

CHAPTER 28

INTRODUCTION TO JOB 28

The design of this chapter is either to show the folly of such who are very diligent in their search and pursuit after earthly things, and neglect an inquiry after that which is infinitely more valuable, true wisdom; or rather to observe, that though things the most secret, and which are hidden in the bowels of the earth, may be investigated and discovered by the sagacity and diligence of men, yet wisdom cannot, especially the wisdom of God in his providences, which are past finding out; and particularly in what concerns the prosperity of the wicked, and the afflictions of the righteous; the reason of which men should be content to be ignorant of for the present, and be studious to possess that wisdom which is attainable, and be thankful for it, if they have it; which lies in the fear of the Lord, and a departure from evil, with which this chapter concludes. It begins with setting forth the sagacity of men in searching and finding out useful metals, and other things the earth produces; the difficulty, fatigue, and labour, that attend such a search, and the dangers they are exposed unto in it, (~~1830~~ Job 28:1-11); then it declares the unsearchableness of wisdom, its superior excellency to things the most valuable, and that it is not to be found by sea or land, or among any of the creatures, (~~1832~~ Job 28:12-22); and that God only knows its way and place, who has sought it out, prepared and declared it, (~~1833~~ Job 28:23-27); and that which he has thought fit to make known of it, and is most for his glory and the good of men, is, that it is to fear God, and depart from evil, (~~1833~~ Job 28:28).

Ver. 1. *Surely there is a vein for the silver*, etc.] Silver is mentioned first, not because the most valuable, for gold is preferable to it, as brass is to iron, and yet iron is mentioned first in (~~1830~~ Job 28:2); but because silver might be first known, or was first in use, especially in the coinage of money; we read of pieces of silver, or shekels of silver, in the times of Abraham, but not of any golden coin, (~~1823~~ Genesis 23:15); and among the old Romans silver was coined before gold^{f954}; it has its name from a word which signifies “desire”, because it is desirable to men, it answering to various uses and purposes; and sometimes the desires and cravings of men

after it are enlarged too far, and become criminal, and so the root of all evil to them: and now there is a “vein” for it in the earth, or a mine in which it may be dug for, and found, in which it runs as veins in a man’s body, in certain ramifications, like branches of trees, as they do; and the inhabitants of Hispaniola, and other parts of the West Indies, when found out by Columbus, which abounded with gold mines, declared that they found by experience that the vein of gold is a living tree, (and so the same, perhaps, may be said of silver,) and that it spreads and springs from the root, which they say extends to the centre of the earth by soft pores and passages of the earth, and puts forth branches, even to the uppermost part of the earth, and ceases not till it discovers itself unto the open air; at which time it shows forth certain beautiful colours instead of flowers, round stones of golden earth instead of fruits, and thin plates instead of leaves^{f955}; so here there is a vein, or a “going out for the silver”^{f956}, by which it makes its way, as observed of the gold, and shows itself by some signs and tokens where it may be found; or rather this egress is made for it, by opening the mine where it is, digging into it, and fetching it out of it, and from whence great quantities are often brought. In Solomon’s time it was made as the stones in Jerusalem, (^{<11027>}1 Kings 10:27);

and a place for gold [where] they fine [it]; there are particular places for this most excellent of all metals, which has its name in Hebrew from its yellow colour; all countries do not produce it; some are famous for it, and some parts of them, as the land of Havilah, where was gold, and that gold was good, (^{<0021>}Genesis 2:11,12); and Ophir; hence we often read of the gold of Ophir, so called from the place where it was found, as in this chapter, (^{<13316>}Job 28:16); and now the Spanish West Indies; but nearer to Job than these gold was found; there were not only mountains that abounded with gold near to Horeb, in the desert of Arabia^{f957}, but it was to be found with the Sabeans^{f958}, the near neighbours of Job; yea, the Ophir before referred to was in Arabia. Some understand this of the place where pure gold is found already refined, and needs no melting and refining; and of such Pliny^{f959} speaks, and of large lumps and masses of it; but for the most part it lies in ore, which needs refining; and so here it may intend the place where it is found in the ore, and from whence it is taken and had to the place where it is refined; for melting places used to be near where the golden ore was found; and so when Hispaniola was first found by Columbus, the gold that was dug out of the mountains of Cibana, and other places, were brought to two shops, which were erected with all

things appertaining to melt and refine it, and cast into wedges; and so early as that, in these two shops, were molten yearly three hundred thousand pound weight of gold ^{f960}.

Ver. 2. *Iron is taken out of the earth*, etc.] Very easily, and in great plenty, and is more common, being in most countries, is nearer the surface of the earth, and here said to be taken “out of the dust” ^{f961}; which, being melted in a furnace, produces iron, a metal very serviceable for various uses, and without which there is scarce any thing to be done, and therefore was with brass of early invention. Tubalcain, son of Lamech, supposed to be the Vulcan of the Heathens, a worker in iron, is said to be the instructor of every artificer in brass and iron, (^{<0102>}Genesis 4:22);

and brass [is] molten [out of] the stone; out of a brassy stone, called “cadmai”, as Pliny says, and also out of another, as he observes ^{f962}, called “chalcites”, found in Cyprus, where was the first invention of brass, according to him, and hence perhaps copper had its name; but it is plain from Scripture, the places before referred to, that it was invented elsewhere, and long before Cyprus was known; or a “stone melted becomes brass”, (see ^{<0103>}Deuteronomy 8:9 33:25); of these four metals was the image in Nebuchadnezzar’s vision, which represented the four monarchies of the world, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman, (^{<0104>}Daniel 2:30,33); and to them are compared, and by them are represented many things in Scripture.

Ver. 3. *He setteth an end to darkness*, etc.] Some understand this and what follows of God, who, by making the luminaries, has fixed the periods and revolutions of light and darkness, of day and night; or who has determined the times before appointed, for the discoveries of things in nature, as mines of gold, silver, and precious stones, how long they should lie in darkness, and then be brought to light, and who searches out the perfection of all things in nature; and makes them known to men, when he himself and his ways are not to be found out unto perfection by men; but rather this is to be understood of the miner that digs for the above metals, who, when he opens a mine, lets in natural light, or carries artificial light along with him, and so puts an end to the darkness which had reigned there before, even from the creation:

and searcheth out all perfection; searches thoroughly the mines he opens, and gets all he can out of them, and searches perfectly into the nature of the ore; he finds, and tries, and proves it, what it is, its worth and value:

the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death; searches and digs through them, to get at what he is seeking; or brings stones, precious stones, to light, which lay in darkness from the beginning, and in such places which were the shadow of death, and looked dismal and horrible, and even threatened with death, to get into and fetch them out: so spiritual miners, that search into the mines of the Scriptures, should not be discouraged with darkness and difficulties that may attend their search; but should continue it, in order to find out truths that have lain in darkness, more precious than gold and silver, and the richest gems; and such who search for them in like manner as miners do shall find them, (^{<3104>}Proverbs 2:4,5).

Ver. 4. *The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant*, etc.] Or, “so that there is no inhabitant”^{f963}; of the mine, as the miner may be said to be, who lives there continually; and, when a flood of water arises, which is an usual thing in mines, he is obliged to flee, and make haste to save his life:

[even the waters] forgotten of the foot; such as never any foot of man touched, or was acquainted with, being subterraneous water, and never seen with the eye of man before, and who before knew not there were such floods underground^{f964}. A like figurative expression in (^{<4075>}Psalm 137:5);

they are dried up, they are gone away from men; though such a flood of waters rise apace, and flow in with great force, and threaten the miners’ lives, and the ruin of their works; yet they are not discouraged, but by means of engines, pumps, and buckets, and such like things, draw up the waters, and clear the mines of them; and they are gone from the workmen, who return to their work again, and go on with their mining: and so sometimes spiritual miners are interrupted by a flood of Satan’s temptations, the world’s persecutions, and various afflictions; but, by the assistance of the spirit and grace of God, whereby a standard is lifted up against them, they get clear of them, and receive no hurt by them, but go on cheerfully in the work of the Lord, (^{<2399>}Isaiah 59:19 ^{<6125>}Revelation 12:15,16).

Ver. 5. *[As for] the earth, out of it cometh bread*, etc.] That is, bread corn, or corn of which bread is made particularly wheat; which falling, or being cast into the earth, rises up and brings forth fruit, and, when ground into flour, makes fine bread; and to this same original the psalmist ascribes bread, which strengthens man’s heart, (^{<1944>}Psalm 104:14,15). The West Indians formerly made their bread of roots of the earth, particularly one

called “jucca”^{f965}; so Caesar’s soldiers in distress made bread of a root called “chara”, steeped in milk^{f966}:

and under it is turned up as it were fire; coal, which is fuel for fire; for, as in the earth are mines for gold and silver, iron and brass, out of which they are dug, or the ore of them, so there is coal under the earth; which, when turned up, or dug, is taken for firing; or brimstone, or sulphureous matter, which is easily inflammable; and sometimes the same earth, the surface of which is covered with corn, out of which bread cometh, underneath are coal, or sulphur, and such like combustible matter: some think precious stones are meant, which glitter and sparkle like fire; (see ^{<2834>}Ezekiel 28:14).

Ver. 6. *The stones of it [are] the place of sapphires*, etc.] In some parts of the earth its stones are a quarry of sapphires, put here for all precious stones: this is a most excellent precious stone, of a sky colour, with golden specks, and was one of the stones in the breast plate of the high priest; and by which are represented the pavement under the feet of the God of Israel, the throne of Christ, his bowels and affections for his people, the comeliness of them, and the glory of his church in the latter day, (^{<0240>}Exodus 24:10 28:18 ^{<3026>}Ezekiel 1:26 ^{<2164>}Song of Solomon 5:14 ^{<3007>}Lamentations 4:7) (^{<2541>}Isaiah 54:11);

and it hath dust of gold; some parts of the earth abound with the dust of gold; its dust is gold, or it hath gold as plenty as dust; though some think this refers to the sapphire in the preceding clause, which, as Pliny says^{f967}, has “pulvis aureus”, dust of gold, in it, and shines and sparkles with golden points, or specks; and so say other writers^{f968}; but the word used rather signifies clods, lumps, masses of gold, which better agree with the earth; and, besides, no very good reason can be given why there should be such a particular description of the sapphire; whereas the earth is the original of that, and of all the other things before spoken of.

Ver. 7. *[There is] a path which no fowl knoweth*, etc.] A path made by miners to the gold, silver, brass, and iron ores; to the places where gems and precious stones lie; the way to which was never seen, and could never have been discovered by the most sharp-sighted fowl, as “the eagle”^{f969}; which some think is particularly intended; and the Greek word for an eagle seems to be derived from the word used in the text: this fowl, the king of birds, as it is the swiftest, it is the most quick-sighted of any; but, though it is eager, and looks out sharp after its prey, and which it beholds at a great distance, and in the most secret lurking places, and flies unto it, and seizes

upon it at once, yet it never could look into the bowels of the earth, or discover a track leading thereunto; in this it is outdone by the diligent and laborious miner, who is not at a loss to make his way into the inmost and darkest recesses of the earth:

which the vulture's eye hath not seen; which is next to the eagle, and some of them are of the species of it, and is a very sharp-sighted creature, even to a proverb, as well as voracious, which makes it diligent to search everywhere for its prey; and yet this creature's sharp and piercing eye never saw the path the miners make by digging into the earth, in order to get metals and minerals from it. Some understand this path of subterraneous paths in nature, made of God, through which rivers of water pass that were never seen by creatures of the quickest sight; it may rather be applied to the paths of God in providence, which are unsearchable and past finding out, by men of the most sagacious and penetrating capacities, though they will hereafter be made manifest; and also to his paths of love, grace, and mercy towards the sons of men, which are the deep things of God, searched into and revealed by his Spirit, or otherwise could not be known; as well as to the ways and paths of righteousness and holiness, of faith and truth, of the word and ordinances God has revealed, as his mind and will his people should walk in, which otherwise would not be known, and are not by carnal men; and especially to the principal way and path, Christ Jesus, who is the way to the Father, the way to everlasting happiness, the way of life and salvation, the high way and way of holiness, in which men, though fools, shall not err, and of which some things are said in (^{238B}Isaiah 35:8,9); which greatly agree with what are said of this path, here and in (^{388B}Job 28:8): this way of peace is not known by carnal men, nor the things of it discerned by natural men, though ever so sagacious; (see ⁴⁸¹⁷Romans 3:17 ⁴⁰¹²⁵Matthew 11:25 ⁴⁰²⁴1 Corinthians 2:14).

