

Language: English

Book: Job

Job

Chapter 1

¹ There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and Job was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned from evil. ² There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. ³ He possessed seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred donkeys and a great many servants. He was the man who was the greatest of all the people of the East. ⁴ On each son's assigned day, he would give a feast in his house. They would send and call for their three sisters to eat and drink with them. ⁵ When the days of the feast were over, Job would send for them and he would consecrate them. He would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings for each of his children, for he would say, "It may be that my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Job always did this.

⁶ Then it was the day when the sons of God came to present themselves before Yahweh. Satan also came with them. ⁷ Yahweh said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Then Satan answered Yahweh and said, "From wandering on the earth, from going back and forth on it." ⁸ Yahweh said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil." ⁹ Then Satan answered Yahweh and said, "Is it for no reason that Job fears God? ¹⁰ Have you not put a barrier around him, around his house, and around all that is his from every side? You have blessed the deeds of his hands, and his livestock have spread throughout the land. ¹¹ But now stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and see if he does not curse you to your face." ¹² Yahweh said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him himself do not stretch out your hand." Then Satan went away from the presence of Yahweh.

¹³ It came about that on a certain day, his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house. ¹⁴ A messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were feeding beside them. ¹⁵ Then the Sabeans fell on them and took them away. As for the servants, they have struck them with the edge of the sword. I alone have escaped to make it known to you." ¹⁶ While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from the heavens and burned up the sheep and the servants. I alone have escaped to make it known to you." ¹⁷ While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three groups, made a raid on the camels, and have taken them away. As for the servants, they have struck them with the edge of the sword. I alone have escaped to make it known to you." ¹⁸ While he was yet speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house. ¹⁹ A strong wind came from the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house. It fell on the young people, and they died. I alone have escaped to make it known to you."

²⁰ Then Job rose, tore his robe, shaved his head, lay facedown on the ground, and worshiped God. ²¹ He said, "I was naked when I came out of my mother's womb, and I will be naked when I will return there. It is Yahweh who gave, and it is Yahweh who has taken away. May the name of Yahweh be blessed."

²² In all this matter, Job did not sin, nor did he accuse God of wrongdoing.

Job 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter introduces a story about a man named Job who lives during a time long before the author.

Special concepts in this chapter

Wealth

Job is very rich. During his time, a man's wealth is measured by the number of animals he owns.

Feasts

Job is a very godly man and celebrates Yahweh's provision by having feasts. It must be remembered that Job lives prior to the law of Moses, so his religious practices are different than the Hebrew people after Moses. The events of this book occur about the same time as the life of Abraham. Therefore, this book corresponds more with Genesis 12-50 than the rest of the Old Testament. (See: godly and lawofmoses)

Job's faith

Satan believes that Job's faith is based on Yahweh's blessings. He challenges Yahweh to remove these blessings from Job's life because he thinks that Job will no longer trust in Yahweh if this happens. (See: faith, bless and trust)

Job 1:1

land of Uz

Possible locations are 1) a place in ancient Edom east of the Jordan River in modern western Jordan or 2) a place east of the Euphrates River in modern Iran.

blameless and upright

The words "blameless" and "upright" share similar meanings and emphasize that Job was a righteous man. Alternate translation: "one who did what was right before God"

one who feared God

"one who honored God"

turned from evil

Here evil is spoken of as if it were a place that a person could avoid going to, instead of the doing of evil actions. Alternate translation: "refused to do evil"

Job 1:2

seven sons and three daughters

"7 sons and 3 daughters"

Job 1:3

He possessed seven thousand sheep

"He had 7,000 sheep"

three thousand camels

"3,000 camels"

five hundred yoke of oxen

"500 yoke of oxen." Each yoke would have been over two oxen, so there were five hundred pairs of oxen, which is a total of one thousand (1,000) oxen.

the greatest

"the richest"

all the people of the East

The refers to places that were east of Canaan.

Alternate translation: "all the people who live in lands that were east of Canaan"

Job 1:4

On each son's assigned day, he would give

The word "day" perhaps refers to the day when they celebrated the son's birth. But it at least refers to the idea that the sons each took a turn in holding a feast. Alternate translation: "On each son's birthday, the son would give" or "Each son in turn would give"

he would give ... They would send and call for

"he habitually gave ... They habitually sent and called for "

with them

The word "them" refers to the seven sons and the three daughters but does not include Job.

Job 1:5

Job would send ... he would consecrate ... He would rise

early in the morning and offer ... he would say
"he habitually gave ... They habitually sent and called for ... Job habitually sent ... he habitually consecrated ... He habitually rose early in the morning and offered ... he habitually said"

When the days of the feast were over

"When the feast was over" or "After the feast"

Job would send for them

"Job habitually sent someone to call them to come to him"

he would consecrate them

Here "consecrate" means to ask God to take away any ritual impurities that Job's children might have brought upon themselves as they happily feasted together. Job did this by making sacrifices to God for them.

cursed God in their hearts

Their "hearts" represent their thoughts. Often such thoughts could come unintentionally, without the person wanting to think them. Alternate translation: "cursed God in their thoughts"

Job 1:6

Then it was the day when

"At the time when" or "One day when." This is not a specific day but apparently the gathering happened often.

sons of God

This refers to angels, heavenly beings.

to present themselves before Yahweh

"to stand together before Yahweh as he commanded them to do."

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Job 1:7

From wandering on the earth, from going back and forth on it

The phrases "wandering" and "going back and forth" refer to the activity of traveling all over the earth in order to emphasize its completeness. Alternate translation: "From going everywhere on the earth"

Job 1:8

Have you considered my servant Job?

"Have you thought about my servant Job?" Here God is beginning to talk with Satan about Job. Alternate translation: "Consider my servant Job"

a blameless and upright man

The words "blameless" and "upright" share similar meanings and emphasize that Job was a righteous man. See how you translated this in [Job 1:1]

one who fears God

"one who honors God." See how you translated this in Job 1:1.

God

God is referring to himself in third person. Alternate translation: "me" or "me, God"

Job 1:9

Connecting Statement:

Satan's response to God's question in [verse 8](#) runs through Job 8:11.

Is it for no reason that Job fears God?

Satan uses a rhetorical question to introduce his claim that Job only serves God because God blesses him. Alternate translation: "Job has a very good reason for fearing God." or "Does Job not live better because he fears God?"

for no reason

The word "reason" here implies some form of gain, whether physical goods or happiness.

Job fears God

"Job honors God." See how you translated similar words in Job 1:1.

God

God is referring to himself in third person. See how you translated this in [verse 8]

Job 1:10

Have you not put a barrier around him, around his house, and around all that is his from every side

Satan states the facts to support his argument. Alternate translation: "You have protected him, his family and everything he owns"

put a barrier around him, around his house, and around all that is his from every side

Just as a barrier such as a wall or a hedge surrounds and protects one's land, God has surrounded Job with his protection. Alternate translation: "protected him and his house and all that is his"

the deeds of his hands

"everything that he does"

his livestock have spread throughout the land

"he has more and more livestock in the land"

Job 1:11

But now stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and see if he does not curse you to your face

Satan means that if God attacks Job, he will see how Job responds. Alternate translation: "But now, if you stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, you will see that he will curse you to your face"

But now stretch out your hand

Here "hand" refers to God's power to act. "But now use your power"

now

This word usually indicates a sincere, polite request, but Satan uses it here to taunt God.

touch all that he has

Here "touch" represents the action of harming or destroying. Alternate translation: "attack all that he has" or "destroy all that he has"

to your face

"in your hearing." This refers to a time when God is paying attention.

Job 1:12

Behold

"Look" or "Pay attention to all that I am about to tell you"

all that he has is in your hand

Here "hand" represents someone's power to control something. Alternate translation: "you have power over all that he has"

against him himself

"against his life"

went away from the presence of Yahweh

"departed from Yahweh" or "left Yahweh"

Job 1:13

General Information:

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Job 1:14

were feeding

"were eating." The word "feeding" here is the usual word for a person's animal eating in a pasture.

Job 1:15

the Sabbeans

This refers to a people in a region in modern day Yemen. Here it represents a group of raiders or bandits.

fell on them

Here "fell" represents the idea of attacking. Alternate translation: "attacked them"

have struck

Here striking represents killing.

the edge of the sword

Here "edge" represents the part of swords that kill people, that is, either the point or the sharp edge. Also, all the swords of the Sabbeans are spoken of as if they were only one sword.

I alone have escaped to make it known to you

"I am the only one who has escaped and can report it to you"

make it known to
or "tell"

Job 1:16

While he was still speaking

"he" refers to the first messenger

another also came

This refers to another messenger. Alternate translation: "another messenger also came"

I alone have escaped to make it known to you

See how you translated this in Job 1:15.

Job 1:17

made a raid on

"quickly attacked"

they have struck them with the edge of the sword. I

alone have escaped to make it known to you

Here "edge" represents the part of swords that kill people, that is, either the point or the sharp edge. Also, all the swords of the Chaldeans are spoken of as if they were only one sword. See how you translated this in [Job 1:15]

they have struck them

"the Chaldeans have struck the servants"

Job 1:18

Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house

See how you translated this in Job 1:13.

Job 1:19

A strong wind

"A tornado" or "A desert storm"

the four corners of the house

"the structural supports of the house"

It fell on the young people

"The house fell on your sons and daughters"

I alone have escaped to make it known to you

See how you translated this in Job 1:15.

Job 1:20

tore his robe, shaved his head

These were ritual mourning actions, symbolizing deep grief.

Job 1:21

I was naked when I came out of my mother's womb, and I will be naked when I will return there

"At my birth, I brought nothing into the world, and at my death I will return to the earth with nothing"

Job 1:22

accuse God of wrongdoing
"say that God had done wrong"

In all this matter
"Regarding all this that happened"

Chapter 2

¹ Then it was the day when the sons of God came to present themselves before Yahweh. Satan also came with them to present himself before Yahweh. ² Yahweh said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Then Satan answered Yahweh and said, "From wandering on the earth, from going back and forth on it." ³ Yahweh said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil. He still holds fast to his integrity, although you misled me against him, to destroy him without cause."

⁴ Satan answered Yahweh and said, "Skin for skin, indeed; a man will give all he has for his life. ⁵ But stretch out your hand now and touch his bones and his flesh, and see if he does not curse you to your face."

⁶ Yahweh said to Satan, "See, he is in your hand; it is only his life that you must spare."

⁷ Then Satan went away from the presence of Yahweh. He struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his feet to his head. ⁸ Job took a piece of broken pottery to scrape himself with, and he sat down in the middle of ashes. ⁹ Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die."

¹⁰ But he said to her, "You talk as a foolish woman talks. Should we receive the good from God and not receive the bad?" In all this matter, Job did not sin with his lips.

¹¹ Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come on him, each of them came from his own place: Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They set a time to come to mourn with him and to comfort him. ¹² When they lifted up their eyes at a distance, they did not recognize him. They raised their voices and wept; each tore his robe and threw dust into the air and upon his own head. ¹³ Then they sat with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights. No one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his grief was very great.

Job 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter repeats the concepts of the previous chapter, but this time it is more severe. After losing his wealth, Job's health is taken from him. His wife also begins to encourage Job to sin by cursing Yahweh. (See: sin and curse)

Job 2:1

General Information:

This verse is almost exactly the same as Job 1:6 and can probably be translated in the same way.

Then it was the day

See how you translated this in Job 1:6.

the day when

This is not a specific day. The gathering happened often. Alternate translation: "at the time when" or "one day when"

sons of God

See how you translated this in Job 1:6.

present themselves before Yahweh

See how you translated this in Job 1:6.

Job 2:2

General Information:

This verse is exactly the same as Job 1:7 and can probably be translated in the same way.

Job 2:3

General Information:

This verse is the same as Job 1:8, except for the addition of "He still holds fast to his integrity, although you misled me against him, to destroy him without cause."

Have you considered my servant Job?

This rhetorical question actually makes a statement. See how you translated this in [Job 1:8]

a blameless and upright man

The words "blameless" and "upright" share similar meanings and emphasize that Job was a righteous

man. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Job 1:1]

one who fears God and turns away from evil
See how you translated this in Job 1:1.

still holds fast to his integrity
"remains completely dedicated to doing what is good and right"

misled me against him
"persuaded me without cause to attack him"

to destroy him
Here "destroy" represents "make poor." Alternate translation: "to make him a poor man"

Job 2:4

Skin for skin, indeed
"Skin" here is a metonym for Job's life. Alternate translation: "A person will do anything to save his own life, even accept the loss of possessions and loved ones"

Job 2:5

But stretch out your hand now and touch his bones and his flesh, and see if he does not curse you to your face
Satan means that if God attacks Job, he will see how Job responds. Alternate translation: "But now, if you stretch out your hand and touch his bones and his flesh, you will see that he will curse you to your face"

stretch out your hand
Here "hand" refers to God's power to act. "But now use your power." See how you translated this in [Job 1:11]

touch
Here "touch" represents the action of harming. Alternate translation: "attack"

his bones and his flesh
This expression represents Job's body.

curse you to your face
See how you translated this in Job 1:11.

to your face
This refers to a time when God is paying attention. Alternate translation: "in your hearing"

Job 2:6

General Information:
This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 2:7

Then Satan went away from the presence of Yahweh
See how you translated this in Job 1:12.

He struck Job with painful boils
"He caused Job to suffer greatly with painful boils"

painful boils
large, itching and painful skin infections

Job 2:8

a piece of broken pottery to scrape himself
The scraping scratches the skin to lessen the itch.

sat down in the middle of ashes
This probably refers to a place where trash and garbage were dumped and perhaps burned. Sitting in such a place was a sign of deep mourning. Alternate translation: "sat on the trash heap"

Job 2:9

Do you still hold fast to your integrity?
This rhetorical question represents a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not still be holding fast to your integrity."

Curse God
"Reject God"

Job 2:10

You talk as a foolish woman
"You talk the way a stupid woman talks"

Should we receive the good from God and not receive the bad?
This rhetorical question represents a statement. Alternate translation: "We should certainly receive the bad from God as well as the good."

receive the good
"benefit from all the good things"

the good
This represents all the good things that God gives us.

receive the bad
"suffer all the bad things without complaining"

the bad
This represents all the bad things that God makes or allows us to experience.

sin with his lips
Here "lips" represents the act of speaking. Alternate translation: "sin by speaking against God"

Job 2:11

Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite
Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar are men's names. Teman was a city in Edom. Shuhites are the

decedents of Abraham and Keturah. Naamah was a city in Canaan.

set a time

"agreed on a time"

to mourn with him and to comfort him

Here the words "mourn with" and "comfort" share similar meanings. The friends try to comfort Job by mourning with him. Alternate translation: "to grieve with Job in order to help ease his suffering"

Job 2:12

they lifted up their eyes

This is an idiom that means "they looked intently" or "they looked carefully."

they did not recognize him

This probably means that Job's visitors did not recognize him at first, when they saw him at a

distance. Job looked very different than usual because of his grief and because of the sores covering his body. Alternate translation: "they barely recognized him"

They raised their voices and wept

Here "raised their voices" is an idiom that means they became loud. Alternate translation: "They wept out loud" or "They wept loudly"

tore his robe

This was a sign of mourning.

threw dust into the air and upon his own head

These were signs of mourning.

Job 2:13

General Information:

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Chapter 3

¹ After this, Job opened his mouth and cursed the day he was born. ² He said,

³ "May the day on which I was born perish,
the night that said, 'A boy has been conceived.'

⁴ May that day be dark!
May God not care about it,
nor light shine on it.

⁵ May darkness and the shadow of death claim it for their own.
May a cloud live over it;
may everything that makes the day black truly terrify it.

⁶ As for that night, may thick darkness seize it.
May it not rejoice among the days of the year;
may it not come into the number of the months.

⁷ See, may that night be barren;
may no joyful voice come into it.

⁸ Those who curse the day—may they curse it,
those who know how to wake up Leviathan.

⁹ May the stars of that day's dawn be dark.
May that day look for light, but find none;
neither may it see the eyelids of the dawn,

¹⁰ because it did not shut up the doors of my mother's womb,
and because it did not hide trouble from my eyes.

¹¹ Why did I not die when I came out from the womb?
Why did I not perish when my mother bore me?

¹² Why did her knees welcome me?
Why did her breasts receive me so that I should suck?

¹³ For now I would have been lying down quietly.
I would have slept and been at rest

¹⁴ with kings and counselors of the earth,
who built up tombs for themselves that are now in ruins.

¹⁵ Or I would have been lying down with princes who once had gold,
who had filled their houses with silver.

¹⁶ Or perhaps I would have been stillborn,
like infants that never see the light.

¹⁷ There the wicked cease from trouble;
there the weary are at rest.

¹⁸ There the prisoners are at ease together;
they do not hear the voice of the slave driver.

¹⁹ Both small and great people are there;
the servant is free from his master there.

²⁰ Why is light given to him who suffers?
Why is life given to the one who is bitter in soul,

²¹ to one who longs for death without it coming;
to one who digs for it more than for hidden treasure?

²² Why is light given to one who rejoices very much
and is glad when he finds the grave?

²³ Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden,
a man whom God has hedged in?

²⁴ For my sighing happens instead of eating;
my groaning is poured out like water.

²⁵ For the thing that I feared has come upon me;
what I was afraid of has come to me.

²⁶ I am not at ease, I am not quiet, and I have no rest;
trouble comes instead."

Job 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Job uses several rhetorical questions in this chapter. The purpose of these rhetorical questions is to show Job's earnest desire.

Job 3:1

opened his mouth

This idiom means he began to speak.

Job 3:2

General Information:

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Job 3:3

May the day on which I was born perish, the night

Job speaks of that day and night as if they were people. Alternate translation: "I wish that I had never been born"

the night that said, 'A boy has been conceived.'

This expression intensifies the statement of Job's grief by going even further back in time from his birth to his conception. Alternate translation: "the night that said, 'A boy has been conceived' perish."

the night that said

Here the night is spoken of as if it were a person who could speak. The translator may choose, however, to translate it in a less metaphorical way. Alternate translation: "the night on which people said"

A boy has been conceived

This may be put into active form. Alternate translation: "his mother has conceived a male child"

Job 3:4

General Information:

The expressions in these verses are all wishes that the day of Job's birth would no longer exist. This may imply that the day, although in the past, still existed somehow.

May that day be dark ... nor light shine on it

These two clauses describe the darkness of the day of Job's birth, thus repeating Job's regret that he had been born. "Dark" describes night: the sun does not shine, so people cannot see. "Light"

describes day: the sun shines, and people can see. If your language does not have words to describe day and night, you might use the sun as a metonym for the light that it brings and the darkness that happens when it is not shining. Alternate translation: "May that day be like the night ... nor may the sun shine during it"

May that day be dark

This is a wish for that day to not exist any longer. Alternate translation: "May that day disappear"

Job 3:5

May darkness and the shadow of death claim it for their own

Here darkness and the shadow of death are spoken of as if they were people who could claim something as their own possession. The word "it" refers to the day of Job's birth.

the shadow of death

Here a shadow represents death itself. Alternate translation: "death like a shadow"

May a cloud live over it

Here a cloud is spoken of as if it were a person who could live over the day of Job's birth. Alternate translation: "May a cloud cover it so no one can see it"

everything that makes the day black

This refers to things that block out the sun's light and create darkness. Here "black" represents darkness.

terrify it

"terrify that day." The day is spoken of as if it were a person who could be terrified by the darkness.

Job 3:6

may thick darkness seize it

This darkness is again spoken of as if it were a person who could grasp and hold the night. Alternate translation: "may thick darkness make it disappear"

thick darkness

"deep darkness" or "complete darkness"

May it not rejoice

The word "it" refers to the night of Job's birth or conception. The night of Job's conception is spoken of as if it were a person who should not rejoice. Alternate translation: "May that night vanish from the calendar"

may it not come into the number

That night is spoken of as if it were a person who could walk. Alternate translation: "may no one count it in the number"

Job 3:7

may that night be barren

The night of Job's birth is spoken of as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "may no child be born on that night"

may no joyful voice come into it

Here that the night of Job's birth is spoken of as if it were a time when it was still possible for someone to be happy. Alternate translation: "may no one hear the happy cry at the birth of a son"

joyful voice come

Here the voice stands for a person who is happy. Alternate translation: "may no one be happy in it ever again"

Job 3:8

General Information:

Job continues to curse the day he was born.

Those who curse the day—may they curse it, those who know how to wake up Leviathan

You may need to change the order of the clauses. Alternate translation: "May those who curse the day—those who know how to wake up Leviathan—curse the day I was born" or "Those who curse the day—those who know how to wake up Leviathan—may they curse the day I was born"

Those who curse the day

This metonym refers to people who use magic to cause other people to suffer on a given day as though they were causing the day itself to suffer. Alternate translation: "Those who know how to curse people"

may they curse it

The word "it" refers to the day on which Job was born.

those who know how to wake up Leviathan

Job is probably referring here to sorcerers and magicians, who he believes might be able to even provoke Leviathan in spreading chaos. Leviathan was an animal well known in Ancient Near Eastern

mythology, which was thought to be responsible for all kinds of destruction, disorder, and chaos.

Job 3:9

May the stars of that day's dawn be dark

This refers to the planets that are often visible just before dawn. Alternate translation: "May the stars that appear before that day's first light be dark"

May that day look for light, but find none

The day of Job's birth is spoken of as if it were a person looking for something. Alternate translation: "May that day hope for light, but have none"

neither may it see the eyelids of the dawn

The dawn is spoken of as if it had eyelids as a person has. Alternate translation: "nor see the first light of the dawn"

Job 3:10

because it did not shut up the doors of my mother's womb

A woman's womb is spoken of as if it were a container with doors. Alternate translation: "because that day did not close my mother's womb"

because it did not hide trouble from my eyes

The day of Job's birth is spoken of here as if it were a person who could hide something.

from my eyes

Here "eyes" represents the person who sees with them. Alternate translation: "from me"

Job 3:11

General Information:

Verses 11 and 12 contain four rhetorical questions, which Job asks in order to show how said he was about being born.

Why did I not die when I came out from the womb?

"Why did I not die at birth?" Job poses this question in order to curse the day of his birth and to express his anguish. Alternate translation: "I wish I had died the day I was born"

Why did I not perish when my mother bore me?

Job means to say that he should not have been born alive. Alternate translation: "I wish I had perished when I came out of the womb."

Job 3:12

Why did her knees welcome me?

This perhaps refers to the lap of Job's mother. His mother's knees are spoken of as if they were people who could welcome a newborn baby. Alternate translation: "I wish there had been no lap to receive me."

Why did her breasts receive me so that I should suck?
Job's mother's breasts are spoken of as if they also were people who could welcome a newborn baby. Alternate translation: "I wish there had been no breasts for me to nurse."

Job 3:13

For now I would have been lying down quietly. I would have slept and been at rest
Job begins talking about what would have been true if he had died at birth. He is sad that these things are not true.

lying down quietly
"asleep, resting peacefully"

been at rest
Here the word "rest" means to sleep peacefully in death, but also that Job would not be experiencing the pain that he does.

Job 3:14

with kings and counselors of the earth
"with kings and their advisers"

Job 3:15

General Information:
Job continues talking about what would have been true if he had never been born. He is sad that these things are not true.

I would have been lying down with princes
"I would be resting with princes." In this phrase, the words "lying down" and "resting" are a polite way of saying "no longer alive."

Job 3:16

General Information:
Job continues talking about what would have been true if the day of his birth had been barren and cursed as he spoke of in [Job 3:7-8]

I would have been stillborn
"I would have died in my mother's womb"

like infants that never see the light
"like babies who have never been born"

infants
"babies"

Job 3:17

General Information:
Job changes his talk from dying to life after death.

There the wicked cease from trouble
Job is talking about the place where people go after they stop living. Alternate translation: "In that place, evil people stop causing trouble"

Job 3:18

the voice of the slave driver
Here "voice" is a metonym for the power that the slave drivers have over the slaves. Alternate translation: "They are no longer under the control of the slave driver"

the slave driver
This refers to slave drivers in general, not one particular slave driver. Alternate translation: "slave drivers"

slave driver
Some English versions read, "oppressor."

Job 3:19

small and great people
This is a figure of speech which means "all people, both poor people and rich people."

the servant is free from his master
A servant is no longer obligated to serve his master.

Job 3:20

Why is light given to him who suffers?
Here Job is wondering why people must stay alive and suffer. Alternate translation: "I do not understand why God gives life to a person who is suffering"

light
Here light represents life.

Why is life given to the one who is bitter in soul
"why does God give life to a miserable person?"
Alternate translation: "I do not understand why God gives life to a person who is very unhappy"

Job 3:21

to one who longs ... for hidden treasure
This is the end of the question that Job begins asking with the words "Why is life given ... bitter in soul" (verse 20).

to one who longs for death without it coming
Here death is spoken of as if it were an object coming toward someone. Alternate translation: "to a person who no longer wants to be alive, but is still alive"

to one who digs for it more than for hidden treasure
A person hoping to die ("death") is spoken of as if he were digging for buried treasure. Alternate

translation: "to a person who wants to stop living more than he wants to look for hidden riches"

Job 3:22

Why is light given to one who rejoices very much and is glad when he finds the grave

Here Job uses a question to make a statement. Alternate translation: "I do not understand why God allows a person to keep living when the person would be very happy to be buried in the ground"

one who rejoices very much and is glad

The phrase "rejoices very much" means basically the same thing as "is glad." Together, the two phrases emphasize the intensity of gladness. Alternate translation: "one who is extremely happy"

when he finds the grave

This is a polite way of referring to dying. Alternate translation: "when he is dead and can be buried"

the grave

Here the grave represents death.

Job 3:23

Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, a man whom God has hedged in?

Job asks this question in order to make a statement. Alternate translation: "God should not give life to a man and then take away his future and confine him."

Why is light given to a man

Here light represents life. Alternate translation: "Why does God keep a man alive"

whose way is hidden

Here Job speaks of his future, which he does not know in advance, as if God had hidden it from him.

a man whom God has hedged in

Here a man who has difficulties and is in danger is spoken of as if God had put a hedge around him so he could not move.

whom God has hedged in

"around whom God has built a hedge." A hedge is a wall of bushes planted so close together that people cannot go through it.

Job 3:24

For my sighing happens instead of eating; my groaning is poured out like water

Job expresses his anguish in two ways.

my sighing happens instead of eating

"Instead of eating, I mourn"

my groaning is poured out like water

Moral qualities and emotions such as grief are often spoken of as if they were water.

Job 3:25

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 3:26

I am not at ease, I am not quiet, and I have no rest

"I do not feel safe, I am not calm, and I cannot rest." Job expresses his terrible anguish in three separate phrases. Alternate translation: "I am very anxious and I cannot rest"

Chapter 4

- ¹ Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,
- ² If anyone tries to speak with you, will you be impatient?
But who can stop himself from speaking?
- ³ See, you have instructed many;
you have strengthened weak hands.
- ⁴ Your words have supported him who was falling;
you have made feeble knees strong.
- ⁵ But now trouble has come to you, and you are weary;
it touches you, and you are troubled.
- ⁶ Is not your fear your confidence,
and the integrity of your ways your hope?
- ⁷ Think about this, please: Who has ever perished when innocent?
Or when were the upright people ever cut off?
- ⁸ According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity
and sow trouble reap it.
- ⁹ By the breath of God they perish;
by the blast of his anger they are consumed.
- ¹⁰ The roaring of the lion, the voice of the fierce lion,
the teeth of the young lions—they are broken.
- ¹¹ The old lion perishes for lack of victims;
the cubs of the lioness are scattered everywhere.
- ¹² Now a certain matter was secretly brought to me,
and my ear received a whisper about it.
- ¹³ Then came thoughts from visions in the night,
when deep sleep falls on people.
- ¹⁴ It was at night when fear and trembling came upon me,
and all my bones shook.
- ¹⁵ Then a spirit passed before my face,
and the hair of my flesh stood up.
- ¹⁶ The spirit stood still,
but I could not discern its appearance.
A form was before my eyes;
there was silence, and I heard a voice that said,
- ¹⁷ "Can a mortal man be more righteous than God?
Can a man be more pure than his Maker?"
- ¹⁸ See, if God puts no trust in his servants;
if he accuses his angels of folly,
- ¹⁹ how much more is this true of those who live in houses of clay,
whose foundation is in the dust,
who are crushed sooner than a moth?
- ²⁰ Between morning and evening they are destroyed;
they perish forever without anyone noticing them.
- ²¹ Are not their tent cords plucked up among them?
They die; they die without wisdom.

Job 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. In this chapter, Eliphaz speaks to Job.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Eliphaz uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job that he is wrong. These questions help to form Eliphaz's argument.

Job 4:1

Eliphaz

Eliphaz is a man's name.

Temanite

A Temanite belongs to the tribe of Teman.

Job 4:2

will you be impatient?

Eliphaz asks this question in order to make a statement. Alternate translation: "you will surely be impatient."

will you be impatient?

"will that annoy you?"

But who can stop himself from speaking?

Eliphaz asks this question to say that no one who sees a friend suffering can remain silent. Alternate translation: "No one can restrain himself from speaking (to a friend in such a state as you find yourself)" or "I must speak to you, (seeing that you are in a state of grief)."

Job 4:3

See, you have instructed many; you have strengthened weak hands

This verse states a single idea in two different ways.

you have strengthened weak hands

Here "weak hands" represents people who need help. Alternate translation: "you have helped others when they needed help"

Job 4:4

supported

Someone who has been encouraged is spoken of as if he were kept from falling down.

falling

Here becoming discouraged is spoken of as if it were falling down.

you have made feeble knees strong

Here discouragement is spoken of as if it were a person whose weak knees could not keep him upright.

Job 4:5

But now trouble has come to you

Here trouble is spoken of as if it were an object that could come to a person. Alternate translation: "But now you suffer from disasters"

you are weary

"you are discouraged"

Job 4:6

your fear

"the fact that you honor God"

Is not your fear your confidence, and the integrity of your ways your hope?

Eliphaz asks these questions in order to tell Job that it is because of his sin that he is suffering. Alternate translation: "Everyone thinks that you honor God; everyone thinks that you are an honest man. But these things must not be true, because you do not trust God any longer."

your fear

Eliphaz means Job's fear of God. Alternate translation: "your fear of God"

your ways

Here "your ways" represents "your conduct," "how you behave."

Job 4:7

Who has ever perished when innocent?

Eliphaz uses this question to prompt Job to search his life for sin

when were the upright people ever cut off

This question also means to make a statement, and may be put into active form. Alternate translation: "No one has ever cut off an upright person"

cut off

Here being cut off represents being destroyed.

Job 4:8

plow iniquity ... sow trouble ... reap

Here the actions of plowing and sowing represent causing trouble for other people. The action of reaping represents suffering the trouble that one has himself caused.

Job 4:9

By the breath of God they perish; by the blast of his anger they are consumed

The writer explains a single idea using two different statements. This is a form of Hebrew poetry used for emphasis, clarity, teaching, or all three.

the breath of God

This may represent the action of God giving a command.

the blast of his anger

This expression suggests the heavy breathing that a person sometimes does through his nose when he is very angry.

breath ... blast

The second builds on the first. They make the same point by using meanings that increase the result. "By the puff of God's mouth they die; the rushing wind of his anger devastates them."

perish ... are consumed

The second phrase builds on the first. They make the same point. "By the puff of God's breath they die, the rushing wind of his anger devastates them."

they are consumed

Here being consumed or eaten represents being killed.

Job 4:10

The roaring of the lion, the voice of the fierce lion, the teeth of the young lions—they are broken.

Here a lion's roar, his voice, and his teeth being broken are used as pictures of the wicked being destroyed.

they are broken

This may be put into active form. Alternate translation: "something breaks them"

Job 4:11

The old lion perishes for lack of victims; the cubs of the lioness are scattered everywhere

Eliphaz uses the picture of an old lion dying of hunger and of a lion's family being scattered as metaphors for the wicked being destroyed.

the cubs of the lioness are scattered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "something scatters the cubs of the lioness"

Job 4:12

Now a certain matter was secretly brought to me ... my ear received a whisper about it

These phrases express the same idea in two different way. They emphasize that Eliphaz heard a message whispered to him.

Job 4:13

visions in the night

"dreams"

when deep sleep falls on people

"when people sleep very deeply"

Job 4:14

fear and trembling came upon me

Here fear and trembling are spoken of as if they were objects that could come to a person. Alternate translation: "I began to be afraid and to tremble"

Job 4:15

the hair of my flesh stood up

This indicates great fear. If your language has a word for what people's hair does when they are frightened, you may want to use it here.

the hair of my flesh

"the hair on my body." In some languages, the word for the hair that grows on the top of the head is different from the word for hair that grows on other parts of the body.

Job 4:16

A form was before my eyes

"Something was before my eyes" or "I saw something"

form

shape

and I heard

"then I heard"

Job 4:17

Can a mortal man be more righteous than God?

Eliphaz poses this question so that Job will consider, "Do I regard myself as more righteous than God?" or "Am I justified before God?" Alternate translation: "A mortal man cannot be more righteous than God." or "A mortal man cannot be righteous before God."

Can a man be more pure than his Maker?

This question has the same purpose as the previous question. Alternate translation: "A man cannot be

more pure than his Maker." or "A man cannot be pure before his Maker."

his Maker
"his Creator"

Job 4:18

General Information:
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Job 4:19

those who live in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust

This is a figurative way of describing human beings, who were created out of the dust of the earth and whose bodies are like houses, which are made of clay and have dirt foundations.

who are crushed sooner than a moth

Possible meanings for this metaphor are 1) "who God destroys as easily as he crushes a moth" or 2) "whose lives are as short as the life of a moth."

Job 4:20

Between morning and evening they are destroyed
This refers to the idea of something happening quickly.

they are destroyed
This may also be put into active form. Alternate translation: "they die"

Job 4:21

Are not their tent cords plucked up among them?
This may be put into active form. Alternate translation: "Have not their enemies plucked up their tent cords from among them?"

their tent cords
Here tent cords represent a tent. Sometimes a person's home and family are pictured as his tent, which can also represent all his possessions.

Chapter 5

- 1 Call out now; is there anyone who will answer you?
To which of the holy ones will you turn?
- 2 For anger kills the foolish;
jealousy causes the death of the silly.
- 3 I have seen a foolish person taking root,
but suddenly I cursed his home.
- 4 His children are far from safety;
they are crushed in the city gate.
There is no one to rescue them.
- 5 The hungry eat up their harvest;
they even take it from among the thorns.
The thirsty pant for their wealth.
- 6 For difficulties do not come out from the soil;
neither does trouble sprout from the ground.
- 7 Yet, mankind is born for trouble,
just as sparks fly upward.

- 8 But as for me, I would turn to God himself;
to him I would commit my cause—
- 9 he who does great and unsearchable things,
marvelous things without number.
- 10 He gives rain on the earth,
and sends water on the fields.
- 11 He does this in order to set up on high those who are low;
to raise to safety those who mourn.
- 12 He breaks the plans of crafty people,
so that their hands cannot achieve success.
- 13 He traps wise people in their own crafty actions;
the plans of twisted people are hurried to their end.
- 14 They encounter darkness in the daytime,
and grope at noonday as if it were night.
- 15 But he saves the poor person from the sword in their mouths
and the needy person from the hand of mighty people.
- 16 So the poor person has hope,
and injustice shuts her own mouth.

- 17 See, blessed is the man whom God corrects;
therefore, do not despise the discipline of the Almighty.
- 18 For he inflicts pain and then binds up;
he wounds and then his hands heal.
- 19 He will rescue you out of six troubles;
indeed, in seven troubles, no evil will touch you.
- 20 In famine he will ransom you from death,
and in war from the hands of the sword.
- 21 You will be hidden from the scourge of the tongue;
and you will not be afraid of destruction when it comes.
- 22 You will laugh at destruction and famine,
and you will not be afraid of beasts of the earth.
- 23 For you will have a covenant with the stones in your field,
and the beasts of the field will be at peace with you.
- 24 You will know that your tent is in safety;
you will visit your sheepfold and you will not miss anything.
- 25 You will also know that your seed will be great,
that your descendants will be like the grass on the ground.
- 26 You will come to your grave at a full age,
like a stack of grain bundles that goes up at its time.

²⁷ See, we have examined this matter; it is like this; listen to it, and know it for yourself."

Job 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. In this chapter, Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.

Special concepts in this chapter

Sickness and sin

In the ancient Near East, it was common to believe that a person's illness was caused by sin. It was seen as the punishment of a god. While Yahweh may punish people because of their sin, not all sicknesses are caused by sin.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Eliphaz uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job that he is wrong. These questions help to build Eliphaz's argument.

Job 5:1

To which of the holy ones will you turn?

Eliphaz poses this question to make the point that there is no one Job can turn to for help. Alternate translation: "Is there a holy one to whom you may turn?" or "There is no holy one to whom you can turn for help."

holy ones

This refers to supernatural beings of some kind, whether angels or other spirits.

Job 5:2

anger kills the foolish; jealousy causes the death of the silly

The phrases "the foolish" and "the silly" are emphatic in the Hebrew. Alternate translation: "it is the foolish whom anger kills; it is the silly of whom jealousy causes the death"

the silly

"the one who lacks sound judgment" or "the one who cannot think well"

the foolish ... the silly

These phrases refer to any foolish person and any silly person.

Job 5:3

a foolish person

any foolish person

a foolish person taking root

Here a person is spoken of as if he were a plant, perhaps becoming more foolish over time. Alternate translation: "a foolish person becoming grounded in foolishness"

his home

This refers to the person's family and all his property.

Job 5:4

His children are far from safety

"His" refers to the foolish person or the foolish people in Job 5:2. Alternate translation: "Their children are never safe"

are crushed

Here being crushed represents being oppressed, taken advantage of, at court. This idea may be put into active form. Alternate translation: "someone crushes them"

city gate

The city gate, functioning as a court, was the place where disputes were resolved and where judgments were given.

There is no one to rescue them

"There is no one to help the foolish people's children out of their hardship"

Job 5:5

they even take it from among the thorns

This perhaps refers to parts of a field where the worst crops grow, because of thorn plants present.

The thirsty pant for their wealth

Here greedy people are spoken of as if they were thirsty, and the wealth of the foolish person is spoken of as if it were something that they could drink.

Job 5:6

For difficulties do not come out from the soil; neither does trouble sprout from the ground

Here difficulties and trouble are spoken of as if they were plants.

Job 5:7

mankind is born for trouble, just as sparks fly upward

It is as natural for people, once they are born, to have trouble as it is for sparks to fly up from a fire.

Job 5:8

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 5:9

great and unsearchable things, marvelous things without number

"great things that cannot be understood, wonders that cannot be counted"

unsearchable things

This refers to things that mankind cannot understand.

great and unsearchable things

Here the writer uses two independent words connected by "and" to emphasize the greatness of God's actions. Alternate translation: "greatly profound things"

marvelous things

"wonderful things" or "wonders"

Job 5:10

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 5:11

He does this in order to set up on high those who are low

Humble people in distress are spoken of as if they were in a low position. When God rescues them, they receive honor. When this happens, they are spoken of as being raised up and put into a high position. Alternate translation: "God does this in order to rescue and honor the humble who have been suffering"

Job 5:12

He breaks the plans

Here stopping crafty people from doing what they have planned to do is spoken of as if those plans were things that he could physically break.

Job 5:13

He traps wise people in their own crafty actions

Here making wise people suffer for their own evil actions is spoken of as if it were catching them in traps. Their own actions are spoken of as if they were those traps.

twisted people

Here being evil in a clever way is spoken of as if it were being twisted. Alternate translation: "those who are cunning" or "those who are devious" or "those who are shrewd"

Job 5:14

They encounter darkness in the daytime

Here the cunning, wicked people whom God confuses are spoken of as if they unexpectedly are in the dark at noon, when the sun is at its highest position in the sky. They cannot do anything they wish to do, because they cannot see. Alternate translation: "Those who are cunning are in the dark, even at noontime"

grope

feel around like a blind person

noonday

the middle of the day, when the sun is highest and brightest

Job 5:15

But he saves the poor person from the sword in their mouths

Here the insulting and threatening things that people say are spoken of as if they were a sword in their mouths. Alternate translation: "But he saves the poor person from the threats of the mighty" or "But he saves the poor person when the mighty threaten or insult them"

Job 5:16

injustice shuts her own mouth

People who say unjust things are spoken of as if they were the injustice itself, who must stop speaking. Alternate translation: "It is as though injustice shut her own mouth"

Job 5:17

God corrects ... discipline of the Almighty

God is pictured as a parent correcting or instructing a child.

blessed is the man whom God corrects

"God really favors the man whom he corrects"

do not despise

"do not reject" or "do not consider worthless"

discipline

"instruction" or "correction"

Job 5:18

For he inflicts pain and then binds up; he wounds and then his hands heal

"For he causes pain but binds up; he crushes, but his hands heal"

inflicts pain ... binds up

If your language has a word for "pain" that is specifically the pain of a bleeding wound, you may want to use it here. The "pain" that "he inflicts" is by implication the pain of a bleeding wound, so when "he binds" it, he stops the bleeding and makes it feel better.

his hands heal

Here "his hands" represents God.

Job 5:19

He will rescue you out of six troubles; indeed, in seven troubles, no evil will touch you

The use of increasing numbers such as "six" and "seven" represents the idea of many, many times. Alternate translation: "He will rescue you out of trouble over and over again; indeed, time after time, no evil will touch you"

Job 5:20

General Information:

The shift in pronoun from "he" to "you" which began in Job 5:19 continues through the end of Eliphaz's speech in Job 5:27.

In famine he will ransom you

Here rescuing is spoken of as if it were ransoming, buying back. Alternate translation: "In famine God will rescue you from danger"

the hands of the sword

Here "hands" probably represents the people who attack with weapons, including swords. Alternate translation: "violent people" or "people who attack you"

Job 5:21

of destruction

Here "destruction" refers to the danger of being destroyed by enemies. Alternate translation: "that any enemy will destroy you"

Job 5:22

You will laugh at destruction and famine

Here "laugh" represents that the person is not afraid. Alternate translation: "You will not be afraid of any danger of destruction or famine"

beasts of the earth

This refers to wild animals. Alternate translation: "wild animals"

Job 5:23

you will have a covenant with the stones in your field

Here the stones in farmers' fields are spoken of as if they were people that someone could have a covenant with. Alternate translation: "the stones in your fields will be like people who promise that they will not make any trouble for you"

the beasts of the field

This refers to dangerous wild animals.

Job 5:24

You will know that your tent is in safety

Here "tent" represents a person's family, household, and all his possessions. Alternate translation: "You will know that your family, servants, and everything you own are safe"

you will visit your sheepfold and you will not miss anything

"when you visit where your flock stays at night, you will find all your sheep there"

Job 5:25

your seed will be great

Here "seed" represents a person's descendants. Alternate translation: "your descendants will be many"

your descendants will be like the grass on the ground

Here "descendants" are spoken of as if they were as many as blades of grass, and probably as thriving, too. Alternate translation: "your descendants will be as many and as alive as the grass that grows"

Job 5:26

You will come to your grave at a full age

"You will die at a very old age"

like a stack of grain bundles that goes up at its time

You may need to make explicit that the grain in this simile is fully ripe but not overly ripe. He would neither die young nor become weak in his old age.

Job 5:27

See, we have examined this matter; it is like this; listen to it, and know it for yourself

The words "we" refers to Job's friends but not to Job. Alternate translation: "Look, we have thought about this matter. Listen to what I am saying and know that it is true"

Chapter 6

- ¹ Then Job answered and said,
- ² "Oh, if only my anguish were weighed;
if only all my calamity were laid in the balance!
- ³ For now it would be heavier than the sand of the seas.
That is why my words were reckless.
- ⁴ For the arrows of the Almighty are in me,
my spirit drinks up the poison;
the terrors of God have arranged themselves in array against me.
- ⁵ Does the wild donkey bray in despair when he has grass?
Or does the ox low in hunger when it has fodder?
- ⁶ Can that which has no taste be eaten without salt?
Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?
- ⁷ I refuse to touch them;
they are like disgusting food to me.
- ⁸ Oh, that I might have my request;
oh, that God would grant me the thing I long for:
- ⁹ that it would please God to crush me once,
that he would set his hand free and cut me off from this life!
- ¹⁰ May this still be my consolation—
even if I rejoice in pain that does not lessen:
that I have not denied the words of the Holy One.
- ¹¹ What is my strength, that I should continue to hope?
What is my end, that I should prolong my life?
- ¹² Is my strength the strength of stones?
Or is my flesh made of bronze?
- ¹³ Is it not true that I have no help in myself,
and that wisdom has been driven out of me?
- ¹⁴ To the person who is about to faint, faithfulness should be shown by his friend;
even to him who abandons the fear of the Almighty.
- ¹⁵ But my brothers have acted as deceitfully to me as a desert streambed,
as channels of water that pass away to nothing,
- ¹⁶ which are darkened because of ice over them,
and because of the snow that hides itself in them.
- ¹⁷ When they thaw out, they vanish;
when it is hot, they melt out of their place.
- ¹⁸ The caravans that travel by their way turn aside for water;
they wander into wasteland and then perish.
- ¹⁹ Caravans from Tema looked there,
while companies of Sheba hoped in them.
- ²⁰ They were disappointed because they had been confident of finding water.
They went there, but they were put to shame.
- ²¹ For now you friends are nothing to me;
you see my dreadful situation and are afraid.
- ²² Did I say to you, 'Give something to me'
or, 'Offer me a bribe from your wealth'
- ²³ or, 'Save me from my adversary's hand'
or, 'Ransom me from the hand of oppressors'?
- ²⁴ Teach me, and I will hold my peace;
make me understand where I have been wrong.
- ²⁵ How painful are upright words!
But your arguments, how do they actually rebuke me?
- ²⁶ Do you plan to ignore my words,

- treating the words of a desperate man like the wind?
- 27 Indeed, you cast lots for a fatherless child,
and haggle over your friend like merchandise.
- 28 Now, therefore, please look at me,
for surely I would not lie to your face.
- 29 Relent, I beg you; let there be no injustice with you;
Indeed, relent, for my cause is just.
- 30 Is there evil on my tongue?
Cannot my mouth detect destructive things?
-

Job 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Eliphaz.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness

Despite being upset about his circumstances, and desiring his own death, Job does not curse God. He would rather have God end his life than to curse him. (See: curse)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

Job uses many different metaphors in this chapter to express his pain or despair. He also is upset with the advice of his friends, who are supposed to help him during difficult times.

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Eliphaz that he is wrong. These questions help to build Job's response.

Job 6:1

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 6:2

in the balance

"on a scale"

Job 6:3

For now it would be heavier than the sand of the seas

Job compares the burden of his suffering to the weight of wet sand; both can crush a person.
Alternate translation: "For my anguish and calamities would be heavier than the sand on the seashore"

my words were reckless

"I spoke recklessly" or "I spoke rashly"

Job 6:4

For the arrows of the Almighty are in me

This is a metaphor for Job's suffering. He compares his many troubles to arrows that God has shot his body with. Alternate translation: "It is as though the Almighty has shot arrows into my body"

my spirit drinks up the poison

"my spirit drinks up the arrows' poison." This continues the metaphor of the arrows, by implying that they had tips of poison and that Job feels the pain in his spirit. He speaks of feeling this pain as if his spirit drank the poison. Alternate translation: "I feel the pain of their poison in my inner being"

the terrors of God have arranged themselves in array against me

Job speaks of the terrible things that have happened to him as if they were soldiers that God had lined up to attack him all at once. Alternate translation: "God has caused all the terrible things that could happen to happen to me all at once"

the terrors of God have arranged themselves in array against me

God causing many things to terrify Job is spoken of as if God's terrors were soldiers lined up to attack Job. Alternate translation: "the terrors of God have arranged themselves like soldiers in an army"

Job 6:5

Does the wild donkey bray in despair when he has grass? Or does the ox low in hunger when it has fodder?

Job poses these rhetorical questions to emphasize that he has a reason to complain. These question can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "Just as the wild donkey does not bray in despair when he has grass and as the ox does not low in hunger when he has fodder, I would not complain if I did not have a reason"

bray

the sound a donkey makes

low

the sound an ox makes

fodder

animal food

Job 6:6

Can that which has no taste be eaten without salt? Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?

Possible meanings are 1) Job is comparing his displeasure for his circumstances to people's dislike for bland food or 2) Job is comparing his displeasure for his friend's advice to people's dislike for bland food.

Can that which has no taste be eaten without salt? Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?

Job uses these rhetorical questions to emphasize his own displeasure. These questions can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tasteless food cannot be eaten without salt, just as there is no taste in the white of an egg."

Can that which has no taste be eaten

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Can you eat that which has no taste"

Job 6:7

I refuse to touch them

"Them" refers to bad tasting foods.

Job 6:8

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 6:9

to crush me once

This means for God to cause him to die. Alternate translation: "to crush me and let me die"

that he would set his hand free and cut me off from this life

The phrase "he would set his hand free" is an idiom that means that Job wants God to do what God really desires to do. Also, the phrase "cut me off from this life" is a euphemism for killing him. Alternate translation: "that he would do what he really wants to do and cut short my life" or "that he would act quickly and end my life"

Job 6:10

even if I rejoice in pain that does not lessen

"I would leap for joy in unending pain" or "I would endure pain that does not diminish"

does not lessen

"does not diminish"

that I have not denied the words of the Holy One

"that I have not disowned God." This can be written in positive form. Alternate translation: "that I have always obeyed the Holy One"

Job 6:11

What is my strength, that I should continue to hope?

What is my end, that I should prolong my life?

Job poses these questions to emphasize that he has no reason to continue living. These questions have the same meaning. They may be written as statements. Alternate translation: "I do not have enough strength to go on living; I have no reason to prolong my life"

continue to hope

keep waiting for something good to happen

Job 6:12

General Information:

The writer uses parallel rhetorical questions in each of these verses to emphasize Job's lack of strength to endure suffering.

Is my strength the strength of stones? Or is my flesh made of bronze?

Job describes the weakness of his body by saying that he is not as strong as rocks and bronze to emphasize his lack of strength. These rhetorical questions may be written as statements. Alternate translation: "I am not as strong as the rocks. My flesh is not as strong as metal."

Job 6:13

Is it not true that I have no help in myself ... me?

Job uses this rhetorical question to emphasize his lack of wisdom and his weakness. This question can be written as a statement. Also, the phrase "no help in myself" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "It is true that I have no strength left ... me."

wisdom has been driven out of me

"my success has been taken from me." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my wisdom is gone"

Job 6:14

To the person who is about to faint, faithfulness should be shown by his friend

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "A friend should be faithful to the person who feels he is about to faint"

who is about to faint

This speaks of a person who feels hopeless and is overwhelmed by his troubles as if he were about to physically faint. Alternate translation: "who feels hopeless"

even to him who abandons the fear of the Almighty

"even if he stops fearing Almighty God." Possible meanings are 1) the faint person does not fear God or 2) his friend does not fear God.

Job 6:15

But my brothers have acted as deceitfully to me as a desert streambed

Job speaks of his friends being unfaithful to him as being like a "wadi" which is a stream that can suddenly dry up. Also, Job refers to his friends ironically here as his "brothers." Alternate translation: "But my friends are unfaithful to me. They are like a desert streambed"

as channels of water that pass away to nothing

"like streams of water that dry up." Job continues speaking of his friends being unfaithful as if they were streams that dry up.

Job 6:16

which are darkened because of ice over them ... and because of the snow that hides itself in them

These two phrases have the same meaning. They describe how the streambed is full of ice and snow in the winter. Alternate translation: "which look dark in the winter because they are covered with ice and are full of melted snow"

because of the snow that hides itself in them

This speaks of the snow melting and the water going into the streambed as if the snow were hiding

in the streambed. Alternate translation: "because the snow melts and goes into them"

Job 6:17

When they thaw out, they vanish ... when it is hot, they melt out of their place

These two phrases have the same meaning. They describe how the streambed dries up in the hot season. Alternate translation: "When it is hot, the ice melts and the streambeds dry up"

Job 6:18

Connecting Statement:

Job is continuing his description of his friends being as unreliable as streams that dry up.

