
JOB 31: 1 "I made a covenant with my eyes, how then should I look lustfully at a young woman?"

Job makes a solemn protestation of his chastity and integrity, Job 31:1-12; of his humanity, Job 31:13-16; of his charity and mercy, Job 31:17-23; of his abhorrence of covetousness and idolatry, Job 31:24-32; and of his readiness to acknowledge his errors, Job 31:33, Job 31:34; and wishes for a full investigation of his case, being confident that this would issue in the full manifestation of his innocence, Job 31:36-40.

Verse 1

I made a covenant with mine eyes - ברית כרתי לעיני berith carati leeynai: "I have cut" or divided "the covenant sacrifice with my eyes." My conscience and my eyes are the contracting parties; God is the Judge; and I am therefore bound not to look upon any thing with a delighted or covetous eye, by which my conscience may be defiled, or my God dishonored.

Why then should I think upon a maid? - ומה אתבונן על בתולה umah ethbonen al bethulah. And why should I set myself to contemplate, or think upon, Bethulah? That Bethulah may here signify an idol, is very likely. Sanchoniatho observes, that Ouranos first introduced Baithulia when he erected animated stones, or rather, as Bochart observes, Anointed stones, which became representatives of some deity. I suppose that Job purges himself here from this species of idolatry. Probably the Baithulia were at first emblems only of the tabernacle; בית אלוה beith Eloah, "the house of God;" or of that pillar set up by Jacob, Gen 28:18, which he called בית אלהים beith Elohim, or Bethalim; for idolatry always supposes a pure and holy worship, of which it is the counterfeit. For more on the subject of the Baithulia, see the notes on Gen 28:19.

JOB 31: 2 For what is the portion from God above, and the heritage from the Almighty on high?

Verse 2

For what portion of God is there from above? - Though I have not, in this or in any other respect, wickedly departed from God, yet what reward have I received?

JOB 31: 3 Is it not calamity to the unrighteous, and disaster to the workers of iniquity?

Verse 3

Is not destruction to the wicked - If I had been guilty of such secret hypocritical proceedings, professing faith in the true God while in eye and heart an idolater, would not such a worker of iniquity be distinguished by a strange and unheard-of punishment?

JOB 31: 4 Doesn't he see my ways, and number all my steps?

Verse 4

Doth not he see my ways - Can I suppose that I could screen myself from the eye of God while guilty of such iniquities?

JOB 31: 5 "If I have walked with falsehood, and my foot has hurried to deceit

Verse 5

If I have walked with vanity - If I have been guilty of idolatry, or the worshipping of a false god: for thus **שׂוּא** shau, which we here translate vanity, is used Jer 18:15; (compare with Psa 31:6; Hos 12:11; and Jon 2:9), and it seems evident that the whole of Job's discourse here is a vindication of himself from all idolatrous dispositions and practices.

JOB 31: 6 (let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know my integrity);

Verse 6

Mine integrity - **תַּמְתִּי** tummathi, my perfection; the totality of my unblameable life.

JOB 31: 7 if my step has turned out of the way, if my heart walked after my eyes, if any defilement has stuck to my hands,

Verse 7

If my step hath turned out of the way - I am willing to be sifted to the uttermost - for every step of my foot, for every thought of my heart, for every look of mine eye, and for every act of my hands.

JOB 31: 8 then let me sow, and let another eat. Yes, let the produce of my field be rooted out.

Verse 8

Let me sow, and let another eat - Let me be plagued both in my circumstances and in my family.

My offspring be rooted out - It has already appeared probable that all Job's children were not destroyed in the fall of the house mentioned Job 1:18, Job 1:19.

JOB 31: 9 "If my heart has been enticed to a woman, and I have laid wait at my neighbour's door,

Verse 9

If mine heart have been deceived by a woman - The Septuagint add, *ανδρος ἑτερου*, another man's wife.

JOB 31: 10 then let my wife grind for another, and let others sleep with her.

Verse 10

Let my wife grind unto another - Let her work at the handmill, grinding corn; which was the severe work of the meanest slave. In this sense the passage is understood both by the Syriac and Arabic. See Exo 11:5 (note), and Isa 47:2 (note); and see at the end of the chapter, Isa 31:8 (note).

And let others bow down upon her - Let her be in such a state as to have no command of her own person; her owner disposing of her person as he pleases. In Asiatic countries slaves were considered so absolutely the property of their owners, that they not only served themselves of them in the way of scortation and concubinage, but they were accustomed to accommodate their guests with them! Job is so conscious of his own innocence, that he is willing it should be put to the utmost proof; and if found guilty, that he may be exposed to the most distressing and humiliating punishment; even to that of being deprived of his goods, bereaved of his children, his wife made a slave, and subjected to all indignities in that state.

JOB 31: 11 For that would be a heinous crime. Yes, it would be an iniquity to be punished by the judges:

Verse 11

For this is a heinous crime - Mr. Good translates, "For this would be a premeditated crime, And a profligacy of the understanding."

See also Job 31:28. That is, It would not only be a sin against the individuals more particularly concerned, but a sin of the first magnitude against society; and one of which the civil magistrate should take particular cognizance, and punish as justice requires.

JOB 31: 12 For it is a fire that consumes to destruction, and would root out all my increase.

Verse 12

For it is a fire - Nothing is so destructive of domestic peace. Where jealousy exists, unmixed misery dwells; and the adulterer and fornicator waste their substance on the unlawful objects of their impure affections.

JOB 31: 13 "If I have despised the cause of my male servant or of my female servant, when they contended with me;

Verse 13

The cause of my man-servant - In ancient times slaves had no action at law against their owners; they might dispose of them as they did of their cattle, or any other property. The slave might complain; and the owner might hear him if he pleased, but he was not compelled to do so. Job states that he had admitted them to all civil rights; and, far from preventing their case from being heard, he was ready to permit them to complain even against himself, if they had a cause of complaint, and to give them all the benefit of the law.

JOB 31: 14 What then shall I do when God rises up? When he visits, what shall I answer him?

JOB 31: 15 Didn't he who made me in the womb make him? Didn't one fashion us in the womb?

Verse 15

Did not he that made me - make him? - I know that God is the Judge of all; that all shall appear before him in that state where the king and his subject, the master and his slave, shall be on an equal footing, all civil distinctions being abolished for ever. If, then I had treated my slaves with injustice, how could I stand before the judgment-seat of God? I have treated others as I wish to be treated.

JOB 31: 16 "If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail,

JOB 31: 17 or have eaten my morsel alone, and the fatherless has not eaten of it

Verse 17

Or have eaten my morsel myself alone - Hospitality was a very prominent virtue among the ancients in almost all nations: friends and strangers were equally welcome to the board of the affluent. The supper was their grand meal: it was then that they saw their friends; the business and fatigues of the day being over, they could then enjoy themselves comfortably together. The supper was called coena on this account; or, as Plutarch says, Το μεν γαρ δειπνον φασι κοινα δια την κοινωνιαν καλεισθαι καθ' εαυτους γ α ρ ηριστων επιεικως οι παλαι ρωμαιοι, συνδειπνουντες τοις φιλοις. "The ancient Romans named supper Coena, (κοινα), which signifies communion (κοινωνια) or fellowship; for although they dined alone, they supped with their friends." - Plut. Symp. lib. viii., prob. 6, p. 687. But Job speaks here of dividing his bread with the hungry: Or have eaten my morsel myself alone. And he is a poor despicable caitiff who would eat it alone, while there was another at hand, full as hungry as himself.

JOB 31: 18 (no, from my youth he grew up with me as with a father, her have I guided from my mother's womb);

Verse 18

This is a very difficult verse, and is variously translated. Take the following instances: - For from his youth he (the male orphan) was brought up with me as a father. Yea, I have guided her (the female orphan) from her mother's womb - Heath.

Nam a pueris educavit me commiseratio; jam inde ab utero matris meae illa me deduxit - Houbigant. "For commiseration educated me from my childhood;

And she brought me up even from my mother's womb."

This is agreeable to the Vulgate. "Behold, from my youth calamity hath quickened me;

Even from my mother's womb have I distributed it."

