

# CHAPTER 19

## INTRODUCTION TO JOB 19

This chapter contains Job's reply to Bildad's second speech, in which he complains of the ill usage of his friends, of their continuing to vex him, and to beat, and bruise, and break him in pieces with their hard words, and to reproach him, and carry it strange to him, (~~1890~~ Job 19:1-3); which he thought was very cruel, since, if he was mistaken, the mistake lay with himself, (~~1890~~ Job 19:4); and if they were determined to go on at this rate, he would have them observe, that his afflictions were of God, and therefore should take care to what they imputed them, since he could not get the reasons of them, or his cause to be heard, though he vehemently and importunately sought it, (~~1895~~ Job 19:5-7); and then gives an enumeration of the several particulars of his distress, all which he ascribes to God, (~~1898~~ Job 19:8-12); and he enlarges upon that part of his unhappy case, respecting the alienation of his nearest relations, most intimate acquaintance and friends, from him, and their contempt of him, and the like treatment he met with from his servants, and even young children, (~~1893~~ Job 19:13-19); all which, with other troubles, had such an effect upon him as to reduce him to a mere skeleton, and which he mentions to move the pity of these his friends, now conversing with him, (~~1890~~ Job 19:20-22); and yet after all, and in the midst of it, and which was his great support under his trials, he expresses his strong faith in his living Redeemer, who should appear on the earth in the latter day, and be his Saviour, and in the resurrection of the dead through him, which he believed he should share in, and in all the happiness consequent on it; and he wishes this confession of his faith might be written and engraven, and be preserved on a rock for ever for the good of posterity, (~~1893~~ Job 19:23-27); and closes the chapter with an expostulation with his friends, dissuading them from persecuting him any longer, since there was no reason for it in himself, and it might be attended with bad consequences to them, (~~1893~~ Job 19:28,29).

**Ver. 1.** *Then Job answered and said.*] Having heard Bildad out, without giving him any interruption; and when he had finished his oration, he rose up in his own defence, and put in his answer as follows.

**Ver. 2.** *How long will ye vex my soul*, etc.] Which of all vexation is the worst; not only his bones were vexed, but his soul also, as David's was, (<sup><391D></sup>Psalm 6:2,3). His body was vexed with boils from head to feet; but now his soul was vexed by his friends, and which denotes extreme vexation, a man's being vexed to his very heart: there are many things vexations to men, especially to good men; they are not only vexed with pains of the body, as others, and with loss of worldly substance; but even all things here below, and the highest enjoyment of them, as wealth, wisdom, honours, and pleasures, are all vanity and vexation of spirit, as they were to Solomon; but more especially truly good men are vexed with the corruptions of their hearts, which are as pricks in their eyes and thorns in their sides, and with the temptations of Satan, which are also thorns in the flesh and fiery darts, and with the conversation of wicked men, as was the soul of righteous Lot, and with the bad principles and practices of professors of religion; and sometimes, as Job was, they are vexed by their own friends, who should be their comforters, but prove miserable ones, as his did, and even vexations, and continued so to the wearing him out almost; and so some render the words, "how long will ye weary my soul"<sup>f719</sup>? with repeating their insinuations that he was a wicked and hypocritical man, and therefore was afflicted of God in the manner he was; and which, knowing his own innocency, extremely vexed him:

*and break me in pieces with words*? not his body, but his spirit; which was broken, not by the word of God, which is like an hammer that breaks the rocky heart in pieces; for such a breaking is in mercy, and not an affliction to be complained of; and such as are thus broken are healed again, and bound up by the same hand that breaks; who has great regard to broken spirits and contrite hearts; looks to them, and dwells with them, in order to revive and comfort them: but by the words of men; Job was smitten with the tongues of men; as Jeremiah was, and was beaten and bruised by them, as anything is beaten and bruised by a pestle in a mortar, as the word<sup>f720</sup> signifies, and is sometimes rendered, (<sup><281D></sup>Isaiah 53:5,10); these must be not soft but hard words, not gentle reproofs, which being given and taken in love, will not break the head, but calumnies and reproaches falsely cast, and with great severity, and frequently, which break the heart. (see <sup><382D></sup>Psalm 69:20).

**Ver. 3.** *These ten times have ye reproached me*, etc.] Referring not to ten sections or paragraphs, in which they had done it, as Jarchi; or to the five speeches his friends, in which their reproaches were doubled; or to Job's

words, and their answer, as Saadiah; for it does not denote an exact number of their reproaches, which Job was not so careful to count; but it signifies that he had been many times reproached by them; so Aben Ezra, and in which sense the phrase is often used, (see <sup><OR></sup>Genesis 31:7) (<sup><OR></sup>Numbers 14:22); it is the lot of good men in all ages to be reproached by carnal and profane sinners, on account of religion, and for righteousness' sake, as Christians are for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; and which Moses esteemed greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt; but to be reproached by friends, and that as an hypocrite and a wicked man, as Job was, must be very cutting; and this being often repeated, as it was an aggravation of the sin of his friends, so likewise of his affliction and patience:

*ye are not ashamed, [so that] ye make yourselves strange to me*; they looked shy at him; would not be free and friendly with him, but carried it strange to him, and seemed to have their affections alienated from him. There should not be a strangeness in good men one to another, since they are not aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, to the grace of God, and communion with him; since they are fellow citizens, and of the household of God; belong to the same city, share in the same privileges, are of the same family, children of the same father, and brethren one of another, members of the same body, heirs of the same grace and glory, and are to dwell together in heaven to all eternity; wherefore they should not make themselves strange to each other, but should speak often, kindly, and affectionately, one to another, and freely converse together about spiritual things; should pray with one another, and build up each other on their most holy faith, and by love serve one another, and do all good offices mutually that lie in their power, and bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law Christ: but, instead of this, Job's friends would scarcely look at him, much less speak one kind word to him; yea, they "hardened [themselves] against" him, as some <sup>f721</sup> render the word; had no compassion on him or pity for him in his distressed circumstances, which their relation to him obliged unto, and was due unto him on the score of friendship; nay, they "mocked" at him, which is the sense of the word, according to Ben Gersom <sup>f722</sup>; and of this he had complained before, (<sup><OR></sup>Job 12:4 17:2); and with some <sup>f723</sup> it has the signification of impudence and audaciousness, from the sense of the word in the Arabic language, (see <sup><OR></sup>Isaiah 3:9); as if they behaved towards him in a very impudent manner: or, though they "knew" him, as the Targum

paraphrases it, yet they were “not ashamed” to reproach him; though they knew that he was a man that feared God; they knew his character and conversation before his all afflictions came on, and yet traduced him as an hypocrite and a wicked man. Whatever is sinful, men should be ashamed of, and will be sooner or later; not to be ashamed thereof is an argument of great hardness and impenitence; and among other things it becomes saints to be ashamed of their making themselves strange to one another. Some render it interrogatively<sup>f724</sup>, “are ye not ashamed?” etc. you may well be ashamed, if you are not; this is put in order to make them ashamed.