The caravans that travel by their way turn aside for water

"The caravans turn aside from the routes to find water" or "The caravans change course looking for water"

The caravans

A caravan is a large group of travelers riding camels across the desert.

Job 6:19

Tema ... Sheba

These are the names of places. The people of these places used caravans to trade things with people from other lands.

while companies of Sheba

"while caravans from Sheba"

hoped in them

"hoped for them" or "put their hope in them"

Job 6:20

but they were put to shame

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but they were disappointed" or "but they were not satisfied"

Job 6:21

General Information:

In these verses, Job poses four questions to rebuke his friends and to emphasize that he did not ask for help from any of them.

For now

Job uses this phrase to introduce the main part of what he is saying.

you friends are nothing to me

"you friends have not helped me at all"

are afraid

This means that they see the trouble Job has and are afraid of being in the same situation. Alternate translation: "you are afraid that God might do similar things to you"

Job 6:22

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 6:23

or, 'Save ... hand' or, 'Ransom ... oppressors'?

These words are the last of a series of rhetorical questions that begins in verse 22. Job uses these questions to emphasize that he has not asked his friends to give him anything or to help him. "I never said to you, 'Give ... me' or, 'Offer ... wealth' or, 'Save ... hand' or, 'Ransom ... oppressors'."

my adversary's hand ... the hand of oppressors

The word "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "having my adversary control me ... having my oppressors control me" or "my adversary's power ... my oppressors' power"

Ransom me

"Rescue me"

Job 6:24

Teach me ... make me

These verbs "teach" and "make" are second person plural and are spoken to his friends.

I will hold my peace

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I will be silent"

Job 6:25

How painful are upright words! But your arguments, how do they actually rebuke me?

The exact meaning of the original language is uncertain. Some Bibles translate "How painful" as "How pleasant." Alternate translation: "When a person speaks the truth, it harms no one. But your arguments are not true, so how do they actually rebuke me?"

upright words

The word "upright" here is a metaphor for honesty or truthfulness. Alternate translation: "honest words" or "truthful words"

But your arguments, how do they actually rebuke me?

Job is using this question to rebuke his friends and to emphasize that what they are saying does not apply to him. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Your reasons for rebuking me do not apply to me even though you sternly correct me." or "But your arguments against

me are not true, so they do not actually rebuke me!"

your arguments

"your reasons" or "your claims"

Job 6:26

Do you plan to ignore my words, treating the words of a desperate man like the wind?

Job uses this rhetorical question to scold his friends. He compares his words to the wind to explain that his friends act like his words are empty and useless. Alternate translation: "You ignore my words! I am a desperate man, and you treat my words as if they are as useless as the wind."

Do you

"You" is in second person plural form.

Job 6:27

you cast lots for a fatherless child

"you would even gamble to win an orphan"

you cast lots ... haggle over your friend

Here "you" and "your" are in second person plural form.

haggle over your friend like merchandise

This compares how the man would sell his friend to how a person sells merchandise or wares. Alternate translation: "bargain to sell your friend for money"

Job 6:28

Now

This word is used by Job to introduce new information.

please look

The verb "to look" is in second person plural form.

I would not lie to your face

The word "your" refers to Job's friends. Here his friends are represented by their faces to emphasize that they are looking at him. Alternate translation: "I would not lie to you while I am looking at you"

Job 6:29

Relent, I beg you

"Please be merciful to me" or "Stop speaking like this, I beg you"

let there be no injustice with you

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "let there always be justice with you" or "always be just in the way you treat me"

Indeed, relent

"Please relent."

Job 6:30

Is there evil on my tongue?

"Do I say wicked things?" Job uses this question to rebuke his friends and to emphasize that he is not wicked. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I do not say wicked things."

on my tongue

Here Job's speech is represented by his "tongue."
Alternate translation: "in my speech"

Cannot my mouth detect destructive things?

Job uses this question to rebuke his friends and to emphasize that he can tell the difference between right and wrong. Here Job refers to himself by his "mouth" to emphasize his speech. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I know what is right to say and what is wrong to say."

Chapter 7

- ¹ Does not man have hard labor on earth?
 Are not his days like the days of a hired man?
² Like a slave earnestly desires the shadows of evening,
 like a hired man looks for his wages—
³ so I have been assigned months of emptiness;
 I have been given trouble-filled nights.
⁴ When I lie down, I say to myself,
 'When will I get up and when will the night be gone?'
 I am full of tossing to and fro until the day's dawning.
⁵ My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust;
 the sores in my skin harden up and then dissolve and run afresh.

⁶ My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle;
 they pass without hope.
⁷ God, call to mind that my life is only a breath;
 my eye will no more see good.
⁸ The eye of God, who sees me, will see me no more;
 God's eyes will be on me, but I will not exist.
⁹ As a cloud is consumed and vanishes away,
 so he who goes down to Sheol will come up no more.
¹⁰ He will return no more to his house;
 neither will his place know him again.

¹¹ Therefore I will not restrain my mouth;
 I will speak in the anguish of my spirit;
 I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.
¹² Am I the sea or a sea monster
 that you place a guard over me?
¹³ When I say, 'My bed will comfort me,
 and my couch will ease my complaint,'
¹⁴ then you frighten me with dreams
 and terrify me through visions,
¹⁵ so that my soul would choose strangling
 and death rather than preserving these bones of mine.
¹⁶ I despise my life; I would not wish to always be alive;
 let me alone, for my days are useless.
¹⁷ What is man that you should pay attention to him,
 that you should set your mind on him,
¹⁸ that you should observe him every morning
 and test him every moment?

¹⁹ How long will it be before you look away from me,
 before you let me alone long enough for me to swallow down my own saliva?
²⁰ Even if I have sinned, what would that do to you,
 you who watch men?
 Why have you made a target of me,
 so that I am a burden for you?
²¹ Why do you not pardon my transgression
 and take away my iniquity?
 For now will I lie down in the dust;
 you will seek me carefully, but I will not exist."
-

Job 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Eliphaz.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness

Despite being upset about his circumstances, and desiring his own death, Job does not curse God. He would rather have God end his life than to curse him. (See: curse)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

Job uses many different metaphors in this chapter to express his pain or despair. He also is upset with the advice of his friends, who are supposed to help him during difficult times.

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Eliphaz that he is wrong. These questions help to build Job's response.

Job 7:1

Does not man have hard labor on earth?

Job poses this negative question to emphasize his awareness that all people experience hard work. It can be translated as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "There is hard labor for every person on earth."

on earth

This is a generalization that means for the time people are living on the earth. Alternate translation: "while he lives on the earth"

Are not his days like the days of a hired man?

Job poses this negative question to emphasize his awareness that all people struggle in life. Alternate translation: "And their days are like the days of a hired man."

a hired man

"a day laborer." This is a man who worked jobs one day at a time and was paid at the end of every day.

Job 7:2

Like a slave ... like a hired man

Job compares his misery and trouble to that of the slave and hired man.

the shadows of evening

"cool shade." The implied information is that the shadows of evening provide coolness and shade from the sun

looks for his wages

"waits for his pay"

Job 7:3

I have been assigned months of emptiness

Job speaks as if God had commanded him to endure months of emptiness. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has assigned me months of emptiness"

months of emptiness

The abstract noun "emptiness" can be translated as the adjective "empty." This is a metaphor for life that is meaningless, because either he believes that he will never enjoy life again or he is unable to do work that has value. Alternate translation: "empty months" or "months when I have nothing to live for" or "months in which I can do nothing of value"

I have been given trouble-filled nights

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has given me trouble-filled nights"

trouble-filled nights

Possible meanings are 1) "nights in which bad things happen" or 2) "nights in which I greatly worry."

Job 7:4

When I lie down

The implied information is that this is when Job would lie down to sleep at night. Alternate translation: "When I lie down to sleep"

I say to myself

Job poses a question to no one else in particular. Alternate translation: "I ask" or "I wonder"

When will I get up and when will the night be gone?

Job poses this question to emphasize his intense suffering during the hours he should be sleeping. Alternate translation: "I wish I could get up, but night continues."

tossing to and fro

"turning back and forth." This indicates that Job has moved on his bed all night without any rest.

Job 7:5

My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust

The worms and clods of dust are pictured as covering Job as if they were clothing. Alternate translation: "My flesh is covered with worms and clods of dust"

My flesh

This represents his whole body. Alternate translation: "My body"

clods of dust

Possible meanings are 1) lumps or crusts of dirt or 2) scabs on the skin.

dissolve and run afresh

"break out again"

Job 7:6

My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle

Job compares his lifetime to the quickness of a weaver's shuttle. Alternate translation: "My life goes by very quickly"

weaver

a person who makes cloth by crossing threads or yarn

a weaver's shuttle

a moving part that carries thread or yarn back and forth quickly in a loom when making cloth

Job 7:7

call to mind

"remember." The phrase "call to mind" does not mean God forgot. Job is asking God to consider or think about the shortness of Job's life.

my life is only a breath

Job compares the shortness of his life to the shortness of a breath. Alternate translation: "my life is very short, like taking one breath"

my eye will no more see good

Here "my eye" represents Job's whole person and his ability to see or experience things. Alternate translation: "I will never again experience good things"

Job 7:8

The eye of God, who sees me, will see me no more

Many versions of the Bible translate this as "The eye which sees me will see me no more." The words "of God" were added to this phrase because they are implied by the context.

The eye of God, who sees me ... God's eyes will be on me

Here God is represented by his "eye" to emphasize what he looks at. Alternate translation: "God who watches me ... God will look for me"

Job 7:9

As a cloud is consumed and vanishes away, so he who goes down to Sheol will come up no more

Job is describing death as being like the clouds that disappear.

As a cloud is consumed

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "As a cloud fades"

he who goes down to Sheol will come up no more

"he who dies will not return"

Job 7:10

his place

The words "his place" represent those who live in his place. Alternate translation: "the people who live in his place" or "his family"

Job 7:11

I will not restrain my mouth

Here the mouth represents speech. Alternate translation: "I will not restrain my speech"

in the anguish of my spirit

"in the distress of my spirit" or "in the torment of my suffering." The abstract noun "anguish" can be translated using the adverb "distress." Alternate translation: "while my spirit is distressed"

in the bitterness of my soul

Here sorrow is spoken of as if it tasted bitter, and "soul" refers to the whole man. Alternate translation: "with anger and resentment"

Job 7:12

Am I the sea or a sea monster that you place a guard over me?

Job poses this question to express his anger at God. In comparing himself to the sea or a sea monster, Job suggests that God regards him as a hideous creature. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am not the sea or a sea monster that needs a guard to watch it."

Job 7:13

My bed will comfort me, and my couch will ease my complaint

Here "bed" and "couch" are metonyms for "sleep." In lying down to sleep, Job would hope to be comforted. The metonyms also have human attributes; they have the ability to comfort and ease a person. Alternate translation: "My bed, my couch, will be like someone who can comfort me"

My bed ... my couch

These phrases refer to the same thing. Alternate translation: "My bed ... my bed"

Job 7:14

you frighten me

"you" here refers to God

Job 7:15

my soul

This is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "I"

strangling

killing a person by squeezing the throat and stopping the breathing

these bones of mine

Here Job uses the word "bones" to refer to his body. Alternate translation: "This body of mine"

Job 7:16

to always be alive

"to live forever"

my days are useless

"my days are pointless" or "the days of my life are empty"

Job 7:17

Connecting Statement:

Job asks a rhetorical question to say that he does not understand why God should pay attention to people.

set your mind on him

Here the mind represents thoughts and attention. To "set your mind on" means to give attention to. Alternate translation: "direct your attention to him"

Job 7:18

that you should observe ... every moment?

This is the end of the rhetorical question that Job begins asking with the words "What is man that" in verse 17. The question can be translated as a statement. "Tell me what man is that ... mind on him, that you should observe ... every moment." or "I do not understand what man is that ... mind on him, that you should observe ... every moment."

observe him

"carefully examine him"

Job 7:19

How long will it be ... swallow down my own saliva?

Here Job uses parallelism to emphasize his wish that God would stop watching him. Alternate translation: "Look away from me! Leave me alone long enough for me to swallow my own saliva!"

saliva

liquid produced in people's mouths that keeps the mouth moist and helps to swallow food

Job 7:20

Even if I have sinned ... burden for you?

Job poses these questions to argue against God treating him unfairly. Alternate translation: "Even if I have sinned, that would do nothing to you, as you watch over people. Tell me why you have made me your target, so that I am a burden for you."

Job 7:21

Why do you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity?

Here Job uses two similar clauses within a rhetorical question to emphasize his point. Possible meanings are: 1) Job is asking why God does not forgive him. Alternate translation: "Tell me why you do not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity." or 2) Job is asking God why he cannot just overlook his supposed wrongdoings. Alternate translation: "Tell me why you do not just bear with my transgression and iniquity."

take away

"remove"

now will I lie down in the dust

The phrase "lie down in the dust" is a metonym that represents dying. Alternate translation: "now I will die"

I will not exist

"I will not be here" or "I will be gone"

Chapter 8

- ¹ Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said,
- ² "How long will you say these things?
How long will the words of your mouth be a mighty wind?"
- ³ Does God pervert justice?
Does the Almighty pervert righteousness?
- ⁴ Your children have sinned against him;
we know this, for he gave them into the hand of their sins.
- ⁵ But suppose you diligently sought God
and sought the favor of the Almighty.
- ⁶ If you are pure and upright,
then he would surely stir himself on your behalf
and restore you to your rightful place.
- ⁷ Even though your beginning was small,
still your final condition would be much greater.
- ⁸ Please ask the former generations,
and give your attention to what our ancestors learned.
- ⁹ (We were only born yesterday and know nothing
because our days on earth are a shadow.)
- ¹⁰ Will they not teach you and tell you?
Will they not speak words from their hearts?
- ¹¹ Can papyrus grow without a marsh?
Can reeds grow without water?
- ¹² While they are still green and not cut down,
they wither before any other plant.
- ¹³ So also are the paths of all who forget God;
the hope of the godless will perish.
- ¹⁴ His confidence will break apart,
and his trust is as weak as a spider's web.
- ¹⁵ He leans on his house, but it will not support him;
he takes hold of it, but it does not stand.
- ¹⁶ Under the sun he is green,
and his shoots go out over his entire garden.
- ¹⁷ His roots are wrapped about the heaps of stone;
they look for good places among the rocks.
- ¹⁸ But if this person is destroyed out of his place,
then that place will deny him and say, 'I never saw you.'
- ¹⁹ See, this is the "joy" of such a person's behavior;
other plants will sprout out of the same soil in his place.
- ²⁰ See, God will not reject an innocent man;
neither will he take the hand of evildoers.
- ²¹ He will yet fill your mouth with laughter,
your lips with shouting.
- ²² Those who hate you will be clothed with shame;
the tent of the wicked will be no more."

Job 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. In this chapter, Bildad speaks to Job.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Bildad uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job that he is wrong. These questions help to build Bildad's argument.

Job 8:1

General Information:

Verses 2 and 3 each consist of two different questions that have the same meaning. Bildad uses these questions to rebuke Job.

Connecting Statement:

In this chapter, Bildad begins to speak about Job's complaints.

Then Bildad the Shuhite answered

"Bildad" is the name of a man who is a member of the tribe of Shuah.

Job 8:2

How long will the words of your mouth be a mighty wind?

Bildad speaks of Job's words as if they are as empty and insubstantial as the wind. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The words of your mouth are as insignificant as a mighty wind."

Job 8:3

Does God pervert justice? Does the Almighty pervert righteousness?

Here "God" and "the Almighty" both refer to Yahweh. These questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "God does not pervert justice; the Almighty does not pervert righteousness."

pervert justice? ... pervert righteousness?

"approve of and do what is not just? ... approve of and do what is not righteous?"

Job 8:4

for he gave them into the hand of their sins

Here "hand" represents the power or results of sin. Bildad implies that God killed Job's children because of their sin. Alternate translation: "for God caused the consequences of your children's sins to kill them"

Job 8:5

But suppose you diligently sought God and sought the favor of the Almighty

Bildad is about to say what would have happened if Job had correctly spoken to God, but Bildad does not believe that Job really did this.

diligently sought God ... sought the favor of the Almighty

These two phrases both refer to Job asking God for help or pleading with God for mercy.

diligently sought God

"earnestly asked God for help"

Job 8:6

General Information:

Bildad says that God would treat Job well if he was pure, but Bildad does not believe that Job is pure.

If you are pure and upright

"If only you were pure and righteous" or "If only you would obey God and do what is right"

stir himself on your behalf

Here Yahweh is spoken of as if he would wake up to help Job. Alternate translation: "help you" or "do good things for you"

restore you to your rightful place

This refers to giving back to Job the things he lost, including his family, wealth, and honor.

Job 8:7

Even though your beginning was small, still your final condition would be much greater

Here lack of wealth is spoken of as being a "small beginning." Alternate translation: "Even if you were poor early in your life, God would make you very wealthy later in your life"

Job 8:8

give your attention to what our ancestors learned

"study carefully what our ancestors discovered" or "consider the things our forefathers learned"

Job 8:9

our days on earth are a shadow

The shortness of life is spoken of as if it were a shadow which quickly disappears.

Job 8:10

Will they not teach you and tell you? Will they not speak words from their hearts?

Bildad uses these rhetorical questions to rebuke Job for not agreeing with Bildad and the ancestors. They can be translated as statements. Alternate

translation: "They will teach you and tell you and speak what they sincerely believe."

from their hearts

Here the word "hearts" represents their inner beliefs. Alternate translation: "that they sincerely believe"

Job 8:11

General Information:

It is unclear if this verse is the teaching of Bildad, or if Bildad is quoting the sayings of the ancestors of [Job 8:8-10](#).

Can papyrus grow without a marsh? Can reeds grow without water?

Bildad uses these two parallel questions to emphasize the single point that people cannot live without God. Here the plants represent people and the water represents God. The questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "Papyrus plants cannot grow away from the marshes. Reeds cannot grow without water."

papyrus

a tall reed-like plant that grows in shallow water

Job 8:12

General Information:

It is unclear if this verse is the teaching of Bildad, or if Bildad is quoting the sayings of the ancestors of [Job 8:8-10](#).

While they are still green and not cut down, they wither before any other plant

It is implied that they wither when there is no water. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "Without water, they stop growing and wither faster than any other plant, even if no one cuts them down"

wither

"dry up"

Job 8:13

General Information:

It is unclear if this verse is the teaching of Bildad, or if Bildad is quoting the sayings of the ancestors of [Job 8:8-10](#).

So also are the paths of all who forget God

Here "the paths" represents a person's future and the events that will happen to them. Alternate translation: "The same thing will happen to everyone who forgets God"

the hope of the godless will perish

"the things the godless person desires will not happen"

Job 8:14

General Information:

It is unclear if this verse is the teaching of Bildad, or if Bildad is quoting the sayings of the ancestors of [Job 8:8-10](#)

His confidence will break apart ... his trust is as weak as a spider's web

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that the godless person is trusting in something that cannot save him.

his trust is as weak as a spider's web

Here Bildad compares the trust of the godless person to a spider's web; the slightest force will break both.

Job 8:15

General Information:

In this verse the pronouns "he" and "him" refer to the godless person, who represents godless people in general. It may be helpful to readers to use the plural pronouns "they" and "their."

He leans on his house, but it will not support him; he takes hold of it, but it does not stand

This statement probably refers to a man relying on his property and wealth for security. If so, then "house" here represents the owner's property and wealth. Alternate translation: "He thinks he will be safe because he is wealthy, but he will not be safe"

it will not support him

This negative statement emphasizes the opposite. It can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "he will fall down"

it does not stand

This negative statement emphasizes the opposite. It can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "it will fall down"

Job 8:16

General Information:

Here pronouns "he" and "his" refer to the godless person, who represents godless people in general. It may be helpful to readers to use the plural pronouns "they" and "their."

Under the sun he is green, and his shoots go out over his entire garden

Here Bildad compares the godless person to a plant that is healthy.

Under the sun he is green

The meaning of the Hebrew text is unclear. Possible meanings are 1) he is healthy during the day or 2) he is watered before the sun rises.

Job 8:17

General Information:

In this verse the pronoun "his" refers to the godless person, who represents godless people in general. It may be helpful to readers to use the plural pronouns "they" and "their."

His roots are wrapped about the heaps of stone ... they look for good places among the rocks

These two phrases have similar meaning, but the meaning is unclear. Possible meanings are 1) he appears to be well-rooted in the rocks, taking advantage of every opening or 2) his roots cannot find fertile ground and must try to find nutrients among the rocks.

Job 8:18

General Information:

In this verse the pronouns "his" and "him" refer to the godless person, who represents godless people in general. It may be helpful to readers to use the plural pronouns "they" and "their."

if this person is destroyed out of his place

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if someone pulls him out of his place" or "if a gardener tears him out of the garden"

his place

"the rocky ground" or "the garden"

that place will deny him and say, 'I never saw you.'

The garden is spoken of as if it had human ability to speak. The garden immediately forgets that he existed.

Job 8:19

this is the "joy" of such a person's behavior

Bildad is speaking with irony to express that there is not any real joy for the godless person. Alternate translation: "this is all the joy they will receive from their godless actions"

other plants will sprout out of the same soil in his place

Bildad continues the metaphor from [Job 8:16-18]

sprout

"grow"

the same soil

"the rocky ground" or "the garden"

in his place

"in the place of the godless man"

Job 8:20

God will not reject an innocent man

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "God will accept an innocent man"

neither will he take the hand of evildoers

Here "take the hand" refers to help or support. Alternate translation: "God will not support people who do evil things"

Job 8:21

He will yet fill your mouth with laughter, your lips with shouting

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize how happy Job would be if he were innocent. The word "he" refers to God and "your" refers to Job. Alternate translation: "God will make you very happy again if you are innocent"

fill your mouth with laughter

God causing Job to laugh is spoken of as if God had poured laughter into Job's mouth. Alternate translation: "cause you to continually laugh"

your lips with shouting

The words "he will yet fill" are understood from the previous clause. God causing him to shout for joy is spoken of as if God had poured joy into Job's mouth. Alternate translation: "he will yet fill your lips with shouting" "God will cause you to shout for joy"

Job 8:22

Those who hate you will be clothed with shame

Here "shame" is spoken of as if it were clothing that God will cause Job's enemies to wear. This means they will be very ashamed. Alternate translation: "God will cause those who hate you to be very ashamed"

the tent of the wicked will be no more

Here "tent" refers to the homes of the wicked. Alternate translation: "the houses of the wicked will be destroyed"

will be no more

"will not last" or "will be destroyed"

Chapter 9

- ¹ Then Job answered and said,
- ² "I truly know that this is so.
But how can a person be in the right with God?
- ³ If he wants to argue with God,
he cannot answer him once in a thousand times.
- ⁴ God is wise in heart and mighty in strength;
who has ever hardened himself against him and succeeded?—
- ⁵ he who removes the mountains without warning anyone
when he overturns them in his anger—
- ⁶ he who shakes the earth out of its place
and sets its pillars trembling.
- ⁷ It is the same God who tells the sun not to rise, and it does not,
and who covers up the stars,
- ⁸ who by himself stretches out the heavens
and tramples down the waves of the sea,
- ⁹ who makes the Bear, Orion, the Pleiades,
and the constellations of the south.
- ¹⁰ He does great and unsearchable things,
and wonderful things that cannot be counted.
- ¹¹ See, he goes by me, and I do not see him;
he passes on, but I do not understand him.
- ¹² If he takes something away, who can stop him?
Who can say to him, 'What are you doing?'
- ¹³ God will not withdraw his anger;
the helpers of Rahab bow beneath him.
- ¹⁴ How much less could I answer him,
could I choose words to reason with him?
- ¹⁵ Even if I were righteous, I could not answer him;
I could only plead for mercy with my judge.
- ¹⁶ Even if I called and he answered me,
I would not believe that he was listening to my voice.
- ¹⁷ For he breaks me with a tempest
and multiplies my wounds without cause.
- ¹⁸ He does not allow me to regain my breath;
but he fills me with bitterness.
- ¹⁹ If it is a matter of strength, behold, he is mighty!
If it is a matter of justice, who can summon him?
- ²⁰ Though I am in the right, my own mouth would condemn me;
and though I am blameless, my words would prove me to be guilty.
- ²¹ I am blameless, but I do not care any more about myself;
I despise my own life.
- ²² It makes no difference, which is why I say
that he destroys blameless people and wicked people together.
- ²³ When a whip suddenly kills,
he mocks the despair of the innocent.
- ²⁴ The earth is given into the hand of wicked people;
God covers the faces of its judges.
If it is not he who does it, then who is it?
- ²⁵ My days are swifter than a running messenger;
my days flee away; they see no good anywhere.
- ²⁶ They are as fast as papyrus reed boats,
and as fast as the eagle that swoops down on its victim.

- 27 If I said that I would forget about my complaints,
that I would take off my sad face and be happy,
- 28 I would be afraid of all my sorrows
because I know that you will not consider me innocent.
- 29 I will be condemned;
why, then, should I try in vain?
- 30 If I washed myself with snow water
and made my hands ever so clean,
- 31 God would plunge me in a ditch,
and my own clothes would be disgusted with me.
- 32 For God is not a man, as I am, that I could answer him,
that we could come together in court.
- 33 There is no judge between us
who might lay his hand upon us both.
- 34 There is no other judge who could take God's rod off me,
who could keep his terror from frightening me.
- 35 Then would I speak up and not fear him.
But as things are now, I cannot do that.
-

Job 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Bildad.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness and Yahweh's power

Despite being upset about his circumstances, Job does not curse God. Job does not think that he can make a claim against Yahweh because only God is perfectly wise and just. Yahweh is truly powerful and Job understands this. (See: curse and wise and justice)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

Job uses many different metaphors in this chapter to express himself or to describe Yahweh's power. He is also upset with the advice of his friends, who are supposed to help him during difficult times.

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Bildad that he is wrong. These questions help to build Job's response.

Job 9:1

how can a person be in the right with God?
"how can anyone be innocent before God?"

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 9:3

Job 9:2

argue
dispute

I truly know that this is so

"I know that what you say is true"

he cannot answer him once in a thousand times

"Once in a thousand times" here is an idiom that means "at all." Possible meanings are 1) "he cannot give any answer to God" or 2) "God will not answer him at all"

this is so

Here the word "this" refers to what Bildad said.

a thousand times
"1,000 times"

Job 9:4

wise in heart
Here the heart represents the inner being or thoughts. Alternate translation: "wise in what he decides"

mighty in strength
The abstract noun "strength" can be expressed as the adjective "strong." Alternate translation: "mighty in how strong he is"

hardened himself against him
To harden oneself means to be stubborn. Alternate translation: "resisted him" or "defied him"

Job 9:5

he who removes the mountains
"God removes the mountains"

Job 9:6

he who shakes the earth
"God shakes the earth"

Job 9:7

who covers up the stars
"who blocks the stars from view"

Job 9:8

who by himself stretches out the heavens
God is spoken of as creating the heavens without any help, as if the heavens were fabric that he stretches out.

tramples down the waves of the sea
God is spoken of as calming the sea as if with his feet. Alternate translation: "puts his feet down on the waves of the sea" or "calms the waves of the sea"

Job 9:9

the Bear, Orion, the Pleiades
These are the names of constellations, which are groups of stars that seem like they form a particular shape in the sky.

Orion
a famous hunter in Greek mythology

Pleiades
several bright stars that look like they are close together in the sky

constellations
groups of stars that seem like they form a particular shape in the sky

Job 9:10

unsearchable things
"things that cannot be understood"

Job 9:11

See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you."

he passes on
"he passes by" or "he moves on"

Job 9:12

If he takes something away, who can stop him? Who can say to him, 'What are you doing?'
These are rhetorical questions that expect an answer of "No one." They can be reworded as statements. Alternate translation: "If he takes something away, no one can stop him. No one can ask him, 'What are you doing?'"

If he takes something away
"If he takes someone away" or "If he wants to snatch something away"

Job 9:13

the helpers of Rahab bow beneath him
Here "bow beneath him" symbolizes submission or defeat. Alternate translation: "he crushes the helpers of Rahab"

Rahab
The word "Rahab" here refers to a monster of the sea.

Job 9:14

How much less could I answer him, could I choose words to reason with him?
Job poses two similar questions to emphasize his reluctance to confront God. They can be reworded as a statement. Alternate translation: "So I certainly could not answer him or choose words to reason with him."

Job 9:15

General Information:
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Job 9:16

General Information:
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Job 9:17

For he breaks me with a tempest

Job compares his troubles from God to the effects of a tempest. Alternate translation: "He injures me as if with a tempest"

tempest

a powerful or violent storm

multiplies my wounds

"gives me many wounds" or "wounds me again and again"

without cause

"even though I have not given him cause to do so" or "even though I am innocent"

Job 9:18

to regain my breath

This is an idiom that means "to be able to breathe again" or

he fills me with bitterness

This verse pictures God as filling up Job's life with things that make him bitter. The abstract noun "bitterness" can be expressed as the adjective "bitter." Alternate translation: "he fills me up with bitter things"

Job 9:19

If it is a matter of strength

"If there is a contest of strength"

behold, he is mighty

"look and you will see that he is mighty" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you: he is mighty"

he is mighty

"he is the strong one"

who can summon him?

This question expects an answer of "No one" to make the point that no one is able to bring God to court. This can be reworded as a statement. Alternate translation: "no one can summon him."

Job 9:20

Though I am in the right, my own mouth would condemn me; and though I am blameless, my words would prove me to be guilty

This verse expresses the same idea twice for emphasis.

Though I am in the right

Here "I am in the right" means I am the one who has done right things. Alternate translation: "Although I have done right things" or "Even though I am innocent"

my own mouth would condemn me

Here "mouth" represents Job's words. Alternate translation: "my own words would accuse me" or "what I say would condemn me"

blameless

"faultless"

my words would prove me to be guilty

Here "my words" are spoken of as if they could take action. Alternate translation: "God would use what I say to prove me guilty"

guilty

The word here has the meaning of "twisted" or "crooked."

Job 9:21

I am blameless

"I am faultless"

about myself

"what happens to me"

Job 9:22

It makes no difference

"It is all the same" or "It does not matter"

he destroys blameless people and wicked people together

Here "blameless" and "wicked" are two extremes for a merism that include everything in between. Alternate translation: "he brings everyone to an end, whether they are blameless or wicked"

Job 9:23

When a whip suddenly kills

The word "whip" here is a metaphor for any kind of disaster. Alternate translation: "When a disaster suddenly happens and people die"

the despair of the innocent

The word "despair" is an abstract noun that can be translated by the verb "despair." Here it is a metonym for the innocent who are despairing. Alternate translation: "the innocent who are despairing" or "the innocent who have lost all hope"

innocent

This is a nominalized adjective. Alternate translation: "innocent people".

Job 9:24

The earth is given

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God gives the earth"

The earth is

Here "the earth" is used to represent the people on the earth. Alternate translation: "The people of the world are"

into the hand of

Here "hand" is a metonym for "control." Alternate translation: "into the control of"

God covers the faces of its judges

This idiom means God keeps the judges of the earth from being able to judge the difference between right and wrong. Alternate translation: "God makes its judges blind" or "God keeps its judges from judging rightly"

If it is not he who does it, then who is it?

"If it is not God who does these things, then who does them?"

Job 9:25

My days are swifter than a running messenger

Job compares how quickly his days are passing by to a fast runner. Alternate translation: "My days pass swiftly"

running messenger

"runner" or "running man"

my days flee away

This pictures the days of Job's life as being able to run away like a person.

they see no good anywhere

This pictures the days of Job's life as being able to see like a person.

no good

"no good thing"

Job 9:26

They are as fast as papyrus reed boats

Job compares how quickly his days are passing by to the speed of fast boats. Alternate translation: "They pass quickly by like papyrus reed boats"

papyrus reed boats

"boats made out of reeds." Papyrus reed is a hollow grass that grows along the banks of rivers.

as fast as the eagle that swoops down on its victim

Job compares how quickly his days are passing by to a large bird diving toward its prey. Alternate translation: "as fast as the eagle that flies down quickly to catch its food"

swoops down

"rushes down"

Job 9:27

I would forget about my complaints

The abstract noun "complaint" can be translated as the verb "complain." Alternate translation: "I would stop complaining" or "I would stop complaining against God"

my complaints

It can be stated clearly whom Job was complaining against. Alternate translation: "my complaints against God"

I would take off my sad face and be happy

Job's sad face is spoken of here as if it was something that could be removed. Alternate translation: "I would stop looking unhappy and smile"

Job 9:28

I would be afraid of all my sorrows

Verses 28 and 29 express the consequences if Job does what he says in verse 27. This can be expressed by adding the word "then." Alternate translation: "Then I would be afraid of all my sorrows"

of all my sorrows

The abstract noun "sorrows" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "of everything that hurts me"

Job 9:29

I will be condemned

"I will be accused and punished." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will condemn me"

why, then, should I try in vain?

Job uses this question to emphasize that he does not think it is of any use trying to get God's attention. The implied information about what Job is trying can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "It is of no use to try to get God's attention."

Job 9:30

If I washed myself with snow water

"If I bathed my body in pure, clean water"

snow water

the water that comes from melted snow

snow

white flakes of frozen water that fall from clouds in places where the air temperature is cold

made my hands ever so clean

"made my hands exceedingly clean." Some other versions of the Bible translate this with the

meaning of "cleaned my hands with very strong soap."

Job 9:31

plunge me in a ditch
"throw me into a pit"

my own clothes would be disgusted with me
Job's clothing is spoken of as if it would have a negative response to Job after God plunged him into a ditch. Alternate translation: "I would be too filthy for my own clothing"

Job 9:32

answer him
Job implies that God has charged him of doing wrong, and he wants to respond to those charges. Alternate translation: "answer his charges against me" or "defend myself" or "argue my innocence with him"

come together in court
"come together to trial." Here "court" is a place where people can come and a judge will settle disputes. "Coming together in court" is a metonym for going against each other in a court of law. Alternate translation: "confront each other before a judge"

Job 9:33

There is no judge between us
This means there is no judge who is greater than God who could decide what is right between him and Job.

lay his hand upon us both
Here "lay his hand upon" means having power or authority over. Alternate translation: "take hold of both of us" or "have authority over both of us"

Job 9:34

Connecting Statement:
These verses continue the previous argument that no one is greater than God who could act as a judge between God and Job.

take God's rod off me
Here "God's rod" is a metonym for God punishing or correcting Job. Alternate translation: "stop God from punishing me"

keep his terror from frightening me
The abstract noun "terror" can be translated as the verb "terrify." Alternate translation: "keep him from terrifying and frightening me"

Job 9:35

Then would I speak up
"Then I would speak"

as things are now
"because this is how things are now"

Chapter 10

- 1** I am weary of my life;
I will give free expression to my complaint;
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
- 2** I will say to God, 'Do not merely condemn me;
show me why you accuse me.
- 3** Is it good to you that you should oppress me,
to despise the labor of your hands
while you smile on the plans of the wicked?
- 4** Do you have eyes of flesh?
Do you see like a man sees?
- 5** Are your days like the days of mankind
or your years like the years of people,
- 6** that you inquire after my iniquity
and search after my sin,
- 7** although you know I am not guilty
and there is no one who can rescue me from your hand?
- 8** Your hands have framed and fashioned me
together round about, yet you are destroying me.
- 9** Call to mind, I beg you, that you have fashioned me like clay;
will you bring me into dust again?
- 10** Have you not poured me out like milk
and curdled me like cheese?
- 11** You have clothed me with skin and flesh
and knit me together with bones and sinews.
- 12** You have granted me life and covenant faithfulness;
your care has guarded my spirit.
- 13** Yet these things you hid in your heart—
I know that this is what you were thinking:
- 14** that if I sinned, you would notice it;
you would not acquit me of my iniquity.
- 15** If I have acted wickedly, woe to me;
and even if I acted righteously,
I could not lift up my head,
since I am filled with disgrace—
see my affliction! **16** If my head were lifted up,
you would stalk me like a lion;
and again you would show yourself with marvellous acts of power against me.
- 17** You bring new witnesses against me
and increase your anger against me;
you attack me with fresh armies.
- 18** Why, then, have you brought me out of the womb?
I wish I had died and that no eye had ever seen me.
- 19** I would have been as though I had never existed;
I would have been carried from the womb to the grave.
- 20** Are not my days only a few? Stop then,
let me alone, so that I may have a little rest
- 21** before I go from where I will not return,
to the land of darkness and of the shadow of death,
- 22** the land that is as dark as darkness,
the land of the shadow of death, without any order,
where the light is like darkness."

Job 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Bildad.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness

Despite being upset about his circumstances, Job does not curse Yahweh. Instead, he defends himself to Yahweh, while trusting in his decision. (See: curse and trust)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to defend himself. He does not believe that he committed a sin deserving severe punishment.

Job 10:1

I am weary of my life
"I am tired of living"

I will give free expression to my complaint
The abstract nouns "expression" and "complaint" can be translated as the verbs "express" and "complain." Alternate translation: "I will freely express what I have to complain about" or "I will argue freely"

I will speak in the bitterness of my soul
How Job feels is compared to a bitter taste. The abstract noun "bitterness" can be translated as the adverb "bitterly." Alternate translation: "My inner being will speak bitterly" or "I will bitterly speak out"

Job 10:2

General Information:
This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 10:3

Is it good to you that you should oppress me, to despise the labor of your hands while you smile on the plans of the wicked?
This question expects a "no" answer and can be changed into a statement. Alternate translation: "It is not good that you should oppress me, that you should despise the labor of your hands, while you smile on the plans of the wicked."

the labor of your hands
Here God is represented by his "hands." Alternate translation: "what you have created"

smile on the plans of the wicked
Here the idiom "smiling on" represents God's approval. Alternate translation: "approve the plans of the wicked"

Job 10:4

Do you have eyes of flesh? Do you see like a man sees?
These two questions have nearly the same meaning. These questions expect a negative answer to emphasize that God does not see or understand things the same way a man does. They can be expressed as statements. Alternate translation: "You do not have eyes of flesh, and you do not see like a man sees."

Job 10:5

Connecting Statement:
Job begins to ask a rhetorical question. He is saying that God lives forever but people live only for a short time, so God should not worry about Job's sins.

your days like the days of mankind ... your years like the years of people
These two phrases have nearly the same meaning.

your days
"the number of your days"

your years
"the number of your years"

Job 10:6

Connecting Statement:
Job continues the rhetorical question he began in verse 5.

inquire after my iniquity
"look to see if I have committed iniquity"

Job 10:7

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Are your days" in verse 5.

although you know ... from your hand?

This is the end of the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Are your days" in verse 5. The whole question can be translated as a statement. "Your days are not like the days of mankind, and your years are not like the years of people, so you should not inquire after my iniquity and search after my sin, because you know I am not guilty and there is no one who can rescue me from your hand."

from your hand

Here "your hand" represents God's power. Alternate translation: "from your power"

Job 10:8

Your hands

Here "hands" represent God and his creative action. Alternate translation: "You"

Your hands have framed and fashioned me together round about

Job is using a metaphor of a potter forming clay to describe how God carefully created him.

framed and fashioned me

"shaped and formed me." The words "framed" and "fashioned" are similar in meaning.

Job 10:9

Call to mind

"Remember"

bring me into dust again

"turn me back into dust again"

Job 10:10

General Information:

In these verses, Job uses the language of poetry to describe how God formed him in the womb.

Have you not poured me out like milk and curdled me like cheese?

This is a question that expects a positive answer. Alternate translation: "You poured me out like milk and curdled me like cheese." or "You formed me in the womb like poured milk becomes cheese."

you

Here "you" refers to God.

me

Here "me" refers to Job.

Job 10:11

You have clothed me with skin and flesh

God putting skin and flesh on Job's body is spoken of as if God was putting clothing on him. Alternate translation: "You have put skin and flesh on my body"

knit me together

"wove me together." God putting Job's body together in the womb is spoken of as if God was knitting or weaving a piece of cloth. Alternate translation: "put me together"

sinews

the parts of the body that connect muscles to bones or other body parts and are like tough, white bands or cords

Job 10:12

You have granted me life and covenant faithfulness

The abstract nouns "life" and "faithfulness" can be stated as "live" and "faithful." Alternate translation: "You have been faithful to your covenant and allowed me to live"

guarded my spirit

Here Job is represented by his "spirit." Alternate translation: "guarded me" or "watched carefully over me" or "kept me safe"

Job 10:13

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 10:14

you would notice it

"you would watch me"

Job 10:15

If I have acted wickedly

"If I do evil things"

woe to me

"how terrible will it be for me"

lift up my head

This idiom means to be sure or confident. Alternate translation: "hold my head up" or "be confident" or "be sure about myself"

I am filled with disgrace—see my affliction

Another possible meaning, followed by some versions, is, "I am full of disgrace and am completely full of my own suffering," where the disgrace is bad but the suffering is even worse.

I am filled with disgrace

"I am totally ashamed" or "No one respects me anymore"

disgrace
shame

see my affliction

The abstract noun "affliction" can be translated using the verb "afflict." Alternate translation: "see how God is afflicting me"

Job 10:16

If my head were lifted up, you would stalk me like a lion

Possible meanings are that Job sees this as 1) a potential situation that has not happened yet or 2) as a situation that happens repeatedly. Alternate translation: "When my head is lifted up, you stalk me like a lion"

If my head were lifted up

This idiom means to become self-confident or proud. Alternate translation: "If I become proud"

you would stalk me like a lion

Possible meanings of this simile are 1) God hunts Job like a lion hunts its prey or 2) Job is like a lion being hunted by God.

again you would show yourself with marvellous acts of power against me

This phrase expresses irony in how God displays his marvelous power by acting to harm Job.

Job 10:17

You bring new witnesses against me

Job's troubles from God are spoken of as if they were people who were witnesses against him.

increase your anger against me

The abstract noun "anger" can be translated as the adjective "angry." Alternate translation: "are more and more angry with me"

you attack me with fresh armies

God sending troubles against Job is spoken of as if God was constantly sending new armies against him.

Job 10:18

brought me out of the womb

Here being brought out of the womb represents being born into this world. Alternate translation:

"brought me out of my mother's womb" or "brought me into this world"

and that no eye had ever seen me

Job uses "eye" here to refer to the whole person. He wishes he could have died at birth, before anyone saw him. Alternate translation: "before any person had ever seen me" or "before I was born"

Job 10:19

I had never existed

"I had never lived"

I would have been carried

"My body would have been carried"

Job 10:20

Are not my days only a few?

Here "my days" represent the length of Job's life. This question expects a positive answer, to emphasize that Job only expects to live a few more days. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I only have a few days left to live." or "My life will soon end."

Job 10:21

the land

Here the place where the spirits of dead people go is spoken of as if it was a land. Alternate translation: "the place"

of darkness and of the shadow of death

The phrase "shadow of death" intensifies the idea of "darkness." Both phrases describe where the spirits of dead people go.

the shadow of death

See how you translated this in Job 3:5.

Job 10:22

as dark as darkness

"totally dark"

without any order

This negative phrase can be expressed in positive form. Alternate translation: "full of confusion" or "where all is confused"

where the light is like darkness

"where there is darkness even where there should be light" or "where there is no light at all"

Chapter 11

- ¹ Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said,
- ² "Should not such a multitude of words be answered?
Should this man, so full of talk, be acquitted?"
- ³ Should your boasting make others remain silent?
When you mock, will no one make you feel ashamed?"
- ⁴ For you say to God, 'My beliefs are pure,
I am clean in your eyes.'
- ⁵ But, oh, that God would speak
and open his lips against you;
- ⁶ that he would show you the secrets of wisdom!
For sound wisdom has two sides.
Know then that God demands from you less than your iniquity deserves.
- ⁷ Can you understand God by searching for him?
Can you comprehend the Almighty perfectly?"
- ⁸ The matter is as high as heaven; what can you do?
It is deeper than Sheol; what can you know?"
- ⁹ Its measure is longer than the earth,
and wider than the sea.
- ¹⁰ If he passes through and shuts anyone up,
if he calls an assembly, then who can stop him?"
- ¹¹ For he knows deceitful people;
when he sees iniquity, does he not notice it?"
- ¹² But foolish people will gain understanding
when the foal of a wild donkey is born a man.
- ¹³ But suppose that you set your heart right
and reach out with your hands toward God;
- ¹⁴ suppose that iniquity is in your hand,
but that you put it far away from you,
and do not let unrighteousness live in your tents.
- ¹⁵ Then you will certainly lift up your face without a sign of shame;
indeed, you will be steadfast and will not fear.
- ¹⁶ You will forget your trouble;
you will remember it only like waters that have flowed away.
- ¹⁷ Your life will be brighter than the noonday;
though there be darkness, it will become like the morning.
- ¹⁸ You will be secure because there is hope;
indeed, you will find safety about you and will take your rest in safety.
- ¹⁹ Also you will lie down in rest, and none will make you afraid;
indeed, many will seek your favor.
- ²⁰ But the eyes of wicked people will fail;
they will have no refuge;
their only hope will be a last gasp of life."

Job 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. In this chapter, Zophar speaks to Job.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Zophar uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job that he is wrong. These questions help to build Zophar's argument.

Job 11:1

Zophar the Naamathite

See how you translated this man's name in [Job 2:11]

Job 11:2

Should not such a multitude of words be answered?

Zophar is asking a question in the negative to emphasize that Job's words must be challenged. Alternate translation: "We must answer all of these words!" or "Someone should respond to all these words!"

Should this man, so full of talk, be acquitted?

Zophar uses this question to emphasize that they should not believe what Job was saying simply because Job talks much. Alternate translation: "This man is full of much talk, but we should not believe him!" or "Job, your many words alone do not show that you are innocent!"

Job 11:3

Should your boasting make others remain silent?

Zophar uses this question to rebuke Job. Alternate translation: "Just because you have spoken many words, this does not mean that others must keep silent."

When you mock, will no one make you feel ashamed?

Zophar uses this question to rebuke Job. You may need to make explicit what it is that Job is mocking. Alternate translation: "You have mocked us for what we have said. Now we will make you feel ashamed!"

Job 11:4

My beliefs are pure

"My understanding is correct"

I am clean in your eyes

The word "clean" here is a metaphor for innocence, and the "eyes" here are a metonym for the thinking or judgment of the person whose eyes they are. Alternate translation: "You should know that I am innocent" or "You should consider me innocent"

Job 11:5

that God would speak ... open his lips against you

The words "open his lips" are a metonym that means speak. These two phrases mean the same

thing and are used together to emphasize Zophar's desire that God would speak harshly against Job.

Job 11:6

that he would show ... secrets of wisdom

What the "secrets of wisdom" are can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "that he would show you that you are suffering because of your sin"

sound wisdom has two sides

The word "wisdom" here is probably a metonym for a wise person, and the "two sides" are the different arguments in a dispute. When there is a disagreement, a wise person will listen to everyone before deciding what the truth is.

Know then

"Acknowledge then" or "So admit"

God demands from you less than your iniquity deserves

Demanding from Job represents punishing Job. Alternate translation: "God is punishing you less than you deserve"

Job 11:7

Can you understand God by searching for him? Can you comprehend the Almighty perfectly?

These two rhetorical questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You cannot understand God by searching for him, and you will never completely understand the Almighty!"

Job 11:8

The matter

This refers to understanding God. Alternate translation: "To understand God"

is as high as heaven ... deeper than Sheol

The impossibility of understanding God is spoken of as if it were impossible to go to these extremely far away places. Alternate translation: "is as inaccessible as the highest places in heaven ... is more inaccessible than the deepest places in Sheol"

what can you do?

Zophar uses this question to show that a person cannot do anything to understand God fully. Alternate translation: "you cannot do anything." or "you cannot understand him fully."

what can you know?

Zophar uses this question to show that a person cannot do anything to know God fully. Alternate

translation: "you cannot know God fully." or "you cannot know all there is to know."

Job 11:9

Its measure

Possible meanings are that this refers to 1) God's greatness or 2) the greatness of God's wisdom.

is longer than the earth ... wider than the sea

God's greatness or wisdom is spoken of as if it could be measured in distance.

Job 11:10

If he ... shuts anyone up

"If God ... shuts anyone up in prison"

if he calls an assembly

The abstract noun "assembly" can be translated with the verb "assemble." You may need to make explicit that the "assembly" is a court that will judge whether someone is guilty. Alternate translation: "if God calls people together for a court"

who can stop him?

This question emphasizes that no one can stop God. Alternate translation: "no one can stop him!"

Job 11:11

does he not notice it?

This emphasizes that God does notice sin. Alternate translation: "he surely notices it!"

Job 11:12

foolish people will gain understanding when the foal of a wild donkey is born a man

Since a wild donkey can never give birth to a man, this means that foolish people will never get understanding. Alternate translation: "foolish people would be able to get understanding only if a wild donkey could give birth to a man" or "it is as impossible for a foolish person to get understanding as it is for a donkey to give birth to a man"

But foolish people will gain understanding

The abstract noun "understanding" can be expressed with the verb "understand." Alternate translation: "But foolish people will be able to understand"

Job 11:13

General Information

Zophar asks Job to consider what will happen if he does these things in this verse.

suppose that you set your heart right

The heart represents thoughts and attitudes. Setting it right represents correcting it. Alternate translation: "if you correct your attitude"

and reach out with your hands toward God

This is a symbolic action representing asking God for help. Zophar asks Job to consider what will happen if he sets his heart right. Alternate translation: "and make an appeal and pray to God"

Job 11:14

General Information

Zophar asks Job to consider what will happen if he puts iniquity far away from him and does not let righteousness live in his tent.

suppose that iniquity is in your hand

The hand represents what a person does. Alternate translation: "even if you have done some evil things"

but that you put it far away from you

Putting sin behind represents stopping sinning. Alternate translation: "but that you stop doing evil things"

and do not let unrighteousness live in your tents

Unrighteousness living represents people doing unrighteous things. Alternate translation: "and that you do not allow the members of your household to do unrighteous things"

Job 11:15

General Information:

In verses 15-19 Zophar tells Job the things that will happen if Job does what Zophar spoke about in verses 13-14.

lift up your face without a sign of shame

"Lifting up your face" represents the attitude of a person who is confident and brave.

Job 11:16

you will remember it only like waters that have flowed away

Zophar is comparing misery with water that flows downstream and it is gone. Alternate translation: "You will remember your misery, but it will be gone, like waters that have flowed away"

Job 11:17

Your life will be brighter than the noonday

Brightness represents being prosperous and happy. Alternate translation: "Your life will be prosperous and happy like the noonday"

though there be darkness

Darkness represents troubles and sadness.
Alternate translation: "Though there might be dark troubles and sadness"

it will become like the morning

The morning represents light, which represents prosperity and happiness. Alternate translation: "it would be prosperous and happy like the morning"

Job 11:18

You will be secure ... will find safety ... will take your rest in safety

Zophar repeats the idea to emphasize how safe Job will be. Job will experience this if he does what Zophar spoke of in verses 13 and 14.

will take your rest in safety

"Take your rest" here is an idiom for "rest." The phrase "in safety" can be expressed with the word "safely." Alternate translation: "will rest safely"

Job 11:19

you will lie down in rest

The abstract noun "rest" can be expressed with the verb "rest." Alternate translation: "you would lie down and rest"

many will seek your favor

This means that people will respect Job and will hope that he will treat them well.

Job 11:20

the eyes of wicked people will fail

Their eyes represent their understanding. Alternate translation: "the understanding of the wicked people will fail" or "the wicked people will not be able to understand"

they will have no refuge

"there will be no place to which they can escape"

Chapter 12

- ¹ Then Job answered and said,
- ² "No doubt you are the people;
wisdom will die with you.
- ³ But I have understanding as well as you;
I am not inferior to you.
Indeed, who does not know such things as these?
- ⁴ I am something for my neighbor to laugh at—
I, one who called on God and who was answered by him!
I, a just and blameless man—I am now something to laugh at.
- ⁵ In the thought of someone who is at ease, there is contempt for misfortune;
he thinks in a way that brings more misfortune to those whose foot is slipping.
- ⁶ The tents of robbers prosper,
and those who provoke God feel secure;
their own hands are their gods.
- ⁷ But now ask the animals, and they will teach you;
ask the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you.
- ⁸ Or speak to the earth, and it will teach you;
the fish of the sea will declare to you.
- ⁹ Which animal among all these does not know
that the hand of Yahweh has done this?
- ¹⁰ In his hand is the life of every living thing
and the breath of all mankind.
- ¹¹ Does not the ear test words
just as the palate tastes its food?
- ¹² With aged men is wisdom;
in length of days is understanding.
- ¹³ With God are wisdom and might;
he has counsel and understanding.
- ¹⁴ See, he breaks things down, and they cannot be built again;
if he imprisons someone, there can be no release.
- ¹⁵ See, if he withholds the waters, they dry up;
and if he sends them out, they overwhelm the land.
- ¹⁶ With him are strength and wisdom;
people who are deceived and the deceiver are both in his power.
- ¹⁷ He leads counselors away barefoot in sorrow;
he turns judges into fools.
- ¹⁸ He removes the bond of kings;
he wraps a cloth about their waists.
- ¹⁹ He leads priests away barefoot in sorrow
and overthrows mighty people.
- ²⁰ He removes the speech of those who had been trusted
and takes away the understanding of the elders.
- ²¹ He pours contempt upon princes
and unfastens the belt of the strong.
- ²² He reveals the deep things of darkness
and brings utter darkness into the light.
- ²³ He makes nations strong, and he also destroys them;
He enlarges nations, and he also leads them along as prisoners.
- ²⁴ He takes away understanding from the leaders of the people of the earth;
he causes them to wander in a wilderness where there is no path.
- ²⁵ They grope in the dark without light;
he makes them stagger like a drunk man.

Job 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Zophar.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness

Despite being upset about his circumstances, Job does not curse God. His friends, on the other hand, judge Job's case, which Job recognizes to be Yahweh's authority. These three friends therefore try to take God's place. (See: curse and judge)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

Job uses many different metaphors in this chapter to express his pain or despair. He is also upset with the advice of his friends, who are supposed to help him during difficult times.

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Zophar that he is wrong. These questions help to build Job's response.

Job 12:1

General Information:

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Job 12:2

No doubt you are the people; wisdom will die with you
Job mocks how they are acting and shows how ridiculous they sound. Alternate translation: "Surely you are such important people that wisdom cannot exist without you" or "You all act like you are the only wise people and that when you die, wisdom will disappear"

No doubt
"Surely"

you

This is plural in verses 2 and 3.

you are the people

"you are the important people who know everything"

Job 12:3

Indeed, who does not know such things as these?

Job used this question to express a truth that should be obvious to his listeners. It can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "Certainly there is no one who does not know such things as these." or "Certainly everyone knows these things."

Job 12:4

I am something for my neighbor to laugh at—I, one who called on God and who was answered by him!

The relationship between these phrases can be made clear with the words "even though." Alternate translation: "I am something for my neighbor to laugh at—even though I am one who called on God and he answered me!"

I, a just and blameless man—I am now something to laugh at

The relationship between these phrases can be made clear with the words "even though." Alternate translation: "Even though I am a just and blameless man, people now laugh at me"

Job 12:5

In the thought of someone who is at ease, there is contempt for misfortune

The abstract nouns "thought," "ease," "contempt," and "misfortune" can be expressed with other phrases. Alternate translation: "A person who lives an easy life despises a person who suffers"

brings more misfortune

Bringing misfortune represents causing it to happen. Alternate translation: "causes more bad things to happen"

to those whose foot is slipping

The foot slipping represents being in danger or trouble. Alternate translation: "to those who are already in trouble"

Job 12:6

The tents of robbers prosper

Their tents prospering represents the robbers prospering in their tents. Alternate translation: "Robbers live in prosperity in their own tents"

their own hands are their gods

Here "their own hands" is a metonym for strength, and "their gods" is a metaphor for their pride. Alternate translation: "they are extremely proud of their own abilities"

Job 12:7

But now ask the animals ... the birds ... they will tell you

Job is saying that the animals and the birds understand God better than Job's friends do.

you

All occurrences of "you" are plural.

But now ask the animals, and they will teach you

The command in the first part of the sentence can be translated as a condition with the word "if." Alternate translation: "But if you ask the animals, they will teach you"

ask the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you

The command in the first part of the sentence can be translated as a condition. Alternate translation: "if you ask the birds of the heavens, they will tell you" (See:)

Job 12:8

speak to the earth ... will declare to you

Job is saying that the beasts, the birds, the earth, and the fish understand God better than Job's friends do.

Or speak to the earth, and it will teach you

The command in the first part of the sentence can be translated as a condition. Alternate translation: "Or if you speak to the earth, it will teach you"

the fish of the sea will declare to you

The command "Ask the fish of the sea" is understood from the previous sentences. It can be translated as a condition. Alternate translation: "and if you ask the fish of the sea, they will declare to you"

Job 12:9

Which animal among all these does not know ... this?

This question emphasizes the point that all the animals know that Yahweh has done this. This question can be worded as a statement. Alternate translation: "Every animal among all these knows ... this."

the hand of Yahweh has done this

Yahweh's hand represents his power. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has done this by his power"

Job 12:10

In his hand is the life ... and the breath of all mankind

Yahweh's hand represents his control or power. Alternate translation: "God controls the life of every living thing and gives breath to all mankind"

the breath of all mankind

Here "breath" represents life or the ability to live.

Job 12:11

Does not the ear test words just as the palate tastes its food?

Job uses this question to emphasize that people listen to what others say and judge whether it is good or not. The ear and palate are metonyms for hearing and tasting. Alternate translation: "We hear what people say and test it just as we taste food and test it."

Job 12:12

With aged men is wisdom

"Aged men have wisdom." The abstract noun "wisdom" can be expressed with "wise." The word "men" refers to people in general. Alternate translation: "Old people are wise"

in length of days is understanding

This represents people gaining understanding when they live a long time. The abstract noun "understanding" can be expressed with the phrase "understand much." Alternate translation: "people gain understanding when they live a long time" or "people who live a long time understand much"

Job 12:13

General Information:

Verse 13 says that God is wise and mighty. The rest of this chapter shows that this is true by telling about the wise and mighty things that God does.

With God are wisdom and might

The abstract nouns "wisdom" and "might" can be expressed with the adjectives "wise" and "mighty." Alternate translation: "God is wise and mighty"

Job 12:14

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

they cannot be built again

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can rebuild them"

if he imprisons someone, there can be no release

The abstract noun "release" can be expressed with the verb "free." Alternate translation: "if God shuts someone in, no one can free him"

Job 12:15

if he withholds the waters, they dry up

Possible meanings are that withholding waters represents 1) preventing the rain from falling. Alternate translation: "if he stops the rain from falling the land dries up" or 2) preventing running water from flowing. Alternate translation: "if he stops the water from flowing, the land dries up"

if he sends them out, they overwhelm the land

Possible meanings are that sending them out is a metaphor meaning 1) causing the rain to fall. Alternate translation: "if he causes a lot of rain to fall, it floods the land" or 2) causing the waters to flow. Alternate translation: "if he makes a lot of water flow, it floods the land"

Job 12:16

With him are strength and wisdom

The abstract nouns "strength" and "wisdom" can be expressed with the words "strong" and "wise." Alternate translation: "God is strong and wise"

people who are deceived and the deceiver are both in his power

Being in God's power represents God ruling over them. Alternate translation: "people who believe a lie and people who lie to others are both in his power" or "God rules over both people who believe lies and people who lie to others"

Job 12:17

He leads counselors away barefoot

Leading counselors away barefoot represents taking away their wisdom and authority.

in sorrow

The abstract noun "sorrow" can be expressed with the words "sad" or "grieve" Alternate translation: "and they feel very sad" or "and they grieve"

he turns judges into fools

"he makes judges become foolish"

Job 12:18

He removes the bond of kings

Possible meanings are that 1) this is a metonym for causing kings to no longer have authority. Alternate translation: "He takes away the authority of kings" or 2) this is a metonym for setting people free from the chains that kings have put on them. Alternate translation: "He takes off the bonds that kings have put on people"

he wraps a cloth about their waists

This cloth is probably what a slave wears. To put these cloths on kings represents making the kings slaves. Alternate translation: "he makes kings wear the clothing of slaves" or "he makes them slaves"

Job 12:19

He leads priests away barefoot

Leading priests away barefoot represents taking away their authority.

in sorrow

The abstract noun "sorrow" can be expressed with the words "sad" or "grieve" Alternate translation: "and they feel sad" or "and they grieve"

overthrows mighty people

"defeats powerful people"

Job 12:20

He removes the speech of those who had been trusted

Removing their speech represents making them unable to speak. Alternate translation: "He makes those who were trusted unable to speak" or "He silences people whom others trusted"

takes away the understanding of the elders

Taking away their understanding represents making them unable to understand or make good decisions. Alternate translation: "makes the elders unable to understand" or "makes the elders unable to make good decisions"

the elders

Possible meanings are 1) the older people or 2) the leaders.

Job 12:21

He pours contempt upon princes

Pouring contempt on princes is a metaphor for causing people to feel contempt for them. Alternate translation: "He causes people to greatly disrespect those who rule"

unfastens the belt of the strong

The belt is a symbol of strength. Unfastening a strong person's belt represents taking away his strength and making him weak. Alternate translation: "makes the strong weak"

the strong

This refers to any strong person. Alternate translation: "strong people"

Job 12:22

He reveals the deep things of darkness

Revealing things represents making them known. "Deep things from darkness" represent secrets that

people do not know. Alternate translation: "He makes known secrets that people do not know"

brings utter darkness into the light

Bringing things out into the light is a metaphor for making them known. Alternate translation: "makes known things that no one can see"

Job 12:23

He enlarges nations

"He makes nations larger" or "He makes nations have more land"

he also leads them along as prisoners

God leading nations represents God causing enemy nations to lead them. The word "them" represents nations, which here represents the people of those nations. Alternate translation: "he also causes their enemies to lead them along as prisoners"

Job 12:24

He takes away understanding from the leaders of the people of the earth

Taking away their understanding represents causing them to be unable to understand. Alternate

translation: "He causes the leaders of the people of the earth to be unable to understand"

to wander in a wilderness where there is no path

Wandering in a wilderness where there is no path represents being in a difficult situation and not knowing what to do. Alternate translation: "to be unsure of what to do like a person wandering in a wasteland with no path"

Job 12:25

They grope in the dark without light

Being in the dark without light represents lacking knowledge. Alternate translation: "They struggle to make decisions without knowledge as people struggle to walk in the dark without light"

he makes them stagger like a drunk man

Staggering or wandering like a drunk man represents living without purpose. Alternate translation: "he makes them live without purpose like a drunk person who staggers as he walks" or "they wander aimlessly like a drunk person who staggers back and forth"

Chapter 13

- ¹ See, my eye has seen all this;
my ear has heard and understood it.
- ² What you know, the same I also know;
I am not inferior to you.
- ³ However, I would rather speak with the Almighty;
I wish to reason with God.
- ⁴ But you whitewash the truth with lies;
you are all worthless healers.
- ⁵ Oh, that you would altogether hold your peace!
That would be your wisdom.
- ⁶ Hear now my own reasoning;
listen to the pleading of my own lips.
- ⁷ Will you speak unrighteousness for God,
and will you talk deceitfully for him?
- ⁸ Will you show him partiality?
Will you argue the case for God?
- ⁹ Will it be good for you when he examines you?
Could you deceive him as you might deceive men?
- ¹⁰ He would surely reprove you
if in secret you showed partiality.
- ¹¹ Will not his majesty terrify you,
and the dread of him fall upon you?
- ¹² Your memorable sayings are proverbs made of ashes;
your defenses are defenses made of clay.
- ¹³ Hold your peace, let me alone, so that I may speak,
let come what may on me.
- ¹⁴ I will take my own flesh in my teeth;
I will take my life in my hands.
- ¹⁵ See, if he kills me, I will have no hope left;
nevertheless, I will defend my ways before him.
- ¹⁶ This will be the reason for my deliverance,
for no godless person would come before him.
- ¹⁷ God, listen carefully to my speech;
let my declaration come to your ears.
- ¹⁸ See now, I have set my defense in order;
I know that I will be vindicated.
- ¹⁹ Who is the one who would argue against me in court?
If you came to do so, and if I were proved wrong, then I would be silent and die.
- ²⁰ God, do only two things for me,
and then I will not hide myself from your face:
- ²¹ withdraw your oppressive hand from me,
and do not let your terrors make me afraid.
- ²² Then call me, and I will answer;
or let me speak to you, and you answer me.
- ²³ How many are my iniquities and sins?
Let me know my transgression and my sin.
- ²⁴ Why do you hide your face from me
and treat me like your enemy?
- ²⁵ Will you cause a driven leaf to tremble?
Will you pursue dry stubble?
- ²⁶ For you write down bitter things against me;
you make me inherit the iniquities of my youth.
- ²⁷ You also put my feet in the stocks;
you closely watch all my paths;

you examine the ground where the soles of my feet have walked
28 although I am like a rotten thing that wastes away,
like a garment that moths have eaten.

Job 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Zophar. It also contains Job's claim of righteousness to Yahweh. (See: righteous)

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness

Despite being upset about his circumstances, Job does not curse God. His friends, on the other hand, judge Job's case, which Job recognizes to be Yahweh's authority. These three friends therefore try to take God's place. (See: curse and judge)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Zophar that he is wrong. These questions help to build Job's response.

Job 13:1

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak to his friends.

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

my eye has seen all this

Job referred to himself as his eye since it is with his eyes that he saw these things. Alternate translation: "I have seen all this"

my ear has heard and understood it

Job referred to himself as his ear since it is with his ears that he heard these things. Alternate translation: "I have heard and understood it"

Job 13:2

What you know, the same I also know

"What you know, I also know" or "I know as much as you"

Job 13:3

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak to his friends.

I wish to reason with God

Job's friends are judging him, but they not speaking the truth. Job would rather argue with God alone about his complaint.

Job 13:4

you whitewash the truth with lies

Putting whitewash or plaster on the truth represents ignoring the truth. Alternate translation: "you hide the truth with lies" or "you lie and ignore the truth"

you are all worthless healers

The word "healers" is a metaphor for people who comfort others. Healers who are "worthless" call themselves healers but do not actually heal people. Alternate translation: "you are all like physicians who do not know how to heal people" or "you all come to comfort me, but you do not know how, like unskilled physicians"

Job 13:5

hold your peace

This expression means "be quiet" or "stop talking."

That would be your wisdom

They thought that they were saying wise things, but Job was saying that they would be wiser if they would stop talking. The abstract noun "wisdom" can be expressed with the word "wise." Alternate translation: "If you were to do that, you would be wise" or "If you were to stop talking, you would appear wise"

Job 13:6

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak to his friends.

listen to the pleading of my own lips

Here "lips" represent the person who is speaking. Alternate translation: "listen to what I myself plead for"

Job 13:7

Will you speak unrighteousness for God, and will you talk deceitfully for him?

Job uses these two questions to rebuke his friends for speaking unrighteously. Alternate translation: "You think that you are speaking for God, but you are speaking unrighteousness. You are trying to defend him by speaking deceitfully."

speak unrighteousness

The abstract noun "unrighteousness" can be translated using the adjective "unrighteous," and the word "words" is a metonym for the message that the words carry. Alternate translation: "speak unrighteous words" or "say things of which God does not approve"

for God ... for him

"to defend God ... to defend him" or "as God's representative ... to represent him"

talk deceitfully

"lie" or "tell lies"

Job 13:8

Will you show him partiality? Will you argue the case for God?

Showing kindness to God represents helping God or defending God against Job's complaints. Job uses these questions to rebuke his friends for thinking that they can defend God. Alternate translation: "You think that God need you to defend him? You think that you can argue for God like attorneys in court."

Job 13:9

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak to his friends.

Will it be good for you when he examines you?

Job uses this question to warn his friends that if God were to examine them, he would say that what they are doing is wrong. Alternate translation: "When God examines you, it will not be good for you."

Could you deceive him as you might deceive men?

Job uses this question to warn his friends that God knows the truth about them. Alternate translation: "You might be able to deceive men, but you cannot deceive God."

Job 13:10

reprove you
"rebuke you"

if in secret you showed partiality

"if you secretly show favor to another." Showing partiality refers to saying only good things about someone so that the judge will say that the person is good. Doing this in secret means pretending to speak fairly, but really favoring one person over another.

Job 13:11

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak to his friends.

Will not his majesty terrify you, and the dread of him fall upon you?

Job uses these questions to rebuke his friends. Possible meanings are 1) Job is saying that they should fear God. Alternate translation: "His majesty should make you afraid, and his dread should fall on you." or 2) Job is saying that they will fear God. Alternate translation: "His majesty will make you afraid, and his dread will fall on you!"

and the dread of him fall upon you

Dread falling on people represents them becoming terribly afraid. Alternate translation: "and you not be terribly afraid" or "and you not be terrified"

Job 13:12

Your memorable sayings are proverbs made of ashes

Ashes represent things that are worthless and do not last. Alternate translation: "Your memorable sayings are worthless like ashes" or "Your memorable sayings will be forgotten like ashes that are blown away"

your defenses are defenses made of clay

Job speaks of what they say as if it were a wall made of clay around a city; it cannot defend the people because clay breaks easily. Alternate translation: "What you say in defense is as useless as a wall of clay"

your defenses

Possible meanings are that this refers to 1) what they say to defend themselves or 2) what they say to defend God.

Job 13:13

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak to his friends.

Hold your peace

This is an idiom meaning "Be quiet" or "Stop talking"

let me alone

This is an idiom that means "stop bothering me" or "stop hindering me"

let come what may on me

Things coming on a person represents things happening to a person. This expression starting with "let" means that he does not care what might happen to him. Alternate translation: "let whatever may happen to me happen" or "I do not care what may happen to me"

Job 13:14

I will take my own flesh ... in my hands

"Flesh" here is a metonym for life. "Teeth" and "hands" are metonyms for his own control. These two phrases together emphasize that Job is willing to risk his life by arguing his case with God. Alternate translation: "I am ready to risk my life"

Job 13:15

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 13:16

Connecting Statement:

Job finishes speaking to his friends and begins to address God directly.

This will be the reason for my deliverance

The abstract noun "deliverance" can be expressed with the verb "deliver." Alternate translation: "This is the reason that God will deliver me" or "This is why God will save me from my troubles"

Job 13:17

God, listen carefully

Job begins directing his speech directly to God.

listen carefully to my speech; let my declaration come to your ears

These two lines mean basically the same thing and intensify Job's request for God to listen to him.

let my declaration come to your ears

The abstract noun "declaration" can be expressed with the verb "declare." The ears represent listening. Alternate translation: "listen to my declaration" or "listen to what I declare"

Job 13:18

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to God.

See now, I

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: I"

I have set my defense in order

Setting his defense in order represents deciding what he will say to defend himself. Alternate translation: "I have thought through how I will defend myself" or "I have decided how I will explain myself"

Job 13:19

Who is the one who would argue against me in court?

Job uses this question to express his belief that since he is right, no one would argue against him. Alternate translation: "I do not believe that anyone would argue against me in court."

If you came to do so

"If you came to argue against me"

If you

"You" here means God himself.

if I were proved wrong

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if you were to prove me wrong"

die

If your language has a word for dying that refers to breathing for the last time, you may want to use it here.

Job 13:20

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to God.

from your face

"Face" represents the person. Alternate translation: "from you"

Job 13:21

withdraw your oppressive hand

An oppressive hand is a metonym for doing things that oppress someone. Withdrawing the hand is a metaphor for stopping doing those things. Alternate translation: "stop oppressing me"

do not let your terrors make me afraid

The phrase "your terrors" refers to what causes people to be terrified of God. Alternate translation: "do not terrify me"

Job 13:22

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 13:23

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to God.

Job 13:24

Why do you hide ... like your enemy?

Job asks this question to complain about how God is treating him. He probably hopes for an answer.

you hide your face from me

Hiding one's face from someone represents refusing to look at him or ignoring him. Alternate translation: "you refuse to look at me" or "you ignore me"

Job 13:25

Will you cause a driven leaf to tremble?

Job is rebuking God because God is attacking Job when Job has no defense against God. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not cause this driven leaf to tremble"

cause a driven leaf to tremble

The word "tremble" here refers to trembling with fear. The phrase "driven leaf," which refers to a leaf that has died and dried up and is blown by the wind, is a metaphor for a man who has no strength and is harmless. Alternate translation: "terrify a weak, harmless man"

Will you pursue dry stubble?

Job uses this question to tell God that since Job is so insignificant and weak, it is useless to pursue him. "Leaf" and "stubble" are metaphors describing Job's weakness, insignificance, and frailty. Alternate translation: "It is useless for you to pursue dry stubble" or "You pursue me, but I am weak like a leaf blown by the wind and insignificant like dry stubble"

pursue

You may need to make explicit that the purpose of pursuing Job is to persecute him. Alternate translation: "persecute"

Job 13:26

Connecting Statement:

Job finishes presenting his case to God.

For you write down bitter things against me

"Bitter things" represents accusations. Alternate translation: "For you write down accusations against me"

you make me inherit the iniquities of my youth

Inheriting the iniquities of his youth is a metaphor. Possible meanings are it represents 1) being guilty for the sins of his youth. Alternate translation: "you say that I am still guilty for the sins of my youth" or 2) being punished for the sins of his youth. Alternate translation: "you punish me for the sins of my youth"

the iniquities of my youth

The abstract noun "youth" can be translated with the word "young." Alternate translation: "the sins I committed when I was young"

Job 13:27

You also put my feet in the stocks

Doing this represents punishing Job and keeping him from living freely as if Job had committed a crime and was a prisoner. Alternate translation: "It is as though you put my feet in the stocks"

the stocks

Possible meanings are 1) a frame that holds a prisoner's feet in place so that he cannot move at all or 2) chains around a prisoner's feet that make it hard for him to walk. These are used as a form of punishment.

all my paths

"Paths" represent the things Job does. Alternate translation: "everything I do"

you examine the ground where the soles of my feet have walked

The soles of his feet represent the person who walks. Alternate translation: "you examine the ground where I have walked"

you examine the ground where the soles of my feet have walked

Examining this ground represents examining all that Job has done. Alternate translation: "it is as though you examine the ground where I have walked" or "you examine everything I do like a person examining someone's footprints on the ground"

Job 13:28

like a rotten thing that wastes away

Job compares his life to something that is decaying. He is slowly dying.

like a garment that moths have eaten

Job compares himself to clothes that are full of holes because the moths have eaten parts of it.

Chapter 14

- ¹ Man, who is born of woman,
lives only a few days and is full of trouble.
- ² He sprouts from the ground like a flower and is cut down;
he flees like a shadow and does not last.
- ³ Do you look at any of these?
Do you bring me into judgment with you?
- ⁴ Who can bring something clean out of something unclean?
No one.
- ⁵ Man's days are determined.
The number of his months is with you;
you have appointed his limits that he cannot pass.
- ⁶ Look away from him that he may rest,
so that he may enjoy his day like a hired man if he can do so.
- ⁷ There can be hope for a tree;
if it is cut down, it might sprout again,
so that its tender stalk does not disappear.
- ⁸ Though its root grows old in the earth,
and its stump dies in the ground,
- ⁹ yet even if it only smells water, it will bud
and send out branches like a plant.
- ¹⁰ But man dies; he becomes weak;
indeed, man stops breathing, and then where is he?
- ¹¹ As water disappears from a lake,
and as a river becomes dry and dries up,
- ¹² so people lie down and do not rise again.
Until the heavens are no more, they will not awake
nor be roused out of their sleep.
- ¹³ Oh, that you would hide me away in Sheol away from troubles,
and that you would keep me in private until your wrath is over,
that you would set me a fixed time to stay there and then call me to mind!
- ¹⁴ If a man dies, will he live again?
All my time of service there I will wait
until my release should come.
- ¹⁵ You would call, and I would answer you.
You would have a desire for the work of your hands.
- ¹⁶ You would number and care for my footsteps;
you would not keep track of my sin.
- ¹⁷ My transgression would be sealed up in a bag;
you would cover up my iniquity.
- ¹⁸ But even mountains fall and crumble to nothing;
even rocks are moved out of their place;
- ¹⁹ the waters wear down the stones;
their flooding washes away the dust of the earth.
Like this, you destroy the hope of man.
- ²⁰ You forever defeat him, and he passes away;
you change his face and send him away to die.
- ²¹ If his sons are honored, he does not know it;
and if they are brought low, he does not see it.
- ²² He feels only the pain of his own body,
and he mourns for himself.

Job 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's claim of righteousness being presented to Yahweh. It also has an abrupt shift in tone. Rather than being hopeful, Job laments. (See: righteous and lament)

Special concepts in this chapter

Resurrection

The events of Job occurred long before the Old Testament was written. Therefore, he likely had very little direct revelation about Yahweh. The resurrection of the dead was apparently not well-known during Job's day. (See: reveal)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in his appeal to Yahweh.

Job 14:1

General Information:

This chapter continues Job's speech, which started in Job 12:1. Job is speaking to God.

Man, who is born of woman

This refers to all people, both men and women; all are born into this world.

lives only a few days

This is an exaggeration to emphasize that people live only a short time. Alternate translation: "lives only a very short time"

is full of trouble

Being "full of trouble" represents experiencing much trouble. Alternate translation: "has many troubles" or "suffers much"

Job 14:2

He sprouts from the ground like a flower and is cut down

Like the life of a flower, a person's life is short and is easily killed.

he flees like a shadow and does not last

A person's short life is compared to a shadow that disappears quickly.

Job 14:3

Do you look at any of these?

Job implies that he does not want God to pay so much attention to him. Alternate translation: "You do not look at any of these." or "You do not pay so much attention to these. Please do not pay so much attention to me."

look at

Here looking at some one represents paying attention to him in order to judge him. Alternate translation: "pay attention to" or "look for faults in"

Do you bring me into judgment with you?

Job uses this question to show his surprise that God judges him even though Job is so insignificant like the flowers. Alternate translation: "But you judge me."

Job 14:4

General Information:

Job continues speaking to God.

Who can bring something clean out of something unclean? No one

Job uses this question to persuade God to apply what he knows about unclean things to Job. Alternate translation: "No one can bring something clean out of something unclean"

Job 14:5

Man's days are determined

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "You determine a man's days" or "You decide how long a man lives"

The number of his months is with you

The number of man's months being with God represents God deciding the number of months that the man will live. "You decide how many months he will live"

you have appointed his limits that he cannot pass

Passing a limit represents living past a time that God has set for a person to die. Alternate translation: "you have appointed the time that he will die, and he cannot live longer than that"

Job 14:6

hired man

a man who is hired to do a job and goes home afterwards

Job 14:7

There can be hope for a tree

The abstract noun "hope" can be expressed with the verb "hope." The hope is explained in verses 7-9. Alternate translation: "We can hope that a tree will live again"

it might sprout again

"it might start growing again"

so that its tender stalk does not disappear

Disappearing represents dying. Alternate translation: "so that its young shoot will not die"

Job 14:8

Though

"Even if"

stump

the part of the tree that remains sticking out of the ground after someone has cut down most of the tree

Job 14:9

even if it only smells water

This describes the dead stump as if it could smell water to represent water being near it. Alternate translation: "even if only a little water is near it"

it will bud

"it will start growing"

send out branches like a plant

The tree sending out branches represents branches growing on the tree. Alternate translation: "branches will start growing on it like a plant"

Job 14:10

then where is he?

Job uses this question to emphasize that when a person dies, he is not present. Alternate translation: "no one knows where he is." or "he is gone."

Job 14:11

Connecting Statement:

Job begins to use word pictures to describe how it is that "man dies; he becomes weak" (verse 10).

As water disappears from a lake ... dries up

Water that has dried up from a lake or a river cannot return, and once a person dies or grows old, he cannot become young again.

becomes dry and dries up

The phrases "becomes dry" and "dries up" mean translate words that mean the same thing. If translating both phrases would be awkward in your language, you can leave one of them untranslated.

Job 14:12

Connecting Statement:

Job finishes comparing growing old and dying with water drying up (verse 11).

so people lie down

Lying down represents dying. Alternate translation: "so people die"

do not rise again

Rising again represents living again. Alternate translation: "do not live again"

Job 14:13

General Information:

Job continues speaking to God.

Oh, that you would hide me

This is an exclamation showing what Job wants very much but does not really expect to happen. Alternate translation: "I wish that you would hide me"

keep me in private

"keep me locked up" or "keep me hidden"

call me to mind

Call someone to mind is an idiom meaning to think about him. Alternate translation: "think about me" or "remember me"

Job 14:14

General Information:

This seems to be an elliptical statement of a hypothetical case: "If a man dies, he will not live again, but if he did, all the days of my hard service I would wait for my release to come."

If a man dies, will he live again?

The implicit answer is "no." Alternate translation: "If a man dies, he will not live again."

man

any male person

All my time of service there I will wait

"I will wait all the time I am serving there"

until my release should come

The abstract noun "release" can be expressed with the verb "release." Alternate translation: "until I should be released" or "until you release me"

Job 14:15

General Information:

Job continues speaking to God.

I would answer

"I would do what you wanted me to do"

You would have a desire for

The noun "desire" can be expressed with the verbs "desire" or "want." Alternate translation: "You would desire" or "You would want"

for the work of your hands

Here God's hands represent him making things. Job refers to himself as the work of God's hands. Alternate translation: "for me, whom you have made"

Job 14:16

number and care for

These two verbs together express a single action. Alternate translation: "attentively care for"

my footsteps

Footsteps represent his life or what he does. Alternate translation: "my life" or "the things I do"

you would not keep track of my sin

Keeping track of Job's sin represents thinking about his sin. Alternate translation: "you would not look at my sin" or "you would not think about my sin"

Job 14:17

My transgression would be ... you would cover up

These three lines express the same thought and are used together to emphasize his confidence that God would forgive him.

My transgression would be sealed up in a bag

Sealing transgression in a bag represents hiding it and refusing to think about it. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You would refuse to think about my transgression like someone who hides something in a bag"

you would cover up my iniquity

Covering up someone's iniquity so that it cannot be seen represents refusing to think about it. Alternate translation: "you would hide my iniquity" or "you would ignore my iniquity"

Job 14:18

General Information:

Job continues speaking to God.

mountains fall and crumble to nothing

"Crumble to nothing" here is an idiom meaning be completely destroyed. This phrase expands on the word "fall" and emphasizes complete destruction. Alternate translation: "mountains completely fall apart"

rocks are moved out of their place

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "rocks tumble down from their place"

Job 14:19

Like this, you destroy the hope of man

If it is easier in your language, you can put this phrase at the beginning of verse 18 and adjust the text accordingly. Alternate translation: "You destroy the hope of man, just like ... dust of the earth"

you destroy the hope of man

Destroying hope represents causing the things people hope for not to happen. Alternate translation: "You prevent the hope of man from happening"

the hope of man

The abstract noun "hopes" can be expressed with the verb "hope." Alternate translation: "the things that man hopes for"

Job 14:20

General Information:

Job continues speaking to God.

You forever defeat him

The word "him" refers to any person. Alternate translation: "You forever defeat man" or "You forever defeat people"

forever

or "completely"

he passes away

Passing away represents dying. Alternate translation: "he dies"

you change his face

Possible meanings are 1) the pain just before dying makes his face contract or 2) when a person dies, God makes the person's face look different.

send him away to die

This represents causing him to die.

Job 14:21

if they are brought low

Being brought low represents being shamed.
Alternate translation: "if they are disgraced" or "if
people shame them"

Job 14:22

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Chapter 15

- ¹ Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,
- ² "Should a wise man answer with useless knowledge
and fill himself with the east wind?
- ³ Should he reason with unprofitable talk
or with speeches with which he can do no good?
- ⁴ Indeed, you diminish respect for God;
you obstruct meditation before him,
- ⁵ for your iniquity teaches your mouth;
you choose to have the tongue of the crafty.
- ⁶ Your own mouth condemns you, not mine;
indeed, your own lips testify against you.
- ⁷ Are you the first man that was born?
Were you brought into existence before the hills?
- ⁸ Have you heard the secret knowledge of God?
Do you limit wisdom to yourself?
- ⁹ What do you know that we do not know?
What do you understand that is not also in us?
- ¹⁰ With us are both the gray-headed and the very aged men
who are much older than your father.
- ¹¹ Are the consolations of God too small for you,
the words that are gentle toward you?
- ¹² Why does your heart carry you away?
Why do your eyes flash,
- ¹³ so that you turn your spirit against God
and bring out such words from your mouth?
- ¹⁴ What is man that he should be clean?
What is he who is born of a woman that he should be righteous?
- ¹⁵ See, God puts no trust even in his holy ones;
indeed, the heavens are not clean in his sight;
- ¹⁶ how much less clean is one who is abhorrent and corrupt,
a man who drinks iniquity like water!
- ¹⁷ I will show you; listen to me;
I will announce to you the things I have seen,
- ¹⁸ the things that wise men have passed down from their fathers,
the things that their ancestors did not hide.
- ¹⁹ These were their ancestors, to whom alone the land was given,
and among whom no stranger ever passed.
- ²⁰ The wicked man twists in pain all his days,
the number of years that are laid up for the oppressor to suffer.
- ²¹ A sound of terrors is in his ears;
while he is in prosperity, the destroyer will come upon him.
- ²² He does not think that he will return out of darkness;
he has been marked out for the sword.
- ²³ He goes to various places for bread, saying, 'Where is it?'
He knows that the day of darkness is at hand.
- ²⁴ Distress and anguish make him afraid;
they prevail against him, as a king ready for battle.
- ²⁵ Because he has reached out with his hand against God
and has behaved proudly against the Almighty,
- ²⁶ this wicked man runs at God with a stiff neck,
with a thick shield.

- 27 This is true, even though he has covered his face with his fat
and gathered fat on his loins,
28 and has lived in desolate cities;
in houses which no man inhabits now
and which were ready to become heaps.
29 He will not be rich; his wealth will not last
and his possessions will not spread over the land.
30 He will not depart out of darkness; ^[1]
a flame will dry up his stalks;
at the breath of God's mouth he will go away. ^[2]
31 Let him not trust in useless things, deceiving himself;
for uselessness will be his reward.
32 It will happen before his time should come to die;
his palm branch will not be green.
33 He will drop his unripe grapes like a grapevine;
he will cast off his flowers like the olive tree.
34 For the company of godless people will be barren;
fire will consume their tents of bribery.
35 They conceive mischief and give birth to iniquity;
their womb conceives deceit."

Footnotes

15:30 ^[1]Many modern translations leave out

15:30 ^[2]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text have

Job 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. In this chapter, Eliphaz speaks to Job again. His words in this chapter are much stronger than when he previously spoke.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Eliphaz uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job that he is wrong. These questions help to build Eliphaz's argument.

Job 15:1

Eliphaz the Temanite

This is the name of a man. People from Teman are known as Temanites. See how you translated this in [Job 2:11]

Job 15:2

Should a wise man answer with useless knowledge and fill himself with the east wind?

Eliphaz uses this rhetorical question to rebuke Job. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "A wise man should not answer with useless knowledge nor fill himself with the east wind."

fill himself with the east wind

The wind represents emptiness. This phrase speaks of a person speaking empty and meaningless words as if that person were full of the wind. Alternate translation: "fill himself with empty words" or "only have meaningless words"

the east wind

"hot air" or "the desert wind"

Job 15:3

Should he reason with unprofitable talk or with speeches with which he can do no good?

Eliphaz uses this rhetorical question to rebuke Job. This can be written as a statement. Alternate

translation: "He should not reason with unprofitable talk nor with speeches with which he can do no good." or "He should not argue using unprofitable talk or make speeches that accomplish nothing good."

Job 15:4

you diminish respect for God

Possible meanings are 1) "because of what you say and do, other people no longer respect God" or 2) "you are no longer respecting God."

diminish

make smaller

you obstruct meditation before him

Possible meanings are 1) "you make it difficult for others to meditate in God's presence" or 2) "you are no longer devoting yourself to God."

Job 15:5

your iniquity teaches your mouth

This describes "iniquity" as if it were a teacher and Job's mouth is described as if it is learning. This means that his speech is greatly influenced by his iniquity. Alternate translation: "your iniquity is like a teacher and your mouth is like its student" or "it is because of your sin that you speak the way you do"

your mouth

This speaks of Job, but refers to his "mouth" to place emphasis on what he says. Alternate translation: "you to speak" or "you to say what you say"

to have the tongue of the crafty

This refers to the way crafty people speak as their "tongue." Alternate translation: "to speak in the way of crafty people"

the crafty

This nominal adjective refers to people who harm others by lying to them.

Job 15:6

Your own mouth condemns you, not mine

This refers to Job and Eliphaz by their "mouths" to place emphasis on what they say. Alternate translation: "You are condemned by what you say, not by what I say" or "You condemn yourself by what you say, it is not I who condemns you"

your own lips testify

This speaks of Job, but refers to his "lips" to place emphasis on what he says. Alternate translation: "your own words" or "you testify"

Job 15:7

General Information:

Each verse is a parallelism that contains two rhetorical questions.

Are you the first man that was born?

The implicit answer here is "no." This rhetorical question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are not the first man that was born."

Were you brought into existence before the hills?

The implicit answer here is "no." This rhetorical question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You were not brought into existence before the hills." or "God did not bring you into existence before he brought the hills into existence."

Were you brought

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Did God bring you"

Job 15:8

Have you heard the secret knowledge of God?

The implicit answer here is "no." This rhetorical question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have not heard the secret knowledge of God."

Do you limit wisdom to yourself?

This rhetorical question emphasizes that he cannot limit wisdom to himself. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You cannot limit wisdom to yourself." or "You are not the only wise person."

Job 15:9

What do you know that we do not know?

The implicit answer here is "nothing." This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is nothing that you know that we do not know." or "Everything you know, we also know."

What do you understand that is not also in us?

This speaks of the men having understanding as if it were something "inside" them. Alternate translation: "Everything you understand, we also understand." or "We understand everything that you understand."

Job 15:10

With us are both the gray-headed and the very aged men

Eliphaz speaks of him and the other men having learned wisdom from older men and wisdom that had been passed down from men of previous generations as if these older men were physically

present with them. Alternate translation: "We acquired wisdom from old gray-haired people, from people who were born before your father was"

Job 15:11

Are the consolations of God ... gentle toward you?

This rhetorical question is an accusation, with the implicit answer to the question being "yes." This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You must think that the consolations of God are too small for you, the words that are gentle toward you"

consolations

"comforts" or "sympathies"

Job 15:12

Why does your heart carry you away?

Here the "heart" represents a person's emotions. Alternate translation: "Why do your emotions take you away?" or "Why do you allow your emotions to guide your decisions?"

Why do your eyes flash

This probably refers to Job appearing angry, specifically the appearance of his eyes. Alternate translation: "Why do your eyes look angry" or "Why are you angry"

Job 15:13

turn your spirit

Here the "spirit" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "turn yourself"

bring out such words from your mouth

This describes him speaking. Alternate translation: "so you say harsh things against him"

Job 15:14

What is man ... What is he who is born

These two questions are basically the same and are used together to emphasize that a man cannot be perfect.

What is man that he should be clean?

This rhetorical question is asked to emphasize that a man cannot be completely "clean." This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "A man, he cannot be completely clean."

clean

A person who God considers spiritually acceptable is spoken of as if the person were physically clean.

What is he who is born of a woman that he should be righteous?

This rhetorical question is asked to emphasize that a man cannot be completely "righteous." This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "A

man who is born from a woman cannot be completely righteous."

Job 15:15

See

This word is used here to draw Job's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

his holy ones

"his angels"

clean

Something that God considers spiritually acceptable is spoken of as if it were physically clean.

in his sight

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "in his judgment"

Job 15:16

abhorrent and corrupt

These two words basically mean the same thing and emphasize how wicked humans are.

abhorrent

If your language has a word for a person whom others reject as unclean in a ritual or spiritual sense, you might want to use it here.

who drinks iniquity like water

This describes iniquity as if it were water you can drink. It compares how the evil man desires to commit sin to how readily he desires to drink cool water. Alternate translation: "who love iniquity as much as they love a cup of fresh water" or "who commit evil deeds as often as they drink water"

Job 15:17

I will show you

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I will explain to you" or "I will make it clear to you"

I will announce

"I will declare"

Job 15:18

their ancestors did not hide

Eliphaz emphasizes that their ancestors purposefully taught them these things. Alternate translation: "their ancestors taught openly"

Job 15:19

to whom alone the land was given

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to whom alone God gave the land"

among whom no stranger ever passed

This means that no foreigner lived among them, specifically so that they would not be influenced by pagan religions. Alternate translation: "no one from another country came and caused them to think wrongly about God"

Job 15:20

twists in pain

"suffers a lot of pain." This is either physical or emotional pain.

the number of years that are laid up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the years that God has laid up"

that are laid up

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "that are prepared" or "that are set aside"

Job 15:21

A sound of terrors is in his ears

"He constantly hears sounds that terrify him"

Job 15:22

Connecting Statement:

Eliphaz continues describing the wicked man he began to describe in Job 15:20.

return out of darkness

Here "darkness" is a metaphor for trouble or misfortune. Alternate translation: "escape misfortune"

he has been marked out for the sword

Here "the sword" is a metonym that represents an enemy who is waiting to kill the evil man. Possible meanings are 1) he is worried that someone will murder him. Alternate translation: "he worries that someone is about to murder him" or 2) it is certain that he is someone will murder him. Alternate translation: "someone is waiting to murder him"

Job 15:23

for bread

Here "bread" refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "for food"

the day of darkness

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "the day of disaster" or "the moment of his death"

is at hand

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "is coming soon"

Job 15:24

Distress and anguish make him afraid; they prevail against him

The words "distress" and "anguish" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of the emotion. Here these feelings are spoken of as if they were an enemy who is attacking the wicked man.

prevail against

"overpower" or "defeat"

as a king ready for battle

This compares how his distress and anguish overpower him to how a king, who is ready for battle, would prevail against him. Alternate translation: "just like a king, who is ready for a battle, would prevail against him"

Job 15:25

he has reached out with his hand against God

"he has shook his fist against God." This is a sign of aggression.

Job 15:26

runs at God

This speaks of the wicked man acting aggressively against God as if he were running towards him to attack him. Alternate translation: "attacks God" or "acts violently against God"

with a thick shield

"with his strong shield"

Job 15:27

This is true

"This" refers to the wicked man running at God from the previous verse.

he has covered his face with his fat and gathered fat on his loins

This wicked man is described as fat and weak, while believing himself to be strong enough to defeat God. Alternate translation: "he is weak with a fat face and fat loins"

Job 15:28

which no man inhabits

"which are abandoned"

heaps

piles of useless things

Job 15:29

He will not be rich; his wealth will not last

These two litotes express that he will be the opposite of rich, that he will be poor. Alternate translation: "he will be poor; all his money will disappear"

Job 15:30

out of darkness

Darkness here represents death. Alternate translation: "out of the darkness of death"

a flame will dry up his stalks

Here the flame represents God's judgment and the drying up of his stalks represents either the fact that his possessions disappear, or that he will die. Alternate translation: "God will take everything he owns away, like a fire dries out the moist branches of a tree"

the breath of God's mouth

Here God's "breath" represents his judgment. Alternate translation: "God's breath" or "God's judgment"

he will go away

This refers to him dying. Alternate translation: "he will die"

Job 15:31

for uselessness will be his reward

This is implied that this is what will happen if he trusts in useless things. Alternate translation: "for if he trusts in them, uselessness will be his reward"

Job 15:32

his palm branch will not be green

This speaks of the man looking pale and dead as if he were a dried out stalk or palm tree branch. Alternate translation: "he will look dead, just like the branch of a dead palm tree does not look green"

Job 15:33

He will drop his ... he will cast off his

These two lines give a similar image, which is repeated to emphasize that this will surely happen.

He will drop his unripe grapes like a grapevine

This speaks of the wicked man growing weak and dying as if he were a grapevine dropping unripe grapes. Alternate translation: "Just like a grapevine drops its unripe grapes, so the wicked man will drop his strength"

he will cast off his flowers like the olive tree

This speaks of the wicked man growing weak and dying as if he were an olive tree dropping its flowers. Alternate translation: "just like an olive tree loses its flowers, so the wicked man will lose his strength"

Job 15:34

the company of godless people

"the group of godless people"

fire will consume their tents of bribery

The phrase "tents of bribery" means that the wicked people bought these tents with the money they made by bribery. Alternate translation: "the tents they bought with their bribes will be burned by fire"

Job 15:35

They conceive mischief and give birth to iniquity; their womb conceives deceit

The same thought is repeated three times to emphasize how much evil these people produce. This speaks of a person planning to do evil things and doing them as if the person were conceiving and giving birth to these things as a woman conceives and gives birth to a child. Alternate translation: "They plan to cause mischief and do evil things; they are always planning to deceive others"

their womb conceives

Here the "womb" is used to refer to the person to emphasize conception, as it is in the womb that conception takes place. Alternate translation: "they conceive"

Chapter 16

- ¹ Then Job answered and said,
- ² "I have heard many such things;
you are all troublesome comforters.
- ³ Will useless words ever have an end?
What is wrong with you that you answer like this?
- ⁴ I also could speak as you do,
if you were in my place;
I could collect and join words together against you
and shake my head at you in mockery.
- ⁵ I would strengthen you with my mouth,
and the quivering of my lips will bring you relief!
- ⁶ If I speak, my grief is not lessened;
if I keep from speaking, how am I helped?
- ⁷ But now, God, you have made me weary;
you have made all my family desolate.
- ⁸ You have made me dry up,
which itself is a witness against me;
the leanness of my body rises up against me,
and it testifies against my face.
- ⁹ God has torn me in his wrath and persecuted me;
He grinds his teeth in rage;
my enemy fastens his eyes on me as he tears me apart.
- ¹⁰ People have gaped with open mouth at me;
they have hit me on the cheek with contempt;
they have gathered together against me.
- ¹¹ God hands me over to ungodly people,
and throws me into the hands of wicked people.
- ¹² I was at ease, and he broke me apart.
Indeed, he has taken me by the neck and dashed me to pieces;
he has also set me up as his target.
- ¹³ His archers surround me all around;
God pierces my kidneys and does not spare me;
he pours out my bile on the ground.
- ¹⁴ He smashes through my wall again and again;
he runs upon me like a warrior.
- ¹⁵ I have sewn sackcloth on my skin;
I have thrust my horn into the ground.
- ¹⁶ My face is red with weeping;
on my eyelids is utter darkness,
- ¹⁷ although there is no violence in my hands,
and my prayer is pure.
- ¹⁸ Earth, do not cover up my blood;
let my cry have no resting place.
- ¹⁹ Even now, see, my witness is in heaven;
he who vouches for me is on high.
- ²⁰ My friends scoff at me,
but my eye pours out tears to God.
- ²¹ I ask for that witness in heaven to argue for this man with God
as a man does with his neighbor!
- ²² For when a few years have passed,
I will go to a place from where I will not return.

Job 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Eliphaz.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's response

Job expresses shock and disgust at the advice Eliphaz gives to him. He even mocks Eliphaz. He describes the difficulties of his circumstances but never curses Yahweh. (See: curse)

Advocate

Job describes the need for someone to intercede for him in heaven. This person would be his advocate and provide a witness for him. Although this is probably not intended as a prophecy, it closely parallels the way Jesus intercedes for people in heaven. (See: intercede, heaven and testimony and prophet)

Job 16:1

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 16:2

you are all troublesome comforters

"instead of comforting me, you all cause me only trouble"

Job 16:3

Will useless words ever have an end?

Job uses this rhetorical question to express that he wishes that they would stop speaking useless words. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "How I wish your useless words would end!"

What is wrong with you that you answer like this?

Job uses this rhetorical question to rebuke Eliphaz. Here the word "you" is singular and refers to Eliphaz, who just finished speaking to Job. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Eliphaz, you should stop answering me like this!"

Job 16:4

I could collect and join words together

Job speaks of thinking of useless things to say as if his words were random items that he collected and joined together. Alternate translation: "I could think of things to say"

shake my head

This is an action that shows disapproval.

in mockery

The word "mockery" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "to mock you"

Job 16:5

I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the quivering of my lips will bring you relief!

The words "mouth" and "lips" are metonyms for the words or messages that a person speaks using his mouth and lips. Here Job is speaking sarcastically and means the opposite of what he says. Alternate translation: "My words would surely not be encouraging to you! They would surely not lighten your grief" or "By speaking to you as you spoke to me earlier, I would not encourage you or lighten your grief!"

with my mouth

Here Job's "mouth" represents what he says. Alternate translation: "with what I say"

the quivering of my lips

This is a metonym for the words or message that he speaks. Alternate translation: "my comforting words"

will bring you relief

This speaks of grief as if it were a heavy physical burden. Alternate translation: "will lessen your grief" or "will help you feel less grief"

Job 16:6

grief

Job has experienced great loss of family and health that is unexplained and therefore causes him "great sorrow and emotional pain."

how am I helped?

Job uses this rhetorical question to express that keeping quiet does not lessen his grief. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "it does not help me at all."

Job 16:7

But now, God, you
Job now turns his complaining to God.

made all my family desolate
"destroyed all my family"

Job 16:8

You have made me dry up
This means that Job's body has shriveled and become wrinkled. Alternate translation: "You have made my body shrivel up"

which itself is a witness against me
Job describes the shriveling of his body as if it were an accuser against him. Alternate translation: "and people think that shows me to be a sinner"

the leanness of my body rises up against me, and it testifies against
Job describes the thinness of his body as if it were an accuser against him. Alternate translation: "They see how thin my body is, and they think that proves that I am guilty"

against my face
Here Job is referred to by his "face." Alternate translation: "against me"

Job 16:9

God has torn me in his wrath and persecuted me ... as he tears me apart
This speaks of God causing Job pain as if God were a wild animal and Job were his prey that he was killing. Alternate translation: "Because God is very angry with me, it is as though he were a wild animal that tore my body apart with his teeth because he was my enemy"

my enemy
Job refers to God as his "enemy" as he describes how he has caused him great pain.

fastens his eyes on me
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "glares at me"

Job 16:10

People have gaped with open mouth
To "gape" means to stare in amazement with open mouth.

