

# Job 16:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder: he hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark.

## Analysis

'I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder: he hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark.' Job describes violent reversal: from 'ease' (שָׁלֹו, shalev—at ease, secure) to being 'broken asunder' (פָּרָרָנִי, fararni—shattered), seized by the neck (בְּעָרָפִי, be'orpi), 'shaken to pieces' (פָּצַפְצַתִּי, pitspetsani—dashed to pieces), and set up as a 'mark' (מְטֻרָה, mattarah—target). This is trauma language—describing sudden, violent catastrophe. Job felt secure (not arrogantly, but reasonably), then everything collapsed. God seemed to target him specifically. Lamentations 3:12 uses similar archery imagery. The Reformed doctrine of providence must make room for these experiences where divine governance feels malevolent. Job teaches that faith survives brutal honesty about suffering's felt experience.

## Historical Context

The imagery of God as divine archer appeared in ancient Near Eastern texts. Job uses this cultural motif to express his sense of being specifically targeted by divine violence.

## Related Passages

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## **Hebrews 11:1 – Definition of faith**

## **John 15:13 – Greatest form of love**

## 1 Corinthians 13:4 – Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

1. How do we process the feeling that God has specifically targeted us for suffering?
2. What does it mean that Scripture includes this kind of traumatic language about God?

## Interlinear Text

אָמַת זֶה לְאַתְּ יְתִיןּ	בְּנֵי יִפְרָפֶרֶר נִי	אָמַת זֶה לְאַתְּ יְתִיןּ
I was at ease	but he hath broken me asunder	he hath also taken
H7961	H6565	H270

## Additional Cross-References

**Job 7:20** (Parallel theme): I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?

**Psalms 44:19** (Parallel theme): Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the shadow of death.

**Lamentations 3:4** (Parallel theme): My flesh and my skin hath he made old; he hath broken my bones.