

SPIRAL-BOUND
JOURNALING BIBLE



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English Standard Version

POETRY



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ESV Text Edition: 2016

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Printed in China
Published by Crossway
Wheaton, Illinois 60187, USA
crossway.org

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PREFACE

TO THE ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION

The Bible

“This Book [is] the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is Wisdom; this is the royal Law; these are the lively Oracles of God.” With these words the Moderator of the Church of Scotland hands a Bible to the new monarch in Britain’s coronation service. These words echo the King James Bible translators, who wrote in 1611, “God’s sacred Word . . . is that inestimable treasure that excelleth all the riches of the earth.” This assessment of the Bible is the motivating force behind the publication of the English Standard Version.

Translation Legacy

The English Standard Version (ESV) stands in the classic mainstream of English Bible translations over the past half-millennium. The fountainhead of that stream was William Tyndale’s New Testament of 1526; marking its course were the King James Version of 1611 (KJV), the English Revised Version of 1885 (RV), the American Standard Version of 1901 (ASV), and the Revised Standard Version of 1952 and 1971 (RSV). In that stream, faithfulness to the text and vigorous pursuit of precision were combined with simplicity, beauty, and dignity of expression. Our goal has been to carry forward this legacy for this generation and generations to come.

To this end each word and phrase in the ESV has been carefully weighed against the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, to ensure the fullest accuracy and clarity and to avoid under-translating or overlooking any nuance of the original text. The words and phrases themselves grow out of the Tyndale–King James legacy, and most recently out of the RSV, with the 1971 RSV text providing the starting point for our work. Archaic language has been brought into line with current usage and significant corrections have been made in the translation of key texts. But throughout, our goal has been to retain the depth of meaning and enduring quality of language that have made their indelible mark on the English-speaking world and have defined the life and doctrine of its church over the last five centuries.

Translation Philosophy

The ESV is an “essentially literal” translation that seeks as far as possible to reproduce the precise wording of the original text and the personal style of each Bible writer. As such, its emphasis is on “word-for-word” correspondence, at the same time taking full account of differences in grammar, syntax, and idiom between current literary English and the original languages. Thus it seeks to be transparent to the original text, letting the reader see as directly as possible the structure and exact force of the original.

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In contrast to the ESV, some Bible versions have followed a “thought-for-thought” rather than “word-for-word” translation philosophy, emphasizing “dynamic equivalence” rather than the “essentially literal” meaning of the original. A “thought-for-thought” translation is of necessity more inclined to reflect the interpretive views of the translator and the influences of contemporary culture.

Every translation is at many points a trade-off between literal precision and readability, between “formal equivalence” in expression and “functional equivalence” in communication, and the ESV is no exception. Within this framework we have sought to be “as literal as possible” while maintaining clarity of expression and literary excellence. Therefore, to the extent that plain English permits and the meaning in each case allows, we have sought to use the same English word for important recurring words in the original; and, as far as grammar and syntax allow, we have rendered Old Testament passages cited in the New in ways that show their correspondence. Thus in each of these areas, as well as throughout the Bible as a whole, we have sought to capture all the echoes and overtones of meaning that are so abundantly present in the original texts.

As an essentially literal translation, taking into account grammar and syntax, the ESV thus seeks to carry over every possible nuance of meaning in the original words of Scripture into our own language. As such, the ESV is ideally suited for in-depth study of the Bible. Indeed, with its commitment to literary excellence, the ESV is equally well suited for public reading and preaching, for private reading and reflection, for both academic and devotional study, and for Scripture memorization.

Translation Principles and Style

The ESV also carries forward classic translation principles in its literary style. Accordingly it retains theological terminology—words such as grace, faith, justification, sanctification, redemption, regeneration, reconciliation, propitiation—because of their central importance for Christian doctrine and also because the underlying Greek words were already becoming key words and technical terms among Christians in New Testament times.

The ESV lets the stylistic variety of the biblical writers fully express itself—from the exalted prose that opens Genesis, to the flowing narratives of the historical books, to the rich metaphors and dramatic imagery of the poetic books, to the ringing rhetoric in the prophetic books, to the smooth elegance of Luke, to the profound simplicities of John, and the closely reasoned logic of Paul.

