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JOB 10: 1 "My soul is weary of my life. I will give free course to my complaint. I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

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Job is weary of life, and expostulates with God, Job 10:1-6. He appeals to God for his innocence; and pleads on the weakness of his frame, and the manner of his formation, Job 10:7-13. Complains of his sufferings, and prays for respite, Job 10:14-20. Describes the state of the dead, Job 10:21, Job 10:22.

Verse 1

My soul is weary of my life - Here is a proof that נפש nephesh does not signify the animal life, but the soul or immortal mind, as distinguished from חַי chai, that animal life; and is a strong proof that Job believed in the distinction between these two principles; was no materialist; but, on the contrary, credited the proper immortality of the soul. This is worthy of observation. See Job 12:10.

I will leave my complaint - I still charge myself with the cause of my own calamities; and shall not charge my Maker foolishly: but I must deplore my wretched and forlorn state.

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JOB 10: 2 I will tell God, 'Do not condemn me. Show me why you contend with me.

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Verse 2

Do not condemn me - Let me not be afflicted in thy wrath.

Show me wherefore thou contendest - If I am afflicted because of my sins, show me what that sin is. God never afflicts but for past sin, or to try his followers; or for the greater manifestation of his grace in their support and deliverance.

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JOB 10: 3 Is it good to you that you should oppress, that you should despise the work of your hands, and smile on the counsel of the wicked?

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Verse 3

Is it good unto thee - Surely it can be no gratification to thee to distress the children of men, as if thou didst despise the work of thy own hands.

And shine upon the counsel - For by my afflictions the harsh judgments of the wicked will appear to be confirmed: viz., that God regards not his most fervent worshippers; and it is no benefit to lead a religious life.

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JOB 10: 4 Do you have eyes of flesh? Or do you see as man sees?

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Verse 4

Hast thou eyes of flesh! - Dost thou judge as man judges?

Illustrated by the next clause, Seest thou as man seeth?

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JOB 10: 5 Are your days as the days of mortals, or your years as man's years,

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Verse 5

Are thy days as the days of man - אנוש enosh, wretched, miserable man. Thy years as man's days; גבר gaber, the strong man. Thou art not short-lived, like man in his present imperfect state; nor can the years of the long-lived patriarchs be compared with thine. The difference of the phraseology in the original justifies this view of the subject. Man in his low estate cannot be likened unto thee; nor can he in his greatest excellence, though made in thy own image and likeness, be compared to thee.

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JOB 10: 6 that you inquire after my iniquity, and search after my sin?

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Verse 6

That thou inquirest - Is it becoming thy infinite dignity to concern thyself so much with the affairs or transgressions of a despicable mortal? A word spoken in the heart of most sinners.

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JOB 10: 7 Although you know that I am not wicked, there is no one who can deliver out of your hand.

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Verse 7

Thou knowest that I am not wicked - While thou hast this knowledge of me and my conduct, why appear to be sifting me as if in order to find out sin; and though none can be found, treating me as though I were a transgressor?

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JOB 10: 8 "Your hands have framed me and fashioned me altogether, yet you destroy me.

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Verse 8

Thine hands have made me - Thou art well acquainted with human nature, for thou art its author.

And fashioned me together round about - All my powers and faculties have been planned and executed by thyself. It is thou who hast refined the materials out of which I have been formed, and modified them into that excellent symmetry and order in which they are now found; so that the union and harmony of the different parts, (יחד' yachad), and their arrangement and completion, (סביב sabib), proclaim equally thy wisdom, skill, power, and goodness.

Yet thou dost destroy me - ותבלעני vatteballeeni, "and thou wilt swallow me up." Men generally care for and prize those works on which they have spent most time, skill, and pains: but, although thou hast formed me with such incredible skill and labor, yet thou art about to destroy me! How dreadful an evil must sin be, when, on its account, God has pronounced the sentence of death on all mankind; and that body, so curiously and skilfully formed, must be decomposed, and reduced to dust!

