



**"BLACK & WHITE  
REDEEMED TOGETHER"**

**JOB 19:1-27**

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**BLACK AND WHITE REDEEMED TOGETHER****JOB 19:1-27****INTRODUCTION**

**WHEN YOU READ THE BOOK OF JOB AND READ IT CAREFULLY, WHEN YOU REALLY LET IT SINK IN TO YOU WHAT HAPPENED TO THIS SUFFERING MAN AND WHAT HE HAD TO SAY ABOUT IT, YOU CANNOT HELP CONCLUDING THAT WHAT IS MOST FRIGHTENING ABOUT JOB IS HIS SPIRITUAL CONDITION.**

**AS BAD AS THE LOSS OF HEALTH MIGHT BE, AS HORRIBLE AS THE FATE THAT BEFELL HIS FAMILY WAS, STILL IT IS JOB'S STATE OF MIND THAT SCARES US THE MOST.**

**AS GRUESOME AS HIS PHYSICAL CONDITION IS, WHEN YOU PICTURE IN YOUR MIND'S EYE THIS POOR MAN SCRATCHING AT HIS SORES WITH A PIECE OF BROKEN POTTERY.**

**AS EXTREME AS HIS LOSSES SEEM TO US, STILL THERE IS NOTHING THAT CAN COMPARE WITH THE AGONY THAT JOB FEELS COMPELLED TO SHARE WITH THE WORLD.**

**AND YOU SEE, IT IS NOT ONLY THAT HE CONTEMPLATES SUICIDE,**

**IT IS NOT ONLY THAT HE WISHES HE HAD NEVER BEEN BORN,**

**IT IS ALSO THAT HE CHOOSES TO STAND AND SHAKE HIS FIST AT GOD.**

**WHO CAN IMAGINE ANYONE WITH SUCH DARING AS THAT,**

**WHO CAN ENVISION ANYONE WHO HAS SO TAKEN LEAVE OF HIS SENSES, THAT HE WOULD DARE TO STAND AND CRY OUT THAT HE WAS NOT TO BLAME, THAT HE WOULD THROW HIMSELF OPEN TO THE ALMIGHTY AND TAKE HIS CHANCES.**

**IT TAKES YOUR BREATH AWAY, THE WAY THIS JOB DARES TO CONFRONT THE LORD GOD HIMSELF AND VIRTUALLY TO DARE GOD TO TAKE AWAY HIS LIFE.**

**AFTER ALL, HE HAD LOST EVERYTHING ELSE; WHY NOT LOSE LIFE ITSELF, IF ONLY TO PROVE THAT YOU DO NOT FEEL THAT SUCH TREATMENT AS THIS WAS DESERVED?**

**BUT TO ME, NOT EVEN THAT DRIVES HOME THE HOPELESSNESS, THE DESPERATION OF JOB'S PLIGHT QUITE LIKE SOMETHING ELSE DOES.**

**THERE IS ANOTHER ELEMENT OF JOB'S PSYCHOLOGY THAT WORRIES ME EVEN MORE THAN HIS RECKLESS ABANDON BEFORE THE VERY FACE OF GOD.**

**AND THAT IS THAT HE BELIEVES HIMSELF TO BE HATED BY EVERYBODY,**

**HE BELIEVES THAT NO ONE LOVES HIM, HE IS CONFIDENT THAT ALL CONSIDER HIM AN ALIEN, AN OUTCAST, A LOATHSOME THING.**

**HE BELIEVES THAT NO ONE CARES, NO ONE LOVES HIM. AND WHY? BECAUSE HE NO LONGER CARES FOR HIMSELF. JOB DOES NOT LOVE HIMSELF.**

**LISTEN TO JOB;**

- 1. "MY BROTHERS HOLD ALOOF FROM ME,**
- 2. MY FRIENDS ARE UTTERLY ESTRANGED FROM ME;**
- 3. MY KINSMEN AND INTIMATES FALL AWAY;**
- 4. MY RETAINERS HAVE FORGOTTEN ME,**
- 5. MY SLAVE-GIRLS TREAT ME AS A STRANGER,**
- 6. I HAVE BECOME AN ALIEN IN THEIR EYES.**
- 7. MY INTIMATE COMPANIONS LOATHE ME,**
- 8. AND THOSE WHOM I LOVE HAVE TURNED AGAINST ME. "**

**THE WORDS OF A MAN IN PROFOUND SPIRITUAL TROUBLE,  
THE MUTTERINGS OF ONE DRIVEN ALMOST MAD BY THE  
SLINGS AND ARROWS OF OUTRAGEOUS FORTUNE,**

**AND THE WORST OF IT IS THAT, MINGLED TOGETHER HERE  
LIKE A VIRULENT POISON, ARE FEELINGS OF SELF-HATRED,  
FEELINGS OF ALIENATION, FEELINGS OF BEING RIGHT  
WHEN ALL THE WORLD IS WRONG,**

**BUT FEELINGS ALSO OF BEING WRONG, WRONG IN SUCH A  
DEEP WAY THAT NOTHING WILL EVER CORRECT IT.**

**JOB, THE SUFFERER, HAS BECOME JOB THE AGONIZED,**

**JOB, FOR WHOM THERE SEEMS TO BE NO EARTHLY HOPE.**

**FOR WHEN CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE DEALT A TERRIBLE  
BLOW, AND OTHERS TREAT YOU AS IF YOU DID NOT EXIST,  
THEN ALL TOO OFTEN YOU TURN ON YOURSELF, YOU HATE  
YOURSELF AS YOU HATE OTHERS, AND THERE IS NO  
TURNING BACK. NO HOPE.**

**MAY I SUGGEST TO YOU ON THIS THIRD SUNDAY IN BLACK  
HISTORY MONTH, THAT ALL THAT COMES CLOSE,  
DANGEROUSLY CLOSE, TO A DESCRIPTION OF THE HISTORY  
OF RACISM IN THESE NOT-SO-UNITED STATES?**

**WOULD IT COME AS A SHOCK TO RECOGNIZE THAT IN  
RACISM, WHITE RACISM AND IN BLACK RACISM AS WELL,  
THERE IS MORE THAN A LITTLE SELF-HATRED, ALL MIXED  
AND MINGLED WITH PREJUDICE AND FEAR AND ANGER AT  
SOMEONE ELSE?**

**NOTHING IS MORE DAMAGING, MORE POWERFUL, OR MORE  
APPARENT THAN THIS TRUTH: THAT TOO MANY OF US  
TODAY, BLACK AND WHITE ALIKE, ARE VICTIMS.**

**WE ARE VICTIMS OF A RACIAL CLIMATE,**

**VICTIMS OF AN ATMOSPHERE WHICH HAS TAUGHT US TO  
BE SUSPICIOUS OF ONE ANOTHER, TO WONDER ABOUT ONE  
ANOTHER.**

**AND AS WE ARE SUSPICIOUS OF ONE ANOTHER, WE BETRAY  
OUR OWN PERSONAL INSECURITIES.**

**WE ARE SAYING, IN EFFECT, I DON'T LIKE ME AND THEREFORE I AM AFRAID OF YOU BECAUSE YOU MAY SHOW ME UP, YOU THREATEN ME.**

**HEAR JOB AGAIN, AND HEAR OURSELVES, HEAR OUR CULTURE, IN JOB'S PLAINTIVE CRY:**

***“MY BROTHERS HOLD ALOOF FROM ME, MY FRIENDS ARE UTTERLY ESTRANGED FROM ME; MY KINSMEN AND MY INTIMATES FALL AWAY. I HAVE BECOME AN ALIEN IN THEIR EYES ... MY INTIMATE COMPANIONS LOATHE ME, AND THOSE WHOM I LOVE HAVE TURNED AGAINST ME. “***

**RACISM IS NOT ONLY HATRED AND FEAR OF THE OTHER PERSON WHO IS DIFFERENT; IT IS A HATRED AND FEAR OF OURSELVES, AND IT LEADS US TO THE SPIRITUAL DREGS,**

