The Meaning of the Word כֶּלַח in Job 5:26 and 30:2:
Textual and Philological Analysis

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The word כֶּלַח is used in Tanakh (Torah, Nevi'im, Ktuvim) only twice. Both occurrences are found in the Book of Job, one of the three books which constitute the body of the Wisdom Literature in the Old Testament. Chapters 5 and 30, where כֶּלַח is found, belong to the poetic sections of the book. Tur-Sinai in his commentary observes that the Hebrew of Job complicates the process of determining the meaning of its poetical chapters.[1] More than that, in many cases the traditional Masoretic vowel pointing, and also the forms *Qere* and *Ketibh*, actually hinder the meaning of certain words and even of whole passages.[2] Similarly, Ceresko notes that the word כֶּלַח has baffled scholars for centuries.[3]

Such difficulties are predictable, given the fact that כֶּלַח is used only twice in the Hebrew Bible. In spite of these obstacles, the word כֶּלַח has been widely discussed by scholars and translators from the time of the Septuagint onward. The absence of any supplementary biblical and extra-biblical occurrences of the word forces the interpreter to draw his conclusions based only on the context (e.g. language and structure) of the passage. It seems that the majority of the existing interpretations and suppositions has inadequately utilized this principle of lexicography, and has preferred, instead, to emend, often without sufficient grounds, the Masoretic text.

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[1] N. H. Tur-Sinai (H. Torczyner), *The Book of Job*, Jerusalem 1957, p. viii. Cf. Marvin H. Pope, *Job*, AB, 3rd ed: New York 1973, pp. xliii, xlvii-xlviii.
[2] See, for instance, Job 13:15 where the *Qere* and *Ketibh* problem is found. The Septuagint, Vulgate, Peshitta and Aramaic Targum follow the *Qere* form.
[3] A. R. Ceresko, *Job 29-31 in the Light of North West Semitic*, Rome 1980, p. 44.

Job 5:26

תָּבוֹא בְכֶלַח אֱלֵי־קָבֶר כַּעֲלוֹת גָּדִישׁ בְּעִתּוֹ

"You will come to the grave in *ripeness*, like sheaves of wheat gathered in season." [author's translation of the Russian Synodal Version; italics added]

In this verse the parallel structure is evident –

תָּבוֹא בְכֶלַח אֱלֵי־קָבֶר // כַּעֲלוֹת גָּדִישׁ בְּעִתּוֹ.

The presence of this stylistic device determines the next step in the philological analysis. For each word in the first line of the Hebrew text there must be a semantic parallel or certain syllabic counterpart in the second line. In this case, the independent clause is found in the first line, "You will come to the grave" (תָּבוֹא אֱלֵי־קָבֶר) and the rest of the verse answers the question *how* the action in the independent clause will be carried out.

Line A תָּבוֹא אֱלֵי־קָבֶר בְכֶלַח how? (9 syllables)

Line B כַּעֲלוֹת גָּדִישׁ בְּעִתּוֹ how? (8 syllables)[4]

It appears that the second line simultaneously performs two functions. First, it contains synonyms for each word in the first line. Secondly, the whole line functions as a semantic equivalent of the word כֶלַח. This assertion derives from the following

word arrangement, where כֶלַח is designated in the form of "X":

תָּבוֹא // כַּעֲלוֹת
אֱלֵי־קָבֶר // בְּעִתּוֹ
גָּדִישׁ // X

In the context of Job 5:26, namely vv. 24-25, Eliphaz speaks about a blessed man who has peace in his house, and whose offspring are as the grass on the earth. This man "will come to the grave" בְכֶלַח and בְּעִתּוֹ גָּדִישׁ כַּעֲלוֹת. It is obvious, that verse 25 is an introduction to verse 26, and is parallel to it in meaning. These parallel ideas are demonstrated by a metaphorical comparison between a family theme, which presents a description of human life, and an agricultural theme, which describes the work in the field and the reaping of the harvest. The common semantic ground that unites these two apparently exclusive thoughts is the image of abundance and prosperity. With the help of the parallelism, the author suggests that the blessed man has plenty of offspring (צאצאים)[5] just as there is a bountiful harvest (ותבואה גדיש) in the field.[6] As appears from the above, the man will come to the grave "possessing a bountiful harvest" (בגדיש), i.e. there will be a multitude of his offspring who will continue on after him. This argument

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[4] The syllable correlation of 9 to 8 between lines A and B is legitimate for poetic Hebrew tradition. In certain cases there may be a difference of two syllables between lines.

[5] See Isa 42:5 where a similar metaphoric comparison can be found: הארץ וצאצאיה // עם (the land and its posterity // people). It shows that צאצאים (posterity, descendants) is used here in the sense of "fruit of the land."

