
JOB 27: 1 Job again took up his parable, and said,

Job strongly asserts his innocence; determines to maintain it, and to avoid every evil way, Job 27:1-7. Shows his abhorrence of the hypocrite by describing his infamous character, accumulated miseries, and wretched end, vv. 8-23.

Verse 1

Continued his parable - After having delivered the preceding discourse, Job appears to have paused to see if any of his friends chose to make any reply; but finding them all silent, he resumed his discourse, which is here called משלו meshalo, his parable, his authoritative weighty discourse; from משל mashal, to exercise rule, authority, dominion, or power - Parkhurst. And it must be granted that in this speech he assumes great boldness, exhibits his own unsullied character, and treats his friends with little ceremony.

JOB 27: 2 "As God lives, who has taken away my right, the Almighty, who has made my soul bitter.

Verse 2

Who hath taken away my judgment - Who has turned aside my cause, and has not permitted it to come to a hearing, where I might have justice done to me, but has abandoned me to the harsh and uncharitable judgment of my enemies? There appears to be a great want of reverence in these words of Job; he speaks with a degree of irritation, if not bitterness, which cannot be justified. No man should speak thus of his Maker.

JOB 27: 3 (For the length of my life is still in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils);

Verse 3

All the while my breath is in me - As Job appears to allude to the creation of Adam, whom God made out of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, so that he became a living soul, the whole of Job's assertion may be no more than a periphrasis for As long as I live and have my understanding. Indeed נשמתי nishmathi may be rendered my mind or understanding, and רוח אלוה ruach Eloah, the breath of God, the principle of animal life, the same that he breathed into Adam; for it is there said, Gen 2:7, He breathed into his nostrils, נשמת חיים nismath chayim, the breath of lives, or that principle from which animal and spiritual life proceeds; in consequence of which he became לנפש חיה lenephes chayah, an intelligent or rational animal.

JOB 27: 4 surely my lips shall not speak unrighteousness, neither shall my tongue utter deceit.

Verse 4

My lips shall not speak wickedness - As I have hitherto lived in all good conscience before God, as he knoweth, so will I continue to live.

JOB 27: 5 Far be it from me that I should justify you. Until I die I will not put away my integrity from me.

Verse 5

God forbid - חלילה לי - di chalilah lli, far be it from me, that I should justify you - that I should now, by any kind of acknowledgment of wickedness or hypocrisy justify your harsh judgment. You say that God afflicts me for my crimes; I say, and God knows it is truth, that I have not sinned so as to draw down any such judgment upon me. Your judgment, therefore, is pronounced at your own risk.

JOB 27: 6 I hold fast to my righteousness, and will not let it go. My heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.

Verse 6

My righteousness I hold fast - I stand firmly on this ground; I have endeavored to live an upright life, and my afflictions are not the consequence of my sins.

My heart shall not reproach me - I shall take care so to live that I shall have a conscience void of offense before God and man. "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God;" 1Jn 3:21. This seems to be Job's meaning.

JOB 27: 7 "Let my enemy be as the wicked. Let him who rises up against me be as the unrighteous.

Verse 7

Let mine enemy be as the wicked - Let my accuser be proved a lying and perjured man, because he has laid to my charge things which he cannot prove, and which are utterly false.

JOB 27: 8 For what is the hope of the godless, when he is cut off, when God takes away his life?

Verse 8

What is the hope of the hypocrite - The word חנף chaneph, which we translate, most improperly, hypocrite, means a wicked fellow, a defiled, polluted wretch, a rascal, a knave, a man who sticks at nothing in order to gain his ends. In this verse it means a dishonest man, a rogue, who by overreaching, cheating, etc., has amassed a fortune.

When God taketh away his soul? - Could he have had any well grounded hope of eternal blessedness when he was acquiring earthly property by guilt and deceit? And of what avail will this property be when his soul is summoned before the judgment-seat? A righteous man yields up his soul to God; the wicked does not, because he is afraid of God, of death, and of eternity. God therefore takes the soul away - forces it out of the body. Mr. Blair gives us an affecting picture of the death of a wicked man. Though well known, I shall insert it as a striking comment on this passage: - "How shocking must thy summons be, O death!

To him that is at ease in his possessions;
 Who, counting on long years of pleasures here;
 Is quite unfurnished for that world to come!
 In that dread moment how the frantic soul
 Raves round the walls of her clay tenement;
 Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help,
 But shrieks in vain! How wishfully she looks
 On all she's leaving, now no longer hers!
 A little longer, yet a little longer,
 O, might she stay, to wash away her stains,
 And fit her for her passage! Mournful sight!
 Her very eyes weep blood; and every groan
 She heaves is big with horror. But the foe,
 Like a stanch murderer, steady to his purpose,
 Pursues her close, through every lane of life,
 Nor misses once the track, but presses on;
 Till, forced at last to the tremendous verge,
 At once she sinks to everlasting ruin."

