



[Pastor Steven Billings](#)

Sermon for Easter Sunrise

April 17, 2022

The Confidence of Job

Job 19:23–27

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

What is your name? Are you sure? How do you know? Is there any question as to whether or not that’s your name? Of course not! It is, after all, your *name!* It was the name given to you by your parents. It’s what you’ve been called your whole life. It’s written on your birth certificate. You know, beyond a shadow of doubt, that it’s your name.

This is the absolute certainty with which Job speaks at the beginning of our text. “I know that my Redeemer lives!” He was confident; there was no doubt in his mind; he was convinced. God had made His existence abundantly clear to Job throughout his entire life. He was as sure of the existence of God as he was of his own name. No one was going to persuade him otherwise.

But, was this all that Job was certain of – the mere existence of God? Absolutely not! And what he says next tells us a great deal about what Job believed concerning God, and gives us great comfort and hope, assuring *us* of what we, too, can believe about our Redeemer this blessed Easter morning.

We’ve already said that Job believed his Redeemer was alive. His God was a living God, an active, personal God, not some impersonal force of nature, not some kind of idol made of wood or stone, but a living, breathing God, a thinking, feeling God, a God full of life, a God who’s aware of and involved with what He’s created.

It’s not insignificant that Job calls this God his Redeemer. As you know, Job had been put through a great deal of testing. God had allowed Satan to subject Job to all sorts of physical and emotional distress. God did this to prove, both to the devil *and to Job*, His ability to sustain Job’s faith in spite of all the trials and tribulations.

But Job’s friends didn’t understand this. They believed that God was somehow punishing Job for sins he’d committed. But Job knew that wasn’t true. He’d been faithful to God. And he knew that, despite all that had happened, despite the accusations of his so-called friends, despite how he himself may have felt about the things happening to him, God was going to vindicate him; God was going to rescue him and restore his life and his good reputation, and that in the end, “He will take His stand” and defend Job against all his accusers.



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What Job says next has been a source of controversy throughout the history of the church. First of all, let's take a moment to notice something else Job is convinced of: his own mortality. He says: "Even after my skin is consumed, yet in my flesh I shall see God." Here we see the sure and lasting result of sin. As Paul writes in Romans five: ". . . sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned". Throughout the book, Job is defending his actions in this particular context; he believes he's done nothing to precipitate the trials he's suffering. But he knows that he is a sinful human being, and that death will one day overtake him. And he knows that without his Redeemer the permanency of death is final. His flesh will be consumed; decay will eventually reduce his body to nothing and return him to the dust from which he came. Yes, job knows that without his Redeemer he would be hopelessly, helplessly lost.

And what about us? Are we as convinced? Do you understand that without Christ you're completely and utterly lost? Do you recognize that the sin in your life – the sin with which you were born, the sin that you've added to by your own actions – condemns you to death, eternal death? Oh, how often we forget what it is we've been saved from! Job describes a complete loss of life. Jesus adds to that the pain and suffering of hell when He says in Matthew thirteen: "This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." May God convince us as He did Job of our need for a Redeemer, our need for a Savior!

And Job was convinced that his Redeemer, his Savior, was up to the task. He believed his Redeemer would rescue him from death. And here's where we find the controversy. The majority of the early church fathers, as well as our own Dr. Luther, saw in this verse a declaration of the resurrection. While some, even early on, such as St. John Chrysostom, and many more over the last hundred years or so, have tried to down-play it, it seems obvious to us that Job is here referring to the resurrection. "After my skin is consumed" – this is beyond just dying! He means: "Even after my body has decayed." "Yet from my flesh" – "from within this body" "I shall see God." That is amazing! What Job means to say is this: "Long after I'm dead, even after my body has decayed, this body shall be resurrected – this very body – my *own* body shall be restored, for from it, within it, my spirit residing in it once again, I will see God!" How can we not see the resurrection here? Yes, it flies in the face of reason. Yes, there is little reference to the resurrection prior to this. But still, the connection is undeniable. And this just goes to prove the faithfulness of God in communicating this great hope to those who believe and trust in Him. Faith often flies in the face of reason. And Job is speaking from faith here, not reason! God has given him confidence that there's something beyond this life, and that one day, in the end, Job will see his Redeemer in his resurrected, restored body.

And to demonstrate his confidence further, Job adds: "whom I shall see for myself, and my own eyes shall see, and not a stranger's." Again – amazing! Such confidence! Such sure conviction! And here's more proof of Job's understanding of the resurrection!



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“I will see Him *for myself!* No one will report it to me. I’ll not read about it in a book. I’ll not hear about it second-hand. I will see for myself!” “My own eyes shall see, and not a stranger’s.” “My eyes; these eyes!” “When I am resurrected, I will not be living in someone else’s body. It will be *my body – my eyes – my own eyes!*”

Oh, such confident hope! And now he shows what this hope has done for him and to him. He concludes this passage by saying: “My heart is exhausted within me.” Now, the Jews had what seems to us to be a peculiar way of expressing this. Literally, we could translate this passage: “my bowels” or even “my kidneys are exhausted within me.” They referred to these organs as the seat of emotions, not unlike when we say we have a “gut” feeling about something. But, as we usually refer to the heart as the seat of emotions, most modern translations say: “My heart.” Actually, the NIV has it pretty well: “How my heart *yearns* within me.” What this tells us, then, is that Job longs for the day when he will finally see his Redeemer. Life seems to have been cruel to him; he has suffered much. And knowing that in the end he will be saved from all of this and rescued and restored, he longs for that day, he yearns for that day, to the point of exhaustion.

And don’t we, too, long for that day? As good as life gets – and sometimes it can be very good – still, life in this world is tainted with suffering and discontent. How we long, even in the best of times, to see our Redeemer, to finally be with our Savior! We, too, long for that day – we yearn for that day – the day He shall come and take His stand upon the earth. For in that day, we, too, shall be vindicated, rescued, restored. On that day, we too, will see Him with our own eyes, from our restored and resurrected bodies.

And we can be just as certain about this as Job! You can be just as sure of this as you are of your own name! For, as we know our name because it was given to us by our parents, and we’ve been called by it all our lives, and can give evidence of it by our birth certificate, so we can be sure of our own resurrection from the dead. For we’ve been given a new name. God, our Redeemer, has called us by the Gospel, marked us as His own in the waters of Holy Baptism, and has written our name in the Lamb’s Book of Life. How do we know? Our Father has told us this. He’s proved it to us throughout our lives. Our birth certificate – His Holy Word – bears the evidence! The event we celebrate today convinces us of His great love for us – the resurrection of His Son, who suffered and died in our stead, redeeming us from sin, death, and hell. Indeed, the Father has gone so far as to demonstrate this redemption by raising His Son from the grave, proving that we who bear His name, who trust and cling to His suffering, death, and resurrection, will be raised as He was raised. As Scripture says: “We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection” (Rom. 6:4-5).

There is no question, beloved, no shadow of doubt. God has said so in His Word and He’s proved it by raising Jesus from the dead. He has so promised, and has always proved that His promises are true. God give each of you the confidence of Job and continue to strengthen your faith that in the end, you too, together with all the saints of



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heaven, will, in your own resurrected and restored body, see with your own eyes your Redeemer, your Savior, your Risen Lord Jesus Christ. In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen