First Hebrew Shakespeare Translations

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First Part

SCENE 1  Venice street (Raddai and Doeg)

RADDAI  Be silent! Do not speak to me further

Behold, my purse is perpetually open before you

And you know this – I am deeply angry.

DOEG  But why, devil! You are not listening to my words

If I have turned my attention to this matter

If I have ever pondered such a thing, you may indeed abhor me.

RADDAI  Why, you told me that you hate him.

DOEG  May I be a laughingstock if the matter is not so.

Three of the great men of the city urged him from day to day.

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1 Salkinson uses the Hebrew word חלך ‘part’ rather than a more specific term for ‘act’, most likely because there was no widely established Hebrew theatre terminology at the time.

2 Salkinson retains the Italian place names appearing in Shakespeare’s text. While this seems to deviate from his overall Judaizing strategy, it may be rooted in his recognition of the longstanding and prominent Jewish presence in Italy and could point to a concomitant decision to interpret his characters as Italian Jews (Kahn 2017).

3 1 Chron. 2:14. Raddai was the fifth son of Jesse and older brother of King David. Salkinson most likely selected the name primarily or solely on the basis of its sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s ‘Roderigo’.

4 1 Sam. 22:18, 22; Ps. 52:2. Doeg was an Edomite and chief herdsman to King Saul who carried out the execution of a large number of priests. Edom was an enemy nation for biblical Israel; in rabbinic literature, it became a symbol of the Jews’ Roman conquerors and of Christianity in general. In light of these points, Scolnicov (2001: 186) proposes that Salkinson selected Doeg as the equivalent of Iago in order to highlight the character’s murderous proclivities and to mark him as a Christian enemy in contrast to the Jewish Ithiel (see note 94). The partial sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s ‘Iago’ most likely also played a role.

5 Jon. 4:9.

6 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Sblood’ (1.1.3). Salkinson has neutralized the Christian connotations of this oath, a contraction of ‘God’s blood’. While ‘Sblood’ was expurgated from the text of the First Folio (Honigmann 1997: 115), it seems to have been present in the edition that Salkinson was using (which generally corresponds to the Folio in other respects). The Hebrew term typically means ‘adversary’ in the Bible, but takes on the sense of ‘devil’ or ‘Satan’ in postbiblical texts. Salkinson is using it in the latter meaning.

7 2 Kings 10:6.

To raise me up and let me be an officer for him

And I hereby swear by my faith that my strength is sufficient for me

And I am not unworthy to bear the obligation of such an office

But he in his arrogance has a different spirit with him

And he replied to them with false and misleading oracles

And he behaved deceitfully towards them, saying that it was a time of war

And that he would not be able to fulfil that which they had urged on my behalf

For he had already chosen an officer, a man after his own heart.

And who is this officer? Who is the man after his own heart?

A man by the name of Chessed, a native of the city of Florence

Who has understanding of the times and is the servant of a beautiful concubine

But to lead a troop in the field, to command an army of war

He has no more knowledge than one who grasps the spindle

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9 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘lieutenant’ (1.1.8). The Hebrew word פָּקִיד is much more general than the English ‘lieutenant’, as Dikman (in Salkinson 1874/2015: 239) has observed, Salkinson uses it to translate distinct English terms (‘lieutenant’ and ‘officer’), thus obscuring the differences between them.

10 Deut. 33:7 לֹֽו רָ֣ב יָדָיו֙ 'strengthen his hands', i.e., ‘give him the strength’.

11 Num. 14:24 עִמּ֔וֹ אַחֶ֙֔רֶת ר֤וּחַ הָֽיְתָ֞ה 'he had a different spirit with him'.

12 Lam. 2:14.

13 1 Sam. 13:14.

14 One of the sons of Abraham’s brother Nahor mentioned in Genesis 22:22 (spelled Kesed in some English Bible translations). Salkinson most likely selected this name on the basis of its sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s ‘Cassio’.

15 1 Chron. 12:33 לַֽﬠִתִּ֖֔ים בִּנָּה֙ יוֹדֵﬠֵ֤י יִשָּׂשְׂכָ֗ר וּמִבְּנֵ֣י 'And of the sons of Issachar, who had understanding of the times'.

16 Prov. 31:19 יָפָה לְפִלֶּגֶשׁ וְﬠֶבֶד 'and her hands grasp the spindle'. Salkinson appears to have taken Shakespeare’s ‘spinster’ (1.1.23) to mean ‘one who spins’.
For he has not experienced these, and he has learned war.

Only from the book; he has no counsel or might.

And no action on a day of battle in the manner of a valiant man.

Except for tongue and lips, and this is his whole lot.

But he has chosen him, and placed the office on his shoulders.

Whereas I am poor and wretched; though with his eyes he has seen

My ability and my might on the island of Caphtor and Rhodes.

In the Christians’ portion of land and among the people of a foreign god.

I must place a muzzle on my mouth and bind my face in the hidden place.

Lest the lender and the creditor oppress me because it is too heavy for me.

Look down from heaven and see that I have waited for your salvation!

Chesed has become an officer, whereas I am the Cushite’s standard-bearer!

17 2 Kings 18:20 "כounsel and might for the war".
18 Ps. 78:9; Zech. 14:3.
19 A place-name mentioned in various places in the Bible, the precise location of which is unclear. It is referred to as an island in Jeremiah 47:4 and is typically thought to correspond to Crete, although some argue that it denotes the southern coast of Turkey.
20 Somewhat unusually, Salkinson has not replaced this place-name with a biblical equivalent.
21 Gen. 33:19; 2 Sam. 23:11; Ruth 2:3, 4:3; 1 Chron. 11:13.
22 Ps. 39:2 מַחְסָּם לְפִי אֶשְׁמְרָה ‘I shall guard my mouth with a muzzle’.
23 Job 40:13 מַחָּט מְצָחָה חֲבֹשׁ פְּנֵיהֶם ‘bind their faces in the hidden place’.
24 Isa. 63:15; Ps. 80:15 (80:14 in English Bibles).
25 Isa. 63:15; Ps. 80:15 (80:14 in English Bibles).
26 The Hebrew word כוּשִׁי is a gentilic adjective appearing on numerous occasions in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., 2 Sam. 18:21; Jer. 13:23; Zeph. 2:12; Num. 12:1 [in the feminine form, referring to Moses’ wife]; Amos 9:7 [in the plural]). It is based on the toponym כוּשׁ, which is first mentioned in Gen. 2:13 and appears in various other places in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., 2 Kings 19:9; Isa. 11:11; Ps. 68:32 [68:31 in English].
Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

Raddai
To bear him in order to hang him is better than bearing his standard.

Doeg
There is no remedy for this illness; this is the curse of those who serve
That a man is not allowed to rise up the ladder of government,
Step after step, a man on the heels of his brother,27
But rather, by partiality28 and according to the mood of the ruler29
One rises up while another stays on the lowest step
And now tell me sir, am I obliged To love the Cushite?
Raddai
Leave him and do not continue to serve him.

Doeg
Do not fear, sir; I serve him for myself
In order that I might also happen to repay him his recompense30
We cannot all be masters, but not every servant Serves his master. There are senseless faithful men
That bend a knee and bear a burden all the days.

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Bibles). The location to which the toponym refers is uncertain, but is generally believed to denote a region in northeastern Africa (Koehler and Baumgartner 2001, 1: 466–7), possibly Ethiopia (Schulman 2007). This uncertainty is reflected in the English translations of both the toponym and its associated adjectives. Some translations (e.g., the New English Bible, New International Version, and English Standard Version) generally prefer the terms ‘Cush’ and ‘Cushite’, while others (e.g., the King James Bible, Jewish Publication Society Tanakh, and New Revised Standard Version) favour ‘Ethiopia’ and ‘Ethiopian’. (Note, however, that there is internal inconsistency within individual translations; for example, the King James Bible uses ‘Ethiopia’ in Gen. 2:13 but ‘Cush’ in Isa. 11:11.) In the modern period, the adjective came to refer more generally to anyone of African descent. I have chosen the translation ‘Cushite’ here as it more closely resembles the Hebrew and is geographically less specific, which is in keeping with the uncertainty surrounding the meaning of Shakespeare’s ‘Moor’.

27 Gen. 25:26 ﬂאֵשָׂו בַּﬠֲ קֵב אֹחֶ֙זֶת֙ וְיָדוֹ
29 Eccles. 10:4.
30 Psalms 28:4 לָהֶֽם גְּמוּלָ֣ם הָשֵׁ֖ב.'
They serve their masters, like asses for straw and fodder, Who send them away in their old age like a wife forsaken
And of them it is said: ‘a rod for the back of fools'
Whereas others appear outwardly to be as faithful servants
But they are faithful to themselves, for by their apparent service
They prosper before their masters, they accumulate a fortune, fill their bags
And in their latter days they become masters. These are men of sense
And I am as one of them. On your name Raddai I swear
If I were the Cushite, I would no longer be Doeg,
And I go after him in order to arrive at my desired haven!
Not out of love or innocence of heart – as God is my witness!
But rather with a flattering mouth until I arrive at the target
For God forbid that I should reveal by the work of my hand and my service
What my desires and my hidden thoughts are,
Lest I reveal my heart in the assembly in broad daylight

31 Gen. 24:32.  
32 Isa. 54:6. 'and the wife of one's youth when forsaken'.  
33 Alshekh to Prov. 10.  
34 Ps. 107:30. 'to their desired haven'.  
35 Job 16:19.  
36 Prov. 11:9.  
37 Num. 25:4; 2 Sam. 12:12.
Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

So that ravens of the valley might pick it out, 38 not thus am I with myself.

I am not the man in the heart, as you see me in the eyes. 39

What great wealth and riches 40 this big-lipped one will have

If he can carry out his plan!

Do not let go of him; put hemlock in his pleasures

Proclaim his name outside and rouse all the members of her family.

