

The Believer's Expectation - Mr. Murdo A Murray

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[0 : 00] We can turn now to Job chapter 19 and reading again at verse 23.

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.

To Christian people particularly, being slaughtered in so many parts of this world. These are all frightening things, the suffering that is going on in the world.

And people often ask, why does God allow such suffering? And it is difficult to answer.

[2 : 12] But this chapter here, and this book of Job, gives us an insight into it.

And it is interesting that at the beginning of the book, we see there in chapter 1 where God and Satan are having a discourse.

And Job wouldn't have been aware of this discourse. And I think it's something that we need to sort of take on board.

The fact that there is this unseen warfare effectively going on in the heavens. And we are only conscious of one side of it in the same way as Job was.

And Job, God himself had indicated that Job was righteous, a righteous person. And therefore, God, God, God, and God. And therefore, he wasn't suffering because of any particular sin of his own.

[3 : 35] And the way the book unfolds, it gives us, first of all, at the beginning, it gives us this discourse that is going on in heaven and between God and Satan.

And so, that's sort of the epilogue that explains to us what is happening. And then we have the dialogue of the friends, these three friends of Job who came supposedly to comfort him.

And they were basically taking the view, Job, to be in such a situation, you must be in the wrong.

You have sinned and you are not acknowledging it. And to some extent, this was the view, the prevalent view of the time that if a person had broken the law or sinned, then they would be punished.

And therefore, they couldn't disaggregate the suffering from the sin. But Job is putting forward his innocence and they're not accepting it.

[4 : 58] So, in that whole section of dialogue, it is one constant friend after friend basically saying to Job, acknowledge your sin.

Even his wife was saying the same because he had suffered so much. And then, after that dialogue, there comes the final epilogue where God gives his judgment on the situation and basically says that the friends were wrong and that Job was in the right.

So, we have that as a sort of context, which helps to some extent, but also it's difficult because we know that Job himself wasn't aware of a lot of what was going on in the background.

And I think it's something that we need to take account of, too, in our lives. That irrespective of what we are going through at any particular time, there is a bigger picture.

And we only need to think of Joseph. If we are in a particular situation where we're feeling downcast and we're feeling that the world is against us and everything is against us, then we should go to Job and we should go to Joseph.

[6 : 21] Because Joseph, he was put into horrendous situations. And whilst he would protest his innocence, he wasn't getting out of it.

But there was the bigger picture. God had a bigger picture. A picture that encompassed his people and encompassed their salvation. And it was indeed but a microcosm of eternal salvation purposed by God.

So, we're seeing in these parts of Scripture, as it were, just a small snapshot of what God has in his master plan.

But as we then come into this particular chapter and to these verses, Oh, that my words were written.

Job has this thing in his mind that he would like what he is going to say to be written down in a book or put with an iron pen and lead into rock.

[7 : 33] Now, these were actually the two types of ways of things being communicated in these days. They could be written by pen and passed along, but it wouldn't survive.

But they could also be engraved in rock. And you see that in some instances where you've got these prisms and pieces of rock that have been inscribed and lead put in.

And he wanted this particular thing that we have before us tonight inscribed in the rock. Now, he didn't get what he was asking for in one sense.

But there is another sense in which the mere fact that we have it written in Holy Scripture is confirmation that God granted his request. Because here it is, for I know that my Redeemer lives.

And it's wonderful for us to recognize that God has granted Job, that this would be a perpetual thing, that it is indeed engraven in the rock that is his word.

[8 : 48] So, I just want to have a look at a few things from this section. First of all, to look at the Redeemer. And then to look at the fact that that Redeemer will come to judge the world.

And then to look at Job himself, although his body will decay, he is going to be resurrected.

And then to look at the final aspect of it, that he is looking forward to the day when he will be eternally with his Redeemer.

So, just a quick look at these things. So, first of all then, for I know that my Redeemer lives. Now, a Redeemer, if we think of it in terms of a kinsman, that's probably the nearest thing that we can get to it.

And the kinsman had duties. And one of the duties was to try and make sure that this person, who was his near kinsman, was redeemed.

[10 : 11] In other words, there was a price had to be paid so that that person could be released. Whether it was released from slavery or released from work bondage or whatever, it was the near kinsman's responsibility to redeem that person out of that situation.

But there was another dimension to it as well, which was that he had the power to deal with the offender.