Ver. 8. *The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.*] Or "upon it"^{f970}; such creatures that are exceeding fierce and cruel, hungry and voracious, eager after their prey, range here and there in pursuit of it, search every hole and corner, and rove in dens and caves of the earth; yet these never traversed such ways and paths the miners make to get out the wealth and riches of the earth. Wicked men are sometimes compared to lions, for their cruelty and oppression exercised on the saints, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against them, (⁴⁵⁷⁰Psalms 57:4); and particularly tyrannical princes and persecutors, as the kings of Assyria and Babylon, and Nero the Roman emperor, (²⁴⁰¹⁷Jeremiah 1:17 ⁵⁸⁴¹⁷2

Timothy 4:17); these never trod the way of holiness, nor walked in the path of truth, nor knew the wisdom of God in a mystery, nor the Lord of life and glory, and the way of life and salvation by him; which is a way the unclean walk not in, or persons of such a temper and disposition; (see ^{<2388>}Isaiah 35:8,9). The former clause may be rendered, as it is by some, “the children of pride”^{f971}, and as it is in (^{<1814>}Job 41:34), which is the only place besides this where it is used; and so the Septuagint version, “the children of proud men”: and may be accommodated to self-righteous persons, who are proud boasters of themselves and of their works, and go about to establish their own righteousness, and despise and will not submit unto the righteousness of Christ; these tread not in nor walk upon the good old way, and the only way of life, righteousness, and salvation, by Christ.

Ver. 9. *He putteth forth his hand upon the rock*, etc.] The discourse is carried on concerning the miner, and digger in the earth for metals and precious stones; who meeting with a rock or flint, and a ridge of them, is not discouraged, but goes to work therewith, and with his hammer in his hand lays upon the rock or flint, and beats it to pieces, and with proper instruments cuts through it; and using fire and vinegar, as Pliny^{f972} observes, makes his way into it, and oftentimes by splitting it discovers gold^{f973} or silver, or precious stones, in it:

he overturneth the mountains by the roots; or turns them up from the roots; he roots them up, he undermines them; he turns up the earth at the roots of them, to get what is hid at the bottom, or in the bowels of them. Some understand this, and what is said in the following verses, of God, and of wonderful things done by him; so Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and others; and to whom indeed such things are sometimes ascribed in Scripture: he touches the hills, and they smoke, (^{<1942>}Psalms 104:32); lays his hand on the rock, and removes it out of its place, (^{<1814>}Job 14:18); it was he that smote and opened the rock at Horeb, and the waters gushed out, (^{<2705>}Exodus 17:6); yea, turned the rock into standing water, and the flint into a fountain of water, (^{<1814>}Psalms 114:8): and he, in a figurative sense, has laid his hand on the rock Christ, and smote him with the rod of justice, whereby the blessings of grace come flowing down upon his people; and he it is that puts forth his hand of powerful and efficacious grace upon the rocky hearts of men, and with the hammer of his word breaks them to pieces, (^{<2029>}Jeremiah 23:29), and takes away the stony heart, and gives an heart of flesh, (^{<2619>}Ezekiel 11:19 36:26): and he also, in a literal sense, overturns hills and mountains by their roots, through storms, and tempests, and

earthquakes; and figuratively, kingdoms and states, that lie in the way of his interest; for what are these mountains before the great Zerubbabel? they soon and easily become a plain; and so breaks through all difficulties, which proverbially may be signified by removing mountains, that seem to obstruct and hinder the conversion and salvation of his people; he makes those mountains a way, and his highways are exalted; (see ²¹¹⁸Song of Solomon 2:8 ²³⁹¹Isaiah 49:11 ³⁰⁰⁷Zechariah 4:7); but the former sense is best, and most agreeable to the context.

Ver. 10. *He cutteth out rivers among the rocks*, etc.] By cleaving rocks asunder in order to find out things of value in the cliffs of them; or by cutting his way through them, the miner opens a course for rivers and floods of water, to drain off from his mines, and so can go on with his works more comfortably, and with success; though sometimes they sink through high rocks, till they go so far below their basis, that they can go no further for water, in some places forty or fifty fathom deep ^{f974}:

and his eye seeth every precious thing; in the cliffs of the rock, or at the bottom of the rivers and floods, as they go off, or in the mines he digs, even gold or silver, or precious stones: hence came the fable of Lynceus, and from him the phrase of Lyncean eyes ^{f975}, who was said to see all things under the earth, because he was the first that searched for metals, as brass, silver, etc. and in search of them carried lamps, or links, under the earth ^{f976}. This verse is also by some ascribed to God, who is said to cleave the fountain and the flood, and to dry up mighty rivers; and also to open rivers in high places, in hills, mountains, and rocks, as well as sometimes in the middle of the valleys, (¹⁷⁴⁵Psalm 74:15 ²³⁴⁹Isaiah 41:19); and who, in a spiritual sense, has cut out and opened the river of his pure love and grace, which flows from the throne of God and the Lamb; and the fulness of grace in Christ, which is as rivers of water in a dry land; and the graces of the Spirit in his people, which flow out of them as rivers of living water; and his word and ordinances in his church, which are the rivers of pleasure he makes his saints to drink of in it: and his eye of omniscience, which sees all things in particular, sees all the precious things in nature; the precious things of heaven, and earth, and sea; the precious things brought forth by the sun and moon; and the precious tidings of the ancient mountains and everlasting hills, the gold, silver, and precious stones that lie hid in the bowels of them, (¹⁵³³Deuteronomy 33:13-16); and who also sees all precious persons, and things, in a spiritual sense; he beholds his precious Son, his precious blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, with delight and

pleasure; and his eye of love, grace, and mercy, upon the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, jewels, and precious stones; and sees all the precious graces of the Spirit in them, with acceptance and good will.

Ver. 11. *He bindeth the floods from overflowing*, etc.] As the miner finds ways and means of cutting through rocks, and draining and carrying off the waters in his mine; so he makes use of other methods of restraining and keeping back the waters from coming into and overflowing his works, and even “from weeping”^{f977}, as in the original text; he binds them up so firmly, and stops every avenue and passage so close, that the waters cannot so much as ooze, or distil and drop as a tear from the eye:

and [the thing that is] hid bringeth he forth to light; the several metals and minerals, gems and precious stones, that lay hid in the bosom of the earth, are fetched out, and brought to light by the diligence and labours of the miner; the same that are called stones of darkness, and of the shadow of death, (~~88B~~ Job 28:3). This verse is likewise by several interpreted of God, and of what is done by him in the things of nature and providence; he it is that at first shut up the sea with doors; made the cloud its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling bands, in which he wrapped and bound it, as an infant, and still sets bars and doors to it, and says, hitherto shalt thou come, and no further, (~~88B~~ Job 38:8-11); and, in a spiritual sense, he restrains the floods of affliction from overflowing and overwhelming his people; and, when the temptations of Satan come in like a flood upon them, his Spirit sets up a standard against them, which keeps them from doing them any harm; and, when the wrath of persecutors rises up against them, and threatens them with destruction, he withholds those proud waters from going over their souls and overwhelming them: and so likewise it is he that bringeth hidden things to light, things in nature men had never seen or known before; things in providence, dark and intricate; things in grace, out of the sight of the most penetrating understanding: he reveals the secrets of his love and grace to them that fear him; the glorious scheme of salvation by Christ, which was hid in himself, in the thoughts, purposes, and counsels of his heart; the mysteries of his Gospel, hid from the wise and prudent, (~~40125~~ Matthew 11:25 ~~40125~~ Luke 10:21); and life and immortality itself, or the way to it, which he has brought to light through the Gospel; yea, he brings to light all the hidden things of a man’s heart, and sets them before him, and convinces him of them in a loving way; and if not now, he will hereafter “bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts”, (~~4015~~ 1 Corinthians 4:5);