This is Mr. Goods version, and is widely different from the above.

For mercy grewe up with me fro my youth,

And compassion fro my mother's wombe.

Coverdale. Ὅτι ἐκ νεότητος μου ἐξετρεφον ὡς πατήρ, καὶ ἐκ γαστροῦ μητροῦ μου ᾠδήγησα - Septuagint. "For from my youth I nourished them as a father; and I was their guide from my mother's womb."

The Syriac. - "For from my childhood he educated me in distresses, and from the womb of my mother in groans." The Arabic is nearly the same.

The general meaning may be gathered from the above; but who can reconcile such discordant translations?

JOB 31: 19 if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or that the needy had no covering;

JOB 31: 20 if his heart hasn't blessed me, if he hasn't been warmed with my sheep's fleece;

Verse 20

If his loins have not blessed me - This is a very delicate touch: the part that was cold and shivering is now covered with warm woollen. It feels the comfort; and by a fine prosopopoeia, is represented as blessing him who furnished the clothing.

JOB 31: 21 if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, because I saw my help in the gate,

Verse 21

If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless - I have at no time opposed the orphan, nor given, in behalf of the rich and powerful, a decision against the poor, when I saw my help in the gate - when I was sitting chief on the throne of judgment, and could have done it without being called to account. There are sentiments very like these in the poem of Lebeid, one of the authors of the Moallakhat. I shall quote several verses from the elegant translation of Sir William Jones, in which the character of a charitable and bountiful chief is well described: - "Oft have I invited a numerous company to the death of a camel bought for slaughter, to be divided with arrows of equal dimensions." "I invite them to draw lots for a camel without a foal, and for a camel with her young one, whose flesh I distribute to all the neighbors." "The guest and the stranger admitted to my board seem to have alighted in the sweet vale of Tebaala, luxuriant with vernal blossoms." "The cords of my tent approaches every needy matron, worn with fatigue, like a camel doomed to die at her master's tomb, whose venture is both scanty and ragged." "There they crown with meat (while the wintry winds contend with fierce blasts) a dish flowing like a rivulet, into which the famished orphans eagerly plunge." "He distributes equal shares, he dispenses justice to the tribes, he is indignant when their right is diminished; and, to establish their right, often relinquishes his own." "He acts with greatness of mind, and nobleness of heart: he sheds the dew of his liberality on those who need his assistance; he scatters around his own gains and precious spoils, the prizes of his valor." - Ver. 73-80.

JOB 31: 22 then let my shoulder fall from the shoulder blade, and my arm be broken from the bone.

Verse 22

Let mine arm fall - Mr. Good, as a medical man, is at home in the translation of this verse: - "May my shoulder-bone be shivered at the blade,

And mine arm be broken off at the socket."

Let judgment fall particularly on those parts which have either done wrong, or refused to do right when in their power.

JOB 31: 23 For calamity from God is a terror to me. Because his majesty, I can do nothing.

Verse 23

Destruction from God was a terror - I have ever been preserved from outward sin, through the fear of God's judgments; I knew his eye was constantly upon me, and I could "Never in my Judge's eye my Judge's anger dare."

JOB 31: 24 "If I have made gold my hope, and have said to the fine gold, 'You are my confidence;'

Verse 24

Gold my hope - For the meaning of זָהָב zahab, polished gold, and כֶּתֶם kethem, stamped gold, see on Job 28:15-17 (note).

JOB 31: 25 If I have rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because my hand had gotten much;

JOB 31: 26 if I have seen the sun when it shined, or the moon moving in splendour,

Verse 26

If I beheld the sun when it shined - In this verse Job clears himself of that idolatrous worship which was the most ancient and most consistent with reason of any species of idolatry; viz., Sabaeism, the worship of the heavenly bodies; particularly the sun and moon, Jupiter and Venus, the two latter being the morning and evening stars, and the most resplendent of all the heavenly bodies, the sun and moon excepted. "Job," says Calmet, "points out three things here:

1. The worship of the sun and moon; much used in his time, and very anciently used in every part of the East; and in all probability that from which idolatry took its rise.
 2. The custom of adoring the sun at its rising, and the moon at her change; a superstition which is mentioned in Eze 8:16, and in every part of profane antiquity.
 3. The custom of kissing the hand; the form of adoration, and token of sovereign respect. "Adoration, or the religious act of kissing the hand, comes to us from the Latin; ad, to, and os, oris, the mouth. The hand lifted to the mouth, and there saluted by the lips.
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JOB 31: 27 and my heart has been secretly enticed, and my hand threw a kiss from my mouth,

JOB 31: 28 this also would be an iniquity to be punished by the judges; for I should have denied the God who is above.

Verse 28

For I should have denied the God that is above - Had I paid Divine adoration to them, I should have thereby denied the God that made them.

JOB 31: 29 "If I have rejoiced at the destruction of him who hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him;

Verse 29

If I rejoiced - I did not avenge myself on my enemy; and I neither bore malice nor hatred to him.

JOB 31: 30 (yes, I have not allowed my mouth to sin by asking his life with a curse);

Verse 30

Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin - I have neither spoken evil of him, nor wished evil to him. How few of those called Christians can speak thus concerning their enemies; or those who have done them any mischief!

JOB 31: 31 if the men of my tent have not said, 'Who can find one who has not been filled with his meat?'

Verse 31

If the men of my tabernacle said - I believe the Targum gives the best sense here: - "If the men of my tabernacle have not said, Who hath commanded that we should not be satisfied with his flesh?" My domestics have had all kindness shown them; they have lived like my own children, and have been served with the same viands as my family. They have never seen flesh come to my table, when they have been obliged to live on pulse. Mr. Good's translation is nearly to the same sense: - "If the men of my tabernacle do not exclaim,

Who hath longed for his meat without fullness?" "Where is the man that has not been satisfied with his flesh?" i.e., fed to the full with the provisions from his table. See Pro 23:20; Isa 23:13, and Dan 10:3.

JOB 31: 32 (the foreigner has not lodged in the street, but I have opened my doors to the traveller);

Verse 32

The stranger did not lodge in the street - My kindness did not extend merely to my family, domestics, and friends; the stranger - he who was to me perfectly unknown, and the traveler - he who was on his journey to some other district, found my doors ever open to receive them, and were refreshed with my bed and my board.

JOB 31: 33 if like Adam I have covered my transgressions, by hiding my iniquity in my heart,

Verse 33

If I covered my transgressions as Adam - Here is a most evident allusion to the fall. Adam transgressed the commandment of his Maker, and he endeavored to conceal it; first, by hiding himself among the trees of the garden: "I heard thy voice, and went and hid myself;" secondly, by laying the blame on his wife: "The woman gave me, and I did eat;" and thirdly, by charging the whole directly on God himself: "The woman which Thou Gavest Me to be with me, She gave me of the tree,

and I did eat." And it is very likely that Job refers immediately to the Mosaic account in the Book of Genesis. The spirit of this saying is this: When I have departed at any time from the path of rectitude, I have been ready to acknowledge my error, and have not sought excuses or palliatives for my sin.

JOB 31: 34 because I feared the great multitude, and the contempt of families terrified me, so that I kept silence, and didn't go out of the door—

Verse 34

Did I fear a great multitude - Was I ever prevented by the voice of the many from decreeing and executing what was right? When many families or tribes espoused a particular cause, which I found, on examination, to be wrong, did they put me in fear, so as to prevent me from doing justice to the weak and friendless? Or, in any of these cases, was I ever, through fear, self-seeking, or favor, prevented from declaring my mind, or constrained to keep my house, lest I should be obliged to give judgment against my conscience? Mr. Good thinks it an imprecation upon himself, if he had done any of the evils which he mentions in the preceding verse. He translates thus: - "Then let me be confounded before the assembled multitude,

And let the reproach of its families quash me!

Yea, let me be struck dumb! let me never appear abroad!"

I am satisfied that Job 31:38-40, should come in either here, or immediately after Job 31:25; and that Job's words should end with Job 31:37, which, if the others were inserted in their proper places, would be Job 31:40. See the reasons at the end of the chapter, Job 31:40 (note).