Release flies upon him so that they bite him in a peaceful abode 42

And if his face glows from joy, may his eye grow dim from grief. 43

This is her father’s house; 44 behold, I shall call out loud.

Call out in a sound of terror, 45 in a sound of loud rumbling 46

Like one who calls out while fire devours a peaceful city at night.

Ho, ho, Phichol! 47 My lord Phichol, arise!

Arise, Phichol, wake up! Thieves, robbers in the night! 48

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38 Prov. 30:17.
39 1 Sam. 16:7 ‘man sees the outward appearance, but the LORD sees the heart’.
40 Ps. 112:3.
41 Josh. 10:6; Prov. 4:13; Ps. 138:8.
42 Isa. 32:18.
43 Ps. 6:8 (6:7 in English Bibles) ‘my eye grows dim from grief’; also Ps. 31:10 (31:9 in English Bibles).
44 Gen. 38:11; Lev. 22:13; Num. 30:17; Deut. 22:20; Josh. 6:25; Judg. 19:2, 3.
45 Job 15:21.
46 Ezek. 3:12, 3:13.
47 Commander of Abimelech’s army, mentioned in Gen. 21:22, 32, 26:26. Abimelech was a Philistine king contemporary with the patriarch Abraham. Salkinson may have selected the name in order to evoke associations of leadership and prowess, as there is no clear sound correspondence between Phichol and Shakespeare’s Brabantio.
48 Obad. 1:5.
Thieves! Thieves!
Look to your house, look to your daughter and your bags of money,
Thieves, thieves!

(Phichol looks out through the window)\(^{49}\)

PHICOL What is the sound of shouting there? What is this I hear?

RADDAI Are all the members of your household, my lord, inside the house?

DOEG Are the doors closed?

PHICOL Why do you ask such a thing? Why do you ask such a thing?

DOEG Why, you have been robbed, my lord! (But put on your robe, for you are naked)

Your heart has been torn to pieces, and your flesh has been half consumed

Behold, now at this very moment, an old black ram
Is pounding your ewe purer than milk. Arise, go

With the sound of the ram’s horn and shouting, and assemble the citizens

Who are sprawled on their beds. If you wait a bit longer
Soon you will be embracing your grandchild, that son of Azazel.\(^{56}\)

49 Judg. 5:28 ‘she peered out through the window’ (Sisera’s mother).
50 1 Sam. 4:14.
51 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Zounds’ (1.1.85); Salkinson has removed the Christian oath.
52 Num. 12:12 ‘and its flesh has been half consumed’.
53 Gen. 28:2; Num. 22:20; Deut. 10:11; 1 Kings 17:9; Jer. 13:6; Jon. 1:2, 3:2.
54 2 Sam. 6:15 ‘with shouting and the sound of the ram’s horn’.
55 Amos 6:4.
56 The term Azazel appears in Lev. 16:8–10, in the description of the Yom Kippur ritual whereby the sins of the community were symbolically placed upon a goat that was sent out into the wilderness, ‘to Azazel’. 
Arise, I proclaim to you!

PHICOL
Are you mad?

RADDAI
My chief and lord, do you recognize my voice?

PHICOL
I do not recognize you; who are you?

RADDAI
My name is Raddai.

PHICOL
As such my anger and fury at your coming here is doubled,

Why, I have warned you not to lie in wait at the door of my house

And I have said clearly to your ears that my daughter will not be for you

Yet now you have come from your carousing, behaving like a madman from the evening’s wine

With a spirit of confusion mixed within you, in order to disturb my rest.

RADDAI
My lord, my lord…

PHICOL
Indeed know that my strength is sufficient

And your end will be bitter.

RADDAI
Please, my lord, please, wait a little while.

PHICOL
What did you tell me about quarrel and strife?  

The meaning of this term is uncertain: some English Bible versions (e.g., the King James Bible and the New International Version) translate it as ‘scapegoat’, while others (e.g., the English Standard Version, the Jewish Publication Society Tanakh, and the New Revised Standard Version) translate it as ‘Azazel’. In rabbinic literature, Azazel is interpreted variously as an area of mountainous cliffs from which the goat was pushed to its death; as the name of the goat (possibly based on a fusion of the names of two fallen angels, Uzza and Azael, whose sins it was intended to atone for); or as the name of a demon (Ahituv 2007). The thirteenth-century Jewish commentator Nahmanides supports the latter interpretation, and the association of Azazel with a demon has remained dominant in Jewish tradition. Salkinson’s translation is based on this interpretation.

57 Isa. 19:14 'the Lord has mixed a spirit of confusion within her'.

58 Deut. 33:7 ‘let his hands be sufficient for him’; i.e., ‘give him the power’.

59 Hab. 1:3.
This is, after all, the city of Venice, and my house is a wall house –

RADDAI
Honourable sir, with an innocent and pure heart I have come to you –

DOEG
You, my lord, are like one of the men who afflict the mouth of the devil when he commands them to serve God. Behold, we come for your own good. Yet you would make us out to be villains.

Is it good in your eyes that an ass should cleave to your daughter and it be said of the offspring of the ass That he is your offspring?

PHICHOL
Who are you? A mouth speaking folly?

DOEG
I am the man who has come to tell you:

Behold, right now your daughter stands before the Cushite as if she were standing before a steer, a bull to lie with her.

As if she were standing before a steer, a bull to lie with her.

PHICHOL
Your mouth testifies against you that you are a villain.

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60 This speech is prose in the original (1.1.107–12).
61 Cf. Shakespeare's 'Zounds' (1.1.107); as previously, Salkinson has omitted the Christian oath.
62 Cf. Shakespeare's 'Barbary horse' (1.1.110), i.e., a North African horse (Honigmann 1997: 123, note 110). Salkinson has removed this geographic reference and replaced the horse with an ass. Scolnicov (2001: 187) suggests that this replacement serves to preserve Shakespeare's bestial imagery via a veiled allusion to Ezek. 23:20, זִרְמָתָֽם סֻסִ֖ים וְזִרְמַ֥ת בְּשָׂרָ֔ם בְּשַׂר־חֲמוֹרִים אֲשֶׁ֤ר פִּֽלַגְשֵׁיהֶ֑םﬠַל וַֽתַּﬠְגְּבָ֔ה 'for she doted upon their paramours, whose flesh is as the flesh of asses, and whose issue is as the issue of horses'.
63 Gen. 2:24 אֶחָֽד לְבָשָׂ֥ר וְהָי֖וּ בְּאִשְׁתּ֔וֹ וְדָבַ֣ק וְאֶת־אִמּ֑וֹ אֶת־אָבִ֖יו יַֽﬠֲזָב־אִ֔ישׁﬠַל־כֵּֽן 'therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh'.
64 Isa. 9:16 (9:17 in English Bibles).
65 This speech is prose in the original (1.1.114–15).
66 Lev. 18:23 לְרִבְﬠָ֖הּ בְהֵמָ֛ה לִפְנֵ֧י לֹֽא־תַﬠֲמֹ֞ד וְאִשָּׁ֗ה 'and a woman must not stand before a beast to lie with it'.
67 2 Sam. 1:16 יֵעָנֶה פִּיךָ כִּי בְךָ פִּיךָ 'for your mouth has testified against you'.
Your mouth testifies against you \(^{68}\) that you are a counsellor.

You will bear all of these yourself, for I know you, Raddai.

All of these I shall bear, just please listen to me:

If this matter had been from my lord
And it were the desire of your heart
That your delicate daughter
Should be brought in the middle of the night and the darkness\(^{69}\)
To set her in the bosom of the Cushite, a man of lust and desires
In order that he abuse her;\(^{70}\) if it is your heart’s desire
Then we have erred very gravely, and our sin is too great to bear.\(^{71}\)
But if you were not aware of the matter, it is my opinion and my belief that
Your rebuking us is not fair and not just.
Please don’t, my lord! I am not insane
That I should come to mock you.
And I hereby say further
If the girl has acted on her own volition and has not sought your counsel\(^{72}\)
She is profaning her father. — How can a daughter of good sense

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68 2 Sam. 1:16 ‘for your mouth has testified against you’.

69 Prov. 7:9.

70 Judg. 19:25 ‘and they abused her all night’ (as part of a gruesome incident whereby a Levite man allows the men of Gibeah to rape and kill his concubine, this reference would have had strong associations for Salkinson’s readers).

71 Gen. 4:13 ‘my iniquity is too great to bear’ (Cain speaking to God after killing his brother Abel).

72 Josh. 9:14 ‘but they did not ask the LORD’s counsel’.
A beautiful, educated daughter, let herself be sold to a foreign man! 73

A noble daughter 74 like her, to a fugitive and a wanderer 75 like a fool! 76

And now see, if you can find her in the house or in the chamber

Pronounce me guilty at the gate of judgement for I have wearied you falsely

PHICHOL Hurry, bring out fire! – Bring light at once!

Call all of my men to me – behold, this matter

Disturbs me like a bad dream; I fear lest the matter is true

Dreams do not speak in vain – light! Light!

(Exits from the window)

DOEG Behold, I am going to my place, and as for you, farewell to you, Raddai

I shall not stand with you any longer lest the matter be discovered

That I am one of those who rebel against the Cushite, and I destroy my inheritance. 77

I know that the prince of the land writes bitter things against him 78

But he will not depose him from his station 79 at this time of war.

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73 Deut. 17:15; Eccles. 6:2.
74 Song of Songs 7:2 (7:1 in English Bibles).
75 Gen. 4:12 (referring to Cain’s fate after killing Abel).
76 2 Sam. 6:20.
77 Ruth 4:6 אֵּמֶת פֶּן יָרֵאֵהוּ ‘lest I destroy my inheritance’.
78 Job 13:26 יַרְדָּכָה יִכְתֹּב עִלָּי מְרֹרוֹת ‘for you write bitter things against me’.
79 Isa. 22:19 בִּלְחָכֵּךְ בָּעָלָתָה ‘and I shall depose you from your station’.
And he has already arranged to go down with the ships to perform service in Caphtor. 80

For he is a valiant man; there is none like him in the land. 81

And even though I despise him like the pains of Sheol, 82

Nevertheless I sense that the matter is necessary. 83

To raise the banner as a sign that his banner over me is love. 84

And you will surely find him if you instruct the guards. 85

And search for him in a certain inn. 86

For there you will find him and me together. 87

(Phichol and servants with torches)

This evil has surely befallen me, the girl is gone. 88

What will be the end of my days except for poison and wormwood? 89

Tell me Raddai! Where did you see her? 90

Where has the wretched girl been cast? With the Cushite, you told me? 91

Who should want to be a father? Who would raise up maidens? 92

How did you recognize her, that it was her you saw there? 93

80 Num. 4:23, 8:24.
81 Job 1:8, 2:3.
82 2 Sam. 22:6; Ps. 18:6. Sheol is the biblical abode of the dead. Salkinson has found a particularly close Hebrew equivalent to Shakespeare’s ‘hell-pains’ (1.1.52).
83 Song of Songs 2:4.
84 Salkinson has generalized Shakespeare’s reference to a specific inn, the Sagittary, an inn with the sign of Sagittarius (the Centaur, mythological half-man half-horse – see Honigmann 1997: 126, note 156), which would have had little meaning to nineteenth-century Hebrew readers.
85 Rashi to Job 21:28 באתני אשר הרעה ‘the evil which has befallen me’.
86 Gen. 37:30 לדה דא ‘the boy is gone’.
87 Deut. 29:17 (29:18 in English Bibles).
Now I know well that you have deceived me.

And you have spoken lies to me – what did she say to you?

Bring lamps and torches – call all my relatives! –

Do you think, Raddai, that she is also married?

Raddai: I think so now, that she is married.

Phichol: How did the daughter of a perverse and rebellious woman get out?

Fathers, do not trust your daughters any more –

Is the matter true, that a maiden in the days of her youth get out?

Might heed the voice of charmers to hand over her honour?

Have you read, Raddai, things such as this in books?

Raddai: Yes, my lord, I have read such things in books.

Phichol: Call my brother for me – if only you had married her –

Go some this way, some that way –

Do you know where we may catch her and the Cushite?

Raddai: I shall surely find him if you give me guards

And you also go with us.

Phichol: Come, lead us.

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88 Judg. 16:10.
89 In postbiblical forms of Hebrew this can also mean ‘one who has lost her virginity’ (Even-Shoshan 2003, 1: 191); Scolnicov (2001: 186) argues that Salkinson intended the latter meaning.
90 1 Sam. 20:30 'son of a perverse and rebellious woman'.
91 Ezek. 16:60 'in the days of your youth'.
92 Ps. 58:6 (58:5 in English Bibles) ‘that does not heed the voice of charmers’.
Behold, I shall enter every house, even if with a strong hand!\(^{93}\)

Bring weapons and guards who surround the city at night –

Lead, Raddai, my friend, there is payment for your labour.

(Exeunt)

**Scene 2**  
*A city street in a different place*  

*Ithiel, Doeg, and attendants*

**Doeg**  
Even though I have killed men in the battles of war

My heart does not permit me to kill a soul with malicious forethought

For I am not wicked enough to do evil even for my own good.

How many times have I raised my hand to strike him in the belly.\(^{95}\)

**Ithiel**  
It is good that you did not strike him.

**Doeg**  
But who can hear ridicule and disgrace from his mouth

As he scorned your name and spoke rebellion against you.\(^{96}\)

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\(^{93}\) Exod. 3:19, 6:1, 13:9; Deut. 5:15, 6:21, 7:8, 9:26, 26:8; Ezek. 20:33–4; Ps. 136:12; Dan. 9:15.

\(^{94}\) This is the name of two minor biblical characters, a) one of two addressees of Agur’s oracle, mentioned in Prov. 30:1, and b) a Benjaminitew returning from Babylonian exile to Jerusalem, mentioned in Neh. 11:7. The name seems to have been selected primarily on the basis of the sound correspondence with Shakespeare’s ‘Othello’. Note that, as mentioned in his letter to Smolenskin directly preceding the beginning of the play, Salkinson originally planned to name his protagonist Athlai, after the minor biblical character the mentioned in Ezra 10:28, a Judean who had intermarried but was influenced by the scribe Ezra to send away his foreign wife. This likewise corresponds in sound to ‘Othello’, although perhaps not as closely as Ithiel. Seolnicov (2001: 186) argues that the selection of Ithiel, an Israelite name for Othello (as opposed to most of the other characters, who bear the names of non-Israelites), serves to highlight the fact that Salkinson regarded his protagonist as a Jew and used the name to underscore his foreignness in the Venetian context. If this was indeed the intention, Salkinson’s initial choice would have made the point more vividly, since the biblical Athlai is known precisely for his status as a Judean with a foreign wife.

\(^{95}\) 2 Sam. 4:6, 20:10.

\(^{96}\) Jer. 29:32 ‘for he has spoken rebellion against the Lord’.

*Ithiel the Cushite of Venice*  

91
The First Hebrew Shakespeare Translations

I would have grown weary of enduring his words had the fear of heaven not prevented me.

But I shall ask you one thing; inform me whether the wedding was according to the law?

You know that the counsellor is dear and honourable.

And he is as powerful at the gate as our lord the prince of the land.

And he will force you to give a bill of divorce to your wife.

Or punishment will be meted out against you according to the laws of the land.

Which he has the power to impose however he desires.

Ithiel

Let him do whatever is in his power.

My service for the government will mollify all of his complaints.

In my heart there would also be the courage to boast in the midst of the assembly and congregation.

If I knew that a boaster would be honoured by his own mouth.

I am also from a family of rulers; I came out of the loins of kings.

And the honour which I have taken for myself with my sword and my bow

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97 Jer. 6:11 ‘and I am filled with the wrath of the L ORD; I am weary of enduring it’.  
98 Ps. 27:4 ‘one thing I have asked of the L ORD’.  
99 Esther 1:8, 4:16.  
100 Alshekh to Ps. 36:8.  
101 Deut. 24:1.  
102 Prov. 5:14.  
103 Exod. 1:5 ‘all the souls who came out of the loins of Jacob’.  
104 Ps. 44:7 ‘for I shall not trust in my bow, neither will my sword save me’. Salkinson has inverted the meaning of this citation, but the resemblance suggests that he may have had it in mind.
Is greater than the honour of the counsellors who boast with their head-covering.

And who would scorn me saying that I am a fugitive and a wanderer?  

Indeed I love to wander and to be free in the land

And had not the love of Asenath kept me dwelling at home

A far-flung journey would be better for me than all the abundance of the sea,

But look, what are these torches coming up from there?

(Chesed and attendants with torches in their hands enter from afar)

DOEG

Her father and her relatives are coming here in anger and great wrath.

Please get into the house.

ITHEIL

No, rather I shall stand here

Should such a man as I flee? I shall not turn away from anyone

But are these the men?

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105 Gen. 4:12 (referring to Cain’s fate after killing Abel).

106 Jer. 14:10 (referring to ‘thus they love to wander’).

107 Asenath is Joseph’s wife. In Gen. 41:45, 50, 46:20 she is identified as the daughter of the Egyptian priest Potiphar. In some places in rabbinic literature (e.g., Genesis Rabba) she is said to be the daughter of Potiphar’s wife, while in others (e.g., Pirke deRabbi Eliezer) she is said to be the daughter of Joseph’s sister Dinah. See Standhartinger (2009) for discussion of Asenath in Jewish literary tradition. Scolnicov (2001: 186) suggests that Salkinson selected this name for his version of Desdemona because Asenath was a non-Jewish married to a prominent Hebrew; she argues that this was designed to underscore Salkinson’s interpretation of Ithiel as a lone Jew among Christians, an ethnic outsider like Othello. Unlike many of the other Hebrew names in the play, there is no obvious sound correspondence between Asenath and Desdemona.


109 Deut. 29:27 (29:28 in English Bibles) ‘and in anger and in great wrath’; also Jer. 21:5.

110 Neh. 6:11.

111 Responsa of Spanish Talmudic authority Isaac ben Sheshet Perfet (1326–1408, known as Ribash), section 394. First published in Constantinople in 1546, these responsa were widely studied and would have been familiar to Salkinson.
DOEG          As my lord lives, these are not the men.

ITHIEL        Why, they are the servants of the prince with my officer Chesed.

Greetings, my brothers! What news is in your mouth?

CHESED       The prince enquires after your health, army commander
And asks to see you at once.

Do you know what he desires?

In my opinion it is on the matter of Caphtor
For regarding that the matter was urgent.

Messenger after messenger and courier after courier in the night
Went out hastened and rushed by the men of the ships
And the counsellors were called and gathered before the prince in his palace
And he also sent for you but you could not be found at home
Therefore they again sent other messengers from the council house
Who appointed three leaders to look for you throughout the whole city.

It is good that you found me.

Wait a little while so that I may give some orders to the household
And afterwards let us go together.

(Exits into the house)

112 Salkinson has replaced Shakespeare’s ‘by Janus’ (1.2.33) with this expression, which lacks any associations with Classical mythology but resembles the common biblical oath יהוה חֵי ‘as the Lord lives’.

113 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘general’ (1.2.36); this phrase appears numerous times in the Bible; for example, 1 Sam. 17:55; 1 Kings 1:19; Jer. 52:25.

114 Esther 3:15かける מֶלֶךְ וְדְחוּפִים יָצְאוּ הָרָצִים ‘the couriers went out, hastened by the king’s command’.
CHESED Tell me, standard-bearer, what is he doing here?

DOEG He captured a mighty ship tonight

And if his action is according to the law let him be a successful man.

CHESED Your words are too wondrous for me; I do not understand your language.

DOEG He was married tonight.

CHESED And whose daughter is she? (Ithiel re-enters from the house)

DOEG Will you go, army commander? Will you go right now?

ITHIEL Behold, I am going, and who would stop me.

CHESED Behold, another troop is coming here to look for you.

(Phichol, Raddai and the guards who surround the city with torches and weapons)

DOEG Behold, Phichol is coming; guard yourself from him, army commander

For he plots evil.

ITHIEL Desist, stand!

RADDAI My lord Phichol, here is the Cushite.

PHICHOL Behold, this is the robber! Destroy, destroy!

(They draw their swords on either side)

כשד ח добро שם בא כלם אשת הלילה
הוא לצלimestone בבללה חנה
מה הוא לעשות בחנה וכרדיה אשת
 الثلاث

כשד נפלוא המקדש זברד לא א熳 שפתה
ודוא אשת חנה
בבת מי היא? (אשתיא שמת בתה)
ודוא חנה שור פبدء? חנה יוה טפתח?
איתיאלא הנני הלך וחי ישערני.
כשם הננה דזר אחר בא לזלום לחיו
فرح ריימים הסביבים בעי ים
(לפידים צלי נשק)
ודוא הננה פוכל בא, הש머 מפנין שלבכע
כז והוא לוחה ונעה.
 ניהל ואניה הננה זוה חורשות
ררי פוכל גאני, הננה זוה הכנוש.
פוכל הננה זה מושダー! השמה, השופר!
(שלוםם מרחבם אלון מזוה ואלוהים)

115 This collocation appears in the Babylonian Talmud Nidda 31a, with a different meaning, namely 'someone who has experienced a miracle' (the Hebrew word הנש can mean 'miracle' or 'banner, standard').


117 Esther 1:8, 4:16.

118 Gen. 39:2.

119 Prov. 30:18.

120 Prov. 6:14.
**DOEG** Prepare yourself, Raddai, come, let us face each other.\(^{121}\)

**ITHIEL** Let each man return his sword to its sheath

Lest rot appear on the blade from the droplets of dew.

And you Phichol, I said a multitude of days should speak\(^{122}\)

For the mouth of an elder like you is better than the edge\(^{123}\) of your sword.\(^ {124}\)

**PHICHL** Kidnapper,\(^ {125}\) foul barbarian! Where have you hidden my daughter?

With cords of magic you have pulled her after you, man whom I have determined to destroy?\(^ {126}\)

For if her hands are not bound with chains of enchantment

Who with sense\(^ {127}\) would believe that a tender and delicate\(^ {128}\) maiden

Who has never desired to marry any man

And who has hidden her face from the desirable young men,\(^ {129}\) the honourable ones of our nation;

That such a pleasant maiden would deceive her father

And flee to everlasting disgrace,\(^ {130}\) to lie in your bosom, despicable Cushite

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121 2 Kings 14:8; 2 Chron. 27:17 (both in the context of battle).
122 Job 32:7 ‘I said, days should speak and multitude of years should teach wisdom’.
123 Lit. ‘mouth’ (play on words with ‘mouth’ in the beginning of the line).
124 Gen. 34:26 ‘with the edge of the sword’ (referring to Jacob’s sons killing Shechem for raping their sister).
125 Deut. 24:7.
126 1 Kings 20:42.
127 1 Sam. 16:18 (referring to King David).
128 Deut. 28:56 ‘with the edge of the sword’ (referring to Jacob’s sons killing Shechem for raping their sister).
129 Ezek. 23:6, 12, 23.
130 Jer. 20:11.
Whose face is like a furnace, to cast dread upon children
And damsels do not love you? – Understand, *judges of the earth*
Whether I have spoken truly, that he came to her with charms
And gave her a cup of intoxicants to drink, or a mixture from *a cup of poison*
Which takes a maiden's heart and incites the flame of desire in her.
With this I have proven sufficiently, that *the matter has substance*
And also a reliable sign that he has committed this abomination
And therefore I have come to imprison him, as one who violates the laws of the state
And as one who engages in the craft of sorcery, which must not be done
Catch him quickly, and if *he stands against you*
Lay a hand on him, for *his blood is on his head*

Ithiel
Be silent, calm down all of you, let no man raise his hand
Both on this side and that side. If I desired to fight
My arm would save me and I would not call for help

An indirect reference to Shakespeare's 'sooty bosom' (1.2.70).
Isa. 40:23.
Zech. 12:2.
This is a postbiblical expression first appearing in the Mishnah (e.g., *Oholot* 16:3 'the matter has substance').
Deut. 7:24 'no man will be able to stand against you'; see also Deut. 11:25.
i.e., with intent to kill; this is a common biblical idiom.
Josh. 2:19; Ezek. 33:4.
But you choose yourselves, where must I go

To give a response to the judges, for my transgression and my sin? 138

PHICHOL

To the prison house you will go, until the appointed day comes

When you stand before the judges, to prove your innocence for your life.

ITHIEL

If I go in compliance with your command, what will our lord the prince 139 say

He who sent messengers to me, who stand here next to me

To bring me before him, so that he might say something to me

Regarding the affairs of state?

THE OFFICER

The matter is thus, honourable lord

The prince sits here, in the company of his counselling ministers

And you, too, have been called to come amongst those summoned.

PHICHOL

The prince sits in the company of his council on this night

Bring him before him. My quarrel is not a small quarrel

Both the prince himself and my brothers the counsellors of the nation

Will consider this violence against me as violence and robbery 140 against themselves.

138 Exod. 34:7 138מַשְׁפִּיעֵי וִינַּבָּהָ וְחַטָּאָ֑ה לָלֶכֶת

139 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘duke’ (1.2.14).

140 Jer. 6:7, 20:8; Ezek. 45:9; Amos 3:10.
If such deeds can be done and no one stands at the breach[^141] Servants and foreigners will before long rule the land. (All exit)

**SCENE 3**

The council house (The prince and the counsellors sit at the table and attendants stand over them)

**THE PRINCE**

The reports that are arriving do not correspond to each other And one can hardly believe them.

**COUNSELOR 1**

One says this way and another says that way[^142]

In my letters it is written a hundred and seven ships.

**THE PRINCE**

And in my letters, a hundred and forty.

**COUNSELOR 2**

And in my letters, two hundred;

Although the number is not the same, as is the way of rumours Regardless, they are unanimous[^143] that the Turks[^144] are descending on ships to Caphtor.

**THE PRINCE**

One who understands matters precisely[^145] will admit that it is thus

[^141]: Ezek. 22:30; see also a similar collocation in Ps. 106:23.

[^142]: 1 Kings 3:23 ‘one says, my son is the living one and your son is the dead one, and the other one says no’.

[^143]: Josh. 9:2; 1 Kings 22:13; 2 Chron. 18:12.

[^144]: The Hebrew epithet 'Togarmah' appears in Gen. 10:3, where it denotes one of Japheth's grandchildren. It also appears in Ezek. 27:14 and 38:6, where it is referred to as a nation from the far north, possibly in a region corresponding to today's Armenia (Koehler and Baumgartner 2001, 2: 1688). In the medieval and Maskilic periods it became identified with Turkey (Even-Shoshan 2003, 6: 1984); this is the sense in which Salkinson is using it.

[^145]: Prov. 14:15 ‘the simple man believes everything, but the prudent man considers his steps’.

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*Ithiel the Cashite of Venice*
And who would rely on numerical errors to live in safety?\footnote{Deut. 12:10, 1 Sam. 12:11}

It is enough for us with this report, to hurry and take heed.

\textit{(A sailor knocks outside)}

Open the door for me.

\textit{(An attendant brings the sailor)}

This is a messenger sent by the men of the ships.

\textbf{The Attendant} This is a messenger sent by the men of the ships.

\textbf{The Prince} What does he have to say?

\textbf{The Sailor} The Turks’ army is headed for Rhodes

Thus the military commander\footnote{1 Sam. 18:13.} ordered me to tell the prince.

\textbf{The Prince} What do you think about this new matter?

\textbf{Counsellor I} The matter is not so; it is only deceit for the eyes

To pull us by a misleading bridle in a different direction.

Let us first consider with good judgement and knowledge\footnote{Ps. 119:66.}

What the island of Caphtor is worth to the Turks

And how much higher its value is than Rhodes in their eyes

For it is easy for them to besiege it and conquer it

\textbf{And who would rely on numerical errors to live in safety?} \footnote{Deut. 12:10, 1 Sam. 12:11}

\textit{It is enough for us with this report, to hurry and take heed.}

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\footnote{Deut. 12:10, 1 Sam. 12:11, 1 Sam. 18:13, Ps. 119:66.}
Since a peaceful and secure people inhabits the island
And there is no army or weaponry to stand against the enemy.
Not so is Rhodes, a place of citadel and weapons of war
And therefore if the wisdom of the Turks has not decayed
They will not abandon the island which is easy for them to possess
In order to go and try to take possession of Rhodes
Because their work will be made difficult and they will not find reward there.

THE PRINCE
My heart is resolved that they are not advancing on Rhodes.

149 Judges 18:27.
150 Jeremiah 49:7 'their wisdom has decayed'.
151 Psalm 112:8 'his heart is resolved; he does not fear'.
152 Habakkuk 1:9.
Going back towards Caphtor.  

And Kenaz, the bravest of the warriors and a faithful servant of the government 

Has enquired after your wellbeing, saying that you may trust his words.

THE PRINCE  

It is clear to us that they are advancing towards Caphtor.

Is Marcos in the city?

COUNSELLOR I  

He has gone to Florence.

THE PRINCE  

Write to him in my name to hurry and return on horseback.

COUNSELLOR I  

Behold, here comes Phichol with the valiant warrior the Cushite.

(Phichol, Ithiel, Doeg, Raddai, and attendants)

THE PRINCE  

Ithiel, valiant warrior! Look, I hereby command you 

To go out towards the army of the Turks, our enemies. 

(To Phichol) Greetings, dear Phichol! 

I am not seeing you here to seek counsel and sound wisdom from your mouth.

