

“My Redeemer Lives!” – Job 19:23-27

Somebody tell me what you are looking forward to. Are you going on vacation? Getting a raise? Your kids are moving out? Tell me something that excites you to think about. I look forward to moving into my house here in Chico pretty soon. That’s something to look forward to. Everybody needs something to look forward to. The problem with so many things that we look forward to, is that they come and then they are gone and afterward there is a let-down because it’s over and rarely does the reality of it match the hype we have in our minds and so we now have to come up with something else to look forward to. In fact, how many of you have ever taken that dream vacation you wanted and did everything you wanted to do and saw everything you wanted to see and had a great time and then came home and went to work the next day and as you sat at your office desk, what did you do? You planned your next vacation, didn’t you? Why? Because, while there is fulfillment in work and there is happiness with family and relaxation with friends, God has placed inside of us a yearning for something more and something different. Do you ever feel like you just don’t really belong where you are? Do you feel out of place; like something is just not quite right? Even during a wonderful vacation or time spent with family and friends, you feel like there has to be more to it than this, right? That’s okay, because *you should feel like that because there is something better and that is what we should really be looking forward to.*

As followers of Jesus, we are just passing through this world; a very temporary stop for us but also a test; a temporary test for how we will live eternally. And as visitors to this world, we should yearn for something more, something better. In **Hebrews chapter 11**, the faith chapter, Abraham is mentioned as looking forward to something. Now, Abraham was loaded. He had everything a man could want, at least in Old Testament Middle East times. It says in **Hebrews 11:9-10**, *“By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. 10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.”*

My dear family, make no mistake. Satan has attacked us as a church and has attacked you individually and he will continue to attack until we are all dead. That’s his job. That’s what he is supposed to do. Just expect it. And we may never understand why God allows him to torment us but we don’t have to understand why. God has told us that His ways are higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:9) and it is not our job to try to figure out why things happen to us. It is just our job to try to know Him better through scripture and prayer and the Holy Spirit living in us. But we do have something better to look forward to just like Job did when he was attacked. We are continuing our look at the life of Job and how he responded to satanic attack. We have seen that he did some things right and he did some things wrong but in **chapter 19**, we see what should be some encouragement to us just like it encouraged Job. Let’s look at **Job 19:23-27**. This has been much more fun to study than some other parts of Job where Job talks about wishing he was dead and wishing his buddies would just be quiet and leave him alone. Here he takes just a quick break from that to affirm the one thing he has to look forward to. Job is stricken with horrible sores from his head to his toes. He has lost everything he owns, including his ten children. He is sitting on a garbage dump listening to three arrogant and misguided friends tell him how bad he is and he assumes he is about to die and that much is fine with him. And in the midst of all that trouble, Job says some profound words. Listen to what Job may be thinking could be his last words in **Job 19:23-27**. *“Oh, that my words were recorded, that they were written on a scroll, 24 that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead, or engraved in rock forever! 25 I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth. 26 And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; 27 I myself will see him with my own eyes-I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!”*

What an amazing passage! It is amazing for a couple of reasons. First, it’s amazing that Job knows this. **Verse 25** says, *“I know...”* This is a definite, experiential knowledge. Well, how did he know because there was no Bible written at this time, certainly no New Testament that talks about Jesus and His coming again? That could only have been revealed to him by God with Whom Job has a relationship. It’s also amazing because he uses the word “Redeemer.” That word is

“Go-el” in the original Hebrew and it has several connotations. We know what it means to redeem a coupon at the store. We take a worthless piece of paper and trade it for something that has worth. That’s part of it but for those in Job’s day, there was more to it. The best illustration of a redeemer is found in the little book of Ruth. All you ladies know that book, right? *“It’s so romantic! That big hunk, Boaz, comes and redeems the widow Ruth and they live happily ever after.”* Right? But in that example of a redeemer, we see a great picture of grace and mercy and generosity because Boaz didn’t have to redeem Ruth. Ruth made out way better than Boaz in that deal. If you have never read that story, you should. You will really like it, especially if you are a woman because, if it were a movie, it would definitely be a chick flick. But everybody can appreciate the fact that we, like Ruth and like Job, have a Redeemer. **Ephesians 1:7** says, *“In him (Jesus) we have redemption through his blood.”* What makes Jesus our Redeemer is the price He paid for us, the price of His blood, His body, His death for us. We deserve death because of our sin. He paid that price because He had no sin. That is redemption.

*Little Tommy carried his new boat to the edge of the river. He had spent weeks building this little thing and now he carefully placed it in the water and slowly let out the string. How smoothly the boat sailed! Tom sat in the warm sunshine, admiring the little boat that he had built. Suddenly a strong current caught the boat. Tom tried to pull it back to shore, but the string broke. The little boat raced downstream. Tom ran along the sandy shore as fast as he could. But his little boat soon slipped out of sight. All afternoon he searched for the boat. Finally, when it was too dark to look any longer, Tom sadly went home. A few days later, on the way home from school, Tom spotted a boat just like his in a store window. When he got closer, he could see -- sure enough -- it was his! Tom hurried to the store manager: *“Sir, that’s my boat in your window! I made it!”* *“Sorry, son, but someone else brought it in this morning. If you want it, you’ll have to buy it for one dollar.”* Tom ran home and counted all his money. Exactly one dollar! When he reached the store, he rushed to the counter. *“Here’s the money for my boat.”* As he left the store, Tom hugged his boat and said, ***“Now you’re twice mine. First, I made you and now I bought you.”*** (Good News Publishers, Westchester, IL.)