**Ver. 4.** *And be it indeed [that] I have erred*, etc.] Which is a concession for argument’s sake, but not an acknowledgment that he had erred; though it is possible he might have erred, and it is certain he did in some things, though not in that respect with which he was charged; “humanum est errare”, all men are subject to mistakes, good men may err; they may err in judgment, or from the truth in some respect, and be carried away for a while and to some degree with the error the wicked, though they shall be turned from it again; they may err in practice, and wander from the way of God’s commandments; and indeed their strayings and aberrations of this sort are so many, that David says, “who can understand his errors?” (<sup>1912</sup>Psalm 19:12); and they may err in words, or make a mistake in speech; but then no man should be made an offender for a word for he must be a perfect man that is free from mistakes of this kind: now Job argues that supposing this to be his case in any of the above instances; yet, says he,

*mine error remaineth with myself*; I only am chargeable with it, and answerable for it; it is nothing to you, and why should you trouble yourselves about it? it will not be imputed to you, nor will you suffer on account of it; or, admitting I have imbibed an error, I do not publish it abroad; I keep it to myself; it lies and lodges in my own breast, and nobody is the worse for it: or “let it remain”, or “lodge with me”<sup>f725</sup>; Why should my mistakes be published abroad, and all the world be made acquainted with them? or else this expresses his resolution to abide by what his friends called an error; and then the so is, if this is an error which I have asserted, that God afflicts both good and bad men, and that afflictions are no argument of a man’s being an hypocrite and a wicked man, I am determined to continue in it; I will not give it up, I will hold it fast; it shall remain with me as a principle never to be departed from; or it may be rather his meaning is, that this notion he had imbibed would remain with

him, and was likely to do so, for anything they had said, or could say to the contrary.

**Ver. 5.** *If indeed ye will magnify [yourselves] against me*, etc.] Look and talk big, set up themselves for great folk, and resolve to run him down; open their mouths wide against him and speak great swelling words in a blustering manner; or magnify what they called an error in him, and set it out in the worst light they could:

*and plead against me my reproach*; his affliction which he was reproached with, and was pleaded against him as an argument of his being a wicked man; if therefore they were determined to go on after this manner, and insist on this kind of proof, then he would have them take what follows.

**Ver. 6.** *Know now that God hath overthrown me*, etc.] He would have them take notice that all his afflictions were from the hand of God; and therefore should take care to what they imputed any acts of his, whose ways are unsearchable, and the reasons of them not to be found out; and therefore, if a wrong construction should be put upon them, which may be easily done by weak sighted men, it must be displeasing to him. Job had all along from the first ascribed his afflictions to God, and he still continued to do so; he saw his hand in them all; whoever were the instruments, it was God that had overthrown him, or cast him down from an high to a very low estate; that had taken away his substance, his children, and his wealth: or “hath perverted me”<sup>f726</sup>; not that God had made him perverse, or was the cause or occasion of any perverseness in him, either in his words or in his actions, or had perverted his cause, and the judgment of it; Job could readily answer to those questions of Bildad, “doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?” and say, no, he doth not; but he is to be understood in the same sense as the church is, when she says, (see <sup>2819</sup>Lamentations 3:9); “he hath made my path crooked”; where the same word is used as here; and both she and Job mean that God had brought them into cross, crooked, and afflictive dispensations:

*and hath compassed me with his net*; and which also designs affliction, which is God’s net, which he has made, ordained, and makes use of; which he lays for his people, and takes them in, and draws them to himself, and prevents them committing sin, and causes to issue in their good; (see <sup>2813</sup>Lamentations 1:13 <sup>2823</sup>Ezekiel 12:13).

**Ver. 7.** *Behold, I cry out of wrong*, etc.] Or of “violence”<sup>[727]</sup>, or injury done him by the Sabeans and Chaldeans upon his substance, and by Satan upon his health; this he cried out and complained of in prayer to God, and of it as it were in open court, as a violation of justice, and as being dealt very unjustly with:

*but I am not heard*; his prayer was not heard; he could get no relief, nor any redress of his grievances, nor any knowledge of the reasons of his being thus used; (see <sup><300></sup>Habakkuk 1:2);

*I cry aloud, but [there is] no judgment*; notwithstanding his vehement and importunate requests; and which were repeated time after time, that there might be a hearing of his cause; that it might be searched into and tried, that his innocence might be cleared, and justice done him, and vengeance taken on those that wronged him; but he could not obtain it; there was no time appointed for judgment, no court of judicature set, nor any to judge. Now seeing this was the case, that the hand of God was in all his afflictions; that he had complained to him of the injury done him; and that he had most earnestly desired his cause might be heard, and the reasons given why he was thus used, but could get no answer to all this; therefore it became them to be cautious and careful of what they said concerning the dealings of God with him, and to what account they placed them; of which he gives a particular enumeration in the following verses.

**Ver. 8.** *He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass*, etc.] A metaphor taken from travellers, who not only meet with obstacles and obstructions in their way, which make it difficult; but sometimes with such enclosures and fences, that they are at a full stop, and cannot pass on, and know not what course to steer: the people of God are not inhabitants of this world, but pilgrims, strangers, and sojourners in it, and travellers through it; they are bound for another country, and are travelling to it; and though their way for far most part is indeed troublesome, but generally passable, or made so; yet sometimes not only is their way hedged up with afflictions, and they hedged about with them, that they cannot easily get out, and get through and pass on; and it is with much difficulty, and with being much scratched and torn, they do brush through; but they also at other times find God has built up a wall against them, and enclosed them with hewn stones, and so fenced up their way that they cannot pass on; such difficulties present as seem insurmountable, and they are at a standstill, and know not what way to take; which was now Job’s case, (see <sup><305></sup>Lamentations 3:5,7,9); and this

may not only respect the way of his walk in this world, but his way to God, either to the throne of his grace, or the tribunal of his justice: the way to God, as on a throne of grace, is only through Christ, the living way; which, though more clearly revealed under the Gospel dispensation, and therefore called a new way, yet was known under the former dispensation, and made use of; in which saints may have access to God with boldness and confidence: but sometimes this way seems by unbelief to be fenced up, though it is always open; and especially when God hides his face, and is not to be seen, nor is it known where to find him, and how to come up to his seat; and which also was Job's case, (<sup><1827B></sup>Job 23:3); and whereas he was very desirous of having his cause heard and tried at the tribunal of God, his way was so shut up, that he could not obtain what he so much desired, and knew not therefore how to proceed, and what course to take:

*and he hath set darkness in my paths*; and was like a traveller in a very dark night, that cannot see his way, and knows not what step to take next; so good men, though they walk not in the ways of darkness, in a moral sense, as unregenerate men do; yet even while they are walking in the good ways of truth and holiness, and while they are passing through this world, God sometimes withdraws the light of his countenance from them, so that they walk in darkness, and have no light, which is very uncomfortable walking; and when God may be said to put darkness into their paths, he not granting them the light of grace and comfort they have sometimes enjoyed; and so it is with them when under such dark dispensations of Providence, as that they cannot see the end of God in leading them in such ways; and then their case is such as it now was Job's; that they cannot see any way of getting out of it; as the Israelites at the Red sea, and Paul and the mariners when in a storm, and all hope of being saved was gone.

