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JOB 33: 1 "However, Job, please hear my speech, and listen to all my words.

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Elihu offers himself in God's stead to reason with Job in meekness and sincerity, Job 33:1-7. Charges Job with irreverent expressions, Job 33:8-12. Vindicates the providence of God, and shows the various methods which he uses to bring sinners to himself: - By dreams and visions, Job 33:13-15; by secret inspirations, Job 33:16-18; by afflictions, Job 33:19-22; by messengers of righteousness, Job 33:23; and by the great atonement, Job 33:24. How and from what God redeems men, and the blessings which he communicates, Job 33:25-30. Job is exhorted to listen attentively to Elihu's teaching, Job 33:31-33.

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JOB 33: 2 See now, I have opened my mouth. My tongue has spoken in my mouth.

JOB 33: 3 My words shall utter the uprightness of my heart. That which my lips know they shall speak sincerely.

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Verse 3

My words shall be of the uprightness - As God has given me his Spirit, from that Spirit alone will I speak; therefore all my words shall be of uprightness, knowledge, and truth.

Knowledge clearly - דעת ברור daath barur, pure science. I shall lay down no false positions, and I shall have no false consequences.

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JOB 33: 4 The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

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Verse 4

The Spirit of God hath made me - Another plain allusion to the account of the creation of man, Gen 2:7, as the words נשמת nishmath, the breath or breathing of God, and תחיני techaiyeni, hath given me life, prove: "He breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives, and he became a living soul."

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JOB 33: 5 If you can, answer me. Set your words in order before me, and stand up.

JOB 33: 6 Behold, I am toward God even as you are. I am also formed out of the clay.

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Verse 6

I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay - Mr. Good, and before him none other that I have seen, has most probably hit the true meaning: - "Behold, I am thy fellow.

I too was formed by God out of the clay."

The word כפִּיךָ kephicha, which we translate according to thy wish, and which, if Hebrew, would mean like to thy mouth; he considers as pure Arabic, with a Hebrew postfix, (Arabic) kefoo, signifying fellow, equal, like. Taken in this way, the passage is very plain, only לאל לael, by or through God, must be added to the last clause of the verse instead of the first, as Mr. Good has properly done.

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JOB 33: 7 Behold, my terror shall not make you afraid, neither shall my pressure be heavy on you.

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Verse 7

My terror shall not make thee afraid - This is an allusion to what Job had said, Job 9:34: "Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrify me." Being thy equal, no fear can impose upon thee so far as to overawe thee; so that thou shouldst not be able to conduct thy own defense. We are on equal terms; now prepare to defend thyself.

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JOB 33: 8 "Surely you have spoken in my hearing, I have heard the voice of your words, saying,

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Verse 8

Surely thou hast spoken - What Elihu speaks here, and in the three following verses, contains, in general, simple quotations from Job's own words, or the obvious sense of them, as the reader may see by referring to Job 13:27 (note); Job 14:16 (note), and Job 31:4 (note), and also to the notes on those passages.

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JOB 33: 9 'I am clean, without disobedience. I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.

JOB 33: 10 Behold, he finds occasions against me. He counts me for his enemy.

JOB 33: 11 He puts my feet in the stocks. He marks all my paths.'

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Verse 11

He putteth my feet in the stocks - See the note on Job 13:27.

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JOB 33: 12 "Behold, I will answer you. In this you are not just, for God is greater than man.

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Verse 12

In this thou art not just - Thou hast laid charges against God's dealings, but thou hast not been able to justify those charges; and were there nothing else against thee, these irreverent speeches are so many proofs that thou art not clear in the sight of God.

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JOB 33: 13 Why do you strive against him, because he doesn't give account of any of his matters?

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Verse 13

Why dost thou strive against him? - Is it not useless to contend with God? Can he do any thing that is not right? As to his giving thee any account of the reasons why he deals thus and thus with thee, or any one else, thou needest not expect it; he is sovereign, and is not to be called to the bar of his creatures. It is sufficient for thee to know that "he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind."

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JOB 33: 14 For God speaks once, yes twice, though man pays no attention.

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Verse 14

For God speaketh once - Though he will not be summoned to the bar of his creatures, nor condescend to detail the reasons of his conduct, which they could not comprehend, yet he so acts, in the main, that the operation of his hand and the designs of his counsel may sufficiently appear, provided men had their eyes open upon his ways, and their hearts open to receive his influence. Elihu, having made the general statement that God would not come to the bar of his creatures to give account of his conduct, shows the general means which he uses to bring men to an acquaintance with themselves and with him: he states these in the six following particulars, which may be collected from Job 33:15-24.