JOB 31: 35 oh that I had one to hear me! (behold, here is my signature, let the Almighty answer me); let the accuser write my indictment!

Verse 35

O that one would hear me! - I wish to have a fair and full hearing: I am grievously accused; and have no proper opportunity of clearing myself, and establishing my own innocence.

Behold, my desire is - Or, *הֵן תָּוִי* hen tavi, "There is my pledge." I bind myself, on a great penalty, to come into court, and abide the issue.

That the Almighty would answer me - That he would call this case immediately before himself; and oblige my adversary to come into court, to put his accusations into a legal form, that I might have the opportunity of vindicating myself in the presence of a judge who would hear dispassionately my pleadings, and bring the cause to a righteous issue.

And that mine adversary had written a book - That he would not indulge himself in vague accusations, but would draw up a proper bill of indictment, that I might know to what I had to plead, and find the accusation in a tangible form.

JOB 31: 36 Surely I would carry it on my shoulder; and I would bind it to me as a crown.

Verse 36

Surely I would take it upon my shoulder - I would be contented to stand before the bar as a criminal, bearing upon my shoulder the board to which the accusation is affixed. In a book of Chinese punishments now before me, containing drawings representing various criminals brought to trial, in trial, and after trial, charged with different offenses; in almost all of them a board appears, on which the accusation or crime of which they are accused, or for which they suffer, is fairly written. Where the punishment is capital, this board appears fastened to the instrument, or stuck near the place of punishment. In one case a large, heavy plank, through which there is a hole to pass the head, - or rather a hole fitting the neck, like that in the pillory, - with the crime written upon it, rests on the criminal's shoulders; and this he is obliged to carry about for the weeks or months during which the punishment lasts. It is probable that Job alludes to something of this kind, which he intimates he would bear about with him during the interim between accusation and the issue in judgment; and, far from considering this a disgrace, would clasp it as dearly as he would adjust a crown or diadem to his head; being fully assured, from his innocence, and the evidence of it, which would infallibly appear on the trial, that he would have the most honorable acquittal. There may also be an allusion to the manner of receiving a favor from a superior: it is immediately placed on the head, as a mark of respect; and if a piece of cloth be given at the temple, the receiver not only puts it on his head, but binds it there.

JOB 31: 37 I would declare to him the number of my steps. as a prince would I go near to him.

Verse 37

I would declare unto him the number of my steps - I would show this adversary the different stations I had been in, and the offices which I had filled in life, that he might trace me through the whole of my civil, military, and domestic life, in order to get evidence against me.

As a prince would I go near - Though carrying my own accusation, I would go into the presence of my judge as the נָגִיד *nagid*, chief, or sovereign commander and judge, of the people and country, and would not shrink from having my conduct investigated by even the meanest of my subjects. In these three verses we may observe the following particulars: -

1. Job wishes to be brought to trial, that he might have the opportunity of vindicating himself: O that I might have a hearing!
2. That his adversary, Eliphaz and his companions, whom he considers as one party, and joined together in one, would reduce their vague charges to writing, that they might come before the court in a legal form: O that my adversary would write down the charge!
3. That the Almighty, יְהוָה *Shaddai*, the all-sufficient God, and not man, should be the judge, who would not permit his adversaries to attempt, by false evidence, to establish what was false, nor suffer himself to cloak with a hypocritical covering what was iniquitous in his conduct: O that the Almighty might answer for me - take notice of or be judge in the cause!

4. To him he purposes cheerfully to confess all his ways, who could at once judge if he prevaricated, or concealed the truth.

5. This would give him the strongest encouragement: he would go boldly before him, with the highest persuasion of an honorable acquittal.

JOB 31: 38 If my land cries out against me, and its furrows weep together;

Verse 38

If my land cry - The most careless reader may see that the introduction of this and the two following verses here, disturbs the connection, and that they are most evidently out of their place. Job seems here to refer to that law, Lev 25:1-7, by which the Israelites were obliged to give the land rest every seventh year, that the soil might not be too much exhausted by perpetual cultivation, especially in a country which afforded so few advantages to improve the arable ground by manure. He, conscious that he had acted according to this law, states that his land could not cry out against him, nor its furrows complain. He had not broken the law, nor exhausted the soil.

