

# THE EXPOSITOR.

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## THE BOOK OF JOB.

### IV.—THE SECOND COLLOQUY: (CHAPTERS XV.—XXI.)

IN the First Colloquy, as we have seen, the Friends of Job had contended that the Judge of all the earth must do right, that his Providence both must, and did, even

<sup>1</sup> In resuming my exposition of the Book of Job I wish, first of all, to thank many readers of this Magazine who have shewn their interest in that work by remonstrating with me on suspending its publication for a time, or by requesting me to resume it at the earliest convenient moment; and to explain to them that it was impossible for me to reply to the letters which, for some weeks, poured in upon me daily.

And then I have to acknowledge, with natural pleasure and gratitude, an act of generous kindness such as was, I think, more common among the scholars of a by-gone generation than it is at the present day. It so happened that in writing some months since to Professor Davidson of Edinburgh University, I chanced to lament that, as he had not carried his valuable commentary on Job beyond Chapter xiv., I should henceforth have to travel on my way without the advantage and solace of his company. In his reply he at once offered me, in the frankest and most generous way, the use of any "notes" he had by him on the subsequent Chapters of the Poem,—notes of lectures delivered in his Hebrew class; and begged me to make any use of them I could, provided that I spared his modesty any public acknowledgment of my debt to him. The deed speaks for itself, and needs no praise of mine; indeed, I dare not praise it, lest I should offend. Of course I gratefully accepted his offer, though I could not accede to the condition which qualified it. And so, at the risk of having his left hand know what his right hand had done, he sent me the only note-book he could find, the contents of which covered nearly the whole of the Second Colloquy. I believe I shall make him the most acceptable return for his kindness by using freely the help he so freely offered me. Unhappily the materials he placed at my disposal are not such as I can indicate by marks of citation. Nor must he be held responsible for the interpretation I put on any passage—my interpretation of many difficult passages having been formed before I had the pleasure and advantage of consulting his notes. But, none the less, in my exposition of Chapters xv.—xxi., I have derived much valuable assistance from him; and if my readers find anything in it specially to their minds, I shall be quite content if they give the credit of it to him rather than to myself.

in this present life, mete out to every man the due reward of his deeds,—good to the good, and evil to the evil; and from this large conclusion they had drawn the particular inference that, since Job was suffering the punishment proper to guilt, he must of necessity have incurred a guilt which, though hidden from man, was known to God. In his reply to them, Job had called even their main argument in question, and had passionately denied the inference they drew from it,—indignantly asserting his innocence of the charge which they insinuated rather than alleged against him, and even impugning the justice of the God who, knowing him to be innocent, nevertheless treated him as though he were a sinner above all men.

In the Second Colloquy, the argument of the Poem is advanced a step, though only by narrowing and defining it; the Friends having by this time discovered that they had fallen into a common fault of controversialists, that of starting from premises larger and wider than they needed for their conclusion. And now, too, the tone of the speakers has sensibly changed, the Friends growing more bitter and impatient, while Job grows more calm and self-possessed.

As Job had refuted the arguments which they had adduced for the manifest and invariable equity of the Divine Providence, and as, moreover, they are not even yet prepared to charge him with this particular sin or that to his face, the Friends take closer order on narrower ground. They no longer contend that the good always receive good from the hand of God; they drop that large assertion from their argument, and are content with affirming that the evil receive evil,—their implication still being that, since Job is suffering evils

so many and strange, he must have provoked them by some secret but heinous sin. All they now contend for is that

'Tis the eternal law that where guilt is  
Sorrow shall answer it.

And they are so indignant with him for shamelessly denying his guilt, and so terrified by his bold assaults on the justice of Heaven, that, though they will not, or cannot, bring any specific charge against him, their tone grows harsh and even sarcastic. They are as much out of sympathy with him as though they themselves had never known sin and sorrow, and no longer speak to him as men

Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,  
Are pregnant to good pity.

They make no further effort to win him to repentance by dilating on the compassion and bounty of God, nor express any hope that he will confess and renounce his sin. They cease to assure him that the Divine judgments are corrective as well as punitive, or even to urge upon him the thought, so frequent on their lips in the previous Colloquy,—

Oh, sir, to wilful men,  
The injuries which they themselves procure  
Must be their schoolmasters.

At first, and while they were still in sympathy with him, they had felt it was much to be lamented that he had no such mirrors as would turn his hidden unworthiness into his eye, that he might see himself as he was; and they had tried, gently and considerately as they thought (Chap. xv. 11), to hint this hidden unworthiness to him, and to persuade him to see himself

as they saw him. But he had indignantly repelled their insinuations: his constant reply to them had been,

You would have me seek into myself  
For that which is not in me.

So that now they felt driven to the resolve: Since he cannot see himself, we must discover to him that of himself which even yet he knows not of.<sup>1</sup>

In his replies to the Friends there is a corresponding change both in the argument and in the tone of Job. He still calls on them to charge him openly with the sins they still covertly suggest, to *prove* the guilt they assume. But, besides this, he meets them victoriously on the narrower ground of argument which they have taken up. So soon as he clearly sees what they would be at, he denies that the Divine Providence is retributive even in so far as the wicked are concerned. In a very noble and striking passage (Chap. xxi.) he affirms that, so far from being the most miserable, they are often the most fortunate and untroubled of men,—happy in their life, honoured in their death. And it is while he is brooding over this strange mystery that he is once more driven, and driven now once for all, to the conviction that, since this life is not retributive, there must be a retributive life to come (Chap. xix. 23-27).

Another train of thought runs through his speeches in this Second Colloquy, which fully accounts for the happy change we detect in his tone. Even in his first encounter with the Friends he had averred his persuasion that God knew he was not guilty (Chap. x. 7)—as indeed God Himself confesses that He did; and that,

<sup>1</sup> See the dialogue between Brutus and Cassius in "Julius Cæsar." Act i. Scene 2.

could he only gain access to his Divine Judge, he had no fear lest he should be not acquitted by Him (Chap. ix. 32-35, and Chap. xiii. 14-19). And now, though he still cannot see God, he is sure that "somewhere in the wide heavens" God is watching him, and testifying to his innocence (Chap. xvi. 19). He is so sure of it that he confidently calls on God Himself to be a Surety for him with Himself, since none other will stand sponsor for him (Chap. xvii. 3). Formerly, and for moments, he had lost hope of himself, because he had lost touch with God, because he doubted whether he any longer dwelt even "in the suburbs" of God's good pleasure. But now the conviction is establishing itself in his mind that, though he cannot see God, God can see him, though he cannot make out how God can be true to him, nevertheless He *is* true—so true as to be both his Witness and his Surety—what wonder is it that his tone grows more calm and assured? True, men have failed and disappointed him, but he is growing used to that disappointment; the first shock of it has spent itself, and he expects but little of them. True, even God Himself had failed and disappointed him, but, as he begins to see more clearly, it was only the phantom God of the current theology, not the real God who sits in heaven ruling the lives and destinies of men. *He* was true and just, and always had been, always would be, just and true. How natural, then, that throughout this Colloquy Job should turn more and more from the men who had failed him, revolt from the dogmas which had misrepresented God to him, and cast himself on the God who could never fail him! It was impossible to convince the Friends of his "integrity;" his assertions and pleas only confirmed them in the false con-

clusion they had inferred, not from his words and deeds, but from their own theories and conjectures. Say what he would, they did but

construe things, after their fashion,  
Clean from the purpose of the things themselves.

Why, then, should he trouble himself to argue with them, or be overmuch incensed by insinuations which sprang from their own ignorance, and even ran right in the teeth of all they knew about him?

More and more, therefore, he appeals, from the men who had so misconstrued and so "misquoted" him, to the God who was watching him, and testifying to him, in heaven. Their inferences and reproaches were built in the mere air of speculation, not on any solid foundation, nor compelled to square with the facts. And hence there is less vehemence, less passion and excitement, in his tone. Not that he is altogether free from them even yet. His soul is still vexed

with passions of some difference  
Which give a soil to his behaviour.