but, as before observed, it is best to understand the whole paragraph of miners; of their sagacity in opening mines, and searching into the bowels of the earth, where none were ever before them; and of their indefatigableness, industry, and labour therein, and of the success that attends them; Job's design being to show, that things rich and valuable, and most remote from the sight of men, may, by diligent application, be investigated and obtained; yet such wisdom is not attainable as to understand the reason of the various dealings of God with the sons of men, both good and bad; and therefore, after all he had said on the above subject, still the question is as follows.

Ver. 12. *But where shall wisdom be found?* etc.] Though there is a vein for silver, a track where that lies, and is to be come at, and a place where gold is found, and where it may be refined, and parts of the earth, out of which brass and iron, and bread corn, may be produced, and even from whence may be fetched brilliant gems and precious stones; which, though attended with many difficulties, in cutting through rocks, draining rivers, and restraining the waters, yet are got over through the art and skill, industry, diligence, and labour of men; so that their eyes behold every precious thing their minds desire, and they bring to light what have been laid up in darkness from the creation of the world: but, though these things may be found by search and labour, the question is, what vein is there for wisdom, or where is the place in which that may be found? by which may be meant the wisdom of God, as a perfection in him; which, though displayed in some measure in the works of creation and providence, yet not completely, and especially in his dealings with the children of men; in all which there is undoubtedly the wisdom of God; yet it is such a depth as is unfathomable by mortals: such are God's dealings with men in a way of distinguishing grace and mercy, as that he should take no notice of any of the whole body of apostate angels that sinned against him, but doomed them all to destruction; and yet there should be a philanthropy, a love of men in him, and such as to give his Son to die for them, and redeem them from ruin and destruction; also that he should make a difference among men, and ordain some to eternal life, while others are foreordained to condemnation and death, when all were in the same situation, condition, and circumstances; and such likewise were his dealings with the Israelites, and other nations of the world, part of which Job was not a stranger to; as his choosing them to be his peculiar people before all others, and bestowing peculiar favours upon them, not because they were more in quantity, or better in quality,

but because this was his pleasure; when he suffered all other nations to walk in their own ways, for many hundreds of years, and winked at the times of their ignorance; and yet, after a long course of time, rejected the people of the Jews, and wrote a “loammi”, or “not my people”, (~~3000~~Hosea 1:9), on them, and took out from the Gentiles a people for his name; so that they, who were not a people, were called the people of God, and the Jews were broken off, and the Gentiles grafted in; and when the fulness of them is brought in, there will be a turn again, and then all Israel shall be saved: upon all which the apostle breaks out in this exclamation, which may serve as a comment on this text, “oh the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!” (~~4513~~Romans 11:33); particularly here may be meant the wisdom of God in his dealings with men, good and bad, in afflicting good men, and in suffering the wicked to prosper: this is a fact Job had fully proved, and it cannot be denied; and there is, no doubt, much of the wisdom of God herein; he does all things well and wisely; as he cannot do an unjust thing, so neither an unwise one; though his wisdom is unsearchable, his judgments are a great deep, and not to be fathomed by men, not only not by weak men and wicked men, but even by the wisest and best of men, as Asaph and Jeremiah: and this being the case, Job suggests to his friends, that the dealings of God with him, and the reasons of them, and his wisdom in them, were not to be searched out by them; and that they should forbear imputing his afflictions to hypocrisy, or to secret sins indulged by him; but to leave all, without making rash censures and wrong constructions, until the time should come when the judgments of God should be made manifest; such wisdom and knowledge, as to account for God’s different dealings with men, being too wonderful, too high to attain unto, and quite out of their reach. The Jews, as particularly Jarchi, understand by wisdom the law, not to be found in the depth or in the sea; and illustrate the words by (~~4501~~Deuteronomy 30:11-14); but it is much better to interpret it of the Gospel, to which the apostle applies the above passage, (~~4506~~Romans 10:6,7); in which there is a glorious display of the wisdom of God, in all the truths and doctrines of it; that it is a mysterious wisdom, hidden wisdom, hid from the wise and prudent, and not to be attained unto by the light nature and carnal reason; it contains the deep things of God, which the Spirit of God alone searches and reveals; but why may not Christ, the Wisdom of God, be thought of? since many things are said in the following verses, as are of Wisdom, as a divine Person, in (~~4183~~Proverbs 8:13-15); in whom all the treasures of wisdom and

knowledge are hid, and on whom the spirit of wisdom and counsel rests, as Mediator; and who, as a divine Person, is the only wise God, and our Saviour: and to this question in Job's time, "where shall wisdom be found?" the only answer to be given is, that he, the Logos, or Wisdom, was with God, as one brought up with him, rejoicing always before him and that he lay in his bosom, (^{<1080>}Proverbs 8:30 ^{<800>}John 1:1,18); and to the same question in our time it must be returned, that he is in heaven at the right hand of God; but that there is no coming at the true knowledge of him by the light of nature, or by the law of Moses, but by means of the Gospel, and through the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. The first of these senses, respecting the wisdom of God in his different dealings with men, good and bad, is most generally given into by interpreters, and seems to suit well with the preceding dispute between Job and his friends: but if we look forward in the chapter, we shall find this question repeated, and an answer given to it as in the negative, so in the affirmative, that God knows the place of it; that he has searched it out, seen it, and declared it; and it is this, "the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding", (^{<880>}Job 28:20,23,27,28); by which it should seem, that this wisdom is supernatural wisdom, or understanding in men; which lies in the fear of God, and the effects of it; in a spiritual knowledge of God and Christ, or of God in Christ; and in that godliness which is profitable in all things; and in that wisdom which comes from above, and is opposed to that which is earthly, sensual, and devilish, and is not to be found in carnal hearts, nor its worth known by carnal men, nor to be obtained by any thing in nature ever so valuable, but is the gift of God, the wisdom he makes men to know, in the hidden part, (^{<850>}Psalm 51:6);

and where [is] the place of understanding? to attain to the understanding of the mysteries of Providence, or of Christ, or of the Gospel; or to have a spiritual understanding of divine things, and experience of them, which only is the gift of God, (^{<610>}1 John 5:20); for, by wisdom and understanding are meant one and the same, as they often are, whether understood as a thing or person; (see ^{<1000>}Proverbs 1:2 2:2 3:13 8:12,14).

