

The Carving of the Cross

Job 19:24 - 26

Nutshell: Job knew He would later be in a resurrection body in which he would see Christ. Unfortunately, this was not a comfort to him, because he thought God had presently rejected his case.

I. Context: Job defending his own righteousness rather than God's .

II. Text

Job 19:23 Who will here grant *it*, and my discourses be written? Who will grant the document, that they be inscribed? -

Job 19:24 *that* they were carved with an iron stylus and lead into the rock unto perpetuity!

Literal Standard Version with modifications

The next four outline items, III. - VI., are based on the 4 uses of Scripture listed in 2 Tim 3:16 AND the 3 depictions of preaching in 2 Tim 4:2.

III. Teaching

A. Job is the ABCs, or kindergarten, of the Bible. It lays out the basics of the God-man relationship. Yet it's a kindergarten where you come out with a Ph.D.

B. Review

1. *God bragged* to Satan that godly Job was THE best, 1:8
 - a. Satan said Job's devotion was 'bought' with blessings, 1:10
 - b. God said Satan could take them away, 1:12
 - c. Job lost all children and possessions, 1:13-19
 - d. But he worshiped and didn't murmur vs. God, 1:20-21
2. God bragged on Job again, 2:3
 - a. Satan said Job would sell God out for his own skin, 2:4-5
 - b. God said Satan could touch him, 2:6
 - c. Satan gave Job death-preferred boils, 2:7-9; 30:18, 30
 - d. Job still didn't sin, 2:10
 - e. Job went 7 days like this, then cursed his birth, 3:1-26.
3. Then begins the bulk of the book, the **argument cycle**, 4-31.
 - a. Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar have each spoken (Eliphaz

trusting *personal revelation*, 4:12, Bildad in *tradition*, 8:8, Zophar in *mystery*, 11:7), Job answering each one: six speeches, chaps. 4-14 = **Argument Cycle 1**

- b. They have increasingly hinted that Job must have sinned to have received this degree of calamity
- c. *Job has increasingly accepted that premise*; thus he begins accusing God for wrongful punishment, 40:8; 9:15; 10:2-7. *What Satan couldn't do, the friends did!* Consider your power as a friend.
- d. The 3 friends speak again, Job answer each one, six more speeches, 15-21 = **Argument Cycle 2**
- e. One last cycle, minus Zophar, 22-25 +
- f. Job insists on his uprightness, 26-31 = **Argument Cycle 3**
- ‡ g. The 3 friends fail to induce a confession of sin, 32:1

Kid-speak: Why did Job's 3 friends say all these bad things happened to Job? Because he'd sinned. But had he? No. But did Job say, "But God won't do wrong"? No, he said "I didn't do anything wrong." Did that get him off track? Yes!

- 4. Then the human hero of the book (a type of Christ- truth incarnate), **Elihu**, sets things straight, chaps 32-37
 - a. God corrects Job, 38:2; 40:2, 8, and his three other friends, 42:7, but never Elihu
 - b. Elihu and God were in agreement, 32:2; 40:8
 - c. Elihu's *last* speech, chap 37, becomes God's *whole* speech: Creation, 38-41. God tag-teamed with Elihu.
- 5. Job will *sulk* in 40:4-5, then *repent* in 42:1-6
- 6. The theme of Job: How can *I* be right in God's eyes (justification) if *He* is not right in my eyes (sanctification)?
- C. **Themes** in Job:
 - 1. God's sovereignty: the main lesson Job learned, Job 42:2
 - 2. God's righteousness. His *sovereignty* is not arbitrary.
 - 3. The necessity of Trials, Ps 119:67, 71. Trials show me my fallen nature. I'd best trust God, not me.
 - 4. Death. Christ's abandonment is especially previewed.
 - 5. God's faithfulness. He didn't quit until Job was restored.
 - 6. God's justice is what Job mainly argued vs.; but God *does* begin to requite the wicked here on earth, Job, 34:10, 20
- D. Argument Cycle Recap, chaps 3-31
 - 1. 3, Job curses his birth

2. 4-5, **Eliphaz** advises Job to make things right with God
3. 6-7, **Job** seeks to correct Eliphaz' perspective, that Job's pain makes him long for death. Job calls on God.
4. 8, **Bildad** says that only the wicked get swept away
5. 9-10, **Job**: God has abandoned me. "Why, God?"
6. 11, **Zophar**, an early postmodernist, claims God is *unfathomable*, yet uses rationality to exhort Job to repent
7. 12-14, **Job** retorts that God's sovereignty includes the wicked's exaltation. "God, I won't regrow if you chop me."
- ✦ a. Job thought God was tired of his accumulated sins.
Hence, he awaited the *afterlife* for God's favor to resume, Job 14:14-17.
- b. But does Heaven = deferred favor?
8. 15, **Eliphaz** puts Job in a long line of failed evildoers
9. 16, **Job** said God had savagely attacked him
10. 17, Job sees his case failing, egged on by his friends
11. 18, **Bildad**: "The wicked are consumed- *just like Job!*"

Kid-speak: Did Job's friends have any proof that he sinned?
No. Do *we* ever accuse people without proof? We'd better not!