Job 16:11

hands me over to ungodly people, and throws me into the hands of wicked people
These two lines mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize Job's feeling of having been betrayed by God.

hands me over to
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "puts me under the control of"

throws me into the hands
Here a person's "hands" refer to his "control." Alternate translation: "delivers me to the control"

Job 16:12

and he broke me apart
Job speaks of his pain and despair as if he himself were something that was broken into pieces. Alternate translation: "but then it felt as though he broke me apart"

dashed me to pieces
Job speaks of God causing him pain and despair as if he were something that God had taken and smashed into pieces. Alternate translation: "it is as though he has taken me by the neck and smashed me to pieces"

he has also set me up as his target
Job speaks of himself being the focus of God's attacks as if God has set him up as a target to shoot arrows at. Alternate translation: "it is as though he set me up like a target"

Job 16:13

His archers surround me all around
Job speaks of himself being the focus of God's attacks as if God has set him up as a target and God had archers surrounding him to attack him. Alternate translation: "It is as though his archers have me surrounded"

God pierces my kidneys and does not spare me; he pours out my bile on the ground
Job speaks of the pain he is feeling by comparing it to God piercing his body with arrows. Here "God" represents the arrows that he shoots. Alternate translation: "It feels like God's arrows have pierced my kidneys and my liver, spilling my bile on the ground. He does not spare me"

Job 16:14

He smashes through my wall
Job speaks of the pain that he feels by comparing himself to a wall that God smashes through. Alternate translation: "I feel like a wall that God smashes through" or "I feel like a wall that God breaks through"

he runs upon me like a warrior
Job describes God as a soldier that attacks him. Alternate translation: "it is like he is a warrior who runs at me to attack me"

Job 16:15

I have sewn sackcloth on my skin

Job speaks of wearing clothing made of sackcloth as if the cloth were attached to his body. People often wore sackcloth to express mourning or great grief. Alternate translation: "Because I am mourning, I have sewn together sackcloth to wear as my clothing" or "I wear clothing that I made from sackcloth, because I am mourning"

I have thrust my horn into the ground

Job's "horn" represents the power and authority he had before but now is no more. Alternate translation: "I sit here in the dirt, very depressed"

Job 16:16

on my eyelids is utter darkness

Here Job's eyes are represented by his "eyelids." Job speaks of his eyes' dark appearance as if his eyes looked like the eyes of a dead person. Alternate translation: "there are dark circles around my eyes" or "my eyes are dark, like the eyes of a dead person"

Job 16:17

there is no violence in my hands

"Hands" refers to a person's ability and activity. Alternate translation: "I have not acted violently"

Job 16:18

Earth, do not cover up my blood

Jobs speaks to the "earth" directly even though it cannot hear him, to add strength to his statement. The earth is personified as purposefully covering up his blood after he dies. Alternate translation: "I wish my blood would not soak into the ground but that it would remain on top of the ground as proof of how I died"

Earth, do not cover up my blood

Job speaks of himself dying as if he would be murdered. Here his "blood" is a metonym referring to his death. Alternate translation: "Earth, when I

die, do not hide how I died unfairly" or "Let it not be hidden how I died unfairly"

let my cry have no resting place

Job speaks of wanting everyone to know what happened to him as if his "cry" were a person that never stopped testifying to what happened to him and never rested. Alternate translation: "let everyone hear about what has happened to me"

Job 16:19

see

Job uses this word to draw attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "listen"

vouches for me

"testifies that I am righteous"

on high

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "in heaven" or "in heaven on high"

Job 16:20

scoff at

"scorn" or "ridicule"

my eye pours out tears

Job describes how strongly he feels his sorrow. Here he exaggerates how he often cries by saying that tears pour from his eyes. Alternate translation: "my eyes are full of tears while I cry out"

Job 16:21

for this man

"for me." Here Job refers to himself in the third person.

as a man does with his neighbor!

"as a man does for his neighbor." Job describes how he wants that one in heaven to plead for him.

Job 16:22

I will go to a place

Here Job is referring to himself dying. Alternate translation: "I will die and go to a place"

Chapter 17

- ¹ My spirit is broken, and my days are over;
the grave is ready for me.
- ² Surely there are mockers with me;
my eye must always see their provocation.
- ³ Give now a pledge, be a guarantee for me with yourself;
who else is there who will help me?
- ⁴ For you, God, have kept their hearts from understanding;
therefore, you will not exalt them over me.
- ⁵ He who denounces his friends for a reward,
the eyes of his children will fail.
- ⁶ But he has made me a byword of the people;
they spit in my face.
- ⁷ My eye is also dim because of sorrow;
all my members are as thin as shadows.
- ⁸ Upright men will be appalled by this;
the innocent man will stir himself up against godless men.
- ⁹ The righteous man will keep to his way;
he who has clean hands will grow stronger and stronger.
- ¹⁰ But as for you all, come on now;
I will not find a wise man among you.
- ¹¹ My days are past; my plans are shattered,
and so are the desires of my heart. ^[1]
- ¹² These people, these mockers, change the night into day;
light is near to darkness.
- ¹³ If the only home I hope for is Sheol;
and if I have spread my couch in the darkness;
- ¹⁴ and if I have said to the pit, 'You are my father,'
and to the worm, 'You are my mother or my sister,'
- ¹⁵ where then is my hope?
As for my hope, who can see any?
- ¹⁶ Will hope go down with me to the gates of Sheol
when we descend to the dust?"

Footnotes

17:11 ^[1]Some modern translations have

Job 17 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Eliphaz, but it is more directly addressed to Yahweh.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's grief

Job expresses grief or great sadness in this chapter. He awaits the justice and intercession of Yahweh as he awaits his own death. (See: curse and intercede)

Advocate

Job describes the need for someone to intercede for him in heaven. This person would be his advocate and provide a witness for him. Although this is probably not intended as a prophecy, it closely parallels the way Jesus intercedes for people in heaven. (See: heaven and testimony and prophet)

Job 17:1

General Information:

Job continues to speak.

My spirit is broken

The word "spirit" is a synecdoche that refers to Job as a whole person and means that he has no physical strength left. Alternate translation: "I have no more strength"

my days are over

"my time is over" or "I am going to die soon"

the grave is ready for me

This phrase describes "the grave" as if it is a person who will receive Job as a guest. Alternate translation: "soon I will be dead and buried"

Job 17:2

Surely there are mockers with me

"Those who are around me are mocking me"

Surely

"Certainly" or "There is no doubt that"

my eye must always see

Job refers to himself by his "eyes" to emphasize what he sees. Alternate translation: "I must always see" or "I must always hear"

their provocation

"their insults." The word "provocation" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "them provoking me" or "them, trying to make me angry"

Job 17:3

Give now a pledge, be a guarantee for me with yourself

Job begins to speak to God. Here he speaks of his situation as if he were in prison. He is asking God to provide a pledge so that he may be released. Alternate translation: "God, give now a pledge so that I may be released from this prison" or "pay for my release from prison"

who else is there who will help me?

Job uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that there is no one else to help him. This question can

be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "there is no one else who will help me."

Job 17:4

General Information:

Job continues to speak.

have kept their hearts

The word "their" refers to his friends. They are referred to by their "hearts" to emphasize their emotions. Alternate translation: "have kept them" or "have kept my friends"

you will not exalt them over me

"you will not allow them to triumph over me"

Job 17:5

He who

"Anyone who"

denounces his friends for a reward

"falsely accuses his friends in order to get a profit" or "betrays his friends to receive a reward"

the eyes of his children will fail

The person's children are referred to here by their "eyes." This phrase describes the children suffering because of what their father or mother did. Alternate translation: "his children will suffer for it"

Job 17:6

General Information:

Job continues to speak.

he has made me a byword of the people

This means that people speak of him in a mocking way and use his name as an insult. Alternate translation: "because of him, people use my name as an insult" or "because of them, people use my name as a byword"

they spit in my face

"people spit in my face." In this culture spitting on someone was a great insult. If spitting has a different meaning in your culture you can write this differently. Alternate translation: "people insult me greatly, by spitting in my face"

Job 17:7

My eye is also dim because of sorrow

Job speaks of his vision as his "eyes." Alternate translation: "My vision has become weak because I am so sad" or "I am almost blind because of my sorrow"

all my members are as thin as shadows

Shadows have no thickness and are infinitely thin. That is an exaggeration of how thin Job's body parts are. Alternate translation: "all my body parts are very thin"

all my members

This is a generalization used to emphasize that his whole body is thin, but it probably refers specifically to his arms and legs. Alternate translation: "my arms and legs"

Job 17:8

will be appalled

"will be shocked" or "will be horrified"

by this

"by what has happened to me"

will stir himself up against

This is an idiom that means to awaken oneself or rouse oneself into activity. Alternate translation: "will begin to take action against"

Job 17:9

General Information:

Job continues to speak.

will keep to his way

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "will continue to live in a righteous way"

he who has clean hands

This speaks of a person being innocent as having clean hands. Alternate translation: "he who does what is right" or "he who is innocent"

will grow stronger and stronger

This does not refer only to physical strength but also to the strength of a person's will and emotions.

Job 17:10

you all

Job is speaking to Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar.

come on now

Job invites his friends to debate what he has said. Alternate translation: "come on now, argue with me again"

Job 17:11

General Information:

Job continues to speak.

My days are past

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "My time is past" or "My life is over"

my plans are shattered, and so are the desires of my heart

Here Job's "heart" represents his inner being. Alternate translation: "my plans will never happen, nor will the things that I have desired most"

Job 17:12

These people, these mockers

These two phrases refer to the same people, namely Job's friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. The second phrase emphasizes their unfriendly attitude.

change the night into day

This speaks of the people claiming that night is day as if they actually changed night into day. Alternate translation: "claim it is daytime when it is night" or "say the opposite of what is true, just as night is the opposite of day"

light is near to darkness

It is implied that the mockers claim that it is light when it is close to dark. Alternate translation: "they claim that light is near to darkness" or "they claim that when it is becoming dark, that it is getting light"

Job 17:13

General Information:

Job continues to speak.

If the only home ... and if I have spread

The instances of "if" here have the meaning of "since"; Job is speaking as if all these things were true. "Since the only home ... and since I have spread"

have spread my couch in the darkness

Here Job speaks of being prepared to die as having laid his bed in the darkness. Alternate translation: "have prepared myself to go and sleep among the dead"

have spread my couch

"have made my bed"

Job 17:14

if I have said

The word "if" here has the meaning of "since"; Job is speaking as if this were true. "since I have said"

I have said to the pit ... and to the worm

These two lines are a variation to each other and are used together to emphasize how desperate Job is.

the pit

"the grave"

You are my father

Job speaks of the closeness he will soon have with his grave by comparing it to the closeness a man has with his father. Alternate translation: "You are as close to me as my father" or "When I am buried, you will be as close to me as a father"

the worm

"the maggot." Worms are the small creatures that eat dead bodies.

You are my mother or my sister

Job speaks of the closeness he will soon have with the worms in his grave by comparing it to the closeness a man has with his mother and sisters. Alternate translation: "You are as close to me as my mother or my sister" or "You will be as close to me as a mother or sister"

Job 17:15

where then is my hope?

The implicit answer is "nowhere," because he has no hope. This rhetorical question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "then I have no hope."

As for my hope, who can see any?

This rhetorical question is used to emphasize that that no one expects him to have any hope. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can see any hope for me." or "No one expects me to have any more hope."

Job 17:16

Will hope go down with me ... dust?

The implicit answer is "no." This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Hope will not go down with me ... dust." or "I will no longer hope when I go down ... dust."

gates of Sheol

Sheol does not really have gates, but it is a metaphor for Job entering Sheol. Alternate translation: "when I go into Sheol"

when we

"when I and the things that I hope for" or "when I and my hopes." The word "we" refers to Job and his hope.

descend to the dust

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "die and are buried" or "go to the grave"

Chapter 18

- ¹ Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said,
- ² "When will you stop your talk?
Consider, and afterwards we will speak.
- ³ Why are we regarded as cattle,
stupid in your sight?
- ⁴ You who tear at yourself in your anger,
should the earth be abandoned for you
or should the rocks be removed out of their places?
- ⁵ Indeed, the light of the wicked person will be put out;
the spark of his fire will not shine.
- ⁶ The light will be dark in his tent;
his lamp above him will be put out.
- ⁷ The steps of his strength will be made short;
his own plans will cast him down.
- ⁸ For he will be thrown into a net by his own feet;
he will walk into a pitfall.
- ⁹ A trap will take him by the heel;
a snare will lay hold on him.
- ¹⁰ A noose is hidden for him on the ground;
and a trap for him in the way.
- ¹¹ Terrors will make him afraid on every side;
they will chase him at every step.
- ¹² His wealth will turn into hunger,
and calamity will be ready at his side.
- ¹³ The parts of his body will be devoured;
indeed, the firstborn of death will devour his parts.
- ¹⁴ He is torn from the safety of his tent
and marched off to the king of terrors.
- ¹⁵ People not his own will live in his tent
after they see that sulfur is scattered within his home.
- ¹⁶ His roots will be dried up beneath;
above will his branch be cut off.
- ¹⁷ His memory will perish from the earth;
he will have no name in the street.
- ¹⁸ He will be driven from light into darkness
and be chased out of this world.
- ¹⁹ He has no offspring or descendants among his people,
no survivor where he once lived.
- ²⁰ Those who live in the west are appalled at what happens to him one day,
and horror seizes those who live in the east.
- ²¹ Surely such are the homes of unrighteous people,
the places of those who do not know God."

Job 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. In this chapter, Bildad speaks to Job again. His words in this chapter are much stronger than when he previously spoke, and he is even angry at Job.

Job 18:1

General Information:

Bildad the Shuhite is speaking to Job. (See: and

Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said

"Bildad" is the name of a man who is a member of the tribe of Shuah. See how you translated this in Job 8:1.

Job 18:2

When will you stop your talk?

This rhetorical question means that Job has been talking for too long. This may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Stop talking!"

Consider, and

"Be reasonable, and" or "Think about these things, and"

Job 18:3

General Information:

Bildad continues speaking to Job.

Why are we regarded as cattle, stupid in your sight?

Bildad uses this rhetorical questions to emphasize to Job that he should not consider his friends as animals who cannot think or speak. It can be written as a statement in active form. Alternate translation: "We should not be regarded as beasts, as stupid in your sight." or "You should not regard us as beasts or think of us as stupid."

Why are we

The word "we" probably refers to Bildad and Job's other friends and so is exclusive.

regarded

Regarding, looking, is a metonym here for thinking well or badly of someone.

in your sight

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "in your judgment" or "in your thinking"

your sight

The word "your" here is plural. Bildad is using sarcasm to tell Job that Job should not think of himself as a great man. Alternate translation: "your sight, you who wrongly think you are great"

Job 18:4

You who tear at yourself in your anger

Here Bildad is stating that it is because of Job's anger and disobedience that he has been injured, not because of God's anger as Job has previously claimed. The word "tear" here means to "injure."

Alternate translation: "You who have caused your own injuries because of your anger"

should the earth be abandoned for you or should the rocks be removed out of their places?

This rhetorical question suggests that letting Job, whom they consider a guilty man, go free would be like changing the whole world. Bildad uses these huge exaggerations here to emphasize how outrageous he thinks this is. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "asking God to let you, a guilty man, go free is as silly as asking for God to forsake the earth for your sake or for God to move the rocks out of their places to please you!"

should the earth be abandoned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "should everyone leave the earth"

should the rocks be removed out of their places

This can be stated in active form. The word "rocks" here refers to large rocks, such as those in the mountains. Alternate translation: "should God remove the rocks from their places" or "should God move mountains around"

Job 18:5

General Information:

Bildad continues speaking to Job.

Indeed, the light of the wicked person will be put out; the spark of his fire will not shine

Bildad speaks of a wicked person dying as if his lamp were being blown out. Alternate translation: "What will happen is that the lives of wicked people like you end as quickly as we can put out a light or extinguish the flame of a fire"

will be put out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will go out"

Job 18:6

The light will be dark in his tent; his lamp above him will be put out

Bildad continues to speak of the wicked person dying. He speaks of the wicked man's life as if it were the light in his tent. Alternate translation: It will be like the light in his tent has turned to darkness, like the lamp above him has gone out"

Job 18:7

General Information:

Bildad continues to describe the wicked person.

The steps of his strength will be made short

This speaks of the wicked person suddenly experiencing disaster as if he no longer had strength to walk. Alternate translation: "It will be like he no longer has the strength to walk"

his own plans will cast him down

"his own advice makes him fall down." This speaks of the wicked person undergoing disaster as if he fell down. Alternate translation: "his own plans will lead him into disaster"

Job 18:8

For he will be thrown into a net by his own feet; he will walk into a pitfall

"His own feet will lead him into a net." Bildad uses this image to say that the way that a wicked person lives his life leads him to sudden disaster. Alternate translation: "It will be as though he led himself into a net, as if he walked right into a pitfall"

a net

cords or ropes that people weave together to create a mesh. People used nets to catch animals.

a pitfall

a pit that has branches and leaves over it so that an animal will walk onto the branches and leaves and fall into the pit

Job 18:9

General Information:

Bildad continues to speak and uses three parallel images to describe how suddenly the wicked person will experience disaster.

A trap will take him ... a snare will

These four phrases speak of the wicked man experiencing disaster as if he were caught in a trap. Alternate translation: "It will be as though a trap will take him ... a snare will"

A trap

People used this kind of trap to catch birds. The trap snapped shut and held on to the foot of the bird.

will take him by the heel

Here the "heel" refers to the whole foot. Alternate translation: "will take hold of his foot"

Job 18:10

A noose is ... and a trap for him in the way

These four phrases speak of the wicked man experiencing disaster as if he were caught in a trap. Alternate translation: "It will be as though a noose is ... and a trap for him in the way"

A noose is hidden for him on the ground

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone has hidden a noose on the ground in order to catch him"

A noose

a rope with a loop that grabs hold of an animal's leg when the animal steps in the middle of the loop

a trap for him

The understood verbal phrase "is hidden" may be supplied. Alternate translation: "a trap is hidden on the path to catch him" or "someone will hide a trap to catch him in the way"

Job 18:11

Terrors will make him afraid on every side
"Terrors all around will make him afraid"

they will chase him at every step

This speaks of the things that terrify the wicked person as if they were enemies who chased him. Alternate translation: "it will be as if the terrors will chase him all around"

Job 18:12

General Information:

Bildad continues to describe the wicked person.

His wealth will turn into hunger

This speaks of the wicked man becoming poor and hungry as if his wealth were something that turned into something else. Alternate translation: "Instead of being wealthy, he will become poor and hungry"

calamity will be ready at his side

The phrase "ready at his side" is an idiom that means that something is continually present. Alternate translation: "he will continually experience disaster" or "he will not be able to avoid calamity"

Job 18:13

The parts of his body will be devoured

This can be stated in active form. Also, this speaks of a disease destroying his body as if it were an animal that had attacked him and was eating him. Alternate translation: "Disease will eat away at his skin" or "Disease will destroy his skin"

the firstborn of death will devour his parts

Here a disease that kills many people is referred to as "the firstborn of death." This speaks of that disease destroying his body as if it were an animal that had attacked him and was eating him. Alternate translation: "a deadly disease will destroy the different parts of his body"

Job 18:14

General Information:

Bildad continues to describe the wicked person.

He is torn from the safety of his tent

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Disaster rips him out of his tent, where he is safe"

marched off

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it marches him off" or "it forces him to go"

the king of terrors

This is a reference to "King Death," a pagan god who was believed to rule over death. Alternate translation: "the one who rules over the dead" or "the king of death"

Job 18:15

People not his own

"People who are not his family"

after they see that sulfur is scattered within his home

People used sulfur to get rid of any diseases from a dying person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after they spread sulfur all over his home"

Job 18:16

General Information:

Bildad continues to describe the wicked person.

His roots will be dried up ... branch be cut off

This speaks of the wicked man dying and having no descendants as if he were a tree whose roots dried up and branches withered, producing no fruit. Alternate translation: "He will die and leave no descendants, he will be like a tree whose roots have dried up and whose branches have all withered"

will his branch be cut off

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his branches will wither"

Job 18:17

His memory will perish from the earth; he will have no name in the street

These phrases have the same meaning and are used together to emphasize the fact that nobody will remember him after he dies.

His memory will perish from the earth

This speaks of the "memory" of the wicked man as if it were a person who died. Alternate translation: "No one on the earth will remember him"

he will have no name in the street

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "no one walking along the street will even remember his name"

Job 18:18

General Information:

Bildad continues to describe the wicked person.

He will be driven from light into darkness ... and be chased out of this world

These phrases together emphasize the fact that the wicked person will be sent to Sheol, the place of the dead.

He will be driven from light into darkness

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will drive the wicked person from light into darkness"

from light into darkness

The word "light" refers to life, and the word "darkness" refers to death. Alternate translation: "from the light of life to the darkness of death"

be chased out of this world

This speaks of God making him leave earth and go where dead people go as if he were chasing him. Alternate translation: "God will make him leave this world" or "God will send him to the place where dead people go"

be chased out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will chase him"

Job 18:19

He has no offspring ... no survivor where he once lived

Together these two phrases emphasize that he will have no family or descendants left.

where he once lived

Or "in his temporary dwelling-place." If your language has a word for a place in which people live temporarily until they can move to a better place, you may want to use it here.

Job 18:20

Those who live in the west ... those who live in the east

The phrases "in the west" and "in the east" are together a merism that refers to all people living everywhere. This is probably an exaggeration, as not everyone on the earth will hear about what happens to every specific wicked person, but Bildad is speaking of Job in the third person to warn Job that if Job continues to do evil, everyone Job cares about will be desolated and horrified at what happens when God punishes Job.

one day

"on the day God punishes him"

Job 18:21

General Information:

Bildad continues to describe the wicked person.

the homes of unrighteous people, the places of those who do not know God

These two phrases have the same meaning and refer to the same people. Here these people are

referred to by the places where they live. Alternate translation: "unrighteous people, those who do not know God"

Chapter 19

- ¹ Then Job answered and said,
- ² "How long will you torment me
and crush me with words?"
- ³ These ten times you have insulted me;
you are not ashamed that you have treated me harshly.
- ⁴ If it is indeed true that I have erred,
my error remains my own concern.
- ⁵ If indeed you will exalt yourselves above me
and use my humiliation against me,
- ⁶ then you should know that God has done wrong to me
and has caught me in his net.
- ⁷ See, I cry out, "Violence!" but I get no answer.
I call out for help, but there is no justice.
- ⁸ He has walled up my way so that I cannot pass,
and he has set darkness in my path.
- ⁹ He has stripped me of my glory,
and he has taken the crown from my head.
- ¹⁰ He has broken me down on every side, and I am gone;
he has pulled up my hope like a tree.
- ¹¹ He has also kindled his wrath against me;
he regards me as one of his adversaries.
- ¹² His troops come on together;
they cast up siege mounds against me
and encamp around my tent.
- ¹³ He has put my brothers far from me;
my acquaintances are wholly alienated from me.
- ¹⁴ My kinsfolk have failed me;
my close friends have forgotten me.
- ¹⁵ Those who once stayed as guests in my house and my female servants regard me as a stranger;
I am an alien in their sight.
- ¹⁶ I call to my servant, but he gives me no answer
although I seek his favor with my mouth.
- ¹⁷ My breath is offensive to my wife;
I am even detestable to those who were born from my mother's womb.
- ¹⁸ Even young children despise me;
if I rise to speak, they speak against me.
- ¹⁹ All my familiar friends abhor me;
those whom I love have turned against me.
- ²⁰ My bones cling to my skin and to my flesh;
I survive only by the skin of my teeth.
- ²¹ Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, my friends,
for the hand of God has touched me.
- ²² Why do you pursue me like God does?
Will you ever be satisfied with my flesh?
- ²³ Oh, that my words were now written down!
Oh, that they were inscribed in a book!
- ²⁴ Oh, that with an iron pen and lead
they were engraved in the rock forever!
- ²⁵ But as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives,
and that at last he will stand on the earth;
- ²⁶ after my skin, that is, this body, is destroyed,
then in my flesh I will see God.

27 I will see him with my own eyes—I, and not someone else.
My heart fails within me.

28 If you say, 'How we will persecute him!
The root of his troubles lies in him,'

29 then be afraid of the sword,
because wrath brings the punishment of the sword,
so that you may know there is a judgment."

Job 19 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Bildad.

Verses 25-27 are very important to this book. They show the great depth of Job's faith in Yahweh after his most difficult time. (See: faith)

Job 19:1

General Information:

See: and

Connecting Statement:

Job speaks to his three friends.

Job 19:2

How long will you torment me and crush me with words?

Job uses this question to complain about how his friends are treating him. Alternate translation: "Stop making me suffer and crushing me with words."

crush me with words

Job uses this image to say that their words make him feel very sad and hopeless. Alternate translation: "torment me with your words"

Job 19:3

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

These ten times you have insulted me

The phrase "These ten times" refers to the way that the friends have completely insulted Job. Alternate translation: "You have completely insulted me" or "You have insulted me many times"

you are not ashamed that you have treated me harshly

Job is rebuking them for this. This can be written in positive form. Alternate translation: "You should be ashamed that you have treated me so harshly"

have treated me harshly

"have despised me" or "have publicly ridiculed me"

Job 19:4

have erred

"have sinned by accident" or "mistakenly sinned"

my error remains my own concern

Job implies that his friends are not responsible for continuing to rebuke him since he is the one who made the error. Alternate translation: "my error is my own responsibility, so you should not continue to rebuke me" or "my error did not hurt you, so you should not continue to rebuke me"

my error

"my sin" or "my mistake"

Job 19:5

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

If indeed you will exalt yourselves above me

"If you think you are better than I am" or "Since you act as though you are better than I am"

use my humiliation against me

How his friends would do this can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "claim that my humiliation is proof against me" or "use my humiliation as evidence that I am guilty"

use my humiliation against me

The abstract noun "humiliation" can be expressed with the verb "humiliate." Alternate translation: "claim that what has happened to humiliate me proves that I am guilty"

Job 19:6

has caught me in his net

Job speaks as if God were a hunter that has trapped Job in his net. This metaphor represents God taking control of Job and Job's feeling of helplessness. Alternate translation: "has trapped me" or "has taken control of me" or "has control of what happens to me, so that I am helpless"

Job 19:7

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

See, I cry out

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: I cry out"

Violence!

This is a cry for help. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Violence! Help!" or "Help! I am being attacked!"

I call out for help

"I shout for help" or "I cry for help"

but there is no justice

The abstract noun "justice" can be translated with a phrase that makes the meaning clear. Alternate translation: "but no one protects me from those who do me wrong"

Job 19:8

He has walled up ... darkness in my path

Job uses these images to describe how God has made him feel helpless and hopeless.

He has walled up my way so that I cannot pass

"God has put a wall on the road that I am walking on" or "He has blocked the way so I cannot keep going"

Job 19:9

He has stripped ... the crown from my head

Job uses these images to say that God has taken his good reputation, wealth, and dignity away from him.

He has stripped me of my glory

Job speaks of his glory as if it were a robe that God has taken away. Alternate translation: "He has taken away my glory"

he has taken the crown from my head

The crown refers to Job's dignity or honor. Alternate translation: "he has taken away my dignity and honor" or "it is as though he has taken my crown off my head"

Job 19:10

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

He has broken me down on every side

Job speaks of God ruining him as if Job were building that God is smashing down. Alternate translation: "He has ruined me in every way" or "He has attacked me in every way"

I am gone

The metaphor "being gone" represents being completely destroyed. Alternate translation: "I am completely destroyed"

he has pulled up my hope like a tree

Job speaks of God causing Job not to have hope as if Job's hope were a tree that God has pulled with its roots out of the ground. Alternate translation: "he has completely taken away all my hope" or "because of what he has done, I can no longer hope for anything good"

like a tree

This simile is also an ellipsis. You may need to supply the omitted words. Alternate translation: "the way a man pulls a tree up by its roots"

Job 19:11

He has also kindled his wrath against me

Job speaks of God's wrath as if it were a fire. Alternate translation: "God has also lit a fire of anger against me" or "God has also become very angry with me"

he regards me as one of his adversaries

"he thinks of me as an enemy"

Job 19:12

His troops come on together

Job speaks of God attacking him as if Job was a city and God was sending an army to attack it. Alternate translation: "God sends his army to attack me"

they cast up siege mounds against me

Job speaks of God attacking him as if Job was a city and God's army was piling up dirt against the city wall in order to climb over the wall and attack the city. Alternate translation: "the soldiers pile up dirt in order to climb over my wall"

encamp around my tent

Job speaks of God attacking him as if Job was in his tent and God's army was camping around him and preparing to attack him. Alternate translation: "they camp around my tent and prepare to attack me"

Job 19:13

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

He has put my brothers far from me

Being "far from" someone represents being unwilling to relate to him or help him. Alternate translation: "God has caused my brothers to stay away from me" or "God caused my brothers to refuse to help me"

my acquaintances are wholly alienated from me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my acquaintances have alienated themselves from me" or "my friends treat me like a stranger"

Job 19:14

My kinsfolk have failed me

"My relatives have left me without help"

my close friends

"my intimate friends"

have forgotten me

"have abandoned me" or "have neglected me." This means that they refuse to treat him according to how he and they had related to each other in the past. It implies that they abandoned him.

Job 19:15

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

regard me

"consider me"

I am an alien in their sight

Job describes how people now think of him as an outsider. Here sight represents judgement or evaluation. Alternate translation: "they think of me as a foreigner"

Job 19:16

but he gives me no answer

"but he does not respond to me" or "but he does not come to me." The answer is a response to Job's call.

although I seek his favor with my mouth

The phrase "my mouth" is a metonym which refers to Job speaking. Alternate translation: "even though I speak to him and plead with him"

seek his favor

"plead with him"

Job 19:17

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

My breath is offensive to my wife

Here "breath" represents the smell of his breath. If something is offensive to someone, it means that he hates it. Alternate translation: "My wife hates the smell of my breath"

those who were born from my mother's womb

Job refers to his brothers and sisters this way to imply that they are people who should love him. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "my own brothers who should love me" or "my brothers and sisters who should love me"

Job 19:18

despise me

"hate me" or "detest me"

they speak against me

"they ridicule me" or "they make fun of me"

Job 19:19

All my familiar friends

"All my closest friends" or "All of my friends with whom I shared my secrets." This refers to his closest friends.

abhor me

"think I am disgusting"

have turned against me

"have betrayed me"

Job 19:20

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

My bones cling to my skin and to my flesh

"I am just skin and bones" or "My skin sticks to my bones." Job speaks of his bones, skin, and flesh to describe his appearance. He was extremely thin, and people could easily see the shape of his bones. Some languages have idioms for this.

I survive only by the skin of my teeth

This idiom means that he is barely surviving, that he almost does not survive. Alternate translation: "I am barely alive" or "I hardly survive"

Job 19:21

Have pity upon me

"Have compassion on me"

for the hand of God has touched me

Here "touched me" is a metonym for "hit me." And, "hand" represents God's power. Causing Job to suffer is spoken of as if Yahweh were physically hitting him with his hand. Alternate translation: "because God has afflicted me"

Job 19:22

Why do you pursue me ... God does?

Job uses this question to complain about how his friends are treating him. Alternate translation: "Do not persecute me ... God does!"

Will you ever be satisfied with my flesh?

Job uses this question to complain about how his friends are treating him. Alternate translation: "You have consumed my flesh enough!" or "Stop consuming my flesh!"

Will you ever be satisfied with my flesh?

Job speaks of his friends speaking so cruelly to him as if they were wild beasts eating up another animal. Alternate translation: "Stop violently slandering me." or "Stop attacking me with your words."

Job 19:23

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

Oh, that my words were now written down

This exclamation tells what Job wishes for. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I wish that someone would write down my words"

my words

"what I am saying"

Oh, that they were inscribed in a book

This exclamation tells what Job wishes for. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I wish that someone would write them in a book"

Job 19:24

Oh, that with an iron pen and lead they were engraved in the rock forever

This exclamation tells what Job wishes for. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I wish that someone would use an iron pen and lead to carve them in the rock forever"

an iron pen

"an iron chisel." This was a tool used for writing. It was made of iron so that people could carve words in rock.

lead

Lead is a soft metal. We do not know how people used lead when carving rock. They may have filled

the letters of the inscription with lead in order to make the inscription last longer.

Job 19:25

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

my Redeemer

"My Defender." Here "Redeemer" refers to a person who will rescue Job by proving Job's innocence, restoring his honor, and giving him justice.

at last he will stand on the earth

This refers to standing to speak in court. Possible meanings are 1) the Redeemer will be the last one to speak in the court. Alternate translation: "he will judge whether or not I am guilty" or 2) the Redeemer will stand in this final court to defend Job. Alternate translation: "at last he will defend me in court"

Job 19:26

after my skin ... is destroyed

Possible meanings are that this refers to 1) his body being destroyed by disease or 2) his body decaying after he has died.

in my flesh I will see God

His flesh represents his body, and "in my flesh" represents being alive. Alternate translation: "while I live in my body, I will see God"

Job 19:27

my own eyes—I, and not someone else

The synecdoche "my own eyes" represents Job. The phrases "my eyes" and "and not someone else" emphasize that Job himself will actually see God. It is not that someone else will see God and tell Job about him.

My heart fails within me

People thought of the heart as being where the emotions are. So the heart failing represents him having very many emotions. Alternate translation: "I am very emotional about it" or "My emotions overwhelm me as I think about that"

My heart fails within me

Possible meanings are that 1) Job feels very hopeful, thankful, and happy or 2) Job feels exhausted waiting to see his Redeemer.

Job 19:28

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

How we will persecute him!

This is an exclamation. Possible meanings are 1) that they will certainly persecute Job or 2) that they will persecute him severely.

The root of his troubles lies in him

The "root" represents the source. Alternate translation: "He is the source of all his troubles" or "He has all these troubles because of what he has done"

Job 19:29

then be afraid of the sword

Possible meanings are that the sword represents 1) God judging them. Alternate translation: "then be afraid that God will judge you" or 2) God killing them. Alternate translation: "then be afraid that God will kill you"

because wrath brings the punishment of the sword

The abstract nouns "wrath" and "punishment" can be expressed with the adjective "angry" and the verb "punish." Possible meanings are that 1) God's anger results in punishment. Alternate translation: "because God will be angry with you and punish you" or 2) the anger of Job's friends results in punishment. Alternate translation: "because if you are so angry with me, God will punish you"

brings

"causes" or "results in"

there is a judgment

The abstract noun "judgment" can be expressed with the verb "judge." Alternate translation: "God judges people"

Chapter 20

- ¹ Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said,
- ² "My thoughts make me answer quickly
because of the worry that is in me.
- ³ I hear a rebuke that dishonors me,
but a spirit from my understanding answers me.
- ⁴ Do you not know this fact from ancient times,
when God placed man on earth:
- ⁵ the triumph of a wicked man is short,
and the joy of a godless man lasts only for a moment?
- ⁶ Though his height reaches up to the heavens,
and his head reaches to the clouds,
- ⁷ yet such a person will perish forever like his own dung;
those who have seen him will say, 'Where is he?'
- ⁸ He will fly away like a dream and will not be found;
indeed, he will be chased away like a vision of the night.
- ⁹ The eye that saw him will see him no more;
his place will see him no longer.
- ¹⁰ His children will apologize to poor people;
his hands will have to give back his wealth.
- ¹¹ His bones are full of youthful strength,
but it will lie down with him in the dust.
- ¹² Although wickedness is sweet in his mouth,
although he hides it under his tongue,
- ¹³ although he holds it there and does not let it go
but keeps it still in his mouth—
- ¹⁴ the food in his intestines turns bitter;
it becomes the poison of asps inside him.
- ¹⁵ He swallows down riches, but he will vomit them up again;
God will cast them out of his stomach.
- ¹⁶ He will suck the poison of asps;
the viper's tongue will kill him.
- ¹⁷ He will not enjoy the streams,
the torrents of honey and butter.
- ¹⁸ He will give back the fruit of his labor and will not be able to swallow it;
he will not enjoy the wealth earned by his commerce.
- ¹⁹ For he has oppressed and neglected poor people;
he has violently taken away houses that he did not build.
- ²⁰ Because he has known no satisfaction in his belly,
he will not be able to save anything in which he takes pleasure.
- ²¹ There is nothing left that he did not devour;
therefore his prosperity will not be permanent.
- ²² In the fullness of his abundance he will fall into trouble;
the hand of everyone who suffers will come against him.
- ²³ When he is about to fill his stomach,
God will throw the fierceness of his wrath on him;
God will rain it down on him while he is eating.
- ²⁴ Although that man will flee from the iron weapon,
a bow of bronze will shoot him.
- ²⁵ He pulls it out of his back
and the gleaming point comes out of his liver.
Terrors come over him.
- ²⁶ Complete darkness is reserved for his treasures;

- a fire not fanned will devour him;
it will consume what is left in his tent.
- 27 The heavens will reveal his iniquity,
and the earth will rise up against him as a witness.
- 28 The wealth of his house will vanish;
his goods will flow away on the day of God's wrath.
- 29 This is the wicked man's portion from God,
the heritage decreed for him by God."
-

Job 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. In this chapter, Zophar speaks to Job again. His words in this chapter are much stronger than when he previously spoke, and he is even angry at Job. He claims that Job took advantage of the poor and is being punished for it.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

There are many metaphors used in this chapter. Zophar uses them to explain the temporary nature of life and riches. He also uses them to describe God's punishment of Job.

Job 20:1

General Information:

Zophar replies to Job.

Zophar the Naamathite

See how you translated this man's name in Job 2:11. Since this is the second time that Zophar speaks, some translations omit "the Naamathite" here.

Job 20:2

My thoughts make me answer quickly

The idea of Zophar's thoughts making him do something represents his strong desire to do something. Alternate translation: "I want very much to answer you quickly"

because of the worry that is in me

The abstract noun "worry" can be expressed with the adjective "worried." The reason for the worry can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "because I am very worried about you" or "because I am very worried because of what you said"

Job 20:3

I hear a rebuke that dishonors me

The abstract noun "rebuke" can be expressed with the verb "rebuke." Alternate translation: "I hear you rebuke me, and what you say dishonors me" or "You insult me by how you rebuke me"

a spirit from my understanding answers me

Here "spirit" probably refers to a thought or idea. Alternate translation: "a thought from my understanding answers me"

a spirit from my understanding answers me

This "spirit" or thought is spoken of as if it were a person that could answer Zophar. Alternate translation: "I have a thought from my understanding, and now I know what I wanted to know"

a spirit from my understanding answers me

The content of the answer can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "a thought from my understanding answers me about how I can reply to you" or "I have a thought from my understanding, and now I know how I can reply to you"

a spirit from my understanding answers me

The abstract nouns "spirit" and "understanding" can be expressed with the verbs "think" and "understand." Alternate translation: "because I understand things, I have thought, and now I know how I can reply to you"

Job 20:4

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking with Job.

Do you not know this fact from ancient times ... man on earth

Zophar begins a rhetorical question to cause Job to think deeply about what he will now say.

Job 20:5

Connecting Statement:

Zophar finishes the rhetorical question he began in verse 4.

the triumph ... for a moment?

Zophar uses a rhetorical question to cause Job to think deeply about what he will now say. This can be translated as a statement. "Surely you know ... man on earth; the triumph ... for a moment."

the triumph of a wicked man is short

The abstract noun "triumph" can be expressed with the verbs "triumph" or "celebrate." Alternate translation: "the wicked man triumphs only a short time" or "the wicked person celebrates for only a little while"

the joy of a godless man lasts only for a moment

The abstract noun "joy" can be expressed with the verb "rejoice" or the adjective "happy." The word "moment" is an exaggeration to emphasize that the time is very short. Alternate translation: "a godless man rejoices for only a moment" or "the godless man is happy for only a very short time"

Job 20:6

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking to Job.

Though his height reaches up to the heavens

"Though the wicked person's height reaches up to the heavens." The abstract noun "height" can be expressed with the adjective "tall." Alternate translation: "Though he is as tall as the heavens"

Though his height reaches up to the heavens

The wicked man's height represents either his reputation or his pride. Also, here "reaches up to the heavens" represents being very great. Alternate translation: "Though his reputation is great" or "Though his pride is great"

his head reaches to the clouds

"and though his head is as high as the clouds." This also represents his reputation or pride being great. This means the same as the previous phrase.

Job 20:7

will perish forever like his own dung

Dung mixes in with the ground and disappears. The reference to dung may also imply that the wicked person is worthless. Alternate translation: "will perish permanently like his dung, which completely disappears in the ground"

his own dung

If people are embarrassed about the word "dung," translators may refer to something else that

disappears completely. Alternate translation: "dust that the wind blows away"

Job 20:8

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking to Job.

He will

"The wicked person will"

He will fly away like a dream ... he will be chased away like a vision of the night

Here "fly away" and "be chased away" represent disappearing. They may also imply being forgotten, since dreams and visions disappear when people forget them. Alternate translation: "He will disappear like a dream ... he will be forgotten like a vision of the night"

will not be found

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will find him"

Job 20:9

The eye that saw him

The eye represents a person. Alternate translation: "Anyone who saw him" or "The people who saw him"

his place

The phrase "his place" represents those who live in his place. Alternate translation: "the people who live in his place" or "his family"

Job 20:10

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking to Job.

His children

"The wicked person's children"

his hands will have to give back his wealth

Here the word "hands" refers to the wicked man's children. When he dies, his children will have to return everything that he took from others.

Job 20:11

His bones are full of youthful strength

The word "bones" represents his body. Being "full of youthful strength" represents being strong like a young person. Alternate translation: "His body is strong like a young person's body"

but it will lie down with him in the dust

The word "it" refers to his youthful strength. The metonym "lie down ... in the dust" represents dying. The strength dying is a metaphor for disappearing. Alternate translation: "but his youthful strength will die with him" or "but his youthful strength will disappear when he dies"

Job 20:12

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking to Job.

Although wickedness is sweet in his mouth

Here "wickedness is sweet" represents a person enjoying doing wicked things. Alternate translation: "Although doing wicked things is pleasurable like tasting sweet food in the mouth"

although he hides it under his tongue

Zophar speaks of wickedness as if it were sweet food that a person puts under his tongue so it will stay in his mouth and he can taste it for a long time.

Job 20:13

he holds it there and does not let it go but keeps it still in his mouth

Zophar speaks of wickedness as if it were sweet food that a person puts under his tongue so it will stay in his mouth and he can taste it for a long time.

Job 20:14

the food in his intestines turns bitter

When food turns bitter in the stomach, it causes pain and a bitter taste. This is a metaphor for a person experiencing the painful consequences of doing wicked things. Alternate translation: "those wicked things become like food that has turned bitter in the stomach" or "the consequences of those wicked things are painful like food that becomes sour in the stomach"

it becomes the poison of asps inside him

This image is even worse than sour food in the stomach. This is a metaphor for a person experiencing the terrible consequences of doing wicked things. Alternate translation: "the consequences of doing those wicked things are painful like the poison of asps inside him"

asps

poisonous snakes

Job 20:15

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking to Job.

He swallows down riches ... cast them out of his stomach

Zophar speaks of gaining and losing wealth as if it were food that a person eats and vomits. Alternate translation: "The wicked person becomes very wealthy, but he loses his wealth like a person who vomits up his food. God causes him to lose it all"

He swallows down riches

Possible meanings are that "swallows down riches" represents 1) accumulating riches and storing them selfishly. Alternate translation: "The wicked man

gains much wealth and keeps it all for himself" or 2) accumulating riches in wicked ways. Alternate translation: "The wicked man steals many riches"

God will cast them out of his stomach

Here "cast them out of his stomach" is a metonym for causing the man to vomit them. This is a metaphor for causing the man to lose his riches.

cast

throw

Job 20:16

He will suck the poison of asps

Here "suck the poison of asps" represents doing evil things. Both are very dangerous. Alternate translation: "Doing evil things is like sucking the poison of asps" or "He will do evil things and endanger his life like a person who sucks the poison of asps"

asps

poisonous snakes

the viper's tongue will kill him

The viper is a poisonous snake. Its tongue represents its poisonous bite. Alternate translation: "the viper's poisonous bite will kill him" or "the viper will bite him and he will die"

the viper's tongue will kill him

The viper represents the man's wickedness. Alternate translation: "his wickedness will kill him like a viper's bite"

Job 20:17

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking to Job.

the streams, the torrents of honey and butter

"Streams" and "torrents" are metaphors that represent abundance. "Honey" and "butter" are metonyms that represent the good things that God gives people. Alternate translation: "the abundance of good things that God gives his people"

Job 20:18

the fruit of his labor

Normally "the fruit of his labor" simply refers to the results of his labor. In this case it refers to the things the wicked man had stolen. Alternate translation: "the things he had worked to get" or "the things he had stolen"

will not be able to swallow it

Here "to swallow" the fruit of his labor represents enjoying the things he had stolen. Alternate translation: "will not be able to enjoy them"

Job 20:19

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 20:20

he has known no satisfaction in his belly

The word "belly" here is a metonym for the person's desires. Alternate translation: "he has never been able to satisfy his desires"

Job 20:21

There is nothing left that he did not devour

This can be reworded with only one of the negatives. Alternate translation: "He devoured everything, and there is nothing left" or "There is nothing left because he devoured everything"

There is nothing left that he did not devour

Here "devour" represents taking things for himself. Alternate translation: "There is nothing left that he did not take for himself" or "He took everything for himself, and there is nothing left"

Job 20:22

he will fall into trouble

"he will suddenly experience trouble"

the hand of everyone who suffers will come against him

Here "hand" represents power, and "hand ... will come against him" represents people attacking him. Alternate translation: "everyone who is in poverty will attack him" or "everyone who suffers will attack him"

suffers

If your language has a separate word for suffering because of poverty, you may want to use it here.

Job 20:23

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking to Job.

to fill his stomach

Here "fill his stomach" is a metonym meaning eat a lot.

God will throw the fierceness of his wrath on him

The "fierceness of his wrath" represents God's anger and punishment. Throwing the punishment on him represents punishing him severely. Alternate translation: "God will be angry and throw down his punishment on him" or "God will be angry and punish him severely"

God will rain it down on him

"God will cause it to rain down on him." Here "rain it down on him" represents causing much

punishment to happen to the man. Alternate translation: "God will punish him severely"

Job 20:24

will flee from the iron weapon

The iron weapon represents the person carrying it. Alternate translation: "will flee from the person carrying an iron weapon"

a bow of bronze will shoot him

The bow represents the person who shoots an arrow with it. Alternate translation: "someone with a bronze bow will shoot him"

Job 20:25

liver

This is a large and important part of the body. If someone shoots through it with an arrow, the person who is shot will die.

Terrors come over him

He will suddenly become very afraid. Alternate translation: "he is terrified"

Job 20:26

Complete darkness is reserved for his treasures

"Complete darkness" here is a metaphor for destruction. Alternate translation: "Destruction is reserved for his treasures" or "His treasures will be destroyed"

a fire not fanned will devour him

Here "devour" is a metaphor meaning destroy. Alternate translation: "a fire that is not fanned will destroy him"

a fire not fanned will devour him

The phrase "not fanned" implies that no human will start the fire. Rather, God will cause the fire. Alternate translation: "a fire that is not started by humans will destroy him" or "God will cause a fire to destroy him"

it will consume

Here "consume" is a metaphor meaning destroy. Alternate translation: "the fire will destroy"

Job 20:27

The heavens ... the earth

Possible meanings are: 1) those who live in the heavens and the earth or 2) Zophar is describing the heavens and the earth as if they are humans who will testify in court against the wicked person.

Job 20:28

General Information:

This concludes Zophar's speech to Job.

vanish
disappear

his goods will flow away on

Here "flow away" represents being taken away from him. Alternate translation: "his goods will be taken away from him, like goods that float away in a flood, on"

his goods

"his possessions"

the day of God's wrath

Here "wrath" represents punishment. The abstract noun "wrath" can be expressed with the verb punish. Alternate translation: "the day when God punishes people"

Job 20:29

This is the wicked man's portion from God

Here "portion from God" represents what God has decided should happen to someone. It is spoken of as if it were something that God would give him. Alternate translation: "This is what God has decided should happen to the wicked man"

the heritage decreed for him by God

This represents what God has decided should happen to someone. It is spoken of as if it were something that God would give him as an inheritance. Alternate translation: "what God has planned to give to him" or "what God has planned should happen to him"

Chapter 21

- ¹ Then Job answered and said,
- ² "Listen carefully to my words,
and let this be the comfort you offer to me.
- ³ Put up with me, and I also will speak;
after I have spoken, mock on.
- ⁴ As for me, is my complaint to a person?
Why should I not be impatient?
- ⁵ Look at me and be appalled,
and lay your hand upon your mouth.
- ⁶ When I think about my sufferings, I am terrified,
and trembling seizes my body.
- ⁷ Why do wicked people continue to live,
become old, and grow mighty in power?
- ⁸ Their descendants are established with them in their sight,
and their offspring are established before their eyes.
- ⁹ Their houses are safe from fear;
neither is the rod of God on them.
- ¹⁰ Their bull breeds; it does not fail to do so;
their cow gives birth and does not lose her calf prematurely.
- ¹¹ They send out their little ones like a flock,
and their children dance.
- ¹² They sing to the tambourine and harp
and rejoice with the music of the flute.
- ¹³ They spend their days in prosperity,
and they go down quietly to Sheol.
- ¹⁴ They say to God, 'Depart from us
for we do not wish any knowledge of your ways.
- ¹⁵ What is the Almighty, that we should worship him?
What profit would we get if we prayed to him?'
- ¹⁶ See, is not their prosperity in their own hands?
I have nothing to do with the advice of wicked people.
- ¹⁷ How often is it that the lamp of wicked people is put out,
or that their calamity comes upon them?
How often does it happen that God distributes sorrows to them in his anger?
- ¹⁸ How often is it that they become like stubble before the wind
or like chaff that the storm carries away?
- ¹⁹ You say, 'God lays up one's iniquity for his children.'
Let him pay it himself, so that he might know it.
- ²⁰ Let his eyes see his own destruction,
and let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty.
- ²¹ For what does he care about his family after him
when the number of his months is cut off?
- ²² Can anyone teach God knowledge,
since he judges even those who are high?
- ²³ One man dies in his full strength,
being completely quiet and at ease.
- ²⁴ His body is full of milk,
and the marrow of his bones is moist.
- ²⁵ Another man dies in bitterness of soul,
one who has never experienced anything good.
- ²⁶ They lie down alike in the dust;
the worms cover them both.

- 27 See, I know your thoughts,
and your schemes to do violence to me.
- 28 For you say, 'Where now is the house of the prince?
Where is the tent in which the wicked man once lived?'
- 29 Have you never asked traveling people?
Do you not know the evidence they can tell,
- 30 that the wicked man is kept from the day of calamity,
and that he is led away from the day of wrath?
- 31 Who will condemn the wicked man's way to his face?
Who will repay him for what he has done?
- 32 Yet he will be borne to the grave;
men will keep watch over his tomb.
- 33 The clods of the valley will be sweet to him;
all people will follow after him,
as there were innumerable people before him.
- 34 How then do you comfort me with nonsense,
since in your answers there is nothing but falsehood?"
-

Job 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Zophar. It is also a response to all three of his friends in general.

Special concepts in this chapter

Ancestor's sin

In the ancient Near East, it was common to believe that a person could be punished because of the sins of their fathers and ancestors. It was seen as the punishment of a god. While a father's sin may have consequences for their children, Yahweh does not punish people because of their father's sin.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Zophar that he is wrong. These questions help to build Job's argument.

Job 21:1

Connecting Statement:

Job begins to answer Zophar's accusations.

Job 21:2

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 21:3

Put up with me

"Allow me" or "Be patient with me"

mock on

"you can continue mocking me." Job is using sarcasm to imply that his friends would ignore what he would say and continue to mock him.

Job 21:4

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

As for me, is my complaint to a person? Why should I not be impatient?

Job uses questions to emphasize that he thinks it is fair for him to complain to God. Alternate translation: "I am not complaining to a person. I have the right to be impatient"

Job 21:5

lay your hand upon your mouth

"cover your mouth with your hand." Possible meanings are that 1) this is a response to being astonished. Alternate translation: "cover your mouth with your hand" or 2) this is a symbol that the person will not speak. Alternate translation: "do not say anything"

Job 21:6

trembling seizes my body

"fear causes my body to tremble" or "I shake with fear"

Job 21:7

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

Why do wicked people continue to live, become old, and grow mighty in power?

Job uses this question to show that his friends are wrong to think evil men always suffer. Alternate translation: "Wicked people indeed continue to live, become old, and become wealthier."

Job 21:8

Their descendants are established with them in their sight ... their offspring are established before their eyes

This two clauses mean the same thing and emphasize that this is true.

in their sight ... before their eyes

These phrases mean the same thing because "eyes" refers to sight. Wicked people get to watch their descendants grow strong and wealthy.

Job 21:9

Their houses

Here "houses" refers to the family members that lives in them. Alternate translation: "Their families"

rod of God

This refers to God's punishment.

Job 21:10

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

does not lose her calf prematurely

"she does not miscarry" or "her calf is born healthy and strong"

Job 21:11

little ones like a flock

Job compares these children to lambs to emphasize that they run, play, and are happy.