Ver. 13. *Man knoweth not the price thereof,* etc.] The worth and value of it, what price to set upon it, or offer and give for it; nor does he know where to find an equivalent to it, or what is a valuable consideration for it: as for the wisdom of God in his dealings with men, if a man was to give all the substance of his house to know the secret reasons of them, it would

utterly be condemned; yea, if he had all the riches in the world in his possession, and would offer them on that consideration, he would not be able to attain the knowledge of them: or “the order thereof”^{f978}; the order of divine Providence, the wise disposal of thing, and the reasons thereof. In the first sense it is applicable to all the things before mentioned; to spiritual wisdom in men, supernatural grace, experimental religion, and real godliness; the worth of which is not known by carnal men, they despise it, and scoff at it; and to the Gospel, which is reckoned foolishness by them, and is of no account; and so is Christ himself rejected and disallowed of men, though chosen of God, and precious both to him and them that believe, who only know the price and value of him:

neither is it found in the land of the living; meaning not wisdom, though that in every sense is not from below, or earthly, but from above, and heavenly, but the price of it; and the sense is, that there is nothing in the whole globe that is equal to its worth, or can be proposed as a valuable consideration for it.

Ver. 14. *The depth saith, it [is] not in me*, etc.] That is, the deep places of the earth, that are dug in it, the mines, and the like, could they speak, they would say there are no metal, nor minerals, no rich treasures of gold and silver ore, of pearls and precious stones, in the bowels of it, that are of the value of wisdom, or to be compared to it:

and the sea saith, [it is] not with me; had that a voice to speak, it would freely declare, that there is nothing in its vast compass, at the bottom of it, or to be got out of it, as corals that grow in it, and pearls fished from thence, after mentioned, that are a sufficient price for wisdom. Some understand these words, the former part of miners and colliers, and such sort of men, that dig and live in the depths of the earth; and the latter part of mariners, that are employed on the sea, who are generally ignorant and carnal men, and void of the knowledge of wisdom in every view of it; but the sense first given is best.

Ver. 15. *It cannot be gotten for gold*, etc.] Having in general said that there is nothing in the whole compass of the terraqueous globe, nothing that is upon the surface of the earth, or in the bowels of it, or in the vast ocean, that is an equivalent price for wisdom, Job descends to particulars, and instances first in gold, that being the most valuable of metals; the word here used for it signifies “shut up”^{f979}, because it is first shut up in the earth, out of which it is dug, and when taken from thence, and refined, and

made into coins or vessels, it is shut up among the treasures of men; the words may be more literally rendered, “gold shall not be given instead of it”^{f980}; as a sufficient price, or valuable consideration for it:

neither shall silver be weighed [for] the price thereof; in former times this metal used to be delivered, in buying and selling, not by the number and value of pieces, but by weight, in rude masses and lumps, and even when coined into shekels; (see ⁻⁰²³⁶Genesis 23:16).

Ver. 16. *It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir*, etc.] Which is often spoken of in Scripture as choice gold, if not the best; (see Gill on “⁻⁰²²⁴Job 22:24”); the sense is, that the gold of Ophir is not of the value of wisdom, or of the same worth with that, and so not sufficient to purchase it: with the precious onyx and sapphire: two precious stones that were in the breastplate of the high priest, of which (see Gill on “⁻⁰²³⁰Exodus 28:9, 18, 20”); but not so precious, or of such value as wisdom. Pliny^{f981} speaks of the onyx stone as in Arabia, near which Job lived, and who doubtless was acquainted with it and its worth, and also with the sapphire he makes mention of before, (see Gill on “⁻⁰³⁰⁶Job 28:6”). The word for “valued” is by some rendered “strowed”^{f982}, as goods are when they are exposed to sale; but wisdom should not be laid, or put on a level with these, though so excellent and precious.

Ver. 17. *The gold and the crystal cannot equal it*, etc.] Crystal was found in an island of the Red sea, situated before Arabia, called Neron, and in another, which from a gem found in it bears the name of Topazion, and may be thought therefore to be well known by Job; and though it is not now of so much account, it formerly was very valuable. Pliny^{f983} makes mention of a crystal vessel, sold for 150,000 sesterces, about 1250 pounds sterling; and of two crystal cups broke by Nero in his fury, on hearing of some losses, to punish the then present age, that no other men might drink out of them: some render it “amber”, which is found in Prussia, and being at a great distance from Job’s country, might be the more valuable there; and Pliny^{f984} speaks of it as had in as great esteem as gems: the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin versions, and others, translate it “glass”^{f985} which had its original from Phoenicia, near Judea; so Pliny says^{f986} from the lake Cendevia, within the roots of Mount Carmel, in Phoenicia, near Judea, springs the river Belus, from whence glass came first; and he speaks of Sidon (a city in Phoenicia) as famous for it; and Tacitus^{f987} observes, that the river Belus glides in the Jewish sea, and about the mouth of it sand is

gathered and mixed with nitre, and boiled into glass; and this being near the country where Job dwelt, it is thought he had knowledge of it; and from this passage some ^{f988} have concluded the great antiquity of glass; and if it is true what Aelianus ^{f989} relates, that when the monument of the ancient Belus (the first king of Babylon) was dug up by Xerxes, the son of Darius, that there was found a glass urn, where lay a body in oil, it must be in use before the times of Job. An Arabic chronologer ^{f990} affirms what he had from men conversant in history, that in Egypt, after the flood, there were men learned in various sciences, and among the rest in alchemy, and had knowledge of burning glasses; though the invention of these, and of a glass globe, is ascribed to Archimedes ^{f991}, who lived somewhat later than two hundred years before Christ. There was great plenty of glass very early in Ethiopia, after mentioned, in which they enclosed their dead, that they might be seen through it ^{f992}; and if it was in use in Job's time, and especially if it was then a late invention, it might be highly valued, and therefore placed here with things of the greatest worth. In the times of Nero, Pliny says ^{f993} two small glass cups were sold for six thousand sesterces, or forty five pounds sterling, and according to others near fifty pounds; and the same writer relates, that in the times of Tiberias an art was found out to make glass flexible and malleable; but was ordered to be destroyed, lest the value of gold, silver, and brass, should be lessened by it. The Targum renders the word here used a looking glass; (see Gill on "~~6108~~Joshua 11:8"). Some think the diamond or adamant is meant, and others that it is a general name for all sorts of precious stones, they being clear, transparent, and lucid, as the word signifies:

and the exchange of it [shall not be for] jewels of fine gold; set in fine gold; or "vessels" of it, more valuable than gold itself, being made of gold, purified, refined, and wrought by art into curious forms; and yet wisdom is so valuable as not to be exchanged for these. Mr. Broughton takes this fine gold, or gold of Phaz, to be the same with Fess in Barbary, which had its name from a heap of gold there found when its foundation was laid; for "fess" with the Arabs signifies gold ^{f994}.

