

# Job 19:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

My breath is strange to my wife, though I intreated for the children's sake of mine own body.

## Analysis

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'My breath is strange to my wife, though I intreated for the children's sake of mine own body.' Job's isolation extends to intimate relationships: his 'breath' (רוּחִי, *ruchi*) is 'strange' (זָרָה, *zarah*—alien, foreign) to his wife, despite entreaties for sake of 'children of mine own body' (בְּנֵי בֵטְנִי, *beney vitni*). His disease makes him repulsive even to his wife. Some scholars suggest this refers to bad breath from disease; others see emotional alienation. Either way, marital intimacy is destroyed. Suffering isolates, breaking closest bonds. This anticipates Christ's 'My God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Total isolation, even from intimates, characterizes extreme suffering. Job's experience, though not salvific like Christ's, reflects suffering's alienating power.

## Historical Context

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Ancient culture valued family intimacy and children highly. Job's alienation from his wife and loss of children would compound his suffering with profound social and emotional isolation.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## 1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

### Study Questions

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1. How does suffering isolate us from those closest to us?
2. What does Christ's experience of total abandonment mean for our isolation?

### Interlinear Text

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לְבָנֵי יִ      ! חֲנֹתִי      לְאִשְׁתִּי      זָרָה      רִיחִי  
**My breath    is strange    to my wife    H2603    for the children's**  
H7307    H2114    H802    H1121

בְּטַנִּי:  
**sake of mine own body**  
H990

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