[6] The Hebrew words גדיש, יבול, תבואה just like the Russian word "harvest" (grammatically singular) are used as collective nouns.

confirms Cohen's conclusions that the word כֶּלַח was taken from the agricultural sphere and has a meaning close to גדיש (sheaf, ears) or תבואה (harvest, fruit).[7]

Analysis of existing interpretations

In spite of the difficulties connected with this word, a great number of possible variants and interpretations were put forth already from the Middle Ages. There are five major interpretations among scholars.

כֶּלַח *means "the definite time"*

Moses Kimhi suggests that the word כֶּלַח means עת או קץ או ההפך "the definite time or end, or vice versa" [author's translation].[8] Chakham agrees with this interpretation and adds בזמן הראוי "in the proper time" [author's translation].[9] In his opinion, the author of the text wanted to say that the death of this man will not be a tragedy, but will, on the contrary, occur at the proper time (בזמן הראוי), i.e. it must be looked at as the appropriate ending (סיום) of a

blessed life.[10] It seems that this interpretation ties in well with the overall semantic picture of the passage as described in its context. However, these approaches, correct as far as they go, do not, it appears, sufficiently take into account the conjugated distribution of words in the parallelism. From the structural point of view advocated in the present article, כֶּלַח (word A) is not a pair with עֵת (word B). It is apparent that many interpreters have made such an assumption, based on the occurrence of the preposition ב with the word עת in this verse, i.e. בכלח = בעתו. Although the preposition ב is used with both words, it is evident that they are not semantically parallel to each other. The force of this argument can be demonstrated by observing in the same text that אֱלֵי־קָבֶר (to the grave) is not a synonym of גָּדִישׁ (sheaf, ears).[11]

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[7] Ch. Cohen, unpublished article about כֶּלַח.

[8] H. Basser, and B. D. Walfish, eds., *Moses Kimhi – Commentary on the Book of Job*, Atlanta 1992, p. 17.

[9] Amos Chacham, *Sefer Iob*, (Da at Ham-Miqra: Yerushalayim 1984), amud מ″d. [hebrew] Chacham suggests this interpretation also on the basis of the rabbinical Hebrew (קלח חז″ל). According to his view the text speaks of a man who dies at a very old age (שיבה טובה). For additional arguments כלח = הזמן הראוי see F. Horst, *Hiob*, Biblischer Kommentar XVI/1, Dritt. Auflage: Des Erziehungsvereins Neukirchen-Vluyn 1974, p. 89.

[10] Ibid. Cf. Moshe Kimchi's terminology, which was evidently used by Chacham as he interpreted כֶּלַח (Moses Kimhi's – עת, קץ; Chacham – זמן, סיום).

[11] There is a passage in the book of Job where the words קבר and גדיש are used together. In the nineteenth century Hirzel said that in Job 21:32 גדיש // קבר (L. Hirzel, *Hiob*, Zw. Auflage: Leipzig 1852, p. 38.). Actually, the first to make this comparison were ancient translators. For instance, we find in the Septuagint εις ταφους // επι σορω, and in the Vulgate *ad sepulchra // et in congerie mortuorum*. In spite of these translations, such a parallel is not evident in Job 5:26 because the passage contains additional information which determines the boundaries of the semantic field of the word גדיש: בעתו ... כעלות (as reaped ... in its time). Thus, the passage speaks of the "harvest" theme here (קציר, תבואה). In the closest context we find the same picture. We may also assume that in Job 21:32 גדיש is used in its basic meaning of "ear, sheaf," and the comparison with קבר is figurative. Due to the strong

כֶּלַח *means "the end, finish"*

Hirzel supposes that כֶּלַח has to be explained in the following way: כָּלָה = כֶּלַח, which is the same as פָּתָה = פֶּתַח, therefore it means *Vollendung*.[12] According to Hirzel the text should be translated as, "you will come into the tomb at the end (of your days)." It appears that this opinion is based on the certain visual comparison between כֶּלַח and כָּלָה and on the variant reading from the Targum. But it does not correspond precisely to the structure of the parallelism in the context of Job 5:26.

כֶּלַח *means "old age"*

Grabbe affirms that כֶּלַח in the meaning of "old age" is quite appropriate in v. 25.[13] In the Middle Ages, Rabbi Saadia Gaon (RaSaG), Rabbi David Kimchi (RaDaQ), Menachem Ben Saruk, and later in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Szold, Budde, König, Ben Yehuda, Clines, Gordis, and others have also held this view.[14] The Russian translations of

Rzhevskiy: "In your *old age* you will come (to your) grave, as a sheaf that is laid, when its time has come" [italics added] and Desnitskiy (Russian Bible Society): "In the *proper age* you will reach your grave, as an ear reaped in time" [italics added], also reflect this interpretation.[15]

It appears that the variants "old age" or "proper age" are as problematical as the previous ones, although they also, correctly, reflect the general semantic picture of the context. Rabbi Saadia Gaon, for example, interprets it in the following way:

תבוא בזקנה מופלגת
כמו שאוספים את הגדיש בעתו

"you will come (to the grave) in an old age, as they reap harvest in its time" [author's translation].[16]

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influence of קבר in line A the Russian Synodal Version translates גדיש as "grave."