JOB 31: 39 if I have eaten its fruits without money, or have caused its owners to lose their life,

Verse 39

If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money - I have never been that narrow-minded man who, through a principle of covetousness, exhausts his land, putting himself to no charges, by labor and manure, to strengthen it; or defrauds those of their wages who were employed under him. If I have eaten the fruits of it, I have cultivated it well to produce those fruits; and this has not been without money, for I have gone to expenses on the soil, and remunerated the laborers.

Or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life - Coverdale translates, Yee yf I have greved eny of the plowmen. They have not panted in labor without due recompense.

JOB 31: 40 let briers grow instead of wheat, and stinkweed instead of barley." The words of Job are ended.

Verse 40

Let thistles grow instead of wheat - What the word חין choach means, which we translate thistles, we cannot tell: but as חן chach seems to mean to hold, catch as a hook, to hitch, it must signify some kind of hooked thorn, like the brier; and this is possibly its meaning.

And cockle - באשה bashah, some fetid plant, from באש baash, to stink. In Isa 5:2, Isa 5:4, we translate it wild grapes; and Bishop Lowth, poisonous berries: but Hasselquist, a pupil of the famous Linnaeus, in his Voyages, p. 289, is inclined to believe that the solanum incanum, or hoary nightshade is meant, as this is common in Egypt, Palestine, and the East. Others are of opinion that it

means the aconite, which (Arabic) beesh, in Arabic, denotes: this is a poisonous herb, and grows luxuriantly on the sunny hills among the vineyards, according to Celsus in Hieroboticon. (Arabic) beesh is not only the name of an Indian poisonous herb, called the napellus moysis, but (Arabic) beesh moosh, or (Arabic) farut al beesh, is the name of an animal, resembling a mouse, which lives among the roots of this very plant. "May I have a crop of this instead of barley, if I have acted improperly either by my land or my laborers!"

The words of Job are ended - That is, his defense of himself against the accusations of his friends, as they are called. He spoke afterwards, but never to them; he only addresses God, who came to determine the whole controversy. These words seem very much like an addition by a later hand. They are wanting in many of the MSS. of the Vulgate, two in my own possession; and in the Editio Princeps of this version. I suppose that at first they were inserted in rubric, by some scribe, and afterwards taken into the text. In a MS. of my own, of the twelfth or thirteenth century, these words stand in rubric, actually detached from the text; while in another MS., of the fourteenth century, they form a part of the text. In the Hebrew text they are also detached: the hemistichs are complete without them; nor indeed can they be incorporated with them. They appear to me an addition of no authority. In the first edition of our Bible, that by Coverdale, 1535, there is a white line between these words and the conclusion of the chapter; and they stand, forming no part of the text, thus:

Here ende the wordes of Job.

Just as we say, in reading the Scriptures "Here ends such a chapter;" or, "Here ends the first lesson," etc. Or the subject of the transposition, mentioned above, I have referred to the reasons at the end of the chapter. Dr. Kennicott, on this subject, observes: "Chapters 29, 30, and 31, contain Job's animated self-defense, which was made necessary by the reiterated accusation of his friends. This defense now concludes with six lines (in the Hebrew text) which declare, that if he had enjoyed his estates covetously, or procured them unjustly, he wished them to prove barren and unprofitable. This part, therefore seems naturally to follow Job 31:25, where he speaks of his gold, and how much his hand had gotten. The remainder of the chapter will then consist of these four regular parts, viz.,

1. His piety to God, in his freedom from idolatry, Job 31:26-28.
2. His benevolence to men, in his charity both of temper and behavior, Job 31:29-32.
3. His solemn assurance that he did not conceal his guilt, from fearing either the violence of the poor, or the contempt of the rich, Job 31:33, Job 31:34.
4. (Which must have been the last article, because conclusive of the work) he infers that, being thus secured by his integrity, he may appeal safely to God himself. This appeal he therefore makes boldly, and in such words as, when rightly translated, form an image which perhaps has no parallel. For where is there an image so magnificent or so splendid as this?

