

Job 19:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

Analysis

Job's triumphant declaration "For I know that my redeemer liveth" stands as one of the Old Testament's clearest Messianic prophecies and most powerful expressions of resurrection hope. The Hebrew phrase ani yadati go'ali chai (אני ידעת כי גָּלִיל חַי) uses the verb yada (יְדָעַת) meaning to know intimately and experientially, not merely intellectual assent. Job possesses certain knowledge despite his suffering. The term go'el (גָּלִיל), "redeemer," refers to the kinsman-redeemer who buys back family property, avenges wrongs, and restores family honor (Leviticus 25:25; Ruth 3:9). This redeemer "liveth" (chai, חַי)—is alive, active, and able to act on Job's behalf.

The phrase "and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth" uses acharon (אַחֲרֹן), meaning last, latter, or final time. The verb qum (קָם), "stand," suggests arising to act, particularly in legal contexts—the redeemer will stand as witness and advocate. "Upon the earth" (al-afar, עַל-עָפָר) literally means "upon the dust," the same word used for mankind's origin (Genesis 2:7) and death (Genesis 3:19). Job envisions his redeemer standing victoriously over death and the grave itself.

Verses 26-27 continue this hope: "And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Job anticipates bodily resurrection, not merely spiritual immortality. Christian interpretation has consistently identified the redeemer as Christ, who lives eternally, will stand on earth at His second coming, and grants believers resurrection bodies. This passage profoundly influenced Handel's Messiah and countless hymns. Job's faith reaches beyond present suffering to grasp eternal vindication through a living redeemer.

Historical Context

Job 19 records Job's response after Bildad's second speech, which harshly insisted that the wicked suffer and implied Job's guilt. Job feels abandoned by family, friends, servants, and even God (19:13-22). Yet in the depths of despair, he makes this extraordinary declaration of faith. The context makes his confidence in a living redeemer all the more remarkable—when earthly supports collapse, Job grasps eternal hope.

The concept of a go'el (kinsman-redeemer) was central to Israelite society. The redeemer had legal obligations to restore family property, marry a deceased brother's widow to preserve his name, and avenge wrongs against the family. Boaz's redemption of Ruth illustrates this institution (Ruth 3-4). Job's situation required a redeemer who could vindicate him before God and restore his honor. Job recognizes that no human redeemer suffices—he needs a divine-human mediator who can bridge the gap between God and man.

This passage's influence on Christian theology and hymnody cannot be overstated. The early church fathers saw clear prophecy of Christ's resurrection and second coming. The church's earliest creeds affirm bodily resurrection based partly on this text. Job's faith in seeing God "in my flesh" contradicts pagan Greek concepts of immortality that despised the body. The Hebrew hope was always embodied resurrection, fulfilled ultimately in Christ's resurrection and promised to all believers (1 Corinthians 15:20-23, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Job could not fully understand the mechanics of resurrection, but he grasped by faith what God would ultimately accomplish through Christ.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does Job's confidence in a living redeemer during his darkest hour speak to your own seasons of suffering or doubt?
2. What does it mean that Christ is our kinsman-redeemer, and how does understanding this role deepen your appreciation of the incarnation?
3. How does Job's hope of seeing God "in my flesh" affirm the value and eternal significance of our bodies?
4. In what ways does this passage challenge both ancient pagan ideas of disembodied immortality and modern skepticism about bodily resurrection?
5. How should the certainty of Christ's return and our resurrection shape daily priorities and responses to present suffering?

Interlinear Text

עַל־יְמִינֵי־אֵלִי
H589 For I know H1350 that my redeemer
H3045 H2416 H314 H5921 H6083

:דַּבֵּר

and that he shall stand

H6965

Additional Cross-References

Ephe sians 1:7 (Redemption): In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Isaiah 54:5 (Redemption): For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

Psalms 78:35 (Redemption): And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer.

Psalms 19:14 (Redemption): Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

Proverbs 23:11 (Redemption): For their redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.

Isaiah 43:14 (Redemption): Thus saith the LORD, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry is in the ships.

Jeremiah 50:34 (Redemption): Their Redeemer is strong; the LORD of hosts is his name: he shall throughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

Job 16:19 (Parallel theme): Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high.

Jude 1:14 (Parallel theme): And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

Genesis 3:15 (Parallel theme): And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

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