

St. Luke EV. Lutheran Church
Sermon by Pastor Anthony E. Schultz
3rd Sunday after Pentecost (WELS B.)
June 25, 2017
Job 38:1-11 The LORD Speaks



38 Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm. He said: ²“Who is this that obscures my plans with words without knowledge? ³Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me. ⁴“Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell me, if you understand. ⁵Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? ⁶On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone—⁷while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy? ⁸“Who shut up the sea behind doors when it burst forth from the womb, ⁹when I made the clouds its garment and wrapped it in thick darkness, ¹⁰when I fixed limits for it and set its doors and bars in place, ¹¹when I said, ‘This far you may come and no farther; here is where your proud waves halt?’

People of God~rescued from the flaming lake of fire in hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

It was about 9 o’clock at night—the 8th of October in the year 1871. A small shed next to a barn owned by the O’leary family caught fire and burned down. How did that fire start? Some people say it was Mrs. O’leary’s cow that kicked over a lantern and started the fire. Some say it was a bunch of men gambling inside the barn and knocked over a lantern. Still others think the blaze was related to other fires in the Chicago area that day. The fact that most buildings were built out of wood didn’t help. They were built in what’s called a balloon frame. Most of the roofs were topped with highly flammable tar or shingle roofs. The city’s sidewalks and many roads were also made of wood. (Like Watertown Plank Road) Add to that the fact there had only been 1 inch of rain from July 4 to October 9—a severe drought—plus the fact there was a strong SW wind the burning embers were flying toward the heart of the city. Add to that the CFD had only 185 firefighters and 17 horse-drawn steam engines to protect the entire city—not to mention the watchman named Matthias—sent the firefighters to the wrong place—and the fact the firefighters were tired from having fought numerous small fires and one large fire the week before—a small shed fire burned up some 2,000 acres—some 300 people died—maybe even more—drowned or incinerated leaving no remains! Can you imagine? Where—in the middle of all this—where in the world was God? It is tempting to ask—to wonder—to want to know—where was Jesus when all those people needed Him? God’s Word today tell us:

The LORD Has The Final Word!

- 1. God is not answerable to us**
- 2. Jesus answers for us!**

The part of God’s Word we are concentrating on—is taken from the scroll of Job. Job is not a name given to other people in the Bible. Job lived in the land of Uz. That is most likely by the land of Edom—home of the Edomites—the descendants of Esau—down in the south east—by the Dead Sea. We don’t know who wrote down the history of Job. Perhaps it wasn’t written

down at the time Job lived. Some very wise theologians think perhaps it was written down by Solomon – part of what’s called “wisdom literature”. God’s Word says, **“The fear of the LORD – fear to offend the Great I AM – is the beginning of wisdom!” Psalm 111:10 and Proverbs 9:10.**

Job was blessed by his Heavenly Father in many ways. God’s Word says: **1 In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. 2 He had seven sons and three daughters, 3 and he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred donkeys, and had a large number of servants. He was the greatest man among all the people of the East. 4 His sons used to hold feasts in their homes on their birthdays, and they would invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. 5 When a period of feasting had run its course, Job would make arrangements for them to be purified. Early in the morning he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, “Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.” This was Job’s regular custom.**

I think it’s hard for us to understand this next part: **6 One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them. 7 The LORD said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” Satan answered the LORD, “From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it.” 8 Then the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil.” 9 “Does Job fear God for nothing?” Satan replied. 10 “Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. 11 But now stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.” 12 The LORD said to Satan, “Very well, then, everything he has is in your power, but on the man himself do not lay a finger.” Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. In a day Job lost everything! He lost all his children – all his livestock – all his workers – except the handful that came one after another to give him the bad news. All was lost – and yet God’s Word says, **“At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship and said:** words we repeat at every one of our funerals – words we repeat at the grave side at the cemetery – **“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised.” In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.****

2 On another day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them to present himself before him. 2 And the LORD said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” Satan answered the LORD, “From roaming throughout the earth, going back and forth on it.” 3 Then the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason.” 4 “Skin for skin!” Satan replied. “A man will give all he has for his own life. 5 But now stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face.” 6 The LORD said to Satan, “Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life.” 7 So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head. 8 Then Job took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes. 9 His wife said to him, “Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!” 10 He replied, “You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?” In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.

