

KEY

Archer = A Survey of Old Testament Introduction (Gleason Archer). Chicago: Moody Press, 2007.

Ash = Job: The Wisdom of the Cross (Christopher Ash). Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014.

BBC = The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament. Edited by John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews and Mark W. Chavalas. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

Bush = Bush, Frederick. Ruth/Esther in the Word Biblical Commentary, Vol 9. Edited by David H. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker. Dallas: Word Books, 1996.

Frame = John Frame, Systematic Theology, P&R Publishing, 2013.

Grudem = Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology, Zondervan, 1994.

Harrison = Introduction to the Old Testament (R.K. Harrison). Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969.

K&D = Keil, C.F. and Delitzsch, F. in the Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament, Vol 2. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1989.

Swindoll = A Man of Heroic Endurance: Job (Charles Swindoll). Nashville, TN. W Publishing Group, 2004.

Talbert = *Beyond Suffering: Discovering the Message of Job* (Layton Talbert). Bob Jones University Press, 2007.

TWOT = The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament (R. Laird Harris; Gleason L. Archer, Jr.; Bruce Waltke). Chicago: Moody Press, 1980. Two Volumes.

Walton = Old Testament Today. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.

Basic English Structure

See outline below.

TRANSLATION, OUTLINE AND CENTRAL PROPOSITION

ENGLISH TRANSLATION (NASB95):

6:1 Then Job answered, 2 “Oh that my grief were actually weighed And laid in the balances together with my calamity! 3 “For then it would be heavier than the sand of the seas; Therefore my words have been rash. 4 “For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, Their poison my spirit drinks; The terrors of God are arrayed against me. 5 “Does the wild donkey bray over his grass, Or does the ox low over his fodder? 6 “Can something tasteless be eaten without salt, Or is there any taste in the white of an egg? 7 “My soul refuses to touch them; They are like loathsome food to me.

8 “Oh that my request might come to pass, And that God would grant my longing! 9 “Would that God were willing to crush me, That He would loose His hand and cut me off! 10 “But it is still my consolation, And I rejoice in unsparing pain, That I have not denied the words of the Holy One. 11 “What is my strength, that I should wait? And what is my end, that I should endure? 12 “Is my strength the strength of stones, Or is my flesh bronze? 13 “Is it that my help is not within me, And that deliverance is driven from me?

14 “For the despairing man there should be kindness from his friend; So that he does not forsake the fear of the Almighty. 15 “My brothers have acted deceitfully like a wadi, Like the torrents of wadis which vanish, 16 Which are turbid because of ice And into which the snow melts. 17 “When they become waterless, they are silent, When it is hot, they vanish from their place. 18 “The paths of their course wind along, They go up into nothing and perish. 19 “The caravans of Tema looked, The travelers of Sheba hoped for them. 20 “They were disappointed for they had trusted, They came there and were confounded. 21 “Indeed, you have now become such, You see a terror and are afraid. 22 “Have I said, ‘Give me something,’ Or, ‘Offer a bribe for me from your wealth,’ 23 Or, ‘Deliver me from the hand of the adversary,’ Or, ‘Redeem me from the hand of the tyrants’?

24 “Teach me, and I will be silent; And show me how I have erred. 25 “How painful are honest words! But what does your argument prove? 26 “Do you intend to reprove my words, When the words of one in despair belong to the wind? 27 “You would even cast lots for the orphans And barter over your friend. 28 “Now please look at me, And see if I lie to your face. 29 “Desist now, let there be no injustice; Even desist, my righteousness is yet in it. 30 “Is there injustice on my tongue? Cannot my palate discern calamities?

7:1 “Is not man forced to labor on earth, And are not his days like the days of a hired man? 2 “As a slave who pants for the shade, And as a hired man who eagerly waits for his wages, 3 So am I allotted months of vanity, And nights of trouble are appointed me. 4 “When I lie down I say, ‘When shall I arise?’ But the night continues, And I am continually tossing until dawn. 5 “My flesh is clothed with worms and a crust of dirt, My skin hardens and runs. 6 “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, And come to an end without hope. 7 “Remember that my life is but breath; My eye will not again see good. 8 “The eye of him who sees me will behold me no longer; Your eyes will be on me, but I will not be.

9 “When a cloud vanishes, it is gone, So he who goes down to Sheol does not come up. 10 “He will not return again to his house, Nor will his place know him anymore. 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 the sea monster, That You set a guard over me? 13 “If I say, ‘My bed will comfort me, My couch will ease my complaint,’ 14 Then You frighten me with dreams And terrify me by visions; 15 So that my soul would choose suffocation, Death rather than my pains. 16 “I waste away; I will not live forever. Leave me alone, for my days are but a breath.

17 “What is man that You magnify him, And that You are concerned about him, 18 That You examine him every morning And try him every moment? 19 “Will You never turn Your gaze away from me, Nor let me alone until I swallow my spittle? 20 “Have I sinned? What have I done to You, O watcher of men? Why have You set me as Your target, So that I am a burden to myself? 21 “Why then do You not pardon my transgression And take away my iniquity? For now I will lie down in the dust; And You will seek me, but I will not be.”

PASSAGE OUTLINE:

Bible Knowledge Commentary

2. JOB’S FIRST REPLY TO ELIPHAZ (CHAPS. 6–7)
 - a. Job’s defense of his complaining (6:1–7)
 - b. Job’s despair in his suffering (6:8–13)
 - c. Job’s disappointment in his friends (6:14–23)
 - d. Job’s plea to the three (6:24–30)
 - e. Job’s pattern of misery (7:1–5)
 - f. Job’s prayer to God (7:6–21)

UBS Handbook Series

1. Job is Weighed Down by Grief Job 6:1–7
2. Job is Without Hope and Strength Job 6:8–13
3. Job Complains That His Friends Deceive Him Job 6:14–23
4. Job Insists That He is Innocent Job 6:24–30
5. Job Complains to God about His Oppressive Existence Job 7:1–8
6. Life is Short and Job Wishes God Would Leave Him Alone Job 7:9–16
7. Job Asks God Why He Watches Him So Closely Job 7:17–21

My initial outline:

I. Job Complains to His Friends (6)

- A. IF ONLY you knew my suffering 6:1-8
- B. IF ONLY my life would end 6:8-13
- C. IF ONLY you were loyal 6:14-23
- D. IF ONLY you were compassionate 6:24-30

II. Job Complains to His God (7)

- A. WHY is life full of vain suffering? 7:1-8
- B. WHY don't You leave me alone? 7:9-16
- C. WHY is this happening to me? 7:17-21

SERMON OUTLINE:

I. Horizontal: Job Complains to His Friends (6)

- A. IF ONLY you knew my suffering 6:1-7
 - 1. Suffering is Suffocating
 - 2. Suffers are Rarely Silent
- B. IF ONLY my life would end 6:8-13
- C. IF ONLY you were loyal 6:14-23
- D. IF ONLY you were compassionate 6:24-30

II. Vertical: Job Complains to His God (7)

- A. WHY is life full of vain suffering? 7:1-8
- B. WHY don't You leave me alone? 7:9-16
- C. WHY is this happening to me? 7:17-21

PASSAGE SUBJECT/THEME (what is the passage talking about): The reality of his suffering

PASSAGE COMPLEMENT/THRUST (what is the passage saying about what it's talking about): is real and while hope seems extinguished he still endures

PASSAGE MAIN IDEA (central proposition of the text): The reality of Job's suffering is real and while hope is extinguished he still endures through the pain - even as he longs for the relief of death.

CENTRAL PROPOSITION (OR IDEA) OF THE SERMON: The Light of the Gospel Cannot Be Extinguished by the Despair of Hopelessness

SERMONIC IDEA/TITLE: Job: Looking for Loyalty While Waiting for Death / Job's Reply to Eliphaz: My Hope is Dim But I Endure

HISTORICAL/CULTURAL/GRAMMATICAL CONTEXT

“Job sometimes speaks to his friends and sometimes to God. It is always easy to be sure which parts of his speeches are which. Sometimes it doesn’t much matter. He speaks aloud for all to hear. But sometimes it is clear, especially when the Hebrew verbs are in the plural (addressing his three friends) or the singular (addressing God). In this speech he addresses his friends to start with, and then he directs his speech to God. So, for example, in 6:22-29 (or 30) he is clearly addressing his friends. And by 7:7 ("Remember" is singular) he is addressing God. Probably our chapter division marks the turn from the one to the other. [Ash, 119]

Context comes as it relates to Eliphaz in the previous two chapters (the righteous do not suffer or bad things don’t happen to good people).

Cf. Word Commentary introduction.

VERSES 6:1-7

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NASB95]:

6:1 Then Job answered, 2 “Oh that my grief were actually weighed And laid in the balances together with my calamity! 3 “For then it would be heavier than the sand of the seas; Therefore my words have been rash. 4 “For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, Their poison my spirit drinks; The terrors of God are arrayed against me. 5 “Does the wild donkey bray over his grass, Or does the ox low over his fodder? 6 “Can something tasteless be eaten without salt, Or is there any taste in the white of an egg? 7 “My soul refuses to touch them; They are like loathsome food to me.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [HCSB]:

6:1 Then Job answered: 2 If only my grief could be weighed and my devastation placed with it in the scales. 3 For then it would outweigh the sand of the seas! That is why my words are rash. 4 Surely the arrows of the Almighty have pierced me; my spirit drinks their poison. God’s terrors are arrayed against me. 5 Does a wild donkey bray over fresh grass or an ox low over its fodder? 6 Is bland food eaten without salt? Is there flavor in an egg white? 7 I refuse to touch them; they are like contaminated food.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NIV]:

6:1 Then Job replied: 2 “If only my anguish could be weighed and all my misery be placed on the scales! 3 It would surely outweigh the sand of the seas— no wonder my words have been impetuous. 4 The arrows of the Almighty are in me, my spirit drinks in their poison; God’s terrors are marshaled against me. 5 Does a wild donkey bray when it has grass, or an ox bellow when it has fodder? 6 Is tasteless food eaten without salt, or is there flavor in the sap of the mallow? 7 I refuse to touch it; such food makes me ill.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Job is Weighed Down by Grief Job 6:1–7 [UBS Handbook Series]

a. Job’s defense of his complaining (6:1–7) [Bible Knowledge Commentary]

1 Then Job answered,

Context comes as it relates to Eliphaz in the previous two chapters (the righteous do not suffer or bad things don’t happen to good people). Job answers Eliphaz (and the others there).

2 “Oh that my grief were actually weighed And laid in the balances together with my calamity!

3 “For then it would be heavier than the sand of the seas; Therefore my words have been rash.

Job's sufferings were heavier than wet sand. He's appealing to Eliphaz (in light of his comments in the previous 2 chapters): consider what I have gone through! Job lost everything (10 children; his wealth / health). Take a moment and reflect on what this kind of anguish is like (I can). Cf. 3:20.

But what about "rash" words? Job is excusing himself for his words. Suffering people sometimes say things they don't really mean . . . Cf. v. 26. "Therefore" (because of this intense suffering) his words have been rash. Job admits he has said some "rash words."

Examples from the previous chapters. Note that his words in 1:21 and 2:10 were godly, Spirit-engendered. But cf. 3:1 ff. for Job's "rash" words.

Such is calamity. Initial shock for the believer - cry out to G. Affirm His sov./goodness. After time passes, then depravity steeps in the heart. I can relate to that.

4 "For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, Their poison my spirit drinks; The terrors of God are arrayed against me.

Again, Job sees God's hand in this (cf. what I said last time).

It was as if God were shooting poisoned arrows at him (cf. 7:20; 16:12-13; Lam. 3:12-13).

Gerard Manley Hopkins, 19th c. English poet
"I am heartburn; I am gall.
God's most deep decree,
Bitter would have me taste—and the taste was me."

Terrors = only here and in Psalm 88:16

Psalm 88:16 Your burning anger has passed over me; Your terrors have destroyed me

5 "Does the wild donkey bray over his grass, Or does the ox low over his fodder?

6 "Can something tasteless be eaten without salt, Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?

7 "My soul refuses to touch them; They are like loathsome food to me.

VV. 5-7 are difficult to interpret.

5 Does a wild donkey bray when it has grass, or an ox bellow when it has fodder? 6 Is tasteless food eaten without salt, or is there flavor in the sap of the mallow? 7 I refuse to touch it; such food makes me ill. [NIV]

In this rhetorical question, the affirmation implied is that if one receives what is appropriate one does not complain about it. Animal imagery is used as so often in proverbial material, a wild animal here being paralleled with a domesticated one. If the

wild ass (אָר, see n. 6:5.a) finds the “soft grass” (JB) that is its natural food, it does not bray (contrast Jer 14:6); if the domesticated ox is given its regular provender (cf. also Isa 30:24), it does not low. Job receives the very contrary of what is due to him as a righteous man; what wonder then if he cries out?

It is not a question of whether the animals find enough food (as many commentators think, e.g., Hesse, Weiser), but whether they find what is usual and right for them (cf. Fohrer). [David J. A. Clines, *Job 1–20*, vol. 17, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 172.]

In the next question, the underlying affirmation is that there are substances too unappetizing to be eaten. One might be offered them as food but reject them with revulsion. This again is Job’s situation: he is refusing to swallow the pill that God has prescribed. His protests arise wholly from the revolting nature of what he has been offered in place of the wholesome nutriment of life. [ibid.]

My life is like tasteless food. My life is worse than bland—it’s poison!”

20 Reproach has broken my heart and I am so sick. And I looked for sympathy, but there was none, And for comforters, but I found none. 21 They also gave me gall for my food And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. —Psalm 69:20–21 (NASB95)

Cf. God’s reply to Job in 39:5,9.

