

# Redemption Found

Believers can trust God to be faithful to them.

## JOB 19:19-29

**MEMORY VERSE:** JOB 19:25

**STUDY** Job 19:19-29, to see how Job's friends continued to disparage him and question his faith. Highlight words or phrases that reveal Job's hope for the future. Consult **Pack Item 13** (*Handout: Redeemer in the Old Testament*) for information about the word *redeemer*.

**CREATE** a teaching plan for your group using the ideas on pages 40–42. Focus on how other people may fail us, but God is always faithful. Emphasize that compassion rather than judgment is needed when people are experiencing hardships.

**GATHER** the following items:

- Extra Personal Study Guides (PSGs)
- Chart paper and markers or white board markers

**Prepare to Display:**

- Pack Item 2** (*Outlines of Job and Ecclesiastes*)

**Make Copies of:**

- Pack Item 10** (*Handout: Friends of Job*)
- Pack Item 13** (*Handout: Redeemer in the Old Testament*)

**CONSULT** *QuickSource* for additional questions to use during the group time and review the *Explore the Bible Adult Commentary* for additional biblical insights (available for purchase from LifeWay.com).

**REINFORCE** the study by texting or emailing Job 19:25 to individuals in the group. Remind them that you are praying for them.

## KEY DOCTRINE

### *Glorification*

Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed (Titus 2:11-14).

## FIRST THOUGHTS

A person doesn't have to be alone to be lonely. We can be surrounded by people and yet not feel connected to them. That can happen even when sitting at a table with people we would count as friends. Such was the case with Job. He was surrounded by so-called friends and yet experienced the sting of abandonment and loneliness because they had turned against him. However, Job realized that even though his friends had abandoned him, the Lord never would.

(In PSG, p. 28) **Think about a time when you felt alone even though you were surrounded by people. What factors make a person feel alone even when in a crowd?**

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## BIBLE SKILL

*Use a Bible dictionary to better understand a word.*

Read articles about “redeemer” in a Bible dictionary. Review Bible passages identified in the articles. What was the significance of Job declaring that his redeemer was living? How does that image of a living redeemer impact how we understand Christ's work in our redemption?

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## UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

### **JOB 15:1–21:34**

The main section of Job follows the dialogue between Job and his three friends (Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar), who alternate in dialogue and response. Job's friends assumed that his circumstances indicated he was at fault for his suffering and needed to repent. Throughout the dialogue, Job insisted he was innocent and there was no hidden guilt that served as the foundation for his suffering. Ultimately, Job believed God allowed suffering to fall on him—had providentially ordained it—without providing him a reason. In times of suffering we often look for meaning. However, there are times when no explicit connections can be made other than we live in a broken and sinful world. In general, suffering is no respecter of persons.

The Book of Job addresses issues of suffering, the problem of evil, the justification for God's mysterious ways, the meaning of faith, and the nature of the relationship between God and mankind. But a key question of the book is this: What is the nature of wisdom and where can it be found? In Job, we understand that the order of the universe is not fully revealed to us, and we must learn to trust in the God who presides over the universe. Even still, Job's friends maintained the belief that he was suffering punishment due to his wickedness.

In Job's responses, he refused to accept their explanation of his predicament, and he would not take responsibility for what they claimed (19:2-6). In chapter 19, Job responded in anger with complaints concerning Bildad's treatment of him. In essence, Job asked how his friend Bildad could live with himself after harassing Job in this way, which added to his suffering (vv. 2-3). The focus of this chapter, however, doesn't fall completely

on Job's friends. In fact, 19:4-22 is essentially a charge against God. Job indicated that if indeed he had made a mistake, which he hadn't, it would be in response to the treatment he had received from God. In other words, he was not suffering this treatment from God because of a previous action. At the conclusion of this speech, Job uttered some of the most famous words of the entire book when he expressed incredible hope in a heavenly Redeemer (vv. 23-29).

## EXPLORE THE TEXT

### FAILING FRIENDS (JOB 19:19-22)

#### Verse 19

At the beginning of chapter 19, Job wondered why God was treating him the way he was, a familiar question in the book thus far. He expanded on his questioning and lamented at the way his family and friends had despised him as well. Job was well aware that his friends assumed he was to blame for his suffering. In verse 4, however, Job proposed that even if he had done something wrong (even unintentionally), that was his own problem and he certainly did not need others to compound it by treating him without compassion. His friends had mounted their case against him, but Job deflected their accusations and aimed them at God. God was the one who had providentially brought this on, and He had not issued a reply to his cries for an explanation. The imagery Job utilized is striking, namely that God had hunted him like a wild animal and had treated him like an enemy, laying siege against him. With this as the context, Job focused on the problem at hand.

