

1. The best title for these chapters is, "God's talking, time to be quiet and listen". These two chapters are an uninterrupted speech by God. After this, Job will speak for a few verses in Chapter 40 to apologize for wanting to question God. He continues for two chapters after that, which I'll cover in the next lesson. These final chapters of Job is essentially God getting the last word, which He should do. My job is to explain what God's trying to teach us, so we'll better understand what God's communicating to us as well as Job. The big question of course, is why should we care?
2. Let me start with an interesting thought: Nowhere in the final five chapters does God say, "I had a bet with Satan over you (Job), and I'm sorry I put you through this, but the good news is you've past with flying colors!" In other words, Job never gets the explanation he desired as why it is he had to suffer so badly, let alone debate critics for the better part of a book! Instead we get a major speech on who God is, what He created things, a discussion of specific types of animals as if to ask Job, can you explain all of that? The idea is to remind us "God is God" and we must accept it as well as accepting whatever we're dealing with in life. Does all that mean God never wants to help us through tough situations? Of course not. It just means the world is still going to work His way on His timing. Sometimes He allows us to go through horrible things for reasons we may not realize in this lifetime. Sometimes God miraculously ends suffering, and most often, we simply work our way through it. That's the underlying lesson of these two chapters. OK, let me explain all of that a little better:
  - a) Chapter 38 and 39 focuses on details of God's creation. Chapter 38 focuses mainly on how the world was made while Chapter 39 names specific animals as examples He created as if to ask, can you explain that Job? The point isn't so much to give us a creation lesson, as it is to remind us, "He's God, we're not, and there are things about what God can do and did do, that are beyond our understanding."
3. Before I start in on these chapters, I'd like you to consider something else about the whole bible. If you didn't know, there are not a lot of chapters in the bible that specifically deal with the issue of creation. Obviously there are a few in the beginning of Genesis. Yes, we have these chapters here in Job. We get a little in the Psalms and a few other miscellaneous references. My simple point is that's it. Sometimes you can tell how important an issue is based on how much space it gets. I'd like you to consider how much space the bible gives to creation versus redemption. Most of the New Testament deals with redemption. Most of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and much of the Old Testament focuses on our redemption. My point is in comparison to what God created, the bible's much bigger topic by far, is the issue of our redemption.
4. OK, enough about what these chapters are not about, let's talk a little about what they're actually about and why they're here. First, they're not here to teach Job and us about creation. We get 'em here to remind us essentially we're not God and we don't know all things. It's indirectly a slap in the face to all the speakers in this book arguing that God "does this or that". It's a vivid reminder of the fact we don't know all there's to know about God, but only what's revealed in His word or what we infer from nature. Chapter 38 gives us a bunch of facts about what God did when He created the world as if to tell Job, "Hey buddy, where were you when I did all of that?" Job can't give a honest response to these facts God poses and that's the point of these chapters.
  - a) The same idea applies the "animal lecture" that is mostly Chapter 39. God gives examples of animals that he's created as if to say, "Can you do that?" Yes, we'll get some interesting details that teach us things about creation of both the world and animals. Yes we can learn

from these chapters which is one reason why they're here. If most of the bible focuses on the topic of redemption, a good bible teacher should also focus on the "majors" as well. At the same time, when the bible focuses on the "minor's" it should be commented upon with the realization that "This is how God did it, accept it as fact and move on!"

5. Let me share another interesting fact that's relevant to these chapters. When we had the big God versus Satan discussion in the opening two chapters, the most holy name of God "YWTH" is used or as many Christians pronounce it Jehovah. It literally means, "I am who I am ". Through all the great debate chapters, a different name for God which focuses on His nature as creator. Now that God Himself is speaking, we're back to "YWTH" as to remind us that God Himself who is who He is, wants to say something, so that's far more important than the whole debate topic!
  - a) Something else trivial fascinated me. The longest speech we have in the bible by God is in the Gospel of Matthew when Jesus gives the Sermon on the Mount. (For my many Jewish readers, this is a "Jesus is God" thing.) Anyway, I did a little math research: There are a total of 106 verses spoken by Jesus in that sermon. We got 123 verses (net) spoken by God in Job Chapters 38-41, interrupted by Job for four verses. My simple point is this lesson as well as the next one are going to cover the longest single speech recorded by "Jehovah" we have in the bible. The simple point is must be pretty important stuff, so pay attention!
  - b) By the way, the question of how did we get these quotes always fascinated me. As to the Gospel of Mathew, most commentators believe Matthew knew "shorthand". The Romans required tax collectors to learn to write fast. It makes sense as Matthew records more of what Jesus actually said than the other Gospel writers. As to Job, I suspect he simply took dictation, at whatever speed that was when all of this was recorded. It's just a theory, but that's how I suspect most of the "God writing" occurred.
6. OK enough of all of that. Just to warn you, this lesson and the next one are going to be different as I focus on creation more than redemption. It's going to be a bit of "science lecture" that's given by a bible teacher and not a science teacher. If I say something in this lesson that's contrary to a current scientific teaching on the subject, I'll just say that's what the bible teaches. If you've got a problem with that, I'm not the one you'll have to take it up with! Personally, I'd rather be wrong in the eye's of current scientific debate than be wrong in my bible teaching. OK then, let's discuss what it is God created, why and how it affects our lives.
7. Chapter 38, Verse 1: Then the LORD answered Job out of the storm. He said:
  - a) Let's back up for a second and remember that we left off with Elihu talking "weather". He gave over a chapter long speech using bad weather examples to show how God works in our world. In Elihu's "bad weather" examples, many commentators believe he watched a storm or was experiencing one. The last part of that chapter told of Job sitting warmed by a south (hot) wind. All of this could be literally or figurative. All I'm saying is since Elihu brought up the topic of weather, it could be relevant as God starts His speech here, we get a reference to a storm. OK, then, why would we have God speaking out of a storm?
  - b) Is it just for dramatic affect? Is it just to get everyone to pay attention? I'd argue no. What I believe it is, is the fact that Job and his friends have been discussing weather. Job's life is a "big storm" and here's God showing up to say in effect, "You want a storm? Watch what I'm capable of doing!"
  - c) Another possibility is it's a hint of the Holy Spirit. In Hebrew the word for wind and the word for Spirit is one in the same. In short it's saying, "Pay attention, God Himself has something to say and like a powerful wind (or Spirit) speaking, it can't be ignored."
  - d) I already mentioned in the introduction that the most holy name of God is used, so I won't cover that topic again.

