

The Weekly Word
May 21-27, 2018

Oh happy day... Spring is in full bloom and God loves us! May God's Word carry you yet another week. Happy reading...
Grace and Peace, Bill

To hear the Bible read click this link... <http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/audio/>.

Monday, May 21: Job 34- God sustains all...

"More of the same," I think as I read, more of the same. I feel beaten by this labored argument.

In the midst of his comments Elihu makes an astute comment about God:

It is unthinkable that God would do wrong, that the Almighty would pervert justice. Who appointed him over the earth? Who put him in charge of the whole world? If it were his intention and he withdrew his spirit and breath, all humanity would perish together and mankind would return to the dust (12-15).

I allowed these words to lead me into meditations about the Lord...

Actually I shuddered at the thought that if God *withdrew his spirit and breath, all humanity would perish together and mankind would return to the dust*. News media trumpet climate change or nuclear disaster as potential causes for catastrophe. But those possibilities suggest that we control our own destiny. Where Elihu places God front and center, which I believe is more accurate.

The idea that God, simply by withdrawing His breath, would cause all humanity to perish staggers me. In fact it takes my breath away.

It never ceases to create awe, when I am hit with the wonder and grandness of our God.

Oh, Lord God, You are great. You are good. You are above all. And as a son, I get to herald You to the world and praise You with every breath.

Bless the Lord, o my soul and all that is within me bless His holy name. Amen.

Tuesday, May 22: Job 35- The blessing of being God's child...

Elihu provides some thoughtful words to mull over.

Look up at the heavens and see; gaze at the clouds so high above you. If you sin, how does that affect him? If your sins are many, what does that do to him? If you are righteous, what do you give to him, or what does he receive from your hand? Your wickedness only affects humans like yourself, and your righteousness only other people (5-8).

I rarely zoom out to God's perspective, not that I can ever see His perspective accurately. Still I rarely attempt to do so, I am comfortable living and viewing life from my vantage point alone. Elihu's thoughts lifted me...

How does my right or wrong living affect the Lord? He remains sovereign. His will will still be done. This is fascinating and humbling to ponder.

I am reminded of the psalmist who sings (Psalm 8:3-6): *When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?*

You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor. You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet:

What are we in God's eyes? We are nothing, an insignificant speck on the landscape of eternity, a single grain of sand on a beach. And still, the psalmist pushes us even further in our thinking. Though we are nothing, barely a speck in the universe, God has crowned us with glory and honor.

So even as I consider my humble estate, for some reason, God has crowned me by virtue of my humanity with glory and honor above all other creation.

So I am humbled... my life affects not God, still He blesses me with His gaze and lifts me up with glory and honor as being created in His image.

Oh, the blessing and wonder of being a child of God...

Awed by Your majesty. Humbled by Your greatness. Blessed by Your grace bestowed. I am Yours, Lord God Almighty. I am Yours. I bow to You and I love You. Through Jesus I pray. Amen.

Wednesday, May 23: Job 36- Lord of all, to thee I raise, this my song of grateful praise....

As I was completing my reading and zeroing in on the words upon which I would meditate, verses 26-30

How great is God—beyond our understanding! The number of his years is past finding out. "He draws up the drops of water, which distill as rain to the streams; the clouds pour down their moisture and abundant showers fall on mankind. Who can understand how he spreads out the clouds, how he thunders from his pavilion? See how he scatters his lightning about him, bathing the depths of the sea.

I began to sing from memory the old hymn, *For the Beauty of the Earth*.

1 For the beauty of the earth,
for the beauty of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies.

Refrain:

**Lord of all, to thee we raise
this, our hymn of grateful praise.**

2 For the wonder of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flower,
sun and moon and stars of light, [Refrain]

3 For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above,
for all gentle thoughts and mild, [Refrain]

4 For yourself, best gift divine,
to the world so freely given,

agent of God's grand design:
peace on earth and joy in heaven. [Refrain]

No matter how much science helps us understand the incredible, interconnected workings of our world, the greatness of our God and creation He has wrought fills me with wonder, joy, gratefulness and amazement. God is beyond understanding. The more we know, the more amazed I grow and the more I realize I do not know! God is beyond all, creating all from nothing.

I gaze out my large windows on a damp spring day. The rains of last night are over, the flowers and earth has been watered yet again. Birds fly, small creatures begin their daily hunt for food, blossoms open, mosses come to life thanks to the moisture of the rain... even muted by the gray tones of the overcast morning the world is beautiful. I marvel at the Lord who made all this and gave me (us) eyes and ears and hearts to soak it in and glory in Him.

Lord of all, to thee I raise, this my song of grateful praise.

Oh, God, thank You for Your majesty, Your creation, Your love and faithfulness. Thank You for the delight of knowing You and seeing You in the world around me. Lord of all, to thee I raise, this my song of grateful praise. Through Jesus Christ I pray. Amen.

Thursday, May 24: Job 37- Filled with wonder for the Lord ...

