

- 1 Nevertheless the dimness *shall* not be
such as was in her vexation,
when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun
and the land of Naphtali,
and afterward did more grievously afflict *her* by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan,
in Galilee of the nations.
- 2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light:
they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

כִּי לֹא מוֹעָף 23

לְאִשֶׁר מוֹעַק לָהּ

כַּעֲת הָרֵאשׁוֹן הַקָּל אֶרְצָה זְבֻלוֹן

וְאֶרְצָה נַפְתָּלִי

וְהֵאחֲרֹן הַכְּבִיד דֶּרֶךְ הַיָּם עֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן

גָּלִיל הַגּוֹיִם:

הָעַם הַהֹלְכִים בְּחֹשֶׁךְ רָאוּ אֹר גָּדוֹל 1

יֹשְׁבֵי בְּאֶרֶץ צְלֻמוֹת אֹר נָגְהָ עֲלֵיהֶם:

Literal Translation:

- 23 Because not gloom
to which distress to her
according to the first (he) caused to be slight to the land of Zebulun
and the after (he) caused to be weighty and to the land of Naphtali
the way of the sea over Jordan
Galilee of the nations
- 1 The people the one walking in darkness saw great light
and ones dwelling in land of shadow light shone upon them

Smoothed Literal Translation [brackets indicate text added for ease of reading in English]:

- 23 Because gloom [existed] not
to [the extent] which distress [existed] to her
according to time the first [distress] [he] caused to be slight to the land of Zebulun
and to the land of Naphtali
and [according to] the after [distress] [he] caused to be heavy [to] the way of the sea
over Jordan
Galilee of the nations
- 1 The people the one walking in darkness saw great light
and ones dwelling in land of shadow light shone upon them

Question:

Thank you for taking the time to read through what I said and to respond. I believe the KJV translation of Isaiah 9:1 to be an error. What we have to determine is how the hiphil is being used. What is the hiphil? The hiphil is basically the causative, meaning that someone is acting or causing something to happen. As you said, context is key. What is God doing in Isaiah 9? What

is He causing? He is causing Light to appear those who walked in darkness. Specifically in Isaiah 9:1 God is making “the way” glorious for His people. Where His people were in affliction He now brings healing. You will see in your notes that the hiphil has a range of possibilities. I don’t know what software you are using, but we have to remember that there are limits to what a pop-up can reveal. To “make heavy” in the hiphil, as your pop-up shows, is merely to help you understand the causative nature of the hiphil but does not limit the hiphil to only meaning the weight of a trial or judgment. The pop-up is not meant as a definition specific to a context and as such is limited. The base meaning, of *chabod*, as you said, is weight. When you look through Scripture you see that this word falls into three main categories (see NIDOTTE for a very detailed explanation and TWOT for a more general explanation. Reference LXHOTLEX for specific examples of translations): 1) Literal and figurative; 2) of body parts in which *chabod* most often means to be unresponsive or hardened (as in the case of Pharaoh); 3) and honorable (often associated with position or wealth).

You’ll notice that chapter 8 speaks of the hardships brought about by God’s people forsaking Him. Isaiah 9:1 introduces a change, a hope, brought about by the coming Messiah. Verse 1 is a pivot from darkness to light. This is why key words point us back to what was to then contrast with what will be. The structure of verse 1 is antithetical parallelism. The nation that was in darkness, that was in anguish, that was under judgement will now be brought out of darkness, will experience joy, will experience blessing. This is the context through verse 7. Verses 1-7 are the glimmer of hope for a people bent on their own way. They need light! They need Jesus. Verse 8 of chapter 9 takes us back to what God’s people are currently doing in context and the judgement that is coming because of what they are doing. But there is the hope of the Messiah (9:1-7).

To translate 9:1 as God bringing more grievous judgment does not make contextual sense for the point that is being made in the hope of the coming Messiah. I would encourage you to look at the MEV translation of this as you hold to a TR position. The MEV translation is, “Nevertheless there shall be no more gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time He contemptuously treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time He shall make it glorious, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.” (The but in verse 1 helps us identify the antithetical parallelism in verse 1).

Analytical Notes:

Verse 1 opens with a *kiv* conjunction, the Hebrew subordinating causal conjunction. This word indicates that the clause that follows gives the ground or reason, the cause, for the main clause that it is modifying, in this case, the main clause in verse 2. Thus, the text of verse 1 gives the ground or reason for the people in verse 2 seeing great light: They see great light because gloom is not existing to them, that is, they are not experiencing gloom/distress. The nature of the gloom/distress which does not exist to Israel is described by the *kaph* comparative prepositional phrase: according to the first [distress] [he] caused to be slight. The phrase “the after [he] caused to be heavy,” as indicated by the *waw* conjunction and the similar phrasing, is clearly joined back to “the first [distress] [he] caused to be slight.” The phrase “the after [he] caused to be heavy” is thus part of the same prepositional phrase, indicating what the gloom/distress was not like: The gloom/distress was not going to be like either the first, lighter distress or the second, heavier distress. (My initial thought is that the light distress refers to the correction which Israel experienced while in the land and the second, heavier distress refers to the Captivity which was yet to occur at the time of Isaiah's writing,

although I need to do more research on this point to be certain). The fact that Israel was not experiencing distress to the same degree that she had in the past, distress that was designed to bring her back to God, demonstrates that she was seeking to conform herself to the design of God, and, thus seeking, was better able to perceive the light which the LORD provided.

Bullet Points:

1. Isaiah 9:1-2 consists of two parts: a main clause (“the people walking in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined”) and a subordinate clause (“Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations”).

2. The subordinate clause is introduced by the Hebrew subordinating conjunction *kiy* (כי). This subordinating conjunction introduces a ground or reason and is literally translated as “because.” In the context of this verse, this subordinate causal clause gives the reason for the main clause, that is, “the people walking in darkness saw great light because gloom did not exist.”

3. Within the *kiy* clause (the clause giving the ground or reason) is a *kaph* (כ) preposition. This *kaph* preposition introduces a prepositional phrase which modifies the understood verb of existence of the causal clause, giving the manner in which the gloom will not exist. Thus, the people walking in darkness saw great light because the gloom did not exist according to the manner described in the *kaph* prepositional phrase.

4. The manner in which the gloom did not exist is identified by the object of the *kaph* preposition. This object is the word “the time” (עת) which is modified by two adjectives, joined together by a *waw*-conjunctive (ו). These two adjectives are “the first” (הראשון) and “the after” (האחרון). Two different times are therefore being contrasted: a first time, where the gloom/distress was, relative to the after distress, light (correlated to Isaiah 9:4, this time of lighter distress appears to be a reference to the distress mentioned in Judges 6, wherein the territory that would later become the Northern Kingdom of Israel, that is, the territory where the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun dwelt, were oppressed by Midian. That oppression, though burdensome, was relatively light because the Israelites remained in their land), and a second time, wherein the gloom is characterized as being heavier (this is probably a reference to the Assyrian captivity, which would have been a heavier distress because the people of the Northern Kingdom had been removed from their land).

5. **Some disagreement exists among commentators regarding the significance of the word *hikbiyd* (הִכְבִּיד), translated “did more grievously afflict” in the KJV text. Some commentators concur with the KJV translation, while other commentators suggest that the word should be translated as “did make glorious.” This difference of opinion traces back to the basic meaning of the Hebrew word. The Hebrew word *hikbiyd* comes from the word *kabed* (כָּבֵד), which literally means “to be weighty.” Like many words, this basic meaning can have either a positive or negative connotation, depending on the context. On the positive side, it can have the idea of “to be valuable,” because value was determined by weight in the ancient Near East (cf. Gen. 23:16). On the negative side, it can have the idea of “to be burdensome.” In the context of Isaiah 9:1-2, the word *kabed* has a negative context. This is indicated by the fact that the word in this passage is being used to refer to a time of gloom, specifically a time of gloom which would not exist in the future. Thus, the time when the people**

would see great light would be a time of less distress than the previous times. This would only make sense if the times mentioned in the *kaph* prepositional phrases were both times of distress, instead of one of those times being a time of distress and the other being a time of glorification.