Job 21:12

tambourine

a musical instrument with a head like a drum that can be hit and with pieces of metal around the side that sound when the instrument is shaken

Job 21:13

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking with his friends.

their days

"their lifetime"

they go down quietly to Sheol

This is a polite way of saying that they die. Alternate translation: "they die peacefully"

Job 21:14

your ways

This refers to how God wants people to behave.

Job 21:15

What is the Almighty, that we should worship him? What profit would we get if we prayed to him?

The wicked people use these questions to mock God. Alternate translation: "We do not believe that this Almighty God is worthy of our worship. If we pray to him, he cannot do anything good for us."

Job 21:16

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

See, is not their prosperity in their own hands?

Here "hands" refers to their power or control. Job uses this question to challenge his friends. Alternate translation: "Look, these wicked people claim that they make themselves prosper!"

Job 21:17

How often is it ... their calamity comes upon them?

Job uses this question to emphasize that it seems to him that God does not punish the wicked very often. Alternate translation: "It is not often ... their calamity comes upon them."

the lamp of wicked people is put out

Job compares extinguishing the lamp to a person dying. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God causes them to die suddenly"

the lamp of wicked people

Job compares the life of the wicked to a lamp that is burning.

How often does it happen ... in his anger?

Job uses this second question to emphasize that it seems to him that God does not punish the wicked very often. Alternate translation: "It is not often ... in his anger."

Job 21:18

How often is it ... the storm carries away?

Job uses this third question to emphasize that it seems to him that God does not punish the wicked very often. Alternate translation: "It is not often ... the storm carries away."

they become like stubble before the wind or like chaff that the storm carries away

The death of the wicked is spoken of as if they were worthless less chaff and stubble that blows away. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God takes them away like the wind blows away the chaff"

Job 21:19

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

You say

These words are added by most versions in order to make it clear that the Job is quoting his friends in the next statement.

God lays up one's iniquity for his children

Job speaks of iniquity as if it were an object that could be stored for later use. You may need to make explicit that God stores the iniquity so that the sinner's children will pay for it. Alternate translation: "God keeps a record of a person's sins, then he punishes the person's children for those wicked deeds"

Let him pay it himself, ... know it

Job now begins to state his own opinion. You may need to make explicit that what the sinner should know is how bad his sins have been. It may be helpful to use an indirect quotation. "But I say that he should pay it himself, ... know his guilt"

Job 21:20

Let his eyes see

Here "eyes" refers to the person. Alternate translation: "Let him see"

let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty

Here the wrath of God is spoken of as if it were a drink that a person can taste, and tasting is a metonym for experiencing the drink. Job wants the wicked person to experience God's punishment.

Job 21:21

For what does he care about his family after him when the number of his months is cut off?

Job uses this question to show that punishing the evil man's children is not effective. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For the wicked man does not care what happens to his family after he has died!"

the number of his months is cut off

This is a polite way of saying that he dies.

the number of his months

This refers to the length of his life.

Job 21:22

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

Can anyone teach God knowledge, since he judges even those who are high?

Job asks this question to emphasize that God knows everything. Alternate translation: "Obviously, no one can teach anything to God, since he even judges those in heaven."

those who are high

Possible meanings are 1) "those who are in heaven" or 2) "powerful people."

Job 21:23

One man dies in his full strength

Job contrasts this man who dies in health and peace to the man who dies in sorrow and pain in [Job 21:25]

Job 21:24

His body is full of milk ... the marrow of his bones is moist

Both of these phrases mean that the person is very healthy.

His body is full of milk

The word for "milk" may mean "fat." Either rendering means he is well-fed. Alternate translation: "His body if full of fat"

the marrow of his bones is moist

This idiom means his body is youthful and healthy.

Job 21:25

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

Another man dies

Job contrasts this man to the man who dies in peace in Job 21:23.

in bitterness of soul

Here sorrow is spoken of as if it tasted bitter, and "soul" refers to the whole man. Alternate translation: "with anger and resentment" or "after living a sad life"

has never experienced anything good

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "has experienced only bad things"

Job 21:26

They lie down alike in the dust

This is a polite way to say that they died. Alternate translation: "They both die and people bury them"

the worms cover them both

Worms are associated with decay of dead bodies. Alternate translation: "the worms in the dirt eat their dead bodies"

Job 21:27

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

See

Job uses this phrase to call attention to the statement that follows. Alternate translation: "Listen"

Job 21:28

Where now is the house of the prince? Where is the tent in which the wicked man once lived?

Job believes his friends will ask these question to scold him. Both questions mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "See, the house of the evil ruler is gone. The tent of the wicked man has disappeared."

Job 21:29

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

Have you never asked traveling people?

Job uses these questions to rebuke his friends for not learning from people who travel. Alternate translation: "You should listen to those who have traveled to distant places."

Job 21:30

Connecting Statement:

Job finishes asking a rhetorical question that begins with the words "Do you not know" in verse 29.

the wicked man is kept ... from the day of wrath?

Job uses these questions to rebuke his friends for not learning from people who travel. "Those who

have traveled to distant places will tell you ... from the day of wrath."

the wicked man is kept from the day of calamity ... he is led away from the day of wrath

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God keeps the wicked man from the day of calamity ... God leads him away from the day of wrath"

Job 21:31

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

Who will condemn the wicked man's way to his face?

Job uses this question to contradict his friends' belief that the wicked are always judged. Alternate translation: "No one condemns the wicked man to his face."

to his face

This means no one will go directly to the wicked person and condemn him personally.

Who will repay him for what he has done?

Job uses this question to contradict his friends' belief that the wicked are always judged. Alternate translation: "No one repays him for the bad things that he has done."

Job 21:32

he will be borne

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will carry him"

Job 21:33

The clods of the valley will be sweet to him

Job imagines that the dead person will even enjoy the dirt that is put on him. This means the wicked person will even have a good death and a nice burial after a fulfilling life. "Clods" refer to the earth that covers the grave. Alternate translation: "He will enjoy being covered with the dirt of the valley" or "He will enjoy being buried in the dirt of the valley"

all people will follow after him, as there were innumerable people before him

Job emphasizes that a large crowd of people will be in the funeral procession of this imaginary wicked man to honor him. Alternate translation: "a huge number of people go to the grave site; some go in front of the procession and some come behind"

Job 21:34

Connecting Statement:

This concludes Job's speech to his friends.

How then do you comfort me with nonsense, since in your answers there is nothing but falsehood?

Job uses a question to scold his friends. Alternate translation: "You cannot comfort me with nonsense. All of your answers are false."

Chapter 22

- ¹ Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,
- ² "Can a man be useful to God?
Can a wise man be useful to him?"
- ³ Is it any pleasure to the Almighty if you are righteous?
Is it gain to him if you make your ways blameless?
- ⁴ Is it because of your reverence for him that he rebukes you
and takes you to judgment?
- ⁵ Is not your wickedness great?
Is there no end to your iniquities?
- ⁶ For you have demanded guarantee of a loan from your brother for no reason,
and you have stripped away clothing from the naked.
- ⁷ You have not given water to weary people to drink;
you have withheld bread from hungry people
- ⁸ although you, a mighty man, possessed the earth,
although you, an honored man, lived in it.
- ⁹ You have sent widows away empty;
the arms of the fatherless have been crushed.
- ¹⁰ Therefore, snares are all around you,
and sudden fear troubles you.
- ¹¹ There is darkness, so that you cannot see;
an abundance of waters covers you.
- ¹² Is not God in the heights of heaven?
Look at the height of the stars, how high they are!
- ¹³ You say, 'What does God know?
Can he judge through the thick darkness?'
- ¹⁴ Thick clouds are a covering to him, so that he does not see us;
he walks on the vault of heaven.'
- ¹⁵ Will you keep the old way
that wicked men have walked—
- ¹⁶ those who were snatched away before their time,
those whose foundations have washed away like a river,
- ¹⁷ those who said to God, 'Depart from us';
those who said, 'What can the Almighty do to us?'
- ¹⁸ Yet he filled their houses with good things;
the plans of wicked people are far from me.
- ¹⁹ Righteous people see their fate and are glad;
innocent people mock them.
- ²⁰ They say, 'Surely those who rose up against us are cut off;
fire has consumed their possessions.'
- ²¹ Now agree with God and be at peace with him;
in that way, good will come to you.
- ²² Receive, I beg you, instruction from his mouth;
store up his words in your heart.
- ²³ If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up,
if you put unrighteousness far away from your tents.
- ²⁴ Lay your treasure down in the dust,
the gold of Ophir among the stones of the brooks,
- ²⁵ and the Almighty will be your treasure,
precious silver to you.
- ²⁶ For then you will take pleasure in the Almighty;
you will lift up your face to God.
- ²⁷ You will make your prayer to him, and he will hear you;

- you will pay your vows to him.
- 28 You will also decree anything, and it will be confirmed for you;
light will shine on your paths.
- 29 God humbles a proud man,
and he saves the one with humble eyes.
- 30 He will rescue even the man who is not innocent;
who will be rescued through the cleanness of your hands."
-

Job 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of the advice of Job's friend, Eliphaz. His words in this chapter are much stronger than when he previously spoke.

Special concepts in this chapter

Repentance

Eliphaz tries to get Job to repent in this chapter. Eliphaz assumes that he is righteous, while assuming Job is not. (See: repent and righteous)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Eliphaz uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job that he is wrong. These questions help to build Eliphaz's argument.

Job 22:1

Eliphaz the Temanite

See how you translated this man's name in [Job 2:11]

Job 22:2

Can a man be useful to God? Can a wise man be useful to him?

Both questions mean basically the same thing. Eliphaz uses questions to emphasize that a person's actions and wisdom do not benefit God. Alternate translation: "A man cannot be useful to God. A wise man cannot be useful to him."

Job 22:3

Is it any pleasure to the Almighty if you are righteous? Is it gain to him if you make your ways blameless?

Both of these statements mean the same thing. Eliphaz uses questions to emphasize that Job's actions do not help God. Alternate translation: "The Almighty does not receive any pleasure if you are righteous. He does not gain anything if you make your ways blameless."

Job 22:4

Connecting Statement:

Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.

Is it because of your reverence for him that he rebukes you and takes you to judgment?

Eliphaz uses questions to scold Job and accuse him of committing terrible sins. Alternate translation: "It is certainly not because you have been devoted to him that God rebukes you and takes you to judgment!"

Job 22:5

Is not your wickedness great? Is there no end to your iniquities?

Eliphaz uses questions to scold Job and accuse him of committing terrible sins. Alternate translation: "As you know, he judges you because your wickedness is great and you keep on sinning!"

Job 22:6

Connecting Statement:

Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.

you have demanded guarantee of a loan

This refers to a lender taking something from the borrower to ensure that the borrower pays him back.

you have stripped away clothing from the naked

Eliphaz is accusing Job of taking clothes as security from poor people who borrowed from him.

Job 22:7

withheld bread

Here "bread" refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "withheld food"

Job 22:8

possessed the earth ... lived in it

Eliphaz is accusing Job of taking land from poor people and not allowing them to live on it. He is emphasizing this point by restating it twice.

possessed the earth

Eliphaz is exaggerating the amount of land that Job owned in order to portray Job as greedy. Alternate translation: "possessed a great amount of land"

Job 22:9

Connecting Statement:

Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.

You have sent widows away empty

"You made widows go away with nothing"

widows

women whose husbands have died

the arms of the fatherless have been crushed

Here "arms" refer to power. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you even oppressed the fatherless"

Job 22:10

snares are all around you ... sudden fear troubles you

These are metaphors for trouble and danger. Alternate translation: "you are always in danger ... you become afraid for no reason"

Job 22:11

There is darkness ... an abundance of waters covers you

Each of these metaphors means troubles and dangers are all around Job because of his sin.

an abundance of waters

"a flood"

Job 22:12

Connecting Statement:

Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.

Is not God in the heights of heaven?

Eliphaz uses this question to say that God sees Job's sin and will judge him. Alternate translation: "God is in the heights of heaven and sees everything that happens on earth."

Look at the height of the stars, how high they are!

Eliphaz implies that God is higher than the stars.

This can be made explicit. Alternate translation:

"Look at how high the stars are. God is even higher than the stars!"

Job 22:13

What does God know? Can he judge through the thick darkness?

Eliphaz uses these questions to imply that Job has said these things against God. Alternate translation: "God does not know what happens on earth. He sits in dark clouds and cannot see to judge us."

Job 22:14

he walks on the vault of heaven

Here "vault" refers to the barrier that ancient people believed separated the earth from heaven. Alternate translation: "he lives too far away in heaven to see what happens here"

Job 22:15

Connecting Statement:

Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.

Job 22:16

those who were snatched away

Dying is compared to God snatching them away. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those who died" or "those whom God took away"

those whose foundations have washed away like a river

The death of wicked people is compared to buildings that had their foundations washed away by a flood.

Job 22:17

What can the Almighty do to us?

Eliphaz quotes a question wicked people use to mock God. Alternate translation: "The Almighty cannot do anything to us!"

Job 22:18

Connecting Statement:

Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.

Yet he filled

"Yet God filled"

the plans of wicked people are far from me

The idiom "far from me" means Eliphaz rejects them. Alternate translation: "but I will not listen to their wicked plans"

Job 22:19

see their fate

"know what will happen to the wicked"

Job 22:20

They say

"The righteous say"

Surely those who rose up against us are cut off

Here "those who rose up" refers to the wicked people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Surely God has destroyed the wicked people who harmed us"

Job 22:21

Connecting Statement:

Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.

Now

Eliphaz uses this word to introduce something important he is about to say.

Job 22:22

instruction from his mouth

Here "from his mouth" represents what God has spoken. Alternate translation: "the instruction that God has spoken"

store up his words

God's words are compared to treasures that Job could keep in a storeroom. Alternate translation: "treasure his commands"

your heart

Here "heart" refers to Job's thoughts. Alternate translation: "your mind"

Job 22:23

Connecting Statement:

Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.

you will be built up

Eliphaz compares Job's restoration to the rebuilding of a house that has fallen. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he will heal you and make you prosper again"

if you put unrighteousness far away from your tents

Unrighteousness is pictured as a person who is living in Job's tent who must be removed. Alternate translation: "if you and everyone in your house stops sinning"

Job 22:24

Lay your treasure down in the dust

To lay a treasure in the dust is to treat it as unimportant. Alternate translation: "Consider your riches as unimportant as dust"

the gold of Ophir among the stones of the brooks

To put gold in the stream is to treat it as no more valuable than stones. Alternate translation: "the gold of Ophir is as worthless as stones in a stream"

Ophir

This is the name of a region famous for its gold.

Job 22:25

the Almighty will be your treasure, precious silver to you

This means God will be more valuable to Job than any treasure.

Job 22:26

Connecting Statement:

Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.

you will lift up your face to God

This means Job will no longer be ashamed but will trust in God. Alternate translation: "you will be able to approach God confidently"

Job 22:27

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 22:28

it will be confirmed for you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will cause you to succeed"

light will shine on your paths

God's blessing is compared to a light on all of Job's paths. Alternate translation: "it will be like a light shining on the road in front of you"

Job 22:29

Connecting Statement:

This concludes Eliphaz's speech to Job.

the one with humble eyes

Here the word "eyes" is a synecdoche for the whole person or a metonym for the way the person thinks and acts. Alternate translation: "the humble person"

humble eyes

"lowered eyes," eyes that look at the ground and not at the person with whom their owner is conversing

Job 22:30

He will rescue even the man who is not innocent; who will be rescued through the cleanness of your hands
Job being innocent is spoken of as if his hands were physically clean. The phrase "who will be rescued" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"Yahweh will rescue even the person who is not innocent because you do what is right"

He will rescue even the man who is not innocent; who will be rescued through the cleanness of your hands
Some versions of the Bible read, "He rescues the innocent person; so he will rescue you when your hands are clean"

Chapter 23

- ¹ Then Job answered and said,
- ² "Even today my complaint is rebellion; ^[1]
my hand ^[2] is heavy because of my groaning.
- ³ Oh, that I knew where I might find him!
Oh, that I might come to his place!
- ⁴ I would lay my case in order before him
and fill my mouth with arguments.
- ⁵ I would learn the words with which he would answer me
and would understand what he would say to me.
- ⁶ Would he argue against me in the greatness of his power?
No, he would pay attention to me.
- ⁷ There the upright person might argue with him.
In this way I would be acquitted forever by my judge.
- ⁸ See, I go eastward, but he is not there,
and westward, but I cannot find him.
- ⁹ To the north, where he is at work, but I cannot see him,
and to the south, where he hides himself so that I cannot see him.
- ¹⁰ But he knows the way that I take;
when he has tested me, I will come out like gold.
- ¹¹ My foot has held fast to his steps;
I have kept to his way and turned not aside.
- ¹² I have not gone back from the commandment of his lips;
I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food.
- ¹³ But he is one of a kind, who can turn him back?
What he desires, he does.
- ¹⁴ For he carries out his decree against me;
there are many like them.
- ¹⁵ Therefore, I am terrified in his presence;
when I think about him, I am afraid of him.
- ¹⁶ For God has made my heart weak;
the Almighty has terrified me.
- ¹⁷ I have not been brought to an end by darkness,
because of the thick darkness that covers the gloom of my face.

Footnotes

23:2 ^[1]Some ancient translations and many English translations have:

23:2 ^[2]Some copies have:

Job 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Eliphaz.

Special concepts in this chapter

Court

This chapter uses an extended metaphor of a court case to describe Job's "case," which he seeks to bring to Yahweh, who is a judge. Cultures without a legal system will have difficulty translating this chapter.

Job 23:1

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 23:2

Even today my complaint is rebellion

Here "Even today" emphasizes that his friends arguments have not changed Job's situation at all. Alternate translation: "In spite of what you have said, my complaint is rebellion"

my complaint is rebellion

That is, God continues to afflict Job, but Job will not stop claiming that he has done no wrong.

my hand ... heavy because of my groaning

Possible meanings are 1) "I can barely lift my hand because of my groaning" or 2) "God's hand continues to make me suffer in spite of my groaning" where "hand" refers to God's power to punish.

Job 23:3

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

Oh, that I knew where ... Oh, that I might come

These two lines mean the same thing and emphasize Job's desire to meet with God.

I might find him

"I might find God"

Job 23:4

lay my case ... fill my mouth

These two lines mean the same thing and emphasize Job's desire to explain his situation to God.

fill my mouth with arguments

Here "fill my mouth" refers to speaking. Alternate translation: "I would speak all of my arguments"

Job 23:5

I would learn the words ... would understand

These two lines mean basically the same thing and emphasize Job's desire to hear God's answer.

the words with which he would answer me

"the answer that he would give me"

Job 23:6

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

Would he

"Would God"

Job 23:7

There

This refers to the place where God is.

I would be acquitted forever by my judge

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my judge would acquit me forever" or "God, who is my judge, would say that I am innocent once and for all"

Job 23:8

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking. He begins using a merism to say that he has looked everywhere.

Job 23:9

north ... south

This is the end of the merism that begins with the words "eastward ... westward" in verse 8. By mentioning these four directions, Job emphasizes that he has looked everywhere.

where he hides himself

Job speaks of God as if he is a person who hides.

Job 23:10

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

he knows the way that I take

Job's actions are spoken of as if he is walking on a path. Alternate translation: "God knows what I do"

I will come out like gold

Job believes that the test will prove that he is as pure as refined gold. Alternate translation: "he will see that I am as pure as gold when anything not pure has been burned away"

Job 23:11

My foot has held fast to his steps

Here "My foot" refers to Job. Alternate translation: "I have followed the path he has shown me"

I have kept to his way

Job's obedience is spoken of as if he is walking in a path that God showed him. Alternate translation: "I have done what he told me to do"

turned not aside

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "followed it exactly"

Job 23:12

I have not gone back from

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I have always obeyed"

of his lips

This phrase refers to the message that God spoke. Alternate translation: "that he spoke"

the words of his mouth

Here God is represented by his "mouth." Alternate translation: "what he said"

Job 23:13

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

But he is one of a kind, who can turn him back?

Job uses this question to emphasize that there is no one like God and no one can force him to change. Alternate translation: "But there is no one like him, and nobody can make him change his mind." or "But he alone is God, and no one can influence him."

What he desires, he does

"He does whatever he wants to do"

Job 23:14

he carries out his decree against me

"he is doing to me what he said he would do"

there are many like them

"he has many similar plans for me"

Job 23:15

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

Job 23:16

For God has made my heart weak; the Almighty has terrified me

These two lines mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Job is very afraid of God.

made my heart weak

A person whose heart is weak is a person who is timid or fearful. Alternate translation: "made me afraid"

Job 23:17

I have not been brought to an end by darkness

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "The thick darkness in front of me has not made me silent" or 2) "Darkness has not stopped me" or "God has stopped me, not the darkness."

the gloom of my face

Here Job refers to himself by his "face." Alternate translation: "my sadness"

Chapter 24

- 1 Why are times for judging wicked people not set by the Almighty?
Why do not those who are faithful to God see his days of judgment come?
- 2 There are wicked people who remove boundary markers;
there are wicked people who take away flocks by force
and put them in their own pastures.
- 3 They drive away the donkey of those without fathers;
they take the widow's ox as a pledge.
- 4 They force needy people out of their path;
poor people of the earth all hide themselves from them.
- 5 See, these poor people go out to their work
like wild donkeys in the wilderness, looking carefully for food;
perhaps the Arabah will provide them food for their children.
- 6 They reap fodder in the field;
they glean the vineyard of the wicked.
- 7 They lie naked all night without clothing;
they have no covering in the cold.
- 8 They are wet with the showers of the mountains;
they lie next to large rocks because they have no shelter.
- 9 The fatherless is seized from the breast,
and they take a pledge against the poor.
- 10 But the poor people go about naked without clothing;
although they go hungry,
they carry bundles of grain belonging to other people.
- 11 The poor people make oil within the walls of those wicked men;
they tread the wicked men's winepresses,
but they themselves suffer thirst.
- 12 From out of the city the dying groan,
and the throat of the wounded cries out for help.
But God does not charge anyone with wrongdoing.

- 13 Some of these wicked people rebel against the light;
they know not its ways,
nor do they stay in its paths.
- 14 Before daylight the murderer rises
and he kills the poor and the needy;
in the night he is like a thief.
- 15 Also, the eye of the adulterer waits for the twilight;
he says, 'No eye will see me.'
He disguises his face.
- 16 In the darkness they dig into houses;
but they shut themselves up in the daytime;
they do not care for the light.
- 17 For all of them, thick darkness is like the morning;
for they are friends with the terrors of thick darkness.

- 18 Swiftly they pass away, however, like foam on the surface of the waters;
their portion of the land is cursed;
no one goes to work in their vineyards.
- 19 As drought and heat melt away the snow into waters,
so Sheol takes away those who have sinned.
- 20 The womb that bore him will forget him;
the worm will feed sweetly on him;
he will be remembered no more;
in this way, wickedness will be broken like a tree.
- 21 The wicked one devours the barren women who have not borne children;

- he does no good to the widow.
- 22 Yet God drags away the mighty by his power;
he rises up and does not strengthen him in life.
- 23 God gives him what he needs for security, and he is supported,
but his eyes are on his ways.
- 24 These people are exalted; still, in only a little while, they will be gone;
indeed, they will be brought low; they will be gathered up like all the others;
they will be cut off like the tops of ears of grain.
- 25 If it is not so, who can prove me to be a liar;
who can make my speech worth nothing?"
-

Job 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Eliphaz. It is a continuation of the previous chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Court

This chapter uses an extended metaphor of a court case to describe Job's "case," which he seeks to bring to Yahweh, who is a judge. Cultures without a legal system will have difficulty translating this chapter.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Eliphaz that he is wrong. These questions help to build Job's argument.

Job 24:1

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

Why are times for judging wicked people not set by the Almighty?

Job uses this question to express his frustration that God has not judged evil. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I do not understand why God does not set a time when he will judge wicked people." or "The Almighty should set a time when he will judge wicked people."

Why do not those who are faithful to God see his days of judgment come?

Job uses this question to express his frustration that the righteous have not seen God judge evil. Alternate translation: "It seems that those who obey him never get to see him judge the wicked." or "God should show the day he will judge the wicked to those who know him."

Job 24:2

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

boundary markers

These are stones or other objects to mark the boundary between the lands owned by different people.

pastures

land with grass for animals to eat

Job 24:3

They drive away

"They steal"

those without fathers

"orphans" or "children whose parents have died"

they take the widow's ox as a pledge

"they take widows' oxen to guarantee that the widows will pay back the money that they loaned to those widows"

widow

a woman whose husband has died

as a pledge

A lender would take something from a borrower to ensure that the borrower pays him back.

Job 24:4

out of their path

"out of their way" or "off the road"

poor people of the earth all hide themselves

The word "all" is an exaggeration to show that many poor people are afraid of these wicked people.

Job 24:5

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

these poor people go out to their work like wild donkeys in the wilderness, looking carefully for food

These poor people are spoken of as if they are wild donkeys who do not know where they will find food. Alternate translation: "these poor people go out to search for food as if they were wild donkeys in the wilderness"

wild donkeys

"donkeys that no one owns or cares for"

Job 24:6

General Information:

This verse is a synecdoche that describes the misery and hard work of the poor. They harvest food for rich people's animals to eat, and they get the last grapes of crops that the wicked enjoy in luxury.

They reap fodder in the field

The words in this line are not clear. Other possible meanings are that they reap at night or that they reap in fields not their own.

reap ... glean

Reaping is the work of hired hands, while gleaning is the work of the landless poor. Taken together, this is a description of poor people who must work in fields belonging to other people, including the wicked.

fodder

food for animals

Job 24:7

They lie naked ... they have no covering

These two lines describe the same thing and are used together to emphasize that these people do not have enough clothing to keep warm.

Job 24:8

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

They are wet with the showers of the mountains

"They become wet when it rains in the mountains"

Job 24:9

The fatherless is seized from the breast, and they take a pledge against the poor

You may need to make explicit that the word "they" refers to the understood actors who seize the fatherless. "They seize the fatherless from the breast and take a pledge against the poor" or "The fatherless are seized from the breast of the poor as a pledge"

The fatherless is seized from the breast

Here "breast" is a synecdoche for the mother. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The wicked seize the fatherless from their mothers"

The fatherless is

"Fatherless children are" or "The orphan is" or "Orphans are"

Job 24:10

go about

"walk around"

naked without clothing

The words "without clothing" mean the same thing as "naked." Alternate translation: "completely naked" or "naked because they have no clothing"

they carry bundles of grain belonging to other people

This means their work will provide food for others but not for themselves.

Job 24:11

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

The poor people make oil

they squeezed olives in order to extract olive oil from them

within the walls of those wicked men

Here "walls" refers to the whole house. Alternate translation: "in the houses of those evil men"

they tread the wicked men's winepresses

It may be helpful to state that they do this to produce juice to make wine. Alternate translation: "they tread on grapes to make juice for wine"

they themselves suffer thirst

"they suffer from thirst" or "they are thirsty"

Job 24:12

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 24:13

Connecting Statement:
Job continues speaking.

rebel against the light

Possible meanings of "light" are 1) visible light or 2) spiritual light, which refers to God or living righteously. Alternate translation: "hate the daylight" or "do not want to do things openly" or "rebel against God"

they know not its ways, nor do they stay in its paths

These two lines describe the same thing, and are used together to emphasize that they do not want to follow the ways of the light. Alternate translation: "they do not know how to live a moral life; they stay far away from living a righteous life"

Job 24:14

the poor and the needy

The words "poor" and "needy" refer to the same group of people and emphasize that these are people who are unable to help themselves.

he is like a thief

The murderer kills in secret just like a thief steals without anyone seeing what he does. Alternate translation: "he kills people secretly, just like a thief steals secretly"

Job 24:15

Connecting Statement:
Job continues speaking.

the eye of the adulterer

Here "eye" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "the adulterer"

for the twilight
"for the sunset"

No eye will see me

Here "eye" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "No one will see me"

Job 24:16

they dig into houses

They dig into the houses in order to steal what is in them. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "wicked people dig into houses to steal what is in them"

they shut themselves up
"they hide inside"

Job 24:17

For all of them, thick darkness is like the morning
The thick darkness is as comfortable for the wicked as light of the morning is for normal people.

the terrors of thick darkness

"the scary things that happen at night"

Job 24:18

Connecting Statement:
Job continues speaking.

like foam on the surface of the waters

Foam lasts only a short time. This emphasizes how quickly God will cause the wicked to disappear.

their portion of the land is cursed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God curses the part of the land that they own"

Job 24:19

As drought and heat melt away ... those who have sinned

Job says that sinners will disappear in Sheol in the same way as snow melts and disappears when it becomes warm.

drought and heat

These two words describe essentially the same weather and are used together to describe it fully.

Job 24:20

Connecting Statement:
Job continues speaking.

The womb

This refers to the mother. Alternate translation: "The mother"

the worm will feed sweetly on him

This means that he will die and worms will eat his body. Alternate translation: "the worm will enjoy eating his dead body" or "he will die and then his body will be eaten by worms"

he will be remembered no more

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will remember him anymore"

wickedness will be broken like a tree

God's destruction of the wicked man is described as if he were cutting down a tree. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will destroy the wicked as if he were a tree"

Job 24:21

The wicked one devours

This metaphor emphasizes how ruthless the wicked man is. Alternate translation: "Just like a wild animal kills its prey, so the wicked person harms"

the barren women who have not borne children

The people of that day considered that a woman who was barren was cursed by God. Therefore, this represents the most unfortunate women.

widow

a woman whose husband has died

Job 24:22

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

by his power

"by using his power" or "because he is powerful"

he rises up and does not strengthen him in life

Here "does not strengthen him in life" means God does not keep the mmighty alive. Alternate translation: "God rises up and does not give the mighty the strength to live" or "God rises up and causes them to die"

the mighty

"mighty people" or, by implication, "the wicked" or "wicked people"

Job 24:23

gives him what he needs ... he is supported

"gives to the mighty what the mighty needs ... he is supported" or "gives to mighty people what they need ... they are supported"

he is supported

"he is safe" or "he has what he needs"

but his eyes are on his ways

Here "eyes" are a synecdoche for God, whose eyes they are. Alternate translation: "but God is always watching what they do"

Job 24:24

Connecting Statement:

This concludes Job's speech.

they will be brought low

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will bring them low" or "God will destroy them"

they will be gathered up like all the others

Some translations are based on a different early text, which says "they wither and fade like weeds."

they will be gathered up like all the others

This can be stated in active form. What "the others" refers to can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "God will gather them up as he gathered up the other wicked people"

they will be cut off like the tops of ears of grain

These wicked people will be cut off in the same way heads of grain are cut off during harvest. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will cut them off like a farmer cuts off the top of a stalk of grain"

Job 24:25

If it is not so, who can prove me to be a liar; who can make my speech worth nothing?

Job uses this question to express the certainty of his argument. The implicit answer is: "no one." Alternate translation: "This is true, and no one can prove that I am a liar; no one can prove me wrong."

make my speech worth nothing

"prove what I say is wrong"

Chapter 25

- ¹ Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said,
- ² "Dominion and fear are with him;
he makes order in his high places of heaven.
- ³ Is there any end to the number of his armies?
Upon whom does his light not shine?
- ⁴ How then can man be righteous with God?
How can he who is born of a woman be clean, acceptable to him?
- ⁵ See, even the moon has no brightness to him;
the stars are not pure in his sight.
- ⁶ How much less man, who is a worm—
a son of man, who is a worm!"

Job 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of the advice of Job's friend, Bildad. His words in this chapter are much stronger than when he previously spoke.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's holiness and man's sin

Bildad describes the holiness of Yahweh and the universal nature of man's sinfulness. While his points are accurate, they are not convincing for Job because he has been righteous. (See: holy and sin and righteous)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Bildad uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job that he is wrong. These questions help to build Bildad's argument.

Job 25:1

Bildad the Shuhite

See how you translated this man's name in Job 2:11.

Job 25:2

Dominion and fear are with him

Here "him" refers to God. The abstract nouns "dominion" and "fear" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "God rules over all and people should fear only him"

he makes order in his high places of heaven
"he makes peace in the high heaven"

Job 25:3

Is there any end to the number of his armies?

Bildad uses this question to emphasize how great God is. The implicit answer is "no." This refers to

the armies of God's angels. Alternate translation: "There is no end to the number of angels in his army." or "His armies are so big that no one can count them."

Upon whom does his light not shine?

Bildad uses this question to emphasize that God gives light to every person. Alternate translation: "There is no one upon whom his light does not shine." or "God makes his light shine over everyone."

Job 25:4

Connecting Statement:

Bildad continues speaking.

How then can man ... God? How can he who is born ... him?

These two questions are used together to emphasize that it is impossible for a man to be good enough before God.

How then can man be righteous with God?

The implicit reaction is that he cannot. Alternate translation: "A man can never be righteous before God."

How can he who is born ... acceptable to him?

The implicit reaction is that he cannot. Alternate translation: "He who is born of a woman cannot be clean or acceptable to him."

he who is born of a woman

This idiom includes everyone. Alternate translation: "any person"

Job 25:5

See

The word "See" here adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "Indeed"

the moon has no brightness to him

The abstract noun "brightness" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "the moon is not bright enough for God"

the stars are not pure in his sight

Here "pure" means "perfect." Alternate translation: "he does not think even the stars are perfect"

Job 25:6

How much less man ... a son of man, who is a worm

These two lines say the same thing and are used together to emphasize that man is not perfect.

who is a worm

Bildad states that human beings are as worthless as worms. Alternate translation: "who is as worthless as a worm"

a son of man

This is another way of referring to a person. Alternate translation: "a person"

Chapter 26

- ¹ Then Job answered and said,
- ² "How you have helped one who has no power!
How you have saved the arm that has no strength!
- ³ How you have advised one who has no wisdom
and announced to him sound wisdom!
- ⁴ With whose help have you spoken these words?
Whose spirit was it that came out from you?
- ⁵ The dead are made to tremble,
those who are beneath the waters
and all who dwell in them.
- ⁶ Sheol is naked before God;
destruction itself has no covering against him.
- ⁷ He stretches out the northern skies
over the empty space,
and he hangs the earth over nothing.
- ⁸ He binds up the waters in his thick clouds,
but the clouds are not torn under them.
- ⁹ He covers the surface of the moon
and spreads his clouds on it.
- ¹⁰ He has engraved a circular boundary on the surface of the waters
as the line between light and darkness.
- ¹¹ The pillars of heaven tremble
and are astonished at his rebuke.
- ¹² He calmed the sea with his power;
by his understanding he shattered Rahab.
- ¹³ By his breath he made the skies clear;
his hand pierced the fleeing serpent.
- ¹⁴ See, these are but the fringes of his ways;
how small a whisper do we hear of him!
Who can understand the thunder of his power?"

Job 26 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Bildad.

This chapter begins a section continuing through chapter 31.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's power

While Bildad describes Yahweh's power as being so much greater than Job's, Job understands the true extent of Yahweh's power. It is not just over Job's life, but over all of creation.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Sarcasm

Job uses sarcasm in this chapter. This is the use of irony to insult Bildad.

Job 26:1

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 26:2

How you have helped one ... the arm that has no strength

In these statements, Job is accusing Bildad. The word "one" refers to Job. And, the word "arm" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I am powerless and have no strength, but you act like you have helped me; but really, you have not helped me at all"

Job 26:3

How you have advised one who has no wisdom and announced to him sound wisdom

Job is saying that Bildad has not provided him with good advice and knowledge. Alternate translation: "You act like I have no wisdom and that you have advised me, that you have given me good advice"

announced to him sound wisdom
"given him good advice"

Job 26:4

With whose help have you spoken these words? Whose spirit was it ... you?

In these questions Job continues to mock Bildad. They are both rhetorical questions and have basically the same meaning. They are used together to strengthen each other. Alternate translation: "You must have had help speaking these words. Perhaps some spirit helped you speak them!"

Job 26:5

The dead

This refers to dead people. Alternate translation: "Those who are dead" or "The spirits of the dead"

tremble

They tremble because they are afraid of God. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "tremble in fear" or "tremble in fear of God"

those who are beneath the waters

This refers to the dead people who tremble.

all who dwell in them

This refers to the dead people who dwell in the waters.

Job 26:6

Sheol is naked before God; destruction itself has no covering

Sheol is spoken of as if it were a person. These two phrases have the same meaning. To be "naked" or

have "no covering" is to be completely exposed and not able to hide anything. Alternate translation: "It is like sheol is naked before God, for nothing in sheol, the place of destruction, is hidden from God"

destruction

This is another name for sheol. Alternate translation: "the place of destruction"

Job 26:7

He stretches out the northern skies over the empty space

The northern skies represent heaven, the place where God dwells with the beings he created to dwell there.

Job 26:8

He binds up the waters in his thick clouds

The clouds are compared to a large blanket in which God wraps the rainwater. Alternate translation: "He wraps up the water in his thick clouds"

but the clouds are not torn under them

This can be stated actively. The word "them" refers to the waters. Alternate translation: "but the weight of the waters does not tear the clouds"

Job 26:9

and spreads his clouds on it

This phrase tells how he covers the surface of the moon. Alternate translation: "by spreading his clouds in front of it"

Job 26:10

He has engraved a circular boundary on the surface of the waters

This speaks of the horizon, where the earth appears to meet the sky, as if God has marked a boundary on the ocean.

Job 26:11

The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his rebuke

People thought of heaven or the sky as resting on pillars. Job speaks as though the pillars are humans that shake in fear when God is angry. Alternate translation: "The pillars that hold up heaven shake in fear when God rebukes them" or "The pillars that hold up the sky shake like people who are afraid when God rebukes them"

Job 26:12

he shattered Rahab

"he destroyed Rahab"

Rahab

This is the name of a frightening monster that lived in the sea. See how you translated this in [Job 9:13]

Job 26:13

By his breath he made the skies clear

The noun "breath" can be translated with the verb "breathe" or "blow." This image represents God causing the wind to blow away the clouds. Alternate translation: "God blew away the clouds so that the skies were clear"

his hand pierced the fleeing serpent

It is implied that God is holding a sword, and here "his hand" represents that sword. Also, "pierced" represents killing. Alternate translation: "With his sword he pierced the fleeing serpent"

the fleeing serpent

"the serpent as it was trying to escape from him."
This refers to Rahab, the monster in the sea. See Job 26:12.

Job 26:14

See, these are but the fringes of his ways

Here "fringes" represents a small part that we can see of something that is much bigger. Alternate translation: "See, these things that God has done show only a small part of his great power"

how small a whisper do we hear of him!

This is an exclamation that expresses Job's amazement of all the great things that God does that we do not even know about. Seeing what God does is spoken of as hearing God's voice. Alternate translation: "it is as if we heard only his quiet whisper!"

Who can understand the thunder of his power?

The "thunder of his power" represents God's greatness. Job uses this question to emphasize that God's power is so great that no one can understand it. Alternate translation: "The thunder displays the greatness of his power which no one can understand!"

Chapter 27

- ¹ Job continued his discourse, and he said,
- ² "As surely as God lives, who has taken away my justice,
the Almighty, who made my life bitter,
- ³ while my life is yet in me,
and the breath from God is in my nostrils,
this is what I will do.
- ⁴ My lips will not speak wickedness,
neither will my tongue speak deceit; ⁵ I will never admit that you are right;
until I die I will never deny my integrity.
- ⁶ I hold fast to my righteousness and will not let it go;
my conscience will not accuse me so long as I live.
- ⁷ Let my enemy be like a wicked man;
let him who rises up against me be like an unrighteous man.
- ⁸ For what is the hope of a godless man when God cuts him off,
when God takes away his life?
- ⁹ Will God hear his cry
when trouble comes upon him?
- ¹⁰ Will he delight himself in the Almighty
and call upon God at all times?
- ¹¹ I will teach you concerning the hand of God;
I will not conceal the thoughts of the Almighty.
- ¹² See, all of you have seen this yourselves;
why then have you become completely useless?
- ¹³ This is the portion of a wicked man with God,
the inheritance of the oppressor that he receives from the Almighty:
- ¹⁴ If his children multiply, it is for the sword;
his offspring will never have enough food.
- ¹⁵ Those who survive him will be buried by plague,
and their widows will make no lament for them.
- ¹⁶ Though the wicked man heaps up silver like the dust,
and heaps up clothing like clay,
- ¹⁷ he may heap up clothing, but righteous people will put it on,
and innocent people will divide up the silver among themselves.
- ¹⁸ He builds his house like a spider,
like a hut that a guard makes.
- ¹⁹ He lies down in bed rich, but he will not keep doing so;
he opens his eyes, and everything is gone.
- ²⁰ Terrors overtake him like waters;
a storm takes him away in the night.
- ²¹ The east wind carries him away, and he leaves;
it sweeps him out of his place.
- ²² It throws itself at him and does not stop;
he tries to flee out of its hand.
- ²³ It claps its hands at him
and hisses him from his place.
-

Job 27 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Bildad.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness

Despite being upset about his circumstances, Job does not curse God. Instead, he recognizes Yahweh's authority. (See: curse)

Job 27:1

continued his discourse

Or "continued speaking." If your language has a word for a series of proverbs or short teachings, you might want to use it for "discourse" here.

Job 27:2

As surely as God lives

This phrase shows that Job is taking an oath. Job compares the certainty that God is alive to the certainty of what he is saying. This is a way of making a solemn promise. Alternate translation: "I swear by God"

has taken away my justice

Justice is spoken of as if it were an object that could be taken away or given. Taking it away represents refusing to treat Job with justice. Alternate translation: "has refused to treat me justly"

made my life bitter

Job's "life" being bitter represents Job feeling resentful toward God. Alternate translation: "has caused me to become resentful" or "has made me feel angry because of the unfair way he has treated me"

Job 27:3

while my life is yet in me

This refers to the duration of the rest of his life. Alternate translation: "during the whole time that my life is yet in me" or "as long as my life is yet in me"

while my life is yet in me

The abstract noun "life" can be expressed with the adjective "alive" or the verb "live." Alternate translation: "as long as I am still alive" or "while I still live"

the breath from God is in my nostrils

"Breath ... in my nostrils" represents being able to breathe. "Breath from God" represents God making him able to breathe. Alternate translation: "God enables me to breathe"

nostrils

"nose"

Job 27:4

My lips will not speak wickedness, neither will my tongue speak deceit

These two phrases have basically the same meaning and are used together to emphasize that he will not speak in such ways. The phrases "My lips" and "my tongue" represent Job himself. Alternate translation: "I will not speak wickedness or deceit"

speak wickedness ... speak deceit

The abstract nouns "wickedness" and "deceit" can be expressed with "wickedly" and "deceitfully." Alternate translation: "speak wickedly ... speak deceitfully"

Job 27:5

I will never admit that you are right

"I will never agree with you and say that you three are right"

that you are right

The word "you" here is plural. It refers to Job's friends.

I will never deny my integrity

"I will never say that I am not innocent" or "I will always say that I am innocent"

Job 27:6

I hold fast to my righteousness

Here "hold fast" is a metaphor that represents being determined to continue to say something. The abstract noun "righteousness" can be expressed with "righteous." Alternate translation: "I am determined to continue saying that I am righteous"

will not let it go

Here "will not let it go" is a metaphor that represents not stopping saying something. Alternate translation: "will not stop saying that I am righteous" or "will not stop saying so"

my conscience will not accuse me so long as I live

Here the phrase "my conscience" represents Job. Alternate translation: "even in my thoughts, I will not accuse myself"

Job 27:7

Let my enemy be ... let him who rises up against me be

The two clauses that start with these words share the same meaning. They are used together to emphasize Job's strong desire that this should happen.

Let my enemy be like a wicked man

How he wants his enemy to be like a wicked person can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Let my enemy be punished like a wicked man" or "Let God punish my enemy as he punishes wicked people"

let him who rises up against me be like an unrighteous man

How he wants this person to be like an unrighteous man can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "let him who rises up against me be punished like an unrighteous man"

him who rises up against me

Here "rises up against me" is a metaphor meaning "opposes me." The whole phrase refers to Job's adversary. Alternate translation: "him who opposes me" or "my adversary"

Job 27:8

For what is the hope of a godless man when ... when God takes away his life?

Job uses this question to say that such a man has no hope. This question can be translated as a simple statement. Alternate translation: "There is no hope for the godless when God ... takes away his soul."

when God cuts him off, when God takes away his life

These two phrases have the same meaning. Alternate translation: "when God cuts him off and takes away his life" or "when God causes him to die"

cuts him off

This is a metaphor meaning "kills him" or "causes him to die"

takes away his life

This is a metaphor meaning "kills him" or "makes him stop living"

Job 27:9

Will God hear his cry when trouble comes upon him?

Job uses this question to say that God will not help that person. This question can be translated as a simple statement. Alternate translation: "God will not hear his cry when trouble comes upon him." or

"When trouble comes upon him and he cries out for help, God will not hear him."

Will God hear his cry

Here "hear his cry" represents responding to the godless man's cry and helping him. Alternate translation: "Will God respond to his cry"

Job 27:10

Will he delight himself in the Almighty and call upon God at all times?

Job uses this question to say that the godless man will not do these things. This question can be translated as a simple statement. Alternate translation: "He will not delight himself in the Almighty and call upon God at all times." or "He will not be happy about what the Almighty does and he will not pray to God often."

Job 27:11

I will teach you

Each occurrence of "you" in these verses is plural and refers to Job's three friends.

the hand of God

God's "hand" represents his power. Alternate translation: "the power of God"

I will not conceal the thoughts of the Almighty

The abstract noun "thoughts" can be expressed with the verb "think." Alternate translation: "I will not hide from you what the Almighty thinks"

Job 27:12

why then have you become completely useless?

Job uses this question to rebuke his friends for saying such foolish things. To become useless here is hyperbole for speaking useless words. This question can be translated as a simple statement. Alternate translation: "you should not have spoken so foolishly!"

Job 27:13

This is the portion of a wicked man with God

"This is what God has planned for the wicked man"

the inheritance of the oppressor that he receives from the Almighty

Here "the inheritance of the oppressor" is a metaphor representing what will happen to the oppressor. What God will do to him is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that God will give him. Alternate translation: "what the Almighty will do to the oppressor"

Job 27:14

it is for the sword

Here "the sword" represents dying in battle. Alternate translation: "they will die in battle"

Job 27:15

Those who survive him

This refers to the wicked man's children. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Those who continue to live after their wicked father dies"

will be buried by plague

Here "be buried" represents dying. Alternate translation: "will die by plague"

their widows ... them

The words "their" and "them" refer to "Those who survive him," that is, the children of the wicked man.

Job 27:16

heaps up silver like the dust

Here "heaps up" is a metonym meaning "gathers much." Job speaks as if the silver were as easy to get as dust. Alternate translation: "gathers large piles of silver" or "gathers silver as easily as he could gather dust"

heaps up clothing like clay

Here "heaps up" is a metonym meaning "gathers much." Job speaks as if the clothing were as easy to get as clay. Alternate translation: "gathers large piles of clothing" or "gathers clothing as easily as he could gather clay"

Job 27:17

General Information:

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Job 27:18

He builds his house like a spider

After "spider," the phrase "builds its web" is understood information. It can be made clear. Alternate translation: "He builds his house as a spider builds its web"

He builds his house like a spider

A spider web is fragile and easily destroyed. Alternate translation: "He builds his house as fragile as a spider builds its web" or "He builds his house as fragile as a spider's web"

like a hut

A hut is a temporary house that is also not very strong. Alternate translation: "like a temporary hut"

Job 27:19

He lies down in bed rich

"He is wealthy when he lies down in bed." This refers to his lying down in bed at night and sleeping.

but he will not keep doing so

"but he will not keep lying down in bed rich" or "but he will not continue to be wealthy when he lies down in bed"

he opens his eyes

Opening his eyes represents waking up in the morning. Alternate translation: "he wakes up"

everything is gone

"all of his riches are gone" or "everything has vanished"

Job 27:20

Terrors overtake him

Here "overtake him" represents suddenly happening to him. Possible meanings are that "terrors" is a metonym for 1) things that cause people to be afraid. Alternate translation: "Terrifying things suddenly happen to him" or 2) fear. Alternate translation: "He suddenly becomes terrified"

like waters

The word "waters" refers to a flood. Floods can happen very suddenly when people do not expect them, and they are dangerous and frightening. Alternate translation: "like a flood" or "like waters that rise up suddenly"

a storm takes him away

"a violent wind blows him away"

Job 27:21

it sweeps him out of his place

Job speaks of the wind blowing the wicked man out of his house as if the wind were a person sweeping dust out of a house with a broom. Alternate translation: "the wind sweeps him out of his place like a woman who sweeps dirt out of a house" or "the wind easily blows him out of his place"

his place

"his home"

Job 27:22

General Information:

In verses 22-23 Job speaks of the wind as if it were a person attacking the wicked person.

It throws itself at him

Here the phrase "throws itself at him" represents the wind blowing strong against him like an attacker. Alternate translation: "It blows strong against him like someone attacking him"

he tries to flee out of its hand

Here "hand" represents the power or control that the wind has over the wicked man. Alternate translation: "he tries to flee out of its control"

Job 27:23

It claps its hands at him

Clapping the hands is a way of mocking someone. Here it represents the wind making loud noises. Alternate translation: "It makes loud noises like someone clapping his hands to mock him"

hisses him from his place

The wind makes a noise as it blows him out of his place, and the noise is like the hissing sound that people make to mock someone. Alternate translation: "it makes a hissing noise as it causes him to leave his home" or "it blows him out of his place and makes a hissing noise like someone who hisses at him to mock him"

Chapter 28

- ¹ Surely there is a mine for silver,
 a place where they refine gold.
- ² Iron is taken out of the earth;
 copper is smelted out of the stone.
- ³ A man sets an end to darkness
 and searches out to the farthest limit
 the stones in the blackest darkness.
- ⁴ He breaks open a shaft away from where people live,
 places that are forgotten by anyone's foot.
 He hangs far away from people; he swings to and fro.
- ⁵ As for the earth, out of which comes bread,
 it is turned up below as if by fire.
- ⁶ Its stones are the place where sapphires are found,
 and its dust contains gold.
- ⁷ No bird of prey knows the path to it,
 nor has the falcon's eye seen it.
- ⁸ The proud animals have not walked such a path,
 nor has the fierce lion passed there.
- ⁹ A man lays his hand on the flinty rock;
 he overturns mountains by their roots.
- ¹⁰ He cuts out channels among the rocks;
 his eye sees every valuable thing there.
- ¹¹ He ties up the streams so they do not run;
 what is hidden there he brings out to the light.
- ¹² Where will wisdom be found?
 Where is the place of understanding?
- ¹³ Man does not know its price;
 neither is it found in the land of the living.
- ¹⁴ The deep waters under the earth say, 'It is not in me';
 the sea says, 'It is not with me.'
- ¹⁵ It cannot be gotten for gold;
 neither can silver be weighed as its price.
- ¹⁶ It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir,
 with precious onyx or sapphire.
- ¹⁷ Gold and crystal cannot equal it in worth;
 neither can it be exchanged for jewels of fine gold.
- ¹⁸ No mention is worth making of coral or jasper;
 indeed, the price of wisdom is more than rubies.
- ¹⁹ The topaz of Cush does not equal it;
 neither can it be valued in terms of pure gold.
- ²⁰ From where, then, comes wisdom?
 Where is the place of understanding?
- ²¹ Wisdom is hidden from the eyes of all living things
 and is kept hidden from the birds of the heavens.
- ²² Destruction and Death say,
 'We have heard just a rumor about it with our ears.'
- ²³ God understands the way to it;
 he knows its place.
- ²⁴ For he looks to the very ends of the earth
 and sees under all the heavens.
- ²⁵ He made the force of the wind
 and parceled out the waters by measure.

- 26 He made a decree for the rain
and a path for the thunder.
- 27 Then he saw wisdom and announced it;
he established it, indeed, and he examined it.
- 28 To people he said,
'See, the fear of the Lord—that is wisdom;
to depart from evil is understanding.'

