

Job 38-39

In Matt Ch 12 you find Jesus there in the Synagogue with a man in the midst of the people with a withered hand. And the Pharisees looking to entrap Jesus, seeking to snare Him, knowing the compassion of Jesus knew that He would heal the man. The problem is that it was the Sabbath day, and it was unlawful (according to them) for anyone to administer healing to another if it was the Sabbath (that was considered work). In other words if you had a life threatening gash, I could do what was necessary to stop the bleeding, but not promote the healing, I couldn't go any farther than the necessary steps to simply keep you alive. If I administered medicinal means to help you heal I would be in violation of the Sabbath. But these Pharisees knowing the compassion of Jesus, that He would heal the man asked Him, "*Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?*" Matt 12:10

And they were really questioning the integrity of the Lord, they were seeking to place Him in a light that was unhealthy for His public persona, seeking to have a justifiable means by which they might indict Him, accuse Him. So Jesus responded to them saying, "*What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep?*" Matt 12:11-12 In other words, "If you'll 'work' for the well being of an animal on the Sabbath, how much more should we work for the well being of our fellow man on the Sabbath, which is the greater good?" And of course He went on to tell them that, let them know that it was lawful to heal a man on the Sabbath and so He did just that.

In Luke Ch 20 we find the Pharisees again trying to trap Him with respect to paying taxes. They said, "*Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?*" Luke 20:22 They thought, "If He says 'yes' the people will hate Him," because the Jews despised being under Roman rule, "but if He says 'no' the Romans will have Him arrested for insurrection." He can't win. And we read, "*But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, 'Why do you test Me? Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?'*" Luke 20:23-24. And of course they said, "Caesar's" and so He said, "Render to Caesar therefore the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's."

In Matt 21 we read, "*Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?' But Jesus answered and said to them, 'I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: The baptism of John -- where was it from? From heaven or from men?'*" Matt 21:23-25 They wouldn't answer Him, because they knew if they said, "From heaven," than He'd say, "Then why didn't you believe him?" (Because John said that Jesus was the Messiah). But if they said, "From men," then the people would stone them because they feared John as a prophet. So they said, "We don't know." And Jesus said, "If you aren't going to answer Me, than I'm not going to answer you."

I say all that to say this; whenever Jesus was confronted with an honest question, invariably He'd answer it. But whenever He was questioned, He seemed to respond most often in the form of a question. In other words, "Jesus I have a question for You." And He'd answer it. But, "Jesus I'm questioning You." And that would invoke an altogether different response, and the response would be poised in such a way as to bring matters into their proper perspective. Jesus isn't the One with a problem, or acting out of line; those questioning Him were the one's with a problem who were acting out of line.

Well, in the book of Job we've found Job questioning the Lord, he's been questioning the Lord's fairness, in essence saying that he's done nothing wrong therefore the Lord can't be right in allowing this travesty and turbulent time to befall him. For 35 Ch's we've been listening in on man's perspective of God's ways. Here in Ch 38 the Lord shows up.

Job's wanted to have his time *before* the Lord, to get a few answers *from* the Lord. You've heard the phrase, "Be careful what you ask for, you just might get it." Well, Job gets what he's been gunning for, an opportunity to *hear from* the Lord and *respond to* the Lord. Job has been questioning God, now God has a few questions for him, about 77 to be a little more precise. Job's been demanding answers, now God would like a few answers Himself, that is, if Job is able to answer them.

But much like Jesus did with the questions He posed, Job really isn't able to defend his position after sitting under the cross examination of the 1 true living God. Job can't answer so much as 1 question that God poses to him, and what that serves to do is place Job back into the proper perspective so as to humble himself *before* the Lord, knowing that He can commend himself into the sovereign care *of* the Lord.

How does God do this? How does He place Job back into the proper perspective? Is it through an explanation of the situation? No, God doesn't give so much as a single explanation as to why He's allowed what He's allowed. You see, an appropriate perspective isn't really set in place through a proper explanation, but rather it comes through personal *revelation* as to who God is. God will minister to Job, not through proper explanations, but through a personal revelation of who He is.

Whenever I perform a funeral service I like to remind the family and those in attendance that we don't always know "why" certain things happen the way they do. But that broken hearts aren't healed through explanations, oh an explanation might satisfy our mind to a degree, but it won't work healing into our hearts. Only the love and grace of Jesus Christ can do that, in other words, it's not explanation that we're in such desperate need of, but rather *revelation* as to the heart and character of our loving Father, who is always in control even when our circumstances seem out of control. Notice with me

So God prepares to buffet Job, that is bring him back into the proper perspective and as He does this He calls Job to attention. Now I don't know about you, but if I heard the voice of God come to me and say, "Now prepare yourself like a man," I couldn't imagine something overly delightful that was about to ensue. I mean, I haven't even heard what He has to say (sort of a thing) and I'm already shrinking up and backing down.

