

– “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?” –
– August 9-10, 2008 – 13th Sunday after Pentecost – Job 38 4-18 – Pastor Scott Hirssig –

Job 38:4-18 (ESV)

⁴ “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. ⁵ Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? ⁶ On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone, ⁷ when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy? ⁸ “Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb, ⁹ when I made clouds its garment and thick darkness its swaddling band, ¹⁰ and prescribed limits for it and set bars and doors, ¹¹ and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no

farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed’? ¹² “Have you commanded the morning since your days began, and caused the dawn to know its place, ¹³ that it might take hold of the skirts of the earth, and the wicked be shaken out of it? ¹⁴ It is changed like clay under the seal, and its features stand out like a garment. ¹⁵ From the wicked their light is withheld, and their uplifted arm is broken. ¹⁶ “Have you entered into the springs of the sea, or walked in the recesses of the deep? ¹⁷ Have the gates of death been revealed to you, or have you seen the gates of deep darkness? ¹⁸ Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth? Declare, if you know all this.

I greet you with, grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Risen Lord and the Holy Spirit who lives within us as believers, and empowering us.

Today we look at our lesson from Job. The book has 42 chapters, almost 17,000 words, (16,915 words, 72,468 Characters – NIV). That would be almost 45 pages double spaced pages. (1 inch margins around, 12pt, double space) So it is not that long, a relatively short read. It is one of the oldest books of the Bible, Job thought to have lived before 1000 b.c. (CPH study Bible intro to Job), and living before Abraham. Considering Job’s age, nearly 200 years, we are told Job lived 140 years after God spoke to him, (42:16), this would have placed him during the time shortly after the flood. Abraham lived 175 years (Gen 25:7) We have the long life spans before the flood, Adam lived 930 years, and in several generations after the flood, then similar to today. Apparently being closer to the creation and not being affected by the environmental changes of the flood contributed to long life spans.

JOB – THE GRACE OF GOD

The central theme of Job is the grace of God, and that grace in the midst of suffering. Suffering that even comes to Job, who is described by God as , “⁸ **blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil.**”“ Job 1:8 (NIV) That does not mean he is perfect, but right with the Lord, living in holiness, and we know his suffering was not as a result of bad choices. Job already has a deep faith and trust in the Lord, and we see this faith grow in his understanding of God and his appreciation of who God is. As the book opens we are told, Job suffers through the sudden loss of his business and his property; he was a very wealthy man. His 10 children die in an accident, and finally his health deteriorates. Not only does the book open with the details of these calamities, but we are told of a conflict between God and Satan, where Satan is allowed to afflict Job, that is never revealed to Job, even when God talks to him face to face. The Holy Spirit reveals to us

this in the first chapter, but Job is unaware of that. There are many times in our lives where the why question is never answered, just like in the case of Job, and we are called to trust, resting in Him.

JOB – BAD ADVICE

His suffering is multiplied from bad counsel from his wife and four friends. His wife says, **“Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!”** (Job 2:9 (NIV)) His three friends, blame Job for the suffering, Eliphaz, like a religious legalist, much like the Pharisee, backed his argument with a dream, (Job 4:1-5,27) Bildad who sought to comfort Job with platitudes, (Job 8) and Zophar religious wisdom, relying on experience and reason, all three say it must have been something that Job did to cause the suffering, and what he experienced was his punishment, which was not the case. The fourth, Elihu, very similar, citing the discipline of God in order to get Job back into fellowship with God, which was also not the case. The friends to their credit, come to comfort, while others did not even come, and they do keep still for 7 days, they have an understanding of God, but wrong conclusions and thus bad advice. Job in his responses longs to have a face to face dialogue with God to plead his case. Yet, in all that he suffers though, he continues in faith, saying, ¹⁵ **“Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him; I will surely defend my ways to his face. ¹⁶ Indeed, this will turn out for my deliverance, for no godless man would dare come before him!”** (Job 13:15-16 (NIV))

GOD RESPONDS TO JOB

Job is granted an audience with God and what we have in our lesson is the beginning of that discourse. God speaks, in 73 verses, (Job 38:1-40:2,) Job responds with 3 verses, (Job 40:3-5), God speaks 53 verses, (Job 40:6-41:34) and Job responds with 6 verses, (Job 42:1-6) That is 123 verses for God verses 9 for Job. All the long discussion that he had envisioned, pleading his case, all changes before the majesty of God and being in His presence. In these two discourses things are revealed that are not told anywhere else in the Bible. For example, God speaks about Behemoth, a land creature, like one of several large land dinosaurs we have found bones of, (Job 40:15-19), and also Leviathan, a huge sea creature, is described by God, again one of several dinosaurs, (Job 41:1-34). We have descriptions of creation, the planets, the stars and what was and is. There are some sixty questions that God asks of Job and also of us, speaking out of a “whirlwind” (Job 38:1

WHERE WERE YOU

God says, ⁴ **“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. ⁵ Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? ⁶ On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone,** (Job 38:4-6 ESV) God was there at creation, not us. How arrogant is man today to tell God how life began. God reveals himself in His word. There is also evidence as explore. More and more scientists are seeing that, the evidence of creation and a world wide flood, and a universe probably less than 10,000 years, as many reliable clocks show a young universe, in various creation science literature. You should not even need that though, since God told you how

it began. But, it is nice to see when science gets it right, and some of those dating methods that show a young earth are in a handout on the back table if you want to look at them, and various sources for more information.

Next in our lesson we have God speaking of ‘morning stars’ singing, that refers to angelic beings that were witnesses. The sea, clouds, and darkness are set by God, given limits. He is in control. In Colossians, it says of Jesus, **“¹⁶ For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”** Col 1:16-17 (NIV) The creation, you and I were made for Jesus and by Jesus, and it is the power of Jesus that hold the universe together. He is our redeemer, our Savior. Paul said to the Corinthians, **“²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead...²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death...⁵⁵ “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?... ⁵⁷ thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”** (1 Cor 15:55, 57 (NIV) That victory is yours, as you trust in the Lord Jesus as your Savior and Lord, and each day as you grow in your relationship with Him through the word, as He helps you in daily repentance to live through Him. May we know the God who appeared to Job, and hear as Job heard, for Job knew, saying, **“²⁶ And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God;”** Job 19:26 (NIV) He knew in the resurrection He would see God, and God would restore His flesh, a new and perfect flesh. Rest in Christ, strong in faith, just like Job, even in suffering.

JOB CLOSE TO GOD

Job continues that rest, and becomes even closer to God, saying in answer to Him, **“...⁴ “I am unworthy--how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. ⁵ I spoke once, but I have no answer--twice, but I will say no more.”**“ (Job 40:4-5 (NIV) and after the 2nd discourse from God, **“² “I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted. ³ You asked, ‘Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge?’ Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know. ⁴ “You said, ‘Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me.’ ⁵ My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. ⁶ Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.”**“ Job 42:1-6 (NIV) That was Job, may your response be that of Job as well, receiving from Him in repentance.

In His name we pray, AMEN May the peace of God that passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. AMEN.