

Sonoraville Baptist Church
Sunday, February 7, 2010 – 11:00 AM
Rev. Steve Skates, Pastor

One Thing – Job 19:17-27

Introduction: In the last few decades, trivia has become a popular pastime. From game shows such as “Jeopardy” and “Who Wants to be a Millionaire” to board games like “Trivial Pursuit” the pursuit of “useless facts” has become a profitable business. I Googled the word “trivia” and got over 43 million sites dealing with the subject. Here are 10 useless trivia facts:

- It’s physically impossible to lick your elbow or touch your elbow to your ear.
- It’s impossible to sneeze with your eyes open.
- Most dust particles in your house are made up of dead skin.
- No word in the English language rhymes with “month, orange, silver, or purple.”
- Bert & Ernie of Sesame Street are named after Bert the Cop & Ernie the Taxi Driver of “It’s a Wonderful Life.”
- Before leaving today, someone will try to lick their elbow.

Some things are just not worth knowing, but today I want to share with you something you really do need to know. The Old Testament book of Job is the story of a man who had it all, then lost it all, then regained it all and more. It’s literally a riches to rags to riches story. But more than that, Job gives us some amazing observations about God in the middle of his pain and suffering. During the time when it seemed that everything he loved had been taken away from him, Job reveals a powerful faith which allows him to trust God throughout his pain.

Let’s read one of those observations found in Job 19. In vs. 17-20, we get an idea of how bad things had gotten for Job. He said, “*My breath is offensive to my wife; I am loathsome to my own brothers. Even the little boys scorn me; when I appear, they ridicule me. All my intimate friends detest me; those I love have turned against me. I am nothing but skin and bones; I have escaped with only the skin of my teeth.*” (Job 19:17-20 NIV).

Then in vs. 23-27, Job’s outlook seems to change from one of “poor pitiful me” to a bold profession of faith as he begins to express his hope and trust in God. He says, “*Oh, that my words were recorded, that they were written on a scroll, that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead, or engraved in rock forever! I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!*” (Job 19:23-27 NIV)

Several years ago, a movie came out called “City Slickers.” It’s about three guys from the city who take a vacation to a dude ranch to learn how to herd cattle. Billy Crystal played a character named Mitch. He planned the trip because his job and marriage were falling apart, and he just needed to get away. He needed a diversion from the stress, and this was the way he thought he could have time to figure things out about his miserable life.

The trail boss of the ranch was crusty old cowboy named Curly played by Jack Palance. In one scene Mitch and Curly are riding along and Mitch has just poured out his heart about how miserable his life was. Curly looked at him and said: “*Do you know what the secret to life is?*” Mitch replied, “*No, what?*” Curly holds up his index finger. Mitch says, “*Your finger! That’s the secret of life?*” Curly says, “*No, this! One thing! Just one thing! You stick with that and everything else don’t mean nuthin’.*” Mitch replied, “*That’s great, but what’s the one thing?*” “*That’s what you gotta’ figure out.*” Curly said.

Well, that’s what Job figured out. In the midst of his suffering and uncertainty, he hung onto the one thing he knew for sure. He said, “*I know that my Redeemer lives!*” Job may not have known His name was Jesus, but by virtue of his unshakable faith in God, he was able to look beyond his misery and know that there was someone who would redeem his life and make all things new.

This morning, I don’t want to waste your time with trivia. I want you to know that there is one thing in life that you can count on - your redeemer lives, and His name is Jesus! And you can have a personal relationship with Him that will continue beyond this life into eternity. That’s the most important thing.

This morning I’d like to share with you why this one thing is so important for us to know. First, it’s important because:

1. You Can Experience It Personally

Now there were a lot of things Job didn't know. He didn't know why he was suffering. He didn't know why his friends were accusing him. But in the midst of his uncertainty, he proclaimed there was one thing he did know. Job said, "**I KNOW** that my Redeemer lives." He didn't say "*I hope he lives,*" or "*I think he lives*" or "*Perhaps he lives.*" He was positive in his knowledge.