In other words, if his near kinsman was being kept in a situation that was not right. I mean, there would be situations sometimes when a person had sold themselves into bond service.

When that was their own, of their own volition. But there would be other times when someone would take the person illegally and have them kept and enslaved.

And in that situation, or even killed, in that situation, the near kinsman had the right to deal with the person who was at fault.

[11 : 30] So it was a power. So there was two sides to it. There was a price side of it and there was a power side of it. Now the price side of it, in relation to Job, it was Satan that was dealing with Job.

But Satan had been given authority from God to deal with Job. And it wasn't a price in a sense because there's no price to pay the devil.

But what we see with Christ is that He gives, He pays the price and releases us from the bondage of sin and of Satan.

And on the other side of it, so that's, as it were, the price dimension. Although there's no price to Satan, there is nonetheless release by Christ from Satan.

And we are all bound. And it's something that's so difficult. I mean, if you say it to so many people today, you're bound by Satan, the prince of the power of this world.

[12 : 55] You are in bondage to Satan. They'll turn around to you and say, get away. What do you think you're trying to tell me? But that's what the reality is. That's the reality of what the Word of God tells us.

That by nature, we are all sinners and that we are under the power of darkness. And most of us know that because we have known it from experience.

And we know that we have been set free by Christ from the power of darkness. Now, there was a time when we didn't know that. Our view would be, no, I'm free.

I'm doing what I want to do. But the reality was we were bound by sin and by Satan. So Christ has given Himself so that the price is paid, so that we can be set free from the power of sin and darkness and Satan.

But He is also able to deal in power because at the end of the day, Christ is the eternal Son.

[14 : 07] He is the Son of the living God. He is God who became man, but He is still God. He is the God-man and He is all-powerful.

And He deals and can deal and will deal with Satan and has dealt with Satan because that's what happened at the cross. Satan thought he had the victory over the Son of God and yet the Son of God rose victorious over death and the grave and is now all-powerful because He has been vindicated by God the Father.

His sacrifice to satisfy divine justice has been accepted and He is now at the right hand of the throne of God and He will come and He will judge the world.

So, that's the reality of what we're seeing here as the Redeemer. but there's more to it than just the Redeemer itself.

It also says, for I know that my Redeemer, not just any Redeemer, not just any kinsman Redeemer, my Redeemer.

[15 : 27] And it's a wonderful thing to see this the way it is written, for I know that my Redeemer lives. And it's interesting that Job, of course, we don't really know when Job was alive, was around, but it does appear that it was early on in the history of the world, perhaps around the time of the Patriarchs.

And some people even think that it is a possibility that he could have been related to Abraham through Abraham's brother Nahor, because there's reference to Uz, and Uz referred to in the first chapter of this book.

And there is references to the fact that the God of Nahor, which suggests that Nahor himself was a worshipper of God, and perhaps his descendants could have been worshippers of God until they went to apostasy.

But whatever, Job was a Gentile, who lived in the East, he was very, very rich and wealthy. Just the list of things that he had are almost beyond measure for the time.

But irrespective of when he was there, he had this awareness which, of course, predated Jesus coming into the world.

[17 : 01] But we see this also with Abraham. Abraham saw Christ's day and rejoiced. And it's the same thing here.

Job was able to see Christ's day. And although he wasn't rejoicing at this particular time because of his situation, nonetheless, he had a consciousness of something that was actually beyond, beyond his own experience.

Because Jesus hadn't come, but in some wonderful way, God had made it known to Job what Christ would do in the future.

so he is my redeemer. And it's just a wonderful thought that he can also be my redeemer.

Not just Job's, but my redeemer. For each one of us, we can have Jesus as our redeemer.

[18 : 19] God. Then it says, for I know. And that's an interesting thought as well. I know that my redeemer lives.

Now, if you want to, if you come across someone, you don't really know them initially.

In fact, there's a sense in which you might not know them even after a lifetime. But you get to know them when you're in their company.

You get to know them sometimes warts and all, and we all have these warts. But it's as we are in someone's company, with them, working with them, living with them, that we start to see them and to know them more and more.

And there's a sense in which this knowledge that Job had, for I know that my redeemer lives. He knew that the Christ was his redeemer.

[19 : 40] The Christ hadn't come, but he knew that the Christ was his redeemer. God had a vision of the future, but he also had an understanding of what he did have in terms of the light of the knowledge of God in the books of the Old Testament, because he makes reference to various parts of Psalms and quotations and things like that.