That’s a great picture of redemption. God created us and through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, He bought us out of slavery to sin. Now, that’s great news, isn’t it? The problem that a lot of people have, though, is that they think that God bought us through Jesus just to let us go free to live however we want and because we walked the aisle and prayed a prayer that God is now our genie in a bottle that will protect us from anything bad that happens. That’s wrong on several levels. Yes, we sing all the time about how God has set us free and we quote the scripture that where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom (2 Cor. 3:17), and we should because that is true but don’t misunderstand that. Listen to what Paul says in **Galatians 4**. *“But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.”* We are redeemed by Jesus when we accept Him to be our Lord, our Master, our King. We are no longer under the Old Testament Law that says we have to make sacrifices of animals for our sins. That sacrifice was made by Jesus. But now we are slaves, servants of God, redeemed, bought with a price, to do what God wants done in our lives as revealed through scripture and prayer. And if that is not how you see yourself then I am concerned about your salvation. I’ll just be honest. **Romans 6:18** says, *“You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.”* This is how it is. You are going to be a slave to sin and the Law or you are going to be a slave to God. Take your pick. One or the other. All through scripture, the men and women of God are referred to as servants of God. Moses and Abraham were called God’s servants. Paul, Peter, James Jude and even Job whom we are studying were all called God’s servants.

If you are redeemed, it means you have been created by God and now He owns you, just like the little boy with his boat. But did that little boy misuse his boat? Did he throw rocks at it or kick it into the lake? No. He took great care of that boat and God will not only take care of you in this life but do you know what we have to really look forward to? Our Redeemer, our “Goel” will someday vindicate us just like He vindicated Job. He will someday say that we are right and righteous. In a few weeks we will look at the very end of the book of Job and we will see that God puts everybody in their place. Yes, Job takes a shellacking from God but at the very end, God tells Job’s friends, *“I’m angry with y’all because you have not spoken the truth about me like Job has!”* (Yes, God is from Texas and says “y’all”.) All of us at some time have wanted to be vindicated or proven right or at least proven not guilty, right?. On October 3, 1995, OJ Simpson

was found not guilty of the murders of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman. And the whole world went, “What??? You gotta be kidding me!” For all the evidence stacked against him, “The Juice” went free. And while nobody but OJ really knows what happened that night, one of these days you are going to stand before the Judge. No, not Judge Ito like OJ had but The Judge. We are all going to stand before God and He will vindicate us. Now, I don’t know exactly how this is going to play out in Heaven but it could go something like this. When I die and close my eyes for the last time on this earth, I will open my eyes in Heaven and God will welcome me in by His crazy amazing grace and say, “Well done, my good and faithful servant!” But Satan will be watching and he might say, “Whoa, whoa, whoa! Now, I know this guy doesn’t deserve to be in Heaven. I watched him sin a bazillion times over! He did this and he did that and you know about that time and this time and what all he did back in the day. He can’t go in to holy Heaven!” But about that time, in walks Jesus! The Hero of Heaven, my Sacrifice, my Redeemer, my Goel, my Justifier, my Attorney. All Heaven busts loose. The angels go crazy! Satan takes a step back and falls over. Of course, I’m crying. But Jesus says in a loud voice, “You’re right. He doesn’t deserve this but I chose to redeem this man and he believed it. And My sacrifice was enough to satisfy the justice of my Father so He is justified and redeemed and I declare him righteous and welcome here!” Whoo! What a day that will be!

You know, while we are here on earth, it would be nice to be vindicated for all the times we were right and somebody else was wrong. That’s what Job kept crying about for chapter after chapter. His buddies kept on saying that he had sinned and so he deserved what was happening to him but Job knew it was something else. And he was blessed to be able to see in his lifetime how God would vindicate him in front of his friends and family. But we may not ever see it in this life and that’s okay. We have something much better to look forward to. Being a “goel” in the Old Testament meant several things. The goel was a blood relative and if somebody in his family was murdered, it was the responsibility of the goel to get blood for blood. It wasn’t revenge. It was justice. This was before they had courts like we do so somebody had to serve up justice and it was the goel’s job. But the goel also had the responsibility to make sure the murdered man’s wife and family was taken care of. That’s what we see Boaz do in the book of Ruth. And one other thing the goel, the redeemer, would do is to clear his relative’s name of any wrong accusations. The family name was vitally important. A man’s honor was everything. It was hard enough for a widow in those days. She shouldn’t have to live with shame for something her husband didn’t do.

So, do you see what we have to look forward to? In **Revelation 12** it says that Satan is accusing us night and day. And some of things we probably have done but some of them we haven’t. But it says in that same passage that God hurled Satan down—that ancient serpent called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him and conquered by the blood of the Lamb. Then, one of these days...one of these days. I believe **1 Thessalonians** says best what Job described. It says, “*Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. 14 For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. 15 According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.*” Now, that is something to look forward to! We will see Jesus in the flesh. We will see with our own eyes our Redeemer. Thank you, Lord! I can’t wait. I’m ready right now. Are you? No, seriously. Are you ready right now to meet God? None of us are guaranteed another breath, much less a day or year.

Right now you need to make sure that you are right with God and you can’t do that by cleaning yourself up and being good enough. Jesus died on the cross to make you righteous or right with God and the only thing you can do in the whole process is believe it. Now, that belief will show itself in your changed life. Can you point to one specific time in your life when you asked God for forgiveness, turned away from that sin in repentance and confessed to the world that Jesus is God? Have you accepted His sacrifice on the cross for your sins? If not, do it right now as the music plays.