**Ver. 9.** *He hath stripped me of my glory*, etc.] The metaphor of a traveller may be still continued, who falling among thieves is stripped of his clothes, to which the allusion may be: Job was not stripped of his glory in a spiritual sense, not of the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness, nor of the graces of the Spirit, which makes saints all glorious within; but in a civil sense, and is to be understood not merely of his rich apparel, or of his robe, which he might wear as a civil magistrate, as an ensign of honour, and which made him look glorious; but either of his wealth, riches, and substance, which are a man's glory, and which he too often and too much glories in, though Job might not; (see <sup><1996></sup>Psalm 49:16 <sup><0300></sup>Genesis 31:1); or of his children, (<sup><2011></sup>Hosea 9:11) (<sup><0711></sup>Esther 5:11); and indeed of everything that

made him look magnificent among men; as an abundance of this world's good, a numerous family, fine clothes, sumptuous living, and a stately palace; all which Job might have had, but was now stripped of all by one means or another; and whoever were the instruments, he ascribes it all to God, as being according to his sovereign will and pleasure; and these things are very properly and significantly expressed by clothes a man is stripped of, because they are outward things, as garments are, adorn and make externally glorious, as they do, and of which a man may be as soon and as easily deprived as to be stripped of his clothes by one or more of superior power to him:

*and taken the crown [from] my head:* meaning much the same as before, either his wealth and riches, which are the crown of a wise man, (<sup><144></sup>Proverbs 14:24); or his children, which are the crown of old then, (<sup><176></sup>Proverbs 17:6); or everything that gave him honour, reputation, and esteem with men; all was taken away from him, and his honour laid in the dust. Some from hence have wrongly concluded that Job was a king, and wore a royal diadem, of which he was now deprived, mistaking him for Jobab, a king of Edom, (<sup><133></sup>Genesis 36:33); but he had and wore a better diadem, and which he did not lose, but held fast, even his righteousness, justice, and integrity, (<sup><194></sup>Job 29:14); and much less could the crown of life, righteousness, and glory, to which he was entitled, be taken from him.

**Ver. 10.** *He hath destroyed me on every side,* etc.] To be “troubled on every side” is much, as the apostles were, (<sup><408></sup>2 Corinthians 4:8); but to be destroyed on every side, and all around, is more, and denotes utter destruction; it may have respect to the rein of his substance and family, which were all demolished at once; his oxen and asses, which were on one side, his camels on other, his sheep on another, and his children on another, and all destroyed in one day, and perhaps in a few hours; and also to his body, which God had made, and had fashioned together round about; but now he had suffered it to be smitten with ulcers from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet; and this earthly tabernacle of his was demolishing on every side, and just falling down; for the allusion is either to the demolition of a building, or to the rooting up of a tree, and so continued in the next clause; comparing himself to a tree, that is dug about on all sides, and its roots laid bare, and these and all their fibres cut off, so that it is utterly destroyed from growing any more, but becomes dead; and this Job thought to be his case:



*and I am gone*; or am a dead man, just going out of the world, the way of all flesh; and because of the certainty of it, and of its being very quickly, in a few minutes, as it were, he speaks of it as if it already was: wherefore it follows,

*and my hope he hath removed like a tree*; not like a tree that is cut down to its roots, which remain in the ground, and may sprout out again, (~~1847~~ Job 14:7); nor like a tree that is taken up with its roots, and removed to another place, and planted in another soil, where it may grow as well or better; but like a tree cut off from its roots, or pulled up by the roots, and laid upon the ground, when there can be no hope of its ever growing again; and so the hope of Job was like that; not his hope of salvation, of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal life, which was strong and firm, (~~1835~~ Job 13:15,16 19:25-27); nor can a good and well grounded hope be removed; not the grace of hope, which is an abiding one; nor the ground of hope, which is Christ and his righteousness, upon which hope, as an anchor, being cast, is sure and steadfast; nor the object of hope, eternal glory and happiness laid up in heaven: but this is to be interpreted of Job's hope of a restoration to outward happiness, which his friends would have had him entertain, in case of repentance and reformation; but Job, as he was not sensible of his need of the one, as his friends understood it, he had no hope of the other, (see ~~1801~~ Job 6:11 17:15).

**Ver. 11.** *He hath also kindled his wrath against me*, etc.] In this and some following verses the metaphor is taken from a state of warfare, in which enemies are engaged in an hostile way, (~~1892~~ Job 19:12); in which way Job apprehended God was come forth against him; he imagined that the wrath of God, which is comparable to fire for its force and fury, was kindled against him; that it began to appear, and was bursting out in a flame upon him, and all around him, to consume him; he thought his afflictions were in wrath, which is often the mistaken apprehension of good men, (see ~~1891~~ Psalm 38:1 88:7,16); and that the terrors of it were set in battle array against him, (~~1806~~ Job 6:4);

*and he counted me unto him as [one of] his enemies*; all men are by nature enemies to God, yea, enmity itself, and so are his own people while unregenerate, until the enmity of their hearts is slain, and they are reconciled to God by his spirit and grace; but as Job was truly a gracious man, and possessed of the fruits of the spirit, he must among the rest of his graces have the love of God in his heart; and he was sensible and conscious

to himself that he was no enemy to God, and could appeal to him, as the searcher of hearts, that he knew he loved him; nay, he could not believe that God reckoned him his enemy, when he had given such a testimony of him, and of his fear of him, that there was none like him; and when Job so strongly trusted in him for salvation, and believed he should enjoy him for ever: but his sense is, that God treated him, by afflicting him in the manner he did, as if he was one of his enemies; had he really been one, he could not have used him, he thought, more roughly and severely; so that, judging according to the outward appearance of things, it might be concluded, as it seems it was by his friends, that he was a wicked man, an hypocrite, an enemy to God and godliness; but whereas Job thought that God dealt with him as with an enemy, he was mistaken; since when God afflicts his people, he deals with them as with sons, (<sup><8127></sup>Hebrews 12:7).

