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# Chiasmus in Job: A Text-Critical

# and Philological Criterion

Failure to appreciate the chiastic word order may account for Otto Eissfeldt's[1] unsatisfactory translation of *UT*, 51: VII: 37–39:

> *wy'n aliyn b'l*
> *ib b'l lm tḫš*     a:b
> *lm tḫš nṭq dmrn*     b:a'
>
> Und es hob an Aliyan Baal:
> Ihr Feinde Hadads, warum meidet(?) ihr,
> warum meidet(?) ihr die Waffe Demarus?

In the second and third cola, the position of *lm tḫš* suggests a chiastic arrangement; this means that disputed *nṭq dmrn* should be the close semantic counterpart of *ib b'l*, "O foes of Baal!" in an a:b:b:a' sequence:

> And Puissant Baal replied:
> O foes of Baal, why do you flee,
> why do you flee, O assailants of Demarous?

Since it is now apparent from *UT*, 2001: 7–8, that *dmrn* is an epithet of *b'l*—and that is the point[2] Eissfeldt wanted to make—it becomes very probable that the one remaining uncertain word, *nṭq*, is a synonym of *ib*, "foes." Eissfeldt interprets *nṭq* as the noun *Waffe*, but the apparent chiastic parallelism of *nṭq dmrn* and *ib b'l* suggests that *nṭq* are persons, hence to be parsed as a qal participle of *nṭq*, from which derive Ugar *nṭq*, "weapon," "ballista," "missile," and Heb *nēšeq* or *nešeq*, "weapons," "missiles." When *nṭq dmrn* is rendered "assailants of Baal," the verb *tḫš* can be identified with Heb *ḥûš*, "to hasten, make haste, flee."

The hypothesis proposed in this paper may be stated thus: when the poet uses the chiastic word order, the synonymy of the parallel members tends to be stricter than when the order is not chiastic.[3] It bids fair to alleviate the ambiguity in numerous verses of the book of Job; in several verses (e.g., 34: 6) it elicits sense for the first time. To bring out more clearly the chiastic structure of the original, the translations will be very literal, hewing to the Hebrew word order as closely as English idiom will permit.

Job 21: 9 may be chosen as the first example because it focuses the problem sharply:

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|---|---|
| *bottêhem šālôm mippāḥad* | a:b |
| *wᵉlōʾ šēbeṭ ʾᵉlôᵃh ᶜᵃlêhem* | b':a' |

In their houses is prosperity without fear,
and the rod of God is not upon them.

Uncertainty touches only the first colon; the phrase *bottêhem šālôm mippāḥad* may be parsed either in the light of Job 5: 24, *wᵉyādaᶜlā kî šālôm ʾoholekā*, "You shall know that your tent is safe" (RSV), or, in view of its immediate counterpart, *wᵉlōʾ šēbeṭ ʾᵉlôᵃh ᶜᵃlêhem*, "and the rod of God is not upon them," a nominal sentence consisting of a subject and prepositional phrase. If we assume a similar nominal sentence in the first colon and a chiastic arrangement of the entire verse, then ambivalent *bottêhem* answers to prepositional *ᶜᵃlêhem* both in function as well as in sound. Hebrew grammars and lexica admit the wide prepositional use of *bêt* when in the construct state—that is, it need not be preceded by the preposition *bᵉ*.[4] A close parallel is Prov 15: 6, *bêt ṣaddîq ḥōsen rāb*, "In the house of the just man is much treasure," where the apparatus of *BHK*[3], "1 c Targ *bᵉbêt*," may safely be ignored.[5] Equally to be declined are proposals to emend *šālôm* to *šālᵉmû* on the authority of LXX, Syr, and Vulg (so Siegfried, Duhm), or to *šālw* (Houbigant), or to *šᵉlēwîm* (Perles).

The assonance of parallel *bottêhem*, "in their houses," and *ᶜᵃlêhem*, "upon them," suggests that in the preceding verse (Job 21: 8) *lipnêhem*, "in front of them," was intended to balance assonant *lᵉᶜênêhem*, "before their eyes." Hence the *athnach* of MT should be advanced from *ᶜimmam* to *lipnêhem* and Job 21: 8 be read and scanned as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| *zarᶜām nākôn lipnêhem* | a:b:c |
| *ᶜammîm (MT ᶜimmām) (wᵉ) ṣeʾᵉṣāʾêhem lᵉᶜênêhem* | b':a':c' |

Their progeny is settled in front of them,
vigorous is their offspring before their eyes.

