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Job 19

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Job 19.

Topics.

- Ten times you have cast reproach upon me; are you not ashamed.
- Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar speak against Job to exalt themselves.
- I call for help, but I am not answered; there is no justice.
- My friends abhor me, and those who I loved have turned against me.
- My bones stick to my skin, have mercy on me, O You My friends.
- Oh, that my words were written and inscribed in a book forever.
- My Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth.
- Be afraid of the sword, that you may know there is a judgment.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION: the book of Job is considered both a theological and a literary masterpiece it is an honest discussion of why God allows good people to suffer. The test of Job's faith, allowed by God in response to a challenge from Satan, reveals God's sovereignty and the supremacy of divine wisdom over human wisdom (personified by Job's four friends). Believing that God is good despite the apparent evidence to the contrary, Job rested in faith alone. In the depths of agony, he could still proclaim, "I know that my Redeemer lives" (Job 19:25). In the end God silenced all discussion against the truth that He alone is wise (Job chpts. 38-41). Yet he vindicated Job's trust in him (chpt. 42), proving that genuine faith cannot be destroyed. The unknown author was probably an Israelite writing sometime between 2000 and 500 B.C.

HELPFUL FACTS: before reading Job, it is helpful to understand when Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu are speaking they are not speaking, "thus sayeth the LORD", they are simply giving their opinions on how they personally perceive things to be. Amongst their conversations there is truth and wisdom, but it must be kept in mind not everything they are saying is true or even wise, in fact God rebukes Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar and tells them they have spoken foolishness, but Job has spoken what is right (Job 42:7-9). The book of Job is not about doctrinal truth, but human suffering and the questions regarding God that arise during a person's calamity and pain.

JOB SPEAKS

JOB 19:1-4

Ten Times you Have Reproached Me; are You Not Ashamed.

- **Job 19:1-4:** Then Job answered (Bildad) and said: ²"How long will you torment me and break me in pieces with words? ³These ten times you have cast reproach upon me; are you not ashamed to wrong me? (Are ye are not ashamed that ye make yourselves strange to me in KJV) ⁴And even if it be true that I have erred, my error remains with myself.

Job's friends believed the righteous prosper and only the wicked suffer and based upon this principal accused him of being a wicked man, because he was so extremely afflicted. In these verses Job describes their

unkindness, showing that their condemnation of him could hardly be excused. Two reasons for this would be because they were grossly mistaken and because of the grief they added to his suffering. Harsh language and condemnation from friends greatly add to the suffering person's grief. When those in Christ are treated with such unkindness it is best not to allow it to sit in the heart for from it resentment will grow. Rather look to Him who endured the scorn and mocking of sinners against himself, and was treated with brutish and bloody cruelty and left to die a suffering lingering death nailed to the cross of Calvary and all this not for himself, but for others.

These ten times: does not necessarily mean a literal ten times, as though Job was being very careful to count the exact number of their reproaches, but more likely signifies that he had been many times reproached by them. It can be taken as an expression that carries the idea of many (i.e., a certain number for an uncertain number) as the common saying is several to mean about seven.

That you make yourselves strange to me: Job's friends were not ashamed to make themselves a stranger to Job and not only harden their hearts against him and oppress and treat him cruelly, but also condemn him as if they had never known his former goodness, faithfulness, godliness and integrity. Rather than speak kind words to Job his friends hardened themselves against him and showed no compassion or pity toward him. In his distressed circumstances they instead mocked him and behaved toward him in a disrespectful manner even though he had considered them friends and it is almost certain that they had known that he was a man that feared God and of good character and integrity prior to his calamities and afflictions and yet they felt no shame in criticizing him and accusing him of being a hypocrite and a wicked man and treating him as such.

My error remains with myself: (v4) Job asks Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar, why do they so aggressively torment him? Especially since they know that even if all that they were accusing him of was true he was the only one that would be judged and condemned, they would not be affected in anyway. This shines a brilliant spotlight upon the truth that no-one should judge others without any solid evidence and outward proof. All Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar accusations against Job were based upon their own reasoning's and assumptions they had no outward evidence or proof to support what they were judging and accusing Job of. It is amazing that Job still calls Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar his friends (perhaps a courtesy), so far in all their conversations they have not spoken one word of compassion toward him, they are so bound up in argument over theology and their own reasoning and opinions that they do not even consider that manifesting the fruits of the Spirit, (love, kindness, mercy and compassion) toward Job would bring God's favour toward them instead of His judgment and condemnation. At the end of the story and after God had finished speaking to Job He said to Eliphaz and his two friends (Bildad and Zophar) (Job 42:9) "My anger burns against you for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has (Job 42:7).

JOB 19:5-6

Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar speak against Job to Exalt Themselves.