At times he is sad, as sad as ever, as impatient of truisms and platitudes, as fierce in resentment of the wrong done him both by God and by man. But, on the whole, he is calming down; the waves do not run so high, nor the wind beat so vehemently: the gloom, once so dense and impenetrable, is now relieved by broken and transient lights, nay, even by fixed stars of hope which shine on though at times the rolling clouds may hide them from his sight. As we study this Second Colloquy, in short, we shall come on many illustrations of Wordsworth's fine lines:—

Within the soul a faculty abides  
 That with interpositions, which would hide  
 And darken, so can deal, that they become  
 Contingencies of pomp ; and serve to exalt  
 Her native brightness.

I.—ELIPHAZ TO JOB (CHAPTER XV.).

Eliphaz, the wisest, and probably the oldest, of the three Friends is, as usual, the first to speak. As is also usual with the speakers in this great controversy, he commences with personalities, and only gradually approaches his new theme. And, still as usual, his speech is at once more thoughtful, more artistic, and even more considerate than that of either Bildad or Zophar. But even *his* spirit is hot within him ; and though he so far tries to be fair that he will advance no opinion against Job for which he cannot adduce higher authority than his own, he evidently intends Job to see his own likeness in the sombre picture he now paints of the wicked man, and endeavours with his whole force to prove that, if Job's conscience still pronounces him innocent, that can only be because he has paltered with it till it has grown "subtle," inaccurate, insincere. He had been content before to deduce Job's guilt from general propositions, from the accepted dogmas of the time ; *now* he needs no argument to prove it, for Job's own words, his passionate defence of himself and his equally passionate impeachment of the justice of God, render his guilt self-evident. Why should Job assail the current standards of thought and action if he were not conscious that they condemned him ?

If we would trace the continuity of the Argument, if we would see how many strands of thought are carried over from the First Colloquy into the Second, we

must be at the pains of marking the point from which Eliphaz starts. That point is the claim, advanced on both sides, to a pre-eminent acquaintance with the Divine Wisdom. In the last speech of the Friends in the First Colloquy (Chap. xi.), Zophar had so magnified the wisdom of God against Job, as to imply his own greater insight into it. If Job saw as far as *he* did into the Wisdom which shapes the lot and fate of men, whatever his conscience might say of his innocence, he would nevertheless have been dumb; he would not have opened his mouth before God, much less against God. In that inscrutable Wisdom, compared with which even the wisest of men was "without understanding" and of a "hollow heart," lay the secret of the strange and sudden calamities with which Job had been overwhelmed. Could God but be induced to come forth from his place and manifest his wisdom, even Job himself would be compelled to admit that God had not "remembered all his guilt," had not punished him to the height of his ill-desert.

All this seems to have stung Job deeply, since it implied that, as compared with the Friends, he was ignorant both of himself and of God, and most of all, probably, because this intolerable assumption of superiority so evidently sprang from an utter want of sympathy with him in the agony and passion of his living death. Hence through his reply to Zophar there runs a thread of perpetual sarcasm against this assumed superiority, blended with pathetic lamentations over the depth to which he must have sunk before they could have dared to take this tone with him. He is never weary of ringing the changes on "the wisdom" which was the keynote and master-word of Zophar's unfortunate oration.



“No doubt *wisdom* will die with you,” he begins (Chap. xii. 2, 3); “but I have understanding as well as ye: I fall not beneath you.” “With God is wisdom,” he continues and admits (Chap. xii. 13); “counsel and understanding are his:” and proceeds to give a far larger and loftier delineation than they were able to reach of the Sovereign Intelligence which moulds the lot of men, and conducts all the changes and events of time to their predestined close. “Lo, all this mine eye hath seen,” he goes on (Chap. xiii. 1, 2, 12); “mine ear hath heard and noted it; what ye know I know also.” *And, more:* “For ye but patch up old saws;” “Your maxims are maxims of ashes, your strongholds strongholds of clay;” “Worthless bunglers are ye all.” Their only hope of proving themselves wise is to be dumb; all he can promise them is that if they hold their peace, *that* shall be counted to them for wisdom (Chap. xiii. 5).