In punctuating, paragraphing, dividing long sentences, and rendering connectives, the ESV follows the path that seems to make the ongoing flow of thought clearest in English. The biblical languages regularly connect sentences by frequent repetition of words such as “and,” “but,” and “for,” in a way that goes beyond the conventions of current literary English. Effective translation, however, requires that these links in the original be reproduced so that the flow of the argument will be transparent to the reader. We have therefore normally translated these connectives, though occasionally we have varied the rendering by using alternatives (such as “also,” “however,” “now,” “so,” “then,” or “thus”) when they better express the linkage in specific instances.

In the area of gender language, the goal of the ESV is to render literally what is in the original. For example, “anyone” replaces “any man” where there

is no word corresponding to “man” in the original languages, and “people” rather than “men” is regularly used where the original languages refer to both men and women. But the words “man” and “men” are retained where a male meaning component is part of the original Greek or Hebrew. Likewise, the word “man” has been retained where the original text intends to convey a clear contrast between “God” on the one hand and “man” on the other hand, with “man” being used in the collective sense of the whole human race (see Luke 2:52). Similarly, the English word “brothers” (translating the Greek word *adelphoi*) is retained as an important familial form of address between fellow-Jews and fellow-Christians in the first century. A recurring note is included to indicate that the term “brothers” (*adelphoi*) was often used in Greek to refer to both men and women, and to indicate the specific instances in the text where this is the case. In addition, the English word “sons” (translating the Greek word *huiioi*) is retained in specific instances because the underlying Greek term usually includes a male meaning component and it was used as a legal term in the adoption and inheritance laws of first-century Rome. As used by the apostle Paul, this term refers to the status of all Christians, both men and women, who, having been adopted into God’s family, now enjoy all the privileges, obligations, and inheritance rights of God’s children.

The inclusive use of the generic “he” has also regularly been retained, because this is consistent with similar usage in the original languages and because an essentially literal translation would be impossible without it.

In each case the objective has been transparency to the original text, allowing the reader to understand the original on its own terms rather than in the terms of our present-day Western culture.

The Translation of Specialized Terms

In the translation of biblical terms referring to God, the ESV takes great care to convey the specific nuances of meaning of the original Hebrew and Greek words. First, concerning terms that refer to God in the Old Testament: God, the Maker of heaven and earth, introduced himself to the people of Israel with a special personal name, the consonants for which are YHWH (see Exodus 3:14–15). Scholars call this the “Tetragrammaton,” a Greek term referring to the four Hebrew letters YHWH. The exact pronunciation of YHWH is uncertain, because the Jewish people considered the personal name of God to be so holy that it should never be spoken aloud. Instead of reading the word YHWH, therefore, they would normally read the Hebrew word *’adonay* (“Lord”), and the ancient translations into Greek, Syriac, and Aramaic also followed this practice. When the vowels of the word *’adonay* are placed with the consonants of YHWH, this results in the familiar word *Jehovah* that was used in some earlier English Bible translations. As is common among English translations today, the ESV usually renders the personal name of God (YHWH) by the word **LORD** (printed in small capitals). An exception to this is when the Hebrew word *’adonay* appears together with YHWH, in which case the two words are rendered together as “the Lord [in lowercase] **GOD** [in small capitals].” In contrast to the personal name for God (YHWH), the more general name for God in Old Testament Hebrew is *’elohim* and its related forms of *’el* or *’eloah*, all of which are normally translated “God” (in lowercase letters). The use of these different ways to translate the Hebrew words for God is especially beneficial to English readers, enabling

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them to see and understand the different ways that the *personal* name and the *general* name for God are both used to refer to the *One True God* of the Old Testament.

Second, in the New Testament, the Greek word *Christos* has been translated consistently as “Christ.” Although the term originally meant simply “anointed,” among Jews in New Testament times it had specifically come to designate the Messiah, the great Savior that God had promised to raise up. In other New Testament contexts, however, especially among Gentiles, *Christos* (“Christ”) was on its way to becoming a proper name. It is important, therefore, to keep the context in mind in understanding the various ways that *Christos* (“Christ”) is used in the New Testament. At the same time, in accord with its “essentially literal” translation philosophy, the ESV has retained consistency and concordance in the translation of *Christos* (“Christ”) throughout the New Testament.