The suffering he experienced had caused discord in all of his relationships. Not only did his family find him repulsive, his **best friends** betrayed him. From Job's perspective, no one was helping him. His friends were only adding to his suffering. One might expect sympathy from close friends, but in this case Job's friends only **turned against** him. Unfortunate as it was, Job was alone in his misery.

#### Verse 20

Job shifted his focus from the anguish caused by his friends to his own personal suffering. He utilized metaphor to explain that he was holding on for dear life. Not only did his skin barely **cling to** his **bones**, but he was barely making it by **the skin of** his **teeth**, symbolizing a close escape. This common idiomatic expression, which is still used today, communicates just barely accomplishing or avoiding something. It is clear from the book as a whole that Job's emotional and physical suffering witnessed to the fact that he had narrowly escaped his own death. It is amazing, considering the intensity of his trial, that Job still had his bearings.

#### VERSE 19

<sup>19</sup> All of my best friends  
despise me, and those  
I love have turned  
against me.

#### VERSE 20

<sup>20</sup> My skin and my flesh  
cling to my bones; I have  
escaped with only the  
skin of my teeth.

## VERSES 21-22

<sup>21</sup> Have mercy on me, my friends, have mercy, for God's hand has struck me. <sup>22</sup> Why do you persecute me as God does? Will you never get enough of my flesh?

## Verses 21-22

In light of this predicament, Job begged his *friends* for *mercy*. He was being *struck* by God and could use a break from the blows he was receiving from them. Again, his closest friends not only pursued him but also added to his persecution. The question raised by Job was why his friends continued their relentless pursuit of him. The final words issued in verse 22 are heartbreaking. Job basically asked, "When will enough be enough?" In many ways, this question was directed at both his friends and God. As we will see, they hadn't had enough. Not only would his friends continue to debate him, but God also would challenge him in the chapters to come. Job's suffering seemed to have no end, and there was no relief in sight.

How long would Job's friends persist in accusing him and feel no shame for doing so? Even if Job had done wrong, it was God's prerogative to execute judgment, not theirs. Their social isolation only compounded his suffering. It is difficult to imagine the pain of having close friends react this way. One cannot help but be reminded of the apostle Paul's words in Romans 12:15 to "weep with those who weep." True friends are to identify with the others in the "ups and downs" of life. Friends should be a healing balm in painful times. People enduring hardships need others to show compassion to them. When there are sorrows, true friends minister sympathy. If anything, the reaction of Job's friends in this book serve as an example of what not to do.

**What are practical ways we can minister to others in times of suffering if we don't have the answers to why they are suffering?**

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## VERSES 23-24

<sup>23</sup> I wish that my words were written down, that they were recorded on a scroll <sup>24</sup> or were inscribed in stone forever by an iron stylus and lead!

## LIVING REDEEMER (JOB 19:23-27)

The words of Job in verses 23-27 stand apart as the most notable in the entire book. These words are interpreted by many theologians as anticipating Jesus the Messiah. It is not insignificant that these words of hope abruptly appear after an onslaught of despairing comments. This sudden burst of confidence would not be maintained for long, but while it lasted it was a powerful note of certainty in the midst of confusing and even chaotic suffering.

## Verses 23-24

Job expressed his desire for his words to be recorded, *inscribed in stone by an iron stylus and lead* to last forever. Perhaps Job saw his life coming to an end and wanted these hopeful words to serve as his legacy for future generations. His desire was for his words to stand as a monument to be preserved to give wisdom for those who came after him. In many ways, this book itself serves as the fulfillment of his expressed desires. The central issue of the book is the nature of wisdom and where it can be found, and Job (despite his low points) becomes a sure and steady guide.

## Verses 25-27

The climax of this section stands out in verse 25, where Job declared with confidence that his **Redeemer lives**. The concept of a redeemer is first laid out in Leviticus 25, where a close relative may come to the aid of a suffering family member. In Leviticus, a redeemer may come to the aid of a relative in distress over property (Lev. 25:25-38) or one who needed support for personal well being (Lev. 25:47-55). In the Book of Ruth, Boaz not only functioned in both of these ways for Ruth but also took her to be his wife. God is referred to as a redeemer in several Old Testament passages (Pss. 19:14; 77:15; Isa. 41:14-16; 43:14; 48:17). In Exodus, God redeemed His people from slavery in Egypt (6:6; 15:13). All of these images together paint a picture that points to Christ the Messiah and Redeemer of His people.

In this passage, Job seems to be referencing God as his Redeemer. Theologians who affirm this passage as looking forward to the Messiah note that Job's faith was in a Redeemer who would rise from the **dust**, which was a poetic reference to the earth. Although *dust* can be a poetic way of referring to the earth, as in Job 5:6, it is more often a way of referring to the grave (Job 7:21; 17:16; 20:11; 21:26; see also Ps. 22:15; Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2). Job envisioned this Redeemer triumphing over the grave, and doing so to Job's benefit. As verse 26 makes clear, Job expected he would be vindicated in a "face-to-face" meeting with his God. This is a powerful statement of faith from a man whose plea throughout the text had been to gain an audience with God. He would not only receive a face-to-face meeting with God, but God would rise from the earth to redeem him.

While the idea of Redeemer does not find its fullest expression until the New Testament in Jesus, here in the Book of Job the concept is central to Job's hope. This hope first found its utterance in 9:32-35, where Job spoke of a mediator between himself and God. This mediator would allow Job not only to stand before God but also speak before God. In 16:19-21 this idea is developed further, where the mediator is believed to arbitrate with God on behalf of Job. As New Testament believers, we understand that ultimately Jesus Christ is the Mediator who will not only allow us to stand before God, but who also died for our sin so that He could plead our case before God the Father.

It seems that Job affirmed not only that God heard his cries—even though He had been silent—but also that God would answer him in a personal meeting. It is not clear when Job believed this meeting would take place. Regardless if Job understood this meeting as taking place before he died or in the bodily resurrection, the truth still stood to provide hope even after his **skin has been destroyed**. As believers, we affirm the existence of life after death and can live with confidence in God's redemption. We have a sure and mighty hope in a physical resurrection. This reminds us of the words of Paul, which echo Job's words: "Where, death, is your victory? Where, death, is your sting?" (1 Cor. 15:55). In light of this, we can give great thanks to God in the midst of suffering. He "gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:57).

On his day of redemption, Job believed that he and God would not meet as strangers but as two intimately familiar with one another. The very

## VERSES 25-27

<sup>25</sup> But I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the end he will stand on the dust. <sup>26</sup> Even after my skin has been destroyed, yet I will see God in my flesh. <sup>27</sup> I will see him myself; my eyes will look at him, and not as a stranger. My heart longs within me.



thought of such a meeting caused his heart to long within him. We will see later in the book that Job would see God (42:5), and after God prompted his repentance, would restore or redeem him. Even before that day, in this passage even, Job declared his confidence in God who would validate his claim of innocence.

**How might we apply the truth that Christ lives, and lives to make intercession for us before God, to the heart of a sufferer?**

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### **WARNING ISSUED (JOB 19:28-29)**

#### **Verses 28-29**

#### **VERSES 28-29**

<sup>28</sup> If you say, “How will we pursue him, since the root of the problem lies with him?”  
<sup>29</sup> then be afraid of the sword, because wrath brings punishment by the sword, so that you may know there is a judgment.

After exploring and expressing the future hope he had in redemption, Job now directed the next words to his friends and issued them a strong warning. The punishment they declared he was undergoing would be the punishment they may experience themselves. Again, Job’s friends saw his suffering as the common lot that falls upon the wicked. Because Job was suffering, they condemned him as wicked and wrongly asserted he was only getting what he deserved. Their harsh judgment continued despite Job’s declaration that he was innocent of the very things with which they charged him.

Why did the friends spend chapter after chapter assuring Job that he had warranted God’s anger, despite Job’s claims of innocence? Perhaps Job’s friends were threatened by his suffering because if he had done nothing to deserve his suffering, the same suffering might fall on them. This possibility would be unsettling. If God allows suffering among the most pious and innocent, what should they expect to receive from God’s hand? After all, the Bible teaches us that God will render to each according to his works (Ps. 62:12) but also calls for trust as God works out judgment according to His purposes.

These truths make Job’s final words in this passage all the more searching. In fact, Job argued that they should fear **the sword** themselves. **Judgment** awaits all people, and Job’s friends needed to **be afraid**, especially in light of how they had treated him.

In calling his friends to be careful how they judge him lest they fall under the punishment of the very sword they wielded, Job was in agreement with the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 7:1-2). Jesus warned against pronouncing judgment on another person because unfounded harshness in judgment toward others will result in being treated in the same way by God. The utilization of sword imagery in Job 19:29 is notable as well. According to Deuteronomy 19:16-19, false testimony demands the same penalty that would have been issued to the accused. Giving false testimony breaks the ninth commandment (Ex. 20:16) and has vast

implications on others (Ps. 27:12; Prov. 6:19; 12:17,19; 14:5; 19:5,9; 25:18). For this reason, proper judgment and punishment deters people from such actions. The seriousness of false testimony is weighty, and Job's friends should have weighed their own assumptions and words carefully.

