

Job 27
September 6, 2026

Open with Prayer

HOOK:

Q: When you've been falsely accused and no one believes you, at what point do you stop defending yourself? [Let people engage as they wrestle with a paradox: maintaining integrity sometimes requires speaking truth about injustice, yet endless self-defense can become a form of spiritual exhaustion.]

Transition: Job pledges that he will defend his integrity until he dies, but this moment reveals something crucial about how suffering reshapes our priorities. The friends have spent chapters accusing Job of hidden sin, yet Job refuses to abandon his claim to righteousness. This creates immediate tension: defending your reputation requires energy, emotional investment, and vulnerability to further rejection.

Many believers have faced situations where their character was questioned—perhaps by a church member, a supervisor, or even family. The natural response is to defend yourself exhaustively, to prove your innocence, to show evidence. Yet this exhaustion can become its own form of suffering. Job's refusal to surrender his integrity is admirable, but it also costs him something.

BOOK:

27 And Job continued his discourse:

² “As surely as God lives, who has denied me justice,
the Almighty, who has made me taste bitterness of soul,

³ as long as I have life within me,
the breath of God in my nostrils,

⁴ my lips will not speak wickedness,
and my tongue will utter no deceit.

⁵ I will never admit you are in the right;
till I die, I will not deny my integrity.

⁶ I will maintain my righteousness and never let go of it;
my conscience will not reproach me as long as I live.

⁷ “May my enemies be like the wicked,
my adversaries like the unjust!

⁸ For what hope has the godless when he is cut off,
when God takes away his life?

⁹ Does God listen to his cry
when distress comes upon him?

¹⁰ Will he find delight in the Almighty?
Will he call upon God at all times?

¹¹ “I will teach you about the power of God;
the ways of the Almighty I will not conceal.

¹² You have all seen this yourselves.

Why then this meaningless talk?

¹³ “Here is the fate God allots to the wicked,
the heritage a ruthless man receives from the Almighty:

¹⁴ However many his children, their fate is the sword;
his offspring will never have enough to eat.

¹⁵ The plague will bury those who survive him,
and their widows will not weep for them.

¹⁶ Though he heaps up silver like dust
and clothes like piles of clay,

¹⁷ what he lays up the righteous will wear,
and the innocent will divide his silver.

¹⁸ The house he builds is like a moth’s cocoon,
like a hut made by a watchman.

¹⁹ He lies down wealthy, but will do so no more;
when he opens his eyes, all is gone.

²⁰ Terrors overtake him like a flood;
a tempest snatches him away in the night.

²¹ The east wind carries him off, and he is gone;
it sweeps him out of his place.

²² It hurls itself against him without mercy
as he flees headlong from its power.

²³ It claps its hands in derision
and hisses him out of his place.

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:

Recognize That Maintaining Integrity May Require Rejecting Others’ Versions of Truth

Job refuses to falsely confess to wrongdoing simply to have his situation restored, choosing a position of integrity even in the midst of suffering and anguish.¹ This application challenges a common Christian impulse toward conflict resolution at any cost. When pressured to admit fault you don’t believe you’ve committed—whether by friends, church leaders, or family—the path of least resistance is capitulation. Yet Job models something different: the willingness to endure relational fracture rather than betray your conscience. The application demands discernment: Are you genuinely wrong, or are you being coerced into a false confession? Having heard his friends’

speeches, Job remains unconvinced by their words and will not change his position, continuing to speak truthfully and uphold his righteousness and integrity.²

Understand That Integrity and Complaint Can Coexist

Job acknowledges the emotional impact of all this when he insists that the Almighty has made his life bitter, yet despite all this, Job expresses a determination to persist in his struggle and not seek an easy way out.¹ This reframes a false dichotomy many believers face: either you accept your circumstances without complaint, or you abandon your faith. Job does neither. Even while making an oath in God's name, Job asserts that God has dealt unfairly with him, yet acknowledges God as the sustainer of his life and recognizes his dependence on Him.² The application invites believers to bring both their pain and their faith before God simultaneously.

Recognize That Taking a Principled Stand May Isolate You

On the basis of how he understands the world is run, Job has taken a principled stand.¹ This stance costs him his friends' approval and leaves him vulnerable to further judgment. Yet Job chooses this isolation rather than compromise. The application challenges churches to support believers who maintain convictions that others reject, recognizing that principled integrity sometimes requires bearing loneliness.

Close in Prayer

Commentaries for Today's Lesson:

Wiersbe, W.W. (1996). Be Patient. (pp. 102-106) Victor Books

Job takes an oath (Job 27:1–6). Once again, Job stood fast in affirming his integrity (10:1–7; 13:13–19; 19:23–27; 23:2–7); but this time, he gave an oath: “As God lives” (27:2). Among Eastern people in that day, taking an oath was a serious matter. It was like inviting God to kill you if what you said was not true. Job was so sure of himself that he was willing to take that chance.

Job also repeated his charge that God was not treating him fairly (“[He] has denied me justice,” v. 2, NIV). Job had asked God to declare the charges against him, but the heavens had been silent. Job had called for an umpire to bring him and God together, but no umpire had been provided.

So, Job declared that, as long as he lived, he would defend himself and maintain his integrity. He would not lie just to please his friends or to “bribe” God into restoring his fortunes. (Satan would have rejoiced at that!) Job had to live with his conscience (“heart,” v. 6) no matter what his friends said or his God did to him.

Job utters a curse (Job 27:7–10). In the East, it was not enough for accused people simply to affirm their innocence; they also felt compelled to call down the wrath of God on those who said they were guilty. Job’s words remind us of the “imprecatory psalms” (Pss. 58, 69, 137, etc.) in that they are a prayer for God’s judgment on his enemies.

Who were Job’s enemies? Anybody who agreed with Job’s three friends that he was guilty of sin and deserved to be punished by God. While this conversation had been going on, many people had likely gathered around the ash heap and listened to the debate; and most of them probably sided with Bildad, Zophar, and Eliphaz. Job could see the spectators nod their heads in agreement with his friends, and he knew that he was outnumbered.

Job’s words sound cruel to us, especially in light of what we are taught about forgiving our enemies by both Jesus (Matt. 5:38–48) and Paul (Rom. 12:17–21). But Job lived even before the Mosaic Law was given, let alone the Sermon on the Mount; and we must not expect him to manifest the kind of spirit that was seen in Jesus (Luke 23:34) and Stephen (Acts 7:60).

However, in the sight of God, *Job was right*. God had *twice* declared before the court of heaven that Job was “a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil” (Job 1:8; 2:3, NKJV). Therefore, Job’s enemies were wrong; and Job had the right to ask God to vindicate him. In fact, *God was the only one who could prove Job right and his enemies wrong*. Where else could Job turn for help?

The three friends had repeatedly warned Job about the terrible destiny of the wicked, so Job threw their words right back at them. “May my enemies be like the wicked, my adversaries like the unjust” (27:7, NIV). Job saw his enemies experiencing great distress, calling out to God for help but getting no answer, and then being suddenly cut off by death. But isn’t that the very judgment Job’s friends predicted for him *and probably hoped would come*?

Bildad had affirmed that God is just and punishes those who disobey Him. But this does not mean that everybody who suffers is being punished for his or her sins. Sometimes we suffer

because of the sins of others (e.g., Joseph) or because God is keeping us from sin (e.g., Paul in 2 Cor. 12). Jesus suffered, not for His own sins, for He had none, but for the sins of the world (1 Peter 2:22–24; 3:18); and because of His suffering and death, sinners can believe and receive eternal life.

Job teaches a lesson (Job 27:11–23). “I will teach you about the power of God” (27:11, NIV), says Job; and he describes God’s judgment of the wicked. On the day when God vindicates Job, this is what will happen to his enemies.

They will die, and their widows will not mourn for them, a terrible insult in the Eastern world. Their children will be slain by the sword or the plague; and if any survive, they will spend the rest of their lives begging for something to eat. The wicked will lie down rich and wake up poor. Their silver and expensive clothing will be gone. Their houses will be destroyed like cocoons (or spiders’ webs), or like the temporary shacks of the watchmen in the fields. The death of the wicked will not be peaceful. Terrors will come in at night like a flood and carry him away. Even if the wicked try to flee, the storm will follow them and destroy them.

You can recognize in this description many of the images that Job’s friends used in their “judgment” speeches against him. Job did this deliberately to remind them that they had better be careful what they say *lest they declare their own punishment*. “Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you” (Matt. 7:1–2, NKJV).