In MT the line seems overlong, and *BHK*[3] suggests either the deletion of *lipnêhem* or the transfer of *ᶜimmām*, repointed *ᶜammām*, to the second colon. When, however, *lipnêhem* and *lᵉᶜênêhem* are seen to balance each other, the chiastic arrangement of the remaining four words comes into view. Since *zarᶜām*, "their progeny," obviously pairs with *ṣeʾᵉṣāʾêhem*, "their offspring," one may conclude that uncertain *ᶜmm* chiastically answers to participial *nākôn*, "settled." Accordingly, vocalize as plural adjective *ᶜammîm* from the root *ᶜmm, "to be vigorous, sagacious."[6] Consonantal *ᶜmm* would then be another instance of *scriptio defectiva*, so characteristic of the text of Job.[7]

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Job 6: 15 | *ʾaḥay bāgᵉdû kᵉmô nāḥal* | a:b:c |
| | *kaʾᵃpîq nᵉḥālîm yaᶜᵃbōrû* | c':b' |

My brothers have been treacherous as a wadi,
like a source of wadis they have vanished.

The ambivalent word here is *yaᶜᵃbōrû*. Is its subject *ʾaḥay*, "my brothers," as understood by KJV, "My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, *and* as the stream of brooks they pass away," or is it *nᵉḥālîm*, "wadis," as construed by RSV, "My brethren are treacherous as a torrent bed, as freshets that pass away," and by NEB, "But my brothers have been treacherous as a mountain stream, like the channels of streams that pass away." The latter construction assumes a relative clause with the relative pronoun unexpressed—no problem in the elliptical style of Job—whereas the chiastic position of the synonymous middle members suggests that the verbs are also chiastically arranged, with *ʾaḥay*, "my brothers," the subject of both verbs. It may be noted in passing that the *qtl/yqtl* sequence of verbs follows Canaanite practice (here both verbs refer to the same past time),[8] and the *kᵉmô/ka* parallelism reflects the balance of *km/k*, witnessed in such texts as *UT*, 51: IV: 51.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Job 8: 5 | *ʾim ʾattāh tᵉšaḥēr ʾel ʾēl* | a:b:c |
| | *wᵉ ʾel šadday tithannān* | c':b' |

If you will seek after El,
and to Shaddai make supplication.

Since piel *šiḥēr* elsewhere always governs the accusative, some scholars have proposed either the emendation of first-colon *ʾel* to *ʾet* (cf. *BHK*[3]) or its deletion.[9] Others who retain *ʾel* tend to explain it on the analogy of *dāraš ʾel*, "to seek after,"[10] but a more immediate explanation is prompted

by the chiastic ordering of the verse. To make the chiasmus with *'el šadday* perfect, the author chose a construction that would yield *'el 'ēl*. Here then would be an instance where the appreciation of Job's chiastic style proves text-critically valuable.

> Job 11: 14  *'im 'āwen b$^e$yād$^e$kā harḥiqēhû*        a:b:c
> *w$^e$'al taškēn b$^e$'oholekā 'awlāh*        c':b':a'
>
> If iniquity is in your hand, put it far away,
> and permit no evil to dwell in your tent.[11]

Consonantal *tškn* lends itself to two interpretations. Though MT construed it as hiphil *taškēn*, the ancient versions read it as qal *tiškōn*. The application of the stylistic principle of chiasmus sustains MT hiphil *taškēn* against qal *tiškōn* of the ancient versions. Since the line is apparently patterned in an a:b:c::c':b':a' sequence, hiphil *taškēn* makes an apter counterpart to hiphil *harḥiqēhû*, "put it far away," than does qal *tiškōn*, which involves a shift from the second person of the first colon to the third person in the latter half of the verse. This shift partially obscures the chiastic pattern.

> Job 12: 10  *'a̯šer b$^e$yādô nepeš kol ḥāy*        a:b:c
> *w$^e$rûạḥ kol bāśār 'ōšō (MT b$^e$śar 'iš)*        c':b'
>
> That from his hand is the soul of every living being,
> and the spirit in all flesh is his gift.