- **Job 19:5-6:** If indeed you (Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar) magnify yourselves against me (Job) and make my disgrace an argument against me, ⁶know then that God has put me in the wrong and closed his net about me.

Job suspects the underlying reason Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar are so determined to argue with him over theology is to exalt themselves by their clever words and religious knowledge. Job tells them even if this is the case, they should know that it is God Himself who has put him in the position he is in. There is a danger even today that some with vast Biblical

knowledge can fall into the trap of doing what Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar are doing, they can attend Bible meetings not because they are interested in comforting and bringing people from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of light (thought it may appear they do), but like Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar their primary purpose is to show off their knowledge. The way to discern a person's motive is look at their spirit is it manifesting love, compassion mercy and kindness when they speak, or are they aggressive, argumentative, determined and forceful to push their particular point through. What they are saying maybe right, but the spirit they are saying it in can be totally wrong. Two teachers can have equal knowledge of the Scriptures and can teach from the same Bible, but one will bring death while the other brings life. This is because the one who brings death teaches from a legalistic mindset while the other teaches from a mindset of grace. The message of the Lord Jesus Christ is beautiful when it is clothed with grace, but without grace it is robbed of its beauty and saving power. The following words of Paul show the enormous importance of trusting in God's grace in Christ. Paul in his letters wrote:

- I do not nullify the *GRACE* of God, for if justification were through the law (or any form of religious self-effort), then Christ died for no purpose (Gal. 2:21).

This means, when a brother or sister in Christ begin to justify themselves through the law and self-effort, they nullify the grace of God and by their actions declare that Christ's death was of no value.

Equally as horrific as this Paul states:

- When we forsake *GRACE* we separate ourselves from Christ because it was only by *GRACE* that God made us alive in Christ (Gal. 5:4) (Eph. 2:5).

Paul to highlight even more the majestic glory of grace wrote with absolute boldness that:

- It is only by *GRACE* that any brother or sister has been saved (Eph. 2:8).

Paul in these verses is shining a brilliant floodlight on the truth that every brother and sister in Christ is saved, solely by faith and by grace and it is not their own doing, but the gift of God. This means that without grace no-one can be united to Christ and whoever is without Christ is separated from God and without God no-one can be saved to eternal life. This means in regards to eternal salvation, Christ, God, grace and faith, are all on an equal par with each other since no-one can be saved to eternal life without any one of them. This is the reason the author in the book of Hebrews spends so many chapters brilliantly and skilfully explaining to the Hebrews that they must stop their sin of trusting in religious works, the Levitical Law and their priesthood to be counted righteous before God and start trusting in the grace of God that is in Christ and in his righteousness to be saved to eternal life. By extension this means that Christians must stop trusting in attending a church building every week, strictly adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions to be saved. Though the practise of some of these maybe good in themselves they become grossly sinful when believers trust in them for their salvation since not one of them has any power to save to eternal life.

JOB 19:7-12

I Cry Out, I Call for Help, I am Not Answered; there is No Justice.

- **Job 19:7-12:** Behold, I (Job) cry out, 'Violence!' but I am not answered; I call for help, but there is no justice. ⁸He (God) has walled up my way, so that I cannot pass, and he has set darkness upon my paths. ⁹He has stripped from me my glory and taken the crown from my head. ¹⁰He breaks me down on every side, and I am gone, and my hope has he pulled up like a tree. ¹¹He has kindled his wrath against me and counts me as his adversary. ¹²His troops come on together; they have cast up their siege ramp against me and encamp around my tent.

Violence: in this context primarily refers to the verbal abuse, the mocking, scorn and false accusations Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar have been accusing Job of and of course would embrace the slaps he received across his face. Job asks the LORD why violence has come to him and why when he cries for help, he gets no answer, everything that has come upon Job seems to be to him a great injustice. This attitude is not limited to Job only it is a common human thought when suffering for no apparent reason. The normal human response is to think it is so unfair, especially when those who deny God are prospering and at ease. This injustice causes some to wonder if God is so Holy, wise loving and powerful how come I am suffering as I am and how come there is so much cruelty, violence murder, rape and oppression etc., on earth and why are there so many governments that are so egotistical and corrupt they use deception and wars for their own gain. The answer to these questions is that: "God gave mankind over to their own stubborn hearts, to follow their own counsels," this is a universal principle of God. God does not force Himself upon others or force others to follow Him rather He invites them to Himself. For us today this invitation comes through the bloodstained cross of Calvary where the bleeding Saviour hung with his arms stretched wide open in self-sacrificing love saying: "All who come unto me I will not cast out, but give eternal life and everlasting happiness in glory."

JOB 19:13-19

My Friends Abhor Me, those who I Loved have Turned Against Me.