Once again, Elihu draws me into contemplating the greatness of the Lord. 'Do you know how...' Elihu asks in 15 and 16. And he rounds up his words saying, *The Almighty is beyond our reach and exalted in power; in his justice and great righteousness, he does not oppress (23).*

I look outside and think how does grace grow? Earlier today I was thinking about the northern lights I witnessed in February. How are they formed, I wondered so I looked it up. Science knows part of the answer, but their knowledge is incomplete.

Isn't that true about most things, our information is incomplete.

Not so the Lord... He is perfect in wisdom and understanding because He created all things!!! God not only knows how things work, He created them in the first place.

It seems Elihu's goal is to get Job to suffer humility realizing the greatness of the Lord.

No matter Job's response, which is not included in the story, I was drawn to a pause.

I stopped yet again and marveled at the majesty of the Lord. It was quite easy today, a glorious spring day. Windows open... the fresh air streaks across my cheeks as the crisp air delights each breath. Sun is high in the sky causing colors of budding flowers to pop. I am seated right now by a brook, which runs lazily by, offering a habitat for ducks, geese and a swan. Earlier some type of hawk was perched in the tree either resting or spying fish in the water. Behind all of this beauty and delight is the hand of the Lord. His creation is wonder-full... i.e. when I pause and reflect I am filled with wonder in the Lord God creator.

What a gift... to be filled with wonder for the Lord. Such as been one of the great gifts from my read through Job!

Lord, Increase my wonder... my wonder and awe of YOU. I pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Friday, May 25: Job 38- Put in my place...

Abrupt change... from men questioning Job to God's interrogation. Even with this dramatic change, I feel at peace. [Of course I am not the person being put on the hot seat.]

For me, the fact that the editor of the book announces, *Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm* (1), sets me at ease. Finally I will hear God's voice on this matter.

The Lord, like a prosecuting attorney, launches into a seemingly endless series of questions that neither Job nor any person could answer.

Frankly though at peace I sit stunned. I can only imagine how Job felt. Then I glance back at the opening words, God spoke *out of the storm*. I do not know what that means literally, however, thoughts of booms and crashes of lightening and the rattling of rain hitting the ceiling if they are inside, or pounding the trees if they are outside, causes additional quaking for me.

I have never discernably heard the voice of God. Oh, I know the nudge of the Lord, an inspired thought I attribute to God's voice but I have never audibly heard God. I have sat in a raging storm, including hurricanes, but never had a sense that God was speaking to me through the storm. Yet, that was clearly Job's experience. The inquisition of God must have been all the more intense given God's platform for speaking... the storm!

I wonder what Job's posture was like. Did he who said he longed for his day in court stand tall and was prepared to speak or did he bow low under the sheer weight of God's presence and voice?

The text at this point is silent on Job, his response or his demeanor. I imagine I would be completely humbled. It is one thing to argue with other me and cry out for your 'day in court.' It is another thing altogether to find yourself in the presence of God with God grilling you.

No one could possibly answer these questions, which seems to be the point of the text. However, we will have to wait until God finishes His statement to know for certain.

Until then, I marvel. God actually gave Job his 'day in court.' That is a rich thought. After all that has gone on and all the speeches, God apparently has been listening and now He answers.

God listens... that thought both encourages me and frightens me.

Encouraged because Job, and by extension we, are that important to God that He cares and He listens...

Frightening because God hears my words which are at times banal and irreverent... that God hears those parts of my speaking...

Even though I am not the one on the 'hot seat', I sit here stilled before the Lord...

Words escape me, Lord. I simply bow my head before You. Through Jesus I pray. Amen.

Saturday, May 26: Job 39- God pours it on...

The Lord pours it on, His inquisition of Job continues. The questions come in rapid-fire sequence. God is relentless.

There is not a mention of Job, yet we know he is on the receiving end of God's questions.

I cannot imagine what it was like to stand there in God's presence as He was questioned. Were Job's knees quaking? Was he trying to hide? Did he stand tall? We don't know because GOD is front and center in this chapter (and the last).

God was at the center of it all in the beginning and now again God is at the center of it all. This seems fitting... God at the center of it all.

It seems fitting that Job's day in court begins not with Job making his case, but with God stating His.

It is actually refreshing to be confronted with the magnitude of God in these pages. Although I am being put in my place, it feels right and good because God is in His place. I surrender to Him. I bow before Him. I worship Him. God is supreme. God knows all.

And to this I say AMEN and Halleluiah!

Oh, Lord, You are mighty and majestic. You are Lord and I trust and believe in You Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit. Amen. Halleluiah!

Sunday, May 27, 2018, Sunday Worship

If any of my thoughts or the Bible readings spark questions send an email reply and I will do my best to answer all questions from people on the list... I will answer personal questions privately; general questions will be answered in a subsequent email installment.

If you are reading along with me from the PCOG website you can send questions or request being placed on the weekly email list by emailing Lisa at office@pcogonline.org.

Click here for a link to my sermons on the web. Sermons are generally posted within 2 days.