Job 28 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Bildad.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's wisdom

Despite being upset about his circumstances, Job does not curse God. Instead, he recognizes Yahweh's wisdom and authority. This chapter especially focuses on Yahweh's wisdom as he controls the circumstances of Job's life. Men cannot understand because they do not have Yahweh's wisdom. (See: curse and wise)

Job 28:1

mine

This is a place where people dig rocks out of the earth. These rocks have metal in them.

refine

This is the process of heating a metal to remove all of the impurities that are in it.

Job 28:2

Iron is taken out of the earth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People take iron out of the earth"

copper is smelted out of the stone

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people smelt copper out of the stone" or "people heat stone to melt copper out of it"

copper

an important red-brown colored metal

smelted

This is a process of heating rocks to melt the metal in them in order to get the metal out of the rocks.

Job 28:3

A man sets an end to darkness

Here "sets an end to darkness" represents shining a light in the darkness. People used a lantern or a torch for light. Alternate translation: "A man carries light into dark places"

to the farthest limit

"to the farthest parts of the mine"

Job 28:4

shaft

a deep narrow hole dug into the ground or rock. People go down into the hole to mine it.

places that are forgotten by anyone's foot

The foot is spoken of as if it is a person who can remember. Alternate translation: "places where people no longer walk" or "where no one ever walks"

He hangs far away from people

How and where he hangs can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Far away from people, he hangs from a rope in the shaft"

Job 28:5

the earth, out of which comes bread

Here "bread" represents food in general. Food coming out of the ground is a metaphor for food growing out of the ground. Alternate translation: "the earth, where food grows"

it is turned up below as if by fire

Possible meanings are that 1) people made fires under the ground to break apart the rock. Alternate translation: "it is broken up below by the fires that the miners make" or 2) "turned" is a metaphor for changed. Alternate translation: "it is broken up below so much that it appears that it was destroyed by fire"

it is turned

The word "it" refers to the earth.

Job 28:6

Its stones ... its dust

The word "its" refers to the earth.

sapphires

a rare and valuable blue gemstone

Job 28:7

No bird of prey knows the path to it ... nor has the falcon's eye seen it

These clauses express a similar meaning. Alternate translation: "No bird of prey or falcon knows or has ever seen the path that goes to the mine"

bird of prey

a bird that eats other animals

falcon

This may also be translated "hawk." Both are birds that hunt and eat other animals. You may translate this with a similar bird from your culture.

Job 28:8

The proud animals have not walked such a path ... nor has the fierce lion passed there

These clauses also express similar meaning.

The proud animals

This refers to very strong, wild animals.

Job 28:9

lays his hand on the flinty rock

This represents breaking up the rock. Alternate translation: "digs into the flinty rock"

flinty rock

"hard rock"

he overturns mountains by their roots

Digging up the mountains and the ground underneath them is a metaphor from digging out weeds or trees, an exaggeration that represents digging minerals out of the ground. Alternate translation: "he turns the mountains upside down by pulling out their roots"

Job 28:10

his eye sees

Here "his eye" represents him. Alternate translation: "he sees"

Job 28:11

He ties up the streams so they do not run

Here "ties up the streams" means damming or blocking the streams. Alternate translation: "He blocks the streams so they do not flow"

what is hidden there

This refers to things that people normally do not see because they are in the ground or underwater.

Job 28:12

General Information:

In 28:12-28, wisdom and understanding are spoken of as if they were precious objects that are in some place and people want to find them. Finding wisdom and understanding represents becoming wise and learning to understand things well.

Where will wisdom be found? Where is the place of understanding?

These questions mean the same thing and are used to show that it is very difficult to find wisdom and understanding. Alternate translation: "It is very difficult to find wisdom and understanding."

Where will wisdom be found? Where is the place of understanding

Becoming wise and understanding is spoken of as finding wisdom and understanding. Alternate translation: "How do people become wise? How do people learn to understand things well?"

Job 28:13

Man does not know its price

Possible meanings are 1) wisdom is spoken of as if it were something that people can buy. Alternate translation: "People do not know what it is worth" or 2) the word translated as "price" means "place." Alternate translation: "People do not know where it is"

neither is it found in the land of the living

"and it is not found in the land of the living." The "land of the living" refers to this world where people live. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and no one can find wisdom in this world"

Job 28:14

The deep waters ... say, 'It is not in me'; the sea says, 'It is not with me.'

The deep waters and the sea are presented as if they are people that can speak. Alternate translation: "Wisdom is not in the deep waters under the earth, nor is it in the sea"

Job 28:15

It cannot be gotten for gold

This can be stated in active form. This implies that wisdom is worth much more than gold. Alternate translation: "People cannot pay for wisdom with gold"

neither can silver be weighed as its price

This implies that wisdom is worth much more than silver. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and people cannot weigh out enough silver to pay for wisdom"

Job 28:16

It cannot be valued with ... sapphire

This implies that wisdom is much more valuable than the gold of Ophir, precious onyx and sapphire.

Ophir

This is the name of a land where there was fine gold.

onyx

a valuable black gemstone

sapphire

a valuable blue gemstone

Job 28:17

Gold and crystal cannot equal it in worth

This implies that wisdom is much more valuable than gold and crystal.

crystal

a valuable gemstone that is clear or lightly colored

neither can it be exchanged for jewels of fine gold

"and it cannot be exchanged for jewels of fine gold." This implies that wisdom is much more valuable than jewels of fine gold.

exchanged

"traded"

Job 28:18

No mention is worth making of coral or jasper

"It is not worth making mention of coral and jasper." This implies that wisdom is worth so much more than coral and jasper that there is no need for Job to say anything about them. Alternate translation: "I will not bother to mention coral or jasper" or "Coral and jasper are worthless compared to wisdom"

coral

This is a beautiful, hard substance that grows on ocean reefs.

jasper ... rubies

These are valuable gemstones.

Job 28:19

The topaz of Cush does not equal it

This implies that wisdom is much more valuable than the finest topaz.

topaz

This is a valuable gemstone.

neither can it be valued in terms of pure gold

"and wisdom cannot be valued in terms of pure gold." This implies that wisdom is much more valuable than pure gold.

Job 28:20

From where, then, comes wisdom? Where is the place of understanding?

Job uses these questions to introduce how people get wisdom and understanding. Alternate translation: "I will tell you where wisdom comes from and where understanding is." or "I will tell you how to become wise and how to learn to understand things."

From where, then, comes wisdom

Wisdom is spoken of as if it were in a place and comes to people. Its coming represents people becoming wise.

Where is the place of understanding

Understanding is spoken of as if it were in a place.

Job 28:21

Wisdom is hidden from the eyes of all living things

This means that living things are unable to see wisdom. It can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "No living thing can see wisdom"

is kept hidden from the birds of the heavens

This means that the birds are unable to see wisdom. This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "even the birds that fly in the skies cannot see wisdom"

Job 28:22

Destruction and Death say

Here "Destruction" and "Death" are spoken of as if they are living things who can speak.

Job 28:23

God understands the way to it; he knows its place

Wisdom is spoken of as if it were in a certain place. Alternate translation: "God knows how to find wisdom. He knows where it is"

Job 28:24

the very ends of the earth
"the farthest places on the earth"

Job 28:25

parceled out the waters by measure
This describes God deciding how much water should be in each place. Possible meanings are that this refers to deciding 1) how much rain should be in each cloud or 2) how much water should be in each sea. Alternate translation: "decided how much water should be in each place"

Job 28:26

a path for the thunder
"he decided how the thunder can be heard" or "he decided the path of the thunderstorm"

Job 28:27

General Information:
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Job 28:28

See, the fear of the Lord—that is wisdom
The abstract noun "fear" can be expressed with the verbs "fear" or "respect." The abstract noun "wisdom" can be expressed with the word "wise." Alternate translation: "Listen, if you fear the Lord, you will be wise"

to depart from evil is understanding
Here "depart from evil" means refusing to do evil things. The abstract noun "understanding" can be expressed with the verb "understand." Alternate translation: "if you refuse to do evil, then you will understand many things"

Chapter 29

- ¹ Job resumed speaking and said,
- ² "Oh, that I were as I was in the past months
when God cared for me,
- ³ when his lamp shined on my head,
and when I walked through darkness by his light.
- ⁴ Oh, that I were as I was in the ripeness of my days
when the friendship of God was on my tent,
- ⁵ when the Almighty was yet with me,
and my children were around me,
- ⁶ when my way was covered with cream,
and the rock poured out for me streams of oil!
- ⁷ When I went out to the city gate,
when I sat in my place in the city square,
- ⁸ the young men saw me and kept their distance from me in respect,
and the aged people rose and stood for me.
- ⁹ The princes used to refrain from talking when I came;
they would lay their hand on their mouths.
- ¹⁰ The voices of the noblemen were hushed,
and their tongue clung to the roof of their mouths.
- ¹¹ For after their ears heard me, they would then bless me;
after their eyes saw me, they would then give witness to me and approve of me
- ¹² because I rescued the one who was poor when he cried out,
and the one who had no father when he had no one to help him.
- ¹³ The blessing of him who was about to perish came on me;
I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.
- ¹⁴ I put on righteousness, and it clothed me;
my justice was like a robe and a turban.
- ¹⁵ I was eyes to blind people;
I was feet to lame people.
- ¹⁶ I was a father to needy people;
I would investigate the case even of one whom I did not know.
- ¹⁷ I broke the jaws of the unrighteous man;
I plucked the victim out from between his teeth.
- ¹⁸ Then I said, 'I will die in my nest;
I will multiply my days like the grains of sand.
- ¹⁹ My roots are spread out to the waters,
and dew lies all night on my branches.
- ²⁰ The honor in me is always fresh,
and the bow of my strength is always new in my hand.'
- ²¹ To me men listened; they waited for me;
they stayed silent to hear my advice.
- ²² After my words were done, they did not speak again;
my speech dropped like water on them.
- ²³ They always waited for me as they waited for rain;
they opened their mouth wide to drink in my words,
as they would do for the latter rain.
- ²⁴ I smiled on them when they did not expect it;
they did not reject the light of my face.
- ²⁵ I selected their way and sat as their chief;
I lived like a king in his army,
like one who comforts mourners.

Job 29 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's statement, but now it is directly addressed to Yahweh.

In this chapter, Job recalls the days before Yahweh's blessings were taken from him. This is only one part of Job's argument that continues for the next 3 chapters.

Job 29:1

General Information:

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Job 29:2

Oh, that I were as I was in the past months

Job uses this exclamation to express a wish.

Alternate translation: "I wish that I were as I was in past months"

Job 29:3

when his lamp shined on my head

God's lamp shining on Job represents God blessing Job. Alternate translation: "when God's blessing was like a lamp shining its light on my head"

when I walked through darkness by his light

Walking through darkness represents experiencing difficult situations.

Job 29:4

in the ripeness of my days

Job speaks of when he was young and strong as if his days were the time when the harvest is ripe.

Alternate translation: "when I was young and strong"

when the friendship of God was on my tent

The abstract noun "friendship" can be expressed with the noun "friend." The word "tent" represents Job's home. Alternate translation: "when God was my friend and protected my home"

Job 29:5

General Information:

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Job 29:6

when my way was covered with cream

"when my path was flowing with cream." Job uses this exaggeration to express that he had many cows and they produced much more cream than he and his family needed. Alternate translation: "when my cows provided an abundance of cream"

and the rock poured out for me streams of oil

"and the rock poured out streams of oil for me." Job uses this exaggeration to express that he had many olive vines and great amounts of olive oil. The rock is where his servants pressed the oil out of the olives. Alternate translation: "when my servants pressed out a great amount of olive oil" or "when oil flowed like streams from the pressing rock"

Job 29:7

city square

This is an open area in a village or city where two or more streets meet.

Job 29:8

rose and stood for me

This is a symbol of respect. It can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "rose and stood respectfully for me"

Job 29:9

The princes used to refrain from talking when I came

This was a sign of respect.

they would lay their hand on their mouths

They did this to show that they would not speak. This was a sign of their respect for Job.

Job 29:10

The voices of the noblemen were hushed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The noblemen hushed their voices" or "The noblemen stopped speaking"

their tongue clung to the roof of their mouths

This represents them having so much respect for Job that they had nothing to say. Alternate translation: "they felt that they were unable to speak" or "they had nothing to say"

Job 29:11

after their ears heard me ... after their eyes saw me

The ears represent those who heard him, and the eyes represent those who saw him. Alternate translation: "after they heard what I told them ... after they saw me"

they would then give witness to me and approve of me
"they would witness approvingly of me"

Job 29:12

I rescued the one who was poor when he cried out
Here "the one who was poor" refers to any poor person. Alternate translation: "I used to rescue poor people who cried out"

Job 29:13

The blessing of him who was about to perish came on me
Someone's blessing coming on another represents that person blessing another. Alternate translation: "He who was about to perish would bless me"

him who was about to perish
This represents anyone who was about to die. Alternate translation: "those who were about to die"

I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy
Here "the widow's heart" represents any widow. Alternate translation: "I caused widows to sing joyfully"

Job 29:14

I put on righteousness, and it clothed me
People often spoke of righteousness as if it were clothing. Alternate translation: "I did what was righteous, and it was like clothing that I put on"

my justice was like a robe and a turban
People often spoke of justice as if it were clothing. Alternate translation: "I did what was just, and it was like a robe and a turban on me"

turban
a long cloth that men wrap around their heads and wear as a hat

Job 29:15

I was eyes to blind people
This represents helping blind people. Alternate translation: "I was like eyes for blind people" or "I guided blind people"

I was feet to lame people
This represents helping blind people. Alternate translation: "I was like feet for lame people" or "I supported lame people"

Job 29:16

I was a father to needy people
Here "I was a father" represents providing for people. Alternate translation: "I provided for needy people as a father provides for his children"

Job 29:17

General Information:
In verses 18-20 Job tells about the things he used to say before bad things happened to him.

I broke the jaws of ... I plucked the victim
Job speaks of unrighteous people who persecute others as if they were wild animals that attack their victims by picking them up between their teeth. Alternate translation: "I made unrighteous people stop persecuting people, like someone who breaks the jaw of a wild animal and rescues its victim from between its teeth"

Job 29:18

I will die in my nest
Here "nest" represents Job's home and family. Job used to speak as if he were a bird that lived in a nest with his baby birds. Alternate translation: "I will die at home with my family" or "I will die in the safety of my home"

I will multiply my days like the grains of sand
There are more grains of sand on the shore than anyone can count. To say that he would live more days than anyone could count is an exaggeration to express that he would live a very long time. Alternate translation: "I will live a very long time" or "I will live many years"

Job 29:19

My roots ... my branches
Job used to speak of his strength as if he were strong like a well-watered tree.

Job 29:20

The honor in me is always fresh
The abstract noun "honor" can be expressed with the verb "honor." Here "fresh" represents the honor being constantly given. Alternate translation: "People constantly give me honor" or "People always honor me"

the bow of my strength is always new in my hand
A new bow is very strong. Job's bow of strength in his hand represents his physical strength. Alternate translation: "I am always strong like a new bow"

Job 29:21

General Information:
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Job 29:22

my speech dropped like water on them
Here "dropped like water on them" represents refreshing the people who heard him. The abstract

noun "speech" can be translated with the verb "speak" or "say." Alternate translation: "my speech refreshed their hearts as drops of water refresh people's bodies" or "what I said to them refreshed them like drops of water"

Job 29:23

They always waited for me as they waited for rain
People waited for Job patiently and expected to hear good things.

they opened their mouth wide to drink in my words
This represents waiting eagerly for Job to speak in order to benefit from what said. Alternate translation: "they eagerly waited for me to speak in order to benefit from what I said"

as they would do for the latter rain
"as farmers wait eagerly for the latter rain"

the latter rain
This refers to the large amount of rain that falls just before the dry season.

Job 29:24

I smiled on them
It can be stated clearly that the purpose of smiling was to encourage them. Alternate translation: "I smiled on them to encourage them"

the light of my face
This represents the kindness they saw in Job's face.

Job 29:25

I selected their way
Here "selected their way" represents deciding what they should do.

sat as their chief
Here "sat" represents ruling or leading. Chiefs sat down when they made important decisions. Alternate translation: "led them as their chief"

sat as their chief
Job was their chief. Alternate translation: "led them because I was their chief"

I lived like a king in his army
Job speaks of how he led the people and how they obeyed him as if he were a king and they were his army.

like one who comforts mourners
This phrase means that Job actually was one who comforted people. Alternate translation: "I comforted them when they mourned"

Chapter 30

- ¹ Now those who are younger than I have nothing but mockery for me—
these young men whose fathers I would have refused to allow to work beside the dogs of my flock.
- ² Indeed, the strength of their fathers' hands, how could it have helped me—
men in whom the strength of their mature age had perished?
- ³ They were thin from poverty and hunger;
they gnawed at the dry ground in the darkness of wilderness and desolation.
- ⁴ They plucked saltwort and bushes' leaves;
the roots of the broom tree were their food.
- ⁵ They were driven out from among people
who shouted after them as one would shout after a thief.
- ⁶ So they had to live in river valleys,
in holes of the earth and of the rocks.
- ⁷ Among the bushes they brayed like donkeys
and they gathered together under the nettles.
- ⁸ They were the sons of fools, indeed, sons of nameless people!
They were driven out of the land with whips.
- ⁹ But now I have become the subject of their taunting song;
I have become a byword for them.
- ¹⁰ They abhor me and stand far off from me;
they do not refrain from spitting in my face.
- ¹¹ For God has unstrung the string to my bow and afflicted me,
and those who taunt me cast off restraint before my face.
- ¹² Upon my right hand rise the rabble;
they drive me away and
pile up against me their siege mounds.
- ¹³ They destroy my path;
they push forward disaster for me,
men who have no one to hold them back.
- ¹⁴ They come against me like an army through a wide hole in a city wall;
in the midst of the destruction they roll themselves in on me.
- ¹⁵ Terrors are turned upon me;
my honor is driven away as if by the wind;
my prosperity passes away as a cloud.
- ¹⁶ Now my life is pouring out from within me;
many days of suffering have laid hold on me.
- ¹⁷ In the night my bones in me are pierced;
the pains that gnaw at me take no rest.
- ¹⁸ God's great force has seized my clothing;
it wraps around me like the collar of my tunic.
- ¹⁹ He has thrown me into the mud;
I have become like dust and ashes.
- ²⁰ I cry to you, God, but you do not answer me;
I stand up, and you merely look at me.
- ²¹ You have changed and become cruel to me;
with the might of your hand you persecute me.
- ²² You lift me up to the wind and cause it to drive me along;
you throw me back and forth in a storm. ^[1]
- ²³ For I know that you will bring me to death,
to the house appointed for all the living.
- ²⁴ However, does no one reach out with his hand to beg for help when he falls?

- Does no one in trouble call out for help?
- 25 Did not I weep for him whose day is hard?
Did I not grieve for the needy man?
- 26 When I hoped for good, then evil came;
when I waited for light, darkness came instead.
- 27 My heart is troubled and does not rest;
days of affliction have come on me.
- 28 I have gone about like one who was living in the dark,
but not because of the sun;
I stand up in the assembly and cry for help.
- 29 I am a brother to jackals,
a companion of ostriches.
- 30 My skin is black and falls away from me;
my bones are burned with heat.
- 31 Therefore my harp is tuned for songs of mourning,
my flute for the singing of those who wail.
-

Footnotes

30:22 ^[1]Some modern translations have

Job 30 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's statement, but now it is directly addressed to Yahweh.

In this chapter, Job laments his current condition as others insult him. (See: lament)

Job 30:1

whose fathers I would have refused to allow to work beside the dogs of my flock

This shows how much he despised those fathers. They were not even good enough to be with his dogs. Alternate translation: "whose fathers I despised and would not have allowed to work beside the dogs of my flock"

the dogs of my flock

The dogs' relationship to the flock can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the dogs that guarded my flock"

Job 30:2

Indeed, the strength of their fathers' hands, how could it have helped me ... perished?

Job uses this question to mock the weakness of those men. Alternate translation: "The strength of their fathers' hands could not have helped me ... perished."

men in whom the strength of their mature age had perished

Their strength perishing is a metaphor that represents no longer being strong but weak. The

phrase "mature age" refers to them being old. Alternate translation: "men who had become old and had no strength" or "men who had become old and weak"

Job 30:3

They were thin from poverty and hunger

The word "They" refers to the fathers of the young mockers.

They were thin from poverty and hunger

The abstract noun "poverty" can be expressed with the word "poor." The abstract noun "hunger" can be expressed with the words "hungry" or "starving." Alternate translation: "They were very thin because they were poor and starving"

they gnawed at the dry ground

Possible meanings are that 1) "dry ground" is a metonym for the dry roots that grow in the ground. Alternate translation: "they chewed on the dry roots they found in the ground" or 2) "gnawed at the dried ground" is a metonym for eating whatever they could find in the dry ground.

Job 30:4

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to talk about the fathers of the mockers.

saltwort ... bushes' leaves ... the roots of the broom tree

These are plants that people would eat only if they could find nothing better.

the roots of the broom tree were their food

Possible meanings are 1) the people ate the roots of the broom tree or 2) the people warmed themselves by burning the roots of broom trees.

Job 30:5

They were driven out from among people who shouted after them as ... a thief

The phrase "were driven out" means "were forced to leave." These phrases can be reordered and stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people shouted after them as ... a thief and forced them to leave"

shouted after them as one would shout after a thief
"shouted at them as though they were thieves"

Job 30:6

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 30:7

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to talk about the fathers of the mockers.

brayed like donkeys

Job speaks of the men crying out in hunger as if they were wild donkeys making a loud noise. Alternate translation: "cried out like wild donkeys because they were hungry"

they gathered together under the nettles

"Nettles" are bushes with sharp thorns. This implies that they did not have a home.

Job 30:8

They were the sons of fools

Here "were the sons of fools" represents having the characteristics of fools. Alternate translation: "They were like fools" or "they were fools"

indeed, sons of nameless people

The word "indeed" shows that what follows strengthens the previous thought. Here "sons of nameless people" represents having the characteristics of nameless people. Alternate

translation: "indeed, they were nameless people" or "indeed, they were worthless"

nameless people

Here being "nameless" represents having no honor or respect. It means that they are worthless. Alternate translation: "worthless people"

They were driven out of the land with whips

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) the idea of whips implies that they were being treated like criminals. Alternate translation: "People treated them like criminals and forced them to leave the land" or 2) people actually used whips to force them out. Alternate translation: "People whipped them and forced them to leave the land"

They were driven out of the land

Here "the land" refers to the land where they lived before they were forced to go out to the wilderness.

Job 30:9

Connecting Statement:

Job speaks again about the people who were mocking him.

But now I have become the subject of their taunting song

The abstract noun "song" can be expressed with the verb "sing." Alternate translation: "But now they sing songs about me to taunt me"

I have become a byword for them

Here "byword" is a metonym for the person about whom people make cruel jokes. Alternate translation: "I am now one whom they make cruel jokes about" or "They joke and say cruel things about me"

Job 30:10

they do not refrain from spitting in my face

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "they even spit in my face"

Job 30:11

God has unstrung the string to my bow

A bow that is unstrung is not useful. The phrase "has unstrung the string of my bow" is a metaphor for making Job powerless. Alternate translation: "God has taken away my power to defend myself"

those who taunt me

"those who mock me"

cast off restraint before my face

A restraint keeps a person from moving freely and doing what he wants. Here "restraint" represents refraining from doing something, and "cast off restraint" represents not refraining from doing something. In this case the mockers did not refrain

from being cruel to Job. Alternate translation: "do not refrain from being cruel to me" or "do whatever cruel things they want to do to me"

Job 30:12

General Information:

Job speaks about the mockers treating him cruelly as if they were a mob and an army attacking him.

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak about the people who were mocking him.

Upon my right hand rise the rabble

"the rabble rise upon my right hand." Possible meanings are 1) rising upon Job's right hand represents attacking his strength. Alternate translation: "Gangs of young people attack my strength" or 2) rising upon Job's right hand represents attacking his honor. Alternate translation: "Mobs attack my honor"

they drive me away

"they force me to run away"

pile up against me their siege mounds

Armies would pile up mounds of dirt along a city's wall in order to climb over the wall and attack the city. Job speaks of the mockers preparing to attack him as if they were doing that. Alternate translation: "prepare to attack me like an army that prepares to attack a city"

Job 30:13

They destroy my path

This represents keeping Job from escaping their attack. Alternate translation: "They prevent me from escaping from them"

they push forward disaster for me

Here "push forward disaster" represents trying to make disaster happen. Alternate translation: "they try to make disaster happen to me" or "they try to destroy me"

men who have no one to hold them back

Here "hold them back" represents stopping them from doing something. Alternate translation: "men who have no one to stop them from attacking me"

Job 30:14

General Information:

Job speaks about the mockers treating him cruelly as if they were an army attacking him.

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak about the people who were mocking him.

They come against me like an army through a wide hole in a city wall

This represents attacking Job forcefully.

they roll themselves in on me

This represents many coming to attack him at once, like giant ocean waves rolling in on him.

Job 30:15

Terrors are turned upon me

Possible meanings are 1) Job has become terrified or 2) things are happening to Job that make him afraid.

my honor is driven away as if by the wind

Job speaks of suddenly having no honor as if the wind had blown it from him. Alternate translation: "Nobody honors me" or "I am now a person that people do not honor"

my prosperity passes away as a cloud

Job speaks of his prosperity ending as if it were a cloud that was blown away. Here "prosperity" may refer to well-being or safety. Alternate translation: "I no longer prosper at all" or "I am no longer safe"

Job 30:16

Now my life is pouring out from within me

Job speaks as if his life were a liquid and his body were a container. He feels he is about to die. Alternate translation: "Now I am dying"

many days of suffering have laid hold on me

Job speaks of his continuous suffering as if the days of suffering have grabbed hold of him. Alternate translation: "I suffer many days, and the suffering does not end"

Job 30:17

my bones in me are pierced

Job speaks of the pain in his bones as if his bones were being pierced. Alternate translation: "my bones ache terribly" or "I have sharp pain in my bones"

the pains that gnaw at me take no rest

Job speaks of his constant pain as if it were alive and biting him and refuses to rest. Alternate translation: "the pains that cause me to suffer do not stop" or "I am in constant pain"

Job 30:18

God's great force has seized my clothing

Job speaks of God using his force as if God's force were actually doing something. Here "God's ... force" stands for "God." Alternate translation: "God has seized my clothing by his great force"

God's great force has seized my clothing

The image of God's force seizing Job is a metaphor. Possible meanings are 1) it represents Job's pain. Alternate translation: "My pain feels like God has grabbed my clothing tightly" or 2) it represents God's causing Job's many problems. Alternate translation: "It is as though by his great force God has grabbed me by my clothes"

it wraps around me like the collar of my tunic

The image of God's force wrapping around Job is a metaphor. Possible meanings are 1) it represents Job's pain. Alternate translation: "he wraps the collar of my tunic tightly around me" or 2) it represents God's causing Job's many problems. Alternate translation: "It is as though he grabs me by the collar of my tunic"

Job 30:19

He has thrown me into the mud

Job says that God has humiliated him. Alternate translation: "It is as though he has thrown me in the mud" or "He has humiliated me, like a person thrown in the mud"

I have become like dust and ashes

This represents Job's feeling of being worthless. Alternate translation: "I have become as worthless as dust and ashes"

Job 30:20

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 30:21

cruel

This word means unkind.

with the might of your hand you persecute me

The word "hand" represents God's power. Alternate translation: "you persecute me with your power"

Job 30:22

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to God.

lift me up to the wind ... throw me back and forth in a storm

These expressions represent the extreme suffering that God made Job endure.

cause it to drive me along

"cause the wind to push me along"

Job 30:23

you will bring me to death

Here "bring me to death" represents causing Job to die. Alternate translation: "you will cause me to die"

the house appointed for all the living

Job speaks of the world of the dead as if it were a house to which God has appointed all living things to go. Alternate translation: "the world of the dead, to which everything that has ever lived goes"

all the living

That is, all things now alive, but that will die one day.

Job 30:24

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to God.

does no one reach out with his hand to beg for help when he falls? Does no one in trouble call out for help?

Job uses these questions to justify himself for crying out to God for help. Alternate translation: "Everyone reaches out with his hand to beg for help when he falls. Everyone who is in trouble calls out for help." or "I have fallen, and so God should not think I am doing wrong when I beg for his help. I am in trouble, so of course I call out for help!"

does no one reach out with his hand to beg for help when he falls? Does no one in trouble call out for help?

Some versions interpret these questions as Job complaining that God has reached out with his hand to harm Job when Job was in trouble and crying out for help. Alternate translation: "Surely no one would reach out with his hand against someone who falls and calls out for help."

Job 30:25

Did not I weep ... hard? Did I not grieve ... man?

Job uses these questions to remind God of how Job had done good to others. A: "You know that I wept ... hard, and I grieved ... man!"

him whose day is hard

Here the word "day" is a synecdoche for the person's life, and "hard" here means "difficult." Alternate translation: "him whose life is difficult"

Job 30:26

When I hoped for good, then evil came

Looking for good represents hoping for good things, and evil coming represents evil things happening.

I waited for light ... darkness came

Here "light" represents God's blessing and favor and "darkness" represents trouble and suffering. Alternate translation: "I waited for the light of

God's blessing, but instead I experienced the darkness of suffering"

Job 30:27

My heart is troubled and does not rest

Job speaks of his heart as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "I am troubled in my heart and the feeling does not end"

days of affliction have come on me

Days of affliction coming on Job represents Job experiencing affliction for many days. Alternate translation: "I experience affliction many days" or "I suffer every day"

Job 30:28

I have gone about

Here "have gone about" represents living. Alternate translation: "I have lived" or "I live"

like one who was living in the dark, but not because of the sun

Here "living in the dark" is a metaphor that represents being extremely sad. The phrase "but not because of the sun" clarifies that "living in the dark" is a metaphor, that is, the darkness is not caused by the sun being hidden. Alternate translation: "like one who is terribly sad"

Job 30:29

a brother to jackals, a companion of ostriches

Being a brother to these animals is a metaphor for being like them. Alternate translation: "I am like jackals and ostriches that cry out in the wilderness"

Job 30:30

my bones are burned with heat

Here "bones" refers to the whole body, which suffers from fever.

heat

Another possible meaning is "fever."

Job 30:31

my harp is tuned for songs of mourning

Here "my harp" represents Job himself, and also represents his desire to sing only songs of mourning. Alternate translation: "I play only songs of mourning on my harp"

my flute for the singing of those who wail

Here "my flute" represents Job himself, and also his desire to sing only songs of crying. Alternate translation: "I play only songs of wailing on my flute"

wail

To wail is to cry very loudly because of terrible sadness or pain.

Chapter 31

- ¹ I have made a covenant with my eyes;
 how then should I look with desire on a virgin?
- ² For what is the portion from God above,
 the inheritance from the Almighty on high?
- ³ I used to think that calamity is for unrighteous people,
 and that disaster is for those who behave wickedly.
- ⁴ Does not God see my ways
 and count all my steps?
- ⁵ If I have walked with falsehood,
 if my foot has hurried to deceit,
- ⁶ let me be weighed in an even balance
 so that God will know my integrity.
- ⁷ If my step has turned aside from the way,
 if my heart has gone after my eyes,
 if any spot has stuck to my hands,
- ⁸ then let me sow, and let another eat,
 and let my crops be uprooted.
- ⁹ If my heart has been deceived by a woman,
 if I have lain in wait at my neighbor's door,
- ¹⁰ then let my wife grind grain for another,
 and let others bow down on her.
- ¹¹ For that would be a terrible crime;
 indeed, it would be a crime to be punished by judges.
- ¹² For that is a fire that consumes as far as Abaddon,
 and it would burn all my harvest to the root.
- ¹³ If I rejected the plea for justice from my male servant or my female servant
 when they argued with me,
- ¹⁴ what then would I do when God rises up to accuse me?
 When he comes to judge me, how would I answer him?
- ¹⁵ Did the one who made me in the womb not make them also?
 Did not the same one mold us all in the womb?
- ¹⁶ If I have withheld poor people from their desire,
 or if I have caused the eyes of the widow to grow dim from crying,
- ¹⁷ or if I have eaten my morsel alone
 and not allowed those without fathers to eat it also—
- ¹⁸ because from my youth the orphan grew up with me as with a father,
 and I have guided his mother, a widow, from my own mother's womb.
- ¹⁹ If I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing,
 or if I have seen that a needy man had no clothing;
- ²⁰ if his heart has not blessed me
 because he has not been warmed with the wool of my sheep,
- ²¹ if I have lifted up my hand against the orphan
 because I saw my support in the city gate,
 then bring charges against me!
- ²² If I have done these things, then let my shoulder fall from the shoulder blade,
 and let my arm be broken from its joint.
- ²³ For I dreaded destruction from God;
 because of his majesty, I was not able to do those things.

- 24 If I have made gold my hope,
and if I have said to fine gold, 'You are what I am confident in';
- 25 if I have rejoiced because my wealth was great,
because my hand had gotten many possessions,
then bring charges against me!
- 26 If I have seen the sun when it shone,
or the moon walking in its splendor,
- 27 and if my heart has been secretly attracted,
so that my mouth has kissed my hand in worship of them—
- 28 this also would be a crime to be punished by judges,
for I would have denied the God who is above.
- 29 If I have rejoiced at the destruction of anyone who hated me
or congratulated myself when disaster overtook him,
then bring charges against me!
- 30 Indeed, I have not even allowed my mouth to sin
by asking for his life with a curse.
- 31 If the men of my tent have never said,
'Who can find one who has not been filled with Job's food?'
- 32 (even the foreigner has never had to stay in the city square,
because I have always opened my doors to the traveler),
and if that is not so, then bring charges against me!
- 33 If, like mankind, I have hidden my sins
by hiding my guilt inside my bosom
- 34 (because I feared the great multitude,
because the contempt of the families terrified me,
so that I kept silent and would not go outside)—
- 35 Oh, if only I had someone to hear me!
See, here is my signature; let the Almighty answer me!
If only I had the indictment that my opponent has written!
- 36 Surely I would carry it openly on my shoulder;
I would bind it on myself like a crown.
- 37 I would declare to him an accounting for my steps;
as a confident prince I would go up to him.
- 38 If my land ever cries out against me,
and its furrows weep together,
- 39 if I have eaten its harvest without paying for it
or have caused its owners to lose their lives,
- 40 then let thorns grow instead of wheat
and weeds instead of barley."

The words of Job are finished.

Job 31 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's statement and it is directly addressed to Yahweh.

In this chapter, Job presents his case to Yahweh that he is upright and not guilty of the sins he is being accused of. (See: righteous and guilt and sin)

Job 31:1

General Information:
Job continues speaking.

I have made a covenant with my eyes

Job speaks of making a promise about what he would look at as though his eyes were a person and he made a covenant with them. Alternate

translation: "I have made a firm promise about what I will look at"

I have made a covenant with my eyes

What job promised can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I made a promise that I will not look lustfully on a virgin" or "I promised that I will not look lustfully on a virgin"

how then should I look with desire on a virgin?

Job uses this question to emphasize that he would never break his promise. Alternate translation: "So I certainly will not look with lust at a virgin."

Job 31:2

For what is the portion from God above, the inheritance from the Almighty on high?

Job speaks of God's response to people's behavior as if it were the portion of an inheritance that God gives. Alternate translation: "For how will God above respond to me? What will the Almighty on high do?"

For what is the portion from God above, the inheritance from the Almighty on high?

Possible meanings are Job uses this question to emphasize 1) that God will not bless bad behavior. Alternate translation: "For if I look lustfully on a woman, God Almighty on high will not bless me." or 2) that God will punish bad behavior. Alternate translation: "For if I look lustfully on a woman, God Almighty on high will certainly punish me."

Job 31:3

General Information:

Job continues speaking.

Job 31:4

Does not God see my ways and count all my steps?

Here "my ways" and "my steps" are metaphors for Job's behavior. Here "see my ways" and "count all my steps" are metaphors for knowing everything Job does. Job uses this question to emphasize that God does know all he does. Alternate translation: "Certainly God watches me and knows everything that I do."

Does not God see my ways and count all my steps?

Job may be implying that God should know that Job is righteous and does not deserve calamity and disaster.

Job 31:5

General Information:

Job continues speaking.

If I have

In 31:5-40 Job describes different situations in which he would deserve God's punishment. But, Job

is confident that they are not true and that he is innocent.

have walked with falsehood, if my foot has hurried to deceit

Here "walked" and "hurried" are metaphors that represent how Job lived. Alternate translation: "have done anything false or purposely deceived anyone"

Job 31:6

let me be weighed in an even balance

People used balances to weigh items and to determine their value. This image represents judging honestly. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let me be judged honestly" or "let God judge me honestly"

Job 31:7

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but Job is confident that they are not true.

If my step has turned aside from the way

Here "my step" is a metaphor for Job's behavior, and "turned out of the right way" is a metaphor for changing from living right. Alternate translation: "If I have changed from living right" or "If I have stopped doing what is right"

if my heart has gone after my eyes

Here "my heart" and "my eyes" are metonyms for what Job desires and sees. The heart going after the eyes is a metaphor for desiring to do what he sees. It is implied that this refers to sinful things that Job sees. Alternate translation: "if I have wanted to do any sinful things that I see"

if any spot has stuck to my hands

This is a metaphor for being guilty. Alternate translation: "if I am guilty of any sin at all"

Job 31:8

then let me sow, and let another eat, and let my crops be uprooted

Job is saying that if he really has sinned, then this bad thing should happen to him. He would do the hard work of sowing his fields, but he would not be able to eat any of it.

let my crops be uprooted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let someone else come and take the harvest from my field"

Job 31:9

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.

If my heart has been deceived by a woman

Here "my heart" represents Job. Here the word "deceived" expresses the idea of "enticed." The word "woman" expresses the idea of "another man's wife." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If another man's wife has enticed me" or "If I have desired another man's wife"

if I have lain in wait at my neighbor's door

It can be stated clearly why he was waiting at his neighbor's door. Alternate translation: "if I have waited at my neighbor's door so I could sleep with his wife"

Job 31:10

then let my wife grind grain for another

Possible meanings are 1) this is an euphemism which means Job is saying may his wife sleep with another man or 2) it means she will become a slave and work for another man.

Job 31:11

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.

For that would be a terrible crime

The word "that" refers to Job sleeping with another woman.

it would be a crime to be punished by judges

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it would be a crime for which judges should punish me"

Job 31:12

For that is a fire that consumes as far as Abaddon, and it would burn all my harvest to the root

Job speaks of the harm that sleeping with another woman causes as if it were a fire that destroys everything. The words "that" and "it" refer to sleeping with another man's wife. Alternate translation: "For adultery is like a fire that burns up everything from here to Abaddon and that would burn up all my harvest"

consumes as far as Abaddon

These words are probably a metaphor for "destroys everything so I have nothing good for the rest of my life," but you should probably translate this literally.

it would burn all my harvest to the root

The word "it" here refers to the action sleeping with another man's wife. This action is a metonym for the punishment that Job would suffer as a result of the action. A fire burning up his harvest is a synecdoche for losing everything he has worked for. Alternate translation: "those who punish me would take away everything I have worked for"

Job 31:13

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.

my male servant or my female servant

These two items refer to Job's servants in general, not to any particular male or female servant, and so may be combined: "my male or female servant" or "any of my servants."

Job 31:14

what then would I do when God rises up to accuse me? When he comes to judge me, how would I answer him?

Job uses these questions to emphasize that if God were to judge him, Job would not be able to make himself appear to be good. Alternate translation: "then there would be absolutely nothing I could say to defend myself when God comes to judge me."

Job 31:15

Did the one who made me in the womb not make them also? Did not the same one mold us all in the womb?

Job uses these questions to emphasize that he is no different from his servants. He implies that God would be angry if Job were to treat his servants as less valuable than himself. Alternate translation: "The one who made me in the womb also made them. He formed us all in the womb."

Job 31:16

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true. He does not finish his sentence in verses 16 and 17. Instead he explains in verse 18 why they are not true.

If I have withheld poor people from their desire

"If I have kept poor people from getting what they desire"

if I have caused the eyes of the widow to grow dim from crying

Here "to grow dim" refers to the widow having bad eyesight from crying a lot. Alternate translation: "if I have caused a widow to cry in great sadness"

Job 31:17

my morsel
"my food"

Job 31:18

because from my youth the orphan grew up with me as with a father

Here "the orphan" represents orphans in general. Job is describing how he truly treated orphans. Alternate translation: "because even when I was young I took care of orphans like a father"

because from my youth

The phrase "But I have done none of those things" is understood from the context. Alternate translation: "But I have done none of those things, because from my youth"

I have guided his mother, a widow, from my own mother's womb

Job is describing how he truly treated widows. With the phrase "from my own mother's womb" he uses exaggeration to emphasize that he did this all his life. Alternate translation: "all my life I have guided the orphan's mother, a widow" or "all my life I have guided widows"

Job 31:19

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he knows they are not true.

Job 31:20

if his heart has not blessed me

The phrase "his heart" represents the poor man who needs clothing. Alternate translation: "if he has not blessed me"

because he has not been warmed with the wool of my sheep

Here "the wool of my sheep" represents blankets or clothing made from the wool of Job's sheep. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because the wool of my sheep has not warmed him" or "because I have not given him clothing made from the wool of my sheep"

Job 31:21

if I have lifted up my hand against the orphan

Lifting up the hand against someone represents threatening to harm him. Alternate translation: "if I have threatened to harm the orphan"

the orphan

This is a generic noun for any orphan or fatherless child. Alternate translation: "orphans" or "fatherless people"

I saw my support in the city gate

Here "saw" is a metaphor for "knew," "support" is a metaphor for "approval," and "the city gate" is a metonym for the leaders who sit at the city gate. Alternate translation: "I knew that the leaders at the city gate would approve of me"

in the city gate

This is where the important men of the city would gather to make decisions.

then bring charges against me

This phrase is not in the original language or in other versions of the Bible. It was added here to help preserve the meaning of Job's statement in this long sentence.

Job 31:22

then let my shoulder fall from the shoulder blade, and let my arm be broken from its joint

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "then let someone tear off my shoulder from the shoulder blade and break my arm from its joint"

Job 31:23

For I dreaded ... his majesty

This is the reason that Job did not do any of the wicked things he spoke of in verses 7 through 21.

Job 31:24

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.

If I have made gold my hope

The abstract noun "hope" can be translated with the verbs "trust" or "hope." Alternate translation: "If I trusted in gold" or "If I hoped that having a lot of gold would make me secure"

if I have said to fine gold, 'You are what I am confident in'

This line means the same as the previous line.

Job 31:25

my hand had gotten many possessions

Here "my hand" represents Job's ability to do things. Alternate translation: "I have gained many possessions by my own ability"

then bring charges against me

This phrase is not in the original language or in other versions of the Bible. It was added here to help preserve the meaning of Job's statement in this long sentence.

Job 31:26

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.

the moon walking

Here "walking" represents moving slowly. Alternate translation: "the moon moving across the sky"

Job 31:27

if my heart has been secretly attracted

Here "my heart" represents Job. This phrase can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if I have been secretly attracted to them" or "if I have secretly desired to worship them"

so that my mouth has kissed my hand

Here "my mouth" represents Job. This is a sign of love and devotion. Alternate translation: "so that I have kissed my hand"

Job 31:28

to be punished by judges

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for which judges would be right to punish me"

I would have denied the God who is above

"I would have been unfaithful to the God who is above"

Job 31:29

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.

at the destruction of anyone who hated me

The abstract noun "destruction" can be translated with the verb "destroy." Alternate translation: "when anyone who hated me was destroyed" or "when bad things happened to anyone who hated me"

when disaster overtook him

"when he experienced disasters"

then bring charges against me

This phrase is not in the original language or in other versions of the Bible. It was added here to help preserve the meaning of Job's statement in this long sentence.

Job 31:30

Indeed, I have not even allowed my mouth to sin

Here "my mouth" represents Job speaking. Alternate translation: "Truly I did not let myself sin" or "Truly, I did not sin"

by asking for his life with a curse

Here "asking for his life with a curse" represents cursing someone's life so that he will die. Alternate translation: "by cursing him so that he would die" or "by cursing his life"

Job 31:31

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.

the men of my tent

The tent represents Job's household. The men of his tent includes family members and servants. All of these knew Job well. Alternate translation: "the men of my household" or "my family members and servants"

Who can find one who has not been filled with Job's food?

Job's men would have used this question to emphasize that Job was generous to everyone. Alternate translation: "Everyone has been filled with Job's food!" or "Everyone we know of has eaten as much of Job's food as he wanted!"

Job 31:32

even the foreigner has never had to stay in the city square

Job is explaining how he truly treated foreigners. Here "stay in the city square" represents sleeping overnight in the city square. Alternate translation: "foreigners have never had to sleep in the city square" or "foreigners have never had to sleep outside"

I have always opened my doors to the traveler

Here "opened my doors to the traveler" represents welcoming the traveler into his home. Alternate translation: "I have always welcomed the traveler into my home"

and if that is not so, then bring charges against me

This phrase is not in the original language or in other versions of the Bible. It was added here to help preserve the meaning of Job's statement in this long sentence.

Job 31:33

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.

If ... I have hidden my sins

Here "have hidden my sins" represents trying to keep people from knowing that he had sinned. Alternate translation: "If ... I have tried to keep my sins a secret"

by hiding my guilt inside my bosom

This represents trying to keep people from knowing that he is guilty. The "bosom" is the chest and arms and is probably a metonym for the tunic that covers it. Alternate translation: "by hiding the evidence of my guilt inside my tunic" or "like one who hides the evidence of his guilt inside his tunic"

Job 31:34

because I feared the great multitude, because the contempt of the families terrified me

This would be the reason for hiding his sins. These two phrases mean the same thing. They emphasize that a person may hide his sin because he fears what other people may think about him.

so that I kept silent and would not go outside)—

The dash at the end of the line is used to show that Job did not finish this sentence.

Job 31:35

Oh, if only I had someone to hear me!

This exclamation expresses Job's wish. Alternate translation: "I wish I had someone to hear me" or "I wish that someone would listen to me"

here is my signature

Here "my signature" represents Job's promise that everything he is saying is true. He speaks of his complaint as if he had written a legal document. Alternate translation: "I solemnly promise that all I have said is true"

let the Almighty answer me!

Here an answer probably refers to telling Job what wrong he accuses Job of doing. Alternate translation: "let the Almighty tell me what I have done wrong" or "I wish the Almighty would say what I have done wrong"

If only I had the indictment that my opponent has written!

This expresses Job's wish. Job speaks as though his troubles are evidence that someone has written something accusing him of terrible sin. Alternate translation: "I wish I had the accusation that my opponent has written" or "If only I could read my opponent's complaint against me"

my opponent

These words could refer to 1) God or 2) someone else.

Job 31:36

Surely I would carry it openly on my shoulder; I would bind it on myself like a crown

This represents putting it where everyone could read it.

Job 31:37

I would declare to him an accounting for my steps

Here "my steps" represents Job's actions. Alternate translation: "I would declare to him an accounting for all I have done" or "I would tell him everything I have done"

as a confident prince I would go up to him

This means Job would approach God without any fear. Job implies that he could do this because he was not guilty. Alternate translation: "I would approach him boldly"

Job 31:38

General Information:

This concludes Job's description of situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is convinced that they are not true.

If my land ever cries out against me, and its furrows weep together

Job speaks of being guilty as if his land were a person who cries out against Job because of the wrong Job has done to the land. Alternate translation: "If I have done wrong concerning my land" or "If I have stolen my land from someone"

Job 31:39

to lose their lives

This represents dying. Alternate translation: "to die"

Job 31:40

weeds instead of barley

The words "let" and "grow" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "let weeds grow instead of barley"

Chapter 32

¹ So these three men stopped answering Job because he was righteous in his own eyes. ² Then the anger of Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, was kindled; it was kindled against Job because he justified himself rather than God. ³ Elihu's anger was also kindled against his three friends because they had found no answer to Job, and yet they had condemned Job. ⁴ Now Elihu had waited to speak to Job because the other men were older than he. ⁵ However, when Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouths of these three men, his anger was kindled.

⁶ Then Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite spoke up and said,

"I am young, and you are very old.

That is why I held back and was afraid to tell you my own thoughts.

⁷ I said, "Length of days should speak;
a multitude of years should teach wisdom.

⁸ But there is a spirit in a man;
the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding.

⁹ It is not only the great people who are wise,
nor the aged people alone who understand justice.

¹⁰ Therefore I say to you, 'Listen to me;
I will also tell you my knowledge.'

¹¹ See, I waited for your words;
I listened to your arguments
while you were searching for a word.

¹² Indeed, I paid attention to you,
but, see, there was not one of you who could convince Job
or who could respond to his words.

¹³ Be careful not to say, 'We have found wisdom!'
God will have to defeat Job; mere man cannot do it.

¹⁴ For Job has not directed his words against me,
so I will not answer him with your words.

¹⁵ These three men are dismayed; they can answer Job no longer;
they have not a word more to say.

¹⁶ Should I wait because they are not speaking,
because they stand there silent and answer no more?

¹⁷ No, I also will answer on my part;
I will also tell them my knowledge.

¹⁸ For I am full of words;
the spirit in me compels me.

¹⁹ See, my breast is like fermenting wine that has no vent;
like new wineskins, it is ready to burst.

²⁰ I will speak so that I may be refreshed;
I will open my lips and answer.

²¹ I will not show favoritism;
neither will I give honorific titles to any man.

²² For I do not know how to give such titles;
if I did so, my Maker would soon take me away.

Job 32 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Job's friends give up on trying to convince him that he is being punished for sinning. This chapter introduces Elihu who was a witness to these interactions between Job and his friends. According to Elihu, instead of being punished for his sins, Job is sinning in the midst of these difficulties. This is the first of Elihu's four statements. (See: sin and testimony)

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers, or songs. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of 32:6-22, which is an extended quotation, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. This quotation continues through the next chapter.

Job 32:1

he was righteous in his own eyes

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "he considered himself righteous"

Job 32:2

Then the anger of Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, was kindled; it was kindled against Job

This compares Elihu's anger to someone starting a fire. Also, this can be stated in active form.

Alternate translation: "Then Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, became very angry with Job"

Elihu ... Barakel ... Ram

These are names of men.

Buzite

This is the name of a people-group.

he justified himself rather than God

This means that he considered himself innocent and believed God had been wrong to punish him.

Alternate translation: "he justified himself and claimed that God had been wrong to punish him"

Job 32:3

Elihu's anger was also kindled against his three friends

This compares Elihu's anger to someone starting a fire. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Elihu also became very angry with his three friends"

Job 32:4

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. This tells background information about Elihu.

Job 32:5

that there was no answer in the mouths of these three men

This means that the men were done speaking to Job. This speaks of the men possibly having an answer as if the answer were an object that would be in their mouths. Alternate translation: "that these three men had nothing else to say" or "that these three men had no more answers to give Job"

his anger was kindled

This compares Elihu's anger to someone starting a fire. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he became very angry"

Job 32:6

you are very old

Here "you" is plural and refers to Job and his three friends.

Job 32:7

Length of days should speak; a multitude of years should teach wisdom

These two lines mean the same thing. Elihu emphasizes that since older people are wiser than younger people, they should be the first to speak of what they know. Alternate translation: "He who has lived many years should speak; He would be older should teach wisdom"

Job 32:8

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job and his friends.

there is a spirit in a man; the breath of the Almighty

Both phrases mean the same thing. Elihu is emphasizing that a man's wisdom comes from God. Alternate translation: "there is a spirit in a man, that is, the breath of the Almighty that"

the breath of the Almighty

Here the spirit is represented by "breath."