153 This is the name of three minor biblical characters, namely a son of Esau’s son Eliphaz (Gen. 36:11, 15, 42; 1 Chron. 1:36, 53); Caleb’s brother and the judge Othniel’s father (Josh. 15:17; Judg. 1:13; 3:9, 11; 1 Chron. 4:13); and the son of Caleb’s son Elah (1 Chron. 4:15). The motivation for Salkinson’s selection of this name as an equivalent of Shakespeare’s Montano is unclear, as there is no sound correspondence between the two and no obvious parallel in meaning.

154 Amos 2:16

155 Cf. Shakespeare’s Marcus Luccicos (1.3.45). This is the only name in the play that Salkinson does not Hebraize (cf. Balthasar and Peter in Ram and Jael; see Ram and Jael, First Part, note 18 and Second Part, note 210 respectively). There does not seem to be a clear motivation for his decision. Salkinson has changed ‘Marcus’ to ‘Marcos’, possibly in order to echo the second name Luccicos, which he has omitted.

156 Prov. 8:14.
And I too am not seeing you to ask for such things from your mouth.

Please pardon me, prince of our nation! It is not the burden of my obligation.

Nor the report of war that has brought me here from my bed.

And neither can I devote attention to the concerns of the state.

For the distress of my soul has engulfed me like a storm against the wall.

And all the distresses of others have sunk in the sea of my distress.

And I do not know anything except for pain before me.

What is wrong with you? What has happened?

My daughter, my daughter! Oh, the fruit of my loins!

Is she dead?

To me she is dead.

For she is defiled and deflowered, stolen by night.

By magic and poison wine of spellcasters.

For an innocent, educated, and sensible soul such as her would not be capable of erring by committing such follies.

For the distress of my soul, נפשו הצרה, 'the distress of his soul'.

بناء, תכשישה, 'your mouth'.

כָּאֵלֶּה לְבַקֵּשׁ רְאִיתִיךָ

לֹא אֲנִי גַּם פיכל

בִּלְתִּי, מָה אֵדַע לֹא וַאֲנִי?

מַה־נִּהְיָתָה? מַה־לְךָ?

כִּי מֵתָה הַאִם יועץ

כִּי מֵתָה הִיא עָלַי פיכל

כִּי בָּאָמֶר מֵתָה הַיָּדוּר

וַחֲלָלָה טְמֵאָה הִיא كִּי

כָּאֵלֶּה לֹא מִפִּי כָּאֵלֶּּה

כַּאֵלֶּה לְבַקֵּשׁ רְאִיתִיךָ לֹא אֲנִי גַּם פיכל

לֹא שָׂא פֹּה הֱבִיאַתְנִי מִלְחָמָה שְׁמוּﬠַת וְלֹא מִמִּשָּׂכָבִי לָשִׁית אוּכַל לֹא הַמְּדִינָה לְדַאֲגַת וְגַם

157 Gen. 42:21 (Jacob speaking to Laban).

158 Isa. 25:4.

159 Zech. 10:11.

160 Mic. 6:7.

161 Gen. 31:39 (Jacob speaking to Laban).

162 Deut. 18:11 ‘and a spellcaster’; also Ps. 58:6 (58:5 in English Bibles).
(Exod. 28:38).
164 Deut. 27:8.
166 Pirqe DeRabbi Eliezer 14; Abarbanel to Exod. 22 and 2 Sam. 24

Except by sorcery.

As I live! Indeed that man

Who tricked your daughter and enticed her away from you

Shall bear his guilt in judgement according to the book of statute and law

Which you shall read to him well and plainly in his ears,

Even if he is one of my own he shall not go unpunished.

Let me find favour in your eyes, my lord, for you have comforted me.

The man is this Cushite who stands before you

For you have called him regarding affairs of state.

We are very sorry.

(To Ithiel) What do you have to say to prove yourself innocent?

There is nothing save to confess his sin.

Honourable rulers, judges of righteousness and truth.

Ones who know law and judgement! Indeed the matter is true

The daughter of this elder, I took her for myself as a wife

And this is the whole of my crime and my sin from root to branch
And there is no other iniquity. I am not a man of words. And I do not know how to speak clearly like the inhabitants of quiet resting places. For from the days of my youth when I was seven years old Until nine months ago, in which time I have rested, I wandered from tent to tent to teach my hands battle Upon the open field, and I know nothing on the earth Except the din of weapons and the noise of war And therefore I have not come with grace of lips to prove my innocence here.

But if you let me open my mouth in your kindness I shall tell the ways of love in an honest and sincere language In order that you may know the magic and the charms and the sorceries The secrecies of sorcerous wonders which have been calculated as guilt against me And according to which I enticed the heart of the lass to myself. PHICHOL A lass who has never known brazenness For she walks modestly in a spirit of humility and quietness.
So that even at the sound of marching her face reddens from shame;

Would she risk her soul – a soft and delicate soul

Forgetting her father’s house and her native land

And all of her precious things, to cleave to the love of a man

At whose face she feared to look? Such a thing has not been seen

Such a thing has not been, and indeed will not be;

And only a senseless, witless, and mindless one

Would believe such strange things, for there is perversity in his heart

And by means of false tricks, deceit of demons

He means to prove in the sight of the sun that the matter is thus.

And therefore I say one thing: this is the attestation of my mouth

That with a mixture which ignites a fire in the blood

Or with water that brings a curse he enticed her away from me.

THE PRINCE Such an attestation of the mouth is not like trustworthy testimony.
But perhaps you have stronger and more trustworthy signs than this thin and insubstantial testimony which has no basis.\(^{178}\)

**COUNSELLOR I** Pray tell, Ithiel

Whether you captured the soul of the lass by **crooked paths**\(^{179}\) and forced her with a **strong hand**\(^{180}\) to give you her love

Or drew her in with pleasing words and supplications as is the custom of one person to another and the **way of a man with a maiden**?\(^{181}\)

**ITHIEL** Please call to the woman of a certain house\(^{182}\)

And ask her before her father and in **broad daylight**\(^{183}\) if according to her words you may find iniquity in me

Not only may you punish me by taking me down from my station, but also by **taking my soul down to Sheol**.\(^{184}\)

**THE PRINCE** Bring Asenath here.

**ITHIEL** Go with them Doeg, for you know her location.

(Doeg and attendants exit)

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178 Isa. 8:20, שָֽׁחַר אֵֽין־ל֖וֹ 'which has no basis'.
179 Judg. 5:6.
180 Exod. 3:19, 6:1, 13:9; Deut. 5:15, 6:21, 7:8, 9:26, 26:8; Ezek. 20:33–34; Ps. 136:12; Dan. 9:15.
181 Prov. 30:19.
182 See note 84.
183 Num. 25:4; 2 Sam. 12:12.
184 Gen. 42:38, שְׁאֽוֹלָה בְּיָג֖וֹן אֶת־שֵׂיבָתִ֛י וְהוֹרַדְתֶּ֧ם 'and you will take my grey head in sorrow down to Sheol'.

*Ithiel the Cushite of Venice* 107
But before she comes I shall tell some words of truth in your ears. I shall conceal nothing, as from God in heaven. In order that you might know how I won the heart of the gracious woman. And how she won my heart.

**THE PRINCE**

Speak.

**ITHIEL**

Her father loved me and called me to come to his house. Not once and not twice, for he desired to hear from my mouth. All the chronicles of the days of the years of my life. All the wars and the sieges and the hardships that had befallen me. And so I fulfilled his desire and I told him of all the times. That I had been through from the days of my childhood onwards, from beginning to end; Every disaster and misfortune and all the great terrors. Whether by sea or on land; how I escaped from the fangs of death. When I stood in the breach; how I fell into the hand of the enemy.

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185 Eccles. 12:10.
186 Prov. 11:16.
187 2 Kings 6:10.
188 Gen. 25:7, 47:9; 2 Sam. 19:35.
189 1 Sam. 3:12.
190 Ezek. 22:30; Ps. 106:23 ‘had not Moses his chosen one stood in the breach’.
191 Lam. 1:7 ‘when her people fell into the hand of the enemy’.

*לֹֽא*
And was sold as a captive of the sword and how I was redeemed from the house of bondage. In addition to what my eyes saw on each and every journey, huge fearsome caves and barren howling wilderness, rock quarries, mountain ranges, rocks, and everlasting hills. Whose peaks touch the clouds. And thus I made known that which surely was, for I responded to what they asked me about, about wild men in the wilderness. Who eat men and each man lives on the flesh of his fellow and strange men whose faces are like those of a hunchback and their heads are under their shoulders. These strange things drew in the ear of Asenath to hear them from my mouth with eagerness and when they summoned her to attend to the affairs of her household. Thus she hastily performed all of her actions and her work and quickly she returned like a thirsty woman to hear my words.

192 Exod. 13:3 and many other locations in the Hebrew Bible.
193 Leviticus Rabbah 36.
194 Deut. 32:10.
195 Hab. 3:6.
196 Hosea 5:9.
197 Job 24:5. In the biblical verse פְּרָאִים means ‘wild donkeys’; since Shakespeare does not mention donkeys but rather cannibals and men whose heads grow beneath their shoulders (1.3.143–6), it is more likely that Salkinson is using the word in the sense of ‘wild men’, which it acquired only in the medieval period (Even-Shoshan 2003, 5: 1524).
198 Prov. 31:7.
My eye saw this and I also did not delay

To find an acceptable moment of rest and give her the opportunity

Until she stood and implored me ardently

To tell her again the whole account of my life and my experiences

As she had not heard a word spoken properly

But rather separate parts, fragments.

And I acquiesced to her and several times I succeeded

In bringing forth, with that which dropped from my lips, drops of water from her eyes

For she was filled with pity upon hearing my affliction and my misery from my youth

When my words were finished she gave me sufficient recompense

For she sighed from the chambers of her heart and spread her palms saying:

‘On my life, these are strange things – wondrously strange –

My heart is faint hearing such things – my heart is very faint –

If only I had not heard such things – if only I had found such a man!’

