

Job 19
June 28, 2026

Open with Prayer

HOOK:

If we had a scale of 1-10 to measure emotional intensity, I would put today's reading very close to a 10! So let me try this out on you for starters: [Rhetorical Q] Have you ever had a "friend"....

Torment you, crush you with words, reproach you, attack you, or use your humiliation against you?

Let's now look at Job and the verbs he uses to describe his perception of the treatment he gets from God:

Blocked my way; shrouded my paths; stripped me of honor; removed the crown from my head; tears me down; uproots my hope; anger burns against me. Need I go on?!!

Transition: I'm going to hazard a guess that many of us, if not all of us, has had the kind of experience Job has had. Yet...today's passage contains one of the most well-known verses that gets quoted often – "I know that my Redeemer lives." Job has never lost sight that he will see God again because he keeps holding onto his integrity and what he knows about himself. Let's read the text.

BOOK:

19 Then Job replied:

² "How long will you torment me
and crush me with words?

³ Ten times now you have reproached me;
shamelessly you attack me.

⁴ If it is true that I have gone astray,
my error remains my concern alone.

⁵ If indeed you would exalt yourselves above me
and use my humiliation against me,

⁶ then know that God has wronged me
and drawn his net around me.

⁷ "Though I cry, 'I've been wronged!' I get no response;
though I call for help, there is no justice.

⁸ He has blocked my way so I cannot pass;
he has shrouded my paths in darkness.

⁹ He has stripped me of my honor
and removed the crown from my head.

¹⁰ He tears me down on every side till I am gone;
he uproots my hope like a tree.

¹¹ His anger burns against me;

he counts me among his enemies.

¹² His troops advance in force;
they build a siege ramp against me
and encamp around my tent.

¹³ “He has alienated my brothers from me;
my acquaintances are completely estranged from me.

¹⁴ My kinsmen have gone away;
my friends have forgotten me.

¹⁵ My guests and my maidservants count me a stranger;
they look upon me as an alien.

¹⁶ I summon my servant, but he does not answer,
though I beg him with my own mouth.

¹⁷ My breath is offensive to my wife;
I am loathsome to my own brothers.

¹⁸ Even the little boys scorn me;
when I appear, they ridicule me.

¹⁹ All my intimate friends detest me;
those I love have turned against me.

²⁰ I am nothing but skin and bones;
I have escaped with only the skin of my teeth.

²¹ “Have pity on me, my friends, have pity,
for the hand of God has struck me.

²² Why do you pursue me as God does?
Will you never get enough of my flesh?

²³ “Oh, that my words were recorded,
that they were written on a scroll,

²⁴ that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead,
or engraved in rock forever!

²⁵ **I know that my Redeemer lives,**
and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.

²⁶ And after my skin has been destroyed,
yet in my flesh I will see God;

²⁷ I myself will see him
with my own eyes—I, and not another.

How my heart yearns within me!

²⁸ “If you say, ‘How we will hound him,
since the root of the trouble lies in him,’

²⁹ you should fear the sword yourselves;

Process Observations/Questions:

Q: What stood out to you? What questions do you have? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you learn about man? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you learn about God or Jesus or the Holy Spirit? [Let people engage]

Q: What is your takeaway? [Let people engage]

LOOK:

Hold onto integrity even when you're misunderstood. Job feels abandoned by friends and believes even God has turned against him. Yet he continues to speak honestly rather than pretending everything is fine. Remain truthful and faithful during hardship, even when others misjudge your situation.

Anchor your hope in God despite present suffering. “I know that my Redeemer lives.” Present suffering does not have the final word. Hope can rest in God’s ultimate justice and redemption.

Close in Prayer

Commentaries for Today’s Lesson:

Wiersbe, W.W. (1996). *Be Patient*. (pp. 70-79) Victor Books

2. The trials of life (Job 19:1–29)

When Bildad finished describing the terrors of death, Job replied by describing the trials of life, *his own life*. “I don’t have to *die* to experience trials,” he said to his friends. “I’m experiencing them right now, and you don’t seem to care!”