- **Job 19:13-19:** "He has put my brothers far from me, and those who knew me are wholly estranged from me. ¹⁴My relatives have failed me, my close friends have forgotten me. ¹⁵The guests in my house and my maidservants count me as a stranger; I have become a foreigner in their eyes. ¹⁶I call to my servant, but he gives me no answer; I must plead with him with my mouth for mercy. ¹⁷My breath is strange to my wife, and I am a stench to the children of my own mother. ¹⁸Even young children despise me; when I rise they talk against me. ¹⁹All my intimate friends abhor me, and those whom I loved have turned against me.

In Job's calamity he has lost his glory and his crown (v9) meaning he has not only lost the respect, friendship and love of:

- His brothers who knew him, his relative's close friends and guests of his house.
- His male and female servants, his wife and the children of his own mother.
- The young children that knew him his intimate friends and those who he loved.

But has also lost everything that caused people to look up to him and esteem him as a man of good reputation, this sadly has resulted in all who did act as his friends deserting him, even his own family despise him. Maybe the following are two reasons for this:

1. Job is not important or famous in the community anymore and has lost all his wealth, added to this he is grossly sick, looks like a beggar and is depressed.
2. Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar who are older than Job are probably considered as wise religious leaders amongst the community and by their mistaken belief that only the wicked suffer they have turned the minds of those who knew Job against him by convincing them that he was a wicked man.

JOB 19:20-22

My Bones Stick to My Skin, have Mercy On Me, O You My Friends.

- **Job 19:20-22:** My bones stick to my skin and to my flesh, and I have escaped by the skin of my teeth. ²¹Have mercy on me, have mercy on me, O you my friends (Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar), for the hand of God has touched me! ²²Why do you, like God, pursue me? Why are you not satisfied with my flesh?

Job is so emotionally and physically weak and feeble, and suffering such a horrific sickness that he knows his life is boarding on either side of the grave. From this weakness he asks Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar why can't they accept his extreme suffering and troubles as judgment enough and show him mercy and comfort. Job like anyone suffering as he is, simply wants his friends to show him some compassion and comfort, but so far, the only good thing they have done for Job was sit in silence with him when they first saw him. There is a lesson to learn in this, if we are with someone who is hurting, silence is better than dogmatic, forceful theology even if it is correct. Compassion love and mercy is far better for someone in Job's circumstances than quoting doctrine or speaking Scriptural clichés.

JOB 19:1-4

Oh, that My Words were Written and Inscribed in a Book Forever.

- **Job 19:23-24:** "Oh that my words were written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book! ²⁴Oh that with an iron pen and lead they were engraved in the rock forever!

How wonderful and prophetic are these words of Job. He got his desire far beyond what he could have ever expected, thousands worldwide in all nations and generations after him have read his writing and still are, but he won't know it until the glorious day of the resurrection, imagine his joy and surprise when he finds out that God gave him the desire of his heart and his writings were chosen to be put into the Cannon of the Bible.

JOB 19:25-27

My Redeemer Lives, and at the Last He will Stand upon the Earth.

- **Job 19:25-27:** For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. ²⁶And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, ²⁷whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!

Sometimes it is heard said of a Christian who has forsaken their faith, "we can understand why they turned away because we know all they have been through", but this can only be a result of having a wrong understanding of faith toward God and a wrong perception of God Himself. Job's calamities, afflictions and extreme suffering did not even put a dent in his faith regarding God the resurrection and eternal life. Job's faith soared far beyond whatever happened to him while on planet earth.

JOB 19:28-29

Be Afraid of the Sword, that You may Know there is a Judgment.

- **Job 19:28-29:** If you (Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar) say, 'How we will pursue him (Job)!' and, 'The root of the matter is found in him' ²⁹be afraid of the sword, for wrath brings the punishment of the sword, that you may know there is a judgment."

The expression, "The root of the matter is found in Job," means the cause of all Jobs calamity and suffering is a result of something within Job's life. Job's warning to Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar (and by extension all of us), "Be afraid of the sword, for wrath brings the punishment of the sword,"

means be careful what you say and who you judge because your own words and your own judgment may come back on you. Job in is saying if Bildad, Eliphaz and Zophar continue to judge and condemn him because they believe he has wickedness in his heart they should be very careful what they say because they will be judged and punished by their own words. It is profitable for us all to remember Jobs words when we find ourselves judging another person's heart and motives by outward circumstances that they have no control over and we have no outward evidence or proof of what we are saying.

FOOTNOTE: always keep in mind that Job is not speaking, "thus saith the LORD," but giving his own personal opinion concerning suffering and because it is his own viewpoint it should be remembered that even though much of what he says maybe true it does not always mean that his reasoning and suppositions are always according to the word of the LORD.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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