(LXT Isaiah 8:23-9:4) καὶ οὐκ ἀπορηθήσεται ὁ ἐν στενοχωρίᾳ ὢν ἕως καιροῦ τοῦτο πρῶτον ποίει ταχὺ ποίει χώρα Ζαβουλων ἢ γῆ Νεφθαλιμ ὁδὸν θαλάσσης καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ οἱ τὴν παραλίαν κατοικοῦντες καὶ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου Γαλιλαία τῶν ἐθνῶν τὰ μέρη τῆς Ἰουδαίας

LXT 9:1 ὁ λαὸς ὁ πορευόμενος ἐν σκότει ἴδετε φῶς μέγα οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐν χώρᾳ καὶ σκιᾷ θανάτου φῶς λάμψει ἐφ' ὑμᾶς 2 τὸ πλεῖστον τοῦ λαοῦ ὁ κατήγαγες ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ σου καὶ εὐφρανθήσονται ἐνώπιόν σου ὡς οἱ εὐφραινόμενοι ἐν ἀμῆτῳ καὶ ὃν τρόπον οἱ διαιρούμενοι σκύλα 3 διότι ἀφήρηται ὁ ζυγὸς ὁ ἐπ' αὐτῶν κείμενος καὶ ἡ ῥάβδος ἢ ἐπὶ τοῦ τραχήλου αὐτῶν τὴν γὰρ ῥάβδον τῶν ἀπαιτούντων διεσκέδασεν κύριος ὡς τῆ ἡμέρᾳ τῆ ἐπὶ Μαδιαμ 4 ὅτι πᾶσαν στολὴν ἐπισυνηγμένην δόλω καὶ ἱμάτιον μετὰ καταλλαγῆς ἀποτείσουσιν καὶ θελήσουσιν εἰ ἐγενήθησαν πυρίκαυστοι

עַם² עַם¹ גְּלוּ קַדְמָא קַדְמִי² לְהוֹן כְּעִידָן¹ לְאֶעְקָא לְהוֹן כְּעִידָן¹ אַרְי לָא יִשְׁתַּלְהִי כָּל דִּיִּתִי לְאֶעְקָא לְהוֹן כְּעִידָן¹ אַרְע זְבוּלוֹן¹ וְעַם² אַרְע נְפֹתְלִי וְשִׁאֲרָהוֹן מִלְּךְ תְּקִיף יְגִלִי עַל דְּלָא אִידְכְּרוּ גְבוּרַת יַמָּא גִיסִי יִרְדְּנָא קָרַב כְּרַכִּי עַמְמִיא: (9:1 TAR) עַמָּא בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל דְּהוּוּ מְהֻלְכִין בְּמַצְרִים כִּיד בְּקַבְלָא נְפִקוּ לְמַחְזִי נִיהוּר סְגִי יִתְבִּין² דִּיתְבִּין בְּאַרְע טוּלִי מוֹתָא נְהוּרָא אִזְהַר עֲלִיהוֹן: 2 אַסְגִּיתָא עַמָּא בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהוֹן אַסְגִּיתָא חֲדוּא חֲדִיאָו קְדָמְךָ כְּחֲדוֹת נְצָחִי קָרַב כְּמָא דְּהוּוּ חֲדָן בְּפִלְגוֹתְהוֹן בִּיזְתָּא: 3 אַרְי אַעֲדִיתָא יֵת נִיר מְרוֹתִיהָ וְיֵת שׁוּלְטָן עֲקֵתִיהָ שְׁלֹטוֹן דְּהוּוּ מְפֻלַּח בֵּיה אִיתְבַּר כִּיּוֹם מִדְּיָן: 4 אַרְי כָּל מִיסְבָּהוֹן וּמִיתְנָהוֹן בְּרִשְׁעָא אֲתַגְעֵלוּ בְּחוּבִין הָא כְּכִסּוּ דְּמִלוּשָׂא בְּדָם דְּלָא דְּכַן רִשְׁמִי כְּתַמָּה² כִּיתְמָהּ מִינָהּ כִּין כְּמָא דְּלִית בֵּיה צְרוּךְ אֲלֵהִין לְאַתּוֹקְדָא בְּגוּרָא כִּין יִיתוֹן עֲלִיהוֹן עַמְמִיא דְּתְקִיפִין כְּאִישְׁתָּא¹ וְיִקְטֹלוּנוּ² וְיִקְטֹלוּנוּ: