not descend to his posterity, as he hoped and designed. Or,

his candle, which was with him, or shone upon him, shall be put out.

Ver. 7.

The steps of his strength, i.e. his strong steps, by a vulgar Hebraism. *By steps* he means his counsels, as the next branch explains it, his attempts and actions; and by *steps of strength*, such of them as seem to be most firm and settled, contrived with greatest strength of understanding, and carried on with great resolution and might.

Shall be straitened, i. e. shall be hindered and entangled. He shall be cast into great difficulties, and troubles, and perplexities, so that he shall not be able to proceed and to accomplish his enterprises, but shall find himself insnared by his own devices, as the next words declare it. This phrase is used also #Pr 4:11,12, and it is opposed to the enlarging of a man's way or steps, which signifies success and prosperity, as #Ps 4:1 31:8.

His own counsel shall cast him down; he shall be undone by his own contrivances; either because God will give him up to dangerous and destructive mistakes of his way, or because God will oppose him, and turn his own devices against him, which he can easily do by throwing in unexpected accidents.

Ver. 8.

By his own feet; by his own choice, and design, and actions.

He walketh upon a snare; and therefore must needs be entangled and destroyed.

Ver. 9.

Shall take the by the heel, i.e. take fast hold of him, so as to keep him in those distresses; and when he is insnared the robber shall come upon him, and take, and spoil, or kill him. Or,

the horrible or terrible man; the huntsman, that laid the snare for him. A metaphor from those who hunt for wild beasts, who first lay snares for them, and then seize upon them in the snares.

Ver. 10.

In the ground; where he doth not expect nor discern it. The former snare he laid for himself, but this was laid for him by another.

Ver. 11.

Terrors; both from men, and from God, and from his own unquiet mind and guilty conscience.

Shall drive him to his feet; shall force him to flee hither and thither, and he knows not whither, being secure and safe no where, but pursued by terrors from place to place.

Ver. 12.

His strength; either,

1. His children, which are, and are called, a man's strength, as #Ge 49:3 Ps 127:4,5. Or rather,

2. His wealth, and power, and prosperity. Hunger-bitten, or famished, i.e. utterly consumed.

Shall be ready at his side, i.e. shall follow him at the heels, as a most diligent servant, or constant companion.

Ver. 13.

The strength of his skin, Heb. *the bars*, or rather, the *branches of the skin*, i.e. either the veins and sinews, which branch out themselves through the skin as well as elsewhere; or the fat and flesh, which like bars support the skin, and adorn and beautify it, as branches do a tree; without which the skirt is shrivelled up and deformed.

The first-born of death, i.e. a most remarkable and terrible kind of death. The *first-born* was the chief of his brethren, and therefore this title is given to things eminent in their kind, as #Isa 14:30 Col 1:18 Heb 12:23 Re 1:5.

Ver. 14.

His confidence, i.e. all the matter of his confidence, his riches, children, &c.

Out of his tabernacle, i.e. out of his habitation.

It shall bring him, to wit, the loss of his confidence.

To the king of terrors; either,

1. Into extreme fears and horrors of mind. Or,

2. To death, which even Aristotle called *the most terrible of all terribles*. And this it will do, either because it will expose him to

his enemies, who will kill him; or because the sense of his disappointments, and losses, and dangers will oppress his spirits, and break his heart.

Ver. 15.

It, i.e. destruction, expressed **#Job 18:12**, and designed by this particle *it*, **#Job 18:13**, shall not come upon him and his for a season, for then there might be some hopes of recovery; but it shall fix his abode with him.

It is none of his: this may be added, either,

1. By way of correction, Did I say

his tabernacle? I must retract the expression; for in truth, it is none of his, it is become another man's. Or,

2. As a reason of the ruin of his tabernacle, because it is none of his own, but got from others by deceit or violence. But these words are and may be joined with the former, and both thus rendered, *A stranger* (Heb. one *that is not his*, that is not descended from him, and hath no relation to him)

shall dwell in his tabernacle, i.e. shall possess his house and goods.

Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation; it shall be utterly and prodigiously destroyed, as it were by fire and brimstone. He seems to allude both to the destruction of Sodom, upon which God did scatter brimstone and fire, which happened not long before these times, and could not be unknown to them, who lived near that place, and were diligent observers of God's works; and to the judgment which befell Job, **#Job 1:16**: when the stranger hath taken and rifled his dwelling, he shall forsake it as an accursed place, and shall burn it with fire and brimstone, that there may be no monument of so vile a person left upon the earth.

Ver. 16.

i.e. He shall be destroyed, both root and branch, i.e. both himself and his posterity. Compare **#Mal 4:1**.

Ver. 17.

Instead of that honour and renown which he designed to have, both whilst he lived, and after his death, he is not so much as remembered, unless it be with contempt and reproach.

Ver. 18.

He shall be driven, Heb. *they shall drive him*, i.e. his enemies, or those whom he hath oppressed; or they whom God shall appoint to do it, whether angels or men. Or it is an impersonal speech, and to be rendered passively, as it is also **#Job 7:3 Lu 12:20 16:9**.

From light into darkness; from a splendid and prosperous life to disgrace and misery, and to the grave, the land of darkness and forgetfulness, as the following words explain it.

Ver. 19.

But if any such survive, they shall be in the hands and power of strangers, or rather of their enemies.

Ver. 20.

At his day, i.e. at the day of his destruction, as the word day is used, **#Ps 37:13 137:7 Eze 21:25 Ob 1:12**. They shall be amazed at the suddenness, and dreadful, and prodigiousness of it, as Job's friends were at his calamities, **#Job 2:12,13**. They that went before, i.e. before the persons last mentioned; those who lived in the time and place where this judgment was inflicted.

Affrighted; or, *filled with horror*; partly through humanity and compassion, and partly for fear, lest the judgment should overtake them also.

Ver. 21.

i.e. Who doth not acknowledge, nor fear, nor serve God, as this phrase is used, **#1Sa 2:12 Ps 79:6 2Th 1:8**.

JOB CHAPTER 19

Job's answer: his friends' strangeness and reproaches vex him, **#Job 19:1-3**. He layeth before them his great misery to provoke their pity, **#Job 19:6-22**; wisheth his words might be recorded, **#Job 19:23,24**. His hope in his Redeemer and the resurrection, **#Job 19:25-27**. His friends should not reproach his integrity, for fear of like judgment, **#Job 19:28,29**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

With mere empty words, void of sense or argument; with your impertinent and unedifying discourses, and bitter reproaches, as it followeth.

Ver. 3.

These ten times, i.e. many times. A certain number for an uncertain. So this phrase is oft used, as **#Ge 31:7 Nu 14:22, &c.**

That ye make yourselves strange to me; that you carry yourselves like strangers to me, and are not concerned nor affected with my calamities, and condemn me as if you had never known my former piety and integrity.

Ver. 4.

If my opinion in this point be faulty and erroneous, as you pretend it is. Or, if I have sinned, (for sin is oft called error in Scripture,) and am therefore punished.

Mine error remaineth with myself; either,

1. It is likely to continue, I see no cause from your reasons to change my judgment. Or,
2. I suffer deeply for my sins, and therefore deserve your pity and help, rather than your reproaches, whereby you add affliction to the afflicted.

Ver. 5.

Magnify yourselves against me, i.e. use lofty, and imperious, and contemptuous speeches against me; or seek praise and honour from others, by your conquering or outreasoning of me.

My reproach; either,

1. Your reproaches of me; if your reproachful and censorious speeches must pass for solid arguments. Or,
2. My wickedness, which, if true, were just matter of reproach, and the cause of all my miseries. Or,
3. My contemptible and calamitous condition, for which you reproach and condemn me as a hypocrite and wicked man.

Ver. 6.

Know now; consider what I am now saying.

Hath overthrown me; hath grievously afflicted me in all kinds; therefore it ill becomes you to aggravate my miseries; and if my passions, hereby raised, have broken forth into some extravagant and unmeet expressions, I might expect your pity and favourable construction, and not such severe censures and reproaches. Heb. *God hath perverted me*, i.e. either my state or condition, as was now said, or my right and cause. He oppresseth me with power, and will not give me a fair hearing, as it follows, **#Job 19:7**. He giveth me very hard measure, and dealeth worse with me than I might in reason and justice expect from so wise and good a God. This is a harsh reflection upon God; but such passages have sometimes come from good men, when under sore afflictions and temptations, which was Job's case.

With his net, i.e. with afflictions on every side, so that I cannot escape, nor get any freedom to come to him and plead with him, as I desire.

Ver. 7.

I cry out, to wit, unto God by prayer or appeal.

Of wrong; that I am oppressed, either,

1. By my friends; or rather,
2. By God, who deals with me according to his sovereign power and exact and rigorous justice, and not with that equity and benignity which he showeth to the generality of men, and hath promised to good men, such as he knoweth me to be.

There is no judgment: God will not hear my cause, nor pass sentence; which I might reasonably expect from him; but he quite neglects me, and hath utterly forsaken me, and left me in the hands of the devil and wicked men. See the like complaints of other good men in the like case of desertion, **#Ps 13:2 22:2 88:15 La 3:8 Hab 1:2**.

Ver. 8.

That I cannot pass, i.e. so that I know not what to say or do, and can see no means nor possibility of getting out of my troubles.

He hath set darkness in my paths; so that I cannot discern my way, or what course I should take.

Ver. 9.

Of my glory, i.e. of my estate, and children, and authority, and all my comforts.

The crown, i.e. all my ornaments.

Ver. 10.

On every side, i.e. in all respects, and to all intents and purposes; my person, and family, and estate.

I am gone, i.e. I am a lost and dead man. *Going is oft put for dying,* as #Ge 15:2 Ps 39:13.

Mine hope, i.e. all my hopes of the present life, as he oft expresseth it; but not of the life to come, as appears from #Job 13:15,16 19:25, &c.

Like a tree; which being once plucked up by the roots, never groweth again.

Ver. 11.

He hath stirred up his wrath against me of his own accord, without any provocation of mine, human infirmity excepted.

He counteth me unto him as one of his enemies, i.e. he useth me as sharply as if I were an inveterate enemy of God and of all goodness, though he knoweth I am and have ever been a hearty lover and servant of him.

Ver. 12.

His troops, i.e. my afflictions, which are but God's instruments and soldiers marching under his conduct.

Raise up their way; either,

1. Cast a bank or trench round about me, as an army doth when they go to besiege a place. Or rather,

2. Make a causeway or raised path, as pioneers usually do in low and waterish grounds for the march of an army. God removes all impediments out of the way, and lays me open to all manner of mischief.

Ver. 13.

My brethren, i.e. my kindred and friends, who might and should have supported and comforted me in my distress.

Far from me; either,

1. In place; because they feared or disdained, or at least neglected, to visit or succour me. Or,

2. In their affections, which are far from me, when their bodies are present with me, as I find in you. But this also I ascribe to God; he hath alienated your hearts from me.

Ver. 14.

My kinsfolk have failed, to wit, to perform the offices of humanity and friendship which they owe to me.

Have forgotten me, i.e. neglect and disregard me as much as if they had quite forgotten me.

Ver. 15.

They that dwell in mine house, Heb. the sojourners of my house, i.e. such as had formerly sojourned with me, whether strangers, widows, and fatherless, whom by the law of charity and hospitality he entertained; or hired servants, who had for a good while their habitation and subsistence in his family.

My maids; who, by reason of their sex, commonly have and should have more tender and compassionate hearts than men. And therefore this is God's doing, who hath hardened their hearts against me.

Count me for a stranger; regard my commands and concerns no more than a stranger.

I am an alien in their sight; the same thing repeated, through vehemency of passion, because this lay very heavy upon him.

Ver. 16.

I called my servant, to do some servile office about me, for my case or relief, and he passed by as if he had been deaf, because he loathed and feared to come near to me; although to my commands I added humble and earnest desires.

With my mouth: either,

1. With gentle and moving speeches; or rather,
2. With my own mouth, and not by a proxy.

Ver. 17.

To my wife; who by reason of the stink of my breath and sores denied me her company.

For the children's sake of mine own body; by these pledges of our mutual and matrimonial tie and affection, the children which came out of my loins, and were begotten by me upon her body. But divers render the words thus, *and I entreated the children of my own body*, i.e. either some of Job's younger children, who by reason of their tender years were kept at home with their father, when their elder brethren and sisters were gone abroad to the feast; or some of his grandchildren by those grown sons and daughters; for such also oft come under the name of *children*. But this sense seems not so proper, partly because according to that translation here is mention only of Job's entreating them, but not a word of their denying his request; which is the only matter of his present complaint; and partly because according to the former translation it is a great and just aggravation of his wife's unkindness, and exactly answers to the foregoing verse, where the servant's perverseness is aggravated in the same manner, and by part of the same words.

Ver. 18.

Young children; or, *fools*; the most contemptible persons. I arose, to wit, from my seat, to show my respect to them, though they were my inferiors; to show my readiness to comply with that mean and low condition, into which God had now brought me. Or, *I stood up*; for so this word sometimes signifies. I did not disoblige or provoke them by any uncivil and uncomely carriage towards them, but was very courteous to them; and yet they make it their business to rail against me, as you also do.

Ver. 19.

My inward friends, Heb. *the men of my secret*; my intimates and confidants, to whom I imparted all my thoughts, and counsels, and concerns.

Whom I loved sincerely and fervently, which they so ill requite. He saith not, *they who loved me*; for their love, had it been true, would have continued in his affliction as well as in his prosperity.

Ver. 20.

My bone, i.e. my bones; the singular collectively put for the plural, as **#Job 2:5 Pr 15:30**.

Cleaveth to my skin, to wit, immediately, the fat and flesh next to the skin being consumed. The sense is, I am worn to skin and bone: see the same phrase **#Ps 102:5**.

And to my flesh; or, *as* (the particle *and* being often so used, as hath been observed before) *to my flesh*, i.e. either as formerly it clave to my flesh, or as near and as closely as it doth to these remainders of flesh which are left in my inward parts.

I am escaped with the skin of my teeth; I am scarce sound and whole and free from sores in any part of my skin, except that of my jaws, which holdeth and covereth the roots of my teeth. This being, as divers observe, the devil's policy, to leave his mouth untouched, that he might more freely express his mind, and vent his blasphemies against God, which he supposed sharp pain would force him to do, and which he knew would be of pernicious consequence not only to Job, but to others also.

Ver. 21.

O ye my friends; for such you have been, and still pretend to be; and therefore fulfil that relation; and if you will not help me, yet at least pity me.

Hath touched me, i.e. smitten or afflicted me sorely, as this word is oft used; as **#Job 1:11 Ps 104:32**.

Ver. 22.

As God; either,

1. As God doth; or rather,

2. As if you were gods, and not men; as if you had the same infinite knowledge which God hath, whereby you can search my heart, and know my hypocrisy; and the same sovereign and absolute authority, to say and do what you please with me, without giving any reason or account of it, which is indeed the

prerogative of the great God; but it belongs not to you, who are men, and therefore liable to mistake and misjudging, and such as must give all account to God of all their words and carriage towards their brethren, and particularly towards persons in affliction, and withal subject to the same diseases and calamities under which I groan; and therefore may need the pity which I expect from you.

With my flesh, i.e. with the consumption and torment of my whole body, but add to it the vexation of my spirit, by grievous reproaches and censures; but are like wolves or lions, that are not contented with devouring the flesh of their prey, but also break their bones.

Ver. 23.

My words; either,

1. The following and famous confession of his faith, **#Job 19:25**, &c. Or rather,

2. All his foregoing discourses with his friends, which he was so far from disowning or being ashamed of, that he was desirous that all ages should know, that they might judge between him and them, whose cause was better, and whose arguments were stronger.

Ver. 24.

An iron pen; of which also there is mention **#Jer 17:1**.

And lead; or, *or lead*; or, *with lead*; the particle *and* being oft so used, as **#Ge 4:20 Ex 1:6 Jer 22:7**. For this lead may be either,

1. The writing pen, which might be either of iron or of lead; for though lead be of itself too soft, yet there was an art of tempering lead with other metals to such a degree of hardness that it could pierce into a rock; as they did-also temper brass, so that they could make bows and swords of it. Or,

2. The writing table; for the ancients did use to write divers things in lead, as is well known. Or,

3. The writing ink, as I may call it; for they used to grave the letters in a stone with an iron tool, and then to fill up the cuts or

furrows made in the stone with lead, that the words might be more plainly seen and read.

Ver. 25.

This is the reason of his great confidence in the goodness of his cause, and his willingness to have the matter depending between him and his friends published and submitted to any trial, because he had a living and powerful Redeemer to plead his cause, and vindicate his person from all their severe censures, and to give sentence for him.

I know: I have no knowledge, nor confidence, nor hope of restitution to the prosperities of this life; yet this one thing I know, which is more comfortable and considerable, and therein I rejoice, though I be now a dying man, and in a desperate condition for this life.

My redeemer; in whom I have a particular interest, and he hath a particular care of me.

Quest. What redeemer and what deliverance doth Job speak of in this and the two following verses?

Answ. Some late interpreters understand this place metaphorically, of God's delivering Job out of his doleful and desperate condition, and restoring him to his former splendour and happiness in the world; it being a very usual thing in Scripture to call eminent dangers or calamities by the name of *death*, as **#Ps 22:15 88:4,5 Eze 37:11,12 2Co 11:23**; and great and glorious deliverances by the name of *quickenings* and *resurrection*, as **#Ps 71:20 Isa 26:19 Ro 11:15**. But the most interpreters, both ancient and modern, understand it of Christ, and of his resurrection, and of Job's resurrection to life by his power and favour; which seems most probable for many reasons.

1. From that known rule, that a proper and literal interpretation of Scripture is always to be preferred before the metaphorical, where it suits with the text and with other scriptures.

2. From the Hebrew word *goel*, here used; which although sometimes it be used of God absolutely, or essentially considered, yet it most properly agrees to Jesus Christ; for this word, as all Hebricians know, is primarily used of the next kinsman, whose

office it was to redeem by a price paid the sold or mortgaged estate of his deceased kinsman, **#Le 25:25**; and to revenge his death, **#Nu 35:12**; and to maintain his name and honour, by raising up seed to him, **#De 25:5**: all which most fitly agrees to Christ, who is our nearest Kinsman and *Brother*, **#Heb 2:11**, as having taken our nature upon him by incarnation; who also hath redeemed that everlasting inheritance which our first parents had utterly lost and sold by the price of his own blood; and hath revenged the death of mankind upon the great contriver of it, the devil, by destroying him and his kingdom; and hath taken a course to preserve our name, and honour, and persons to eternity. And if the places where God is called *Goel* in the Old Testament be examined, it will be found that either all or most of them may be, and some of them must be, understood of God the Son, or of Christ, as **#Ge 48:16 Isa 49:20**. See also **#Ps 74:2 Isa 41:14 44:16 49:7 52:3 63:16**.

3. Because Job was so far from such a firm confidence as he here professeth, that he had not the least degree of hope of any such glorious temporal restoration as his friends promised to him, as we have oft seen and observed in the former discourses, as **#Job 16:22 17:12,13**, &c. And therefore that *hope* which every *righteous* man *hath in his death*, **#Pr 14:32**, and which Job oft professeth that he had, must necessarily be fixed upon his happiness in the future life.

4. Because some of the following expressions cannot without wresting and violence be applied to a metaphorical resurrection, as we shall see in the sequel.

5. Because this is a more lofty and spiritual strain than any in Job's former discourses, and quite contrary to them. And as they generally savour of dejection and diffidence, and do either declare or increase his grief; so this puts him into another and much better temper. And therefore it is well observed, that after this time and these expressions we meet not with any such impatient or despairing passages as we had before; which shows that they had inspired him with new life and comfort.

6. Because this well agrees with other passages in this book; wherein Job declareth, that although he had no hope as to this life,

And the comforts thereof, yet he had a hope beyond death, which made him profess, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*, #**Job 13:15**. *Trust in him*; for what? Surely for comfort and happiness. Where? Not in this life, for that he supposeth to be lost; therefore it must be in the next life. And this was one reason why he so vehemently desired death, because he knew it would bring him unto God and unto true felicity. And this his hope and confidence in God, and in his favour to him, Job opposeth to those foul and false aspersions which his friends had cast upon him, as if he had forsaken God, and cast off all fear of him, and hope in him.

Object

1. If this place had spoken of the resurrection of the body, some of the Hebrew' writers or commentators upon this place, who did believe that doctrine, would have understood it so, and have urged it against the Sadducees, which they did not.

Answ.

1. All the Jewish writers which are now extant lived and wrote since Christ's time, when the doctors of that people were very ignorant of many great truths, and of the plain meaning of many scriptures, and very corrupt in their principles as well as in their practices.

2. There was a manifest reason why they could not understand this text thus, because they believed that Job in his agonies did deny God's providence, and consequently the resurrection and the future judgment, which though it was a most uncharitable and false opinion, yet forced them to interpret this text another way.

Object.

2. How is it credible that Job, in those ancient times, and in that dark state of the church, should know these great mysteries of Christ's incarnation, and of the resurrection and life to come?

Answ. 1. The mystery of Christ's incarnation was revealed to Adam by that first and famous promise, that *the seed of the woman should break the serpent's head*, #**Ge 3:15**; which being the only foundation of all his hopes for the recovery and salvation of himself, and of all his posterity, he would doubtless carefully

and diligently teach and explain it, as need required, to those that descended from him.

2. That the ancient patriarchs and prophets were generally acquainted with these doctrines is undeniably evident from **#Heb 11 1Pe 1:9-12**.

3. Particularly Abraham, from whom Job is supposed to have descended, had the promise made to him, that Christ should come out of his loins, **#Ge 12:3**; and is said to have *seen, Christ's day, and rejoiced to see it*, **#Joh 8:56**, and had his hopes and desires fixed upon a divine and heavenly city and country, **#Heb 11:10,16**. And as Abraham knew and believed these things himself, so it is manifest that, he taught them to his children and servants, **#Ge 18:19**, and to his kindred and others, as he had occasion. And therefore it cannot seem strange that Job professeth his faith and hope in these things.

My redeemer liveth: I am a dying man, and my hopes are dying, but he liveth, and that for ever; and therefore though I die, yet he both can and will make me live again in due time, though not in this world, yet in the other, which is much better; and though I am now highly censured and condemned by my friends and others as a great dissembler and a secret sinner, whom God's hand hath found out; yet there is a day coming wherein my cause shall be pleaded, and my name and honour vindicated from all these reproaches, and my integrity brought to light.

He shall stand: I am falling and dying, but he shall stand firm, and unmovable, and victorious, in full power and authority; all which this word

stand signifies; and therefore he is able to make me stand in judgment, and to maintain my cause against all opposers. Or, *he shall arise*, as this verb most commonly signifies, i.e. either,

1. He shall exist, or be born, as this word is oft used; as **#Nu 32:14 De 29:22 Jud 2:10 1Ki 3:12 Mt 11:11**. And it notes Christ's incarnation, that although as he was God he was now and from all eternity in being, yet he should in due time be made man, and be born of a woman. Or,

2. He shall arise out of the dust; which had been more probable, if it had been in the text *from* or *out of*, as now it is upon, the earth or dust; for Christ's resurrection from the dead might be fitly mentioned here as the cause of Job's resurrection, which followeth.

At the latter day; either,

1. In the days of the Messiah, or of the gospel, which are oft called the

latter or *last days* or times; as **#Isa 2:2 Ho 3:5 Joe 2:28**, compared with **#Ac 2:17 1Ti 4:1 2Ti 3:1 Heb 1:1**. Or rather,

2. At the day of the general resurrection and judgment, which, as those holy patriarchs well knew and firmly believed, was to be at the end of the world, and which is called the *last day*, **#Joh 6:39,40,44,51 11:24 12:48 1Pe 1:5**; for this was the time when Job's resurrection, of which he speaketh here, was to be. Heb. *at the last*; by which word he plainly intimates that his hope was not of things present, and of worldly felicities, of which his friends had discoursed so much; but of another kind of, and a far greater, blessedness, which should accrue to him in after-times, long after he was dead and rotten. Or, *the last*; who is both the *first and the last*, **#Isa 44:6 Re 1:11**, who shall subdue and survive all his and his people's enemies, and after others the last enemy, death, **#1Co 15:26**, and then shall raise up his people and plead their cause, and vindicate them from all the calumnies and injuries which are put upon them, and conduct them to life and glory.

Upon the earth; the place upon which Christ shall appear and stand at the last day. Heb. *upon the dust*; in which his saints and members lie or sleep, whom he will raise out of it. And therefore he is fitly said to *stand upon the dust*, or the grave, or death, because then he will put that among other *enemies under his feet*; as it is expressed, **#1Co 15:25,26**. Some render the words thus, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew, *the last*, or *at the last*, *he shall arise or stand up against* (for so this very phrase is used, **#Ge 4:8 Jud 9:18 Ps 44:3**) *the dust*, and fight with it, and rescue the bodies of the saints, which are held in it as prisoners, from its dominion and territories. Some understand this of God, that *he* should *stand last in the field*, as Conqueror of all his enemies. But

this neither agrees with the words, the Hebrew *aphar* signifying *dust*, and being never used of the field or place of battle; nor with Job's scope, which was to defend himself against his friends' accusations, and to comfort himself with his hopes and assurance of God's favour to be exhibited to him in due time; which end the words in that sense would by no means serve, because God might and would be Conqueror of all his enemies, though Job himself had been one of them, and though his cause had been bad, and his friends should with God have triumphed over him.

Ver. 26.

The style of this and other poetical books is concise and short, and therefore many words are to be understood in some places to complete the sense. The meaning of the place is this, Though my skin is now in a great measure consumed by sores, and the rest of it, together with this body, shall be devoured by the worms; which may seem to make my case quite desperate. Heb.

And though (which particle, as it is oft elsewhere, is here to be understood, as the opposition of the next branch showeth)

after my skin (which either now is, or suddenly will be, consumed by sores or worms) *they* (i.e. *the destroyers*, or *devourers*, as is implied in the verb; such impersonal speeches being usual in the Scripture; as #Ge 1:26 Lu 12:20 16:9, where the actions are expressed, but the persons or things acting are understood. And by the destroyers he most probably designs the worms, which do this work in the grave) *destroy*, or *cut off*, or *devour this*, i.e. all this which you see left of me, this which I now point to, all this which is contained within my skin, all my flesh and bones, *this* which I know not what to call, whether a living body, or a dead carcass, because it is between both; and therefore he did not say

this body, because it did scarce deserve that name.

Yet; for the particle *and* is oft used adversatively; or *then*, as it is oft rendered.

In my flesh, Heb. *out of my flesh*, or *with* (as the particle *mem* is used, #So 1:2 3:9 Isa 57:8) *my flesh*, i.e. *with eyes of flesh*, as Job himself calls them, #Job 10:4; or with bodily eyes; my flesh or body being raised from the grave, and restored and reunited to my

soul. And this is very fitly added, to show that he did not speak of a mental or spiritual, but of a corporeal vision, and that after his death.

Shall I see God; the same whom he called his *redeemer* #**Job 19:25**, i.e. Christ; of which see the note there; who being God-man, and having taken flesh, and appearing in his flesh or body with and for Job upon the earth, as was said #**Job 19:25**, might very well be seen with his bodily eyes. Nor is this understood of a simple *seeing* of him; for so even they that pierced him shall see him, #**Re 1:7**; but of seeing him with delight and comfort, as that word is oft understood, as #**Ge 48:11 Job 42:16 Ps 128:5 Isa 53:11**; of that glorious and beatifying vision of God which is promised to all God's people, #**Ps 16:11 17:15 Mt 5:8 1Co 13:12 1Jo 3:2**.

Ver. 27.

Whom I shall see, in manner before and after expressed. No wonder that he repeats it again, because the meditation of it was most sweet to him.

For myself, i.e. for my own comfort and benefit, as that phrase is oft used. Or, which is much of the same importance, on my behalf; to plead my cause, and vindicate me from all your reproaches.

Not another, to wit, for me, or in my stead. I shall not see God by another's eyes, but by my own, and by these selfsame eyes in this same body which now I have. Heb. *not a stranger*, i.e. this privilege shall be granted to me and to all other sincere servants of God, but not to strangers, i.e. to wicked men, who are oft called strangers, as #**Ps 18:44,45 54:3 Pr 21:8**, because they are estranged or alienated from God, and from his service and people. And if I were such a one, as you suppose me to be, I could never hope to enjoy that happiness.

Though my reins be consumed within me: this I do confidently expect and hope for, though at present my case seems desperate, my very inward parts being even consumed with grief; and though, as I have said, the grave and the worms will consume my whole body, not excepting the reins, which seem to be safest and furthest out of their reach. Or without

though, which is not in the Hebrew, *my reins are consumed within me*. So this may be a sudden and passionate ejaculation or exclamation, (such as we find **#Ge 49:18**, and oft in the Book of Psalms,) arising from the contemplation and confident expectation of this his unspeakable happiness, wherein he expreseth his vehement desire and longing for that blessed time and state. *The reins* are oft put for earnest desires or affections, whereof they are supposed to be the seat; as **#Job 38:36 Pr 23:16**. And men are oft in Scripture said to be

consumed or *eaten up*, or the like, by ardent affections; as **#Ps 69:9 84:2 119:81,82 Joh 2:17**.

Ver. 28.

But; or, *therefore*; because this is my case, and my faith and hope in God.

Ye should say: so the future is used potentially, as it is **#Ob 1:12**; and the sense is, it would become you; or, it is your duty upon this account to say. Or, *you will say*, i.e. either,

1. I hope you will say so, and that you will be more moderate in your censures and expressions concerning me, as being convinced and sweetened by this sincere and solemn profession of my faith and hope. Or,

2. Peradventure you will say, to wit, by way of excuse for yourselves.

Why persecute we him? so it is a correction of themselves. Seeing things are thus with him, we are blameworthy, that we have persecuted him with such bitter invectives, and we will do so no more. Or, *wherein* or *how* (for so that particle is sometimes used, as the learned observe) *do we persecute him*, as he chargeth us, **#Job 19:22**. He accuseth us falsely, and without cause given on our parts. So it is an apology for their hard speeches against him, which Job puts into their mouths as their exception to his charge, which he mentioned **#Job 19:22** and upon that occasion falls into a most serious and pathetic exclamation, **#Job 19:23,24**, and into a most solemn declaration of his faith in God his Redeemer, **#Job 19:25-27**; and after that digression he resumes the former matter, and here propounds an objection, to

which he gives a severe answer, which may seem to suit much better with this than with the former exposition.

Seeing the root of the matter is found in me. These words contain either,

1. A motive or reason why they should correct themselves for persecuting him, and desist from it; *because*, saith Job,

the root of the matter, or *word*, is in me. The *root* notes the occasion, or the foundation, or the truth and substance of a thing. And by this *matter* or word may be meant either,

1. That famous profession of his faith and confidence in God, **#Job 19:25-27**, which, saith he, I have not uttered vain-gloriously or hypocritically, but from my very heart, wherewith I believe what I have spoken with my mouth, as is said upon another occasion, **#Ro 10:9,10**. This word or faith is rooted in mine heart, as it should be, **#Mt 13:21 Col 2:7**. I am no hypocrite, as you asperse me, but an upright person, having a root of true religion in me; which therefore should allay your censures, and make you willing to bear with some circumstantial defects or mistakes in my discourses, or miscarriages, into which my passion and pain might transport me, and make you repent of your cruel usage of a truly good man. But although Job had this root in his heart, yet this was doubted of, and not discernible by, Job's friends, and therefore could be no argument to them. Possibly it might be better to understand by this *root of the word*, to wit, of God's word, which is oft called *the word*, by way of eminency, the foundations or fundamental truths of Divine doctrine which Job held; as appeared by this glorious confession, howsoever he might err in the matter of controversy with them; which being a difference in lesser things, they should mildly have borne with it, and not aggravated it and traduced him, as if thereby he had renounced God, and the very principles of religion, as they did. Or,

2. The word or thing under debate among them. So the sense may be this,

the root or truth of *the thing* debated by us is with me, i.e. is on my side. Your discourses and arguments have no truth nor solidity in them as mine have. You speak whatever cometh into your minds and mouths; but my discourses are rooted and grounded

upon sound knowledge and deep consideration. But this was no convincing answer; for they could easily retort the same thing upon him again, and their affirmation might seem as good as his; for it was only a begging of the thing in question. Or rather,

2. A defence of themselves, and of their former sharp and severe discourses, which Job called persecution, **#Job 19:22**. And having made a short, but vehement and important, digression, **#Job 19:23**, &c., he returns to the main question between them here; and the sense of this verse (with submission to better judgments) seems to me to be plainly this, *But ye will say*, i.e. I know will object against my charge, *how*, or *wherein*, or *why do we persecute him?* Why doth he charge us with so black a crime; *seeing*, or *for*, (as *vau* is oft used,) *the root*, i.e. the foundation, or cause, or occasion of the *word*, i.e. of those words or passages of ours which are so ill taken, or

of the matter, i.e. of the thing now debated among us, *is in me*; i.e. Job gives the occasion to it by his boisterous passions and wicked expressions against God, which we neither can nor ought to endure, but are to be sharply reprov'd. And so this verse contains their objection or apology, which Job puts into their mouths, to which he makes a sharp and suitable reply in the following verse.

Ver. 29.

Of the sword, i.e. of some considerable judgment to be inflicted on you, which is called the sword; as **#De 32:41**, and oft elsewhere. Do not please yourselves with such pretences and crafty evasions, as if the blame were wholly in me, not in you: God will not be mocked by you; he sees and will punish your most unrighteous and uncharitable judgment of me, and dealing with me.

Wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword: for that *wrath* or *fury* which is in your hearts, and breaks out of your lips against me, doth deserve, and will certainly bring upon you, the *punishment* (Heb. *punishments* or *iniquities*; but *iniquity* is oft put for *punishment*)

of the sword, i.e. a dreadful judgment from God. Or without any supplement, except that which is generally understood,

for wrath (that sin of wrath or rage against a man, especially against one in affliction) is *an iniquity* (Heb. *iniquities*, the plural number being used by way of aggravation; as **#Ps 73:22**, and elsewhere: or, *of the iniquities*; the Hebrew prefix *mem* being here understood, as it is in many other places)

of the sword, i.e. one of those iniquities which use to be, or are fit to be, punished by the Sword, i.e. by some eminent judgment; as **#Job 31:11**, *an iniquity of the judges, is an iniquity to be punished by the judges*, as our translation hath it. *That ye may know*: the sense is either,

1. This admonition I now give you, that you may know it in time, and for your good, that you may seriously consider and prevent it.
Or,

2. This judgment will come upon you, that you may be taught by your own sad and costly experience what you would not learn without it. *That there is a judgment*, i.e. that there will be a time of judgment, when God will call men to an account for all their hard speeches and miscarriages, and particularly for their rash and uncharitable censures of their brethren, **#Mt 7:1 Ro 14:4 Jas 4:11**, either in this life, or at that last and dreadful day of the general resurrection (of which he spoke **#Job 19:25**, &c.) and judgment. God sees, and observes, and will judge all your words and actions, and therefore do not flatter yourselves with vain hopes of impunity.

JOB CHAPTER 20

Zophar's answer: the state and portion of the wicked, not withstanding for a time he may prosper and flourish.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Therefore; for this thy severe sentence and denunciation of God's judgments against us, **#Job 19:29**, which much more justly belongs to thyself and is actually executed upon thee; and because of thy reproaches, as it followeth, **#Job 20:3**.

My thoughts cause me to answer: I thought to have troubled myself and thee with no further discourses, considering how exceptionous and incorrigible thou art; but my thoughts or consideration of thy reproachful words force me to break silence, and to answer thee as the matter requires.

For this I make haste; I speak sooner than I intended, because I am not able to contain myself longer, and fear lest I should forget what is in my mind. Possibly he interrupted Job when he was proceeding further in his discourse; or he prevented some of his brethren who made an offer to speak.

Ver. 3.

I have heard from thy mouth. Or, *Shall I hear*, to wit, with patience, and without a reply? Who can endure it?

The check of my reproach, i.e. thy shameful and opprobrious reproofs of us, as if we and all thy friends were void of all humanity and natural affection towards them, and were haters, and cruel persecutors, and even devourers, of thee, #Job 19:19,22; and as if we were guilty of most heinous crimes, and might expect God's vengeance upon us.

The spirit, i.e. my soul or mind.

Of my understanding, or, *because of* (for so the Hebrew *mem oft* signifies)

my understanding i.e. out of, or because of, that certain knowledge which I have of this matter from study and experience; I have not spoken, and I shall not speak, out of ignorance, or prejudice, or passion and rage against Job, as he asperseth us, but only what I evidently know, and yet hope that I can and shall convince thee of.

Causeth me to answer, i.e. forceth me to speak. Or, *answereth for me*, i.e. either vindicates me against thy calumnies, or suggesteth an answer to me.

Ver. 4.

i.e. *This* which I am now about to say. How canst thou,

thou, I say, who pretendest to such an exact and universal knowledge of men and things, be ignorant of so notorious a thing,

which wicked men sensibly feel, and good men diligently observe, and all men are forced to acknowledge, one time or other?

Of old, i.e. from the experience of all former ages.

Since man was placed upon earth, i.e. since the world was made, and there were any men to observe God's government of it.

Ver. 5.

Is short, Heb. is *from near*, i.e. from or for a little time; they have not long enjoyed it, and it will shortly vanish.

The joy of the hypocrite: this he adds by way of reflection upon Job, who though he did clear himself from gross wickedness, yet might be guilty of deep hypocrisy.

Ver. 6.

Though he be advanced to great dignity and authority in the world.

Ver. 7.

Like his own dung; which men cast away with contempt and abhorrency. Compare #1Ki 14:10 2Ki 9:37.

They which have seen him, with admiration at his felicity.

Where is he? i.e. he is no where to be found; he is utterly lost and gone.

Ver. 8.

As a dream; which for the present makes a great show and noise, and highly affects the fancy, but hath nothing solid nor permanent in it; for as soon as the man awakes all vanisheth, and the remembrance of it is quickly lost.

Shall not be found; the man will be utterly lost and gone, together with all his riches and glory.

As a vision of the night; which appears to a man in the night and in his sleep.

Ver. 9.

i.e. It shall not acknowledge nor contain him. A figure called *protopopaeia*, as #Job 7:10. Or, *neither shall it* (i.e. the eye last mentioned) *behold him any more in his place*.

Ver. 10.

Shall seek to please the poor; either,

1. To get some small relief from them in their extreme necessity.
Or rather,

2. Lest they should revenge themselves of them for the great and many injuries which their father did them, or seek to the magistrate for reparations.

His hands shall restore their goods, by the sentence of the judge, to whom the oppressed poor will appeal, notwithstanding all their entreaties and endeavours to dissuade them from so-doing.

Ver. 11.

His bones, i.e. his whole body, even the strongest parts of it, which may seem most remote from danger.

Of the sin of his youth, Heb. *of his youth*, i.e. of his youthful pleasures and lusts, by a metonymy of the subject. And this may be understood either,

1. Of the sins themselves, that he shall persevere in his youthful lusts even in old age, and shall die without repentance. Or rather,

2. Of the punishment of his sins, of which he is speaking both in the foregoing and following verses. He shall feel the sad effects of those sins in his riper years, as riotous sinners commonly do; and, as it follows, attended him to his grave. Or, *with his secret ways* or sins, as others render it; whereby he possibly intimates that Job, though he appeared righteous before others, yet was guilty of some secret wickedness, for which God was now reckoning with him.

Ver. 12.

In his mouth, i.e. to his taste, though it greatly please him for the present.

Though he hide it under his tongue; as an epicure doth a sweet morsel, which he is loth to swallow, and therefore keeps and rolls it about his mouth that he may longer enjoy the pleasure of it: though he be highly pleased with his lusts, and cleave to them in hearty love, and resolve to hold them fast, and improve them to the greatest delight and advantage.

Ver. 13.

Though he spare it, i.e. will not part with it; or gratify and obey it, instead of subduing and mortifying it.

Keep it still within his mouth, to suck out all the sweetness or benefit of it, though it be very delightful to him.

Ver. 14.

Turned into another nature or quality, from sweet to bitter.

The gall of asps, i.e. exceeding bitter and pernicious. Gall is most bitter; the gall of serpents is full of poison, which from thence is conveyed to their mouths by veins, as Pliny observes; and the poison of asps is most dangerous, and within a few hours kills without remedy.

Ver. 15.

He shall vomit them up again, i.e. be forced to restore them with great shame and torment, as gluttons sometimes do loathe, and with grief and pain cast up, that meat which they have eaten and swallowed down with much greediness and delight. If no man's hand can reach him, God shall find him out, and punish him severely.

Ver. 16.

That which he hath greedily and industriously sucked in as pleasant and wholesome nourishment, shall in the issue be as ungrateful and destructive to him as the

poison or *head* (for the Hebrew word signifies both, and the poison lies in the head)

of asps would be to one that sucketh it. The viper's tongue, together with its teeth, in which the poison lurks, which it conveys by biting a man.

Ver. 17.

Not see, i.e. not enjoy, as that word is oft used as **#Ps 106:5 Ec 2:1**.

The brooks of honey and butter; that abundant satisfaction and comfort, (oft signified by these or suchlike metaphors; as **#Ps 36:8 46:4 Isa 7:15,22 41:18**) either which he promised to himself from that great estate which he had got by deceit and oppression, or

which good men through God's blessing may and commonly do enjoy.

Ver. 18.

That which he laboured for, Heb. *labour*, i.e. the goods which were gotten with labour; either,

1. By the labour of others; or rather,

2. By his own labour; which may relate as well to the goods of others, which he got not without pains and difficulty; or to his own goods honestly gotten by the sweat of his brows. And this is an aggravation of his misery, that he was forced to restore not only other men's goods which were in his hands, but his own also, to make reparation for their damages.

Shall not swallow it down, to wit, so as to hold it; for otherwise he did swallow it, but withal did speedily vomit it up again, **#Job 20:15**, which was as if he had not swallowed it. He shall not possess it long, nor to any considerable purpose.

According to his substance shall the restitution be, i.e. he shall be forced to part with all his estate to make compensation for his wrongs done to others.

He shall not rejoice therein, i.e. he shall not enjoy what he hath gotten, because it shall be taken from him.

Ver. 19.

By his oppression he brought men to utter poverty, and then forsook or left them in that forlorn estate, affording no mercy nor help to them. Or, some he made poor by his oppression, and others that were poor he suffered to perish for want of that relief which he should and might have afforded them; which is a crying sin in God's sight, and one of those sins for which God destroyed Sodom, **#Eze 16:49**, and therefore fitly mentioned here as one of the sins for which God punished this wicked man. Or, *he oppresses and leaveth poor*, as Broughton renders it.

An house which he built not, i.e. which was none of his. Heb. *he hath violently taken away an house, and (or but) did not build (or repair, as building is oft used) it*, to wit, that house for his own use, i.e. he did not build or possess that house, as he intended to

do, but was cut off by God's hand before he could enjoy the fruit of his oppressions.

Ver. 20.

He shall not feel quietness in his belly, i.e. he shall have no peace nor satisfaction in his mind in all his gains, partly because of his perpetual fears and expectations of the wrath of God and man, which his guilty conscience knoweth that he deserves; and partly because they shall be speedily taken away from him. He still continueth the metaphor of a glutton, whose belly is not quiet until it hath vomited up that wherewith he had oppressed it.

Of that which he desired, i.e. any part of his good and desirable things, but he shall forfeit and lose them all.

Ver. 21.

None of his meat be left for his own future use; but he shall be stripped of all.

Therefore shall no man look for his goods; it being publicly known and observed that he was totally ruined, none of his kindred or friends shall trouble themselves to seek for any relics of his estate, as is usually done after men's deaths. But this verse is and may be rendered otherwise, *There shall none be left for his meat*, (i.e. he shall leave no heir who shall possess or enjoy his goods,) *because*, (for so the Hebrew particle *al-chen* is oft used; as #Ge 38:26 Nu 14:13 Ps 42:7 Jer 48:36) *none of his goods shall remain*, either for his heir or any other; all shall be utterly lost.

Ver. 22.

In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits; i.e. the height of prosperity and abundance he shall be distressed and tormented, either by the horrors of an unquiet mind and guilty conscience, which makes him every moment expect Divine vengeance to fall upon his head; or rather, because of the sudden and unexpected assault of other men combining against him, and spoiling all his goods, as it follows.

Every hand of the wicked, who lives by injury and the spoiling of others, and by God's providence are directed to fall upon him. Or, *of the labourer*, whose wages possibly he hath detained; or, *of such as are in trouble or misery*, as this word signifies, #Job 3:20, who may jointly invade him, either because their necessity tempts

and drives them to spoil others; or rather, because they were such as had been brought into their calamity by his oppressions, and therefore now take reparations from him.

Ver. 23.

When he is about to fill his belly, i.e. when he hath enough and abundance to satisfy all his appetites, and shall design to take the pleasure of all his gains, and to spend his days in epicurism and sensuality. *God*; who is oft understood in this book where he is not expressed; and so he is here, as appears from the following words, because there is no other person here expressed who was to inflict these evils upon him, and because they, are said to be *rained* down upon *him*; which implies their coming from Heaven, or from God. *The fury of his wrath*; some dreadful and destructive judgment.

Shall rain it upon him. This phrase notes both the author of his plagues, God, and the nature and quality of them, that they shall come upon him like rain, i.e. with great vehemency, and so as he cannot prevent or avoid it.

While he is eating; as it fell upon thy sons, **#Job 1:18,19.** Compare **#Ps 78:30,31.**

Ver. 24.

From the iron weapon, i.e. from the sword or spear; and so shall think himself out of danger.

The bow; an arrow shot out of a bow. A distant, place and unknown hand shall unexpectedly fall upon him; so that he shall only go from one danger to another.

Of steel; which is of great strength, and therefore sendeth forth the arrow with greater force. Compare **#Ps 18:34.** Or, *of brass*, as the word properly signifies; which the ancients did so temper and harden, that their bows were commonly made of it.

Shall strike him through, i.e. mortally wound him.

Ver. 25.

It is drawn; either,

1. A sword, which may be understood out of this Hebrew verb, which is for the most part used of that weapon, as #Nu 22:23,31 Jud 8:20, &c., and out of the following branch of the verse. Or,

2. The arrow last mentioned, which had entered into his body, and now was drawn out of it either by himself, or by some other person, as is frequent in that case, if peradventure he might be cured.

Out of the body; or, *out of his body*, i.e. the body of the wounded man; as appears both by the next clause of the verse, which is added to explain the former; where it is

out of his gall; and from the use of this Hebrew word, which signifies a man's body or carcass, as #Jud 14:8 1Sa 31:12 Isa 5:25 Na 3:3.

The glittering sword: the word properly signifies *lightning*, and thence a *glittering weapon*, the bright sword or spear, as #De 32:41 Eze 21:10,15 Na 3:3 Hab 3:11; whereby it is implied that he was doubly wounded; first, by the arrow, and then, to make more sure work, with the sword or spear thrust into him. But the word may as well signify *the bright and sharp point of an arrow*, of which he spoke hitherto; and having in the general said that it *came out of his body*, now he determines the part of the body, *the gall*; which showeth that the wound was both deep and deadly, as they are in that part. It is probable he mentions this in reference to the like expression of Job, #Job 16:13.

Cometh out of his gall; into which it had entered, and wherewith it was coloured.

Terrors are upon him, to wit, the terrors of death, because he perceived by the tincture of his gall upon the weapon that his wound was incurable; or horrors of conscience, because he cannot live, and dare not die.

Ver. 26.

All darkness, i.e. all sorts of miseries, both of soul, and body, and estate.

Shall be hid, or, is *hid*, or *laid up*, to wit, by God for him. This phrase may note, that though it be not actually upon him, yet it is

reserved and treasured up for him, and is kept as in a sure place, and shall infallibly overtake him.

In his secret places; either,

1. In his *hid treasures*, as this very word signifies, **#Ps 17:14**. He treasures up wealth, and with God's wrath and curse. Or,

2. In those places where he confidently hopes to hide and secure himself from all evils and enemies; yet even there God shall find him out. Or, *for*, or *instead of*, (or *with*, for both ways the prefix *lamed* is oft used,) *his hid treasures*.

A fire not blown, to wit, by man, but kindled by God himself, as that was, **#Job 1:16**. He thinks by his might and violence to secure himself from men, but God by his own immediate hand, or in some unknown and unexpected manner, will find him out. Some understand it of hell-fire; of which see **#Isa 30:33**.

With him that is left in his tabernacle, i.e. with his posterity or family, who shall inherit his curse as well as his estate.

Ver. 27.

The heaven shall reveal his iniquity, i.e. God shall be a swift witness against him by some extraordinary judgments: still he reflects upon Job's case, and the fire from heaven, **#Job 1**.

The earth i.e. all creatures upon earth shall conspire with God to destroy him.

Ver. 28.

The increase of his house; either,

1. His posterity; or rather,

2. His estate, got by the labour, and employed for the use, of his family.

Shall depart; shall be lost or taken away from him. See **#2Ki 20:17**.

His goods shall flow away like waters, to wit, swiftly and strongly, and so as to return no more.

The day of his wrath, i. e. of God's wrath, when God shall come to execute judgment upon him.

Ver. 29.

From God; who like a wise master of a feast gives to every man his proper portion, and as a just judge distributes to him according to his deserts.

The heritage appointed unto him by God, Heb. *the heritage* (i.e. the portion, as before; called here a heritage; partly to note the stability and assurance of it, that it is as firm as an inheritance to the right heir; and partly in opposition to that inheritance which he had gotten by fraud and violence) *of his word*; either,

1. Of God's word, i.e. which is allotted to him by the word or sentence of God. Or,

2. Of the wicked man's word, the reward of his speeches; which, like his actions, are and may well be presumed to be wicked and blasphemous, and many ways offensive to God: and he instanceth in his speeches rather than his actions, to meet with Job, who, though he had made some colourable excuses for his actions, yet was manifestly guilty of hard and sinful speeches against God, which he would hereby intimate that they were not such harmless and excusable things as Job pretended, as appeared by these severe judgments which they brought upon wicked men.