**IT LEADS US TO THE POINT WHERE WE FEEL THAT WE ARE NO GOOD AT ALL.**

**BUT I AM HERE THIS MORNING AS A PREACHER OF THE GOOD NEWS, NOT THE BAD NEWS.**

**I AM HERE TO PROCLAIM A WAY OF HOPE, NOT JUST TO WALLOW IN DESPAIR.**

**I AM HERE AND YOU ARE HERE, WE CAN BE HERE TOGETHER BECAUSE OF WHAT JOB FOUND AND AFFIRMED, EVEN IN THE MIDST OF HIS DESPAIR,**

**FOR IN SOME MYSTERIOUS WAY THAT NO HUMAN MIND CAN BEGIN TO EXPLAIN, OUT OF HIS SUFFERING AND SELF-LOATHING, JOB FOUND HOPE,**

**HE DISCOVERED THAT HE WOULD HAVE A FRIEND, A DIFFERENT KIND OF FRIEND.**

**HE DISCOVERED THAT HE WOULD BE GIVEN A VINDICATOR, A COUNSELOR,**

**HE WOULD BE PROVIDED A HEAVENLY DEFENSE ATTORNEY WHO WOULD STAND AT HIS SIDE AND WOULD LIFT UP HIS CAUSE.**

**FOR JOB, THERE WAS A GLIMMER OF HOPE; MORE THAN THAT, THERE WAS A BEACON OF LIGHT DAWNING IN HIS SOUL,**

**FOR THERE WAS NOW, SOMEONE TO COME TO HIS RESCUE.**

**THERE WAS NOW ONE WHO WOULD LOVE HIM, UNCONDITIONALLY;**

**THERE WAS NOW ONE WHO WOULD LOVE THE LOATHSOME AND RECEIVE THE REPULSIVE,**

**ONE, WHO WOULD STAND WITH HIM AGAINST ALL COMERS.**

**WHO IS THIS WHOM JOB BELIEVES WILL DELIVER HIM FROM THE MORASS OF HIS OWN HEART?**

***“IN MY HEART I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES AND THAT HE WILL RISE LAST TO SPEAK IN COURT, AND I SHALL DISCERN MY WITNESS STANDING AT MY SIDE AND SEE MY DEFENDING COUNSEL, EVEN GOD HIMSELF, WHOM I SHALL SEE WITH MY OWN EYES, I MYSELF AND NO OTHER. “***

**I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES, AND THAT HE IS GOD HIMSELF.**

**I KNOW, SAYS JOB, THAT ONE WILL RESCUE ME FROM SELF-PITY AND FROM FEAR AND FROM ALIENATION.**

**AND THAT ONE IS GOD HIMSELF, NO OTHER THAN THE VERY LORD OF LIFE WHO ALWAYS SEEKS TO SAVE THAT WHICH IS LOST,**

**WHO WILL INDEED REDEEM WITH HIS VERY LIFE’S BLOOD ANY ONE OF HIS SUFFERING CHILDREN.**

**HEAR IT, HEAR IT, I URGE YOU; THAT OUR REDEEMER STANDS READY TO RESCUE US FROM THE DANGERS OF SELF-HATRED,**

**FOR IF GOD HIMSELF IS READY TO GIVE HIS OWN LIFE FOR US, HOW CAN ANY OF US THINK OURSELVES UNWORTHY?**

**OR HOW CAN ANY OF US DARE IMAGINE SOMEONE ELSE UNWORTHY?**

**WE ARE NOT OUR OWN, WE ARE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE.**

**AND SO THIS MORNING, SURELY IT IS CLEAR TO US THAT  
BLACK AND WHITE MUST BE REDEEMED TOGETHER.**

**THERE IS NO WAY AT ALL FOR US TO IMAGINE THAT WE DO  
NOT NEED EACH OTHER, FOR WE DO.**

**WE NEED EACH OTHER, BLACK PEOPLE AND WHITE  
PEOPLE, IN THIS NATION.**

- **WE NEED EACH OTHER'S GIFTS,**
- **WE NEED EACH OTHER'S HISTORY,**
- **WE NEED EACH OTHER'S EXPERIENCES;**

**BUT MOST OF ALL, WE NEED EACH OTHER IN ORDER TO BE  
FULLY REDEEMED.**

**DID YOU HEAR? DID YOU UNDERSTAND? WE NEED EACH  
OTHER IN ORDER TO BE FULLY REDEEMED.**

**BLACK AND WHITE MUST BE REDEEMED TOGETHER IN  
ORDER FOR THE REDEEMING CHRIST TO DEAL CREATIVELY  
WITH THE VESTIGES OF FEAR AND SELF-HATRED THAT LIE  
IN MY SOUL.**