Third, a particular difficulty is presented when words in biblical Hebrew and Greek refer to ancient practices and institutions that do not correspond directly to those in the modern world. Such is the case in the translation of *‘ebed* (Hebrew) and *doulos* (Greek), terms which are often rendered “slave.” These terms, however, actually cover a range of relationships that requires a range of renderings—“slave,” “bondservant,” or “servant”—depending on the context. Further, the word “slave” currently carries associations with the often brutal and dehumanizing institution of slavery particularly in nineteenth-century America. For this reason, the ESV translation of the words *‘ebed* and *doulos* has been undertaken with particular attention to their meaning in each specific context. Thus in Old Testament times, one might enter slavery either voluntarily (e.g., to escape poverty or to pay off a debt) or involuntarily (e.g., by birth, by being captured in battle, or by judicial sentence). Protection for all in servitude in ancient Israel was provided by the Mosaic Law, including specific provisions for release from slavery. In New Testament times, a *doulos* is often best described as a “bondservant”—that is, someone in the Roman Empire officially bound under contract to serve his master for seven years (except for those in Caesar’s household in Rome who were contracted for fourteen years). When the contract expired, the person was freed, given his wage that had been saved by the master, and officially declared a freedman. The ESV usage thus seeks to express the most fitting nuance of meaning in each context. Where absolute ownership by a master is envisaged (as in Romans 6), “slave” is used; where a more limited form of servitude is in view, “bondservant” is used (as in 1 Corinthians 7:21–24); where the context indicates a wide range of freedom (as in John 4:51), “servant” is preferred. Footnotes are generally provided to identify the Hebrew or Greek and the range of meaning that these terms may carry in each case. The issues involved in translating the Greek word *doulos* apply also to the Greek word *sundoulos*, translated in the text as “fellow servant.”

Fourth, it is sometimes suggested that Bible translations should capitalize pronouns referring to deity. It has seemed best not to capitalize deity pronouns in the ESV, however, for the following reasons: first, there is nothing in the original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts that corresponds to such capitalization; second, the practice of capitalizing deity pronouns in English Bible translations is a recent innovation, which began only in the mid-twentieth century; and, third, such capitalization is absent from the KJV Bible and the whole stream of Bible translations that the ESV carries forward.

A fifth specialized term, the word “behold,” usually has been retained as the most common translation for the Hebrew word *hinneh* and the Greek word *idou*. Both of these words mean something like “Pay careful attention to what follows! This is important!” Other than the word “behold,” there is no single word in English that fits well in most contexts. Although “Look!” and “See!” and “Listen!” would be workable in some contexts, in many others these words lack sufficient weight and dignity. Given the principles of “essentially literal” translation, it is important not to leave *hinneh* and *idou* completely untranslated and so to lose the intended emphasis in the original languages. The older and more formal word “behold” has usually been retained, therefore, as the best available option for conveying the original weight of meaning.

Textual Basis and Resources

The ESV is based on the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible as found in *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (5th ed., 1997), and on the Greek text in the 2014 editions of the *Greek New Testament* (5th corrected ed.), published by the United Bible Societies (UBS), and *Novum Testamentum Graece* (28th ed., 2012), edited by Nestle and Aland. The currently renewed respect among Old Testament scholars for the Masoretic text is reflected in the ESV’s attempt, wherever possible, to translate difficult Hebrew passages as they stand in the Masoretic text rather than resorting to emendations or to finding an alternative reading in the ancient versions. In exceptional, difficult cases, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Septuagint, the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Syriac Peshitta, the Latin Vulgate, and other sources were consulted to shed possible light on the text, or, if necessary, to support a divergence from the Masoretic text. Similarly, in a few difficult cases in the New Testament, the ESV has followed a Greek text different from the text given preference in the UBS/Nestle-Aland 28th edition. Throughout, the translation team has benefited greatly from the massive textual resources that have become readily available recently, from new insights into biblical laws and culture, and from current advances in Hebrew and Greek lexicography and grammatical understanding.