Insults (Job 19:1–4). Our words either hurt others or heal them; we either add to their burdens or help them bear their burdens with courage. Job’s friends crushed him with their words; they made him feel worthless and helpless in the face of all his suffering. How sensitive we should be

to the needs and struggles of others! Even if people do need rebuke, we should do it in love; and our words should hearten them and not weaken them.

“Even if I have sinned,” Job said in 19:4, “it’s *my* sin and not yours. God and I can work things out, so leave me alone.” The word Job used (“erred”) means “an unintentional sin.” Job still defended his integrity and claimed that he had committed no sins worthy of all the suffering he had endured.

Illustrations (Job 19:5–12). Bildad had given four frightening pictures of the terrors of death, so Job countered with seven vivid pictures of the trials of his life, what he was experiencing right then and there!

He felt like *an animal trapped* (v. 6). Job saw himself caught in God’s net, not because of his sins but because God had trapped him. Bildad described six different kinds of traps that would catch a fleeing criminal (18:7–10), but Job did not put himself into that picture. He was not running away from God, nor was he guilty of sin. It was God who had suddenly caught him for reasons Job did not understand.

He also felt like *a criminal in court* (19:7). God had wronged him by arresting him and bringing him into judgment. What had he done? Why were the charges not read to him? Why was he not permitted a defense? “Though I call for help, there is no justice” (v. 7, NIV). Throughout the book, Job pleads for justice and cries out for an advocate to defend himself before God. What Job did not realize was that *he was the advocate defending God!* It was Job’s faith and endurance that proved Satan wrong and brought glory to the Lord.

Job saw himself as *a traveler fenced in* (v. 8). Satan had complained that God had “walled in” Job and his family so that they were protected from trouble (1:9–12). Now Job is complaining because God has blocked his path, and he cannot move. Job could not see what lay ahead because God had shrouded the way with darkness.

At times God permits His children to experience darkness on a dead-end street where they don’t know which way to turn. When this happens, *wait for the Lord to give you light in His own time*. Don’t try to manufacture your own light or to borrow light from others. Follow the wise counsel of Isaiah, “Who among you fears the Lord? Who obeys the voice of His Servant? Who walks in darkness and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord and rely upon his God” (Isa. 50:10, NKJV).

Dr. Bob Jones, Sr. used to say, “Never doubt in the darkness what God has taught you in the light.” In fact, what God teaches us in the light will become even more meaningful in the darkness.

“Oh, the unspeakable benediction of the ‘treasures of darkness!’” wrote Oswald Chambers. “It is not the days of sunshine and splendor and liberty and light that leave their lasting and indelible effect upon the soul, but those nights of the Spirit in which, shadowed by God’s hand, hidden in the dark cleft of some rock in a weary land, He lets the splendors of the outskirts of Himself pass before our gaze.”

Job's suffering left him feeling like *a king dethroned* (Job 19:9). Before his calamities came, Job had been the leading man in Uz and the greatest man in the East (1:3; 29:1–25); but now all that honor and authority were gone. God had taken from him his royal robes and crown, and now he was the lowest instead of the highest. What humiliation!

His fifth picture is that of *a structure destroyed* (19:10). It could be a wall or a building that God's "troops" swooped down on and left in ruins. Job may have been looking back at his business affairs or his household; or perhaps he was contemplating his emaciated body. In any event, what was once strong and useful was now useless and destroyed. Bildad had spoken about a tent being destroyed (18:15), and Job knew what this meant.

In the sixth picture, Job borrowed the image of *a tree uprooted* (19:10; see 18:16). Job had used the tree as a picture of hope (14:7), but now he sees it as a symbol of *lost* hope. But in Job 14, Job was speaking about a tree that was chopped down, while here the tree is *uprooted*. Without a root system, the tree cannot live.