Proposed in 1965, and confirmed by a reading from Qumran,[12] the reading is further sustained by the stylistic observation that when the order is chiastic, the synonymy tends to be stricter. In the present instance, this means that consonantal *'š* should semantically balance *b$^e$yādô*, "from his hand," a balance that is realized when it is vocalized *'ōšō* and derived from *'wš*, "to give, donate," a well-documented root,[13] witnessed in Ugar *ušn*, "gift." MT *'iš* would thus have stemmed from an original defectively written *'š*, which, on the basis of Arab *'awsu*, "gift," and Ugar *ušn*, "gift," I would now vocalize as *'ōšō*, to balance *yādô*, and to avoid two accents falling on two successive syllables; see below on Job 41: 7.

> Job 13: 12  *zikrōnêkem mišlê 'ēper*        a:b
> *l$^e$gabbê ḥōmer gabbêkem*        b':a'
>
> Your maxims are ashen aphorisms,
> indeed defenses of clay your defenses.

Since the order of the two cola is chiastic, one may infer that the syntactic elements in each colon are similar. The first colon is a nominal sentence

consisting of subject and predicate. One thus looks for a predicate followed by a subject in the second colon. These emerge when *l$^e$* of *l$^e$gabbê* is construed as the emphatic *lamedh*,[14] "indeed," frequent in nominal sentences, rather than as the preposition.[15]

> Job 15: 18  *'a̯šer ḥ$^a$kāmîm yaggîdû*        a:b:c
> *w$^e$lō' kiḥ$^a$dûm 'a̯bôtām (MT kiḥ$^a$dû mē'a̯bôtām)*        c':b'
>
> What wise men have told,
> and their fathers did not conceal from them.

The chiastic positioning suggests that second colon *'a̯bôtām* should be the subject of the second colon, just as *ḥ$^a$kāmîm*, "wise men," is the subject of the first colon. This becomes possible when prepositional *mē* of MT *mē'a̯bôtām* is attached to the preceding word, as has long been suggested, and parsed as the dative suffix. In the two transitive[16] verbs *yaggîdû* and *kiḥ$^a$dûm* one notices the *yqtl-qtl* sequence commented upon in connection with Job 6: 15.

Chiasmus and dative suffix likewise characterize Job 31: 16:

> *'im 'emnā'ēm ḥēpeṣ (MT 'emna' mēḥepeṣ) dallîm*        a:b:c
> *w$^e$'ênê 'almānāh 'a̯kalleh*        c':b'
>
> If I have withheld the poor's desire from them,
> or the eyes of the widow caused to fail.

Since *'ênê 'almānāh*, "the eyes of the widow," is the direct object, it would seem that its chiastic counterpart *ḥēpeṣ dallîm*, "the poor's desire," should also be the direct object. By attaching the preposition *mē* of *mēḥepeṣ* to the preceding verb and parsing it as the prospective dative suffix, we obtain the desired direct object. Moreover, the verb *mānā'*, "to withhold," elsewhere governs the accusative of the thing desired, e.g., Job 22: 7, *ûmērā'ēb timna' lāḥem*, "and from the hungry you withheld bread," or the accusative of the person refused, e.g., Num 24: 11, *m$^e$nā'a̯kā yhwh mikkābôd*, "Yahweh has refused you glory." The dative suffix of *'emnā'ēm*, "(If) I have withheld from them," recalls Job 15: 18, *kiḥ$^a$dûm*, "did (not) conceal from them."

> Job 17: 7  *wattēkah mikka'aś 'ênî*        a:b:c
> *wiṣûray kaṣṣēl kālū-mî (MT kullām)*        c':b':a'
>
> Dimmed with sorrow is mine eye,
> and my limbs like a shadow are wasted.

The evident chiasmus of the line points to the desirability of a verb in consonantal *klm*. This stylistic observation lends support to the suggestion of N.M. Sarna[17] that *kālū* plus enclitic *mem* be read for MT *kullām*. I would vocalize *kālū-mī*, to produce assonance with *'ênî* and to even the syllable count at 8: 8.

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|---|---|---|
| Job 19: 14 | *mimmennî ḥād'lû q'rôbāy* | a:b:c |
| | *ūm'yuddā'ay š'kēḥûnî* | c':b':a' |
| | From me have fallen away my close friends, | |
| | and my kinsmen have forgotten me. | |

With the transposition of *mimmennî* from the end of vs 13 to the beginning of vs 14, the syllable count of vs 13 becomes 7: 7 and that of vs 14 evens at 9: 9. What is more, in vs 14 an a:b:c::c':b':a' chiastic pattern, so characteristic of Job, comes to light; it consists of prepositional phrase: verb:subject:: subject:verb: pronominal suffix.