**Ver. 12.** *His troops come together*, etc.] Afflictions which are many, and of which it may be said, as was at the birth of God, who had his name from the word here used, “a troop cometh”: (<sup><0311></sup>Genesis 30:11); and these sometimes come together, or follow so quick one upon another, that there is scarce any interval between them, as did Job’s afflictions; and they are God’s hosts, his troops, his soldiers, which are at his command; and he says to them, as the centurion did to his, to the one, Go, and he goes, and to another, Come, and it comes:

*and raise up their way against me*; as an army, when it comes against a place, throws up a bank to raise their artillery upon, that they may play it to greater advantage; or make a broad causeway, for the soldiers to march abreast against it; or an high cast up way, as the word <sup>f728</sup> signifies, over a ditch or dirty place in a hollow, that they may the better pass over: some read it, “they raise up their way upon me” <sup>f729</sup>; he opposing and standing in the way was crushed down by them, and trampled upon, and over whom they passed as on an highway, and in a beaten path; (see <sup><25123></sup>Isaiah 51:23); but most render it, “against me”; for Job looked upon all his afflictions, as Jacob did (<sup><0426></sup>Genesis 42:36), to be against him, to militate against him, and threaten him with ruin, when they were all working for him, even for his good:

*and encamp round about my tabernacle*: as an army round about a city when besieging it. Job may have respect to the tabernacle of his body, as that is sometimes so called, (<sup><4411></sup>2 Corinthians 5:1 <sup><6013></sup>2 Peter 1:13,14); and

to the diseases of it; which being a complication, might be said to encamp about him, or surround him on all sides.

**Ver. 13.** *He hath put my brethren far from me*, etc.] As it is one part of business in war to cut off all communication between the enemy and their confederates and auxiliaries, and to hinder them of all the help and assistance from them they can; so Job here represents God dealing with him as with an enemy, and therefore keeps at a distance from him all such from whom he might expect comfort and succour, as particularly his brethren; by whom may be meant such who in a natural relation are strictly and properly brethren; for such Job had, as appears from (~~821~~ Job 42:11); who afterwards paid him a visit, and showed brotherly love to him; but for the present the affliction that God laid upon him had such an influence on them, as to cause them to stand aloof off, and not come near him, and show any regard unto him; and as this was the effect of the afflicting hand of God, Job ascribes it to him, and which added to his affliction; (see ~~828~~ Psalm 69:8);

*and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me*; such as knew him in the time of his prosperity, and frequently visited him, and conversed with him, and he with them; but now, things having taken a different turn in his outward circumstances, they carried it strange to him, as if they had never been acquainted with him: “si fueris felix”, etc.

**Ver. 14.** *My kinsfolk have failed*, etc.] Or “ceased” <sup>f730</sup>, not to be, or that they were dead, which is sometimes the sense of the word; but they ceased from visiting him, or doing any good office for him; those that were “near” <sup>f731</sup> him, as the word used signifies; that were near him in relation, and were often near him in place, in his own house, in company and conversation with him, now ceased to be near him in affection; or to come nigh him, to converse with him and comfort him, and sympathize with him, which might be expected from persons nearly related:

*and my familiar friends have forgotten me*; such as were well known to him, and he to them, and who not long ago were very loving and friendly to him, and very freely and familiarly conversed with him; but now they forgot him; the friendship that subsisted between them, the friendliness with which they had visited him, and the favours they had received from him; they so slighted and neglected him, that it seemed as if he was forgotten, as a dead man, out of mind; or as if they did not remember that there ever was, or at least that there now was, such a man in the world as

Job: these could not be true friends; for “a friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity”, (~~3077~~ Proverbs 17:17); a real friend loves, and continues to love, in adversity as well as in prosperity; and such an one, who sometimes sticks closer to a man than a brother, is born and designed to be of service to him in a time of trouble; but so it was ordered by divine Providence, and according to the will of God, that Job should meet with such treatment from his brethren, relations, acquaintance, and familiar friends, for the trial of his faith and patience.

**Ver. 15.** *They that dwell in mine house*, etc.] Not his neighbours, as the Septuagint; for though they dwelt near his house, they did not dwell in it; nor inmates and sojourners, lodgers with him, to whom he let out apartments in his house; this cannot be supposed to have been his case, who was the greatest man in all the east; nor even tenants, that hired houses and lands of him; for the phrase is not applicable to them; it designs such who were inhabitants in his house. Job amidst all his calamities had an house to dwell in; it is a tradition mentioned by Jerom <sup>f732</sup>, that Job’s house was in Carnea, a large village in his time, in a corner of Batanea, beyond the floods of Jordan; and he had people dwelling with him in it, who are distinct from his wife, children, and servants after mentioned; and are either “strangers” <sup>f733</sup> as the word sometimes signifies, he had taken into his house in a way of hospitality, and had given them lodging, and food, and raiment, as the light of nature and law of God required, (~~6008~~ Deuteronomy 10:18,19 ~~8852~~ Job 31:32); or else proselytes, of whom this word <sup>f734</sup> is sometimes used, whom he had been the instrument of converting from idolatry, superstition, and profaneness, and of gaining them over to the true religion; and whom he had taken into his house, to instruct them more and more in the ways of God, such as were the trained servants in Abraham’s family: these, says he,

*and my maids, count me for a stranger*; both the one and the other, the strangers he took out of the streets, and the travellers he opened his doors unto, and entertained in a very generous and hospitable manner; the proselytes he had made, and with whom he had taken so much pains, and to whom he had shown so much kindness and goodness, and been the means of saving their souls from death; and his maidens he had hired into his house, to do the business of it, and who ought to have been obedient and respectful to him, and whose cause he had not despised, but had treated them with great humanity and concern; the Targum wrongly renders the word, “my concubines”; yet these one and another looked upon

him with an air of the utmost indifference, not as if he was the master of the house, but a stranger in it, as one that did not belong unto it, and they had scarce ever seen with their eyes before; which was very ungrateful, and disrespectful to the last degree; and if they reckoned him a stranger to God, to his grace, to true religion and godliness, this was worse still; and especially in the proselytes of his house, who owed their conversion, their light and knowledge in divine things, to him as an instrument:

*I am an alien in their sight*; as a foreigner, one of another kingdom and nation, of a different habit, speech, religion, and manners; they stared at him as if they had never seen him before, as some strange object to be looked at, an uncommon spectacle, that had something in him or about him unusual and frightful; at least contemptible and to be disdained, and not to be spoke to and familiarly conversed with, but to be shunned and despised.

**Ver. 16.** *I called my servant*, etc.] His manservant, whom he had hired into his house, and who waited upon his person, and had been his trusty and faithful servant, and was dear unto him, and he had shown him much respect and kindness in the time of his prosperity; him he called to him, to do this and that and the other thing for him as usual; and of whose assistance and service he might stand in more need, being so greatly afflicted in body as well as in other things; and who ought to have been obedient to his call in all things, and have served him with all readiness and cheerfulness, with all heartiness, sincerity, integrity, and faithfulness; and given him the same honour and reverence as before; but instead of all this, it is observed,

*and he gave [me] no answer*; whether he would or would not do what he ordered him to do; he took no notice of him, he turned a deaf ear to him, and his back upon him; he came not near him, but kept his place where he was, or walked off without showing any regard to what he said to him; he neither answered him by words, nor by deeds; neither signified his readiness to do what he was ordered, nor did it. In some cases it is criminal in servants to answer again, when they thwart and contradict their masters, or reply in a saucy, surly, and impudent manner; but when they are spoke to about their master's business, it becomes them to answer in a decent, humble, and respectable way, declaring their readiness to do their master's will and pleasure:

*I entreated him with my mouth*; which is an aggravation of his insolence and disobedience; such was the low condition Job was reduced unto, and

such the humility of his mind under his present circumstances, that he laid aside the authority of a master, and only entreated his servant, and begged it as if it was a favour, to do this or the other for him; nor did he signify this by a look and cast of his eye, or by a nod of his head, or by the direction of his hand; but with his mouth he spake unto him, and let him know what he would have done; and this not in an authoritative, haughty, and imperious manner; but with good words, and in submissive language, as it was something he was beholden to his servant for, rather than obedience to be performed.

**Ver. 17.** *My breath is strange to my wife*, etc.] Being corrupt and unsavoury, through some internal disorder; (see <sup><870></sup>Job 17:1); so that she could not bear to come nigh him, to do any kind deed for him; but if this was his case, and his natural breath was so foul, his friends would not have been able to have been so long in the same room with him, and carry on so long a conversation with him; rather therefore it may signify the words of his mouth, his speech along with his breath, which were very disagreeable to his wife; when upon her soliciting him to curse God and die, he told her she talked like one of the foolish women; and when he taught her to expect evil as well as good at the hand of God, and to bear afflictions patiently, or else the sense may be, “my spirit”<sup>f735</sup>, his vital spirit, his life, was wearisome and loathsome to his wife; she was tired out with him, with hearing his continual groans and complaints, and wished to be rid of him, and that God would take away his life: or else, as some render it, “my spirit is strange [to me], because of my wife”<sup>f736</sup>; and then the meaning is, that Job was weary of his own life, he loathed it, and could have been glad to have it taken from him, because of the scoffs and jeers of his wife at him, her brawls and quarrels with him, and solicitations of him to curse God and renounce religion:

*though I entreated her for the children’s [sake] of mine own body*; this clause creates a difficulty with interpreters, since it is generally thought all Job’s children were dead. Some think that only his elder children were destroyed at once, and that he had younger ones at home with him, which he here refers to; but this does not appear: others suppose these were children of his concubines; but this wants proof that he had any concubine; and besides an entreaty for the sake of such children could have no influence upon his proper wife: others take them for grandchildren, and who, indeed, are sometimes called children; but then they could not with strict propriety be called the children of his body; and for the same reason

it cannot be meant of such that were brought up in his house, as if they were his children; nor such as were his disciples, or attended on him for instruction: but this may respect not any children then living, but those he had had; and the sense is, that Job entreated his wife, not for the use of the marriage bed, as some suggest <sup>f737</sup>; for it can hardly be thought, that, in such circumstances in which he was, there should be any desire of this kind; but to do some kind deed for him, as the dressing of his ulcers, etc. or such things which none but a wife could do well for him; and this he entreated for the sake of the children he had had by her, those pledges of their conjugal affection; or rather, since the word has the signification of deploring, lamenting, and bemoaning, the clause may be thus rendered, “and I lamented the children of my body” <sup>f738</sup>; he had none of those indeed to afflict him; and his affliction was, that they were taken away from him at once in such a violent manner; and therefore he puts in this among his family trials; or this may be an aggravation of his wife’s want of tenderness and respect unto him; that his breath should be unsavoury, his talk disagreeable, and his sighs and moans be wearisome to her, when the burden of his song, the subject of his sorrowful complaints, was the loss of his children; in which it might have been thought she would have joined with him, being equally concerned therein.

**Ver. 18.** *Yea, young children despised me*, etc.] Having related what he met with within doors from those in his own house, the strangers and proselytes in it, his maidens and menservants, and even from his own wife, he proceeds to give an account of what befell him without; young children, who had learned of their parents, having observed them to treat him with contempt, mocked and scoffed at him, and said, there sits old Job, that nasty creature, with his boils and ulcers; or using some such contemptuous expression, as “wicked man”; so some translate the word <sup>f739</sup>; he was scorned and condemned by profane persons, who might tease him with his religion, and ask, where was his God? and bid him observe the effect and issue of his piety and strict course of living, and see what it was all come to, or what were the fruits of it: the Vulgate Latin version renders it “fools”, that is, not idiots, but such as are so in a moral sense, and so signifies as before; and as these make mock at sin, and a jest of religion, it is no wonder that they despised good men: the word is rendered by a learned man <sup>f740</sup>, the “most needy clients”, who were dependent on him, and were supported by him; but this coincides with (<sup>18015</sup> Job 19:15);

*I arose, and they spoke against me:* he got up from his seat, either to go about his business, and do what he had to do; and they spoke against him as he went along, and followed him with their reproaches, as children will go after persons in a body they make sport of; or he rose up in a condescending manner to them, when they ought to have rose up to him, and revered and honoured him; and this he did to win upon them, and gain their good will and respect; or to admonish them, chastise and correct them, for their insolence and disrespect to him; but it signified nothing, they went on calling him names, and speaking evil against him, and loading him with scoffs and reproaches.

**Ver. 19.** *All my inward friends abhorred me,* etc.] Or “the men of my secret”<sup>f741</sup>; who were so very familiar with him, that he imparted the secrets of his heart, and the most private affairs of life, unto them, placing so much confidence in them, and treating them as his bosom friends; for this is always reckoned a great instance of friendship, (~~CRISIS~~ Job 15:15); and yet their minds were set against him; their affections were alienated from him; they abhorred the sight of him, and declined all conversation with him, even all of them; not one showed respect unto him:

*and they whom I loved;* or “this whom I loved”<sup>f742</sup>; this and that and the other particular friend, that he loved more than others: though all men are to be loved as the creatures of God, and as fellow creatures, and especially good men, even all the saints; yet there are some that engross a greater share of love than others, among natural and spiritual relations; as Joseph was more loved by his father than the rest of his children; and, even by our Lord, John was loved more than the other disciples: and so Job, he had some particular friends that he loved above others; and yet these not only turned away from him in the time of his adversity, and turned their backs on him, and would have nothing to say to him for his comfort, nor afford him any relief of any kind in his distress, but

*are turned against men;* were turned against him, and became his enemies; and, as David says of some that he had a love for, for my love, “they are my adversaries”, (~~PSALM~~ Psalm 109:4).