Job, thus conscious of innocence, wishing even God himself to draw up his indictment, [rather his adversary Eliphaz and companions to draw up this indictment, the Almighty to be judge,] that very indictment he would bind round his head; and with that indictment as his crown of glory, he would, with the dignity of a prince, advance to his trial! Of this wonderful passage I add a version more just and more intelligible than the present: - "

Verse 35

O that one would grant me a hearing!

Behold, my desire is that the Almighty would answer me;

And, as plaintiff against me, draw up the indictment.

With what earnestness would I take it on my shoulders!

I would bind it upon me as a diadem.

The number of my steps would I set forth unto Him;

Even as a prince would I approach before Him!"

I have already shown that Eliphaz and his companions, not God, are the adversary or plaintiff of whom Job speaks. This view makes the whole clear and consistent, and saves Job from the charge of presumptuous rashness. See also Kennicott's Remarks, p. 163. It would not be right to say that no other interpretation has been given of the first clause of Job 31:10 than that given above. The manner in which Coverdale has translated the Job 31:9 and Job 31:10 is the way in which they are generally understood: Yf my hert hath lusted after my neighbour's wife, or yf I have layed wayte at his dore; O then let my wife be another man's harlot, and let other lye with her.

In this sense the word grind is not unfrequently used by the ancients. Horace represents the divine Cato commending the young men whom he saw frequenting the stews, because they left other men's wives undefiled!

Virtute esto, inquit sententia dia Catonis,

Nam simul ac venas inflavit tetra libido,

Hue juvenes aequum est descendere, non alienas

Permolere uxores.

Sat. lib. i., s. 2, ver. 32. "When awful Cato saw a noted spark

From a night cellar stealing in the dark: 'Well done, my friend, if lust thy heart inflame,

Indulge it here, and spare the married dame.'"

Francis.

Such were the morals of the holiest state of heathen Rome; and even of Cato, the purest and severest censor of the public manners! O tempora! O mores! I may add from a scholiast: - Molere vetus verbum est pro adulterare, subagitare, quo verbo in deponenti significatione utitur alibi Ausonius, inquires, Epigr. vii., ver. 6, de crispa impudica et detestabili: -

Deglubit, fellat, molitur, per utramque cavernam.

Qui enim coit, quasi molere et terere videtur.

Hinc etiam molitores dicti sunt, subactores, ut apud eundem, Epigr. xc., ver. 3.

Cum dabit uxori molitor tuus, et tibi adulter.

Thus the rabbins understand what is spoken of Samson grinding in the prison-house: quod ad ipsum Palaestini certatim suas uxores adduxerunt, suscipiendae ex eo prolis causa, ob ipsius robur. In this sense St. Jerome understands Lam 5:13: They took the young men to Grind. Adolescentibus ad impudicitiam sunt abusi, ad concubitus scilicet nefandum. Concerning grinding of corn, by portable millstones, or querns, and that this was the work of females alone, and they the meanest slaves; see the note on Exo 11:5, and on Jdg 16:21. The Greeks use $\mu\lambda\lambda\alpha\varsigma$ to signify a harlot; and $\mu\lambda\lambda\omega$, to

grind, and also coeo, in eo, in the same sense in which Horace, as quoted above, alienas Permolere uxores. So Theocritus, Idyll. iv., ver. 58. Επ' αγε μοι Κορυδων, το γεροντιον η ρ' ετι μυλλει Τηναν ταν κυανοφρυον ερωτιδα, τας ποτ' εκνισθη.

Dic age mihi, Corydon, senecio ille num adhuc molit,

Illud nigro supercilio scortillum, quod olim deperibat?

Hence the Greek paronomasia, μυλλαδα μυλλειν, scortam molere. I need make no apology for leaving the principal part of this note in a foreign tongue. To those for whom it is designed it will be sufficiently plain. If the above were Job's meaning, how dreadful is the wish or imprecation in verse the tenth!