**How does the truth that we will be judged by the same standard we judge others teach us to measure our words and sometimes keep our mouths shut?**

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Job's warning to his friends was an act of compassion. This is especially moving, considering how they had treated him. Every warning before the final judgment is an act of mercy. At the end of the book, Job's friends escaped the deadly consequences they deserved only by virtue of Job's prayers for them. (See 42:7-9.) What an exemplary friend Job was. What a fine example of steadfastness he provides us. James 5:11 reminds us: "See, we count as blessed those who have endured. You have heard of Job's endurance and have seen the outcome that the Lord brought about—the Lord is compassionate and merciful."

***This passage provides a sobering warning to all of us concerning how we treat others.***

Even still, this passage provides a sobering warning to all of us concerning how we treat others, and specifically a warning to be slow to judge others based on our perceptions. A clear hope in meeting God face to face should not only bolster our steadfastness and faithfulness, but should also prompt us to speak the truth to others, even warning them of what's to come.

Job looked forward to being restored after his death and to seeing the Lord face to face. One day, Job would see God as He is. This should remain the hope of all Christians as well. In that moment, we will no longer see through "a reflection as in a mirror" (1 Cor. 13:12). As for believers, the sight of God will be welcomed and will incite worship. As for the wicked, the sight of God will bring about judgment and horror. Before our last breath, we need to come to personal terms with God. If we truly believe that our Redeemer lives and we have placed our faith in Jesus Christ, then we have nothing to fear. However, if we have not bowed the knee to the living Redeemer, Jesus Christ, we will bow one day in fear.

# LEAD GROUP BIBLE STUDY

## FOCUS ATTENTION

**INTRODUCE:** Prior to the session, draw a three-column chart on a white board or poster and write the words *Failing Friends* in the first column. Once most have arrived, direct attention to the words and guide the group to reflect on a time when they felt let down by a friend or when they know they disappointed a friend.

**ASK:** Call for a show of hands as you ask this question: **How many of you have ever felt alone in the midst of a crowd of people?**

**STATE:** *Perhaps you pictured yourself with a group of friends or by yourself, at a sporting event, a movie theater, or moving to a new town or church where you were surrounded by people but knew no one. Social media may also lead to lots of “friends” but little personal connection.*

**DISCUSS:** **What factors make a person feel alone even when in a crowd?** (PSG, p. 28)

**TRANSITION:** *In today’s study, we will discover how Job’s frustration, even when surrounded by his three friends, overwhelmed him. The friends’ lack of encouragement and support left Job on the defensive as he wrestled with adversity and looked for hope in a future reconciliation with God.*

## EXPLORE THE TEXT

**MINI-LECTURE:** Using **Pack Item 2** (*Outlines of Job and Ecclesiastes*) indicate that today’s study will focus on the second round of discourses between Job and his friends. Briefly review the messages that Job’s friends shared in the first round of discourses. Provide copies of **Pack Item 10** (*Handout: Friends of Job*) for anyone in the group who did not receive a copy in the last group time.

**CONTEXTUALIZE:** *Today we will examine Job’s response to his friends’ assertions that he needed to repent of his wicked ways. Utilizing Understand the Context (pp. 34–35), summarize the messages of each friend. Read aloud Job 19:1-3, leading the group to listen for the depth of Job’s feelings after hearing from his friends.*

**STATE:** *Job found no comfort from his friends, only judgment and rejection. At a time when he needed it most, his friends failed to stand by him. Job continued to share that the problem was between him and God.*

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**READ: Invite a volunteer to read Job 19:19-22**, while the group listens for Job’s description of his problem and his plea for help.

**ASK:** **What makes the failure of a friend to show compassion so disheartening to the person needing help?** (PSG, p. 30)

**EXPLAIN:** *Both Job and his friends attributed Job’s adversity to God, but from our study of the early chapters of Job, we recognize that the source of Job’s dire circumstances was Satan. Read 1 Peter 5:8, stressing that Satan is still working today.*

**HIGHLIGHT:** Point out the following statement from the PSG (p. 31): *How delighted Satan must be when people blame God for what Satan has done!*

**WRITE:** In the second column of the chart write the words, *Living Redeemer*.

**ASK:** **How is the need for a Redeemer tied to the warning given to the friends?** (PSG, p. 29)

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**READ: Instruct someone to read Job 19:23-27**, silently looking for Job’s words of hope.



