

# Push

Job 16:17-22

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## A. Haters (vs. 17-18):

1. Violence in my hands; Unrighteous – Job states that he has absolutely no intention of working very hard with his hands to disrupt what God has allowed by violently addressing anyone (even though people violently attacked him; vs. 10) or violently retaliating against those who have harmed him.
  - a) Though I speak (v. 6a). It seems useless to Job to continue the lament and the debate, for both man and God are set against him. His fervent protestations of innocence have been and will be interpreted as proof of godlessness. Devoid of inner resources and outer reinforcements (v. 7), he is labeled “sinner” by his impotent wretchedness (v. 8). He hath torn me in his wrath (v. 9a, ASV). It seems to Job that God has savagely rent him (v. 9) and given him over to the spiteful rabble, who had once been obliged to respect him (vv. 10, 11). God shatters (v. 12a) and batters (v. 14) him, piercing his vitals (vv. 12b, 13) and reducing him to a sobbing wreck, prostrate in the dust (vv. 15, 16). And all without cause: Although there is no violence in my hands, And my prayer is pure (v. 17, ASV; cf. Isa 53:9).
2. My prayer – Job uses a word for prayer which means it is a prayer that is set to music so it is a worshipful prayer. It is the same kind of prayer that the musician Habakkuk used.
3. Pure – Job’s prayer is going to be free of guilt, representing his innocence.
4. Pure – Maintain your integrity and what you believe God has called you to be; never walk away from that. It does not matter if it is a Lion’s Den.
5. Pure – Stay pure because vengeance does not belong to you (Romans 12:14-21).
6. For my cry – Job’s cry is loud, directed to God, full of sorrowful pain and distress.
7. For my cry – You cry loud, and you never stop because you never lose hope in the Lord who is a just God.

## B. God Sees (vs. 19-21):

1. Note – Job says his prayers are pure (James 4:1-4; 1 John 3:13-24).
2. Now behold – Job, after crying out about how difficult his circumstances are

decides to make a specific point about how all of this creates a need to talk with God while evaluating the difficulty of gaining God's attention.

3. Witness – His suffering compared to the righteous life of Job (theodicy) created a legal issue requiring decisive testimony (compared to what his friends have been saying) of the truth before God.
  - a) Since no mediator could rise *above* both God and man (Job 9:33), Job wanted a spokesman, a kind of heavenly defense attorney who could speak on God's level. Job's companions had not spoken on his behalf, so he needed someone who would.<sup>[1]</sup>
4. Witness – Someone who verifies the facts before God.
  - a) Job believes that he does have a witness in heaven. How prophetic and inspiring. Job has no writings from Moses, but God has already placed hope in his heart.
  - b) In the Hebrew court the witness/advocate had the responsibility to testify on behalf of one and to see justice done to him. The "witness" is not merely one who knows Job's innocence, but one who will testify to it in the court of public opinion (16:19).<sup>[2]</sup>
5. Advocate – – Job believed that the person who has a full knowledge of his situation is in heaven. This well-informed person can defend him through all the legal proceedings as Job's spokesman.
  - a) Job feels that God has shattered his life and so he is pleading for someone to mediate his case.
  - b) Job seems to indicate that his advocate is in the same place as God – 'on high.'
6. Advocate – One person verifies the facts and the other person becomes Job's defense attorney.
  - a) That confession returns to the theme of the heavenly Arbitrator or Intercessor. Job was now certain of the reality of the Intercessor. He had previously only wished that such an Intercessor existed (9:33–34). Job had already far surpassed his friends in the understanding of God's ways, and his sufferings would drive him deeper still.<sup>[3]</sup>
7. My friends – Job viewed the men he considered to be like his own brothers as if they were family to him, scoffers.
8. Scoffers – Job viewed his friends as men who did not apply wisdom to seek to understand what had happened to him. Their approach was done with a sense of

pride and haughtiness. As a result, they provided Job more reproof than a good understanding of what was taking place was necessary so he needs a witness and an advocate.

9. My eye weeps to God — His friend’s approach caused Job to constantly cry with no end in sight so that his tears were like a constant flow of water. Job saw no end to his grief. However, Job was not just endlessly crying, Job cried with his attention towards God hoping for a response from God.
  - a) Like the eyes of servants that look to the hand of their master, like the eyes of the maid to the hand of her mistress (Ps 123:2), Job looks to God—though not for mercy; rather for justice.<sup>[4]</sup>

### **C. A True Friend Loves at All Times (vs. 21-22; Proverbs 17:17):**

1. Oh that a man might plead; appointed – Job requested that a man endlessly make a legal dispute that would vindicate him so that he is found not guilty of the charges brought against him.
2. Neighbor; friend – Job wished that his cry for justice would be no different than if someone was pleading his case to a person who was an intimate friend. A friend who is considered a family member.
  - a) He argues the case of his friend before the bar of divine justice. His task is similar to that of the Messiah in Isa. 2:4; 11:4, where the same verb appears (cf. Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25).<sup>[5]</sup>
3. Neighbor; friend – A true friend never gives up fighting for justice even when all the noise and attention die down; a true friend fights on (Proverbs 17:17).
4. I shall go – Job’s plans to endlessly experience a new life in a few years.
5. I shall go – When a true friend fights for you, your soul rest knowing that whether you live or die; your good name will stand because justice will take place.
6. I shall go – If I am wrong, a true friend fights for me to do right so I establish a good name.
7. The way of no return – Job expects his integrity to take him on a path that moves him to a point of no return. He never said if that point is heaven.
8. The way of no return – A person whose integrity eventually is established does not need to return because their name stands forever.

<sup>[1]</sup> Zuck, R. B. (1985). Job. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 739). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>[2]</sup> Smith, J. E. (1996). *The wisdom literature and Psalms* (p. 104). Joplin, MO: College Press Pub. Co.

<sup>[3]</sup> Garrett, D. A. (1998). The Poetic and Wisdom Books. In D. S. Dockery (Ed.), *Holman concise Bible commentary* (pp. 207–208). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

[\[4\]](#) Clines, D. J. A. (1989). *Job 1–20* (Vol. 17, p. 390). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

[\[5\]](#) Alden, R. L. (1993). *Job* (Vol. 11, p. 187). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.