VERSES 6:8-13

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NASB95]:

8 “Oh that my request might come to pass, And that God would grant my longing! 9 “Would that God were willing to crush me, That He would loose His hand and cut me off! 10 “But it is still my consolation, And I rejoice in unsparing pain, That I have not denied the words of the Holy One. 11 “What is my strength, that I should wait? And what is my end, that I should endure? 12 “Is my strength the strength of stones, Or is my flesh bronze? 13 “Is it that my help is not within me, And that deliverance is driven from me?

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [HCSB]:

8 If only my request would be granted and God would provide what I hope for: 9 that He would decide to crush me, to unleash His power and cut me off! 10 It would still bring me comfort, and I would leap for joy in unrelenting pain that I have not denied the words of the Holy One. 11 What strength do I have that I should continue to hope? What is my future, that I should be patient? 12 Is my strength that of stone, or my flesh made of bronze? 13 Since I cannot help myself, the hope for success has been banished from me.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NIV]:

8 “Oh, that I might have my request, that God would grant what I hope for, 9 that God would be willing to crush me, to let loose his hand and cut off my life! 10 Then I would still have this consolation— my joy in unrelenting pain— that I had not denied the words of the Holy One. 11 “What strength do I have, that I should still hope? What prospects, that I should be patient? 12 Do I have the strength of stone? Is my flesh bronze? 13 Do I have any power to help myself, now that success has been driven from me?

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Job is Without Hope and Strength Job 6:8–13 [UBS Handbook Series]

b. Job’s despair in his suffering (6:8–13) [Bible Knowledge Commentary]

6:8–10. Job hoped for death; he wanted God to grant his request that he die (voiced in 3:20–23 and also in 7:15; 10:18–19; 14:13). His misery would end if God would ... crush (cf. 4:19) him, loose His hand from sustaining Job’s life, and cut him off. The Hebrew verb translated “loose” carries the idea of setting prisoners free (e.g., Ps. 105:20) and the Hebrew verb rendered “cut off” pictures a weaver cutting thread. The one consolation and joy in Job’s pain was that he was innocent of defying God. This is the first of several of Job’s affirmations of his innocence (cf. Job 9:21; 16:17; 27:6). [Roy B. Zuck, “Job,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 727.

8 “Oh that my request might come to pass, And that God would grant my longing!

Cf. “longing” translated as “hope” (cf. ESV). This is the misguided hopes of a sufferer. Job’s “hope” is described in v. 9. When death becomes one’s hope!

9 “Would that God were willing to crush me, That He would loose His hand and cut me off!

Death - cf. 3:22. Cf. 2:9 - Job now agrees with his wife - to an extent.

Here he says, for the first time explicitly, that his wish is for death. In chap. 3 he had uttered futile wishes that he should not have been born (vv 3–10) and that he should have died at birth (vv 11–19) and had asked forlornly why the lives of those who would rather be dead are prolonged (vv 20–23). But it is not until now that he speaks explicitly of himself in this connection. [David J. A. Clines, Job 1–20, vol. 17, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 172.]

Cf. Edwards’ “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” where he talked about being held over hell by the web of a spider. Idea of G. cutting the thread.

When heaven is silent...

10 “But it is still my consolation, And I rejoice in unsparing pain, That I have not denied the words of the Holy One.

As his wife exhorted him to do in 2:9.

“the words of the Holy One” = that which Job knew about God (oral tradition, direct revelation?).

Cf. my struggles. Angry / disappointed at God. Could not deny though I could doubt. Cf. Doubt vs. Deny.

“If God did not soften the hardness of our hearts it would happen to us as it did to Pharaoh. For men are like anvils; when they are struck their nature is not changed; for we see how they repulse the blows. Even so, then, until God has touched us to the quick within, it is certain that we shall do nothing but kick against Him and spit out more and more poison; and whenever He chastises us, we shall gnash our teeth at Him, and we shall do nothing else but storm at Him. And in fact the iniquity of men is so wicked, so headstrong, and so desperate that the more God chastises them, the more do they spew out their blasphemies and show themselves to be utterly incorrigible, so that there is no way to bring them back to reason. Let us learn, then, that until God has touched us with His Holy Spirit, it is impossible that His chastisements should serve to bring us back to repentance, but rather they will cause us to grow worse and worse.” [John Calvin, Sermons From Job, 34]

Note the diff. ways vv. 9-10 are translated (interpreted). The diff. is between making a statement of fact vs. hypothetical situation.

9 “Would that God were willing to crush me, That He would loose His hand and cut me off! 10 “But it is still my consolation, And I rejoice in unsparing pain, That I have not denied the words of the Holy One. [NAS]

9 that God would be willing to crush me, to let loose his hand and cut off my life! 10 Then I would still have this consolation— my joy in unrelenting pain— that I had not denied the words of the Holy One. [NIV]

6:8–10. Job hoped for death; he wanted God to grant his request that he die (voiced in 3:20–23 and also in 7:15; 10:18–19; 14:13). His misery would end if God would . . . crush (cf. 4:19) him, loose His hand from sustaining Job’s life, and cut him off. The Hebrew verb translated “loose” carries the idea of setting prisoners free (e.g., Ps. 105:20) and the Hebrew verb rendered “cut off” pictures a weaver cutting thread. The one consolation and joy in Job’s pain was that he was innocent of defying God. This is the first of several of Job’s affirmations of his innocence (cf. Job 9:21; 16:17; 27:6). [Roy B. Zuck, “Job,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 727]

On death, cf. my hope — sitting under a tree during a lightening storm. Time I screamed “kill me!” “Thank the Lord that He is wise and gracious enough not to give us everything we ask.” [Talbert, 100]

11 “What is my strength, that I should wait? And what is my end, that I should endure?”

Waiting / Patience. I don’t know that there is a greater test of faith than having to patiently endure . . . suffering . . . trials . . . uncertainty. I’m not good at it. Fruit of the Spirit.

Cf. resting in God’s sov.

To live w/o hope is to live as a if dead.

“For how can he go on? He has no strength to go on. Verses 11-13 give a sensitive articulation of the close relation between existential energy and one’s sense of future. The first couplet (v. 11) portrays patience (which, in Hebrew, means “waiting”) as a “strong virtue.” Waiting is not a passive virtue nor a state of inertia; it is an activity which enacts moral strength. The Hebrew idiom translated “I should be patient” (RSV) means, literally, “to extend or stretch out or lengthen one’s *nepes*.” The idiom names that inner activity in which, tempted by the unpalatability of one’s experience to give up the ghost, one takes responsibility for one’s own appetitive outreach toward the future and one goes on, for the sake of a worthwhile end.” [Janzen, 78-79]

12 “Is my strength the strength of stones, Or is my flesh bronze?”

13 **“Is it that my help is not within me, And that deliverance is driven from me?”**

Job had no need to be patient (cf. 4:2) because he had nothing to hope for (cf. 7:6; 14:19; 17:15). His strength was gone. Did Eliphaz think that Job had the strength of stone or that he was as insensitive as bronze? Job’s next question (6:13) should be taken as a negative statement, introduced by a strong affirmative particle meaning “indeed.” [Bible Knowledge Commentary]

Many think he asks what end could possibly be achieved from waiting: “What is my end?” i.e., what real future (as distinct from the visionary future Eliphaz has projected in 5:17–26) lies in store for me? “What end have I to expect?” (NEB). But NAB offers the rendering, “What is my limit that I should be patient?” which suggests that the “end” here is the end of his resources that he has already reached. A nearer exegesis may perhaps be reached by considering Ps 39:5–6 [4–5] . . . [David J. A. Clines, Job 1–20, vol. 17, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 175.]