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|---|---|---|
| Job 20: 6 | *'im ya'⁴leh laššāmayim mśy* (MT *śî'ô*) | a:b:c |
| | *'ô rô'śô lā'āb yaggi⁴'* | c':b':a' |
| | If his statue should rise to heaven, | |
| | or its head to the clouds reach up. | |

The unexplained hapax legomenon *śî'ô* presents the chief difficulty in this verse. The chiastic word order bespeaks a close semantic bond between c and c'. The LXX reading, *a toû tà dôra*, indicates that they had *śay*, "present," (Ps 68: 30; 76: 12) in mind. Another possibility assumes an instance of a shared consonant[18] whereby the final *mem* of *šāmayim* also serves as the initial consonant of *mś*, "statue," a well-attested noun in the Phoenician inscriptions[19] and probably identifiable in 2 Kings 23: 12. The suffix of *mśy* would parse as the third person singular suffix -*y*, as in Phoenician, a stylistic variant to the normal suffix of *rô'śô*.[20] Of course, the picture that comes to mind is that of Dan 3: 1: "King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, ninety feet high and nine feet wide."

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Job 26: 5 | *hār'pā' îm y'ḥôlālû-mî* | a:b |
| | *tēḥat* (MT *mittaḥat*) *mayim w'śôk'nēhem* | b':a' |
| | The Shades writhe in pain, | |
| | dismayed are the waters and their dwellers. | |

A. C. M. Blommerde[21] has correctly seen that MT *mittaḥat* conceals the verb needed chiastically to balance *y'ḥôlālû*, "writhe in pain." When *mî* is attached to the first-colon verb as the enclitic, consonantal *tḥt* can be parsed as the niphal third feminine singular *tēḥat* followed by the plural

subjects understood collectively. Compare Ezek 32: 30, which juxtaposes the roots *ḥll* and *ḥtt* that are juxtaposed here. The emergent chiasmus and the 9: 9 syllable count tend to preclude the various emendations and reconstructions that have been hitherto proposed.[22]

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Job 28: 2 | *barzel mē'āpār yuqqāḥ* | a:b:c |
| | *w' 'eben y'ṣûqā* (MT *yāṣûq*) *n'ḥûśāh* | b':a' |
| | Iron is taken from ore, | |
| | and from smelted rock, bronze. | |

To elicit a coherent statement from this couplet, the critic must recognize, first, the use of a double-duty preposition, with *'eben*, "rock," sharing the preposition of synonymous *mē'āpār*, "from ore." Second, he must see in consonantal *yṣwq* defective spelling for feminine *y'ṣûqā* that modifies feminine *'eben*. For similar instances, compare Job 20: 26; 28: 14, 21.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Job 32: 14 | *w'lô 'e''rōk* (MT *lô' 'ārak*) *'eley* (MT *'elay*) *millîn* | a:b:c |
| | *ûb''imrêkem lô' '⁴śîbennû* | c':b':a' |
| | I shall not marshal against him your arguments, | |
| | and with your words I shall not rebut him. | |

From the chiastic position of *millîn* and *'imrêkem*, the textual critic may assume that unintelligible MT *lô' 'ārak 'elay* is the close semantic counterpart to *lô' '⁴śîbennû*, "I shall not rebut him." The reading *lō 'e''rōk 'eley*, based on no consonantal changes of the text, provides the desired counterpart. To be sure, one may read *lō'*, invoking the practice of shared consonants, but since the negative particle in Ugaritic is simply *l*, the reading *lō* may stand. Consonantal *'rk 'ly* must then answer to *'⁴śibennû*, "I shall rebut him"; this becomes possible when the suffix of *'ly* is parsed as the Phoenician third person singular -*y*. Thus the suffix of *'eley* balances the accusative suffix -*ennû* of *'⁴śîbennû*. For other instances of *'el*, "against," compare Job 9: 4; 15: 13, 25, 26. Suffixless *millîn*, "your arguments," shares the suffix of synonymous *'imrêkem*, "your words."[23]

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Job 34: 6 | *'al mišpāṭî '⁴kuzzāb* (MT *'⁴kazzēb*) | a:b |
| | *'ānûš ḥiṣṣî b'lî pāśa'* | b':a' |
| | Despite my honesty I am declared a liar, | |
| | wounded by his arrows though sinless. | |

*BDB*, p. 754b, recognizes *'al*, "despite, notwithstanding," here and in Job 10: 7, but *GB*[17], p. 586b, rightly adds Job 16: 17. Here it may be noted that failure to grasp this nuance may underlie the defective understanding

of Job 23: 2, *gam hayyôm mᵉrî śiḥî yādî kābᵉdāh 'al 'anḥāti,* "Especially today my complaint is bitter; his hand [suffix of *yādî* is third singular] is heavy despite my groaning." Compare NEB, "My thoughts today are resentful, for God's hand is heavy on me in my trouble."[24]

Since *'al mišpāṭi,* "despite my honesty, " and *bᵉlî pāša',* "though sinless," evidently pair off, *'kzb* and *'nwś ḥṣy* must be mutually elucidated. MT passive *'ānûś* points to the passive vocalization *'ᵃkuzzab,* "I am declared a liar,"[25] namely, by Yahweh. Accordingly the suffix of *ḥṣy,* to be pointed either as singular *ḥiṣṣî,* "his arrow," or plural *ḥiṣṣey,* "his arrows," should refer to Yahweh. This analysis thus links our verse to Job 6: 4, *ḥiṣṣê šadday 'immādî,* "Shaddai's arrows are toward me," and Job 16: 14, "His shafts encompass me, he pierces my entrails without pity."

Job 36: 3  *'eśśā' dē'î lᵉmērāḥôq*           a:b
           *ūlᵉp 'ᵃlî 'etten ṣedeq*          b':a'

           I bring my knowledge from afar,
           and from my Maker I present the truth.

The similarity of *'eśśā'* and *'etten,* both from *primae nun* verbs, bespeaks the chiastic structure of the verse. And since *lᵉmērāḥôq,* as in Job 39: 29, signifies "from afar," *lᵉ* of *lᵉpō'ᵃlî* carries the force of "from," as so often in Ugaritic. Cf UT, 68: 12–13, where *l,* "from," is parallel to *l,* "from," as here.[26] The precise force of the hapax legomenon phrase *'etten ṣedeq* must be inferred from its chiastic parallelism with *'eśśā' dē'î,* whose meaning is tolerably clear. In *dē'î* and *ṣedeq* we have the breakup of a composite phrase signifying true knowledge.[27]

Job 36: 12  *wᵉ'im l ' yišmᵉ'û*
            *bᵉšelaḥ ya'ᵃb rû*              a:b
            *wᵉyigwᵉ'û bibᵉlî dā'at*        b':a'

            But if they do not obey,
            the Channel[28] they cross,
            and expire in Unknowing.

In his study of this passage, N. J. Tromp[29] recognizes the a:b::b':a' structure of the verse but hesitates to accept *bᵉlî dā'at* as a poetic epithet for Sheol. He renders the final colon, "And they die for lack of knowledge." But he fails to notice that the translation and exegesis of our verse are bound up with the preceding verse:

            *'im yišmᵉ'û wᵉya'ᵃbōdû*
            *yᵉkallû yᵉmêhem baṭ ôb*
            *ūšᵉnêhem bannᵉ'imîm*

            If they obey and serve,
            they pass their days in happiness,
            and their years in comfort.

Here the consequence of obedience is expressed by two terms that are strictly parallel and synonymous: *ṭôb* and *nᵉ'imim.* In vs 12 the consequence of disobedience is presumably stated in strictly parallel and synonymous terms: *šelaḥ* and *bᵉlî dā'at.* The basic thesis of this paper, that the chiastic pattern bespeaks an even stricter synonymy, excludes Dhorme's and Tromp's explanation of *bᵉlî dā'at* as giving the cause of their death. The cause of their death is *'im lō' yišmᵉ'û,* "if they do not obey," not ignorance. Vs 10 plainly states, "He opened their ear for instruction and warned them to draw back from evildoing"; so it seems improbable that two verses later death would be ascribed to ignorance.

This translation and interpretation are sustained by comparison with Job 14: 20–21, which collocate the two motifs of Channel and Unknowing: "You overwhelm him, he passes away forever; you change his visage and send him across the Channel (*tᵉšallᵉḥêhû*). His sons are honored, but he never knows (*lō' yēdā'*); they are disgraced, but he perceives not."[30]

Job 37: 3  *taḥat kol haššāmayim yišrēhû*     a:b
           *wᵉ'ôrô 'al kanᵉpôt hā'āreṣ*       b':a'

           Beneath the whole heaven it flashes,[31]
           and his lightning is upon the corners of the earth.