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JOB 33: 15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men, in slumbering on the bed;

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Verse 15

I. In a Dream

In a Dream - when deep sleep falleth upon men - Many, by such means, have had the most salutary warnings; and to decry all such, because there are many vain dreams, would be nearly as much wisdom as to deny the Bible, because there are many foolish books, the authors of which supposed they were under a Divine influence while composing them.

II. In a Vision

In a Vision of the night - in slumberings upon the bed - Visions or images presented in the imagination during slumber, when men are betwixt sleeping and waking, or when, awake and in bed, they are wrapt up in deep contemplation, the darkness of the night having shut out all objects from their sight, so that the mind is not diverted by images of earthly things impressed on the senses. Many warnings in this way have come from God; and the impression they made, and the good effect they produced, were the proofs of their Divine origin. To deny this would be to call into doubt the testimony of the best, wisest, and holiest men in all ages of the Church. Of one of these visions we

have a remarkable account in this book, Job 4:12-21. And this vision seems to have taken place in the night season, when Eliphaz awoke from a deep sleep. There is this difference between the accidents of the dream and the vision: the former takes place when deep sleep falleth upon men; the latter, in the night, in or after slumberings upon the bed.

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JOB 33: 16 Then he opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction,

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Verse 16

### III. By secret Inspirations

Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealet, etc. - A dream or a vision simply considered is likely to do no good; it is the opening of the understanding, and the pouring in of the light, that make men wise to salvation. Serious alarms, holy purposes, penitential pangs for past sins, apprehension of death and judgment, discoveries of God's justice, of Christ's love, of the world's vanity, of heaven's excellence, etc., etc., etc., are often used by the Divine Spirit to withdraw men from their evil purpose, and to hide pride from man, Job 33:17; and of all these openings of the ear of the heart, and sealing instructions upon the conscience, we have numerous examples in the history of the Church, in the experience of good men, and even in the civil and providential history of all nations.

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JOB 33: 17 That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.

JOB 33: 18 He keeps back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.

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Verse 18

He keepeth back his soul from the pit - By the above means, how many have been snatched from an untimely death! By taking the warning thus given, some have been prevented from perishing by the pit - some sudden accident; and others from the sword of the assassin or nocturnal murderer. It would be easy to give examples, in all these kinds; but the knowledge of the reader may save this trouble to the commentator.

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JOB 33: 19 He is chastened also with pain on his bed, with continual strife in his bones;

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Verse 19

### IV. By Afflictions

He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, etc. - Afflictions are a fourth means which God makes use of to awaken and convert sinners. In the hand of God these were the cause of the salvation of David, as himself testifies: Before I was afflicted, I went astray, Psa 119:67, Psa 119:71, Psa 119:75.

The multitude of his bones - By such diseases, especially those of a rheumatic kind, when to the patient's apprehension every bone is diseased, broken, or out of joint.

Some render the passage, When the multitude of his bones is yet strong; meaning those sudden afflictions which fall upon men when in a state of great firmness and vigor. The original, וְרוֹב עֲצָמָיו אֶתֵּן verob atsamaiv ethan, may be translated, And the strong multitude of his bones. Even the strong multitude of his bones is chastened with pain upon his bed; the place of rest and ease affording him no peace, quiet, or comfort.

The bones may be well termed multitudinous, as there are no less than 10 in the cranium, or skull; upper jaw, 13; lower jaw, 1; teeth, 32; tongue, 1; vertebrae, or back-bone, 24; ribs, 24; sternum, or breast-bone, 3; os innominatum, 1; scapula, or shoulder-blades, 2; arms, 6; hands, 54; thigh-bones, 2; knee-bones, 2; legs, 4; feet, 54: in all, not less than 233 bones, without reckoning the ossa sethamoides; because, though often numerous, they are found only in hard laborers, or elderly persons.

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JOB 33: 20 So that his life abhors bread, and his soul dainty food.

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#### Verse 20

His life abhorreth bread - These expressions strongly and naturally point out that general nausea, or loathing which sick persons feel in almost every species of disorder.

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JOB 33: 21 His flesh is so consumed away, that it can't be seen. His bones that were not seen stick out.

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#### Verse 21

His flesh is consumed away - As in atrophy, marasmus, and consumptive complaints in general.

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JOB 33: 22 Yes, his soul draws near to the pit, and his life to the destroyers.

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#### Verse 22

His soul draweth near unto the grave - נֶפֶשׁ nephesh, soul, is here taken for the immortal spirit, as it is distinguished from חַיָּה chayah, the animal life. The former draws near to the pit, שַׁחַת shachath, corruption; perhaps he meant dissipation, considering it merely as the breath. The latter draws near לַמֵּתִים lamemithim, to the dead; i.e., to those who are already buried. Mr. Good translates it the Destinies; and supposes the same is meant among the Hebrews by the Memithim, as among the Greeks by their Μοῖραι; the Latins, by their Parcae; the Goths, by their Fatal Sisters; the Scandinavians, by their goddess Hela; and the Arabians, by Azrael, or the angel of death. I think, however, the signification given above is more natural.

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JOB 33: 23 "If there is beside him an angel, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show to man what is right for him;

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 Verse 23

## V. The Messengers

If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, etc. - The Messengers of righteousness; this is a Fifth method, **יש עליו מלאך מליץ** im yesh alaiv malach melits, "If there be over him an interpreting or mediatorial angel or messenger." One among a thousand, **אחד מני אלף** echad minni aleph. "One from the Chief, Head, or Teacher."

To show unto man his uprightness - **להגיד לאדם ישרו** lehaggid leadam yoshro, "to manifest or cause to be declared to man his righteousness:" to show unto Adam - men in general, the descendants of the first man - his purity and holiness; to convince him of sin, righteousness, and judgment, that he may be prepared for the discovery of what is next to be exhibited.

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JOB 33: 24 then God is gracious to him, and says, 'Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom.'

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 Verse 24

Then he is gracious unto him - He exercises mercy towards fallen man, and gives command for his respite and pardon. Deliver him from going down to the pit - Let him who is thus instructed, penitent, and afflicted, and comes to me, find a pardon; for: -

## VI. By an Atonement

I have found a ransom - **כפר** copher, an atonement. Pay a ransom for him, **פדעהו** pedaehu, that he may not go down to the pit - to corruption or destruction, for I have found out an atonement. It is this that gives efficacy to all the preceding means; without which they would be useless, and the salvation of man impossible. I must think that the redemption of a lost world, by Jesus Christ, is not obscurely signified in Job 33:23, Job 33:24. While the whole world lay in the wicked one, and were all hastening to the bottomless pit, God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life. Jesus Christ, the great sacrifice, and head of the Church, commissions his messengers - apostles and their successors - to show men the righteousness of God, and his displeasure at sin, and at the same time his infinite love, which commands them to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and that they who believe on him shall not perish, shall not go down to the pit of destruction, for he has found out an atonement; and that whoever comes to him, through Christ, shall have everlasting life, in virtue of that atonement or ransom price. Should it be objected against my interpretation of **אלף** aleph, that it cannot be translated chief or head, because it is without the vau shurek, **אלוף** alluph, which gives it this signification; I would answer, that this form of the word is not essential to the signification given above, as it occurs in several places without the vau shurek, where it most certainly signifies a chief, a leader, captain, etc., e.g., Zac 9:7; Jer 13:21, and Gen 36:30; in the first of which we translate it governor; in the second, captain; and in the third, duke. And although we translate **אלוף** alluph an ox or beeve, (and it most certainly has this meaning in several places), yet in this signification it is written without the vau shurek in Pro 14:4; Psa 8:7; Isa 30:24; and in Deu 7:13; Deu 28:4, Deu 28:18, Deu 28:51; which all show that this letter is not absolutely necessary to the above signification.

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JOB 33: 25 His flesh shall be fresher than a child's. He returns to the days of his youth.

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Verse 25

His flesh shall be fresher than a child's - He shall be born a new creature.

He shall return to the days of his youth - He shall be born again, and become a child of God, through faith in Christ Jesus.

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JOB 33: 26 He prays to God, and he is favourable to him, so that he sees his face with joy. He restores to man his righteousness.

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Verse 26

He shall pray unto God - Being now adopted into the heavenly family, and become a new creature, he shall have the spirit of prayer, which is indeed the very breath and language of the new or spiritual life.

He will be favorable unto him - He shall manifest his good will to him; he shall live under the influences of Divine grace.

He shall see his face with joy - He shall know that God is reconciled to him; and this shall fill him with joy, בתרועה bithruah, with exultation: for, "being justified by faith, he has peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom he has received the atonement; and Rejoices in the hope of the glory of God."

He will render unto man his righteousness - So good and gracious is the Lord, that by his grace he will enable this convert to live to his glory, to bring forth all the fruits of the Spirit, and then reward him for the work, as if it were done by his own might.

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JOB 33: 27 He sings before men, and says, 'I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it didn't profit me.

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Verse 27

He looketh upon men - אנשים anashim, wretched, fallen men. He shines into them, to convince them of sin; and if any, under this convincing light of God, say, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and perverted the right - abused the powers, faculties, mercies, and advantages, which thou didst give me, by seeking rest and happiness in the creature, and it profited me not - it was all vanity and vexation of spirit; ולא שוה לי velo shavah li, "and it was not equal to me," did not come up to my expectation, nor supply my wants: -

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JOB 33: 28 He has redeemed my soul from going into the pit. My life shall see the light.'

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Verse 28

He will deliver his soul - He will do that to every individual penitent sinner which he has promised in his word to do for a lost world - he will deliver his soul from going down to the pit of hell.

