

# Gospel Gleanings, "...especially the parchments"

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## A Living Redeemer and a Certain, Literal Resurrection

*Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my redeemer liveth, And that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, Yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, And mine eyes shall behold, and not another; Though my reins be consumed within me. (Job 19:23–27, KJV 1900)*

We tend to take common blessings for granted, and likely our, as I believe, inspired and divinely preserved Bible may stand near the head of the list of neglected, taken-for-granted blessings in our lives. Think. What if you faced the Job-ordeal without a Bible to help you understand it? Job lived in such a time. Notice his longing.

*Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!*

If the Job-experience had been written in Job's time, he could have read it and found far more reliable comfort than any of his "Miserable comforter" friends gave him. I fear that many children of grace spend too little time with their Bible because they read on its pages things that they prefer not to confront and deal with in their lives. They live in a fairy tale world of fantasy. Pretend the Bible doesn't condemn your ideas and conduct, and you can continue to practice those things with the self-deluded idea that you are doing no wrong. I suggest that their own conscience, along with the energy that they invest in their delusion, speaks volumes to the fact that they know more about the wrongness of what they do than they are willing to confess. God refuses to join anyone's private delusions. What He teaches as right and wrong, sin and righteousness, is fixed **and revealed in Scripture**. He measures our thoughts and actions by that fixed principle of His righteousness, and He commands us, not to retire to our private fantasy, but to repent and live in His world in active fellowship with Him and His commandments. And should we choose to claim ignorance, Scripture and His law, written in our hearts, witness against our claim.

Despite no Bible, no preacher, and perhaps no prophet, Job reflects specific knowledge that we often think can only come through exposure to the gospel. No doubt, the gospel is loaded with rich graces and knowledge of God and of His truth. However, we should never discount the power of God to teach His children many principles of His grace abounding to us. (Titus 2:12-14; spend some

time in this passage. Learn what Paul specifically names as things that the grace of God teaches us. Paul didn't write that the grace of God plus a preacher teach these things, did he? We should never discount or diminish God's power in grace to teach His beloved children of His goodness and grace) The contemporary notion that no one can possibly have such knowledge apart from a preacher does great damage to Scripture's testimony regarding God's grace teaching, including what it teaches, and God's Law written in the hearts and minds of those who experience the new birth at His loving and sovereign hand.

*For I know that my redeemer liveth, And that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth...*

Through Moses' Law, we learn of the debt that sin imposes and of God's rich provision for redemption. However, if Job lived at a time prior to the Law or in a culture that did not know that Law, how did he come to know about a Redeemer and his need for redemption by that Redeemer?

For that matter, how did Job comprehend that this world as we know it would come to an end? Thus, we see his reference to the "...latter day upon the earth."

*And though after my skin worms destroy this body, Yet in my flesh shall I see God.*

I can't recall how many times I have heard preachers misquote this verse. Job did not write about "...skin worms destroying this body." He wrote about worms who went "...after my skin." The details are closer to reality than we would like, but the specific details leave every reader without excuse. No one can deny that Job was writing about his literal body and what would happen to it at his death, but he also wrote about what he expected to happen to that same body at the resurrection. Thus, when Job writes, "**Yet in my flesh** shall I see God," no honest reader can possibly deny that Job expected his literal, physical body to be raised, that he would see God in and with that literal physical body.

*Whom I shall see for myself, And mine eyes shall behold, and not another.*

Job makes two major points in this brief comment. He viewed the resurrection as something incredibly personal, "Whom I shall see for myself." It was not some general event, but an event that he would personally experience. Further, Job expected that his eyes, not mythical spiritual eyes, or fabricated eyes from another body, supposedly given to him after death, but "...mine eyes" would see Him. It would not be other eyes that see Him, but Job's eyes.

*Though my reins be consumed within me.*

As he lived in this world, Job would die. His emotions and conscious thoughts in the here and now would cease. But Job would not cease, consciously or factually. Job would live on and, after the resurrection he would see his Redeemer with his own eyes.

Who is this Redeemer of whom Job writes? In other sections of Job, we see Him in similar supportive, intercessory roles.

*Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, That might lay his hand upon us both. (Job 9:33, KJV 1900)*

Job longs for the daysman, the intercessor, the umpire, who is uniquely capable of touching Job's case and God's, so that He might serve as an effective and worthy mediator. In the ninth chapter, Job doesn't see Him, but in the nineteenth chapter, he does see Him and rejoice in Him.

*Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, And my record is on high. (Job 16:19, KJV 1900)*

Not only does Job come to see his "daysman," his umpire, but now he understands that this holy One is also his personal witness, One who intervenes in heaven and bears record on Job's behalf before God.

Who is this "Redeemer" of whom Job writes? The word "Redeemer" in the Old Testament is a rich, instructive word.

The primary meaning of this root is to do the part of a kinsman and thus to redeem his kin from difficulty or danger.<sup>1</sup>

The root is used in four basic situations covering the things a good and true man would do for his kinsman. First, it is used in the Pentateuchal legislation to refer to the repurchase of a field which was sold in time of need (Lev 25:25 ff.), or

the freeing of an Israelite slave who sold himself in time of poverty (Lev 25:48ff.). Such purchase and restitution was the duty of the next of kin. Secondly, but associated with this usage was the "redemption" of property or non-sacrificial animals dedicated to the Lord, or the redemption of the firstborn of unclean animals (Lev 27:11ff.). The idea was that a man could give an equivalent to the Lord in exchange, but the redemption price was to be a bit extra to avoid dishonest exchanges. In these cases, the redeemer was not a relative, but the owner of the property. Thirdly, the root is used to refer to the next of kin who is the "avenger of blood" (RSV "revenger") for a murdered man.

Finally, there is the very common usage prominent in the Psalms and prophets that God is Israel's Redeemer who will stand up for his people and vindicate them. There may be a hint of the Father's near kinship or ownership in the use of this word. A redemption price is not usually cited, though the idea of judgment on Israel's oppressors as a ransom is included in Isa 43:1-3. God, as it were, redeems his sons from a bondage worse than slavery.

We need not stretch the point or the word to understand that Job's grasp of his Redeemer's identity is not at all different from other Old Testament references to the ultimate Redeemer, or to the New Testament reference to Jesus as our Redeemer.

As the Mosaic redeemer was to be a near kinsman who stepped up to help his near relative who was indebted beyond his ability to pay, so Job and other Biblical saints understand that God has provided them a "Near kinsman Redeemer" who loves them above all others, and who, in loving, familial care, shall step up to pay their debt and thereby deliver them from the consequences of non-payment that they faced apart from His intervention. Further, as in the Mosaic code, this Redeemer is a near kinsman. He is a close relative! In fact, He is your older Brother in grace.

Is it too much a stretch to think that Job or other Old Testament saints entertained such clear thoughts of their Redeemer? I say no. Peter agrees. (1 Peter 1:9-12) Not only did they possess the Spirit of God dwelling in them, but "...the Spirit of Christ" was in them and signifying, teaching, witnessing to them of Him and of His coming work. A basic provision of God's "New covenant" stipulates, "...I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts...And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jeremiah 31:33-34) In Scripture, we should never overlook; God is the primary teacher of His people. (Isaiah 54:3; John 6:45)

<sup>1</sup> R. Laird Harris, "300 לאָ," ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 144.

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Bellflower, California

Worship service each Sunday  
Joseph R. Holder

10:30 A. M.  
Pastor