Job's final picture is that of *a besieged city* (19:11–12). God has declared war on Job (13:24) and is treating him like an enemy. His troops have attacked him and settled down for a long, hard siege. Imagine a large army building a ramp just to attack a tent! Once again, Job cannot understand why God has sent so much suffering. Why use an atomic bomb just to destroy a tent?

Isolation (Job 19:13–22). Job went on to explain how his suffering affected his relationship with people. We must recognize that extreme and prolonged pain often isolates sufferers from people and circumstances around them. When people really hurt, they may tend to withdraw and give the impression that others don't really understand what they are going through. Job felt alienated from those left in his family, from his friends, and even from his servants.

But there was more to this alienation than Job's pain. He was now bankrupt and ill, living at the city dump; and nobody wanted to be identified with him. Furthermore, people were convinced that Job was a guilty sinner suffering the judgment of God; so why be his friend? His appearance was repulsive, and people avoided looking at him. He was being treated like a leper, an outcast who was not wanted by family or friends.

One evidence of our Lord's compassion was the way He identified with outcasts. He ate with "publicans and sinners" (Matt. 9:9–13), touched the lepers (Matt. 8:1–4), accepted gifts from prostitutes (Luke 7:36–50), and even died between two criminals (23:32–33). Jesus knew what it was like to be "despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3). How important it is that we, His disciples, have this same kind of compassion. It's easy to identify with people we know and like when they are going through trials, but we tend to overlook the helpless, the poor, and the neglected in their sufferings.

Job's statement in Job 19:20 has become a familiar but misunderstood proverb: "I am escaped with the skin of my teeth." This is usually quoted, "I escaped *by* the skin of my teeth," that is, "I just barely escaped!" (If there were skin on our teeth, how thick would it be?) But the Hebrew text says "with" and not "by," and interpreters don't agree on the meaning.

Some suggest that Job meant, “I’m so far gone that only my gums are left!” But the gums are not usually referred to as “the skin of the teeth.” Others say that he meant, “If there were skin on my teeth, that’s how close I am to death!” Or, “My body is so emaciated that all I have left is the skin of my teeth!” (He was exaggerating, of course.) Whatever Job had in mind, the image clearly shows one thing: it was a miracle that Job was alive.

Job closed this part of his defense by appealing to his friends for pity (vv. 21–22; 6:14). God was against him, his family and friends had deserted him, and all he had left were his three intimate friends who were now pursuing him like wild beasts after their prey. Couldn’t they stop and try to help him? Why must they have such hard hearts?

Insight (Job 19:23–29). Why did Job want his words to be recorded permanently? He thought he was going to die before God would vindicate him, and he wanted people to remember how he suffered and what he said. Bildad warned him, “The remembrance of him [a wicked man] shall perish from the earth” (18:17), and Job wanted his record to remain.

At this point, Job uttered another of his statements of faith that in this book punctuate his many expressions of grief and pain. It is significant that Job would go from the depths of despair to the heights of faith, and then back into the depths again. *This is often the normal experience of people experiencing great suffering.* The skies will be dark and stormy, a ray of light will suddenly shine through, and then the storm will come again.

In spite of what some preachers say, very few people can maintain a constant high level of faith and courage in times of severe pain and trial. John Henry Jowett, at one time known as “the greatest preacher in the English-speaking world,” wrote to a friend: “I wish you wouldn’t think I am such a saint. You seem to imagine that I have no ups and downs, but just a level and lofty stretch of spiritual attainment with unbroken joy and equanimity. By no means! I am often perfectly wretched, and everything appears most murky” (*John Henry Jowett*, by Arthur Porrit, p. 290).

In 19:25–27, Job expressed confidence that, even if he died, he would still have a Redeemer who one day would exercise judgment on the earth. Furthermore, Job affirmed that he himself expected to live again and see his Redeemer! “And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God” (v. 26, NIV). It was an affirmation of faith in the resurrection of the human body.