[12] L. Hirzel, *Hiob*, p. 37. Cf. Kimhi's interpretation (see footnote 8).

[13] L. L. Grabbe, *Comparative Philology and the Text of Job*, Montana 1977, pp. 43-46. In spite of this he states that כֶּלַח should be understood as קלח.

[14] Y. D. Kapach, *Iob im tergum upherush RASAG*, Yerushalayim Tav-Shin-Lamed-Gimel, amud נ״ד [Hebrew]; H. P. Biesental, and F. Lebrecht, eds., *Rabbi Davidis Kimchi Radicum Liber sive Hebraeum Bibliorum Lexicon*, Berolini 1847, p. 147; *Menahem Ben Saruq: Mahberet*, Granada 1986, p. 215; B. Szold, *The Book of Job: A New Commentary*, Baltimore 1886, p. 54; K. Budde, *Das Buch Hiob*, Göttinger Handkommentar zum Alten Testament, Zw. Auflage: Göttingen 1913,

p. 25; E. König, *Das Buch Hiob*, Westfalen 1929, p. 86; A. Ben Yehuda, *Millon Hal-Lashon Ha-Ivrit Ha-Yeshana Ve-He-Khadasha*, kerech 5, Yerushalayim-Tel-Aviv, amud 2387 [Hebrew]; D. J. A. Clines, *Job 1-20*, WBC, Dallas 1989, pp. 108, 118-19, in spite of the fact that Clines supports this interpretation he states that the original meaning of the word is not known; J. E. Hartley, *The Book of Job*, NICOT, Michigan 1988, p. 128; D. J. A. Gordis, *The Book of God and Man: A Study of Job*, JTS Moreshet Series, New York 1978, p. 60; W. A. Wright, ed., *A Commentary on the Book of Job*, London 1905, p. 17; *The Book of Job: A New Translation according to the Traditional Hebrew Text*, Philadelphia 1980, p. 9; in the latter translation it is also mentioned that the meaning of this word is not clear. Cf. Baumgartner et al., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the OT*, vol. II, Leiden 1994-1999, p. 478 [HAL].

[15] *Vetkhiy Zavet: Perevod s Drevneevreyskogo; Pritchi, Kniga Ekkleziasta i Kniga Iova*, RBO 2002 [the translation of the Book of Job is done by A.S. Desnitskiy]; M. I. Rzhevskiy, *Kniga Iova: Iz istorii bibleiskogo teksta*, Novosibirsk Nauka. Sib. Otdelenie, 1991, 36 [Russian].

[16] Y.D. Kapach, *Iob im tergum upherush RASAG*, amud נ״ד. [Hebrew].

Further, although this interpretation looks quite logical, it seems to be based only on the second part of the passage, namely on the word עֵת ("the definite" time), but apparently ignoring its usage in v. 25. We have already shown that כֶּלַח is not a synonym of עֵת, first because of the inner structure of the verse, and second because the context requires the interpreter to build the following scheme between vv. 25-26:

Verse 25   זרעך // צאצאיך
            (your seed // your posterity)

semantically parallel to

Verse 26   בכלח // גדיש
            (X // ears, harvest)

The meaning "old age" in the expression "die in very old age" can be compared metaphorically with בעתו כעלות גדיש (harvest reaped in its time), but not in Job 5:25-26, because it does not conform to the parallel words זרעך // צאצאיך (seed//posterity) in v. 25, and is not an agricultural term.

כֶּלַח *means* חיל כוח *"power,"* *"strength,"* כוח ולח *"freshness" or* *"strength and freshness"*[17]

The first to suggest seeing in כֶּלַח "כוח and לח" was Dahood.[18] Blommerde quotes Dahood in his own work:

"כֶּלַח is formed by congeneric assimilation of כוח and לח."[19]
"Sometimes two words with kindred meaning and one or two letters in common grew together to form one new word."[20]

To prove this interpretation, Blommerde gives an example of words in which, according to his opinion, such an assimilation of consonants has taken place. In Isa 51:9 the word מחצבת, according to Blommerde, actually consists of two roots – מחץ and חצב.[21] HAL, on the basis of such an interpretation translates כֶּלַח as "ripe, ripeness."[22] Averintsev also suggests such an interpretation: "*Ripen to the end*, you will come to the tomb. As a sheaf, reaped in its time" [italics added].[23] The complex argumentation of Blommerde is unwarranted because there is a simpler grammatical explanation for the meaning of this word. מחצבת is formed from the root חצב with the initial מ. Moreover, in Isa 51:9-10 another two words with an initial מ can be distinguished – מחוללת and מחרבת. There is no need to suggest that there was assimilation between

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[17] We grouped all these opinions together because they all practice a similar approach—the changing of consonants in the Masoretic text, or interpreting כֶּלַח as כוח or לח.