Afterwards she gave her hand to thank me for my kindness

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199 Ps. 69:14 (69:13 in English Bibles).
200 Prov. 25:11.
201 Lam. 3:19.
202 Jer. 4:19.
203 Lam. 5:17 'for this our heart is faint'.
Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

And she said further to me that if I had a friend and companion Who desired her, it would be well for me to instruct him To tell the account of my life in her ears and she would be his. And I hastened to contemplate what her words were hinting at And I lifted my eyes to her and my soul clove to her soul. She loved me for passing as a man through a sea of trouble. And I loved her because her compassion was stirred for me. This is the charm and the sorcery that I worked. Now behold, the woman comes before us; let her arise and testify against me. (Asenath, Doeg, and attendants)

THE PRINCE

Such a clever and smooth speech would be powerful enough To entice my daughter too. Phichol my friend, I counsel you, your vessel has broken in two. Take the good half out of the two parts A broken weapon is better than empty hands in war.

PHICHLOL

Please consent to hear the testimony of her mouth.

204 Gen. 34:3 'and his soul clove to Dinah'; Alshekh to Gen. 34:3 'his soul clove to her soul'.
205 Zech. 10:11 'and they will pass through the sea of trouble'.
206 1 Kings 3:26.
207 Prov. 6:24.
208 Ps. 119:88 'the testimony of Your mouth'.
If she admits before you that her hand is also among the conspirators

I shall die if I place iniquity on his head.

Listen, my daughter, my only one!

Which of ours will you obey more than his fellow?

ASENATH

There are two opinions before me, and I must hobble between them both.

I am yours, as is everything that belongs to me, for you gave me life

And also raised me, and therefore I indeed honour you.

According to the law and the commandment; you are lord at my head

And I am your daughter, your maidservant. However, there is my husband in front of me

And therefore all the honour which my mother gave to you

As she forgot her father’s house and went after her lord

Such honour I too give to my lord the Cushite.

PHICHLOR

Go after him in peace – there are no more words on my tongue.

If she admits before you that her hand is also among the conspirators

I shall die if I place iniquity on his head.

Listen, my daughter, my only one!

Which of ours will you obey more than his fellow?

ASENATH

There are two opinions before me, and I must hobble between them both.

I am yours, as is everything that belongs to me, for you gave me life

And also raised me, and therefore I indeed honour you.

According to the law and the commandment; you are lord at my head

And I am your daughter, your maidservant. However, there is my husband in front of me

And therefore all the honour which my mother gave to you

As she forgot her father’s house and went after her lord

Such honour I too give to my lord the Cushite.

PHICHLOR

Go after him in peace – there are no more words on my tongue.

209 Gen. 22:2 אֶת־בִּנְךָ֨ קַח־נָ֠א אֶת־יְחִֽידְךָ֤ 'take your son, your only one'.

210 1 Kings 18:21 הַסְּﬠִפִּים֒ﬠַל־שְׁתֵּ֣י פֹּסְחִים֮ ‘how long will you hobble between two opinions’. 1 Kings 18:21 הַסְּﬠִפִּים֒ﬠַל־שְׁתֵּ֣י פֹּסְחִים֮ ‘how long will you hobble between two opinions’.

211 Num. 22:17; 24:11 (‘honour’ in these contexts refers to a monetary reward).

212 2 Chron. 14:3 (14:4 in English Bibles). This collocation also appears in various rabbinic and medieval Hebrew texts; in these postbiblical sources the first word, תּוֹרָה, refers to the Torah (which in its narrow definition denotes the Pentateuch and in its broader definition the whole of Jewish law and tradition), while the second word, מִצְוָה, refers to the biblical commandments as interpreted through the framework of rabbinic Judaism.


214 Ps. 139:4 בִּלְשׁוֹנִ֑י מִ֭לָּה אֵ֣ין כִּ֤י ‘for there is no word on my tongue’.
Bring the prince! Turn to the affairs of state.

It would be better for me to collect a son from a market than to beget offspring of my loins.

Approach me, O Cushite! I hereby give you my daughter

Since you married her in secret,

For if you had not already married her, I would not give her to you now.

And you, delightful daughter, have put joy in my heart

That you are my only child and I have no other daughter

For your flight from my house would have made me merciless to your sister

Enclosing her with planks of cedar. — My words are finished.

Desist so that I may propose some words to be a little help

As the entrance to the dwelling of peace, to turn the heart of the father to the children:

In the absence of healing for the break, let worry and terror retreat

For a man girds himself to bear the distress in its time;

215 Jer. 31:20; 215 שַׁﬠֲשֻׁﬠִ֔ים יֶ֣לֶד 'delightful child'.
216 Ps. 4:8 (4:7 in English Bibles) נָתַ֣תָּה 'you (masc.) have put joy in my heart'.
217 Song of Songs 8:9 לך על אַרֶז 'we shall enclose her with planks of cedar'.
218 Dan. 11:34.
219 Mal. 3:24 (4:6 in English Bibles) 'he will turn the heart of the fathers to the children'.
220 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘ended/depended’ (1.3.203–4).
Do not cry out with a bitter soul over that which has passed and is no more.

For this is the way to create distress twice;

If the ewe has gone and the stray cannot be returned

With long forbearance the damage will turn into gain;

When a robbed man laughs, he steals a portion from the plunderer

But he steals from himself if he cries out like a madman.

PHICHL. Thus if the Turks dare to go up to Caphtor

It will not be torn away from us but rather our mouths will be filled with laughter.

Happy is he who rejoices in his judgement and delights even in the inferno

From poison he extracts sweetness for himself, from wormwood he sucks pure honey;

But woe to him who has a worried heart and no patience in his spirit.

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221 Job 21:25.
222 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘gone/on’ (1.3.205–6).
223 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘takes/makes’ (1.3.207–8).
224 Prov. 25:15.
225 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘thief/grief’ (1.3.209–10).
226 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘beguile/smile’ (1.3.211–12).
227 Ps. 126:2.
228 This word appears on a number of occasions in the Hebrew Bible (2 Kings 23:10; Jer. 7:31, 32, 19:6, 11–14) but as a place-name, Topheth, a location in Jerusalem where idol-worshippers would sacrifice their children; in the medieval period it became a label for hell (Even-Shoshan 2003, 6: 2030), and this is the sense in which Salkinson is employing it.
229 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘bears/hears’ (1.3.213–14).
230 Deut. 28:65.
231 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘sorrow/borrow’ (1.3.215–16).
For when he is judged he is tormented by pain and despondency;

אַכְּלָם לִכְּלַבְּרָם כִּי־יֵתִיבָה כִּקְנֵה לְאָחָד בֵּי יִטְיִיבָה כִּקְנֵה לְאֶחָד

And parables, why they are as sharp as an ox-goad or a nail.

מַכְאֹב מִפְּנֵי בְּהִשָּׁפְטוֹ יִתְﬠַנֶּה כִּי; וָמֹרֶךְ כְּדוּרְבָּן חַדִּים הֲלֹא וּמְשָׁלִים מִמְּרֵרָה מַר לַשֵּׁנִי דְבַשׁ כִּקְנֵה לְאֶחָד

To one like sugar cane; to another, more bitter than gall;

אֶחָד מִלֵּבָנָה שפֹטְסָה יִתְﬠַנֶּה כִּי, יִתְﬠַנֶּה כִּיסֶּבָה מַגְּהִית יִתְﬠַנֶּה כִּי; וָמֹרֶךְ כְּדוּרְבָּן חַדִּים הֲלֹא וּמְשָׁלִים מִמְּרֵרָה מַר לַשֵּׁנִי דְבַשׁ כִּקְנֵה לְאֶחָד

But what do mere words have that they might be good medicine?

הַעֲלוֹת רָדָה אֵשׁ אֲרֻכָּה לָרְזָה 232 יִתְﬠַנֶּה כִּי יִתְﬠַנֶּה כִּי מְשָׁל גְּרָה בּוּרֶה תֶּכֶם וָמֹרֶךְ כְּדוּרְבָּן חַדִּים הֲלֹא וּמְשָׁלִים מִמְּרֵרָה מַר לַשֵּׁנִי דְבַשׁ כִּקְנֵה לְאֶחָד

Can healing for a broken spirit go in through the ears?

גּוֹרָה: נִתְﬠַנֶּה כִּי יִתְﬠַנֶּה כִּי מְשָׁל גְּרָה בּוּרֶה תֶּכֶם וָמֹרֶךְ כְּדוּרְבָּן חַדִּים הֲלֹא וּמְשָׁלִים מִמְּרֵרָה מַר לַשֵּׁנִי דְבַשׁ כִּקְנֵה לְאֶחָד

Now please resolve to turn your attention to the affairs of state.

הַמְּדִינָה לִקְרַאת יֹרְדִים דִּבְרֵי לָשִׁית הוֹאֵל אָנָּאﬠַתָּה לָשִׁית הוֹאֵל אָנָּא לָשִׁית הוֹאֵל אָנָּא

THE PRINCE The Turks with a great army are descending towards Caphtor.

גּוֹרָה: מַמְּדִינָה מִבְצַר הָיְתָה אִיתִיאֵל וְאַתָּה הַהוּא הַמָּקוֹם חַיִל בֶּן כִּי אַף, לָנוּ אֲשֶׁר וְהַנָּצִיב הוּא רֵתַּר לְךָ כִּי 234 דָּחָא אָחָד פֶּה כֻּלָּם יֹאמְרוُ 239 זָﬠָו וְיֶ֥תֶר שָׂאֵ֖ת יֶ֥תֶר 'אָלָמָה לִכְּלַבְּרָם כִּי־יֵתִיבָה כִּקְנֵה לְאֶחָד מִלֵּבָנָה שפֹטְסָה יִתְﬠַנֶּה כִּי, יִתְﬠַנֶּה כִּיסֶּבָה מַגְּהִית יִתְﬠַנֶּה כִּי; וָמֹרֶךְ כְּדוּרְבָּן חַדִּים הֲלֹא וּמְשָׁלִים מִמְּרֵרָה מַר לַשֵּׁנִי דְבַשׁ כִּקְנֵה לְאֶחָד

And you, Ithiel, know well the citadel of that place.