It is from this point that Eliphaz now starts, asking (*Chapter xv. 2*), “Will a *wise man* answer with windy lore, and fill his breast with the east wind?” Job’s claim to wisdom is hardly borne out (*Verses 3 and 4*) by his mode of argument. Judged by his own words, he was more than unwise; he was impious and irreverent: his own mouth condemned him (*Verses 5 and 6*). And this claim to superior wisdom—from whence did he derive it? Was he the Adam of the race, the first born of men (*Verse 7*)? Had he a seat in the Celestial Divan; and, listening to the secret counsels of Heaven, had he monopolized wisdom to himself (*Verse 8*)? And, in fine, was he wiser than the fathers, the sages of the purest race, whose wisdom was as uncontaminated as their blood (*Verses 9-11*)?

His whole demeanour was of a piece with this monstrous claim to superior, or even to exclusive, wisdom. His bearing toward them, the Friends, was unbecoming, for they were bringing him not their own words simply, but "the consolations of God." His bearing toward God was still more unbecoming, for he had launched wild and passionate charges against Him, impugning the Divine justice and asserting his own integrity: and yet how could any man be pure in God's sight? Even the heavens, the purest work of God's hands, were not pure to Him: how much less, then, a creature so impure as man (*Verses 12-16*)!

These personalities disposed of, Eliphaz proceeds to his main theme, and expounds that mystery of suffering which is no longer a mystery to him. He does not now, as formerly, trouble himself to contend for the universal equity of the Divine Providence; he limits himself to the sterner half of it, that which metes out punishment to the guilty. While he still spins round in the same circle of thought as before, he confines himself to the darker segment of it. And in his treatment of his theme he betrays the very bitterness of spirit which we have detected in the personalities which introduce it. The one sign of relenting and grace he shews is "the polite indirection" of his words. As in the earlier Colloquy he had fallen back on a Divine Oracle, so now, still loath to advance his own unsupported opinions against those of Job, he falls back on the teaching of a pure and unvarying Tradition (*Verses 17-35*). With an air of relief, of triumph even, he adduces the sayings of certain sages, certain

good old chronicles

Who had so long walk'd hand in hand with time,

that their words are to be received as of an Oracular authority. As the unbroken voice of Antiquity is with him, he feels that,

Instructed by the antiquary times,  
He must, he is, he cannot but be wise ;

wiser than Job, though Job had claimed to be wiser than he. From these ancient maxims, these "grand-sire phrases," he draws the materials of a most sombre and lurid picture of the sinner and his course—of the terrors that haunt him, of the chastisement that falls on him, of the end that awaits him ; intending that Job should see in this picture at least some dim resemblance to himself. And, what is very notable, for it shews how much more stern and bitter even Eliphaz has grown, he closes his harangue without a single invitation to repentance, without a word of sympathy or a suggestion of hope.

#### CHAPTER XV.

1. *Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite and said :*
2.       *Should the wise man answer with windy lore,  
      And fill his breast with the East wind,*
3.       *Reasoning with words that cannot profit,  
      And arguments which prove nothing ?*
4.       *Nay, thou dost make piety void  
      And restrain devotion before God :*
5.       *For thine own mouth proclaimeth thine iniquity,  
      And thou chooseth the tongue of the subtle ;*
6.       *Thine own mouth convicteth thee, and not I,  
      And thine own lips testify against thee.*
7.       *Wast thou born first, O man,  
      And wast thou brought forth before the hills ?*
8.       *Hast thou listened in the Council of God,  
      And dost thou engross wisdom to thyself ?*
9.       *What knowest thou which we know not,  
      Or what dost thou understand and it is not with us ?*

10. *With us are both the aged and the hoary-headed  
Who are older than thy sire.*
11. *Are the consolations of God too little for thee,  
And the words we gently speak?*
12. *Whither doth thine heart carry thee away,  
And at what do thine eyes kindle,*
13. *That thou frettest thy spirit against God,  
And scatterest such speeches from thy mouth*
14. *What is man that he should be pure,  
Or the woman-born that he should be righteous?*
15. *Behold He putteth no trust in his Holy Ones,  
And the heavens are not pure in his eyes:*
16. *How much more loathsome and unclean is man,  
Who drinketh in iniquity like water!*
17. *I will shew thee; hearken thou to me,  
For what I have seen will I declare---*
18. *That which the sages have openly taught,  
Handing it down from their fathers;*
19. *To whom alone the land was given,  
And no stranger passed through their midst:*
20. *“The wicked trembleth through all his days,  
Through the many years reserved to the oppressor:*
21. *Voices of terror resound in his ears,  
Even in times of peace the spoiler falleth upon him;*
22. *He is never sure that he shall come back out of darkness,  
And he is watched for by the sword:*
23. *He roameth after bread [asking,] ‘Where is it?’  
He knoweth that a day of darkness is close at hand;*
24. *Distress and anguish affright him,  
They prevail over him like a king equipped for onslaught,*
25. *Because he stretched out his hand against God,  
And hardened himself against the Almighty,*
26. *Ran upon Him with stiffened neck,  
With the thick bosses of his shields;*
27. *Because he covered his face with fatness,  
And folded flesh on his flanks:*
28. *And he dwelt in desolate cities,  
In houses which none should inhabit,  
Ordained to be ruins.*

29. *He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance last,  
Nor shall his wealth weigh upon the earth;*
30. *He shall never quit darkness:  
A flame shall burn up his branches,  
And at a puff of breath shall he pass away.*
31. *Let him not trust in vanity; he is deceived;  
For vanity shall be his recompense:*
32. *It shall come upon him ere his day be spent,  
And his branch shall not be green;*
33. *He shall shake off his grapes sour like the vine,  
And shed his blossom like the olive:*
34. *For the household of the impure shall be desolate,  
And a fire shall devour the tents of injustice;*
35. *They conceived mischief, and shall bring forth iniquity;  
Yea, their breast frameth deceit."*

*Verse 2.*—Job had cast ridicule on the pretensions to eminent wisdom advanced by the Friends, especially by so "slight and unmeritable" a man as Zophar, and had claimed a higher wisdom than theirs. Hence Eliphaz opens by demanding whether it was like a wise man to answer with words as blustering as the wind, as noxious as the east wind. In *Verse 3* he translates his own metaphor, and plainly charges Job with having used unreasonable and unprofitable arguments such as no wise man would have condescended to employ.

*Verse 4.*—Job was not only unwise; he was also irreverent, irreligious. By his wild and whirling speeches he, whom men held to be a model of piety, brought religion itself into contempt, since he assailed one of its fundamental assumptions—that God is just, and so diminished that *devout meditation*, that reverent thoughtfulness, that awe and modesty of spirit, which becomes man in the presence of God.

*Verses 5 and 6.*—There is no longer any need, there-

fore, to scrutinize his life for proof of his guilt, to produce the definite charges which he had so passionately demanded. His own mouth has proved the guilt which his Friends had inferred from the calamities that had befallen him. All that they had ever alleged or implied was now demonstrated by his own unruly and unruled member, by his violent and irreverent tongue.

*Verses 7-10.*—But even yet Eliphaz cannot get out of his mind the slighting way in which Job had flung back—in the rough question, “Who knows not such things as these?”—the pretensions of the Friends to instruct him in the Divine Wisdom; and he here returns to the point again, demanding, in three ironical questions, how Job came by that pre-eminence in wisdom which he assumed. (1) Was he the first man God made? (2) Had he sat in the Cabinet of Heaven? And (3) how could he possibly be wiser than they, when they had on their side the highest and most ancient, and therefore most indubitable, authority? The question, “Wast thou born first of, or among, men?” rests on the tradition that “the first-created man, because coming straight from the hand of God, had the most direct and profound insight into the mysteries of the world which came into existence at the same time with himself.” Schlottman compares with it the ironical proverb of the Hindoos: “Yes, indeed, he was the first man: no wonder that he is so wise!”