Scripture records several instances where the judgment planned by an enemy was brought home to that enemy by the Lord. Pharaoh ordered the newborn Jewish boys to be drowned, and his own army was drowned in the Red Sea (Ex. 1:15–22; 14:23–31). Haman built a gallows on which to hang Mordecai, but Haman and his sons were hanged there instead (Es. 7:10; 9:25). Daniel’s enemies tried to have him destroyed, but they and their families ended up in the lions’ den in the place of Daniel (Dan. 6:24). (See Prov. 11:8.)

Scholars do not agree on the interpretation of Job 27:23. The NASB reads, “Men will clap their hands at him, and will hiss him from his place,” and most translations agree with that; but the word *men* is not in the original text. It simply reads, “He claps his hands against him.” Who is “he”? Elmer B. Smick in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* suggests that it might be God, and that verse 23 should be connected with verse 13 where “God” is the subject of the sentence (vol. 4, p. 972). He translates verse 23, “He claps his hands against them and hisses at them from his dwelling [heaven].” Whether God or men, there is rejoicing at the destruction of the wicked.

Zuck, R. B. (1985). Job. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 1, p. 750) Wheaton, IL: Victor Books

b. Job’s description of the fate of the wicked (chap. 27)

27:1–6. Before addressing the plight of the wicked (vv. 7–23) **Job** again affirmed his innocence (vv. 1–6) perhaps in an effort to show that he was not one of the godless. Repeatedly Job had accused **God** of injustice (6:4; 7:20; 10:2–3; 13:24; 16:12–13; 19:7; 23:14) and of giving him

inner **bitterness** (3:20; 7:11; 10:1; 23:2). Even so, Job again affirmed his innocence as he had done before in responses to Eliphaz (6:10, 29–30; 16:17; 23:10–12), Bildad (9:21–22; 10:7), and Zophar (12:4; 13:18–19). He said that **as long as** he lived (27:3, 6), with God’s **breath** in him (cf. 10:12; 12:10; 34:14–15), he would not **admit** to wrongdoing; he simply could not accept his friends’ (**you** is plural in 27:5, 11–12) viewpoint, or **deny** (cf. **denied** in v. 2) his **integrity** which his wife had urged him to do (2:9). Even with all his friends’ badgering, Job was confident that he would retain his **righteousness** and that his **conscience** would **not reproach** (*hārap*, “speak sharp, accusing things against”) him.

27:7–12. Imprecating his **enemies** (did Job have in mind his fellows at the ash pile?), he then asked four questions that pointed to the hopeless condition of **the godless** person (*‘awāl*, “an unrighteous person”; cf. 18:21; 29:17; 31:3). When dying (**when God takes away his life**; cf. God as the source of life, 10:12), he will call on **God**, but since he prays only when in **distress** God will not answer him.

Job said he, in contrast with the wicked, could even instruct his compatriots about God’s **ways** (thus reversing what Eliphaz said in 22:22). Since they had **seen** evidences of God’s works, they were wrong to continue their false and empty (**meaningless**, *hebel*, 7:16; 9:29, “in vain”; 21:34, “nonsense”; 35:16, “empty”) accusations, claiming **God** was punishing an innocent person.

27:13–23. Many scholars assign these words to Zophar because this would give him a third speech and because the words seem more consistent with him than with Job. However, Job had already spoken of the fate of the wicked (24:18–24). He never denied the ultimate punishment of God’s enemies, but he *did* deny their immediate judgment, contrary to Zophar’s claim (20:5; 21:7). If Zophar could speak of **the fate** of **the wicked** and their **heritage** (20:29), so could Job. A vile person’s family members are subject to death by warfare (**the sword**), starvation, or **the plague**. He will also lose his possessions. Though he may be “filthy rich,” with vast amounts of **silver** and many **clothes**, they will pass into the hands of others. His **house** will be as empty as a deserted **cocoon**, as unstable as a temporary shelter **made by a** farmer for guarding his crops. His wealth will be **gone** suddenly, and will quickly be carried off by a storm, the strong sirocco **east wind**. It will make fun of him (clap **its hands** and hiss) while he tries to escape its merciless **power**.

1. Lindsay Wilson, *Job*, ed. J. Gordon McConville and Craig Bartholomew, The Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015), [130](#).

2. John D. Barry et al., *Faithlife Study Bible* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012, 2016). [See [here](#), [here](#).]

The Holy Bible: New International Version. (1984). (Job 27). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.