JOB CHAPTER 21

Job's reply: he complaineth not to man, in whose judgment he hath most reason to grieve; but exciteth their attention to convincing and amazing truths, **#Job 21:1-6**. The wicked prosper till in their pride they fear not God, **#Job 21:7-15**. Yet he purgeth himself from their counsel, and acknowledgement that often their destruction from God is manifest, at least in their children, **#Job 21:16-21**. God is righteous in both cases, and both are alike in their death, **#Job 21:22-26**. The wicked are indeed reserved for destruction, but who dareth now withstand them? and in the grave they are at rest, whither all others follow them, **#Job 21:27-34**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Or, *this shall be your consolations*, i.e. I shall accept of your patient and diligent attention to me, instead of all those consolations which you owed to me in this condition, and which I expected from you.

Ver. 3.

Suffer me that I may speak without such interruption as you have given me, **#Job 20:2**; and if I do not defend my cause with solid and convincing arguments, go on in your scoffs if you please.

Ver. 4.

To man; or, *of man*; for the prefix *lamed* commonly signifieth both *to* and *of*. And this question implies a denial, or that his complaint is not to or of man, to wit, only, but to or of God; as is here sufficiently implied, and oft elsewhere expressed by Job in this book. So the sense seems to be either,

1. This, I do not make my moan or complaint unto, or expect relief from, you, or from any men, but from God only; and therefore you have reason patiently to hear me when I am pouring forth my complaints to God. Or rather,

2. This, Do I only complain, or have I reason to complain, only of you and your unmerciful carriage to me; or of men who have dealt barbarously with me? **#Job 1 Job 30:1,9**, &c. Surely no; but, my complaint is of God, and of his hard and severe dealing with me. It is he who hath alienated my friends' affections from me, and stirred up mine enemies against me. And though it hath been my chief care and business to please and serve him, yet he hath also set himself against me, and shot all his arrows into me. And therefore my expostulation with him (which here follows, **#Job 21:7**) is the more reasonable; and if you will hear me calmly and patiently, you will find that I have cause of complaining. *If it were so*, i.e. if my complaint were only of man, I have cause to be troubled. Or, *if it be so*, i.e. if I do not complain of man, but of God, it is no wonder if my spirit be greatly oppressed; and you ought to allow me the liberty of easing my troubled mind, and modestly pleading my cause before God.

Be troubled, Heb. *be shortened*, or *straitened*, i.e. either grieved or vexed, as this word signifies, #Ex 6:9 Nu 21:4 Jud 10:16 16:16 The heart is enlarged by joy, and contracted by sorrow; as appears by philosophy and experience.

Ver. 5.

Consider what I am about to say concerning the wonderful prosperity of the worst of men, and the intolerable pressures of some good men, such as I have manifested and shall prove that I am, and it is able to fill you that are but spectators with astonishment and horror at the strange and mysterious course of Divine Providence herein; and therefore it is no wonder if I, who suffer such things from that God whom I have so faithfully served, am overwhelmed with the sense of it.

Lay your hand upon your mouth, i.e. be silent, as this phrase is oft used, as #Job 40:4 Pr 10:32 Mic 7:16; for shame forbear to vex me with your words: or, *you will lay*, &c.; the imperative being put for the future, as is usual. I am persuaded you will be silenced and convinced by what I shall say.

Ver. 6.

When I remember what I have partly observed and partly felt of these things. The very remembrance of what is past fills me with dread and horror.

Ver. 7.

He expostulates this matter partly with his friends, If things be as you say, how comes this to pass, &c? partly with God himself, Wherefore doth the righteous God distribute things so unequally?

The wicked live, to wit, long and happily; as *living* is oft taken, as #Le 18:5 1Sa 10:24 25:6 Ps 38:19; a painful and afflicted life being a kind of death, and oft so called, as #De 30:15,19 Pr 15:10 19:16 1Co 3:22 15:31.

Become old, to wit, in their prosperous estate.

Ver. 8.

Their seed; either,

1. The fruits of their ground; or rather,

2. Their children; as it is explained in the next branch of the verse, the words both here and there used being commonly so understood.

Their seed is established, i.e. they multiply and prosper greatly. In their sight; which is a great addition to their happiness.

Ver. 9.

They neither fear nor feel any disturbance.

Ver. 10.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 11.

Like a flock of sheep or goats, as the word signifies; in great numbers, and with sweet concord; which is a singular delight to them and to their parents.

Ver. 12.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 13.

In wealth; in good, i.e. in the enjoyment of all the good things of this life, without any mixture of evil. They do not die of a lingering and tormenting disease, as I now and many other good men die, but suddenly and sweetly, like lambs; as is usually said in such cases.

Ver. 14.

Therefore; because of their constant prosperity. Heb. *and*, or *yet*. Though God be so gracious to them, yet they say and do thus to him.

They say; sometimes in words, but commonly in their thoughts and affections, and the language of their lives: see #Ps 14:1 36:1,2 Mal 3:14,15 Tit 1:16.

We desire not the knowledge of thy laws,

much less the practice.

Ver. 15.

What excellency is there in him? and what advantage have we or can we expect from him?

Ver. 16.

Their good is not in their hand: this seems to be an answer to the foregoing question, and a confutation of that ungodly opinion and practice, #Job 21:14,15. Wicked men (saith he) have no reason to neglect and reject God because of their prosperity, for **their good**, i.e. all their wealth and felicity, is not

in their hand, i.e. it neither was obtained nor can be kept by their own might, but only by God's power and favour, upon whom they wholly depend for it. Or the sense is, Though they have riches, and power, and glory in their hands, yet **their true and proper good is not in their hand**, i.e. they are destitute of that in which their true happiness lies, to wit, in God's love and favour; and all the comforts which they enjoy are attended with God's wrath and curse, and therefore not to be envied by any man in his wits. *They say to God, Depart from us*, when indeed their true and only felicity consists in the enjoyment of him: compare #Ps 4:6,7.

The counsel of the wicked is far from me; therefore I am far from approving their opinion, or following their course, or enjoying their prosperity, or desiring to partake of their delicacies upon such terms.

Ver. 17.

How oft! this phrase notes either,

1. The rarity and seldomness of it. This. I confess, sometimes happens, but not oft. Or rather,

2. The frequency of it. I grant that this happens oft, though not constantly, as you affirm. And this seems best to agree both with the use of this phrase in Scripture, where it notes frequency, as #Ps 78:40 Mt 18:21 Lu 13:34, and never seldomness; and with the foregoing words, as a reason why *the counsel of the wicked was far from him*, because they oftentimes pay dear for it in this life, and always in the next life; and with the following verses, wherein he discourseth largely, not of the prosperity of the wicked, (as he should have done, if the sense of these words were this, that such were but seldom afflicted,) but of their calamities. *The candle*, or *lamp*, i. e. their glory and outward happiness; as #Job 8:6 2Sa 21:17 Ps 132:17.

God distributeth: God is manifestly understood out of the following words, this being God's work, and proceeding from God's anger.

Ver. 18.

i.e. Their destruction shall be speedy, and certain, and irrecoverable.

Ver. 19.

God layeth up, to wit, in his treasures, **#Ro 2:5.**

His iniquity, or rather, *the punishment of his iniquity*, i.e. he will punish him both in his person and in his posterity.

He shall know it, i.e. he shall live to see the destruction of his children.

Ver. 20.

His eyes shall see his destruction, i.e. he shall be destroyed;

as to see death, is to die, **#Ps 89:48 Heb 11:5;** and *to see affliction,* or *any kind of evil,* is to feel it **#Ps 90:15 La 3:1;** and *to see good,* is to enjoy it, **#Job 7:7 9:25 Ps 34:12.** Or this phrase may be emphatical, he shall foresee his ruin hastening towards him, and not be able to prevent or avoid it; he shall sensibly feel himself sinking and perishing; which aggravates his misery.

He shall drink; not sip or taste, but drink; which word commonly notes the abundance of the thing spoken of.

Ver. 21.

What pleasure hath he in his house after him? or, *for what desire, or care, or study hath he for or concerning* (as *beth* is oft used)

his house, i.e. his children? When he is dead and gone, he cares not what becomes of his children, as irreligion commonly makes men unnatural; he is not concerned nor affected with their felicity or misery. See **#Job 14:21.** And therefore God doth punish both him and his children whilst he lives, **#Job 21:19,20.** Or thus, What delight can he take in the thoughts of the glory and happiness of his posterity, when he finds that he is dying a violent and untimely death? So this is a further proof that this man is neither happy in himself, nor with reference to his posterity.

When the number of his months is cut off in the midst; when that number of months, which by his constitution and the course of nature he might have lived, is diminished and cut off by the hand of violence.

Ver. 22.

Knowledge, i.e. discretion, or how to govern the world. For so you do, whilst you tell him that he must not sorely afflict the godly, nor give the wicked much and long prosperity here.

He judgeth those that are high; either,

1. The highest persons, whether in earth, as the greatest kings; or in heaven, as the angels: he *judgeth them*, i.e. he exactly knows them, and accordingly gives sentence concerning them, as he sees fit; and therefore it is great folly and presumption in us to direct or correct his judgments. Or,

2. Those things that are high, and deep, and far out of our reach, as God's secret counsels and judgments are.

Ver. 23.

One, to wit, either,

1. One of these wicked men, of whose condition he is here speaking. Or,

2. Any one man, whether good or bad. In his full strength; in a state of perfect health, and strength, and prosperity; all which this phrase implies.

Ver. 24.

His breasts: the Hebrew word is not elsewhere used, and therefore it is diversely translated; either,

1. *Breasts*. But that seems very improper here, because men's breasts do not use to be filled with milk. Or,

2. *Milk-pails*. But their fulness is common, and no sign of eminent plenty, which is here designed. Besides, the following branch, which in Job and elsewhere frequently explains the former, implies that it signifies some part of man's body, as all the ancient interpreters render it; either the *sides*, as some of them have it; or the *bowels*, as others. But for the following *milk* they read *fat*; the

Hebrew letters being exactly the same in both words; and the Hebrews by the name of *milk* do oft understand fat.

His bones are moistened with marrow; which is opposed to the dryness of the bones, #**Job 30:30 Ps 102:3**, which is caused by old age, or grievous distempers or calamities.

Ver. 25.

Another; either,

1. Another wicked man. Or,

2. Any other man promiscuously considered, either good or bad. So hereby he shows how indifferently and alike God deals the concerns of this life to one and another, to good and bad. So he shows that there is a great variety in God's dispensations; that he distributes great prosperity to one, and great afflictions to another no worse than he, according to his wise but secret counsel.

In the bitterness of his soul, i.e. with heart-breaking pains and sorrows.

Never eateth with pleasure, i.e. hath no pleasure in his life, no, not so much as at meal-time, when men usually are most free and pleasant.

Ver. 26.

All these worldly differences are ended by death, and they lie in the grave without any distinction, till the time of general resurrection and judgment comes. So that no man can tell who is good, and who is bad, by any events which befall them in this life.

Ver. 27.

I know your thoughts; I perceive what you think, and will object, and say for your own defence.

The devices, or, *evil thoughts*; for so this word is oft used, as #**Pr 12:2 14:17 Job 24:8 Isa 32:7**.

Wrongfully imagine, or *wrest*, or *violently force*. For they strained both Job's words, and their own thoughts, which were biassed by their prejudice and passion against Job.

Against me; for I know very well that your discourses, though they be of wicked men in the general, yet are particularly levelled at me.

Ver. 28.

Ye say, to wit, in your minds. *Where is the house of the prince?* i.e. it is no where, it is lost and gone. This is spoken either,

1. Of Job, or his eldest son, whose house God had lately overthrown. Or rather,

2. In general of wicked princes or potentates, as the following answer showeth. So the meaning of the question is, that it was apparent from common observation, that eminent judgments, even in this life, were sooner or later the portion of all ungodly men.

Where are the dwelling-places of the wicked? which is added to limit the former expression, and to show that he spoke only of wicked princes.

Ver. 29.

These are the words, either,

1. Of Job's friends, who thus continue their former discourse by a second inquiry; or rather,

2. Of Job himself, who answers one question with another. You may learn this, which is the matter of our debate, to wit, that good men are oft afflicted, and that wicked men do commonly live and die in great prosperity, and are not punished in this world, even from

them that go by the way, i.e. either from travellers, who having seen and observed many persons, and places, and events, are more capable judges of this matter; or from any person that passeth along the high-way, from every one that you meet with. It is so vulgar and trivial a thing, that no man of common sense is ignorant of it.

Their tokens, i.e. the examples, or evidences, or signs of this truth, which they that go by the way can produce. They will show here and there in divers places the goodly houses, and castles, and other monuments of power and dignity which wicked potentates

have erected, and to this day do possess, and in which divers of them live and die. He alludes here to those

tokens which are set up in high-ways for the direction of those who travel in them.

Ver. 30.

That the wicked, &c. this is the thing which they might learn of passengers.

Reserved; or, *withheld*, or *kept back*, to wit, from falling into common calamities, though in truth he be not so much kept from evil as kept for evil; he is reserved from a less, that he may be swallowed up in a greater misery; as Pharaoh was kept from the other plagues, that he might be drowned in the sea.

They shall be brought: he speaketh of the same person; only the singular number is changed into the plural, possibly to intimate, that although for the present only some wicked men were punished, yet then all of them should suffer. *Shall be brought forth*, to wit, by the conduct of God's providence and justice, as malefactors are brought forth from prison to judgment and execution, though they be brought to it slowly, and by degrees, and with some kind of pomp and state, as this word signifies.

To the day of wrath; Heb. *to the day of wraths*, i.e. of special and extraordinary wrath; either to some terrible and desolating judgments, which God sometimes sends upon wicked princes or people; or to the day of the last and general judgment, which is called in Scripture the day of wrath; for the day of the general resurrection and judgment was not unknown to Job and his friends, as appears from **#Job 19:25**, &c, and other passages of this book.

Ver. 31.

His way, i.e. his wicked course and actions, and whither they lead him. His power and splendour is so great, that scarce any man dare reprove him for his sin, or show him his danger.

To his face, i.e. plainly, and whilst he lives, as the same phrase is used, **#De 7:10**.

Who shall repay him what he hath done? no man can bring him to an account or punishment.

Ver. 32.

Yet, Heb. *and*. The pomp of his death shall be suitable to the glory of his life.

Shall he be brought, with pomp and state, as the word signifies.

To the grave, Heb. *to the graves*, i.e. to an honourable and eminent grave; the plural number being oft used emphatically to note eminency, as **#Job 40:10 Pr 1:20 La 3:22**. He shall not die a violent, but a natural death, and shall lie in the bed of honour.

Shall remain in the tomb, Heb. *shall watch* (i.e. have a constant and fixed abode, as watchmen have in the watching-place) in the heap, i.e. in his grave, which is called a heap, either because the earth is there heaped up, or because it was adorned with some pyramid or other monument raised up to his honour. His body shall quietly rest in his grave or monument, where he shall be embalmed and preserved so entire and uncorrupted, that he might rather seem to be a living watchman, set there to guard the body, than to be a dead corpse.

Ver. 33.

Of the valley, i.e. of the grave, which is low and deep like a valley.

Shall be sweet unto him; he shall sweetly rest in his grave, free from all cares, and fears, and troubles, **#Job 3:17,18**.

Every man shall draw after him, Heb. *he shall draw every man after him*, to wit, into the grave; i.e. all that live after him, whether good or bad, shall follow him into the grave, i.e. shall die as he did. So he fares no worse herein than all mankind. He is figuratively said to draw them, because they come after him, as if they were drawn by his example.

Ver. 34.

Why then do you seek to comfort me with vain hopes of recovering my prosperity if I repent, seeing your grounds are manifestly false, and common experience showeth that good men are very oft in great tribulation, while the vilest of men thrive and prosper in the world?

JOB CHAPTER 22

Eliphaz's answer: man's righteousness profiteth not God; nor can God fear man, #Job 22:1-4. He chargeth Job's misery on his sins, #Job 22:5-11; which God beheld, and knew, nor could they be hid from him, #Job 22:12-14. The wicked, and their misery, #Job 22:15-17. If they prospered, he would not hold with them; but their destruction the righteous should laugh at, #Job 22:18-20. He exhorteth Job to know God and his law, and return to him: he should grow rich: God shall be his defence, his joy and confidence, #Job 22:21-26. If he would pray, God would hear; and his desire and purpose should stand, #Job 22:27-30.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Be profitable unto God, i.e. add any thing to his perfection or felicity, to wit, by his righteousness, as the next verse shows. Why then dost thou insist so much upon thy own righteousness, as if thou didst oblige God by it, or as if he could not without injury afflict thee? who supposeth thyself to be a righteous person, though indeed thou art not so, as he saith, #Job 22:5,6, &c.; but if thou wert really so, God is not thy debtor for it.

As; or, *because;* or, *but;* or, *yea* rather: so this latter clause is to be read without an interrogation, and the former with it.

He that is wise may be profitable to himself: a wise or good man (for these in Scripture use are one and the same) doth much good to himself; he promotes his own peace, and honour, and happiness by his goodness; and having so great a reward for his virtue, God is not indebted to him, but he is indebted to God for it.

Ver. 3.

Any pleasure, i.e. such a pleasure as he needs for his own ease and contentment, without which he could not be happy, as appears by the foregoing and following words; for otherwise God is oft said to delight in the good actions of his people, to wit, so far as to approve and accept them.

That thou makest thy ways perfect; that thy life is free from blemish, as thou pretendest, but falsely, as I shall show.

Ver. 4.

Will, or *doth*, or

would he reprove thee, i.e. punish thee? For this word is frequently used of real rebukes or chastisements, as hath been oft noted.

For fear of thee; because he is afraid, lest if he should let thee alone, thou wouldst grow too great and powerful for him, as princes oftentimes crush those subjects of whom they are afraid. Surely no. As thy righteousness cannot profit him, so thy wickedness can do him no hurt. Or, *for thy piety or religion*, which is commonly called by the name of *fear*. Doth he punish thee because thou fearest and servest him, as thou dost insinuate? No surely, but for thy sins, as it follows.

Will he enter with thee into judgment, and condemn thee? to wit, for the reason last mentioned, as appears from the Hebrew text, where the words lie thus, *Will he for fear of thee*

reprove thee, or

enter with thee into judgment?

Ver. 5.

Thy great sins are the true and only causes of thy misery. The words may very well be rendered thus, *Is not thy evil* (i.e. thy punishment or affliction, which is frequently expressed by this very word) *great, because* (the particle *and* being oft used causally, as it is #Ge 18:13 22:12 24:56 Isa 34:1 64:5)

thine iniquities are infinite? Are not thy calamities procured by and proportionable to thy sins? Thy own conscience tells thee they are so. And therefore thou hast no reason to accuse God, nor any person but thyself.

Ver. 6.

For thou hast taken, or, *surely thou hast taken*. He speaks thus by way of conjecture, or strong presumption. When I consider thy grievous and unusual calamities, I justly conclude thou art guilty of all or some of these following crimes; and do thou search thine own conscience, whether it be not so with thee.

From thy brother, i.e. either of thy neighbour, or of thy kinsman; which are both called by the name of *brother*. This is added to aggravate the offence.

For nought, i.e. without sufficient and justifiable cause; which he might do many ways; either by taking what he ought not to take, **#De 24:6**; or from whom he ought not, to wit, the poor, to whom he should give **#Pr 3:27** or when and in such manner as he ought not, of which **See Poole "De 24:10"**, **See Poole "De 24:11"**; or by keeping it longer than he should, as when the poor man's necessity requires it, or when the debt is satisfied, **#Eze 18:16**.

Stripped the naked of their clothing; either by taking their garment for a pledge, against the law, **#Ex 22:26**; or otherwise by robbing them of their rights, all other injuries being synecdochically comprehended under this.

Quest. How could he strip the naked?

Answ. He calls them *naked*, either,

1. Because they had but very few and mean clothes, such being oft called naked, as **#De 28:48** **1Co 14:11** **Jas 2:15**. Or,

2. From the effect, because though he did not find them naked, yet he made them so. The like phrases we have **#Isa 47:2**, *grind meal*, i.e. by grinding corn make it meal; **#Am 8:5**, *falsifying the deceitful balances*, i.e. by falsifying making true balances deceitful. And so here, *to strip the naked*, is by stripping them to make them naked.

Ver. 7.

Surely thou hast been so hard-hearted as to deny a cup of cold water to those that needed and desired it. Water was oftentimes scarce and precious in those hot countries, and was appropriated to particular persons, without whose leave other persons might not take it.

To the weary, i.e. to him who by reason of hard labour or travel is weary and thirsty. So this word is used **#Pr 25:25**.

From the hungry, to whom it was due by God's law, **#Pr 3:27**, which also was known to Job by the light of nature. Hereby he intimates the greatness of this sin of uncharitableness, by ranking

it with heinous crimes; whereas Job (as he thought) esteemed it but a small fault, if any.

Ver. 8.

Heb. *And, or but, the man of arm, or strength, or, power, to him was the earth, or the land.* i.e. he had the firm possession or free enjoyment of it: which is meant either,

1. Of Job, of whom he speaks invidiously in the third person. The mighty man Job possessed, and enlarged, and enjoyed his estate without any compassion to the poor. Or rather,

2. Of other rich and potent men, who had the earth or land, either.

1. By Job's judicial sentence, which was generally given in favour of the rich, and against the poor; or,

2. By Job's kindness and courtesy. The rich were always welcome to him, his house was open to them, his land was before them, when the poor were driven away from his house and territories.

The honourable man dwelt in it; either by thy sentence or permission he had a peaceable and sure possession of it. He repeateth the same thing in other words.

Ver. 9.

Widows, whose helpless estate called for thy pity, **#Ex 22:22 De 24:17,19.**

Away empty; either by denying them that relief which their poverty required, or that right which their cause deserved; or by spoiling them of their goods, because thou knewest them to be unable to oppose thee, or to right themselves.

The arms, i.e. all their supports, and comforts, and rights. A heinous sin, but falsely charged upon Job.

Ver. 10.

For these and the like crimes. The cause of thy ruin is not secret from God's sovereign power, and unsearchable judgments, (as thou pretendest,) but plain and manifest, even thy own crying sins.

Snares are round about thee; thou art encompassed with dangers and calamities.

Sudden fear: beside thy present miseries, thou art tormented with the dread and expectation of further and sorer judgments.

Ver. 11.

Darkness; either,

1. A darkness and confusion of mind so great that thou canst not discern the true cause and use of all thy sufferings. Or,

2. Grievous calamities, which are oft called darkness, which are such that thou canst see no way nor possibility of escaping. Either thou art troubled with fear of further evils, as it is said, **#Job 21:10**, or with the gross *darkness* of thy present state of misery.

Abundance of waters, i.e. plenty and variety of sore afflictions, which are frequently compared to waters, as **#Ps 18:16 66:12 Isa 43:2**.

Ver. 12.

Is not God in the height of heaven? Surely he is; and from that high tower *he looketh down upon men*, **#Ps 14:2**, to behold, and govern, and recompense all their actions, whether good or bad. And therefore, O Job, thou art grossly mistaken, in thinking that all things in this lower world are managed by chance, and without any regard to justice, or to just men, and not by the wise and holy providence of God; for this is the genuine consequence of thy great principle, that good men suffer as deeply as any others, whilst the vilest of men are exalted and flourish.

Behold the height of the stars, how high they are; yet God is far higher than they, and from thence can easily spy all men and things here below; as the highest places afford the best prospects.

Ver. 13.

And, or, *therefore*; from this true and certain principle thou drawest this false and wicked conclusion. Or, *yet*, notwithstanding this undeniable argument.

Thou sayest; thou reasonest thus within thyself, as it may seem by thy discourses.

How doth God know? i.e. God cannot discern, and therefore doth not mind things so far below him and distant from him.

Can he judge through the dark cloud, i.e. through those immense and innumerable clouds which lie between the heaven and the earth, although our eyes see but few of them?

Ver. 14.

His conversation and business and delight is in the higher and heavenly world, which is worthy of his care, but he will not disparage nor burden himself with the care of this contemptible spot of earth; which was the opinion of many heathen philosophers, and, as they fancied, was Job's opinion also.

Ver. 15.

Heb. *the way of antiquity*, i.e. of men living in ancient times, or former ages. By this way is here meant, either,

1. Their course or common practice; or,
2. Their end or success; as the

way is taken, **#1Sa 9:6,8**; and as death, which is, and is called, *the end of all men*, **#Ec 7:2**, is also called *the way of all the earth*, **#Jos 23:14 1Ki 2:2**.

Ver. 16.

Out of time, i.e. before their time; who died a violent and untimely death.

Whose foundation was overflown with a flood; who, together with their foundation, to wit, the earth, and all their supports and enjoyments in it, were destroyed by the general deluge; which doubtless was very well known to them, because they lived not long after it; and which was most proper for this argument. Or,

whose foundation, i.e. all their power, and riches, and policy, upon which they build all their hopes and happiness, *was like a flood poured forth*; which made a great show and noise for a time, but speedily vanished and came to nothing.

Ver. 17.

He reports Job's words, **#Job 21:14,15**, (where they are explained,) but to a contrary purpose. Job alleged them to show that they prospered notwithstanding their professed wickedness, and Eliphaz produceth them to show that they were cut off for it.

Ver. 18.

Yet it is true that for a time God did prosper them, as he did thee; which also was the aggravation of their sin, and that which hastened their ruin: but at last, and in due time, God cut them off in a tremendous and exemplary manner; as he will also do thee, if thou dost not repent.

But the counsel of the wicked is far from me; he repeats Job's words, #Job 21:16, not without reflection and some kind of derision. Thou didst say so, but without sufficient reason, and against thy own principle, that God carries himself indifferently towards good and bad; but I, who have observed God's terrible judgments upon wicked men, have much more reason to abhor their counsels which had so sad an issue.

Ver. 19.

The righteous see it; whom God oft spares in common calamities, and makes them to survive and see the destruction of the wicked; as Noah, Lot, &c.

Are glad; not that they insult over or rejoice in the ruin of any men, but because they delight in the vindication of God's honour, and justice, and holiness, which is conjoined with the destruction of his enemies, and which is and ought to be dearer to them than all the interests of men.

The innocent laugh them to scorn; they justly deride them, for their vain and yet strong confidences, which are now destroyed; and for their profane contempt of God and of his judgments, which now they feel; and for their deep and crafty counsels, which are now frustrated and turned against themselves.

Ver. 20.

Whereas; or, *when*; or, *seeing that*; or, *because*; for this Hebrew particle *im* is oft used for *chi*. And so the following words may contain the reason of the joy and laughter of the innocent, mentioned #Job 22:19, because when wicked men are destroyed, they are preserved; because

our substance, i.e. our souls, and bodies, and subsistence,

was now cut down. He should have said *their substance*, i.e. the substance of the righteous; but he changeth the person, and saith,

our substance; either as including himself in the number of righteous persons, and thereby intimating that he pleaded the common cause of all such, whilst Job pleaded the cause of the wicked, as is elsewhere observed; or because he would hereby thankfully acknowledge some eminent and particular preservation given to him amongst other righteous men; or because he and his brethren were of the same substance with and descended from the loins of them whom God had miraculously preserved, when others round about them were cut off; as God had done for Abraham and his posterity, of which race these are conceived to have been. And a like change both of person and number we find #Ho 12:4, *He found him* (i.e. Jacob) *in Beth-el, and there he spake with us*, i.e. with him, as representing us, and for all our good.

The remnant; all that was left undestroyed in the general calamity. Or, *their excellency*; all their desirable and delectable things. *Of them*, i.e. of those who are opposed to the righteous, and in whose destruction the righteous rejoiced.

The fire, to wit, of God's wrath: some dreadful judgment, either proper fire, possibly that which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, which such knowing and inquisitive persons could not be ignorant of, as a thing done near their times and places; or some other sore calamity; for such oft come under the name of *fire*. But this whole verse is and may be otherwise rendered, and that interrogatively. *Is not* (or rather, *was not*, the Hebrew prefix *he* being here understood, after the manner of the language, from #Job 22:15, where it is expressed) *our substance* (i.e. almost all our nature and kind) *cut off*, (almost all destroyed in the flood,) *and did not the fire consume a*

remnant of them, i.e. of mankind, and of ungodly men, in Sodom and Gomorrah?

Ver. 21.

With him, i.e. with God, as appears both from #Job 22:23, where he is expressed, and from the nature of the thing, there being no other way to happiness. Renew thy acquaintance and converse with God by prayer, which thou hast restrained, #Job 15:4. and repentance for all thy sins, and true humiliation under his hand, and hearty compliance with all his commands, and diligent care to

serve and enjoy him; and be no longer estranged from God, as thou now art.

Be at peace: this is either,

1. A promise, the imperative being put for the future of the indicative mood, *and so thou shalt have peace*, i.e. prosperity and happiness. Or rather,

2. A counsel or command; If God be an enemy to thee, as thou sayest he is, reconcile thyself to him by true repentance, and earnestly seek his favour and friendship, and do not provoke him further by thy false and wicked speeches of him, or by thy froward carriage to him: and whereas thou art full of unquietness and rage against God, learn to possess thy soul in patience, give over murmuring against him, and get a composed, and quiet, and submissive mind and heart; which is called *peace*, **#Jud 6:23 19:20 Isa 57:21**. Thus far is the command or exhortation; now followeth the promise.

Thereby, i.e. by following these counsels.

Good shall come unto thee; thou shalt be freed from all thy calamities, and enjoy all the happiness which thy heart can desire.

Ver. 22.

Take the law and rule whereby thou governest thy thoughts, and words, and whole life, not from profane heathens, whose opinion concerning God's providence thou hast embraced, nor from thy own vain imaginations or violent passions, which have led thee into thy present errors and miscarriages, but from God, and from his word, and from his law, which is written in thy own mind, and from the doctrines and instructions of the holy men of God, who are all of our mind in this matter.

Lay up his words in thine heart, i.e. do not only hear them with thine ears, but let them sink into thy heart being received there by hearty affection, and fixed by serious, and frequent, and practical consideration of them, **#Ps 119:11 Mt 13:9 Lu 2:19,51**.

Ver. 23.

To the Almighty; or, *home to the Almighty*; or, *so as to reach to the Almighty*, and be joined to him. The Hebrew phrase is extraordinary, and emphatical, and implies a thorough and

effectual turning not only from sin, (which a hypocrite may do in great part, at least for a time, upon carnal motives, and without any respect or love to God,) but also unto God, so as to love him, and cleave to him, and sincerely devote a man's self to his fear and service. And he expresseth it in this manner, because he thought Job to be a hypocrite, and therefore counselleth him to turn to God in another and better manner than he had done, to wit, with all his heart, and not feignedly.

Thou shalt be built up; God, who hath pulled thee down in thy estate, and honour, and children, will repair thy ruins, and give thee more children, which is oft called *building*; #Ge 16:2 Ex 1:21 Ru 4:11; and bless thee with prosperity and happiness, as *building* signifies, #Jer 42:10 31:4.

Thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles: this may be either,

1. A condition, upon which God makes the following promises, If (which particle may be repeated out of the former part of the verse) *thou shalt put away, &c.*, i.e. if thou shalt effectually purge thyself and family from all sin, and keep thyself and them, as far as thou canst, from all appearances and occasions of sin, which is the duty of all, and the practice of true penitents; whereby he seems to reflect upon Job, as if he had been faulty and negligent in the government of himself or children, notwithstanding his sacrificing for them, #Job 1. Or rather,

2. A promise, because the conditions required had been expressed together, #Job 22:21,22, and in the beginning of this verse, after which he comes to the promises, and begins with this,

thou shalt be built up, and so proceeds to other promises; and therefore it seems not probable that he should return to the conditions again, and mix the conditions and promises together, which he hath so carefully separated in these verses. And so it is either,

1. A spiritual promise, If thou dost sincerely repent, God will give thee more grace effectually to reform thyself and family, according to that rule, *To him that hath shall be given.* Or,

2. A temporal promise,

Thou shalt put away iniquity, or *injury*, or *perverseness*, (i.e. either perverse and injurious men; or God's judgments, or the punishments of thy sins; as iniquity is very oft used,)

far from thy tabernacles, i.e. from all thy dwellings, and tents, and possessions; no hand of violence shall come near them, no evil plague shall come upon thy own habitation, or upon the habitations of thy children, as lately it did for thine and their sins.

Ver. 24.

Gold; solid or choice gold, as the word signifies.

As dust, i.e. in great abundance. Or, *upon the dust*, or ground; it shall be so plentiful, and therefore vile, that thou shalt not lock it up in chests and treasuries, but scatter it any where, and let it lie even upon the ground.

As the stones of the brook; as plentifully as if the places of gold were but so many pebble stones, which are to be found in and near every brook. Or, *for the stones*, i.e. instead of them. Or, *in the rock*, or *among the rocks*: gold shall be so abundant, that thou mayst lay it any where, even upon or among the rocks.

Ver. 25.

God by his special and watchful providence shall protect thee from all dangers and calamities. Heb.

thy defences, or *munitions*. One God shall keep thee as safely as many munitions.

Plenty of silver, Heb. *silver of strength*, i.e. which by God's blessing shall be thy defence, #Ec 7:12. Or, *silver of heights*, i.e. high and heaped up like a mountain.

Ver. 26.

For; — so this verse contains a reason why he might confidently expect all those former outward blessings, because he should have God's favour, which is the spring and foundation of them. Or, *surely*, or, *yea, moreover*; for this particle *chi* is sometimes used by way of aggravation, or amplification, as #Ge 45:26 1Sa 14:41 Isa 7:9 32:13. And this suits very well here; yea, God will do greater things than these for thee.

Thou shalt have thy delight in the Almighty; thou shalt find delight not only in these outward comforts, but also and especially in God, whose face shall shine upon thee; who shall give thee these things not in anger and wrath, as he doth to wicked men, but as pledges of his love and favour to thee, and of those greater and eternal blessings which he hath in store for thee; and accordingly thou shalt delight thyself in worshipping, enjoying, obeying, and serving God in and with all his mercies.

Shalt lift up thy face unto God, i.e. look up to him by meditation and prayer, not as now thou dost, with horror and grief, which is signified by a dejected countenance, #2Sa 2:22 Lu 18:13; but with cheerfulness and confidence, as this phrase oft notes, as #Lu 21:28. See Poole "Job 11:15".

Ver. 27.

Hear thee, i.e. answer thy prayers, and not disregard them, and hide himself from thee, as now he doth.

Thou shalt pay thy vows, i.e. thou shalt obtain those blessings for which thou didst make vows to God, and therefore, according to thy obligation, shalt pay thy vows to him. The antecedent is here supposed and understood out of the consequent.

Ver. 28.

Thy purposes and designs shall not be disappointed, but effected and ratified by God; which is a great satisfaction. In all thy counsels, and courses, and actions, God shall give thee the light of his direction and governance, and of comfort and success; and thou shalt not be in such a dark, and doubtful, and perplexed condition as now thou art.

Ver. 29.

When men are cast down, Heb. *When they* (i.e. they who do this work. It is an indefinite and impersonal speech, which is very common in the Hebrew language) *shall cast down or overthrow*; either,

1. Proud and wicked men, as may be guessed by the opposition of the humble and innocent, who should be saved, whilst these were destroyed. So the sense is, When there shall come a general calamity, which shall sweep away all the wicked round about them. Or,

2. Thee, or thine; which pronoun is oft understood. So the sense is, When through God's permission thou shalt be brought into some trouble, which God sees fit for thee.

Thou shalt say within thyself, with good assurance and confidence.

There is lifting up; or, There shall be lifting up, either,

1. For them; if they repent and humble themselves, they shall be preserved or restored. And this thou wilt assure them of from thy own experience. Or,

2. For thee and thine; God will deliver thee, when others are crushed and destroyed. *And;* or, *for;* this particule being oft put causally, as hath been formerly noted. So the following words contain a reason why he might confidently say, that there would be such a lifting up for a person so humbled.

He, i.e. God, unto whom only salvation belongeth, **#Ps 3:8.**

Shall save; either,

1. Eternally; or,

2. Temporally, to wit, from the evils here mentioned.

The humble person, Heb. *him that hath low or cast-down eyes;* which phrase may here note, either,

1. Humility and lowliness of mind and disposition, as pride is oft expressed by high or lofty looks, as **#Ps 18:27 101:5 131:1 Pr 6:17.** And so this is a tacit admonition and reproof for Job, whom for his confident justification of himself, and his contemptuous expressions and censures concerning them, they judged to Job guilty of intolerable pride of heart. Or,

2. Lowness of estate or condition, as **#Jas 1:10.** So it notes him whose eyes and countenance are dejected by reason of his great troubles and miseries; as, on the contrary, prosperity makes persons lift up their eyes and faces.

Ver. 30.

He, i.e. God, as **#Job 22:29,** whose prerogative it is to give deliverances.

Shall deliver, to wit, upon thy request, as the following clause showeth: God will hear thy prayers even for others, which is a great honour and comfort; and much more for thyself.

The island of the innocent; not only thyself, when thou shalt become innocent and pure, but for thy sake he will deliver the whole island (or country, that word being oft used not only for such lands or countries as were separated from Canaan by the sea, as is commonly observed, but also for such as were upon the same continent with it, as appears from **#Ge 10:5 Ps 72:10 97:1 Isa 41:5**) in which thou dwellest. Or, *the guilty*, or *him that is not innocent*; for the word here rendered *island* is sometimes used for *not*, in Scripture, as **#1Sa 4:21 Pr 31:4**. So the sense is, God will have so great a respect to thy innocency and purity, that for thy sake he will deliver those that belong to thee, or live with thee, or near thee, though in themselves they be sinful creatures, and ripe for destruction. See **#Ge 18:32**.

It is delivered, to wit, the island; or, *he*, i.e. the guilty person.

By the pureness of thine hands, i.e. by thy prayers proceeding from a pure heart and conscience. When thou shalt lift up pure hands to God in prayer, as it is expressed, **#1Ti 2:8**; whereby as he asserts the prevalency of the righteous man's prayers with God for mercy, both for himself and others; and by this argument he persuadeth Job to repentance; so withal he allegeth this as an argument or evidence that Job did not stretch out pure hands to God in prayer, as he pretended, because his prayers could not prevail for the preservation of himself or his children, and much less for others at a greater distance.

JOB CHAPTER 23

Job's reply: his desire to plead with God, **#Job 23:1-5**; who should not confound, but strengthen him, **#Job 23:6,7**. He cannot behold God's way; but he walked in the way of his law, **#Job 23:8-12**. God in his providences bringeth about what he had decreed: Job's trouble herein, **#Job 23:13-17**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

i.e. Even at this time, notwithstanding all your promises and pretended consolations, I find no ease or satisfaction in all your discourses; and therefore in this and the following chapters Job seldom applies his discourse to his friends, but only addresseth his speech to God, or bewaileth himself.

Is my complaint bitter, i.e. I do bitterly complain, and have just cause to do so. But this clause is and may be otherwise rendered, *Even still* (Heb. *at this day*) is my complaint called or accounted by you *rebellion* or *bitterness*, or the rage of an exasperated mind? Do you still pass such harsh censures upon me after all my declarations and solemn protestations of my innocency?

My stroke, Heb. *my hand*, passively, i.e. the hand or stroke of God upon me, as the same phrase is used, **#Ps 77:2**; and *mine arrow*, **#Job 34:6**.

Is heavier than my groaning, i.e. doth exceed all my complaints and expressions; so far are you mistaken, that think I complain more than I have cause. Some render the words thus, *my hands are heavy* (i.e. feeble and hanging down, as the phrase is, **#Heb 12:12**. My strength and spirit faileth) because of my groaning.

Ver. 3.

Where I might find him, to wit, God, as his friends well knew, and the thing itself showeth. Thou biddest me *acquaint myself with him*, **#Job 22:21**. I desire nothing more than his acquaintance and presence; but, alas, he hides his face from me that I cannot see him, nor come near him.

To his seat, i.e. to his throne or judgment-seat, to plead my cause before him, as it here follows, **#Job 22:4**, not upon terms of strict justice, but upon those terms of grace and mercy upon which God is pleased to deal with his sinful creatures: see before, **#Job 9:34,35 16:21 17:3**. And this my confidence may be some evidence that I am not such a gross hypocrite as you imagine me to be.

Ver. 4.

I would orderly declare the things which concern and prove the right of my cause; not only debating the controversy between my friends and me, concerning my sincerity or hypocrisy before God,

as a witness or judge; but also pleading with God as a party, and modestly inquiring whether he doth not deal more rigorously with me than I might reasonably expect, wherein I desire no other judge but himself.

Fill my mouth with arguments, to prove my innocency and sincerity towards God, and consequently that am severely used.

Ver. 5.

I long to know what he would say, either to prove me a hypocrite, or to justify his harsh proceedings against me; and if he should discover to me any secret and unknown sins, for which he contendeth with me, I should humble myself before him, and accept of the punishment of mine iniquity.

Ver. 6.

Will he oppress me with his sovereign and absolute power, as men do those whom they cannot fairly and justly conquer?

He would put strength in me; the word *strength*, or *power*, being fitly supplied out of the former branch of the verse, as is very usual in Scripture. He would not use his power against me, but for me; by enabling; me to plead my cause, and giving sentence according to that clemency and benignity, which according to his gracious covenant he useth towards his children. Or, *he would put* or *set* his heart (this very verb of *putting* or *setting* being elsewhere used in this defective manner for *putting* or *setting the heart*, as #**Job 7:17 Isa 41:10**, as it is fully expressed, #**Isa 57:1 Eze 40:4 44:5**) *upon* (the preposition *beth*, *in*, being sometimes used for *al*, *upon*, as #**Ne 2:12 Isa 21:13**) *me*, to wit, to hear me and all my reasons meekly, and to judge favourably, and to help and deliver me, as that and the like phrases commonly signify in Scripture use.

Ver. 7.

There; at that throne of grace, as it is called, #**Heb 4:16**, where God lays aside his majesty and power, and judgeth according to his wonted grace and clemency.

The righteous; such as I do and dare avow myself to be, to wit, in sincerity, though not in perfection. *Might dispute with him;* humbly and modestly propounding the grounds of their

confidence, and the evidences of their righteousness. *So*; upon such a fair and equal hearing.

From my judge; either,

1. From the severe censures of all corrupt and partial judges, such as you my friends are. Or rather,

2. From the damnatory sentence of God; for he is not only pleading before him, but also with him. He would give sentence for me, and against himself. This and some such expressions of Job cannot be excused from reverence towards God, and too great a confidence in himself; for which therefore God sharply reproveth him hereafter, and Job abhorreth himself.

Ver. 8.

I go forward, i.e. towards the east, which in Scripture is accounted the forepart of the world, as the Hebrew name of it signifies, because of the light of the sun, which ariseth there, and draweth the eye of men towards it.

He is not there, to wit, so as I would have him, as a judge to hear and determine my cause, of which he is here speaking; for otherwise he knew and believed that God was essentially present in all places.

Backward, i.e. towards the west; so also the north is called *the left hand*, and the south *the right hand*, #**Job 23:9**, because so they all are to a man who looks towards the east. He names all the several parts of the world, to show his eager desire and restless endeavours to find out God, and to present himself before him.

Ver. 9.

Where he doth work, to wit, in a special and peculiar manner, more than in other parts of the world; for so indeed God did work in those parts which were northward from Job, because there mankind (among whom God delights to be and to work) were most numerous, and most ingenious to discern God's works. There also was the seat of the Assyrian empire, which was eminent in Job's time, and afterwards of the other successive empires; in and by all which God did many great and glorious works. But this Hebrew word is by others, and that very properly and fitly, rendered *when*, or *whilst, he worketh*, to wit, in an

eminent manner. So this is added to aggravate Job's unhappiness. We may certainly find any man when and where he is working; but I, saith he, search for God even when and where he is working, and yet cannot find him out.

He hideth himself, to wit, *from me*; he withdraweth his favour, and will not afford me his presence and audience.

I cannot see him; either,

1. I cannot discern his counsels and ways, and the reasons of his severe dealings with me. Or rather,

2. He doth not appear to me as a judge, to examine my cause and arguments, but condemns me without hearing me.

Ver. 10.

But, though I cannot see him, yet my comfort is, that he seeth me and my heart, and all my actions. Or, *for*, as this particle commonly signifies. So this verse contains a reason why he so vehemently desired that he might plead his cause with or before God.

He knoweth the way that I take; he cannot be deceived nor blinded, either by the artifices of bold accusers or advocates, or by his own misapprehensions or passions, but he exactly knows the way that is *with me*, i.e. the disposition of my heart, and the whole course or manner of my life.

When he hath tried me; if he would examine me thoroughly, which above all things I desire.

I shall come forth as gold; which cometh out of the furnace pure from all dross. It would appear upon a fair hearing that I am free, though not from all sin, as he had confessed before, yet from that hypocrisy and those gross enormities wherewith my friends charge me.

Ver. 11.

My foot hath held, i.e. made a free and fixed choice, and taken fast hold of them; been firmly and strongly settled, and resolved to continue in them, as the word signifies.

His steps; either,

1. Actively, the steps or ways in which God himself walks; the paths of holiness, justice, mercy, &c., wherein *he walked with or after God*, as the phrase is, #Ge 5:24 2Ki 23:3, following his example. Or,

2. Passively, the steps or paths which God hath appointed men to walk in, as #Job 21:14.

His way have I kept, and not declined; the same thing with that in the former part of the verse, in different expressions.

Ver. 12.

Neither have I gone back, i.e. not turned aside to any crooked or sinful path or course of life, human infirmity excepted.

I have esteemed, Heb. *I have hid*, or laid it up, as men do their best treasures, or what they most love and value. The phrase notes a high estimation of it, a hearty affection to it, and a diligent care to preserve it.

My necessary food, or *my appointed food*, or *my daily portion*, i.e. that food or provision which is necessary for the support of my life, as this word is used, #Ge 47:22 Pr 30:8 31:15, which is more prized and desired than all the riches in the world.

Ver. 13.

He is in one mind, i.e. notwithstanding all these evidences of my sincere piety, and all my prayers to him, he still continues in the same mind and course of afflicting me. Or,

but he is, i.e. if he be, *against one*, or *against any man*, as that word is oft used, as he now setteth himself against me. Or, *but he is one*, the Hebrew prefix *beth* being here the note of a nominative case, as it is #Job 18:8 Ps 68:5 Ho 13:9, and elsewhere. So the sense is, But why do I waste words to no purpose? All my former constant integrity, and my present profession of it, gives me no case, he is still one and the same, constant, unchangeable in his purposes and counsels of proceeding against me. Or, he is alone, and there is none besides him who can either restrain, or advise, or move him.

Who can turn him? no man can change his counsels or course, or incline him to show favour to me. He is most absolute and free to

do what he pleaseth, and he dealeth with me accordingly, and not by those milder methods which he useth towards other men.

What his soul desireth, even that he doeth; he will not do what I please or desire, but only what pleaseth himself.

Ver. 14.

Or, *he will perfect or finish my appointed portion*, i.e. those calamities which he hath allotted to me for my portion, which as he hath begun to lay on me, so he is resolved to make a full end of them.

And many such things are with him; there are many such examples of God's proceeding with men in way of absolute sovereignty and severity, and his counsels and providences, though always just, yet are oft secret, and we cannot discern the reasonableness or equity of them, which is my case.

Ver. 15.

Therefore; in consideration of his glorious majesty, and sovereign and irresistible power, by which he can do whatsoever pleaseth him, without giving any account of his matters.

At his presence; when I present him to my thoughts. Or, when he appears or manifesteth himself to me. Or, *for fear or dread of him;* or, by reason of him.

Ver. 16.

Soft, or tender. He hath bruised, and broken, or melted it, so that I have no spirit, nor courage, nor strength in me, as this or the like phrase is used, **#De 20:3 Ps 39:11 Isa 7:4 Jer 51:46.**

Ver. 17.

Because I was not cut off; because God did not cut me off by death. *Before the darkness*, i.e. before these dark and dismal miseries came upon me. Or, *before the face*, or *by reason of the darkness*, i.e. that God hath not yet cut me off by these calamities, but prolonged my days under them, that he might increase my torment.

Neither hath he covered the darkness from my face; so that I might no longer see or feel my miseries, but might be taken out of them by my long-desired death. *Seeing* (and consequently having before one's face) is oft put for experiencing, for enjoying good,

or feeling evil, as **#Job 20:17 Ps 16:10**, &c. Or, *but he hath covered darkness*, to wit, death, which is so called **#Job 10:21,22**, and elsewhere, from my face, i.e. he will not allow me the favour to see death.

JOB CHAPTER 24

The practice and prosperity of the wicked, **#Job 24:1-16**. Their punishment and curse in the end, **#Job 24:17-25**.

Ver. 1.

The sense of the words according to this translation is this,

Why, (how comes it to pass,)

seeing times (i.e. the several times of every man's life, how long he shall live, or the fittest seasons and opportunities (which are oft called *times*, as **#Ge 24:11 Ps 31:15 119:126 Ac 1:6,7**) for every action, and particularly for the punishment of wicked men, about which the present controversy was)

are not hidden from or unknown to the almighty God, (i.e. seeing all times, and men that live, and things that are done, or to be done, in their times and seasons, are exactly known to God,)

do they that know him (i.e. who love and obey him, as that word is oft used, as, **#Ps 9:10 36:10 91:14**, or they who observe and regard his ways and works done in the world)

not see (whence is it that they cannot discern)

his (i.e. God's)

days, i.e. his times and seasons which he takes for the punishment of ungodly men? which if they were constant and fixed in this life, as you pretend they are, they would not be unknown to good men, to whom God useth to reveal his secrets, and they could not be unobserved by so many good men, who make it their business to mind and study the works of God, and especially the course and methods of his providence towards good and bad men. The times or days of God's executing judgments upon sinners are frequently called *the days of the Lord*, as **#Isa 2:12 13:6 Jer 46:10**; compare **#Job 20:28 Pr 6:34 Ac 2:20**; as the time of man's judging is called *man's day*, **#1Co 4:3**. But this verse is in part, and may

very agreeably to the Hebrew text be rendered and interpreted thus, *Why or how are not times* (i.e. the times and seasons appointed for the punishment of evil-doers, about which the dispute was) *hidden or reserved by or with God*, (i.e. kept as a secret in his own breast, and concealed from the knowledge of mankind. How can you say or think with any colour that these times are fixed and manifest to all men, and that sinners are constantly punished in this life, and that so notoriously that all good men see it, as was said, #**Job 22:15-19**) *seeing* (as the particle you is rendered, #**Job 19:28**; or *for*, as it is frequently used) *they that know him* (that give themselves to understand and consider his doings in the world, who of all men are most likely to know this, if it were true and certain) *do not see his days*, to wit, of punishing the wicked in this life? as was said before. And this he mentions as a fit preface to usher in the following discourse concerning the manifold wickedness of men, and withal their present impunity.