The Grave.

The Chaldee has, What can the detractor expect who has gathered together (מָמוֹן דִּישְׁקָר mamon dishkar, the mammon of unrighteousness) when God plucks out his soul? The Septuagint: Τις γὰρ ἐστὶν ἐπι ἐλπίδι ἀσεβείας, ὅτι ἐπεχει; Μὴ πεποιθὼς ἐπὶ Κυρίῳ εἰ ἀρὰ σωθῆσεται; "For what is the hope of the ungodly that he should wait for? shall he, by hoping in the Lord, be therefore saved?" Mr. Good translates differently from all the versions: - "Yet what is the hope of the wicked that he should prosper,

That God should keep his soul in quiet?"

I believe our version gives as true a sense as any; and the words appear to have been in the eye of our Lord, when he said, "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Mat 16:26.

JOB 27: 9 Will God hear his cry when trouble comes on him?

JOB 27: 10 Will he delight himself in the Almighty, and call on God at all times?

JOB 27: 11 I will teach you about the hand of God. That which is with the Almighty will I not conceal.

Verse 11

I will teach you by the hand of God - Relying on Divine assistance, and not speaking out of my own head, or quoting what others have said I will teach you what the mind of the Almighty is, and I will conceal nothing. Job felt that the good hand of his God was upon him, and that therefore he should make no mistake in his doctrines. In this way the Chaldee understood the words, אל ביד beyad El, by the hand of God, which it translates בנבואת אלהא binbuath Elaha, by the prophecy of God. Those who reject the literal meaning, which conveys a very good sense, may adopt the translation of Mr. Good, which has much to recommend it: "I will teach you concerning the dealings of God."

JOB 27: 12 Behold, all of you have seen it yourselves; why then have you become altogether vain?

Verse 12

Ye yourselves have seen it - Your own experience and observation have shown you that the righteous are frequently in affliction, and the wicked in affluence.

Why then are ye thus altogether vain? - The original is very emphatical: הבל תהבלו hebel tehablu, and well expressed by Mr. Good: "Why then should ye thus babble babblings!" If our language would allow it, we might say vanitize vanity.

JOB 27: 13 "This is the portion of a wicked man with God, the heritage of oppressors, which they receive from the Almighty.

Verse 13

This is the portion of a wicked man - Job now commences his promised teaching; and what follows is a description of the lot or portion of the wicked man and of tyrants. And this remuneration shall they have with God in general, though the hand of man be not laid upon them. Though he does not at all times show his displeasure against the wicked, by reducing them to a state of poverty and affliction, yet he often does it so that men may see it; and at other times he seems to pass them by, reserving their judgment for another world, that men may not forget that there is a day of judgment and perdition for ungodly men, and a future recompense for the righteous.

JOB 27: 14 If his children are multiplied, it is for the sword. His offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.

 Verse 14

If his children be multiplied - As numerous families were supposed to be a proof of the benediction of the Almighty, Job shows that this is not always the case; for the offspring of the wicked shall be partly cut off by violent deaths, and partly reduced to great poverty.

JOB 27: 15 Those who remain of him shall be buried in death. His widows shall make no lamentation.

Verse 15

Those that remain of him - שרידיו seridaiv, his remains, whether meaning himself personally, or his family.

Shall be buried in death - Shall come to utter and remediless destruction. Death shall have his full conquest over them, and the grave its complete victory. These are no common dead. All the sting, all the wound, and all the poison of sin, remains: and so evident are God's judgments in his and their removal, that even widows shall not weep for them; the public shall not bewail them; for when the wicked perish there is shouting. Mr. Good, following the Chaldee, translates: Entombed in corruption, or in the pestilence. But I see no reason why we should desert the literal reading. Entombed in corruption gives no nervous sense in my judgment; for in corruption are the high and the low, the wicked and the good, entombed: but buried in death is at once nervous and expressive. Death itself is the place where he shall lie; he shall have no redemption, no resurrection to life; death shall ever have dominion over him. The expression is very similar to that in Luk 16:22 (note), as found in several versions and MSS.: The rich man died, and was buried in hell; and, lifting up his eyes, being in torment, he saw, etc. See my note there.