Textual Footnotes

The footnotes that are included in most editions of the ESV are therefore an integral part of the ESV translation, informing the reader of textual variations and difficulties and showing how these have been resolved by the ESV translation team. In addition to this, the footnotes indicate significant alternative readings and occasionally provide an explanation for technical terms or for a difficult reading in the text.

Publishing Team

The ESV publishing team has included more than a hundred people. The fourteen-member Translation Oversight Committee benefited from the work of more than fifty biblical experts serving as Translation Review Scholars and from the comments of the more than fifty members of the Advisory Council, all of which was carried out under the auspices of the Crossway Board of Directors. This hundred-plus-member team shares a common commitment to the truth of God’s Word and to historic Christian orthodoxy and is international in scope, including leaders in many denominations.

PREFACE

To God's Honor and Praise

We know that no Bible translation is perfect; but we also know that God uses imperfect and inadequate things to his honor and praise. So to our triune God and to his people we offer what we have done, with our prayers that it may prove useful, with gratitude for much help given, and with ongoing wonder that our God should ever have entrusted to us so momentous a task.

Soli Deo Gloria!—To God alone be the glory!

The Translation Oversight Committee

JOB

Job's Character and Wealth

In the land of Uz there was a man whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. ²There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. ³He possessed 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys, and very many servants, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the east. ⁴His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. ⁵And when the days of the feast had run their course, Job would send and consecrate them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, "It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed¹ God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually.

Satan Allowed to Test Job

⁶Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan² also came among them. ⁷The LORD said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." ⁸And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?" ⁹Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason? ¹⁰Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. ¹¹But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face." ¹²And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Satan Takes Job's Property and Children

¹³Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁴and there came a messenger to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside

¹The Hebrew word *bles* is used euphemistically for *curse* in 1:5, 11; 2:5, 9 ²Hebrew *the Accuser or the Adversary*; so throughout chapters 1-2

them,¹⁵ and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them and struck down the servants¹ with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

¹⁶ While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, “The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you.” ¹⁷ While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, “The Chaldeans formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.” ¹⁸ While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, “Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house,¹⁹ and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

²⁰ Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. ²¹ And he said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”

²² In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

Satan Attacks Job’s Health

2 Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. ² And the LORD said to Satan, “From where have you come?” Satan answered the LORD and said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.” ³ And the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason.” ⁴ Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. ⁵ But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face.” ⁶ And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life.”

⁷ So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. ⁸ And he took a piece of broken pottery with which to scrape himself while he sat in the ashes.

⁹ Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die.” ¹⁰ But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?”² In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

¹ Hebrew *the young men*; also verses 16, 17 ² Or *disaster*; also verse 11

Job's Three Friends

¹¹ Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They made an appointment together to come to show him sympathy and comfort him. ¹² And when they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him. And they raised their voices and wept, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads toward heaven. ¹³ And they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

Job Laments His Birth

3 After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. ² And Job said:

- ³ “Let the day perish on which I was born,
and the night that said,
‘A man is conceived.’
- ⁴ Let that day be darkness!
May God above not seek it,
nor light shine upon it.
- ⁵ Let gloom and deep darkness claim it.
Let clouds dwell upon it;
let the blackness of the day terrify it.
- ⁶ That night—let thick darkness seize it!
Let it not rejoice among the days of the year;
let it not come into the number of the months.
- ⁷ Behold, let that night be barren;
let no joyful cry enter it.
- ⁸ Let those curse it who curse the day,
who are ready to rouse up Leviathan.
- ⁹ Let the stars of its dawn be dark;
let it hope for light, but have none,
nor see the eyelids of the morning,
- ¹⁰ because it did not shut the doors of my mother's womb,
nor hide trouble from my eyes.
- ¹¹ “Why did I not die at birth,
come out from the womb and expire?

12 Why did the knees receive me?
Or why the breasts, that I should nurse?

13 For then I would have lain down and been quiet;
I would have slept; then I would have been at rest,
14 with kings and counselors of the earth
who rebuilt ruins for themselves,
15 or with princes who had gold,
who filled their houses with silver.

16 Or why was I not as a hidden stillborn child,
as infants who never see the light?

17 There the wicked cease from troubling,
and there the weary are at rest.

18 There the prisoners are at ease together;
they hear not the voice of the taskmaster.

19 The small and the great are there,
and the slave is free from his master.

20 “Why is light given to him who is in misery,
and life to the bitter in soul,
21 who long for death, but it comes not,
and dig for it more than for hidden treasures,
22 who rejoice exceedingly
and are glad when they find the grave?

23 Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden,
whom God has hedged in?

24 For my sighing comes instead of¹ my bread,
and my groanings are poured out like water.

25 For the thing that I fear comes upon me,
and what I dread befalls me.

26 I am not at ease, nor am I quiet;
I have no rest, but trouble comes.”

Eliphaz Speaks: The Innocent Prosper

4 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said:

² “If one ventures a word with you, will you be impatient?
Yet who can keep from speaking?

¹Or like; Hebrew before

- 3 Behold, you have instructed many,
and you have strengthened the weak hands.
- 4 Your words have upheld him who was stumbling,
and you have made firm the feeble knees.
- 5 But now it has come to you, and you are impatient;
it touches you, and you are dismayed.
- 6 Is not your fear of God¹ your confidence,
and the integrity of your ways your hope?
- 7 “Remember: who that was innocent ever perished?
Or where were the upright cut off?
- 8 As I have seen, those who plow iniquity
and sow trouble reap the same.
- 9 By the breath of God they perish,
and by the blast of his anger they are consumed.
- 10 The roar of the lion, the voice of the fierce lion,
the teeth of the young lions are broken.
- 11 The strong lion perishes for lack of prey,
and the cubs of the lioness are scattered.
- 12 “Now a word was brought to me stealthily;
my ear received the whisper of it.
- 13 Amid thoughts from visions of the night,
when deep sleep falls on men,
14 dread came upon me, and trembling,
which made all my bones shake.
- 15 A spirit glided past my face;
the hair of my flesh stood up.
- 16 It stood still,
but I could not discern its appearance.
A form was before my eyes;
there was silence, then I heard a voice:
- 17 ‘Can mortal man be in the right before² God?
Can a man be pure before his Maker?
- 18 Even in his servants he puts no trust,
and his angels he charges with error;
- 19 how much more those who dwell in houses of clay,

¹ Hebrew lacks *of God* ² Or *more than*; twice in this verse

whose foundation is in the dust,
who are crushed like¹ the moth.

²⁰ Between morning and evening they are beaten to pieces;
they perish forever without anyone regarding it.

²¹ Is not their tent-cord plucked up within them,
do they not die, and that without wisdom?’

5 “Call now; is there anyone who will answer you?
To which of the holy ones will you turn?

² Surely vexation kills the fool,
and jealousy slays the simple.

³ I have seen the fool taking root,
but suddenly I cursed his dwelling.

⁴ His children are far from safety;
they are crushed in the gate,
and there is no one to deliver them.

⁵ The hungry eat his harvest,
and he takes it even out of thorns,²
and the thirsty pant³ after his⁴ wealth.

⁶ For affliction does not come from the dust,
nor does trouble sprout from the ground,

⁷ but man is born to trouble
as the sparks fly upward.

⁸ “As for me, I would seek God,
and to God would I commit my cause,

⁹ who does great things and unsearchable,
marvelous things without number:

¹⁰ he gives rain on the earth
and sends waters on the fields;

¹¹ he sets on high those who are lowly,
and those who mourn are lifted to safety.

¹² He frustrates the devices of the crafty,
so that their hands achieve no success.

¹³ He catches the wise in their own craftiness,
and the schemes of the wily are brought to a quick end.

¹⁴ They meet with darkness in the daytime
and grope at noonday as in the night.