On verse 13:

Job concludes this triplet of verses with the most complete confession of his weakness. In v 11 he had no strength for waiting, no power for sheer patience. The reality is that he has no strength of any kind. It is as though his strength has been “thrust” or “driven” (RSV) from him by an external power. All he knows is that such a weakness is properly matched only by death, the state of ultimate absence of energy. [David J. A. Clines, Job 1–20, vol. 17, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 175.]

VERSES 6:14-23

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NASB95]:

14 “For the despairing man there should be kindness from his friend; So that he does not forsake the fear of the Almighty. 15 “My brothers have acted deceitfully like a wadi, Like the torrents of wadis which vanish, 16 Which are turbid because of ice And into which the snow melts. 17 “When they become waterless, they are silent, When it is hot, they vanish from their place. 18 “The paths of their course wind along, They go up into nothing and perish. 19 “The caravans of Tema looked, The travelers of Sheba hoped for them. 20 “They were disappointed for they had trusted, They came there and were confounded. 21 “Indeed, you have now become such, You see a terror and are afraid. 22 “Have I said, ‘Give me something,’ Or, ‘Offer a bribe for me from your wealth,’ 23 Or, ‘Deliver me from the hand of the adversary,’ Or, ‘Redeem me from the hand of the tyrants’?”

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [HCSB]:

14 A despairing man should receive loyalty from his friends, even if he abandons the fear of the Almighty. 15 My brothers are as treacherous as a wadi, as seasonal streams that overflow 16 and become darkened because of ice, and the snow melts into them. 17 The wadis evaporate in warm weather; they disappear from their channels in hot weather. 18 Caravans turn away from their routes, go up into the desert, and perish. 19 The caravans of Tema look for these streams. The traveling merchants of Sheba hope for them. 20 They are ashamed because they had been confident of finding water. When they arrive there, they are frustrated. 21 So this is what you have now become to me. When you see something dreadful, you are afraid. 22 Have I ever said: “Give me something” or “Pay a bribe for me from your wealth” 23 or “Deliver me from the enemy’s power” or “Redeem me from the grasp of the ruthless”?

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NIV]:

14 “Anyone who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty. 15 But my brothers are as undependable as intermittent streams, as the streams that overflow 16 when darkened by thawing ice and swollen with melting snow, 17 but that stop flowing in the dry season, and in the heat vanish from their channels. 18 Caravans turn aside from their routes; they go off into the wasteland and perish. 19 The caravans of Tema look for water, the traveling merchants of Sheba look in hope. 20 They are distressed, because they had been confident; they arrive there, only to be disappointed. 21 Now you too have proved to be of no help; you see something dreadful and are afraid. 22 Have I ever said, ‘Give something on my behalf, pay a ransom for me from your wealth, 23 deliver me from the hand of the enemy, rescue me from the clutches of the ruthless’?”

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Job Complains That His Friends Deceive Him Job 6:14–23 [UBS Handbook Series]
c. Job’s disappointment in his friends (6:14–23) [Bible Knowledge Commentary]

14 **“For the despairing man there should be kindness from his friend; So that he does not forsake the fear of the Almighty. (“Shaddai” 31x in Job)**

Difficult verse (note three diff. interpretations):

14 “For the despairing man there should be kindness from his friend; So that he does not forsake the fear of the Almighty. [NAS]

14 A despairing man should receive loyalty from his friends, even if he abandons the fear of the Almighty. [HCSB]

14 “Anyone who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty. [NIV]

Others [Pope] have “A sick man should have loyalty from his friends, though he forsake the fear of the Almighty.”

Job’s special concern is the loyalty (דסד) that he believes he is owed, so a plausible sense is:

A friend does not refuse his loyalty,
nor forsake the fear of the Almighty.

The meaning would be: he is no more likely to be disloyal than to abandon his faith in God. The point may be put more strongly by defining loyalty as involved in the fear of God:

A friend who does not refuse his loyalty
does not forsake the fear of the Almighty.

The most similar linkage of the loyalty of friendship with right religion is seen in Prov 14:21: “he who despises his friend sins (חַטָּא)”; cf. also Hos 4:1; Mic 6:8. A yet stronger form of the sentence defines the fear of God as consisting in loyalty to a friend. Thus:

He who withholds kindness from a friend
forsakes the fear of the Almighty (RSV).

[David J. A. Clines, Job 1–20, vol. 17, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 177.]

Note the use of “Hesed.” My endearing of loyalty....

kindness, loving-kindness, mercy, steadfast love, loyalty, lovingkindness, unfailing love. [TWOT]

The quality of “loyalty” (חסד) that a person has a right to expect from one’s friends. This is a characteristic frequently ascribed to God. Cf. Psalms where most of the over 200 occurrences are found. NASB usu. “lovingkindness.”

Selections from the Psalm:

Psalm 23:6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life,
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Psalm 31:7 I will rejoice and be glad in Your lovingkindness, Because You have seen my
affliction; You have known the troubles of my soul,

Psalm 63:3 Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise You.

Psalm 145:8 The LORD is gracious and merciful; Slow to anger and great in
lovingkindness.

Psalm 103:11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His
lovingkindness toward those who fear Him.

Often associated with truth and everlasting:

Psalm 85:10 Lovingkindness and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have
kissed each other.

Psalm 115:1 Not to us, O LORD, not to us, But to Your name give glory Because of Your
lovingkindness, because of Your truth.

Psalm 118:1 Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is
everlasting.

**15 “My brothers have acted deceitfully like a wadi, Like the torrents of wadis which
vanish,**

16 Which are turbid because of ice And into which the snow melts.

**17 “When they become waterless, they are silent, When it is hot, they vanish from their
place.**

18 “The paths of their course wind along, They go up into nothing and perish.

19 “The caravans of Tema looked, The travelers of Sheba hoped for them.

20 “They were disappointed for they had trusted, They came there and were confounded.

“May we not be wadis. Make us streams whose flow is fed by the springs of Your own
unfailing faithfulness to us, so that when others look to us for compassion to slake their
thirst for acts of kindness in their need, we may readily offer the refreshing loyalty they
deserve from us as brothers and sisters and friends.” [Talbert]

Job seems to be looking beyond his 3 friends to the many others who have abandoned him (after
all, these three were there!).