JOB 27: 16 Though he heap up silver as the dust, and prepare clothing as the clay;

Verse 16

Though he heap up silver - Though he amass riches in the greatest abundance, he shall not enjoy them. Unsanctified wealth is a curse to its possessor. Money, of all earthly possessions, is the most dangerous, as it is the readiest agent to do good or evil. He that perverts it is doubly cursed, because it affords him the most immediate means of sinful gratification; and he can sin more in an hour through this, than he can in a day or week by any other kind of property. On the other hand, they who use it aright have it in their power to do the most prompt and immediate good. Almost every kind of want may be speedily relieved by it. Hence, he who uses it as he ought is doubly blessed; while he who abuses it is doubly cursed.

JOB 27: 17 he may prepare it, but the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver.

Verse 17

The just shall put it on - Money is God's property. "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord;" and though it may be abused for a time by unrighteous hands, God, in the course of his providence, brings it back to its proper use; and often the righteous possess the inheritance of the wicked.

JOB 27: 18 He builds his house as the moth, as a booth which the watchman makes.

Verse 18

He buildeth his house as a moth - With great skill, great pains, and great industry; but the structure, however skillful, shall be dissolved; and the materials, however costly, shall be brought to corruption. To its owner it shall be only a temporary habitation, like that which the moth makes in its larve or caterpillar state, during its change from a chrysalis to a winged insect.

As a booth that the keeper maketh - A shed which the watchman or keeper of a vineyard erects to cover him from the scorching sun, while watching the ripening grapes, that they may be preserved from depredation. Travellers in the East have observed that such booths or sheds are made of the lightest and most worthless materials; and after the harvest or vintage is in, they are quite neglected, and by the winter rains, etc., are soon dissolved and destroyed.

JOB 27: 19 He lies down rich, but he shall not do so again. He opens his eyes, and he is not.

Verse 19

The rich man shall lie down - In the grave. But he shall not be gathered - Neither have a respectable burial among men, nor be gathered with the righteous in the kingdom of God. It may be that Job alludes here to an opinion relative to the state of certain persons after death, prevalent in all nations in ancient times, viz., that those whose funeral rites had not been duly performed, wander about as ghosts, and find no rest.

He openeth his eyes - In the morning of the resurrection.

And he is not - He is utterly lost and undone for ever. This seems to be the plain sense of the passage; and so all the versions appear to have understood it; but Reiske and some others, by making $\eta\theta\alpha\iota$ yeaseph an Arabic word, signifying, not the idea of gathering, but care, anxiety, etc., have quite altered this sense of the passage; and Mr. Good, who copies them, translates thus: Let the rich man lie down, and care not. I see no manner of occasion to resort to this interpretation, which, in my judgment, gives a sense inferior to that given above, or to the following: The rich man shall lie down - go to his rest, fully persuaded that his property is in perfect safety; but he shall not be gathered, or he shall not gather - make any farther addition to his stores: he openeth his eyes in the morning, when he is not - marauders in the night have stripped him of all his property, as in the case of Job himself; a case quite probable, and not unfrequent in Arabia, when a hostile tribe makes a sudden incursion, and carries off an immense booty. But I prefer the first meaning, as it is obtained

without crucifying the text. Coverdale translates: When the rich man dyeth, he carieth nothings with him: he is gone in the twincklinge of an eye.

JOB 27: 20 Terrors overtake him like waters. A storm steals him away in the night.

Verse 20

Terrors take hold on him as waters - They come upon him as an irresistible flood; and he is overwhelmed as by a tempest in the night, when darkness partly hides his danger, and deprives him of discerning the way to escape.

JOB 27: 21 The east wind carries him away, and he departs. It sweeps him out of his place.

Verse 21

The east wind carrieth him away - Such as is called by Mr. Good, a levanter, the euroclydon, the eastern storm of Act 27:14.

JOB 27: 22 For it hurls at him, and does not spare, as he flees away from his hand.

Verse 22

God shall cast upon him - Or, rather, the storm mentioned above shall incessantly pelt him, and give him no respite; nor can he by any means escape from its fury.

JOB 27: 23 Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place.

Verse 23

Men shall clap their hands at him - These two verses refer to the storm, which is to sweep away the ungodly; therefore the word God, in Job 27:22, and men in this verse, should be omitted. Job 27:22: "For it shall fall upon him, and not spare: flying from its power he shall continue to fly. Job 27:23. It shall clap its hands against him, and hiss, וישרק veyishrok, shriek, him out of his place."

Here the storm is personified and the wicked actor is hissed and driven by it from off the stage. It seems it was an ancient method to clap the hands against and hiss a man from any public office, who had acted improperly in it. The populace, in European countries, express their disapprobation of public characters who have not pleased them in the same manner to the present day, by hisses, groans, and the like.