**Ver. 20.** *My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh,* etc.] Or, “as to my flesh”<sup>f743</sup>, as Mr. Broughton and others render the words; as his bones used to stick to his flesh, and were covered with it, now his flesh being consumed and wasted away with his disease, they stuck to his skin, and were seen through it; he was reduced to skin and bone, and was a mere



skeleton, what with the force of his bodily disorder, and the grief of his mind through the treatment he met with from God and men, (see <sup><2048></sup>Lamentations 4:8);

*and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth*; meaning not, as some understand it, his lips, which covered his teeth; for those cannot be properly called the skin of them; rather the fine polish of the teeth, which fortifies them against the hurt and damage they would receive by what is ate and drank; though it seems best to interpret it of the skin of the gums, in which the teeth are set; and the sense is, that Job had escaped with his life, but not with a whole skin, his skin was broken all over him, with the sores and ulcers upon him, (see <sup><1875></sup>Job 7:5); only the skin of his teeth was preserved, and so Mr. Broughton renders it, “I am whole only in the skin of my teeth”; everywhere else his skin was broken; so the Targum,

“I am left in the skin of my teeth.”

Some have thought that Satan, when he smote Job from head to feet with ulcers, spared his mouth, lips, and teeth, the instruments of speech, that he might therewith curse God, which was the thing he aimed at, and proposed to bring him to, by getting a grant from God to afflict him in the manner he did.

**Ver. 21.** *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me*, etc.] Instead of calumny and censure, his case called for compassion; and the phrase is doubled, to denote the vehemence of his affliction, the ardency of his soul, the anguish of his spirits, the great distress he was in, and the earnest desire he had to have pity shown him; and in which he may be thought not only to make a request to his friends for it, but to give them a reproof for want of it:

*O ye my friends*; as they once showed themselves to be, and now professed they were; and since they did, pity might be reasonably expected from them; for even common humanity, and much more friendship, required it of them, that they should be pitiful and courteous, and put on bowels of mercy and kindness, and commiserate his sad estate, and give him all the succour, relief, and comfort they could, (see <sup><1874></sup>Job 6:14);

*for the hand of God has touched me*; his afflicting hand, which is a mighty one; it lay hard and heavy upon him, and pressed him sore; for though it was but a touch of his hand, it was more than he could well bear; for it was the touch of the Almighty, who “toucheth the hills, and they smoke”, (<sup><1946></sup>Psalm 104:32); and if he lays his hand ever so lightly on houses of

clay, which have their foundation in the dust, they cannot support under the weight of it, since they are crushed before the moth, or as easily as a moth is crushed.

**Ver. 22.** *Why do ye persecute me as God,* etc.] As if they were in his stead, or had the same power and authority over him, who is a sovereign Being, and does what he pleases with his creatures, and is not accountable to any for what he does; but this is not the case of men, nor are they to imitate God in all things; what he does is not in all things a warrant to do the like, or to be pleaded and followed as a precedent by them; they should be merciful as he is merciful, but they are not to afflict and distress his people because he does, and which he does for wise ends and reasons; for such a conduct is resented by him, (see <sup><3015></sup>Zechariah 1:15). God persecuted or pursued and followed Job with one affliction after another, and hunted him as a fierce lion does his prey, (<sup><3016></sup>Job 10:16); but this was not a reason why they should do the same. Some read the words, “why do ye persecute me as those?” <sup>f744</sup> you that profess to be my friends, why do ye persecute me as those before mentioned, as those wicked men? or “with those”, with such reproaches and calumnies; but the original will not bear it:

*and are not satisfied with my flesh?* It was not enough that he was afflicted in his body, and his flesh was ulcerated from head to feet, and was clothed with worms and clods of dust; they were not content that his children, which were his own flesh, were tore away from him, and destroyed; and that his substance, which is sometimes called the flesh of men, (see <sup><3303></sup>Micah 3:3 <sup><61716></sup>Revelation 17:16); was devoured, and he was spoiled and plundered of it; but they sought to afflict his mind, to wound his spirit, by their heavy charges and accusations, by their calumnies and reproaches, and hard censures of him; he suggests, that they dealt with him more cruelly than savage beasts, who, when they have got their prey, are satisfied with their flesh; but they, who would be thought to be his friends, were not satisfied with his.

**Ver. 23.** *O that my words were now written!* etc.] Not his things <sup>f745</sup>, as some render it, his affairs, the transactions of his life; that so it might appear with what uprightness and integrity he had lived, and was not the bad man he was thought to be; nor the words he had delivered already, the apologies and defences he had made for himself, the arguments he had used in his own vindication, and the doctrines respecting God and his providence which he had laid down and asserted; and was so far from

being ashamed of them, or retracting them, that he wishes they had been taken down in writing, that posterity might read and judge of the controversy between him and his friends; but rather the words he was about to deliver in (~~18925~~ Job 19:25-29), expressing his faith in Christ, in the resurrection of the dead, and in a future state of happiness and glory; these he wishes were “written”, that they might remain as a standing testimony of his faith and hope; for what is written abides, when that which is only spoken is soon forgot, and not easily recalled:

*O that they were printed in a book!* not written on loose sheets, which might be lost, but in a book bound up, or rolled up in a volume, as was the custom of ancient times; though this cannot be understood of printing properly taken, which has not been in use but little more than five hundred years, but of engrossing, as of statutes and decrees in public records; and the word for “statutes comes” from this that is here used.