The figure of the second question is, of course, taken from the divan of an Oriental prince, in which state secrets were discussed; and the sarcastic insinuation of it is, obviously, that no man could be so wise as Job pretended to be, no man could affect a monopoly of

wisdom, unless he had frequented the council-chamber of the Almighty. It is not unnatural or infrequent, perhaps, for a man whose claim to pre-eminent wisdom has been traversed to charge his opponent with advancing a similar claim ; but it shews how the spirit of Eliphaz had been chafed, that he should now resent in Job a claim to wisdom which he would once have cheerfully conceded, and will no longer

Give him allowance for the better man ;

that he should misconstrue Job's claim to an equal or higher wisdom than his own into a claim to the monopoly of wisdom : and, above all, that, instead of bearing with his friend's infirmity and sympathizing in his sorrows, he should take this mocking and sarcastic tone with him.

Considering how conclusively Job had dealt with Bildad's appeal to antiquity in Chapter xii. Verses 11-13, it is a little wonderful that, in his third question, Eliphaz should have ventured on a similar appeal ; and that he should repeat and elaborate it in the closing Verses of this Chapter. But for the present he does not dwell on it.

He passes from it, in *Verse 11*, to reproach Job with having rejected "the consolations of God," by which he means the assurances which, in God's name, they had given him in the previous Colloquy of deliverance from his misery, restoration to happy conditions, and a tranquil old age, if only he would confess and renounce his guilt ; and with having rejected these consolations although they had urged them upon him in so gentle and considerate a spirit. Some gentleness and consideration they had unquestionably shewn *him from*

*their point of view*; but as that point of view, the assumption of his guilt, was an intolerable insult to him, and was, moreover, quite wide of the facts, it is no wonder that their "consolations" had proved too small for him.

As Eliphaz thus complacently purrs on, forgetting that "whatever praises itself but in the deed, devours the deed in the praise," possibly some gesture of natural astonishment and indignation on the part of Job arrests him, and reminds him once more of the hard and impious speeches which Job had launched against God; for (*Verses 12 and 13*) he cries, "Whither doth thine heart carry thee away, and at what do thine eyes kindle" with anger? Why, instead of accepting the consolations of God, dost thou fret thy spirit against Him, and respond to our gentleness so ungently? Plainly, the two men are moving along parallel lines—Eliphaz on the assumption of Job's guilt, and Job on the conviction of his own innocence; and, so long as they keep to them, can never meet. They do but chafe each other even when they try to be most reasonable and considerate. Let Eliphaz state his conviction of Job's guilt as indirectly and tenderly as he will, he can but inflame the anger of Job, since it is *that*, and not the form in which it is put, which he resents.

In *Verse 14* Eliphaz quotes Job's own words (Chap. xiv. 1-4) about the inherited and inevitable impurity of man that is born of woman,—striking him with his own weapon, as it were, and convicting him out of his own mouth. In *Verse 15* Eliphaz quotes himself (Chap. iv. 18) on the impurity of the very heavens in God's sight, and on the frailty of the very angels—as if to shew that Job had not yet mastered the very first



lesson he had been taught. And, in *Verse* 16, he draws the inevitable inference from these premises, viz., that if the heavens and the angels are not impeccable, how much less man, who so lusts after iniquity that he drinks it in like water. In short, he repeats the old slander, the Satanic slander, against man, in order that he may thus justify the ways of God.