The Hebrew word translated “Redeemer” in verse 25 refers to the kinsman redeemer, the near relative who could avenge his brother’s blood (Deut. 19:6–12), reclaim and restore his brother’s property (Lev. 25:23–24, 39–55), and set his brother free from slavery (25:25). The kinsman redeemer could also go to court on behalf of a wronged relative (Prov. 23:10–11). In the Book of Ruth, Boaz is the kinsman redeemer who was willing and able to rescue Ruth and give her a new life in a new land.

Previously, Job had talked about his need for an umpire (Job 9:33–34) and an Advocate in heaven (16:19). Now he takes it a step further: his Redeemer will one day vindicate him, and Job

will be there to witness it! When you consider how little God had revealed in Job's day about the future life, these words become a remarkable testimony of faith. And when you add to this the discouragement expressed by Job's friends and his own intense suffering, Job's witness becomes even more wonderful.

Of course, this kinsman redeemer is Jesus Christ. He took upon Himself a human nature so that He might reveal God to us, experience all that we experience, die for our sins, and then return to heaven to represent us before the Father. He is *willing* to save and *able* to save. One day He shall stand upon the earth and exercise judgment; and He will vindicate His own people.

Job closed his speech with a word of warning to his three critical friends (19:28–29): They too will stand at God's judgment throne, so they had better be ready. They accused Job of being a sinner, but were *they* not also sinners? They said that God was judging Job for his sins, but will He not judge them as well? One day they will have to answer to God for the way they have spoken to and about Job, so they had better beware. Job's words remind us of Paul's counsel in Romans 14:10–13 and our Lord's warning in Matthew 7:1–5.

Abraham Lincoln once said, "He has a right to criticize who has a heart to help." Do you qualify?

Zuck, R. B. (1985). *Job*. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, pp. 740-742) Wheaton, IL: Victor Books

4. Job's second reply to Bildad (chap. 19)

This chapter records one of Job's lowest points, emotionally and spiritually, and also one of his highest. After bemoaning the animosity of his accusers (vv. 1–6), of God (vv. 7–12), and of his relatives and friends (vv. 13–22), Job rose to a new level of spiritual confidence, certain that he would see God and be vindicated by Him (vv. 23–29).

a. *The animosity of his three friends (19:1–6)*

19:1–6. Nettled by the trio's wordy assaults, with which they were tormenting, crushing, and reproaching him **10 times** (a Heb. idiom meaning "often"; cf. Gen. 31:7, 41; Num. 14:22; Dan. 1:20), **Job** threw back at Bildad his words, **How long?** (cf. 8:2; 18:2, "When ...?") Then Job maintained that **if** he had sinned, it was his problem, not theirs. **If** they were going to act superior to him, they should realize that *he* had not sinned and trapped himself as Bildad had said (18:8–10); *God* had trapped him. He said **God** had **wronged** him, perverting justice in his case (this Heb. word for "wronged" is translated "pervert" in 8:3). Again, Job placed the blame squarely on God (cf. 3:23; 6:4; 7:17–21; 9:13, 22, 31, 34; 10:2–3; 13:24–27; 16:7–14; 17:6). How else could he account for his plight?

b. *The animosity of God (19:7–12)*

19:7–12. In his outcry (cf. 30:28) against God's violence (**I've been wronged** paraphrases the one Heb. word *ḥāmās*, "violence"), Job was further frustrated by God's silence (cf. 30:20) and

seeming indifference to **justice**. In eight hostile actions, God had flouted Job: (a) **He** obstructed Job's path (cf. 3:23) and (b) darkened it (cf. 12:25); (c) **He removed** Job's **crown** (i.e., his place of esteem in the community; cf. 29:7–11; 30:1, 9–10); (d) **He** demolished Job like a building; (e) **He uprooted** Job's **hope like a tree** (cf. 14:7). Besides all that, (f) God was angry with Job (cf. 14:13; 16:9), (g) considered Job His enemy (cf. 13:24; 33:10; certainly Job was wrong here for Satan, God's chief enemy, was also Job's enemy). Also (h) God assaulted Job like an army building a **siege ramp against** a beleaguered city wall and encamping **around** his **tent**. Bildad had enumerated many disasters encountered by the wicked (18:5–21), but Job responded that such catastrophes had come to *him* from, of all people, God Himself. Why God should buffet one of His own is always one of the most baffling questions a believer faces.