In the dispute over the meaning of the hapax legomenon *yišrēhû,* the stylistic observation regarding the chiastic wording sustains the definition of *šrh* (Ugar *šrh*), "to flash," since its chiastic counterpart is *'ôrô,* "his lightning."

Job 39: 6  *'ᵃšer śamti 'ᵃrābāh bêtô*         a:b:c
           *ūmiškᵉnôtāyw mᵉlēḥāh*             c':b'

           I made the wilderness his home,
           and his dwelling the salt flats.

The chiastic parallelism with singular *bêtô,* "his home," shows that *miškᵉnôtāyw,* though plural in form, is to be understood as singular in meaning.[32] The apparatus of *BHK*[3] recommends the insertion, *metri causa,* of *'ereṣ* before *mᵉlēḥāh* in the second colon, but the strict chiastic balance of three-syllabled *'ᵃrābāh,* "wilderness," and three-syllabled *mᵉlēḥāh,* "salt flats," discountenances such an insertion. What is more, the current 9: 8 syllable count and the fact that *ūmiškᵉnôtāyw* can bear two accents render such an addition unnecessary.

Job 39: 8   *yātûr* (MT *yeʿtûr*) *hārîm mirʿēhû*   a:b
              *weʾaḥar kol yārôq yidrōš*       b':a'

              He roams the hills as his pasture,
              and for anything green he searches.

The longstanding practice of reading verbal *yātûr* for nominal *yeʿtûr* of MT is upheld by the resultant chiasmus with verbal *yidrōš*.[33]

Job 41: 7   *gaʾᵃwāh ʾᵃpîqê māginnîm*   a:b
              *sāgûr ḥôtām ṣūrō* (MT *ṣār*)   b':a'

              His back[34] rows of shields,
              enclosed by a seal[35] his dorsum.

Once the chiasmus is recognized, it becomes probable that consonantal *ṣr* should be identified with Ugar *ẓr*, "back, dorsum."[36] The vocalization *ṣūrō* instead of *ṣūr* is adopted to avoid two accents falling on two successive syllables, the same procedure as above at Job 12: 10. The chiastic parallelism of *gaʾᵃwāh* and *ṣūrō* thus recalls the straight balance between *ᶜᵃṣāmāyw*, "his bones," and *gᵉrāmāyw*, "his gristles," in Job 40: 18. *Scriptio defectiva* in the original will account for MT *ṣar* as against revowelled *ṣūrō*; since it is a *mediae waw* root, it would appear as *ṣwr* in normal Hebrew orthography.

The recognition of chiasmus in Job proves valuable in reducing the number of options in equivocal texts. In some verses, it can even prove decisive. The MT (as well as the ancient versions which, though checked, were rarely cited for lack of space) betrays a limited appreciation of this element of Job's style.

## NOTES

[1] *Bi Or* 26 (1969), 182–83.

[2] A point also made in my *Ugaritic-Hebrew Philology* (Rome, 1965), p. 55.

[3] In *Ugarit-Forschungen* 1 (1969), 24–25, the writer has applied this hypothesis to *UT* 49: I: 22–24; 1 Aqht: 114–15; 77: 38–39, and ʿnt: III: 23–25.

[4] H. Bauer and P. Leander, *Historische Grammatik der hebräischen Sprache des Alten Testaments*, p. 217a; *BDB*, p. 109a; W. Baumgartner, *HALAT*, p. 119b. It may be noted here that the same usage appears in Ugaritic, underlining the close syntactic relationship between Ugaritic and Hebrew; see *UT*, §§ 10.4; 11.8.

[5] See M. Dahood, *Proverbs and Northwest Semitic Philology* (Rome, 1963), p. 33.

[6] For the Ugar-Heb attestation of this root, see Dahood, *Psalms I* (AB), pp. 112–13, 283–84, 286; *Psalms II* (AB), pp. xxiii, 93, 231, 316, 348, 368; *Psalms III* (AB), pp. xxxi, 68, 116; H. J. van Dijk, *Ezekiel's Prophecy on Tyre* (Ez. 26, 1–28, 19): *A New Approach* (Rome, 1968), pp. 4–10, 100–101; A. C. M. Blommerde, *Northwest Semitic Grammar and Job* (Rome, 1969), pp. 122–23. Particularly relevant for the present purpose, since it collocates two of the roots in our verse, is Ps 89: 22, *yādî tākîn ʿammô*, "My hand shall supply his power," as read and translated in *Psalms II* (AB), pp. 309, 316.