Of course he intends Job to make a personal application of this terrible description of the depravity of the human race, to see his own face in this distorting-glass, and to conclude, let his reason and conscience say what they will, that he *must* be loathsome and unclean before God, possessed by an insatiable thirst for iniquity. How gross the libel, we know; for while Eliphaz was depicting Job as loathsome and unclean to God, God was boasting of him as a perfect man and an upright, who, so far from lusting after evil, eschewed it. And what we know, Job felt. All the diatribes and libels and sarcasms of the Friends were but as a hot malignant wind, against which he must strive as best he could. He did not deny the depravity of man; *i.e.*, he did not deny that in every man there is that which is corrupt and impure; but neither would he deny that, by some men at least, these tendencies to impurity and corruption have been checked and subdued. Men might be unrighteous, but they might also be righteous. Conscious that he himself was upright, he would not draw the inference to which Eliphaz urged him, nor admit that, since all men were impure, he was therefore an open and convicted sinner.

In the second section of his harangue, Eliphaz returns to and expands the point he had touched and

dropped in *Verse* 10. He formally appeals to the wisdom of antiquity, to the sages of old time—just as certain modern divines constantly hark back on “the fathers”—hoping, I suppose, that he may handle this argument more successfully than Bildad had done in Chapter viii., or that at least he might reinforce it by citing another, and a more authoritative, series of traditions. For, while Bildad appealed to the wise men of Egypt, Eliphaz presents a string of proverbs handed down from the ancient sages of the purest-blooded Arabian races, with whom, as himself a Temanite, he would naturally be familiar. As in his first speech he had given weight to his argument by citing a mysterious Oracle from which he had learned that no man can be pure in the sight of his Maker; so now he gives an added force to his argument that the wicked, even when they be in great prosperity, have, and know that they have, a terrible doom impending over them, by quoting from the Arab “fathers” the maxims in which they had expressed this view of the lot of the wicked. Consul Wetzstein affirms that the dogma which these “sayings” illustrate is still a ruling theme of Arab proverb and tradition. Such a feat as stringing together a collection of ancient Arabian “sentences,” and converting them to his own use, is quite in the manner of our Poet, to whom such literary *tours de force* were very dear.<sup>1</sup> And, as we shall see, there are several indications in these sayings themselves that they are of Arabian origin. But, whatever their derivation, they are the answer of Eliphaz to Job’s contention (Chap. xii. Verses 6 *et seq.*) that it is the wicked who prosper, and the pious who are a mark for all the slings and arrows of Misfortune.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Chap. iv. 10, 11, Chap. vi. 15-20, and Chap. viii. 8-18.

*Verses 17-19* are simply the solemn preface which Eliphaz prefixes to his catena of quotations, and correspond to *Verses 12-16* of Chapter iv., in which he introduces the Oracle. But in *Verse 19* there is a markedly Arab touch; for to this day the Arabs lay no less stress on purity of descent than Eliphaz does. And, indeed, it is now admitted that the freer a race is from intermixtures, the purer are its traditions. Obviously Eliphaz insists on this point in order to give weight to the quotations he is about to adduce. When the race from which he sprang was in quiet possession of their own land, before they had corrupted the purity of their blood by intermarriage with other races, they would stand nearer to the fountains of Original Tradition, and would be more likely to keep that living water uncontaminated.

Then, from *Verse 20* onward, follow these maxims of a wise and pure Antiquity. Most of them are very simple, and carry with them the air of a time when men took less subtle and complicated, but also less accurate, views of human life and destiny than we may find even in the Book of Job itself. No one had then questioned the narrow and insufficient dogma, that good comes only and always to the good, and evil only and always to the evil. The moral colours had not then been differentiated; everything was either very white or very black. I need not enter on a formal and detailed exposition of sayings which, for the most part, explain themselves. In *Verses 20-24* we have a graphic description of the uneasy and apprehensive conscience of the sinner. In *Verses 25-27* this restless and haunted conscience is traced to his full-fed and arrogant opposition to the will of God.