[18] M. Dahood, "Northwest Semitic Philology and Job," in *The Bible in Current Catholic Thought*, ed. By J. L. McKenzie, New York 1962, p. 56.

[19] A. C. M. Blommerde, *Northwest Semitic Grammar and Job*, Rome 1969, p. 112.

[20] Ibid., p. 12.

[21] Ibid.

[22] HAL, vol. II, p. 478. Cf. Russian Synodal Translation.

[23] *Poesia i Proza Drevnego Vostoka*, Biblioteka Vsemirnoi Literatury. Seria Pervaya, Moskva: Khudoghestvennaya literatura, 1973. Kniga Iova (perevod S. Averintseva), p. 571. [Russian]

two roots based on the similar letters and meanings.

Birr in the BHK, comparing the present passage with Dt 34:7, suggests the following reading: בלחך.[24] It seems that Birr assumes that this is an instance of metathesis. But metathesis usually occurred in the copying of manuscripts with letters that were close to each other. That is why כ could not be moved by the mistake of a copyist over another two consonants to the beginning of the word and form כֶּלַח. There exist no witnesses from Masorah or from the ancient translators or from any other sources to support Birr's reconstruction.

Merx suggests another argument for forming לח from כֶּלַח. In his view, in the Masoretic text "ב und כ vereinend בכלח", which is why it should be read לח.[25] Hartley and Pope hold to the same view.[26] Thus, these scholars suggest taking away one letter from the text so as to arrive at the desired result.

Another group of scholars, such as Driver, Guillaume, and also BDB prefer the meaning of כוח "might, power."[27]

The majority of the emendations suggested in this category are usually based on another passage from Ta'anach with similar contexts and/or words with similar consonants (בלח). The primary difficulty facing this solution is the absence of textual witnesses supporting the view. The present author suggests that, in the case of כֶּלַח, the rule *Lectio Difficilior Praeferenda* is applicable. These interpretations also seem to be problematical because they are not synonyms of the word גדיש in line B, which is needed in the parallelism.

כֶּלַח *means* קלח *(with* ק *)* "ear, harvest"

Tur-Sinai proposes that כֶּלַח does not mean "old age" (זקנה), but "harvest" (קציר).[28] His conclusion is based on the word קלח (with ק) which is used in Rabbinical Hebrew (Mishna).[29] In rabbinical literature it means ענף צמח, as it is written ובו חמש שבולים צמח אחד ("one sprout and there are five seeds in it" [author's translation].[30]

כֶּלַח means "ear, harvest" Additional arguments based on the Vulgate and Septuagint

The Vulgate

The Vulgate offers the interpretation of בכלח *in abundantia* (in abun-

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[24] Cf. BHS where Gerlemann does not bring any variant reading. See also Job 30:2 in BHK where a different emendation is proposed – כל חיל .

[25] A. Merx, *Das Gedicht von Hiob*, Jena 1871, pp. 22-23.

[26] J.E. Hartley, *The Book of Job*, p. 115; Marvin H. Pope, *Job*, pp. 41, 46-47.

[27] S. R. Driver, G. B. Gray, *The Book of Job*, ICC, Edinburgh repr. 1921, p. 28; A. Guillaume, *Studies in the Book of Job*, Suppl. II to the Annual of Leeds Univ. Oriental Society, Leiden 1968, p. 83. Guillaume builds his interpretation on the Arabic kulāʿun, which means כוח (strength); BDB, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the OT*, Oxford 1907, p. 407.

[28] N.H. Tur-Sinai (H. Torczyner), *The Book of Job*, pp. 107-08.

[29] The change of consonants from כ to ק is to be found in Hebrew.

[30] *Talmud Yerushalmi*, PEAH, Pe-Gimel Yod Zayin Ayin-Gimel. [Aramaic, Hebrew]

dance), probably meaning the abundance of the harvest, relating to the second part of the passage (Job 5:26). Even if Jerome did not see the direct parallel between בכלח // גדיש and זרעך // צאצאיך in v. 25, i.e. the metaphorical comparison between "seed, ears, harvest" and "posterity", and he saw "abundance" in the sense of "harvest," his translation corresponds nicely to the principles of parallelism.

The Septuagint

Tur-Sinai's explanation is appropriate for our passage not only because of the possible change of ק // כ, which is ordinarily insufficient for forming an argument, but also from the view of its structure and context. Thus, it appears that both כֶּלַח in Biblical Hebrew and קלח (with ק) in Mishnaic Hebrew mean "ear," and as a collective noun it can be translated as קציר (harvest). This conclusion seems warranted, first because "ear, harvest" is taken from an agricultural context, and second because it can be used as a synonym for the word גדיש (sheaf, ear). Based on the aforementioned conclusions, Job 5:26 can be translated as follows: "you will come to the grave with harvest (offspring) as an ear reaped in its time."

