

International Bible Lessons Commentary

Job 19:1-7, 23-29

New Revised Standard Version

International Bible Lessons

Sunday, October 12, 2014

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The **[International Bible Lesson](#)** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, October 12, 2014**, is from **Job 19:1-7, 23-29**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary* below. **Study Hints for Thinking Further**, a study guide for teachers, discusses the five questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion; these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website. The weekly *International Bible Lesson* is usually posted each Saturday before the lesson is scheduled to be taught.

International Bible Lesson Commentary

Job 19:1-7, 23-29

(Job 19:1) Then Job answered:

Job probably lived near the time of Abraham. None of those in Job were Israelites. In some sense, similar to Jesus, Job was also a suffering servant of God. When Satan tested Job, with permission from God, all of his family and friends turned away from him. Satan thought Job only believed in God because of his own self-interest or selfishness. God knew that Job obeyed Him because of God's holy character and worthiness to be obeyed. As Job suffered, he answered the accusations of his "comforters" and "friends." The verses below are Job's reply to a speech from Bildad against Job.

(Job 19:2) "How long will you torment me, and break me in pieces with words?"

The entire Bible provides the answer to the problems of suffering in the Book of Job. In Job's day and for centuries thereafter, even to the time of Jesus Christ, most people believed that suffering was the result of personal sin in one's life. According to their theology, the sin might be hidden from others, but it could not be hidden from God; therefore, suffering was God's direct punishment for hidden sins and not only from obvious sins (or so some people believed). Bildad and Job's other "friends" wanted Job to admit that he deserved his suffering as God's punishment for his sins.

(Job 19:3) These ten times you have cast reproach upon me; are you not ashamed to wrong me?

Job accused Bildad and the others of constantly tormenting him by accusing him of having sinned against God and by refusing to believe Job's claims that he was innocent and did not know why God was causing him to suffer. Because his friends would not believe he was innocent, because their beliefs about the relationships between sin and suffering dominated their thinking, they wronged Job with their continued accusations. "Ten times" is a poetic expression for "many or several times" or "repeatedly."

(Job 19:4) And even if it is true that I have erred, my error remains with me.

Though Job had not sinned, he told Bildad that if he had sinned that it was between God and him and none of Bildad's business to keep trying to find out the sins of Job that led to his severe suffering. At that time, no one could believe that anyone could suffer as severely as Job was suffering and be innocent. Job suffered and served God by showing that not all suffering is God's punishment for personal sins, that one reason for suffering is Satan's testing of us and Satan's trying to prove God wrong or wrong about us.

(Job 19:5) If indeed you magnify yourselves against me, and make my humiliation an argument against me,

Job's friends made themselves out to be morally superior to Job. By comparing themselves and the blessings they enjoyed to Job's suffering, they believed they were better than Job. Judging by appearances alone, for many years they probably felt Job was better than they were because of his wealth and many other blessings. Continuing to judge by appearances, they now thought they were far superior to Job.

(Job 19:6) know then that God has put me in the wrong, and closed his net around me.

Because Job did not yet know about Satan, his testing, and the fact that God was upholding Job's integrity by telling Satan and the assembled angels that Job did not serve Him for selfish reasons and He could prove it after Job passed the test, Job continued to declare he was innocent and God must have put him in the wrong and was making him suffer and that was why he suffered. Even though Job expressed the limits of his knowledge about God, Job did not sin against God.

(Job 19:7) Even when I cry out, 'Violence!' I am not answered; I call aloud, but there is no justice.

Job must have enjoyed a close personal relationship with God because of his faith and the sacrifices he made to God in behalf of his family (Job 1:1-5). God said of Job, "There is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil" (Job 1:8). Similar to Abraham, before God gave the law to Moses Job lived by faith in God. Therefore, Job could not understand why suddenly he could call out to God "Violence!" and God would not reply to him or give him the justice he sought because of his innocence.