The word "*know*" means to know by experience or to have intimate knowledge. It's the same word used in Genesis 4, where it says that Adam "*knew*" his wife. So, in this sense, knowing God doesn't come from reading a book or hearing a message or even going to seminary. You can know about God or know some facts about God that way, but in order to really know God, you have to experience Him. And that happens when you meet His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus said it Himself when He was speaking to some unbelieving Pharisees in **John 8:19 (NIV)**. He said, "*If you knew me, you would know my Father also.*" He wasn't talking about taking a course called "Experiencing God". He was talking about really experiencing God through Christ! Have you really experienced the living Lord? Do you really know Him?

Also notice that Job didn't say "*I know a Redeemer*" or "*I know of a Redeemer.*" He said, "*I know that **my** Redeemer lives.*"

Now, the word "*my*" can be used in a selfish way: That is what kids do when they say to another child, "*That's my toy, you can't have it!*" But the word can also be used in a connective way, like when I say, "*This is my hand,*" or "*My head hurts!*" So when Job speaks of "*my redeemer,*" he's not claiming sole ownership. He's simply claiming a personal connection with the ruler over his life.

Jesus wants to be the redeemer of the world. That's why He came to this earth. But the question is, "*Is He **your** redeemer?*" Do you have a personal connection with Him?

You know, some people claim to have that connection because they were raised in a Christian home, or because they live in a Christian nation. But being born in a Christian home or in a Christian nation doesn't make you a Christian any more than being born in a McDonalds makes you a Big Mac. It just doesn't work that way. Everyone must come to a place in their lives when they make Jesus the Lord of their lives. It's a personal choice. Can you say today, "*Jesus is my Redeemer?*"

Now this would be a good time to explain the word "*redeemer.*" Job used that word to describe God in a very precise way. You've heard the expression "*It's WHO you know that matters?*" Well, when it comes to God, you've got to know **who** God really is in order to know Him.

The word "*redeemer*" in the Hebrew is the word "*go'el*" which means "*the one who buys back.*" Now here's what that means. Once there was a boy who built a toy sailboat out of wood. He took it to the lake in the park and shoved it off. The wind caught it and it floated away! The boy ran around the little lake to retrieve it, but when he got to the other side he couldn't find it. He waited and waited, but it never appeared. He thought it was gone forever in the bottom of the lake. A few days later he was walking by a toy store and saw his sailboat displayed in the window. He ran inside and said, "*That's my boat! I want it back*" The store owner told him, "*Son, I bought that boat from a man a few days ago. If you want it I'll sell it to you for \$5.*"

Well, the boy didn't have the money right then, so he went home and began to find ways to earn enough money to pay for the boat. He raked leaves, and mowed yards until he'd earned \$5. He went back to the toy store and laid down the money. "*Now, can I have my boat back,*" he asked? And the store owner handed him the boat. He walked outside and hugged it to himself and said, "*You're mine now; you're twice mine, because I made you and now I've bought you back!*" That's what our Redeemer did for us. He made us. But we strayed from Him and went our own way, so He had to buy us back from the penalty of sin! **Titus 2:13-14 (NIV)** says, "*Jesus Christ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness...*" He bought us back. Jesus is our blessed Redeemer. Next, this one thing is important because:

2. You Can Experience It Presently

Job spoke these words almost 4,000 years ago, but notice that he said, "*I know that my Redeemer **lives.***" He didn't say, "*I know my Redeemer **lived***" or "*I know that my Redeemer **will live someday.***" Job knew one day he would die, but he knew that His Redeemer lives and would live forever.

Job's faith wasn't founded in a statue or an ideology or a concept. His faith wasn't founded in someone who had lived, but was now dead and buried in a grave. Job had a faith in a living God.

Muhammad was born in 570 and in his lifetime, he claimed to have received revelations from God and in his words, became *the prophet and messenger of God*. His teachings were the basis of the founding of the Islamic

religion. But Muhammad died in 632, and hasn't been seen since.

Buddha was born in 563 BC in India as the royal prince Shakyamuni. Over his lifetime, it is said that he had a special ability to rid his mind of all distractions through meditation and concentration and attain "*enlightenment*" which is defined as the highest form of mental cleansing of human impurities. But Shakyamuni died in 483 BC, and hasn't been seen since.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea. We now date our calendars based upon His birth. He lived 33 years and in His lifetime, He not only claimed to be the Son of God, He proved to be the Son of God by His sinless life, by His miracles, by His teachings, and most vividly and convincingly by His resurrection following His death by crucifixion. The Scriptures record ten post-resurrection appearances of Jesus, and Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 15:5-8 (NIV)** that following Jesus' resurrection, "*...he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also...*" Jesus isn't just a religious leader who lived and died. Jesus lived, and died, but He rose from the dead. And His resurrection was witnessed by many. And He is alive today.