¹Or *before* ²The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain ³Aquila, Symmachus, Syriac, Vulgate; Hebrew could be read as *and the snare pants* ⁴Hebrew *their*

- 15 But he saves the needy from the sword of their mouth
and from the hand of the mighty.
- 16 So the poor have hope,
and injustice shuts her mouth.
- 17 “Behold, blessed is the one whom God reproves;
therefore despise not the discipline of the Almighty.
- 18 For he wounds, but he binds up;
he shatters, but his hands heal.
- 19 He will deliver you from six troubles;
in seven no evil¹ shall touch you.
- 20 In famine he will redeem you from death,
and in war from the power of the sword.
- 21 You shall be hidden from the lash of the tongue,
and shall not fear destruction when it comes.
- 22 At destruction and famine you shall laugh,
and shall not fear the beasts of the earth.
- 23 For you shall be in league with the stones of the field,
and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with you.
- 24 You shall know that your tent is at peace,
and you shall inspect your fold and miss nothing.
- 25 You shall know also that your offspring shall be many,
and your descendants as the grass of the earth.
- 26 You shall come to your grave in ripe old age,
like a sheaf gathered up in its season.
- 27 Behold, this we have searched out; it is true.
Hear, and know it for your good.”²

Job Replies: My Complaint Is Just

6 Then Job answered and said:

- ² “Oh that my vexation were weighed,
and all my calamity laid in the balances!
- ³ For then it would be heavier than the sand of the sea;
therefore my words have been rash.
- ⁴ For the arrows of the Almighty are in me;
my spirit drinks their poison;
the terrors of God are arrayed against me.

¹ Or disaster ² Hebrew for yourself

5 Does the wild donkey bray when he has grass,
or the ox low over his fodder?

6 Can that which is tasteless be eaten without salt,
or is there any taste in the juice of the mallow?¹

7 My appetite refuses to touch them;
they are as food that is loathsome to me.²

8 “Oh that I might have my request,
and that God would fulfill my hope,
9 that it would please God to crush me,
that he would let loose his hand and cut me off!

10 This would be my comfort;
I would even exult³ in pain unsparing,
for I have not denied the words of the Holy One.

11 What is my strength, that I should wait?
And what is my end, that I should be patient?

12 Is my strength the strength of stones, or is my flesh bronze?

13 Have I any help in me,
when resource is driven from me?

14 “He who withholds⁴ kindness from a friend
forsakes the fear of the Almighty.

15 My brothers are treacherous as a torrent-bed,
as torrential streams that pass away,
16 which are dark with ice,
and where the snow hides itself.

17 When they melt, they disappear;
when it is hot, they vanish from their place.

18 The caravans turn aside from their course;
they go up into the waste and perish.

19 The caravans of Tema look,
the travelers of Sheba hope.

20 They are ashamed because they were confident;
they come there and are disappointed.

21 For you have now become nothing;
you see my calamity and are afraid.

22 Have I said, ‘Make me a gift’?
Or, ‘From your wealth offer a bribe for me’?

¹The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain ²The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain ³The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain ⁴Syriac, Vulgate (compare Targum); the meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain

23 Or, 'Deliver me from the adversary's hand'?
Or, 'Redeem me from the hand of the ruthless'?

24 "Teach me, and I will be silent;
make me understand how I have gone astray.

25 How forceful are upright words!
But what does reproof from you reprove?

26 Do you think that you can reprove words,
when the speech of a despairing man is wind?

27 You would even cast lots over the fatherless,
and bargain over your friend.

28 "But now, be pleased to look at me,
for I will not lie to your face.

29 Please turn; let no injustice be done.
Turn now; my vindication is at stake.

30 Is there any injustice on my tongue?
Cannot my palate discern the cause of calamity?

Job Continues: My Life Has No Hope

7 "Has not man a hard service on earth,
and are not his days like the days of a hired hand?

² Like a slave who longs for the shadow,
and like a hired hand who looks for his wages,

³ so I am allotted months of emptiness,
and nights of misery are apportioned to me.

⁴ When I lie down I say, 'When shall I arise?'
But the night is long,
and I am full of tossing till the dawn.

⁵ My flesh is clothed with worms and dirt;
my skin hardens, then breaks out afresh.

⁶ My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle
and come to their end without hope.

⁷ "Remember that my life is a breath;
my eye will never again see good.