“Many think that Job has three particular friends in mind here (6:14-20). But these three
are the only ones who have not deserted him. Job does not couch his complaint in 6:14-15
as though he is talking to them or about them, but about others. This is not the last time
he will express his disillusionment with the abandonment of friends, neighbors, servants,

and even relatives. Job uses similar terminology in 19:13-19 to describe the desertion of every conceivable companion. Everywhere he turned, people scattered from him. You wouldn't want to be caught comforting God's enemy. Only a fool could look at Job and not read the handwriting of divine judgment. It wasn't safe to be one of Job's children; they were all dead. It wasn't safe to be one of Job's servants; most of them were gone too. It wasn't even safe to be one of Job's animals. Whatever Job did to bring all this on, they're not having any part of it. Only a fool stands near a tree in a storm. And to a man, they were no fools. Whatever else you may think of Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, they were willing to take the risk." [Talbert, 101]

His friends had been like a riverbed. In the rainy season, a wadi is filled with rushing, raging water from melting snow, but in the summer when it is most needed it dries up. So his friends, when most needed, disappointed him (cf. v. 21). [BKC]

21 “Indeed, you have now become such, You see a terror and are afraid.

Here Job is talking about them! Note second half of the verse . . . Admit, that we often don't know how to respond to sufferers. What do we say? What do we do? May also be that they were fearful of sympathizing w/one who was under God's punishment.

**22 “Have I said, ‘Give me something,’ Or, ‘Offer a bribe for me from your wealth,’
23 Or, ‘Deliver me from the hand of the adversary,’ Or, ‘Redeem me from the hand of the tyrants’?**

“No one knows quite what to make of Job's rhetorical questions in 6:22-23 or their link to 6:21. Perhaps they form a bridge between verses 14-21 and 24-30. All my friends have dried up and disappeared like desert wadis (6:14-20). Now you are no more help than they; you behold my disaster and are bewildered (6:21). I am not asking for a bailout to compensate my losses (6L22-23). All I am asking for is some explanation! Teach me and I will be quiet; show me what I have done wrong (6:24). Upright words sound forceful but what does your argument prove (6:25)? Will you quarrel and treat the speeches of a despairing man like wind (6:26)? You might as well gamble for orphans and barter away your friend (6:27). Look at me! I will not lie to your face (6:28). Desist, no more injustice! My integrity is at stake (6:29). Is there perversity in my tongue? I am not speaking falsehood (6:30).” [Talbert, 101-02]

What is suffering apart from God?

VERSES 6:24-30

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NASB95]:

24 “Teach me, and I will be silent; And show me how I have erred. 25 “How painful are honest words! But what does your argument prove? 26 “Do you intend to reprove my words, When the words of one in despair belong to the wind? 27 “You would even cast lots for the orphans And barter over your friend. 28 “Now please look at me, And see if I lie to your face. 29 “Desist now, let there be no injustice; Even desist, my righteousness is yet in it. 30 “Is there injustice on my tongue? Cannot my palate discern calamities?

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [HCSB]:

24 Teach me, and I will be silent. Help me understand what I did wrong. 25 How painful honest words can be! But what does your rebuke prove? 26 Do you think that you can disprove my words or that a despairing man’s words are mere wind? 27 No doubt you would cast lots for a fatherless child and negotiate a price to sell your friend. 28 But now, please look at me; would I lie to your face? 29 Reconsider; don’t be unjust. Reconsider; my righteousness is still the issue. 30 Is there injustice on my tongue or can my palate not taste disaster?

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NIV]:

24 “Teach me, and I will be quiet; show me where I have been wrong. 25 How painful are honest words! But what do your arguments prove? 26 Do you mean to correct what I say, and treat my desperate words as wind? 27 You would even cast lots for the fatherless and barter away your friend. 28 “But now be so kind as to look at me. Would I lie to your face? 29 Relent, do not be unjust; reconsider, for my integrity is at stake. 30 Is there any wickedness on my lips? Can my mouth not discern malice?

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Job Insists That He is Innocent Job 6:24–30 [UBS Handbook Series]

d. Job’s plea to the three (6:24–30) [Bible Knowledge Commentary]

24 **“Teach me, and I will be silent; And show me how I have erred.**

25 **“How painful are honest words! But what does your argument prove?**

26 **“Do you intend to reprove my words, When the words of one in despair belong to the wind?**

Cf. 2:10; 8:2; 15:2

27 **“You would even cast lots for the orphans And barter over your friend.**

Such callousness would be the equivalent of the friends' casting lots for the orphan of a man who had been their debtor in order to sell it into slavery (cf. the situation depicted in 2 Kgs 4:1), or "selling" their friend as if he were a commodity. [David J. A. Clines, Job 1–20, vol. 17, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 181.]

28 "Now please look at me, And see if I lie to your face.

29 "Desist now, let there be no injustice; Even desist, my righteousness is yet in it.

The "turning," lit. "returning" (בּוֹשׁ) may involve physical movement, but it certainly involves a change of attitude: turn "from the unfair course you have adopted: do not unjustly assume my guilt" (Driver). It is far more than that his lament is justified (Fohrer): it is that his integrity or innocence is still intact (so כִּי should probably be understood; see n. 6:29.e), and that he demands that they should recognize it. [David J. A. Clines, Job 1–20, vol. 17, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1989), 182.]

30 "Is there injustice on my tongue? Cannot my palate discern calamities?

VERSES 7:1-8

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NASB95]:

1 “Is not man forced to labor on earth, And are not his days like the days of a hired man? 2 “As a slave who pants for the shade, And as a hired man who eagerly waits for his wages, 3 So am I allotted months of vanity, And nights of trouble are appointed me. 4 “When I lie down I say, ‘When shall I arise?’ But the night continues, And I am continually tossing until dawn. 5 “My flesh is clothed with worms and a crust of dirt, My skin hardens and runs. 6 “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, And come to an end without hope. 7 “Remember that my life is but breath; My eye will not again see good. 8 “The eye of him who sees me will behold me no longer; Your eyes will be on me, but I will not be.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [HCSB]:

1 Isn’t mankind consigned to forced labor on earth? Are not his days like those of a hired hand? 2 Like a slave he longs for shade; like a hired man he waits for his pay. 3 So I have been made to inherit months of futility, and troubled nights have been assigned to me. 4 When I lie down I think: When will I get up? But the evening drags on endlessly, and I toss and turn until dawn. 5 My flesh is clothed with maggots and encrusted with dirt. My skin forms scabs and then oozes. 6 My days pass more swiftly than a weaver’s shuttle; they come to an end without hope. 7 Remember that my life is but a breath. My eye will never again see anything good. 8 The eye of anyone who looks on me will no longer see me. Your eyes will look for me, but I will be gone.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NIV]:

1 “Do not mortals have hard service on earth? Are not their days like those of hired laborers? 2 Like a slave longing for the evening shadows, or a hired laborer waiting to be paid, 3 so I have been allotted months of futility, and nights of misery have been assigned to me. 4 When I lie down I think, ‘How long before I get up?’ The night drags on, and I toss and turn until dawn. 5 My body is clothed with worms and scabs, my skin is broken and festering. 6 “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, and they come to an end without hope. 7 Remember, O God, that my life is but a breath; my eyes will never see happiness again. 8 The eye that now sees me will see me no longer; you will look for me, but I will be no more.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Job Complains to God about His Oppressive Existence Job 7:1–8 [UBS Handbook Series]

e. Job’s pattern of misery (7:1–5) [Bible Knowledge Commentary]

Here Job seems to be talking directly to God or this section, to the end of the chapter, may morph into a prayer to God. By v. 7 Job clearly is speaking to God.

