



LC STUDY GUIDE

Done in Sync with the "Rediscovering Jesus" Series

The Passage: Job 19:1-7, 20-27

For Life Community usage the week of 10/19/15

Intro: Dear LC Leader, welcome to our year of "Rediscovering Jesus." We're grateful that you can be part of this in growing, in teaching, in sharing, and in all things community.

Today's Big Idea: The Lord is not only present in our suffering but also at work in the redemption of all things, including our lives.

Context: The book of Job is an ancient story and is part of the "wisdom literature" section of the Old Testament (alongside books like the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon). In the first chapter, Job is described as a highly regarded, righteous, and wealthy man with a wife, ten children, numerous servants, and livestock. Then unbeknownst to Job, Satan says to God that Job only fears Him because He's so blessed; if all was taken from him, Job would curse God and no longer fear Him. Satan is wrong initially, then correct temporarily, then incorrect again. By the end of the story, Job repents, and is blessed again but before then, he is understandably lost in his suffering. We pick up Job's reply to his friends in Chapter 19:

1 Then Job replied:

2 "How long will you torment me
and crush me with words?"

3 Ten times now you have reproached me;
shamelessly you attack me.

4 If it is true that I have gone astray,
my error remains my concern alone.

5 If indeed you would exalt yourselves above me
and use my humiliation against me,

6 then know that God has wronged me
and drawn his net around me.

7 "Though I cry, 'Violence!' I get no response;
though I call for help, there is no justice..."

20 "I am nothing but skin and bones;
I have escaped only by the skin of my teeth.

21 "Have pity on me, my friends, have pity,
for the hand of God has struck me.

22 Why do you pursue me as God does?
Will you never get enough of my flesh?"

- 23** "Oh, that my words were recorded,
that they were written on a scroll,
24 that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead,
or engraved in rock forever!
25 I know that my redeemer lives,
and that in the end he will stand on the earth.
26 And after my skin has been destroyed,
yet in my flesh I will see God;
27 I myself will see him
with my own eyes—I, and not another.
How my heart yearns within me!"

-Job 19:1-7, 20-27

O – What words and feelings surprise you about what Job is saying to God and aloud to everyone? Have you ever felt similarly? What troubles you most about the story of Job?

I – Job continues to plead his case that God has wronged him while also appealing that God would have mercy on his suffering. Earlier in the book, he appealed for mercy but here in verse 6, Job explicitly says that God has "wronged him." Suffering affects us so deeply, causing us to pursue numerous avenues to stop it. Why do you think God allows suffering to continue for so long? Can anything be gained during such trying times?

A – Though each circumstance is different, we have all felt similarly to Job in times of pain, grief, and agony. Who are the modern-day "Jobs" that we can see throughout our lives? Before answering what they need, let us imagine and attempt to describe their suffering.

O – In verse 25, Job changes voice and confidently call out for a redeemer. Does anything else surprise you about the turn in verses 20-27?

I – The "redeemer" (Hebrew *go'el*) in the OT means a few things (all related to each other):

- One is that it means "champion" or "deliverer"

- It also means "Kinsman Redeemer." For those familiar with the story of Ruth and Boaz, the Kinsman Redeemer comes and saves the family. He buys back what was sold in distress, avenges a murdered relative, and recovers what was stolen. As one theologian puts it, the redeemer is the "embodiment of family solidarity."

One school of thought suggests that Job is calling for a redeemer to vindicate him before God. While another believes that he is calling for God to be the redeemer/advocate.

First, what are you seeing here?

Second, Job is calling for a greater redeemer than he can imagine. Given our Christ-centered understanding of the Old Testament, what would you say to Job about Jesus if you could?

(Consider Jesus' suffering and work of redemption.)

A – Who are those near us and far from us that need the hope of redemption? How can we share that hope?

- a. Please note that not all these questions are to be asked in a single meeting. Take some time to prayerfully discern what will serve your LC the best. Select and reword the questions that best fit your voice and your Life Community group.
- b. Complement these questions with "process questions" (what else? what more? what do others think?)
- c. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. Wait. Take your time; don't rush people but encourage their participation. And avoid answering your own questions!
- d. Application: Pace the study to conclude with difference-making application.
- e. Secondary texts—use other texts sparingly, even if they are relevant. Such texts will push you into "teaching" rather than facilitating. It can cause people to feel distracted or de-powered.