So there was a knowledge of that. And I think that leads us to the thought, how do we know? How do we know the redeemer?

Well, he has given to us his word, and it's through his word that we understand more and more, that we come to know more and more of the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

Because he has given to us, to Job, they had, in his day, they had parts of the Old Testament. In our day, we have the whole of the book, God's book, both testaments.

And as we go through these, and I think it's interesting that it's as we read through Old Testament and new together, it's in that sort of blend that we come to see more and more and to understand and to know more about the Lord Jesus Christ, our redeemer.

[21 : 26] I know for myself that it has taken a long time. I mean, I've been reading the word of God for years and years, and I know that there is so much that I don't know, but I also know that with experiences in life and the word of God to guide me, that it has helped me to come to know more about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Just experience in life and the word of God, Old Testament and you combine together, working in me a better understanding of the truth of what this means for me to live as Christ, for I know that my redeemer lives.

So that's the redeemer aspect of it. But he also recognizes that he will come to judge the world. At the last, he will stand upon the earth.

So this is Job, way back in almost prehistory, we could say, looking to the fact that the Christ will come.

But he's seeing, and sometimes in the Old Testament when we're reading it, as we're projecting forward, we sometimes we can get confused with what it means in a sense because it's looking at a return.

[23 : 12] So a sense, there's one sense in which Christ did come, and he came when he came to this world and went to the cross.

So Job is looking forward to that. But he's also looking beyond that to the time when he will come again. And we ought also to be looking beyond that because we're now past the first stage that Job would have been looking on towards.

We're beyond that, and we are now looking towards the return of Christ, irrespective of when that will be. And no man knows the day or the hour. There is no knowledge of when it will be.

But there are signs indicated in the Word of God. And we're seeing things today that are making us feel that Christ's return can't be that far away.

The apostasy that we are seeing, the way we have turned, and the way that we are seeing wars and rumors of wars and all other sorts of things. But the reality is no man knows the day or the hour except the Father.

[24 : 25] But we should be preparing, and we need to recognize that suffering can be in many different ways.

There is physical suffering. People that are tormented and persecuted, they are suffering. But you can also suffer internally, mentally, internally.

And I often feel that the more we have a consciousness of the reality of eternity, and we're thinking about people that we're praying for, it is a horrendous thought to think that someone would go from time into eternity without Christ.

And that can be a burden, a huge burden, that only the Spirit of God can help us with, because it's an overwhelming thing.

It's like you're going down a river, and the person that you're watching is in a canoe. and you can see the waterfall, but they can't.

[25 : 49] And when you think of it in these sorts of terms, it sort of hits you like lead, a lump of lead, hitting you. The fact that people are going to a lost eternity.

And you know, it just strikes you that when we're seeing this country now, looking at, introducing what they're calling assisted dying, which is in effect assisted suicide.

It is a horrendous thing, because they're encouraged to almost feel a joy in this dying. It's the release from pain.

pain. Now, when you put it in the context of Job and the context of others in the Bible, relief from pain is only one aspect.

When you have a waterfall of eternity ahead of you, it's a never, an unending situation.

[26 : 58] And Jesus makes reference to it in a number of places where he talks about the eternity without Christ. And there is just a reality about it that is absolutely horrendous.

So, we ought to be thinking about that and praying for people. And I know that I don't do it enough. I'm conscious that even as I was coming across the moor tonight, I was thinking about times when people here were praying and they would be behind barns and in all sorts of places praying that God would come in power.

And he did. He did. But then the indictment is on us. What are we doing? Because there's an eternity without Christ out there for all who will die without him.

But here we know that he is going to come and he's going to come to judge the world. And Job knew it. But he also recognizes that he will be resurrected.

Job doesn't look as if he had really much sense of getting over his situation in this life. It looks very much as if he was looking towards the eternal realms.

[28 : 33] That his situation was beyond the pale as it were. And his thoughts were on the other side. But there's a sense too in which that is something that is almost God engendered.

Because just thinking about getting over something in this life is not always for the best.

If we think of say, let's say someone who's incarcerated in North Korea, in prison, in labor camps, in horrendous situations, it is always good for them.

