

# CHAPTER 16

## INTRODUCTION TO JOB 16

This chapter and the following contain Job's reply to the preceding discourse of Eliphaz, in which he complains of the conversation of his friends, as unprofitable, uncomfortable, vain, empty, and without any foundation, (<B1601>Job 16:1-3); and intimates that were they in his case and circumstances, they should behave in another manner towards them, not mock at them, but comfort them, (<B1604>Job 16:4,5); though such was his unhappy case, that, whether he spoke or was silent, it was much the same; there was no alloy to his grief, (<B1606>Job 16:6); wherefore he turns himself to God, and speaks to him, and of what he had done to him, both to his family, and to himself; which things, as they proved the reality of his afflictions, were used by his friends as witnesses against him, (<B1607>Job 16:7,8); and then enters upon a detail of his troubles, both at the hands of God and man, in order to move the divine compassion, and the pity of his friends, (<B1609>Job 16:9-14); which occasioned him great sorrow and distress, (<B1615>Job 16:15,16); yet asserts his own innocence, and appeals to God for the truth of it, (<B1617>Job 16:17-19); and applies to him, and wishes his cause was pleaded with him, (<B1620>Job 16:20,21); and concludes with the sense he had of the shortness of his life, (<B1622>Job 16:22); which sentiment is enlarged upon in the following chapter.

**Ver. 1.** *Then Job answered and said.*] As soon as Eliphaz had done speaking, Job stood up, and made the following reply.

**Ver. 2.** *I have heard many such things,* etc.] As those Eliphaz has been discoursing of, concerning the punishment of wicked men; many instances of this kind had been reported to him from his preceptors, and from his parents, and which they had had from theirs, as well as Eliphaz had from his; and he had heard these things, or such like, told "many times" from one to another, as Ben Gersom interprets it; or "frequently", as the Vulgate Latin version, yea, he had heard them his friends say many things of this kind; so that there was nothing new delivered, nothing but what was "crambe millies cocta", the same thing over and over again; insomuch that it was not only needless and useless, but nauseous and disagreeable, and

was far from carrying any conviction with it, or tracing weight and influence upon him; that he only gave it the hearing, and that was all, and scarce with any patience, it being altogether inapplicable to him: that wicked men were punished for their sins, he did not deny; and that good men were also afflicted, was a very plain case; and that neither good nor hatred, or an interest in the favour of God or not, were not known by these things; nor could any such conclusion be fairly drawn, that because Job was afflicted, that therefore he was a bad man:

*miserable comforters [are] ye all*; his friends came to comfort him, and no doubt were sincere in their intentions; they took methods, as they thought, proper to answer such an end; and were so sanguine as to think their consolations were the consolations of God, according to his will; and bore hard upon Job for seeming to slight them, (~~Job~~ Job 15:11); to which Job here may have respect; but they were so far from administering divine consolation, that they were none at all, and worse than none; instead of yielding comfort, what they said added to his trouble and affliction; they were, as it may be rendered, “comforters of trouble”, or “troublesome comforters”<sup>f640</sup>, which is what rhetoricians call an oxymoron; what they said, instead of relieving him, laid weights and heavy pressures upon him he could not bear; by suggesting his afflictions were for some enormous crime and secret sin that he lived in the commission of; and that he was no other than an hypocrite: and unless he repented and reformed, he could not expect it would be better with him; and this was the sentiment of them one and all: so to persons under a sense of sin, and distressed about the salvation of their souls, legal preachers are miserable comforters, who send them to a convicting, condemning, and cursing law, for relief; to their duties of obedience to it for peace, pardon, and acceptance with God; who decry the grace of God in man’s salvation, and cry up the works of men; who lay aside the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, the consolation of Israel, and leave out the Spirit of God the Comforter in their discourses; and indeed all that can be said, or directed to, besides the consolation that springs from God by Christ, through the application of the Spirit, signifies nothing; for if any comfort could be had from any other, he would not be, as he is called, the God of all comfort; all the creatures and creature enjoyments, even the best are broken cisterns, and like the deceitful brooks Job compares his friends to, (~~Job~~ Job 6:15), that disappoint when any expectations of comfort are raised upon them.

