

THE BOOK OF JOB

Lesson 7 – Job 19-21

Our words either hurt or heal. In these chapters, Job described the words of his friends as *tormenting, wronging, scheming, and falsehoods*. He pleaded with them to *listen carefully, to bear with him, to look at him, to put their hand over their mouth*. The prosperity of the *wicked* is examined in these chapters, concluding that we must trust in the *wisdom of God*. May your study bring you closer to being a *comforter* whose words can best be described as trusting in God's *wisdom* when life seems so unfair.

Begin your study with prayer...

Memory Verse – This week's memory verse is:

*“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.” Psalm 19:14*

Read Job 19.

Our words either hurt or heal. In this chapter, as Job describes the words of his friends, we will consider the power of our own words and how we should use them. We will also consider how our outlook can be skewed by the words of another, but it is in our faith that we can still find hope.

1. Job again responded to the accusations made against him by his friends. From Job 19:2-3, what did Job say his friends had done with their *words*?
2. If you were counseling someone in distress, how would you want them to describe the words you spoke to them?
3. What do the following verses teach us about our *words*?
 - a. Psalm 19:14
 - b. Proverbs 10:19
 - c. Proverbs 16:24
 - d. Ephesians 4:29

Note: To understand Job 19:7-12, we must look at the “If, Then” statement in Job 19:5-6. Consider the NIV translation of these verses:

If indeed you would exalt yourselves above me and use my humiliation against me, then know that God has wronged me and drawn his net around me. Job 19:5-6 NIV

Now we can see that Job isn’t exactly saying that God has wronged him, but his outlook has been affected by the words of his friends and we can clearly see how that he does not understand why all of this is happening to him.

4. Read Job 19:7-12 and see again what Job *feels* God has done to him. Choose one or two phrases and write them below.

5. Job 19:13-20 describes what Job sees as the results of all that has come against him.

a. In these verses, list those who Job has lost because they turned away or turned against him.

b. It’s sad to see a person in such a difficult place, suffering, and then losing friends and family at the same time. Why do you think this happens?

6. Job turns to his *friends* in verses 21 and 22.

a. What did he ask from them?

b. Write a definition or give synonyms for this.

7. In spite of all the suffering we have just read in this chapter, Job has another moment of faith and hope in verses 25-27. What does Job say that he *knows* in each verse below?

a. Job 19:25

b. Job 19:26

c. Job 19:27

d. How does knowing these truths help in times of distress?

Read Job 20.

In this chapter we hear for a second time from Zophar. He still does not understand Job or the situation, so he uses his words to proclaim again to Job what the wicked can expect. Once again, we know that this does not truly apply to Job, but we can glean some truth from this chapter as it does apply to those who are truly choosing to sin against God, those who are truly wicked.

1. Choose two verses from Job 20:4-11, where Job describes the short triumph of the wicked, that accurately describe what the wicked can expect.

a.

b.

2. In verses 12-19, Job continues to describe the life of the wicked and its frustrations.

a. Read this section, with its poetic descriptions, and explain what Job is saying about the wicked.

b. Most of us may not describe ourselves as *wicked*, since we became believers. Yet, what lesson is there for us in these warnings?

3. Zophar described “*the portion from God for a wicked man*” (verse 29) in Job 20:20-29. He used words that not only described material lack, but also emotional lack. Notice the words of verse 20. What will he not *know*?

a. Record the truth of Isaiah 57:21.

b. Describe the *unrest* or lack of *quietness in the heart* when a person chooses sin.

4. Job was not one of the wicked, but his description of their end in this chapter is true. Many today deny the judgment of the wicked, but that does not take away the truth that it will happen.

a. Describe the destiny of the wicked from Job 20:20-28.

b. Why do so many deny the judgment of the wicked, even the existence of hell?

c. What are the dangers of this denial?

Read Job 21.

In this chapter we will look at several questions Job asks as he again describes the wicked. We can't answer these questions completely, but we will consider each one.

Question 1:

Job 21:7 - *Why do the wicked live and become old, Yes, become mighty in power?*

1. This question is asked against the repeated claim by his friends that only the righteous are blessed, but the "*triumphing of the wicked is short*" (Job 20:5). If you were asked this question, how would you answer?

Remember, this was a question from Job, not a truth from the Lord. Consider this thought from David Guzik: "Job acknowledged that wickedness was never ultimately rewarded and was always punished in the end. The problem for Job was that it never seemed soon enough that the wicked would drink of the wrath of the Almighty. Job suffered in the *now*, and many of the wicked did not."

2. Even when the wicked seem to live and have power, do not forget that this life is but a vapor! What do you find in the following scriptures that present another view of the wicked?

a. Proverbs 24:19-20

b. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

3. In all of the words on the wicked in Chapter 20, we see nothing of grace. What do you see in the following verses that could be also be used in answering Job's question here in Chapter 21?

a. Ezekiel 18:23

b. 2 Peter 3:9

Question 2:

Job 21:22 – “*Can anyone teach God knowledge, Since He judges those on high?*”

We can see with this question that, even though Job has been questioning the way God has allowed the wicked to prosper or at least not to suffer as Job is suffering, he still knows God is sovereign and has all wisdom. This question is more to himself than to God, but don't we do the same thing at times?

1. What do you see in the following scriptures that relates to this question of Job's?

a. Isaiah 40:14

b. Isaiah 45:9

2. Consider the following scriptures that remind us of Who our God is and write the aspects of His character that you see in each, considering how each one helps us to not question God.

a. Psalm 33:4

b. Psalm 145:17

c. Romans 11:33

Question 3:

Job 21:34 – “*How then can you comfort me with empty words, Since falsehood remains in your answers?*”

1. What makes a person's words *empty*?

2. Why could Job's friend's words be considered *empty*?

“These closing words were in the nature of a summary of all he had been saying. The sufferings he had described were such as fell to the wicked, and that by Divine appointment. All this was true. But other things were true, of which he seemed to have no knowledge... The narrowness of Zophar’s philosophy made him unjust to Job.” (Morgan) Morgan, G. Campbell "Searchlights from the Word" (New York: Revell, 1926)

In closing...

In these chapters we have read much of how Job and his friends describe the wicked. Not all of it was truth, but we can agree with Job 20:20 that *he has no quietness in his heart*.

1. The opposite of *no quietness* in the heart is peace. Describe the peace of God we have in Christ.

Memory Verse

*“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.”
Psalm 19:14*