They don't know if they'll ever get out. But it is wonderful for them to be able to think of what is beyond. So that they can maintain, as it were, their integrity in Christ when they're being beaten and thumped and all sorts of tortures applied so that they would recant and do away with Christ.

It's wonderful to be able to look beyond death, beyond what this world can offer, and to have this foundational thing in your very being.

[30 : 05] as you're confronting difficult situations. And that encourages us all when we know that this can be the case, that we can have this in us.

Christ in us, the hope of glory. Christ working in us something that is beyond what can be affected by the world, can be affected by pain or suffering.

it is just something that is there in the kernel, in the heart of our being. And if we have Christ, we have everything we need.

And so often, that's actually what reflects, because people in these positions are reflecting the glory of the very Christ. They're reflecting Jesus, even out against the persecutors.

and who knows how many people in persecuting situations have been impacted by the reality of the reflection of Jesus in the hearts of his people.

[31 : 13] So he is seeing there that he will be raised again, and he's also seeing that there's a happiness in the forever after.

for what does he say? After my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another.

So he is looking towards the reality of being in the presence of the living, eternal, Son of God, and to see him as he is, and to be known, and to know him even as he will be known.

It's just a wonderful thought that he's got there at the close of this section, that he's looking to the reality of eternity with Christ.

And this is something that we all ought to think about, God's love. Because whatever this world offers us, it will cease.

[32 : 28] Whatever this world offers us, it will be gone one day. But if we have Christ, this is but a beginning. And it will go on in an unending sense of glory to glory, as we gaze into the presence and the face of the anointed Christ.

And if any of you are here tonight, and haven't yet come to be able to say, for I know that my Redeemer lives, then the way to look at it is, where can I know him?

We can know him in the pages of Holy Scripture. Yes, we know that it is the Spirit that quickens, the flesh profit of nothing.

Yes, we know that it is the Spirit alone that can make us alive, bring us alive, but we also know that if we are in his word, we are actually in his presence, and he can impact upon us through his gracious mercy.

just as a personal anecdote, 45 years or so ago, I came to know the Lord, or the Lord came into my life more accurately.

[34 : 01] And I remember being in Borg and going out to the car at one morning just after I was converted, thinking, well, I'll go and start the car because it was the middle of winter, and the car wouldn't start.

And the first thought that came to me was, you haven't had the worship, but we didn't have worship in the house in my uncle's home. But I went in and I had the worship, and I prayed to the Lord, would he start the car?

And then I thought, no, no, no, that's just too far. Go and get the tractor battery. Then I thought, no, don't get the tractor battery. You've prayed to the Lord, leave it with him.

And I went out to the car, and I put the key in it, and I must admit I was in trepidation. I turned the key, and the car roared. And I can still remember coming out of Bor onto the main road, lifting my hands up and saying, it was in Gaelic admittedly, Ha Esa.

These very words, I know that my redeemer lives.

[35 : 25] Amen. We'll close singing in Psalm 63. Again in the Scottish Psalter, Psalm 63.

Verses 1-6. Lord, thee my God, I'll early seek, my soul doth thirst for thee.

My flesh longs in a dry parched land, wherein no waters be, that I thy power may behold, and brightness of thy face, as I have seen thee heretofore within thy holy place, since better is thy love than life, my lips thee praise shall give, I in thy name will lift my hands, and bless thee while I live.

even as with marrow and with fat my soul shall filled be, then shall my mouth with joyful lips sing praises unto thee.

When I do thee upon my bed, remember with delight, and when on thee I meditate in watches of the night. These verses, Lord thee my God, I rarely seek.

[36 : 44] Lord thee my God, I rarely seek, my soul doth thirst for thee.

My flesh longs in a dry parcel wherein no water waters be, that I thy power may behold and brightness of thy face, as I have seen thee her to fall within thy holy place.

Since better is thy love than life, my lips thee praise shall give.

I in thy name will lift my hands! I blessed thee while I live.

Even as with morrow and with fire, my soul shall fill let be, then shall my mouth with joyful lift sing praises unto thee.

[38 : 44] When I do thee upon my bed remember with delight, and when on thee I meditate in watches of the night.

We close with a word of prayer. Eternal and ever blessed Lord, we thank you for your word, and we pray that you would make it precious and more precious to us day by day.

We pray your blessing upon us now as we part, and ask that you would watch over us in this week which has begun, guiding us and keeping us, and going before us, and pardoning our sins,!

For Christ's sake, Amen.