All this is simple and plain; but in *Verse* 28 the sinner's constant and climbing fear is attributed to a second capital sin, or, rather, to the very climax of his sins. *He dwelt in desolate cities, in houses which none should inhabit, ordained to be ruins*; and as to our English ears there is no sound of offence in such a sin as that, a few words of explanation become requisite. What the Poet means is, I apprehend, that the wicked man he is describing has shewn his contempt for the Divine Will by dwelling in houses or cities which God has judged and cursed for the crimes of their former inhabitants. Such an act as this was held by the Arabs, as by most Oriental races, to be nothing short of a public and deliberate defiance of the Almighty, and is so held to this day. As one who yields to inordinate passion is cast out from the fellowship of the Arabian tribes, and stigmatized as "one who is beaten in his conflict with God;" as no one of them dare pronounce the name of Satan, because God has cursed *him*, without adding, "God's ban on him!" so no man presumes to inhabit places which he believes God has doomed to desolation. Such villages and cities, ruined by frequent judgments, are common in the Arabian Desert. They are held to be places where *the Dîn Ibrâhîm*, *i.e.*, "the religion of Abraham," has been notoriously transgressed. The city of *Nigr*, in Arabia Petræa, for instance, which consists of thousands of dwellings, some richly ornamented, cut in the solid rock, has this doom upon it. Without looking round, and muttering prayers for the Divine protection, the wandering Arab hurries through its deserted streets, as do the caravans of pilgrims on their way to Mecca, not daring to linger, lest they should provoke the wrath

of Heaven. To *dwell* in such a city would be regarded with horror, as a sin so insolent and enormous as to be almost incredible.<sup>1</sup>

There may have been such buildings, or even such villages, on Job's vast estate; but, embittered as he was, we can hardly suppose that Eliphaz meant to insinuate that Job had been guilty of a sin at once so easily discovered and so monstrously opposed to all the pious instincts of the time, as to dwell in them, or even to cause his dependants to dwell in them. Eliphaz is quoting, and he might well quote a proverb so picturesque without intending any directly personal application of it. At the same time it is only too probable he meant to insinuate that the enormous and unparalleled calamities of Job suggested that he had been guilty of some sin equally offensive to God.

In *Verse 31* there is a play on words—or rather a play on a word, a *double entendre*—such as is common in Hebrew poetry. The word I have translated “vanity” covers both “evil” and “calamity;” it emphasizes the unreality or nothingness of opposition to the Divine Will and law and order. “Powerful or successful as it may seem for a time, it must prove in the end unprofitable” and disastrous. And under this play on the word “vanity” a Hebrew would instantly detect the meaning that vanity in one sense was to be recompensed by vanity in another, that sin has calamity for its wage.

*Verse 32* simply states the fact that this wage for the day is commonly paid *before evening*.

In *Verse 33* we have images familiar to Eastern

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted for this note to Consul Wetzstein, as quoted by Delitzsch *in loco*.

literature, and taken straight from facts which every man might observe for himself. The vine, in its earlier stages especially, and always when it fruits, is very tender, very open to various forms of disease, in which its unripened grapes fall like leaves in autumn. And the Syrian olive, which bears copiously in its first, third, and fifth year, rests from bearing in its second, fourth, and sixth. But it blossoms even during the years of rest, the blossom falling off before the berry is formed. "In spring one may see the bloom, on the slightest breath of wind, shed like snowflakes, and perishing by millions." <sup>1</sup> Such, so transient and so unprofitable, is the life of the wicked; evanescence and unfruitfulness are written on his lot: so at least thought Eliphaz and the authorities on whom he leaned, surely with a strange blindness to many sufficiently patent facts.

According to him and them, too, as we learn from *Verse 34*, every trace of the wicked man perishes; not a vestige of him is left to tell of all the labour he did under the sun, or of the doom which fell upon him,—a statement even more untrue to the facts of human life and history than that which preceded it.

S. COX.

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*THE SAMARITAN ELEMENT IN THE GOSPELS  
AND ACTS.*

I DO not purpose in this paper, tempting as the subject is, to take a general survey of the history of the Samaritans, or to discuss the many problems that connect themselves with their earlier or later history. I shall not touch the questions whether they might, as they

<sup>1</sup> Tristram's "Natural History of the Bible."