

Job 19:23-27 "I know my redeemer lives"

Note re picture

This is the foundation stone of the old St Paul's Lutheran Church Waikerie – which is now the School Library.



Text: Job 19:23-27

"Oh, that my words were recorded,
that they were written on a scroll,
that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead,
or engraved in rock forever!
I know that my redeemer lives,
and that in the end he will stand on the earth.

Job the millionaire.

Job has a wife, 10 kids, hundreds of servants, thousands and thousands of sheep and goats, and camels, and donkey's, and cattle.

It says that Job was the richest man in the known world!

Job the man who got up extra early and secretly, and faithfully, offered extra sacrifices to God for his wife and kids, just in case they sinned against God in their hearts.

It says that there was no man as faithful as Job!

Job gets caught up in some weird cosmic test between the devil and God and he's reduced to a pile of human misery.

His 10 kids are killed in a cyclone

All his stock are killed by roaming armies

His servants are slaughtered by his neighbours

He has painful sores all over his body – even the soles of his feet – he can't walk.

It says he uses broken pottery to scratch his sores.

He is naked, sobbing, and as it says "He's sitting on a pile of crap".

Job says:

Why was I ever born?

Why did my mother's knees and breasts greet me?

Why didn't she burry me alive?

Why couldn't I have been born dead?

Please curse the day I was born.

To rub salt into his wounds his "wife" calls him an idiot.

She says: *why don't you just curse God and then you will die and be put out of your misery?*

His mates came to comfort him.

When they saw his condition they "screamed" in shock and couldn't speak for 7 days.

This is the same Job who proclaims:

I know my redeemer lives!

If only I could engrave it in stone I would. My redeemer lives!

He knew what a redeemer was – probably more so than we do.

We sing the songs – but do we really know what a redeemer is?

A redeemer is a rescuer, a Saviour, but most importantly a redeemer is a family member who is obliged to help.

Redeemers were very important in Job's world.

Redeemers were able to get you out of debt – out of trouble.

For most people the job of redeemer was an honour but, more so, it was **the law** for the redeemer to help the relative out – it was their obligation.

The classic example is the one of Ruth and Boaz.

Ruth and her mother-in-law Naomi were widowed and had to return to their homeland.

They had nothing.

Soon in their homeland they were being cared for very well – especially Ruth.

Ruth can't work out why things were going just right for her.

Naomi whispers in Ruth's ear: "Boaz is our family redeemer".

Of course, with the benefit of hind sight we know Boaz was wanted more than just to redeem Ruth – He wanted to marry her.

They went home because they had what they call a "Kinsman Redeemer" – Boaz, he was rich bachelor Boaz.

He looked after the women very well – especially Ruth.

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| What was Boaz before he met Ruth? – Ruthless |
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Anyway the point is it was an obligation and a law to be the redeemer if you were it.

The kinsman redeemer role even went as far as the right or obligation of brother and sisters to have children with their brothers or sisters in law if the brother or sister died prematurely.

Two key factors of being a redeemer:

1. You have to be a family member

2. It was at the personal expense or sacrifice of the redeemer to help the family member.

Job the pile of misery surely needed a redeemer.

And he calls God to be his redeemer. A bit of a long shot!

Two problems with God being a redeemer:

1. God would have to be family – a relative. God family??

2. And God would be obliged to help. God obliged to Job?? God obliged to anybody??

It's either a very long shot or Job has an incredible insight to our God.

To call God his personal family member, redeemer, might sound far fetched but to a man of faith it's normal, it's right, it's how it should be.

You know we use the word redeemer in Christian circles everyday, but I wonder if it means the same to us as it did for Job.

Jesus is our redeemer – we know! – but why do we call Jesus our redeemer?

I think mostly it is because we know him as Saviour.

**But have you ever considered Jesus as a family member – as big brother?
Have you ever considered that Jesus owes us – Jesus obliged to serve us?**

This is really controversial because we say, confidently, that we are saved by the grace of God – and this is true.

And while God's grace is free and has absolutely no obligation about it - it is by its very nature obliged to give, and love, and save.

A bit like love. There is no obligation to do anything in a loving relationship, but the nature of love obliges us to do acts of love.

We are saved by grace alone not by works but the nature of that saving grace obliges us to do good works.

Just as James says Salvation “must and will” produce works. Not in order to be saved but because we're saved.

Now back to the redeemer.

Our God of grace must and will redeem us because of the very nature of grace itself.

And our God of grace is also bound to save us because we are his children – we're family.

Job knew this – Job called on the nature of God's grace when he said, “My redeemer lives”.

Job knew the Old Testament.

He knew the promise of God: I am the Lord your God, I will rescue you from the slavery of the Egyptians, I will redeem you. (Ex 6:6)

Which of course became the creed, the great Shema, of the Old Testament, which describes God rescuing/redeeming his people.

While I think we are familiar in some way what redeemer means I think we have lost the wonder of what “My” means.

My redeemer lives.

It says God is my Father, I am his child.

It says, very boldly, God is obliged to save me, because of the nature of his love.

Jesus highlights this very specifically when he calls his father ABBA or dad and then calls us his own.

He does it again when he gives us the lord's Prayer – Pray like this: Our Father in Haven.

Jesus is our true kinsman redeemer. He is a true brother, and we share the same true Father.

Luther reminds us Jesus didn't redeem us with gold or silver but with his own "holy, precious blood and his innocent suffering and death".

God wants, nothing more than us to belong to him, live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.

Today I want us to focus on all the words around the word redeemer in Job's statement "I know MY redeemer lives."

He knew because of God's words and promises and that great act of redeeming the Israelites from Egypt.

We know because of God's word and promises and that great act of redeeming us from the slavery of sin.

My Redeemer lives is a great statement – how can you unpack it in your life.

For a starter, as Dr Phill always says: Past behavior is the best indicator of future behavior.

Jesus has always been the God of grace and love in the past – he will always continue to be the God of grace and love – he can do no other – he is obliged.

He has redeemed us on the cross – we can come to him and not be afraid or embarrassed – we can bodily enter his grace.

We are invited to talk personally about redeemer God – he is no stranger – he's family.

As we enter danger – faith danger – know that our God is obliged by the nature of pure grace and love to not let anything separate us from his love and grace.

How dare I say that God is obliged to me?

Job said it – My redeemer lives!

God can't help but be obliged to us all – the proof is his only beloved son died for us.

God doesn't mean turn your back.

God simply means: "I am obliged by love and grace to redeem my children".

My redeemer lives – is the boldest statement anyone can make; *"If only I could carve this in stone: "My Redeemer lives"*.

Amen.

Father, we thank you that you love allowed Jesus to die for us – forgiving us – and making us right with you. Amen.