

KEY

Archer = A Survey of Old Testament Introduction (Gleason Archer). Chicago: Moody Press, 2007.

Ash = Job: The Wisdom of the Cross (Christopher Ash). Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014.

BBC = The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament. Edited by John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews and Mark W. Chavalas. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

Frame = John Frame, Systematic Theology, P&R Publishing, 2013.

Grudem = Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology, Zondervan, 1994.

Harrison = Introduction to the Old Testament (R.K. Harrison). Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969.

K&D = Keil, C.F. and Delitzsch, F. in the Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament, Vol 2. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1989.

Swindoll = A Man of Heroic Endurance: Job (Charles Swindoll). Nashville, TN. W Publishing Group, 2004.

Talbert = *Beyond Suffering: Discovering the Message of Job* (Layton Talbert). Bob Jones University Press, 2007.

TWOT = The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament (R. Laird Harris; Gleason L. Archer, Jr.; Bruce Waltke). Chicago: Moody Press, 1980. Two Volumes.

Walton = Old Testament Today. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.

Basic English Diagram / Structure

See outlines below.

TRANSLATION, OUTLINE AND CENTRAL PROPOSITION

ENGLISH TRANSLATION (NASB95):

Job 27 1 Then Job continued his discourse and said, 2 “As God lives, who has taken away my right, And the Almighty, who has embittered my soul, 3 For as long as life is in me, And the breath of God is in my nostrils, 4 My lips certainly will not speak unjustly, Nor will my tongue mutter deceit. 5 “Far be it from me that I should declare you right; Till I die I will not put away my integrity from me. 6 “I hold fast my righteousness and will not let it go. My heart does not reproach any of my days.

7 “May my enemy be as the wicked And my opponent as the unjust. 8 “For what is the hope of the godless when he is cut off, When God requires his life? 9 “Will God hear his cry When distress comes upon him? 10 “Will he take delight in the Almighty? Will he call on God at all times?

11 “I will instruct you in the power of God; What is with the Almighty I will not conceal. 12 “Behold, all of you have seen it; Why then do you act foolishly?

13 “This is the portion of a wicked man from God, And the inheritance which tyrants receive from the Almighty. 14 “Though his sons are many, they are destined for the sword; And his descendants will not be satisfied with bread. 15 “His survivors will be buried because of the plague, And their widows will not be able to weep. 16 “Though he piles up silver like dust And prepares garments as plentiful as the clay, 17 He may prepare it, but the just will wear it And the innocent will divide the silver. 18 “He has built his house like the spider’s web, Or as a hut which the watchman has made. 19 “He lies down rich, but never again; He opens his eyes, and it is no longer. 20 “Terrors overtake him like a flood; A tempest steals him away in the night. 21 “The east wind carries him away, and he is gone, For it whirls him away from his place. 22 “For it will hurl at him without sparing; He will surely try to flee from its power. 23 “Men will clap their hands at him And will hiss him from his place.

PASSAGE OUTLINE:

Bible Knowledge Commentary

- I. BILDAD'S THIRD SPEECH (CHAP. 25)
- II. JOB'S THIRD REPLY TO BILDAD (CHAPS. 26–31)
 - A. Job's description of God's majesty in nature (chap. 26)
 - B. Job's description of the fate of the wicked (chap. 27)
 - C. Job's discussion of God's wisdom (chap. 28)
 - 1. Getting valuable metals from the earth (Job 28:1–2)
 - 2. Going underground (v. 3)
 - 3. Remoteness of the mines (unseen) seen by people, v. 4)
 - a'. Getting valuable metals and gems from the earth (vv. 5–6)
 - c'. Remoteness of the mines (unseen by birds and animals, vv. 7–8)
 - b'. Going underground (v. 9)
 - a''. Getting valuable metals from the earth (vv. 10–11)
 - a. Inaccessibility of wisdom (vv. 12–14)
 - b. Wisdom's value beyond [gold, silver jewels (vv. 15–19)
 - a'. Inaccessibility of wisdom (vv. 20–22)
 - b'. Wisdom's value known by God (vv. 23–27)
 - D. Job's concluding soliloquy (chaps. 29–31)
 - 1. Job's past glory (chap. 29)
 - 2. Job's present gloom (chap. 30)

UBS Handbook Series

- I. Job Replies (27:1–23)
 - A. Job Affirms That His Conscience is Clear (27:1–6)
 - B. Job Asks God to Punish Those Who Have Opposed Him (27:7–10)
 - C. Job Wishes He Could Instruct His Opponents (27:11–12)
 - D. How God Punishes the Wicked (27:13–23)

The Outline Bible

- II. Bildad's Denunciations (25:1–6)
 - A. God is Powerful (25:1–3)
 - B. No One is Righteous (25:4–6)
- II. Job's Defense (26:1–31:40)
 - A. How Have You Helped Anyone? (26:1–4)
 - B. Creation is But a Minor Work of God (26:5–14)
 - C. A Two-Fold Vow (27:1–6)
 - D. The Godless Have No Hope (27:7–23)
 - E. Finding Valuable Things (28:1–11)
 - F. Wisdom Cannot be Found or Bought (28:12–21)