Ver. 2.

Some remove the landmarks; or, *they* (i.e. the wicked, of whom he here treats) *touch* (to wit, in an unlawful manner, and with evil design, as this word is oft used, as #**Ge 26:11,29 Ru 2:9**, so as to invade, or possess, or remove)

the landmarks, by which men's lands are discerned, and their properties secured; that so they may enlarge their own border by diminishing their neighbour; which is so horrid an act of injustice, that it hath not only been severely forbidden by God, #**De 19:14 27:17 Pr 22:28 23:10**, but also declared execrable by the heathens, among whom it was permitted to any man to kill him that did it.

Feed thereof; or, *feed them*. They do not hide or kill them, but openly feed them, either in their oppressed neighbour's ground, which, by taking away the landmarks, they have made their own, or in their own pastures, without any remorse, or shame, or fear of punishment, either from God or men.

Ver. 3.

The ass, either *the asses*, the singular number being used collectively. Or he saith *the ass*, to aggravate their sin, that they robbed him who had but one ass. Compare #1Sa 12:2-4.

The fatherless; whose helpless condition required their pity and mercy.

The widow's ox; thereby depriving her not only of the ox itself, but of all the benefit of its labours, by which she sustained her life.

For a pledge; contrary to God's law, first written in men's hearts, and afterwards in Holy Scripture, #Ex 22:26,27 De 24:6,10, &c.

Ver. 4.

Out of the way; either,

1. Out of the way of piety and justice. They engage them to take evil courses by their examples, or promises, or threatenings. Or,

2. Out of their right. Or,

3. Out of their course and way of living. Or rather, (as the word properly signifies, and as the next clause explains it,) out of the high-way; out of the path or place in which these wicked oppressors walk and range. They labour to keep out of their way and sight for fear of their further injuries and oppressions.

Hide themselves, for fear of these wicked tyrants and persecutors.

Together, for their mutual comfort and defence against those who should invade or disturb them there. Or, *alike*. Though some of the poor are more nearly related, or have been more serviceable to these oppressors, yet none of them can escape their rage and violence.

Ver. 5.

As wild asses; which are wild, and lawless, and unteachable, and fierce, and greedy of prey, or food, which they snatch out of the goods or labours of the husbandman; in all which they are fit emblems of these men. Or, *these wild men*; for so this word signifies, #Ge 16:12, as elsewhere *wild asses*. The particle *as* is not in the Hebrew. *In the desert*, which is the proper habitation of wild asses, #Jer 2:24. If this be understood of the wild men, he

placeth them in the *desert* and *wilderness*, either because they by their spoils and violences have destroyed or driven away the people, as is intimated, **#Job 24:4**, and thereby turned populous places into deserts; or because such places as have but few houses and inhabitants (which are oft so called, as **#Ge 21:20,21 Jos 15:61,62 1Ki 2:34 9:15 Isa 42:11 Mt 3:1**) are most fit for their robberies.

Go they; either,

1. The poor, whom they spoiled and drove away from their own former habitations into deserts, where they hid themselves, and wrought hard for a subsistence. Or rather,
2. The oppressors, who are more fitly compared to wild asses, and more truly said to seek for prey, than those poor oppressed persons mentioned **#Job 24:4**, and of whom he speaks both in the foregoing and following verses.

To their work, i.e. to spoil and rob, which is their constant work and trade.

The wilderness yieldeth food for them; they are so diligent and industrious in that work, that they will fetch food for them and theirs even out of desert places, in which the owners can very hardly subsist.

For their children, or *servants*; for the word signifies both *children* and *servants*, even the whole family.

Ver. 6.

They; either,

1. The poor, who are forced to gather in the corn and grapes of their wicked oppressors; or rather,
2. The oppressors, of whom he speaks **#Job 4:4,5,7**.

His corn, i.e. the corn of the wicked, as it is in the next clause. Or, *that which*

is not their own; as the LXX., and Chaldee, and Vulgar Latin translate it, reading the Hebrew as two distinct words: they reap other men's labours.

In the field, i.e. in the field of the right owner, from whom they take it. He notes their great power and boldness, that they did not come suddenly, and carry away their corn when it was laid up in the barns, or in heaps; but they proceeded leisurely, and staid to reap the corn, and by degrees carried it away, as it were in triumph, not fearing any interruption or hinderance either from God or man.

The vintage of the wicked; of such as themselves: so they promiscuously robbed all, even their own brethren in iniquity; whereby also he may intimate the righteous judgment of God in punishing one wicked man by another, and in depriving men of those goods which they had wickedly gotten. Or, *the wicked* (the singular number being used collectively for the plural, as is frequent; the oppressors)

gather the vintage, to wit, belonging to other men.

Ver. 7.

The naked, i.e. those whom they have made naked, whom they stripped of their garments and coverings; so far were they from exercising justice or charity towards them.

To lodge; to sleep in the night, which is the coldest season.

Without clothing; without bed-clothes to cover them: compare #De 24:13.

In the cold of the night of the winter season. This verse is and may fitly be rendered thus, *They cause men to lodge naked, because they have no clothing*, (i.e. because they leave them nothing wherewith they can clothe themselves,) and

no covering in the cold; they leave them neither raiment to wear in the day, nor a covering for the night.

Ver. 8.

They, i.e. the poor, being stripped of their raiment, and forced away from their houses.

With the showers of the mountains; with the rain water, which in great showers run down from the rocks or mountains into the caves or holes in the sides of them, to which they fled for shelter.

Embrace the rock, i.e. are glad when they can find a cavern or cleft of a rock in which they may have some protection against the injuries of the weather, and a hiding-place from the fury of their oppressors. Compare #La 4:5.

Ver. 9.

They; the wicked oppressors, as is manifest from the following words.

From the breast; either out of cruelty, not sparing poor infants, but killing them; or out of covetousness, and with design either to sell the mother, or to employ her in their work, to which they so strictly confine her, that they will not allow any of her time or strength for the suckling of her infant.

Take a pledge of the poor; of which See Poole "Job 22:6".

Ver. 10.

They cause him, the poor oppressed person, *to go naked without clothing*; leaving him nothing, or next to nothing, to cover him in the day-time, when he should go abroad to his labour to get his living, but cannot for want of clothes to cover his nakedness.

The sheaf from the hungry; that single sheaf which the poor man had got with the sweat of his brows to satisfy his hunger, they inhumanly take away, and add it to their own stores and full barns. Or, *they are hungry*; or they sent them away hungry; those words being repeated out of the former clause of the verse (as is most usual); which *took or carried the sheaf, or their sheaves*, i.e. which reaped and gathered in the rich man's corn, for which they received injuries instead of a just recompence for their labour; and that when God's liberality, and the bounty of the earth to them, invited and obliged them to kind and generous actions to others.

Ver. 11.

To wit, the poor man last mentioned.

Within their walls; either,

1. Within their own walls, i.e. in private and secret places, for fear of the oppressors. Or rather,

2. Within the walls of the rich oppressors, for their use and benefit; for the poor, alas! had no walls, nor houses, nor

oliveyards, nor vineyards left to them, but they were violently spoiled of and driven away from all those things, as was said in the foregoing verses.

Their wine-presses, i.e. the grapes in their wine-presses, by a metonymy of the thing containing for the thing contained.

Suffer thirst; because they are not permitted to quench their thirst out of the wine which they make, though their labor's both need and deserve refreshment.

Ver. 12.

Men groan under the burden of injuries and grievous oppressions.

From out of the city; not only in deserts or less inhabited places, where these tyrants have the greater opportunity and advantage to practise their villainies; but even in cities, where there is a face of order and government, and courts of justice, and a multitude of people to observe and restrain such actions; whereby they plainly declare that they neither fear God nor reverence man.

The soul of the wounded; either,

1. Properly, their soul sympathizing with the body, and being grieved for its insupportable miseries, crieth to God and men for help. Or rather,

2. The life or blood (which oft cometh under that name) of those who are there

wounded unto death, as this word properly signifies, #Eze 30:24, crieth aloud unto God for vengeance, #Ge 4:10 Re 6:9,10, whereby God might seem in some sort obliged to punish them; and yet he did not, as the next words declare.

Yet God layeth not folly to them: so the sense is, yet God doth not impute or lay to their charge this folly or wickedness, which in Scripture is commonly called *folly*; i.e. he takes no notice of these horrid oppressions, nor hears the cries of the oppressed, nor punishes the oppressors. Or, *yet God* (who seeth and permitteth all this) *disposeth*, or *ordereth*, or *doth*, (for all these things this Hebrew verb signifies,) *nothing which is absurd*, or *foolish*, or *unsavoury*, i.e. doth nothing in this permission and connivance unworthy of himself, or which a wise and considerate man cannot

relish or approve, or which is not in itself righteous and reasonable, though we do not always discern the reasonableness of it.

Ver. 13.

This is added as the general character of the persons before mentioned, and as a great aggravation of their wickedness, that they were not modest sinners, which were ashamed of their evil ways, and therefore sinned in the dark, and in secret, as some who here follow; but sinned impudently in the face of the sun, and in spite of all their light, as well the light of reason and conscience, which abhors and condemns their wicked actions, as the light of Divine revelation, which was then in good measure imparted to the church and people of God in this time, and shortly after was committed to writing; all which they set at defiance, sinning with manifest contempt of God, and of men, and of their own consciences.

They know not; either,

1. They do not desire or care to know them; they are willingly ignorant of them. Or,
2. They do not approve, nor love, nor choose them; as *knowing* frequently signifies in the Scripture use.

The ways thereof, i.e. of the light, or in such ways and courses as are agreeable to the light. Or, *in his ways*, i.e. in the ways of God, who is oft understood in this book where he is not expressed.

Nor abide in the paths thereof; if they do some good actions, yet they do not persevere in well-doing, they are not constant and fixed in a good course of life.

Ver. 14.

With the light; as soon as the light appears, using no less diligence in his wicked practices, than labourers do in their honest and daily employments.

Killeth the poor and needy; where he finds nothing to satisfy his covetousness, he exerciseth his cruelty.

Is as a thief, i.e. he is really a thief; the particle *as* being oft used to express, not the resemblance but the truth of the thing, as **#Nu**

11:1 De 9:10 Ho 4:4 Ho 5:10 Joh 1:14. In the night they rob men secretly and cunningly, as in the day-time they do it more openly and avowedly.

Ver. 15.

The eye of the adulterer, i.e. the adulterer; but he mentions his eye, because the eye discerns the difference between light and darkness.

The twilight, to wit, for the evening twilight, which is his opportunity.

Saying in his heart, comforting himself with the thoughts of secretness and impunity.

Disguiseth his face, Heb. *putteth his face in secret*; covers it with a vizard or cloak, that he may be undiscovered.

Ver. 16.

They dig; either,

1. The adulterer last mentioned; although such persons do not use nor need these violent courses to get into the house of the adulteress, but are commonly admitted upon milder and easier terms. Or,

2. The thief or robber, whose common practice this is, of whom he spoke **#Job 24:14**; and having on that occasion inserted the mention of the adulterer as one who acted his sin in the same manner as the night-thief did, he now returns to him again.

Which they had marked for themselves; the thief and his accomplices, designing by some secret mark the house of some rich man which they intended to rob, and the part of the house where they resolved to enter into it.

They know not the light, i.e. do not love nor like it, as **#Job 24:13**; but abhor it, as it follows.

Ver. 17.

As the shadow of death, i.e. terrible and hateful, because it both discovers them and hinders their practices. If they are brought to light or discovered, they are overwhelmed with deadly horrors and terrors. Or, as the words are, and may very agreeably to the

Hebrew be rendered thus: *but* (as the Hebrew particle commonly signifies)

they know (Heb. *he knoweth*, every one of them knoweth, i.e. approveth and loveth)

the terrors of the shadow of death, i.e. the grossest darkness of the night, which to other men is as terrible as the shadow of death, but to these men is most acceptable: so this clause is fitly opposed to the former; he hates the light, and he likes darkness.

Ver. 18.

In these words he describes either,

1. The wicked man's disposition and deportment, that such persons are *light* and frothy in their spirits, or *swift* or *hasty* to do evil, or *unstable* in their ways as the waters, or *upon the face of the waters*, i.e. like the foam, or froth, or any other light thing which swims upon the top of the waters. Or rather,

2. His miserable condition, of which he manifestly speaks in the next words, and in the two next verses. For though Job constantly affirms and maintains it against his friends, that many ungodly men do prosper and escape punishment in this life; yet withal he observes and asserts that God will certainly sooner or later punish them, and that he sometimes doth it here, cutting them off by cruel and untimely deaths, or otherwise inflicting some notable judgment upon them; of which he also speaks **#Job 21:17**, &c. So the sense is,

He is swift, i.e. he quickly putteth away with all his glory,

as the waters, which never stay in one place, but are always hasting and running away; or like a ship, or any other thing which swimmeth *upon the face of the waters*: though he seems to stand as firm and unmovable as a rock, and to have taken deep rooting in the earth, yet he is suddenly and unexpectedly removed and pulled up by the roots. *Their*; or, *his*; for he still speaks of the same person, though with a change of the number, which is most familiar in this book, and elsewhere in Scripture.

Portion, or *part*, i.e. his habitation and estate which he left behind him.

Is cursed in the earth; is really accursed by God, and is by all men who live near it, or observe it, pronounced accursed, because of the remarkable judgments of God upon it, and upon his posterity or family to which he left it, and from whom it is strangely and suddenly alienated.

He beholdeth not the way of the vineyard, i.e. he shall never more see or enjoy his vineyards, or other pleasant places and things, which seem to be comprehended under this particular.

Ver. 19.

As the snow, though it doth for a time lie upon the ground, yet at last is dissolved into water by the heat of the season, and that water quickly swallowed up by the earth when it is dry and thirsty; so ungodly sinners, though they live and prosper for a season, yet at last they shall go into the grave, which will consume them, together with all their hopes and comforts; their jolly life is attended with a sad, and oftentimes sudden and violent, death; not with such a death as the godly die, which perfects them and brings them to happiness, but with a consuming and never-dying death.

Ver. 20.

His mother that bare him in her womb, and much more the rest of his friends, shall seldom or never remember or mention him, to wit, with honour and comfort, but shall rather be afraid and ashamed to own their relation to one that lived such a vile and wretched life, and died such an accursed death. This he shall have instead of all that honour and renown which he thirsted and laboured for, and expected should perfume his name and memory. This proud and insolent tyrant that preyed upon all his neighbours, **#Job 24:2,3**, &c., shall himself become a prey and a sweet morsel to the contemptible worms.

He shall be no more remembered, to wit, with honour, or so as he desired and hoped; but his name shall rot, and scarce ever be mentioned but with infamy and execration.

Wickedness, i.e. the wicked man, of whom he is here treating; the abstract being put for the concrete, of which many instances have been formerly given;

shall be broken to pieces, or violently broken down, as the word signifies. He shall be utterly and irrecoverably destroyed. And this

expression plainly showeth first the former clauses are not to be understood of the sinner's happiness in an easy and comfortable death, but of his cursed and miserable end.

As a tree; which being once broken, either by its own weight, or by some violent wind, or by the hand of man, never groweth again.

Ver. 21.

He; either,

1. God, who is oft understood, who having cut off his person, and brought him to his grave, continues his judgments upon his wife or widow, and family. Or rather,

2. The oppressor, who is the principal subject of almost all that is said in this chapter; whose great and manifold wickedness Job described from **#Job 24:2-18**, where he proceeds to relate the judgments of God upon him for his sins; which having done, **#Job 24:18-20**, he here returns to the declaration of his further wickednesses, the cause of these judgments.

Evil entreateth; or *feedeth upon*, or *devoureth*, or breaketh in pieces; for all these the word signifieth, and all come to one and the same thing.

The barren that beareth not: barrenness was esteemed a curse and reproach; and so he added affliction to the afflicted, whom he should have pitied and helped; but because such had no children, and the widows no husbands, to defend or avenge their cause, he exercised cruelty upon them.

Doeth not good: either,

1. He did her much wrong and harm, it being usual in Scripture under such negative expressions to contain the affirmation of the contrary; as **#Ex 20:7 Pr 17:21 28:21**. And so this branch answers to the former, of *evil entreating*. Or,

2. He afforded her no help, or advice, or comfort in her distresses; and so he intimateth the greatness of omission sins, and that the common neglect or contempt of plain and positive duties, whether of piety to God, or of charity to men, is to be reckoned among high and heinous crimes.

Ver. 22.

He draweth, either into his net, as **#Ps 10:9**, or to his party, to assist and serve him in his enterprises.

The mighty; who are mighty in place, or wealth, or power; he practiseth upon these as well as upon the poor.

With his power; which being greater than theirs, he soon forceth them to comply with his desires and demands.

He riseth up, to wit, against any man, as this phrase is used, **#Ps 18:38 44:5**; when he sets himself against a man, and resolves to destroy him.

No man is sure of life, i.e. none of them whom he so opposeth can be secure or confident of holding his life, but all such give up themselves for lost men, as knowing they cannot resist his greater might: compare **#De 28:26**.

Ver. 23.

Heb. *He giveth to him to be in safety*, or all things necessary for his safety, &c. This verse is understood either,

1. Of the oppressor; if the oppressor give a man his hand or promise that he shall live in safety by him, or if the oppressed give gifts to the oppressor to purchase his quiet and safety, and, as it follows, he resteth upon that assurance given him;

yet his, i.e. the oppressor's,

eyes are upon their ways; he watcheth for their halting, and seeks for all occasions to quarrel with them, and to destroy them. Or rather,

2. Of God; and so the words are fitly rendered thus, *He*, i.e. God, *giveth or granteth to him*, i.e. to the oppressor, to be in safety, i.e. to live a quiet and comfortable life, *and he resteth secure, or he resteth or leaneth upon him*, i.e. upon God; his former experience of God's favour makes him confident of the continuance of it: so he is not only happy in his present enjoyments, but also in his freedom from distracting fears of future miseries; *and his*, i.e. God's, eyes

are upon their ways, i.e. God blesseth and prospereth him in all his undertakings, as this phrase most commonly signifies, as #De 11:12 Ezr 5:5 Ps 33:18. Or,

yet his eyes are upon their ways, i.e. although God giveth them such strange successes, this doth not proceed from his ignorance or regardlessness of their wicked actions; for he sees and observes them all, and will in due time punish them, though not always in this life, nor as soon as their sins are committed, but in such time and way as he in deep wisdom seeth most fit.

Ver. 24.

They live in honour and happiness, but not for ever, but only at best during this short and mortal life, which lasteth but for a very little time, and therefore their present happiness is not to be envied; nor is it any reproach to God's providence, which hath time enough to reckon with them hereafter.

Are gone, Heb. *are not*, to wit, in this world; they die.

Brought low; as low as their graves. Or, *after* (as the particle *vau* is elsewhere used, as hath been observed before) they have been brought low, to wit, by pining sickness, or other grievous judgments.

Out of the way, i.e. out of this world and way of living, by death. Or, *are restrained*, or *shut up*, to wit in the grave, the place of silence and impotency.

As all other; they can no more prevent or delay their death than the meanest men in the world. *Cut off* by death's sickle, or by a violent hand.

As the tops of the ears of corn, to wit, in his greatest height and maturity, when he is arrived at his perfect stature of worldly power and glory, then God cuts him off, and that suddenly and violently.

Ver. 25.

If it be not so now, to wit, as I have discoursed; if God doth not suffer wicked men to live long and prosperously in the world before he punisheth them; and if good men be not sometimes sorely afflicted there, if all things do not fall alike to all men in these matters.

JOB CHAPTER 25

Bildad's answer: God's majesty and purity is such as that man cannot be justified before God: before him the heavenly lights lose their lustre and purity.

Ver. 1.

Bildad answered, not to that which Job spoke last, but to that which stuck most in Bildad's mind, and which seemed most reprobable in all his discourses, to wit, his bold censure of God's proceedings with him, and his avowed and oft-repeated desire of disputing the matter with him.

Ver. 2.

Dominion, i.e. absolute and sovereign power over all persons and things, with whom to contend is both rebellion and madness.

Fear, actively understood, or *terror*, i.e. that which justly makes him dreadful to all men, and especially to all that shall undertake to dispute with him; awful majesty, infinite knowledge, whereby he knows men's hearts and ways far better than they know themselves, and sees much sin in them which themselves do not discover, and exact purity and justice, which renders him formidable to sinners.

Are with him; emphatically spoken; with him whom thou challengest; with him who is not lightly and irreverently to be named, much less to be contended with. And therefore it is thy duty to humble thyself for thy presumptuous words and carriage towards him, and quietly and modestly to submit thyself and thy cause to his pleasure.

He maketh peace in his high places. This clause, as well as the following verse, seems to be added to prove what he last said of God's dominion and dreadfulness; he keepeth and ruleth all persons and things in heaven in peace and harmony; and the order which he hath established among them. The angels, though they be very numerous, and differing in orders and ministries, do all own his sovereignty, and acquiesce in his pleasure, without any disputing and murmuring. The stars and heavenly bodies, though vast in their bulk, and various in their motions, yet exactly keep their courses and the order which God hath appointed them; and

therefore it is great folly and impudence to exempt thyself from God's jurisdiction, or to quarrel with the methods of God's dealings with thee.

Ver. 3.

Of his armies; of the angels, and stars, and other creatures, all which are his hosts, wholly submitting themselves to his will, to be and do what God would have them; and therefore how insolent and unreasonable a thing is it for thee to quarrel with him! He spoke before of God's making peace, and here he mentions the armies by which he keeps it.

Upon whom doth no his light arise? either,

1. Properly, his sun, which riseth upon all, **#Mt 5:45**. Or rather,
2. Metaphorically, all that is in men, which is or may be called *light*; the light of life, by which men subsist, and are kept out of the state of the dead, called *a land of darkness*, **#Job 10:22**; the light of reason and understanding, called. God's *candle*, **#Pr 20:27**, by which thou, O Job, art capable of arguing with God and with us; and all that peace, and prosperity, and comfort which thou ever didst enjoy, which oft comes under the name of light, as **#Es 8:15,16 Ps 97:11 Ps 112:4**; which being here called *light*, is, to continue the metaphor, most fitly said to arise upon men: all this is from God, and therefore is wholly at his disposal; he freely gave it all, and he may justly take it away, as thou thyself didst truly observe and confess, **#Job 1:21**, and consequently thou hast no reason to reproach God for disposing of his own as he pleaseth. Thou hast lost nothing which was thine own, and having no propriety, there is no foundation for any judicial contest with God.

Ver. 4.

Man: the word signifies man that is miserable, which supposeth him to be sinful; and that such a creature should quarrel with that dominion of God, to which the sinless, and happy, and glorious angels willingly submit, is most absurd and impious.

With God i.e. before God's tribunal, to which thou dost so boldly appeal. Thou mayst plead thy cause with thy fellow worms, as we are, and expect to be justified; but woe to thee if the great God undertake to plead his cause against thee! how severely and certainly wouldst thou then be condemned!

That is born of a woman, to wit, after the ordinary course; for otherwise Christ was born of a woman, but in a singular manner. This birth is alleged as an evidence of man's filthiness, **#Job 14:4 15:14 Ps 51:5**, and of his liableness to God's curse and wrath, **#Ge 3:16 Eph 2:2**, and consequently of his condemnation, opposite to the justification here mentioned, and confidently expected by Job in this contest.

Ver. 5.

The moon, though a bright and glorious creature, **#Job 31:26 So 6:10**, if compared with the splendour of the Divine majesty, is but as a dark and earthy lump, without any lustre or glory. He names the

moon and the

stars rather than the *sun*, because they many times are eclipsed or disappear even to our eyes, which is a plain evidence of their utter obscurity in respect of God's light; whereas the sun, though that also he obscure, if compared with God, yet it casts a constant and most clear light. Or by naming the *moon*, and thence proceeding to the stars, the sun is included between them.

The stars are not pure in his sight; he can discern many spots and blemishes in them which we cannot see; and in like manner he can discover those corruptions or sins in us which are unknown to our own conscience, which should make thee, O Job, tremble to appear before his tribunal.

Ver. 6.

A worm, to wit, mean, and vile, and impotent; proceeding from corruption, and returning to it; and withal filthy and loathsome, and so every way a very unfit person to appear before the high and holy God, and much more to contend with him. The same thing is repeated in other words; only for *miserable man* in the last branch he here puts *the son of any man*, of what degree or quality soever, to show that this is true even of the greatest and best of men.

JOB CHAPTER 26

Job's reply: this toucheth not Job, **#Job 26:1-4**; who acknowledgeth God' power and providence to be infinite and

unsearchable, of which we have but small knowledge #Job 26:5-14.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

How hast thou helped? thou hast helped egregiously. It is an ironical expression, implying the quite contrary, that he had not at all helped. See the like, #Ge 3:22 1Ki 18:27 1Co 4:8,10.

Him that is without power; either,

1. God, who it seems is weak and unwise, and needed so powerful and eloquent an advocate as thou art to maintain his fights and plead his cause. Or, rather,

2. Job himself: I am a poor helpless creature, my strength and spirits quite broken with the pains of my body and perplexities of my mind, whom nature, and humanity, and religion should have taught thee to support and comfort with a representation of the gracious nature and promises of God, and not to terrify and overwhelm me with displaying his sovereign majesty, the thoughts whereof are already so distractive and dreadful to me.

Ver. 3.

Him that hath no wisdom; either,

1. God: thou hast in effect undertaken to teach God how to govern the world. Or rather,

2. Me, whom you take to be a man void of understanding, #Job 11:2,3, whom therefore you should have instructed with wholesome counsels, instead of these impertinent discourses; and who indeed do want wisdom, being perfectly at a loss, and not knowing what to say or do.

The thing as it is, Heb. *essence*, the truth and substance of the thing in question between us; thou hast spoken the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and all t can be said in the matter. Or,

wisdom, as this word is used, #Pr 3:21. A most wise and profound discourse thou hast made, and much to the purpose: an ironical expression, as before.

Ver. 4.

For whose instruction hast thou uttered these things? For mine? Dost thou think me to be so ignorant, that I do not know that which the meanest persons are not unacquainted with, to wit, that God is incomparably greater and better than his creatures?

Whose spirit came from thee? so the sense is, Whom hast thou revived or comforted by this discourse? Not me surely. The spirit or breath of a man is in a manner suppressed and intercepted in deep sorrows and consternations, such as Job's were; and when he is cheered or refreshed, it finds vent and breathes out freely, as it did before. But I do not remember that ever this phrase is used in this sense; but, on the contrary, the giving or restoring of life is expressed by the coming in, and not by the going out, of spirit or breath, as appears from **#Ge 2:7 Eze 37:5,6,10**. The words therefore are and may be otherwise understood; either thus, *Whose spirit or inspiration* (as this word signifies, **#Job 32:8**)

came from thee? Who inspired thee with this profound discourse of thine? Was it by Divine inspiration, as thou wouldst have us to believe? or was it not a rash suggestion of thy own vain and foolish mind? Or thus, *Whose spirit went out* (to wit, of his body, by an ecstasy of admiration) for thee, by reason of thy discourse? I may be thought partial in my censure of it, but thou mayst perceive none of our friends here present admire it, except thyself. Or, To or for *whom* (the particle *eth* being here understood out of the former branch, as is usual among the Hebrews) *did breath go out from thee*, i.e. didst thou speak? For whose good, or to what end, didst thou speak this? God needed it not; I receive no edification or benefit by it.

Ver. 5.

Job having censured Bildad's discourse concerning God's dominion and power, as insignificant and impertinent to their question, he here proceedeth to show how little he needed his information in that point, and that he was able to instruct him in that doctrine, of which accordingly he gives divers proofs or instances. Here he showeth that the power and providence of God reacheth not only to the things which we see, but also to the invisible parts of the world; not only to the heavens above, and their inhabitants, and to men upon earth, of which Bildad

discoursed **#Job 25:2,3**, but also to such persons or things as are under the earth, or under the waters, which are under the earth; which are out of our sight and reach, and might be thought to be out of the ken or care of Divine Providence. This Hebrew word sometimes signifies giants, as **#De 2:11,20 3:13 1Ch 20:8**; whence it may be translated to other great and, as it were, gigantic creatures, and more commonly *dead men*, as **#Ps 88:11 Pr 2:18 9:18 21:16 Isa 14:9 Isa 26:14,19** whence it is supposed metaphorically to signify also *dead* or *lifeless* things; though there be no example of that use of the word elsewhere; and it may seem improper to call those things dead, which never had nor were capable of life. The next Hebrew word, or the verb, is primarily used of women with child, and signifies their *bringing forth* their young ones *with travail or grievous pains*, as **#Job 39:3 Ps 29:9 Isa 23:4 45:10**; and thence it signifies either to *form* or *bring forth*, as below, **#Job 26:13 Pr 26:10**; or to *grieve* or *mourn*, or to *be in pain*. Accordingly these words are diversely understood; either,

1. Of dead or lifeless things, such as amber, pearl, coral, metals, or other minerals, which are *formed or brought forth*, to wit, by the almighty power of God, *from under the waters*, i.e. either in the bottom of the sea, or within the earth, which is the lowest element, and in the Scripture and other authors spoken of as under the waters; this being observed as a remarkable work of God's providence, that the waters of the sea, which are higher than the earth, do not overwhelm it; *and* from under (which may be repeated out of the former clause of the verse, after the manner of the Hebrews)

the inhabitants thereof, i.e. either of the waters, which are fishes; or of the earth, which are men. Or rather,

2. Of the *giants* of the old world, which were men of great renown whilst they lived, **#Ge 6:4**, and the remembrance of them and of their exemplary destruction was now in some sort fresh and famous; who once carried themselves insolently towards God and men, but were quickly subdued by the Divine power, and drowned with a deluge, and now *mourn* or *groan* from under the waters, where they were buried, and from under the present inhabitants thereof, as before. Or,

3. Of vast and *gigantic fishes*, or *monsters* of the sea, who by God's infinite power were *formed* or *brought* forth under the waters with the other inhabitants thereof, to wit of the waters, the lesser fishes. Or,

4. Of *dead men*, and of the worst sort of them, such as died in their sins, and after death were condemned to further miseries; for of such this very word seems to be used, #Pr 2:18 9:18, who are here said to *mourn* or *groan from under the waters*, i.e. from the lower parts of the earth, or from under those subterranean seas of waters which are by Scripture and by philosophers supposed to be within and under the earth; of which see #De 8:7 Job 28:4,10 Ps 33:7; and from under

the inhabitants thereof, i.e. either of the waters, or of the earth, under which these waters are, or *with the other inhabitants thereof*, i.e. of that place under the waters, to wit, the apostate spirits. So the sense is, that God's dominion is over all men, yea, even the dead, and the worst of them, who though they would not own God nor his providence whilst they lived, yet now are forced to acknowledge and feel that power which they despised, and bitterly mourn under the sad effects of it in their subterranean and infernal habitations, of which the next verse speaks more plainly. And this sense seems to be favoured by the context and scope of the place, wherein Job begins his discourse of God's power and providence at the lowermost and hidden parts of the world, and thence proceeds to those parts which are higher and visible. Nor is it strange that Job speaks of these matters, seeing it is evident that Job, and others of the holy patriarchs and prophets of old, did know and believe the doctrine of the future life, and of its several recompences to good and bad men. Others understand this of the resurrection of the dead; *The dead shall be born* (as this word is used, #Ps 2:7 Pr 8:24,25, i.e. shall be raised, which is a kind of regeneration, or second birth, and is so called, #Mt 19:28 Ac 13:33)

from under the waters, (i.e. even those of them that lie in the waters, #Re 20:13, that were drowned and buried in the sea, and devoured by fishes, &c., whose case may seem to be most desperate, and therefore they only are here mentioned,) *and* (or

even, this particle being oft used expositively) the inhabitants thereof, i.e. those dead corpses which lie or have long lain there.

Ver. 6.

Hell, as this word is frequently used, as **#Job 11:8 Isa 57:9**, &c. And so it seems to be explained by the following word,

destruction, i.e. the place of destruction, which interpreters generally understand of hell, or the place of the damned. Others, *the grave*, the most secret and obscure places and things. *Is naked before him*, i.e. it is in his presence, and under his providence. So far am I from imagining that God cannot see through a dark cloud, as you traduced me, **#Job 22:13**, that I very well know that even hell itself, that place of utter darkness, is not hid from his sight.

Destruction, i.e. the place of destruction, as it is also used, **#Pr 15:11**, by a metonymy of the adjunct.

Hath no covering, to wit, such as to keep it out of his sight.

Ver. 7.

The north, i.e. the northern pole, or part of the heavens, which he particularly mentions, and puts for the whole visible heaven, because Job and his friends lived in a northern climate, and were acquainted only with that part of the heavens, the southern pole and parts near it being wholly unknown to them. The heavens are oft and fitly said to be *spread* or *stretched out* like a curtain or tent, to which they are resembled.

The empty place, to wit, the air, so called, not philosophically, as if it were wholly empty; but popularly, because it seems to be so, and is generally void of solid and visible bodies.

Upon nothing; upon its own centre, which is but an imaginary thing, and in truth nothing; or upon no props or pillars, but his own power and providence; which is justly celebrated as a wonderful work of God, both in Scripture and in heathen authors.

Ver. 8.

This also is a miraculous work of God, considering the nature of these waters, which are fluid and heavy, and pressing downward, especially being oftentimes there in great abundance; and withal, the quality of the clouds, which are thin and loose bodies of the same nature with fogs and mists upon the face of the earth, and

therefore of themselves utterly unable to bear that weight, and to keep up those waters from falling suddenly and violently upon the earth.

Ver. 9.

He holdeth back, i.e. to wit, from our view, that its lustre and glory should not reach us, and so dazzle our sight; he covereth it with a cloud, as the next words explain it. Or, *he holdeth fast*, or *binds together*, or *strengthens it*, that it may be able to bear that burden.

The face of his throne; either,

1. This lower air, which is as the face or open part of the heavens, which is often called God's throne, as **#Ps 11:4 Isa 66:1 Am 9:6**. Or,

2. The appearance or manifestation of the heaven of heavens, where he dwelleth, whose light and glory is too great for mortal eyes, which therefore by clouds and other ways he hides from us.

Ver. 10.

The waters, to wit, of the sea; for of the upper waters coming out of the clouds he spoke before.

With bounds; which are partly the rocks and shores, and principally God's appointment, made at the first creation, and renewed after the deluge, **#Ge 9:11,15**, that the waters should not overwhelm the earth: see **#Job 38:8,10,11 Ps 104:3 Jer 5:22**.

Until the day and night come to an end, i.e. unto the end of the world, for so long these vicissitudes of day and night are to continue, **#Ge 8:22 9:9 Jer 5:22 31:35,36**.

Ver. 11.

The pillars of heaven; either,

1. Those mountains which by their height and strength may seem to reach and support the heavens, as the poets said of Atlas; for this is a poetical book, and there are many poetical expressions in it. These tremble sometimes by force of earthquakes, or by God's glorious appearance in them, as Sinai did. Or,

2. Holy angels; but they are not subject either to trembling, or to God's rebuke. Or,

3. The heavenly bodies, as the sun, and moon, and stars, which as they may seem in some sort to support, so they do certainly adorn the heavens; and we know pillars are oft made, not to support, but only for ornament; as the two famous pillars of the temple, Jachin and Boaz, #1Ki 7:21. And these oftentimes seem to tremble and be astonished, as in eclipses or tempests, and terrible works of God in the air, by which they are frequently said to be affected and changed, because they seem so to us; and many things are spoken in Scripture according to appearance: see #Isa 13:10 24:23 Joe 2:10,31 Mt 24:29, &c.

At his reproof; either,

1. When God rebuketh them: for God is sometimes said in Scripture to rebuke the lifeless creatures; which is to be understood figuratively of the tokens of God's anger in them. Or,
2. When God reproveth not them, but men by them, manifesting his displeasure against sinful men by thunders, or earthquakes, or prodigious works.

Ver. 12.

He speaks either,

1. Of God's dividing the Red Sea for the Israelites to pass over; and consequently the Hebrew word *rahab*, which here follows, and is translated *pride*, or the *proud*, is meant of Egypt, which is oft called *Rahab*, as #Ps 87:4 89:10 Isa 51:9. But it seems most probable that that work was not yet done, and that Job lived long before Israel's coming out of Egypt. Or rather,
2. Of the common work of nature and providence in raising tempests, by which he breaketh or divideth the waves of the sea, by making deep furrows in it, and casting up part of the waters into the air, and splitting part of them upon the rocks and shores of the sea.

By his understanding, i.e. by his wise counsel and administration of things, so as may obtain his own glorious ends.

The proud; either,

1. The whale, which is called

king over all the children of pride, #Job 41:34, and which is sometimes by force of tempests cast upon the shore. Or rather,

2. The sea, which is fitly called *proud*, as its waves are called, **#Job 38:11**, because it is lofty, and fierce, and swelling, and unruly; which God is said to *smite* when he subdues and restrains its rage, and turns the storm into a calm.

Ver. 13.

By his spirit; either,

1. By his Divine virtue or power, which is sometimes called *his spirit*, as **#Zec 4:6 Mt 12:28**. Or,

2. By his Holy Spirit, to which the creation of the world is ascribed, **#Ge 1:2 Job 33:4 Ps 33:6**.

He hath garnished the heavens; adorned or beautified them with those glorious lights, the sun, and moon, and stars.

The crooked serpent; by which he understands either,

1. All the kinds of serpents, or fishes, or monsters of the sea. Or,

2. The most eminent of their kinds, particularly the whale, which may be here not unfitly mentioned (as it is afterwards more largely described) amongst the glorious works of God in this lower world; as the garnishing of the heavens was his noblest work in the superior visible parts of the world.

Or, 3. A heavenly constellation, called *the great dragon and serpent*, which being most eminent, as taking up a considerable part of the northern hemisphere, may well be put for all the rest of the constellations or stars wherewith the heavens are garnished. Thus he persisteth still in the same kind of God's works, and the latter branch explains the former. And this sense is the more probable, because Job was well acquainted with the doctrine of astronomy, and knew the nature and names of the stars and constellations, as appears also from **#Job 9:9 38:31**.

Ver. 14.

These are parts, or, *the extremities*, but small parcels, the outside and visible work. How glorious then are his visible and more inward perfections and operations!

Of his ways, i.e. of his works. *Of him*, i.e. of his power, and wisdom, and providence, and actions. The greatest part of what we see or know of him, is the least part of what we do not know, and of what is in him, or is done by him.

The thunder of his power; either,

1. Of his mighty and terrible thunder, which is oft mentioned as an eminent work of God; as **#Job 28:26 40:9 Ps 29:3 77:18**. Or,

2. Of his mighty power, which is aptly compared to thunder, in regard of its irresistible force, and the terror which it causeth to wicked men; this metaphor being used by others in like cases; as among the Grecians, who used to say of their vehement and powerful orators, that they did *thunder* and *lighten*; and in **#Mr 3:17**, where powerful preachers are called *sons of thunder*.

JOB CHAPTER 27

He will not renounce his integrity, **#Job 27:1-6**. The character of a hypocrite, and his misery, **#Job 27:7-10**. The portion and heritage of the wicked, **#Job 27:11-23**.

Ver. 1.

When he had waited a while to hear what his friends would reply, and perceived them to be silent. His parable; his grave and weighty, but withal dark and difficult, discourse, such as are oft called parables, as **#Nu 23:7 24:3-15 Ps 49:4 88:2 Pr 26:7**.

Ver. 2.

He confirms the truth and sincerity of his expressions by an oath, because he found them very hard to believe all his professions.

My judgment, or *my right*, or *my cause*, i.e. who, though he knows my integrity and piety towards him, yet doth not plead my cause against my friends, nor will admit me to plead my cause with him before them, as I have so oft and earnestly desired, nor doth deal with me according to those terms of grace and mercy wherewith he treateth other men and saints; but useth me with great rigour, and by his sovereign power punisheth me sorely, without discovering to me what singular cause I have given him to do so.

Ver. 3.

My breath; which is the constant companion and certain sign of life, both coming in with it, #Ge 2:7, and going out with it, #1Ki 17:17 Ps 144:4. Or, *my soul*, or *life*. *The spirit of God*; that spirit or soul which God breathed into me, #Ge 2:7, and preserveth in me. Or rather, *the breath of God*, i.e. which God breathed into me, which eminently appears in a man's nostrils.

Ver. 4.

I will speak nothing but the truth with all plainness and impartiality, neither defending myself and cause by vain and false professions of those virtues or graces which I know I have not; nor yet, in compliance with your desire and design, falsely accusing myself of those crimes wherewith you charge me, whereof I know myself to be innocent.

Ver. 5.

That I should justify you, i.e. your opinion and censure concerning me, as one convicted to be impious or hypocritical, by God's unusual and severe dealing with me.

I will not remove, to wit, declaratively, as real words are frequently understood; or by renouncing or denying my integrity, of which God and my own conscience bear me witness. I will not, to gratify you, say that I am a hypocrite, which I know to be false.

Ver. 6.

I hold fast, Heb. *I have held fast*, i.e., I have not only begun well, but continued in well-doing; which is a plain evidence that I am no hypocrite. Or, the past tense is put for the future, as is usual, *I will hold fast*, declaratively, as before, I will maintain it, that howsoever you calumniate me, I am a righteous person.

My heart, i.e. my conscience, as the heart is oft used, as #1Sa 24:5 25:31 Eze 14:5 1Jo 3:20,21.

Shall not reproach me; either,

1. With betraying my own cause and innocency, and speaking what I know to be false, to wit, that I am a hypocrite. Or,
2. For my former impiety or hypocrisy, wherewith you charge me.

So long as I live, Heb. *from*, or *for*, or *concerning my days*, i.e. the time of my life, whether past or to come. Or the course of my life; days or times being put here, as it is elsewhere, for actions done in them by a metonymy.

Ver. 7.

I am so far from loving and practising wickedness, whereof you accuse me, that I abhor the thoughts of it; and if I might and would wish to be revenged of mine enemy, I could wish him no greater mischief than to be a wicked man.

He that riseth up against me; either,

1. You my friends, who, instead of comforting me, are risen up to torment me. Or rather,
2. My worst enemies.

Ver. 8.

There is no reason why I should envy or desire the portion of wicked men; for though they oftentimes prosper in the world, as I have said, and seem to be great gainers, yet death, which hasteneth to all men, and to me especially, will show that they are far greater losers, and die in a most wretched and desperate condition; having no hope either of continuing in this life, which they chiefly desire, or of enjoying a better life, which they never regarded. But I have a firm and well-grounded hope, not of that temporal restitution which you promised me, but of a blessed immortality after death, and therefore am none of these hopeless hypocrites, as you account me. *Taketh away*; or, *expelleth*, or *plucketh up*; which notes violence, and that he died unwillingly; compare #**Lu 12:20**; when good men are said freely and cheerfully to give themselves or their souls unto God.

Ver. 9.

A hypocrite doth not pray to God with comfort, or any solid hope that God will hear him, as I know he will hear me, though not in the way which you think.

When trouble cometh upon him; when his guilty conscience will fly in his face, so as he dare not pray; and accuse him to God, so as God will not hear him.

Ver. 10.

Will he be able to delight and satisfy himself with God alone, and with his love and favour, when he hath no other matter of delight? This I now do, and this a hypocrite cannot do, because his heart is chiefly set upon the world; and when that fails him, his heart sinks, and the thoughts of God are unsavoury and troublesome to him. He may by his afflictions be driven to prayer: but if God doth not speedily answer him, he falls into despair, and neglect of God and of prayer; whereas I constantly continue in prayer, notwithstanding the grievousness and the long continuance of my calamities.

Ver. 11.

By the hand of God, i.e. by God's help and inspiration; as God is said to speak to the prophet *with* or *by a strong hand*, #Isa 8:11. I will not teach you my own vain conceits, but what God himself hath taught me. Or, *concerning* (as the prefix *beth* is oft used, as #Ex 12:43,44 Ps 63:6 87:3 Pr 4:11)

the hand of God, i.e. his counsel and providence in governing the world, or the manner of his dealing with men, and especially with wicked men, of whose portion he discourseth #Job 27:13,14, &c., showing how far the hand of God is either for them, or upon them, and against them.

That which is with the Almighty, i.e. what is in his breast or counsel, and how he executes his secret purposes concerning them; or the truth of God, the doctrine which he hath taught his church about these matters.

Ver. 12.

I speak no false or strange things, but what is known and confirmed by your own as well as others' experiences.

Why then are ye thus altogether vain, in maintaining such a foolish and false opinion against your own knowledge and experience? Why do you obstinately defend your opinion, and not comply with mine, for the truth of which I appeal to your own consciences?

Ver. 13.

This is the portion of a wicked man; that which is mentioned in the following verses; in which Job delivers either,

1. The opinion of his friends, in whose person he utters them, and afterwards declares his dissent from them. Or rather,

2. His own opinion, and how far he agreeth with them; for his sense differs but little from what Zophar said, **#Job 20:29**.

With God; either laid up with God, or in his counsel and appointment; or which he shall have from God, as the next words explain it.

Of oppressors; who are mighty, and fierce, and terrible, and mischievous to mankind, as this word implies, whom therefore men cannot destroy, but God will.

Ver. 14.

It is for the sword; that they may be cut off by the sword, either of war or of justice.

Shall not be satisfied with bread; shall be starved, or want necessaries. A figure called *meiosis*.

Ver. 15.

Those that remain of him; who survive and escape that sword and famine.

Shall be buried in death; either,

1. Shall die, and so be buried. Or,

2. Shall be buried as soon as ever they are dead, either because their relations or dependents feared lest they shored come to themselves again, and trouble them and others longer; or because they were not able to bestow any funeral pomp upon them, or thought them unworthy of it. Or,

3. Shall be in a manner utterly extinct in or by death; all their hope, and glory, and name, and memory (which they designed to perpetuate to all ages) shall be buried with them, and they shall never rise again to a blessed life: whereas a good man hath hope in his death, and leaves his good name alive and flourishing in the world, and rests in his grave in assurance of redemption from it, and of a glorious resurrection to a happy and eternal life.

His widows; for they had many wives, either to gratify their lust, or to increase and strengthen their family and interest.

Shall not weep; either because they durst not lament their death, which was entertained with public joy; or because they were overwhelmed and astonished with the greatness and strangeness of the calamity, and therefore could not weep; or because they also, as well as other persons, groaned under their tyranny and cruelty, and rejoiced in their deliverance from it.

Ver. 16.

i.e. In great abundance.

Ver. 17.

The just shall put it on; either because it shall be given to him by the judge to recompense those injuries which he received from that tyrant; or because the right of it is otherwise transferred upon him by Divine Providence.

The innocent shall divide the silver; either,

1. To the poor; he shall distribute that which the oppressor hoarded up and kept as wickedly as he got it. So this suits with **#Pr 28:8 Ec 2:26**. Or,

2. With others, or to himself; he shall have a share of it, when by the judge's sentence those ill-gotten goods shall be restored to the right owners.

Ver. 18.

As a moth; which settleth itself in a garment, but is quickly and unexpectedly brushed off, and dispossessed of its dwelling, and crushed to death.

That the keeper maketh; which the keeper of a garden or vineyard suddenly rears up in fruit time, and as quickly and easily pulls it down again. See **#Isa 1:8 La 2:6**.

Ver. 19.

Shall lie down; either,

1. To sleep; as this word is used, **#Ge 19:35 De 6:7**, &c. Or,

2. In death, of which it is used, **#2Sa 7:12**.

He shall not be gathered, to wit, in burial, of which this word is used, **#2Ki 22:20 Jer 8:2 25:33**. Instead of that honourable interment and burial with his fathers which he expected, he shall

be buried with the burial of an ass; his carcass shall lie like dung upon the earth.

He openeth his eyes so the sense is either,

1. He awaketh in the morning, promising to himself a happy day.

Or,

2. He looks about him for help and relief in his extremity. But the words are and may be rendered thus, *one openeth his eyes*, i.e. whilst a man can open his eyes, in a moment, or in the twinkling of an eye.

He is not; he is as if he had never been, dead and gone, and his family and name extinct with him.

Ver. 20.

Terrors take hold on him, from the sense of his approaching death or judgment.

As waters; either,

1. In abundance, one terror after another. Or,

2. Violently and irresistibly, as a river breaking its banks, or a deluge of waters bears down and overwhelms all that is before it.

A tempest stealeth him away in the night; God's wrath and judgment cometh upon him forcibly like a tempest, and withal secretly and unexpectedly, like a thief in the night.

Ver. 21.

The east wind, i.e. some violent and terrible judgment, fitly compared to the east wind, which in those parts was most vehement and furious, and withal pestilent and pernicious; of which see **#Ex 10:13 14:21 Ps 48:7 78:26 Ho 13:15 Jon 4:8**.

Carrieth him away, out of his place, as it follows, out of his stately palace, wherein he expected to dwell for ever; whence he shall be carried either by an enemy, that shall take him and carry him into captivity, or by death.

Ver. 22.

God shall cast upon him his darts or plagues, one after another.

And not spare, i.e. shall show no pity nor mercy to him, when he crieth to God for it.

He would fain flee out of his hand; he earnestly desires and endeavours by all ways possible to escape the judgments of God, but all in vain.

Ver. 23.

Men, who shall see and observe these things,

shall clap their hands; partly, in token of their joy at the removal of such a public pest and tyrant; and partly, by way of astonishment; and partly, in contempt, and scorn, or derision; all which this gesture signifies in Scripture use; of which see **#La 2:15 Eze 25:6 Na 3:19.**

Shall hiss him, in token of their amazement, detestation, and derision. See **#1Ki 9:8 2Ch 29:8 Jer 25:9 Mic 6:16.**

Out of his place; now that he is out of his place and power, which they durst not do whilst he was in his place. Or, the men of his place, that lived with him or near him, and daily felt the effects of his tyranny.