**BLACK AND WHITE MUST BE REDEEMED TOGETHER IN  
ORDER FOR HIM, WHOSE BLOOD WAS SHED FOR ALL  
HUMANITY, TO COMPLETE THE WORK OF MAKING US  
BROTHERS AND SISTERS TO EACH OTHER.**

**BLACK AND WHITE REDEEMED TOGETHER.**

**IN MY HEART, I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES AND I  
SHALL DISCERN MY WITNESS STANDING AT MY SIDE, EVEN  
GOD HIMSELF.**

### **ILLUSTRATION**

**MANY YEARS AGO AT ONE OF THE OLDER BAPTIST  
CHURCHES IN A TOWN IN GEORGIA, ON ONE SUNDAY  
MORNING THE INVITATION WAS GIVEN AND TWO PERSONS**

**MADE THEIR WAY DOWN THE AISLE TO ASK FOR MEMBERSHIP.**

**OVER HERE ON ONE SIDE AN AGED BLACK WOMAN WHO WORKED AS A DOMESTIC, WHO HAD WORKED FOR MANY YEARS IN ONE OF THE FINE HOMES IN THAT CITY, WHO HAD ATTENDED CHURCH WITH HER EMPLOYERS,**

**BUT NOW COMING TO ASK TO BE RECEIVED AS A PART OF THAT FELLOWSHIP, THE FIRST BLACK MEMBER OF THAT CONGREGATION, AS IT TURNED OUT.**

**BUT OVER HERE, IN THE OTHER AISLE, A DISTINGUISHED LOOKING GENTLEMAN, WELL-DRESSED, RAMROD STRAIGHT; AND A WHISPER WENT THROUGH THE CONGREGATION,**

**FOR SOME RECOGNIZED HIM. HE WAS CHARLES EVANS HUGHES, THE CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE UNITED STATES.**

**WHAT A STRANGE PAIR PRESENTING THEMSELVES AT THE DOORS OF THE CHURCH:**

**A BLACK DOMESTIC, POOR, YET CERTAIN OF HER SPIRITUAL COMMITMENT; AND A WHITE JUSTICE, WEALTHY, ELITE, YET ALSO CLEAR ABOUT HIS NEED OF A SAVIOR.**

**AND THE STORY HAS IT THAT THE PASTOR SIMPLY TURNED, LOOKED AT THE CROSS PLACED ON THE COMMUNION TABLE, AND SAID TO THE CONGREGATION,**

**"AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS THE GROUND IS LEVEL."**

**AND SO TODAY, BEGINNING A MONTH IN WHICH WE WILL CELEBRATE AN ALMOST FORGOTTEN HISTORY, WE BEGIN BY COMING TO THE FOOT OF THAT CROSS. .**

**ARE WE PREPARED THIS MORNING, LIKE JOB THE ANGUISHED PATRIARCH, TO TURN FROM OUR FEARS AND OUR ALIENATION, TO SET ASIDE OUR SELF-HATRED AND OUR LOATHING, AND SIMPLY TO CRY,**

**“IN MY HEART I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES, EVEN  
GOD HIMSELF, WHOM I SEE WITH MY OWN EYES, I MYSELF  
AND NO OTHER.”**

**IN SUCH A WAY CAN WE KNOW THAT BLACK AND WHITE  
ARE REDEEMED TOGETHER, REDEEMED.**

**AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS, THE GROUND IS LEVEL.**

**AT LAST AND DID MY SAVIOR BLEED?**

**AND DID MY SOVEREIGN DIE ?**

**WOULD HE DEVOTE THAT SACRED HEAD**

**FOR SUCH A WORM AS I?**

**AT THE CROSS, AT THE CROSS**

**WHERE I FIRST SAW THE LIGHT**

**AND THE BURDEN OF MY HEART ROLLED AWAY**

**IT WAS THERE BY FAITH**

**I RECEIVED MY SIGHT**

**AND NOW I AM HAPPY ALL THE DAY.**