**Ver. 3.** *Shall vain words have an end?* etc.] Or “words of wind”<sup>f641</sup>, vain empty words, great swelling words of vanity, mere bubbles that look big, and have nothing in them; here Job retorts what Eliphaz had insinuated concerning him and his words, (~~Job~~ Job 15:2,3); and he intimates such worthless discourses should have an end, and a speedy one, and not be carried on to any length, they not bearing it; and wishes they were at an end, that he might hear no more of them; and suggests that it was weak and foolish in them to continue them; that if they could speak to no better purpose, it would be best to be silent:

*or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?* when men are engaged in a good cause, have truth on their side, and are furnished with arguments sufficient to defend it, this animates and emboldens them to stand up in the defence of it, and to answer their adversaries, and to reply when there is occasion; but Job could not imagine what should encourage and spirit up Eliphaz to answer again, when he had been sufficiently confuted; when his cause was bad, and he had no strong reasons to produce in the vindication of it; or “what has exasperated” or “provoked thee”<sup>f642</sup> to make reply? here Job seems to have thought that he had said nothing that was irritating, though it is notorious he had, such were his grief and troubles; and so well assured he was of his being in the right, that the harsh and severe words and expressions he had used were not thought by him to have exceeded due bounds, such as (~~Job~~ Job 12:2,3 13:2,4).

**Ver. 4.** *I also could speak as ye [do]*, etc.] As big words, with as high a tone, with as stiff a neck, and as haughtily and loftily; or “ought I to speak as you do”<sup>f643</sup>? that I ought not, nor would you think I ought, if you were in my case; or, being so, “would I speak as you do”<sup>f644</sup>? no, I would not, my conscience would not suffer me:

*if your soul were in my soul's stead;* in the same afflicted state and condition, in the same distressed case and circumstances; not that he wished it, as some render the words, for a good man will not wish hurt to another; only he supposes this, as it was a case supposable, and not impossible to be a fact, some time or another, in this state of uncertainty and change; however it is right to put ourselves in the case of others in our own imagination, that so it may be considered in the proper point of view, that we may better judge how we should choose to be treated ourselves in such circumstances, and so teach us to do that to others as we would have done to ourselves:

*I could heap up words against you*; talk as fast as you to me, and run you down with a great torrent of words; Job had a great fluency, he talked a great deal in his afflicted, state, too much as his friends thought, who represent him as dealing in a multitude of words, and as a very talkative man, (~~188B~~ Job 8:2 11:2); and what could he have done, had he his health, and in prosperous circumstances as formerly? he could have brought many charges and accusations against them, as they had against him; or “would I heap up words against you?” or “ought I?” etc. <sup>f645</sup>; no, it would not be my duty, nor would I do it; humanity and good sense would never have allowed me to do it; but, on the contrary, I “would have joined [myself] with you”, in a social, free, and familiar manner, in words <sup>f646</sup>, in a friendly meeting with you, so the words may be read and paraphrased; I would have come and paid you a visit, and sat down by you, and entered into a kind and compassionate conversation with you about your case and condition, and done all I could to comfort you; I would have framed and composed (as the word used signifies) a set discourse on purpose; I would have sought out all the acceptable words, and put them together in the best manner I could for you <sup>f647</sup>; had I the tongue of the learned, I would have made use of it, to have spoken a word in season to you:

*and shake mine head at you*; by way of scorn and derision, that is, he could have done it as well as they; shaking the head is used as a sign of contempt, (~~121B~~ Psalm 22:8 ~~212B~~ Lamentations 2:15); or “would I”, or “ought I to shake my head at you” <sup>f648</sup> if in my case? no, I would not; as I ought not, I would have scorned to have done it; or the sense may be, “I would have shook my head at you”, in a way of pity, bemoaning lamenting, and, condoling your case <sup>f649</sup>; (see ~~182B~~ Job 42:11 Na 3:7).

**Ver. 5.** [*But I would strengthen you with my mouth*, etc.] Comfort them with the words of his mouth; so God strengthens his people with strength in their souls, when he answers them with good and comfortable words; an angel strengthened Christ as man when in an agony, comforting him, suggesting comfortable things to him; so one saint may strengthen and comfort another when in distress, whether of soul or body; (see ~~148B~~ Psalm 138:3 ~~224B~~ Luke 22:43,32); and thus Job had strengthened and comforted others, with his words in former times, as Eliphaz himself owns, (~~104B~~ Job 4:3,4) and so he would again, were there a change in his circumstances, and objects presented:

*and the moving of my lips should assuage [your grief]:* words uttered by him, which are done by the moving of the lips, should be such as would have a tendency to allay grief, to stop, restrain, forbid, and lessen sorrow; at least that it might not break out in an extravagant way, and exceed bounds, and that his friends might not be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

**Ver. 6.** *Though I speak, my grief is not assuaged,* etc.] Though he spoke to God in prayer, and entreated for some abatement of his sorrows, he got no relief; and though he spoke to himself in soliloquies, his sorrow was not repressed nor lessened; he could not administer comfort to himself in the present case, though he might to others in like circumstances, if his own were changed;

*and [though] I forbear speaking, hold my peace, and say nothing,*

*what am I eased?* or “what goes from me”<sup>f650</sup>? not anything of my trouble or grief; sometimes a man speaking of his troubles to his friends gives vent to his grief, and he is somewhat eased; and on the other hand being silent about it, he forgets it, and it goes off; but in neither of those ways could Job be released: or it may be his sense is, that when he spake of his affliction, and attempted to vindicate his character, he was represented as an impatient and passionate man, if not as blasphemous, so that his grief was rather increased than assuaged; and if he was silent, that was interpreted a consciousness of his guilt; so that, let him take what course he would, it was much the same, he could get no ease nor comfort.