(Job 19:23) “O that my words were written down! O that they were inscribed in a book!

In some sense, verses 23 and 24 are transitional. Job wanted to write his complaint in a book and record all that had happened to him: the unjust and unloving accusations of Job’s family and friends, Job’s replies to them, and his prayers to God. God answered his prayers by inspiring Job to proclaim what may have been additional or a new understanding about his Redeemer and by later fully explaining everything to Job and by having the Book of Job written about him as Job wanted and prayed would happen.

(Job 19:24) O that with an iron pen and with lead they were engraved on a rock forever!

Job wanted his book to be preserved forever; therefore, he prayed that it would be cut into a rock and then lead melted and poured into the engraved words so that his book could be read forever. God had a better idea in His answer to Job’s prayers. God had the Book of Job written and the writing inspired by His Spirit. And God placed the Book of Job in the Bible, and the Book of Job is still read around the world in many different languages. God did more for Job than Job could ever imagine when he prayed to God. If God had given Job exactly what he asked for, people would have had to travel long distances to read his book; now, his book can be easily read by millions of people.

(Job 19:25) For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth;

After Adam and Eve sinned, God promised to send a Redeemer (Genesis 3:15). Someday, the head of Satan, who tested Job, will be crushed by the Redeemer. Job had probably heard about and knew something about the Redeemer that God had promised to send someday, but God’s Spirit revealed to him even more. In answer to Job’s prayer for justice, for a vindicator to take his side, God inspired Job to proclaim and write in a book more good news about the Redeemer who would come; and this even before God gave the 10 Commandments to Moses. Notice: Job said his Redeemer lived, but his Redeemer was not yet standing on the earth. We know from the New Testament that God sent His Son, the Redeemer, from heaven to earth where Jesus walked among us as our Lord and Savior and Redeemer.

(Job 19:26) and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then in my flesh I shall see God,

Job proclaimed that because his Redeemer lived that after he died and his flesh had decayed and returned to dust that at some point in the future God would give him flesh once again and he would see God in his own flesh. Job’s prophetic words could only be fulfilled by the resurrection of the dead, and when Jesus Christ the Redeemer came He rose from the dead and made the resurrection of the dead possible for all who believe in Him. Job was saved by his faith that his Redeemer would come someday as God had promised.

(Job 19:27) whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!

Job prophesied that he would see God and God would be on his side. From the New Testament, we know that the Redeemer, Jesus Christ, is our Advocate and the Son of God; furthermore, Jesus Christ will stand at our side before God, the Judge and King of the universe and our Judge will declare that we are saved by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in our behalf. With such a revelation and vision, no wonder Job exclaimed “My heart faints within me!”

(Job 19:28) If you say, ‘How we will persecute him!’ and, ‘The root of the matter is found in him’;

After Job proclaimed his prophetic vision, that his Redeemer would save him, he anticipated that his former friends would seek to persecute him. Job rightly anticipated this, and when Jesus the Redeemer came, Jesus declared, “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account” (Matthew 5:11). Job told them that the root cause of his suffering was not sin in his life and his Redeemer would prove that he was right and declare his innocence. We learn from the Book of Job that God vindicated Job as his Redeemer, explained things to Job, and restored Job losses. God affirmed the reality of Job’s faith and obedience to Him.

(Job 19:29) be afraid of the sword, for wrath brings the punishment of the sword, so that you may know there is a judgment.”

Job warned his false comforters that if they persisted in persecuting him and in refusing to believe what he foretold about the Redeemer that God promised to send that they would suffer the judgment of God. Indeed, they did suffer God’s judgment at the end of Job’s test; then they repented and Job prayed for them (Job 42:7-9).

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. Why was Job suffering?
2. Did Job’s friends help him as he suffered? Explain your answer.
3. What did Job’s friends think of themselves?
4. What did Job want done with his words?
5. Where did Job place his faith for his future?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

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