In addition to these arguments the witness of the Septuagint should be added. In the Septuagint, we find the following interpretation of Job 5:26:

ελευση δε εν ταφω ωσπερ σιτος ωριμος κατα καιρον θεριζομενος η ωσπερ

θιμωνια αλωνος καθ ωραν συγκομισθεισα[31]

In the computer program CATSS (ed. E. Tov), in which Greek and Hebrew texts are set out in parallel columns, the word כֶּלַח is not translated.[32] Instead, according to its authors, the Septuagint contains a double translation of the phrase גדיש בעתו כעלות.

MT	LXX
תבוא	ελευση δε
ב/כלח	---
אלי	εν
קבר	ταφω
כ/עלות	ωσπερ σιτος // ωσπερ θιμωνια
גדיש	ωριμος // αλωνος
ב/עתו	κατα καιρον // καθ ωρα
--+[33]	θεριζομενος //
--+	συγκομισθεισα

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[31] After the first Greek word we find the particle δε, which usually translates the Hebrew conjunction ו (see, for instance, Job 5 where δε is found in place of ו more than fifteen times). In our case the appearance of δε can point to the *Vorlage* of Job 5:26 – ותבוא.... Peshitta does have the conjunction here. From another point of view, it can be explained as a translator's stylistic technique. That may be the case here, because in the same chapter we find passages with δε which do not have a counterpart in Hebrew.

[32] E. Tov, ed., *The Parallel Aligned Text of the Greek and Hebrew Bible*, electronic text prep. by OakTree Software, Inc., v. 2.1. For principles of text division between Tanakh and the Septuagint see E. Tov, *A Computerized Database for Septuagint Studies—The Parallel Aligned Text of the Greek and Hebrew Bible*, CATTS vol. 2, JNSL, Suppl. Series 1, Stellenbosch 1986.

[33] This sign shows that this word/phrase was added in the Septuagint, i.e. it has no counterpart in the Hebrew Bible.

The division of the Greek text relative to the Hebrew given in CATSS seems to be unsubstantiated in the case of Job 5:26. The correlation between כ/עלות and ωσπερ σιτος // ωσπερ θιμωνια seems to be incorrect. In this version the verb συγκομισθεισα is marked as an addition, which has no Hebrew parallel word in the Masoretic text. It is our assumption that the word כֶּלַח is translated in the Septuagint in the form ωσπερ σιτος ωριμος κατα καιρον θεριζομενος, "as a ripened ear, reaped in its time" [author's translation].[34] There are number of reasons supporting this alternative conclusion.

1. Interchangeability of the prepositions ב and כ

It has been demonstrated that as a result of parallelism בכלח semantically is a synonym of כעלות גדיש בעתו. This comparison is possible because of the usage of the prepositions ב and כ, which on many occasions can be used interchangeably. For instance, in Ge 1:26 we read:

נעשׂה אדם בצלמנו כדמותנו

[bold script – author's addition]. The Septuagint translates both prepositions ב and כ with κατα. The same Greek word is used in Ge 5:3 כצלמו ויולד בדמותו [bold script – author's addition]. One should pay attention to the reverse order of the prepositions' usage in the Masoretic text in

Ge 5:3 in comparison with Ge 1:26, which demonstrates the author's stylistic preferences and thus proves the prepositions' interchangeability.[35] The Septuagint translation not only fits the syntactic rules of the Greek language, but also demonstrates that there is not any semantic difference between ב and כ in our text.

Another example can be found in Ps 78:72:

וירעם כתם לבבו ובתבונות כפיו ינחם

In this case both prepositions ב and כ are translated in the Septuagint in the form εν. It is obvious that in such a translation the semantic similarity of both prepositions is reflected.[36]

Based on the textual and linguistic witnesses given above it is evident that, at least in Job 5:26, the two-fold usage of ωσπερ actually reflects בכלח and כעלות. It appears that the combination כלח // גדיש is as correct as צלם // דמות (Ge 1:26; 5:3) and כפיו // תם לבבו // תבונות (Ps 78:72).

2. The translation method in Job

The analysis of the translation technique of the Book of Job shows that the translation of בכלח in the form of

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[34] Cf. Peshitta, where בכלח is translated differently - *nyh'yt* "in peace, in rest." It appears that this interpretation reflects how the translator understands a blessed man's death.

[35] Many manuscripts (mlt mss) from the Middle Ages that belong to the Masoretic tradition have the same order of prepositions in Ge 5:3 as in Ge 1:26. It is possible that in the process of transmission a scribe made a textual mistake which later spread into other copies like *Codex Leningradensis*.

[36] Many manuscripts (mlt mss) from the Middle Ages have preposition ב for both words (ובתבונות, בתם). For possible reasons of this variant reading, see the previous footnote.

ωσπερ σιτος ωριμος κατα καιρον θεριζομενος is possible.[37] If we take, for instance, the immediate context of Job 5:26, we will find the following pattern in the Greek translation of the Book of Job: the translator adds a word or combination of words to a parallelism or even to a simple sentence for the purpose of making the text clearer to the reader. In v. 20 we read:

ברעב פדך ממות ובמלחמה מידי חרב

According to the structure of parallelism we see that the verb פדי is used for both lines. The Septuagint suggests the following variant of the translation:

εν λιμω ρυσεται σε εκ θανατου εν πολεμω δε εκ χειρος σιδηρου *λυσει σε* [Italics added].

With the help of the addition λυσει σε, (a double translation of the verb פדי) the translator helps the reader understand the sentence written in the form of parallelism, and also follows the main syntactic rules of the Greek language.

Another example can be found in v. 27:

הנה זאת חקרנוה כן היא שמענה ואתה דע לך

The Septuagint translates it:
ιδου ταυτα ουτως εξιχνιασαμεν ταυτα εστιν α ακηκοαμεν συ δε γνωθι σεαυτω ει τι επραξας.

The phrase ει τι επραξας is added because it apparently has no counterpart in the Hebrew text. In this case the translator adds to the words of Eliphaz something that is important for Job to know – "if you have done something" [author's translation].

These examples show that the translator made additions to the text when it was needed for two purposes: to help the reader understand the text better and/or to make a syntactically correct sentence. For this reason, we suppose that in Job 5:26 כֶּלַח was translated into the Greek with the addition of several words to explain its initial meaning.

3. The meaning of the Greek word σιτος

The meaning of the Greek word σιτος corresponds with Tur-Sinai's explanation that כלח is קלח (with ק) (ear, harvest) in Rabbinical Hebrew.

4. The translation of גדיש in the Septuagint

The word גדיש in line B is used four times in the Hebrew Bible and is never translated as σιτος. Moreover, in Ex 22:5 it is translated as αλων, i.e. the same word that is found after ωσπερ # 2 in the Greek translation of Job 5:26. Thus, this Greek translation ωσπερ θιμωνια αλωνος καθ ωραν συγκομισθεισα fits כעלות גדיש בעתו. We can conclude that all the words that are found after ωσπερ #1 refer to כֶּלַח.

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[37] For the Greek translation method in Job see H. Heater, *A Septuagint Translation Technique in the Book of Job*, CBQMS 11, Washington 1982.

5. An additional argument

We do not observe any other reason or textual problem for which it was necessary to make a double translation of the phrase כעלות גדיש בעתו, which is easy to understand, and to 'ignore' כֶּלַח. On the contrary, even later biblical translations offer their interpretation of כֶּלַח.

All the abovementioned arguments seem to prove that in the Septuagint of Job 5:26 there is no double translation of כעלות גדיש בעתו. The translator presented a detailed explanation of the meaning of the word כֶּלַח, expressed in the form ωσπερ σιτος ωριμος κατα καιρον θεριζομενος. We assume that the same conclusion can be applied here as in the case with the Vulgate. Even if the translator of the Greek text of Job did not have any intention of showing a clear parallel between כֶּלַח and צאצאים // זרע in v. 25, i.e. a metaphorical comparison between "seed, ear, harvest" and "posterity," but saw only "ear, reaped in its time," his free translation is correct.

The evidences from Mishnaic Hebrew, the Vulgate, the Septuagint and, of course, the structure of parallelism in Job 5:25-26, help us to conclude that כֶּלַח means "ear(s), harvest." On the basis of the metaphorical comparison between "ear(s), harvest" (v. 26) and "posterity" (v. 25), we are to translate v. 26: "You will come into the grave with the harvest (of posterity), as an ear reaped in its time." The fact that this person can see the multitude of his posterity presents an image of the blessed man's life, i.e. the one who lived for many years. This conclusion can be also found in Job 42:16-17: "and Job lived after this another one hundred and forty years, and saw his sons and grandsons till the fourth generation. And Job died at a very old age" [author's translation]. At the very end of the book the author intentionally shows the multitude of posterity that characterizes the death of a blessed man.

Job 30:2

גַּם־כֹּחַ יְדֵיהֶם לָמָּה לִּי עָלֵימוֹ אָבָד כָּלַח

"Of what use is the strength of their hands to me, in whom *old age* had perished?" [author's translation; italics added][38]

Analysis of existing interpretations

On the whole, scholars and interpreters of Job 30:2 have approached כֶּלַח the same way as in Job 5:26. Ceresko observes that the parallelism of the verse is evident, where כלח // כוח, and that is why its meaning should resemble "vigor."[39] Moreover, he suggests dividing the word into two parts and reading it as כי לח.[40] Habel, Hartley and Pope translate it slightly differently, but in general they all understand כֶּלַח in the sense of

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[38] In this case the Russian Synodal Translation draws an analogy with the word "ripeness" from Job 5:26. Such an interpretation does not correspond to the structure of parallelism in Job 30:2.
[39] A.R. Ceresko, *Job 29-31 in the Light of North West Semitic*, p. 44.
[40] Ibid.

"strength, vigor."[41] So do other Russian translations.[42] Rabbi Saadia Gaon (RaSaG), Rabbi Shlomo Itzhaki (RaSHI), Moshe Kimhi and Szold interpret it as זקנה (old age) as in Job 5:26.[43] Tur-Sinai suggests looking at כֶּלַח as an early form of קלח (with ק) (ear, harvest) based on the Rabbinical Hebrew.[44]

As in Job 5:26, the suggested interpretations זקנה and כוח and conjectural emendations כל לח, כי לח are not suitable for Job 30:2. זקנה does not suit the context of the passage because it does not match כח ידיהם in the parallelism found in the text. It is evident that the authors of this interpretation wanted to use the same translation in both Job 5:26 and 30:2. An attempt to link 30:2 and 5:26 semantically is quite legitimate and also helps to check other interpretations.[45] Based on this foundation we affirm that the meaning כוח (strength) does not fit in here because of its discrepancy with Job 5:26. Emendations כי לח and כל לח have no textual proof.

כֶּלַח means "ear, harvest": Additional arguments

The structure of the parallelism: X // כוח יד in Job 30:2 and other places in Tanakh

In this passage the following parallelism structure can be seen:

גַּם־כֹּחַ יְדֵיהֶם לָמָּה לִּי // עָלֵימוֹ אָבַד כָּלַח[46]

Due to this fact we are to look at כח ידיהם as a semantic parallel to the

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[41] N.C. Habel, *The Book of Job*, OTL, Philadelphia 1985, p. 396, 413; Marvin H. Pope, *Job*, p. 217. It seems that Habel and Pope interpret כֶּלַח as לח כל ("all their vigor"). It is evident that they follow Blommerde's explanation of כֶּלַח in Job 5:26.

[42] Averintzev translates כֶּלַח as "strength," *Poesia i Proza Drevnego Vostoka*, p. 604; Rzhevskiy—"(strength) of might," *Kniga Iova: Iz istorii bibleiskogo teksta*, p. 65. Cf. *Vetkhiy Zavet: Perevod s Drevneevreyskogo; Pritchi, Kniga Ekkleziasta i Kniga Iova*, RBO 2002. [Russian]

[43] Kapach, amud q″n [Hebrew], Rabbi Saadia Gaon explains it in the following way – להם הוקנה וכבר אבדה, ("and their old age has already perished" [author's translation]); H. Basser, B.D. Walfish (eds.), *Moses Kimhi – Commentary on the Book of Job*, p. 76, Moses Kimhi writes – שלא הגיעו לימי הזקנה מרוב צערם ועמלם, ("because they did not reach a great age due to their trouble and labor" [author's translation]); B. Szold, *The Book of Job: A New Commentary*, p. 54; see also D. J. A. Clines, ed., *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, vol. IV, Sheffield 1998, p. 420. The editors of the dictionary have included two articles for the word כֶּלַח. The only difference is that they provide different meanings of the word—"old age" and "strength." Moreover, both articles contain the same information, which seems odd.

[44] N.H. Tur-Sinai (H. Torczyner), *The Book of Job*, p. 420; Amos Chacham, *Sefer Iob*, amud rk″h [Hebrew]. He accepts Tur-Sinai's explanation and says that קלח speaks metaphorically of people who do not have family relations and connection with their forefathers.

[45] In the case of Job 5:26 and 30:2, these interpretations usually resemble the semantic picture of one passage but do not fit the other. Budde remarks: "Vollreife (5[26]) gibt hier kaum einen Sinn", K. Budde, *Das Buch Hiob*, p. 178; Cf. Peshitta *d'lyhwn 'byd klh 'wsn'*, and Vulgate *et vita ipsa putabantur indigni*, that provide here completely different translations than in Job 5:26.

[46] In Qumran only the remnants of an Aramaic translation of Job 30:2 have been found— לא הוא לי צבין ובכפ]הון[(the first and the last letters have been partly preserved). J. P. M. van der Ploeg, and As. van der Woude, As., eds., *Le Targum de Job: De La Grotte XI de Qumrân*, Leiden 1971, p. 40.

word כלח. We suppose that כֶּלַח in this verse has the same meaning as in Job 5:26 "ears, harvest." In order to prove the correctness of this conclusion it is needed to bring examples in which כוח יד // קציר (the strength of arms // harvest). Here are some examples to prove the legitimacy of such a parallel.

Dt 16:15b reads:

כי יברכך ה אלהיך
בכל תבואתך
ובכל מעשׂה ידיך

In this passage the author compares תבואה (harvest) and מעשׂה ידים (the deed of arms).

Lev 26:20 reads:

ותם לריק כחכם
ולא תתן ארצכם את יבולה
ועץ הארץ לא יתן פריו

This verse states that the Lord will punish His people for their sins. The punishment will be revealed in the lack of strength in people, and, as a result, the lack of a harvest in the field and fruit on the trees.

In addition, we find in the Book of Job the following parallel phrase—destroyed fruit (harvest) // destroyed seed (posterity). The presence of such a variant proves that כֶּלַח means "ear, harvest," first in the agricultural sphere (literal meaning), and second in the family sphere (in a figurative sense meaning "posterity"). In Job 18:16-17, 19 we read:

מתחת שׁרשׁיו יבשׁו וממעל ימל קצירו
זכרו אבד מני ארץ ולא שׁם לו על פני חוץ
לא נין לו ולא נכד בעמו ואין שׂריד במגוריו[47]

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[47] Cf. Job 24:24.

In this passage it is said about an impious man. According to the text structure the following comparative scheme can be built:

שׁרשׁיו יבשׁו, ימל קצירו //
אבד, לא שׁם, לא נין, לא נכד, אין שׂריד[48]
זכרו

The author of the text says that an impious man has no future on the earth because his harvest was destroyed and he has no posterity. This metaphoric comparison between קציר and אין שׂריד, לא נכד בעמו allows us to conclude that כֶּלַח in Job 30:2 means "ear, harvest."

The context of Job 30:2

In the context of the explored passage, we find an allusion to offspring as in Job 5:26. In Job 30:2 the text speaks of people who used to serve Job and his sons and who laughed at them. That happened because Job did not allow their fathers "to stay with the dogs of his flock," he also has no need of the "strength of their arms" because their harvest has been lost. Thus, אבות // בנים and צאן // קציר can be compared.[49]

The Septuagint: Evidence against the conjectured emendations

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[48] Cf. Ps 21:11 פרימו מארץ תאבד וזרעם מבני אדם; Joel 1:11 על חטה ועל שׂערה כי אבד קציר שׂדה; Is. 26:14 כל זכר למו הבישׁו אכרים הילילו כרמים ותאבד.
[49] Parallel צאן // קציר is possible because both words have a common semantic ground—housekeeping (domestic animals, harvest from a field).

Although the Greek translation of Job 30:2 does not help to define the meaning of כֶּלַח, it is a useful source in this case, because it testifies against the conjectured emendations. In this passage we have no translation of Old Greek (OG). Instead, in the standard edition of the Septuagint we find a text that corresponds to the kaige-Theodotion revision:[50]

και γε ισχυς χειρων αυτων ινα τι μοι επ αυτους απωλετο συντελεια

כֶּלַח is translated here with the word συντελεια. In Greek this word means "the end, finish." Usually in Tanakh it was used to translate כָּלָה (Am 8:8; 9:5) and כֻּלֹּה (Hab 1:9). Probably the mistake was made in the translation process or had already been there in the translator's *Vorlage*. It is possible that the translator saw the following text:

גם כח ידיהם למה לי עלימו אבד כלה

"Of what use is the strength of their hands to me, they have completely lost it" [author's translation]; (כלה instead of Masoretic כלח).[51]

Semantically, this reading looks acceptable, first because כח יד // כלה, evidently due to parallel structure, and second, because it corresponds with the scheme X // כלה, which can

be found in Tanakh.[52] In spite of this, such a variant can not be used as textual evidence, because it is not the Old Greek translation, but a later *kaige* revision. The existence of this reading is important because it can testify to the textual tradition of reading in Job 30:2 the following consonants כלח. This statement underlines the fact that the conjectured emendations such as כי לח, כל לח do not have any textual approval.

We suppose that כֶּלַח in Job 30:2 means "ears, harvest." This conclusion is based on the word קלח from the Mishnaic Hebrew and also other texts containing the same semantic idea and structure of parallelism in the text. That is why we suggest the following translation:

"Of what use is the strength of their hands to me, their harvest has been lost."

כֶּלַח means "ear, harvest" according to the context and structure of parallelism. It is a synonym of כוח יד.

In both cases, Job 5:26 and 30:2, the author shows diverse ways the word כֶּלַח is used. In Job 5:26 it is used metaphorically, pointing to the offspring of a blessed man, characterizing his death. According to the author of these texts a blessed man dies seeing the "harvest" of posterity.

In 30:2 we see that כֶּלַח is used literally. Job does not need the work of people who have lost his harvest.

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[50] A. Rahlfs, *Septuaginta*, Stuttgart 1935/1979, p. LXI; See also D. Barthélemy, *Les devanciers d'Aquila*, VTSupp. 10, Leiden 1963.

[51] Scribal errors writing ה instead of ח occur in Tanakh. See, for instance, Pr 1:21, where המיות should be read as חמות or חמיות, because it is parallel to פתחי שערים. The Septuagint translates it as τειχεων, which is equivalent to חמות.

[52] Cf. Jer 48:38; Eze 35:15; Hos 12:2; Am 8:8, 9:5; Ps 139:4; Job 38:18; Pr 30:27. On the translation of כלה in the Septuagint see F. H. Polak, "The Interpretation of Kulloh / Kalah in the LXX: Ambiguity and Intuitive Comprehension," *Textus* 17 (1994), pp. 57-77.