⁸ The eye of him who sees me will behold me no more;
while your eyes are on me, I shall be gone.

⁹ As the cloud fades and vanishes,

so he who goes down to Sheol does not come up;
10 he returns no more to his house,
nor does his place know him anymore.

11 “Therefore I will not restrain my mouth;
I will speak in the anguish of my spirit;
I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.

12 Am I the sea, or a sea monster,
that you set a guard over me?

13 When I say, ‘My bed will comfort me,
my couch will ease my complaint,’

14 then you scare me with dreams
and terrify me with visions,
15 so that I would choose strangling
and death rather than my bones.

16 I loathe my life; I would not live forever.
Leave me alone, for my days are a breath.

17 What is man, that you make so much of him,
and that you set your heart on him,
18 visit him every morning
and test him every moment?

19 How long will you not look away from me,
nor leave me alone till I swallow my spit?

20 If I sin, what do I do to you, you watcher of mankind?
Why have you made me your mark?
Why have I become a burden to you?

21 Why do you not pardon my transgression
and take away my iniquity?
For now I shall lie in the earth;
you will seek me, but I shall not be.”

Bildad Speaks: Job Should Repent

8 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said:

2 “How long will you say these things,
and the words of your mouth be a great wind?

3 Does God pervert justice?
Or does the Almighty pervert the right?

4 If your children have sinned against him,

he has delivered them into the hand of their transgression.

5 If you will seek God

and plead with the Almighty for mercy,

6 if you are pure and upright,

surely then he will rouse himself for you

and restore your rightful habitation.

7 And though your beginning was small,

your latter days will be very great.

8 “For inquire, please, of bygone ages,

and consider what the fathers have searched out.

9 For we are but of yesterday and know nothing,

for our days on earth are a shadow.

10 Will they not teach you and tell you

and utter words out of their understanding?

11 “Can papyrus grow where there is no marsh?

Can reeds flourish where there is no water?

12 While yet in flower and not cut down,

they wither before any other plant.

13 Such are the paths of all who forget God;

the hope of the godless shall perish.

14 His confidence is severed,

and his trust is a spider’s web.¹

15 He leans against his house, but it does not stand;

he lays hold of it, but it does not endure.

16 He is a lush plant before the sun,

and his shoots spread over his garden.

17 His roots entwine the stone heap;

he looks upon a house of stones.

18 If he is destroyed from his place,

then it will deny him, saying, ‘I have never seen you.’

19 Behold, this is the joy of his way,

and out of the soil others will spring.

20 “Behold, God will not reject a blameless man,

nor take the hand of evildoers.

21 He will yet fill your mouth with laughter,

¹ Hebrew *house*

and your lips with shouting.

²² Those who hate you will be clothed with shame,
and the tent of the wicked will be no more.”

Job Replies: There Is No Arbiter

9 Then Job answered and said:

² “Truly I know that it is so:

But how can a man be in the right before God?

³ If one wished to contend with him,

one could not answer him once in a thousand times.

⁴ He is wise in heart and mighty in strength

—who has hardened himself against him, and succeeded?—

⁵ he who removes mountains, and they know it not,

when he overturns them in his anger,

⁶ who shakes the earth out of its place,

and its pillars tremble;

⁷ who commands the sun, and it does not rise;

who seals up the stars;

⁸ who alone stretched out the heavens

and trampled the waves of the sea;

⁹ who made the Bear and Orion,

the Pleiades and the chambers of the south;

¹⁰ who does great things beyond searching out,

and marvelous things beyond number.

¹¹ Behold, he passes by me, and I see him not;

he moves on, but I do not perceive him.

¹² Behold, he snatches away; who can turn him back?

Who will say to him, ‘What are you doing?’

¹³ “God will not turn back his anger;

beneath him bowed the helpers of Rahab.

¹⁴ How then can I answer him,

choosing my words with him?

¹⁵ Though I am in the right, I cannot answer him;

I must appeal for mercy to my accuser.¹

¹⁶ If I summoned him and he answered me,

I would not believe that he was listening to my voice.