Do you have a relationship with the living Jesus? I'm not talking about knowing the facts about Him or knowing Him in the same way you know George Washington. You can know the facts about Washington, but not have a relationship with him. In the same way, you can know the facts about Jesus, but because He lives, you can have an ongoing, living, and growing relationship with Him right now – in the present!

How can you know if you have a living relationship with Jesus? Well, you can talk with Him right now. You can't talk with George Washington or Muhammad or Buddha because they're dead. But you can talk with Jesus! In fact, I just talked with Him this morning! Alfred Ackley put it well when he wrote the hymn that says, "*He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today. He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way. You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart!*" Finally, this one thing is important because:

3. You Can Experience It Permanently

Job knew he was going to die; yet he understood that death wouldn't be the end. He believed "*In my flesh, I will see God.*"

We live in a world, where there's not much that is permanent. When Elaine and I got married and we were buying our first house, we thought, "*We better be sure about this because this is it...this is where we'll spend the rest of our lives, and we'll be paying for this house for the rest of our lives!*" By the way, our house payment back then was \$101/month. We didn't know where we were going to come up with that kind of money back then. But here we are today in our third mortgage, our fourth city, and our 5th house! Yes, we're still together and we're still paying a mortgage, but not everything is as permanent as we think it is.

2 Corinthians 4:18 (NIV) says, "*So we fix our eyes not on what is seen but what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*"

We know that almost everything we see around us is temporary. Someday, the skyscrapers, the money and all the fame will be gone, wiped out, disposed of like a disposable razor. Even our relationships are not permanent because not only do we live in a day when spouses divorce each other; we live in a day when kids are divorcing their parents! But even if there were no such thing as divorce, our relationships are still only temporary because when a couple gets married, a part of the vows are "*till death do us part.*" So, even death has an effect on relationships.

But there is one relationship that you can have that is absolutely permanent. It can't even be changed by death. That is our relationship with Jesus. It's permanent because He is permanent.

In John 11, we see when Martha was grieving over the death of her brother Lazarus. She was scolding Jesus for delaying His coming when He knew her brother was sick. She said, "*Lord...if you had been here, my brother would not have died.*" Jesus told her, "*I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?*" **John 11:21, 25-26 (NIV)**

And in **John 10:28-29 (NIV)**, Jesus gave the definitive answer to the question of eternal life when He said, "*I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.*" Your relationship with Christ is the only permanent relationship you can have. By faith, Job knew that, and for that reason, he didn't fear death. He knew there was another world that he couldn't see. And he believed that one day he would see his

Redeemer face to face. You can have that assurance too because when you know Jesus, you are in a permanent relationship.

Conclusion: There are a lot of expensive things people can own to try to make them happy. For example, if you want to impress your party guests, you can buy perfectly shaped ice spheres made by the Glace Luxury Ice Company for \$8 per sphere.

The Jackson family buried their brother Michael in a hand-polished, 14k gold plated solid bronze casket lined with blue velvet which cost \$25,000.

If you want to show off your taste in clothes, you can purchase a pair of Dussault Apparel's Trashed Denim jeans for \$250,000.

The 8th richest man in the world, Lakshmi Mittal forked over \$55 million to see his daughter Vanisha happily married.

There have been folks buried with their jewelry & mink coats on and even one guy buried in his Cadillac, trusting in their riches.

The Psalmist said, *"They trust in their wealth and boast of great riches. Yet they cannot redeem themselves from death by paying a ransom to God. Redemption does not come so easily, for no one can ever pay enough to live forever and never see the grave....But as for me, God will redeem my life. He will snatch me from the power of death."* **Psalms 49:6-9, 15 (NLT)**

Jesus said in **Mark 8:36 (NIV)** *"What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?"* You can find something more valuable than the world when you find the living Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Then, you've found, as Curly said, the secret of life.