And his life shall see the light - He shall walk in the light, as Christ is in the light; always enjoying a clear sense of his acceptance through the blood of the Lamb. See another mode of paraphrasing these verses at the end of the chapter.

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JOB 33: 29 “Behold, God works all these things, twice, yes three times, with a man,

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Verse 29

Lo, all these things worketh God - God frequently uses one, or another, or all of these means, to bring men, גבר gaber, stout-hearted men, who are far from righteousness, to holiness and heaven.

Oftentimes - שלש פעמים paamayim shalosh, "three times over;" or as פעמים paamayim is by the points in the dual number, then it signifies twice three times, that is, again and again; very frequently. Blessed be God!

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JOB 33: 30 to bring back his soul from the pit, that he may be enlightened with the light of the living.

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Verse 30

To bring back his soul from the pit - Nearly a repetition of the promise in Job 33:28.

To be enlightened with the light of the living - An echo of Psa 56:13: "Thou hast delivered my soul from death, that I may walk before God in the light of the living;" and probably quoted from it.

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JOB 33: 31 Mark well, Job, and listen to me. Hold your peace, and I will speak.

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Verse 31

Mark well, O Job - Pay the deepest attention to what I have said, and to what I shall say.

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JOB 33: 32 If you have anything to say, answer me. Speak, for I desire to justify you.

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Verse 32

If thou hast any thing to say - If thou hast any objection to make against what I have already stated, now answer, now speak freely; for it is my desire that thou shouldst stand clear of all charges.



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JOB 33: 33 If not, listen to me. Hold your peace, and I will teach you wisdom."

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### Verse 33

If not - Then I will proceed: listen carefully, keep silence, and I will teach thee what true wisdom is. Job was silent; none of his friends chose to intermeddle farther; and in the next chapter Elihu addresses both Job and them.

There are some various readings in the MSS. and versions on certain words in the concluding verses of this chapter, which it will be necessary to mention, as they, if adopted, will lead to a somewhat different paraphrase to that given, especially of Job 33:26-28. Job 33:26 For צדקתו tsidkatho, His righteousness, one MS. and the Chaldee have כצדקתו ketsidkatho, According to his righteousness. Job 33:28 For נפשו naphsho, His soul, which is the keri reading, and that which our translation has followed, נפשי My soul is the reading of many MSS., early editions, the Complutensian, Antwerp, and London Polyglots, the Jerusalem Targum, the Chaldee, the Vulgate, and Coverdale.

For חיתו chaiyatho, His life, many MSS., early editions, the Complutensian, Antwerp, and London Polyglots, the Jerusalem Targum, Chaldee, Vulgate, and Coverdale, read חיתי chaiyathi, My life. Both of these are properly the kethib or textual readings in the best editions, but are directed by the Masora to be changed for the keri readings, or those inserted in the margin.

For באור תראה baor tireh, Shall See the light, six of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS. have תהיה tihyeh, and twenty-one have כאור תהיה caor tihyeh, Shall Be As the light. The whole verse, by these various readings, will stand thus: - "He will deliver My soul from going into the pit, and My life Shall Be As the light." But if, with the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic, we read פדה padah, in the imperative mood, then the verse will read thus: - "Deliver Thou My Soul from going down to the pit, and My life Shall Be As the light."

On the Job 33:26, Job 33:27, Job 33:28, and Job 33:29 verses, the following paraphrase has been recommended. Job 33:26 He (Jesus Christ, the head and ransom price) shall pray unto God, (shall make intercession for the transgressors, for he is the Mediator between God and man). And he (God the Father) will be favorable, ירצהו yirtsehu, will manifest his good will towards him). And he shall see his face (פניו panav, his faces, God the Father, Son, and Spirit) with joy, בותרועה bithruah, with exultation or triumph), for he will render unto man his righteousness, ושב לאנוש צדקתי yasheb leenosh tsidkatho, "He will restore to wretched man his righteousness;" i.e., he will create the soul anew, and restore to the fallen spirit that righteousness and true holiness which it has lost, and bring it again to its original state of perfection, through the grand atonement mentioned Job 33:24).

But when is it that wretched miserable man shall be brought to this state of salvation? This is answered in Job 33:27 When God, looking upon men, seeth any of them saying, I have sinned and perverted that which is right, and it hath profited me nothing - has afforded nothing equal to my wishes, and the tribulation which I sustained in seeking happiness in forbidden things. Redeem my soul from going down to destruction, and my life shall see the light, or shall be as the light. This is the prayer of the penitent, which God has promised to hear.

This is one of the best, the deepest, the most spiritual, and most important chapters which the reader has yet met with in the Book of Job. It is every way important, and full of useful information. It is a grand exhibition of the Way of salvation as revealed to patriarchs and prophets.

