Job 38; Isaiah 55:8-11; The LORD Responds I. True Wisdom on Display II. Job Silenced by God

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, when God speaks it is wise to listen! But up to this point, we have noticed that God has been silent. The book of Job opens with the LORD speaking to Satan- but the LORD has not been speaking to Job. God has been silent, and Job is growing impatient. Job has been crying out for justice- for vindication- will not the LORD speak and come to the aid of His servant? Why must Job remain forsaken? “Why have you forsaken me” Job could have cried out- and like Jesus- Job has remained suffering in the silence! But today the silence is broken! Finally, words come from the mouth of the LORD- and as we read from Isaiah 55- every word of the LORD will accomplish the purpose that God designs. But the challenge is this- the purpose that God designs is not always the purpose that we design! The answer God gives may not be the one that we are asking for! When the LORD speaks to Job- He does not answer all of Job’s questions. But the fact remains when the LORD speaks His people had better listen! The question that Job is asking is this- why did all these things happen to me? Will not the judge of the earth do what is right? Although refusing to charge God with wrong, Job has said that what he has endured is not right. I did not deserve this! The answer that the LORD gives is something like- “who are you to question Me?” Who are you man, to question the work, purpose and wisdom of God? So as we will see today, one of the first responses of those who hear God speak is this: we are to humble ourselves and listen! Job said back in 31:35- Let the Almighty answer me! Well, today God starts to answer Job- but the answer comes in the form of a question! So Job is asking God to speak- to explain Himself. But can man question God? Can we put God on the stand and make Him answer our questions? The LORD is getting ready to speak- 38:3- Get ready, Job, and I will answer! If you can answer my question, then I will answer yours. Again in 40:2- can you content with God? Can you argue your case against God? Get ready for trial Job- 40:7- I will question you! So today we consider this theme: Jesus Christ teaches Job humility as He reveals the wisdom of the Creator.

**I. True Wisdom on Display**

Our text begins in 38:1 where the LORD answers Job out of the whirlwind. As you will remember, when the LORD shows up- when His power is on display- every man from Moses to Isaiah is struck by the awesome power of God! Woe to me- I am undone! So God speak to Job out of the glory cloud and says- who are you that you would speak to me this way? Who are you, that you would teach me wisdom or question my works? Instead of answering the question -Why LORD- the LORD says- why are you talking like you can teach me something? Who are you- finite man? The LORD is changing Job’s focus- and then He turns Job’s attention to creation. Job- Lets go for a walk. Do you think that you are strong- do you think that you are mighty- do you think that you are wise? Well, let’s just see. Okay- Job- if you are strong and mighty- if you are wise- if you would teach me- let me ask you- how did I make the world? Where you there- Job- the LORD asks in 38:4. Were you present when I set the earth on its foundations? Do you know how I measured the endless expanse of the sky- how I put the sea in its proper border as v. 8 says. Do you know how I made both light and darkness- before even the sun and moon were made? Surely you know how I made the planets and placed the stars in their constellations- v. 31. How about it Job? Do you know how I made the waters to flow from the heavens- how I formed the clouds, hail and snow- v. 22. Do you know how I make the grass grow- or cause the waters to freeze- and then thaw again? Surely you who are the wisest of the men know how everything was made- and you can call out to clouds and make it rain!

No- you can’t do that Job? Okay- how about the creatures. If you cannot make the things of creation- if you cannot form and fashion the heavens and the earth- how about the creatures. Do you have the ability to go tow to tow with the beast of the earth? Can you control the creatures or bring forth the animals that I have made? In 40:15 we read of the Behemoth. Now the Behemoth was largest of all the land creatures- the name behemoth simply means “beast” and it was applied to a lot of different animals. Now the behemoth was the pinnacles of God’s work- the largest of all the land animals. He was apex predator of the land- no one could stand in his way. Mighty in all areas- in limb, tail and jaw. Covered in muscle- the first or the greatest of at the woks of God 40:19. Now we do not know exactly what animal this was- but whatever animal it was- it was huge- able to go where it pleased and do as it wished. Today we would say it was like the hippo or the elephant. Can anyone wrestle a hippo and win? Can anyone lift an elephant out of its place? Well, the LORD made all of these creatures- and He can lead them by His hand! So Job, you can’t win in a battle against a hippo? Well, how about the Leviathan. Now the Leviathan is found in 41:1. If the Behemoth was the largest land animal- the Leviathan was the largest water reptile. Can you catch this water beast with your ropes- can you make it your pet? This massive sea serpent was a mighty foe- you cannot pierce its hide with hooks or harpoons- you cannot win in a battle against it. The description in 41:21 is that the leviathan is almost like a fire-breathing dragon- filling the hearts of men with fear! Today it would be like our crocodiles or sharks- no one challenges a great white shark to a swimming race? You don’t let your kids play with crocodiles? So the leviathan and the behemoth stand as the princes of the water and sea- and guess what Job. I made these! You cannot catch them or restrain them- but these each get their food from my hand and find shelter in the shade I provide! The LORD goes on in chapters 38-39 to point to all sorts of other creatures- the lion, the horse, the mountain goat, the hawk and even the ostrich. These were all made and brought forth by the wisdom of the LORD! These all tell of the glory and might of the creator! So lets review. The first thing that God says when Satan comes into his presence is this- have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him- righteous in the land. But when Job comes into God’s presence- this time the LORD says to Job- Have you considered my creation and the mighty creatures in it? Job- this world is bigger than you- my purposes are greater than just your life! Each creature has a place and purpose- and nothing is outside of my control! The LORD gives Job a lesson on creation and providence- that is the answer that HE gives! Instead of just telling Job what he wanted to know- the LORD opens Job’s eyes to God’s power. Sometimes, the answer to prayer that we need is a change of focus! To take our eyes off our situation- and to refocus our attention on the glory of God! Remember that Jesus did the same thing in Matthew 6- when you are filled with anxiety and dread- when you are worried about what is to come- Jesus tells us to look at the birds and the flowers! Consider that God takes care of these- look around you! Rest in the power, wisdom and might of God! That is the first answer to your prayers!