**Ver. 7.** *But now he hath made me weary,* etc.] Or “it hath made me weary”<sup>f651</sup>, that is, “my grief”, as it may be supplied from (~~1816~~ Job 16:6); or rather God, as appears from the next clause, and from the following verse, where he is manifestly addressed; who by afflicting him had made him weary of the world, and all things in it, even of his very life, (~~1810~~ Job 10:1); his afflictions were so heavy upon him, and pressed him so hard, that his life was a burden to him; they were heavier than the sand of the sea, and his strength was not equal to them; he could scarcely drag along, was ready to sink and lie down under the weight of them:

*thou hast made desolate all my company,* or “congregation”<sup>f652</sup>; the congregation of saints that met at his house for religious worship, as some think, which now through his affliction was broke up, whom Eliphaz had called a congregation of hypocrites, (~~1853~~ Job 15:34); which passage Job

may have respect unto; or rather his family, his children, which were taken away from him: the Jews say <sup>f653</sup>, ten persons in any place make a congregation; this was just the number of Job's children, seven sons and three daughters; or it may be he may have respect to his friends, that came to visit him, who were moved and stupefied as it were at the sight of him and his afflictions, as the word <sup>f654</sup> is by some translated, and who were alienated from him; were not friendly to him, nor administered to him any comfort; so that they were as if he had none, or worse.

**Ver. 8.** *And thou hast filled me with wrinkles*, etc.] Not through old age, but through affliction, which had sunk his flesh, and made furrows in him, so that he looked older than he was, and was made old thereby before his time; (see ~~<XIII>~~Lamentations 3:4); for this is to be understood of his body, for as for his soul, that through the grace of God, and righteousness of Christ, was without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing:

*[which] is a witness [against me]*; as it was improved by his friends, who represented his afflictions as proofs and testimonies of his being a bad man; though these wrinkles were witnesses for him, as it may be as well supplied, that he really was an afflicted man:

*and my leanness rising up in me*; his bones standing up, and standing out, and having scarce anything on them but skin, the flesh being gone:

*beareth witness to my face*; openly, manifestly, to full conviction; not that he was a sinful man, but an afflicted man; Eliphaz had no reason to talk to Job of a wicked man's being covered with fatness, and of collops of fat on his flanks, (~~<XIV>~~Job 15:27);

**Ver. 9.** *He teareth [me] in his wrath, who hateth me*, etc.] By whom is meant not Satan, as Jarchi, though he is an enemy to, and an hater of mankind, especially of good men; nor Eliphaz, as others, who had fallen upon Job with a great deal of wrath and fury, tearing his character in pieces, which Job attributed to his hatred of him; but it rather appears from the context that God himself is intended, of whom Job had now a mistaken notion and apprehension; taking him for his enemy, being treated by him, as he thought, as if he had an aversion to him, and an hatred of him; whereas God hates none of his creatures, being his offspring, and the objects of his tender care, and providential regard: indeed sin is hateful to him, and makes men odious in his sight, and he hates all the workers of iniquity, and those whom he passed by, when he chose others; though they

are said to be hated by him as Esau was, yet not with a positive but a negative hatred; that is, are not loved by him; and considered as profane and ungodly persons, and as such foreordained to condemnation; for sin may be said to be hated, but good men never are; God's chosen ones, his children and special people, are the objects of his everlasting love; and though he may be angry with them, and show a little seeming wrath towards them, yet never hates them; hatred and love are as opposite as any two things can possibly be; and indeed, strictly and properly speaking, there is no wrath nor fury in God towards his people; though they deserve it, they are not appointed to it, but are delivered from it by Christ; and neither that nor any of the effects of it shall ever light on them; but Job concluded this from the providence he was under, in which God appeared terrible to him, like a lion or any such fierce and furious creature, to which he is sometimes compared, and compares himself, which seizes on its prey, and tears and rends it to pieces; (<sup><3813></sup>Isaiah 38:13 <sup><3814></sup>Hosea 5:14); thus God permitted Job's substance to be taken from him by the Chaldeans and Sabeans; his children by death, which was like tearing off his limbs; and his skin and his flesh to be rent and broken by boils and ulcers: Job was a type of Christ in his sorrows and sufferings; and though he was not now in the best frame of mind, the flesh prevailed, and corruptions worked, and he expressed himself in an unguarded manner, yet perhaps we shall not find, in any part of this book, things expressed, and the language in which they are expressed, more similar and to be accommodated to the case, and sorrows, and sufferings of Christ, than in this context; for though he was the son of God's love, his dear and well beloved son, yet as he was the surety of his people, and bore and suffered punishment in their stead, justice behaved towards him as though there was a resentment unto him, and an aversion of him; yea, he says, "thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine Anointed" or "Messiah", (<sup><988></sup>Psalm 89:38); and indeed he did bear the wrath of God, the vengeance of justice or curse of the righteous law; and was suffered to be torn in every sense, his temples with a crown of thorns, his cheeks by those that plucked off the hair, his hands and feet by the nails driven in them, and his side by the spear; and his life was torn, snatched, and taken away from him in a violent manner:

*he gnasheth upon me with his teeth*; as men do when they are full of wrath and fury: this is one way of showing it, as the enemies of David, a type of Christ, and the slayers of Stephen, his protomartyr, did, (<sup><9516></sup>Psalm 35:16 <sup><4054></sup>Acts 7:54); and as beasts of prey, such as the lion, wolf, do:

*mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me*; the Targum adds, as a razor. Here again Job considers God as his enemy, though he was not, misinterpreting his dealings with him; he represents him as looking out sharp after him, inspecting narrowly into all his ways, and works, and actions, strictly observing his failings and infirmities, calling him to an account, and afflicting him for them, and dealing rigidly and severely with him for any small offence: his eyes seemed to him to be like flames of fire, to sparkle with wrath and revenge; his thee, as he imagined, was set against him, and his eyes upon him to destroy him; and thus the eye of vindictive justice was upon Christ his antitype, when he was made sin and a curse for his people, and the sword of justice was awaked against him, and thrust in him.

**Ver. 10.** *They have gaped upon me with their mouth*, etc.] Here Job speaks of the instruments which God suffered to use him ill; and he has respect to his friends who came with open mouth against him, loading him with calumnies and reproaches, laying charges to him he was not conscious of, and treating him with scorn and contempt, which such a gesture is sometimes a token of, (<sup><2784></sup>Lamentations 3:46 2:15); and in which manner also Christ was used by men, on whom the reproach of them that reproached God and his people fell, and who exhibited false charges against him of various sorts; and he was the reproach of men and the contempt of the people, who laughed him to scorn, opened their mouths in derision; they shot out the lip and shook the head, and mocked and scoffed at him; yea, “they gaped upon him with their mouth as a ravening and a roaring lion”, (<sup><1926></sup>Psalm 22:6,7,13); to which the allusion is here, when they cried out themselves and called upon others to join them, saying, “Crucify him, crucify him”, (<sup><6201></sup>Luke 23:21 <sup><6906></sup>John 19:6):

*they have smitten me on the cheek reproachfully*; to be smitten on the cheek is a reproach itself, and is a suffering not very patiently endured. Hence Christ, to teach his followers patience, advised when they were smitten on the one cheek to turn the other, that is, to take the blow patiently; and it is not the smart of the stroke that is so much regarded as the shame of it, the affront given, and the indignity offered; (see <sup><4112></sup>2 Corinthians 11:20,21 <sup><4089></sup>Matthew 5:39); so that the phrase may be taken for reproaching him; and indeed it may be rendered, “they have smitten on the cheek with reproach” <sup>f655</sup>; they reproached him, which was the same as if they had smitten him on the cheek; they smote him with their tongues, as Jeremiah’s enemies smote him, (<sup><2488></sup>Jeremiah 18:18); they threw the dirt of



scandal and calumny at him, and which is the common lot of God's people; and though since they are reproached for Christ's sake, for the Gospel's sake, and for righteousness sake, they should not be disturbed at that; but rather reckon themselves happy, as they are said to be, and bind these reproaches about their necks as chains of gold, and esteem them greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. This was literally true of Job's antitype, the Messiah, for as it was foretold of him that he should give his cheek to those that plucked off the hair, and they should smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon his cheek, (~~2816~~ Isaiah 50:6 ~~3816~~ Micah 5:1): so this was done unto him by the servants of the high priest in his hall, and by others, (~~4866~~ Matthew 26:67 ~~6822~~ John 18:22);