וָמֹרֶךְ כְּדוּרְבָּן חַדִּים הֲלֹא וּמְשָׁלִים מִמְּרֵרָה מַר לַשֵּׁנִי דְבַשׁ כִּקְנֵה לְאֶחָד

And as for the governor whom we have, though he is a valiant man.

וָמֹרֶךְ כְּדוּרְבָּן חַדִּים הֲלֹא וּמְשָׁלִים מִמְּרֵרָה מַר לַשֵּׁנִי דְבַשׁ כִּקְנֵה לְאֶחָד

Everyone says unanimously that you excel in dignity and power.

וָמֹרֶךְ כְּדוּרְבָּן חַדִּים הֲלֹא וּמְשָׁלִים מִמְּרֵרָה מַר לַשֵּׁנִי דְבַשׁ כִּקְנֵה לְאֶחָד

And therefore for several days you must cease taking pleasure in your light.

וָמֹרֶךְ כְּדוּרְבָּן חַדִּים הֲלֹא וּמְשָׁלִים מִמְּרֵרָה מַר לַשֵּׁנִי דְבַשׁ כִּקְנֵה לְאֶחָד

Which is shining for you like a new star, in order to set your feet.

וָמֹרֶךְ כְּדוּרְבָּן חַדִּים הֲלֹא וּמְשָׁלִים מִמְּרֵרָה מַר לַשֵּׁנִי דְבַשׁ כִּקְנֵה לְאֶחָד

232 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘gall/equivocal’ (1.3.217–18).

233 2 Kings 18:20; Isa. 36:5.


235 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘hear/ear’ (1.3.219–20).


237 This speech is prose in the original (1.3.222–9).

238 2 Kings 18:17; Isa. 36:2.

239 Josh. 9:2; 1 Kings 22:13; 2 Chron. 18:12.

240 Gen. 49:3 ‘excelling in dignity and excelling in power’.

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
On a road of snares and uneven ground and a field of din and shouting

For you shall go at the head of the company to command the army of war.

**ITHIEL**

The hand of cruel time has taught me like a nurse from youth

To lie in a field of war on a bed of iron and lead

As on a pillow of fur and down, and a spirit of power and might

Spurs me to perform any service, even to fight against the Turks.

And therefore I hereby present my plea before the honour of the rulership

To be a shield and protector for my wife who stands here

To support her in an established house as befits the house of her birth.

**THE PRINCE**

If you are willing, she may stay in her father's house.

**PHICHL**

Her father refuses to allow her to return to his house.

**ITHIEL**

As do I.

**ASENATH**

As do I; for I have no desire

To disturb my father's peace whenever he sees me in his house.

And to you, O prince, I raise my eyes that you might be an advocate for me

To take hold of that which I ask with an innocent heart.

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242 Jer. 38:26
Ithiel the Cushite of Venice

What is your request? 244

Asenath?

I love the Cushite in order that I might live with him

Is known in all the land, since I left my father

And went out from his house in a storm, for I saw the heart of my husband 245

And my soul clove to his soul, until I forgot my kindred

And all of my precious things from previously, in order that I be called by his name

To revel in the glory of his power, and with his honour my honour might be joined.

And now, honourable ministers! If he goes to the war

And I stay here like a lonely bird on a rooftop 247

What will remain with me, of all my desire and my love?

How can I sit many days, without a father, without a husband

Alone, abandoned like an orphan and like a widow, a widow whose husband is alive? 248

Let me go with him.

Please consent, ministers! To give her her desire;

My witness is in heaven! That I do not yearn for this before you

244 Esther 5:3, 6, 7:2, 9:12.
245 1 Sam. 16:7; 'man sees the outward appearance, but the LORD sees the heart'.
246 Gen. 34:3; 'and his soul clove to Dinah'; Alshekh to Ruth 1.
247 Ps. 102:8 (102:7 in English Bibles).
248 2 Sam. 20:3.
Because I desire to satisfy the hunger of my soul
And to drink new wine from my own vineyard for I am thirsty
It is for nothing other than to fulfil her wishes that I have asked.
And God forbid you should say that when she goes with me
I shall abandon the labour which you have entrusted into my hand.
If I have given myself up to the delights of men, many concubines, And have become like the target for arrows of love from the hand of an archer, Which seizes the heart of its master and casts sluggishness upon his delights
So as not to engage in the labour which keeps its master alive, May my wife grind grain for another man; may my honour turn into shame;
And may the bronze helmet on my head become the cooking women’s pot!

**The Prince**

Look, you have the power to choose as is best in your eyes
But choose for yourself quickly, whether you will go or whether you will leave off

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249 Eccles. 2:8 and the delights of men, many concubines.
250 Salkinson has deleted the reference to Classical mythology in this translation of Shakespeare’s ‘light-winged toys/ Of feathered Cupid’ (1.3.269–70).
251 Gen. 21:20.
252 Job 31:10.
253 1 Sam. 17:5 'and there was a bronze helmet on his head'.
For the matter is extremely urgent, and you are due to leave tonight.

**ASENATH**
Tonight?

**THE PRINCE**
This very night.

**ITHIEL**
Behold, I shall go with all my heart.

**THE PRINCE**
Tomorrow at the morning watch we shall gather here again

Ithiel, please appoint one of your men to stay behind you And he will bring to your hand our document of attestation With the rest of the supplies required for you on the way.

**ITHIEL**
I shall appoint my standard-bearer, an honest and faithful man Whom I shall assign to bring me my wife With the rest of the things that you will send as is fitting in your eyes.

**THE PRINCE**
Let it be so – go in peace, each man to his house.

And you, noble Phichol! Listen to the wise pronouncement of the ruler Indeed I shall honour a man of valour, as long as I still have my sense

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254 Exod. 14:24; 1 Sam. 11:11 (sometimes translated as ‘last watch of the night’).
255 This verb appears only once in the Hebrew Bible (Num. 31:16), with unclear meaning; it becomes commonly used only in postbiblical texts starting with the Mishnah (Even-Shoshan 2003, 3: 1026).
256 Gen. 19:18; Esther 8:8.
257 Judg. 20:8; 1 Sam. 10:25; 2 Sam. 6:19; 1 Kings 12:24, 22:17; Hag. 1:9; 1 Chron. 16:43; 2 Chron. 11:4, 18:16.
258 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘lack/black’ (1.3.290–1).
And regarding your son-in-law
I hereby say: the skin of the Cushite’s face shone. 259

COUNSELLOR 1
Go in peace, Ithiel; do well by your wife Asenath.

PHICHL
Keep your eye on her, Cushite, for there is deceit in her mouth. 260, 261

Lest she cheat you as she cheated her father.

(The prince, the counsellors, and the attendants exit)

ITHIEL
I shall vouch for my wife with my life – my dear Doeg!

Know that I hereby give her over to your charge

Command your wife to stand at attendance and serve before her

And as for you, bring both of them to me according to your best ability.

Come to me Asenath, only a few moments

Have been given to us as a time of love, 264 for the appointed time cannot be moved.

(Raddai and Asenath exit)

RADDAI
Doeg!

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259 Exod. 34:35 ‘the skin of Moses’ face shone’ (after speaking with God). This phrase also appears in the thirteenth-century Hebrew book of fables Meshal haQadmoni by the poet and scholar Isaac ben Solomon abi Sahula, where it refers to a husband whose wife has been unfaithful to him by playing on the homonymy of the word קֶרֶן, which can mean ‘ray of light’ or ‘horn’. Sahula draws on the medieval European notion of the wronged husband wearing horns. It is possible that Salkinson was aware of the text and its interpretation, and had it in mind when selecting this particular phrase. Thanks to Marc Sapirstein for this observation.

260 Isa. 53:9 ‘and there was no deceit in his mouth’.

261 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘see/thee’ (1.3.293–4).

262 Gen. 27:36 ‘for he has tricked me twice now’.

263 Gen. 43:9 ‘I shall be surety for him’.

264 Ezek. 16:8.
DOEG What do you say, willing-hearted one? 265

RADDAI Tell me, what should I do now?

DOEG Go to your house and lie on your bed.

RADDAI I am going to drown in the river momentarily.

DOEG If you do so, I shall not continue To love you. But why, my dear fool?

RADDAI Because it is folly to keep myself alive Since life is cholera and death is the doctor.

DOEG You are speaking like a shameless one. 266

Approximately four times seven years have passed on my head And from the day that I started to distinguish between good and evil 269 I have not found a single man who knew how to honour himself.

As for myself, instead of going to drown because of a beautiful hen I would go to exchange my life for the life of a monkey.

RADDAI But I do not know what I should do – Shamefacedly I admit that my love has grown greater than the strength of bearing the burden 270

265 Exod. 35:22; 2 Chron. 29:31.
266 This and the following speeches until Raddai’s line ‘Where shall we see each other tomorrow’ are prose in the original (1.3.307–73).
267 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘to live is torment; and then have we a prescription to die’ (1.3.309–10). Cholera was the most common infectious disease affecting Eastern European Jews in the second half of the nineteenth century (see Markel 1997: esp. 87–8). Cf. Ram and Jael, Fifth Part, note 28.
268 Job 2:10
269 Lev. 27:12, 14 (with a slightly different meaning: ‘whether good or evil’).
270 Neh. 4:4 (4:10 in English Bibles).
And I have no more spirit to extinguish the flame.  