Job had a couple of “friends”! Guys named Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu! **When they saw Job from a distance, they could hardly recognize him; they began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads. Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was.** Maybe you have rushed to the Emergency Room. Maybe you have rushed to a hospital bed. Maybe you have hurried to the Hospice room or to the home or gone to a wake at the funeral home. What do you say? What can you say to comfort someone who has suffered a terrible loss? Sometimes the loss is so painful and terrible – at first there is nothing you can say! You can hug people and hold them. You can take their hand and hold it in your hand – as you realize tears fill your eyes, too. Then what to say...what can you say that will bring any comfort? You can say, “Jesus loves you! Jesus loves you! Jesus always did and Jesus always will!” When someone we love dies – we can say Jesus loves them, too! Jesus died to wash away all their sins! By grace through faith we will see them again – because Jesus takes us home to Heaven when we die!” Eternal life is ours by grace through faith in Scripture! Here is hope! Here is healing! Here is help for here and now!

Job had a couple of “friends”! Guys named Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu! Job said they were **miserable comfort!** They didn’t talk about forgiveness, eternal life and Heaven. They told Job pretty bluntly that what Job needed to do was come clean. Confess what Job had done secretly and terribly – so that God would forgive him and stop the pain and suffering! Job said again and again – he didn’t do anything so terrible. Job complained again and again that all this grief and all this loss was horribly unfair! What Job wanted was a day in court – so he could confront his Heavenly Father with the injustice of it all!

Finally – chapter 38 God’s Word says: **38 Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm. He said: ²“Who is this that obscures my plans with words without knowledge? ³Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me. ⁴“Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell me, if you understand.** What do we know about creation? Have you been to the Creation Museum? God’s Word says, **In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. Genesis 1:1-3** I have long wanted to get one of those little models with all the planets. The sun in the middle of our solar system – the earth making her journey around in 365 days – one more day during leap year. The earth on her axis – around every 24 hours – the sun shining during the day – the moon shining through the night. The phases of the moon – the stars that twinkle. Places like Mars where people might live someday – not planning to return to earth! *Space – the final frontier* – distance measured in millions of lightyears! Who can understand that? The space around the earth – filled with space junk – that burns up as it reenters the earth’s atmosphere! Who can begin to understand all that!

⁶ On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone – ⁷while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy? ⁸“Who shut up the sea behind doors when it burst forth from the womb, ⁹when I made the clouds its garment and wrapped it in thick darkness, ¹⁰when I fixed limits for it and set its doors and bars in place, ¹¹when I said, “This far you may come and no farther; here is where your proud waves halt?” Did you hear that part about--**⁷while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?** Angels? Can you wrap your head around angels? Me neither! The Bible doesn’t say too much about the angels that rebelled against their Heavenly Father – fought against the Archangel Michael and were cast out of Heaven – into the forever flaming lake of sulfur in eternal destruction! We, too, would be lost forever – were it not for the fact that Jesus was conceived by

the Holy Spirit—born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate was crucified died and was buried—only to be raise from the dead on the 3rd day! Jesus died and rose again to wash away all our sins. So from time to time—we like Job are tempted to question, to doubt and wonder why it is—if **God is love**—and God’s Word says He is! Why do some terribly painful things still happen in our lives? It is for us to remember the Scriptures: **“Be still and know that I am God!” Psalm 46:10**

Grenfell Towers is/was a 24 story apartment in London, England! 10 days ago there was a terrible fire? What started the fire? Nobody seems to know for sure! Some people think it was a freezer! Can you imagine how that might be—some wire—something in the back of the freezer gets hot—there are some sparks—some little curtains catch fire—the little breeze coming through the window! The drapes are on fire—the paint and the wall paper and the drywall start to burn. Pretty soon the ceiling is on fire—and the fire spreads! There was a mommy on the tenth floor—that’s about the peak of the Church ceiling—time 3 and then some more! A mommy on the 10th floor gets a window open—and screams—literally screams—to the people below! She is going to drop her baby out the window. Somebody—somebody—needs to step up and catch her baby and not drop them! Would you? Could you! Somebody did step up! The mommy prayed—and let her baby go. A man 10 stories below caught the little baby—caught him against his chest—with arms and hands made strong by Jesus. The baby was safe! That was nothing short of a miracle. A miracle that pales—in comparison to the miracle that happened almost 2,000 years ago—on a Friday afternoon—on a skull shaped hill just outside Jerusalem. There Jesus’ arms were spread as his hands and feet were pierced with nails. Jesus stayed on that cross—held there not by the nails but by his forgiving love! Jesus died and rose again so all our sins are forgiven. That Gospel of sins forgiven is what will enable us—here on earth—one day at a time to know the LORD doesn’t answer to us. We trust Him to make everything to work out for the eternal good of all Jesus’ lambs and sheep! **Thank you, Jesus! Amen!**

To God alone all glory!

Rev. Anthony E. Schatz

