

April 3, 2016  
Sermon for the Second Sunday of Easter  
St Peter Lutheran Church  
Bowie, TX  
Larry Knobloch, Pastor  
Job 19:23-27

*J.J.- Jesu Juva—Help me, Jesus*

Job 19:23–27 (ESV)

<sup>23</sup> “Oh that my words were written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book! <sup>24</sup> Oh that with an iron pen and lead they were engraved in the rock forever! <sup>25</sup> For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. <sup>26</sup> And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, <sup>27</sup> whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Amen.

“Dad?” A little a little voice that felt like a dream, except the dream repeated itself. “Dad?” I opened my eyes to see my son looking at me, then I looked at the clock glowing in the darkness and it read “3:44.”

“What’s wrong Kelsey?” “I don’t feel good.” “Well thanks for the update son. Give me an update in a few hours and I’ll see what I can do. I don’t remember exactly how old he was, but we had moved recently and he wasn’t overly familiar with the house. And when you are little wandering around the house in the middle of the night, a new hallway looks five miles long with multiple side rooms, where giants are waiting to jump out and eat little kids for late-night snacks.

“Dad?” “Yeah, Kelsey?” “Please come with me?” “Thanks for the invitation son, but you know I have church in the morning and I need some sleep. You go ahead. I’ll be with you in spirit.” Shuffle. Shuffle. Stop. Turn around. Shuffle back. “Dad?” “Yes, Kelsey?” “I need someone with their skin on!”

Kelsey knew that dark hallways are not conquered by mere words, even though I was just in the other room he needed a strong hand guiding him and a tender heart loving him. Kelsey needed someone with their skin on!

Job knows about long, dark hallways. Come with me, to a God-forsaken, ash heap. There sits Job with a shaved head and sores all over his body. His ten children have all died when a storm destroyed their home.

Raiding bands from neighboring lands and lightning from the sky have taken all his animals and killed all his servants. It has all reduced Job from his former position as the greatest man in the east to being a pitiful, ghastly sight, scraping himself with a piece of broken pottery. It seemed like a number of giants had jumped out of those dark hallways and chewed Job up for a late-night snack.

On this day of days, Second Sunday of Easter, we continue to celebrate Jesus' resurrection as we wrap up our sermon series on the book of Job. And our text is from Job 19:25, *"I know that my Redeemer lives."*

What does it mean?

It means we aren't insulated from life's tragedies, but neither are we intimidated by them. It means we have someone to walk with us through life's long, dark, winding hallways. And He's got skin on! This verse is the Mt. Everest of Job! Let's unpack Job 19:25. As we climb the mountain, we begin at the first base camp. **"I know."** Job is living his worst nightmare. Job 3:25: *"For the thing that I fear comes upon me, and what I dread befalls me."*

And yet Job doesn't say, "I kind of think . . ." or, "I sure would like it if . . ." or, "Wouldn't it be nice if . . ." or, "Knock on wood . . . maybe . . ." He doesn't say anything of the sort!

Although Job has been severely assaulted, he is not defeated. Although he has lost much that was valuable to him, he still has what was most precious. Although he is down, he is not out!

Job dares to confess, **"I know."**

There are a lot of things we don't know.

We don't know why we had to bury the love of our life.

We don't know why our child turned against us.

We don't know why we lost that job.

We don't know why our parents emotionally abandoned us.

And many times we don't know what God is doing. But instead of living in whimpering sadness, and letting the giants consume us, with Job, we dare to say, **"I know!"**

"I know" . . . what? **"I know that my Redeemer."**

We are getting higher! Job doesn't say, "His Redeemer. Her Redeemer. Their Redeemer. Or your Redeemer."

No. It's personal and particular. It's intimate and individual.

It's, "my Redeemer."

In the Old Testament a redeemer was a close relative—someone with skin on!—who would rescue, ransom, recover, or redeem anyone who had been, or was in danger of being, removed from the family by poverty, war, death, or a poor economy.

So, for instance, if someone had fallen into debt and had sold himself into slavery in order to pay back debts, the redeemer bought him back and set him free.

If a piece of property had to be sold, the redeemer made sure that the title to the property remained in the family.

And if a member of the family was hurt or killed, the redeemer pursued the legal options and collected the damages assessed against the offender.

Whatever goes bad your redeemer will make good. Let me repeat that.

**Whatever goes bad your redeemer will make good.**

What is broken will be mended, what is sick will be healed, whatever is lost will be restored and what is dead will be made alive!

Really? That's what Job 19:26 says, *"And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God,"*

**"I know my Redeemer."** His name is Jesus. Jesus is not a mystical, abstract, impersonal vague idea. Jesus has a strong hand guiding us and a tender heart loving us when we are faced with a long, dark hallway.

As our Redeemer, Jesus comes not simply to see that justice is done, but that mercy is given. Jesus bears whatever needs to be borne and carries whatever needs to be carried in order to see that our wrongs are righted.

If a sentence needs to be served, He will serve it. If a fine needs to be paid, He will pay it. He does whatever it takes to set us free, even if it means giving his life for ours. Jesus forgives my guilt and Jesus destroys my grave.

And He has already done it all... with skin on.

Skin that felt the Roman whip at a place called Gabbatha.

Skin that felt the blazing Palestinian sun while carried His cross-piece on the Via Dolorosa; the way of sorrows.

Skin that felt the thorns on his head and the hammering of the nails into His hands and feet. Skin and muscles and nerves that, for six hours, bled on a cross all alone in a long, dark, God-forsaken hallway called Golgotha.

And you can bet that there were giants who jumped out and chewed Jesus up like a late-night snack.

Romans. Scribes. Pharisees. And there was satan too who stalked our Savior, took aim, shot straight, and killed.

However, three days later this cry rocked the world,  
**“I know that my Redeemer . . . lives!”**

Now we stand on the top of the world. We can see everything! The angels announced, “He is alive!”

John outran Peter to the tomb.

Mary cried out “Rabboni!”

The Emmaus disciples recognized the risen Christ in the breaking of the bread. And when he saw the scars on the living Redeemer with skin on, Thomas climactically said, “My Lord and my God!”

Death is dead. The grave is defeated. The free gift of eternal life is absolutely all yours forever and ever and ever!

People saw Jesus, literally. They didn’t see a phantom or experience a sentiment.

Graveside eulogies often include such phrases as, “She’ll live on in my heart.”

Christ’s followers didn’t say this. That’s because they saw Him in the Flesh, in His skin! And that’s because Jesus was physically and factually resurrected from the dead.

There’s a word for all of this. Grace.

Grace is the amazing gift God gives us that says even when it's all wrong around us, at the very core of our lives, where we really are the most wrong, it is all right because God forgives all our sins.

Grace is the gift of power—the power to be freed to be the person God wants us to be. Grace is the promise that on the days when we can barely cope with the circumstances of life that we can carry within us the faith that tomorrow will be better.

Grace is the love poured out for us so that all our debts are paid, we are released from slavery, and our brokenness is repaired.

What's it all mean? It means that whatever your dark hallway looks like and whatever your giants are saying, you do not walk alone.

And why is that? Christ is Risen!  
“He lives, all glory to His name! He lives, my Jesus, still the same. Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives: ‘I know that my Redeemer lives!’”

Hallelujah! Amen!

The peace of God, which passes all understanding keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus!

Amen.