

THE BOOK OF JOB



TRUE COMFORT

Job 19:1-12; 23-29
NRSV

*Then Job answered:
“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 is true that I have erred,
my error remains with me.
If indeed you magnify yourselves against me
and make my humiliation an argument against me,
know then that God has put me in the wrong
and closed his net around me.
Even when I cry out, ‘Violence!’ I am not answered;
I call aloud, but there is no justice.*

- Job 19:1-12

*⁸ He has walled up my way so that I cannot pass,
and he has set darkness upon my paths.
He has stripped my glory from me
and taken the crown from my head.
He breaks me down on every side, and I am gone;
he has uprooted my hope like a tree.
He has kindled his wrath against me
and counts me as his adversary.
His troops come on together;
they have thrown up siegeworks against me
and encamp around my tent.”*

- Job 19:1-12

*23 “O that my words were written down!
O that they were inscribed in a book!
O that with an iron pen and with lead
they were engraved on a rock forever!
For I know that my vindicator lives
and that in the end he will stand upon the earth;
and after my skin has been destroyed,
then in my flesh I shall see God,
whom I shall see on my side,
and my eyes shall behold, and not another.
My heart faints within me!*

- Job 19:23-29

*28 If you say, 'How we will persecute him!'
and, 'The root of the matter is found in him,'
be afraid of the sword,
for wrath brings the punishment of the sword,
so that you may know there is a judgment.'"*

- Job 19:23-29

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Eliphaz speaks (Job 4-5)
Job responds (Job 6-7)
Bildad speaks (Job 8)
Job responds (Job 9-10)
Zophar speaks (Job 11)
Job responds (Job 12-13)

(repeat) (Job 14-21)
Eliphaz speaks (Job 22)
Job responds (Job 23-24)
Bildad speaks (Job 25)
Job responds (Job 26-27)

*“See, you have instructed many;
you have strengthened the weak hands.
Your words have supported those who were stumbling,
and you have made firm the feeble knees.
But now it has come to you, and you are impatient;
it touches you, and you are dismayed.
Is not your fear of God your confidence
and the integrity of your ways your hope?”*

- Job 4:3-6

*“Those who withhold kindness from a friend
forsake the fear of the Almighty.
My companions are treacherous like a torrent bed,
like swollen streams that pass away,
that run dark with ice,
turbid with melting snow.”*

- Job 6:14-16

*“If your children sinned against him,
he delivered them into the power of their transgression.
If you will seek God
and make supplication to the Almighty,
if you are pure and upright,
surely then he will rouse himself for you
and restore to you your rightful place.
Though your beginning was small,
your latter days will be very great.”*

- Job 8:4-7

*Then Job answered:
“Indeed, I know that this is so,
but how can a mortal be just before God?
If one wished to contend with him,
one could not answer him once in a thousand.
He is wise in heart and mighty in strength;
who has resisted him and succeeded?”*

- Job 9:1-4

*“For your iniquity teaches your mouth,
and you choose the tongue of the crafty.
Your own mouth condemns you, not I;
your own lips testify against you.”*

- Job 15:5-6

*“All my intimate friends abhor me,
and those whom I love have turned against me.*

*Have pity on me, have pity on me, O you my friends,
for the hand of God has touched me!
Why do you, like God, pursue me,
never satisfied with my flesh?”*

- Job 19:19,21-22

Job is supposed to be in a place of lament

Job doesn't want anything from his friends
but their love for him

“The whole story of Job is a massive raising of questions to which the book does not provide answers; it is about living with questions to which we do not have answers.”

- John Goldingay

Our quiet presence with people
can be enough