

a sermon from JOB 19:25-27:

ON THE BURIAL OF A 16 YEAR OLD CHRISTIAN TEENAGER

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3/03/2005 AD

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I. A PRAYER

Let us pray: “Lord GOD, You are attentive to the voice of our pleading. Let us find in Your Son comfort in our sadness, certainty in our doubt, and courage to live through this hour. [O Almighty and loving Father,] Make our faith strong through CHRIST... O Lord, Whose ways are beyond understanding, listen to the prayers of Your faithful people: that those weighed down by grief at the loss of this child may we find reassurance in Your infinite goodness. We ask this through CHRIST our Lord. Amen.”¹

II. A PROPOSITION

Friends, it is appointed for men to die once, and then comes The Day of Judgment for all men, when we shall all stand before The Throne of The Almighty. Those who have rejected the Grace of GOD in CHRIST in this life shall perish in their sins, but those who have received that Grace of The blessed Cross shall be accounted as righteous and dwell forever with GOD in Heaven!

III. A SCRIPTURE – JOB 19:25-27 – I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH!

²⁵ For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

²⁶ And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see GOD:

²⁷ Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.²

IV. INTRODUCTION

The writer of HEBREWS declares this Eternal Truth to all men in HEBREWS 9:27, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”³ But need we who are covered by the loving salvation of JESUS CHRIST fear such a day? Need we who know GOD Himself through The Son worry that we might not find ourselves - or our saved loved ones - at home in Heaven after leaving this world? Need the saints of GOD who live in the sanctuary of The Church on earth fear what eternity may hold for us? Friends, GOD Himself gives us the answer, which is a resounding NO - we who are saved in CHRIST need not fear!

¹ 1, Catholic Family Prayer Book, Prayers For Mourners, p 315.

² 2, KJV, JOB 19:25-27.

³ 2, KJV, HEBREWS 9:27.

V. HOPE OF THE JUST IN THE RESURRECTION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Saint John of The Cross said of our earthly death, “At the evening of life, we shall be judged on our love” before GOD’s throne Above.⁴ But he did not fear, for he knew his soul was safe in the loving arms of our blessed Saviour JESUS CHRIST. That Old Testament saint Job also knew this, for though in the midst of great sorrow, loss, suffering and pain, he confessed to GOD the certain knowledge of his resurrection and salvation by virtue of The Redeemer of the saints. That Redeemer is none other but CHRIST. The young Christian to whom we today bid temporary goodbye also knew this.

With Saint John of The Cross, and with this departed young Christian, we also join Job in his confession of faith in the resurrection of the saints of GOD unto eternal life in Heaven by the loving arm of our Redeemer JESUS CHRIST. So Job confesses in JOB 19:25-27, “For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see GOD: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me!”⁵

Job, who lived “before the giving of The Law [of Moses in]... the patriarchal age,” confesses his unshakable faith in The CHRIST, The Saviour, The Messiah Who rescues him in life and saves his soul from death!⁶ Job believes in “the glory of The Redeemer and his own interest in Him..., [that The] Redeemer liveth, that He is in being and is ...[his very] life...” Job believes in The Redeemer’s “Incarnation.” Job believes that The Redeemer “shall be lifted up from the earth... [after] His crucifixion... [at] His resurrection...” Job believes that, at the end of time, The Redeemer “shall appear over the earth... [coming] in the clouds...” Job believes that his Redeemer shall stand over all His enemies, and “triumph over them!”⁷ And Job believes, as The Redeemer lives and triumphs forever, so shall he! In like manner also this young Christian man.

⁴ 3, Catechism of The Catholic Church, # 1022, Saint John of The Cross, p 289.

⁵ 2, KJV, JOB 19:25-27.

⁶ 4, Scofield King James Version Bible, The Book of JOB, Introduction, p 569.

⁷ 5, ,Matthew Henry, JOB 19:23-29, III., 1., v. 25-27.

“I know that My Redeemer lives!
What joy the blessed assurance gives!
He lives, He lives, Who once was dead;
He lives, my everliving Head!”⁸

VI. HOPE OF THE JUST OF THE RESURRECTION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

My friends, even more certain are we who know The Lord JESUS CHRIST as our Saviour! Our salvation being made sure at The Cross of CHRIST, Scripture proclaims boldly that we shall sit in Paradise with our Good Shepherd forever after our earthly lives have passed away! Such a one was and is this young Christian!

