

## JOB: THERE IS HOPE

**Monday July 18<sup>th</sup>** - Read Job 14:7-15, Psalms 92:12-14, Hosea 14:5-8. Job uses a common symbol for the theme of hope: a tree. Like human beings, the tree falls in its prime, ages and dies in dry ground, and has hope for a shoot from a severed trunk. The conclusion? Human beings do not have hope because they cannot regenerate. *Think about hope and that God would give the tree more than God gave humanity. Don't immediately jump to Jesus to close this thought (you're right to do so, but let's stay in the depth of Job for just a moment). Even in Job's "hope" he is falling short. What does it mean that humans are excluded from the regeneration that a simple tree can do? What does it mean for us as Christians that the door for resurrection (far more powerful than simple regeneration!) has been opened because of Christ?*

**Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup>** - Read Job 14:7-15 and let's focus on vs. 11. Job moves from trees to rivers and lakes. Bodies of water were thought to be very strong so when water vanishes it is surprising but easily visible. In seasonal changes, water vanishes and then returns. Job isn't talking about "seasonal dryness." He is talking about the loss of water that cannot be changed, like an earthquake cutting off the source and drying up the water. It is the same with sleep, just as dry lakes hope for the return of water, a sleeping person will wake up. Job insists that this sleep will not change. It is forever. It's important to remember that in this time period, there is no afterlife. There is no heaven. So if God doesn't show you favor in this life, well, that's it. *Would you live differently if this life was all that you had? How does Jesus' gift of eternal life change all this? Should we still live as though there were no heaven, to give and to love with such tenacity that this life is all we are given? What would our lives look like?*

**Wednesday, July 20<sup>th</sup>** - Read Psalms 88:5-6, Job 14:15. Job is changing his desire and wants the connection to God restored. He knows that this suffering is leading to death. Ancient Israelites believed that death was a realm cut off from God, so in death nothing with God can be restored. *Do we as Christians take a connection with God for granted? Do we just always assume that God is always there, like a puppy that follows us around? Again, I want us all to wrestle with the idea of death being the end of a relationship with God and think about what eternity of "nothingness" would mean for our daily living. Would we see each day as a precious gift?*

**Thursday, July 21<sup>st</sup>** - Just before this section (19:23-27), Job rejects the language of prayer (v 21-22) and realizes his outcry brings no response or justice. It appears there is no way for him to bring his words before God. He is basing his words on the assurance of a kinsman-defender from on high. The term is go'el and it refers

to the nearest male relative who was responsible for protecting a person's interests when that person was not able to do so. The go'el would buy back family property sold in distress (Lev. 25:25, Ruth 4:4-6, Jer. 32: 6-7), recover what had been stolen (Num. 5:8), redeem a kinsman sold into slavery (Lev. 25:28) or avenge a murdered kinsman's blood (Deut. 19:6-12; 2 Sam. 14:11). The go'el is the embodiment of family solidarity. Job is seeking a go'el to defend him against God. *Have you ever needed someone to navigate a difficult situation for you? Have you been frustrated because of healthcare, legal matters, family relationships, choosing a place to eat? (Okay, that last one was in jest, but those discussions can get heated when people are hungry!) What would it be like to live in a community where it was expected that someone would take care of those who were suffering, that we would be obligated to do our duty for others?*

**Friday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>** - Read Job 19:25-27. First, let's strip these verses from their current Christian interpretation. The "redeemer" is not Jesus. This is not prophecy. The translations that capitalize the "R" in redeemer are reading into it more than they should. The "redeemer" is the go'el that we learned about yesterday and the fact that the redeemer lives is simply because Job has died. He is hoping that his death will be avenged and his blood accounted for. Second, let's find a Christian connection that is honest to this text. God was often thought to be the go'el for the widow and orphan (least and lost). It is not a big stretch that Christians would look back to the book of Job and find new meaning to the words "My Redeemer lives." In Jesus we do have a heavenly advocate and a kinsman who will work on our behalf. But our Christ lives because he was dead and is now resurrected, not merely because we are dead and he is not. See the differences? You can still take comfort as a Christian, just don't read Jesus into the story of Job. Be thankful in the story of Jesus that Job's hope is fulfilled and carried much further. That's the message: Job's hope wasn't big enough for what God would later do through Jesus Christ.

**Saturday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>** - Today is Garage Sale. Pray for good weather and remember that all those souls looking for great deals or Pokemon need Jesus too. How will you be Jesus for them today?

**Love:** How do these devotions teach about the love of God and the love for one another?  
**Learn:** What have you learned about where Jesus walked that helps you with where you walk?  
**Share:** What key insights have you learned this week on how to share your faith with others?  
**Serve:** Look at the prayer list. Who can you pray for? Who needs a little extra help in an area where you can make a difference?  
**Healing Strength:** Chris Rosemeyer, Deloris Wessell (Barb McCormack's sister-in-law), Linda Stephenson, LeAnne Schemenaur, Chris & Katie Hamon, Charlie Walters, Mary Schmidt, Rex Townsend, Stan Ensich, Chris Osborn (Ken and Sandy Grubb's daughter), Janet Coons (Donna McCullough's daughter)  
**Homebound Members:** Mary Hicks, Mary Schmidt, Joann Young, Jeanne Carman  
**Military Personnel:** Adam Walters, Joseph Roberts, Lucas Lamkin, Adam Clark