

"I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH"

(Job 19:25)

Those few words spoken by Job thousands of years ago have brought untold blessings to countless souls down through the centuries. They are relevant in many situations, but our simple purpose, just now, is to show how they also constitute the very essence of true Christian testimony, and, at the same time, point the way to personal experience of God's saving mercy. We shall do this by considering the FOUR KEY WORDS in the statement -each of them very significant and helpful when it comes to knowing Christ as personal Lord and Savior.

The first of these is that word "Redeemer": - "I know that my Redeemer liveth". To "redeem", we know, is "to restore to original ownership by payment of a stipulated price", and our Bibles have much to say about this. We can even say that, in matters of the soul, the idea of "Redemption" is peculiar to the Christian message. Paul said, "...we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Eph. 1: 7; Col.1: 14). And there is the parallel word of Peter, "...ye were not redeemed with ...silver and gold, ...But with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet. 1: 18, 19).

The Old Testament word for "Redeemer" is particularly interesting and informative. The Hebrew word is "GAAL", and that same word is also frequently translated "kinsman", that is, "relative". The reason for this is that, under the Levitical law, the right to "redeem" belonged to the "kinsman" and the two words became interchangeable. It meant that the one who was the "close relative" was authorized to buy back into the family heritage any property that had to be forfeited for any reason. The whole Book of Ruth, in our Old Testaments, is a classical example of this.

This surely explains why Christ had to become a MAN, and enter into this world as man. He was becoming our "relation", so that He could lawfully "redeem" us. We are also told that He was "made ... sin for us" (2 Cor.5: 21), and this was a still closer identification with us (See also Matt.3: 15). In these two respects, then, He was fully related to us, and eminently qualified to be our "Redeemer". Here is one of the marvels of the Gospel; God has provided us with this perfect "Relative-Redeemer" so that we may be fully restored to Himself (1 Pet.3: 18)! All praise to His Name!

The next key -word is "LIVETH"; -"I know that my Redeemer liveth". Here, of course, we are at the very heart of all true Christian "testimony"; we have a LIVING Savior! Christianity itself is firmly based on this GREAT HISTORICAL EVENT; Christ ROSE FROM THE DEAD on the third day; -and "He is ALIVE FOR EVERMORE"(John 20:1-18; Rev.1: 18)

It is interesting to note that, when Paul was outlining "the gospel which he preached", most of what he had to say was about the resurrection of our Lord. Whilst just a few words sufficed to cover the glorious fact of Christ's atoning death (1Cor.15: 3), the main emphasis was that, after that death, CHRIST ROSE AGAIN, and was "seen" by a whole succession of reliable and fully accredited witnesses (See 1 Cor.15: 1-8), so that the resurrection, too, was a fully -proven historical event!

A Christian, then, has good reason to testify, "I know that my Redeemer LIVETH". He knows it from simple history, and, better still, he knows it in his own inward experience. He can say with Paul, "Christ liveth IN ME".

And that, indeed, is the "witness" of Christ's living Church. The resurrection of Christ is something positively embodied into that Church. Our Lord said, "...Because I live, ye shall live also"(John14: 19). And there is the "Testimony". We must ask ourselves, "Are we giving out that testimony today"?

Next comes that all-important word "MY": "my Redeemer liveth". Here, the matter becomes a very, very, personal one; my own conscious ownership. The question that faces us all is, "Have we made that Redeemer ours; have I made Him mine"? We all have to face it; have we actually taken that essential "step of faith"? The Bible plainly says, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36).

It is our conviction that, if we really see our need, that "step of faith" will not be difficult. But we are so proud, and a willingness to repent comes but very slowly! We would suggest, however, that just one honest look at the TEN COMMANDMENTS would greatly help us here, for we are all guilty on all points; -in one way or another (See Matt.5:21 ,22 etc.)! Very obviously, we need that Redeemer!

The greatest aid to faith, however, is just a sight of the Redeemer Himself. He "draws" us irresistibly by His incomparable mercy and compassion, and we can only "run after" Him (Song of Solomon 1: 4). And, once we have come, we shall be singing like that happy Bride in the Song of Solomon, "I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is MINE"(2:16; 6:3). There will be no doubt, then, that our own Redeemer lives.

Finally; in our text, is that wonderful word "I KNOW". Job knew that his Redeemer was alive; - and he knew it thousands of years before Christ actually appeared! The Bible makes it very clear that God not only wants us to HAVE salvation, but He wants us to KNOW we have it! We read, "These things have I written unto you...THAT YE MAY KNOW that ye have eternal life" (1John 5:13). Blessed assurance, indeed!

We would say that this assurance comes to the believer in two distinct ways. First, it comes from God's unfailing WORD, -the Bible. That Book says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED" (Acts 16:31). My response is, "I have believed, and I have done so from my heart, and so I AM SAVED"! On the basis of what is written in the Book, I KNOW! Then comes the second way. Once we have taken our stand on God's Word, we find we have a further assurance; -one that is deep within ourselves. God's Holy Spirit enters into us and forthwith "beareth witness with our spirit, that we ARE the children of God" (Rom.8: 16). Thus we are able to say with full assurance, -" I know". And we shall be part of that Great Living Church which bears the same testimony.

We ask you now, in closing, "Can you now say with Job of old, "I know that my Redeemer liveth"? Settle it without delay, and add your voice, and your life to the same glad testimony, -"I know that my Redeemer liveth".