Ver. 18. *No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls,* etc.] Coral is a marine plant, is as hard as a stone, and of such value as to be reckoned among precious stones; (see Gill on "~~3276~~Ezekiel 27:16"). In Arabia Felix, on the shore of the Red sea, is a place called Coralia ^{f995}; it may be from coral found there. Pearls are from shellfish taken out of the sea, though these seem rather intended in the next clause: the words "ramoth" and

“gabish” are left untranslated by some, and by others are taken for precious stones, though unknown, so called because they are found in high places, which both words signify. The Targum renders the first by “sandalchin”, and seems to be the same with the sardonyx, a precious stone found in Arabia, and which found there is by Pliny^{f996} said to excel. Junius and Tremellius render it by “sandastros”; which, as Pliny says^{f997}, some call “Garamantis”, being bred in a place of that name in India; and he also observes, that it is found in Arabia towards the south, and has shining golden drops in the body of it; it is a sort of a carbuncle. “Gabish” seems to have some affinity with “chabazios”, mentioned by Orpheus^{f998} as a precious stone; but whatever precious stones are meant, as it is hard to determine what, they are not to be spoken of with wisdom, or to be compared to it:

for the price of wisdom is above rubies; or rather pearls, as Bochart^{f999} seems to have abundantly proved, who renders the words,

“the extraction of wisdom is greater than the extraction of pearls;”

and so the Targum; there being, as he thinks, an allusion to the extraction of pearls out of the sea by divers into it^{f1000}; who get them through much art, difficulty, and danger; and he observes, that there is a double extraction, or drawing them out, first of the shellfish out of the sea, and then of the pearls out of the shells; but the drawing out of wisdom, or the attainment of that; is more difficult, and superior to it, as well as attended with greater advantage; (see ^{<1085>}Proverbs 3:15) and (see Gill on ^{<2007>}Lamentations 4:7”); and though of pearls some are very large, Oviedo^{f1001} speaks of one that weighed thirty one carats, and another twenty six; some as big as hazel nuts, and even as a middling walnut, and of very great price, as that bought by Pope Paul at 44,000 ducats^{f1002}; that by Philip the Second, of the size of a pigeon’s egg, valued at an hundred forty four thousand ducats; that drank by Cleopatra at a draught, reckoned worth eighty thousand pounds sterling; and that of the emperor of Persia, bought at 110,400 pounds^{f1003}; yet the price of wisdom is above them.

Ver. 19. *The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it*, etc.] Not Ethiopia Abyssinia, or that which lies beyond Egypt in Africa; for, as Ludolphus^{f1004} says, there are no gems found there, or very rarely; but Cush, as the word is, or Arabia Chusaea, the same with the country of Midian, and the parts adjacent; (see ^{<3837>}Habakkuk 3:7); hence Zipporah, the wife of Moses, who was of that country, is called an Ethiopian woman, (^{<0420>}Numbers 12:1); and

this was near Job's country, who knew the produce of it; and here the topaz is found, as many writers observe. Diodorus Siculus says ^{f1005}, in Ophiodes, an island in the Arabian gulf, belonging to the Troglodytes, the topaz is found, which is a very clear stone, pleasant to the sight, like to glass, and affording a wonderful golden colour; and with him Strabo ^{f1006} agrees, who relates there is an island called Ophiodes, from its being freed from serpents by the king's orders, which killed men that came there for topazes; which, he says, is a clear stone of a golden colour, and so refulgent, that it is not easy to see it in the daytime, being so surrounded with light; but at night it is seen by those that gather it, who set a vessel for a sign, and then dig for it in the daytime; and, he adds, a multitude of men are hired by the kings of Egypt, to gather and keep these stones, and men from stealing them; and, according to Archelaus ^{f1007}, the topaz is found in Chitis, an island in Arabia, where the Troglodytes digging for herbs and roots find it; and, as Juba relates ^{f1008}, there is an island called Topazion, in the Red sea, three hundred furlongs (about 73 miles) from the continent, which is cloudy, and is therefore often sought for by navigators; whence he says it had its name Topazion, which in the language of the Troglodytes signifies to seek, and the topaz itself in their language so signifies; in the Samaritan version of (~~Exodus~~ Exodus 39:10); it is called Datchetah, from the Arabic word ^{f1009} "Dachatz", the language of the Troglodytes, which signifies to seek and search by removing the earth with the foot. This island seems to be the same with Topazos, which Pliny ^{f1010} says is an island of the Arabians, and gave name to a gem, meaning the topaz; but the truth rather is, that the gem gave name to the island: upon the whole, it is no wonder, as Braunius ^{f1011} observes, that this gem should be called by Job the Arabian topaz. The Targum here calls it a green pearl; and some have thought the emerald is meant, which is of that colour; and the emeralds of Ethiopia are praised by some, according to Juba ^{f1012}; and in Egypt were emerald mines the Ethiopians laid a claim to ^{f1013}; and there were emeralds also in Arabia, as the above Juba relates; however, be this what it may, as it is most likely to be the topaz, it is not equal in value to wisdom, no, not the largest topaz ever known; not even that of the great Mogul, which weighs more than an hundred fifty seven carats, valued at 271,500 French pounds ^{f1014}; and according to Tavernier ^{f1015} it weighs almost an hundred fifty eight carats, and was bought at Goa for almost 272,000 florins:

neither shall it be valued with pure gold; that is most refined and freed from dross; they are not to be laid together as of equal value; (see Gill on “^{<K&O>}Job 28:16”), where the same word is used.

Ver. 20. *Whence then cometh wisdom? and where [is] the place of understanding?*] The same questions as in (^{<K&O>}Job 28:12); repeated to set forth the superior excellency of wisdom, and to carry on the discourse, and lead on to other things concerning it. (See Gill on “^{<K&O>}Job 28:12”).

Ver. 21. *Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living*, etc.] Meaning not the beasts of the field, as some interpret it; this makes the sentiment jejune and trifling; but rational creatures, men, so the Septuagint, Eve is said to be the mother of, (^{<K&O>}Genesis 3:20); wisdom, as a perfection in God, displayed in his works of creation and providence, is but imperfectly known by men; and the secret reasons of his providential dealings with men, good and bad, are hid from all at present; and as for spiritual wisdom or godliness, and the Gospel of Christ, and Christ himself, they are hid from the eyes of all natural and carnal men, though ever so wise and prudent in other things:

and kept close from the fowls of the air, or “heaven”^{f1016}; either the devils so called, because they dwell in the air, and are the posse or power of the air, (^{<K&O>}Ephesians 2:2); and because of their ravenous and cruel disposition, and swiftness to do mischief; (see ^{<K&O>}Luke 8:5,12); or rather the holy angels, as Jarchi, whose habitation is in heaven, and who are swift to do the will of God, and are represented as having wings like fowls; though these know much, yet the wisdom of God in his providence, in the doctrines of the Gospel, and Christ himself, the Wisdom of God, are in a good measure hid from them; at least their knowledge is imperfect, and they are desirous of prying more into these things, (^{<K&O>}1 Peter 1:12): unless men of the most piercing and penetrating geniuses, that soar aloft in the things of nature, and make the greatest discoveries therein, and yet know nothing of divine and spiritual things, of the arcanas of Providence or of grace, should be meant.

Ver. 22. *Destruction and death say*, etc.] Meaning the dead that are in the pit of destruction, the grave; not their dead bodies there, devoid of life and sense, and know not anything, but their souls; either the damned in hell, or the saints in heaven: the Targum is, the house of destruction, and the angel of death; or rather it regards such as are dead, who while alive had only a report of this wisdom; wherefore if their records and writings, or traditions

handed down from them, are inquired into, the result of the information they will give concerning it will amount to no more than this:

we have heard the fame thereof with our ears; it has been reported to us there is such wisdom, but what it is we know not; and this is all that we can say about it.

Ver. 23. *God understandeth the way thereof*, etc.] And he only; not the way that men can come at the knowledge of wisdom, which at present appears to be past finding out; but rather the way which wisdom itself takes, and is in the deep, and its footsteps not known by any other, and the grounds and reasons of its taking such a course it does; which are only understood by the Lord: it may be applied to spiritual wisdom in men, and the way to come at it; which God only knows and instructs in, and is his special and peculiar gift; and to Christ, the wisdom of God, and the way which he has taken in the council and covenant of grace and peace, for the salvation of his people; and which he took in time, in the assumption of human nature, and by sufferings and death to obtain it for them:

and he knoweth the place thereof; the seat of wisdom within himself, the source of all his dealings with men, his sovereign will and pleasure in his own heart; the place of spiritual wisdom and knowledge, the heart of a regenerate man, where his Gospel is, and has come with power, and took place and works effectually; and where Christ, the Logos, the Wisdom of God is, even with himself, and in his bosom, as in the times of Job, and now at his right hand, in human nature.

Ver. 24. *For he looketh to the ends of the earth*, etc.] In this and some following verses, reasons are given, which abundantly show that God must know the way and place of wisdom; since all the parts and places of the earth, even to the ends of it, are seen by him, and all creatures and things in it; nor is there anything in heaven, earth, and hell, that is hid from him; and therefore if there is a way to it, or a place for it, he must needs know it; where its direction is, or where it steers its course, and takes up its abode

[and] seeth under the whole heaven; the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field, the inhabitants of the world, and all that is done in it; everything falls under the eye of his omniscience, and under the notice of his providence, which extends to all creatures and things throughout the whole earth, and under the compass of the heavens; and since all places and persons are

obvious to his view, and all subject to his all wise and disposing providence, and are ordered, directed, and governed, according to his sovereign will and pleasure; the path of wisdom, and the place of understanding, he must be acquainted with; and particularly his all seeing eye, and all powerful providence, are concerned in the following things, and in which there are wonderful proofs of his knowledge and wisdom.

Ver. 25. *To make the weight for the wind*, etc.] He indeed makes the wind itself, holds it in his fists, and brings it forth out of his treasures, and lets it go, or restrains it, at his pleasure; he gives it an inclination to this or that or the other point of the heavens, and a force to blow with, greater or lesser, as he pleases, either for the good and benefit of men, or for the punishment of them; he raises the stormy wind, which fulfils his word and his will; and he makes it subside and become a calm when he thinks fit; he can make it heavier or lighter, add to or take from its weight, so that it becomes more or less pressing on bodies it meets with; he can make a rough wind, and stay that in the day of his east wind; he can make the rain in some sense a weight to it; he can wet its wings with it, and bear it down and cause it to rest and be still; and he that knows from whence it comes, and whither it goes, though we do not, being wholly under his direction, must know the way and place of wisdom:

and he weigheth the waters by measure; or, “in a measure”^{f1017}; in the hollow of his hand, where he poises them; (see ²³¹²Isaiah 40:12); some, because there is a seeming impropriety in weighing by, or with a measure, render it “out of a measure”^{f1018} Mr. Broughton translates the words, “and held the waters in a measure”; in his hand, as before, or in the sea; weight and measure being both applied to the waters, may denote the perfect and exact knowledge God has of them, and of his great and diligent concern in Providence about them, he ordering and disposing of them according to his will; and which is greatly the sense of the word used for weighing; and so the Targum paraphrases it,

“the waters he prepares (orders or disposes of) by measure.”

These waters, as they seem to be distinguished from rain in (¹⁸³⁶Job 28:26), may design the waters of the sea and rivers; with these the earth at first was covered, which being ordered off of it, and a place provided for them, they were gathered into it, and measured and bounded in it by shores and sand, that they might not overflow the earth; which is a wonderful instance of the providence of God, in weighing and measuring the waters; of which

also there was a singular instance at the general deluge, when the windows of heaven were opened, and the fountains of the great deep broke up, which overflowed the whole earth, and the highest mountains in it; and after a time went off at the command of God, and the earth was dry as before: the tides, the ebbing and flowing of the sea, and the flux and reflux of rivers, from and to the same place, are surprising things, and wholly owing to the power and providence of God; the causes and reasons of which are unknown to us, but are well known to him, who weighs and measures the waters, which flow in a regular course; and who therefore must know the way and place of wisdom and understanding.

Ver. 26. *When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder.* Decreed within himself that he would give it; for rain is his gift alone, and which none of the vanities of the Gentiles can give, and a wonderful blessing to the earth it is; and which God bestows on all sorts of men, both good and bad, and causes it to fall sometimes on one place and sometimes on another, sometimes in greater, sometimes in lesser showers; and according to his sovereign pleasure he gives or withholds it; the effects of which are quickly seen. Mr. Broughton renders the clause, “he made a bound for the rain, and a way for the lightning of thunder”, or “the lightning and the thunder”, as Ben Gersom, who thinks the copulative *ו*, “and”, is wanting. Thunder is from God, it is his voice, and the word here used is in the plural number, “voices”^{f1019}, signifying various claps of thunder; and lightning generally accompanies it, which, though first perceived, they are both at once the eye doing its office quicker than the ear; and a cloud also is usual; and so some render the word for lightning, as in (~~300~~ Zechariah 10:1); it may signify the way of the lightning out of the thunder cloud, and attending claps of thunder; the thunder breaks the cloud and makes a path for the lightning: the Targum is,

“a path for the lightnings, which run with the voices or thunders;”

but, though the course or path the lightning steers is very quick and very extensive from east to west, and cannot be traced by us. God that made it knows it, and he knows the path and place of wisdom. Saphorno interprets this of the thunder and lightnings at the giving of the law, which he understands by wisdom, as do other Jewish writers: Pliny^{f1020} speaks of thunder and lightning as chance matters; but Seneca^{f1021} more truly ascribes them to divine power and Providence, as here.

Ver. 27. *Then did he see it, and declare it,* etc.] His own wisdom, when he made and executed his decrees concerning rain, lightning, and thunder; he saw it in himself, and as it appeared in the works of his hands, which he looked on and approved of, and saw that all was very good; and he declared it to others, by his works of nature and providence; for they declare the glory of God, and particularly the glory of his wisdom:

he prepared it, yea, and searched it out; he prepared it in his counsels, according to which he wrought all things in the creation, and still does in Providence; and his searching out denotes his perfect knowledge of it, and the way and course of it, or he takes with it, though it is unsearchable, and past finding out by us. Mr. Broughton understands this of a person, as do some others, even Christ, the Wisdom of God; rendering the words, “then he saw her, and showed her”, etc. and so the passages in (^{<1087>}Proverbs 8:27-31), may be a comment on these words and the foregoing; for when the above decrees were formed in the divine mind, then he “saw” his Wisdom, his Logos, his eternal Son; for he was by him, and with him, and in him, lying in his bosom; he looked at him in creation, and made man after his image, the idea he had formed of his human nature, and made all things for his sake; and he viewed him with the utmost delight and pleasure, as being the express image of his person; he declared him to be his only begotten Son, saying, “this day I have begotten thee”, (^{<1087>}Psalm 2:7); he made him known to the angels, as the Targum here expresses it, and what he designed to do by him, and with him; which occasioned the revolt of many of them from him; and he declared him to Adam as soon as there was an opportunity and occasion for it; he prepared him in his eternal purposes to be the Redeemer and Saviour of his people, to be the Head of the church, and the Judge of quick and dead; he searched him out in his infinite wisdom, and found him, singled him out, laid help on him with his holy oil anointed him, and appointed him to be the ransom of his chosen ones, (^{<1087>}Job 33:24) (^{<1087>}Psalm 89:19,20).

Ver. 28. *And unto man he said,* etc.] What follows; unto Adam, so some render it, as Mr. Broughton; taking what is after delivered to be said to the first man; either by suggesting it to his mind and conscience, and inscribing it on his heart, where the law of God was written, and by which he was directed to fear God and avoid evil; or by the express command he gave him not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge; thereby instructing him to fear him, and abstain from evil; which, had he done, would have been his highest wisdom, and a proof of it, and of his understanding; but it seems

best to understand it in general of the sons of men, as the Targum and others: this is the substance of what God says in his works, which are done that men might fear him, and stand in awe of him, (^{<4886>}Psalm 33:6-8 ^{<2084>}Ecclesiastes 3:14); and in his word, and by his prophets, and their ministry in all ages; whereby it appears, that this is the whole of men, to fear God and keep his commandments, (^{<2124>}Ecclesiastes 12:14). Some render the words, “but unto men he said” ^{f1022}; though he knows his own wisdom, and the way and place of it, the course it steers in Providence, and has seen, observed, and shown it; has prepared, disposed, ordered, and searched it out, and perfectly knows it, and the causes and reasons of it; yet he has not thought fit to make these known clearly to men; who therefore must be content they should be secrets to them, and attend to the wisdom which is revealed, and is of the greatest importance and consequence to them; namely, what follows,

behold, the fear of the Lord, that [is] wisdom; by which is meant, not a fear of his wrath, and of eternal damnation, but an affection for God with reverence of him; such as is peculiar to children, a godly filial fear; and which is consistent with strong faith, great joy, and true courage; is opposite to pride and self-confidence, and takes in the whole worship of God both external and internal: and it is called the fear of the Lord, because he is the object and author of it; it is not from nature, or in men naturally, but comes from the grace of God, and is a gift of it; it is wrought in conversion, and is increased by the discoveries of the love and goodness of and is that wisdom which God makes his people know, in the hidden part; no man is wise till he fears the Lord; and when that grace is put into him, he begins to be wise, for this is the beginning of wisdom, (^{<2107>}Proverbs 1:7 9:10); and is a principal part of it, and very profitable to men, both for this life, and for that to come; and therefore it is their highest wisdom to be concerned for it: the heart of God is towards them that fear him; his eye is upon them; his hand communicates to them; his secret with them; he sets a guard of angels about them; causes the sun of righteousness to arise on them, and he has laid up much for them, for time and eternity:

and to depart from evil [is] understanding; this is the fruit and effect of the fear of the Lord, through which men have an hatred of sin, and an aversion to it, and are careful not to commit it; through it they depart from evil, and abstain from all appearance of it; (see ^{<2083>}Proverbs 8:13 16:6); and it puts them upon a regard to God and his commandments, and to all that is good, and which is an evidence and proof of a good understanding, (^{<4810>}Psalm

111:10). Now Job suggests by this, that his friends should be solicitous about, and satisfied with, such wisdom and understanding as this, and not pry into the secrets of Providence, and the wisdom of that, which are not to be found out; and so cease to charge him with being an hypocrite, and a wicked man, because of the dealings of God with him, which were not to be accounted for: and by this Job appears to be a good man, and had an experience what he here expresses; that he was one that feared God and eschewed evil, according to the testimony given of him, (~~800~~ Job 1:1,8); and this he gave proof of his former life and conversation; of which an account is given in the following chapter.