DOEG

Your spirit is futility;  
For the strength is in our hands to be thus or thus. 
Man's body is a garden, and the master of the garden is the will; I have the power to plant weeds in it and to sow greens in it, When I will it hyssop rises up, and when I will it that which my hand has planted is torn up, 
When I will it I sow one species, or species of different kinds. It is in my power to make it like the field of a slothful man, neither pruned nor weeded. Or like the garden of an industrious man full of blessed fruit, All these come into being in accordance with my desire, which is ruler over everything. If you ponder the way of life and there is no sense on the scale To outweigh the scale full of desire and lusts Who could stand up against the inclination of the heart, which is evil from one's youth! But indeed, our sense is with us, and the strength is in our hands.

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271 Josh. 5:1 אֵין מִי עֹדְךָ רַוחְלָהּ אֲלֵהוֹת וּלְכַבּוֹת אֲלֵהוֹת; to extinguish the flame.  
271 1 Kings 10:5 וְלֹא־הָיָה פֶּרֶשׁ לֹא־הָיוּ בָּהּ 'and they had no more spirit'; 1 Kings 10:5 וְלֹא־הָיָה חַיִּים אֹרַח יַﬠֲמֹד. 'and she had no more spirit'.  
272 Abarbanel to 1 Kings 11.  
273 Prov. 24:30.  
274 Isa. 5:6 יֵﬠָדֵ֔ר וְלֹ֣א יִזָּמֵר֙ לֹא אֲלֵהוֹת חַיִּים אֹרַח. 'neither pruned nor weeded'.  
275 Prov. 5:6 פֶּן־תְּפַלֵּס אָלֵמִיא אָלֵמִיא פֶּרֶשׁ אֲלֵהוֹת. 'lest you (or: she) ponder the way of life'.  
276 Mishnah Avot 2:9 'if all the sages of Israel were in one pan of a scale and Eliezer ben Hyrcanus were in the other, he would outweigh them all'.  
277 Gen. 8:21 מִנְּﬠֻרָיו רַ֖ע הָאָדָ֛ם לֵ֧ב יֵ֣צֶר 'the inclination of man's heart is evil from his youth'.

The First Hebrew Shakespeare Translations
To put out the fire of lust and the desire of the life of the flesh. 278
And therefore the desire in your heart, which you have called by
the name of love
Is an alien branch in your garden
and a foreign vine. 279

God forbid, do not say such a thing.
The soul of desire is in the blood,
and the will can rule over it;
Arise, be a man, and do not chatter
like a fool
About destroying yourself with your hands; throw vermin and mice
in the water
Or puppies, puppies without eyes.
As for me, my soul is tied to you by
unbreakable bonds
And now the time has come to help you with my love.
Put money in your purse and go
after the army of war,
Disguise yourself with a long beard
and do not forget your bag
of money;
Indeed, Asenath will not love the Cushite for long,
Therefore put money in your purse –
and he will not love her forever
A love that is hasty at its beginning
soon reaches its end.
And therefore, just put the money in
the mouth of your sack 281

278 Prov. 14:30.
279 Isa. 17:10.
280 Isa. 66:17
281 Gen. 42:27 ‘and the vermin and the mice’.
see also Gen. 49:21 for a similar phrasing.

Ithiel the Cushite of Venice
Indeed the Cushites change the desire of their hearts like clothing
So therefore, fill your sack with money.
The food which is as sweet to him today as pure honey
Will be as bitter to him tomorrow as the venom of asps.
And moreover, she is tender in years; she will desire a change and replacements
When she has had her fill of his flesh, she will recognize her mistake
And she will set her sights on a change, and her change will surely come;
Therefore I say to you, prepare your bag of money.
But if you want to send your soul down to the land of the dead
Choose for yourself the death of the righteous and do not descend into the depths
Arise, collect all the money that you have to hand.
Behold, my hand is stretched out and the whole assembly of the dead is with me
To nullify the link between this foreign sojourner.

282 Ps. 19:11 (19:10 in English Bibles). It is unclear whether Salkinson chose this translation in order to avoid the non-kosher connotations of the original ‘locusts’ (1.3.349), or because he was aware of the interpretation according to which the English term refers to the sweet juice of the carob (see Honigmann 1997: 157, note 349; Crystal and Crystal 2002: 266).
283 Deut. 32:33; Job 20:16; פְּתָנִים is sometimes translated as ‘cobras’ or ‘vipers’.
284 Num. 23:10.
285 Prov. 21:16.
286 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Barbarian’ (1.3.356). In the Hebrew Bible this term denotes a resident foreigner in Israelite territory (Lieber 2007). Conversely, in rabbinic and later Jewish literature, as well as in Yiddish, it refers to a convert to Judaism (Rabinowitz and Eichhorn 2007). As Salkinson’s readers would have been familiar with both meanings of the word, the translation can be understood on two levels: Ithiel is at once a foreigner residing in Venice, and a convert to a different religion, which echoes Othello’s implied conversion to Christianity in the original text. See Ram and Jael, First Part, note 340 for a similar use of this word.
And that deceitful soul, the beautiful daughter of Venice.

And if my power is not gone, you will go in to her and be her husband.

Therefore, prepare your money – and let your plan to drown in the river.

Become a bane and a curse, for this is not a good plan.

It is better for you to be hanged in peace and honour on a tree.

After you have drunk your fill of stolen water,

Than to go die in the depths before you have tasted a thing.

If I do as you say

Will you stand at my right-hand side to grant me my desires when there is a chance?

Let your heart be firm because you trust in me.

Go and gather up all the money that you have to hand; why, I have already told you

And I shall tell you a second time and a third time that with absolute hatred

I hate the Cushite, and I do not hate him for nothing.

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287 Prov. 19:15; in the biblical verse the word רְמִיָּה is translated as ‘idle’, but in Salkinson’s text it has the meaning of ‘deceitful’, which corresponds to Shakespeare’s ‘super-subtle’ (1.3.357, used in the sense of ‘crafty’; see Honigmann 1997: 158, note 357). This latter meaning of רְמִיָּה is attested in a different collocation in Mic. 6:12 (Koehler and Baumgartner 2001, 2: 1243–4) and is also standard in later forms of Hebrew.

288 Deut. 32:36 יָדֶ֥ד אִלָּלֶ֣ה וֶתְּקֹ֣שֶׁר נָכ֣וֹן ‘[their] strength is gone’.
290 Abarbanel to Numbers 5 מָאָרָה וְקֹֽלְלַ֖לֶה ‘a bane and a curse’.
291 Prov. 9:17.
292 Ps. 32:6.
293 Ps. 112:7 יָ֔ד אֱלֹהִ֥ים בַּיִּ֑הוָה בָּטֻ֥חַ לִ֝בּ֗וֹ ‘his heart is steadfast, trusting in the L ord’.
294 Ps. 139:22 שִׂנְאָ֣ה תַכְלִית שְׂנֵאתִ֑ים ‘I hate them with absolute hatred’.
295 This collocation is first attested in rabbinic literature; for example, Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 22b.
Just like your hatred, the root of the matter is found for it\(^{296}\)
as well

Come, let us take counsel together in order to exact revenge upon him;

If you desecrate his bed,\(^{297}\) you will be pleased and I shall laugh.

And who else then knows what the day will bring?\(^{298}\)

For much counsel runs this way and that

Until it emerges from the womb when the days of conception are complete.

Go and prepare your money, and tomorrow we shall speak further.

**Raddai** Where shall we see each other tomorrow?

**Doeg** At my house.

**Raddai** Early in the morning I shall come to see you.

**Doeg** Go in peace – do you hear me, Raddai?

**Raddai** What do you ask of me?

**Doeg** Do not talk further of drowning in the river – do you hear?

**Raddai** My heart is turned within me;\(^{299}\)

I shall sell the field of my possession.\(^{300}\)

**Doeg** Go in peace! Put enough money in your purse. (Raddai exits)

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296 Job 19:28

297 1 Chron. 5:1

298 Prov. 27:1

299 Lam. 1:20

300 Lev. 27:16, 22, 28
Thus I shall find for myself a bag of money, by means of this senseless man.  
For it would be a disgrace for a shrewd man like me to waste pleasant words on a fool like him, if not for profit and amusement. And I hate the Cushite, and many even say that he has gone up on my bed; and even though I do not know whether the matter is indeed true, nevertheless I shall recompense him solely for what my ears have heard, as if I had seen it with my eyes. And because of his great trust in my faithfulness, as quick as lightning he will fall into my hunting-net. And Chesed is the man who will be like a desired tool in my hand; but how will he be of profit to me if not to dispossess him in order to take his office and satiate my eye with vengeance. Because with a desired tool like him I shall carry out a double act of deceit. But how will the deceit succeed? Desist – I shall ponder the matter. In several days, I shall report him to the Cushite's ears, saying that I saw him sporting with the lady Asenath.

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301 Ps. 92:7 (92:6 in English Bibles).
302 Isa. 11:3 ‘and not by what his ears hear’.
303 Job 35:3 ‘what profit is it to you’.
304 Gen. 26:8 ‘and he saw Isaac sporting with his wife Rebecca’.
And the spirit of jealousy will come upon him, thinking that his wife has strayed.

For her soul desired the officer, a man with a flattering tongue and lips.

As he is also handsome in form and appearance.

And the Cushite in his innocence will not recognize my cunning.

For he considers me to be faithful, as I appear in his eyes.

And he will go where I lead him, like an ass pulled by the bridle.

Aha! Just now, I have conceived a sin in the world, and Sheol and the darkness answer: behold, evil is born.

(Exits)

End of First Part.

305 Num. 5:14 תָּשְׁבִּיתָהּ נָפָשָׁהּ לְחַשֵּׁבָהּ רָוָּעָה לְרוּחַ־קִנְאָה וְﬠָבַ֨ר ‘and the spirit of jealousy comes upon him’; see also Num. 5:30.

306 Gen. 34:8 וְﬠָבַ֨ר נַפְשָׁהּ חָשְׁקָה ‘his soul desires your daughter’.

307 Prov. 28:23.

308 Gen. 39:6 וְﬠָבַ֨ר נַפְשָׁהּ חָשְׁקָה ‘and Joseph was handsome in form and appearance’.

309 This and the following line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘night/light’ (1.3.402–3).