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JOB 10: 9 Remember, I beg you, that you have fashioned me as clay. Will you bring me into dust again?

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#### Verse 9

Thou hast made me as the clay - Thou hast fashioned me, according to thy own mind, out of a mass of clay: after so much skill and pains expended, men might naturally suppose they were to have a permanent being; but thou hast decreed to turn them into dust!

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JOB 10: 10 Haven't you poured me out like milk, and curdled me like cheese?

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#### Verse 10

Hast thou not poured me out as milk - After all that some learned men have said on this subject, in order to confine the images here to simple nutrition, I am satisfied that generation is the true notion. *Respicit ad fetus in matris utero primam formationem, quum in embryonem ex utriusque parentis semine coalescit - Ex semine liquido, lac quodammodo referente, me formasti - In interpretando, inquit Hieronymus, omnino his accedo qui de genituali semine accipiunt, quod ipsa tanquam natura emulget, ac dein concresecere in utero ad coalescere jubet.* I make no apology for leaving this untranslated. The different expressions in this and the following verse are very appropriate: the pouring out like milk-coagulating, clothing with skin and flesh, fencing with bones and sinews, are well imagined, and delicately, and at the same time forcibly, expressed. If I believed that Job referred to nutrition, which I do not, I might speak of the chyle, the chylopoietic organs, the lacteal vessels, and the generation of all the solids and fluids from this substance, which itself is derived from the food taken into the stomach. But this process, properly speaking, does not take place till the human being is brought into the world, it being previously nourished by the mother by means of the funis umbilicus, without that action of the stomach by which the chyle is prepared.

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JOB 10: 11 You have clothed me with skin and flesh, and knit me together with bones and sinews.

JOB 10: 12 You have granted me life and loving kindness. Your visitation has preserved my spirit.

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#### Verse 12

Thou hast granted me life and favorer - Thou hast brought me from my mother's womb; given me an actual existence among men; by thy favor or mercy thou hast provided me with the means of life;

and thy visitation - thy continual providential care, has preserved me in life - has given me the air I breathe, and furnished me with those powers which enable me to respire it as an agent and preserver of life. It is by God's continued visitation or influence that the life of any man is preserved; in him we live, move, and have our being.

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JOB 10: 13 Yet you hid these things in your heart. I know that this is with you:

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Verse 13

And these things hast thou hid in thine heart - Thou hast had many gracious purposes concerning me which thou hast not made known; but thy visitations and mercy are sufficient proofs of kindness towards me; though for purposes unknown to me thou hast sorely afflicted me, and continuest to treat me as an enemy.

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JOB 10: 14 if I sin, then you mark me. You will not acquit me from my iniquity.

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Verse 14

If I sin - From thee nothing can be hidden; if I sin, thou takest account of the transgression, and canst not hold me for innocent when thou knowest I am guilty.

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JOB 10: 15 If I am wicked, woe to me. If I am righteous, I still shall not lift up my head, being filled with disgrace, and conscious of my affliction.

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Verse 15

If I be wicked - I must meet with that punishment that is due to the workers of iniquity.

If I be righteous - I am only in the state which my duty to my Creator requires me to be in; and I cannot therefore suppose that on this account I can deserve any thing by way of favor from the justice of my Maker.

I am full of confusion - I am confounded at my state and circumstances. I know that thou art merciful, and dost not afflict willingly the children of men; I know I have not wickedly departed from thee; and yet I am treated by thee as if I were an apostate from every good. I am therefore full of confusion. See thou to my affliction; and bring me out of it in such a way as shall at once prove my innocence, the righteousness of thy ways, and the mercy of thy nature.

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JOB 10: 16 If my head is held high, you hunt me like a lion. Again you show yourself powerful to me.

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Verse 16

For it increaseth - Probably this refers to the affliction mentioned above, which is increased in proportion to its duration. Every day made his escape from such a load of evils less and less probable.

Thou huntest me as a fierce lion - As the hunters attack the king of beasts in the forest, so my friends attack me. They assail me on every side.

Thou showest thyself marvelous - Thy designs, thy ways, thy works, are all incomprehensible to me; thou dost both confound and overpower me. Mr. Good translates thus: - "For uprousing as a ravenous lion dost thou spring upon me.

And again thou showest over me thy vast power."

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JOB 10: 17 You renew your witnesses against me, and increase your indignation on me. Changes and warfare are with me.

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Verse 17

Thou renewest thy witnesses - In this speech of Job he is ever referring to trials in courts of judicature, and almost all his terms are forensic. Thou bringest witnesses in continual succession to confound and convict me.

Changes and war - I am as if attacked by successive troops; one company being wearied, another succeeds to the attack, so that I am harassed by continual warfare.

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JOB 10: 18 "Why, then, have you brought me out of the womb? I wish I had given up the spirit, and no eye had seen me.

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Verse 18

Wherefore then - Why didst thou give me a being, when thou didst foresee I should be exposed to such incredible hardships? See on Job 3:10 (note), etc.

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JOB 10: 19 I should have been as though I had not been. I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.

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Verse 19

I should have been as though - Had I given up the ghost as soon as born, as I could not then have been conscious of existence, it would have been, as it respects myself, as though I had never been; being immediately transported from my mother's womb to the grave.

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JOB 10: 20 Aren't my days few? Cease then. Leave me alone, that I may find a little comfort,

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 Verse 20

Are not my days few? - My life cannot be long; let me have a little respite before I die.

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JOB 10: 21 before I go where I shall not return from, to the land of darkness and of the shadow of death;

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## Verse 21

I shall not return - I shall not return again from the dust to have a dwelling among men.

To the land of darkness - See the notes on Job 3:5. There are here a crowd of obscure and dislocated terms, admirably expressive of the obscurity and uncertainty of the subject. What do we know of the state of separate spirits? What do we know of the spiritual world? How do souls exist separate from their respective bodies? Of what are they capable and what is their employment? Who can answer these questions? Perhaps nothing can be said much better of the state than is here said, a land of obscurity, like darkness. The shadow of death - A place where death rules, over which he projects his shadow, intercepting every light of every kind of life. Without any order, וְלֹא סֹדְרִים *velo sedarim*, having no arrangements, no distinctions of inhabitants; the poor and the rich are there, the master and his slave, the king and the beggar, their bodies in equal corruption and disgrace, their souls distinguished only by their moral character. Stripped of their flesh, they stand in their naked simplicity before God in that place.

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JOB 10: 22 the land dark as midnight, of the shadow of death, without any order, where the light is as midnight.”

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## Verse 22

Where the light is as darkness - A palpable obscure: it is space and place, and has only such light or capability of distinction as renders "darkness visible." The following words of Sophocles convey the same idea: ἰω σκοτος εμοι φως; "Thou darkness be my light." It is, as the Vulgate expresses it, Terra tenebrosa, et operta mortis caligine: Terra miseriae et tenebrarum, ubi umbra mortis, et nullus ordo, sed sempiternus horror inhabitat: "A murky land, covered with the thick darkness of death: a land of wretchedness and obscurities, where is the shadow of death, and no order, but sempiternal horror dwells everywhere." Or, as Coverdale expresses this last clause, Wheras is no ordre but terrible feare as in the darknesse. A duration not characterized or measured by any of the attributes of time; where there is no order of darkness and light, night and day, heat and cold, summer and winter. It is the state of the dead! The place of separate spirits! It is out of time, out of probation, beyond change or mutability. It is on the confines of eternity! But what is This? and where? Eternity! how can I form any conception of thee? In thee there is no order, no bounds, no substance, no progression, no change, no past, no present, no future! Thou art an indescribable something, to which there is no analogy in the compass of creation. Thou art infinity and incomprehensibility to all finite beings. Thou art what, living, I know not, and what I must die to know; and even then I shall apprehend no more of thee than merely that thou art E-T-E-R-N-I-T-Y!