JOB CHAPTER 28

The power and wisdom of God in his works of nature, **#Job 28:1-11.** A knowledge and wisdom answering this is not found in man, nor to be bought or acquired, **#Job 28:12-21.** Death and destruction make their report of it, **#Job 28:22.** It is only in God, **#Job 28:23-27.** Man's wisdom is to fear God, **#Job 28:28.**

Ver. 1.

There is a vein for the silver; where it is hid by God, and found and fetched out by the art and industry of man. The connexion of this chapter with the former is difficult, and diversly apprehended; but this may seem to be the fairest account of it: Job having in the last chapter discoursed of God's various providences and carriages towards wicked men, and showed that God doth sometimes for a season give them wealth and prosperity, but afterwards calls them to a sad account, and punisheth them severely for their abuse of his mercies; and having formerly showed that God doth sometimes prosper the wicked all their days, so as they live and die without any visible token of God's displeasure against them, when, on the contrary, good men are

exercised with many and grievous calamities; and perceiving that his friends were, as men in all ages have been, scandalized at these methods of Divine Providence, and denied the thing, because they could not understand the reason of such unequal dispensations: in this chapter he declares that this is one of the depths and secrets of Divine Wisdom, not discoverable by any mortal man in this world; and that although men had some degree of wisdom whereby they could dig deep, and search out many hidden things, as the veins of silver, gold, &c., yet this was a wisdom of a higher nature, and out of man's reach. And hereby he secretly checks the arrogance and confidence of his friends, who, because they had some parts of wisdom, the knowledge of natural things, such as are here contained, and of human affairs, and of some Divine matters, therefore presumed to fathom the depths of God's wisdom and providence, and to judge of all God's ways and works by the scantling of their own narrow understandings. Possibly it may be connected thus: Job having been discoursing of the wonderful ways of God, both in the works of nature, #**Job 26:5-14**, and in his providential dispensations towards wicked men, #**Job 27:13-23** to the end, he here returns to the first branch of his discourse, and discovers more of God's wisdom and power in natural things. And this he doth partly, that by this manifestation of his singular skill in the ways and actions of God, he might vindicate himself from that contempt which they seemed to have of him, and oblige them to hear what he had further to say with more attention and consideration; and partly that by this representation of the manifold wisdom and power of God, they might be wrought to a greater reverence for God and for his works, and not presume to judge so rashly and boldly of them, and to condemn what they did not understand in them.

Where they fine it; or rather, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, which they, to wit, the refiners, *do fine*. For he speaks not here of the works of men and of art, but of God and of nature, as is manifest from the foregoing and following words.

Ver. 2.

Iron is taken out of the earth; being made of earth, concocted by the heat of the sun into that hardness, and by miners digged out of the earth.

Brass; or, *copper*.

Is molten out of the stone, wherewith it is mixed and incorporated in the earth, and by fire and the art of the metallist it is separated from it, and taken out of it, as Pliny observes, **#Job 34:1,10 36:27.**

Ver. 3.

He; either,

1. Man, the miner; or,
2. God, of whose works of nature he here speaks; or,
3. God as the chief author and director, and man as God's instrument in the work.

An end; or, *a bound*, how far the darkness shall reach, and how far the dark and hidden parts and treasures of the earth shall be searched, and discovered, and brought to light.

All perfection, i.e. metals and minerals, which are nothing else but earth concocted, and hardened, and brought to maturity and perfection. Or, *unto all perfection*, i.e. he perfectly and exactly searcheth them out; although the Hebrew *lamed* may be here only a note of the accusative case, as our translation takes it.

The stones; either gems and precious stones, which are called by this word, **#Pr 26:8;** or those stones out of which the metals forementioned are taken.

Of darkness, and the shadow of death; which lie hid in the dark and deadly shades and bowels of the earth.

Ver. 4.

This verse speaks either,

1. Of another great and remarkable work of God, whereby in some places either new rivers break forth, or old rivers break in upon the inhabitants, and drive them away; and in other places rivers or other waters are dried up, or derived into other channels or grounds, by which means these lands are rendered more useful and fruitful. Or rather,

2. Of an accident which commonly happens in mines, where, whilst men are digging, a flood of waters breaks in suddenly and violently upon them, and disturbs them in their work.

From the inhabitant, Heb.

from with the inhabitant, i.e. out of that part of the earth which the miners in a manner inhabit, or where they have their fixed abode, and for the most part dwell. Or, *so that there is no inhabitant or abider*, i.e. so that the miners dare continue there no longer, but are forced to come away.

Even the waters; which word is easily and fitly understood out of the foregoing word *flood*. Or without this supplement, *the flood* may be said to be forgotten, &c., that singular word being collectively taken, and so conveniently joined with this word of the plural number.

Forgotten of the foot, i.e. untrodden by the foot of man, such waters as men either never did pass over, by reason of their depth, cannot pass over; or such as though the miners at first for a while did pass over, yet now cannot, or dare not, do so any more. *Forgetfulness* is here ascribed to the foot, as it is to the hand, **#Ps 137:5**; and it is put for ignorance or unacquaintedness; as all sinners are said to forget God, though many of them never remembered nor minded him.

They are dried up, they are gone away from men; Heb.

they are dried up (or *drawn up*, to wit, by engines made for that purpose) from men, (i.e. from the miners, that they may not be hindered in their work. Or, *with* or *by men*, the prefix *mem* being oft put for *beth*, i.e. by the labour of men,) *they remove* or *vanish*, or pass away, and so the miners return to their work.

Ver. 5.

Out of it; out of the upper parts of the earth. Bread; bread-corn, or other food for man's use.

Under it; either,

1. Under the same earth, which either at the same time yields bread out of its upper, and fire out of its lower parts; or at several

times; that earth which once was fruitful becoming, by the disposition of Divine Providence, barren and sulphureous, &c. Or,

2. Under other parts of the earth.

Is turned up, i.e. is digged out and fetched up.

As it were fire; either gold and precious stones, which glitter and sparkle like fire; or coals, and brimstone, and other materials of fire.

Ver. 6.

The place of sapphires, i.e. of precious stones; the sapphire, as one of the most eminent, being put for all the rest. In some parts of the earth the sapphires are mixed with stones, and cut out of them and polished. Of this stone, see **#Ex 24:10 So 5:14 La 4:7 Eze 1:26**.

It hath, i.e. the earth containeth in or under it.

Dust of gold; which is a distinct thing from that gold which is found in the mass or lump, of which **#Job 28:2**; both sorts of gold being found in the earth.

Ver. 7.

A path, to wit, in the dark depths and bowels of the earth. *The vulture*; whose eye is very quick and strong, and which searcheth all places for its prey, but cannot reach to these places, which yet the wisdom of man by the direction of God's providence findeth out.

Ver. 8.

The lion's whelps, Heb. *the sons of pride*; a fit name for lions, which are lofty and stately creatures, despising both men and all other beasts that oppose them.

The fierce lion; which rangeth all places for prey, and findeth out the deepest dens and caves of the earth. The birds and beasts have oftentimes led men to such places as otherwise they should never have found out; but they could not lead men to these mines; but the finding out of them is a special gift of God, and an act of that wisdom which he hath put into man.

Ver. 9.

This and the two next verses are meant either,

1. Of other eminent and considerable works of God, who sometimes overturneth rocks, and produceth new rivers in unlikely places. Or rather,

2. Of the same work of mining and digging for gold, or other precious things of the earth, and of other effects of man's art and wisdom in that work. The miners resolve to break through all opposition, and by iron tools, or fire, or other ways, dig through the hardest rocks. He undermineth the very mountains to find out the metals lying at the bottom of them.

Ver. 10.

He maketh channels among the rocks to convey away that water which was breaking in upon him, and if not thus diverted, would have spoiled his work; of which **See Poole "Job 28:4"**. Having with great art and indefatigable industry broke through all difficulties, he at last arriveth at his end, and finds out those precious treasures which he sought for.

Ver. 11.

He restraineth

the floods, and as it were bindeth them to their good behaviour, that they may not overflow the mine; and those metals which did lie hid in the secret parts of the earth, he discovers to himself and others.

Ver. 12.

Wisdom, Heb. *that wisdom*; for here is an article which seems to be emphatical. The sense is, I confess that man hath one kind of wisdom in a great measure, to wit, to discover the works of nature, and to perform the operations of art; but as for that sublime and eminent wisdom, which consists in the exact knowledge of all God's counsels and ways, and of the several manners and reasons of his governing the world, and dealing with good and bad men, this is far above man's reach, and is the prerogative of God alone.

Where is the place of understanding? there is no vein for that upon the earth, as there is for gold or silver.

Ver. 13.

Man knoweth neither where to purchase it, nor how much it is worth, nor what to offer in exchange for it.

In the land of the living; amongst mortal men that live upon earth, but only amongst those blessed spirits that dwell above.

Ver. 14.

The depth, to wit, of the earth, because the sea here follows as a differing place. This is a very common figure, whereby speech is ascribed to dumb and senseless creatures. The meaning is, This is not to be found in any part of the land or sea, yea, though a man should dig or dive never so deep to find it, nor to be learned from any creatures; for though these discover the being, and power, and in part the wisdom of God, yet they do not instruct us in the methods and grounds of God's providential dispensations to good and evil men: these are secrets of wisdom reserved for God himself.

Ver. 15.

For gold; the choicest gold laid up in treasures, as the word signifies. *Weighed,* to wit, in the balance; for in those times money was paid by weight, not by tale. See #Ge 23:16 Jer 23:9,10.

Ver. 16.

The gold of Ophir was the best sort of gold. See Poole "1Ki 9:28", See Poole "Job 22:24". *Onyx,* or *sardonyx.* See Poole "Ex 28:20".

Ver. 17.

The crystal; or, *amber,* which in those parts was of very great price; or, *the diamond.* The Hebrew word is not elsewhere used, and it hath in it the signification of *purity,* or *clearness,* or *brightness.*

Jewels; or, *vessels;* wherein there is not only the excellency of the materials, but the curiosity of art, which renders the other much more valuable.

Ver. 18.

No mention shall be made; they are of no value, nor worthy to be named the same day with this, nor fit to be mentioned as a price or recompence wherewith to purchase this. *The price;* or, *the attraction,* or *acquisition;* or rather, *the extraction,* or *drawing forth.* For Job useth the word of art which was proper in the taking of

pearls, as the following word, rendered by our translators rubies, is understood by divers, both Hebrew and Christian interpreters, and amongst others by the late eminently learned Bochart, who proveth it by divers arguments. Now these pearls are and were taken by men that dived to the bottom of the sea, and *drew them out* thence, which is the very word which both Arabic and Latin authors use in the case; as indeed the same word is used of all fishermen, who are said to draw forth with their hook, or net, or otherwise, fishes, or any other thing for which they are fishing. Moreover this diving, as it produced great profit, so it was not without some danger and difficulty; for if they heedlessly put their fingers into the gaping shell, within which the pearl was, it speedily closed upon them, and put them to exquisite pain, to the loss of their finger, and sometimes of their life; which is a fit representation of the state of those persons who search after the knowledge of God's counsels and ways, and the grounds of them, who as when they modestly inquire into them, and truly discover them, they have infinite advantage and satisfaction therein; so if they pry into them too boldly, searching into those things which God hath concealed, and rashly judging of them above what they know, which Job judged to be his friends' case, they expose themselves to manifold snares and dangers. And this *extraction*, or *drawing forth*, is aptly used concerning this wisdom, which lying very deep and remote from the reach of ordinary men, is not to be obtained without diligent search and consideration. And so the place may be thus translated, *the extraction or drawing forth of wisdom is above that* (to wit, the extraction) of pearls.

Ver. 14.

The topaz; of which see #Ex 28:17 39:10.

Of Ethiopia, or, *of Arabia*; for *Cush* signifies both Ethiopia and Arabia; and the topaz was found in the Red Sea, which lay between both, and so might be ascribed to either.

Ver. 20.

Where this precious treasure lies, and whence a man may fetch it.

Ver. 21.

Of all living; of all men that live upon the earth.

From the fowls of the air: though they fly high, and can see far and well, yet they cannot discern this: men of the most raised understandings cannot discover it. It is to be found no where in this visible world, neither in the upper nor lower parts of it.

Ver. 22.

Destruction and death; either,

1. Men that are dead, and thereby freed from the encumbrance of their bodies, which depress their minds, and have more raised thoughts than men that live here. Or,

2. The grave, the place of the dead, to which these things are here ascribed, as they are to the *depths*, and to the *sea*, #**Job 28:14**, by a figure called *prosopopaeia*. If a man should search for this wisdom, either amongst living men, or amongst the dead, he could not find it; yea, though he should and might inquire of all men that formerly lived in the world, some of whom were persons of prodigious wit and learning, and of vast experience, as having lived nigh a thousand years, and made it their great business in that time to search out the depths of this Divine wisdom in the administration of the world.

We have heard the fame thereof; we know it only by slight and uncertain rumours, but not fully and perfectly.

Ver. 23.

God, i.e. God alone; as appears by the denial of it to all other things.

The way thereof; either the way how it is to be obtained; or rather, the methods or courses which it takes in the management of all affairs in the world, together with its grounds and ends in them.

The place thereof; where it dwells, which is only in his own breast and mind, and in the best of men but in part, and only as far as it pleaseth him to afford it.

Ver. 24.

He, and he only, knows it, because his providence, and that only, is infinite and universal, reaching to all places, and times, and things, past, present, and to come; whereas the most acute and knowing men have narrow understandings, and see but very few

things and small parcels of the works of God, and therefore are very unfit to pass a judgment upon them, because the wisdom, and justice, and beauty of God's works is not clearly nor fully seen till all the parts of them be laid together.

Ver. 25.

To make the weight for the winds; which of themselves are most light, and without any weight, and inconstant, and such as no creature can order or govern them: but God manageth them all by weight, appointing to every wind that blows its season, its proportion, its bounds and limits, when, and where, and how much, and how long each wind shall blow, and for what ends; whether for mercy, as to refresh men in hot seasons with its gentle gales, to cherish the fruits of the earth, to waft ships on the sea to their desired havens, &c.; or whether for judgment, as to corrupt the air, and thereby the bodies of men, and fruits of the earth, to blow down houses upon their inhabitants, as he was pleased to deal with my poor unhappy children. He only doth all these things, and he only knows why he doth them. He instanceth but in some few of God's works, and those which seem to be most trivial, and casual, and uncertain, that thereby he might more strongly imply and prove that God doth the same in other things which are more considerable, and are managed by more constant causes and certain methods; that he doth all things in the most exact order, and weight, and measure.

He weigheth: but it seems a very improper speech, *to weigh* things by measure; and therefore this word may more fitly be otherwise rendered, *he examineth*, or *disposeth*, or *fitteth*, or *directeth*, for so this verb is elsewhere used, as #1Sa 2:3 Ps 75:3 Pr 16:2 21:2.

The waters, to wit, the rain waters, as appears from the next verse, which God layeth up in his store-houses, or bottles, the clouds, and thence draws them forth, and sends them down upon the earth in such times and proportions as he thinks fit, and as may serve his several designs and ends.

By measure; for liquid things are examined by measure, as other things are by weight; and here is both weight and measure, to

signify with what exact and perfect wisdom God doth govern the world.

Ver. 26.

When he made; which was either from eternity, or at the first creation, when he settled that course and order which should afterwards be continued. Or, *when he maketh*: but our translation seems best to suit with the then in the next verse, where the sense is completed.

Decree for the rain; an appointment, and as it were a statute law, that it should fall upon the earth, and that in such times, and places, and proportions, and manner as he should think fit, either for *correction* or *for mercy*, as Elihu speaks, **#Job 37:13**. *A way*, or *path*, how it should get out of the thick cloud, in which it was shut up, and as it were imprisoned; or, *a course*, which should for the future be observed, as to the time, and measure, and ends, and other circumstances belonging to it.

Ver. 27.

Then; either from eternity, when he decreed what he would do, or when he first created them.

Did he see it, i.e. wisdom, which is the subject matter of the present discourse. This God saw not abroad, but within himself; he looked or reflected upon it in his own mind, as the rule by which he would proceed in the creation and government of all things, managing them in such ways and methods as were most agreeable to his own most wise and unsearchable counsels, which no human or created wit can reach or pierce into. Or, *he saw it*, so as to declare it, as it follows; so as to make it visible and manifest in some measure to his creatures. Or, *he saw it*, i.e. he enjoyed it, *seeing* being oft put for enjoying, as **#Ps 27:13 34:12 Ec 2:1 3:13**. Compare **#Pr 8:22**.

Declare it, i.e. he made it evident, he discovered his deep wisdom, which lay hid before in his own breast; or he laid the foundation of that discovery of it, which then was, or afterward should be, made to angels and men, as the *heavens* did in themselves declare the glory of God, **#Ps 19:1**, before there was such a creature as man to take notice of it, because the object was visible in itself, and not made so by the eye which afterwards

beheld it. Or, *did number* it, i.e. showed it as it were by number; not only in gross, but as it were by retail, in all the several works which he made.

He prepared it, i.e. he had it in readiness for the doing of all his works, as if he had been for a long time preparing materials for them. So it is a speech of God after the manner of men. Or, *he disposed it*, i.e. used or employed it in his works. Or, *he settled or established it*, i.e. he firmly purposed to do such and such things in such manner as he thought meet, and he established the order which he first made in the world, that it should continue in after-ages. Or, *he directed it*, and directed and ordered all things by it.

Searched it out; not properly; for so searching implies ignorance, and that a man is at a loss, and requires time and industry, all which is repugnant to the Divine reflections; but figuratively, as such expressions are oft used concerning God, i.e. he did and doth all things with that absolute and perfect wisdom, and he knoweth all his own counsels and actions, and the reasons of them, so exactly and perfectly, as if he had bestowed a long time in searching and judging to find them out. And this and the other acts mentioned in this verse are to be understood of God solely and exclusively, it being here, as it is oft elsewhere in this book, sufficiently implied, that this kind of Divine wisdom, which consists in the accurate knowledge of all God's counsels and works, is far above, out of man's reach. Man doth not see this wisdom but only so far as God is pleased to reveal it to him, and therefore he cannot

declare it to others; man did not *prepare*, nor *order*, nor *contrive* it, and therefore no wonder if he cannot *search it out*. And so this is most fitly connected with the following verse; for as here he tells us what wisdom is denied to man, so there he informeth us what is granted to him.

Ver. 28.

And; or rather, *but*; for this is added by way of opposition, to show that man's wisdom doth not lie in a curious inquiry into, or in an exact knowledge of, the secret paths of God's counsel and providence: but in things of another and of a lower nature.

Unto man; unto Adam at first, and in and with him to all his race and posterity.

He said, i.e. God spoke it, partly, and at first inwardly, to the mind of man, in which God wrote this with his own finger, and engraved it as a first principle for his direction; and partly afterwards by the holy patriarchs, and prophets, and other teachers of his church, whom God sent into the world to teach men true wisdom; which accordingly they did, not by acquainting the people with the secrets and intricacies of God's counsel and providence, but by declaring the revealed will of God, and instructing them in their duty towards God and men, making this their great, if not only, business, to make men wise unto salvation. See #De 4:6 29:29. *Behold;* which expression notes the great importance of this doctrine, and withal man's dulness and backwardness to apprehend and consider it, and man's proneness to place his wisdom in vain and curious speculations.

The fear of the Lord, i.e. true religion, and the right worship of God, both inward and outward, all which cometh under this name.

That is wisdom; in that only consists man's true wisdom, because that, and that only, is his duty, and his safety, and happiness, both for this life and for the next; and withal this is attainable, whereas the depths of God's ways are unknown and unsearchable to human or created capacities. *To depart from evil,* i.e. from sin, which is called *evil* eminently, as being the chief, if not the only, evil, and the cause of all other evils, and that which is constantly and immutably evil, whereas afflictions are frequently made good and highly beneficial. Religion consists of two branches, doing good and forsaking evil; the former is expressed in the former clause of this verse, and the latter in these words.

Is understanding; is the best kind of knowledge or wisdom to which man can attain in this life. The same thing is here twice expressed in several phrases. And the design of Job in this close of his discourse, is not only to show the mistake, and reprove the arrogance and boldness, of his friends, in prying into God's secrets, and passing such a rash censure upon him, and upon God's ways and carriage towards him; but also to vindicate

himself from the imputation of hypocrisy and profaneness, which they fastened upon him, by showing that he had ever esteemed it to be his best wisdom and true interest to fear God, and to depart from evil.

JOB CHAPTER 29

Job's former prosperity in God's favour, #**Job 29:1-5**. His honour and repute, #**Job 29:6-11**, for his charity, #**Job 29:12-16**, and punishing the wicked, #**Job 29:17**. His hope herein, #**Job 29:18**. His glory and honour repeated, #**Job 29:19-25**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

To wit, from all those miseries which now I feel. This he desires, not only for his own ease and comfort, but also for the vindication of his reputation, and of the honour of religion, which suffered by his means: for as his calamities were the only ground of all their hard speeches and censures of him, as a man forsaken and hated by God; so he rightly judged that this ground being removed, and his posterity restored, his friends would take it for a token of God's favour to him, and beget in them a milder and better opinion of him.

Ver. 3.

His candle, i.e. his favour and blessing, oft signified by the name *light*; as his displeasure and a state of affliction is frequently called darkness. *Upon my head*, or, *over my head*, to comfort and direct me. The ground of the expression is this, that lights used to be carried and set on high, that men may make the better use of them, as the sun for that end was placed above us.

I walked through darkness; I passed safely through many difficulties, and dangers, and common calamities, which befell others who lived round about me, and overcame those troubles which fell upon myself.

Ver. 4.

In the days of my youth, i.e. in my former and flourishing days, which he calls the

days of youth, because those are commonly the times of mirth and comfort, as old age is called *evil days*, #**Ec 12:1**; when there was a secret blessing of God upon me and my family, protecting, directing, and succeeding us in all our affairs, which the devil observed, #**Job 1:10**; whereas now there is a visible curse of God upon me and mine.

Ver. 5.

With me, i.e. on my side; whereas now he is against me, and hath forsaken me.

My children, or *servants*, or both; and therefore he useth this word, which comprehends both.

Ver. 6.

i.e. When I abounded in all sorts of blessings; which is oft signified by this or the like phrases, as #**Ge 49:11 De 33:24 Job 20:17 Ps 81:16**; when I had such numerous herds of cattle, and consequently such plenty of butter, that if I had needed it, or been pleased so to use it, I might have washed my feet with it; when not only fruitful fields, but even barren and rocky places, (such as that part of Arabia was where Job lived,) yielded me olive trees and oil in great plenty. **See Poole "De 32:13"**.

Ver. 7.

When I went out from my dwelling to the gate, to wit, of the city, as the following words show; to the place of judicature, which was in the gates, as hath been oft observed.

Through the city; through that part of the city which was between my house and the gate. Or, *to the city*, i.e. the gate belonging to the city. So Job might live in the country adjoining to it.

When I prepared my seat; when I caused the seat of justice to be set for me. By this and divers other expressions it appears that Job was a magistrate or judge in his country. *In the street*, i.e. in that void and open place within or near the gate, where the people assembled for the administration of justice among them.

Ver. 8.

Hid themselves; either out of a profound reverence to my person and dignity, or out of a conscience of their own guilt or folly,

which they supposed I might either understand by information from others, or discover by their countenances or carriage in my presence, for which they knew I would reprove them, and bring them to shame, or other punishment.

Stood up, whilst I either passed by them, or as present with them. See #**Le 19:32 1Ki 2:19**. So great a veneration they had for my person, in regard of that wisdom, and justice, and faithfulness which they discerned in me, and in all my proceedings. And therefore they judged quite otherwise of me than you now do.

Ver. 9.

Refrained talking; either fearing that I should discern their weakness by their words; or desiring to hear my words and sentence, which they readily approved of, and fully assented to. Such an opinion had they of my wisdom, and did not think me such a foolish, erroneous, and impertinent person as you fancy or represent me to be.

Laid their hand on their mouth, in token both of their wonder at Job's wise speeches and sentences, and of their resolution to be silent. See #**Job 21:5 Pr 30:32**.

Ver. 10.

It lay as still as if it had done so, and they could not have spoken.

Ver. 11.

It blessed me, i.e. pronounced me to be a man blessed of God with eminent gifts and graces; or heartily prayed for God's blessing upon me, because of that wisdom and integrity which they saw in all my actions, and of the satisfaction which I gave to all, and the relief which I gave to the oppressed, by my righteous and equitable decrees in all causes which were brought before me.

When the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; when my appearance gave them occasion to speak of me, they gave testimony to my pious, and just, and blameless conversation. So far was I from being, or being thought to be, guilty of those crimes wherewith you charge me; of which see #**Job 22:9**.

Ver. 12.

I delivered from his potent oppressor. They did not honour me for my great wealth or power, but for my impartial justice and pity

to the afflicted, and courage in maintaining their cause and right against their mighty adversaries.

None to help him; none that would own or help them, partly because they were poor, and unable to recompense them for it; and partly because their enemies were great, and likely to crush both them and their helpers; which made Job's virtue more glorious.

Ver. 13.

The blessing, wherewith both he and others for his sake blessed me, and begged that God would bless me.

To perish; to lose his life or estate by the malice and tyranny of wicked men.

The widow's heart; who are the common objects of injuries and oppressions, because for the most part they are unable, either to offend those who molest them, or to defend themselves from their violence.

To sing for joy, for her great and unexpected deliverance.

Ver. 14.

It clothed me: as a garment covers the whole body, and is worn continually all the day long; so I was constantly just in the whole course of all my administrations, public and private, and never put off this garment out of a partial respect to myself, or to the persons of other men, as the manner of many judges is.

My judgment was as a robe and diadem; my judgments or decrees were so equal and righteous, that they never brought shame and reproach upon me, but always honour and great reputation.

Ver. 15.

Eyes, i.e. instead of eyes, to instruct, and direct, and assist.

To the blind; either,

1. Corporally. Or rather,

2. Spiritually; such as through ignorance or weakness were apt to mistake, and to be seduced or cheated by the craft and artifices of

evil-minded men. These I cautioned, and advised, and led into the right way.

Feet was I to the lame, i.e. ready to help him who was unable to help himself.

Ver. 16.

A father, i.e. had the care and bowels of a father to them.

The cause which I knew not; either,

1. Those which were not brought to my knowledge or tribunal, either through neglect, or because the injured persons durst not complain, I diligently inquired after. Or,

2. Those which were hard and difficult, and possibly were made so by the frauds or arts of the oppressors, or their advocates, which the poor injured person could not find out, I took pains to discover.

Ver. 17.

The jaws; or, *the jaw-bones*; or, *the grinders*, the sharpest and strongest teeth in the jaw, i.e. their power and violence wherewith they used to oppress others. It is a metaphor from wild beasts, which break their prey with their teeth. Compare **#Ps 3:7 57:4 58:6**.

Plucked the spoil out of his teeth, i.e. forced them to restore what they had violently and unjustly taken away.

Ver. 18.

Then I said, i.e. I persuaded myself, being thus strongly fortified with the conscience of my own universal integrity, and with the singular favour of God, and of all men. But although this was sometimes Job's opinion, yet at other times he was subject to fears, and expectation of changes, as appears from **#Job 3:25,26**.

I shall die in my nest; not a violent or untimely, but a natural, and peaceable, and seasonable death, sweetly expiring in my own bed and habitation, in the midst of my children and friends, leaving the precious perfume of a good name behind me, and a plentiful inheritance to all my posterity.

As the sand; which is innumerable. See **#Ge 22:17 41:49**.

Ver. 19.

I was continually watered by Divine favour and blessing, as a tree which is constantly supplied with moisture, both in its root and branches, and consequently must needs be fruitful and flourishing.

Ver. 20.

My glory was fresh; the reputation which I had gained by my just and virtuous life was not decaying, but growing, and every day augmented with the accession of new honours.

In me, Heb. *with me*.

My bow, i.e. my strength, which is signified by a bow, #Ge 49:24 1Sa 2:4, because in ancient times the bow and arrows were principal instruments of war.

Was renewed, Heb. *changed* itself, i.e. grew as it were a new bow, when other bows by much use grow weak and useless. Or, *changed* its strength, which word may be here understood, as it is expressed, #Isa 40:31, i.e. hath got new strength.

Ver. 21.

Expecting till I spoke, and silently listening to my counsel, which they were confident would be like the oracle of God, wise, and just, and good, and preferring it before their own judgment.

Ver. 22.

After my words they spake not again; either to confute them as false, or to add to them as lame and imperfect.

Dropped upon them, to wit, as the rain, as the next verse explains it, which when it comes down gently and droppingly upon the earth, is most acceptable and beneficial to it; not so when it comes in great and violent showers.

Ver. 23.

As for the rain; as the earth or the husbandman waiteth for the rain, to wit, the former rain, of which see #De 11:14, because the

latter rain is here opposed to it: see #Jas 5:7.

They opened their mouth to receive my words, and therewith to satisfy their thirst, as the dry and parched earth gapes or opens its mouth to receive the rain.

Ver. 24.

If I laughed on them, or sported or jested with them, i.e. carried myself familiarly and pleasantly with them.

They believed it not; it was so acceptable to them to see me well-pleased with them, that they could scarce believe their eyes and ears that it was so: compare **#Ge 45:26 Ps 126:1**.

The light of my countenance they cast not down; my familiarity did not breed contempt or presumption in them to say or do any thing that might grieve me, or make my countenance to fall, as it doth in case of shame or sorrow, **#Ge 4:5**. They were very cautious not to abuse my smiles, nor to give me any occasion to change my countenance or carriage towards them.

Ver. 25.

I chose out their way; they sought to me for my advice in all doubtful and difficult cases, and I chalked out their path, and directed them what methods they should take to accomplish their desires.

Sat, as a prince or judge, whilst they stood waiting for my counsel.

Chief, or *head*; as their head or ruler, and my mind and word was as a law or oracle to them.

As a king in the army, whose presence puts life, and courage, and joy into the whole army. And no less acceptable was my presence to them.

As one that comforteth the mourners; as I was able and ready to comfort any afflicted or sorrowful persons, so my consolations were always grateful and welcome to them. Or, when he, to wit, the king,

comforteth the mourners, i.e. his army, when they are under some great consternation or dejection, by reason of some great loss or danger, but are revived by the presence and speech of a wise and valiant king or general.

JOB CHAPTER 30

Job's honour is turned into contempt, **#Job 30:1-14**; his prosperity into calamity, fears, pains, despicableness, **#Job 30:15-19**; notwithstanding his prayer now, and his former charity, and hope, **#Job 30:20-26**. His great sorrow, **#Job 30:27-31**.

Ver. 1.

But now my condition is sadly changed for the worse.

They that are younger than I; whom both universal custom and the light of nature taught to reverence their elders and betters.

Have me in derision; make me the object of their contempt and scoffs: thus my glory is turned into shame.

I would have disdained; or rather, *I might have disdained*, i.e. whose condition was so mean and vile, that in the opinion and according to the custom of the world they were unworthy of such an employment.

To have set with the dogs of my flock; to be my shepherds, and the companions of my dogs which watch my flocks. Dogs are every where mentioned with contempt, as filthy, unprofitable, and accursed creatures; as **#2Sa 16:9 2Ki 8:13 Php 3:2 Re 22:15**.

Ver. 2.

Nor was it strange that I did, or would. or might refuse to take them into any of my meanest services, because they were utterly impotent, and therefore unserviceable.

In whom old age was perished; or, lost; either,

1. Because they never attain to it, but are consumed by their lusts or cut off for their wickedness by the just hand of God, or men, in the midst of their days. Or,

2. Because they had so wasted their strength and spirits by their evil courses, that when they came to old age, they were feeble and decrepit, and useless for any labour. Or,

3. Because they had not that prudence and experience which is proper and usual in that age, by which they might have been useful, if not for work, yet to oversee and direct others in their work. But the words may be thus rendered, *in whom vigorous age*

was perished, i.e. who were grown impotent for service. For the word here rendered *old age*, is used only here and #Job 5:26, where also it may be so rendered, *Thou shalt come to thy grave in a vigorous or mature age*, having the rigour of youth even in thine old age, and until thy death, as Moses had. And if this word do signify *old age*, yet it signifies not every, but only a flourishing and vigorous, old age; as the Hebrews note, and the word may seem to imply; whence the LXX. interpreters also render it *perfection*, to wit, of age, and of thee endowments belonging to age.

Ver. 3.

Want and famine, brought upon them either by their own sloth or wickedness, or by God's just judgment. Heb. *In want and famine*, which aggravates their following solitude. Although want commonly drives persons to places of resort and company for relief, yet they were so conscious of their own guilt, and contemptibleness, and hatefulness to all persons, that they shunned all company, and for fear or shame fled into and lived in desolate places.

Ver. 4.

Mallows; or, *purslain*, or *salt or bitter herbs*, as the word seems to import, which shows their extreme necessity.

By the bushes; or, by the shrubs, nigh unto which they grew; or, *with the barks of trees*, as the Vulgar Latin renders it.

Juniper roots: possibly the word may signify some other plant, for the Hebrews themselves are at a loss for the signification of the names of plants.

Ver. 5.

Giving one another warning of their danger from them.

Ver. 6.

As unworthy of human society, and for their beggary and dishonesty suspected and avoided of all men.

Ver. 7.

They brayed, like the wild asses, #Job 6:5, for hunger or thirst.

Under the nettles, which seem not proper for that use. This Hebrew word is used but twice in Scripture, and it is

acknowledged both by Jewish and Christian writers, that the signification of the Hebrew words which express plants, or beasts, or stones, &c. is very uncertain; and therefore this is by others, and may well be, understood of some kind of thorns; and so this is the same thing with the bushes in the former branch of the verse, under which they hid themselves, that they might not be discovered when they were sought out for justice.

Ver. 8.

Children of fools; either,

1. The genuine children of foolish parents; their children not only by birth, but by imitation; as they only are esteemed *the children of Abraham* who *do the works of Abraham*, #Joh 8:39. Or,

2. Fools, by a common Hebraism, as the *sons of men* are put for men, and the children of wisdom for wise men, &c.

Children of base men, Heb. *men without name*, i.e. without any degree of credit or reputation; as *men of name* is put for renowned persons, #Ge 6:4.

Viler than the earth, which we tread and spit upon, and are not willing to touch.

Ver. 9.

The matter of their song and derision. They now rejoice in my calamities, because formerly I used my authority to punish such vagrants and miscreants.

Ver. 10.

They flee far from me, in contempt of my person, and loathing of my sores.

Spare not to spit in my face; not literally, for they kept far from him, as he now said; but figuratively, i.e. they use all manner of contemptuous and reproachful expressions and carriages towards me, not only behind my back, but even to my face.

Ver. 11.

Because he, to wit, God, for it follows, *he afflicted me*, which was God's work.

Hath loosed my cord; either,

1. He hath slackened the string (as this word sometimes signifies) of my bow, and so rendered my bow and arrows useless, either to offend others, or to defend myself, i.e. he hath deprived me of my strength or defence: so this is opposed to that expression, **#Job 29:20**. Or,

2. He hath taken away from me that power and authority wherewith, as with a cord, I bound them to the good behaviour, and kept them within their bounds. The like expression is used in the same sense **#Job 15:18**.

Afflicted me: when they perceived that God, who had been my faithful friend, and constant defender, had forsaken me, and was become mine enemy, they presently took this advantage of showing their malice against me.

They have also let loose the bridle; they cast off all former restraints of law, or humanity, or modesty, and gave themselves full liberty to speak or act what they pleased against me. *Before me;* they durst now do those things before mine eyes, which formerly they trembled lest they should come to my ears.

Ver. 12.

Upon my right hand. This circumstance is noted, either because this was the place of adversaries or accusers in courts of justice, **#Ps 109:6 Zec 3:1**; or to show their boldness and contempt of him, that they durst oppose him even on that side where his chief strength lay.

Rise, to wit, in way of contempt and opposition, or to accuse and reproach me, as my friends now do; as one who by my great, but secret, wickedness have brought these miseries upon myself.

The youth, Heb. *young striplings*, who formerly hid themselves from my presence, **#Job 29:8**.

They push away my feet; either,

1. Properly, they trip up my heels Or rather,

2. Metaphorically, they endeavour utterly to overwhelm my goings, and to cast me down to the ground.

The ways, i.e. causeways, or banks; so it is a metaphor from soldiers, who raise or cast up banks against the city which they

besiege. Or, they raise up a level, or smooth the path by continual treading it; they prepare, and contrive, and use several methods to destroy me.

Of their destruction; either,

1. Passively; so the sense is, *they raise or heap upon me*, i.e. impute to me, *the ways*, i.e. the causes, *of their ruin*; they charge me to be the author of their ruin. Or rather,

2. Actively, of that destruction which they design and carry on against me; which best suits with the whole context, wherein Job is constantly represented as the patient, and wicked men as the agents.

Ver. 13.

As I am in great misery, so they endeavour to stop all my ways out of it, and to frustrate all my counsels and courses of obtaining relief or comfort. And although Job had no hopes of a temporal deliverance or restitution, yet he could not but observe and resent the malice of those who did their utmost to hinder it. Or the sense is, They pervert all my ways, putting perverse and false constructions upon them, censuring all my conscientious discharges of my duty to God and men, as nothing but craft and hypocrisy.

They set forward my calamity; increasing it by their bitter taunts, and invectives, and censures. Or, *they profit by, or are pleased and satisfied with, my calamity*. It doth them good at the heart to see me in misery.

They have no helper: this is added as an aggravation of their malice; they impudently persisted in their malicious designs against me, though none encouraged or assisted them therein. Or, even *they who had no helper*, who were themselves in a forlorn and miserable condition; and yet they could so far forget or overlook their own calamities as to take pleasure in mine.

Ver. 14.

As a wide breaking in of waters; as fiercely and violently as a river doth when a great breach is made in the bank which kept it in. Heb. *as at a wide breach*; as a besieging army, having made a breach in the walls of the city, do suddenly and forcibly rush into

it. *In the desolation*; or, *for or instead of a desolation*, i.e. that they might utterly destroy me, and make me desolate. Or, *in the waste place*, i. e. in that part of the bank or wall which was wasted or broken down.

They rolled themselves upon me; as the waters or soldiers come rolling or tumbling in at the breach.

Ver. 15.

Terrors, to wit, from God, who sets himself against me, and in some sort joins his forces with these miscreants.

Are turned upon me; are directed against me, to whom they seem not to belong, as being the portion of wicked men.

My soul, Heb. *my principal or excellent one*, i.e. my soul, which is fitly so called, as being the chief part of man; as it is called a man's glory, #Ge 49:6, and his *only one*, #Ps 22:20, and which is the proper seat and object of Divine terrors, as his body was of his outward pains and ulcers.

As the wind, i.e. speedily, vehemently, and irresistibly.

My welfare; all the happiness and comfort of any life.

As a cloud; which is quickly dissolved into rain, or dissipated by the sun, or driven away with the wind.

Ver. 16.

My soul is poured out; all the strength and powers of my soul are melted, and fainting, and dying away, through my continued and insupportable sorrows and calamities.

Upon me; or, *within me*, as this Hebrew particle is elsewhere used, as #Ps 42:5,6 Isa 26:9 Ho 11:8.

Ver. 17.

My bones are pierced: Heb. *It*, to wit, the terror or affliction last mentioned; or, *He*, i.e. God, *hath pierced my bones*. This is no slight and superficial, but a most deep wound, that reacheth to my very heart, and bones, and marrow. Nothing in me is so secret but it reacheth it, nothing so hard and solid but it feels the weight and burden of it.

In me, Heb. *from above me*, by an arrow shot from Heaven, whence my calamities come, and that in a singular and eminent manner. Or, *by that which is upon me*: the sores which are upon my skin, or outward flesh, do pierce and pain me even to the bones. For now he is come from describing the terrors of his mind, to express the torments of his body.

In the night season; when others do, and I should, receive some rest and refreshment.

My sinews; and the flesh of my body which covereth the sinews, and is mixed with them, and may seem to be synecdochically expressed by the sinews, which are the strength and support of the flesh. So he signifies that neither his bones nor his flesh resteth. Or, *and my veins or arteries*, which rest or move slowly when the mind and body are well composed; but in Job did move vehemently and restlessly, by reason of his great heat, and pain, and passion.

Ver. 18.

My disease is so strong and prevalent, that it breaks forth every where in my body, in such plenty of purulent and filthy matter, that it infects and discolours my very garments. Others, *By the great power of God*

my garment is changed. In both these translations the words, *of disease*, and *of God*, are not in the Hebrew text, but are supplied by the translators. But the words are by some not untruly nor unfitly rendered thus, without any supplement, *With great force my garment is changed*; for so this verb is used, #1Ki 22:30. So the sense is, I cannot shift or put off my garment without great strength and difficulty; the reason whereof is rendered in the following words.

It bindeth me about; it cleaveth fast to me, being glued by that filthy matter issuing from my sores.

As the collar of my coat; as my collar girdeth in and cleaveth to my neck. He alludes to the fashion of the Eastern outward garments, which were seamless, and all of a piece, and had a straight mouth at the top, which was brought over the head, and contracted and fastened close about the neck.

Ver. 19.

He hath made me contemptible and filthy, and loathsome for my sores, my whole body being a kind of quagmire, in regard of the filth breaking forth in all its parts;

and I am become like dust and ashes, like one dead and turned to dust; more like a rotten carcass than a living man.

Ver. 20.

Thou dost not hear me, to wit, so as to answer or help me.

I stand up, or, *I stand*, to wit, before thee, i.e. I pray, as this phrase signifies, #Jer 15:1 18:20, this being a gesture of prayer, #Mt 6:5. And so the same thing is here repeated in other words, after the manner. Or, *I persist or persevere* in praying; I pray importunately and continually, as thou requirest.

Thou regardest me not; so the particle not is supplied out of the former clause. Or without the negation, *thou knowest* or *observest me*, and all my griefs and cries, and yet dost not pity nor help me, but rather takest pleasure in the contemplation of my calamities, as the following words imply. Or it may be taken interrogatively, *Dost thou regard me?* i.e. thou dost not.

Ver. 21.

Become cruel, Heb. *turned to be cruel*; as if thou hadst changed thy very nature, which is kind, and merciful, and gracious; and such thou hast been formerly in thy carriage to me; but now thou art grown severe, and rigorous, and inexorable.

Thou opposeth thyself against me; thy power wherewith I hoped and expected that thou wouldst have supported me under my troubles thou usest against me.

Ver. 22.

Thou liftest me up to the wind; thou dost not suffer me to rest or lie still for a moment, but disquietest me, and exposest me to all sorts of storms and calamities; so that I am like chaff or stubble lifted up to the wind, and violently tossed hither and thither in the air, without the least stop or hinderance.

To ride upon it, i.e. to be carried and hurried about by it. By this restlessness, and the vehemency of these winds, my body is almost consumed and wasted, and my heart is melted within me.

Ver. 23.

I see nothing will satisfy thee but my death, which thou art bringing upon me in a lingering and dismal manner.

To the house appointed for all living; to the grave, to which all living men are coming and hastening.

Ver. 24.

There is great variety and difficulty in the sense and connexion of these words. They may be joined either,

1. With the following verse, as describing Job's compassion to others in affliction, which by the principles of reason and religion should have procured him some pity from God and men in his affliction. And to that purpose the words are or may be translated thus: *But was not my prayers* for them (which words may be understood out of the following clause) *when he stretched out his hand?* (to wit, against them to destroy them;) *in his destruction or oppression* (understand it actively, i.e. when God was about to destroy any other man or men) was not (the negation being understood out of the former branch of the verse, as is usual) *my cry for them?* the feminine-gender being put for the masculine, as it is elsewhere; or *for these things*, the feminine being put for the neuter; that is, for those destructive calamities which were upon them. Or,

2. With the foregoing verse. And so these words contain either,

1. A consolation against the evil last mentioned: so the sense is, Though God will undoubtedly bring me to the grave by these torments, yet this comforts me, that *surely he will not stretch out his hand* (to wit, to afflict or punish me further, as this phrase is used, #Ex 3:20 Isa 9:12,13) *in the grave, though they*, i.e. the perishing persons, *cry or roar* (i.e. be sorely pained and tormented)

in his destruction, i.e. whilst God is destroying them. Or this last clause may be read interrogatively, *Is there any cry in his destruction?* When a man is cut off or destroyed by death, doth he then cry and complain? No, there is an end of all these miseries. Or rather,

2. A confirmation of what he last said. For the whole context shows that Job is not taking any comfort to himself, but rather aggravating his sufferings. I know, saith he, that I am a dead man, and my condition is desperate, for *surely he*, i.e. God, will *not stretch* out his hand (to wit, to save or rescue me, as this phrase is used, #Ps 18:17 144:7, compared with #Ac 4:30) *to* or *in the grave*, (i.e. to a dead man, such as I am in effect, having not only one foot, but in a manner both feet, in the grave, as being upon the very brink of the pit,) *though they cry* (to wit, unto God, i.e. though there be a great and a general cry and lamentation for him among his friends, or others, and an earnest desire of him, if possibly he might be restored to life again) in his destruction, i.e. when he is destroyed or dead; yet all these cries would be in vain.

Ver. 25.

Whence is it that neither God nor man show any compassion to me, but both conspire to afflict me, and increase my torments? Doth God now mete out to me the same measure which I meted out to others? Have I now judgment without mercy, because I afforded no mercy nor pity to others in misery? No, my conscience acquits me from this inhumanity. I did not slightly resent, but bitterly mourn and weep over others in their miseries; and therefore I had reason to expect more compassion than I find.

Was not my soul grieved for the poor, even for him who was not capable of requiting my kindness in case of his recovery? which shows that my sympathy was real, and not reigned, as it is in some who pretend great sorrow for the rich in their troubles, hoping thereby to insinuate themselves into their favour and friendship, and thereby to procure some advantage to themselves.

Ver. 26.

Instead of the return of the like pity to me, which I might justly challenge and expect whensoever I should stand in need of it, I meet with a sad disappointment, and my pity is recompensed with others' cruelty to me.

Ver. 27.

My inward parts boiled without ceasing. The bowels are the seat of passion and of compassion; and therefore this may be understood, either,

1. Of his compassionate and deep sense of others' miseries; which is oft expressed by bowels, as **#Isa 16:11 Col 3:12**, and elsewhere, of which he spoke **#Job 30:25**, to which he subjoins the contrary usage which he met with, **#Job 30:26**. And then, in this first part of **#Job 30:27**, he renews the mention of his compassion to others, and in the latter part he adds, by way of antithesis or opposition, that his mercy was requited with cruel afflictions. Or,

2. Of the grievousness of his troubles, which is sometimes expressed by the troubling or boiling of the bowels, or inward parts; as **#La 1:20**.

Prevented me, i.e. came upon me suddenly and unexpectedly, when I promised to myself peace and prosperity, as the usual recompence which God promiseth and giveth to such as fear and please him, as I have done.

Ver. 28.

I went, or, *I walked* hither and thither as I could. Or, *I converse* or *appear* among others.

Mourning without the sun; spending my days in mourning, without any sun-light or comfort; or so oppressed with sadness, that I did not care nor desire to see the light of the sun. Heb. *black not by the sun*. My very countenance is changed and become black, but not by the sun, which makes many other persons black, **#So 1:5,6**; but by the force of my disease and deep melancholy, which oftentimes makes a man's visage black and dismal. See **#Ps 119:83 La 5:10**. And this he repeats in plainer terms, **#Job 30:30**, as an eminent token of his excessive grief and misery.

I stood up; either because my disease and pain made me weary of other postures; or that others might take notice of me, and be moved with pity towards me.

I cried with a loud and direful clamour, through great and sudden anguish.

In the congregation; where prudence and modesty taught me to forbear it, if extreme necessity and misery had not forced me to it.

Ver. 29.

A brother, to wit, by imitation of their cries: persons of like qualities are oft called brethren, as **#Ge 49:5 Pr 18:9**.

To dragons; which howl and wail mournfully in the deserts, **#Mic 1:8**, either through hunger or thirst, or when he fights with and is beaten by the elephant. *To owls*; whose sad and mournful noises are known. Or, *ostriches*; which also is noted to make lamentable outcries.

Ver. 30.

My skin is black upon me; either by his dark-coloured scabs, wherewith his body was in a manner wholly overspread; or by grief, as before.

My bones are burned with heat; the effect of his fever and sorrow, which dried up all his moisture, and caused great inflammations and burning heats within him.

Ver. 31.

Either,

1. I have now nothing but bitter lamentations instead of my former expressions of joy. Or,

2. Those very things which formerly were occasions and instruments of my delight, do now renew and aggravate my sorrows.

JOB CHAPTER 31

He protesteth his continency and chastity; God's providence, presence, and judgments; his motives, **#Job 31:1-4**. His just dealings, **#Job 31:5-8**. Free from adultery, which ought to be punished by the magistrate, **#Job 31:9-12**. His just carriage to his servants, and the reason, **#Job 31:13-15**. His bounty to the poor, for fear of God, and his highness, **#Job 31:6-23**. Not covetous, nor idolatrous, which ought to be punished by the magistrate, **#Job 31:24-28**. Not revengeful, **#Job 31:29,30**. Hospitable to strangers, **#Job 31:31,32**. His repentance, **#Job 31:33**. He wisheth God would answer, and his words might be recorded, **#Job 31:35-37**. His imprecation against himself, if he spoke not the truth, **#Job 31:38-40**.

Ver. 1.

So far have I been from wallowing in the mire of uncleanness, or any gross wickedness, wherewith you charge me, that I have abstained even from the least occasions and appearances of evil, having made a solemn resolution within myself, and a solemn covenant and promise to God, that I would not wantonly or lustfully fix mine eyes or gaze upon a maid, lest mine eyes should affect my heart, and stir me up to further filthiness. Hereby we plainly see that that command of Christ. #Mt 5:29, was no new command peculiar to the gospel, as some would have it, but the very same which the law of God revealed in his word, and written in men's hearts by nature, imposed upon men in the times of the Old Testament. See also #2Pe 2:14 1Jo 2:16. *Should I think upon*, i.e. indulge myself in filthy and lustful thoughts? Seeing I was obliged, and accordingly took care, to guard mine eyes, I was upon the same reason obliged to restrain my imagination. Or, *why then should I consider*, or *contemplate*, or *look curiously*, or *thoughtfully*, or *diligently*? Since I had made such a covenant, why should I not keep it? *A maid*; which is emphatically added, to show that that circumstance which provokes the lust of others had no such power over him, and that he restrained himself from the very thoughts and desires of filthiness with such persons, wherewith the generality of men allowed themselves to commit gross fornication, as deeming it to be either none, or but a very little sin. Withal he insinuates with how much more caution he kept himself from uncleanness with any married person.