Saint John records these sure words of faith in JESUS The Messiah, which brings the forgiveness of sins and the joy of eternal life to the faithful as in JOHN 3:15-18: “That whosoever believeth in... [JESUS CHRIST] should not perish, but have eternal life. For GOD so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. For GOD sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on... [our Lord JESUS CHRIST] is not condemned...!”⁹

Here in JOHN 3 we have our Lord expounding to Nicodemus, a master and teacher of Israel in JOHN 3:5, that “...Except a man be born of water and of The Spirit, he cannot enter into The Kingdom of GOD.”¹⁰ But to understand this, we with Nicodemus must see with spiritual eyes as well as with the eyes of our minds, that we may hear with our hearts and take hold of salvation with our souls in faith. For “The issue of such faith is eternal life. Apart from this faith, one must perish.”¹¹

This is “...the tragedy of being cut off eternally from GOD,” so needless and so contrary to The Almighty’s desired will that all men might be saved by His Grace!¹² For

⁸ 6, Breaking Bread 2007, hymn # 613, stanza 1, “I Know That My Redeemer Lives,” by Samuel Medley, “based on JOB 19:25.”

⁹ 2, KJV, JOHN 3:15-18.

¹⁰ 2, KJV, JOHN 3:5.

¹¹ 7, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, JOHN 3:14-15, paragraph 1, p 1078.

¹² 7, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, JOHN 3:14-15, paragraph 1, p 1078.

though “love for sin prompts men to reject The Light of CHRIST, ...[yet] those who welcome The Light [of CHRIST and]... put their trust in Him” in faith shall “...not perish, but have everlasting life!”¹³ Job knew this, as did Saint John. They are now with The Lord in Paradise Above. So also this dearly departed young Christian knew this. He also is with The Lord in Heaven Above. So shall it be, that we in like faith continue steadfast in our faith in The Redeemer, that we may also join them in Eternal Joy forever!

“He lives triumphant from the grave;
He lives eternally to save;
He lives in majesty above;
He lives to guide His Church in love!”¹⁴

VII. THE LORD PRESERVES THE SOULS OF HIS SAINTS NOW AND FOREVER

My friends, The Creator did not simply make us and the cosmos and then walk away. No, The LORD GOD is present and personal in His boundless love for all men. And to His saints in particular, The Almighty is forever close! He walks with us in the midst of both our joys and our trials, our victories and our afflictions. We see The Divine Presence also in the cry of The PSALMS, which give voice to “the emotions, desires and sufferings of the people of GOD” in all ages, as well as our triumphs and rejoicing. So also of CHRIST Himself.¹⁵

We may hear this departed loved one’s voice in The Words of The PSALMS, most particularly intermingled with that of the psalmist in PSALM 97:10-12. There we may hear the souls of the redeemed rejoicing in The LORD for the knowledge that He preserves His saints in both this life and the next: “Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: He preserveth the souls of his saints; He delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoice in The LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness!”¹⁶

¹³ 7, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, JOHN 3:14-15, paragraph 2, p 1078.

¹⁴ 6, Breaking Bread 2007, hymn # 613, stanza 2, “I Know That My Redeemer Lives,” by Samuel Medley, “based on JOB 19:25.”

¹⁵ 4, Scofield King James Version Bible, The Book of PSALMS, Introduction, paragraph 1, p 599.

O you that are the redeemed of The Lord, “look to thy heart, see that thou hate evil, and let it come from sincere looking to GOD!”¹⁷ For when we do, The Almighty promises to preserve us and deliver us out of affliction and trouble at the hands of evil. For GOD in His Divine protection of we His saints both preserves us and delivers us, for “...it is The Lord Who keeps the souls of His saints, lest they fall into the hands of the wicked; and if they should fall, he will deliver them!”¹⁸

The Light of GOD sews righteousness in us as His people, “in His power, promise grace and love,” which “yield a plentiful harvest of comfort to the godly!”¹⁹ Therefore, even in the midst of our suffering, as CHRIST Himself suffered for us, we may rejoice and give thanks to GOD for His loving Providence over us. For though this young Christian man’s soul has departed this life, yet he is by GOD’s preservation and deliverance, now casting down his crowns of glory joyfully before the throne of The Almighty! And though our eyes see through tears at his loss to us today, yet tomorrow we shall also join him before that same Divine throne of Grace Above.

“He lives to silence all my fears;
He lives to wipe away my tears;
He lives to calm my troubled heart;
He lives all blessings to impart!”²⁰

VIII. WE HIS SAINTS SHALL DWELL WITH THE LORD IN HEAVEN FOREVER

Friends, the separation death brings to us in this earthly life from our loved ones who are secure in CHRIST is but a momentary passing of time compared to eternity. And in that eternity we who are of The Body of CHRIST on earth shall be rejoined to our loved ones who are safe in the arms of Our Saviour in Heaven! Such a one was and is this young Christian! Take heart then in what St. Paul writes in I THESSALONIANS

¹⁶ 2, KJV, PSALMS 97:10-12.

