

## March 26

**Scriptures:** Read Job 18 & 19

**Key Verse:** “For I know that my Redeemer lives,...” (Job 19:25-26)

### Overview

After Job had finished his lament, Bildad spoke up in his turn. However Bildad did not even think Job was worth speaking to, until he had gained understanding (18:2). He accused Job of insulting him and the other two friends, inferring they were stupid, like animals (18:3). Then he turned on Job and said indirectly that Job himself deserved to be treated like an animal because of his base nature and wickedness. Job had blamed God for hunting him, but Bildad said Job had trapped himself because of his own foolish words (18:7-10). Bildad’s description of the fate of the wicked clearly refers to Job, and Job would have recognized it as such. The “firstborn of death” (18:13) was an expression likely referring to Job’s deadly skin disease which was destroying him. He lost his possessions and his home (“tent”, Job was semi-nomadic), and “brimstone” (which represents God’s wrath, judgment, and curse) was upon his land (18:14-15; cf. 1:16; Genesis 19:24; Deuteronomy 29:23).

A horrible punishment for an ancient eastern man was to be cut off without descendants, and Bildad asserted that this is what happens to the wicked. He was obviously referring to the fact that all Job’s children had died, and so Job would die without posterity and without being remembered by anyone. Bildad authoritatively claimed that “this is the place [position] of him who does not know God” (18:21). Bildad was later proven wrong, for through these very trials, Job was in the process of knowing God better, and the memory of Job did not die with him; God later gave him many children, and even to this day Job is well known and honoured all over the world through the Holy Word of God.

In Job’s speech, found in chapter nineteen, he reached the climax of his faith, but before this sudden dawning came upon him, he again rebuked his fellow-debaters for wronging him and felt they should be ashamed of themselves for the numerous ways they had reproached him (19:2-3). Job answered Bildad’s accusation of walking into his own net (18:8) by retorting, “[God had] surrounded me with His net” (19:6). Job had a limited understanding of the spiritual realm, for not once did he take into consideration the possibility that it was Satan, the Adversary, who had brought the suffering upon him. The ancients attributed everything that took place to God, or to “the gods” if they were polytheistic; but through the writing of the book of Job, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, God revealed more about Satan’s activities on the earth so we might become more aware (chapters 1 and 2). ,

Job felt alone and alienated. All his friends and even his family had deserted him. At this time in his life, he needed true friends, but they were nowhere to be found. Job wished that those men, whom he still referred to as “friends,” would only sympathize with him and take pity on him, instead of persecuting him, for he felt that God had done enough of that.

Job also wished that his words were recorded in a book or inscribed on a rock, so they would last forever (19:23-24), especially those wonderful words of divine revelation he was just about to

utter (19:25-27). The Lord answered this prayer, and indeed his words were written down, not upon rocks but upon people's hearts, for they came to be written in God's inspired Holy Bible. Throughout the generations, the story of Job and his contemplations have touched people's hearts and brought comfort, strength, and encouragement, that they too might overcome pain and suffering with patience and faith.

Job had previously seen God as his witness and surety. Now, from the depths of despair, a light shines upon Job, and with great conviction of heart, he sees God as his Redeemer (Hebrew, *goel*). In the ancient culture, a redeemer was usually a close relative (kinsman-redeemer) who would help in the time of need, such as buying back property, buying back from slavery, or even acting as a blood-avenger. This would ensure that this deceased relative's name would be carried on in posterity (Deuteronomy 19:4-13; 25:5-6; Leviticus 25:25, 48-49). Job/however, had been deserted by his relatives; he could only rely on God. Job knew that in his situation only God could help him to overcome and bring to him a sense of security and peace. Job's faith welled up within him as he pictured his divine Redeemer who truly-lived and could come to stand upon the earth. He was the One who would not only defend and vindicate him, but give him the victory, so that after he died, he might see God. Without a doubt, the Lord had graciously revealed this to Job. Indeed, God was to be Job's Redeemer, and He still is today because He sent His Son Jesus Christ to redeem the world, and this redemption was sealed on the cross (Romans 3:24; Luke 1:68; Hebrews 9:12; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14).

## **Prayer**

Thank You, Lord, that You answered Job's cry to You and his words have been written for us to read. Grant us the same faith Job had when he declared "I know my Redeemer liveth." Even in the midst of tragedy, grant us this glorious confidence.