Ver. 2.

The reason of my continency and chastity was, the consideration of God's presence, and providence, and judgments.

What portion of God; what fruit or recompence might be expected from God for those who do such things? Nothing but destruction, as it follows, #Job 31:3. I considered, that though these practices might at first please me, yet they would be bitterness in the latter end. *From above*; an emphatical phrase, to note, that how secretly and slyly soever unchaste persons carry the matter, so as men cannot reprove or reproach them; yet there is one who stands upon a higher place, whence he hath the better

prospect, who seeth both when, and in what manner, and with what design they do these things.

Ver. 3.

Destruction is their portion, and a strange punishment, some extraordinary and dreadful judgment, which of right and course belongs to them, and only to such as they are, although it hath pleased God out of his sovereign power to inflict it upon me, who have lived in all good conscience before him. Heb. *an alienation or estrangement*, to wit, from God and from his favour. Had I been such a one, I neither could nor should have expected any kindness or mercy from God, as now I do.

Ver. 4.

i.e. All my counsels and courses. This is another reason why he was so circumspect and exact in restraining his thoughts, and senses, and whole man from sinful practices, because he knew that God would discern them, and therefore punish them, as he said, **#Job 31:3**.

Ver. 5.

Walked, i.e. conversed in the world, dealt with men.

With vanity, i.e. with lying, or falsehood, or hypocrisy, as this word is oft used, as **#Ps 4:2 12:3 36:3 Pr 30:8**, and as the next words explain it.

If my foot hath hastened to deceit; if when I have had any temptation or opportunity of enriching myself, by defrauding or wronging others, I have readily and greedily complied with it, as hypocrites (such as you account me) use to do, and have not rejected and abhorred it; for more is here understood than is expressed. The sense is imperfect, and supposeth an imprecation, which is either understood, after the manner of the Hebrews, or expressed in the next verse.

Ver. 6.

This is either,

1. An imprecation; or rather,

2. A submission to trial, as the following words show. The sense is, I am so far from being conscious to myself of any hypocrisy or secret wickedness, whereby I have brought these unusual

judgments upon myself, as you traduce me, that I desire nothing more than to have my heart and life weighed in just balances, and searched out by the all-seeing God.

That God may know, Heb. *and let him know* (i.e. let him acknowledge and show that he knoweth and approveth); or let him make known to my friends and others, who censure or condemn me. Or, *and he will know*, (i.e. upon search he will find out; which is spoken of God after the manner of men)

mine integrity. So this is an appeal to God to be witness of his sincerity, and to vindicate him from the imputation of hypocrisy.

Ver. 7.

If I have wittingly, and willingly, and customarily (as you accuse me) swerved from the way of truth and justice which God hath prescribed to me; for otherwise no man here is so just, but he sometimes takes a wrong step, **#Ec 7:20**. If I have let my heart loose to covet and seek after forbidden things, which mine eyes have seen; which may design either,

1. The lust of uncleanness; but of that he had spoken **#Job 31:1**, and reneweth the discourse **#Job 31:9**. Or rather,

2. The lust of covetousness, which is called the lust of the eyes, **#1Jo 2:16**, partly because it is oft caused by sight, as **#Jos 7:21**, and partly because oftentimes all the satisfaction it gives is to please the sight, **#Ec 5:11**. And this sin is most legible in the following punishment, **#Job 31:8**, where his loss answers to this evil gain. The phrase notes the common method and progress of sin, which is to enter by the eye to the heart, **#Ge 3:6 Nu 15:39 Ec 2:10 11:9**.

Any blot, or *blemish*, to wit, any unjust gain. If I have in my hands or possession any goods gotten from others by fraud or violence, which would be a great scandal and a blot to my reputation.

Ver. 8.

Let strangers enjoy the fruit of my labours, according to God's curse, **#Le 26:16 De 28:30**.

My offspring; as this word is used, **#Job 5:25 27:14**. Or rather, *my increase*, or *growths*, or *sprouts*, i.e. all my plants, and fruits, and improvements. For,

1. So the word properly signifies.
2. So this latter branch of the verse explains the former, as is most frequent in this and some other books of Scripture.
3. He had not now any children to be rooted out.

Ver. 9.

By a woman, to wit, by a strange woman, or rather by my neighbour's wife, as the next words limit it; for of a maid he spoke before, **#Job 31:1**, and this cannot be meant of his own wife. He saith, *by a woman*, i.e. either by gazing upon her beauty, so as to be enamoured with it, and to lust after her; or by her persuasions or allurements. Or, *concerning a woman*, i.e. concerning impure conversation with a forbidden woman. The phrase is very emphatical, taking from himself and others the vain excuses wherewith men use to palliate their sins, by pretending that they did not design the wickedness, but were merely drawn in and seduced by the strong enticements and provocations of others; all which Job supposeth, and yet nevertheless owns the great guilt of such practices even in that case, as well knowing that temptation to sin is no justification of it.

Laid wait at my neighbour's door; watching for a fit opportunity to defile his wife. Compare **#Pr 7 Pr 9**.

Ver. 10.

Let my wife grind unto another; either,

1. Let her be taken captive, and made a slave to grind in other men's mills; which was a sore and vile servitude, **#Ex 11:5 Jud 16:21 Isa 47:2 Mt 24:41**. Or rather,
2. Let her be defiled by another man, as the next words expound it, and as the Hebrews understand it, and as this very phrase is used by very ancient, both Greek and Latin, authors *of which see my Latin Synopsis on this place*. And this is to be cautiously understood, not as if Job desired or would permit a requital in the same kind, but only, that if in that case God should give up his wife to such a wickedness, he should acknowledge his justice in it,

and (though with abhorrency of the sin) accept of that punishment of it.

Let others bow down upon her; another modest expression of a filthy action; whereby the Holy Ghost gives us a pattern and a precept to avoid not only unclean actions, but also all immodest expressions.

Ver. 11.

To wit, adultery, whether committed by choice and design, or by the solicitation of the woman, **#Job 31:9**. Heb. *an iniquity of the judges*, i.e. which belongs to them to take cognizance of, and to punish, and that with death; and that not only by the law of Moses, **#De 22:22**, but even by the law of nature, as appears from the known laws and customs of heathen nations in that case. See also **#Ge 38:24**. This is opposed to those secret and lesser sins, which are only known to and punished by God.

Ver. 12.

For this sin would be as a secret but consuming fire, wasting my estate and reputation, and body and soul too, provoking God and enraging the husband, and bringing down some extraordinary vengeance upon me; and therefore the fear of God kept me from this and such-like wickedness.

All mine increase, i.e. all my estate: compare **#Pr 6:27**.

Ver. 13.

If I did despise the cause of my man-servant; if I used my power over him to overthrow him or his just rights. And seeing it is known that I was so just and kind to them, over whom I had such unlimited power, it is not probable that I should be guilty of such cruelty to others, as you impute to me.

When they contended with me; either for imposing heavier burdens than they could bear; or for not providing for them those supports which their nature and necessity required, or for any other plausible cause. I heard them patiently and indifferently, and did them right even against myself, if by any misinformation or passion I had done them any injury.

Ver. 14.

When God riseth up, to wit, to plead the cause of the oppressed against the oppressor, and to execute judgment, as this phrase is used, **#Ps 68:1 Zec 2:13**, and elsewhere. I used my servant like one who was also myself a servant, and had a Master in heaven, **#Col 4:1**, to whom I was to give an account of my carriage to my servant and to all men.

When he visiteth, i.e. when he shall call me to his tribunal, and severely examine all my actions, and particularly the cause between me and my servant, what apology shall I make for myself?

Ver. 15.

I considered that he was, though my servant, yet my fellow creature, made by the same God, and therefore one of God's subjects, whom I could not abuse without the injury of his supreme Lord.

Did not one fashion us in the womb, Heb. *did he not form us in one womb?* not in one individual womb, but in a womb of the same kind, in a human womb, with a body and soul of the same nature and quality, a reasonable and immortal creature, and made after God's image, no less than myself, to whom therefore I owed some respect for God's sake.

Ver. 16.

Withheld the poor from their desire, i.e. denied them what they desired of me, either in justice or from necessity; for he was not obliged to grant their vain or inordinate desires.

Caused the eyes of the widow to fail, to wit, with tedious expectation of my justice or charity. I durst neither deny nor delay my help when they required and needed it.

Ver. 17.

Eaten my morsel myself alone; without communicating part of my provisions or estate to the poor, as it follows.

The fatherless: this one kind of necessitous persons is put for all the rest.

Ver. 18.

From my youth; as soon as I was capable of managing my own affairs, and of doing good to others.

He was brought up with me, in my family, or at least under my care and protection.

As with a father, i.e. with all the diligence and tenderness of a father.

I have guided her, i.e. the widow, mentioned **#Job 31:16**, and commonly joined with the fatherless.

From my mother's womb, i.e. from my tender years; ever since I was capable of discerning good and evil, I have made conscience of this duty; and this my continuance in well-doing is a good evidence of my sincerity therein.

Ver. 19.

When it was in my power to clothe and arm them against cold and nakedness.

Ver. 20.

Blessed me, i.e. given him occasion to bless and praise me, and to pray to God to bless me for covering them; the loins being put synecdochically for the whole body: see the like expression **#De 24:13**, and compare **#Ge 4:10 Lu 16:9**.

With the fleece of my sheep; with clothing made of my wool.

Ver. 21.

To smite him with the fist of wickedness, as the phrase is, **#Isa 58:4**; to bring him to the judgment-seat, that under colour of justice I might take away his right, as powerful oppressors use to do, or any ways to threaten, injure, or crush him.

When I saw my help in the gate; when I understood my advantage against him, and that I could influence the judges to do what I pleased.

Ver. 22.

I am contented that that arm which hath been so wickedly employed may either rot off, or fall out of joint, and so be useless and burdensome to me.

Ver. 23.

I was so far from denying or questioning God's providence, wherewith you seem to charge me, that I always revered it; and when by reason of my great wealth, and power, and interest I had little reason to fear man, I stood in awe of God and of his judgments, and made it my care and business to please God. *His highness, or excellency, or majesty*, which is most glorious and terrible.

I could not endure; I found myself utterly unable either to oppose his power, or to bear his wrath, and therefore I durst not provoke him by any impiety or injustice.

Ver. 24.

My hope, i.e. the matter of my hope and trust, placing my chief joy and satisfaction in worldly wealth, expecting safety and happiness from it. Compare #Ps 62:10.

Ver. 25.

If I rejoiced, to wit, carnally and excessively, esteeming myself happy therein without God's love and favour; for otherwise it is not only lawful, but a duty and gift of God, moderately and thankfully to rejoice in the good things of this life; of which see #De 12:7 Ec 2:24-26 3:12,13 5:18,19.

Because mine hand had gotten much; ascribing my wealth to my own wit or industry, rather than to God's goodness and mercy. And these sins he the rather mentions, partly for his own vindication, lest it should be thought that God took away his estate because he had abused it to pride, or carnal confidence, or luxury, or the oppression of others, &c.; and partly for the instruction of mankind in succeeding generations, that they might take notice of the malignity and odiousness of these practices, which by most men are reputed either laudable or harmless, or at worst but light and trivial miscarriages.

Ver. 26.

If I beheld; not simply, nor only with admiration; (for it is a glorious work of God, which we ought to contemplate and admire;) but for the end here following, or so as to ascribe to it the honour peculiar to God.

The sun, Heb. *the light*, to wit, the sun, as appears by the opposition of the

moon following, which is called the light here, and **#Ge 1:16 Ps 136:7,8**, by way of eminency, because it is the great light, and the fountain of light to this visible world. And this is understood either,

1. Of Job's worldly glory or prosperity, which is oft compared to light in Scripture, as the contrary is to darkness. And so the sense of these and the following words is, If I reflected upon my wealth and glory with pride, and admiration, and satisfaction. But this he had now mentioned in plain and proper terms, **#Job 31:25**, and therefore it is not likely that he should now repeat the same thing in dark and metaphorical expressions. And although this be a great sin before God, yet this is not one of those sins which fall under the cognizance of human judges, as it here follows, **#Job 31:28**. Or rather,

2. Of the sun in the firmament; and so this place speaks of the idolatrous; worship of the host of heaven, and especially of the sun and moon, the most eminent and glorious of that number, which was the most ancient kind of idolatry, and was most frequent in the Eastern countries, in one of which Job lived.

When it shined, i.e. in its full strength and glory; for then it did most affect men's eyes and hearts with admiration at its beauty and benefits, and so move them to adore it. Or, *when it began to shine*, (the complete verb being used of the beginning of it, as *he reigned* is oft put for *he began to reign*,) i.e. at its first rising, which was a special and the chief time for its adoration. *Walking in brightness*; when it shines most clearly; or when it is at the full, for then especially did the idolaters worship it.

Ver. 27.

Secretly; in my inward thoughts or affections, whilst I made open profession of my adherence to God and to the true religion. *Enticed, or seduced, or deceived*, by its plausible and glorious appearance, which might easily cheat a credulous and inconsiderate person to believe that there was something of a divinity in it, and so induce him to worship it. This emphatical expression seems to be used with design to teach the world this

necessary and useful truth, that no mistake or error of mind would excuse the practice of idolatry. *Or my mouth*, Heb. *and my mouth*, which seems more proper here, because the secret error of the mind, without some such visible action and evidence as here follows, had not been punishable by the judges.

Kissed my hand, in token of worship; whereof this was a sign, whether given to men, as #Ge 41:40 Ps 2:12, or to idols, #1Ki 19:18 Ho 13:2. And when the idols were out of the reach of idolaters, that they could not kiss them, they used to kiss their hands, and, as it were, to throw kisses at them; of which we have many examples in heathen writers; of which see my Latin Synopsis on this place.

Ver. 28.

This also, no less than the other forementioned sins, adultery, oppression, &c.

By the judge, i.e. by the civil magistrate; who being advanced and protected by God, is obliged to maintain and vindicate his honour, and consequently to punish idolatry. And this did not cease to be his duty, although the magistrates of the world in Job's time were so far from this, that they themselves also were idolaters. Yet considering that both Job and his friends, who lived in his time and neighbourhood, were most probably the posterity or kindred of Abraham and his family, and by him or his instructed in the knowledge of the true God, and were also men of great power and authority in their places; it seems most likely that they did restrain and punish idolatry in their several jurisdictions, or at least in their own large and numerous families, where the masters anciently had power of life and death without control.

I should have denied God; not directly, (for nothing is more evident than this, that divers of the wiser heathens, who did worship the sun and moon, did yet acknowledge and adore the sovereign and supreme God over and above all,) but by consequence and construction, because this was to rob God of his prerogative, by giving to the creature that religious honour or worship which is peculiar to God.

That is above; who is above the sun and moon, not only in place, his glorious mansion and palace being far above all visible heavens, but also in power and dignity, or adorable excellency.

Ver. 29.

I was so far from malice and revenging myself of mine enemy, which is the common and allowed practice of ungodly men, that I did not so much as desire or delight in his ruin, when it was brought upon him by other hands. Compare **#Ex 23:4 Pr 24:17,18**. Whence we may judge whether the great duty of loving and forgiving our enemies be a peculiar precept of Christianity, or whether it be a natural and moral duty, and a part and act of that charity which now is, and ever was, the duty of one man to another in all ages.

Lifted up myself, Heb. *stirred up myself*, to rejoice and insult over his misery.

Ver. 30.

My mouth, Heb. *my palate*, which being one of the instruments of speech, is put for another, or for all the rest. The sense is, If any secret passion or desire of his hurt did arise in me, I forthwith suppressed it, and did not suffer it to grow and break forth into an imprecation of hurt to him.

Ver. 31.

The men of my tabernacle, i.e. my domestics and familiar friends, who were much conversant with me in my house, and were witnesses of my carriage to others, and of their carriages to me, and therefore best able to judge in the case.

Of his flesh; either,

1. *Of Job's flesh*, which is thought to be an expression either,

1. Of their fervent love to him, caused by his great tenderness and kindness to them. But his meek and gentle carriage to his servants he had expressed before in plain terms, **#Job 31:13**; and therefore it is not likely he would repeat it, at least in such an obscure and ambiguous phrase, as is no where used in this sense, and is used in a contrary sense, **#Job 19:22**. Or,

2. Of their hatred and rage against him, for the excessive trouble he put upon them in the entertainment of strangers, which follows,

#Job 31:32. But it is very improbable, either that so just and merciful a man as Job would put intolerable burdens upon his servants; or that some extraordinary trouble brought upon them by hospitality would inflame them to such a height of rage as this phrase implies, against so excellent and amiable a master. Or,

2. Of the flesh and other provisions made by Job for strangers: He feeds them liberally, but scarce alloweth us time to satisfy ourselves therewith; which also is very unlikely. Or rather,

3. Of the flesh of Job's enemy, of whom he last spoke, **#Job 31:29,30.** And so this is an amplification and further confirmation of Job's charitable disposition and carriage to his enemy, although his cause was so just, and the malice of his enemies was so notorious and unreasonable, that all who were daily conversant with him, and were witnesses of his and their mutual carriages, did condemn and abhor them for it, and were so concerned and zealous in Job's quarrel, that they protested they could eat their very flesh, and could not be satisfied without it. And yet notwithstanding all these provocations of others, he restrained both them and himself from executing vengeance upon them, as David afterwards did in a like case, **#1Sa 24:4 2Sa 16:9,10.**

We cannot be satisfied, to wit, without eating his flesh.

Ver. 32.

The stranger; or, *traveller* as it follows.

Did not lodge in the street; but in my house, according to the laws of hospitality, and the usage of those times, when there were no public inns provided for the conveniency of such persons: see **#Ge 18:3 19:2 Jud 19:15,21.**

Ver. 33.

This he adds to prevent or answer an objection. So the sense is, either,

1. And whereas amongst these and other virtues it may well be presumed that I had divers failings, as I do not now deny them, so I never covered them, but was forward to confess them to God or to men, as I had occasion. Or, (which I propose with submission to better judgments,)

2. If I used all this care and caution in my carriage towards strangers, and enemies, and others only as a cloak to any secret and subtle way of wickedness, such as you accuse me of, and did not seek to purge out all sin as in God's sight, but only to hide my sins from men, and to have the better opportunity for oppressing others, or indulging myself in any other close sin, under a colour, and with a reputation of justice and holiness. *As Adam*; either,

1. As Adam did in Paradise; which history is recorded by Moses, **#Ge 3:7**, &c., and was doubtless imparted by the godly patriarchs to their children before Moses's time. Or,

2. *Like a man*, or after the manner of men in their corrupt estate. Compare **#Ho 6:7**.

In my bosom; in my own breast, and from the sight of all men.

Ver. 34.

This verse either,

1. Contains new matter, and another argument or evidence of his integrity, taken from his courage and faithfulness in the discharge of his duty as a magistrate. The interrogation implies a denial; and so the sense is either,

1. This, *I did not for fear of a great multitude, or for any contempt, or reproach, or other inconvenience which might befall me from great and numerous families, or combinations of people, who were engaged for him who had an unrighteous cause, forbear to speak for the poor oppressed and injured person whom they all opposed, or deny to go out of the door of my house to plead his cause, as a timorous and man-pleasing judge would have done.* Or,

2. This, *Though I could have terrified or violently oppressed*

a great multitude, because of my great power and interest, *yet did the most contemptible persons or families terrify me*, i.e. I was afraid to do them any injury, not for fear of them, as appears from the former clause, but for fear of God; *therefore I kept*

silence, and went not out of the door, i.e. I durst neither move tongue, nor hand, nor foot against them. Or,

2. It contains an amplification or confirmation of what he said, **#Job 31:33**; either thus, Did I cover or conceal my transgressions, because *I was afraid of the rage of the multitude, or of the contempt of families*, which would be brought upon me by the confession of my wickedness? *Did I therefore keep silence*, i.e. forbore to confess my sin, and not go out of my door; but keep at home as one in that case ashamed or afraid to be seen abroad? No, the fear of shame or contempt from men did not hinder me from giving glory to God by confessing my faults. Or rather thus, Did I therefore cover all my oppressions, and frauds, and other wickednesses (wherewith you tax me) with the mask of virtue and piety, and use all possible caution and cunning in my evil courses, *because I feared the great multitude*, (who were my friends and admirers, but in case of the discovery of my wickedness would have hated and persecuted me,) *or because the contempt of so many families* (whose favour and good opinion I needed or desired) *terrified me*? Then (as the particle *vau* is oft used, i. e. if that were really my case) *I should be silent*, (I should silently and patiently bear all the strokes of God, and all the reproaches of my friends,) *and not go out of the door of my house*, as one ashamed to show his face before men. But my condition being through God's mercy far otherwise, and my conscience bearing me witness of my integrity in these and many other things, I dare now lift up my head, and open my mouth to plead my cause, and I desire nothing more than a fair hearing; *Oh that one would hear me!* as it follows in the next verse.

Ver. 35.

Oh that one would hear me! Oh that I might have my cause heard by any just and impartial judge!

That the Almighty would answer me, i.e. answer my desire herein; either by hearing me himself, or by appointing some indifferent person to judge whether I be such a hypocrite as my friends make me, or an upright person, and whether I have not cause to complain.

Mine adversary; whosoever he be that shall contend with me, or accuse me, God himself not excepted, nay, possibly being chiefly intended, though for reverence to him he forbore to express it. So

this is another of Job's irreverent and presumptuous expressions, for which he is so sharply reproofed afterwards.

Had written a book, i.e. had given me his charge written in a book or paper, as the manner was in judicial proceedings, that I might put in my answer into the court, which I am ready to do.

Ver. 36.

I would take it, i.e. that book containing my charge or accusation.

Upon my shoulder; as a trophy or badge of honour. I should not fear nor smother it, but glory in it, and make open show of it, as that which gave me the happy and long-desired occasion of vindicating myself, which I doubt not fully to do.

Ver. 37.

Unto him, i.e. to my judge, or adversary.

The number of my steps, i.e. the whole course of my life and actions, which I would exactly number to him, step by step, so far as I can remember. I would not answer his allegations against me, but furnish him with further matter of the same kind, and then answer all together.

As a prince, i.e. with undaunted courage, and confidence, and assurance of success, as being clearly conscious of my own sincerity; not like a self-condemned malefactor, as my friends suppose me to be.

Would I go near unto him, and not run away, or hide myself from my judge, as guilty persons desire to do.

Ver. 38.

To wit, to God for revenge, as the like phrase is used, **#Ge 4:10 Hab 2:11**, because I have gotten it from the right owners by fraud or violence, as my friends charge me, and as is implied in the next verse.

Ver. 39.

Without money; either without paying the price required by the right owner for the land, or by defrauding my workmen of the wages of their labours.

To lose their life; killing them, that so I might have undisturbed possession of it, as Ahab did Naboth.

Ver. 40.

To wit, in answer to his friends; for he speaks but little afterwards, and that is to God.

JOB CHAPTER 32

Elihu, Job's fourth friend, speaketh: he is angry with Job for justifying himself, and with his three friends for not satisfying, and yet condemning him, **#Job 32:1-5**. He excuseth his youth; but wisdom is from God, and not from age, **#Job 32:6-9**; therefore he speaketh, being full of matter, and his spirit constraining him, without accepting any man's person, **#Job 32:10-22**.

Ver. 1.

i.e. Was self-conceited, and obstinately resolved to justify himself both against God and men; therefore they give him over as incorrigible.

Ver. 2.

The Buzite; of the posterity of Buz, Nahor's son, **#Ge 22:21**.

Of the kindred of Ram, or *of Aram*; for *Ram* and *Aram* are used promiscuously: compare **#2Ki 8:28**, with **#2Ch 22:5 Ru 4:19 Mt 1:3**. Others, *of Abraham*, who as he was called *Abram*, possibly was at first called only *Ram*. His pedigree is thus particularly described, partly for his honour, because his speech declares him to be both a wise and a good man; and principally to evidence the truth of this history, which otherwise might seem to be but a poetical fiction.

He justified himself rather than God; he justified himself, not without reflection upon God, as dealing too severely with him, and denying him that hearing which he so passionately desired. He took more care to maintain his own innocency than God's glory.

Ver. 3.

They had found no answer to Job's allegations and arguments, as to the main cause.

Had condemned Job as a hypocrite or ungodly, man.

Ver. 4.

Elihu had waited with patience, as the word notes.

Till Job; add, *and his three friends*, as appears from the following words. It is a synecdoche, whereof instances have been given before.

They were elder than he; and therefore he expected more satisfaction from them, and gave them the precedency in the discourse; wherein he showed his prudence and modesty.

Ver. 5.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 6.

To wit, of discovering my weakness and folly, and of being thought forward and presumptuous.

Ver. 7.

Days, i.e. multitude of days, by comparing the next clause of the verse. Or men *of days*, i.e. of many days or years, old men.

Should speak, to wit, wisely and pertinently, as the next words limit it.

Should teach wisdom; should instruct us that are younger in the paths of wisdom, and concerning the wise counsels and ways of God, about which the present controversy lay.

Ver. 8.

But; or, *surely*; it must be confessed.

A spirit, to wit, which gives him understanding, as is easily and fitly gathered out of the last words of the verse. And this is to be understood either,

1. Of the human spirit, or reasonable soul, which is in every man. So the sense of the place is, Every man, as a man, whether old or young, hath a reasonable soul, by which he is able in some measure to discern between good and evil, and to judge of men's opinions and discourses; and therefore I also may venture to deliver my opinion. Or,

2. Of the Spirit of God; the latter clause being explicatory of the former, according to the manner. So the sense is, I expected a true

and full discovery of the truth in this controversy from persons of your years, wisdom, and experience. But upon second thoughts I consider that the knowledge of these deep and Divine mysteries is not to be had or expected from any man as such, though never so aged or wise; but only from God's Spirit, which alone knoweth the deep things of God. And this

Spirit he saith is

in man; not in every man, for the words are not universal, but indefinite, and *man* in this branch is no larger than them who receive Divine inspiration in the next branch. And so the sense is, God is pleased to give his Spirit unto mankind, unto men of all ages and qualities, as he pleaseth; and having given it in some measure to me, I may take the boldness to utter my thoughts.

The inspiration of the Almighty, i.e. God's Spirit, or the gracious gifts thereof breathed or infused into man's soul by God.

Understanding, to wit, in divine and spiritual matters, which are the matter of this debate and book.

Ver. 9.

Great men, i.e. men of eminency for age or learning, or dignity and power, such as Job's three friends seem to have been.

Judgment; what is just and right; or the judgment of God, and the methods and reasons of his administrations.

Ver. 10.

I said within myself, and now I say it with my mouth. *Hearken to me;* thou, Job, especially, who art more nearly concerned, (to whom therefore he speaketh in the singular number,) and thy friends with thee.

Ver. 11.

I waited with silence, and patience, and diligent attention; which therefore I now expect from you.

Your reasons; or, *reasonings,* Heb. *understandings;* or *mind's;* the depth and strength of your discourses, your most intelligent and forcible arguments against Job; I searched and examined them to the bottom.

Whilst ye searched out what to say; whilst you put your inventions upon the rack, and studied to find out all that could be said against him, and to furnish yourselves with the most convincing words and reasons.

Ver. 12.

By solid and satisfactory answers to his assertions and allegations.

Ver. 13.

Lest ye should say; it is a defective speech, and may be thus supplied: Thus it was, or God thus left you to your own weakness, and mistakes, and impertinent discourses, *lest ye should say*, &c., i.e. lest you should ascribe the conquering or silencing of Job to your own wisdom, age, and experience; or lest you should boastingly say, We have discovered and said all that can or need be said in the cause, the sum and substance of the thing, that which may fully and finally end the controversy, which is contained in the following words.

God thrusteth him down, not man: these are alleged by Elihu, in the person of Job's three friends, or as their words. The sense is, The stupendous judgments which are upon Job have not been brought upon him by man solely and originally, for then there might have been some ground for Job's complaints, there might have been injustice or cruelty in them; but immediately by the hand of God, of that God, who being omniscient, and just, and true, and merciful, would never have dealt thus hardly with Job if he were not a hypocrite, and guilty of some very gross, though secret, sins; which is the ground-work of our discourses. But, saith Elihu, this argument doth not satisfy me, and therefore bear with me if I seek for better.

Ver. 14.

I am not engaged in this discourse by any provoking words of Job, as you have been, which hath drawn forth your passions and biassed your judgments; but merely from zeal for the vindication of God's honour, and love to truth and justice, and a sincere desire to administer to Job matter both of conviction and of comfort. *With your words*, i.e. with such words or arguments as yours, either weak and impertinent, or fierce and opprobrious.

Ver. 15.

They, i.e. Job's three friends, of whom he speaks some times, in the second, and here in the third person, directing his speech to Job and the auditors of this disputation.

Were amazed; they stood mute, like persons amazed, not knowing what to reply to Job's arguments, and wondering at his bold and confident assertions of his integrity, and of his interest in God, under such sad and manifest tokens of God's just displeasure against him.

They answered no more, although Job gave them just occasion to reprove and confute him for his intemperate speeches and presumptuous and irreverent expressions concerning God.

Ver. 16.

Which he repeats as a strange and unreasonable thing, that they should be silent when they had such obligations to speak for the vindication both of God's justice, and of their own truth and reputation.

Ver. 17.

I will take my turn, and speak what they have omitted.

Ver. 18.

I am full of matter, i.e. I have many things to say in this cause.

The spirit within me; either my own spirit or soul, which is wholly dissatisfied with what hath been hitherto spoken, and clearly apprehends what may silence Job, and end the dispute; or God's Spirit, which he hath put in me; the Spirit of understanding, which hath discovered the truth of the matter to me; and the Spirit of zeal, which urgeth me to plead God's cause against Job.

Constraineth me; forceth me to speak. It is a metaphor from a man or woman whose belly is full with wind, or with a child, and is never at rest till it be emptied and eased of its burden.

Ver. 19.

My belly, i.e. my mind or heart, which is oft called a man's belly, as **#Job 15:35 Ps 40:8 Hab 3:16 Joh 7:38**.

As wine; as new wine pent up close in a bottle, as the following words explain it and determine it. The

wine is here put for the bottle in which it is, by a common metonymy.

New bottles, i.e. bottles of new wine, by the same general figure; for otherwise old bottles are most apt to burst, **#Mt 9:17**.

Ver. 20.

That I may be refreshed; that I may ease my mind of those thoughts which now oppress it.

I will open my lips and answer; I will not utter impertinent words, but solid answers, to Job's arguments.

Ver. 21.

Do not expect that I should out of fear or respect to any of you speak partially, but bear with my free and plain dealing with you all. As I shall not censure and reproach Job as a hypocrite or profane person, which you have done; so neither shall I flatter him, but faithfully reprove him for his exorbitant speeches of God.

Ver. 22.

I have neither skill nor will to flatter Job or any man so as to debauch my conscience, or corrupt the truth, or speak falsely for his sake. If I should be guilty of that sin, God would quickly and sorely punish me for it. Or without this supplement,

my Maker will quickly take me away, to wit, out of this world. I dare not flatter any man, because I consider I must shortly die and go to judgment, to give an account of all my words and actions.

JOB CHAPTER 33

He offereth himself in God's stead to reason with Job, **#Job 33:1-7**, who had too hard thoughts of God, who by his greatness giveth no account of his ways, **#Job 33:8-13**. God instructeth man by visions, **#Job 33:14-18**; by afflictions, **#Job 33:19-22**; by his ministry, **#Job 33:23-25**. When man prayeth and confesseth, God will be gracious, **#Job 33:26-28**. These are God's methods of instructing men, **#Job 33:29,30**.

Ver. 1.

Perceiving the error Job's friends, and that by their violent and opprobrious speeches they had exasperated Job's mind, and

thereby hindered the success of their discourses, he applies himself to him in milder ways, and treats him kindly, thereby to gain his attention and affection, that his words might have more acceptance with him.

Hearken to all my words; not only to what may please thee, but also to what may convince and reprove thee.

Ver. 2.

Now I have begun to speak, and intend with thy good leave to proceed in my discourse with thee.

In my mouth, Heb. *in or with my palate*; for both tongue and palate are instruments of speech; and, that a man should speak plainly and distinctly, (which he designed to do,) it is necessary that his tongue should oftentimes touch the palate or roof of the month.

Ver. 3.

I shall not speak passionately or partially, as one resolved to defend what I have once said, whether true or false; but from an honest mind, or what I verily believe to be true, and from a sincere desire to do thee good. I shall not speak my own fancies or devices, but only that which by diligent study and Divine inspiration I know to be true, and this I shall do plainly and clearly.

Ver. 4.

I am thy fellow creature, made by God's Spirit, #Ge 1:2, and quickened by that soul which God breathed into man, #Ge 2:7, and therefore fit and ready to discourse with thee upon even and equal terms, according to thy desire.

Ver. 5.

I shall allow thee all freedom of discourse; I cannot terrify thee, as God would: I shall not reproach thee, nor cavil at thee, as thy friends have done.

Stand up, to contend with me as thing adversary in this cause.

Ver. 6.

I will plead with thee in God's name and stead, and on his behalf, which thou hast oft wished that God would do upon equal terms, and laying aside his terrible majesty, &c. Or, *I am as thou art with*

or towards God, i.e. God's creature like thyself, as the next words explain it.

Ver. 7.

Which was the condition of that disputation which thou didst offer to undertake with God, **#Job 9:34 13:21**.

Ver. 8.

I shall not charge thee with hypocrisy, as thy friends do, which God only can discern; but with those words which I have heard from thee.

Ver. 9.

Not simply and absolutely none, for he oft confesseth himself to be a sinner, as **#Job 9:1,2**, &c.; Job 14:4; but no such transgression or iniquity as might give God just occasion to punish him so severely, as is implied in the next verse, where he blameth God for *finding occasions against him*, implying that he had given him none by his sins. And thus far Elihu's charge was just and true, and herein it differs from the charge of Job's three friends, who oft accuse him, and that in words much like these, for asserting his own righteousness and innocency; although they did it because they thought him a secret sinner and a hypocrite, whereas Elihu doth it upon other grounds, even because Job's justification of himself was accompanied with reflections upon God, as hath been said.

Ver. 10.

He picketh quarrels with me, and *watcheth over* and *searcheth after* all my errors and frailties, as Job said, **#Job 10:6 14:16,17**; severely marking what is amiss in me, that thence he may take occasion to punish me worse than mine iniquities deserve. Though I have endeavoured to be his friend and faithful servant all my days, yet he treats me like an enemy. This Job said **#Job 13:24 19:11**.

Ver. 11.

He narrowly pries into all my actions, that he may find matter for further severities against me.

Ver. 12.

I do not accuse thee of hypocrisy, nor rip up the former errors of thy life; but in this thou art unjust and much to blame, that thou

boapest so much of thine own integrity, and chargest God with rigorous dealing, and callest him to an account before thy tribunal, and offerest to dispute the matter with him.

That God is greater than man; not only in power and majesty, which thou acknowledgest, but also in justice, and wisdom, and goodness; and therefore thou dost very foolishly, and presumptuously, and wickedly in contending with him, and censuring his judgments: thou forgettest thy distance from him, and castest off that awe and reverence which thou shouldst constantly maintain towards thy sovereign Lord.

Ver. 13.

Why? upon what grounds and for what ends? What advantage dost thou expect from it?

Dost thou strive against him, to wit, in a judicial way? See #**Job 8:6.**

He giveth not account of any of his matters; he neither useth, nor is by any law obliged, to give an account to any of his creatures of the grounds and reasons of his judgments or dispensations, as being the supreme and absolute Governor of all persons and things, in whose will and pleasure it becometh all men to acquiesce. And therefore, O Job, thou exceedest all bounds of modesty, and humility, and reverence, and submission, which thou owest to thy Maker, in that thou presumest to demand a reason for his dealings with thee, and to quarrel with him for not giving it to thee at thy desire. Or, *he answereth not all his words*, i.e. he doth not say, or hath not said, all that he can to justify his actions, which he can do many more ways than we can imagine; but hath revealed so much of his will and ways to mankind as he hath thought meet, and as their narrow capacity can comprehend; as he declareth in the following verses.

Ver. 14.

For; or, *nevertheless*, as this particule is sometimes used. Although God doth not give men an account of his matters, yet he doth that for them which is much better, and which is sufficient for them.

God speaketh, to wit, unto men by way of instruction or admonition, as appears from the following verses.

Once, yea twice, again and again, or oftentimes, this number being sometimes put indefinitely, as below, **#Job 33:29 2Ki 6:10 Ps 62:11.** When one speaking doth not awaken men, God is graciously pleased to give them another admonition. So God, though he will not gratify men's curiosity in inquiring into his hidden judgments, yet he will supply their necessity, and acquaint them with their duty and interest so far as is fit, and they are concerned to know.

Yet man; which is easily and fitly understood here from the former branch of this verse, as being the person to whom God speaketh, as appears from the next verse. And such supplements are not unusual in the Hebrew language, and especially in these poetical books, where the style is very concise and short, and many things to be understood.

Perceiveth it not; through his inadvertency, or negligence, or dulness. Man therefore hath no reason to charge God as if he were deficient in his notices and manifestations of his will, but to accuse himself for not improving revealed things to his own advantage, but desiring rather to pry into God's secret counsels, which was Job's error.

Ver. 15.

In a dream: this he mentions, as the usual way of God's revealing his mind and will to men in those days, before God's word was committed to writing, as **#Ge 20:6 41:1,28.**

In a vision of the night: this is added by way of explication and limitation, to show that he speaks not of every dream, but of those Divine dreams in which God was pleased to vouchsafe some vision or representation of his will to the mind of a man.

When deep sleep falleth upon men; when men's senses are bound up, and their minds free from all distracting cares and business of the world, and wholly at leisure to receive Divine impressions.

In slumberings: this is added, because in this case the man is like one that slumbereth, or between sleeping and waking, or uncertain in which state he is, as Paul could not tell whether he was in the body, or out of the body, when he was in his ecstasy, **#2Co 12:1,2.**

Ver. 16.

i.e. He revealeth his will to the ears and hearts of men, as this phrase is used, **#Job 36:10 Ps 40:6 Isa 1:4**; and he imprinteth those instructions which he hath revealed to their ears upon their minds, that after they have heard and received them they do not let them slip, as men commonly do most things which they hear, whether from God or men, but do retain and hold them fast, and are fully satisfied and assured of the truth and importance of them. Or, *he sealeth their chastening*, or *correction*, for so this word signifies as well as instruction, i.e. he gives them assurance of his purpose of correcting them for their sins, if they do not prevent it by a speedy repentance. Or, *he sealeth it* (i.e. his word conveyed to their ears and minds) *with chastening them*, i.e. he gives them assurance of the truth and reality of his revelation by striking them with a sacred dread and horror, as was usual in such dreams or night visions, as we see **#Job 4:13,15**; which he did that they might remember it the better, and distinguish this from such vain dreams as are only the productions of man's fancy.

Ver. 17.

That he, i.e. God, who was expressed **#Job 33:14**, and designed by this pronoun he both in the foregoing and following verses.

From his purpose, i.e. from the execution of his purpose. Heb. from his *work*, i.e. from his evil work as the Chaldee and LXX. understand it; from sin, which is truly and fitly called man's work, because it hath its rise in and from him, and is his own proper work, and very agreeable to his nature in his present corrupt estate; as, on the contrary, all the good that is in man is God's proper and peculiar work, and is generally ascribed to him in Scripture. So this is noted as the design of God's giving man this warning, to keep him from executing that evil work which possibly he had designed to do; of which see examples, **#Ge 20:5,6 31:24**.

Hide pride, i.e. either,

1. To take it away, as God is said to *hide* sin, when he quite removes and forgives it, **#Ps 32:1**; and *sorrow* is said to be *hid*, **#Job 3:10**, when it never is nor was; and *understanding* is said to be *hid* when it *perisheth*, **#Isa 29:14**. And

pride is here mentioned as the root of those evil purposes or works last mentioned; which for the most part proceed from haughtiness of spirit, whereby men scorn to submit themselves and their wills and actions to God's authority, and presume to advance themselves above God, and resolve to follow their own wills and lusts in spite of God, and with contempt of him. Or *pride* may be here put for all matter or occasion of pride. And God by this means is said to

hide pride from man, because by these glorious and terrible representations of his Divine majesty to a man, he takes him off from the contemplation and admiration of his own excellency, which men are generally very prone to reflect upon, and brings him to a sight of his own nothingness and weakness, and to a sense of his dependence upon God, and to a humble and ready submission to his will and pleasure.

Ver. 18.

He keepeth back, to wit, by these gracious admonitions, whereby he leads them to repentance,

his soul; either the man, who is oft expressed by this part; or

his life, as the next branch explains it.

From the pit, i.e. from the grave, from death or destruction.

From perishing by the sword, i.e. by some dreadful judgment of God which was ready to fall upon him.

Ver. 19.

With pain, or *grief*; with some painful and dangerous diseases, or bodily distempers, which is the second way whereby God instructs men and excites them to repentance; which also was Job's case.

The multitude of his bones with strong pain; the pain pierceth his very bones, even all of them. Or, *even the strong multitude of his bones*, i.e. his bones, which are both many and strong. Or, according to another reading, *the contention of his bones* (i.e. the pain of his bones, whereby God contends with him) is strong. This also was Job's case, **#Job 30:17**.

Ver. 20.

His life, i.e. his soul, as the next clause explains it; or his appetite, which is a sign and an act of life.

Bread, i.e. common and necessary food.

Dainty meat; such as others do, and he formerly did, much desire and prize.

Ver. 21.

His flesh is consumed away, through pain and pining sickness.

That it cannot be seen; because there is none left to be seen; but he who before was fat and flourishing, is now become a mere skeleton.

That were not seen, formerly, because they were covered with flesh and fat. But this clause, is and may be rendered thus, *and his bones are broken*, and *are not seen*; which is to be metaphorically understood.

Ver. 22.

He seems to himself and others to be lost, and past all hopes of recovery; which he adds for Job's comfort in his desperate condition.

To the destroyers; to the instruments of death or destruction, whether it be angels, whom God sometimes useth in those cases; or devils, *who have the power of death*. #**Heb 2:14**; or diseases, which by God's appointment are ready to give the fatal blow.

Ver. 23.

A messenger; either,

1. An angel sent to him from heaven upon this errand; for the angels are ministering spirits, #**Ps 103:20 Heb 1:14**, and are, and especially in that time and state of the church were, frequently employed by God upon messages to men. But why then should he say *one of a thousand angels*, seeing any the meanest angel was very competent for this work? Or rather,

2. A prophet or teacher, for such are oft called by this name; as #**Jud 2:1 Mal 2:7 3:1 Re 1:20**, and such persons are appointed by God for, and are most commonly employed in, this work. *With him*; either,

1. With God to plead man's cause, and to pray to God for man. Or rather,

2. With man, who is expressed in the last clause of this verse, and of whom this same pronoun him is twice used in the next verse. Nor is it strange that the pronoun relative is put before the noun to which it belongs, but usual in the Hebrew language, as **#Ex 2:6 Pr 5:22 Pr 14:33**, and elsewhere. *An interpreter*; one whose office and work it is to declare the mind of God unto the sick man, and wherefore God contends with him, and what God would have him to do.

One among a thousand; a person rightly qualified for this great and hard work, such as there are but very few, scarce *one of a thousand*; which expression is used to denote the rarity and fewness of persons, **#Ec 7:28**. By which words he doth covertly reflect upon Job's three friends, and imply that they were not such persons, though they had undertaken to perform this office or work to Job; and withal, modestly intimates, that although he was in himself mean and inferior to all of them, (as he acknowledgeth,) yet he was selected by God for this work; which he saith not out of a desire of vain boasting of himself, but to dispose Job to a more diligent attention unto, and a more ready entertainment of his present discourses. *His uprightness*, or rectitude, or righteousness. *His*, i.e. either,

1. God's; to convince a man that God is just and right in all his dealings with him, though never so severe; of which Job was not yet convinced. Or rather,

2. Man's; to teach man his duty, or to direct him to the right way and method how he may please God, and procure that mercy and deliverance which he thirsts after; which is not by quarrelling with God, as Job did, but by a humble confession and hearty detestation and forsaking of his sins, and supplication to God for mercy in and through Christ the Redeemer, of whom Job spoke before. Or thus, to discover to man, that although he be afflicted, yet he is an upright and righteous person, and consequently in God's favour; about which good men oft doubt, and need the help of a skilful minister to satisfy them therein. But this seems not so well to suit Job's case, who was sufficiently and more than

enough persuaded of his own integrity, and needed no minister to preach that doctrine to him.

Ver. 24.

Then; in that case, or upon the sick man's knowledge and practice of his duty.

He; either,

1. The messenger or interpreter last mentioned, who is pitiful unto the sick man, and in companion to him doth all that he can for him, counselling and comforting him, and praying to God for his recovery in the following words,

Deliver him, &c. for the sake of that ransom which thou hast revealed and I have discovered to him. Or rather,

2. God, who is oft in this book designed by this particle *he*, or *him*; whose property and prerogative it is to be gracious unto man, and who alone can speak the following words with power and authority.

Is gracious unto him; pardoning his sins, and delivering him from his dangerous disease, and from death and from the hell which attends upon it.

And saith, to the angel or messenger.

Deliver him, to wit, ministerially and declaratively; in which sense the acts of forgiving sins, and reconciling sinners, and saving souls, are ascribed to God's ministers; as **#Joh 20:23 2Co 5:19,20 1Ti 4:16**. Declare to him that I have pardoned and will heal him.

I have found a ransom: although I might justly destroy him, and should do it, if I were severe to mark what is amiss in him; yet I will spare him, for I have found out an expedient and a way of ransoming and redeeming sinners from death, both temporal and eternal, which they by their sins have deserved, which is by the death of my Son, the Redeemer of the world, which shall be in the fulness of time, and with respect to which I will pardon this sick man, and others that shall repent and sue to me for mercy, as he hath done.

Ver. 25.

Fresher than a child's, i.e. more sound and tender. These joyful tidings delivered to him by God's messenger shall revive his spirit, and by degrees restore his former health and vigour.

To the days of his youth, i. e. to the same healthful and strong constitution of body which he had in his youth.

Ver. 26.

He; either,

1. The messenger; or rather,
2. The sick man.

Shall pray unto God; being engaged and encouraged to do so, either by the aforesaid gracious message, or by his miraculous recovery through God's goodness.

He will be favourable unto him, in hearing and answering his prayers, which before he seemed to neglect.

He shall see his face with joy; either,

1. God will look upon the man with a smiling or well-pleased countenance; whereas before he either hid his face from him, or frowned upon him. Or,
2. The man shall then be emboldened and encouraged to look God in the face with comfort and joy; which before he was, not without cause, afraid to do; but now he shall find that God is reconciled to him by the blessed effects of it, both in his body and in his conscience.

His righteousness, i.e. according to his righteousness, or the fruit of his righteousness; as on the contrary, iniquity is oft put for the punishment of iniquity. The sense is, he will deal with him as with one reconciled to him through the Mediator, and sincerely repenting of and turning from his former sins unto the serious practice of righteousness and true holiness, and therefore must needs be favourable to him, as he hath declared and engaged himself to be in such cases.

Ver. 27.

He looketh upon men; either,

1. The sick man shall look upon and converse with mankind, his friends, or others, as he did before, and shall say, (as the following word is and may be rendered,)

I have sinned, &c., i.e. he shall confess to them that God was not to be blamed, but that he, by his own sin and folly, did bring that evil upon himself. And then he shall acknowledge God's great goodness to him, and shall add what follows in the next verse, *He hath delivered my soul, &c., and my life, &c.*, as they render it. Or rather,

2. God diligently observes all mankind, and their several carriages, especially in sickness and distress.

If any say, I have sinned; if there be any man that sincerely saith thus, God hears it, and will pardon and heal him, as it follows.

Perverted that which was right; either,

1. I have judged perversely of the just and right ways of God, censuring his proceedings against me as too severe and rigorous, whereas in truth I only was to be blamed. Or,

2. I have perverted God's righteous law by bending it, and making it comply with my crooked ways; or, I have swerved from the right and good way of God's commands; or, I have made crooked paths. So he repeats in other words what he said in the former branch of the verse, *I have sinned. It profited me not;* I got no good by so doing, as I vainly promised myself; but I got much hurt by it, even diseases, and griefs, and extreme dangers. This was the just fruit of my sins. It is a meiosis, whereby less is said, and more is understood, of which we have seen many examples before.

Ver. 28.

He, i.e. God, whose work alone this is.

His soul; himself; or, as it follows,

his life. *His life:* See Poole "Job 33:18".

Shall see the light, i.e. shall enjoy, either,

1. Prosperity, which is oft called light, as darkness is put for affliction; or,

2. *The light of the living*, as it follows, **#Job 33:30**; the light of this world, i.e. his life, which was endangered, shall be restored and continued. This is opposed to his going down into the pit, in the former branch.

Ver. 29.

All these ways and methods doth God use to awaken, and convince, and save sinners.

Oftentimes with man; either severally, one way with one, and another way with another; or with the same man, trying several means one after another to bring him to repentance, and prepare him for deliverance.

Ver. 30.

i.e. That he may enjoy the light of life, and continue in the land of the living, out of which he was going.

Ver. 31.

Hold thy peace; attend to what I have further to say to thee with patience and silence.

Ver. 32.

If thou hast any thing to say for thy own justification, or in answer to the charge that I have already brought against thee.

I desire to justify thee, to wit, as far as may consist with truth and justice. I do not speak with evil design, or a bitter mind, or as one resolved to condemn thee whatsoever thou sayest, and I shall be glad to hear any thing from thee which may make for thy just vindication.

Ver. 33.

i.e. What thy wisdom and duty is in thy circumstances.