**Ver. 24.** *That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!*] Or “that they were written with an iron pen and lead, that they were cut or hewn out in a rock for ever”; not with both an iron and leaden pen, or pencil; for the marks of the latter are not durable, and much less could it be used on a rock according to our version; but the sense seems to be, that they might be written with an iron pen, which was used in writing, (~~2470~~ Jeremiah 17:1); upon a sheet of lead, as the Vulgate Latin version; for it was usual in ancient times, as Pliny<sup>f746</sup> and others relate, for books to be made of sheets of lead, and for public records to be engrossed, as in plates of brass, so sometimes in sheets of lead, for the perpetuity of them; or else it refers to the cutting out of letters on stones, as the law was on two tables of stone, and filling up the incisions or cuttings with lead poured into them, as Jarchi suggests: so Pliny,<sup>f747</sup> speaks of stone pillars in Arabia and the parts adjacent, with unknown characters on them; also this may have respect to the manner of writing on mountains and rocks formerly, as the Israelites at or shortly after the times of Job did. There are now, in the wilderness through which the Israelites passed, hills called Gebel-el-mokatab, the written mountains, engraved with unknown ancient characters, out into the hard marble rock; supposed to be the ancient Hebrew, written by the Israelites for their diversion and improvement which are observed by some modern travellers<sup>f748</sup>. In the last age, Petrus a Valle and Thomas a Novaria saw them; the latter of which transcribed some of them, some of which seemed to be like to the Hebrew letters now in use, and others to the Samaritans; and some agreed with neither<sup>f749</sup>; and

Cosmoss the Egyptian <sup>f750</sup>, who wrote A. D. 535, declares on his own testimony, that all the mansions of the Hebrews in the wilderness were to be seen in stones with Hebrew letters engraved on them, which seemed to be an account of their journeys in it. The inscription on a stone at Horeb, brought from thence by the above mentioned Thomas a Novaria, and which Kircher <sup>f751</sup> has explained thus,

“God shall make a virgin conceive, and she shall bring forth a son,”

is thought by learned men to be of a later date, and the explication of it is not approved of by them. <sup>f752</sup> Job may have in view his sepulchre hewn out of a rock, as was usual, and as that was our Lord was laid in; and so his wish might be that the following words were his funeral epitaph, and that they might be cut out and inscribed upon his sepulchral monument, his rocky grave; that everyone that passed by might read his strong expressions of faith in a living Redeemer, and the good hope he had of a blessed resurrection.

**Ver. 25.** *For I know*, etc.] The particle **w**, which is sometimes rendered by the copulative “and”, by an adversative “but”, and sometimes as a causal particle “for”, should not be rendered here by either; but as an explanative, “to wit”, or “namely”, as it is by Noldius <sup>f753</sup>; in connection with the preceding words; in which Job wishes some words of his were written in a book, or engrossed on sheets of lead, or were cut out on some rock, and particularly were engraved on his tombstone; “namely”, these following, “I know that my Redeemer liveth”, etc. and to this agrees Broughton, “how that my Redeemer liveth”; let these be the words written, engraved, and cut out there: by my Redeemer, he means not any mere man that should rise up and vindicate him; for the account of his then living, and of his standing on the earth in the latter day, will not agree with such an one; nor God the Father, to whom the character of a Redeemer is seldom or ever given, nor did he ever appear or stand on earth, nor was his shape seen at any time, (<sup>f754</sup> John 5:37); but the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our “Goel”, the word here used, our near kinsman, and so our Redeemer, to whom the right of redemption belonged; and who was spoken of by all the holy prophets, from the beginning of the world, as the Redeemer of his people, who should redeem them from all their sins; from the law, its curses and condemnation; from Satan, and his principalities and powers; from death and hell, and everlasting destruction; and that by giving himself a ransom for them; all which was known in the times of Job,

(~~scrib2~~ Job 33:24); and known by him, who speaks of him as living; he then existed not only as a divine Person, as he did from all eternity, but in his office capacity as Mediator, and under the character of a Redeemer; for the virtue of his future redemption reached to all the ages before it, from the foundation of the world; besides, the epithet “living” points at him as the “living God”, as he is, (~~scrib2~~ Hebrews 3:12); and so equal to the work of redemption, and able to redeem, and mighty to save; of whom it is said, not that he has lived, or shall live, but “liveth”; ever lives; and so an expression of the eternity of Christ, who is from everlasting to everlasting, the same today, yesterday, and for ever; and who, though he died in human nature, yet is alive, and lives for evermore; he has life in and of himself, as he is God over all blessed for ever; and has life in him for all his people, as Mediator; and is the author of spiritual life in them, and the donor of eternal life to them; and because he lives, they shall live also. Now Job had an interest in him as the living Redeemer, and knew he had, which is the greatest blessing that can be enjoyed; an interest in Christ is of infinitely more worth than the whole world, and the knowledge of it exceeds all others; this knowledge was not merely speculative, nor only approbational and fiducial, though such Job had, (~~scrib5~~ Job 13:15,16); but the knowledge of assurance of interest; to know Christ as a Redeemer of men, and not our Redeemer, is of no avail; the devils know him to be a Redeemer, but not theirs: men may have an interest in Christ, and as yet not know it; interest is before knowledge; it is neither knowledge nor faith that gives interest, but God of his grace gives both interest and knowledge: and such a knowledge as here expressed is a peculiar favour; it is owing to an understanding given to know him that is true, and that we are in him that is true; and to the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ, and to the testimony which he bears; and such knowledge will support under the greatest afflictions and sorest trials; under the ill usage of friends, and the loss of nearest and dearest relations, and in the views of death and eternity; all which was Job’s case:

*and [that] he shall stand at the latter [day] upon the earth;* appear in the world in human nature; be the seed of the woman, and born of one, be made flesh, and dwell among men, and converse with them, as Jesus did; who stood upon the land of Judea, and walked through Galilee, and went about doing good to the bodies and souls of men; and this was in the last days, and at the end of the world, (~~scrib5~~ Hebrews 1:1 9:26); as a pledge of this there were frequent appearances of the son of God in an human form

to the patriarchs; nor need it seem strange that Job, though not an Israelite, had knowledge of the incarnation of Christ, when it is said to <sup>f754</sup> be the opinion of the Indian Brahmans that God often appeared in the form and habit of some great men, and conversed among men; and that Wistnavius, whom, they say, is the second Person of the triune God, had already assumed a body nine times, and sometimes also an human one; and that the same will once more be made by him; and Confucius, the Chinese philosopher <sup>f755</sup>, left it in writing, that the Word would be made flesh, and foresaw the year when it would be: or, “he shall rise the last out of the earth” <sup>f756</sup>; and so it may respect his resurrection from the dead; he was brought to the dust of death, and was laid in the grave, and buried, in the earth, and was raised out of it; and whose resurrection is of the greatest moment and importance, the justification, regeneration, and resurrection of his people depending on it: but this is not to be understood as if he was the last that should rise from the dead; for he is the firstfruits of them that sleep, and the firstborn from the dead, the first that rose to an immortal life; but that he who, as to his divine nature, is the first and the last; or that, in his state of humiliation, is the last, the meanest, and most abject of men <sup>f757</sup>; or rather, who, as the public and federal head of his people, is “the last Adam”, (<sup>4656</sup>1 Corinthians 15:45); and who did rise as such for their justification, which makes the article of his resurrection an unspeakable benefit: or, “he shall stand over the earth in the latter day” <sup>f758</sup> in the last times of all, in the close of time, at the end of the world, at his appearing and kingdom, when he shall come to judge the quick and dead; those that will be alive, and those that will be raised from the dead, who will meet him in the air over the earth, and shall be for ever with him; and even then “he shall stand upon the earth”; for it is expressly said, that when he shall come, and all the saints with him, “his feet shall stand on the mount of Olives”, (<sup>3846</sup>Zechariah 14:4,5); or, “he shall stand against the earth at the latter days” <sup>f759</sup>; in the resurrection morn, and shall exercise his authority over it, and command the earth and sea to give up their dead; and when at his all commanding voice the dead shall come out of their graves, as Lazarus came out of his, he shall stand then upon the dust of the earth, and tread upon it as a triumphant Conqueror, having subdued all his enemies, and now the last enemy, death, is destroyed by the resurrection of the dead: what a glorious and enlarged view had Job of the blessed Redeemer!

