

A Mission Congregation of the ELCA
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pittsburg, Ohio 45358

Sermon Series on the Book of Job
Week 4
June 28, 2020



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- Prelude
- Office of the Acolyte and Ringing of the Bell

Roxanne Groff

- Welcome

Pr Mel

P:

* **HYMN OF PRAISE**



1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.
 2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
 3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:
 Son of God and gra - cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;
 Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
 on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
 Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.
 Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand.
 For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

* **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: We confess our sins before God and one another.

Pause for silence and reflection.

- * Please stand if able

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P: Gracious God,

C: We are tempted to be thankful only when things are going well for us. We are tempted to take credit for all that is good in our lives. We conveniently forget that all things come from you. Forgive us for being shortsighted, arrogant and thoughtless. Cleanse our hearts and bring us back to your side, for you are all that we truly need.

P: God hears our repentance and answers our request for forgiveness. Receive the assurance of your creator's mercy and return to the loving embrace of the one who made, loved, and redeemed you. In Jesus' name,

All: Amen.

*** GREETING**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

*** PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Almighty God, You created all and know all, and yet you care about each one of us. Humble us with grateful hearts for all that you have done, through Jesus Christ our Lord,

C: Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Job 31:35-37; 38:1-11(25-27)

P: Our scripture reading for this morning is selected verses from the book of Job, chapters 31 and 38.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

³⁵“Oh, that I had one to hear me! (Here is my signature! let the Almighty answer me!) Oh, that I had the indictment written by my adversary! ³⁶Surely I would carry it on my shoulder; I would bind it on me like a crown; ³⁷I would give him an account of all my steps; like a prince I would approach him.”

^{38:1} Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind: ²“Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? ³Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me.

⁴“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. ⁵Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? ⁶On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its

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cornerstone ⁷when the morning stars sang together and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy? ⁸“Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb?— ⁹when I made the clouds its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band, ¹⁰and prescribed bounds for it, and set bars and doors, ¹¹and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stopped’?”

[²⁵“Who has cut a channel for the torrents of rain, and a way for the thunderbolt, ²⁶to bring rain on a land where no one lives, on the desert, which is empty of human life, ²⁷to satisfy the waste and desolate land, and to make the ground put forth grass?”]

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Praise To You, O Christ** (*Spoken*)

- **SERMON**

Pr Mel Musser

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the one who reveals

God to us, our Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

We’re almost to the finish line in the Book of Job. Next week we get the Epilog and find out the rest of the story as Paul Harvey would say. We began this journey 4 weeks ago with the Folk Tale that set the scene for what we call the Wisdom Dialog where Job’s three friends each get three chances to “help” Job see the logic and “justice” in his suffering and loss. In between each of the friends’ speeches Job answers them back revealing just how unsatisfactory each of their arguments is for his specific and personal suffering. Job has considered each of their arguments and after rejecting them, he calls on God to answer for Himself. That brings us up to today’s reading where God does in fact speak from the

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whirlwind. Any time God appears or speaks that event is called a Theophany. God appeared to Moses in the form of a burning bush and at the Baptism of Jesus God spoke from heaven. Then on the mountain of transfiguration God spoke again telling Peter, James, and John to listen to Jesus. Job challenges God to defend Himself against accusations that God is hostile and the universe God created has no moral compass, where deeds are not met with appropriate responses of reward or punishment. I believe this opinion is shared by a growing number of people today. All you have to do is look for 5 minutes on any news channel to see video clips of anarchists taking over or at least trying to take over sections of our major cities. The people behind such movements with the rioting, the looting, and the attempts to tear down monuments and statues feel empowered to do these things precisely because they know their actions won't be met with appropriate responses.

I remember when I was in 8th or 9th grade. It was back in 1973 or 74. I had lived through all the rioting of the 1960 civil rights movement and the anti-war protests. The High School I attended in Geneva Ohio decided to fire one of our most beloved English teachers, Mr. Lowell Millikin. I had him for a couple of classes and his loss as a teacher hit me pretty hard. It affected almost everyone who ever had him as a teacher. I have no idea how it started, but we all had this

great idea to hold a sit in and a protest march. Every student and many of the teachers participated and we closed down the school for a couple of days and marched to the superintendent's home in the evening. By about the third day of our sit-in the school board relented and re-hired Mr. Millikin. Sometimes protests against injustice do prevail and right wins over wrong. I wish that were the case every time. Unfortunately, in far too many cases what's right doesn't win in the end and today, it's hard to even determine what is right from wrong.

So, how does God defend His image in this challenge by Job? He begins by asking who this is who darkens counsel by words with no knowledge. The Hebrew word we have translated as counsel also means plan or design. God is reminding Job that God is the creator and designer of the entire universe and it is in fact an "intelligent design." In all of Job's complaining about his unfair treatment, God begins His defense by scolding Job for obscuring his design because of Job's ignorance. Although Job's words were ignorant, God's design is something Job should have known; otherwise, he could hardly be blamed for obscuring it. In the following speeches, God describes the design by asking rhetorical questions that Job or any other follower would or should know. God's questions aren't an attempt to make Job look foolish, nor are they God's way of skirting the issue and

not answering Job's challenge. They are God's way, like so many great teachers of asking questions that pull or drag out knowledge from the student. These are not great mysteries here... I mean God asks where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth. Job knows he wasn't even a gleam in his father's eye... Who determined the measurements? Again, Job and anyone who hadn't been living under a rock knew that God made everything and measured out the seas and the land... Now here's the question that really blows my mind and makes me think. On what basis or foundation were the cornerstones of the earth laid? Another way of asking that questions is what holds this great design together? Again, Job has to admit it is God who does all those things and God is also the cornerstone that holds it all together. The function of these questions from God to Job are to remind us of who God is and who we are as well. They aren't questions meant to belittle, but to remind Job and us of the majesty of Almighty God.

Some critics have suggested this verse about God causing the rain in the desert is proof God's design is flawed. What a waist, they say, for rain to fall where no humans can survive? God's view is a little more long-range than our human understanding. Rain in the desert provided a survivable pathway for the Hebrew people to travel back to the Holy Lands after their captivity in Babylon

was ended. Water in the desert provided life for those same Hebrew people many years earlier when they were wondering for 40 years in the wilderness or deserts of what is now Saudi Arabia. In God's grand design the rain falls on both the righteous and the unrighteous, on saints and sinners alike.

So, what are we to make of God's rhetorical questions? First off, let's recognize these questions set the tone for God's whole Theophany. If God just came and praised himself we might say He's boastful or egotistic, or even narcissistic. Instead God draws Job and us in by drawing out of us what we already know to be true about God. With Job, we become participants in this description of who God is and by confessing these truths about God we become a community of faith, believers in this God who created everything with a plan and a pretty great design.

Despite the beginning of the Book of Job where God and the Satan have this bet concerning Job, the vast majority of scripture and my personal experience with bad experiences is that God doesn't cause them, nor does God desire bad things to happen to anyone. As these rhetorical questions by God indicate, God is the one who not only created, but the one who also maintains the order of the creation.

Job is a book written for readers such as us. We get to look down on this story and we know all the inside, behind the scenes stuff that happens, like the prolog that sets the stage for the rest of the book. In the book of Job we get to peer inside the mind of God through this Theophany. For example, in the first chapter we learned that God not only desires the obedience of all his creatures, God also desires us to love him unconditionally. God already loves us unconditionally, but he also wants us to love him just for who he is and not for all the things we get from Him. God's desire for this unconditional faith is so great and such a deep part of who God is that God is willing to abandon justice in some cases to make this type of faith possible. That's why God's mercy always trumps God's justice and grace always wins in the end. If God simply wanted creatures to unconsciously obey, he would have stopped after creating the dirt and rocks and other inanimate objects.

The question then becomes; how does God create such unconditional faith? First by doing all those things God does in creating and sustaining the universe. In most cases the laws of nature are followed and justice is served. Yes, there are exceptions where justice doesn't seem to be fairly executed. Mercy, grace, and forgiveness are three of those exceptions. Unfortunately, in this world there are

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also too many cases of injustice where the punishment we usually reserve for the guilty is meted out to those we see as guiltless and innocent, as with the case of Job. Even after 4 weeks of reading everything I can find about this Book of Job, I still can't answer why innocent suffer. What I can say is there is some comfort in knowing that all suffering isn't caused by the consequences of our specific sins. I will also add that when this book was written the doctrine of original sin hadn't been developed as thoroughly as we know it today. Once you add original Sin into the equation the question of why innocent people suffer becomes a moot point because there are no truly innocent people. The real question is why aren't we all receiving the same treatment as Job? As Saint Paul writes all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Thanks be to God that we all don't get what we deserve, but instead get Grace upon grace from a loving God who desires nothing more than our faith and trust in His goodness. May you experience the goodness of God's mercy and grace. May the whirlwind of God blow through you and give you that bold confidence that no matter what your circumstance in life, you know God is not only the one who made the foundations of the earth, He is also your rock and foundation as well. Amen.