**II. Job Silenced by God**

But how will Job respond to this lesson? After being reminded of the LORD’s power, wisdom and might- after the LORD has quested Job and examined Job’s ability and his own wisdom- Job responds in 40:3. I am small- what can I answer. I have spoken, but I will not proceed. Job rightly puts his hand over his mouth and confesses his own inadequacies. You see, the LORD is humbling Job- Job is going to be given a right view of his own lack of understanding. And it is from this position of humility that Job will rightly worship. To be clear, God’s people are comforted when they remember- when they meditate on the powerful works of God! Particularly in times of suffering, God’s people must rest in the knowledge of God’s Fatherly love and care! Seeing His power over creation, moves His people from worry to worship! This is a theme that we find in the Scriptures. Be still, and know that I am God- Psalm 46. The LORD is in His temple, let all the earth keep silent before him- Habakkuk 2:20. Paul put it this way in Rom. 9- God is the potter, and we are the clay. Who can resist His will, who can question His work? Does not the potter have right over the clay? One more, in Ecc. 5:2; God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few! Job has taken this lesson to heart- God is God- His ways may not be our ways- but His ways are always good! The LORD has basically reminded Job of his place. Job comes face to face with his own inadequacies- I am of small account. I have spoken too quickly- I have spoken of things I did not understand! I see now that You are God and that you are in control. I am reminded of your creative power- that you reign and rule overall. I content myself in that fact- that nothing happens outside of your control- that leaf and blade- raindrop and snowflake- behemoth and leviathan- all stand in their place because they are held by your hand. Each finds its place in this creation by your good pleasure. So let me worship you- forgive me for doubting your care! Your ways are beyond all my tracing out- you do unfathomable things! If you take care of the birds of the air and beasts of the field, I can know that you have me in your hand as well! In other words, the doctrine of creation and providence moves Job to worship! God has not abandoned or forgotten Job! Job acknowledges that God’s ways are mysterious- an that we may not have all the answer to “why” given to us. But let God be God- He is not answerable to us- it is we who must give an answer to Him! Job has kept the faith- His trust in the Redeemer holds- Job learned to trust God in the dark and silence. And when the light breaks and His voice is heard- Job replies with humble worship! Job has overplayed his hand- he has spoken without fully understanding. And for this, Job repents as he closes his mouth in humble submission.

Before we close, teaching by asking question is a tactic often used by our God. As we find with Jesus in Matthew 22:42 as well- whose son is the Christ? Is the Christ to be David’s son or David’s lord. Answer me this question. Or again in Mark 11- when questioned about his own authority Jesus posed a question about the authority of John the Baptist. Jesus often spoke in ways that humbled the Pharisees and exposed their own pride. But where Job learned the lesson and covered his mouth, the Pharisees went out and conspired to kill Jesus! In other words, not everyone learns the lesson that God is teaching in creation. Rom. 1 adds to this by reminding us that creation can be used to teach us about God’s eternal power. The same power that Job witnessed as He looked at the heavens, the earth and its creatures. God’s eternal power and divine nature are truly on display. Although this knowledge is not enough to reveal the identity and work of our Redeemer- as we saw in Job. 19- the fact remains that the heavens declare the glory of our God! Although the secret things belong to God- the revealed things do belong to us. So like Job, when we come to see our own inadequacy and inability- may we turn to God in humble worship which silences our objections. And as Jesus taught in Matthew 6- if God takes care of all these creatures, He will surely care for you! You, Job, are of much more value than these beasts of the earth and sea! I am sending my Son, Jesus, to be your redeemer! You can trust me- you can rely on me! I will hold you in my hand even when you do not understand!

To conclude, the presence, wisdom and power of God are put on display today. The LORD takes Job by the hand and walks around all that He has made. Consider this- look at that! Who do you think made all these? Why do you question my wisdom and purpose when you can see that I have everything firmly in my hand! No creature can move or be moved unless I sent it! That applies to Satan, the leviathan and the behemoth! No creature can remove you from my loving hand- so find rest in this truth! Jesus Christ teaches Job humility as He reveals the wisdom of the creator. God may not reveal everything to us- some things remain hidden. But what He does say is sufficient for us and our salvation! We will not know everything- but we can hear enough about God to give Him praise! So may we all worship our God as He reveals Himself in creation and in His Word.