Alternate translation: "the spirit of the Almighty"

Job 32:9

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 32:10

General Information:

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Job 32:11

See

Elihu uses this word here to draw the men's attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

I waited for your words

"I waited to hear what you would say." The word "your" refers to Job's friends and so is plural.

searching for a word

The word "word" is a synecdoche for an entire message, and "searching for" a word as if it were a solid object is a metaphor for thinking of the right

thing to say. Alternate translation: "thinking about what to say" or "trying to think of the right thing to say"

Job 32:12

who could respond to his words

Here the word "respond" does not just mean to answer, but to answer with a helpful response.

Job 32:13

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job's friends.

We have found wisdom

This means that they believe that they have figured out what is wise. Alternate translation: "We have discovered what is wise"

to defeat Job

This speaks of God responding to Job and correcting him as if he were defeating him in battle. Alternate translation: "to refute Job" or "to answer Job"

Job 32:14

with your words

"by saying what you have said"

Job 32:15

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

dismayed

discouraged or distressed

Job 32:16

Should I wait because they are not speaking, because they stand there silent and answer no more?

Elihu uses a question to emphasize that he will not wait any longer to speak. Elihu answers this question himself in the next verse. Alternate translation: But because you do not speak, I certainly will not wait any longer; you merely stand there and do not reply anymore.

Job 32:17

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking using parallelisms.

I also will answer on my part

"I will now take my turn to answer"

Job 32:18

I am full of words

Elihu speaks of having a lot to say as being full of words. Alternate translation: "I have so much to say"

the spirit in me compels me

"my spirit forces me to say it"

Job 32:19

my breast is like fermenting wine that has no vent; like new wineskins, it is ready to burst

While wine is fermenting, gas collects in the container. If the gas is not let out the container will burst. Elihu means that he has so much to say that if he does not speak he feels like he will burst. Also, these two phrases are parallel and have the same meaning. Alternate translation: "I feel like my breast is about to burst, like a container of fermenting wine that has no vent"

my breast is

This represents Elihu, specifically his spirit. Alternate translation: "my spirit is" or "I am"

Job 32:20

I may be refreshed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I may feel better"

open my lips

Here the "lips" represent the mouth. Alternate translation: "open my mouth"

Job 32:21

favoritism; neither will I give honorific titles to any man

Elihu is probably speaking of giving honorific titles to someone as a metaphor for flattering him, and he is probably speaking indirectly about Job and his friends by speaking of "a man" in general. Alternate translation: "favoritism; neither will I flatter anyone" or "favoritism, nor will I flatter any of you"

Job 32:22

my Maker

This is a name referring to God. Alternate translation: "God who made me"

take me away

This means that he would destroy him. Alternate translation: "destroy me"

Chapter 33

- ¹ So now, Job, I beg you, hear my speech;
listen to all my words.
- ² See now, I have opened my mouth;
my tongue has spoken in my mouth.
- ³ My words come from the uprightness of my heart;
my lips speak pure knowledge.
- ⁴ The Spirit of God has made me;
the breath of the Almighty has given me life.
- ⁵ If you can, answer me;
set your words in order before me and stand up.
- ⁶ See, I am just as you are in God's sight;
I also have been formed out of the clay.
- ⁷ See, terror of me will not make you afraid;
neither will my pressure be heavy upon you.
- ⁸ You have certainly spoken in my hearing;
I have heard the sound of your words saying,
- ⁹ 'I am clean and without transgression;
I am innocent, and there is no iniquity in me.
- ¹⁰ See, God finds opportunities to attack me;
he regards me as his enemy.
- ¹¹ He puts my feet in stocks;
he watches all my paths.'
- ¹² See, in this you are not in the right—I will answer you,
for God is greater than man.
- ¹³ Why do you struggle against him?
He does not account for any of his doings.
- ¹⁴ For God speaks once—
yes, twice, though man does not notice it.
- ¹⁵ In a dream, in a vision of the night,
when deep sleep falls upon men,
in slumber on the bed—
- ¹⁶ then God opens the ears of men,
and frightens them with threats,
- ¹⁷ to cause man to turn away from his deed,
and keep pride from a man.
- ¹⁸ God keeps man's life back from the pit,
his life from crossing over to death.
- ¹⁹ Man is punished also with pain on his bed,
with constant strife in his bones,
- ²⁰ so that his life abhors food,
and his soul abhors delicacies.
- ²¹ His flesh is consumed away so that it cannot be seen;
his bones, once not seen, now stick out.
- ²² Indeed, his soul draws close to the pit,
his life to those who wish to destroy it.
- ²³ But if there is an angel who can be a mediator for him,
one out of a thousand,
to tell a man what is right for him,
- ²⁴ to be gracious to him and say,
'Save this person from going down to the pit;

- I have found a ransom for him,'
- 25 then his flesh will become fresher than a youth's;
it is restored to the days of his youthful vigor.
- 26 He will pray to God, and God will be kind to him,
so that he sees God's face with joy.
God will restore to the person his righteousness.
- 27 Then that person will sing in front of other people and say,
'I sinned and perverted that which was right,
but my sin was not punished.
- 28 God has rescued my soul from going down into the pit;
my life will continue to see light.'
- 29 See, God does all these things with a person,
twice, yes, even three times,
- 30 to bring his soul back from the pit,
so that he may be enlightened with the light of life.
- 31 Pay attention, Job, and listen to me;
be silent and I will speak.
- 32 If you have anything to say, answer me;
speak, for I wish to justify you.
- 33 If not, then listen to me;
remain silent, and I will teach you wisdom."
-

Job 33 General Notes

Structure and formatting

According to Elihu, instead of being punished for his sins, Job is sinning in the midst of these difficulties. This is a continuation of the first of Elihu's four statements and it is addressed to Job. (See: sin and testimony)

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This quotation is a continuation of the previous chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's mercy

While Job has been complaining about the lack of justice and response from Yahweh, Elihu shows Job that Yahweh has shown him great mercy along the way. He is still alive because of Yahweh's mercy. (See: mercy)

Job 33:1

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

hear my speech; listen to all my words

These two phrases mean the same thing. Elihu is emphasizing that Job must listen carefully.

Job 33:2

See now, I

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: I" See how you translated this phrase in Job 13:18.

I have opened my mouth ... my tongue has spoken in my mouth

These mean the same thing. Elihu is emphasizing that he is now ready to speak. His "tongue" speaking represents himself speaking. Alternate translation: "I have opened my mouth and I have begun to speak"

Job 33:3

My words come from the uprightness of my heart

Here Elihu refers to himself by his "heart" as he speaks of being upright. Alternate translation: "I will speak with uprightness" or "I will speak with complete honesty"

my lips speak pure knowledge

Here Elihu refers to himself by his "lips" to emphasize his speech. Alternate translation: "I will speak sincerely to you the things I know"

Job 33:4

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job.

The Spirit of God ... has given me life

These two lines mean the same thing. Elihu is emphasizing that God has made him and so gives authority to what he is saying.

Job 33:5

set your words in order before me and stand up

This speaks of Job preparing what he will say as if he were setting up and organizing physical objects. Alternate translation: "prepare what you will say, and stand up and answer me"

Job 33:6

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job.

See

Elihu uses this word here to draw Job's attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

I am just as you are in God's sight

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "I am just as you are in God's judgment" or "God judges me the same way that he judges you"

I also have been formed out of the clay

Though people are not made out of clay, God has made everyone as a potter carefully makes things out of clay. Alternate translation: "God has made both of us just as a potter forms things from clay"

I also have been formed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has also made me" or "God has formed both of us"

Job 33:7

terror of me will not make you afraid

"you do not need to be afraid of me"

neither will my pressure be heavy upon you

This means that he will not hinder Job or burden him. He speaks of emotional burden here as if it were a heavy physical burden. Alternate translation: "neither will I burden you" or "I will not oppress you with what I say"

Job 33:8

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job.

in my hearing

"where I could hear you"

I have heard the sound of your words saying

"I have heard you say"

Job 33:9

clean

A person who God considers spiritually acceptable is spoken of as if the person were physically clean.

there is no iniquity in me

"I have not sinned"

Job 33:10

General Information:

Elihu continues quoting what he heard Job say.

See

The speaker uses this word here to draw attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

Job 33:11

He puts my feet in stocks

"Stocks" are wooden blocks a jailer puts around a prisoner's feet to restrict his movement. Job speaks of feeling like he is a prisoner by saying that he is in stocks. Alternate translation: "I feel he has made me a prisoner"

my paths

These words refer to where he goes. Here where he goes represents what he does. Alternate translation: "everything that I do"

Job 33:12

I will answer you

Elihu is speaking to Job, so the word "you" is singular.

Job 33:13

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job.

Why do you struggle against him?

Elihu uses this question to emphasize that Job should not struggle against God. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not struggle against God." or "You should not try to argue with God."

He does not account for any of his doings

"He does not have to explain to us anything he does"

Job 33:14

God speaks once—yes, twice

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "God speaks again and again in different ways"

Job 33:15

a dream ... a vision of the night

These phrases have the same meaning.

when deep sleep falls upon men, in slumber on the bed

This speaks of people being in a deep sleep as if the sleep fell upon them or overcame them. Alternate translation: "when people are fully asleep on their bed"

Job 33:16

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job.

then God opens the ears of men

This speaks of God making people aware of things as if he were opening their ears so that they could hear. Alternate translation: "then God reveals things to people"

Job 33:17

to cause man to turn away from his deed

This speaks of God keeping someone from doing something as if he were physically causing him to turn his body away from something. Alternate translation: "to keep man from"

man

If your language has a word for human beings, male and female, you may want to use it here.

his deed

"what he desires to do" or "what he is doing." The context implies that the deed will be evil, so if your language has a word for a deed that is probably evil, you may want to use it here.

a man

This is a male person as opposed to a female, a strong person as opposed to a weak person.

Job 33:18

God keeps man's life back from the pit ... his life from crossing over to death

Both of these statements mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "God saves people from the grave and from death"

the pit

The place where people go when they die is referred to here as "the pit." Alternate translation: "the place where dead people are"

man's life back ... his life

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "man from dying and ... he keeps him"

from crossing over to death

Here "death" represents the place where people go when they die, that is, sheol. Alternate translation: "from going to sheol"

Job 33:19

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job.

Man is punished also

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God also punishes a person"

with pain on his bed

This means that the person is experiencing such pain that he must lie in bed. Alternate translation: "with pain so that he must lie in bed"

constant strife in his bones

The word "strife," possibly referring to the man's reaction to God causing him to "turn away from his deed" [Job 33:17]

Job 33:20

so that his life abhors food, and his soul abhors delicacies

These two phrases mean basically the same thing, that the person is in so much pain that he cannot even eat. The person is represented by his "life" and his "soul." Alternate translation: "the result is that he does not desire any food, not even very special food"

abhors delicacies

"hates even very special food"

Job 33:21

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job.

His flesh is consumed away so that it cannot be seen; his bones, once not seen, now stick out

This can be stated in active form. "His flesh" refers to his fat and muscles, not to his body's outer skin. Alternate translation: "Disease makes his body weak and thin so that a person can see his bones"

Job 33:22

his soul draws close to the pit

Here a person is represented by his "soul."
Alternate translation: "he is close to going into the grave"

the pit

The place where people go when they die is referred to here as "the pit." Alternate translation: "the place where dead people are"

his life to those who wish to destroy it

Here the person is represented by his "life." The phrase "those who wish to destroy it" refers to the place where people go after they die. Alternate translation: "and he is close to going to the place where dead people go" or "and he will soon go to the place of the dead"

Job 33:23

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job.

for him

This does not refer to a specific person. Elihu continues speaking about any person in general.

one out of a thousand

In some languages it may be more natural to refer to "a great number" instead of "a thousand."
Alternate translation: "one from the great number of angels"

Job 33:24

to be gracious to him and say

"to be gracious to the man and to say to God"

the pit

The place where people go when they die is referred to here as "the pit." Alternate translation: "the place where dead people are"

I have found a ransom for him

This means that the angel has found a way to pay for the sins of the man so that he does not have to die. Alternate translation: "for I have found a way for you to keep him from dying"

Job 33:25

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job.

then

This word is used here to introduce what will happen if God grants the angel's request by saving the man.

his flesh will become fresher than a youth's

This speaks of the man being healed and his body growing strong again as if his body became new like a youth's body. Alternate translation: "the sick man's body will become new again like a young person's body"

fresher than a youth's

In this comparison, the word "fresher" is an exaggeration. Alternate translation: "fresh like a youth's"

a youth's

This refers to a youth's flesh. Alternate translation: "a youth's flesh"

it is restored to the days of his youthful vigor

This speaks of the man's flesh again being as strong as it was when he was young. Alternate translation: "it will become strong again, as it was when he was young"

Job 33:26

he sees God's face with joy

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "he joyfully worships God"

God's face

Here God is represented by his "face." Alternate translation: "God"

will restore to the person his righteousness

Possible meanings are that the words "his righteousness" refer to 1) the righteousness of the person. Alternate translation: "will once again consider the person righteous" or "God will make things right for the person again" Or 2) God's righteousness.

Job 33:27

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job.

but my sin was not punished

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but God did not punish me for sinning"

Job 33:28

rescued my soul from going down into the pit

Here the person is referred to by his "soul."
Alternate translation: "rescued me from dying and going to the pit"

the pit

The place where people go when they die is referred to here as "the pit." Alternate translation: "the place where dead people are"

my life will continue to see light

Here the person is represented by his "life." Also, living is spoken of as seeing the light. Alternate translation: "I will continue to live and see the daylight" or "I will continue to live"

Job 33:29

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job.

See

Elihu uses this word here to draw Job's attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

twice, yes, even three times

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "again and again"

Job 33:30

his soul

The person is represented by his "soul." Alternate translation: "him"

to bring his soul back from the pit

This speaks of saving the man from dying as if he had died and was being brought back to life. Alternate translation: "to keep him from dying and going to the pit"

the pit

The place where people go when they die is referred to here as "the pit." Alternate translation: "the place where dead people are"

he may be enlightened with the light of life

This is an idiom and may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he may be happy to still be alive"

Job 33:31

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job.

Pay attention, Job, and listen to me

These phrases mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "Listen carefully to me, Job"

Job 33:32

justify you

"show that you are in the right" or "show that you are innocent"

Job 33:33

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Chapter 34

- ¹ Moreover, Elihu continued to speak:
- ² "Listen to my words, you wise men;
hear me, you who have knowledge.
- ³ For the ear tests words
as the palate tastes food.
- ⁴ Let us choose for ourselves what is just:
let us discover among ourselves what is good.
- ⁵ For Job has said, 'I am righteous,
but God has taken away my rights.
- ⁶ Regardless of my rights
I am considered to be a liar.
My wound is incurable,
although I am without sin.'
- ⁷ What man is like Job,
who drinks up mockery like water,
- ⁸ who goes around in the company of those who behave wickedly,
and who walks with wicked men?
- ⁹ For he has said, 'It is no use to a person
to take pleasure in doing what God wants.'
- ¹⁰ So listen to me, you men of understanding:
far be it from God that he should do wickedness;
far be it from the Almighty that he should commit sin.
- ¹¹ For he pays back a person's work;
he makes every man come upon the reward of his own ways.
- ¹² Indeed, God does nothing wicked,
nor does the Almighty ever pervert justice.
- ¹³ Who put him in charge over the earth?
Who put the whole world under him?
- ¹⁴ If he ever set his intentions only on himself,
and if he ever gathered back to himself his spirit and his breath,
- ¹⁵ then all flesh would perish together;
mankind would return to dust again.
- ¹⁶ If now you have understanding, listen to this;
listen to the sound of my words.
- ¹⁷ Can one who hates justice govern?
Will you condemn God, who is righteous and mighty?
- ¹⁸ God, who says to a king, 'You are worthless,'
or says to nobles, 'You are wicked'?
- ¹⁹ God, who does not show favoritism to leaders
and does not acknowledge rich people more than poor,
for they all are the work of his hands.
- ²⁰ In a moment they will die;
at midnight people will be shaken and will pass away;
mighty people will be taken away, but not by human hands.
- ²¹ For God's eyes are upon a person's ways;
he sees all his steps.
- ²² There is no darkness and there is no deep shadow
where those who behave wickedly may hide themselves.
- ²³ For God does not need to examine a person further;
there is no need for any person to go before him in judgment.
- ²⁴ He breaks mighty men into pieces for their ways that need no further investigation;
he puts others in their places.
- ²⁵ In this way he has knowledge of their deeds;

- he overthrows these people in the night; they are crushed.
- 26 In the open sight of others, he kills them for their wicked deeds like criminals
27 because they turned away from following him
and refused to acknowledge any of his ways.
- 28 In this way, they made the cry of poor people come to him;
he heard the cry of afflicted people.
- 29 When he stays silent, who can condemn him?
If he hides his face, who can see him?
He rules over nation and individual alike,
30 so that a godless man may not reign,
so that there may be no one to entrap people.
- 31 Suppose someone says to God,
'I am certainly guilty, but I will not act corruptly any longer;
32 teach me what I cannot see;
I have committed sin, but I will do it no longer.'
- 33 Is it according to your desires that God must punish that person?
For you reject this!
You must choose, not I.
So say what it is that you know.
- 34 Men of understanding will say to me—
indeed, every wise man who hears me will say,
- 35 'Job speaks without knowledge;
his words are without wisdom.'
- 36 If only Job were put on trial in the smallest details of his case
because of his talking like wicked men.
- 37 For he adds rebellion to his sin;
he claps his hands in mockery in our midst;
he piles up words against God."
-

Job 34 General Notes

Structure and formatting

According to Elihu, instead of being punished for his sins, Job is sinning in the midst of these difficulties. This is the second of Elihu's four statements and it is addressed first to Job's friends and then to Job. (See: sin and testimony)

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. Elihu uses many of Job's statements against him. His attitude is not too different from Job's friends.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's justice

Elihu defends the justice of Yahweh after Job claimed that Yahweh was being unjust. (See: justice)

Job 34:1

Moreover, Elihu
"Then, Elihu"

Elihu
See how you translated this man's name in [Job 32:2]

Job 34:2

Listen to my words
"Listen to what I say"

you wise men ... you who have knowledge
Elihu is criticizing Job and his friends. He does not think they are actually wise.

Job 34:3

For the ear tests words as the palate tastes food

Elihu means people listen carefully to determine what is right or wrong just like we taste food to determine if it is good or bad. Here people are referred to by their "ear" and their "palate" to emphasize that they are tasting and hearing. Alternate translation: "For we listen to words to know what is good and bad, just as we taste foods to know what is good to eat"

Job 34:4

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

Let us

Here "us" refers to Elihu, Job, and his three friends.

Job 34:5

has taken away my rights

"refused to give me justice"

Job 34:6

I am considered to be a liar

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God considers me to be a liar"

My wound is incurable

Here Job's sickness and suffering is spoken of as if it were a "wound." Alternate translation: "I am sick and no one can heal me"

Job 34:7

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

What man is like Job

Elihu uses this rhetorical question to scold Job. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is no one else like Job"

who drinks up mockery like water

Elihu is accusing Job of mocking others as often as a person drinks water. Alternate translation: "who mocks other people as frequently as he drinks water"

Job 34:8

who walks with wicked men

Here "walk" is an idiom for how a person acts. Alternate translation: "who behaves like wicked men"

Job 34:9

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 34:10

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking. Each of these verses contain parallel phrases.

you men of understanding

Elihu is criticizing Job and his friends. He does not actually think they are wise.

far be it from God ... far be it from the Almighty that he should commit sin

These two phrases have the same meaning and are used together to emphasize that God would never do anything wrong. The phrase "far be it from" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Almighty God would never consider doing anything that is wicked or wrong"

Job 34:11

For he pays back a person's work

This means that he gives to a person what he deserves for the work he has done. Here "work" is a metaphor for what a person does. Alternate translation: "For he gives to a person what he deserves in return for he does"

he makes every man come upon the reward of his own ways

The phrase "his own ways" is an idiom for how a person lives his life. Elihu emphasizes that God gives to people what they deserve. Alternate translation: "he causes every man to receive the reward he deserves for how he lives"

Job 34:12

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 34:13

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

Who put him in charge over the earth? Who put the whole world under him?

Both of these rhetorical questions have the same meaning and emphasize that no one needed to grant God authority because it was already his. These questions can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "No one needed to give permission to God to take responsibility over all the earth. He is the rightful one to rule the world."

Job 34:14

If he ever set his intentions ... his breath

The word "he" refers to God. Elihu is describing a situation that he does not believe would ever happen.

his spirit and his breath

The "spirit" and "breath" of God are what makes all living things alive. Alternate translation: "his spirit and breath which give us life"

Job 34:15

all flesh

Here all living things are represented by their "flesh." Alternate translation: "all living things"

mankind would return to dust again

This means that all people would die and their bodies would decay and become soil. In the beginning God created man from the dust. Alternate translation: "the bodies of mankind would soon become soil again"

Job 34:16

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

now

Elihu uses this word to bring attention to something important he is about to say.

you have

Here "you" is singular and refers to Job.

listen to the sound of my words

"listen to what I say." This means the same as the previous part of the sentence.

Job 34:17

Can one who hates justice govern? Will you condemn God, who is righteous and mighty?

Elihu uses this question to rebuke Job for implying that God hates justice. Alternate translation: "One who hates justice cannot be expected to rule over people. So you really cannot criticize God, who is righteous and powerful, and you cannot say that what he has done is wrong."

Can one who hates justice govern?

The implicit answer to this rhetorical question is "no." This question implies that God could not rule the world if he hated justice. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "One who hates justice cannot govern the world." or "God could certainly never hate what is right and still rule the world."

Will you condemn God, who is righteous and mighty?

This rhetorical question is used to emphasize that Job does not have the authority or a reason to condemn God. Alternate translation: "You cannot condemn God, who is righteous and mighty!"

Job 34:18

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

God, who says to a king, 'You are worthless,' or says to nobles, 'You are wicked'?

This continues the rhetorical question from the previous verse, emphasizing to Job that he cannot condemn God. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "He says to some kings, 'You are worthless,' and he says to some nobles, 'You are wicked.'"

God, who says to a king

This is part of the previous question. The understood words from the previous verse, "will you condemn God," may be supplied. Alternate translation: "Will you condemn God, who says to a king"

Job 34:19

for they all are the work of his hands

Here "hands" refer to power. Alternate translation: "for God made them all"

Job 34:20

at midnight

Midnight is the time when one day ends and another begins. Here "midnight" is used as an idiom. Alternate translation: "at night" or "suddenly, at night"

people will be shaken and will pass away

This can be stated in active form. The phrase "will be shaken" is an idiom that means to be "struck." Alternate translation: "God strikes them and they die"

mighty people will be taken away, but not by human hands

This means that it is God who causes people to die, not people. Also, this can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it is God and not humans who cause mighty people to die"

not by human hands

Here people are represented by their "hands." Alternate translation: "not by humans" or "not by people"

Job 34:21

For God's eyes are upon a person's ways

God's "eyes" represent his sight. The phrase "a person's ways" is an idiom for what he does and how he lives. Alternate translation: "For God watches everything a person does"

he sees all his steps

This means that he always knows where the person is and where he is going. Alternate translation: "he sees him wherever he goes"

Job 34:22

no darkness ... no deep shadow

The words "deep shadow" mean basically the same thing as, and intensify, the word "darkness."

Job 34:23

in judgment

"so he may judge him" or "to be judged"

Job 34:24

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

He breaks mighty men into pieces

This speaks of God destroying these men as if he actually broke their bodies into pieces. Alternate translation: "He destroys mighty men" or "He destroys important people"

for their ways that need no further investigation

He does not need to investigate what they have done because he already knows everything about them. Alternate translation: "without needing to do further investigation, because he already knows their ways"

their ways

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "the things they have done"

he puts others in their places

This means that he appoints other people to rule in their positions. Alternate translation: "and he chooses other people to rule in their places"

Job 34:25

in the night

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "when they are not expecting it"

they are crushed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and crushes them"

crushed

They are no longer able to cause trouble. Alternate translation: "destroyed"

Job 34:26

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

In the open sight of others, he kills them for their wicked deeds like criminals

This phrase compares the way that these people die to how criminals die. Alternate translation: "He kills them for their wicked deeds, in the open sight of others as if they were criminals"

In the open sight of others

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "In a place where everyone can see"

he kills them

This speaks of God causing these people to die, though he does not actually strike them with a sword himself. He may cause someone else to kill them or disaster to come upon them. Alternate translation: "he causes them to die"

Job 34:27

his ways

This refers to God's instructions for how people should behave.

Job 34:28

they made the cry of poor people come to him

The word "cry" can be expressed as a verb. This speaks of God hearing their cry as if the cry were a person that came to him. Alternate translation: "they made the poor people cry, and God heard them"

Job 34:29

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

When he stays silent, who can condemn him? If he hides his face, who can see him?

These two questions speak of God not punishing wicked people as if he were being silent and hiding his face.

When he stays silent, who can condemn him?

Elihu uses this rhetorical question to teach Job. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can criticize God if he decides to remain silent"

If he hides his face, who can see him?

Elihu uses this rhetorical question to teach Job. This question can be written as a statement.

Alternate translation: "No one can go and see him if he decides to hide his face"

his face

Here God is represented by his "face." Alternate translation: "himself"

Job 34:30

no one to entrap people

This compares a godless ruler harming people as if he were a hunter trapping his prey. Alternate translation: "no one to harm the people"

Job 34:31

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

Job 34:32

teach me what I cannot see

Here to "see" means to know. Alternate translation: "teach me what I have done wrong that I am not aware of"

Job 34:33

Is it according to your desires that God must punish that person?

Elihu is rebuking Job. Alternate translation: "God does not need to punish that person according to your desires."

you reject this

Another possible meaning is "you reject God" or "you do not want God to punish you."

what it is that you know

"what you are thinking about this"

Job 34:34

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

who hears me

"who hears me speaking"

Job 34:35

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 34:36

If only Job were put on trial in

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If only we could put Job on trial in" or "If only we could take Job to court so a judge could listen to"

in the smallest details of his case

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "to listen to his case thoroughly" or "to hear all of the details of his case"

of his talking like wicked men

"of how he has spoken like a wicked man"

Job 34:37

he adds rebellion

This refers to rebellion against God. Alternate translation: "he adds rebellion against God"

he claps his hands in mockery in our midst

In this accusation, this means that Job clapped his hands to strengthen his mockery of God. Alternate translation: "he claps his hands as he mocks God in our midst" or "he mocks God right in front of us"

he piles up words against God

Elihu speaks of "words" as if they were objects, and of speaking many words as if it were piling those objects one on top of the other. Alternate translation: "he speaks many words against God"

Chapter 35

- ¹ Moreover Elihu continued, saying,
- ² "Do you think this is just
when you say, 'I am in the right before God'?"
- ³ For you ask, 'What use is it to me?'
and, 'Would I be better off if I had sinned?'
- ⁴ I will answer you,
both you and your friends.
- ⁵ Look up at the sky, and see it;
see the sky, which is higher than you.
- ⁶ If you have sinned, what harm do you do to God?
If your transgressions are many, what do you do to him?
- ⁷ If you are righteous, what can you give to him?
What will he receive from your hand?
- ⁸ Your wickedness may hurt a man, as you are a man,
and your righteousness might benefit another son of man.
- ⁹ Because of many acts of oppression, people cry out;
they call for help from the arms of mighty men.
- ¹⁰ But no one says, 'Where is God my Maker,
who gives songs in the night,
- ¹¹ who teaches us more than he teaches the wild animals of the earth,
and who makes us wiser than the birds of the sky?'
- ¹² There they cry out, but God gives no answer
because of the pride of evil men.
- ¹³ God will certainly not hear a foolish cry;
the Almighty will pay no attention to it.
- ¹⁴ How much less will he answer you if you say that you do not see him,
that your case is before him, and that you are waiting for him!
- ¹⁵ Now you say that his anger does not punish,
and he does not take even a little notice of transgression.
- ¹⁶ So Job opens his mouth only to speak foolishness;
he multiplies words without knowledge."

Job 35 General Notes

Structure and formatting

According to Elihu, instead of being punished for his sins, Job is sinning in the midst of these difficulties. This is the third of Elihu's four statements and it is addressed first to Job's friends and then to Job. (See: sin and testimony)

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. Elihu uses many of Job's statements against him.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Elihu uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job. These questions help to build Elihu's argument.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Ironic situation

Elihu explains the irony of Job's claim. He claimed to be righteous and desired Yahweh to intervene. In this chapter, Elihu explains to Job that his claims of righteousness are prideful. This makes him unrighteous. (See: and righteous)

Job 35:1

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 35:2

Do you think this is just ... 'I am in the right before God'?

Elihu uses questions to challenge Job. Alternate translation: "You must think you are right ... 'I am in the right before God.'" or "It is not just ... 'I am in the right before God.'"

Do you think this is just when you say

"Do you think it is right for you to say"

Do you think

Here "you" is singular and refers to Job.

say, 'I am in the right before God'?

This can be translated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "say that you are in the right before God."

I am in the right before God

Possible meanings are 1) Job is claiming to be innocent before God or 2) Job is claiming that he, rather than God, is right. Alternate translation: "I am more righteous than God"

Job 35:3

For you ask, 'What use is it to me?' and, 'Would I be better off if I had sinned?'

Elihu quotes Job as saying the these two rhetorical questions. Alternate translation: "For you say, 'It does not benefit me' and, 'I am no better off than if I had sinned.'"

Job 35:4

Connecting Statement:

Elihu continues speaking.

Job 35:5

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 35:6

Connecting Statement:

Elihu continues speaking.

If you have sinned ... what do you do to him?

These two lines share similar meanings. The second line intensifies the meaning of the first line.

If you have sinned, what harm do you do to God?

Elihu asks this question to emphasize that Job's sins cannot actually do anything to God. Alternate translation: "If you have sinned, you have not done any harm to God."

If your transgressions are many, what do you do to him?

Elihu asks this question to emphasize that Job does nothing to God by his transgressions. Alternate translation: "If you committed a great many transgressions, you still do nothing to him."

Job 35:7

If you are righteous, what can you give to him? What will he receive from your hand?

The two rhetorical questions mean basically the same thing, that Job's righteousness adds nothing to God. Alternate translation: "If you are righteous, that does not enable you to give anything to him, and there is nothing that he will receive from your hand."

receive from your hand

Here the word "hand" represents Job. Alternate translation: "receive from you"

Job 35:8

another son of man

"another human-being" or "another person"

Job 35:9

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

Because of many acts of oppression

The word "oppression" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "Because of the many things that people do to oppress others"

they call for help from the arms of mighty men

Here "arms" refers to power or strength. Alternate translation: "they call for someone to deliver them from the power of mighty men"

Job 35:10

who gives songs in the night

Elihu speaks of God enabling people to have hope in troubling circumstances as if he were giving to them songs which they can sing during the night.

Job 35:11

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 35:12

Connecting Statement:

Elihu continues speaking.

they cry out

"the oppressed people cry out"

Job 35:13

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 35:14

How much less will he answer you ... that you are waiting for him!

Since God will not hear the prayers of prideful, evil men, it is even less likely that he will hear Job, who is complaining against him. Alternate translation:

"So he certainly will not answer you ... that you are waiting for him!"

that your case is before him

"you have presented your case to him"

you are waiting for him

"you are waiting for him to respond"

Job 35:15

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

Now you say that his anger does not punish, and he does not take even a little notice of transgression

Because Job is saying these things about God that are untrue, it is even less likely that God will answer Job's prayers.

his anger does not punish

Here "his anger" is a metonym for "him." Alternate translation: "he never punishes anyone because he is angry"

Job 35:16

he multiplies words without knowledge

Elihu speaks of "words" as if they were objects, and of speaking many words as if it were piling those objects one on top of the other. The word "knowledge" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "he speaks many words without knowing what he is talking about"

Chapter 36

- ¹ Elihu continued on and said,
- ² "Be patient with me a little longer, and I will show you some things
because I have a little more to say in defense of God.
- ³ I will obtain my knowledge from far off;
I will acknowledge that righteousness belongs to my Maker.
- ⁴ For indeed, my words will not be false;
someone who is mature in knowledge is with you.
- ⁵ See, God is mighty, and despises no one;
he is mighty in strength of understanding.
- ⁶ He does not preserve the life of wicked people
but gives justice those who suffer.
- ⁷ He does not withdraw his eyes from righteous people
but sets them on thrones with kings forever,
and they are lifted up.
- ⁸ If they are bound in chains
and trapped in cords of suffering,
- ⁹ then he reveals to them what they have done,
and their transgressions and their pride.
- ¹⁰ He also opens their ears to his instruction,
and commands them to turn back from iniquity.
- ¹¹ If they listen to him and worship him,
they will spend their days in prosperity,
their years in contentment.
- ¹² However, if they do not listen, they will perish by the sword;
they will die because they have no knowledge.
- ¹³ Those who are godless in heart store up their anger;
they do not cry out for help even when God ties them up.
- ¹⁴ They die in their youth;
their lives end among the cultic prostitutes.
- ¹⁵ God rescues afflicted people by means of their afflictions;
he opens their ears by means of their oppression.
- ¹⁶ Indeed, he would like to draw you out of distress
into a broad place where there is no hardship
and where your table would be set with food full of fatness.
- ¹⁷ But you are full of judgment on wicked people;
judgment and justice have laid hold of you.
- ¹⁸ Do not let your anger entice you to mockery,
or the greatness of a ransom to turn you aside.
- ¹⁹ Can your wealth benefit you, so that you will not be in distress,
or can all the force of your strength help you?
- ²⁰ Do not desire the night, to commit sin against others,
when peoples are cut off in their place.
- ²¹ Be careful that you do not turn to wickedness
because you are being tested by suffering so that you will stay away from sinning.
- ²² See, God is exalted in his power;
who is a teacher like him?
- ²³ Who has ever instructed him about his way?
Who can ever say to him, 'You have committed unrighteousness?'
- ²⁴ Remember to praise his deeds,
of which people have sung.
- ²⁵ All people have looked on those deeds,
but they see those deeds only from far away.

- 26 See, God is great, but we do not understand him well;
the number of his years is incalculable.
- 27 For he draws up the drops of water
that he distills as rain from his vapor, ^[1]
- 28 which the clouds pour down
and drop in abundance on mankind.
- 29 Indeed, can anyone understand the extensive spread of the clouds
and the thunder from his hut?
- 30 See, he spreads his lightning around him
and covers the roots of the sea.
- 31 In this way he judges the peoples
and gives food in abundance.
- 32 He fills his hands with the lightning
until he commands it to strike its mark.
- 33 Its thunder warns of the storm,
the cattle can also hear it is coming.
-

Footnotes

36:27 ^[1]Some modern translations have

Job 36 General Notes

Structure and formatting

According to Elihu, instead of being punished for his sins, Job is sinning in the midst of these difficulties. This is the last of Elihu's four statements and it is addressed first to Job's friends and then to Job. (See: sin and testimony)

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. His attitude is not too different from Job's friends.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's justice

This chapter focuses on the justice of Yahweh. It is important to remember that justice won't always come in this life. (See: justice)

Job 36:1

General Information:

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Job 36:2

Be patient with me

"Allow me to speak"

I will show you some things

Elihu speaks of explaining things to Job as if he were going to show those things to Job. Alternate translation: "I will explain some things to you"

Job 36:3

I will obtain my knowledge from far off

Elihu speaks of having knowledge of many different subjects as if it were getting his knowledge from far away places. Alternate translation: "I will show you my great knowledge"

that righteousness belongs to my Maker

Here the word "righteousness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "that my Maker is righteous"

Job 36:4

my words will not be false

"what I say will not be false"

someone who is mature in knowledge is with you

The word "someone" refers to Elihu himself. He speaks of being very knowledgeable as if it were being mature in knowledge. Alternate translation: "I, who am with you, am very knowledgeable"

Job 36:5

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

he is mighty in strength of understanding

The phrase "mighty in strength" forms a doublet that means "very strong." Elihu speaks of God understanding everything perfectly as if his understanding were very strong. Alternate translation: "he is very strong in understanding" or "he understands everything completely"

Job 36:6

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 36:7

He does not withdraw his eyes from righteous people

Elihu speaks of God protecting righteous people as if God were watching them with his eyes, and of God ceasing to protect them as if he withdrew his eyes from them. Alternate translation: "He does not stop protecting the righteous people"

sets them on thrones with kings

Elihu speaks of God honoring the righteous people as if God were causing them to sit on thrones with kings.

they are lifted up

Elihu speaks of God honoring the righteous people as if he lifted them up to a high place. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he lifts them up" or "he honors them"

Job 36:8

If they are bound in chains

Here the word "they" refers righteous people whom God will discipline if they sin. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If someone binds them in chains" or "If someone makes them a prisoner"

trapped in cords of suffering

Elihu speaks of a person being made to suffer as if that person were trapped in ropes that cause suffering. Alternate translation: "someone causes them to suffer"

Job 36:9

their transgressions and their pride

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "he reveals to them their transgressions and their pride"

Job 36:10

He also opens their ears

Elihu speaks of causing a person to listen as if it were opening that person's ear. Alternate translation: "He also causes them to listen"

to his instruction

The noun "instruction" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "to what he is instructing them"

to turn back from iniquity

Elihu speaks of stopping an action as if it were turning back from it. Alternate translation: "to stop committing iniquity"

Job 36:11

they will spend their days in prosperity, their years in contentment

The words "days" and "years" both refer to the person's lifetime. Alternate translation: "they will spend their lives in prosperity and contentment"

Job 36:12

they will perish by the sword

Elihu speaks of a person dying violently as if someone had killed them with a sword. Alternate translation: "they will die a violent death"

Job 36:13

who are godless in heart

Here the word "heart" refers to the thoughts and emotions. The phrase may indicate that the person stubbornly refuses to trust God. Alternate translation: "who refuse to trust in God"

store up their anger

Elihu speaks of a person remaining angry as if that person stored up their anger like one would store up treasure. Alternate translation: "are always angry"

even when God ties them up

Elihu speaks of God disciplining people as if God were tying them up with ropes. Alternate translation: "even when God punishes them"

Job 36:14

their lives end among the cultic prostitutes

Here "cultic prostitutes" refers to young men who served in pagan temples performing sexually immoral acts as part of their rituals. Possible meanings for this phrase are 1) the godless die because of their immoral behavior or 2) the godless die in shame and disgrace.

Job 36:15

he opens their ears

Elihu speaks of God causing a person to listen as if God were opening their ears. See how you translated this in [Job 36:10]

Job 36:16

into a broad place where there is no hardship

Elihu speaks of living without trouble as if it were being in a wide-open space where there were no hardships.

where your table would be set with food full of fatness

Elihu speaks of living prosperously as if it were having one's table filled with the best foods.

your table would be set

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your servants would set your table"

food full of fatness

Meat that had plenty of fat on it was a sign of prosperity because the animals were healthy and well-fed. Alternate translation: "the very best food"

Job 36:17

you are full of judgment on wicked people

Possible meanings are 1) "God is punishing you as he would punish the wicked" or 2) "you are obsessed with the judgment that the wicked deserve."

judgment and justice have laid hold of you

Elihu speaks of God judging Job and giving him justice as if judgment and justice were people that have laid hold of Job. Alternate translation: "God has brought you to judgment and given you justice"

Job 36:18

Do not let your anger entice you to mockery

Some versions of the Bible translate this as "Beware that you are not enticed by wealth."

Job 36:19

Can your wealth benefit you, so that you will not be in distress, or can all the force of your strength help you?

Elihu asks these questions to state that money and power will not be able to help Job if he acts unjustly. Alternate translation: "Your wealth cannot cause you to no longer be in distress, and all the force of your strength cannot help you."

all the force of your strength

"all of your great strength" or "all of your mighty efforts"

Job 36:20

when peoples are cut off in their place

Possible meanings are 1) that "peoples" refers to people in general and "cut off in their place" is a metaphor for oppressing others by dragging them away from their homes. Alternate translation: "when people drag others away from their homes" or 2) that "peoples" represents nations and "cut off in their place" is a metaphor for nations being destroyed. Alternate translation: "when nations will perish"

Job 36:21

you are being tested by suffering

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God is testing you by making you suffer"

Job 36:22

See, God

"You know this already: God"

God is exalted in his power

Possible meanings are 1) "God is extremely powerful" or 2) "people exalt God because he is powerful"

who is a teacher like him?

Elihu asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one is a teacher like God. Alternate translation: "no one is a teacher like him." or "no one teaches like he does."

Job 36:23

Who has ever instructed him about his way?

Elihu asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one has ever taught God what to do. Alternate translation: "No one has ever instructed him about what he should do."

Who can ever say to him, 'You have committed unrighteousness?'

Elihu asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one can accuse God of having committed unrighteousness. Alternate translation: "No one can

ever say to him, 'You have committed unrighteousness.'"

Job 36:24

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 36:25

they see those deeds only from far away

Elihu speaks of people not being fully able to understand God's deeds as if people were only able to see those deeds from far away. Alternate translation: "they do not fully understand them"

Job 36:26

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

the number of his years is incalculable

This refers to how long God has existed. Alternate translation: "people cannot know how long he has lived" or "people cannot know his age"

Job 36:27

that he distills as rain from his vapor

The word "distills" can also mean "refine" or "filter." Elihu describes how God turns the drops of water, or vapor, that he draws up into rain. Alternate translation: "that he turns into rain"

Job 36:28

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 36:29

can anyone understand the extensive spread of the clouds and the thunder from his hut?

Elihu asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one can do these things. Alternate translation: "no one can understand the extensive spread of the clouds and the thunder from his hut."

the extensive spread of the clouds

The phrase "the extensive spread" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "how the clouds spread across the sky"

from his hut

Elihu speaks of the sky as if it were a "hut" in which God lives. Alternate translation: "from the sky, where God lives"

Job 36:30

See, he spreads

"Look carefully and see how he spreads"

and covers the roots of the sea

Elihu speaks of the deep parts of the sea as if the sea were a plant and its depths were its roots. Possible meanings are 1) although the lightning causes light in the sky, the deep parts of the sea remain dark. Alternate translation: "but the depths of the sea remain dark" or 2) the lightning in the sky cause even the depths of the sea to have light. Alternate translation: "and lights up the depths of the sea"

Job 36:31

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 36:32

He fills his hands with the lightning

Elihu speaks of the lightning that storms cause as if God were holding the lightning in his hand and directing it to strike where he wills. Possible meanings are 1) that God holds the lightning bolts in his hands in order to throw them, or 2) that God hides the lightning bolts in his hands until he is ready to use them.

Job 36:33

Its thunder

"The thunder caused by the lightning" or "The thunder"

hear it is coming

"hear that the storm is coming"

Chapter 37

- ¹ Indeed, my heart trembles at this;
it is moved out of its place.
- ² Hear, oh, hear the noise of his voice,
the sound that goes out from his mouth.
- ³ He sends it out under the whole sky,
and he sends out his lightning to the edges of the earth.
- ⁴ A voice roars after it;
he thunders with the voice of his majesty;
he does not restrain the lightning bolts
when his voice is heard.
- ⁵ God thunders marvelously with his voice;
he does great things that we cannot comprehend.
- ⁶ For he says to the snow, 'Fall on the earth';
and to the rain shower, 'Be strong.'
- ⁷ He stops the hand of every man from working,
so that all people whom he has made may see his deeds.
- ⁸ Then the beasts go into hiding
and stay in their dens.
- ⁹ The storm comes from its chamber in the south
and the cold from the scattering winds in the north.
- ¹⁰ By the breath of God ice is given;
the expanse of the waters is frozen like metal.
- ¹¹ Indeed, he weighs down the thick cloud with moisture;
he scatters his lightning through the clouds.
- ¹² He swirls the clouds around by his guidance,
so that they may do whatever he commands them
above the surface of the earthly world.
- ¹³ He makes all of this happen; sometimes it happens for correction, sometimes for his land,
and sometimes as acts of covenant faithfulness.
- ¹⁴ Listen to this, Job;
stop and think about God's marvelous deeds.
- ¹⁵ Do you know how God establishes the clouds
and makes the lightning bolts to flash in them?
- ¹⁶ Do you understand the floating of the clouds,
the marvelous deeds of God, who is perfect in knowledge?
- ¹⁷ Do you understand how your garments become hot
when the land is still because the wind comes from the south?
- ¹⁸ Can you spread out the sky as he can—
the sky, which is as strong as a mirror of cast metal?
- ¹⁹ Teach us what we should say to him,
for we cannot lay out our arguments in order because of the darkness of our minds.
- ²⁰ Should he be told that I wish to speak with him?
Would a person wish to be swallowed up?
- ²¹ Now, people cannot look at the sun when it is bright in the sky
after the wind has passed through and has cleared it of its clouds.
- ²² Out of the north comes golden splendor—
over God is fearsome majesty.
- ²³ As for the Almighty, we cannot find him!
He is great in power;
he does not oppress justice and abundant righteousness.
- ²⁴ Therefore, people fear him.
He does not pay any attention to those who are wise in their own minds."

Job 37 General Notes

Structure and formatting

According to Elihu, instead of being punished for his sins, Job is sinning in the midst of these difficulties. This is a continuation of the previous chapter and the last of Elihu's four statements, and it is addressed first to Job's friends and then to Job. (See: sin and testimony)

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. His attitude is not too different from Job's friends.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's justice

This chapter focuses on the justice of Yahweh. It is important to remember that justice won't always come in this life. (See: justice)

Job 37:1

my heart trembles ... it is moved out of its place

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of his fear.

my heart trembles at this

The word "this" refers to the storm in Job 36:33.

it is moved out of its place

Elihu speaks of his heart beating violently as if it were to jump out of his chest. Alternate translation: "it moves out of its place" or "it beats violently"

Job 37:2

the noise of his voice, the sound that goes out from his mouth

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Elihu speaks of the thunder as if it is God's voice.

Job 37:3

to the edges of the earth

Elihu speaks of the farthest places on the earth as if they were the earth's borders. Alternate translation: "everywhere in the world"

Job 37:4

A voice roars after it ... the voice of his majesty

Elihu continues to speak of the thunder as if it is God's voice.

roars after it

"roars after the lightning"

the voice of his majesty

"his majestic voice"

when his voice is heard

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when people hear his voice"

Job 37:5

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 37:6

and to the rain shower

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "and in the same way he says to the rain shower"

Be strong

"Be a strong shower of rain"

Job 37:7

He stops the hand of every man

Here the word "hand" represents the entire person. Alternate translation: "He stops every man"

Job 37:8

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 37:9

The storm comes from its chamber in the south and the cold from the scattering winds in the north

In Israel, strong wind storms blow in from the south and cold weather approaches from the north.

The storm comes from its chamber in the south

Elihu speaks of the storm blowing in from the south as if the storm has a place where it resides until it comes.

Job 37:10

By the breath of God ice is given

Elihu speaks of the cold north wind as if it were God's breath. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God's breath makes ice"

frozen like metal

Elihu compares the hardness of ice to the hardness of metal. Alternate translation: "frozen, as hard as metal"

Job 37:11

he weighs down the thick cloud with moisture

Elihu speaks of God causing the storm clouds to be full of water as if the moisture weighed heavily on the clouds. Alternate translation: "he causes the thick clouds to be full of moisture"

Job 37:12

the earthly world

Possible meanings are 1) "the land on which people live" or 2) "the land on which it is possible to live."

Job 37:13

sometimes it happens for correction

The word "correction" can be translated with a verbal phrase. The object of his "correction" is people. Alternate translation: "sometimes it happens to correct his people"

sometimes for his land

This means that the rain waters the ground and causes vegetation to grow. Alternate translation: "sometimes to water the land"

sometimes as acts of covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful" or "faithfully." Alternate translation: "sometimes to act faithfully to his covenant" or "sometimes to be faithful to his people"

Job 37:14

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 37:15

Do you know how God establishes the clouds and makes the lightning bolts to flash in them?

Elihu asks this question to emphasize that Job cannot know this. Alternate translation: "You cannot understand how God establishes the clouds and makes the lightning bolts to flash in them."

establishes the clouds

"controls the clouds" or "makes the clouds obey him"

Job 37:16

Do you understand the floating of the clouds, the marvelous deeds of God, who is perfect in knowledge?

Elihu asks this question to emphasize that Job does not know these things. Alternate translation: "You

do not understand the floating of the clouds, the marvelous deeds of God, who is perfect in knowledge."

the floating of the clouds

"how the clouds float"

the marvelous deeds of God

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "or do you understand the marvelous deeds of God"

Job 37:17

Do you understand how your garments become hot ... from the south?

Elihu asks this question to emphasize that Job does not know these things. Alternate translation: "You do not understand how your garments become hot ... from the south."

how your garments become hot

"how you become hot in your clothes" or "how you sweat in your clothes"

because the wind comes from the south

In Israel, hot winds blow in across the desert from the south and cause hot temperatures. Alternate translation: "because of the hot, dry wind blowing in from the south"

Job 37:18

Can you spread out the sky ... a mirror of cast metal?

Elihu asks this question to emphasize that Job cannot do this. Alternate translation: "You cannot spread out the sky ... a mirror of cast metal."

as strong as a mirror of cast metal

In biblical days, mirrors were made of metal. Elihu speaks of the sky giving no rain as if it were as hard as solid metal.

cast metal

This refers to metal that is melted, poured into a mold, and then hardens as it cools.

Job 37:19

Teach us what we should say to him

Here the words "us" and "we" refer to Elihu, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, but not to Job. Elihu uses this phrase sarcastically.

because of the darkness of our minds

Elihu speaks of the inability to understand as if it were having darkness in one's mind. Alternate translation: "because we do not understand"

Job 37:20

Should he be told that I wish to speak with him?

Elihu asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one can do this. Alternate translation: "I

cannot have someone tell him that I wish to speak with him."

Should he be told

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Should I have someone tell him"

Would a person wish to be swallowed up?