- G. God Knows Where Wisdom is Found (28:22-28)
- H. Once Respected for Who I Was (29:1-11)
- I. Once Respected for What I Did (29:12-25)
- J. Now Despised by the Despicable (30:1-14)
- K. Unending Pain and Unanswered Prayers (30:15-21)
- L. Have I Lusted? (31:1-12)
- M. Have I Mistreated Others? (31:13-23)
- N. Have I Worshipped Money or Idols? (31:24-28)
- O. Have I Concealed Any Other Sin? (31:29-40)

The New American Commentary: Job (Robert L. Alden)

- I. Job's Ongoing Discourse (27:1-23)
 - A. Protest of Innocence (27:1-6)
 - B. Curse on Enemies (27:7-10)
 - C. Fate of the Wicked (27:11-23)
 - 1. Introduction (27:11-12)
 - 2. Terrors the Wicked Can Expect (27:13-23)

Be Patient: Job (Warren W. Wiersbe)

- I. Job questions God's justice (Job 27)
 - A. Job takes an oath (Job 27:1-6)
 - B. Job utters a curse
 - C. Job teaches a lesson (Job 27:11-23)

Swindoll (3 Priorities):

- 1. Thinking God's Thoughts is our Highest Goal
- 2. Walking in Integrity is the Only Way to Live
- 3. Wrong will Occur but it will not Ultimately Triumph

Ash:

- 1. The Believer Boasts in His Right Status with God (6:1-6)
- 2. The Believer Prays for God to Judge His Accusers (6:7-10)
- 3. The Believer Warns His Accusers of Their Danger (6:11-23)

BASIC OUTLINE:

- I. Exoneration: Job Has a Clear Conscience (27:1–6)
- II. Exhortation: Job Warns His Friends (27:7–10)
- III. Education: Job Desires to Instruct His Friends (27:11–12)
- IV. Emulation: Job Uses His Friend’s Words Against Them (27:13–23)

SERMON OUTLINE:

- I. Exoneration: Job Has a Clear Conscience (27:1–6)
 - A. The Authority (v. 2)
 - B. The Condition (v. 3)
 - C. The Promise (v. 4)
- II. Exhortation: Job Warns His Friends (27:7–10)
 - A. Curse or a Warning?
- III. Education: Job Desires to Instruct His Friends (27:11–12)
- IV. Emulation: Job Uses His Friend’s Words Against Them (27:13–23)
 - A. Famine and War (v. 14)
 - B. Plague and the Death of Family (v. 15)
 - C. Sudden Loss of Wealth (vv. 16-19)
 - D. Natural Disaster (vv. 20-22)
 - E. Mocked by Others (v. 23)

Concluding Thoughts . . .

- 1. Beware of Giving Bad Counsel
 - 1. They did not express any sympathy for Job.
Not only for what he went through, but for his continued agony.
 - 2. There’s no evidence that they prayed for him.
 - 3. They talked too much and listened too little.
 - 4. They were defensive and argumentative.
 - 5. They assumed they knew the cause of Job’s problems.
 - 6. They also assumed they had the answers.
- 2. Keep a good conscience (cf. v. 6)
- 3. Treasure the Right Things
- 4. Have as a Goal to Die Well

PASSAGE SUBJECT/THEME (what is the passage talking about): Job’s defense of his righteousness

PASSAGE COMPLEMENT/THRUST (what is the passage saying about what it’s talking about): demonstrated by a clear conscience before God and an understanding of the fate of the wicked

PASSAGE MAIN IDEA (central proposition of the text): Job Swears He is Innocent.

CENTRAL PROPOSITION (OR IDEA) OF THE SERMON: N/A

SERMONIC IDEA/TITLE: Job's Defense Rests (Part 1): A Vow of Innocence

HISTORICAL/CULTURAL/GRAMMATICAL CONTEXT

In chapter 27 Job begins his final speech. His arguments cease at the end of chapter 31. Using a series of questions in 26:2–4, Job bitterly denounced the friends for their failure to offer him wise and helpful counsel. In 27:1–6 Job swears to his own integrity. He does this through the use of legal terms, as if he were testifying in court in his own defense. These six verses are particularly significant in the overall structure of the book, in that they are the beginning of the final speech by Job in his defense. Also Yahweh refers to this statement when he speaks later. [William David Reyeburn, *A Handbook on the Book of Job*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1992), 481]

As throughout the third cycle of speeches as a whole, the integrity of the speech is crucial to its interpretation. The view is taken in this commentary that Job's ninth speech properly contains only 27:1–6, 11–12, and that the remainder of chaps. 27–28, which in the Masoretic text are also assigned to Job, belong to other speakers. As will become apparent, the argument advanced here is that 27:7–23 (apart from vv 11–12), on the fate of the wicked, is what remains of the third speech of Zophar, which is otherwise entirely missing from the book; and that chap. 28 is the closing element in the speech(es) of Elihu, if chaps. 32–37 are moved to follow chap. 27. . . . Among those who do not recognize the presence of any other speaker but Job in this chapter are Davidson, Andersen, Good, and Murphy, 36. [David J. A. Clines, *Job 21–37*, vol. 18a, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2006), 643-44]

The Masoretic text ascribes 27:7–23 to Job.

Overview of Job's speeches in chapters 27-31:

Job's Concluding Address (Job 27:1–31:40)

The passage.—The dialogues between Job and his friends have now ended. Their arguments have all been exhausted. In fact, the third speaker, Zophar, does not speak at all in this last cycle, and after a pause, Job sums up his defense. The line of thought is difficult to trace in this concluding discourse. Some of the ideas seem to contradict what Job has said earlier. As a result some interpreters believe that portions of this passage are the words of Zophar, whose speech is missing from the third cycle. Others find certain misplaced sections which they attribute to the two other friends. However, the inconsistency in Job's speech could also be a result of the trauma of his suffering. He is not thinking clearly. His words often come in torrents. Inconsistencies are to be expected from one who is struggling with the heavy mysteries of life.

In chapter 27, Job renews his claim of innocence before God (vv. 1–6). He follows this with another dreary description of the destruction of wicked men and declares with an oath that he is not one of the wicked. Until he dies he will not admit his guilt. His conscience sustains his innocence (vv. 7–23).

In chapter 28 the theme is “wisdom cannot be attained by man.” Job uses poetic pictures to illustrate this truth. (1) Man digs for valuable treasures and precious stones and he finds them. But there is no mine from which wisdom can be uncovered and brought out (vv. 1–14). (2) Man can purchase merchandise in the marketplace, but wisdom is not for sale at any price (vv. 15–22). God created wisdom and keeps it secretly hidden from man. Man’s only wisdom is to fear God (vv. 23–28).

In chapter 29, Job paints a pathetic word picture of his former prosperity and respect. He reviews with sadness the happiness he enjoyed with his family, his prosperity, his feeling of acceptance by God, and the respect and reverence shown him by his friends (vv. 2–10). He remembers that he earned their respect by benevolent and humane treatment of others (vv. 11–17). He had looked forward to the future with calm assurance (vv. 18–20). In contrast to the rejection of his three friends, he remembers his pleasant relationships with his fellowman in the past (vv. 21–25).

Chapter 30, Job reviews his present state in sharp contrast to the happy picture drawn in chapter 29.

In chapter 31 the long discourse ends with a series of protests from Job by which he clears himself of all offenses. The last verse says, “The words of Job are ended.”

[Russell H. Dilday Jr., “Job,” in *The Teacher’s Bible Commentary*, ed. H. Franklin Paschall and Herschel H. Hobbs (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1972), 284-85]

Job refers to the name of God some 11 times in this chapter (2,3,8,9,10,11,13). Job is clearly focused on God to a degree that the friends cannot match. God is essentially important to Job.

VERSES 27:1-6

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NASB95]:

1 Then Job continued his discourse and said, 2 “As God lives, who has taken away my right, And the Almighty, who has embittered my soul, 3 For as long as life is in me, And the breath of God is in my nostrils, 4 My lips certainly will not speak unjustly, Nor will my tongue mutter deceit. 5 “Far be it from me that I should declare you right; Till I die I will not put away my integrity from me. 6 “I hold fast my righteousness and will not let it go. My heart does not reproach any of my days.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [ESV]:

1 And Job again took up his discourse, and said: 2 “As God lives, who has taken away my right, and the Almighty, who has made my soul bitter, 3 as long as my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils, 4 my lips will not speak falsehood, and my tongue will not utter deceit. 5 Far be it from me to say that you are right; till I die I will not put away my integrity from me. 6 I hold fast my righteousness and will not let it go; my heart does not reproach me for any of my days.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [HCSB]:

1 Job continued his discourse, saying: 2 As God lives, who has deprived me of justice, and the Almighty who has made me bitter, 3 as long as my breath is still in me and the breath from God remains in my nostrils, 4 my lips will not speak unjustly, and my tongue will not utter deceit. 5 I will never affirm that you are right. I will maintain my integrity until I die. 6 I will cling to my righteousness and never let it go. My conscience will not accuse me as long as I live!

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NIV]:

1 And Job continued his discourse: 2 “As surely as God lives, who has denied me justice, the Almighty, who has made my life bitter, 3 as long as I have life within me, the breath of God in my nostrils, 4 my lips will not say anything wicked, and my tongue will not utter lies. 5 I will never admit you are in the right; till I die, I will not deny my integrity. 6 I will maintain my innocence and never let go of it; my conscience will not reproach me as long as I live.

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

1 Then Job continued his discourse and said,

I.e. Job may have been waiting for Zophar to speak, so there was silence between 26:14 and 27:1. Job was focused on Bildad in chapter 26. He now responds to everyone present (the 3 plus Elihu who must have been present at least for this part of the saga). This discourse runs from chapter 27 - 31 (note verse 40: “the words of Job are ended”).

“Discourse” as “Parable”?

“The word *parable* (*mashal*) translates a versatile Hebrew noun. It describes speech designed to cause someone to reflect and come to a verdict about the subject under discussion.” [Talbert, 148. Talbert adds Footnote 2 citing the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament: “The word can apply to the pithy proverbs of Solomon (1 Kings 4:32; Prov. 10:1), ‘an extended didactic discourse’ such as Prov. 1:8-19, or a prophetic message of judgement (Isa. 14:4-27). . . .”]

2 “As God lives, who has taken away my right, And the Almighty, who has embittered my soul,

Expression of an oath here (with v. 3). The body of the oath is in vv. 4-6.

You see a similar 3-fold oath by Paul in Romans 9:1.

Job believes that God has denied him (court) justice and sees God as the cause of his misery.

Job has spoken of the bitterness of his *nepesh* “soul” in 7:11 and 10:1. This bitterness or resentment is caused by God’s refusal to hear his case. [UBS Handbook]

Job’s justification of himself at God’s expense? God knows: 40:8 “Will you really annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me that you may be justified?”

When I testified before the Grand Jury . . . Oath with hand on Bible.

“Old Testament oaths basically consist of a promise [we might add, or statement] that is strengthened by the addition of a curse, usually in conjunction with an appeal to the deity or king who could carry out the curse.... Oath statements seem conditional, but it is the curse, not the promise, that is conditional” (T. W. Cartledge, *Vows in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, JSOTSup 147 [Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992] 15 [Cartledge’s emphasis]). [cited in David J. A. Clines, *Job 21–37*, vol. 18a, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2006), 645]

With God as witness, the oath-taker who used the divine name was inviting God to kill him if he was speaking falsely. No higher authority than God. (cf. Marlon Brando who refused . . .)

For the ancients, these oaths/vows were inexcusably binding. Cf. Jephthah’s vow.

To deny justice “is expressly forbidden in Deuteronomic law (Deut 24:17; 27:19; cf. 1 Sam 8:3 [הטן is the verb in all three places].” [David J. A. Clines]

“Bitter” (רם; the verb is ררם, as here) is a key word for Job (see 3:20; 7:11; 10:1; 13:26; 21:25; 23:2). Cf. Ruth 1:20.

3 For as long as life is in me, And the breath of God is in my nostrils,

As long as my breath is in me: verse 3 may be taken as the conditions which will keep Job faithful to his oath. “I swear ... that as long as my breath is ... and the spirit of God...” Job is frail and probably near death but still has the breath which comes from God’s act of creation in Genesis 2:7. . . . And the spirit of God is in my nostrils: spirit of God translates ruax eloah, in which the first word can mean “spirit, wind, breath,” but in association with nostrils “breath” is the sense to be understood. Although the two lines of verse 3 are the same in meaning, line a is general and line b specific, which is the stylistic technique often used to raise the poetic intensity in the second line. So Job is saying that he swears “that as long as I have a spark of life and a breath from God in me...” [UBS Handbook Series]

Breath/Life, cf. 10:12; 12:10; 34:14–15.

Soul/breath/life, cf. parallel to Job’s 3 speech organs: nostrils/lips/tongue.

So long as he is alive: that is, so long as there is “breath” (נשמה) in him. The term [nešāmâ] (see T. C. Mitchell, “The Old Testament Usage of nešāmâ,” VT 11 [1961] 177–87; H. Lamberty-Zielinski, TDOT, 10:65–70) is elsewhere used in Job of the breath of God, especially as the life force imparted by God to humans (as in 4:9; 32:8; 33:4; 34:14; and by implication 26:4), and the parallel here with “the spirit of the Almighty” no doubt suggests a similar sense for “breath.” But it is not that [nešāmâ] itself means that; it is the context in each case that is determinative. The “spirit” (רוח) of a human being is the life or vitality of that person (as in 6:4; 10:12); in calling his life-breath the spirit of the Almighty in his nostrils, Job is no doubt alluding to the creation narrative of God breathing into the nostrils (אפיים, as here) of the first man the “breath of life” . . . [David J. A. Clines]

4 My lips certainly will not speak unjustly, Nor will my tongue mutter deceit.

Parallel thoughts. Cf. 13:7.

Irony: Job swears on his own righteousness using the immutable authority of the God whose righteousness he calls into question! Elihu calls Job on this (34:5-6,10,12,17, 35:2) as does God (40:2,8). Job rightly attributes his suffering (“bitterness” v. 2) to God. But he wrongly impugns God’s character in doing so.

5 “Far be it from me that I should declare you right; Till I die I will not put away my integrity from me.

To say that you are right translates the Hebrew “that I should justify you,” where “justify” represents the causative form of the verb TsaDaq “to be right.” It is used in 9:15; 11:2; 13:18. The meaning is “admit that you (plural) are right.” [UBS Handbook]

“I will never admit you are in the right [Hiph. $\text{\textcircled{H}}\text{dq}$].” We have seen Job use this verb many times, referring to his righteousness or his desire to be vindicated, but this is the only time he uses the Hiphil form.⁶⁵ In the Hiphil stem, this verb indicates an action of declaring someone righteous or innocent, legally acquitting them of guilt or blame. Job is refusing to allow that his friends have accurately assessed his character. [John H. Walton and Kelly Lemon Vizcaino, *The NIV Application Commentary: Job*, ed. Terry Muck et al. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 260]

“Integrity” = Same term God used to refer to Job in 2:3 (when speaking to Satan, “He still holds fast his integrity”). Job is not claiming perfection, but innocence of wrongdoing that would bring such calamity upon him.

6 “I hold fast my righteousness and will not let it go. My heart does not reproach any of my days.

Righteousness not sinlessness. cf. “above reproach” used of elders in the NT. Nothing that Job did which would deserve God’s judgment in suffering.

Cf. Job “holds fast his integrity” (2:3,9). Parallel thought in this verse refers to Job’s conscience. Cf. Paul in the NT who always maintained a pure conscience.

Job may have been near death and his conscience was indeed clear. Note 1 Samuel 24:5 It came about afterward that David’s conscience bothered him because he had cut off the edge of Saul’s robe.

Cf. preparation for a “happy departure” in Christian (Puritan) thought.

Job has previously defended his innocence. For example, to Eliphaz (6:10, 29–30; 16:17; 23:10–12), Bildad (9:21–22; 10:7), and Zophar (12:4; 13:18–19).

Job 6:10 “But it is still my consolation, And I rejoice in unsparing pain, That I have not denied the words of the Holy One.

Nevertheless, the modern reader cannot help raising a quizzical eyebrow at anyone, ancient or modern, who can entertain such a naive faith in their own innocence. Surely self-doubt did not originate with Paul or with Freud. What of the psalmist of Ps 19, caught up in reverent adoration of the God of creation and the law, and then bursting out with, “But who can detect their errors? Clear me from hidden faults” (Ps 19:13 [12])? Or of Ps 139, full of devout praise for the creator’s wonderful works (139:14), but calling on God nevertheless to search the heart to see if there remains any “hurtful way” within the psalmist (Ps 139:23–24). [David J. A. Clines, 650]

VERSES 27:7-10

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NASB95]:

7 “May my enemy be as the wicked And my opponent as the unjust. 8 “For what is the hope of the godless when he is cut off, When God requires his life? 9 “Will God hear his cry When distress comes upon him? 10 “Will he take delight in the Almighty? Will he call on God at all times?

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [ESV]:

7 “Let my enemy be as the wicked, and let him who rises up against me be as the unrighteous. 8 For what is the hope of the godless when God cuts him off, when God takes away his life? 9 Will God hear his cry when distress comes upon him? 10 Will he take delight in the Almighty? Will he call upon God at all times?

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [HCSB]:

7 May my enemy be like the wicked and my opponent like the unjust. 8 For what hope does the godless man have when he is cut off, when God takes away his life? 9 Will God hear his cry when distress comes on him? 10 Will he delight in the Almighty? Will he call on God at all times?

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NIV]:

7 “May my enemy be like the wicked, my adversary like the unjust! 8 For what hope have the godless when they are cut off, when God takes away their life? 9 Does God listen to their cry when distress comes upon them? 10 Will they find delight in the Almighty? Will they call on God at all times?

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

7 “May my enemy be as the wicked And my opponent as the unjust.

To whom does Job refer? The three? If so, this points to a severe fracture in the relationship.

Who were Job’s enemies? Anybody who agreed with Job’s three friends that he was guilty of sin and deserved to be punished by God. While this conversation had been going on, many people had likely gathered around the ash heap and listened to the debate; and most of them probably sided with Bildad, Zophar, and Eliphaz. Job could see the spectators nod their heads in agreement with his friends, and he knew that he was outnumbered. [Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Patient*, “Be” Commentary Series (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 103]

In the East, it was not enough for accused people simply to affirm their innocence; they also felt compelled to call down the wrath of God on those who said they were guilty. Job's words remind us of the "imprecatory psalms" (Pss. 58, 69, 137, etc.) in that they are a prayer for God's judgment on his enemies. [Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Patient, "Be"* Commentary Series (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 103]

"Let mine enemy be as the wicked," etc.] Hereby Job expresses his sense of the miserableness of the state of an ungodly man, however he may seem to prosper, so that he could desire no worse misery to his worst enemy than to be as they. He don't mean that he wished his enemy such misery, for that is contrary to what he solemnly and expressly professes and swears in the same discourse (Job 31:29). [Jonathan Edwards, *The "Blank Bible": Part 1 & Part 2*, ed. Stephen J. Stein and Harry S. Stout, vol. 24, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2006), 453]

8 "For what is the hope of the godless when he is cut off, When God requires his life? 9 "Will God hear his cry When distress comes upon him? 10 "Will he take delight in the Almighty? Will he call on God at all times?

Will he call upon God at all times? This echoes Psalm 86:3b, "for to thee do I call all the day." Call upon means "to call for help, to pray." At all times means "all the time, at any time." This may be understood to mean that Job (assuming he is the speaker) does not admit that the godless can call upon God. The friends, who refuse to recognize Job's innocence, urge him to do just that. But Job constantly calls on God to hear his case. Therefore the friends and Job are at a total impasse. The only way it can be resolved is for the friends to recognize Job's innocence, and they cannot do this because of the evidence before their eyes: Job's misfortune. [UBS Handbook]

VERSES 27:11-12

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NASB95]:

11 “I will instruct you in the power of God; What is with the Almighty I will not conceal. 12
“Behold, all of you have seen it; Why then do you act foolishly?”

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [ESV]:

11 I will teach you concerning the hand of God; what is with the Almighty I will not conceal. 12
Behold, all of you have seen it yourselves; why then have you become altogether vain?

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [HCSB]:

11 I will teach you about God’s power. I will not conceal what the Almighty has planned. 12 All
of you have seen this for yourselves, why do you keep up this empty talk?

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NIV]:

11 “I will teach you about the power of God; the ways of the Almighty I will not conceal. 12 You
have all seen this yourselves. Why then this meaningless talk?”

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

11 **“I will instruct you in the power of God; What is with the Almighty I will not conceal. 12
“Behold, all of you have seen it; Why then do you act foolishly?”**

“power” = Hebrew *yad* = “hand.” Cf. use of *yad* for God’s hand in 10:7; 12:9, 10; 19:21.
Metaphor for power, work, action. Also for control over another (i.e. to be delivered into the
hand of someone). Cf. Isa. 49:22.

The future instruction seems to point to chapter 28, a great discourse on wisdom. Note that
wisdom and power are sometimes associated with God:

Jeremiah 10:12 It is He who made the earth by His power, Who established the world by
His wisdom; And by His understanding He has stretched out the heavens.

Daniel 2:20 Daniel said, “Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, For wisdom
and power belong to Him.

Revelation 5:12 saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive
power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.”

Cf. 11b in HCSB: “I will not conceal what the Almighty has planned.”

Verse 12b rendered by TEV: “So why do you talk such nonsense?”

I.e. “No one can teach you; you know everything.”

Reverse of Eliphaz in 22:22, “Please receive instruction from His mouth And establish His words in your heart.

In 27:11–12 he again addresses the friends directly. Job initially asked for their instruction (6:24), which they offered in the form of teaching (8:10). Now Job again turns the tables, assessing their instruction as nothing but “meaningless talk.” Here Job uses the term that forms the theme of Ecclesiastes (hebel). I interpret the word as referring to that which is incapable of bringing ultimate satisfaction or contentment. [John H. Walton and Kelly Lemon Vizcaino, *The NIV Application Commentary: Job*, ed. Terry Muck et al. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 261]

VERSES 27:13-23

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NASB95]:

13 “This is the portion of a wicked man from God, And the inheritance which tyrants receive from the Almighty. 14 “Though his sons are many, they are destined for the sword; And his descendants will not be satisfied with bread. 15 “His survivors will be buried because of the plague, And their widows will not be able to weep. 16 “Though he piles up silver like dust And prepares garments as plentiful as the clay, 17 He may prepare it, but the just will wear it And the innocent will divide the silver. 18 “He has built his house like the spider’s web, Or as a hut which the watchman has made. 19 “He lies down rich, but never again; He opens his eyes, and it is no longer. 20 “Terrors overtake him like a flood; A tempest steals him away in the night. 21 “The east wind carries him away, and he is gone, For it whirls him away from his place. 22 “For it will hurl at him without sparing; He will surely try to flee from its power. 23 “Men will clap their hands at him And will hiss him from his place.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [ESV]:

13 “This is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage that oppressors receive from the Almighty: 14 If his children are multiplied, it is for the sword, and his descendants have not enough bread. 15 Those who survive him the pestilence buries, and his widows do not weep. 16 Though he heap up silver like dust, and pile up clothing like clay, 17 he may pile it up, but the righteous will wear it, and the innocent will divide the silver. 18 He builds his house like a moth’s, like a booth that a watchman makes. 19 He goes to bed rich, but will do so no more; he opens his eyes, and his wealth is gone. 20 Terrors overtake him like a flood; in the night a whirlwind carries him off. 21 The east wind lifts him up and he is gone; it sweeps him out of his place. 22 It hurls at him without pity; he flees from its power in headlong flight. 23 It claps its hands at him and hisses at him from its place.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [HCSB]:

13 This is a wicked man’s lot from God, the inheritance the ruthless receive from the Almighty. 14 Even if his children increase, they are destined for the sword; his descendants will never have enough food. 15 Those who survive him will be buried by the plague, yet their widows will not weep for them. 16 Though he piles up silver like dust and heaps up a wardrobe like clay— 17 he may heap it up, but the righteous will wear it, and the innocent will divide up his silver. 18 The house he built is like a moth’s cocoon or a booth set up by a watchman. 19 He lies down wealthy, but will do so no more; when he opens his eyes, it is gone. 20 Terrors overtake him like a flood; a storm wind sweeps him away at night. 21 An east wind picks him up, and he is gone; it carries him away from his place. 22 It blasts at him without mercy, while he flees desperately from its grasp. 23 It claps its hands at him and scorns him from its place.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION [NIV]:

13 “Here is the fate God allots to the wicked, the heritage a ruthless man receives from the Almighty: 14 However many his children, their fate is the sword; his offspring will never have

enough to eat. 15 The plague will bury those who survive him, and their widows will not weep for them. 16 Though he heaps up silver like dust and clothes like piles of clay, 17 what he lays up the righteous will wear, and the innocent will divide his silver. 18 The house he builds is like a moth's cocoon, like a hut made by a watchman. 19 He lies down wealthy, but will do so no more; when he opens his eyes, all is gone. 20 Terrors overtake him like a flood; a tempest snatches him away in the night. 21 The east wind carries him off, and he is gone; it sweeps him out of his place. 22 It hurls itself against him without mercy as he flees headlong from its power. 23 It claps its hands in derision and hisses him out of his place.”

CONTEXTUAL, GRAMMATICAL, THEOLOGICAL, APPLICATIONAL ANALYSIS:

Some translations assign verses 13–23 to Zophar (as his 3d speech, cf. the same contentions by some as it relates to chapter 26). However, this part of the chapter repeats the theme of vv. 7-10.

The speaker then proceeds step by step through the loss and destruction the wicked suffer: children and wives (verses 14 and 15); silver and clothing (verses 16 and 17); house and wealth (verses 18 and 19); and natural disasters (verses 20–23). [UBS Handbook]

Because vv. 13–23 sound more like what the friends had been saying, these verses can be understood as a quotation of them introduced by Job's term “meaningless words” at the end of v. 12. [Robert L. Alden, Job, vol. 11, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 261]

As noted above, many commentators posit that this is the lost third speech of Zophar. Since it lacks the introductory formula common to all the other speeches, we are understanding it as Job's quotation of their position, which he has just labeled “meaningless talk.” Several subjects in these verses reflect things the friends said to Job through the course of the dialogue. [Robert L. Alden, Job, vol. 11, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 265]

I think this makes sense, that vv. 13-23 are a summation of the words of what the friends have been contending. Note Eliphaz in 5:4, 15:20-24,34; Bildad in 8:4,13-19 (“spider's web” and “house” in vv. 14-15, cf. 27:18), 18:11-21; Zophar in chapter 20.

Wiersbe takes a different approach:

You can recognize in this description many of the images that Job's friends used in their “judgment” speeches against him. Job did this deliberately to remind them that they had better be careful what they say lest they declare their own punishment. “Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you” (Matt. 7:1–2, NKJV).

Scripture records several instances where the judgment planned by an enemy was brought home to that enemy by the Lord. Pharaoh ordered the newborn Jewish boys to be

drowned, and his own army was drowned in the Red Sea (Ex. 1:15–22; 14:23–31). Haman built a gallows on which to hang Mordecai, but Haman and his sons were hanged there instead (Es. 7:10; 9:25). Daniel’s enemies tried to have him destroyed, but they and their families ended up in the lions’ den in the place of Daniel (Dan. 6:24). (See Prov. 11:8.). [Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Patient*, “Be” Commentary Series (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 105]

Summary of this section by Wiersbe:

They will die, and their widows will not mourn for them, a terrible insult in the Eastern world. Their children will be slain by the sword or the plague; and if any survive, they will spend the rest of their lives begging for something to eat. The wicked will lie down rich and wake up poor. Their silver and expensive clothing will be gone. Their houses will be destroyed like cocoons (or spiders’ webs), or like the temporary shacks of the watchmen in the fields. The death of the wicked will not be peaceful. Terrors will come in at night like a flood and carry him away. Even if the wicked try to flee, the storm will follow them and destroy them. [Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Patient*]

13 “This is the portion of a wicked man from God, And the inheritance which tyrants receive from the Almighty.

Introductory statement; introduces verses 14-23.

Job had already spoken of the fate of the wicked (24:18–24). He never denied the ultimate punishment of God’s enemies, but he did deny their immediate judgment, contrary to Zophar’s claim (20:5; 21:7). If Zophar could speak of the fate of the wicked and their heritage (20:29), so could Job. [Roy B. Zuck, “Job,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 750]

14 “Though his sons are many, they are destined for the sword; And his descendants will not be satisfied with bread. 15 “His survivors will be buried because of the plague, And their widows will not be able to weep.