*they have gathered themselves together against me*; Job's friends got together in order to visit him and comfort him, but it proved otherwise, and he viewed it in no other light than as a combination against him: the words may be rendered, "they filled themselves against me"<sup>f656</sup>; their hearts with wrath and anger, as the Targum; their mouths with reproaches and calumnies, and their eyes with pleasure and delight, and satisfaction at his miseries and afflictions; and so the Vulgate Latin version,

"they are satiated with my punishments;"

though rather this may respect the high spirits they were in, the boldness and even impudence, as Job interpreted it, they showed in their conduct towards him, their hearts being swelled with pride and haughtiness and passion<sup>f657</sup>; (see ~~4006~~ Esther 7:5 ~~4488~~ Acts 5:3); or else their numbers that came against him; so Mr. Broughton renders the words, "they came by full troops upon me"; Job's three friends, being great personages, very probably brought a large retinue and train of servants with them; who, observing their master's conduct, behaved in an indecent manner towards him themselves, to whom he may have respect, (~~3800~~ Job 30:1); this was verified in Christ his antitype, whom Judas, with a multitude of men, with swords and staves, even with a band of soldiers, came to apprehend in the garden; and when Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and people of Israel, were gathered against him to do what God had determined should be done, (~~4836~~ Matthew 26:46 ~~6828~~ John 18:3 #~~4027~~ Acts 4:27,28).

**Ver. 11.** *God hath delivered me up to the ungodly*, etc.] The evil or wicked one, for it is in the singular number; and designs either Satan, into whose hands God had not only delivered his substance, but his person, excepting his life; though it may be, and which is an objection to this sense,

Job as yet knew it not; or else Eliphaz, or, the singular number being put for the plural, as the next clause explains it, all his friends, whom he in turn calls evil and wicked men, because of their treatment of him; or else the Sabeans and Chaldeans are intended, who were suffered to plunder him of his substance; the words are very applicable to Christ, who was delivered to the Gentiles, and into the hands of sinners and wicked men, and that by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, who with wicked hands took him, and crucified him, (~~4109~~ Matthew 20:19 26:45 ~~4123~~ Acts 2:23); or God “shut [him] up”, or “delivered [him] bound” <sup>f658</sup>, as the word signifies; which was literally true of Christ, who was bound by the Jews, and delivered first to the high priest, and then to the Roman governor, in such circumstances, (~~8182~~ John 18:12,13 ~~4170~~ Matthew 27:2);

*and turned me over into the hands of the wicked*; signifying the same as before, unless it should be rendered, “and caused me to decline”, or “come down by the hands of the wicked” <sup>f659</sup> that is, from his former state of prosperity and happiness, into the low circumstances in which he was, and which he was brought into by the means of wicked men, God suffering it so to be.

**Ver. 12.** *I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder*, etc.] He was in easy and affluent circumstances, abounding with the good things of this life, lay in his nest, as his expression is, (~~1898~~ Job 29:18); quietly and peaceably, where he expected he should have died; and he was easy in his mind, had peace of conscience, being a good man that feared God, and trusted in his living Redeemer, enjoying the presence of God, the light of his countenance, and the discoveries of his love, (see ~~1890~~ Job 39:2-5); but now he was broken to pieces, he was stripped of his worldly substance; his family was broken up, and not a child left him; his body broken, and full of ruptures through boils and ulcers; and his spirits were broken with his afflictions, and a sense of divine displeasure; the arrows of God’s wrath, in his apprehension, stuck in him, and the poison thereof drank up his spirits. Mr. Broughton renders it, “I was wealthy, [and] he hath undone me”; though once so opulent, he was now broken, and become a bankrupt. It may be applied to Christ, his antitype, who, though rich, became poor to make his people rich, (~~4789~~ 2 Corinthians 8:9); and whose body was broken for them; and he was wounded and bruised for their transgressions, and whose heart was broken with reproach:

*he hath also taken me by the neck, and shaken me to pieces*; as a combatant in wrestling, who is stronger than his antagonist, uses him; or as a giant, who takes a dwarf by his neck or collar, and shakes him, as if he would shake him to pieces, limb from limb; or “hath dashed” or “broken me to pieces”<sup>f660</sup>; or to shivers; as glass or earthen vessels dashed against a wall, or struck with a hammer, fly into a thousand pieces, can never be put together again; so Job reckoned of his state and condition as irrecoverable, that his health, his substance, his family, could never be restored as they had been:

*and set me up for his mark*; to shoot at, of which he complains (<sup><K172></sup>Job 7:20); a like expression is used by the church in (<sup><2182></sup>Lamentations 3:12,13); and a phrase similar to this is used of Christ, (<sup><11234></sup>Luke 2:34); and in consequence of this are what follow.

**Ver. 13.** *His archers compass me round about*, etc.] Satan and his principalities and powers casting their fiery darts at him; or rather, his friends shooting their arrows, even bitter words, reproaches, and calumnies; or the various diseases of his body, his boils and ulcers, which were so many arrows shot into him, in every part of him all around, and gave him exquisite pain and anguish; besides the arrows of the Almighty, or that painful sensation he had of the wrath of God. This also is true of Christ, the antitype of Job and of Joseph; of the latter of which it is said, “the archers sorely grieved him, and shot at him, but his bow abode in strength”, (<sup><0423></sup>Genesis 49:23,24); so Satan and his ministers threw their fiery darts at Christ when on the cross, and the scribes and priests, his emissaries, surrounded him there, and shot out their reproachful and blasphemous words at him, and the justice of God smote him, and the law of God cast its curses on him. Gussetius renders the words, “his great ones”<sup>f661</sup>; and such Job’s friends were, men of great substance, and lived in great credit and honour; some have supposed them to be kings, and such were those that opposed Christ, and distressed him, the rulers of the people, civil and ecclesiastic:

*he cleaveth my reins asunder*; by causing his arrows to enter into them, (<sup><2183></sup>Lamentations 3:13); the consequence of which must be death; a man cannot live, at least long, after this is his case; though some think this is to be understood of the disorder of the stone in his reins or kidneys, which was very distressing to him:

*and doth not spare*; shows no mercy or pity, though in such sad circumstances and dreadful agonies; thus God spared not his own son, (<sup><818></sup>Romans 8:32);

*he poureth out my gall upon the ground*; which is done by piercing the gall bladder with the sword, or any such instrument, (see <sup><815></sup>Job 20:25); which must issue in death; and the design of both these clauses is to show, that Job looked upon his case irretrievable, and he here makes use of hyperbolical expressions to set it forth by.

**Ver. 14.** *He breaketh me with breach upon breach*, etc.] Upon his substance, his family, and the health of his body, which came thick and fast, one after another; referring to the report of those things brought by one messenger upon the back of another, (see <sup><307></sup>Ezekiel 7:26);

*he runneth upon me like a giant*; with great fury and fierceness, with great strength and courage, with great speed and swiftness, causing great terror and distress; he not being able to resist him, any more than a dwarf a giant, and no more, nor so much, a match for him; (see <sup><303></sup>Isaiah 42:13).

**Ver. 15.** *I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin*, etc.] Which he very probably put on when he rent his mantle, or sat in ashes, (<sup><812></sup>Job 1:20 2:8); which actions were usually performed together in times of distress and sorrow, (see <sup><1374></sup>Genesis 37:34); and this was no doubt a voluntary action of his, like that of the king of Nineveh and his subjects (Jon 3:5); though some have thought that Job was so reduced that he had no clothes to wear, and was obliged to put on such coarse raiment, which is not probable; and it seems that he put this next to his skin, which must be very uneasy to one that had been used to such soft apparel, as it seems did also the kings of Israel in time of mourning, (<sup><127></sup>1 Kings 21:27 <sup><160></sup>2 Kings 6:30); it is not only observed by several Jewish writers, that the word here used in the Arabic language signifies “skin”, as we render it, as Aben Ezra, Ben Melech, and others; but the skin of the wound, the thin skin which is drawn over a wound when it is healing, as Ben Gersom and Bar Tzemach; which, being tender, must be very unfit to bear such rough raiment upon it; nay, Schultens observes, that the Arabic word more properly signifies “torn skin” <sup>f662</sup>, as Job’s skin must be full of ruptures through the boils and ulcers upon him; he himself says, that his “skin [was] broken, and become loathsome”, (<sup><815></sup>Job 7:5); now to have sackcloth put on such a skin must be intolerable; the phrase of sewing it to it is very unusual; though it may signify no more than an application of it, a putting it on him, and clothing

himself with it; yet it seems to denote its sticking close to him, as if it was sewed to his skin, through the purulent matter of his boils clotting and cleaving to it; for he says in (<sup><18075></sup>Job 7:5) that his “flesh [was] clothed with worms and clods of dust”; and those running into one another were like one scab, and, as it were, a garment to him; his “disease bound [him] about as the collar of his coat”, and his “skin [was as] black” as sackcloth itself, (<sup><18308></sup>Job 30:18-30); the design of the expression is both to show the wretched and miserable condition he was in, and his great humiliation on account of his present circumstances; and that he was not that proud and haughty man, or behaved under his affliction in the insolent manner Eliphaz had suggested, (<sup><18152></sup>Job 15:12,13,25,26); but was one that humbled himself under the mighty hand of God, which is further confirmed by the next clause:

*and defiled my horn, in the dust:* as he did when he sat in ashes, as he afterwards repented in dust and ashes; and it was usual in the times of mourning to put dust or ashes upon the head; which may be meant by his horn, the horn of a beast, to which the allusion is, being in the head; and this may be put for the whole body, which sometimes, on such occasions, was rolled in dust and ashes, (see <sup><18076></sup>Joshua 7:6 <sup><18300></sup>Micah 1:10); and the horn being an emblem of grandeur, power, and authority, may denote that Job now laid aside all the ensigns of it, and was content to have his honour laid in the dust, and lie low before God, and not lift up his horn unto him, and much less stretch out his hand against him; the Targum is,

“I sprinkled my glory in or with dust.”

**Ver. 16.** *My face is foul with weeping*, etc.] On account of the loss of his substance, and especially of his children; at the unkindness of his friends, and over his own corruptions, which he felt working in him, and breaking forth in unbecoming language; and because of the hidings of the face of God from him: the word used in the Arabic language <sup>f663</sup> has the, signification of redness in it, as Aben Ezra and others observe; of red wine, and, as Schultens adds, of the fermentation of it; and is fitly used to express a man’s face in excessive weeping, which looks red, and swelled, and blubbered:

*and on my eyelids [is] the shadow of death;* which were become dim through weeping, so that he could scarcely see out of them, and, like a dying man, could hardly lift them up; and such was his sorrowful condition, that he never expected deliverance from it, but that it would issue in death;

and which he supposed was very near, and that he had many symptoms of it, of which the decay of his eyesight was one; and he was so far from winking with his eyes in a wanton and ludicrous way, as Eliphaz had hinted, (<sup><18512></sup>Job 15:12); that there was such a dead weight upon them, even the shadow of death itself, that he was not able to lift them up.

**Ver. 17.** *Not for [any] injustice in my hands*, etc.] Came all those afflictions and calamities upon him, which occasioned so much sorrow, weeping, mourning, and humiliation; he does not say there was no sin in him, not any in his heart, nor in his life, nor any iniquity done by him, he had acknowledged these things before, (<sup><18070></sup>Job 7:20 9:20,30,31); but that there was nothing in his hands gotten in an unjust manner; he had taken away no man's property, nor injured him in the least in a private way; nor had he perverted justice as a public magistrate, by taking bribes or accepting persons, and could challenge any to prove he had, as Samuel did, (<sup><09128></sup>1 Samuel 12:3);

*also my prayer [is] pure*: he prayed, which disproves the calumny of Eliphaz, (<sup><18154></sup>Job 15:4); and his prayer was pure too; not that it was free from failings and infirmities, which attend the best, but from hypocrisy and deceit; it came not out of feigned lips, but was put up in sincerity and truth; it sprang from an heart purified by the grace of God, and sprinkled from an evil conscience; it was put up in the faith of Christ, and as a pure offering through him; Job lifted up pure and holy hands, and with these a pure and holy heart, and for pure and holy things; so that it was not for want of doing justice to men, nor for want of devotion towards God, that he was thus afflicted by him; compare with this what is said of his antitype, (<sup><25109></sup>Isaiah 53:9).

**Ver. 18.** *O earth, cover not thou my blood*, etc.] This is an imprecation, wishing that if; he had been guilty of any capital crime, of such acts of injustice that he ought to be punished by the judge, and even to die for them, that his blood when spilt might not be received into the earth, but be licked up by dogs, or that he might have no burial or interment in the earth; and if he had committed such sins as might come under the name of blood, either the shedding of innocent blood, though that is so gross a crime that it can hardly be thought that Job's friends even suspected this of him; or rather other foul sins, as injustice and oppression of the poor; the Tigrine version is, "my capital sins", (see <sup><20115></sup>Isaiah 1:15,18); then he wishes they might never be covered and concealed, but disclosed and spread abroad

everywhere, that all might know them, and he suffer shame for them; even as the earth discloses the blood of the slain, when inquisition is made for it, (<sup><232></sup>Isaiah 26:21);

*and let my cry have no place*; meaning if he was the wicked man and the hypocrite he was said to be, or if his prayer was not pure, sincere, and upright, as he said it was, then he desired that when he cried to God, or to man, in his distress, he might be regarded by neither; that his cry might not enter into the ears of the Lord of hosts, but that it might be shut out, and he cover himself with a cloud, that it might not pass through, and have any place with him; and that he might not meet with any pity and compassion from the heart, nor help and relief from the hand of any man.

