

Theme: **Chaos Reigns / Chaos Broken**

Text: Genesis 1: 1 – 5

Date: January 7, 2018

Season: 1st Sunday after Epiphany

Place: Shepherd of the Rockies LCMS, Bailey, CO

*Grace and peace to you as you grow in the knowledge of God's Epiphany, from God, our Father, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

“Wait a minute, Stop this world! I want to get off!” Those might be your thoughts and words when you run into the chaos of this world. You know the feeling when something out of our control throws a monkey wrench into your day and you just don't have time to deal with it. The coffee pot explodes all over you, your computer stops working right in the middle of an important project, the dishwasher or the washing machine rebels and fills your house with water and soap suds. Oh, you might be able to handle the minor annoyances that happen during each day, but there are times when life gets down right chaotic.

Nobody like chaos, we can't work or thrive under fear or the constant bombardment of demands, worries and problem from every direction. The more chaos we have in our lives the more we go out of our minds. Oh, we can deal with a little chaos at times in our life as we work on bringing order back into our life, but when the chaos gets out of hand, we just want it all to stop and get off this world, because life can't exist in chaos.

Moses, in the book of Genesis, takes us back to the beginning, even before history began, before the fall, before the rat race of our modern life, before work, before the crashing of computers and cars that don't work the way we want them began. At the start of Genesis, we begin before time when there is only God, Eluhim.

Why does Moses use the word 'Eluhim' here for God instead of the name that God gave to Himself, Yahweh, at the burning bush when Moses asked God what His name was? Because the word 'Eluhim' means: the ones to be revered or feared, the ones to be respected because they started it all. From the first chapter of Genesis we are introduced to the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit who are involved in creating and making us and the whole world perfectly good. In the beginning, all three persons of the Triune God were involved in creation and they are still involved in our lives today. Yes, we need to Eluhim, to revere God, above all things, for all that He has and will do for us.

Moses begins the account of God's creation with the words, **“In the beginning, Eluhim created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and**

**darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of Eluhim was hovering over the face of the waters.”** (Gen 1:1 – 3) God begins with nothing, no form, no substance and out of this complete chaos or absent of anything, He begins the creation of all that we have, know and are by build life upon the solid rock foundation of His Love for us. Where God’s love exists, the void of chaos is subdued and defeated. Where chaos reigns, life can no longer go on. We know this all too well. God created the world by the power of His Word and it was perfect, but chaos came into this world by a seductive serpent and the bite of a forbidden fruit. From the moment of the fall into sin life in this world has been in battle against the chaos of sin. Because of our sins we have been cut off from our creator and are caught up in a world that is trying to tear itself apart. That’s the work of evil and chaos!

You and I feel the chaos every day. We can sense it stalking us like a wild animal on a hunt for prey. We feel the void of chaos closing in on us when our job is lost and the bills are due. We feel the void of chaos trying to swallow us whole at the hospital and at the funeral home. Chaos takes the shape of addiction or depression. Chaos confronts us as Christians suffer persecution and ungodly agendas are forced down our cultural throats. Name your poison – abortion, violence, abuse, neglect, the sins of others commit against us and the sins we commit with our hands, minds and hearts – they all beckon us to jump out of the saving hands of our Savior into the roaring flames of the abyss.

Some of the effects of chaos we bring on ourselves by our own sin filled living. Some are indeed done to us by others’ sin. No, it’s not that every time the computer locks up or the washing machine goes on the blink or when we lose a job or suffer a terrible accident that it’s because of some particular sin we’ve committed that chaos comes into our lives. No, it’s not, but in every case, the root of the problem is that sin - Adam’s sin, Eve’s sin, my sin, your sin, the world’s sin – has separated us from God and thus thoroughly corrupted God’s perfect Creation. That’s the evil of chaos!

For life to exist, the chaos in the world and in our lives, must be subdued. The enemies of sin, death and Satan must be broken for us, for we have no strength on our own and the cosmic job of subduing chaos is just too big for us.

You and I look at the chaos in our lives and say, “Stop the world! I want to get off!” Eluhim, our God hovers over the dark void of chaos and says, “Let there be light,” and there was light. With His powerful Word, chaos is broken. God saw what He had made and behold

it was perfectly good! God, our Father created life out of nothing by His Word, His Son, and the Holy Spirit saw that it was perfectly good. Chaos is broken and life is the result. In the dark void of chaos, life cannot abide, but with the Word of God there is life, life and more life that is good and perfect.

This is God's World – it all belongs to Him. Everything is His, from the cattle on a thousand hills to the people from a thousand nations. Everything and everyone is His creation. He made it, He will sustain it and He will redeem it for Himself. So, when the chaos of evil threatens to overtake His children, His creation or His Church, it is God's living Word that brings order, peace and salvation out of the chaos. Eluhim's Word created the world and His Word made flesh and blood in Jesus Christ recreated you and me to save us from sin, death and Satan. That incarnated Word came to us at the manger in Bethlehem; that incarnated Word was searched for by the Magi; that incarnated Word came to stand in the waters of the Jordan River to be baptized for each and every one of our sins. My sins, your sins and the sins of the world were poured out on Jesus' head in His baptism. The Evangelist Mark tells us, **"And when Jesus came up out of the water, immediately He saw the heavens opening and the Spirit descending on Him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are My Beloved Son; with You I am well pleased."** (Mk 1:10-11) Eluhim, who called the light good now praises the light of the world for taking on the chaos of the world and proclaims this act of Love "very good!"

In a way that no one could dare to imagine, God the Son re-created us. Not in power but in weakness, with humility and service, with lowliness and stripes, with a cross and nails and a spear thrust into His side just for our assurance. At the place called "Skull Hill," Jesus re-created a fallen world and rescued all of us hell-bent sinners by dying the death we deserved. When the baptized son of God said from the cross, "It is finished," He spoke a deeper truth than we can ever fathom. His baptized, crucified and resurrected flesh redeemed our fallen, sin filled flesh. By removing the sins that separated us from God, Jesus' death and resurrection reconciled us to God, restoring our relationship with the one who brings order where there is only chaos. Jesus' perfect life, death and resurrection redeemed our wretched performance and chaotic choices. His beauty re-created our ugliness and makes us beautiful in the eyes of our loving Father.

Beloved in Christ, the chaos of sin, death and the devil have no power over you anymore. God has created us and recreated us in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. The Spirit of God hovered over the waters at the moment of creation. The Spirit of God hovered over the waters of Jesus' Baptism and descended upon Him at the Jordan River. The Spirit of God hovered over the waters of your baptism and washes you of all your sins and re-creates you at your Baptism to live a new life in God's love. Today, we thank God that our Baptized, crucified and resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, who has broken the power of chaos and death to bring us into His kingdom now and for all eternity. So, go and share the good news with all the world. Amen.