¹⁷ 8, Treasury of David, Volume 2, PSALM 97, Verse 10, 4th entry, p 205. Spurgeon quotes Richard Sibbes.

¹⁸ 8, Treasury of David, Volume 2, PSALM 97, Verse 10, last entry, p 205. Spurgeon quotes Musculus.

¹⁹ 8, Treasury of David, Volume 2, PSALM 97, Verse 11, 5th entry, p 206. Spurgeon quotes John Sheffield.

²⁰ 6, Breaking Bread 2007, hymn # 613, stanza 3, “I Know That My Redeemer Lives,” by Samuel Medley, “based on JOB 19:25.”

5:9-11, where he proclaims the same firm faith in salvation by GOD's loving Grace to us His saints!

And so That Apostle declares to us These Words of comfort: "For GOD hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord JESUS CHRIST. Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do!"²¹ We who are His saints are, by His Divine decree, given are sure foundation of our hope of eternal life in which we shall at length join this beloved departed young saint and all those redeemed by GOD who have gone before us Above.

We then may join saint Paul in rejoicing in the sureness of our salvation in CHRIST, for it is not of our doing, but His. "Were we to obtain salvation by our own merit or power, we could have but little or no hope of it; but seeing we are to obtain it by virtue of GOD's appointment, which we are sure cannot be shaken..., on this we build unshaken hope!"²² And this is our joy and security, that our salvation rests upon "CHRIST's merit and grace, and that salvation is by our Lord JESUS CHRIST, Who died for us" to secure our souls as His for eternity!²³

"He lives, all glory to his Name!
He lives, my Saviour, still the same;
What joy this blest assurance gives:
I know that my Redeemer lives!"²⁴

IX. AN EXHORTATION TO RECEIVE THE LORD'S COMFORT

Dear Brothers and Sisters in The Lord, what comfort then have we discerned of our hope of eternal life for our dearly departed loved one, for our loved ones who remain behind in this world and for ourselves? As we have read in HEBREWS 9:27, it is appointed for men to die once, and then comes The Day of Judgment for all men. And on

²¹ 2, KJV, I THESSALONIANS 5:9-11.

²² 5, Matthew Henry, I THESSALONIANS 5:6-10, II., (1), v. 9.

²³ 5, Matthew Henry, I THESSALONIANS 5:6-10, II., (2), v. 9.

²⁴ 6, Breaking Bread 2007, hymn # 613, stanza 4, "I Know That My Redeemer Lives," by Samuel Medley, "based on JOB 19:25."

that day we shall all stand before The Throne of The Almighty.²⁵ For as we have observed today, those who have rejected the Grace of GOD in CHRIST in this life shall perish in their sins, but those who have received that Grace of The blessed Cross shall be accounted as righteous and dwell forever with GOD in Heaven!

Yes, it will be an awesome and fearful thing to stand before The Judgement Seat of the Creator King of the universe on our day of judgement! But when we do, as is your departed loved one now, we who are redeemed by The Messiah JESUS CHRIST from the curse of sin and death into new life and fellowship with GOD shall be accounted as righteous before His throne in Heaven! Your loved one is there now, and in the twinkling of an eye, as the years of our earthly lives pass by, we shall soon join him there!

But with that Old Testament saint Job, we confess with him as in JOB 19:25-27, “For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see GOD: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me!”²⁶

X. IN CONCLUSION

The Word of GOD assures us, and the faithful historic Church proclaims, that your loved one – though no longer here in this world in your loving arms – is yet safe and secure forever in the loving arms of The Almighty in Heaven! May These Words of Holy Scripture caress your wounded souls with the sure love of GOD, the sure salvation of His saints in Glory and the sure resurrection of the redeemed in CHRIST into Heaven! Let us then pray:

²⁵ 2, KJV, HEBREWS 9:27. I paraphrase the text here.

²⁶ 2, KJV, JOB 19:25-27.

O “Father [in Heaven],
GOD of all consolation,
in Your unending love and mercy for us
You turn the darkness of death
into the dawn of new life.

Show compassion to Your people in their sorrow.
Be our refuge and our strength [in our present pain]
to lift us from the darkness of this [passing] grief
to the peace and light of Your [eternal] Presence.

Your Son, our Lord JESUS CHRIST,
by dying for us, conquered death
and by rising again, restored life
[to the souls of His redeemed].

May we then go forward eagerly to meet Him,
and after our life on earth
be reunited with our brothers and sisters
where every tear will be wiped away!

We ask this through CHRIST our Lord.”²⁷
In The Name of GOD The Father,
and The Son and The Holy Ghost.
AMEN.

²⁷ 1, Catholic Family Prayer Book, Prayer For The Bereaved, p 314.

XI. REFERENCES

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