**Ver. 19.** *Also now, behold, my witness [is] in heaven*, etc.] That is, God, who dwells in the heavens, where his throne is, and which is the habitation of his holiness, and from whence he beholds all the sons of men, and their actions, is the all seeing and all knowing Being; and therefore Job appeals to him as his witness, if he was guilty of the things laid to his charge, to bear witness against him, but if not to be a witness for him, which he believed he would, and desired he might:

*for my record [is] on high*; or “my testimony”; that can testify for me; who is an “eyewitness” <sup>f664</sup>, as some render it, before whom all things are naked and open; who has seen all my actions, even the very inmost recesses of my mind, all the thoughts of my heart, and all the principles of my actions, and him I desire to bear record of me; such appeals are lawful in some cases, which ought not to be common and trivial ones, but of moment and importance, and which cannot well be determined in any other way; such as was the charge of hypocrisy against Job, and suspicions of his having been guilty of some notorious crime, though it could not be pointed at and proved; (see <sup><912></sup>1 Samuel 12:3,4) (<sup><4013></sup>2 Corinthians 1:13 <sup><5008></sup>Philippians 1:8).

**Ver. 20.** *My friends scorn me*, etc.] Not that they scoffed at his afflictions and calamities, and at his diseases and disorders, that would have been very brutish and inhuman, but at his words, the arguments and reasons he made use of to defend himself with, (see <sup><822></sup>Job 12:4);

*[but] mine eye poureth out [tears] unto God*; in great plenty, because of his very great sorrows and distresses, both inward and outward; and it was his mercy, that when his friends slighted and neglected him, yea, bore hard

upon him, and mocked at him, that he had a God to go to, and pour out not only his tears, but all his complaints, and even his very soul unto him, from whom he might hope for relief; and what he said, when he did this, is as follows.

**Ver. 21.** *Oh that one might plead for a man with God*, etc.] That is, that one might be appointed and allowed to plead with God on his account; or that he be admitted to plead with God for himself; or however, that there might be a hearing of his case before God, and that he would decide the thing in controversy between him and his friends, when he doubted not but it would be given on his side:

*as a man [pleadeth] for his neighbour*; using great freedom, and powerful arguments, and having no dread of the judge, nor fear of carrying the cause for his neighbour; so Job wishes, that either one for him, or he himself, might be freed from the dread of the divine Majesty, and might be suffered to speak as freely to his case as a counsellor at the bar does for his client. The words will admit of a more evangelic sense by observing that God, to whom Job says his eye poured out tears, at the close of (~~1816~~ Job 16:20), is to be understood of the second Person in the Godhead, Jehovah, the Son of God, the Messiah; and then read these words that follow thus, “and he will plead for a man with God, and the Son of man for his friend”; which last clause perhaps may be better rendered, “even the Son of man”, etc. and so they are expressive of Job’s faith, that though his friends despised him, yet he to whom he poured out his tears, and committed his case, would plead his cause with God for him, and thoroughly plead it, when he should be acquitted. The appellation, “the Son of man”, is a well known name for the Messiah in the New Testament, and is not altogether unknown in the Old, (see ~~1807~~ Psalm 80:17); and one part of his work and office is to be an advocate with the Father for his friends, whom he makes, reckons, and uses as such, even all the Father has given him, and he has redeemed by his blood; for these he pleads his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, to the satisfaction of the law, and justice of God, and against Satan, and all enemies whatever, and for every blessing they want; and for which work he is abundantly fit, because of the dignity of his person, his nearness to God his Father, and the interest he has in him. Gussetius <sup>f665</sup> goes this way, and observes that this sense has not been taken notice of by interpreters, which he seems to wonder at; whereas our English annotator on the place had it long ago, and Mr. Caryl after him, though disapproved of by some modern interpreters.



**Ver. 22.** *When a few years are come*, etc.] As the years of man's life are but few at most, and Job's years, which were yet to come, still fewer in his apprehension; or "years of number"<sup>f666</sup>, that are numbered by God, fixed and determined by him, (~~1845~~ Job 14:5); or being few are easily numbered:

*then I shall go the way [whence] I shall not return*; that is, go the way of all flesh, a long journey; death itself is meant, which is a going out of this world into another, from whence there is no return to this again, to the same place, condition, circumstances, estate, and employment as now; otherwise there will be a resurrection from the dead, the bodies will rise out of the earth, and souls will be brought again to be united with them, but not to be in the same situation here as now: this Job observes either as a kind of solace to him under all his afflictions on himself, and from his friends, that in a little time it would be all over with him; or as an argument to hasten the pleading of his cause, that his innocence might be cleared before he died; and if this was not done quickly, it would be too late.