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 Sermon
 November 10th, Pentecost 22

To Jesus Christ, who suffered once for sins in our place, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us to God, AMEN!!!

The Word of the LORD which forms a portion for our sermon text this morning comes to us from the book of Job, verses from Chapters 13 and 14:

So a man rots away like a garment eaten by moths. 14 Man born of woman has a few short days, and they are full of anxiety. 2 He blossoms like a flower, but soon withers. He recedes like a shadow and does not remain. 3 You keep your eye on such a man. You bring me into judgment in your presence. 4 Who can produce something pure from something that is impure? No one. 5 Certainly his days are determined. The number of his months has been set by you. A limit is set, which he cannot exceed. 6 Turn your gaze away from him, and let him be, until he finishes his day's work as a hired man.

This is the Word of The LORD!!! The congregation may be seated...

Mercy, Grace, and Peace ARE YOURS from your God and Father and from your Savior from sin, Jesus Christ. Dear fellow Redeemed...

One of my favorite movies of all time is the film from 1987, "The Princess Bride". It is a great movie for many reasons. But I think the reason I love it so much is how quotable it is. Within it are many lines of dialogue that are classic and known by heart. I feel like I could recite many lines from it, even if I never watched it ever again.

But, recently this movie has become a favorite of my son. So, I've been watching it a lot more these days. One of the lines that stood out to me on the last watch is not one of the most quoted lines from the movie. But it struck me, and it was a line I thought of when I was reading our text that we have before us today. The princess is being taunted by the person who she thinks killed her one true love, who incidentally actually turns out to be her love. She angrily shouts at him, "You mock my pain!" He then responds, "Life IS pain, highness. Anyone who says differently is selling something."

Do you think that is true? Is life pain?

I think that the Biblical man known as Job would agree, at least at some points in his life. Here he states, **Man born of woman has a few short days, and they are full of anxiety.**

These words might not be the uplifting message you were looking for today. But just because they aren't very positive doesn't mean they are untrue. Job brings up some good points here, and depending on what you are feeling at the moment, they can be very relatable. Sometimes we feel the way that Job did. Yet, thankfully our salvation is not dependant on our feelings. No matter how we feel, we know (by faith) that the LORD truly provides relief from our sufferings. While the days of our lives are set and determined, so also is our grace and our salvation. Our grace and salvation are determined by our Redeemer, Jesus Christ!

And so we pray:

O LORD, SANCTIFY US BY YOUR TRUTH, YOUR WORD IS TRUTH, AMEN!

The story of the book of Job is as well known as it is unique. The Bible describes him as a “blameless and upright man”. He had a large family, 7 sons and 3 daughters. He was also one of the wealthiest men in his land. His wealth rivaled perhaps even that of Abraham. He lived a life that was truly blessed, and even though he had great possessions, he had even greater faith in the LORD.

But that faith would be severely tested. There is a unique encounter at the beginning of this book, where somehow Satan came before the LORD. The subject of Job comes up, and the LORD brings him up as an example of a blameless servant of His. Satan basically argues that the reason for Job’s devotion is because the LORD blessed him so richly. So, Satan is allowed to mess with Job, everything that he has except for his own life. And Satan takes it all away. His large herd of oxen and camels gets plundered by raiders, and his large herd of sheep and donkeys were consumed by fire from heaven. All of his servants who were in charge of these animals were all killed as well. He received news of all of this, and in the same breath, he is also informed that all of his children were gathered in the same house and a mighty wind came up and collapsed the house, killing all of his ten children. It is hard to imagine a worse day for nearly anyone in the entire history of the earth!

How did Job handle this terrible news? **Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. 21 And he said: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, And naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord.” (Job 1:20-21)**

Initially, Job handles this tragedy very well. But then Satan is allowed to destroy his health as well. Job gets very painful boils all over him, and he is in a great deal of pain. The rest of this book is a large amount of lament poetry, and it basically focuses on Job and a few of his friends debating the nature and goodness of God.

It is never obvious that Job loses his faith. But what is obvious is that he is greatly depressed. And who could blame him? He lost literally everything that he

had. At least you have your health? Not Job! He was down in the dumps, as even the best of us would most certainly be as well.

The words of our text bear Job’s depression out. **So a man rots away like a garment eaten by moths. 14 Man born of woman has a few short days, and they are full of anxiety. 2 He blossoms like a flower, but soon withers. He recedes like a shadow and does not remain.**

The book of Job is not the only place in scripture where depression is expressed. This book is very unique, but it reads pretty similarly to the book of Ecclesiastes. It reiterates that this world is a vale of tears. This is a truth that we know full well. We all know examples of what Job says here. We know of people who have had very short days, taken at a young age. We have known examples of people whose lives are full of anxiety. Man does not last long in this world, and the few days that we do have are often weighed down by grief. Often times, that movie line is true. “Life IS pain!”

Have you ever felt like Job? Surely, most of us have not suffered in the tragic ways in which Job did. But you don’t have to suffer like Job did to feel the same way which he did. In our darkest moments, we act even worse than Job. Sometimes the weight of grief overwhelms us. It is during these times when even staunch Christians are tempted to ask of the Almighty, “Why God? Why???”

There are some important things to know when we experience such grief. First of all, it is not wrong to struggle in this world. Jesus told us to expect pain in this world, and we do suffer here from time to time. But God will never give us anything that we cannot handle. **1 Corinthians 10:12-13 12 So let him who thinks he stands be careful that he does not fall. 13 No testing has overtaken you except ordinary testing. But God is faithful. He will not allow you to be tested beyond your ability, but when he tests you, he will also bring about the outcome that you are able to bear it.**

Even though this great tragedy struck Job, God still had him in mind. Satan was allowed to do some things

to him, but not everything. God would not allow Satan to take his life. Satan tried to tempt Job, God tested Job's faith.

Satan loves to get us down! When we say "Woe is me!" that is Satan's cue to turn up the pressure. He uses these moments in our lives to tempt us. He will use these moments to tempt us down 1 of 2 roads. His goal is to get us to either A) blame God and doubt His goodness or B) to make us think that we are being punished for our multitude of sins. Job ran the gambit of both of these scenarios. First, when his friends come to him, they basically say to him, "What did you do to offend God so greatly?" But eventually, that thought gives way to "I didn't do anything, so why I am suffering so much?" Satan loves these moments. The devil tries to drive us from doubt unto despair. Either despair over our own sinfulness or despair of disbelief in our Holy and Righteous God!

But even through the eyes of grief, we still know the truth by faith! **2 Corinthians 4:8-12 We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So then death is working in us, but life in you.**

Yes, Satan revels in our suffering. But he also knows that it is a risky play. Yes, a man may be tempted to despair in his sufferings, but they make clear the goodness of God as well. It is in the darkest of times when we can see our Saviors light of love the brightest! It is in these times when the truth we easily forget becomes evident. We are sinful, and all flesh is as grass. Like Job points out here, we do not last forever, our lives are short. We were meant to die in our sins. Despite our fantasies of long life and control over the things that happen to us, we are pretty hapless and helpless.

During times of great suffering, do not look at the world like the world does. Rather, see the One who

came to save the world. Don't just see the pain and sadness, see the Savior instead!

4 Who can produce something pure from something that is impure? No one. 5 Certainly his days are determined. The number of his months has been set by you. A limit is set, which he cannot exceed.

These verses confirm the truth. Our days are limited, the number of our days are set. We do not know what that limit is exactly, but God does! During these limited days, they are often highlighted by the suffering which occurs during them. At least, that is the way that the world sees it. But, they are also highlighted by the grace and mercy that is shown to us. It easy to focus on the sufferings. It is harder to focus on the blessings. It is even harder to focus on all the bad that could've happened to us which God simply did not allow!

Job asks a rhetorical question, but it's not that rhetorical...**Who can produce something pure from something that is impure? No one.** This is, of course, true, from the perspective of men. Since all men are sinful, and our righteousness is like rags, it seems like there is nothing that can be done to fix this. And that is true, for man. **Matthew 19:26 Jesus looked at them and said, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."**

We know by faith that Jesus is the answer to all of this! When we are down, we are tempted to think that no one has it as bad as I do. But this is never the case! Whenever you think that no one could have experienced the things that you have, you are wrong! Someone always has it worse than you do! Who could possibly have it worse than you? Well, how about JESUS!!!

Jesus is in this text! When Job says, **14 Man born of woman has a few short days, and they are full of anxiety**, this was true of Jesus as well! He too was born of a woman, and His days were full of anxiety, to say the least. But that was the point! He did not come to this world to be served, but rather to serve, and give His life as a ransom for many!

Yes, we have it rough sometimes. If any man had a case for the fictional argument "No one has it worse

than I do!" it was Job. He had it rough. But do you know who had it far worse than you do or Job did? JESUS! There was absolutely zero reasons Jesus went through what He went through. Job was a pretty good person, but he was still sinful. Jesus wasn't just pretty good, He was absolutely good. He was perfect, He was 100% righteous, never sinning even once. But, despite His perfection, He was made to suffer in ways that no one ever had! He suffered the pain of hell itself for us on the cross! No one ever had it worse than Jesus did on the cross. The only reason He suffered in this way wasn't because of something He had done, but because of what we had done!

Surely he was taking up our weaknesses, and he was carrying our sufferings. We thought it was because of God that he was stricken, smitten, and afflicted, 5 but it was because of our rebellion that he was pierced. He was crushed for the guilt our sins deserved. The punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53:4-5

This was how God did the impossible. This was how God **produce something pure from something that is impure** like Job said. How does one make the impure race of man pure? By taking the Holy Lamb of God and making Him stricken, smitten, and afflicted. It is by His wounds that we are healed! Jesus suffered as no had ever suffered, and in so doing He secured our salvation!

This is how our gracious and loving God provides relief! He put His own life on the line, and because He was willing to suffer greatly, now we never will! Yes, we do suffer from time to time here in this world. But these sufferings are nothing compared to the salvation we have been given through Jesus Christ! Paul writes in Romans **For I conclude that our sufferings at the present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us. 19 In fact, creation is waiting with eager longing for the sons of God to be revealed. 20 For creation was subjected to futility, not by its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in the hope 21 that even creation itself will be set free from**

slavery to corruption, in order to share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. (Romans 8:18-23)

Satan loves to get us down! He uses these moments to get us to either blame God and doubt His goodness or to make us think that we are being punished for our multitude of sins. But we know by faith that neither one of these things is true. We do deserve to be punished for our sins, but God doesn't do that! Instead, He punished Jesus for your sins. This is how God shows His goodness and grace for us! Jesus suffered and died, and now we will not experience the suffering that our sins deserve!

Is life pain? It may seem like it from time to time. The pain that we experience here is pretty clear. It is easy to see it when it happens. But, for the Christian, it also makes us see our redemption that much more clear! Life may be pain, but not with Jesus! Jesus suffered true pain, and as a result, we will experience true and everlasting life with Him in paradise!

Job suffered, but eventually, he saw how God truly loved him. Everything he lost he recovered, and he ended up living a long life, highlighted by faith. He saw great suffering in his time, but he also saw his redemption clearly through his sufferings. The same is clear for us as well! Yes, we may suffer here for a while, but heaven is our home. That is where we are going, and there we will be comforted forever! Our God is good, our Savior is great, and because our Redeemer lives, so too shall we! Let us not commensurate with Job and cry out "woe is me". Rather, let us see by faith his confession and cry out in the same way that he did! **Job 19:25-27 For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth; 26 And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, That in my flesh I shall see God, 27 Whom I shall see for myself, And my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!" AMEN!!!**