

“Do You Know?”—Job 19:23-27

The text for this sermon, the theme of which is, “Do You Know?”, is Job 19:23-27 → *Oh that my words were written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book! Oh that with an iron pen and lead they were engraved in the rock forever! For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!*

This is the text.

Dear Brothers & Sisters In Christ:

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Through all the trials, temptations and afflictions that occur in our lives there is a natural tendency on our part to ask a basic question: “Why me, Lord?” Isn’t it ironic that no matter how many times that question passes over our lips the answers still remain the same. Those answers usually go along the lines of: “Only time will tell!” or “God only knows!” or maybe its just a frustrating response of “I haven’t got a clue!” Such struggles which afflictions and trials place before you may drive you to someone else for help, guidance and hopefully some answers.

Our text records the words of a man named Job who looked to

someone to find the answers for why so many afflictions came upon him. In one day Job's servants were killed by some neighboring peoples who also took his oxen and donkeys. That same day *the fire of God fell from heaven and burned up his sheep and the servants attending them, the Chaldeans . . . made a raid on the camels and took them, killing the servants, and while his sons and daughters were eating and drinking . . . in their oldest brother's house . . . a great wind came across the wilderness* taking down the house and killing all his children. (cf. Job 1:13-19) And you think you have bad days?!

Then he was struck *with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head*. With only his life and his wife left, Job's "quality of life" was not the greatest at this point. All he could do was sit in ashes and scrape his sores with a piece of broken pottery. (cf. Job 2:7-8) How was Job to understand this situation in light of his relationship with Yahweh?

As Job sought guidance to understand his situation some of his friends tried to help him "figure out" what was going on in his life. However, his friends' explanations of his situation were not necessarily comforting or even helpful. Basically, they were telling him that God must be punishing him for some sin that he committed, assuming bad things only happen to wicked people. It is a very logical conclusion. Many who experience struggles, afflictions and tragedies will ask, "What did I do

wrong to deserve this?” Looking for a particular sin upon which to blame your struggles is dangerous. It will lead you into further despair because it is impossible for any human being to know every sin they’ve ever commit. It also disables you from asking a more important question: “Lord, where are you leading me from here?”

Job recognized that the LORD permitted all these things to happen to him but would not accept that it was because of something he did against God. Throughout their “counsel” he clung to his “innocence” before Yahweh so strongly that he wished his *words were written . . . inscribed in a book . . . with an iron pen and lead . . . engraved in the rock forever* so future generations would know his “innocence” as well! (cf. verses 23-24) Still, Job needed to find comfort in the present situation more than in the future! How could he have confidence? Where did he go to find assurance and comfort in the midst of this miserable life with which he had been “blessed?”

So far, this sermon certainly is not our picture of an Easter celebration, is it? Yet, we too are celebrating Easter amidst our many struggles, afflictions, trials, sins and spiritual battles in all the “stuff” of our lives. Where do you find assurance, strength and comfort for your life? The Holy Spirit directed Job to an event which gives hope and new life for all the faithful, that is, all those who trust in Yahweh and His plan of salvation in Jesus!

Because of this event we celebrate Easter by following Job's example! Even in the midst of his miserable life he was able to view his life in the best possible way **by faith in Jesus**, about two thousand years before Jesus was even born! As a result of his **faith** knowledge Job expressed the wonderful Easter confession in verse 25 of our text → *I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will stand upon the earth.*

Satan's main purpose is to make us deny the living God. (cf. Job 1:11;2:5) This Easter confession of faith shows that Satan's purpose produced just the opposite response in Job. It brought his Redeemer, Jesus Christ, into clear focus!

Job was able to look beyond his miserable life to see a life which was far greater—a life which would be his by faith in Jesus! Notice how he continued his confession of faith in verses 26-27 of our text → *After my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!* It's a description of the new life given in the resurrection of the body on the Last Day!

All the knowledge in the world—even that of Job and his three friends trying to “figure out” the reasons for his situation—cannot bring us to Job's confession of **faith**. It is a conviction which comes through the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives as we trust completely in the

Person and Work of Jesus Christ.

The celebration of Easter is actually a confession that meaning in life is found in our Lord Jesus Who has overcome death and the struggles or afflictions that we experience in this life. It is a confession that we are guided and directed by our **faith** knowledge—not just our own frail efforts to try and “figure it all out.” Proverbs 9:10 says *the fear of the LORD* (i.e. faith in Yahweh) *is the **beginning of wisdom**, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.*

Since faith is *the beginning of wisdom*, faith in Jesus is the filter through which all other knowledge we Christians encounter is passed. The Easter celebration causes us to ask, “Where do we go from here, Lord?” instead of “Why me, Lord?”

Like Job, we constantly look to our Redeemer to keep us on the right course throughout our life. We strive to *lay aside every weight , and sin which clings so closely, and run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.* (cf. Hebrews 12:1-2) Like Job, we *look to Jesus* in the midst of every area of our lives, good and bad, and make the great confession: *I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will stand upon the earth.*

It is when we look to Jesus that we can receive the endurance we need as we struggle this side of the resurrection of all flesh! He has perfected our faith by His perfect obedience to God’s Law which we

could not give. He has perfected our faith by His perfect sacrifice for the penalty which our sins deserve, and by His resurrection from the dead to restore our human natures, sinless in Paradise forever!

Therefore, if we are going to seek help to guide us through life it had better begin with Jesus. If we are going to seek out someone else for guidance in life it had better be someone who is also looking to Jesus so that we can obtain Christ-centered guidance. If we are going to be someone who helps guide others in life, we ourselves had better be looking to Jesus for guidance first.

Easter is a celebration of resurrection, not just Jesus' resurrection, but our resurrection as well! Job knew that, by looking to his Redeemer, Jesus Christ, he would see God face to face no matter how much he was afflicted in this life. He looked forward to and anticipated his own resurrection. This is what it means to live by faith in Jesus. We know that He did it all **for us!** It is a celebration of our resurrection to new life under the forgiveness of sins in Christ, today and into eternity!

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

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