

**THE ESCHATOLOGICAL JUDGMENT IN JOB 19:21-29:
AN EXEGETICAL STUDY.**

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Practically all scholars today acknowledge the juridical features of the book of Job. The purpose of this study is to identify the legal event that we understand Job believed would take place in the eschaton. Chapter one first analyzes the significance of the place of our passage in the structure of the book. Job 19 is found to be the center of a structurally balanced composition. Further study of structure reveals that vss. 25-27b can be viewed as: (1) the heart of the chiasm in 19:21-29, (2) the node of that speech, and (3) a pivot of the book. We then consider the immediate context of Job 19. Though Job echoes the vocabulary and imagery of Bildad (chap. 18), he rejects Bildad's tenets: (1) that there is no future life, at least for the wicked, and, by implication, for Job; and (2) that rewards are given in this present life. In contrast, Job is seen to affirm a belief in vindication in a future life.

Chapter two examines the vocabulary of Job 19:21-29. OT usage suggests that numerous words are technical terms from both the juridical and eschatological associated fields. Comparison with other OT texts, whose contexts are considered established, and which utilizes similar clusters of terms as our passage, confirms that Job 19:21-29 combines technical terms of both the juridical and eschatological fields, to describe an eschatological judgment.

We begin chapter three with an interpretation of the passage by attending to its form. Genre, structure, and poetic devices appear to have been specially selected to give body and shape for the message of the poet, and to highlight the significance of vss. 25-27b in his thinking.

Our explanation of Job 19:21-29 is built upon the arguments of the previous chapters, and further confirms our thesis that Job believed he would die, but be raised for the purpose of vindication, in the eschaton.

We conclude that the eschatological judgment of Job 19:21-29 is central to the solution of Job's problem. The thought of ultimate vindication, and faith in his redeemer satisfied the theological problem for the moral order of the universe and the existential problem of Job's suffering.