Elihu asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one would want this to happen. Alternate translation: "No person would want to be swallowed up."

to be swallowed up

Elihu speaks of a person being destroyed as if the person were swallowed up. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for God to destroy him"

Job 37:21

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 37:22

over God is fearsome majesty

The word "fearsome" means that it causes fear. Elihu speaks of God's majesty as if it were something that rests upon God. Alternate translation: "God's majesty causes people to fear"

Job 37:23

we cannot find him

Possible meanings are 1) "we cannot approach him" or 2) this is a metaphor in which Elihu speaks of a person's being unable to fully understand God as if he could not find God. Alternate translation: "we cannot comprehend him"

Job 37:24

those who are wise in their own minds

Here "minds" represents the person's thoughts. Alternate translation: "those who are wise in their own thinking" or "those who consider themselves to be wise"

Chapter 38

- ¹ Then Yahweh called to Job out of a fierce storm and said,
- ² "Who is this who brings darkness to plans
by means of words without knowledge?"
- ³ Now gird up your loins like a man
for I will ask you questions,
and you must answer me.
- ⁴ Where were you when I laid the earth's foundations?
Tell me, if you have so much understanding.
- ⁵ Who determined its dimensions? Tell me, if you know.
Who stretched the measuring line over it?
- ⁶ On what were its foundations laid?
Who laid its cornerstone
- ⁷ when the morning stars sang together
and all the sons of God shouted for joy?
- ⁸ Who shut up the sea with doors
when it burst out, as if it had come out of the womb—
- ⁹ when I made clouds its clothing,
and thick darkness its swaddling bands?
- ¹⁰ That was when I marked out for the sea my boundary,
and when I placed its bars and doors,
- ¹¹ and when I said to it, 'You may come this far, but no farther;
here is where I will put a boundary to the pride of your waves.'
- ¹² Have you given orders to the morning,
or caused the dawn to know its place,
- ¹³ so that it might take hold of the edges of the earth
and shake the wicked out of it?
- ¹⁴ The earth is changed in appearance like clay changes under a seal;
all things on it stand out clearly like the folds of a piece of clothing.
- ¹⁵ From wicked people their light is taken away;
their uplifted arm is broken.
- ¹⁶ Have you gone to the springs of the sea?
Have you walked in the lowest parts of the deep?
- ¹⁷ Have the gates of death been revealed to you?
Have you seen the gates of the shadow of death?
- ¹⁸ Have you understood the earth in its expanse?
Tell me, if you know it all.
- ¹⁹ Where is the way to the resting place of light—
as for darkness, where is its place?
- ²⁰ Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work?
Can you find the way back to their houses for them?
- ²¹ Undoubtedly you know, for you were born then;
the number of your days is so large!
- ²² Have you entered the storehouses for the snow,
or have you seen the storehouses for the hail,
- ²³ these things that I have kept for times of trouble,
for days of battle and war?
- ²⁴ What is the path to where the lightning bolts are distributed
or to where the winds are scattered from the east over the earth?
- ²⁵ Who has created the channels for the floods of rain,
or who has made a path for the thunder,

- 26 to cause it to rain on lands where no person exists,
and on the wilderness, in which there is no one,
- 27 to satisfy the devastated and desolate places,
and to make the ground sprout with grass?
- 28 Does the rain have a father,
or, who fathers the drops of dew?
- 29 Out of whose womb did the ice come?
Who bore the white frost out of the sky?
- 30 The waters hide themselves and become like stone;
the surface of the deep becomes frozen.
- 31 Can you fasten chains on the Pleiades,
or undo the cords of Orion?
- 32 Can you lead the constellations to appear at their proper times?
Can you guide the Bear with its children?
- 33 Do you know the regulations of the sky?
Could you set in place the sky's rule over the earth?
- 34 Can you raise your voice up to the clouds,
so that an abundance of rainwater may cover you?
- 35 Can you send out bolts of lightning that they may go out,
that they say to you, 'Here we are'?
- 36 Who has put wisdom in the clouds
or has given understanding to the mists?
- 37 Who can number the clouds by his skill?
Who can pour out the water skins of the sky
- 38 when the dust runs into a hard mass
and the clods of earth clump tightly together?
- 39 Can you hunt down a victim for a lioness
or satisfy the appetite of her young lion cubs
- 40 when they are crouching in their dens
and sheltering in hiding to lie in wait?
- 41 Who provides victims for the ravens
when their young ones cry out to God
and stagger about for lack of food?
-

Job 38 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. Yahweh finally speaks in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's greatness

Yahweh is far greater than any man. He is the creator of the earth, and his ways will not always be understood by men because their knowledge is always limited.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Yahweh uses a series of rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to defend his character.

Job 38:1

Then Yahweh called

Here, the word "then" marks the beginning of a new part of the book. See if your language has a similar way to introduce a new scene. Alternate translation: "After all that had happened, Yahweh called."

called to Job

"answered Job" or "responded to Job"

out of a fierce storm

"from a powerful storm"

Job 38:2

Who is this who brings darkness to plans by means of words without knowledge?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that Job spoke of things he did not know about. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You bring darkness to my plans by means of words without knowledge."

Who is this who brings

"Who are you to bring"

brings darkness to plans

"obscures my plans" or "confuses my purposes." How Job confuses God's plans is spoken of as if he were making God's plans harder to see. The abstract noun "darkness" can be translated as the verb "darkens." Alternate translation: "darkens plans" or "makes plans hard to see"

by means of words without knowledge

"by speaking of things about which you do not know"

words without knowledge

The abstract noun "knowledge" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "unknowing words" or "ignorant words"

Job 38:3

gird up your loins like a man

"tie your robe up around your waist like a man." Men tied up their robes around their waists so that their legs could move more freely as they did heavy work. The idiom "gird up your loins like a man" means to get ready to do something involving action such as work, a contest, or a battle. Job was to prepare for the hard work of answering God. Alternate translation: "get yourself ready for hard work"

Job 38:4

General Information:

Yahweh begins to challenge Job with a series of questions that emphasize he created the earth and Job did not.

Where were you when I laid the earth's foundations? Tell me, if you have so much understanding

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tell me where you were when I laid the foundations of the earth, if you have so much understanding"

I laid the earth's foundations

Yahweh describes creating the earth as though he was building a structure.

if you have so much understanding

The abstract noun "understanding" can be translated as the verb "understand." Alternate translation: "if you understand so much"

Job 38:5

Who determined its dimensions? Tell me, if you know

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tell me who determined its dimensions, if you know"

dimensions

"size"

Who stretched the measuring line over it?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tell me who stretched the measuring line over it."

measuring line

a rope or cord that people use to make something the right size and shape

Job 38:6

General Information:

The word "its" refers to the earth. Yahweh uses more questions to emphasize that Job could never understand how great God is.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

On what were its foundations laid?

This can be stated in active form. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "On what did I set its foundations?" or "Tell me on what its foundations were laid."

Who laid its cornerstone

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tell me who laid its cornerstone"

Job 38:7

Connecting Statement:

Job finishes the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who laid its cornerstone" in verse 6.

when the morning stars ... the sons of God shouted for joy?

Job finishes the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who laid its cornerstone" in verse 6. This can be translated as a statement. "Tell me who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars ... the sons of God shouted for joy."

when the morning stars sang together

The morning stars are spoken of as singing like people sing. Possible meanings are: 1) the "morning stars" are the same as the "sons of God" in the next line or 2) "the morning stars" refer to stars in the sky.

the morning stars

"the bright stars that shine in the morning"

sons of God

This refers to angels, heavenly beings. See how you translated this in Job 1:6.

shouted for joy

The abstract noun "joy" can be translated as the adverb "joyfully." Alternate translation: "shouted joyfully"

for joy

"because they were full of joy"

Job 38:8

General Information:

Yahweh uses another question to emphasize that he created the earth and Job did not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Who shut up the sea ... of the womb

This can be translated as a command. Alternate translation: "Tell me who shut up the sea ... of the womb"

shut up the sea with doors

Yahweh compares the way that he prevented the sea from covering all of the earth to holding it back with doors. Alternate translation: "prevented the water from flooding over the land"

as if it had come out of the womb

Yahweh compares his creation of the sea to childbirth.

Job 38:9

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who shut up" in verse 8.

when I made clouds ... and thick darkness its swaddling bands?

This can be translated as a command. Alternate translation: "Tell me who shut up ... when I made clouds ... and thick darkness its swaddling bands."

its clothing

"as clothes for the sea"

thick darkness its swaddling bands

The abstract noun "darkness" can be translated as the adjective "dark." Alternate translation: "made dark clouds its swaddling bands"

swaddling bands

long pieces of cloth that people use to wrap a baby in after it is born

Job 38:10

I marked out for the sea my boundary

"I made a boundary for the sea"

boundary

Yahweh set a limit beyond which the sea was not allowed to cross.

I placed its bars and doors

Yahweh compares the way that he made a boundary for the sea to containing the sea with bars and doors. Alternate translation: "I set up its barriers"

bars

long pieces of wood or metal that are used to keep a door shut

Job 38:11

when I said to it

"when I said to the sea." Yahweh speaks to the sea as though it were a person.

You may come this far, but no farther

The words "this far" mean only as far as the boundary that Yahweh set up. Alternate translation: "You may come as far as this boundary, but no farther"

to the pride of your waves

"to the power of your waves." The waves are spoken of as if they could have pride. The abstract noun "pride" can be translated as the adjective "proud." Alternate translation: "to your proud waves" or "to your powerful waves"

Job 38:12

General Information:

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that he created the light of day and Job did not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job. He begins to ask a rhetorical question.

Have you ... to know its place

This question expects a negative answer. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have never ... shaken the wicked out of it."

given orders to the morning

Yahweh describes the morning as being able to receive orders and know things like a person.

caused the dawn to know its place

"caused the dawn to know where it belongs"

dawn

the daylight that appears in the morning sky before the sun rises

Job 38:13

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Have you given" in verse 12.

so that it might take hold ... shake the wicked out of it?

This is the end of the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Have you given" in verse 12. This question expects a negative answer. It can be translated as a statement. "You have never given ... so that it might take hold ... shaken the wicked out of it."

take hold of the edges of the earth

The light of dawn is spoken of as if it seizes the horizons of the earth. Alternate translation: "grasp the ends of the earth"

shake the wicked out of it

The daylight is pictured as causing wicked people to leave like shaking something to remove unwanted things. Alternate translation: "shake wicked people out of the earth"

Job 38:14

The earth is changed in appearance like clay changes under a seal

At nighttime, people cannot see clearly, but in the morning the light reveals the distinct shape of everything, just like a seal creates distinct images in clay.

all things on it stand out clearly like the folds of a piece of clothing

Here "it" refers to the earth. This phrase has a similar meaning to the first phrase in this verse.

Job 38:15

From wicked people their light is taken away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The morning takes away the 'light' of wicked people"

their light

The wicked consider darkness to be their light, because they do their evil deeds in the darkness and they are familiar with the darkness.

their uplifted arm is broken

The raised arm of the wicked represents their power and intention to do evil things, but the wicked stop doing those evil things when the morning light comes.

Job 38:16

General Information:

Yahweh uses five questions to emphasize that he understands the earth and seas and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Have you gone to the springs of the sea?

This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have not gone to the springs of the sea."

Have you walked in the lowest parts of the deep?

This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have not walked in the lowest parts of the deep."

the springs of the sea

"the sources of the sea"

the deep

This refers to the sea or ocean where the water is very deep. Alternate translation: "the deep sea" or "the ocean depths" or "the deep water"

Job 38:17

Have the gates of death been revealed to you

Death is spoken of as if it were a city that had gates through which people enter into it. This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "Has anyone shown the gates of death to you"

the shadow of death

See how you translated this in Job 3:5.

Job 38:18

Have you understood the earth in its expanse?

This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You do not understand the earth in its expanse."

the earth in its expanse

"the great broad places of the earth"

if you know it all

"if you know all about these things"

Job 38:19

General Information:

Yahweh uses three questions to emphasize that he understands light and darkness and Job does not. Each of these verses have two parallel phrases.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Where is the way to the resting place of light—as for darkness, where is its place?

This question can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You do not know the way to the resting place of light or the place of darkness."

the resting place of light

"the dwelling of light." Light is spoken of as having a resting place from which it comes forth each day.

light

"daylight" or "sunlight"

Job 38:20

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work? Can you find the way back to their houses for them?

These questions expect a negative answer. They can be expressed as statements. Alternate translation: "You cannot lead light and darkness to their places of work, or find the way back to their houses for them."

to their places of work

"to their territory." Light and darkness are spoken of as being led out and back each day to accomplish Yahweh's purposes.

Job 38:21

Undoubtedly ... so large

Yahweh uses mocking irony to emphasize that Job does not understand light and darkness. Alternate translation: "It is obvious that you do not know, because you were not born when I created them, and you are not very old"

for you were born then

"for you were already living then." The word "then" refers to the time when light was created and

separated from darkness. Alternate translation: "for you were already born when I created them"

the number of your days is so large

"you have lived so many years"

Job 38:22

General Information:

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that he rules over the natural world and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job. He begins to ask a rhetorical question.

storehouses for the snow ... storehouses for the hail

Snow and hail are pictured as being stored by Yahweh to do his will.

hail

balls of ice (usually small) that sometimes fall down from the sky during a storm

Job 38:23

Connecting Statement:

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Have you entered" in verse 22 ends here.

these things that I have kept ... and war?

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Have you entered" in verse 22 ends here. "You have never entered the storehouses for the snow, and you have never seen the storehouses for the hail, these things that I have kept ... and war."

these things that I have kept

The words "these things" refer to the snow and the hail (verse 22).

Job 38:24

What is the path to where the lightning bolts are distributed or to where the winds are scattered from the east over the earth?

These can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "What is the path to where I distribute the lightning bolts or to where I scatter the winds from the east over the earth?"

the winds are scattered

"the winds are blown"

Job 38:25

General Information:

Yahweh questions Job to emphasize that he causes it to rain and thunder and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job. He begins to ask a series of rhetorical questions.

Who has created the channels for the floods of rain

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Only I have created the channels for the floods of rain"

or who has made a path for the thunder

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "and only I have made a path for the thunder"

the floods of rain

"the torrents of rain"

a path for the thunder

"a way for the rumble of thunder to be heard."

Job 38:26

on lands where no person exists, and on the wilderness, in which there is no one

These two phrases have nearly the same meaning.

where no person exists

"where there are no people"

Job 38:27

Connecting Statement:

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who has created" in verse 25 ends here.

to satisfy ... sprout with grass?

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who has created" in verse 25 ends here. This can be translated as a statement. "I am the one who has created ... of rain, and I am the one who has made ... to satisfy ... sprout with grass."

to satisfy

The implied information is that it is the rain that meets the needs of the land to grow grass. Alternate translation: "so that the rain can satisfy the needs of"

devastated and desolate

"ruined and wasted." These two words have nearly the same meaning and emphasize the ruined and empty nature of these regions.

with grass

"the new grass" or "the fresh grass." This is grass that is just starting to grow.

make the ground sprout with

"make the ground support new grass"

Job 38:28

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh begins a series of four questions to emphasize to Job that he makes rain, dew, ice, and frost and Job does not. Rain, dew, ice, and frost are

spoken of as though they could be born like people are.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Does the rain have a father, or, who fathers the drops of dew?

These can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "Tell me who the rain's father is, and tell me who has become the father of the drops of dew."

fathers the drops of dew

Becoming the father of the dew is a metaphor for creating it. Alternate translation: "causes the drops of dew to exist"

Job 38:29

Out of whose womb did the ice come? Who bore the white frost out of the sky?

These can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "Tell me whose womb the ice came out of. Tell me who bore the white frost out of the sky."

ice

"frozen water"

bore

"gave birth to"

the white frost

dew that freezes on the ground on cold, clear nights

Job 38:30

The waters hide themselves and become like stone

The waters are spoken of as being able to hide. During the winter the ice hides the water underneath it.

become like stone

The hardness of ice is spoken of as if it was stone. Alternate translation: "become hard like stone"

the deep

This refers to the sea or ocean where the water is very deep. Alternate translation: "the deep sea" or "the ocean depths" or "the deep water"

Job 38:31

General Information:

Yahweh uses five questions to emphasize to Job that he rules the heavens and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Can you fasten chains on the Pleiades, or undo the cords of Orion?

These can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You cannot fasten chains on the Pleiades, and you cannot undo the cords of Orion."

fasten chains on

"bind chains onto" or "tie the bonds of"

the Pleiades ... Orion

These are the names of constellations. See how you translated them in Job 9:9.

undo the cords of Orion

"loosen the cords that hold Orion"

Job 38:32

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Can you lead the constellations ... proper times? Can you guide ... children?

These rhetorical questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You cannot lead the constellations ... proper times. You cannot guide ... children."

constellations

groups of stars that seem like they form a particular shape in the sky

to appear at their proper times

"so that they appear at the right time"

the Bear

This is the name of a constellation. Translate as in Job 9:9.

its children

"its cubs"

Job 38:33

Do you know the regulations of the sky? Could you set in place the sky's rule over the earth?

These can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You do not know the regulations of the sky? You could not set in place the sky's rule over the earth."

Job 38:34

General Information:

Yahweh uses two questions to emphasize to Job that he rules the rain clouds and lightning and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Can you raise ... may cover you?

These can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You cannot raise ... may cover you."

an abundance of rainwater

The abstract noun "abundance" can be translated as the adjective "abundant." Alternate translation: "an abundant amount of rainwater" or "a flood of waters"

Job 38:35

Can you send out ... you, 'Here we are'?

These can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You cannot send out you, 'Here we are!'"

Here we are

The lightning bolts are spoken of as servants saying they are ready to follow commands.

Job 38:36

General Information:

Yahweh uses three questions to emphasize to Job that he rules the clouds and rain and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Who has put wisdom in the clouds or has given understanding to the mists?

These questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "I am the one who has put wisdom in the clouds and given understanding to the mists."

has put wisdom in the clouds

"has given wisdom to the clouds"

Job 38:37

Connecting Statement:

A rhetorical question begins here.

Who can pour out the water skins of the sky

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am the one who can pour out the water skins of the sky."

the water skins

These are skins that people sew together so that they can hold water. Yahweh refers to the thick clouds as "waters skins" because they hold much water just like water skins.

Job 38:38

when the dust runs ... tightly together?

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who can pour out" in verse 37 ends here. "Only I can pour out ... when the dust runs ... tightly together."

when the dust runs into a hard mass

The rain makes the loose dry dirt stick together like one piece of dirt. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the rain molds the dirt into a hard mass"

the clods of earth clump tightly together
"the lumps of soil stick together"

Job 38:39

General Information:

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that he knows how to feed the lions and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Can you hunt down a victim for a lioness or satisfy the appetite of her young lion cubs

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that you cannot hunt down a victim for a lioness or satisfy the appetite of her young lion cubs"

a victim

"prey." This is an animal that a lion could eat.

lioness

This is a female lion.

appetite

hunger

of her young lion cubs

"of young lions." These are young lions that are old enough to hunt for themselves.

Job 38:40

Connecting Statement:

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Can you hunt" in verse 39 ends here.

when they are crouching ... to lie in wait?

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Can you hunt" in verse 39 ends here. This can be translated as a statement. "You know that you

cannot hunt down ... when they are crouching ... to lie in wait."

dens

A "den" is a lair or shelter where lions live.

sheltering in hiding

"hiding in a thicket." Lions hide in thick vegetation when hunting their prey.

to lie in wait

The implied information is that the lions are hiding and waiting for their prey to come near. Alternate translation: "to lie waiting for a victim"

Job 38:41

General Information:

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that he provides food for the ravens and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Who provides victims ... for lack of food?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tell me who provides victims ... for lack of food."

provides victims

"provides food." This refers to animals that ravens look for and can eat.

ravens

large birds with shiny black feathers that feed on dead animals

cry out to God

The implied information is that the ravens are crying out for food. Alternate translation: "cry to God for help" or "cry out for God to give them food"

stagger about

This means to walk around in an unsteady way.

for lack of food

"because they have no food" or "because they have nothing to eat"

Chapter 39

- ¹ Do you know at what time the wild goats in the rocks bear their young?
Can you watch when the deer are having their fawns?
- ² Can you count the months that they gestate?
Do you know the time when they bear their young?
- ³ They crouch down and give birth to their young,
and then they finish their labor pains.
- ⁴ Their young ones become strong and grow up in the open fields;
they go out and do not return to them.
- ⁵ Who sent the wild donkey out free?
Who has untied the bonds of the swift donkey,
- ⁶ whose home I have made in the Arabah,
his house in the salt land?
- ⁷ He laughs in scorn at the noises in the city;
he does not hear the driver's shouts.
- ⁸ He roams over the mountains as his pastures;
there he looks for every green plant to eat.
- ⁹ Will the wild ox be happy to serve you?
Will he consent to stay by your manger?
- ¹⁰ Can you use ropes to hold the wild ox in the furrows?
Will he harrow the valleys as he follows after you?
- ¹¹ Will you trust him because his strength is great?
Will you leave your labor to him to do?
- ¹² Will you depend on him to bring your grain home,
to gather the grain for your threshing floor?
- ¹³ The wings of the ostrich wave proudly,
but are they the pinions and plumage of love?
- ¹⁴ For she leaves her eggs on the earth,
and she lets them keep warm in the dust;
- ¹⁵ she forgets that a foot might crush them
or that a wild beast might trample them.
- ¹⁶ She deals roughly with her young ones as if they were not hers;
she does not fear that her labor might have been in vain,
- ¹⁷ because God has deprived her of wisdom
and has not given her any understanding.
- ¹⁸ When she runs swiftly,
she laughs in scorn at the horse and its rider.
- ¹⁹ Have you given the horse his strength?
Did you clothe his neck with his flowing mane?
- ²⁰ Have you ever made him jump like a locust?
The majesty of his snorting is fearsome.
- ²¹ He paws in might and rejoices in his strength;
he rushes out to meet the weapons.
- ²² He mocks fear and is not dismayed;
he does not turn back from the sword.
- ²³ The quiver rattles against his flank,
along with the flashing spear and the javelin.
- ²⁴ He swallows up ground with fierceness and rage;
at the sound of the ram's horn, he cannot stand in one place.
- ²⁵ Whenever the ram's horn sounds, he says, 'Aha!'
He smells the battle from far away—

the thunderous shouts of the commanders and the outcries.

- 26 Is it by your wisdom that the hawk soars,
that he stretches out his wings for the south?
- 27 Is it at your orders that the eagle mounts up
and makes his nest in high places?
- 28 He lives on cliffs and makes his home
on the peaks of cliffs, a stronghold.
- 29 From there he searches for victims;
his eyes see them from very far away.
- 30 His young also drink up blood;
where killed people are, there he is."
-

Job 39 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. Yahweh continues to speak in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's greatness

Yahweh is far greater than any man. He is the creator of the earth, and his ways will not always be understood by men because their knowledge is always limited. Since Job cannot understand creation, he cannot truly understand Yahweh.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Yahweh uses a series of rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to defend his character. Many of these questions focus on nature because Yahweh is the creator of the heavens and the earth. (See: and heaven)

Job 39:1

General Information:

Yahweh uses four questions to emphasize that he is greater than Job because Yahweh takes care of the wild mountain goats and deer and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Do you know at what time ... bear their young?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely you do not know when ... bear their young!"

Can you watch when the deer are having their fawns?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are not able to watch to make sure everything goes well when the deer give birth to their fawns!"

are having their fawns

"give birth to their fawns"

Job 39:2

Can you count the months that they gestate?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You cannot count the months that they are pregnant."

that they gestate

"to complete their pregnancy"

they

The word "they" refers to the goats and the deer.

gestate

"are pregnant"

Do you know the time when they bear their young?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Of course you do not know when they give birth to their young."

Job 39:3

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

They crouch down

The word "They" refers to the wild mountain goats and the deer.

then they finish their labor pains

Possible meanings are 1) their labor pains are over when the birth is finished or 2) "labor pains" is a metonym that refers to the offspring of the goats and deer because they are the result of the mother's labor and pain. Alternate translation: "send out their offspring from their womb"

Job 39:4

the open fields

"the countryside" or "the wild"

do not return to them

"do not come back to them" or "do not come back to their mothers"

Job 39:5

General Information:

Yahweh uses two questions to emphasize that he is greater than Job because Yahweh takes care of the wild donkeys and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Who sent the wild donkey out free?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am the one who sent the wild donkey out free."

the wild donkey ... the swift donkey

These are different names for the same kind of donkey.

Who has untied the bonds of the swift donkey

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am the one who untied the bonds of the swift donkey"

bonds

ropes, chains, or straps that hold an animal and keep it from running away

Job 39:6

General Information:

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who has untied" in verse 5 ends here.

whose home I have made ... in the salt land?

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who has untied" in verse 5 ends here. This can be translated as a statement. "I am the one who has untied ... whose home I have made in the Arabah, his house in the salt land."

whose home I have made in the Arabah

Yahweh describes the donkey as though he were a person that had a house. "I gave him the Arabah as a place to live"

the salt land

the land around the Salt Sea that has a lot of salt in it

Job 39:7

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

He

The word "He" refers to the wild donkey.

laughs in scorn

Yahweh describes the donkey as though he were a person. The donkey laughs because those in the city have to hear loud noise, but he lives in a quiet place.

the driver's

someone who forces an animal to work

Job 39:8

pastures

places where animals can eat plants growing in the field

Job 39:9

General Information:

Here Yahweh uses four questions to emphasize that Job is not like Yahweh because Job cannot control the wild ox.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Will the wild ox be happy to serve you?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The wild ox will not be happy to serve you."

the wild ox

Possible meanings are 1) a type of ox that used to live in the wild or 2) some kind of buffalo that looked like oxen.

be happy

"be willing"

Will he consent to stay by your manger?

This question can be translated as a statement.
Alternate translation: "He will not consent to stay by your manger."

consent to stay by your manger

"stay by your manger through the night"

manger

something that holds food so that animals can eat it

Job 39:10

Can you use ropes to hold the wild ox in the furrows?

This question can be translated as a statement.
Alternate translation: "You cannot control the wild ox with a rope in order to plow furrows in your fields."

ropes

Farmers would tie ropes to animals' heads or necks in order to lead them.

furrows

These are long channels made in the dirt while plowing. See how you translated this in Job 31:38.

Will he harrow the valleys as he follows after you?

This question can be translated as a statement.
Alternate translation: "He will never harrow the valleys as he follows after you."

harrow

to smooth and break up the soil

Job 39:11

General Information:

Here Yahweh uses three questions to continue his argument that Job is not like Yahweh because Job cannot control the wild ox.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Will you trust him because his strength is great?

This question can be translated as a statement.
Alternate translation: "You cannot trust him because his strength is great."

trust him

The word "him" refers to the "wild ox."

Will you leave your labor to him to do?

This question can be translated as a statement.
Alternate translation: "You will not be able to make him do your labor for you."

leave your labor to him to do

"have him do your hard work for you"

Job 39:12

Will you depend on him ... grain for your threshing floor?

These two clauses basically mean the same thing.
This question can be translated as a statement.
Alternate translation: "You will not be able to depend on him ... grain for your threshing floor."

Job 39:13

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

The wings of the ostrich ... pinions and plumage of love?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that Job cannot explain why ostriches behave the way they do. Alternate translation: "You do not know whether the pinions and plumage of the ostrich represent love when they wave their wings proudly."

ostrich

a very large bird that can run very fast but cannot fly

wave proudly

"move with joy"

pinions

the very long feathers on the wings of birds

plumage

the smaller feathers that cover the body of a bird

of love

The Hebrew word is uncertain. Possible meanings are 1) "of faithfulness" or 2) "of a stork." The name of the stork meant "the faithful one" or "the loving one" because people knew that storks take very good care of their chicks.

Job 39:14

on the earth

"on the ground"

Job 39:15

crush them

The word "them" refers to the eggs.

trample them

"step on them"

Job 39:16

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

She deals roughly

The word "She" refers to the female ostrich.

her labor

the work that she does when she lays the eggs

might have been in vain

If the chicks die, all of her work was useless.
Alternate translation: "might have been useless if the chicks die"

Job 39:17

deprived her of wisdom

"made her forget wisdom" or "not given her wisdom"

understanding

See how you translated this in Job 11:6.

Job 39:18

When she runs

This verse is in contrast to her weakness in caring for her chicks. Alternate translation: "However, when she runs"

she laughs ... its rider

It is implied that she laughs because she is faster than the horse. Alternate translation: "she laughs ... its rider because she can run faster than the horse"

Job 39:19

General Information:

Yahweh uses three questions to emphasize that Job is not like Yahweh because Job cannot control the wild horse.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Have you given the horse his strength?

This question can be translated as a statement.
Alternate translation: "You have never given the horse his strength."

Did you clothe his neck with his flowing mane?

This question can be translated as a statement.
Alternate translation: "You cannot clothe his neck with his flowing mane."

clothe his neck with his flowing mane

The horse's "mane" is spoken of as if it was clothing for the neck of the horse. Alternate translation: "made his flowing mane to cover his neck like clothes"

flowing mane

the long hair on the top of the neck of a horse

Job 39:20

Have you ever made him jump like a locust?

This question can be translated as a statement.
Alternate translation: "You are not able to make him jump like a locust."

a locust

a large kind of grasshopper that can jump very far and very quickly

snorting

a very loud sound that horses make with their nose

Job 39:21

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

He paws

The word "He" refers to the horse. The horse paws the ground because he is very excited to begin the fight. Alternate translation: "He paws with excitement and"

paws

"digs at the ground with his hooves"

to meet the weapons

Here "the weapons" represent the battle in which they are used. Alternate translation: "to join in the battle"

Job 39:22

He mocks fear

"He is not afraid at all"

mocks

"laughs at"

dismayed

discouraged

does not turn back

"does not run away"

Job 39:23

quiver

a container that holds arrows

rattles

shakes and makes noise

flank

the side of a horse

javelin

a long stick with a sharp end that people throw at their enemies

Job 39:24

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

He

The word "He" refers to the horse.

swallows up ground

The horse runs over the ground so quickly that the ground passes by like water that a person drinks. Alternate translation: "runs very fast over the ground"

with fierceness and rage

The horse is very excited, so he moves quickly and strongly.

at the sound of the ram's horn

It can be stated that someone blows the ram's horn. Alternate translation: "when someone blows a ram's horn to announce that a battle has begun"

he cannot stand in one place

"he is too excited to stand still"

Job 39:25

he says, 'Aha'

The word "Aha" is a sound people make when they discover something. The horse makes a sound because he has discovered the battle.

the thunderous shouts

It is implied that the horse hears these things. Alternate translation: "he hears the thunderous shouts"

the outcries

"the battle cries." People have special shouts that they use in war to show their great strength and bravery and to scare the enemy.

Job 39:26

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Is it by your wisdom ... for the south?

Yahweh uses this question to prove that Job is not as great as Yahweh. The implicit answer to this question is "no." Alternate translation: "It is not by your wisdom ... for the south."

stretches out his wings for the south

Here the stretching out of his wings refers to flying. Alternate translation: "flies to the south"

for the south

In the biblical geography, birds fly south during the winter in order to live in warmer climates.

Job 39:27

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Is it at your orders ... nest in high places?

Yahweh uses this question to prove that Job is not powerful enough to command the eagles. The implicit answer to this question is "no." Alternate translation: "You are not able to command the eagle to mount up and build his nest in high places."

at your orders

The abstract noun "orders" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "because you tell it to do so"

mounts up

This means he flies upward. Alternate translation: "flies up into the sky"

Job 39:28

a stronghold

The high cliffs are strongholds for eagles because the animals that would want to eat them cannot reach them.

Job 39:29

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

he searches for victims

Here the word "he" refers to the eagle.

for victims

"for animals that he can kill and eat"

his eyes see them

Here "his eyes" refer to the eagle. Alternate translation: "he sees them"

Job 39:30

His young

"The baby eagles." It may be helpful to state that this happens after the eagle kills an animal. Alternate translation: "After an eagle kills an animal, the baby eagles"

drink up blood

"drink the blood of the animal that he killed"

where killed people are

"where there are dead people." This phrase refers to dead bodies that are lying out in the open, not to bodies that are buried in the ground.

there he is

It can be made explicit that he comes to eat the dead bodies. Alternate translation: "he is there to eat them"

Chapter 40

- ¹ Yahweh continued to speak to Job; he said,
- ² "Should anyone who wishes to criticize try to correct the Almighty?
He who argues with God, let him answer."
- ³ Then Job answered Yahweh and said,
- ⁴ "See, I am insignificant; how can I answer you?
I put my hand over my mouth.
- ⁵ I spoke once, and I will not answer;
indeed, twice, but I will proceed no further."
- ⁶ Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said,
- ⁷ "Now gird up your loins like a man,
for I will ask you questions, and you must answer me.
- ⁸ Will you actually say that I am unjust?
Will you condemn me so you may claim that you are in the right?
- ⁹ Do you have an arm like God's,
and can you thunder with a voice like his?
- ¹⁰ Now clothe yourself in glory and dignity;
array yourself in honor and majesty.
- ¹¹ Scatter around the excess of your anger;
look at everyone who is proud and bring him low.
- ¹² Look at everyone who is proud and bring him low;
trample down wicked people where they stand.
- ¹³ Bury them in the earth together;
imprison their faces in the hidden place.
- ¹⁴ Then will I also acknowledge about you
that your own right hand can save you.
- ¹⁵ See now, the behemoth,
which I made when I made you—
he eats grass like an ox.
- ¹⁶ See now, his strength is in his loins,
and his power is in his belly's muscles.
- ¹⁷ He makes his tail like a cedar;
the sinews of his thighs are joined together.
- ¹⁸ His bones are like tubes of bronze;
his legs are like bars of iron.
- ¹⁹ He is the chief of the creatures of God.
Only God, who made him, can defeat him.
- ²⁰ For the hills provide him with food;
the beasts of the field play nearby.
- ²¹ He lies under the lotus plants
in the shelter of the reeds, in the marshes.
- ²² The lotus plants cover him with their shade;
the willows of the brook are all around him.
- ²³ See, if a river floods its banks, he does not tremble;
he is confident, though the Jordan should surge up to his mouth.
- ²⁴ Can anyone capture him with a hook,
or pierce his nose through with a snare?
-

Job 40 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers, or songs. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of 40:1-2, 4-5, 7-24, which are extended quotations of Job and Yahweh, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness

In seeking to defend his own righteousness, Job accuses Yahweh of being unjust. Yahweh asks a very important question: "Will you condemn me so you may claim you are right?" This is the essence of Job's error.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Irony

Yahweh states, "He who argues with God, let him answer." Job immediately answers him. This is irony. While Job is forced to acknowledge the power of Yahweh, he does not repent of his former statements. Because of this, Yahweh asks him more questions. (See: repent)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Animals

There are several animals mentioned in this chapter that do not exist and may never have existed. It may be necessary to leave these names untranslated or to translate their names as adjectives.

Job 40:1

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Job 40:2

Should anyone who wishes to criticize try to correct the Almighty?

Yahweh is rebuking Job. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one who wants to criticize me should try to argue with me, for I am Almighty God." or "You, a person, want to criticize me, Almighty God, but you should not try to correct me."

He who argues with God, let him answer

Yahweh speaks of Job and himself as if they were two other people to remind Job that no person anywhere should argue with God. Alternate translation: "You want to argue with me, so answer me"

Job 40:3

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 40:4

See, I am

"You are right when you say that I am" or "Look at me and you will see that I am"

I am insignificant

"I am not important"

how can I answer you?

Job uses this question to apologize for questioning God. Alternate translation: "I cannot answer you."

Job 40:5

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 40:6

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 40:7

gird up your loins like a man

A man who tucks his robe up under his sash or belt is preparing for hard physical work, and Job was to prepare for the hard work of answering God. See how you translated this in [Job 38:3]

Job 40:8

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Will you actually say that I am unjust?

The word "actually" indicates that Yahweh is surprised that Job would say that Yahweh is unjust

and that Job should make sure that he really wants to say that. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am surprised that you are saying I am unjust." or "You should be sure that you want to say that I am unjust, because that is what you are saying."

Will you condemn me so you may claim that you are in the right?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are condemning me so you can claim that you are innocent."

Job 40:9

an arm like God's

The arm is a metonym for the strength in the arm. Alternate translation: "strength like God's strength"

can you thunder with a voice like his?

God uses this rhetorical question to show Job that God is powerful and Job is not. Alternate translation: "you certainly cannot thunder with a voice like God's."

can you thunder with a voice like his

Here "thunder with a voice" is a metaphor for speaking in way that is extremely loud and frightening like thunder. Alternate translation: "can you speak with the sound of thunder as he does"

a voice like his

"a voice like his voice"

Job 40:10

clothe yourself in glory and dignity; array yourself in honor and majesty

The abstract nouns "glory," "dignity," "honor," and "majesty" are spoken of as if they were clothing that a person could put on. They can be translated as adjectives and verbs. Alternate translation: "make yourself glorious; do something great so people will respect you and honor you; make people think you are a great king"

Job 40:11

Scatter around the excess of your anger

The abstract noun "anger" is spoken of as if it were something that usually could be held in a container, but in this situation there is so much of it that what does not fit needs to be spread around. It is also a metonym for the actions a person takes when he is angry. You may need to make explicit why the person is angry. Alternate translation: "Be angry because people are proud, and punish them"

bring him low

"take away everything he is proud of"

Job 40:12

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 40:13

their faces

The "face" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "them"

the hidden place

a euphemism for the place where people's spirits go when they die

Job 40:14

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 40:15

See now, the behemoth

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is an exhortation for the hearer to pay attention. "Listen carefully: the behemoth"

behemoth

a large water animal, possibly the hippopotamus

he eats

the behemoth eats

eats grass like an ox

Both the behemoth and the ox eat grass.

Job 40:16

See now, his strength

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is an exhortation for the hearer to pay attention. "Listen carefully: his strength" See how you translated this phrase in Job 40:15.

loins ... belly's muscles

These two phrases refer to the same part of the body.

Job 40:17

like a cedar

Cedar is a very hard wood, and his tail becomes very hard.

Job 40:18

like tubes of bronze

Here, his bones are compared to tubes made of bronze to show how tough this animal is.

like bars of iron

This last comparison describes the strength of this great animal.

Job 40:19

chief of the creatures

"most important of the creatures" or "strongest of the creatures"

the creatures of God. Only God

Yahweh speaks as if he were another person.
Alternate translation: "of my creatures. Only I, God"

Job 40:20

the hills provide him with food

The hills are spoken of as if they were people capable of giving him food. Alternate translation: "food grows on the hills for him"

Job 40:21

lotus plants

flowering plants that float on the water in swampy areas

reeds

tall grasses found in swamps or marshes

Job 40:22

lotus plants

flowering plants that float on the water in swampy areas. See how you translated this in Job 40:19.

willows of the brook

Willows are large trees that grow in damp ground. If they are unknown in your culture, you can use a general term for trees that grow near water.

Job 40:23

banks

sides of the river

though the Jordan should surge up to his mouth

"even if the flood of the Jordan should come up to his mouth"

Job 40:24

Can anyone capture him with a hook ... snare?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can capture him with a hook or pierce his nose through with a snare."

Chapter 41

- 1 Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook?
Or tie up his jaws with a cord?
- 2 Can you put a rope into his nose,
or pierce his jaw through with a hook?
- 3 Will he make many pleas to you?
Will he speak soft words to you?
- 4 Will he make a covenant with you,
that you should take him for a servant forever?
- 5 Will you play with him as you would with a bird?
Will you tie him up for your servant girls?
- 6 Will the groups of fishermen bargain for him?
Will they divide him up to trade among the merchants?
- 7 Can you fill his hide with harpoons
or his head with fishing spears?
- 8 Put your hand on him just once,
and you will remember the battle and do it no more.
- 9 See, the hope of anyone who does that is a lie;
will not anyone be thrown down to the ground just by the sight of him?
- 10 None is so fierce that he dare stir Leviathan up;
who, then, is he who can stand before me?
- 11 Who has first given anything to me in order that I should repay him?
Whatever is under the whole sky is mine.
- 12 I will not keep silent concerning Leviathan's legs,
nor about the matter of his strength, nor about his graceful form.
- 13 Who can strip off his outer garment?
Who can penetrate his double armor?
- 14 Who can open the doors of his face—
ringed with his teeth, which are a terror?
- 15 his back is made up of rows of shields,
tight together as with a close seal.
- 16 One is so near to another
that no air can come between them.
- 17 They are joined to each other;
they stick together, so that they cannot be pulled apart.
- 18 Light flashes out from his snorting;
his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning dawn.
- 19 Out of his mouth go burning torches,
sparks of fire leap out.
- 20 Out of his nostrils goes smoke
like a boiling pot on a fire that has been fanned to be very hot.
- 21 His breath kindles coals into flame;
fires go out from his mouth.
- 22 In his neck is strength,
and terror dances in front of him.
- 23 The folds of his flesh are joined together;
they are firm on him; they cannot be moved.
- 24 His heart is as hard as a stone—
indeed, as hard as a lower millstone.
- 25 When he raises himself up, even the gods become afraid;
because of its thrashing they draw back.
- 26 If a sword strikes him, it does nothing—
and neither does a spear, an arrow, or any other pointed weapon.
- 27 He thinks of iron as if it were straw,

- and of bronze as if it were rotten wood.
- 28 An arrow cannot make him flee;
to him sling stones become chaff.
- 29 Clubs are regarded as straw;
he laughs at the whirring flight of a spear.
- 30 His lower parts are like sharp pieces of broken pottery;
he leaves a spreading trail in the mud as if he were a threshing sledge.
- 31 He makes the deep to foam up like a pot of boiling water;
he makes the sea like a pot of ointment.
- 32 He makes a shining wake behind him;
one would think the deep had gray hair.
- 33 On earth there is no equal to him,
who has been made to live without fear.
- 34 He sees everything that is proud;
he is king over all the sons of pride."

Job 41 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers, or songs. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of this chapter, which is an extended quotation of Yahweh, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. It is a continuation of the previous chapter.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Yahweh uses a series of rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to defend his character and to convince Job to repent. (See: and repent)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Animals

There are several animals mentioned in this chapter that do not exist and may never have existed. It may be necessary to leave these names untranslated or to translate their names as adjectives.

Job 41:1

General Information:

God continues speaking. He is using many rhetorical questions to challenge Job.

Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook?

God uses this question to remind Job that Job is not powerful like Leviathan. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that you cannot draw out Leviathan with a fishhook."

draw out

pull out of the water

Or tie up his jaws with a cord?

The words "can you" are understood from the previous question. They can be repeated here. God uses this question to remind Job that Job is not powerful like Leviathan. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Or

can you tie up his jaws with a cord?" or "And you know that you cannot tie up his jaws with a cord."

his jaws

Leviathan's jaws

Job 41:2

Can you put a rope into his nose ... with a hook?

God uses this question to remind Job that Job is not powerful like Leviathan. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that you cannot put a rope into Leviathan's nose ... with a hook."

Job 41:3

Will he make many pleas to you?

God uses this question to remind Job that Job is not powerful like Leviathan. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that he will not make pleas to you."

he
Leviathan

Will he speak soft words to you?

God uses this question to remind Job that Job is not powerful like Leviathan. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that he will not speak soft words to you."

Job 41:4

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to rebuke Job. He uses rhetorical questions to remind Job that Job is not powerful like Leviathan.

Will he make a covenant with you, that you should take him for a servant forever?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that he will not make a covenant with you, that you should take him for a servant forever."

he ... him

The words "he" and "him" refer to Leviathan.

Job 41:5

Will you play with him as you would with a bird?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that you cannot play with him as you would play with a bird."

Will you tie him up for your servant girls?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that you cannot tie him up for your servant girls."

Job 41:6

Will the groups of fishermen bargain for him?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that the groups of fishermen will not bargain for him."

Will they divide him up to trade among the merchants?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that they will not divide him up to trade among the merchants."

Will they divide

"Will the groups of fishermen divide"

Job 41:7

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to rebuke Job. He uses rhetorical questions to remind Job that Job is not powerful like Leviathan.

Can you fill his hide with harpoons or his head with fishing spears?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You cannot pierce his skin with your hunting weapons, nor can you pierce his head with fishing spears."

his
Leviathan's

harpoons

large spears with barbed points that people use to hunt large sea creatures

Job 41:8

him
Leviathan

Job 41:9

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you."

will not anyone be thrown down to the ground just by the sight of him?

This generalization can be translated as a statement in active form. Alternate translation: "Anyone who looks at him will be so frightened that he will throw himself on the ground."

the sight of him

"by looking at him" or "by seeing him"

Job 41:10

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to rebuke Job by asking him rhetorical questions. He uses rhetorical questions to remind Job that Yahweh is much more powerful than both Leviathan and Job.

None is so fierce that he dare stir Leviathan up; who, then, is he who can stand before me?

It would be easier to stir up Leviathan than to stand before Yahweh. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Since you know that no person is so fierce that he dare stir Leviathan up, you should certainly know that no one can stand before me."

Job 41:11

Who has first given anything to me in order that I should repay him?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that no one has first given anything to me, so there is no one whom I need to repay."

Job 41:12

I will not keep silent concerning ... nor about ... nor about

This can be translated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I will certainly speak about ... and about ... and about"

concerning Leviathan's legs, nor about the matter of his strength, nor about his graceful form

These are three things about which God will not keep silent.

his

The word "his" refers to Leviathan.

Job 41:13

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to rebuke Job by asking him rhetorical questions.

Who can strip off his outer garment?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can strip off his outer clothing."

his ... his

Leviathan's

Who can penetrate his double armor?

The word "armor" is a metaphor for the hard scales or hide on his back. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can penetrate his very thick hide."

Job 41:14

Who can open the doors of his face ... terror?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can pry his jaws apart ... terror."

Job 41:15

shields

The word "shields" is a metaphor for Leviathan's hide. Both shields and Leviathan's hide protect well and deflect arrows and other weapons.

tight together as with a close seal

This means the "shields" are very close to one another and nothing can get between them.

Job 41:16

One is so near to another

One row of shields is so near to another (Job 41:15).

between them

between the rows of shields (Job 41:15)

Job 41:17

They ... they ... they

the rows of shields (Job 41:15).

they cannot be pulled apart

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can pull them apart"

Job 41:18

from his snorting

"when he snorts." A snort is a sound like a short snore. Another possible meaning is "from his sneezing" or "when he sneezes."

his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning dawn

This means that his eyes are red as the morning dawn is red.

his

The word "his" refers to Leviathan.

Job 41:19

Out of his mouth go burning torches, sparks of fire leap out

God expresses the same idea in two different ways in order to emphasize the terrifying appearance of Leviathan. You can make this clear by adding the omitted words. Alternate translation: "Out of his mouth go burning torches, sparks of fire leap out of his mouth"

his

The word "his" refers to Leviathan.

Job 41:20

nostrils

the two openings of the nose

smoke like a boiling pot

Both the smoke and a boiling pot are very hot.

Job 41:21

kindles coals into flame

"causes coals to catch fire"

Job 41:22

his ... him

The words "his" and "him" refer to Leviathan.

terror dances in front of him

The abstract noun "terror" can be translated as the verb "be afraid." Alternate translation: "when people see him coming, they are very afraid"

Job 41:23

they cannot be moved

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can move them"

Job 41:24

His heart is as hard as a stone

A rock or stone does not change and become soft. Possible meanings are 1) Leviathan's physical chest and the organs inside it are physically hard or 2) Leviathan is not afraid of anything or 3) Leviathan is spoken of as a person who kills without ever being sorry.

a lower millstone

"the hardest of rocks." The lower millstone is the larger and harder of the two rocks used to grind grain. It would be the hardest rock people could find.

Job 41:25

he ... himself

Leviathan

the gods

Possible meanings are 1) "mighty people" or 2) "very strong people" .

Job 41:26

strikes him

strikes Leviathan

Job 41:27

He thinks of iron as if it were straw

"He thinks of weapons made of iron as if they were weapons made of straw." Straw would not get through his hide, and iron weapons do not get through his hide.

of bronze as if it were rotten wood

You can make this clear by adding the omitted words. Alternate translation: "he thinks of weapons made of bronze as if they were weapons made of rotten wood"

Job 41:28

to him sling stones become chaff

Chaff cannot hurt Leviathan, and sling stones are just as ineffective as chaff.

him ... him

Leviathan

Job 41:29

Clubs are regarded as straw

A club made of straw would not hurt him, and a club made of wood would not hurt him. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "He thinks of clubs as if they were straw"

he laughs at the whirring flight of a spear

The person throwing the spear hopes that the spear will kill Leviathan, but the writer speaks as if Leviathan knows the spear will not kill him and so laughs.

he laughs

Leviathan laughs

Job 41:30

His ... he ... he

These words refer to Leviathan.

he leaves a spreading trail in the mud as if he were a threshing sledge

Just as a threshing sledge goes over grain on a threshing floor and turns it to powder, so Leviathan's tail leaves a trail in the mud as he wags it when he walks.

Job 41:31

He makes the deep to foam up like a pot of boiling water

"As he passes through the water, he leaves a trail of bubbles behind him, like the bubbling of boiling water in a pot"

He

The word "he" refers to Leviathan.

he makes the sea like a pot of ointment

The ointment in a pot is cloudy if someone shakes it, and the sea is muddy when Leviathan swims in it.

Job 41:32

one would think the deep had gray hair

This is because the bubbles in his wake are white.

Job 41:33

there is no equal to him

"no other creature is like Leviathan"

him

Leviathan

Job 41:34

He sees everything that is proud

"He is very, very proud"

he is king over all the sons of pride

Leviathan is spoken of as if he were a person who is able to become king and be proud. Alternate

translation: "Leviathan has more reason to be proud than anyone else on earth"

He ... he
Leviathan

Chapter 42

¹ Then Job answered Yahweh and said,

² "I know that you can do all things,
that no purpose of yours can be stopped.

³ 'Who is this who without knowledge conceals plans?'
Indeed, I have spoken things that I did not understand,
things too difficult for me to understand, which I did not know about.

⁴ You said to me, 'Listen, now, and I will speak;
I will ask you things,
and you will tell me.'

⁵ I had heard about you by my ear's hearing,
but now my eye sees you.

⁶ So I despise myself;
I repent in dust and ashes."

⁷ It came about that after he had said these words to Job, Yahweh said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has done. ⁸ Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer, so that I may not deal with you after your folly. You have not said what is right about me, as my servant Job has done." ⁹ So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite went and did as Yahweh had commanded them, and Yahweh accepted Job.

¹⁰ When Job prayed for his friends, Yahweh reversed his captivity. Yahweh gave him twice as much as he had possessed before. ¹¹ Then all Job's brothers, and all his sisters, and all who knew him before, came to him and ate food with him in his house. They showed him sympathy and comforted him for all the disasters that Yahweh had brought upon him, and each of them gave Job a piece of silver and a ring of gold. ¹² Yahweh blessed the final end of Job's life more than the first; he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys. ¹³ He also had seven sons and three daughters. ¹⁴ He called the name of the first daughter Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third Keren-Happuch. ¹⁵ In all the land no women were found as beautiful as Job's daughters. Their father gave them an inheritance along with their brothers. ¹⁶ After this, Job lived 140 years; he saw his sons and his sons' sons, up to four generations. ¹⁷ Then Job died, being old and full of days.

Job 42 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers, or songs. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of 42:1-6, which is an extended quotation of Job, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

In this chapter Job shows his complete trust in Yahweh. (See: trust)

Special concepts in this chapter

Justice

Yahweh enacts justice at the end of this book. He punishes Job's friends and restores Job's blessings. Yahweh's blessing was not dependent upon Job's repentance, but upon Yahweh's grace. (See: justice, restore, bless and repent and grace)

Job 42:1

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 42:2

I know that you can do all things, that no purpose of yours can be stopped

You may want to repeat the words "I know."
Alternate translation: "I know that you can do all things. I know that no purpose of yours can be stopped"

no purpose of yours can be stopped

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can stop any of your plans"

Job 42:3

Who is this

The ULB and most modern versions agree that Job is loosely quoting God's own words from [Job 38:2]

conceals plans

That is, hides or misrepresents God's plans.

Job 42:4

General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

Job 42:5

but now my eye sees you

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents understanding. Alternate translation: "but now I really understand you"

Job 42:6

despise myself

Job's self is a metonym for what he said. Alternate translation: "I despise the things I said"

despise

intensely dislike

I repent in dust and ashes

Sitting in dust and ashes is a symbolic act showing the person is sorry.

Job 42:7

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Eliphaz the Temanite

See how you translated this man's name in Job 2:11

My wrath is kindled against you

Fire is a metaphor for anger, and starting a fire is a metaphor for becoming angry. Alternate translation: "I have become very angry with you"

Job 42:8

seven bulls

"7 bulls"

so that I may not deal with you after your folly

The abstract noun "folly" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "even though you have been very foolish, I will not punish you as you deserve"

Job 42:9

Bildad the Shuhite

See how you translated this man's name in Job 2:11

Zophar the Naamathite

See how you translated this man's name in Job 2:11

Yahweh accepted Job

The person is a metonym for the prayer he prays. Alternate translation: "God accepted Job's prayer for his three friends"

Job 42:10

Yahweh reversed his captivity

This is an idiom that means that Yahweh restored Job's good life. Alternate translation: "Yahweh restored his riches" or "Yahweh restored his wealth"

Job 42:11

all who knew him before

"all the people he had known before"

Job 42:12

more than the first

The words "he blessed" and "of Job's life" are understood from the previous phrase. They can be repeated here. Alternate translation: "more than he blessed the first part of Job's life"

fourteen thousand sheep

14,000 sheep

six thousand camels

6,000 camels

one thousand yoke of oxen

1,000 yoke of oxen

Job 42:13

seven sons and three daughters
7 sons and 3 daughters

Job 42:14

Jemimah ... Keziah ... Keren-Happuch
women's names

Job 42:15

no women were found as beautiful as Job's daughters
"Job's daughters were more beautiful than all the other women"

Job 42:16

lived 140 years
"lived 140 years"

Job 42:17

being old and full of days
The words "full of days" means basically the same thing as "being old." The two phrases form a common idiom. Alternate translation: "a very old man"