**RECORD:** Guide the group to share the words or phrases of hope they discovered and write them under the second column.

**DISCUSS:** *What is the significance of Job wanting a permanent record of his declaration? How does this desire demonstrate his confidence in God?*

**SUMMARIZE:** *Job's desire was to be cleared of the false accusations of his friends and the wrong ideas of all the people around him. Instead, he sought to be remembered for his unwavering faith in God.*

**REREAD:** Invite a volunteer to reread Job 19:25-27, as the group listens for Job's expectations for the future.

**VISUALIZE:** Lead the group to imagine the picture that might accompany Job's words.

**ASK:** *How do Job's words reveal his hope for the future?*

**GUIDE:** Distribute copies of **Pack Item 13** (*Handout: Redeemer in the Old Testament*) for background information. Divide the group into three teams, assigning each one of the three Hebrew words that express the concept of redeemer in the Old Testament. After allowing time for study, call for a volunteer from each team to share what they learned about redemption.

**EMPHASIZE:** *Verse 25 indicates that Job knew his Redeemer lives, and today, through our faith in Jesus Christ, we too know that our Redeemer lives. Ask: How does the promise of a future resurrection in Christ impact how a believer lives?* (PSG, p. 35)

**WRITE:** In the third column write the words *Warning Issued*.

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**READ:** *Before you read aloud Job 19:28-29,* direct the group to listen for Job's warning to his friends.

**RECORD:** Write the word *judgment* under the column labeled *Warning Issued*.

**STATE:** *Job's warning to his friends that they too would face judgment by the same standards they were proposing to Job is also a warning to us today.*

**ASK:** *Why must humility always accompany a loving warning to others concerning God's judgment?* (PSG, p. 35)

## SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE

**DISCUSS:** *Why should the people of God be quick to show compassion to those who suffer no matter the reason for their suffering?* (PSG, p. 32) *Share about a time when someone showed you compassion that you perhaps didn't deserve.*

**EVALUATE:** Guide the group to consider their actions toward others and analyze whether their tendency is more toward judgment or compassion.

**CHALLENGE:** Lead the group to complete one of the question sets on page 36 of the PSG.

**APPLY:** *How has today's discussion changed your perspective on the role of friends in helping others through their suffering, regardless of whether their difficulties are unwarranted or a result of their own decisions? How can we help them discover God's redemption through Jesus Christ?*

**PRAY:** Close in prayer, thanking God for being our Redeemer. Thank Him for securing our future through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. Pray that He will lead the group to reach out to others with compassion and love, remembering that everyone will face God's judgment.

## OPTIONS

Use these options to supplement and enhance the group plans on the previous pages.

### MUSIC

Prior to the session, enlist three volunteers. Ask each volunteer to read one verse of the song, “Redeemed, How I Love to Proclaim It” by Fanny J. Crosby, when requested. Be prepared to lead the group in singing or reading chorally the chorus following the reading of each passage section.

### WORD STUDY

*Gather Bible dictionaries.*

Divide the group into teams of two to four and provide a Bible dictionary for each team. Direct the group to complete the Bible Skill activity on page 33 of the PSG. Then guide the group to address the following questions after their research: ***What was the significance of Job declaring that his redeemer was living? How does that image of a living redeemer impact how we understand Christ’s work in our redemption?***

### WRITING/REFLECTION

*Gather pencils and paper.*

In Job 19:23, Job indicated that he wished his words were inscribed in stone forever. Job wanted to be remembered for his faithfulness to God. Distribute paper and pencils and guide the group to consider what they would like to be remembered for in the future. Direct the group to sketch a tombstone and in ten words or less write what they would like to see written about them. Provide time for each person to share their epitaph with one other person.

### CHART

*Gather chart paper and markers.*

As a group, list characteristics that are valued in a friendship. Lead the group to determine which characteristics are the most important. Compare the list on the chart to the characteristics exhibited by Job’s friends. Complete an acrostic for the word *friend* using the completed list of valued characteristics.

### DRAMA

Recruit a volunteer to read Job 19:19-29 as a monologue portraying Job speaking to his friends after their second discourse. Direct the rest of the group to imagine that they are one of the three friends listening to Job. After the monologue, discuss the feelings and emotions Job exhibited and how the friends who gathered around him might have responded to his words. Direct the volunteer to repeat Job 19:25-26 while the group considers words that resound with hope for the future.