

My Redeemer Lives Job 19

Job's arguments seem to go in circles like a merry-go-round in the park. His continuous diatribe is getting him nowhere with his friends. They speak; he responds. No one seems to move or change their thinking.

Although Job's arguments appear to be going nowhere, they are developing and shifting as he processes the messages from his friends.

As he begins to tell his friends about his feelings and thoughts, he wishes that he had never been born (3:3-10). In fact, he curses the day of his conception desiring that he had been born a miscarriage (3:11-19). If he had to be born, why didn't God allow him to be still born or to die immediately after his birth? Why doesn't God strike him now and take away his life?

However, Job did not die. He survived birth. Now, he rethinks his ideas. If he cannot die, then he wants to talk to God. He wants to meet God to discuss the issues. If necessary, he wants to meet God in court. He wants a legal vindication because the reality of his life does not reflect his retributive theology. To the best of Job's knowledge, he is innocent of any sin that results in his present humiliation. He is a good person in good standing with God. Why are terrible things happening to a good person? He does not understand why these circumstances have befallen him. His answer is to blame God for his circumstances.

In response to Bildad, Job will show that God has declared an unjust war against him. Because of the consequences of that war, Job's relationships in life have completely shifted so that all his friends and family are far off instead of near to his heart. In utter desperation throughout this chapter, a glimmer of hope appears at the end of his tirade.

God Declares War Against Job – 19:2-12

How long will you torment me
and break me in pieces with words?
These ten times you have cast reproach upon me;
are you not ashamed to wrong me?
And even if it be true that I have erred,
my error remains with myself.
If indeed you magnify yourselves against me
and make my disgrace an argument against me,
know then that God has put me in the wrong
and closed his net about me.
Behold, I cry out, 'Violence!' but I am not answered;
I call for help, but there is no justice.

*As iron sharpens items,
so a person sharpens his friends
-- Solomon*

He has walled up my way, so that I cannot pass,
 and he has set darkness upon my paths.
 He has stripped from me my glory
 and taken the crown from my head.
 He breaks me down on every side, and I am gone,
 and my hope has he pulled up like a tree.
 He has kindled his wrath against me
 and counts me as his adversary.
 His troops come on together;
 they have cast up their siege ramp against me
 and encamp around my tent.

Job opens his response by dealing with his immediate problem, his friends that continually and without hesitation torment him without any empathy or sympathy ([19:2-6](#)). They insist that he repent, but he insists that if he has sinned, that sin is between him and God. What business is it of theirs to poke their noses into his life? Who invited them to console him? Who empowered them to call for his repentance?

In Job's mind, God is the real culprit in this situation, bringing all this calamity upon him ([19:7-8](#)). Feeling walled in and stripped of his glory like an imprisoned king, Job has no way to defend himself. He's stuck. He can neither move forward or backward.

Whether Job was the first person to experience these feelings is not known to us. He was not, however, the only person to feel walled in or humiliated by God, stuck in his circumstance. Balaam, hired to curse Israel by king Balak of Moab, tried to carry out his assignment only to have God prevent him from doing so by walling him off from further advancement ([Numbers 22:24](#)). Jeremiah says of God in [Lamentations 3:7](#), "He has walled me about so that I cannot escape; he has made my chains heavy." Jeremiah was God's prophet called to speak for Him, a job he never wanted from the first day. God dealt with him in such a way that he feels imprisoned, walled in, unable to do what he wants to do. No relief appeared.

Not only is Job walled in, he contends that God is laying siege to his life as though they are engaged in a war, in a struggle to the death ([19:9-12](#)). Overcome with darkness by God's design, Job now says that God has humiliated him. Stripped of his crown, Job sees this situation as God withdrawing his hand of favor from him. No longer is he in the inner circle with God but cast aside as God's enemy.

At some time in your life, you may have been part of the "in" crowd. Not only did you have friends, but you had the "right" friends. Suddenly, one wrong word, one misstep, one betrayal put out your spotlight. No longer were you on the inside looking out at the less fortunate, but you found yourself on the outside looking in at the privileged. Job could identify with your dilemma.

Job compares his situation to that of a tree violently uprooted from the ground with soil scattered all around ([19:10](#)). With a gaping hole remaining, evidence of the incredible violence done to him rests on the ground with scattered broken roots. Thrown aside by God, the tree is ready for the wood cutters.

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Job's life is like a city that the enemy lays siege to ([19:11-12](#)). With the battle embankments constructed, the enemy ruthlessly engages him. Unfortunately, the enemy is God, Job's confidant, Job's benefactor. How can this happen to Job? This does not fit his theology. How will he overcome and continue forward in life?

A Shift in Relationships from Near to Far (19:13-20)

He has put my brothers far from me,
and those who knew me are wholly estranged from me.
My relatives have failed me,
my close friends have forgotten me.
The guests in my house and my maidservants count me as a stranger;
I have become a foreigner in their eyes.
I call to my servant, but he gives me no answer;
I must plead with him with my mouth for mercy.
My breath is strange to my wife,
and I am a stench to the children of my own mother.
Even young children despise me;
when I rise they talk against me.
All my intimate friends abhor me,
and those whom I loved have turned against me.
My bones stick to my skin and to my flesh,
and I have escaped by the skin of my teeth.
Have mercy on me, have mercy on me, O you my friends,
for the hand of God has touched me!
Why do you, like God, pursue me?
Why are you not satisfied with my flesh?

Job now sees God as the one responsible for completely shifting his world around. Those relationships once held close are now at a distance. He experienced a colossal paradigm shift. Every normal relationship in Job's life is reversed, turned upside down.

Those in Close Proximity	Have Moved Far Away
Brothers	Far away
Those who knew me	Estranged
Relatives	Failed me
Close friends	Forgotten me
Guests in my house	I am a stranger to them
My maidservants	I am a stranger to them & a foreigner
My man servant	Does not answer me
My wife	She doesn't know me
My mother's children	Say that I stink
Young children	Despise me and talk against me
Intimate friends	Abhor me
Those I have loved	Turned against me

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Job pleads for his friends to show him some small amount of mercy ([19:21](#)). Yet, no one does so, nor will anyone act on Job's behalf until God finally remedies the situation. Where did Job finally turn to for solace in his misery? He dug deeply into his heart to find what he genuinely believed about God. When our family, relatives, acquaintances and friends fail us, when the economy is in free fall or our health suddenly deserts us, God will always be there waiting for us to come to Him. At times, we may feel as though we are praying to a brick wall, but we must approach God with determination to break through that wall to get His ear ([Matthew 7:7-11](#); [James 5:16-18](#)).

My Redeemer Lives (19:23–29)

Oh that my words were written!
 Oh that they were inscribed in a book!
 Oh that with an iron pen and lead
 they were engraved in the rock forever!
 For I know that my Redeemer lives,
 and at the last he will stand upon the earth.
 And after my skin has been thus destroyed,
 yet in my flesh I shall see God,
 whom I shall see for myself,
 and my eyes shall behold, and not another.
 My heart faints within me!
 If you say, 'How we will pursue him!'
 and, 'The root of the matter is found in him,'
 be afraid of the sword,
 for wrath brings the punishment of the sword,
 that you may know there is a judgment."

Wanting to give evidence of his right standing with God, Job wishes that he could record his words in a book or permanently inscribe them in rock with an iron pen and highlight them with lead. His words would stand for eternity.

What would those words include? "I know that My Redeemer lives, and at the last He will stand upon the earth" ([19:25](#)).

The redeemer stepped up to save something or someone from a disaster. He might buy back mortgaged land ([Leviticus 19:29](#)). As a close friend, he might redeem a person sold into slavery ([19:17-18](#)) or satisfy a debt for someone ([19:25](#)). The redeemer could avenge the blood of one innocently murdered ([Numbers 35:12](#); [2 Samuel 14:11](#)). As in the case of a widow, the redeemer may take a relative's widow to be his wife and raise up children in the name of the deceased husband ([Ruth 2:20](#)). In each case, the biblical writer pictures him as a savior.

Job sees his Redeemer in terms of vindication. Things will be set right. This may be one of the first recognitions that life will continue beyond the grave. After his death, he will see God with his own eyes. If there is no vindication in this life, there will be a judgment when he dies, a time to reconcile the books.

In the end, Job warns his friends that judgment will come, and they will be unable to escape that judgment ([19:29](#)). He is warning them that their words are wrong and that

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they will be the ones facing God's judgment. No one will be able to escape the judgment of God.

Millennia beyond Job, the apostle Paul would stand on Mars Hill in the city of Athens confirming Job's with his words.

The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead. ([Acts 17:30-31](#))

Will you move through life with Job's words of affirmation? "I know that My Redeemer lives, and at the last He will stand upon the earth." Will you be ready to stand before God when He calls you to reconcile your account?

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