¹Or to my judge

17 For he crushes me with a tempest
and multiplies my wounds without cause;

18 he will not let me get my breath,
but fills me with bitterness.

19 If it is a contest of strength, behold, he is mighty!
If it is a matter of justice, who can summon him?¹

20 Though I am in the right, my own mouth would condemn
me;
though I am blameless, he would prove me perverse.

21 I am blameless; I regard not myself;
I loathe my life.

22 It is all one; therefore I say,
'He destroys both the blameless and the wicked.'

23 When disaster brings sudden death,
he mocks at the calamity² of the innocent.

24 The earth is given into the hand of the wicked;
he covers the faces of its judges—
if it is not he, who then is it?

25 "My days are swifter than a runner;
they flee away; they see no good.

26 They go by like skiffs of reed,
like an eagle swooping on the prey.

27 If I say, 'I will forget my complaint,
I will put off my sad face, and be of good cheer,'

28 I become afraid of all my suffering,
for I know you will not hold me innocent.

29 I shall be condemned;
why then do I labor in vain?

30 If I wash myself with snow
and cleanse my hands with lye,

31 yet you will plunge me into a pit,
and my own clothes will abhor me.

32 For he is not a man, as I am, that I might answer him,
that we should come to trial together.

33 There is no³ arbiter between us,
who might lay his hand on us both.

34 Let him take his rod away from me,

¹ Or *who can grant me a hearing?* ² The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain ³ Or *Would that there were an*

and let not dread of him terrify me.

³⁵ Then I would speak without fear of him,
for I am not so in myself.

Job Continues: A Plea to God

10 “I loathe my life;
I will give free utterance to my complaint;
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

² I will say to God, Do not condemn me;
let me know why you contend against me.

³ Does it seem good to you to oppress,
to despise the work of your hands
and favor the designs of the wicked?

⁴ Have you eyes of flesh?
Do you see as man sees?

⁵ Are your days as the days of man,
or your years as a man’s years,

⁶ that you seek out my iniquity
and search for my sin,

⁷ although you know that I am not guilty,
and there is none to deliver out of your hand?

⁸ Your hands fashioned and made me,
and now you have destroyed me altogether.

⁹ Remember that you have made me like clay;
and will you return me to the dust?

¹⁰ Did you not pour me out like milk
and curdle me like cheese?

¹¹ You clothed me with skin and flesh,
and knit me together with bones and sinews.

¹² You have granted me life and steadfast love,
and your care has preserved my spirit.

¹³ Yet these things you hid in your heart;
I know that this was your purpose.

¹⁴ If I sin, you watch me
and do not acquit me of my iniquity.

¹⁵ If I am guilty, woe to me!
If I am in the right, I cannot lift up my head,
for I am filled with disgrace
and look on my affliction.

16 And were my head lifted up,¹ you would hunt me like a lion
and again work wonders against me.

17 You renew your witnesses against me
and increase your vexation toward me;
you bring fresh troops against me.

18 “Why did you bring me out from the womb?
Would that I had died before any eye had seen me
and were as though I had not been,
carried from the womb to the grave.

20 Are not my days few?
Then cease, and leave me alone, that I may find a little cheer

21 before I go—and I shall not return—
to the land of darkness and deep shadow,

22 the land of gloom like thick darkness,
like deep shadow without any order,
where light is as thick darkness.”

Zophar Speaks: You Deserve Worse

11 Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:

2 “Should a multitude of words go unanswered,
and a man full of talk be judged right?

3 Should your babble silence men,
and when you mock, shall no one shame you?

4 For you say, ‘My doctrine is pure,
and I am clean in God’s² eyes.’

5 But oh, that God would speak
and open his lips to you,

6 and that he would tell you the secrets of wisdom!
For he is manifold in understanding.³

Know then that God exacts of you less than your guilt deserves.

7 “Can you find out the deep things of God?
Can you find out the limit of the Almighty?

8 It is higher than heaven⁴—what can you do?
Deeper than Sheol—what can you know?

9 Its measure is longer than the earth

¹Hebrew lacks *my head* ²Hebrew *your* ³The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain ⁴Hebrew *The heights of heaven*