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[7] Cf. D. N. Freedman, "Orthographic Peculiarities in the Book of Job," *Eretz Israel* 9 (1969), 35–44.

[8] For a list of examples from the Psalter, consult Dahood, *Psalms III* (AB), pp. 422–23.

[9] Thus Georg Fohrer, *Das Buch Hiob* (*KAT*; Gütersloh, 1965), p. 184, writes, "'Nach' ist zu streichen, da *šḥr* den Akkusativ nach sich zieht."

[10] *Mutatis mutandis*, the observations on Job 8: 5 also obtain in Job 15: 25.

[11] Though plural in form, *ʾōholekā*, being the name of a dwelling, is singular in meaning. See below on Job 39: 6. This usage is well documented in Ugaritic and in Hebrew; consult *UT*, § 13.17; Dahood, *Ugaritic-Hebrew Philology*, p. 37; *Psalms III* (AB), p. 384. This principle applies also in Job 37: 8, to be discussed below. Hence Fohrer's comment (*Hiob*, p. 222) on our passage, "mit zahlreichen Versionen ist das Singular *b'hlk* statt Plural zu lesen," must be disallowed. The collocation of *yādᵉkā*, "your hand," and *ʿawlāh*, "evil," in this verse echoes their juxtaposition in *UT*, 127: 32, *šqlt bġlt ydk*, "You have let your hand fall into evil."

[12] See Dahood, "Ugaritic *ušn*, Job 12, 10 and 11QPsᵃPlea 3–4," in *Bibl* 47 (1966), 107–8.

[13] F. M. Cross, Jr., presents fully the evidence in *BASOR* 184 (1966), 8–9; see also *BASOR* 193 (1969), 23, and Dahood, *Psalms III* (AB), pp. 61–62, 128.

[14] As recognized by, among others, C. Brockelmann, *Hebräische Syntax* (Neukirchen, 1956), § 31a, p. 28.

[15] Compare the prepositional explanation given by S. R. Driver and G. B. Gray, *The Book of Job* (*ICC*; Edinburgh, 1921), II, 83, "*lgby ḥmr gbykm* = 'become bosses of clay,' the *l*, as often, denoting *transition into*, usually with a verb, as *śm*, *ntn*, *hyh*, etc., but occasionally in poetic and late Hebrew without one, as Mic 1: 14; Hab 1: 11, Zech 4: 7; Lam 4: 3." But in all these texts the *lamedh* can more convincingly be explained as emphatic rather than as prepositional; cf F. Nötscher, *VT* 3 (1953), 372–80.

[16] Needlessly rendered as passives and in brackets by *NEB*:
      [what has been handed down by wise men
        and was not concealed from them by their fathers].

[17] Some Instances of the Enclitic *-m* in Job," *JJS* 6 (1955), 108–10, esp. 110.

[18] The most recent study of this orthographic practice being that of W. G. E. Watson, "Shared Consonants in Northwest Semitic," *Bibl* 50 (1969), 525–33, with full bibliography. In a paper read at the annual national meeting of the American Oriental Society in Baltimore, 16 April 1970, S. Gevirtz applied this principle to good effect in Gen 49: 3, *yeter rš'l* (MT *śᵉʾēt*) *wᵉyeter ʿōz* (MT *ʿāz*), "an excess of authority and an excess of power." The resultant parallelism of *rš'l* and *ʿz* matches that of Phoenician Karatepe III: 6, *rš' l nʿmt ʿz ʾdr*, "good authority and mighty power." [See S. Gevirtz, "The Reprimand of Reuben," *JNES* 30 (1971), 87–98.—Reader's note.]

[19] See C. F. Jean and J. Hoftijzer, *Dictionnaire des inscriptions sémitiques de l'ouest* (Leiden, 1965), pp. 168–69.

