

April 15, 2017

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Scripture

Job 19:21-27a

- ²¹ Have pity on me, have pity on me,
 O you my friends,
 for the hand of God has touched me!
- ²² Why do you, like God, pursue me,
 never satisfied with my flesh?
- ²³ “O that my words were written down!
 O that they were inscribed in a book!
- ²⁴ O that with an iron pen and with lead
 they were engraved on a rock for ever!
- ²⁵ For I know that my Redeemer lives,
 and that at the last he will stand upon the earth;
- ²⁶ and after my skin has been thus destroyed,
 then in my flesh I shall see God,
- ²⁷ whom I shall see on my side,
 and my eyes shall behold, and not another.”

Devotional

Anyone who has ever skinned a knee or elbow from a fall or playing sports will tell you it is not a pleasant experience. The raw, burning feeling on your skin comes alive with the slightest movement. And even though you know it isn't a serious injury, the pain reminds you just how frail we human beings are. But as with most injuries, the body begins to heal quickly, and within days the injury is merely a memory.

Today's passage from Job reminds us that our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, is alive and will stand upon the earth once more at the last. But Job also says that when his flesh is totally destroyed, when all is stripped away, perhaps even when his life on earth is over, then he shall see God in the flesh, as his frail, completely exposed self.

C. S. Lewis takes this concept a step further in *The Chronicles of Narnia: Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. SPOILER ALERT. In the novel, the Pevensies' cousin Eustace is transformed into a dragon because of his brutish nature, and he can only return to being a boy by stripping the dragon skin off his body. But no matter how much he scrapes and tears, he cannot “undragon” himself. Only with the help of Aslan can his dragon-self be permanently stripped away.

Similarly, only when we are stripped of our skin, stripped of our sinfulness, our burdens, and ourselves can we truly see God. When there is nothing left but our flesh, when our walls are taken down, when we become vulnerable—that is when we can truly see and welcome God. And the beautiful truth is that our God is with us.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, we know that you are alive, and we rejoice in your resurrection. Strip away our fears, our worries, and ourselves, O God, so that we may see you. Grant us perseverance and patience as we await the return of your Son. Help us to be vulnerable, to love others as we love ourselves, and to trust in You alone. In the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.