Job 14:1-17; 19:13-29; Job and His Redeemer I. Job’s Living Faith II. The Nature of this Redemption

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, we often underestimate the depth of faith that the OT saints had. We tend to view the OT believers as shallow or ignorant- without much knowledge concerning what was to come. But today we are going to find a real, living and solid faith evident in the heart of Job. Remember that Job has been wrongly and repeatedly accused by his friends. They have labeled him a great transgressor- a hypocrite- someone who was stubbornly refusing to repent from his sins. As we saw last week, Job is crying out for arbiter in 9:33. Job is asking for someone to come to his aid- to bridge the gap between God and man. Job needs a comforter- a mediator who will take up his cause and vindicate him in the presence of his foes. And his friends have really become his foes- those who were the closest to him have become his harshest critics. So who will come to Job’s aid? Where will Job look for lasting comfort in life and in death? Basically, we are going to answer this question- did the OT saints look forward in the hope of a future resurrection? Where their hopes limited to the things of this world or did they long for a lasting inheritance in the land of eternal rest? So we consider this theme: Job’s faith in the living Redeemer comforts Him when no one else can.

**I. Job’s Living Faith**

In our first point, we will see that Job’s faith is anything but a cold, academic acknowledgement. In fact, it is the pressure of the trial that wrings from Job these sweet words of confidence. This declaration of the truth is highlighted by what he has endured. In our first reading from Job 14, we find Job longing for something better to come. Remember that Job’s emotions are not static- he has his ups and down. He was a real person who struggled with depression. Job is teaching us how to respond to suffering- how to have peace when faced with the trials of this life. So he ponders real issues- posting real questions of the heart. The question is posed in 14:10- after you die, where do you go? After death, where is man? Does man cease to exist after death? Is our last breath the end- do we finish our life with a sigh and then it is all over? He asks again in 14:14- if a man dies, shall he live again? Who here has struggled in the dark night with a question like this- what is to come? Can someone who has died be roused again? Well, most people today will say no. Death is the end, and after that there is no nothing. This life is all there is. But Job has learned from creation- he points to the trees in 14:7- there is hope for a tree! After it is cut down, it can produce a shoot once again. So is man worse off than a tree? We start to catch a glimpse of hope in 14:12- we will not rise again until the heavens are no more. That does not mean forever- but rather until this current age is done. It is decreed- that a man dies once and after that face judgement as Heb. 9 puts it. It is our faith that equips us with the answer to these questions. Continuing in 14:13- conceal me until your wrath is past- appoint a set time and remember me! So Job is asking to be hid from the wrath of God until a specific time- and at that time to be remember. Once more in 14:17- seal up my transgression in a bag and cover over my iniquity. As Job rightly points out in 14:4- who can bring something clean out of an unclean? No one can! In other words, fallen man cannot produce the righteousness that is required! Sinners cannot atone for other sinners! Fallen man cannot appease the wrath of God- those who are born in iniquity cannot secure the peace and pardon that we all need! Job’s friends cannot bring the comfort that Job ultimately needs! And yet- Job needs an arbiter- a mediator and redeemer! So Job is looking forward to something- some kind of atonement where iniquity is pardoned and wrath passes over. He hopes for a day when his renewal would come as v. 14 ends. So one of the points that Job is making in chapter 14 is that life is short- our life is like a flower that blooms and soon dies- withering away. The sting of death remains- and that sting is our sin. We all die- but is it possible for pardon, restoration and revival after death? If a tree can live again- after being cut down- can man live again after his body has died and is laid in the dust? So how about you- do you have an answer to this question? Is death really the end of everything? How do you know that a better future is coming? Is there any hope for something after death? Once your body is laid in the tomb- is that the end of this temple of flesh?

Well, to answer this question posed by Job- let’s listen to what Job says in chapter 19. Here in chapter 19 we find a clear affirmation of faith which is quite stirring! So Job says in 19:25- I know that my Redeemer lives! You can hear the very personal nature of this faith. I know- Job has a living faith! My Redeemer- Job is personally in the hands of one who can and will save! The word for Redeemer here is “Go-el” which is the same word used for kinsman redeemer found in Ruth as well. A redeemer is one who takes up the cause of the afflicted- who defends the rights of the poor. Job’s redeemer will not let Job’s cause be lost- but rather this redeemer will ensure that justice is done! In identifying the Redeemer as a Go-al; Job is pointing to the nature of this person. A kin of Job- one of Job’s own humanity- will be the one to Redeemer. The nature of this coming one must be one that satisfies God’s justice and secures His mercy- one with God and one with man! But no other helper can be found. Look again at the context of this chapter- 19:13-14. My friends and family have failed me- those close to me have forgotten me. None have come to my help- all have turned their backs on me. But I know that my Redeemer lives! Although none came to my aid- I know that my Redeemer lives! All may despise me- children have mocked me- all have turned against me- my own friends abhor me! And yet- I know that my Redeemer lives! Let’s not forget the significance of this- Job likely lived around the time of Abraham. He is a very early, OT saint. And yet- Job knew His Redeemer! Not only that this Redeemer would one day come- but that this Redeemer already lives! The eternal Son of God was already present, Redeeming His people! And Job knew this Redeemer! In other words, Job was saved by faith in Jesus Christ alone! Job was a man of living faith that trusted in the Redeemer who would comfort His people! And part of this comfort included the pardon of sins and the resurrection of the dead as we now see.

**II. The Nature of this Redemption**

So having confessed his faith in his living Redeemer, Job continues by outlining the nature of this Redeemers work. Or could say- what is the nature of this coming redemption. Returning to Job 19:25- I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will stand upon the earth. When will Job be vindicated? When will the Redeemer come? At the last- at the end- the telos of history. As we saw in chapter 14:12- after heaven and earth pass away- at some set time in the future. So the redemption that Job hoped for was a future event. Added to that, Job knew that this redemption would come after his own, personal death. After my skin has been thus destroyed, he said in v. 26. So the restoration would not come until after he had died. This means that the vindication and blessings that Job did enjoy at the end of his life was not the end of the matter. Although God graciously restored to him twice as much as had been taken away- the fact remains that a future restoration and redemption would take place. And this restoration would be a physical restoration. In this flesh- Job said. So the very flesh was now covered in boils and would one day die and be buried- the skin that was destroyed and turned to dust after death- would be the same that would be brought to see the Redeemer. In this Job makes it clear that he was looking forward to a physical, personal resurrection!

Where would this resurrection take place? Upon this earth v. 25 concludes. Where would this Redeemer be seen? On this very earth- in this very place! Job is looking forward not only to a physical resurrection- but to the physical return of the Redeemer! With these eyes I will see the Redeemer on this earth! In my flesh I will see God! So Job is looking forward to God being visible in the flesh standing upon this earth in a glorified state after death! A physical resurrection by which to see a physical Redemer on a physical earth! The Redeemer that lives will at last stand here upon this earth! A physical Redeemer who will also be God who can be seen- God with us and God for us! As you can see, the nature and person of Jesus Christ is the only one who can satisfy and fulfill that which Job was longing for! Ultimate and final redemption- the vindication of the righteous who live by faith- will then be seen. So when we put all the pieces together we find that Job knew- he believed in the Son of God. This Son of God was Job’s living Redeemer who would one day raise Job in the flesh. This Redeemer would also be present in the flesh- so that Job and his Redeemer would see each other on the earth on the last day! Death would be defeated- Job would be vindicated after death- and all the world would know and see that this poor man trusted in God- and He was saved!

Now to apply this truth to us, it is clear that Job’s friends would not be the comforters that Job needed. They become miserable comforters in the end. Rather, Job’s only lasting comfort in life and in death- for Job’s body and soul- would be found on in his belonging to a living Redeemer! This too is our only source of lasting comfort! When facing financial trials- when falsely accused- when dealing with the death of a loved one- when coming face to face with your own physical suffering and impending death- when you face trials of various kinds- it is here alone that you can find hope! I know that my Redeemer lives! That He ever lives to intercede for me! That He will raise my body and the body of my loved ones one day! That He will restore what was lost and vindicate my cause! Even as Paul says in I Thes. 4- do not grieve as those without hope! On the last day, the dead in Christ will rise and then those who are left will be caught up into the air. We will be with the Lord always! Therefore, encourage one another with these words! The truth is- your possessions cannot give you lasting comfort. They can be stolen, lost, burned up in fire, or eaten with rust or decay. Your family can get sick or move away. Your friends can turn on you and speak lies about you behind your back. Your own body can be plagued with various diseases. So I ask again- what is your only comfort- in life and in death? That you belong body and soul to a faithful savior! Your only lasting comfort is found in knowing that your Redeemer lives. That He will return to this earth to raise the dead, judge the earth and vindicate His people! As our theme states: Job’s faith in the living Redeemer comforts Him when no one else can. So may your faith in our living Redeemer be your source of comfort when all else fails.