7:1–5. Job said that man (’ēnôš, “weak, mortal man”; cf. comments on 4:17) is like: (a) a soldier (hard service translates šābā’, “military service”; cf. 14:14; Isa. 40:2) fulfilling his time of enlistment with its toils; (b) a hired hand, destined to hard labor; (c) a slave who

works in the hot sun and longs for the end of the day; and (d) a hired worker waiting to be paid. But Job's condition was worse. For he had months, not just days, of futility (lit., "emptiness"). Instead of being able to rest in the shade at the end of the day, his nights were miserable. (Misery translates 'āmāl, "trouble"; cf. Job 3:10; 4:8; 5:6–7.) His nights were long as he tossed and turned in pain. Who could possibly sleep with his body covered with worms (probably eating his dead flesh) and dirty scabs? (lit., "clods of dust") The scabs on his skin hardened and cracked; his sores were festered with pus. [BKC]

**1 "Is not man forced to labor on earth, And are not his days like the days of a hired man?
2 "As a slave who pants for the shade, And as a hired man who eagerly waits for his wages,**

The lot of all mankind is misery. All are subject to suffering.

3 So am I allotted months of vanity, And nights of trouble are appointed me.

Job is resigned to the fact that this is his appointed lot in life: tragedy and despair.

Cf. 3:18 where he refers to G. as a "taskmaster."

"months of vanity" - indicative of the time of his suffering so far?

I came across this quote that is so relevant to many of you here:

I cannot read Job 7:3 without thinking of my mother. Her months vanity (lit., emptiness)" have multiplied, under the slow erosion of Alzheimer's disease. She has lived with us for over twelve years. I know no more apt description of that thief of memory and mind than Job's expression "months of vanity and wearisome nights," and no more biblical resolution to this mystery than Job's conviction that "months of vanity and wearisome nights are appointed' to her. Job understood that there is Someone in charge. So must we.

"Months of vanity" may describe the experience of the one suffering from Alzheimer's disease or similar long-term, debilitating illnesses. It should not describe the experience of the caretaker who sees the larger picture. I once wondered why God would leave His child to linger so helplessly and uselessly. A friend who had been down the same road before us cleared it up. 'There is a reason the Lord leaves them here,' he said, 'and it's not for their benefit.' God appoints 'months of vanity' to our loved ones to polish us. Such appointments are not obstacles or inconveniences but equally God's appointment for us. Parents or siblings or children who require our care become the Lord's tools to shape our character, to sculpt in us a likeness to Christ, to reorient our personal ambitions and even our service. All rests on our submission to the providences of God in the lives of those around us as well as in our own lives. It is easy to resent these appointments as obstructions to a 'higher' calling, interruptions to our efforts to serve the Lord. My mother is God's will for us right now; she is our service, our ministry, our calling. If God calls you to that kind of situation, it is not a setback to fulfilling God's will; it is the means to living out God's will for you and in you. God arranges the such circumstances

because His primary purpose is not for us to accomplish great things for Him but for Him to accomplish great things in us.” [Talbert, 102-03]

4 “When I lie down I say, ‘When shall I arise?’ But the night continues, And I am continually tossing until dawn.

Sleeplessness... Where is Job sleeping? Verse 5 adds to the misery of trying to sleep:

5 “My flesh is clothed with worms and a crust of dirt, My skin hardens and runs.

Cf. 2:7.

6 “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, And come to an end without hope.

Other images of the brevity or insubstantiality of life that appear in Job are the cloud (v 9), the breath (vv 7, 16; cf. Ps 78:39; 144:4), a fleeting shadow (8:9; 14:2; cf. Ps 102:12 [11]; 109:23; 144:4; 1 Chr 29:15), a runner (9:25), swift reed boats, an eagle (9:26), a flower that withers (14:2; cf. Ps 90:5–6; 103:15–16; Isa 40:6–7), a dream (20:8; cf. Ps 39:7 [6]).

Sometimes when you suffer the days drag on. I think that’s often when you have some sort of hope. In other words, you’re facing a major surgery. You suffer and fear. The results could be good or bad - in fact, you may not survive the surgery itself. Waiting for that date to come may seem like months and months, even if it’s only days away.

But when your hope is extinguished, every day seems like the day before. They are miserable. That’s where Job was.

7 “Remember that my life is but breath; My eye will not again see good.

Cf. the hope Eliphaz held out for him, 5:17–26.

8 “The eye of him who sees me will behold me no longer; Your eyes will be on me, but I will not be.

“This last verse, following after verses 4-7, suggests that Eliphaz’s words are experienced as only adding to the bitterness of soul to which Job’s recent experience has subjected him.” [Janzen, 80]

VERSES 7:9-16

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NASB95]:

9 “When a cloud vanishes, it is gone, So he who goes down to Sheol does not come up. 10 “He will not return again to his house, Nor will his place know him anymore. 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 the sea monster, That You set a guard over me? 13 “If I say, ‘My bed will comfort me, My couch will ease my complaint,’ 14 Then You frighten me with dreams And terrify me by visions; 15 So that my soul would choose suffocation, Death rather than my pains. 16 “I waste away; I will not live forever. Leave me alone, for my days are but a breath.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [HCSB]:

9 As a cloud fades away and vanishes, so the one who goes down to Sheol will never rise again. 10 He will never return to his house; his hometown will no longer remember him. 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 keep me under guard? 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 with visions, 15 so that I prefer strangling — death rather than life in this body. 16 I give up! I will not live forever. Leave me alone, for my days are a breath.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NIV]:

9 As a cloud vanishes and is gone, so one who goes down to the grave does not return. 10 He will never come to his house again; his place will know him no more. 11 “Therefore I will not keep silent; I will speak out in the anguish of my spirit, I will complain in the bitterness of my soul. 12 Am I the sea, or the monster of the deep, that you put me under guard? 13 When I think my bed will comfort me and my couch will ease my complaint, 14 even then you frighten me with dreams and terrify me with visions, 15 so that I prefer strangling and death, rather than this body of mine. 16 I despise my life; I would not live forever. Let me alone; my days have no meaning

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Life is Short and Job Wishes God Would Leave Him Alone Job 7:9–16 [UBS Handbook Series]
f. Job’s prayer to God (7:6–21) [Bible Knowledge Commentary]

9 “When a cloud vanishes, it is gone, So he who goes down to Sheol does not come up.

Note - what is Sheol (Cf. 10:21-22). Used 65x in t/OT (NASB transliterates “Sheol” in every one). Compare t/KJV: 31x “grave;” 31x “hell;” 3x “pit.” Cf. “hades” 10x in critical editions of the Greek NT (11 in the TR). LXX translates “Sheol” with the Greek “Hades.”