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Silence for reflection may follow

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*** APOSTLES CREED**

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

➤ *Or, He descended to the dead.*

*** PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P: We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

P: We speak about things of which we know nothing and assert our understanding without basis, and yet you endure our foolishness, O Lord. Give us perspective and help us focus on the things that matter and the places where we can make a difference. God of all,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: In the midst of warm weather, keep us mindful of those who may be in danger of harm from high temperatures, that we might help them find relief and safety. God of all,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: You have the power to rein in the sea and you set their boundaries. Forgive our foolish arrogance and our neglect of the great gift of this earth. Give us your deeper wisdom to turn in our tracks and repent of our sins against the planet. God of all,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: Be with all who have lost their homes to disasters of nature, comfort them in loss and help them establish new lives after tragedy. Give peace to families coping with loss, especially from the Covid-19 pandemic. As more states and businesses open back, give us wisdom to continue good sanitation and social distancing practices. Speed up research so treatments and a vaccine are available to everyone in need. Send your healing to all those whom we know

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are in need, especially... .. God of all,

C: Hear our prayer.

P: We pray for pastors and Bishops, for deacons and all your people, who spread your word and expand your earthly kingdom. May we also raise up your gospel for any and all who long to hear it. God of all,

C: Hear our prayer.

Here other petitions may be offered.

P: You are the God of the universe, but also the God of your beloved children. Hear our prayers and hold us close to your side, in the mercy of Jesus Christ, Amen.

*** SHARING OF THE PEACE**

(The Sharing of the Peace that began when the congregation arrived is now shared with the Pastor at this time...)

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

• OFFERING

*** OFFERING PRAYER**

P: Our generosity is only a small reflection of your own, and yet we are compelled to give. Receive these offerings of our hands and hearts, and in your wisdom, O Lord, bless them for your greater purpose. In the name of Christ,

C: Amen.

*** THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Jesus is the "tie that Binds us together", let us pray as Jesus taught...

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

• ANNOUNCEMENTS

*** SENDING BLESSING**

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P: Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. God, the creator, † Jesus, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the comforter, bless you and keep you in eternal love.

C: Amen.

* **SENDING HYMN** **“I Know That My Redeemer Lives!”**

P: We have been singing verses from I know That My Redeemer Lives each week as we study the book of Job. This week I thought you could pick three verses that are your favorites... Can we decide which 3 verses to sing this morning?

- 1 I know that my Redeemer lives!
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, he lives, who once was dead;
he lives, my ever-living head!
- 2 He lives triumphant from the grave;
he lives eternally to save;
he lives exalted, throned above;
he lives to rule his church in love.
- 3 He lives to grant me rich supply;
he lives to guide me with his eye;
he lives to comfort me when faint;
he lives to hear my soul's complaint.
- 4 He lives to silence all my fears;
he lives to wipe away my tears;
he lives to calm my troubled heart;
he lives all blessings to impart.
- 5 He lives to bless me with his love;
he lives to plead for me above;
he lives my hungry soul to feed;

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he lives to help in time of need.

6 He lives, my kind, wise, heav'nly friend;
he lives and loves me to the end;
he lives, and while he lives, I'll sing;
he lives, my prophet, priest, and king!

7 He lives and grants me daily breath;
he lives, and I shall conquer death;
he lives my mansion to prepare;
he lives to bring me safely there.

8 He lives, all glory to his name!
He lives, my Savior, still the same;
what joy this blest assurance gives:
I know that my Redeemer lives!

*** DISMISSAL**

P: Depart in Christ's Love.

C: Seeking, welcoming, and serving all. Amen!

Postlude

“ ”

Roxanne Groff

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Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

	<i>Today</i>	<i>Next Sunday</i>
Ministers	All the People of Trinity	All the People of Trinity
Lector	N/A	N/A
Acolyte	N/A	N/A
Organist	Roxanne Groff	Roxanne Groff
Greeters	Dean Thompson	

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Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman	Sharon Fourman
FaceBook Live Recorder	PJ Musser	

Health Tips for the Week
BODY: Wear sunscreen
MIND: Put a Puzzle together
SPIRIT: Start each day with a devotional



This Week @ Trinity – June 28 thru July 5, 2020

Sun, June 28

10:30 am Worship Service

Fri, July 3

3:30 pm FISH Pantry @ 400 Markwith, Greenville OH

Sat, July 4 *Happy Independence Day!*

Sun, July 5

10:30 am Worship Service

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Scripture readings for next Sunday, July 5th
Job 41:1-8; 42:1-17

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