And he says, "Who is this who darkens counsel by words with out knowledge." Translation; "Job you've been doing an awful lot of talking about things you know nothing about." One translation puts it like this, "*Who are you to question my wisdom with your ignorant, empty words?*" Job 38:2 TEV And another version says it like this, "*Who is this that makes my purpose unclear by saying things that are not true?*" Job 38:2 TNCV And the essence of what's being said is, "Job, you've been speaking out of turn, confusing reality by making things up to try and somehow vindicate or justify yourself." And I think this is an area that it's so easy for all of us to fall into. We feel somehow slighted or backed in a corner, we don't understand what's going on, or why something has seemingly come down the way it has so we just graft our own conclusion based (really) upon no solid substance. There's no fact behind our suspicion, but it gratifies our mind, gives us a justifiable explanation so we cling to it and purport it like fact. And we darken counsel by words with out knowledge.

Or perhaps someone will have a question for us about God, or a biblical principle. And we don't really know the answer, but we don't want to look stupid, especially if people know we've been believers for a long time. So we fumble through it and say something about it and when it's all said and done we're not even sure if we've given the right answer.

We in essence just made it up, don't do that. Don't make up answers to questions you don't know. It's much more commendable to humble yourself and say, "You know, that's a great question, and I gotta be honest with you I'm not sure on that one, but I'll look into and get back with you." Don't confuse the issue, or take the chance of leading someone in a direction that's not accurate, darkening counsel by words with out knowledge. That's what Job was doing, he confused the issue, he didn't clarify the matter, he made himself look good and God look bad. And that's a misnomer, because God is good, He doesn't have a problem or deal with matters in an unjust way. But Job has clouded that issue, darkened the matter.

So God comes to him, and notice how God comes to him, the way in which He speaks to him; out of the whirlwind. Remember as Elihu was speaking there was a storm brewing on the horizon. At the end of Ch 36 and into Ch 37 he began to speak about it, draw illustrations through it, and God uses that (in essence) as a segue into the scene. And He comes to Job, speaks to Job out of the whirlwind, out of the storm.

And isn't that so often the way God works, He speaks to us out of the storm, when everything is breaking loose in and around our lives. Everything seems to be spinning so out of control, and out of the storm, out of the whirlwind, God speaks. There the children of Israel were gathered around Mt Sinai, on the morning of the 3rd day there were thunderings and lightnings, a thick cloud on the Mt, fire and smoke, and out of the storm God spoke; called out to Moses. There the disciples were on the sea of Galilee, rowing for their lives against the raging storm, and out of the storm, through the midst of the storm, Jesus came to them, spoke peace to them, calmed the storm for them. It's not uncommon for God to speak from the midst of a storm. But God's not limited to storms; He speaks to people in various ways. Remember Elijah looked for God in the storm but couldn't find Him there. There he was on the Mt, in a desperate way, in fear for his life, depressed, and lonely. And we read, "*And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. So it was, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. Suddenly a voice came to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"*" 1 Kings 19:11-13 So for Elijah, God wasn't speaking to Him in the storm, but in the stillness, God can speak through the storm, or through the stillness, He can speak to us in dreams or visions (which is an area we obviously need to be very careful with) but most obviously and consistently He speaks to us by His Spirit through His Word.

God's spoken to me through storms, in times of stillness, but most generally His Spirit ministers to me through His Word. And He'll speak to you the same way, He knows where you're at and what you need and He'll speak to your life accordingly, be it through a storm, or in a time of stillness. Through your time spent in His Word, but He desires to communicate *with* you, and reveal Himself *to* you. But it's not always good news, sometimes He has to deal with us in a chastening manner, such was the case with Job. He says, "Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me." You've posed a lot of questions *to* Me, thinking you know everything *about* Me, now I'm going to pose a few questions to you. And He begins to question Job about creation, the vastness and complexity *of* it, the oversight necessary *for* it, how much (Job) do you really know about it. And somewhere in here we begin to glean the fact that if God is big enough to oversee and maintain control over the details of all of creation, than His sovereign control over the details of my life is nothing. We serve a great God for whom *nothing* will be impossible.

Vs 4-7

This is kind of some interesting insight to realize that while God was laying the foundations of the earth as a Master builder, while He was creating the universe the angels were singing together and shouting for joy. He says, "If you know so much Job, tell me a bit about the foundations of the earth, how were its dimensions determined; to what was its foundations fastened?"

Where were you when the angels were singing and shouting for joy while the earth was being created?” It’s amazing to hear evolutionists speak with such convincing authority isn’t it, as if they have a clue how time and space, the earth came into existence, where were they when the foundations of the earth were laid, they weren’t there, how can they know?

And notice here that the angelic hosts were created before the earth, they were already in existence before God began His creation of time and space, the earth and it’s inhabitants. And they’re referred to here as “sons of God,” but don’t confuse that phrase with Jesus who is the only *begotten* Son of God. God only has 1 begotten Son, we’re referred to as sons and daughters of God as by adoption, the angels are referred to here and there as the sons of God in that they belong to God, were created *by* God. But don’t be deceived God only has 1 *begotten* Son, fully God and fully Man, the Man Christ Jesus.

Vs8-11

So from the picture of building to birthing, “Where were you when the sea was birthed, and burst forth?” (Talk about “My water broke!”) But in the beginning the Genesis account tells us that water covered the face of the earth, it wasn’t until the 2nd day of creation that God caused dry land to appear whereby the sea was issued it’s limits. What keeps the seas from raging over the beach fronts and flooding the earth, who keeps back the waters? Who ascribed the ocean it’s limits? God did all those things, He’s the One who’s in control of His creation.

Vs12-15

How many times have you caused the sun to rise over the earth, to shine light upon the circumstances and situations *of* the earth? These are some significant questions aren’t they? If God is big enough to order all these things, why do we have a problem thinking He’s not big enough to order, ordain and control the events of our lives?

Vs16

The deepest known point in the ocean is about 36,000 feet deep, nearly 7 miles. Next time you’re cruising in a jet at the altitude of 30,000 feet look down, and realize you’d have to be another mile high in order to get nearly as high as the ocean floor is deep. Now when you’re talking about depths like that you’re talking about unthinkable crushing pressure. The crushing pressure at depths that great is 8 tons per square inch, that’s the equivalent of 1 person trying to hold 50 jumbo jets. God says, “Have you been walking around, searching out the depths of the sea lately? What’s going on down there, have any clue?”

Vs17

Now remember as early as Ch 3 Job was detesting his life, he wanted to die, said that there everything would be peaceful. Rich, poor, righteous or wicked, none of that mattered, in death all just sleep easy. That’s what he espoused, and advocated, soul sleep, that’s what the 7th Day Adventists and J.W.’s purport, and they glean significant proof text from the book of Job.

But this is why you can't support soul sleep from the book of Job, because God tells Job that he was speaking about things of which he knew nothing about. "Have the gates of death been revealed to you Job? Do you know what takes place when a person dies?" There's only One person who's truly tasted death and lived to tell about it, Jesus Christ and In Luke 16 He gives a bit of insight as to what takes place in the life of the unrighteous after death. And believe me it's not sleep, and there's a full awareness of what's taking place.

The bible speaks of the weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth that takes place in those who've rejected Jesus Christ the smoke of their torment ascends day and night forever, the fire's not quenched and the worm never dies. And to the contrary with the believer, the one who's received Jesus Christ The bible is equally clear, 2 Cor 5:6-8 tells us, "*...knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.*" In Christ absent from the body, present with the Lord. Soul sleep is not an option, it's not a biblical doctrine, God tells Job he was darkening counsel by words with out knowledge, he didn't know what he was talking about when it came to the reality of death and what takes place then and there.

Vs18-21

Where does darkness dwell? I mean it's not far, all we have to do is turn off the lights and it'll take up residence right here, turn on the lights and it'll flee, but where does it go? I don't know.

Vs22-23

Elihu spoke about the way God uses the elements to control the activities of man in Ch 37. God is affirming that, God used hail in his plagues against Egypt, again with Joshua in Joshua Ch 10 when the children of Israel were at war with the inhabitants of Canaan. It was snow that defeated Napoleon when he marched on Moscow in his desire to defeat Russia and his army of 600,000 men was reduced to 30,000 because of the bitter winter. In WWII it was discovered that TNT could be transported in a much more stable manner when it was packed in ice. Hail, snow, and ice, God uses these things in times of war. Of course when you begin to think of the treasury of snow, how that billions of snowflakes fall every year and when placed under a microscope the geometric intricacies are astounding and not any 2 of them are exactly alike. That's the creativity of God, you try and draw, or cut out of paper billions of snow flakes year after year and never duplicate them.

Vs24

Light can be diffused, divided, there are multiples of colors that make up light, how does that happen, we know how to diffuse light today, but how colors make up light... you got me and I'll guarantee you Job was *way* out of his ball park on these things, just like we are, if not more so.

Vs25-30

Can ya make it rain Job? Or cause the frost to fall on the earth? If you don't understand how rain is "fathered" how can you comprehend how ice is "born?" What's the point in watering places where no one lives, what's the providential purpose behind it?

Now I would imagine that by this time Job was wanting a reprieve, "I get it, can we call this quits now." But God's just getting started, He's only been speaking about the things of the earth, now He throws in a bit of info regarding some things outside of our atmosphere, out in space, the stars, and extra-terrestrial bodies in the heavenlies.

Vs31-33

So from the earth, we get a quick excerpt from things outside of this earth, into outer space. God says, "Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades?" Now this is the cluster of the Pleiades (and to give you just a hint of the size of the enormity of our universe) Pleiades is about 440 light years away. Now light travels at 186,287 miles per second, in 1 year at that rate it'll travel about 6 million, million miles, or 5,878,625,373,184 miles, now multiply that times 440 and you'll wind up at the Pleiades cluster. God says, "Job, can you bind that cluster together." Scientists have discovered that the Pleiades cluster is actually bound together gravitationally though they're a cluster that is in motion in space. "Can you do that Job?" God says, "I can." "Can you loose the belt of Orion?"

Now this is the cluster that forms Orion (and there are better pictures but this one was about the best I could find that made it easy to see his belt). (Here's how they form Orion around that cluster) (And here's a picture of the Orion Nebula complements of the Hubble site). Now Orion is 16-1800 light years away, which is 5,878,625,373,184 miles times about 16-1800! And what scientists have discovered about Orion is that although this cluster is in motion, and his belt stays cohesive (if you will, that is, in order as we see it) these stars aren't bound gravitationally, they're "loosed" from one another. "How about that Job, can you do that?" Can you bring out these constellations in their seasons, or guide the Great Bear with its cubs. The "Great Bear" is another star otherwise known as "Arcturus" it's about the 4th brightest star in the sky about 36 light years away. But the interesting thing about Arcturus is that it's also referred to as the "runaway star" because although it's over 20 times larger than the sun (and keep in mind that you could fit about a million earths inside the sun), it careens (or speeds) through space at about 257 miles per second, or 925,200 mph. God says, "Can you guide that thing Job, feel like driving that for awhile?" And believe me I haven't even touched a thimble of water in the enormity of the ocean of our universe and yet the bible declares that God holds it all in the span of His hand. "Is there anything too hard for me, says the Lord?" And we fear that He can't handle what's going on in our lives. God help us.

Vs34-38

Now God moves from creation to the creatures He oversees.

Vs39-41

How many people consider it their responsibility to tend to the beasts of the field, or the birds of the air? Yet God takes care of them all, remember Jesus said, *“Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds?”* Luke 12:24 So if God tends to the beasts, tends to the birds, knows all about them and is able to sovereignly rule over them, how much more will He take care of you whom He’s created in His own image? Let’s blast through this here.

Ch 39

Vs1-4

Now today we have some people who study such things, but in reality how many people really consider it of value to know when a Mt goat has her young, or how long a deer carries before she gives birth. How does the deer know when it’s time to leave her young? I mean who really cares right? God cares, the bible says, *“You open Your hand And satisfy the desire of every living thing.”* Ps 145:16. And again the idea here is that if God cares for, takes care of, and tends to these things that seem so menial to us (yet completely beyond us) how much more is He going to care *for* you, be concerned *about* you, and take good care *of* you, those things that make for our eternal good and His eternal glory?

Vs5-18

What do you make of the ostrich Job? Think about it, how many of us would think to make a bird that had wings but couldn’t fly weighed up to 3-400 lbs, and could stand to heights of 9 feet tall? Yet when it runs full speed it can out run horses reaching speeds of 44 mph. It’s the fastest creature on 2 legs, it has a 4” claw on each foot and it’s kick is powerful enough to kill a lion. But it’s a dumb bird, it’ll lay it’s eggs in the sand, they’ll occasionally crush their own eggs, or even abandon their nests, why would they do such things? Because God deprived them of wisdom...It’s God who gives wisdom, imparts understanding, those things are beyond our ability to facilitate.

Vs19-30

Ill equipped to contend with creation, how much less are we able to contend with or condemn our Creator? He is sovereignly, providentially in control, and we do well to simply submit our lives to Him accordingly.

Prayer Points:

God help us to maintain the proper perspective, You are so great and awesome, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You have visited us? We thank You that You’re in control, that You love us, tend to us, and take good care *of* us. Help us to be perceptive of Your voice, that we might hear You when you speak, be it through the storm, or in times of stillness, help us to be sensitive to Your Spirit so that we might sense Your direction as we study Your Word, give us ears to hear. And may we be those who bring clarity, not confusion to an issue, or question or concern, that we not darken counsel by words with out knowledge.