Compared to the descriptions of the Egyptian and Mesopotamian lands of the dead, very few descriptions of Sheol exist. The biblical text describes Sheol as dark (Lam 3:6), dusty (Job 17:16), silent (Pss 31:17–18; 94:17), and tempestuous (Jonah 2:3–6; Brenner, “Jonah’s Poem Out of and Within Its Context,” 189). Several passages note that Sheol has gates (Isa 38:10; Job 38:17; Jonah 2:7; Tromp, *Primitive Conceptions*, 59–66). When a person dies, their “life force” (נַפְשׁוֹ, *npsh*) descends (יָרַד, *yrd*) into Sheol (e.g., Num 16:30; Job 7:9; Psa 88:3–4; Jonah 2:2–9). Further biblical details regarding Sheol include:

- It is the place of great equity; all are equal, from kings to slaves.
- It is the place where both the wicked and the just reside.
- It is “located under the earth” (Num 16:30–33).
- It has bars to prevent escape (Job 17:16).
- Only God can rescue His people from Sheol (Psa 49:15 LXX).
- It is a place where no one can praise God (Psa 88:10 LXX).
- There is no understanding in Sheol (Prov 9:18; 21:16 LXX).

In addition, biblical information regarding Sheol sometimes appears contradictory. For example, some biblical texts describe Sheol as a place where God is not present (Pss 6:5; 88:5, 10–12; Isa 38:18), while others specify that God reaches even into Sheol (Amos 9:2; Psa 139:8; Trible “Jonah,” 506).

The biblical text refers to the inhabitants of Sheol as “rephaim” or “shades” (מִיאֲפֵרִים, *rp'ym*; Isa 26:14, 19; Psa 88:10; also noted in ancient funerary liturgies; Lewis, “The Cults of the Dead,” 166; and the final passage of the Ugaritic Baal Cycle, CTA 6.6.46–52). The word “rephaim” is also used to describe a race of giants in the Old Testament. Certain Ugaritic texts help distinguish and reconcile the two meanings. In the Ugaritic liturgical text KTU 1.161, “rephaim” referred to the line of dead kings and heroes (the giants of old; Levine and De Tarragon, “Dead Kings and Rephaim,” 649–59), a meaning which some biblical texts also confirm (Isa 14:9; Prov 2:18; 9:18; 21:16; Job 26:5). Horwitz notes that, eventually, the word “rephaim” preserved only vestiges of the original meaning and was broadened to include all the dead in Sheol, not just dead nobility (Horwitz, “The Significance of the Rephaim,” 41–43).

New Testament Usage

In the Septuagint, the word *sh'wl* is most often translated as “Hades” (Ἅδης, *Adēs*), which refers to the netherworld in Greek mythology. In the New Testament, Hades resembles Sheol in that people must descend into both places (Matt 11:23; Luke 10:15), and both locations are inescapable. The main difference between Hades and Sheol is that only the wicked descend into Hades (1 Pet 3:19). The torments of Hades (later called hell) are not intricately detailed until postbiblical times. [D.A. Neal, “Sheol,” ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).]

“There are eight passages in Job. Six of these have poetic parallels and in some cases these clarify the conception. Job 17:13 and 16 are clear: “If I wait, Sheol is mine house, I

have made my bed in the darkness.” This is explained in vs. 14 as the place of corruption and the worm. Clearly it means, “lie down in the grave.” Verse 16 puts the “bars of Sheol” in parallel with “resting in the dust.” Though the expression, “bars of Sheol,” is used, this need only be a figure of speech similar to the “bars of the sea.” Heidel refers to this and compares such figures as the “hand of Sheol,” the “mouth of the earth,” (Gen. 4:11), etc.² The passage clearly uses Sheol to mean “the grave.” It does not teach that the departed spirits dwell in darkness; it only says that the dead body in the grave is in darkness. Job 24:19 is similar. It says that as heat melts snow, so Sheol consumes those who have sinned. This does not teach annihilation of the wicked. The next verse says, “the worm shall feed on him.” It teaches the decomposition of the body in the grave. Only the wicked are referred to here, but that is because in the context the wicked who think themselves secure are the ones in view.

The other verses in Job are not so clear, but will all bear this meaning. Job 7:9, like a fading cloud, he that “goeth down to Sheol shall come up no more.” The context is talking about death. In the grave the body wastes away. What happens to the personality, the verses do not say. That was Job’s problem at the moment! Job 14:13 is similar, “O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave.” This is equivalent to wishing for death. In passing, may I suggest that this passage teaches resurrection as well as does the more famous one in Job 19:25. Job here poses the problem of a tree cut down which yet will yield a second growth. But man of much more worth dies and what happens? Apparently nothing happens, but this is illogical. So in verse 14 Job declares with confidence that he will wait “until my change comes.” What is not clear from the translation is that the word “change” in vs. 14 is derived from the same root as is “second growth” in vs. 7. In effect Job is expressing his faith that somehow for man too God has reserved a “second growth,” a resurrection. It reminds one of Franklin’s epitaph in which he expresses his confidence that God will bring the old book out in a new edition!

Job 21:13: That the wicked “in a moment go down to Sheol” is more of a problem. It was a problem to Job. The wicked have an easy death while Job suffers. Verses 23ff. say that one man dies easily, another in bitterness. They lie down in the dust alike, worms cover both. This is to say that all go to Sheol, to the grave. But here Job sees further. In vs. 30 the wicked are said to be reserved to the day of destruction. This is not said to be Sheol or a lower part of Sheol. This is paralleled to being brought forth to the day of wrath.

In Job 11:8 Sheol is simply the deep, opposite of high heaven. It is like Deuteronomy 32:22 already discussed. In Job 26:6 there is more uncertainty. Here Sheol is paralleled with Abaddon as both being known to God. This would be true for both the grave and hell. Not much can be proved from this for any view. [Journal: Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society Volume: JETS 04:4 (Dec 1961) Article: The Meaning Of The Word Sheol As Shown By Parallels In Poetic Texts Author: R. Laird Harris]

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“To summarize, we have looked, though briefly, at all 65 instances of the use of Sheol. It is used almost exclusively in poetic passages. Hiedel remarks that all but 8 instances are

poetic whereas in prose *qeber* is the regular word for “grave.” Many times Sheol clearly means just “grave.” Its parallels are “death,” “pit” (which predominantly means a hole dug in the earth), or “sepulcher.” Its accoutrements are worms, dust, armor, etc. Its characteristics are darkness, being forgotten (the phrase “land of forgetfulness” does not mean the deceased forgets, but that he is forgotten), lack of wisdom, lack of work, and absence of praise. The only passages that speak of activity in Sheol are those in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 31 and 32 which are pretty clearly the “grave” with some figurative treatment. The New Testament usage of Psalm 16:10 and Hosea 13:14 depends on Sheol being interpreted as “the grave.” Sheol is not a cavern way below the earth’s crust; it is a grave dug into the ground. All go to Sheol without moral distinctions because the grave is our common end. There is no clear case of punishment in Sheol because this is not applicable to the grave.