c. The animosity of his relatives and others (19:13–22)

19:13–17. The sufferer's plaint was also nurtured by loneliness. **Brothers** (perhaps comrades, not blood relatives), **acquaintances.... kinsmen ... friends**, and **guests** abhorred and forsook Job—including even the three men who, though with him physically, abandoned him emotionally. Speaking of his household, Job then listed **maidservants**, his own personal **servant**, and even his **wife** and **brothers** among those who rejected him. His personal attendant refused to respond to him and his wife (this is the only mention of her apart from 2:9–10) stayed away because of his disease-caused halitosis.

19:18–20. Youngsters made fun of Job instead of showing the customary respect due to elders (cf. 30:1, 9–10). Job then lumped with the children those who had been his **intimate friends**—probably meaning “Eliphaz and Company”—and **those** he loved. Job lacked even the solace that normally comes from friends and loved ones in times of affliction.

Besides all that, his physical pain did not subside. He continued to lose weight (he was only **skin and bones**; cf. 18:13), and he had barely eluded death (**escaped with only the skin of his teeth**). If, as some suggest, “the skin of my teeth” meant his gums then he was saying his body was so run down that even his teeth had fallen out and only his gums were unaffected. However, the more common interpretation seems preferable.

19:21–22. In a poignant plea Job then begged his **friends**, probably sarcastically, to **pity** him. It was enough for **God** to have **struck** him (on God's **hand**; cf. 1:11; 2:5; 6:9; 12:9; 13:21); **why** did they need to be ruthless too, like animals after his **flesh**?

d. The certainty of seeing God (19:23–29)

Just after Job was at his lowest ebb, he rose to his highest peak. Forlorn, wracked by pain, and maligned by both God and people, he then mounted in spirited confidence to a future vindication of his cause. This was a “magnificent burst of faith” (W.B. MacLeod, *The Afflictions of the Righteous*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, no date, p. 173).

19:23–24. Job expressed his desire for a permanent written record of his **words** of innocence and protest, either **on a scroll** or **engraved in rock** in letters filled with **lead**. Then present and future generations could know of his guilelessness.

19:25. In his jubilation of faith Job affirmed his certainty that God his **Redeemer lives**. Though Job believed God was against him, he knew that only God could vindicate his innocence. Job would die, but God lives on as his Defender, Protector, or Vindicator (*gō'ēl*, “a person who defended or avenged the cause of another, or who provided protection or legal aid for a close relative who could not do so for himself”; cf. Lev. 25:23–25, 47–55; Num. 35:19–27; Prov. 23:10–11; Jer. 50:34). Job knew **that in the end** God would **stand upon the earth** and, like a witness for the defendant at a court trial, would testify that Job was innocent. In that way all would not only read of his uprightness (Job 19:23–24) but also all would hear of it—from God Himself!

19:26. **After my skin has been destroyed** may be rendered, “After my skin has been flayed” (or “stripped off”), that is, after he had died from the constant peeling away of his skin (another symptom of pemphigus foliaceus; cf. comments on 2:7 and see 30:30) or after worms (cf. 17:14; 24:20) in his grave had eaten away his skin (though “worms,” supplied in the KJV, is not in the Heb. text).

After he was dead, Job then would **see God**. He would continue in a conscious existence; he would not be annihilated or sink into soul sleep. But how could he say he would see the Lord **in his flesh** after he had just said he would die? Either he meant he would receive a resurrection body (in which case the Heb. preposition *min*, here translated “in,” would be translated “from the vantage point of”; in 36:25 *min* is used in that sense) or he meant he would see God “apart from” any physical flesh at all (*min* normally means “without”; cf. 11:15b), that is, in his conscious existence after death but before the resurrection. Favoring the first view is the point that whereas *min* normally means “without,” it takes on the meaning of “from the vantage point of” when it occurs with the verb “to see” (*hāzāh*). Favoring the second view is the fact that since 19:26a speaks of his condition in death, one would expect that verse 26b in Hebrew parallelism would also refer to death rather than to an after-death resurrected condition.