12. 19:1-6, **Job** : "*God's* vs. me. Why ya'll too?"
 - a. 19:7-12 "God refuses me, except to heap insult, coordinating His attacks"
 - b. 19:13-19 "Family and friends are now like strangers"
 - c. 19:20-22 "Doesn't the mere sight of me evoke pity?"
13. 19:23, Though God is unjustly trying to block me off, my tale must be told! My case must be made!" *Ironic.*
- E. 19:24, Not just written, but permanently inscribed!
 1. Mine is the tale that makes God's dealings inconsistent!
 - a. He'll probably be able to keep it secret, but that would be a colossal injustice!
 - b. (And what is ya'll's particular interest in covering for Him?)
 2. Job imagines a rock carved with either:
 - a. a stylus made of iron and lead combined, or
 - b. an iron stylus with a lead hammer.
 - c. Carve my case deep- indelibly!
- F. Job is on dangerous ground
 1. As God says in Jer 17:1, men only have the 'right' to make

- one kind of permanent inscription: that of their sinfulness
2. And only God can remove it
 3. By making this demand, Job is effectively seeking to replace *God* dealing with his sin with him making his *own* case. Again- super dangerous! Job 34:36-37
- G. Job thinks he has a unique case vs. God. No one had heard the like!
1. It *was* unique! Partly because *he* was unique.
 2. How many “blameless (complete)” men are there? How many of them can then be separated into a higher class by themselves? 1:8 Then how many of those get bashed?

Kid-speak: Job thought that what happened to him should be written down forever, because it was wrong! But without God’s forgiveness, was Job still a sinner who deserved to go to Hell? Yes!

H. Job and Christ

1. Job was blameless. Christ was sinless.
 - a. Job’s blamelessness was a *type* of Christ’s sinlessness, but Job was not sinless
 - b. Job’s sin had to be paid for. Job understood this, receiving God’s forgiveness, as pictured in animal sacrifices. *But did he really understand?*
 2. In fact, Job’s record WAS “inscribed” into “the Rock,” Christ, on the cross.
 - a. With the “iron stylus” of God’s justice and the “lead” of His wrath
 - b. Job had therefore ignored the clear picture of a **substitute** in the animal sacrifices
 3. Christ saw Himself in Job, except- ! Christ *would* have to be *completely* cast off!
 - a. So what Job was (unjustly) *feeling* and *expressing*, Christ would actually be *experiencing*
 - b. In one sense, there is an injustice at the Cross. The Just One should *not* die under a curse. The unjust ones (you and me) *should* be punished.
- I. Ironically, Job is right now going to confess His faith in Christ/Messiah

Kid-speak: Who was the one man who really *didn't* deserve all the bad He got? Jesus. Why did God cast Jesus away on the cross if Jesus didn't deserve it? Because Jesus was cast away *in our place!*

Job 19:25 For I myself know *that* my Vindicating One *is* alive ["of life"], and afterwards, He will rise upon the dust *of the earth*.

- J. This is a breathtaking theological statement. It takes us by surprise.
 - 1. Many try to interpret it in light of a Job who had no such specific knowledge about Messiah or the future
 - 2. But why shouldn't Job know these things? Why wouldn't God have told this to men of Job's time period?
 - a. He speaks of someone "alive," but not on earth yet
 - b. At least a hint of the Second Person of the Trinity
- K. Connected with what he just said, Job is expecting that his mishandled case will be sorted out when God (his "Vindicating One") comes to earth
 - 1. He therefore has faith mixed with unbelief. Unfortunately, his unbelief is making his faith ineffective.
 - 2. But he still knows three crucial things:
 - a. God has taken his part as a Vindicator
 - b. That there is a coming day of accounting
 - c. That God will administer Vindication in person, on earth
 - 3. His unbelief, however, discounts these points by saying:
 - a. God has temporarily chosen *not* to act as Job's Vindicator
 - b. Whatever has 'gummed up the works' (his accumulated sins, 14:14-17) cannot or will not be straightened out presently
 - c. His belief in the Incarnation (as we call it) has allowed him to *defer* God's favor until that event- when He can look God in the eye. 9:32-33; 10:2; 23:3-7
 - 4. Remember, though: this unbelief is (ironically) Job's way of *rescuing his faith in God!* He believes things will still come right, but an obstacle has arisen (God's tight accounting of his sins)
 - 5. And again, what simple misstep has Job made? God's afflictions can be *apart from any wrong we've done*.