Appreciation of these points will preserve us from the error of using Old Testament passages on Sheol to establish soul sleep, from the error of picturing the departed saints as shades wandering in a place of gloom, and from a false Babylonian cosmology fastened without warrant on the Biblical text.

It is no argument against this position that the Septuagint uses the Greek Hades to translate Sheol. We should beware of thinking that the Jewish use of Hades would even probably be like the Greek. Surely the Jewish use of the word “God” was vastly different from the Greek use, simply because the Jewish theology bore no resemblance to the mythological ideas of Greece. The Jewish usage of Hades in the Septuagint is to be gathered from the Hebrew original rather than vice versa.” [Journal: Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society Volume: JETS 04:4 (Dec 1961) Article: The Meaning Of The Word Sheol As Shown By Parallels In Poetic Texts Author: R. Laird Harris]

Sheol. An intermediate state in which souls are kept. Word occurs sixty-five times in the O.T. and use depends on context. Refer to “the grave” “the place where the wicked go” “the place from which the righteous are delivered” (Psa. 16:10).

“The OT teaches that after death, people go to a place called Sheol, a shadowy abode awaiting the coming of Christ. . . . [T]here is biblical evidence that after His death, Jesus took the inhabitants of Sheol with him to the very presence of God.” [John Frame, Systematic Theology]

“These terms intimate that there may be two compartments within Sheol-Hades separated from each other by a great gulf (Luke 16:22-26). The upper part is referred to as “Abraham’s bosom” (Luke 16:22) or “paradise” (Luke 23:43). The lower part of Sheol-Hades is referred to as “lowest Sheol” in the Old Testament (Deut. 32:22; Ps. 86:13 ASV) . . . There is strong reason to believe that these various names do not designate different places in the nether world for the temporary confinement of lost personal beings. But just as there is one one place for the temporary confinement of such persons awaiting judgment, and these various names have been used to refer to this one place. . . . At any rate, it seems quite evident that the lower compartment of Sheol-Hades is a place of

torment. . . . The fact that Hades is finally merged with the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14-15) suggests that its usefulness as a separate place for the temporary confinement of the lost is no longer needed.” [Herman Hoyt, *The End Times*, 37-38]

What Job means as far as not “going up from Sheol” is explained in the next verse.

10 **“He will not return again to his house, Nor will his place know him anymore.**

Not a denial of life beyond death / resurrection (cf. 19:25-26).

Cf. “I’m ready to take a dirt nap.”

Cf. the pain of losing Giana and realizing that she isn’t coming home.

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.**

Lament . . .

12 **“Am I the sea, or the sea monster, That You set a guard over me?”**

Am I that much of a threat to you as a mythical creature w/great power (cf. Satan)?

Job complained that God was watching and harassing him. This monster was an allusion either to Ugaritic mythology in which the sea god Yam was defeated by Baal or to the Babylonian myth in which Marduk overcame the sea monster Tiamat and set a guard over her. Of course Job was not giving credence to those myths (cf. comments on 3:8), but was using known stories to depict his condition. [BKC]

Job speaks to God directly.

13 **“If I say, ‘My bed will comfort me, My couch will ease my complaint,’**

Sleep - how much I have appreciated sleep . . .

14 **Then You frighten me with dreams And terrify me by visions;**

Thankfully, not something I have experienced.

15 **So that my soul would choose suffocation, Death rather than my pains.**

16 **“I waste away; I will not live forever. Leave me alone, for my days are but a breath.**

Job again expressed his desire to end his misery by death (cf. 3:20–23; 6:8–9; 10:18–19; 14:13).

VERSES 7:17-21

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NASB95]:

17 “What is man that You magnify him, And that You are concerned about him, 18 That You examine him every morning And try him every moment? 19 “Will You never turn Your gaze away from me, Nor let me alone until I swallow my spittle? 20 “Have I sinned? What have I done to You, O watcher of men? Why have You set me as Your target, So that I am a burden to myself? 21 “Why then do You not pardon my transgression And take away my iniquity? For now I will lie down in the dust; And You will seek me, but I will not be.”

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [HCSB]:

17 What is man, that You think so highly of him and pay so much attention to him? 18 You inspect him every morning, and put him to the test every moment. 19 Will You ever look away from me, or leave me alone long enough to swallow? 20 If I have sinned, what have I done to You, Watcher of mankind? Why have You made me Your target, so that I have become a burden to You? 21 Why not forgive my sin and pardon my transgression? For soon I will lie down in the grave. You will eagerly seek me, but I will be gone.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NIV]:

17 “What is mankind that you make so much of them, that you give them so much attention, 18 that you examine them every morning and test them every moment? 19 Will you never look away from me, or let me alone even for an instant? 20 If I have sinned, what have I done to you, you who sees everything we do? Why have you made me your target? Have I become a burden to you? 21 Why do you not pardon my offenses and forgive my sins? For I will soon lie down in the dust; you will search for me, but I will be no more.”

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Job Asks God Why He Watches Him So Closely Job 7:17–21 [UBS Handbook Series]

**17 “What is man that You magnify him, And that You are concerned about him,
18 That You examine him every morning And try him every moment?”**

Cf. Psalm 8

“Job's experience now moves him to a savage critique of the vision of humankind which Psalm 8 sets forth. Having elaborated a view of the master-slave relation untempered by parent-child sensibilities (7:1-3), from that point of view he now stands Psalm 8 on its head. Beginning, like the psalm, with the question "What is mortal (man, RSV) . . .? and the child of earth . . .? he asks, why should such a creature be the object of so much divine attention? In the psalm that question is answered by the vision of humankind as God's vice-regent on earth. Job sees things differently: To be a human being is to be subject to God's daily visitation and moment-by-moment testing and trial (v. 18), at

whatever cost of suffering. For Job, the end of such an existence is to lie in the dust (v. 21 . . . a destiny which disillusioned the fond dream of Psalm 8.” [Janzen, 82-83]

19 “Will You never turn Your gaze away from me, Nor let me alone until I swallow my spittle?”

“until I swallow my spittle” was an idiom meaning “give me a moment” - still used in Arabic.

Similar phrases are well known in Arabic, e.g., ’abli’ni riqi, “let me swallow my spittle,” i.e., “wait a moment” (cf. also 9:18).

20 “Have I sinned? What have I done to You, O watcher of men? Why have You set me as Your target, So that I am a burden to myself?”

21 “Why then do You not pardon my transgression And take away my iniquity? For now I will lie down in the dust; And You will seek me, but I will not be.”

“If [Job] seems defiant, it is the daring of faith. All Job has known about God he still believes. But God's inexplicable ways have his mind perplexed to the breaking point. Job is in the right; but he does not know that God is watching with silent compassion and admiration until the test is fully done and it is time to state His approval publicly (Job 42:8). [Anderson, cited in Talbert, 104]

[Job’s] days had no meaning (lit., “were futile,” *hebel*; cf. Ecc. 1:2). Job 7:17–18 are similar to Psalm 8:4, except that the words in the psalm express awe at God’s concern, whereas Job expressed remorse that he was haunted continually by God—examined every morning and tested every moment. [BKC]