

Notes for Next Sunday

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

The Point of this Week's Readings

Old Testament (Job 38:1-11). Mighty tornado like tempest threatens Job with destruction, in marked contrast to the “still small voice” that came to Elisha. God often appeared in storms. The Lord comes to Job as Job had requested, answering Job’s blustery and windy words. Earlier, Job stated that if the Lord came to him in a whirlwind, He would crush Job. Instead of crushing him, the Lord speaks with him as Job had hoped and as Elihu had assured him. His confrontation is a loving, gracious response to Job’s many questions. *said*. Instead of answering Job’s specific questions, the Lord floods Job with further questions to demonstrate His creative power and continuing presence in the midst of the ambiguities of this life.

Epistle (2 Corinthians 6:1-13). Christ’s love compels Paul to persevere through all hardships to make God’s offer of forgiveness and reconciliation plain to the people at Corinth. Too often we mute the Gospel’s power because of our pride, our carelessness, or our lack of concern for others. No greater honor can be given us than to be His ambassadors, His spokespeople. He not only saves us but also works through us.

Gospel Mark 4:35-41). When Jesus rebukes the wind and waves, the lifeless storm shows a greater recognition of His divine power than the disciples. Similar examples still abound, as the brute forces of nature invariably obey the Lord’s commands better than people, including God’s own children, obey them. But the Lord nonetheless continues to love and care for us, despite our dullness and doubts. He not only calms all of the storms in our lives but actually does so in ways that mature our faith and lead us to trust Him more deeply.

For more in-depth commentary on each reading, read the notes found after each text below.

OLD TESTAMENT – Job 38:1-11

Then the LORD answered Job out of the storm. He said: ²“Who is this that darkens my counsel 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. ⁵ Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? ⁶ On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone— ⁷ while the morning stars sang together and all the angels^a shouted for joy? ⁸“Who shut up the sea behind doors when it burst forth from the womb, ⁹ when I made the clouds its garment and wrapped it in thick darkness, ¹⁰ when I fixed limits for it and set its doors and bars in place, ¹¹ when I said, ‘This far you may come and no farther; here is where your proud waves halt’?”

38:1 the Lord. It is significant that in verse 1 God is referred to by his name the Lord (Yahweh – covenant/promise keeper). Throughout the greatest part of the book he is referred to by three titles” Shaddai (the Almighty – the Mountain One), El and Eloah (both meaning God). Only once in these 35 chapters do we find the name Lord. From this we can conclude that Job knew the true God by his name and that he stood in a covenant relationship with him. (PBC)

38:2 darkens my counsel. In this case it means to hinder God’s counsel or take the true light from it. (QV)

38:3 brace yourself like a man. Literally those words read, “Gird your loins like a man.” In ancient time people didn’t wear slacks, jeans or shorts as people do today. They wore long, flowing garments which

they would tie up with a sash or belt when they engaged in some physical activity. That was particularly true in the case of warfare or athletic contests. In these words God challenges Job to get ready for a contest with him. (PBC)

38:4 laid the foundation. The Lord speaks of creation in terms of building a house with plans (v 5) that are known to the Architect of the universe, but not to the laborers in the building. The Lord echoes Eliphaz's sarcastic comment about Job being born "before the hills" (15:7). With sarcastic questions, the Lord shows Job how little he knows. All is under His control, as Job had acknowledged earlier (12:13). (TLSB)

38:8 when it burst out from the womb. Personifies creation of the seas as a birthing event. The infant waters gush into the swaddling clothes of the clouds (v 9). Many in the ancient Near East thought of water as an evil element, but it is a gracious gift from God, always under His caring dominion and delimitation (vv 10–11). Babylonian mythology described the creation as the destruction of a monster, Tiamat, whose body was used to construct the world. (TLSB)

EPISTLE – 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain.² For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.³ We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited.⁴ Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses;⁵ in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger;⁶ in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love;⁷ in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left;⁸ through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors;⁹ known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed;¹⁰ sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.¹¹ We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you.¹² We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us.¹³ As a fair exchange—I speak as to my children—open wide your hearts also.

6:2 the time of my favor ... the day of salvation. Paul applies the words of promise in Is 49:8 to the Corinthian Christians. He impresses on the Corinthians the importance and seriousness of God's offer of grace to them through Jesus Christ. God's favor is being offered now to the Corinthians, and Paul pleads with them not to take this offer lightly. (TLSB)

6:3 We put no stumbling block in anyone's path. As a minister of the Gospel, Paul was careful not to get in the way of the message of Jesus. He was the messenger, not the message. (TLSB)

6:4 as servants of God we commend ourselves. Here, Paul adds that his conduct in suffering and persecution has been worthy of his calling as a minister of God to the Corinthians (cf 4:7–12). (TLSB)

6:7 weapons of righteousness. The tools that God graciously provides His people to wage His battle, to execute His mission and ministry—namely, God's Word and Sacraments (Mt 28:18–20), prayer, sacrificial service (cf 10:3–5; Rm 6:13; 13:12). (TLSB)

6:8-10 Throughout these verses, one is confronted by the contrasts involved in Paul's ministry, the tensions of people's reaction to him, his own personal struggles, and even the paradox of what it means to be an earthen vessel with the treasures of Christ. But through it all, Paul claims that none of these circumstances affected his faithful sharing of the ministry of God's reconciliation with others (3:3–4). (TLSB)

6:11-14 Paul has always been completely open and sincere in his relations with the Christians in Corinth (cf. 1:12–14; 4:2), but the false apostles among them have been trying to persuade them that Paul does not really love them. Now the apostle tenderly appeals to these Corinthians, who are the beneficiaries of his love for them. (CSB)

6:13 *widen your hearts*. Paul, in appealing to their hearts, is not simply calling them back to himself. He is calling them back to Christ, who can make His light shine in their hearts (4:6). Restored to Jesus, their hearts could again be wide open to Paul. (TLSB)

GOSPEL – Mark4:35-41

³⁵ That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” ³⁶ Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. ³⁷ A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. ³⁸ Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” ³⁹ He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. ⁴⁰ He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” ⁴¹ They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

4:35 *to the other side*. He was leaving the predominantly Jewish region of Galilee for the more Gentile region. (TLSB)

4:35 The Sea of Galilee is 13 miles long, 7 miles wide, and 160 feet deep at its deepest point. (Lutheran Bible Companion – Volume 2)

4:37 *A furious squall came up*. Situated in a basin surrounded by mountains, the Sea of Galilee is particularly susceptible to sudden, violent storms. Cool air from the Mediterranean is drawn down through the narrow mountain passes and clashes with the hot, humid air lying over the lake. (CSB)

4:38 *sleeping on a cushion*. The picture of Jesus, exhausted and asleep on the cushion customarily kept under the coxswain’s seat, is characteristic of Mark’s human touch. (CSB)

4:38 They feared. This is not commendable. But they sought help from the right person. That is commendable. (Buls)

4:39 *rebuked...be still*. Jesus addresses creation by speaking to the storm as if it were a person. By His authoritative word, He masters the wind and waves just as easily as illness and demons. (TLSB)

4:39 *wind died down*. Hendriksen: Not only the winds immediately quiet down, but so do even the waves. Generally, it is well-known, after the winds have perceptibly diminished, the billows will continue to roll for a while . . . But in this instance winds and waves synchronize in the sublime symphony of a solemn silence. (Buls)

4:40 *why are you afraid...no faith*. Jesus had assured the Twelve not much earlier that “the secret of the kingdom” had been given to them (v. 11). However, they had yet to internalize His teaching and self-revelation. Their lack of understanding is a theme for almost all of Mark. (TLSB)

4:41 *they were terrified*. They feared a great fear.” To the core of their being they feared—fearing their presence before a force like they had not before seen, fearing this God before whom they do not deserve to stand, fearing for their eternal welfare. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 19, Part 3)