[20] Jeffrey H. Tigay, "Psalm 7: 5 and Ancient Near Eastern Treaties," *JBL* 89 (1970), 178–86, has unwittingly confirmed the existence of the third singular suffix *-y* by his observation that Ps 7: 5 *ṣôrᵉrî* should mean "his enemy" because it is parallel to *šôlᵉmî*, "my ally." On p. 182 he correctly renders vs 5, "If I repaid my ally with treachery and rescued his enemy . . .", but needlessly emends *ṣôrᵉrî* to *ṣôrᵉrô*, claiming scribal confusion of *wāw* and *yôd*. But this emendation is ruled out because it destroys the rhyme of the three syllables of *šôlᵉmî* with the three syllables of *ṣôrᵉrî*! That Hebrew, like Phoenician, possessed the third singular suffix *-y* steadily gains new adherents; e.g., L. Sabottka, *BZ* 12 (1968), 242; C. van Leeuwen, *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 24 (1969), 140; L. Gorssen, *ETL* 46 (1970), 298.

[21] *Northwest Semitic Grammar and Job* (Rome, 1969), p. 103.

[22] Among them, those proposed by Lynn Roy Clapham, "Sanchuniaton: The First Two Cycles," a thesis presented to the Department of Near Eastern Languages of Harvard University, December 1969, p. 74. Clapham scans these verses: *hrp'ym yḫwllw mtḥt mym/šknyhm 'rym mš'l ngdw/'yn kswt l'bdwn*, "The Rephaim writhe from beneath the waters/Their inhabitants the 'Watchers' from Sheol before Him/There is no cover for the deceased."

[23] For a list of double-duty suffixes in the Psalter, see Dahood, *Psalms III* (AB), pp. 429-34.

[24] Since the *NEB* is so freewheeling, one cannot readily reconstruct the Hebrew under-lying their translation. Compare also their version of Job 34: 6, "He has falsified my case; my state is desperate, yet I have done no wrong," where *'kzb* is emended to *ykzb*, with no explanatory note that the text has been altered.

[25] Whereas, in the words of Elihu, Job considered himself just: *'al ṣaddᵉqô napšô mē'ᵉlōhîm*, "because he considered himself just before God."

[26] For further details, consult Blommerde, *Northwest Semitic Grammar and Job*, p. 125.

[26] On *ṣedeq*, "the truth," in Prov 12: 17, see W. A. van der Weiden, *Le Livre des Pro-verbes: Notes philologiques* (Rome, 1970), pp. 100-101.

[28] For this definition of *šelaḥ*, see the full discussion, with bibliography, by N. J. Tromp, *Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Nether World in the Old Testament* (Rome, 1969), pp. 147-51.

[29] *Ibid.* p. 150.

[30] Compare Is 5: 13-14, where *bᵉlî dā'at* "Unknowing," occurs in a *Wortfeld* teeming with names for the nether world.

[31] The ending of the singular verb *yišrēḥû* can be parsed as the archaic indicative ending found in Ugaritic. Blommerde, *Northwest Semitic Grammar and Job*, p. 15, cites other examples in Job and pertinent bibliography.

[32] This poetic usage is discussed above in connection with Job 11: 14.

[33] It has long been observed that the proper understanding of this verse sheds light on Prov 12: 26:

> *yātūr mir'ēhû* (MT *yātēr mērē'ē, hû*) *ṣaddîq*
> *wᵉderek rᵉšā'îm tat'ēm*
> The just man roams his pasture,
> but the path of the wicked leads them astray.

Contrast *NEB*: "A righteous man recoils from evil, but the wicked take a path that leads them astray." That *mir'ēhû*, "his pasture," and *derek*, "path," are a congenial parallel pair may be argued from Is 49: 9: *'al dᵉrākîm yir'û ûbᵉkol šᵉpāyîm mar'îtām*, "Near the paths they shall pasture, and upon all the bare heights shall be their pasture." Thus the parallelism in repointed Prov 12: 26 may in turn be cited against the adoption of 1QIsᵃ, which reads in 49: 9, *'l kwl hrym*, "upon all hills," for MT *'al dᵉrākîm*, "near the paths."

[34] On *ga'ᵃwāh*, "back," see Dahood, *Bibl* 45 (1964), 398-99.

[35] I am indebted to Ms Tiqva Frymer for this translation of *sāgûr ḥôtām*.

[36] Dahood, *Psalms II* (AB), p. 361, collects the evidence for biblical *ṣûr*, "back." To the texts listed there, Job 19: 24 *baṣṣûr* may have to be added. The traditional translation "upon the mountain/rock" introduces a new element that ill accords with the imagery of the preceding three cola. Perhaps we should translate Job 19: 24: "With iron stylus upon lead may they be inscribed upon it (*baṣṣûr*, literally "upon its back," as in Job 22: 24) forever."