**Ver. 26.** *And though after my skin [worms] destroy this [body], etc.]*

Meaning not, that after his skin was wholly consumed now, which was

almost gone, there being scarce any left but the skin of his teeth, (<sup><1892></sup>Job 19:20); the worms in his ulcers would consume what was left of his body, which scarce deserved the name of a body, and therefore he points to it, and calls it “this”, without saying what it was; but that when he should be entirely stripped of his skin in the grave, then rottenness and worms would strip him also of all the rest of his flesh and his bones; by which he expresses the utter consumption of his body by death, and after it in the grave; and nevertheless, though so it would be, he was assured of his resurrection from the dead:

*yet in my flesh shall I see God*: he believed, that though he should die and moulder into dust in the grave, yet he should rise again, and that in true flesh, not in an aerial celestial body, but in a true body, consisting of flesh, blood, and bones, which spirits have not, and in the same flesh or body he then had, his own flesh and body, and not another’s; and so with his fleshly or corporeal eyes see God, even his living Redeemer, in human nature; who, as he would stand upon the earth in that nature, in the fulness of time, and obtain redemption for him, so he would in the latter day appear again, raise him from the dead, and take him to himself, to behold his glory to all eternity: or “out of my flesh”<sup>f760</sup>, out of my fleshly eyes; from thence and with those shall I behold God manifest in the flesh, my incarnate God; and if Job was one of those saints that rose when Christ did, as some say<sup>f761</sup>, he saw him in the flesh and with his fleshly eyes.

**Ver. 27.** *Whom I shall see for myself*, etc.] For his pleasure and profit, to his great advantage and happiness, and to his inexpressible joy and satisfaction, (see <sup><1975></sup>Psalm 17:15 16:11);

*and mine eyes shall behold, and not another*; or “a stranger”<sup>f762</sup>; these very selfsame eyes of mine I now see with will behold this glorious Person, God in my nature, and not the eyes of another, of a strange body, a body not my own; or as I have seen him with my spiritual eyes, with the eyes of faith and knowledge, as my living Redeemer, so shall I see him with my bodily eyes after the resurrection, and enjoy uninterrupted communion with him, which a stranger shall not; one that has never known anything of him, or ever intermeddled with the joy of saints here, such shall not see him hereafter, at least with pleasure; like Balaam, they may see him, but not nigh, may behold him, but afar off: though “my reins be consumed within me”; or “in my bosom”;

*[though]*; this word may be left out, and be read,

*my reins are consumed within me*; or, “within my bosom”<sup>f763</sup>; and both being the seat of the affections and desires, may signify his most earnest and eager desire after the state of the resurrection of the dead; after such a sight of God in his flesh, of the incarnate Redeemer, he believed he should have, insomuch that it ate up his spirits, as the Psalmist says, zeal for the house of God ate up his, (~~3509~~ Psalm 69:9); it was not the belief of restoration of health, and to his former outward happiness, and a deliverance from his troubles, and a desire after that, which is here expressed; for he had no faith in that, nor hope, nor expectation of it, as appears by various expressions of his; but much greater, more noble, more refined enjoyments, were experienced by him now, and still greater he expected hereafter; and his words concerning these were what he wished were written, and printed, and engraven; which, if they only respected outward happiness, he would never have desired; and though he had not his wish in his own way, yet his words are written and printed in a better book than he had in his view, and will outlast engravings with an iron pen on sheets of lead, or marble rocks. The Vulgate Latin version seems to incline to this sense,

“this here is laid up in my bosom,”

that is, of seeing God in my flesh; so the Tigurine version, rather as a paraphrase than a version, “which is my only desire”.

**Ver. 28.** *But ye should say*, etc.] Here Job directs his friends what use they should make of this confession of his faith; they should upon this say within themselves, and to one another,

*why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?* Why should we pursue him with hard words, and load him with censures and reproaches, as if he was an hypocrite, when it appears, by what he says, that he has truth in the inward parts, the true grace of God is in him; that he is rooted in the love of God, and in the person of the Redeemer; that he has the Spirit of God in him, and the divine seed which has taken root in him, and brings forth fruit: or that “the root of the word”<sup>f764</sup> is in him; the word of God has a place in him, and is become the ingrafted word; the root doctrines, the principal and fundamental truths of religion, are believed and professed by him, such as respect the incarnation of the Messiah, his resurrection from the dead, and coming to judgment, the resurrection of all the dead in the same body, a future state of happiness, in which saints will enjoy the beatific vision; since these things are firmly believed by him,



though he may differ from us in some points about the methods of divine Providence, let us cease from persecuting him any further; (see ~~5118~~ Romans 10:8-10).

**Ver. 29.** *Be ye afraid of the sword*, etc.] Not of the civil magistrate, nor of a foreign enemy, but of the avenging sword of divine justice; lest God should whet the glittering sword of his justice, and his hand should take hold of judgment, in order to avenge the wrongs of the innocent; unless the other should also be considered as his instruments:

*for wrath [bringeth] the punishments of the sword*, or “sins of the sword” <sup>f765</sup>: the sense is, either that the wrath of men, in persecuting the people of God, puts them upon the commission of such sins as deserve to be punished with the sword, either of the civil magistrate, or of a foreign enemy, or of divine justice; or else the wrath of God brings on more punishments for their sins by means of the sword; and to this sense is the Targum,

“when God is angry for iniquities, he sends those that slay with the sword:”

*that ye may know [there is] a judgment*; that is executed in the world by the Judge of all the earth, who will do right; and that there is a future judgment after death, unto which everything in this world will be brought, when God will judge the world in righteousness by Christ, whom he has ordained to be Judge of quick and dead; and which will be a righteous judgment, that none can escape; and when, Job suggests, the controversy between him and his friends would be determined; and it would be then seen who was in the right, and who in the wrong; and unto which time he seems willing to refer his cause, and to have no more said about it; but his friends did not choose to take his advice; for Zophar the Naamathite starts up directly; and makes a reply, which is contained in the following chapter.