- L. But despite Job's misapplication of the doctrines in 19:25, they are still remarkable. What use *should* he have made of them?
1. My Vindicator took on that 'job' permanently- no interruptions. He exonerates me now.
 2. Straightening things out in the end does not mean that my Vindicator leaves them dangling in the meantime (one of Elihu's foremost corrections, 34:21-30)
 3. My Vindicator's *final* settlement will be consistent with His dealings *to that point*

Kid-speak: Job thought that God would change His mind later and say that Job was right. But was God even against Job right then? No. Even though He let all the bad things happen to Job? Right. No, those things didn't mean God was against Job. If you get really sick, does that mean God is against you? No.

- M. Remember, God does not consider these to be minor deviations, 40:8
- N. "Vindicator" is *ga-al* in Hebrew, 104x (Gilead's root)
1. Most famously, it's the word for the kinsman-redeemer in Ruth, 21x
 - a. In the Torah, it's mainly about buying back something pledged, Lev 25, 27, 22x
 - b. It's the "avenger" of blood in Num, Deut, and Josh, 13x
 2. Its real redemptive meat isn't fleshed out until Isaiah (e.g., 44:6), 24x
- O. But Job knows that this Vindicator will "rise" upon the "dust" of the earth!
1. That sounds like someone being born here!
 2. That sounds like the God-man, Messiah

Job 19:26 and after they have struck this- my skin, yet from my flesh, I will gaze upon God,

- P. Here Job is saying that once his present skin (and life) are done, he'll eventually be clothed with new skin (the resurrection of the body), in which he'll see God. Amazing.
- Q. Again, Job knew a lot more about a lot more than we probably would have expected. But why not? It's not reasonable to assume that the point in the Biblical timeline where we first

read about a doctrine is the first time God instructed men in it.

1. Almost the opposite, I think
2. Until it was written, God would have preserved the knowledge orally or, more likely, in pre-Scriptural records

Kid-speak: Is this body the last body we will have? No. We will all have a body that will last forever. Where will some people spend forever? In Hell. Who will spend forever with Jesus? Those who love Him for dying for their sins.

R. Yet this knowledge doesn't change Job's basic stance:

1. He's still longing for this *later* meeting to *resume normal relations with God* that have been cut off in this present injustice
2. You might say He believed the right things about God and salvation, only later
3. But that is nearly as perverted a view as the 3 friends- a view that angered God, 42:7
 - a. Which also proves that opposing a wrong view doesn't ensure a right view
 - b. You must oppose error with the correct 'opposite'

S. "After they have struck my skin"- present skin/body

1. The AFV says "And *though worms* destroy my skin," specifying "they" as the worms (most treat "they" as an implied passive: "after my skin is struck")
2. "Yet from my flesh," trading present skin/body for future flesh/body, Philip 3:21

T. "I will gaze upon God," in person

1. This belief will be realized both in the Millennium and in the New Earth, Rev 20, 21
2. It skips over Christ's first coming. Job is saying He'll see God on earth at the same time we will.
3. Job anticipates a restored Eden-type fellowship

Kid-speak: Will we get to see Jesus one day? Yes! Will that be a great day? YES!

U. Remember, Jesus said that our present relationship with the Spirit is superior to his in-person, earthly ministry, Jn 16:7

V. How encouraging this doctrine is with a corrected view!

1. This flesh isn't my last flesh. It's obviously decaying, but it will be replaced with better-than-new.
2. I will see God. The throne of God and the Lamb are in the New Jerusalem, Rev 22:3, and His servants will see "His" face, Rev 22:4; Matt 18:10; Ps 11:7; 17:15.

IV. For the Walking Wounded (1 Thess 5:14, "Uphold the strengthless")
Affliction got the best regular guy ever off track. You're not alone.

V. Conviction (2 Tim 4:2, "Convince, rebuke"): What have I done wrong?
How have I lost righteousness?
As long as I have circumstantial favor (enough food and stuff), do I even really care about any other favor from God?

VI. Correction/ Realignment (2 Tim 4:2, "Exhort/encourage"):
How will I correct my error? How will I regain uprightness?
Lord, help me judge my status before you by spiritual criteria, not physical; by my place in Christ, not in the world.

VII. Schooling in Righteousness: How will I avoid the error and follow Christ?
We should lift ourselves with the thought of seeing Christ in a renewed world.

Wrap-up: Job's complaint was written, like he wanted! We're reading it! But it wasn't the vindication he sought. His words were his condemnation, 40:8.

As usual, with its beautiful irony, the real story glorifies Christ. Job's rebellious record was closed as a book condemning him. Job's sinful record was carved into Christ on the cross. Job's sin was "carved into the Rock."

In his repentance (42:1-6), Job knew that his Vindicator didn't uphold *his own* righteousness, but *God's*.

How much better we know that with the Cross accomplished! This greater knowledge demands the continual *abnegation* of our own righteousness and *exaltation* of Christ's righteousness.