19:27. So certain was Job of his seeing God that he repeated this point. The Hebrew word for **see** (*hāzāh*) is the same in verses 26 and 27a. Also, Job twice emphasized the word **I** (vv. 25, 27)—literally, “I, even I, know,” and “I, even I, will see” **Him**. This gazing on God for all eternity will be **with his own eyes** (either the eyes of his resurrected body, or figuratively the eyes of his soul). Job would no longer be like a stranger to God, for God would be on his side.

This thought so overwhelmed Job that he exclaimed, **My heart yearns** (lit., “my kidneys,” considered the seat of the emotions, “waste away”) **within me!** He was emotionally drained by the very thought of meeting God and having Him once and for all vindicate rather than vitiate his cause.

19:28–29. **If** Job’s friends continued to **hound** (the same word is translated “pursue” in v. 22) **him**—to get him to accept their view that sin had precipitated his suffering, and that **the trouble** lay within **him**—God would eventually strike them down by **the sword** (perhaps a retort to Eliphaz’s word about the sword in 15:22). *Then* they would see that God punished the sin of the wicked. Rather than God punishing *Job* for being wicked, *they* would be the recipients of God’s **wrath** for they had repeatedly harassed an innocent victim. Confident that they were wrong

about his spiritual state and that he was right, Job was able to look beyond death to his being acquitted by God and fellowshiping with Him.

This sixth speech by Job's companions is the most stinging of all the diatribes. Infuriated and insulted, Zophar blasted Job, seeking to convince him that his wealth had vanished because that is what happens to those who deprive the poor.

Garrett, D. A. (1998). *The Poetic and Wisdom Books*. In D. S. Dockery (Ed.), *Holman Concise Bible Commentary* (p. 208). Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Job Laments and Hopes (19:1–29). Job again bemoaned his fate and called attention to how those who formerly loved him had abandoned him. He first spoke of God's antagonism to him and then of the contempt he had received from relatives, friends, and subordinates. He pleaded for pity from his friends and warned them that they too might face judgment for their hostility. In the middle of this cry for love, Job made his most profound confession of hope. The somewhat obscure Hebrew may be translated: "I know that my redeemer lives and that the final One will arise against the dust. After they have done away with my skin, from my flesh I shall have a vision of God. I will have this vision for myself; my eyes will see that He is no stranger. My heart yearns within me!"

The term "the final One" refers to the divine Redeemer (the Hebrew word is translated "the last" in Isa. 44:6 and 48:12). "Done away with" translates a word elsewhere used of cutting away underbrush (Isa. 10:34). Job assumed his tormented body would soon die and be thrown out like garbage. The phrase "have a vision" ("see") translates a Hebrew word often used of seeing God or a vision (Exod. 24:11; Isa. 1:1).

Job's yearning for an Intercessor and hope for a resurrection came together here, in the middle of deep dejection, in a triumphant assertion of faith. Job's "Redeemer" would arise against the dust. In other words, He would conquer human mortality. Job was therefore sure that he too would rise from the dead and in his body behold God. At the same time, we note that Job's problems were not over. He still did not understand why God treated him as an enemy.

It is pointless to deny that Job looked for a resurrection and a Redeemer. The book, through the sufferings of its hero, points to the two universal human needs: the need for a Deliverer and the need for release from mortality. No one is competent to stand before God, and everyone longs to escape death (in that sense the three friends were correct in their estimate of human sin and divine power). These needs, poignantly portrayed in Job, are dramatically fulfilled in the New Testament.

The Holy Bible: New International Version. (1984). (Job 19). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.