JOB CHAPTER 34

He accuseth Job for charging God with injustice, **#Job 34:1-9**. God, the almighty Disposer, Governor, and Judge of the world, cannot be unjust, **#Job 34:10-17**. It is not fit to say of kings and princes they are unjust, much less of God: his power over and

observance of man, who cannot hide from God, #**Job 34:18-22**. He exerciseth his power and justice over them, #**Job 34:23-30**. Man's duty under God's afflictions, #**Job 34:31,32**. He reproveth Job's words against God, #**Job 34:33-37**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

O ye wise men, who are here present, do you judge of the truth and reason of what I have said, and am further to say; for I am willing to submit all to the judgment of the truly wise.

Ver. 3.

i.e. Man's mind judgeth Of things spoken and heard.

The ear, the sense of discipline, is put for the mind, to which things are conveyed by it. See Poole "**Job 12:11**".

Ver. 4.

Judgment, i.e. justice and equity; judgment being oft synecdochically used for just judgment, as #**Job 8:3 19:7 32:9 Ps 37:28**. Let us not contend for victory, but only for truth and justice. This shall be my only care and business. Let us lay aside all prejudices and animosities, which I perceive have had too great an influence upon thee and thy friends, and impartially consider the naked truth and right of the cause. Let us know, i.e. let us discover or make it known one to another. What is good; who hath the best cause.

Ver. 5.

I am righteous; either,

1. I am perfectly righteous. But this Job did not say, but the contrary, #**Job 9:2,3 14:4**. Or,

2. I am a sincere person, no hypocrite, as my friends made me. But this Elihu doth not deny. Or,

3. I am so far righteous, and have been so holy and blameless in my life, that I have not deserved, nor had any reason to expect, such hard usage from God. And this Job had oft intimated, and Elihu doth justly blame him for it, that he blazoned his own

righteousness with tacit reflections upon God for dealing so severely with him.

God hath taken away my judgment; for so Job had said, **#Job 27:2**; i.e. he denies me that which is but just and equal, to give me a fair hearing, to suffer me to plead my cause with or before him, to show me the reasons of his contending with me, and what sins besides common infirmities I have been guilty of, whereby I have deserved such extraordinary judgments; which Elihu justly taxeth him with as a very irreverent and presumptuous expression.

Ver. 6.

Should I lie against my right? so Job had said in effect, **#Job 27:4-6**. Should I falsely accuse myself of such sins of which I am no way conscious to myself? Should I betray mine own cause, and deny my integrity, and say that I deserved worse than I have done?

Without transgression, i.e. without any great, or heinous, or crying sin, as this word commonly signifies, which might reasonably bring down such terrible judgments upon my head.

Ver. 7.

i.e. Abundantly and greedily; who doth so oft and so easily break forth into scornful and contemptuous expressions, not only against his friends, but in some sort even against God himself, whom he foolishly and insolently chargeth with dealing rigorously with him. The words may be thus read,

What man, being like Job, *would drink up?..?* That a wicked or foolish man should do thus is not strange; but that a man of such piety, gravity, wisdom, and authority as Job should be guilty of such a sin, this is wonderful.

Ver. 8.

Although I dare not say, as his three friends do, that he is a wicked man, yet in this matter he speaks and acts like one of them.

Ver. 9.

He hath said; not absolutely and in express terms, but by unforced consequence, and as concerning this life, and with reference to himself; because he said that good men were no less, nay, sometimes more, miserable here than the wicked, **#Job 9:22**

30:26, and that for his part he was no gainer as to this life by his piety, but a loser, and that God showed him no more kindness and compassion than he usually did to the vilest of men; which was a very unthankful and ungodly opinion and expression, seeing godliness hath the promise of this life as well as of that to come, and Job had such supports, and such assurances of his own uprightness, and of his future happiness, as he confesseth, as were and should have been accounted even for the present a greater comfort and profit than all which this world can afford.

That he should delight himself with God; that he should choose and delight to walk with God, and make it his chief care and business to please him, and to do his commandments; which is the true and proper character of a godly man.

Ver. 10.

Ye men of understanding; you who are present, and understand these things, do you judge between Job and me.

Far be it from God that he should do wickedness: this I must lay down as a principle, that the righteous and holy God neither doth nor can deal unjustly with Job, or with any man, as Job insinuates that God had dealt with him.

Ver. 11.

The work, i.e. the reward of his work, or according to his work. Job's afflictions, though great and sharp, are not undeserved, but justly inflicted upon him, both for his original corruption, and for many actual transgressions, which are manifest to God, though Job, through his partiality, may not see them. And Job's piety shall be recompensed, it may be, in this life, but undoubtedly in the next. And therefore piety is not unprofitable, as Job saith.

Ver. 12.

As Job hath wickedly affirmed. For the phrase, **See Poole "Job 8:3"**.

Ver. 13.

Over the earth, i.e. over the inhabitants of the earth, to rule them according to his laws, and to give an account to him of it. Who or where is his superior that made the world, and then delivered the government of it to God? There is no such person. God himself is the sole Creator, the absolute and supreme Lord and Governor, of

all the world, and therefore cannot do unjustly. The reason is, partly, because all unrighteousness is a transgression of some law, and God hath no law to bound him but his own nature and will; partly, because the Creator and Lord of the world must needs have all possible perfections in himself, and, amongst others, perfect justice, and must needs be free from all imperfections and obliquities, and therefore from injustice; and partly, because he is of himself all-sufficient, and independent upon all other persons, and able to do and procure whatsoever pleaseth him; and therefore as he hath no inclination, so he hath no temptation, to any unrighteous actions; this being generally the reason of all unrighteous actions in the world, because the persons who do them either are obliged to do it, to gratify some superior authority who commands them to do it, or else do want or desire something which they cannot justly obtain; for he is a monster, and not a man, who will take away any thing by injustice or violence which he may have by right.

Who hath disposed, or *committed*, to wit, to him, to be governed by him, in the name and for the use and service of his superior Lord, to whom he must give an account.

Ver. 14.

Upon man, Heb. *upon him*, i.e. man, as may seem probable from **#Job 34:11,15**, where *man* is expressed; and from the next clause of this verse, where he speaks of that

spirit and

breath which is in man. If his eye and heart be upon man, if he diligently and exactly observe him, and all his ways, and whatsoever is amiss in him, and, which follows upon it of course, resolve to punish him. Or, *if he set his heart against* (as this particle *el* is used, **#Am 7:15**, and elsewhere, as hath been noted before) *him*, to wit, to cut him off. *If he gather unto himself*; if it please him to gather to himself, to wit, by death, whereby God is said to take away men's breath, **#Ps 104:29**, and to *gather men's souls*, **#Ps 26:9**, and the *spirit* is said to return unto God, **#Ec 12:7**.

His spirit and his breath, i.e. that spirit and breath, or that living soul, that God breathed into man, **#Ge 2:7**, and gives to every man that cometh into the world.

Ver. 15.

All flesh, i.e. every man, who is called *flesh*, **#Ge 6:3,17 Isa 40:6**.

Together, or, *alike*, without any exception, be they great or mean, wise or foolish, good or bad; if God design to destroy them, they cannot withstand his power, but must needs perish by his stroke. The design of this and the foregoing verse is the same with that of **#Job 34:13**, See Poole "**Job 34:13**", namely, to declare God's absolute and uncontrollable sovereignty over all men, to dispose of them either to life or to death, as it pleaseth him, and consequently to show that Job had cause to be thankful to God, who had continued his life so long to him, which he might have taken away as soon as ever he had given it, and had no cause to complain of him, or to tax him with injustice for afflicting him, as he did.

Ver. 16.

As thou art a man of understanding, hear and consider what I say.

Ver. 17.

He that hateth right, i.e. that is unrighteous. But this he expresseth in a most emphatical manner, the reason and weight whereof seems to me to be this: If God be unjust, he is not so from fear of any superior, (as inferior magistrates do many unrighteous things against their consciences to please their prince or chief ruler, or to avoid his displeasure,) but merely from an intrinsical hatred of justice, or love of unrighteousness; which being most absurd to imagine concerning God, therefore he cannot possibly be unjust, or do any unjust action.

Govern; so this word, which properly signifies *to bind*, is fitly rendered by most interpreters; and so it is used **#Isa 3:7**, because governors have a power to bind their subjects by laws and penalties, and they are as it were the ligaments by which societies are bound and kept together, which without them would be dissolved and broken to pieces. Elihu's argument here is the same with that of Abraham's, **#Ge 18:25**, and that of St. Paul's, **#Ro 3:5,6**, If God *be unrighteous, how shall he judge or govern the*

world? And the argument is undeniable, If God were unjust, there would be nothing but injustice, and confusion, and mischief in the world; whereas we see there is a great deal of justice administered by rulers in the world, and all this must proceed from him who is the fountain and author of all justice, and rule, and authority. And as the psalmist saith, **#Ps 94:9**, *He that formed the eye, shall not he see?* so say I, He that makes men just, shall he be unjust? *Him that is most just*, i.e. God, who hath given so many clear and unquestionable evidences of his justice, in giving just and holy laws, in encouraging and rewarding very many righteous persons in this life, and inflicting dreadful and remarkable judgments upon tyrants and oppressors. Or, *him that is just and mighty*; for the next verse speaks of such, who were generally in those times more considerable for their power and authority than for their justice. So here is a double argument against Job's censures of God's justice. He is *just*, and therefore giveth thee no cause to condemn him; and withal *potent*, and therefore can punish thee yet far worse for so doing.

Ver. 18.

Thou art wicked; or, Thou art Belial, or a son of Belial. Though a king may really be unjust and wicked, yet their subjects neither may nor dare presume to call them so, **#Ex 22:28**. And therefore if some evil thought did arise in thee, yet how wast thou not afraid to utter such unworthy and almost blasphemous expressions against God?

Ver. 19.

To him that accepteth not the persons of princes, i.e. to God, who respecteth not the greatest princes, so as to do any unjust thing to gain their favour, or to avoid their anger, to whom princes and peasants are equally subject, and infinitely inferior; who therefore is free from all temptation to injustice, which commonly proceeds from respect of persons, **#Le 19:15**, and to whom therefore thou didst owe more reverence than thy words have expressed.

They all are the work of his hands; and therefore of equal worth and price with him, and equally subject to his power and pleasure.

Ver. 20.

In a moment; whensoever God doth but give the word, and send his summons for them.

Shall they, i. e. the rich and the prince, no less than the poor, must submit to the law of death, which God hath imposed upon all men, without exception, and they cannot charge God with injury therein.

The people; whole nations or people are no less subject to God's power than any particular persons; their numbers cannot secure them from God's hand.

Troubled, i.e. disturbed and terrified with those calamities which God shall bring upon them.

At midnight; suddenly, and when they are most secure.

Pass away; either,

1. Go into captivity, or run or flee away they know not whither for their lives. Or,
2. Perish or die, as he said before, and as this word is oft used, as **#Job 14:20 Ps 37:36 Ec 1:4**. So the same thing is said of the people, which in the first branch of the verse was said of the princes.

Taken away; either from their place or power, or out of this life.

Without hand; without any hand or help of man, by some secret and stupendous work and judgment of God; which he oft inflicts upon those who are out of the reach of men.

Ver. 21.

This is added as the reason of the judgments mentioned in the foregoing verse, God doth not afflict nor destroy either princes or people unjustly, no, nor out of his mere pleasure and absolute sovereignty, (to which Job seemed to impute his calamities,) but for their sins, which God sees exactly, although they use all possible arts and tricks to hide them from him. Therefore no man hath cause to complain of God, but of himself, for all that he may suffer in the world.

Ver. 22.

They may flatter themselves, or cheat others, by covering their wicked actions with plausible pretences and professions; but they cannot deceive God, nor keep their hearts and ways from his sight.

Ver. 23.

More than right; more or heavier punishments than they deserve, or than are proportionable to their sins, which he accurately observes, as was now said, and therefore can suit punishments to them.

That he should enter into judgment with God; thereby to give him any pretence or occasion of entering into judgment with him, or condemning his proceedings; for which there might seem to be some colour, if God did lay upon man more than right. And therefore thou, O Job, hadst no cause for thy complaints against God.

Ver. 24.

Mighty men without number; neither their greatness nor their numbers can secure them from the stroke of God's justice.

Set others in their stead, i.e. give away their power and dignity to others who shall come in their place.

Ver. 25.

i.e. Hence it appears that he knows all their evil works, because he judgeth them for them. God or men are oftentimes said in Scripture to know or do a thing, when they only manifest their knowing and doing of it. Or, *became*, &c., as this particle is used, **#Isa 26:14 61:7**. So this is subjoined as the ground or reason why he punisheth them, as is related both in the foregoing and in the following words, because he sees all their wicked designs and actions.

He overturneth them in the night, i.e. when they are at rest and secure; *at midnight*, as it is **#Job 34:20**. Or, *he turneth or bringeth upon them the night*, to wit, of calamity and tribulation, as the next words explain it, and as the words

night and *darkness* are oft used. Or, *he turneth the night*, to wit, into day, i.e. he knoweth all their deeds of darkness, and bringeth them to light. See above, **#Job 34:22**.

So that they are destroyed, Heb. *and* (or *then*, or *therefore*; for both these ways this particle is sometimes used) *they shall be destroyed*, or *broken to pieces*.

Ver. 26.

As wicked men, i.e. as he useth to smite wicked men, with a grievous and terrible stroke. Compare **#Isa 27:7**. Or, *for wicked men*; or, *because they are wicked men*, therefore he destroys them without any regard to their quality.

In the open sight of others; in public view, for their greater shame, and for the greater glory of God's justice, and for the greater terror of other oppressors, and comfort of the oppressed.

Ver. 27.

From him; from the God, whom they or their progenitors had owned; and his laws, which God hath written in the minds of all men, **#Ro 2:14,15**; and, it may be, from the practice of the true religion, which sometimes they professed;

Would not consider, or *understand*. They did not desire nor endeavour to know them, at least practically, or to any good purpose.

His ways; either,

1. God's providential ways. They did not lay to heart any of God's judgments inflicted upon such oppressors as themselves, which should have given them warning, but boldly persisted in the same wicked courses. Or,

2. His precepts; oft called his *ways*, because he hath appointed them for us to walk in. For these ways they were in a special manner obliged to consider and practise; and the next verse giveth us an instance of their backsliding from these ways.

Ver. 28.

So that they cause, Heb. *to bring*, &c., which is ambiguous, and may be read, either,

1. *That he*, i.e. God, *might bring*, &c. So this is a reason why God smote them, &c., as is said, **#Job 34:26**. Or,

2. **That they**, i.e. those wicked men, *might bring*, &c.; and so these words contain either,

1. A reason of what was last mentioned, to wit, why they would not consider nor walk in God's ways, because they were resolved to oppress the poor, and give them cause to cry unto God; which they neither could nor would have done, if they had thoroughly understood and considered God's ways. Or,

2. An evidence or instance of it, wherein it did appear that *they had turned back from God, &c. Unto him*, i.e. unto God, as the following words imply, it being God's work to *hear the cry* and plead the cause of the afflicted or oppressed. Others, *upon him*, or *upon them*, or *upon each of them*, to wit, of the oppressors; upon whom the cry of the oppressed is said to come, because the vengeance of God is by that cry brought down upon them.

He heareth the cry of the afflicted; he delivereth the oppressed by taking the oppressor away.

Ver. 29.

When he giveth quietness; either to the poor and oppressed persons last mentioned, or to any other person or people, as it follows.

Who then can make trouble? no man or creature can hinder God's design and work.

When he hideth his face, i.e. withdraws his favour and help from them, and thereby exposeth them to all oppressions or calamities.

Who then can behold him? i.e. who can look up to God with cheerfulness or confidence, to desire or expect his help? Or rather, *who then will look upon him, or regard him*, to wit, so as to pity or succour him? If God be against him, what man will or dare be for him? all men will forsake and oppose him, and so he will be utterly lost. For this *who* answers to the *who* in the former branch of the verse, and both of them speak of man and his act as opposed unto God and to his act. The case is the same in both: God can carry on his work, either of mercy or justice, as easily and as irresistibly upon a whole nation or people as upon one particular person.

Ver. 30.

Having said that God could and would carry on his own work and design effectually, whether against one man, or against a whole

people, he now proceeds to give a further instance of God's mighty power above and against the greatest monarchs, in whom their own and the people's strength seem to be united, yet all together cannot oppose God in his work. God when he pleaseth can and doth so order affairs,

that the hypocrite (i.e. *the profane wicked prince*, as one of the kings of Judah is called, #Eze 21:25; bad princes being called *hypocrites*, because they do commonly cover all their oppressions, and injuries, and impieties too, with the specious pretence of justice and the public good, and the discharge of their trust and duty) *may not reign*, (i.e. may not continue his reign and tyranny, that he may and shall by his sovereign power and omnipotent providence be deprived of his kingdom,)

lest the people be insnared, i.e. lest the people should be longer and more and more kept and held in the snares or fetters of tyranny and oppression, i.e. God doth this to free poor oppressed people from the snares which ungodly and unrighteous princes lay for them. Or, *that the people be not insnared any longer*, Heb. *that there be no snares of or for the people*. Or, *for the snares*, or *scandals*, or *sins* (which are oft so called) *of the people*. So the sense is, that such a wicked prince may not continue to reign over that people, although by their sins they had provoked God to give them such a prince, and to continue his power over them.

Ver. 31.

Certainly it is but fit and reasonable that man should say thus to his Maker and supreme Lord, and that instead of contending with God, he should submit to him. Or, (which comes to the same thing,) *But hath he said?* so the sense is, I have showed the absolute power which God hath over all his creatures, and that he may justly, and doth oftentimes severely, punish all sorts of men as he sees fit. And this Job should have applied to his own case. *But*, I appeal to all of you, *hath he*, i.e. Job, (who is the principal subject of this whole discourse, and to whom he now begins to direct his discourse,) said, that which here follows? which is a kind of form of confession or humiliation, which Elihu puts into Job's mouth, as fit to have been used by him. Nay, hath not his speech and carriage been of a directly contrary nature and tendency? Instead of humbling himself under God's hand, which

was his duty, hath he not been full of murmurings and complaints against God?

Unto God; unto one so much thy superior, so mighty and so righteous in all his ways; with such a one a weak and sinful creature (as thou art) should not presume to contest.

I have borne chastisement; or, *I do or shall bear it*, to wit, quietly and contentedly; I will bear the Lord's indignation, and accept of the punishment of my own iniquity, and not accuse God falsely and foolishly, as I have done.

I will not offend any more, Heb. *I will not corrupt*, to wit, myself or my ways; which is oft understood in like cases. Or, *I will take or demand no pledge*; for so this verb is oft used. So the sense may possibly be, I confess I have been too bold with God, in desiring that he would come with me into judgment, and that I could have a pledge or surety that he would do so; but I will no longer desire it, but submit myself wholly to him.

Ver. 32.

I will no longer maintain mine innocency, but from thy judgments I will conclude and have reason to believe that there are some secret sins in me, for which thou dost chastise me, and which I through mine ignorance or partiality cannot yet discover, and therefore do beg that thou wouldst by thy Spirit manifest them to me. If I have done iniquity, I will amend my former errors.

Ver. 33.

Having advised and directed Job how to behave himself, and what to say to God in his case, he now proceedeth to enforce his advice by solid arguments.

Should it (to wit, God's chastening of thee, about which the great controversy was)

be according to thy mind? Heb. *from with thee*, as thou wouldst have it? Shall thy opinion or affection give laws and measures to God that he shall afflict only such persons, and in such a manner and measure, and so long, as thou wouldst have him. Doth God need, or should he seek for, thy advice how to govern the world, and whom and when to reward or punish? Dost thou quarrel with

God, because he punisheth thee worse and longer than thou expectest or desirest?

He will recompence it, to wit, thy iniquity, expressed #**Job 34:32**. Whether thou art satisfied or offended with his proceedings, he regards not, as not being obliged to give thee an account of his matters, whether thou wouldst refuse his punishments or accept of them. It is not I, nor thou, that must prescribe to God, but he will do what he pleaseth. Or, *but not I*, i.e. do thou refuse or choose as thou pleasest, and contend with God for doing with thee otherwise than according to thy opinion or good will; but so would not I do, if it were my case; and I can say nothing for this course which thou takest, and therefore do thou

speak what thou knowest, or what thou canst say for it, as it here follows. If thou canst, say any thing for this practice, here I am ready to hear thy defence, and to justify thee as far as I can truly and righteously do. But this verse is and may well be otherwise rendered, and that very agreeably to the Hebrew, though still the sense will be the same, *Shall he*, i.e. God, *render or recompense it* (to wit, thy iniquity) *according to thy mind*, (i.e. no further than thou dost like and consent,) *because thou refusest?* (to wit, his chastisement. Is he obliged to forbear punishing thee because thou art not pleased with it? Shall not he dispense either favours or afflictions as he sees fit without thy consent?) *shalt thou choose, and not I?* (so Elihu speaks this in the name and person of God; such sudden changes of persons being not unusual in this book. Shalt thou, O Job, choose for me, and not I for myself?)

therefore speak what thou knowest. If this be thy opinion, speak what thou canst, in defence of it; and here am I ready to plead for God against thee. So here Elihu returns to speak in his own person.

Ver. 34.

I am content that any wise man should judge of my words, and let such consider what I say. Or, as others translate the place, *Men of understanding will speak for or with* (as the prefix *lamed* is sometimes used, as #**Ge 46:26 Nu 18:11 Job 17:5**) *me*, and

wise men will

hearken or *assent* unto me.

Ver. 35.

Without knowledge; foolishly and inconsiderately.

Ver. 36.

Either,

1. That he may be further tried by God, or exercised with afflictions, till he be thoroughly convinced or humbled. But it seems harsh that he should pray for the continuance or increase of Job's afflictions. Or rather,

2. That his words and cause which I am now debating may be examined and sifted, that you that are here present, or any other wise men, may consider and judge thereof, as he desired above, **#Job 34:2,10,34.**

Unto the end, i.e. thoroughly and exactly, till the cause be brought to an issue. Or, *unto victory*, i.e. till judgment be brought forth unto victory.

Because of his answers; or, *concerning his answers, or replies, or discourses;* for answering is oft used in Scripture, both in the Old and New Testament, for *speaking*. So he limits and changeth the state of the controversy: I do not meddle with Job's former life, nor charge him with hypocrisy, as his three friends have done; but I justly reprove him for his hard speeches against God, whereby he hath reproached his justice and goodness.

For wicked men, i.e. on their behalf, or for their use. He hath put arguments into their mouths against God and his providence. Or, *with or among wicked men;* as if he were one of them; or such answers as they use to make, which therefore are very unbecoming such a man as Job is, or pretends to be.

Ver. 37.

He sinned before, as other ways, so by impatience under his afflictions, which may be ascribed to human infirmity; but now he is grown obstinate and incorrigible, and instead of repenting and humbling himself for his sins, he excuseth them, and justifieth himself, and accuseth the blessed God. Or thus,

For otherwise, unless he be thoroughly tried and rebuked, *he will add rebellion unto his sin*; he will break forth into open rebellion against God, and (as it follows) *he will clap*, &c. For the Hebrew words are of the future tense, although such are oft rendered by the past tense.

He clappeth his hands, in token of joy and victory, as this phrase is used, **#Ps 47:1 98:8**; insulting and triumphing, not only over us, as if none of us were able to answer him, but in a sort over God himself, inasmuch as he hath again and again desired leave of God to debate his cause with or before him, and in that case did not doubt to maintain it, but could not obtain the favour or justice of a fair hearing.

Multiplieth his words against God: whereas the reverence which he oweth to God, and his infinite distance from him, should teach him to be very modest and sparing in his speeches of God, Job on the contrary poureth forth whole floods of bold and presumptuous expostulations with God, and reflections upon God's proceedings with him.

JOB CHAPTER 35

Our good or evil extendeth not to God, **#Job 35:1-7**, but to men on earth, who are hereby oppressed, and cry out, but not unto God, nor are delivered, **#Job 35:8-12**. He exhorteth to hope in God, though for the present he be angry, **#Job 35:13-16**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Canst thou in thy conscience, upon second thoughts, approve of what thou hast said? Not that Job said this in express terms, but he said those things from which this might seem to follow, as that God punished him more than he deserved or expected, all things considered; and that if he might be admitted to debate his cause with or before God, he did not doubt to carry it, and to obtain that ease and favour from God, which otherwise God would not afford him. But this charge against Job he proves in the next verse.

Ver. 3.

This verse contains the proof of the foregoing charges. Job had oft affirmed that he was, and still continued to be, righteous, though he had no present benefit by it, but much bitterness with it; and God was not kind to Job, notwithstanding all his former and present piety, but dealt with him as if he had been a most wicked man; which was in effect to say, that he was more righteous than God.

What advantage will it, to wit, his righteousness last mentioned, be unto thee, i.e. unto me; such changes of persons being very frequent in the Hebrew language.

If I be cleansed from my sin; or, *by the expiation of my sin*; for the same Hebrew word signifies both *to sin* and *to purge out or expiate sin*. Or, by it (to wit, by my righteousness) *more than by my sin*. So the sense is, I have no more present benefit by all my care to please and serve God, than wicked men have by their sins against him. God regards my cries no more than theirs, and shows no more kindness or pity to me than he doth to the most profligate wretches. But still remember Job speaks not here of the future life, wherein he knew he should have much advantage, as he professed before, but only of this present state.

Ver. 4.

Thy companions, i.e. those who are of thy opinion, or with whom thou dost associate thyself in those speeches and carriages; which seems to be meant not of Job's three friends, (as many understand it, for their opinions were contrary to Job's in this point,) but of *wicked men*, with whom Job is said to walk and go in company for this same opinion or assertion, **#Job 34:8,9**. And these men he here calls Job's companions, partly because they are very forward to harp upon the same string, and to accuse God and justify themselves upon all occasions; and partly that he might awaken Job to a more serious review of his former assertions, by representing to him whose cause he pleaded, and who were his confederates and colleagues in this opinion.

Ver. 5.

How much more is God, who is far above all heavens, higher than thou! And therefore God is out of the reach of all profit or loss by

thy actions. If thy goodness do not profit thee, it is certain it doth not profit him; and therefore doth not lay any obligation upon him to indulge or recompense thee for it, save only so far as he hath graciously obliged himself; and therefore thou canst not accuse him of injustice for afflicting thee, nor pretend that thou hast deserved better usage from him. And this infinite distance between God and thee should cause thee to think and speak more modestly and reverently of that glorious majesty.

Ver. 6.

Thy sins do him no hurt, and therefore thy righteousness brings him no benefit, as it follows.

Ver. 7.

He gaineth nothing by it, nor can indeed receive any good from thee, because all thy good comes from him. And therefore thou hast no reason to boast of nor to upbraid God with thy piety, which is much to thy advantage, but nothing to his.

Ver. 8.

If God were such a one as thou art, he might have benefit or hurt by thine actions; but being an infinite, independent, and self-sufficient Being, he is far exalted above all thy good or evil.

Ver. 9.

The multitude, or *greatness*. This verse is supposed to contain an argument to prove what he said **#Job 35:8**, that one man's wickedness may hurt another. But he rather seems to begin a new matter, and having answered one of Job's objections, to proceed to another, which may be either,

1. That which Job had oft complained of, that he cried to God, and God did not hear his cry; which Elihu answers by a parallel case of men crying out for oppression; whom yet God doth not hear nor help, and that for just reasons, which he leaves to Job to apply to himself. Or,

2. That which Job had alleged, **#Job 24:12**, and which might seem to reflect upon God's providence. This therefore Elihu repeats in this verse, and answereth in the following.

To cry; not only to murmur and complain, but to cry out by reason of sore oppression, and to cry to the oppressors or others

for pity and help. By reason of the arm of the mighty; because their oppressors are too strong for them.

Ver. 10.

None, i.e. few or none (for few are oft called and accounted as none, both in Scripture and other authors) of the great numbers of oppressed persons.

None saith, to wit, seriously or sincerely, and it may be not so much as in word and profession.

Where is God? they howl and cry out of men, and to men, but they seek not after God; they do not acknowledge him in all their ways; they praise him not for that ease, and liberty, and estate, and other mercies which God gave them; and by this unthankfulness they forfeit their mercies; and therefore if God suffer oppressors to take them away, they have no cause to complain of God, but only of themselves: they will not vouchsafe to pray to God seriously and fervently, either to continue or to restore their lost mercies; and therefore if God do not hear nor regard their brutish cries, arising only from a natural sense of their misery, it is not strange nor unjust.

My Maker; who alone made me, and whose power and providence preserveth me every day, and who only can protect and deliver me; all which were obligations upon them to praise God, and pray to him, and depend upon him, and aggravations of their gross neglect of God. Heb. *my Makers*, in the plural number; which being used not only here, but also **#Ec 12:1 Isa 44:5**, and that without any necessity, when it might as well have been put in the singular number, yea, though Elohim be plural, as it is **#Ge 1:1**, plainly implies a plurality of persons in the Divine essence, of which see on **#Ge 1:26**. Songs, i.e. matter of songs; great occasion to rejoice and praise God.

In the night; either,

1. Metaphorically taken, i.e. in the night of affliction; implying that they want not cause to bless God even in their afflictions. Or rather,

2. Properly, as this word is always used in Job, one place excepted, which is doubtful, to wit, #**Job 36:20**; which he may mention rather than the day, either because oppressed persons, who in the day time are cruelly used by their oppressors, are permitted to rest in the night; or because the hand and mercy of God is more manifest in the preservation, and rest, and sleep of the night, than in the blessings of the day, which are procured by man's industry; or because the day is the time of action, the night of contemplation, when we do and ought to remember God's mercies with thanksgiving: compare #**Ps 42:8 119:62**.

Ver. 11.

This is mentioned as a further aggravation of men's neglect of God in their misery. God hath given to men those gifts which he hath denied to beasts, reason and religion, wisdom to know God and themselves, and their obligations to God, and their dependence upon him. And therefore it ill becometh them to lie like brute creatures, roaring and crying out in their miseries, without taking any notice of God in way of prayer or praise; and if they do so, it is no wonder if God takes no notice of them.

Ver. 12.

There, or *then*, as this particle is used, #**Ps 14:5 Ec 3:17 Zep 1:14**; in that time or condition.

The pride of evil men; either

1. Of the oppressors. So this is the reason not of the last clause, why none answereth, but of the former, why they cry; the latter clause being therefore shut up within a parenthesis, and the words thus are to be transposed, as some place them,

There they cry, because of the pride of evil men, *but none giveth answer*; the reason whereof followeth in the next verse. Or rather,

2. Of the oppressed persons. And so there is no need of any parenthesis or transposition. And so these words contain one reason of the words immediately foregoing, which is most natural, and easy, and usual, to wit, why none giveth answer, i.e. why God doth not answer nor regard their cries, because of their *pride*, &c., because they are both *evil*, wicked and impenitent, and *proud*,

unhumbled for those sins for which God brought these miseries upon them, and unsubdued to the obedience of God.

Ver. 13.

Either,

1. Vain and light persons, that have no true wisdom or solid piety in them, but are wholly addicted to vain and worldly things, rejoicing immoderately when they have them, and crying out for want of them, as here they do. Or,

2. Vain cries, which proceed not from faith or piety, but only from self-love and a natural sense of their misery; which is common to them with brute beasts. The abstract is here put for the concrete, as *wickedness* is oft put for wicked men, and *pride* for proud persons, and the like.

Neither will the Almighty regard it: though God be able to help them, as this title of God implies, and though he be the Judge of the world, as the former name of God signifies, to whom therefore it belongs to right the oppressed against the oppressor, yet in this case he justly refuseth to help them.

Ver. 14.

Thou shalt not see him; or, *thou canst not see him;* the future tense of the indicative mood being oft put potentially; i.e. thou canst not have thy desire in appearing and pleading thy cause before him. So this is a new matter, and Elihu answers another objection of Job's, of which see **#Job 23:8,9**, and tells him that he is not to judge of God by present appearance; because though God may for a season hide his face, and delay to give him an answer, yet he will certainly do him right. *Before him*, i.e. before God, or in his presence, or at his tribunal, or in all his ways and administrations. And

judgment is put for justice or just judgment, as it is **#Job 8:3 Ps 37:28 99:4**, and oft elsewhere. So the sense is, God is and will show himself to be just in all his ways, and therefore thou dost wickedly in reflecting upon God's justice. Or, yet *judge* thyself

before him; instead of accusing God, condemn thyself, acknowledge thy sins, and then thou mayst hope for mercy. Compare **#1Co 11:31**.

Trust thou in him; instead of murmuring against him, put thy trust in him. Repent of what is past, and humble thyself under God's hand, and do not despond for the future, but wait upon God patiently in his way till deliverance come to thee; for it will certainly come if thou dost not hinder it.

Ver. 15.

Because it is not so, i.e. because Job doth not acknowledge God's justice and his own sins, and wait upon God in his way for mercy, according to the last advice given to him, **#Job 35:14.**

He, to wit, God, to whom this great work of visiting is ascribed every where in Scripture.

Hath visited in his anger, i.e. hath laid grievous afflictions upon him; all which is too little to bring Job to compliance with God.

He knoweth it not; Job is not sufficiently sensible of it, so as to be humbled under God's hand.

In great extremity; or, though (which particle is sometimes understood, of which examples have been before) *in great extremity*, or abundance, to wit, of afflictions. Though Job hath hitherto been and still is exercised with very sore calamities, yet they have not brought Job to the knowledge of God and of himself. But this verse is and may be rendered thus, *And now know that his (i.e. God's) anger hath visited thee little or nothing,* (to wit, in comparison of what thou hast deserved and mightest reasonably expect,) *neither hath he known* (i.e. judged or punished, as this word is used, **#Pr 10:9**, and elsewhere) *thee in or according to* (as the prefix *beth* is sometimes used) *the great abundance*, to wit, of thy sins. And therefore thy complaints against God are very unrighteous and unreasonable.

Ver. 16.

Therefore; hence it is manifest.

Open his mouth in vain, i.e. pour forth his complaints without any success, and gets no ease by them.

He multiplieth words without knowledge, thereby discovering his ignorance of God and of himself.

JOB CHAPTER 36

God is first in all his ways; towards the wicked, #Job 36:1-6, the godly, #Job 36:7-11, the hypocrite, #Job 36:12-14, the poor, #Job 36:15. Job's sins hindered God's salvation to him: he admonisheth him, #Job 36:16-21. God's power, and sovereignty, and all his perfections to be magnified, #Job 36:22-33.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Suffer me a little; give me thy patient attention but a little longer; and I

will show thee that I have not said all that can be said to justify God's proceedings against thee.

Ver. 3.

From afar, i.e. from remote times, and places, and things. I will not confine my discourse to thy particular case, but will justify God by declaring his great and glorious works of creation and providence, both in the heaven and earth, and the manner of his dealing with men in other parts and ages of the world; for these are the chief heads of the following discourse, and therefore the best comment upon this general expression.

I will acknowledge that which is true, that God is righteous. He adds the words,

my Maker, either,

1. As an argument or evidence of God's righteousness; partly, because it is not likely that God should be unjust to his own creatures, since even men are not only just, but kind, to their own works and relations; and partly, because the work of creation gave unto God an absolute right and power to dispose of Job as he saw fit, as the potter hath power over the clay, #Ro 9:21, and therefore there was no foundation for unrighteousness, nor any temptation upon God to do it; and partly, because man's Maker must needs be a being of all possible perfection, and therefore one of perfect righteousness. Or,

2. As a motive or obligation upon him to plead God's cause. I do not engage myself in this controversy out of a pragmatical or contentious humour, nor out of any prejudice or ill-will to thee, but merely from the sense of my duty to my blessed Creator. Withal he reflects upon Job as guilty of great folly and ingratitude in contending with him, in or by whom he lived, and moved, and had his being.

Ver. 4.

I will not speak any thing against my own conscience, nor against truth, either to flatter God, or to vex thee, as thou supposest thy other friends have done, #**Job 13:7**, and elsewhere.

He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee. This is meant either,

1. Of God. Thou hast to do with a God of perfect knowledge, by whom all Shy words and actions. are weighed; and therefore hast need to be more wary and circumspect in thy expressions and behaviour. Or rather,

2. Of himself, as the former part of the verse is. And he speaketh of himself in the third person, for modesty's sake. He speaks not of absolute, but of comparative perfection. And whatsoever perfection of knowledge he had, he doth not ascribe it to himself, but to God's Spirit, #**Job 32:8**. And the meaning may be this, Thou hast not to do with a novice, but with one who hath accurately considered, and through God's grace doth fully understand, these matters; therefore hearken to me. But the word rendered

perfect signifieth also *sincere*, or *upright*, or *right*. And this may seem best to agree with the former clause, wherein he saith that he would not speak what he knew to be false; and now he adds, that he was and would be upright in the use of his knowledge, or in the delivery of his opinion in this matter, and not be biassed by any passion or prejudice, either to speak otherwise than he thought, or to judge otherwise than he should.

Ver. 5.

His greatness doth not make him (as it doth men) to scorn, or despise, or oppress the meanest. Though he may do what he

pleaseth, and none can hinder him, yet he will not use it to do any man wrong, as Job seemed to insinuate, #**Job 10:3 19:7 23:13**. His strength is guided by wisdom, and therefore cannot be employed to do any thing unbecoming God, or unjust to his creatures; for either of these is folly. Or,

in strength, or *virtue of heart*; for the *and* is not in the Hebrew. So the sense is, He is truly magnanimous, of a great and generous mind or heart, and therefore not unrighteous; for all injustice proceeds from littleness or weakness of heart. Truly great souls scorn unjust actions.

Ver. 6.

He preserveth not the life of the wicked, to wit, for ever; but will in his due time forsake them, and give them up to the destroyer. Or, *he doth not or will not preserve*, is put for *he will certainly and dreadfully destroy*, by the figure called *meiosis*, used #**Pr 17:21**, and oft elsewhere.

Giveth right to the poor; he doth uphold, and he certainly will in his time deliver, his poor oppressed ones from all their oppressors.

Ver. 7.

He never ceaseth to care for and watch over

the righteous, no, not when they are afflicted or persecuted, when he may seem to neglect them. Though they may be oppressed for a time, yet ofttimes he not only delivers them, but also raiseth them to the highest honour and happiness in this life; compare #**1Sa 2:8 Ps 113:7,8**; and their felicity is more stable and permanent than that of the wicked. Having mentioned the cause, that God *did establish them*; he now mentions the effect, that *they are* or *continue to be exalted*; they are not cast down from their dignity, as the wicked commonly are.

Ver. 8.

If through the vicissitude of worldly affairs, and the righteous judgment of God upon them for their sins, they be brought from their throne into a prison, as sometimes hath been done.

Ver. 9.

Their work, i.e. their evil works, as the next clause explains and limits it. By these afflictions he brings them to a sight of their sins and to repentance, which is the way and means of their recovery.

That they have exceeded; that they have greatly sinned by abusing their power and prosperity; which even good men are too prone to do.

Ver. 10.

i.e. He enableth and inclineth them to hearken to what God speaks by the rod, who would not hear in the time of their prosperity; like them **#Jer 22:21**.

To discipline; or, *to instruction*, i.e. to receive instruction; or, *to chastening*, i.e. to hear the rod, and who hath appointed it, as is said, **#Mic 6:9**.

Commandeth, either by his word or Spirit accompanying the affliction, and discovering the mind and will of God in this dispensation.

That they return from iniquity, which is the chief cause of their calamity.

Ver. 11.

If they obey God's admonition and command.

They shall spend their days in prosperity; they shall be restored to their former prosperity, and shall live and die in it. This he speaks according to the tenor of God's promises, especially in the Old Testament state of the church, and according to the common course and method of God's providence, which Elihu and other good men had observed.

Their years in pleasures; abounding in worldly comforts, and being enabled by God to rejoice in them, which is God's gift, **#Ec 3:13**, and delighting themselves in God's love and favour to them.

Ver. 12.

If they; the righteous, spoken of **#Job 35:7**, opposed to the hypocrites here following, **#Job 35:13**; for even good men may sometimes be disobedient to Divine admonitions, and may suffer deeply, yea, even death itself, for their folly: see **#1Co 11:30**.

Without knowledge; in or for their ignorance, or inadvertency, or folly. Or, *because they are without* knowledge; because they are foolish, or brutish, and will not learn the lessons which God so plainly teacheth them.

Ver. 13.

The hypocrites in heart; such as are truly void of that piety which they profess; whereby he either secretly insinuates that Job was such a one; or gives him this occasion to search himself whether he were not so; or rather, admonisheth him not to carry himself like such a one, as he had hitherto done, and for which he reproveth him, **#Job 34:8**.

Heap up wrath, i.e. by their impious and obstinate carriage in all conditions, they treasure up God's wrath against themselves.

They cry not unto God for help. They live in the gross neglect of God and of prayer.

When he bindeth them, to wit, with the cords of affliction, expressed **#Job 34:8**, which is mentioned as an aggravation of their wickedness; because even wicked men, if not profligately bad, will seek God in time of affliction, **#Ho 5:15**. Withal he secretly reflects upon Job as one that behaved himself like a wicked man, because though he cried out of God in way of complaint, yet he did not cry unto him by humble supplication.

Ver. 14.

They die in youth; they provoke God to cut them off before their time. Heb. *Their soul* (i.e. they themselves) *shall die in youth. Their life is;* or, *their life* shall die or be extinct; which verb is understood out of the former clause, after the manner of the Hebrews.

The unclean; or, *the filthy,* or *whoremongers,* or *sodomites;* to whose destruction (which happened not long before this time) he may seem to allude. The sense is, they shall die by some dreadful and exemplary stroke of Divine vengeance.

Ver. 15.

i.e. Causeth them to hear, and understand, and do the will of God; hearing being oft put *for obeying*. And this latter clause seems to

be added, to intimate that he will not deliver all afflicted persons, but only those whose ears he openeth to receive his counsels.

In oppression, i.e. in the time of their oppression. Or, *by oppression or tribulation*, as the means of opening their ears and hearts.

Ver. 16.

Even so, if thou hadst opened thine ear to God's counsels, and humbled thyself under his correcting hand, and sued to God for mercy,

would he have removed thee; as this verb is used, #2Ch 18:31. Or, *allured, or enticed, or persuaded thee*, as the word properly signifies; which possibly may here be emphatical, and may imply, as that Job had by his sins brought himself into these straits, so that God would have brought him out of them by the usual and regular way, to wit, by persuading him to turn from his sins, and humbly and earnestly to cry to God for mercy, which if he had complied with, God would have delivered him.

Out of the strait, Heb. *out of the mouth or jaws of tribulation*; which like a wild beast was read to swallow him up.

Into a broad place, i.e. into a state of ease and freedom.

Thy table; thy dishes, or the food in them.

Ver. 17.

The judgment; or, *the cause, or sentence*, as the word most properly signifieth. Thou hast fully pleaded their cause, and justified the hard and reproachful speeches which wicked men in their rage utter against God, condemning God and justifying themselves.

Judgment and justice take hold on thee; or, therefore (which is oft understood) *the sentence and judgment* (or, *the judicial sentence*, to wit, of the wicked now mentioned) shall take hold on thee. Thou hast maintained their cause against God, and God shall pass against thee their sentence, or the sentence of condemnation due to such wicked men.

Ver. 18.

Because there is wrath, to wit, conceived by God against thee. Because by thy pleading the cause of the wicked, thou hast deserved that God should give sentence against thee, as was now said, and hast provoked God's wrath against thee; therefore look to thyself, and reconcile thyself to God by true repentance whilst thou mayst, and before sentence be executed upon thee.

Beware: this is not in the Hebrew, but is necessarily to be understood to make up the sense, and is oft understood in the like cases, and that before this Hebrew particle *pen*, as **#Ge 3:22 11:4 42:4 Isa 36:8**. See the like also **#Mt 25:9 Ac 5:39**.

With his stroke; properly, with the stroke of his hand or foot. It is an allusion to men, who oft express their anger by clapping their hands, or stamping with their feet.

Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee; for if once God's wrath take hold of thee, and sentence be executed upon thee before thou dost repent and humble thyself to thy judge, neither riches, nor friends, no, nor any person or thing in heaven and earth, can redeem thee; no ransom or price will be accepted for thee.

Ver. 19.

If thou couldst recover thy lost wealth or strength, or thy friends would employ theirs on thy behalf, neither could the one ransom thee, nor the other rescue thee.

Ver. 20.

Desire not the night; either,

1. Properly, that in it thou mayst find some ease or rest, as men usually do. But this Job did not much desire, for he complains that his nights were as restless as his days. Or rather,

2. Metaphorically, the night of death, which is called the night both in Scripture, as **#Joh 9:4**, and in other writers; and which Job had oft and earnestly desired, and even thirsted after, as this verb notes. See **#Job 7:15**. And this seems best to agree with the foregoing counsel, **#Job 36:18**, beware *lest he take thee away with his stroke*; for then, saith he, thou art irrecoverably lost and gone; and therefore take heed of thy foolish and oft-repeated

desire of death, lest God inflict it upon thee in great anger. *When*; or, by which; which words are oft understood in divers texts of Scripture. *People*; even whole nations and bodies of people, which are all God's creatures as well as thou, and yet are not spared by him, but cut off in wrath, and many of them sent from one death to another; take heed therefore thou be not added to the number.

Are cut off, Heb. are made to *ascend*, i.e. to vanish, or perish, or die, as this verb is oft used, as **#Job 18:16 Ps 102:24**.

In their place; in their several places where they are; or suddenly, before they can remove out of the place where the hand and stroke of God finds them; or in the place where they are settled and surrounded with all manner of comforts, and supports, and friends, all which could not prevent their being cut off. Possibly this phrase may allude to that expression of Job's, **#Job 29:18**, *I shall die in my nest*.

Ver. 21.

Regard not iniquity, or, *look not to it*, to wit, with an approving or coveting eye, as this word is used, **#Pr 23:31**. Thou hast chosen rather to quarrel with God, and censure his judgments, than humbly and quietly to submit to them, and to wait upon God by faith and prayer for deliverance in his time and way.

Ver. 22.

God exalteth; or, *is high*, or exalted; the active verb being taken intransitively; which is not unusual in the Hebrew tongue. This is a proper argument to force the foregoing counsels. God is omnipotent; and therefore can with great facility either punish thee far worse, if thou be obstinate and refractory; or deliver thee, if thou dost repent and return to him.

Who teacheth like him? he is also infinitely wise as well as powerful; and as none can work like him, so none can teach like him. Therefore do not presume to teach him how to govern the world, or to order thy affairs; but know that whatsoever he doth with thee, or with any other men, is best to be done. And therefore be willing to learn from him. Learn obedience by the things which thou sufferest from him; and do not follow thy own fancies or affections, but use the methods which God hath taught thee to get out of thy troubles, by submission, and prayer, and repentance.

The words may be rendered, *what lord is like him?* For the word *moreb* in the Chaldee dialect signifies a *lord*. This translation suits with the former clause of this verse; but ours agrees well enough with that, and is confirmed by the following verse.

Ver. 23.

His way, wherein he would walk, i.e. what courses and methods he should use in the administration of human affairs. If he had a superior Lord who gave him laws for his actions, he might be accountable to him, and questionable for what he did; but he is supreme, absolute, and uncontrollable, who hath no law to regulate him but his own holy nature and blessed will. And therefore how rash, and impudent, and absurd a thing is it for any man to censure his proceedings!

Thou hast wrought iniquity; thou hast swerved from the law and rule given to thee.

Ver. 24.

Remember; call to mind this thy duty, and take this matter into thy more serious thoughts, and it will prevent thy horrible mistakes and miscarriages.

That; so this Hebrew particle is used here, **#Job 36:10 3:12.**

His work; or, *his works*, the singular number being put for the plural, every work which he doth; do not condemn any of his providential works towards thee or others, but adore and glorify them, as done with admirable wisdom, and justice, and faithfulness.

Which men behold, to wit, with admiration and astonishment; which by their greatness and glory draw the eyes and minds of all men towards them; which deserve to be entertained with adoration and reverence of all men, not with censure and reproach.

Ver. 25.

May see it, to wit, his work, last mentioned. The power, and wisdom, and greatness of God is so manifest in all his works, that all who are not blind or stupid must needs see and acknowledge it.

Man may behold it afar off; the works of God are so great and conspicuous, that they may be seen at a great distance; whereas

little things cannot be seen, unless we be near them. This translation and interpretation seems better to agree with the context than that which is more common, *man doth behold it* (i.e. God's work or works)

afar off, i.e. they see them darkly and imperfectly, as things at a great distance, but not clearly and plainly, as things near at hand; and therefore they are so apt to mistake them, and misjudge of them.

Ver. 26.

God is great; infinite in majesty, and power, and wisdom, and all perfections, and therefore just in all his ways. We

know him not, to wit, perfectly. Though we see something of him in his works, as was now said, yet we see and know but little of him in comparison of that which is in him. He is incomprehensibly great in his essence and in his works, and therefore be not so rash, O Job, as to censure those ways of God which thou canst not fully understand. He is from everlasting to everlasting, eternal, as in his being, so in all his counsels; which therefore must be infinitely wise, and above the comprehension of short-lived men.

Ver. 27.

Having affirmed that God's works are incomprehensibly great and glorious, he now enters upon the proof of it; and he proveth it from the most common and visible works of nature and providence, which if thoroughly considered, are full of wonder, and past the reach of the greatest philosophers, who indeed speak of them only by guess, and by their innumerable disputations about them discover their ignorance in them. And hence he leaves it to Job to consider how incomparably more deep and unconceivable the secret counsels and judgments of God must needs be, and therefore how foolish and presumptuous a thing it was for him to judge and censure them.

He maketh small the drops of water, i.e. he orders matters so wisely and graciously, that the waters which are in the clouds do not fall down at once in spouts, or rivers, or seas; which would be both unprofitable and pernicious to the earth, and to mankind; but by degrees, and in drops; which is best for men's safety and

comfort, and for the refreshment of the earth. And this he observes as a wonderful work of God, without whose providence herein those waters might constantly or commonly fall in spouts, as sometimes part of them hath done.

They; either the waters, last mentioned; or the clouds, as it is expressed in the next verse; or the active verb is used impersonally, which is frequent in the Hebrew language, *they pour down rain*, for *the rain is poured down*.

Pour down; or, *melt* or *dissolve*; which word is borrowed from metallists, who dissolve metals with fire, and then pour them forth by degrees and in parcels; as the clouds are dissolved, and then poured forth in drops, as was now expressed.

According to the vapour thereof, i.e. according to the proportion of vapours which the heat of the sun hath drawn up from the earth or sea into the clouds. Or,

into the vapour thereof. So it notes that great work of God, by which the rain is first made of vapours, and afterwards resolved into vapours, or into the matter of succeeding vapours, by a constant rotation and reciprocation.

Ver. 28.

In such plenty as the necessities of the earth require; which also is a wonderful work of God.

Ver. 29.

Of the clouds; or rather, *of a cloud*, as it is in the Hebrew; whence it comes to pass that a small cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, doth suddenly spread over the whole heavens: how the clouds come to be suddenly gathered together, and so condensed as to bring forth thunder and lightning, which here follows.

The noise of his tabernacle, i.e. the thunder produced in the clouds, which are oft called God's *tent* or tabernacle, as **#Ps 18:1 104:3**, because there he oftentimes seems to dwell, and gives forth tokens of his powerful and glorious presence in those mighty works of thundering and lightning, wherewith men are frequently astonished and affrighted.

Ver. 30.

His light, i.e. the lightning; of which the whole context speaks, which is fitly called *God's light*, as it is called *God's lightning*, #Ps 144:6, because God only can light it.

Upon it, i.e. upon the cloud, which is in a manner the candlestick in which God sets up this light.

Covereth the bottom of the sea; the lightning spreads far and wide over all the parts of the sea, and pierceth deep, reaching even to the bottom of it, and spreading itself upon it, and so covering it like a gay and glorious garment, suddenly cast over and covering the body of a man or woman; or as God is said to *cover himself with light as with a garment*, #Ps 104:2.

Ver. 31.

By thunder and lightning he manifests his displeasure and executes his judgments against ungodly people or countries.

He giveth meat in abundance; or, and (which conjunction is oft understood) *he giveth meat*, &c., i.e. by the selfsame clouds he punisheth wicked men by thunder and lightning, and provideth for others by those plentiful showers which accompany them.

Ver. 32.

With clouds; with thick and black clouds spread over the whole heavens, as it is in times of great thunders and lightnings. Heb. *With hands*; either the clouds are so called for their resemblance to hands, #1Ki 18:4,1, as being hollow and spread abroad; or the meaning is, that God covereth the light as it were by the hollow of his hand, as a man sometimes covers the light of a candle.

The light; either the lightning, or rather the sun, which is fitly called light, #Job 31:26 Ps 136:7, as being the fountain of light.

Commandeth it not to shine; or, *giveth a charge concerning it*, to wit, that it shall be covered; or, *forbiddeth it*, as this Hebrew word, joined with this proposition, usually signifies, as #Ge 2:17 28:6 1Ki 2:43 11:11, and elsewhere, i.e. hindereth it, as it were by an express command or prohibition, from its usual and proper work, to wit, from shining.

That cometh betwixt; which God interposeth as a veil between the sun and earth; by which he doth, as it were, deliver his command or prohibition to the sun, that he should not shine.

Ver. 33.

The noise thereof, to wit. of or within the black or thick cloud, spoken of #**Job 36:32**. Or, *his*, i.e. God's, *noise*, to wit, the thunder, which is called *God's voice*, #**Ps 29:4,5**.

Showeth concerning it, to wit, the rain, which is the principal subject of these verses, of which he speaketh expressly #**Job 36:27,28**; and of its companions, the clouds, and thunder and lightning, in all the following verses. The sense is, The thunder gives notice of the approaching rain. And as the thunder, so *also the cattle*, showeth (which verb is, understood out of the foregoing clause, after the manner) *concerning the vapour*, i.e. concerning the coming of the rain; but he puts *vapour* for the rain, because divers cattle are very sagacious in this matter, and do not only perceive the rain when it is ready to fall, but foresee it at some distance by the vapours, which are drawn up by the sun in great abundance, and by divers motions and actions, give men timely notice of it, as hath been observed not only by husbandmen, but also by learned authors.

JOB CHAPTER 37

God's great works, lightning, thunder, snow, rain, winds, frosts, clouds, and his providences towards nations, whether for correction or mercy, call for reverence and fear, #**Job 37:1-14**; as also his unsearchable wisdom in them, #**Job 37:15-18**. We are ignorant, and cannot speak to God; but must fear him, who respecteth none, #**Job 37:19-24**.

Ver. 1.

At this also, of which I have already spoken, and am now to speak further, to wit, the thunder, which hath oftentimes made even atheists and other wicked men to tremble with a fear of horror, and good men to tremble with a fear of reverence, and a due dread of God's judgments.

Is moved out of his place; leaps and beats excessively, as if it would leap out of my body.

Ver. 2.

It seems not improbable, that whilst Elihu was speaking it thundered greatly, and that tempest was begun wherewith God ushered in his speech, as it here follows, **#Job 38:1**, and that this occasioned his return to that subject of which he had discoursed before, and his exhortation to them to mind it with deeper attention.

The noise of his voice; or, *his voice* (to wit, the thunder, which is called *a voice*, **#Ex 20:18**, and God's voice, **#Ps 29:4**) *with trembling*; because the thunder is an effect or evidence of God's mighty power, and oftentimes of his anger also. *The sound that goeth out of his mouth*; as the voice (and thunder is God's voice) goeth out of man's mouth. Or, that is produced by God's word or command, which is oft signified by his mouth.

Ver. 3.

He directeth it, to wit, his voice; which he shooteth or guideth like an arrow to the mark, so disposing it that it may do that work for which he sends it.

Under the whole heaven; far and wide through all the parts of this lower world.

Unto the ends of the earth; from one end of the heaven to the opposite end or part of the earth, as from east to west, **#Mt 24:27**.

Ver. 4.

After it a voice, i.e. after the lightning. For though the thunder be in order of nature before the lightning, yet the lightning is seen before the thunder is heard.

With the voice of his excellency, or, *with his excellent*, or *high*, or *lofted* voice, both loud and full of majesty and awfulness.

He will not stay; or, *delay*. Heb. *take them by the heel*, as Jacob did Esau in the womb, to delay or stop him from entering into the world before him. *Them*; either,

1. The lightnings spoken of in the beginning of the verse. But these do not stay till his voice be heard, but come before it. Or rather,

2. The rains and storms, of which he spoke before, and will speak again, **#Job 37:6**.

Ver. 5.

Marvellously; with a wonderful and terrible noise, and so as to produce many wonderful effects, as the breaking down of great and strong trees or buildings, the killing of men in a stupendous manner, &c.

Great things doeth he, even in the course of nature, and in visible things; which all men see, but scarce any can give the true and satisfactory reasons of them; for the greatest philosophers speak only by guess, and are greatly divided among themselves about them. And therefore it is not strange if the secret and deep counsels of Divine Providence be out of our reach; and it is great arrogancy in thee, O Job, to censure them, because thou dost not fully understand them.

Ver. 6.

By his powerful word and will the snow is made in the air, and falls upon the earth where and when he seeth fit.

The great rain of his strength, i.e. those great storms or showers of rain which come with great force and irresistible violence.

Ver. 7.

By these great snows and rains he drives men out of the fields, and seals or binds up their hands from all that work, and drives them home to their houses, and in a manner shuts them up there. See **#Ge 7:16 Ex 9:19**. Or, *by his hand or power* (i.e. by those powerful works of his hand here mentioned) *he sealeth*, or *shutteth up*, or *keepeth close every man*, to wit, in his house, as the beasts in their dens, **#Job 37:8**. *That all men may know his work*; that men being hindered from action and their own work, and so being idle and at perfect leisure, may fall to a serious contemplation of these and other great and glorious works of God. Or, *that he* (i.e. *every man*, as was now expressed)

may know (or *inquire into*, or *take an account of*) all his workmen; for which the proper season is when they are all hindered from their work, and brought together into the house.

Ver. 8.

Then, in great rains or deep snows, the beasts go into dens for shelter and comfort.

Ver. 9.

Out of the south, Heb. *out of the inner chamber*; as the southern part of the world is called, because in a great part it was and is hid and unknown to those who live in the northern hemisphere, in which Job's habitation lay. Or, *out of the chambers of the south*, as it is more largely expressed, **#Job 9:9**; for this is opposed to the north in the following clause.

The whirlwind; violent and stormy winds which in those parts most frequently came-out of the south, whence they are called *whirlwinds of the south*, **#Zec 9:14**. So also **#Isa 21:1**.

Cold, i.e. cold and freezing winds, which generally come from that quarter.

Ver. 10.

By the breath of God, i.e. by the word of God, as this very phrase is explained, **#Ps 33:6**; by his will or appointment, to which as the principal cause all these works are ascribed.

The breadth of the waters is straitened; the frost dries up the waters in great measure, and bringeth the remainder into a narrower compass, as we see.

Ver. 11.

By watering, to wit, the earth; by causing them first to receive and return, and then to pour forth abundance of water.

He wearieth the thick cloud, by filling and burdening them with much water, and making them to go long journeys to water remote parts, and at last to spend and empty themselves there; all which things make men weary; and therefore are here said to make the clouds weary by a common figure called *prosopopoeia*.

He scattereth his bright cloud: as for the white and lightsome clouds, (which are opposed to the thick and black clouds in the former clause,) *he scattereth* and *dissolveth them* by the wind or sun. Or, *he scattereth other clouds by his light*, i.e. by the beams of the sun. So he gathereth some, and scattereth others, as he pleaseth, causing either clear, or dark and rainy weather.

Ver. 12.

It is turned round about; the clouds (now mentioned) are carried about to this or that place.

By his counsels; not by chance, (though nothing seems to be more casual and uncertain than the motions of the clouds,) but by his order and governance.

That they may do whatsoever he commandeth them; either be dispersed and pass away without effect, to the disappointment of the husbandmen's hopes, or be dissolved in sweet and fruitful showers.

Ver. 13.

He causeth it to come, Heb. *he maketh it* (to wit, the cloud, or clouds, and the rain which is in it) *to find*, to wit, a path, or to find out the persons or place to which God intends either good or hurt by it.

For correction, Heb. *for a rod*, to scourge or correct men by immoderate showers. Or, for a tribe, or certain portion of land, which God intends particularly to punish in that kind.

For his land, i.e. for God's land, whereby he understands either,

1. The land which he favoureth, and where his servants live, such as Canaan was, which for that reason God blessed with rain, as is noted, **#De 11:12 Ps 68:9,10**. But in Job's time God's people were not in Canaan, but in Egypt, where little or no rain fell. Or,

2. The uninhabited or desert parts of the world, which may be called *God's land* peculiarly, because it is immediately and only under God's care, as being not regarded nor possessed by any man. For it is noted as a special act of God's providence, that he causeth rain to fall upon such places, **#Job 38:26,27**. Or,

3. *His earth*, as it may be rendered, to wit, the whole earth, which is said to be the *Lord's*, **#Ps 24:50:12**, and which may be here opposed to a *tribe*, or little part of the earth. And so this may note a general judgment by excessive rains inflicted upon the whole earth, and all its inhabitants, even the universal deluge, which then was in a manner of fresh memory, which came in a great measure out of the clouds. And thus these two first members speak of correction, and the last of mercy.

For mercy; for the comfort and benefit of mankind, by cooling and cleansing the air, and refreshing and improving all the fruits of the earth, and other ways.

Ver. 14.

If there be so much matter of wonder and adoration in the most obvious and sensible works of God, how wonderful must his deep and secret counsels and judgments be! And therefore it would better become thee humbly to admire, and quietly to submit to them, than to murmur or quarrel with them.

Ver. 15.

When God disposed them, to wit, the things before mentioned, the clouds, rain, snow, thunder and lightning, and other meteors. Did God ask counsel from thee to acquaint thee with his counsels in the producing and ordering of them, when, and where, and in what manner he should dispose them? God ordereth all these things not as it pleaseth thee, but as he thinks meet; and in like manner he disposeth of all human affairs, and of thine among the rest.

Caused the light of his cloud to shine; which may be understood either,

1. Of the light of the sun breaking through the clouds, when it is most glorious and comfortable. But though this light break through the clouds, yet it is very improper to call it *the light of the clouds*. Or,

2. The lightning, which is properly so called, as being produced by and in a cloud. Or,

3. The rainbow, which is a lightsome and glorious work of God, and therefore not likely to be omitted in this place, and which is seated in a cloud, which also may well be called God's cloud, because therein God puts *his bow*, as the rainbow is called, **#Ge 9:13.**

Ver. 16.

The balancings; how God doth as it were weigh and suspend the clouds in balances; so that although they are ponderous and flail of water, yet they are by his power kept up in the thin air from falling down upon us in spouts and floods, as sometimes they

have done, and generally would do, if not overruled by a higher Providence.

Which is perfect in knowledge; who exactly knows the weight. These are effects and evidences of his infinite power and knowledge.

Ver. 17.

How and why thy garments keep thee warm; of which as there are some natural causes, so it is certain that they are not sufficient to do it without God's blessing, as experience shows, #**Hag 1:6**.

The earth, i.e. the air about the earth.

By the south wind; which though sometimes it brings tempests, #**Job 37:9**, yet commonly it ushereth in hot weather, #**Lu 12:55**, as the north wind brings cold, #**Job 37:9**. Or, *from the south wind*, i.e. from the tempest, which was noted to come out of the south, #**Job 37:9**. Heb. *from* or

by the south, i.e. by the sun's coming into the southern parts, which makes the air quiet and warm.

Ver. 18.

Wast thou his co-worker or assistant in spreading out the sky like a tent or canopy over the earth? or canst thou spread out such another sky? Then indeed thou mayst with some colour pretend to be privy to his counsels, and to judge of his works.

Which is strong; which though it be very thin and transparent, yet is also firm, and compact, and stedfast, and of great force when it is pent up.

As a molten looking-glass, made of brass or steel, as the manner then was.

Ver. 19.

Unto him, i.e. unto God, either by way of apology for thee; or rather, by way of debate and disputation with him about his counsels and ways: about which we know not what to say, and therefore are willing to be taught by thee, who pretendest to such exquisite knowledge of these matters. So it is a reproof of his presumption and arrogance.

We cannot order our speech; we know neither with what words or matter, nor in what method and manner, to maintain discourse with him, or plead against him. The words our speech are easily understood out of the former clause of the verse.

By reason of darkness; both because of the darkness of the matter, God's counsels and ways being a great depth, and far out of our reach; and because of the darkness or blindness of our minds.

Ver. 20.

That I speak, Heb. *that I will speak*. Shall I send, or who dare carry, a challenge from me to God, or a message that I am ready and desirous to debate with him concerning his proceedings? This indeed thou hast done in effect, but far be such presumption from me.

If a man speak; if a man should be so bold and venturous to enter the lists with God.

He shall be swallowed up with the sense of God's infinite majesty and spotless purity.

Ver. 21.

And; or, *for*, as this particle is oft rendered; the following words containing a reason of those which go before.

Now: this particle is either,

1. A note of time, and so it intimates a sudden change which then was in the weather, which having been very dark, began now to clear up; or rather,

2. A note of inference to usher in the argument. *Men see not;* either,

1. Do not observe (as *seeing* is oft used) nor consider these glorious works of God; or,

2. Cannot behold, or at least not gaze upon it.

In the clouds; or, *in the skies;* for the Hebrew word signifies both clouds and skies. This is to be understood, either,

1. Of bright and lightsome clouds; or rather,

2. Of the sun, which is oft and emphatically called light, as was noted before, and here the bright light; which men oftentimes cannot behold, either when it is covered with a black and thick cloud; or when, as it follows, the sky is very clear, and consequently the sunshine is very bright. And therefore it is not strange if we cannot see God, who dwelleth in darkness, #**1Ki 8:12**, nor discern his counsels and ways, which are covered with great obscurity; and if we dare not approach to him, with whom is, as it here follows, terrible majesty; and if we presume to do so, we must needs be swallowed up, as was said, #**Job 37:20**.

But the wind passeth; or rather, *when* (as this particle is used) the wind passeth. Cleanseth them; earlier the clouds, i.e. cleanseth the air from them; or the skies, by driving away those clouds which darkened it.

Ver. 22.

Fair weather; or, *when* (which particle may well be understood out of, the foregoing verse; and so this may be a further description of the time when men cannot see or gaze upon the sun, namely, when) *fair weather*, &c. Heb. *gold*; either,

1. Properly. And so this may be noted as another wonderful work of God, that the choicest of metals, to wit, gold, should be found in and fetched out of the bowels of cold northern countries. Or,

2. Metaphorically, as this word is oft used of bright and shining things; as we read of *golden oil*, #**Zec 4:12**, and we call happy times *golden days*. And so bright and fair weather may well be called golden, because then the sun gilds the air and earth with its beams, which also are called by poets golden beams.

Out of the north, i.e. from the northern winds, which scatter the clouds, and clear the sky, #**Pr 25:23**.

With God is terrible majesty; and therefore we neither can nor may approach too near to him, nor speak presumptuously or irreverently to him, or of him. And so this is the application of what he had now said, that we could not see the sun, &c, much less God; and withal it is an epiphonema or conclusion of the whole foregoing discourse. Those glorious works of his which I have described, are testimonies of that great and terrible majesty

which is in him; which should cause us to fear and reverence him, and not to behave ourselves so insolently towards him, as Job hath done.

Ver. 23.

We cannot find him out, to wit, to perfection, as it is expressed, **#Job 11:7**. We cannot comprehend him; his being, power, wisdom, justice, and his counsels proceeding from them, are past our finding out; and therefore it is most absurd and intolerable that thou, O Job, presumest to censure what thou dost not understand.

He is excellent in power; and therefore as he doth not need any unrighteous action to advance himself, so he cannot do it, because all such things are acts and evidences of impotency or weakness.

In judgment, i.e. in the just and righteous administration of judgment, as this word is oft used, and as the thing itself and the following words plainly evince. And this he adds, to intimate that although God had indeed a power to crush Job, or any other man, yet he never did nor can exercise that power unjustly or tyrannically, as Job seemed to insinuate.

In plenty of justice; in great and perfect justice, such as no man can justly reproach.

He will not afflict, to wit, without just cause, and above measure; as it may and must be limited, both from the foregoing words, and from Job's complaint, which was of that very thing; and from the nature of the thing, because otherwise this proposition, that God

will not afflict, is not simply and universally true. Or these last words may be joined with the former; and so some render the place,

he is excellent in power, and, or but, or

yet, he will not afflict any man with judgment and much (i.e. too much)

justice, i.e. with extremity or rigour of justice.

Ver. 24.

Men do therefore fear him; for this cause, to wit, because of God's infinite and excellent perfections, and especially those

mentioned in the foregoing verse, *men do or should* (for the future tense is oft used potentially, as Hebricians know) *fear or reverence him*, and humbly submit to him, and not presume to quarrel or dispute with him, as thou, O Job, hast done.

He respecteth not, Heb. *he doth not*, or *will not behold*, to wit, with respect or approbation; he beholdeth them afar off with scorn and contempt.

Any that are wise of heart, i. e. such as are wise in their own eyes, that lean to their own understandings, and despise all other men in comparison of themselves, and scorn all their counsels; that are so puffed up with the opinion of their own wisdom, that they dare contend with their Maker, and presume to censure his counsels and actions; which he hereby intimates to be Job's fault, and to be the true reason why God did not respect nor regard him, nor his prayers and tears, as Job complained. And so this is also a tacit advice and exhortation to Job to be humble and little ill his own eyes, if ever he expected or desired any favour from God.

JOB CHAPTER 38

The Lord answers Job, **#Job 38:1-3**: declareth his works of creation; the foundation and the measures of the earth, **#Job 38:4-6**; the stars; the sea, and its bounds, **#Job 38:7-11**; the morning, and its light, **#Job 38:12-15**; the depth of the sea; the gates and shadow of death; the breadth of the earth, **#Job 38:16-18**; the place of light and darkness; the treasures of snow and hail for battle, **#Job 38:19-23**; the east wind, springs, and rain for the earth, **#Job 38:24-30**; the planets, ordinances of heaven, and their dominion on the earth; clouds and lightning, **#Job 38:31-35**. Wisdom and understanding in the heart of man, and in his works more than we can understand: he feedeth the lion and the raven, **#Job 38:36-41**.

Ver. 1.

Answered Job, i.e. began to debate the matter with him, as Job had desired.

Out of the whirlwind, i.e. out of a dark and thick cloud, from which he sent a terrible and tempestuous wind, as the harbinger of his presence. In this manner God appears and speaks to him,

partly, because this was his usual method in those times, as we see, #Ex 19:18 Nu 9:15,16; see also #1Ki 19:11 Eze 1:4; partly, to awaken Job and his friends to the more serious and reverent attention to his words; partly, to testify his displeasure, both against Job, and against his three friends; and partly, that all of them might be more deeply and thoroughly humbled and abused within themselves, and prepared the better to receive, and longer to retain, the instructions which God was about to give them.

Ver. 2.

Who is this? it is a question of admiration and reprehension, What and where is he that presumeth to talk at this rate? this language becomes not a creature, much less a professor of religion. The person here designed is not Elihu, who spoke last; but Job, who had spoken most, as is apparent from #Job 38:1, and from #Job 42:3, where Job takes the following reproof to himself, and from the following discourse, wherein God convinceth Job by divers of the same kind of arguments which Elihu had used against him.

That darkeneth counsel; either,

1. His own counsel, i.e. that expresseth his own mind darkly and doubtfully. But that was not Job's fault. He spake his mind too plainly and freely. Or rather,

2. God's counsel, which is called simply *counsel* by way of eminency, as *the word* and *the commandment* are oft put for *the word* and *command of God*. For the great matter of the dispute between Job and his friends was concerning God's counsel, and purpose, and providence in afflicting Job; which being a wise, and just, and glorious action of God, Job had endeavoured to obscure, and misrepresent, and censure. And God's decrees and judgments are frequently called his *counsels*, as #Ps 32:11 Pr 19:21 Isa 28:29 Ac 2:23.

By words; God doth not charge Job, as his three friends had done, with hypocrisy and wickedness in the course of life, nor with atheistical opinions of God or his providence, as some of the Hebrew writers do, but confines his reproof to his hard speeches.

Without knowledge; proceeding from ignorance, and mistake, and inconsiderateness; not from malice or rage against God, as his friends accused him.

Ver. 3.

Gird up now thy loins; as warriors then did for the battle. Prepare thyself for the combat with me, which thou hast oft desired. I accept of thy challenge, **#Job 13:22**, and elsewhere.

I will demand of thee; or, *I will ask thee questions*; which he doth in the following verses.

Ver. 4.

Then thou wast no where, thou hadst no being; thou art but of yesterday; and dost thou presume to judge of my eternal counsels? I made the world without thy help, and therefore can govern it without thy counsel, and I do not need thee to be the controller or censurer of my works.

When I laid the foundations of the earth; when I made the earth, which is as the foundation or lower part of the whole world, and settled it as firm and fast upon its own centre as if it had been built upon the surest foundations. But if thou art ignorant of these manifest and visible works, do. not pretend to the exact knowledge of my secret counsels and mysterious providences.

Ver. 5.

Who hath prescribed how long and broad and deep it should be?

Or who hath stretched the line, to wit, the measuring line, to regulate all its dimensions, so as might be most convenient both for beauty and use?

Ver. 6.

This strong and durable building hath no foundations but in God's power and word, which hath marvellously established it upon itself.

Or who laid the cornerstone thereof; by which the several walls and parts of the building are joined and fastened together, and in which, next to the foundations, the stability of any building does consist? The sense is, Who was it that did build this goodly fabric, and established it so firmly that it cannot be moved without a miracle?

Ver. 7.

The morning stars; either,

1. The stars properly so called, who are said to sing and praise God, objectively, because they give men ample occasion to do it in regard of their glorious light and stupendous motions, &c. Compare #Ps 19:1 148:1, &c. But,

1. These stars are not here the objects or matter, but the authors or instruments, of God's praises for the founding of the earth.

2. The stars were not created when the earth was founded, but upon the fourth day.

3. There is no satisfactory reason given why all the stars should be called

morning stars, especially when there is but one star known by that name. Or rather,

2. The sons of God, as it here follows, the latter clause of the verse being explicatory of the former, as is most frequent in this and some other books of Scripture, to wit, the angels, who may well be called *stars*, as even men of eminent note, and particularly ministers of God's word, are called, #Da 8:10 12:3 Re 1:16,20; and *morning stars*, because of their excellent lustre and glory, for which they are called *angels of light*, #2Co 11:14, and Christ for the same reason is called the *Morning Star*, #Re 22:16. *The sons of God*; the blessed angels; for man not being yet made, God had then no other sons; and these are called the sons of God, partly because they had their whole being from him, and partly because they were made partakers of his Divine and glorious image. And *all* these are said to join in this work of praising God, probably because none of the angels were as yet fallen from their first estate, though they did fall within a very little time after.

Shouted for joy; rejoiced in and blessed God for his works; whereby he intimates that they neither did advise or any way assist him in his works, nor dislike or censure any of his works, as Job had presumed to do with the works of his providence, which are not inferior to those of creation.

Ver. 8.

Who was it, thou or I, that did set bounds to the vast and raging ocean, and shut it up as it were with doors within its proper place and storehouse, that it might not overflow the earth; which without God's powerful restraint it would do? See **#Ps 33:7 104:9**. This sense seems most proper, and to be confirmed by the following verses.

When it brake forth, or, *after it had broken forth*, to wit, from the womb or bowels of the earth, within which the waters were for the most part contained, **#Ge 1:2**; compare **#2Pe 3:5**; and out of which they were by God's command brought forth into the proper place or channel which God had appointed for them.

Ver. 9.

When I covered it with vapours and clouds which arise out of the sea. and by God's appointment hover above it, and cover it like a garment.

Thick darkness, i. e. black and dark clouds, called *darkness* by a usual metonymy of the adjunct. So the same thing is repeated in other words, after the manner. Having compared the sea to a newborn infant, he continues in the same metaphor, and makes the clouds as swaddling-bands to keep the sea within its bounds; though indeed neither clouds, nor air, nor sands and shores can bound the sea, but it is God alone who doth it in and with these things.

Ver. 10.

Brake up for it my decreed place, i.e. made those valleys, or channels, and hollow places in the earth, which might serve for a cradle to receive and hold this great and goodly infant when it came out of the womb. See **#Ge 1:9, 10 Ps 33:7**. Or, ordained or established my decree upon or concerning it. Set bars and doors, i.e. fixed its bounds as strongly as if they were fortified with bars and doors.

Ver. 11.

To wit, at the sand and shore of the sea, **#Jer 5:22**.

Thy proud waves; which rage and swell as if they would overwhelm all the earth.

Ver. 12.

The morning, i.e. the morning light, or the sun, which is the cause of it. Didst thou create the sun, and appoint the order and succession of day and night?

Since thy days; since thou wast born. This work was not done by thee, but by me, and that long before thou wast born.

To know his place; to observe the punctual time when, and the point of the heavens where, it should arise; which varies every day. Was this thy contrivance or mine?

Ver. 13.

That this morning light should in a moment spread itself over the face of the whole earth, from one end of the hemisphere to the other.

Shaken out of it, from the face of the earth. And this effect the morning light hath upon the wicked, partly because it discovers them, and drives them into their lurking holes; whereas the darkness hides them, and draws them forth, and gives them opportunity to execute their villanies without observation, **#Job 24:15-17**; and partly because it brings them to condign punishment, the morning being the most fit and the most usual time for executing judgment; of which see **#Ps 101:8 Jer 21:12**.

Ver. 14.

It, to wit, the earth, mentioned in the next foregoing verse.

Is turned; is transformed and changed in its shape and appearance.

To the seal, or, *by the seal*, which makes a beautiful or valuable impression upon that clay, which in itself hath no form, nor worth, nor comeliness in it. So the earth, which in the darkness of the night lies like a confused heap, without either form or beauty, when the light ariseth and shineth upon it, appears in excellent order and great glory.

They; either,

1. The inhabitants of the earth, and particularly the wicked, mentioned both in the foregoing and following verses. Or,

2. More generally, the men and things of the earth, whether natural, as living creatures, herbs, and trees, &c.; or artificial, as houses or other buildings.

Stand, i. e. present themselves to our view, for which that posture of standing is most convenient. Or, *consist*, or *abide*, or *are constituted*.

As a garment; wherewith the earth is in a manner clothed and adorned as with a garment; as the blessed God himself is said to *cover himself with light as with a garment*, #Ps 104:2.

Ver. 15.

And, or *but*; for the following words seem to be added by way of opposition to what went before. The earth, and the men, and the things in it have the comfort and benefit of the light, but so have not the wicked. *Their light*, i.e. their portion of light. That light which is enjoyed by others is withholden from them, either by their own choice, because they love and choose darkness rather than light; or by the judgment of God, or the magistrate, by whom they are cut off from *the light of the living*, as it is called, #Job 33:30, or at least deprived of their peace, and comfort, and prosperity, which frequently goes under the name of

light in Scripture, and may be so called here by an elegant allusion to the natural light of the sun mentioned before.

The high arms; their great strength, which they used tyrannically, to the oppression and crushing of others.

Ver. 16.

The springs, Heb. *the tears*, i.e. the several springs out of which the waters of the sea flow as tears do from the eyes. Hast thou found out the utmost depth and bottom of the sea, which in divers places could never be reached by the wisest mariner, or the longest cables? And how then canst thou fathom the depths of my counsels?

Ver. 17.

Hast thou seen, or dost thou perfectly know, the place and state of the dead, the depths and bowels of that earth in which the generality of dead men are buried, or the several ways and

methods of death, or the various states and conditions of men after death? And the same thing is repeated.

Ver. 18.

Dost thou exactly know the whole compass and all parts of the earth, and the state and quality of all countries, and of the men and things in them? Give me an answer to these questions, which is far more easy to do, than to answer me to many other questions which I could put to thee about my secret counsels and providences, and the reasons of my dealing with thee as I do.

Ver. 19.

The way; or rather, *the place*, as the next clause explains it, and the Hebrew phrase will bear.

Where light dwelleth, i.e. hath its constant and settled abode; for in the place where Job lived, and in most other parts of the inhabited world, it is like a traveller, that cometh and goeth continually every day. This may be referred either,

1. To the place under the two poles, where first the light, and then the darkness, continues for six months together. Or rather,

2. To the sun, the fountain of light. And as this is a poetical book, so this may be a poetical expression and question, Whither goes the sun, when it departs from this hemisphere? Where is the tabernacle and the chamber in which both sacred, as **#Ps 19:4,5**, and profane poets suppose the sun to rest? Dost thou know the place where the sun when it sets may be found, and whence thou canst fetch it back again. For it is to be carefully observed, that he speaks not here of a bare and simple knowledge of this matter, which was plain and easy to Job, and many others, who were not ignorant that the sun was the fountain of light, from whose approach light comes, and by whose departure darkness is caused; but of an operative knowledge, even such as could and did enable him to *take it to the bound thereof*, as it follows, **#Job 38:20**. And withal, he seems here to speak not only of the daily course and motion of the sun, and the vicissitude of day and night, but also and especially of the first production of the light, which was before Job was born, as is evident from **#Job 38:21**. And this makes the question more difficult and more considerable, the sense whereof may be this: Seeing there was a time when there

was nothing but gross and comfortless darkness upon the face of the earth, what way came light into the world? which was the place where light dwelt at that time, and whence it was fetched? and whence came that orderly constitution and constant succession of light and darkness? Was this thy work? or wast thou privy to it, or a counsellor or assistant in it? or was it not done by me alone long before thou hadst a being?

Ver. 20.

That thou shouldst take it, i.e. taking, bring or lead it, as this verb is oft used, as #Ex 25:2 Ps 68:29, compared with #Eph 4:11 1Ki 3:24 17:10 Ho 14:2. And many other such pregnant verbs there are in the Hebrew language, having the signification of two verbs included in one, And this it refers principally to the *light*, and secondarily to darkness, as the consequent of the other.

To the bound thereof, i.e. its whole course, from the place of its abode whence it is supposed to come, to the end of its journey which it is to go. Didst thou direct or guide the light or the sun, that he should at first take, and afterward constantly continue, in that course which now it holds; that it should go from east to west, and rise sometimes in one point or part of the heaven, and sometimes in another, and that its day's journey should be longer in one season of the year, and shorter in another? This regular and excellent course must needs be the effect of great wisdom. And whose wisdom was it? thine or mine?

That thou shouldst know, to wit, practically, so as to direct or lead it in the manner now expressed.

The paths to the house thereof; where thou mayst find it, and whence thou mayst fetch it.

Ver. 21.

An ironical question: If thou pretendest that thou knowest these things, and canst readily answer these questions, how comest thou by this knowledge? Was it from hence, because thou wast born when I made the world, and that first constitution of the light and darkness in that order and succession which continues to this day, and thereby hadst the opportunity of inspecting my works, and seeing whence the light came, and because thou hast gained this

knowledge by long experience, as having lived ever since the creation of the world until this time? whereas in truth thou art but *of yesterday, and knowest nothing*, as was said, #**Job 8:9**. But the words are and may be otherwise rendered, *Dost or didst thou know*, either by thy own remembrance, or by the information of others,

that thou wast then born? (to wit, when I made the world. Or, *Didst thou know that thou shouldst then be born? then*, to wit, when thou wast born. Or, *Didst thou then know*, the two Hebrew particles being transplac'd, as is not unusual in that language, *that thou shouldst be born?* How couldst thou know this, when thou hadst no being?) *and that the number of thy days should be great?* that thou shouldst live so long as thou hast lived? Thou couldst neither foreknow the time of thy birth, nor the length of thy life. Or, *and is the number of thy days great*, i.e. so great that it reacheth to the time of the world's creation?

Ver. 22.

Dost thou know where I have laid up those vast quantities of snow and hail which I draw forth when I see fit? Dost thou know the causes of them, and the way to produce them? But if thou art unacquainted with these treasures, it is intolerable presumption in thee to pretend that thou knowest those treasures of wisdom which lie hid in my own breast.

Ver. 23.

Which, i.e. which snow, and especially hail.

Against the time of trouble, i.e. when I intend to bring trouble or calamity upon any country or people for their sins, or for their trial. Or, *against the time of the enemy*, i.e. when I intend to punish mine or my people's enemies, and to fight against them with these weapons; of which see instances #**Ex 9:14 Jos 10:11**. Compare #**1Sa 7:10 Job 36:31 Isa 30:30**.

Ver. 24.

By what way; dost thou know all the causes, means, methods, and circumstances of this work of God? *Is the light parted or dispersed or distributed*, to wit, in the air, or upon the face of the earth? By

light he understands either,

1. The lightning, which breaks forth suddenly out of a cloud, and with strange swiftness disperseth itself, and fleeth from east to west, as is noted, **#Mt 24:27**. But this word *light* put by itself, and being understood properly, is constantly used in this book for the light of the sun, and never for the lightning; and where it is meant of the lightning, there is some other word added to it, as **#Job 37:15**, where it is called *the light of his cloud*. And besides, he speaks of the lightning in the next verse; which were superfluous, if it were here mentioned. Or rather,

2. Of the light of the sun, which is commonly called *light* without any other word added to it, as **#Job 3:4,9,16 24:14 25:3**, &c. And this light of the sun is variously parted or distributed in the world, shining in one place and time, when it doth not shine in another; or for a longer time, or with greater brightness, and power, and virtue, than it doth in another; all which are the effects of God's infinite wisdom and power, and such as were out of Job's reach to understand, or at least to effect.

Which scattereth the east wind upon the earth, i.e. which light *scattereth*, &c., i.e. raiseth, the east wind, and causeth it to blow hither and thither upon the earth. For as the sun is justly called by the poets and others *the father of the winds*, because he draws up those exhalations which give matter to the winds, and for other reasons; so in particular the east wind is oft observed to rise together with the sun, from which also it hath both its Latin and Greek name. But some make this a distinct question from the former, and render the words thus; and (repeat, *by which way*)

the east wind (under which all the other winds may be comprehended) scattereth itself upon the earth, i.e. whence the winds come, and whither they go, which is mentioned as a secret in nature, **#Joh 3:8**, and how it comes to pass that they blow in such several manners, and with such various and even contrary effects. Or thus, and by which way the *east wind scattereth* (to wit, the clouds, or other light things; for this is noted in Scripture to be a most vehement wind, and to scatter the clouds, **#Ex 14:21 Jon 4:8**)

upon the earth, i.e. whence it comes to pass that the east wind was so violent and furious. But the words may be rendered thus,

which (i.e. which light of the sun, or when it, to wit, this light) *scattereth itself* (as divers here render this word, that conjugation being often used reciprocally, as is confessed) from (the prefix *mem* being understood, as it is very frequently in the Hebrew text)

the east (for this Hebrew word doth not only signify the *eastern wind*, but also the *east*, or the eastern part of the heavens or earth, as #**Eze 40:19 42:16 Hab 1:9**, and in many other places; and *kedem*, the root of this word, is constantly so used) *upon* or *over the earth, all over the earth*. And this is justly mentioned as a wonderful work of God, that as soon as ever the sun ariseth, it parteth or scattereth its light in an instant from one end of the hemisphere to another. But this I propose with submission.

Ver. 25.

For the overflowing of waters; for the showers of rain which come down out of the clouds, orderly, moderately, and gradually, as if they were conveyed in pipes or channels; which, without the care of God's providence, would fall confusedly, and all together; and, instead of refreshing, would overwhelm the earth.

For the lightning of thunder, i.e. for that lightning which, breaking out of the cloud with violence, causeth thunder. Or, *for lightning and thunder*. Who opened a passage for them out of the cloud in which they were imprisoned? And these are here joined with the rain, because they are commonly accompanied with great showers of rain; which is here noted as a wonderful work of God, that fire and water should come out of the same cloud.

Ver. 26.

To cause it to rain; that the clouds being broken by lightning and thunder might pour down rain.

Wherein there is no man, to wit, to water those parts by art and industry, as is usual in cultivated and inhabited places; which makes this work of Divine Providence more necessary and more remarkable, in providing for the relief of the wild beasts, and plants, and other fruits of these forsaken lands, which otherwise would perish with drought.

Ver. 27.

To satisfy, by raining, not sparingly, but liberally and abundantly upon it.

To cause the bud of the tender herb to springforth; there being many excellent and useful herbs found in desert places, which otherwise would be utterly neglected and despised.

Ver. 28.

To wit, besides me. Is there any man upon earth than can beget or produce rain at his pleasure? No, this is my peculiar work. And therefore seeing thou knowest and canst do nothing as to the government of these ordinary effects of nature, how great presumption is it to arrogate to thyself the knowledge and management of the secret and mysterious affairs of my providence in the disposal of men!

Ver. 29.

What man either can produce them, or doth fully understand where or how they are engendered? For philosophers speak of these things only by guess, and the reasons which some assign for them are confuted by others; and so they will confute one another to the end of the world, and prove nothing solidly but their own ignorance and the reasonableness of these questions.

Ver. 30.

As with a stone, i.e. with ice as hard as a stone.

The face of the deep, i.e. the great sea, which is oft called *the deep*, as #Ge 7:11 Ps 107:24 Isa 51:10 63:13 2Co 11:25, which in some parts is frozen, which is a wonderful work of God.

Ver. 31.

Bind, i.e. restrain or hinder them. Canst thou bind or shut up the earth when they open it?

The sweet influences; or, *the delights*; because this constellation by its benign and opening influences brings in the spring, the herbs and flowers, and other delights of the earth.

Pleiades, called also the Seven Stars. Of this and the following constellation, see #Job 9:9.

The bands; by which it binds up the air and earth, by bringing storms of rain or hail, or frost and snow; and withal binds or seals the hands of workmen, as is noted, #Job 37:7.

Orion: this is another constellation, which riseth in November, and brings in winter. So the sense of the verse is, Thou canst not bind the earth when the one looseth or openeth it, nor loose or open it when the other binds or shutteth it up.

Ver. 32.

Canst thou bring forth to wit, into view? canst thou make him to arise and appear in thy hemisphere?

Mazzaroth; by which he designs either,

1. All the constellations, and especially the twelve sign of the zodiac; or rather
2. Some particular constellation, as all the rest here mentioned are understood. But whether this be that which is called *the chambers of the south*, #Job 9:9, or the Dog Star, or some other visible in Job's country, but not in ours we may be safely and contentedly ignorant, seeing even the Hebrew doctors are not agreed therein.

Arcturus; a northern constellation, of which See Poole "Job 9:9".

With his sons, to wit, the lesser stars which belong to it, and are placed round about it, and attend upon it, as children upon their parents.

Ver. 33.

Knowest thou? either,

1. Simply, and by speculation, dost thou understand them? Or,
2. Practically, or operatively, so as to establish or rule them, as the next clause implies.

The ordinances of heaven; the laws, which are firmly established concerning their order, motion, or rest and their powerful influences upon this lower world. Didst thou give these laws? or dost thou perfectly know them?

Canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth? canst manage and overrule their influences, that they shall bring such seasons and such weather as thou wouldst have?

Ver. 34.

Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds; either thundering in them, or calling to them with a loud voice, commanding them to rain?

May cover thee, i.e. thy land, when it needs and requires rain.

Ver. 35.

Canst thou send at thy pleasure, and upon thy errand?

Here we are; an expression of servants, declaring their readiness to obey their masters' commands; of which **See Poole "Ge 22:1"** **See Poole "Isa 6:8"**.

Ver. 36.

In the inward parts, to wit, of a man. Compare **@Job 19:27 Ps 51:6**. Who gave thee that wit and understanding which thou hast, and which thou now usest so arrogantly and wickedly, to contend with me, and to censure my actions?

Who hath given understanding to the heart; so he limits the former general expression of the inward parts. The heart is made by the Hebrews the seat of the understanding, and is commonly put for it in Scripture.

Ver. 37.

Who can wisely search out and exactly find the number of the clouds? They are numberless, and filled with water, as the next clause implies.

Who can stay the bottles of heaven, to wit, the clouds? in which the rain is kept as in bottles, out of which God poureth it when he sees fit.

Ver. 38.

This verse containeth a description either,

1. Of a great drought, when the earth grows hard, and close, and compact; or
2. Of the condition of the earth presently after the fall of the rain, when the earth, which in time of drought was much of it dissolved into dust, is now by the rain cemented or united together. In either of these cases it is the work of God alone to keep the clouds from pouring down more rain upon the earth.

Ver. 39.

Is it by thy care and providence that the lions, who live in desert places, are furnished with necessary provisions? This is justly mentioned as another wonderful work of God.

Ver. 40.

When through age and infirmity they cannot range abroad for prey, as the young lions do; but lie still in their dens, as if they were expecting their food from God, from whom also they receive it.

To lie in wait; watching till some beast come that way upon which they may prey.

Ver. 41.

Having mentioned the noblest of brute creatures, he now mentions one of the most contemptible and loathsome, to show the care of God's providence over all creatures, both great and small; which is more remarkable in ravens, because,

1. They devour flesh, which it is not easy for them to find.
2. They are greedy, and eat very much.
3. They are generally neglected and forsaken by mankind.
4. Their young ones are so soon forsaken by their dams, that if God did not provide for them in a more than ordinary manner, they would be starved to death.

JOB CHAPTER 39

Of the wild goats and hinds, **#Job 39:1-4**; the wild ass, **#Job 39:5-8**; the unicorn, **#Job 39:9-12**; the peacock, stork, and ostrich, **#Job 39:13-18**; the horse, **#Job 39:19-25**; the hawk; the eagle, **#Job 39:26-30**. These creatures, not fully known to Job, or governed by him, are sufficient to convince him that he is no fit judge of the counsels of God.

Ver. 1.

Knowest thou the time, that thou mayst then go to them, and afford them thy help in their hard work?

The wild goats of the rock; which dwell in high and steep rocks, where no man can come. See **#1Sa 24:2 Ps 104:18**.

Bring forth; which they do with great difficulty, as is implied, #Ps 29:9, and noted by philosophers, wherein they have no assistance from men, but only from God.

When the hinds do calve; when God by his secret instinct directs them to a certain herb called *seseli*, which, as naturalists report, doth hasten and help forward their birth.

Ver. 2.

Dost thou exactly know when they did conceive, and when they will bring forth? which is more uncertain in these than in other creatures, because there fall out many accidents which cause them to bring forth before their time, as thunder, #Ps 29:9, and other like causes of sudden fear, which may be many and various in those desert places where they live.

Ver. 3.

They bow themselves; being taught by a Divine instinct to dispose themselves in such a posture as may be fittest for their safe and easy bringing forth.

They bring forth their young ones, to wit, with great pain, being almost torn or rent asunder with the birth, as the word signifies; or, without any of that help which tame beasts oft have.

Their sorrows, i.e. their young ones, and their sorrows together. Or, though (which particle is oft understood) *they remit* or *put away their sorrows*, i.e. though instead of cherishing and furthering their sorrows, which for their own ease and safety they should do, they foolishly hinder them, and so increase their own danger; yet by God's good providence to them they are enabled to bring forth, as was now said.

Ver. 4.

Are in good liking; or, *grow strong*, or *fat*; notwithstanding their great weakness caused by their hard entrance into the world.

With corn; which they find and feed upon in the fields. Or, as *with corn*, i.e. as if they were fed with corn; the particle as being oft deficient, and to be supplied. Or, *in the field*, as this word in the Chaldee or Syriac dialect signifies.

Return not unto them; finding sufficient provisions abroad by the care and conduct of God's providence.

Ver. 5.

Who hath sent out the wild ass free? who hath given him this disposition, that he loves freedom, and avoids and hates that subjection which other creatures quietly and contentedly endure?

Who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass? which is not to be understood privatively, as if God took off the bands which men had put upon him; but negatively, that he keeps him from receiving the bands and submitting to the service of man. Who hath made him so untractable and unmanageable? Which is the more strange, because home-bred asses are so tame and tractable.

Ver. 6.

Who useth and loveth to dwell in desert lands, **#Jer 2:24 Ho 8:3,9.**

The barren land; called *barren*, not simply, for then he must be starved there; but comparatively, unmanaged, and therefore in a great measure unfruitful land.

Ver. 7.

He scorneth; either,

1. He feareth them not when they pursue him, because he is swift, and can easily escape them. Or,

2. He values them not, nor any provisions or advantages which he may have from them, but prefers a vagrant and solitary life in the wilderness before them. Or,

3. He disdains to submit himself to them, and resolutely maintains his own freedom.

The multitude of the city: he mentions the city rather than the country, partly because there is the greatest multitude of people to pursue, and overtake, and subject him; and partly because there is the greatest plenty of all things to invite him; the fruits of the country being laid up in cities in greatest abundance.

Neither regardeth, Heb. *heareth*, i.e. obeyeth. *Of the driver*, Heb. *of the taskmaster*, or *exactor* of labour, i.e. he will not be brought to receive his yoke, nor to do his drudgery, nor to answer to his cries or commands, as tame asses are forced to do.

Ver. 8.

The range of the mountains; that which he searcheth out or findeth in the mountains. He prefers that mean provision and hardship with his freedom, before the fattest pastures with servitude. Why so weak and harmless a creature as the wild ass should be untamable, when the most savage lions and tigers have been tamed, and how there comes to be so vast a difference between the tame and the wild ass, thou canst give no reason, but must refer it wholly to my good pleasure; to which also thou shouldst upon the same grounds refer all the various methods of my providence and dealings with thee, and with other men, and not so boldly censure what thou dost not understand.

Ver. 9.

It is much disputed among the learned, but is not needful to be known by others, whether there be or ever was such a creature as we call the unicorn; or whether this *reem*, which is the Hebrew name of it, be the *rhinoceros*, as some would have it; or a certain kind of wild goat, called *oryx*, which is very tall, and strong, and untractable; or one of that kind of wild oxen or bulls called *uri*; which may seem most probable, both from the description of this creature here and elsewhere in Scripture, which exactly agrees with its description given by other authors; and from the description of his work in this place, which must in all reason be agreeable to creatures of that general kind; and from the conjunction of this creature with bullocks in Scripture, #De 33:17; and especially #Isa 34:6,7, where having put *lambs*, and *goats*, and *rams* together, #Job 39:6, as creatures of the same or very like sort, he mentions *bullocks*, and *bulls*, and *reems*, #Job 39:7, as belonging to the same general sort of creatures. But this I shall not positively determine here. He that would know more, may see what the reverend and learned Mr. Caryl hath upon this text out of Boetius and others, and my Latin Synopsis on #Nu 23:22.

Be willing to serve thee; canst thou tame him, and bring him into subjection to thy command?

Abide by thy crib; will he suffer himself to be tied or confined there all night, and to be reserved to the work of the next day, as the oxen do? Surely no. And if thou canst not rule such a creature

as this, much less art thou able to govern the world, or to teach me how to govern it, which thou presumest to do.

Ver. 10.

In the furrow, i.e. in thy furrowed field, by a metonymy. Or, *to* or *for* (as the prefix *beth* is oft used, as **#Ge 11:4 Le 16:22 Job 24:5**)

the furrow, i.e. to make furrows, or to plough; for which work cattle use to be bound together, that they may be directed by the husbandman, and may make right furrows.

The valleys, to wit, the low grounds, which are most proper for and most employed in the work of ploughing.

After thee; under thy conduct, following thee step by step.

Ver. 11.

Wilt thou trust him, to wit, for the doing of these works, because he is very able for thy work? And wilt thou by thy power make him willing, or force him, to put forth and spend his strength in thy service?

Thy labour; either,

1. Thy work of ploughing and harrowing. Or rather,
2. The fruit of thy labour, or the goods gotten by thy labour, as this word is oft used, as **#De 28:33 Job 20:18 Ps 78:46 128:2 Joh 4:38**, to wit, the fruits of the earth procured by God's blessing upon thy industry.

To him; to be brought home by him into thy barns, as the next verse explains it.

Ver. 12.

Will bring home thy seed, Heb. *will return thy seed*; either,

1. By ploughing and harrowing thy land so well that it shall make a good return to thee for thy seed. Or rather,
2. By bringing into thy barn, as it follows, thy seed, i.e. the product of thy seed, or thy sheaves of corn, as this word is used, **#Hag 2:19**.

Ver. 13.

Gavest thou: the style of this book is very concise, and some verb is manifestly wanting to supply the sense; and this seems to be

fitly understood out of #Job 39:19, where it is expressed. *The goodly*; or, *triumphant*; that wherein it triumpheth or prideth itself. *Wings*, or *feathers*; Heb. *wing* or *feather*. The peacock's beauty lies in its tail; which may well enough be comprehended under this name, as it is confessed that the Latin word *ala*, which properly signifies a *wing*, is used by Martial and Claudian to express the peacock's tail.