Children and wives (verses 14 and 15). Also, famine, war and plague.

Eliphaz in 5:4, Bildad in 8:4 and 18:19, and Zophar in 20:10 all indirectly connected Job’s alleged sin to the fate of his children. It was the old popular theology that children suffered for their parents’ misdeeds (see comment on 21:19). [Robert L. Alden]

[T]he text invokes the familiar sinister trio of death—war, famine, and plague (so too in Jer 14:12; 15:2; Ezek 5:12; 6:11–12; 14:12–20 [with wild beasts]; Rev 6:8 [also with wild beasts] [David J. A. Clines, 665]

בָּנִים meaning either “sons” or “children.” “Akin to the English word “Men” which can refer to both sexes. Most translations favor “children.” However, here it’s associated with war (sword). “If he has man sons, they will die in war.”

Note the upheaval that war itself brings, both for those in the battle and those at home. This may be why the descendants have not enough food (v. 14b).

You also have the plague, in addition to war (sometimes these go hand in hand).

16 “Though he piles up silver like dust And prepares garments as plentiful as the clay, 17 He may prepare it, but the just will wear it And the innocent will divide the silver.

Silver and clothing (verses 16 and 17).

Note the simile in v. 16. Extreme wealth. Wealth and the corollary power, go together. This is the ambition of fallen men. Those who are billionaires have the attention of the world, and subsequent power and influence.

Note 17:8 where “upright” and “innocent” are parallel.

Proverbs 28:8 He who increases his wealth by interest and usury Gathers it for him who is gracious to the poor.

Ecclesiastes 2:26 For to a person who is good in His sight He has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, while to the sinner He has given the task of gathering and collecting so that he may give to one who is good in God’s sight. This too is vanity and striving after wind.

Mindful of Exodus 3:22.

This will be ultimately true in the millennial age, or in the eternal state.

Fleeting wealth (cf. Great Crash of 29’):

Proverbs 23:4–5 4 Do not weary yourself to gain wealth, Cease from your consideration of it. 5 When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings Like an eagle that flies toward the heavens.

18 “He has built his house like the spider’s web, Or as a hut which the watchman has made. 19 “He lies down rich, but never again; He opens his eyes, and it is no longer.

House and wealth (verses 18 and 19).

More simile in v. 18.

The wicked man’s house, all that he is, is akin to a spider’s web or cocoon. “Spider’s web” cf. 8:14. Most translations have “moth” or “moth’s cocoon” (“web” and “cocoon” are not in the

Hebrew). More likely “cocoon.” Note an empty cocoon. As against fragility, both a web and cocoon are temporary.

Life is easy to take for granted, until the possibility of death comes.

Verse 19: cf. Luke 12:16ff.

Like a booth which a watchman makes: booth refers to a hut put together by using fragile materials, where a person stays to protect the harvest from birds and other intruders. (See Isa 1:8.). [UBS Handbook]

The moth’s house is a cocoon, a frail and temporary shelter, and the shack a watchman sets up only for the duration of the harvest is similarly flimsy and impermanent. Both are gone with the turn of the seasons, and, by analogy, so will the elaborate dwellings of the wicked disintegrate. [Robert L. Alden]

Farmers put up temporary booths in the middle of their fields in order to guard the crops during harvest. [IVPBBC]

20 “Terrors overtake him like a flood; A tempest steals him away in the night.

Natural disasters (verses 20–23).

Flood, cf. our camping experience, minor in scope to great floods of history.

The [Hebrew OT Text Project] rates “like the waters” as an “A” reading, meaning there is no doubt about its being original. Their remark is “The waters are those of a *waDi* (stream bed) which unexpectedly take the traveler by surprise.” [UBS Handbook]

21 “The east wind carries him away, and he is gone, For it whirls him away from his place.

22 “For it will hurl at him without sparing; He will surely try to flee from its power. 23

“Men will clap their hands at him And will hiss him from his place.

[T]he east wind blows from the desert towards the Mediterranean Sea, bringing scorching heat. Here it is violent, like a tornado or whirlwind, in that it picks the man up and carries him away. [UBS Handbook Series]

The two verbs that describe the sound of the storm were chosen for onomatopoeic and alliterative reasons. “It claps” is *yīspōq*³² and “hisses” is *yīšrōq*. [Robert L. Alden]

Clapping vs. boos. Boos vs. hisses.

Scholars do not agree on the interpretation of Job 27:23. The NASB reads, “Men will clap their hands at him, and will hiss him from his place,” and most translations agree

with that; but the word men is not in the original text. It simply reads, “He claps his hands against him.” Who is “he”? Elmer B. Smick in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* suggests that it might be God, and that verse 23 should be connected with verse 13 where “God” is the subject of the sentence (vol. 4, p. 972). He translates verse 23, “He claps his hands against them and hisses at them from his dwelling [heaven].” Whether God or men, there is rejoicing at the destruction of the wicked. [Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Patient, “Be” Commentary Series* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 105–106]