The peacocks; or, as some render it, *to the ostrich*, whose wings are much more great and goodly than those of the peacock. And for the other word in the next clause, which is rendered

ostrich, they translate it another way; for that the Hebrew word *hasidah* doth not signify an *ostrich*, seems plain from the mention and description of that bird, #Ps 104:17 Jer 8:7 La 4:3 Zec 5:9, which doth not at all agree to the ostrich. And forasmuch as the following verses do evidently speak of the ostrich, and it is absurd to discourse of a bird which had not been so much as named, and consequently the name of it must be found in this verse, and there is no other word in this verse which bids so fair for it, it may seem probable that this word is not to be rendered the *peacock*, (though it be so taken by most,) but the *ostrich*. Nor is it likely that both the peacock and the ostrich should be crowded together into one verse, especially when all the following characters belong only to the latter of them. Add to this, that it is confessed, even by the Hebrew writers themselves, that there is a great uncertainty in the signification of the names of birds and beasts; and therefore it is not strange if many interpreters were mistaken in the signification of this word. Or

wings and feathers unto the ostrich: or, *or the wings or feathers of the stork* (or, *or*) *the ostrich*. Or, didst thou give (which may be repeated out of the former branch)

the wings and feathers to the stork? Or, *verily* (the particle *im* being oft used as a note of confirmation, as #Ps 59:16 63:7 Pr 3:34 23:18) it hath

wings and feathers like those of a *stork*; for so indeed they are, black and white like them. And this may be noted as a great and a remarkable work of God, that it should really have wings and feathers as other birds have, and particularly the stork, who comes

nearest to it in bulk and colour, although otherwise, by its vast bulk, it might seem to be a beast rather than a bird, as it is also called by Aristotle, and Pliny, and others.

Ver. 14.

Which, i.e. which ostrich; whose property this is noted to be by naturalists. Or, *but*; for this unnatural quality is opposed to the goodliness of her wings or feathers.

In the earth; in the place where she lays them; where she leaves them, either,

1. From care, lest she should crush and break them, if her vast body should sit upon them; or rather,
2. From forgetfulness, or carelessness, or unnaturalness, or folly; to which it is manifestly ascribed in the following verses.

Warmeth them in the dust; either,

1. Covering them with sand, that they may be warmed and hatched by that, together with the heat of the sun. But this is judged a fabulous report; for the Arabians, amongst whom this bird is most frequent and best known, affirm that such eggs do quickly perish and putrefy. Or rather,
2. Exposing them to the heat of the sun, which being excessive in those hot countries, doth and must needs quickly destroy or spoil them. And the ostrich is said to warm them, because her leaving them there is not only the occasion, but in some sort the cause, of the sun's warming them.

Ver. 15.

The feet, to wit, of wild beasts *as it follows* passing that way.

Ver. 16.

She is hardened; or, *he*, i.e. God, *hardens her*; or, *she hardeneth herself*. *Against her young ones*, i.e. against her eggs, which he calls her

young ones emphatically, to aggravate her fault and folly in destroying those eggs, which, if not neglected, would have been young ones.

As though they were not hers; as if they were laid by some other bird. Or, *that they may not be to her*, i.e. that they may be utterly lost and destroyed; or as if it were her design to destroy their very being.

Her labour, to wit, in laying her egg's, is wholly lost. *In vain*

without fear: this may be added as a further aggravation. She doth this, not because she is compelled to forsake her eggs for fear of men or beasts, but merely out of an unnatural carelessness. Or, she is *without fear*, or *for want of fear*, to wit, of a provident fear and care about them.

Ver. 17.

Because God hath not implanted in her that natural instinct, and providence, and affection, which he hath put into other birds and beasts towards their young. And yet no man presumes to reproach me for making this difference in my creatures. And as little reason hast thou to blame me for afflicting thee, when others not so bad as thou for the present go unpunished; because I have no less authority over thee than over them, and can dispose of all my creatures according to my good pleasure. The great folly of this bird is noted by Arabic writers, who best know her, and that not only for this property of forsaking her own eggs, but also for other things, as that she eats any thing which is offered to her, as iron, stones, glass, hot coals, &c., whereas other birds and beasts have so much sagacity, as to reject improper and unwholesome things; that being pursued by the hunter, she thinks herself safe and unseen by hiding her head in the sand; for which, and other such qualities, it is a proverb among the Arabians, *More foolish than an ostrich*.

Ver. 18.

She lifteth up herself on high, to flee from her pursuer; to which end she lifteth up her head and body, and spreads her wings.

She scorneth the horse and his rider she despiseth them in regard of her greater swiftness; for though she cannot fly because of her great bulk, being said to be as big as a new-born camel, yet by the aid of her wings she runs so fast that horsemen cannot reach her, as both Greek and other authors have noted.

Ver. 19.

Strength; either strength of body; or rather, courage and generous confidence, for which the horse is highly commended.

With thunder, i.e. with snorting and neighing; in the making of which nereid the neck, in regard of the throat, which is within it, and a part of it, is a principal instrument; which noise may not unfitly be called *thunder*, because of the great vehemency and rage wherewith it is attended, and the great terror which it causeth, especially in war and battle, of which see **#Jer 8:16**; and compare **#1Sa 12:17,18**, where this very term of *thundering* is ascribed to a far lower and less terrible noise. Nor is this, as some allege, an improper speech, because this thunder or neighing is rather clothed with the neck, as being within it, *than the neck with it*; for nothing is more common in Scripture than to say that men are *clothed with righteousness, humility*, and other graces, which yet are in strictness of speech within the man, and not he within them. But because this word in this form is not elsewhere extant, some render it otherwise, *with a mane*, with a thick, and full and deep mane, as the phrase of being clothed with it implies; for this is mentioned by all writers of horses as a notable mark of a generous horse; which therefore they conceive would not be omitted here, where so many several properties and excellencies are described. And the verb *raam*, whence this comes, in the Syriac language signifies not only *to thunder*, but also to *be high or lofty*; which fitly agrees to the mane, which is in the highest part of the horse.

Ver. 20.

As a grasshopper; which is easily affrighted, and chased away by the least noise of a man. Or, as divers others render the place, *Didst thou make him to move like a grasshopper*, skipping and leaping as he goes? So he describes the posture of a gallant and generous horse, who curvets, and pranceth, and as it were danceth as he walks.

The glory of his nostrils; that snorting, or sound, and smoke which cometh out of his nostrils, especially when he is enraged and engaged in battle, which is another note of a generous horse, and strikes a terror into his adversary. Or, *the vehemency*, or *majesty*, or *magnificence of his snorting*, or *snoring*, as this word is rendered, **#Jer 8:16**.

Ver. 21.

He paweth; or, *he diggeth*. Through courage and wantonness he cannot stand still, but is beating, as it were digging, up the earth with his feet.

In the valley: this he adds, partly because the ground being there more plain and smooth, he hath the better conveniency for his prancing and pawing with his feet, which in hilly and uneven ground he cannot so well do; and partly because battles use to be pitched in valleys, or low grounds, especially horse battles.

Rejoiceth in his strength; making semblance of great pride and complacency in it.

He goeth on to meet the armed men, with great readiness and undaunted courage.

Ver. 22.

At fear, i.e. at all instruments and objects of terror, as fear is oft used, as **#Pr 1:26 10:21**. He despiseth what other creatures dread.

From the sword; or, *because of the sword;* or, *for fear of the sword,* as this phrase is used, **#Isa 21:15 31:8 Jer 14:16 1:16**.

Ver. 23.

The quiver; or although *the quiver* &c. So this comes in as an aggravation of his courage, notwithstanding the just causes of fear which are mentioned in this verse. And the *quiver* is here put for the arrows contained in it, by a metonymy, very usual in this very case, and in all sorts of authors, which being shot against the horse and rider, make this rattling noise here mentioned.

The glittering spear and the shield; or rather, the *lance* or *javelin*. For that this was not a defensive, but an offensive weapon, seems plain, both from this place, where it is mentioned among such, and as an object of fear, which the shield is not, and from **#Jos 8:18 1Sa 17:45**, where it is so used.

Ver. 24.

The sense is either,

1. He is so earnest and eager upon the battle, that he rusheth into it with all speed; and runs over the ground so swiftly, that he might seem to have swallowed it tap. Or,

2. He is so full of war-like rage and fury, that he not only champs his bridle, but is ready to tear and devour the very ground on which he goes. And the phrase here used is not unusual, both in Arabic and in other authors; of which see my Latin Synopsis on this place.

He is so pleased with the approach of the battle, and the sound of the trumpet calling to it, that he could scarce believe his ears for gladness: compare **#Ge 45:26 Lu 24:41**. Or thus, *he cannot stand still*, or *firm*, (as this verb and Hie derivative from it is used, not only in the Chaldee and Syriac dialect, but also in the Hebrew, as **#De 28:59 1Sa 2:35**) *when the trumpet soundeth*; his rider can hardly keep him still, but he strives and longs to run to the fight.

Ver. 25.

Ha, ha; an expression of joy and alacrity, declared by his proud neighings; whereby he doth in some sort answer the sound of the trumpets, in way of scorn and challenge.

He smelleth, i.e. he perceiveth, as this phrase is used, **#Jud 16:9**.

Afar off; at some distance, either of place, or rather of time, as the word is most frequently used. He perceives by the motion of the soldiers, and the clattering of the arms, that the battle is at hand, which is very welcome to him.

The thunder of the captains; by which he understands, either the military orations which the captains make and deliver with a loud voice to animate their soldiers to the battle; or rather the loud and joyful clamour begun by the commanders, and followed by the soldiers, when they are ready to join battle, that thereby they may both daunt their enemies, and encourage themselves.

Ver. 26.

Doth the hawk fly in so singular a manner, so strongly and steadily, so constantly and unweariedly, so swiftly and speedily, so regularly and cunningly, to catch her prey, *by thy wisdom*; didst thou inspire her with that wisdom?

Stretch her wings toward the south; which she doth, either.

1. When she casts her old feathers, and gets new ones, which is furthered either by the warmth of southerly winds, or by the heat

of the sun, which was southward from Job's country, as it is from ours; whence it is, that as wild hawks do this by natural instinct, so the places which men build for the keeping of tame hawks are built towards the south. Or,

2. In or towards winter, when wild hawks fly into warmer countries, as being impatient of cold weather.

Ver. 27.

Mount up; fly directly upward, till she be out of thy sight; which no other bird can do.

On high; in the highest and inaccessible rocks. Compare #**Jer 49:16 Ob 1:4**.

Ver. 28.

Which she doth partly for the security of herself and her young; and partly that she may thence have the better prospect to discern her prey, as it followeth.

Ver. 29.

Her sight is exceeding sharp and strong, so that she is able to look upon the sun with open eyes, and to behold the smallest prey upon the earth or sea, when she is mounted out of our sight; which when she spies, she flies to it with incredible swiftness, even like an arrow out of a bow.

Ver. 30.

Blood; either of the prey which the eagle hath brought to her nest for them, or of that which themselves catch and kill, being betimes inured to this work by their dams. Naturalists note of the eagle, that she drinketh no water, but blood only.

Where the slain are; where any dead carcasses are, yea, or are like to be; for natural historians write of the eagles, that they can presage or smell a battle some days before it be fought. And although some writers affirm that there are divers eagles who do not feed upon carcasses, and will not meddle with them, yet that many eagles do feed on them is sufficiently evident, by the testimony both of Scripture, as #**Mt 24:28**, and of divers both ancient and later writers.

There is she, to wit, in an instant, flying thither with admirable celerity.

JOB CHAPTER 40

God's reproof of Job, **#Job 40:1,2**. He humbleth himself, **#Job 40:3-5**. God again declareth his righteousness, majesty, and the power of his wrath to abase the proud, **#Job 40:6-14**. A description of behemoth, **#Job 40:15-21**.

Ver. 1.

Having made a little pause to try what Job could answer to his questions, and Job being it seems astonished with God's rebukes, or expecting what God would further say, continued silent.

Ver. 2.

Shall Job, who presumed to contend with me in judgment, and to dispute the reasonableness and equity of my proceedings, give me instructions or directions how to manage my own affairs, and govern my creatures? He justly mentions his almightiness, as a convincing argument of his justice. For how can he be unjust to his creatures, who hath no obligation to them, and never did nor can receive any thing from them; and who hath an absolute, sovereign, and uncontrollable dominion over them; and who being infinitely and necessarily perfect, and all-sufficient within himself, can neither have any inclination to unrighteousness, which is an imperfection, nor any temptation to it from any need he hath of it to accomplish his designs, which he can do by his own omnipotence, or front any advantage accruing to him by it.

That reproveth God; that boldly censureth his ways or works; which thou hast done.

Let him answer it; let him answer my former and further questions at his peril.

Ver. 3.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 4.

I am vile, what am I, a mean and contemptible creature that should presume to contend with my Maker and Judge? I confess my fault and folly.

What shall I answer thee? I neither desire nor am able to dispute with thee. I will for the future bridle my tongue, and instead of contesting with thee, do here humbly and willingly submit myself to thee.

Ver. 5.

I will not answer, or *speak again*; answering being oft put for speaking. I will contend no more with thee.

Yea, twice, i.e. oftentimes, or again and again, the definite number being used indefinitely.

I will proceed no further in such bold and presumptuous expressions and accusations of thy providence towards me. Vain therefore are the excuses which some interpreters make for Job, as if he were faultless in his foregoing discourses, when both God chargeth him with faultiness therein, and Job himself confesseth it.

Ver. 6.

The whirlwind was renewed when God renewed his charge upon Job, whom he intended to humble more thoroughly than yet he had done. Both this and the next verse are repeated out of **#Job 38:1,3**, where they are explained.

Ver. 7.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 8.

Every word is emphatical,

Wilt (art thou resolved upon it)

thou (thou, Job, whom I took to be one of a better mind and temper; had it been a stranger or my enemy who had spoken thus of me, I could have borne it, but I cannot bear it from thee)

also (not only vindicate thyself, and thy own integrity, but also accuse me)

disannul (not only question and dispute, but even condemn, repeal, and make void, as if it were ungrounded and unjust)

my judgment, i.e. my sentence against thee, and my government and administration of human affairs? Wilt thou make me unrighteous, that thou mayst seem to be righteous?

Ver. 9.

Thou art infinitely short of God in power, and therefore in justice; for all his perfections are equal and infinite. Injustice is much more likely to be in thee, an impotent creature, than in the Almighty God; of which **See Poole "Job 40:2"**.

Canst thou thunder with a voice like him? therefore do not presume to contend with him.

Ver. 10.

Seeing thou makest thyself equal, yea, superior to me in justice, and consequently in power and majesty, take to thyself thy great power, come and sit in my throne, and display thy divine perfections in the sight of the world. These and the following are ironical expressions, to make Job more sensible of his distance from and subjection to God.

Ver. 11.

Inflict heavy judgements upon thine enemies, the Chaldeans and Sabeans, and others who have injured or provoked thee. Destroy him with an angry look, as I can do and delight to do with such persons.

Ver. 12.

Either,

1. Wheresoever they are. Or,
2. Where they are in their greatest strength and glory, and therefore are most secure and confident. Or,
3. Forthwith, upon the spot, that the quickness and immediateness of the strike may discover that it comes from a Divine hand.

Ver. 13.

Kill *every one* of them (as he said, **#Job 40:12**) at one blow, as I can do, and bring them all to their graves, that they may sleep in the dust, and never offend thee nor trouble others more.

Bind their faces, i.e. condemn or destroy them. He alludes to the manner of covering the faces of condemned persons, **#Es 7:8**, and of dead men, **#Joh 11:44 20:7**. See Poole "**Job 9:21**".

In secret; either in a secret place, bury them in their graves; or secretly, with a secret and invisible stroke, that it may appear it comes from the hand of a God.

Ver. 14.

i.e. That thou art mine equal, and mayst venture to contend with me. But since thou canst do none of these things, it behoves thee to submit to me, and to acquiesce in my dealings with thee.

Ver. 15.

That some particular beast is designed by this word is evident from **#Job 40:15**, and from the peculiar characters given to him, which are not common to all great beasts. But what it is is matter of some dispute amongst the learned. The generality of them are agreed that this is the elephant, and the following leviathan the whale; which being two of the goodliest and vastest creatures which God made, the one of the land, the other of the sea, and withal such to whom the description here given for the most part manifestly agrees, and the like is presumed concerning the rest, may seem to be here intended. And the difficulty of reconciling some few passages to them, may arise either from our ignorance of them, or from the different nature and qualities of creatures of the same general kind in divers parts. But some late and very learned men take the leviathan to be the crocodile, and the behemoth to be a creature called the hippopotamus, which may seem fitly to be joined with the crocodile, both being very well known to Job and his friends, as being frequent in the adjacent parts, both amphibious, living and preying both in the water and upon the land, and both being creatures of great bulk and strength. I shall not undertake to determine the controversy, but shall show how each part of the following description is or may be applied to them severally. And this being no point concerning faith or a good life, every one may take the more liberty to understand the place of one or other of them.

Which I made with thee; either,

1. Upon the earth, where thou art, whereas the leviathan is in the sea. Or,

2. As I made thee, for this Hebrew particle is oft used as a note of comparison, as #Job 9:26 Ps 143:7, and elsewhere; in the same manner, and upon the same day. Whereby he may intimate, that being equally the Creator and sovereign Lord, both of Job, and of this behemoth, he had equal right to dispose of them in such manner as he thought meet. Or, (*nigh*, as the particle oft signifies,) *unto thee*, i.e. in a place not far from thee, to wit, in the river Nile, where the hippopotamus, as well as the crocodile, doth principally abide. But although those creatures were now in the river, yet they were made elsewhere, even where the first man was made. *He eateth grass as an ox*: This is mentioned as a thing strange and remarkable, as indeed it is; either,

1. Of the elephant, in which God hath wisely and mercifully planted this disposition, that he should not prey upon other creatures, which if he had, being so strong and vast a creature, he must needs have been very pernicious to them, but feed upon grass as an ox doth. Or,

2. Of the hippopotamus; of whom historians relate that he comes out of the river upon the land to feed upon corn, and hay, or grass, as an ox doth, to whom also he is not unlike in the forth of his head and feet, and in the bigness of his body, whence the Italians call him the *sea ox*.

Ver. 16.

He hath strength answerable to his bulk, but this strength by God's wise and merciful providence is not an offensive strength, consisting in or put forth by horns or claws, as it is in ravenous creatures; but only defensive, and seated in his loins, as it is in other creatures, whereby he is rendered more serviceable to men by the carrying of vast burdens.

His force is in the navel of his belly; which though in the elephant it be weaker than his loins, whence the rhinoceros fighting with him aims at that part; yet hath a more than ordinary strength in it, as appears by the binding of the heaviest burdens under and about it. This also agrees to the hippopotamus in an

eminent degree, whose whole skin is noted by ancient writers to be harder than any other creature's, and almost impenetrable.

Ver. 17.

He moveth his tail; which though it be but short, both in the elephant and in the hippopotamus, yet when it is erected is exceeding stiff and strong. But this may be understood, either,

1. Of his generative part, which is oft called by that or the like name, which the following close of the verse may seem to favour. Or,

2. Of the elephant's trunk, which being so eminent and remarkable a part, would not probably be omitted in this description, to which these words very fitly agree, because of its admirable motion and strength. Nor is it strange that this is called his tail, because that word is oft used improperly for any end of a thing, as #**Isa 7:4**. See also #**De 25:18 28:13,44**.

The sinews of his stones: this may be noted, because the elephant's testicles do not hang down below the belly, as they do in other beasts, but are contained within his belly, where they are fastened by ligaments of extraordinary strength. Or, *the sinews of the terror thereof*, to wit, of the trunk last mentioned, under the name of the

tail, i.e. its terrible sinews are strongly and strangely wrapped together, that he can move it as he listeth with wonderful dexterity and strength. Or,

the sinews of his thighs, as the latter word oft signifies in the Arabic tongue, which is very near akin to the Hebrew. The thighs and feet of the hippopotamus are noted to be so sinewy and strong, that one of them is able to break or overturn a large boat.

Ver. 18.

His bones; under which title are comprehended his ribs (as the LXX here render it) and his teeth.

As strong pieces of brass, exceeding hard and strong, as they are in both these creature.

Ver. 19.

Of the ways of God, i.e. of God's works, to wit, of that sort, or among living and brute creatures. This is eminently and unquestionably true of the elephant, in regard of his vast bulk and strength, joined with great activity, and especially of his admirable sagacity and aptness to learn, and of his singular usefulness to mankind, his lord and master, and God's vicegerent in the world, and many other commendable qualities. And the hippopotamus also is in some sort, as others note, the chief, or one of the chief, of God's works, in regard of its great bulk, and strength, and sagacity, and the manner of his living, both in the water and upon the land. But it must be granted that the elephant doth exceed the hippopotamus in many things.

Though he be so strong and terrible, yet God can easily subdue and destroy him, either immediately, or by arming other creatures, as the rhinoceros, or dragon, or tiger, against him. Or, *he that made him hath applied or given to him his sword, or arms*, to wit, his trunk, which may not unfitly be called his sword, because thereby he doth both defend himself and offend his enemies. And this trunk of his being a thing very observable and admirable in him, and therefore not likely to be neglected in his description, if it were not intended by his *tail*, #**Job 40:17**, may seem to be designed in these words.

Ver. 20.

Though this creature be vastly great, and require much food, and no man careth for it; yet God provides for it out of his own stores, and makes even desert mountains to afford him sufficient sustenance. The hippopotamus also, though he live most in the water, fetched his food from the land, and from the mountains or hills, which are nigh unto the river Nile.

Where all the beasts of the field play; they not only feed securely, but sport themselves by him or with him, being taught by experience that he is gentle and harmless, and never preys upon them.

Ver. 21.

The elephant lies down to rest himself; and it is but fabulous which some writers affirm, that they have no joints in their legs,

and so cannot lie down, but sleep or rest themselves standing or leaning against a tree; which is denied and confuted by Aristotle in his History of Living Creatures, 2, 4. and by later writers. For the elephant, being a creature naturally hot, and living generally in hot countries, diligently seeks for and delights in shady and waterish places, as is noted by Aristotle, and after him by Pliny and Ælian.

Ver. 22.

Of the brook; or, *of Nilus*, of which this word is oft used in Scripture. And this seems to be the chief argument by which the learned Bochart proves this to be meant of the hippopotamus, whose constant residence is in or near the river of Nilus, or the willows that grow by it. But it is well alleged by our learned and judicious Caryl, that this word *Naal* is never used to express Nilus when it is put by itself, as here it is, but only where the word Egypt is added to it, as it is in all the places which Bochart produceth. And this very phrase,

the willows of the brook, is used of other brooks or rivers besides Nilus, as **#Le 23:40**: compare **#Isa 15:7**.

Ver. 23.

He drinketh up; or, *he snatcheth*, or *draweth*, or drinketh up as it were with force and violence, as the word signifies.

A river, i.e. a great quantity of water, hyperbolically called a river, as it is also **#Ps 78:16 105:41**. This may be fitly applied to the elephant, which because of its great bulk and vehement thirst drinks a great deal of water at one draught, as naturalists and historians have observed.

Hasteth not; he drinks not with fear and caution, and sparingly, as the dogs do at Nilus, for fear of the crocodile; but such is his courage and self-confidence, that he fears no enemy, either by water or by land, but drinketh securely and liberally.

He trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth; he drinks as if he designed, or hoped, or desired to drink up the whole river. He mentions Jordan, either as a river well known in and nigh unto Job's land; or because possibly there were many elephants which used to drink at it; or as a river in some parts of it but small, which therefore might give more colour to the

hyperbole, and to the elephant's fancy or expectation, than a vaster river, such as Euphrates, would have done. Bochart expounds this also of the hippopotamus, which though he cannot swim, and may be drowned, as naturalists report, yet will continue securely under water at the bottom of Nilus for some days together; and he renders the verse thus, *Behold, if a river oppress or cover him, he fears not; he is confident or secure, though Jordan* (which is here put for any river) *should break forth or overflow above his mouth*, i.e. should overwhelm him. But the judgment of this I leave to the reader.

Ver. 24.

According to this translation the sense is this, *He taketh, or snatcheth, or draweth up* (as was now said, #**Job 40:23**)

it (to wit, the river Jordan) with his eyes, i.e. when he sees it, he trusteth that he can drink it all up; as we use to say, *The eye is bigger than the belly: his nose or snout pierceth, &c.*, i.e. he securely thrusteth his snout into the river, even to the bottom of it, to stir up the mud, because he delights to drink muddy water; and if there be any snares laid for other creatures, he breaks them to pieces. But this verse is otherwise translated by others. *Will or can any man take him in his eyes*, (i.e. openly, and by manifest force? Surely no. His force and strength is too great for man to resist or overcome; and therefore men are forced to use many wiles and engines to catch him; which is true both of the elephant and of the hippopotamus,) or *pierce his nose with snares or gins*? No. He may be taken by art and cunning, but not by violence.

JOB CHAPTER 41

God's kingly power and authority above all the children of pride seen in the leviathan.

Ver. 1.

Canst thou take him with a hook and a line, as anglers take ordinary fishes? Surely no.

Quest. What is this

leviathan?

Answ. This is granted on all hands, that it is a great and terrible monster, living in the sea or rivers, as behemoth is a land monster. It is the general and received opinion that it is the whale, which is unquestionably called the leviathan, #Ps 104:25,26; which having been discovered in the seas next bordering upon Arabia, probably was not unknown to Job, who was a very inquisitive person, and well studied in the works of God, as this book manifests. But some later and very learned interpreters conceive that it is the crocodile; which was very well known in Egypt, and all the parts adjacent to it. And this is evident, that the Hebrew *thannin* (which is parallel to this word *leviathan*, these two words being synonymous, and the one promiscuously used for the other, as appears from #Ps 74:13,14 Isa 27:1 Eze 32:2) is used of the crocodile, #Eze 29:3,4 32:2,3. But I shall not positively determine this controversy, but only show how far the text may be understood of both of them, and then submit it to the reader's judgment; this being a matter of no great moment, wherein Christians may vary without any hazard. Only this I will say, that whatever becomes of the behemoth of the former chapter, whether that be the elephant, or the hippopotamus, that doth not at all determine the sense of this leviathan; but leaves it indifferent to the whale or the crocodile, as the context shall determine, which I confess seems to me to favour the latter more than the former. To which may be added, that it seems more probable that God would speak of such creatures as were very well known to Job and his friends, as the crocodile was, than of such as it is very uncertain whether they were known in those parts, and in Job's time. This verse, noting either the impossibility, or rather the great and terrible difficulty, of taking this monster with his hook or line, or such-like instruments, may agree to either of them. For the whale there is no doubt; nor much doubt as to the crocodile; the taking whereof was generally esteemed by the ancients to be very difficult and perilous, whatsoever peculiar virtue or power from nature or art the Tentyritae had against them, as the Psylli were said to have against serpents. Some indeed object, that the last clause cannot agree to the crocodile, because that hath no tongue, as is affirmed by Aristotle, Pliny, and other ancient authors. But that is a mistake, and the ground of it is plain, because their

tongues are but small in proportion to their vast bodies, and withal fastened to their under jaws, as the selfsame authors note. And that the crocodile hath a tongue is positively affirmed by the said ancient authors, and by the Hebrew writers, and by the Arabians, to whom this creature was best known, and by later authors.

Ver. 2.

An hook, Heb. *a bulrush*, i.e. a hook like a bulrush, with its head hanging down, as is expressed, **#Isa 58:5**.

Into his nose, to hang him up by it for sale, or to carry him home for use, after thou hast drawn him out of the sea or river, of which he spake in the former verse.

With a thorn; or, with an iron hook or instrument as sharp as a thorn, wherewith thou usest to carry little fishes.

Ver. 3.

Doth he dread thine anger or power? or will he humbly and earnestly beg thy favour, that thou wouldst spare him, and not pursue him, or release him out of prison? It is a metaphor from men in distress and misery, who use these means to them to whose power they are subject.

Ver. 4.

A covenant, to wit, to do thee faithful service, as the next words explain it. Canst thou bring him into bondage, and force him to serve thee?

Ver. 5.

As with a bird; as children play with little birds kept in cages, or tied with strings, which they do at their pleasure, and without any fear?

For thy maidens; for thy little daughters; which he mentions rather than little sons, because such are most subject to fear.

Ver. 6.

Thy companions; thy friends or assistants in the taking of him.

Make a banquet of him, i.e. feed upon him. Or, *for him*, i.e. for joy that thou hast taken him.

Shall they part him among the merchants? as is usual in such cases, that all who are partners in the labour amid hazard may partake of the profit also, and divide the spoil.

Ver. 7.

This may be understood, either,

1. Of the whale. And whereas it is objected that the whales at this day are taken in this manner, and therefore this cannot be understood of them; it may be replied, both that this art and way of taking whales is a late invention, and was not known in Job's time; and that he doth not speak of the absolute impossibility, but of the great difficulty of taking them. Or,

2. Of the crocodile, whose skin is so hard that an iron or spear will not pierce it, as we shall see hereafter.

Ver. 8.

Lay thine hand upon him; either,

1. In a familiar and friendly manner, that thou mayst catch him by deceit, when thou canst not do it by force. Or rather,

2. In way of hostility, seize upon him and take him by a strong hand, if thou darest do so.

Remember the battle; but ere thou do attempt that, consider what thou art doing, and how hazardous thy enterprise is, and with whom and with what disadvantage thou art going to fight, and, as it follows, *do no more*, proceed no further, draw back thy hand, and be thankful for so great a deliverance. Or the verse may be rendered thus, If (which particle is oft understood) *thou* offerest or attemptest *to lay violent hands on him*, *thou wilt* have cause to *remember* (the imperative being put for the future, which is frequent in the Hebrew language) *the battle*, and *thou wilt do no more*; if thou dost escape, thou wilt never forget thy danger, nor attempt any thing of like nature for the time to come.

Ver. 9.

The hope of him; either,

1. Of the fish, i.e. the hope of taking or conquering him. Or rather,

2. Of the man who laid hands upon him, as hoping to take him by force, but in vain.

Shall not; the prefix *he* being put for *halo*, as it is oftentimes in the Hebrew text, as #Ge 27:36 1Sa 2:28 Jer 3:6 Jer 31:20 Eze 20:30.

Even at the sight of him; not only the fight, but the very sight of him is most frightful. Such is the sight of the whale to mariners, who fear the overturning of their vessel. And such is the sight of the crocodile, by which alone some have been affrighted out of their wits.

Ver. 10.

That dare stir him up, when he sleepeth or is quiet. None dare provoke him to the battle.

To stand before me; to contend with me his Creator, as thou, Job, dost, when one of my creatures is too hard for him.

Ver. 11.

Who hath prevented me, to wit, with offices or service done for me, by which he hath laid the first obligation upon me, for which I am indebted to him? Who can be beforehand with me in kindnesses, since not only the leviathan, but all men, and, as it follows, all things under heaven, are mine, made by my hand and enriched with all their endowments by my favour, without which, O Job, thou wouldst not have had either reason or such to use so perversely to reproach my providence. Having now said and largely proved that man could not contend with God in power, he now adds, that he cannot do it in justice, because God oweth him nothing, nor is any way obliged to him; which having briefly hinted to prevent an objection, he returns to his former argument, the description of the leviathan.

That I should repay him; that I should be engaged to requite his favours.

Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine; created by my power and favour, and wholly in my possession, and at my dispose, and therefore cannot possibly prevent me, as was now said.

Ver. 12.

i.e. I will particularly speak of them. Here is a meiosis, as there is #Job 14:11 15:18, and oft elsewhere.

His parts, Heb. *His bars*, i.e. the members of his body, which are strong, like bars of iron.

His comely proportion, which is more amiable and admirable in so vast a bulk.

Ver. 13.

Discover, or, *uncover*, or take off from him.

The face of his garment; the upper or outward part of his garment, or the garment itself; the word face being oft redundant, as #Ge 1:2 23:3, and oft elsewhere. And by the garment is meant the skin, which covers the whole body, and may be taken off from the body like a garment. Who dare attempt to touch his very outward skin? much less dare any venture to approach him to give him a deep or deadly wound.

With his double bridle; to put it into his mouth, and lead him by it to thy stable and service, as thou dost by a horse. Or rather, (because he plainly seems to persist in describing the several parts of his body; of which he speaks both in the foregoing and following words,) *who can come within his double bridle*, to wit, his vast jaws, which have some resemblance to a double bridle; whence the Greeks call those parts of the face which reach to the jaws on both sides the bridles.

Ver. 14.

The doors of his face, to wit, his mouth. If it be open, none dare enter within it, as he now said; and here he adds, that if it be shut, none dare open it.

His teeth are terrible round about: this is true of some kinds of whales, though others are said to have either none, or no terrible teeth; but it is more eminently and unquestionably true of the crocodile, of which this very thing is observed by all authors who write of it.

Ver. 15.

He prides and pleaseth himself in his strong and mighty scales. Heb. *His strong shields* (i.e. scales) are *his pride*. Or, (as other, both ancient and modern, interpreters render it,) *his body*, (or *his back*, as this word is used, #Isa 38:17; which, if meant of the crocodile, is emphatical, because his scales and strength is in his

back, whereas his belly is very soft, and easily pierced) is *the strength of shields*, i.e. fortified with scales strong as shields. This is meant either,

1. Of the whale whose skin, though it be smooth and entire, and without scales, may be said to be as (which particle is oft understood) *strong shields*, because it is, as Galen reports, exceeding hard and strong, and almost impenetrable, and like a shield, especially then, when shields were made of leather; and so it is not only on the back, as in the crocodile, but also in the belly all over. Or,

2. Of the crocodile, which hath scales properly so called, and those most truly such as are here described, as all authors and eye-witnesses consent.

Shut up together as with a close seal; closely compacted together, as things that are fastened together by a seal.

Ver. 16.

Which plainly shows that the shields or scales are several; which agrees better to the crocodile than to the whale, whose skin is all one entire piece, unless there were a sort of whales having thick and strong scales, which some have affirmed, but is not yet known and proved.

Ver. 17.

It is exceeding difficult, and almost impossible by any power of art, to sever them one from another.

Ver. 18.

By his neesings; which may be understood either,

1. Of any commotion or agitation of the body, like that which is in neezing, as when the whale stirreth himself and casteth or shooteth up great spouts of water into the air by the pipes which God hath planted in his head for this use; which water being thin, and transparent, and illuminated by the sun-beams, casts forth a shining light. Or,

2. Of neezing properly so called, which the crocodile is said frequently to do, because it commonly turneth its eyes to the sun, as Strabo and others note; which when a man doth, he is apt to neeze.

Like the eyelids of the morning; to which they seem very fitly compared, because the eyes both of the whale and crocodile are dull and dark under the water; but as soon as they appear above water, they cast forth immediately a bright and clear light, though not like that of the sun at noon-day, which had been too great an hyperbole, yet like the morning light, suddenly breaking forth after the dark night.

Ver. 19.

i.e. His breathings and blowings are very hot, or flaming, as the following verses explain this. This also may seem better to agree to the crocodile, which breathes (as Aristotle affirms) like the hippopotamus, of which ancient authors affirm, *that his nostrils are very large, and he breathes forth a fiery smoke like that of a furnace*, than to the whale, which rather casts forth streams of water, as was noted before, than flames of fire, there being no such great heat observed in whales, nor, as far as I know, in any other fishes.

Ver. 20.

Heb. *pool*. So a great caldron is called, because it sends forth a great smoke, as a pool doth vapours; as in like manner the great brazen laver in the temple is called a sea, for the great quantity of water which it held.

Ver. 21.

An hyperbolic expression, noting only extraordinary heat.

Ver. 22.

His neck is exceeding strong. This is meant either

1. Of the whale, who though he hath no neck no more than other fishes have, yet he hath a part in some sort answerable to it, where the head and body are joined together. Or,

2. Of the crocodile, whom Aristotle, (who made it his business to search out the several natures and parts of all living creatures, and had all the helps and advantages which he desired to find them out,) and Scaliger, and others affirm to have a neck, though some deny it.

Sorrow is turned into joy before him, i.e. the approach of any enemy, which usually causeth fear and sorrow in others, fills him

with joy, as being desirous of nothing more than fighting. Or, *sorrow rejoiceth*, or *danceth*, or *triumpheth*, &c., i.e. is prevalent and victorious, and quickly invades and conquers all those men, or other creatures, which are in his way. Sorrow is his companion or harbinger, which attends upon him wheresoever he goes. This may be a poetical expression, like that of the poets, when they bring in anger and fear going along with or before Mars into the battle.

Ver. 23.

The flakes, or *parts*, which stick out, or hang loose, and are ready to fall from other fishes or creatures.

Of his flesh: the word *flesh* is used of fishes also, as #Le 11:11 1Co 15:39.

They cannot, without difficulty,

be moved, to wit, out of their place, or from the other members of the body.

Ver. 24.

His heart; either,

1. That part of the body is most firm, and hard, and strong. Or,
2. His courage is invincible; he is void of fear for himself, and of compassion to others, which is oft called *hardness of heart*.

Hard as a piece of the nether millstone; which being to bear the weight of the upper, ought to be the harder and stronger of the two.

Ver. 25.

When he raiseth up himself; showing himself upon the top of the waters. Or, *because of his height*, or *greatness*, or *majesty*; for he is represented as a king, #Job 41:31. *The mighty*; even the stout-hearted mariners or passengers, who use to be above fear.

By reason of breakings; either,

1. Of the sea, caused by his motion, which dasheth the waves in pieces one against another. Or rather,

2. Of their mind and state; by reason of their great danger and distress; which is expressed by this very word, **#Ps 60:2 Jon 2:4.**

They purify themselves; either,

1. Naturally; that being, the usual effect of great terror. See **#Eze 7:17.** Or rather,

2. Morally, as this word is generally used. Those mariners who ordinarily live in a gross and general neglect of God, and of religion, are so affrighted with this imminent danger, that *they cry unto God in their trouble*, as is said in like case, **#Ps 107:28**, and endeavour to purge their consciences from the guilt of their sins, by confessing and seemingly forsaking of them, and to make their peace with God, and obtain his favour and help, by their vows, and promises, and prayers.

Ver. 26.

That layeth at him; that approacheth to him, and dare strike at him.

Cannot hold, Heb. *cannot stand*, i.e. either,

1. Cannot endure the stroke, but will be broken by it. Or rather,

2. Cannot abide or take hold of him, or be fixed in him; but is instantly beaten back by the excessive hardness of the skin, which cannot be pierced by it, as may be gathered from this and other passages before and after it. This also seems better to agree to the crocodile, whose skin no sword, nor dart, nor musket bullet (as others add) can pierce, than to the whale, whose skin is easily pierced, as experience showeth in our whales; except the whale here spoken of were of another kind, which is not impossible.

Nor the habergeon; or, breastplate. As offensive weapons cannot hurt him, so defensive weapons cannot secure a man from him. But men that go upon the design of taking either whales or crocodiles do not use to fortify themselves in that manner. Some therefore take this to be another offensive weapon, a kind of dart, as this word signifies in the Arabic language; which is but a dialect of the Hebrew, and from which the true signification of many Hebrew words must be gathered.

Ver. 27.

He neither fears nor feels the blows of the one more than of the other.

Ver. 28.

The arrow, Heb. *the son of the bow*; as it is elsewhere called *the son of the quiver*, #La 3:13; the quiver being as it were the mother or womb that bears it, and the bow as the father that begets it, or sendeth it forth.

Sling-stones; great stones cast out of slings, which have a great force and efficacy; of which see on #2Ch 26:14.

Are turned with him into stubble; hurt him no more than a blow with a little stubble.

Ver. 29.

So far is he from fearing it, and fleeing from it, that he scorns and defies it.

Ver. 30.

According to this translation the sense is, his skin is so hard and impenetrable, that the sharpest stones are as easy to him as the mire, and make no more impression upon him. But the words are and may be otherwise rendered, as continuing the former sense, They (to wit, the arrows, darts, or stones cast at him) are or fall

under him, like (which particle is oft understood) *sharp shreds, or fragments of stones*;

he spreadeth sharp pointed things (to wit, the pieces of swords or darts which were flung at him, and broken upon him) upon the mire. The fragments of broken weapons lie as thick at the bottom of the water in the place of the fight as little stones do in the mire, or as they do in a field after some fierce and furious battle. Or thus, *With him* (or *for him*, i.e. for his defence) *are sharp stones*; he spreadeth himself like *an arrow or threshing instrument* (which is filled and fortified with iron)

in the mire or *mud* in the bottom of the water: so he doth not describe his resting-place, but rather his back, which he not unfitly compares to sharp stones or threshing instruments, because the darts or stones east at him pierce no more into him than they would do into them if they were thrown at them.

Ver. 31.

The deep; the deep waters, or the sea, which is called *the deep*, #Ps 107:24 Jon 2:3, as it is explained in the next clause.

To boil like a pot; to swell, and foam, and froth by his strong and vehement motion, as any liquor doth when it is boiled in a pot.

The sea; either the great sea, the proper place of the whale, #Ps 104:25; or the great river Nilus, which is called a *sea*, both in Scripture, as #Isa 11:15, and in other authors, (of which see my Latin Synopsis,) as Euphrates is called *the sea of Babylon*, #Isa 21:1 Jer 51:36; or lakes or pools, which are most frequently called seas, both in the Old and New Testament, as every one knows. And in such lakes the crocodiles are no less than in Nilus, as it is attested by Herodotus, and Strabo, and others.

Like a pot of ointment: this clause seems to be added very emphatically, to intimate that this leviathan causeth not only a vehement commotion, but also a great fragranciness in the sea or waters where it is; which, though it was not observed by the ancients, yet is unanimously affirmed by later authors upon their own knowledge and experience, that it casts a perfume like musk; of which see the names and words of the authors in my Latin Synopsis.

Ver. 32.

When he raiseth himself to the top of the waters, he doth as it were plough it up, and make large furrows, and causeth a white froth or foam upon the waters.

Ver. 33.

Upon earth; either,

1. Strictly so called, as it is distinguished from the sea or rivers. There is no land creature comparable to him for strength and courage. Or,

2. Largely taken. No creature equals him in all points. Or, *upon the dust*, as the word properly signifies, i.e. among the things that creep in the dust, among which this may in some sort be numbered for the shortness of its feet. But this were no great honour to it, to be the chief of creeping things; and therefore the

former translation seems more proper for the present design of magnifying this creature above all others.

Who is made without fear; fears no enemy, as being full of courage, and sensible of his own invincible strength. Or, so as he cannot be bruised or broken, by reason of his prodigious hardness, of which I have spoken before.

Ver. 34.

He doth not turn his back upon nor hide his face from the highest and proudest creatures, but looks upon them with a bold and undaunted countenance, as being without any fear of them, as was now said. He carries himself with princely majesty and courage towards the stoutest and loftiest creatures; which, though of far higher stature than himself, he striketh down with one stroke of his tail, as he commonly doth cows, and horses, and sometimes elephants.

JOB CHAPTER 42

Job's humiliation and repentance, **#Job 42:1-6**. God preferring Job's cause, reproveth his friends, for whom Job must intercede, and God will accept him, **#Job 42:7-9**. God magnifieth and blesseth Job, **#Job 42:10-15**. His age and death, **#Job 42:16,17**.

Ver. 1.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 2.

Thou canst do; not only by power, (for that he always thought,) but also by right; about which he had in some sort doubted and disputed. It is a maxim in law, that a man can only do that which he hath a right to do.

Every thing; whatsoever it pleaseth thee to do with thy creatures.

No thought can be withholden from thee; he speaks either,

1. Of Job's thoughts. Thou knowest me and all my sinful and unworthy thoughts of thy providential dealings with me, though I was not able to see the evil of them. Or,

2. Of God's thoughts. Whatsoever thou thinkest or proposest to do thou canst or mayst do it; and neither I nor any of thy creatures can either restrain thee from it, or condemn thee for it, as I have boldly and wickedly presumed to do. So this last clause of the verse explains the former.

Ver. 3.

Who is he? i.e. what am I, that I should dare to do so? Ah silly audacious wretch that I am, that I should be guilty of such madness!

That hideth counsel without knowledge; which words are repeated out of **#Job 38:2**, where they are explained.

Therefore; because my mind was without knowledge, therefore my speech was ignorant and foolish. Or, being sensible of my ignorance and rashness, I think fit to make this humble and ingenuous confession.

Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not; I have spoken foolishly and unadvisedly of things far above my reach, even of God's infinite and sovereign majesty, and of his deep and unsearchable counsels and providence.

Ver. 4.

Hear and accept my humble and penitent confession and recantation.

I will demand of thee; or, and *inquire*, to wit, counsel or instruction, as a scholar doth of his master, as the following words note. I will no more saucily dispute the matter with thee, but beg information from thee. The words which God had uttered to Job by way of challenge, **#Job 38:3 40:7**, Job returns to him again in way of submission.

Ver. 5.

The knowledge which I had of thy Divine nature, and perfections, and counsels, was hitherto dark, and doubtful, and conjectural, being grounded chiefly, if not only, upon the instructions and reports of other men; but now it is clear and certain, as being immediately inspired into my mind by this thy glorious apparition and revelation, and by the operation of thy Holy Spirit; which

makes these things as certain and evident to me, as if I saw them with my bodily eyes.

Ver. 6.

I abhor, i.e. dislike, and detest, and loathe

myself, or *my former words and carriage*. One of these or some like supplement is necessary to complete the sense, and is clearly gathered from the following words.

In dust and ashes; sitting in dust and ashes; which hitherto I have done in token of my grief for my affliction; but now I desire and resolve to do in testimony of my penitence for my sins.

Ver. 7.

To Eliphaz the Temanite; as the eldest of the three, and because he spoke first, and by his evil example led the rest into the same mistakes and miscarriages.

Thy two friends, to wit, Bildad and Zophar, who are not excused, but severely reprov'd, although they, were drawn into the sin by Eliphaz's authority and influence. Elihu is not here reprov'd, because he dealt more justly and mercifully with Job, and did not condemn his person, but only rebuke his sinful expressions.

As my servant Job hath; either,

1. As Job hath now spoken: you have not acknowledged your errors as he hath done. Or rather,

2. As Job did in his discourses with you; which is not to be understood simply and absolutely, (as is manifest from God's censure upon Job for his hard and evil speeches of him,) but comparatively, because Job was not so much to be blamed as they; partly, because his opinion concerning the methods of God's providence, and the indifferency and promiscuousness of its dispensations towards good and bad men, was truer than theirs, which was that God did generally reward good men and punish sinners in this life; partly, because their misbelief of God's counsels and dealings with men was attended with horrid uncharitableness and cruelty towards Job, whom they wounded with bitter and injurious speeches, and condemned as a hypocrite, not only without sufficient evidence, as not being able to search

his heart, but upon false and frivolous grounds, to wit, his sore afflictions, and against many evidences of piety which Job had given; and partly, because Job's heavy pressures might easily cloud and darken his mind, and draw forth his impatience and passionate speeches; which although it did not wholly excuse Job, yet did certainly much extenuate his offences; whereas they were under no such temptations or provocations, either from God or from Job, but voluntarily broke forth into their hard, and severe, and untrue expressions concerning God's counsels and Job's conditions, thereby adding affliction to him whom God did sorely afflict, which was most unfriendly and inhuman.

Ver. 8.

Go to my servant Job; whom though you have censured and condemned as a hypocrite, I own for my faithful servant, human infirmity excepted.

Offer up by the hand of Job, whom I do hereby constitute your priest, to pray and sacrifice for you.

Him will I accept, to wit, on your behalf, as well as on his own.

Lest I deal with you after your folly; lest my wrath and just judgment take hold of you for your false and foolish speeches.

Ver. 9.

Did according as the Lord commanded them; showing their repentance by their submission to God, and to Job for God's sake, and by taking shame to themselves.

The Lord also accepted Job, both for his friends and for himself, as the next verse explains it.

Ver. 10.

Turned the captivity of Job, i.e. brought him out of that state of bondage in which he had been so long held by Satan and by his own Spirit, and out of all his distresses and miseries. Or, *returned Job's captivity*, i.e. the persons and things which had been taken from him; not the same which he had lost, but other equivalent to them, and that with advantage.

When he prayed for his friends; whereby he manifesteth his obedience to God, and his true love and charity to them, in being

so ready to forgive them, and heartily to pray for them; for which God would not let him lose his reward.

Also; an emphatical particle. He not only gave him as much as he lost, but double to it.

Ver. 11.

Then, when Job had humbled himself, and God was reconciled to Job, he quickly turned the hearts of his friends to favour him, according to #Pr 16:7; as during his impenitency, and for his trial and humiliation, he had alienated their hearts from him, of which Job so sadly complains.

His brethren and his sisters; largely so called, according to the Scripture use of these titles, to wit, his kindred distinguished from his other acquaintance.

Did eat bread with him, i.e. feasted with him, as that phrase is commonly used in Scripture, to congratulate with him for God's great and glorious favour already vouchsafed to him in so eminent a vision and revelation.

They bemoaned him; they declared the sense which they had of his calamities whilst they were upon him, although they had hitherto wanted opportunity to express it.

Over all the evil; or, *concerning all the evil*; which though it was bitter to endure when it was present, yet the remembrance of it revived in him by the discourses of his friends was very delightful, as is usual in such cases.

Every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold; partly to make up his former losses, and partly as a testimony of their honourable respect to him.

Ver. 12.

The Lord blessed Job, not only with spiritual, but also with temporal and earthly blessings.

Ver. 13.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 14.

Giving them such excellent names as signify their excellent beauty, of which see my Latin Synopsis.

Ver. 15.

Gave his daughters a share, and possibly an equal share, with his sons in his inheritance; which in so plentiful an estate he might easily do, especially to such amiable sisters, without the envy of their brethren; and which peradventure he did to oblige them to settle themselves amongst their brethren, and to marry into their own religious kindred, not to strangers, who in those times were generally swallowed up in the gulf of idolatry.

Ver. 16.

No text from Poole on this verse.

Ver. 17.

After God had turned his captivity, as is said #**Job 42:10**.

Old and full of days; by which length of his days it seems most probable that he lived before the times of Moses, when the days of human life were much shortened, as he complains.

END OF VOL. I.