- e) Finally let me discuss Job's reaction before we begin the "God talk". Recall what Job did miss the most during all the debate chapters: Communicating with God. He felt like all of his prayers were "bouncing off the ceiling" as I was fond of saying through much of this book. Now here's God actually talking to Job again. Yes, God's going to rebuke Job for all of his demands of an audience with Him! Yes, Job apologizes to God after a two-chapter speech. No, God never explains the "bet" to Job. My simple point is I wonder if Job was a little happy that God was actually speaking to him in spite of all the negative commentary that we'll read through the next two chapters. OK then, onto Verse 2:
8. Verse 2: "Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge?
    - a) On the other hand, the first thing God says to Job is in effect, "Who are you to decide what it is that I can and cannot do in this world? Who are you Job, to think you can question how I run things around here?" Let's be honest, that statement alone should stop us in our tracks when we ask God, "Hey, why did You allow this or that to happen?"
    - b) You'd think that verse alone is tough enough, but God's just getting warmed up!
  9. Verse 3: Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me.
    - a) I have to admit I'm fascinated by the phrase, "Brace yourself like a man", as if preparation is required to hear what God has to say to us. I think this is simply an introduction phrase as if to say, "Hey Job, you're about to be lectured by the God who created the world, so get ready to drop everything and pay attention as there's nothing more important that you've could be doing right now, so stop and listen to what I've got to say to you." (Hint, hint!)
    - b) I don't know about you, but the whole idea of God saying, "I'm going to question you" is a scary thing to me. If you recall from earlier chapters, Job was interested in defending his life to God. Here God "reverses the tables" and says, "Hey Job, let Me question you! If you can answer these questions then I'll consider answering your questions, Job". I don't know about you, but I'm humbled by all of this, and I'm not the one God's talking to.
  10. Verse 4: "Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand.
    - a) Here in Verse 4, "God gets down to business". The first thing God asks Job is "Hey buddy, where were you when I created the world you live in?" Obviously, the question is meant to be reflective and no, Job was not expected to answer. It's questioning do we understand all things? Do we know for sure how old the earth is? It's been debated as long as people have been alive and the truth is none of us where there, so all we can do is speculate.
    - b) Yes I understand that our world is floating in space. That's not the issue. The issue is, Job do know when all this began? I know that scientists love to say our world is exactly "x" billion years old. That estimate has changed through the millenniums, and the truth is we don't know for sure because we were not there to see it!
  11. Verse 5: Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it?
    - a) If you thought Verse 4 was impossible to answer, Verse 5 is even worse. Let's say that you are convinced the earth is exactly "x" billion years old. I'll disagree, but I'll leave it at that. The more impossible question is "Who decided how big the world should be?" Who made that decision? We must accept the world as it is in terms of its physical nature.
    - b) One of the most fascinating things about our world is simply how "finely tuned" it is. All I mean by that is if the size was a little different, life would not work. Everything from say magnetic fields that exist around the world, the distance between the earth and the sun or the moon are all limited in what those dimensions can be in order for life to work. I'm not an expert on a lot of scientific facts, but I do know that our world is finely balanced and it

is an argument that all of this could not have happened by accident! Speaking of evidence that God exists, we're going to get a lot more of that in these two chapters.

- c) By the way, Job was never expected to answer any of these questions. They're given so Job can realize "who He's messing with" when Job desired to question why God allowed him to suffer the way Job did. This is God responding to Job's question by asking, "Just who do you think you are to question Me in the first place?" The point for you and me is when we're suffering and want to know why God's allowing us to go through something, pause to ask, can we explain all that God does? Who do we think we are to question God in the first place? OK, now that I've scared everyone half to death for questioning God, it's time to move on to the next verse!

12. Verse 6: On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone--

- a) This continues the creation questions. Was the earth built in pieces? Did God decided, let me put this piece here first and then I'll figure out how big to make it?
- b) Again, all of this is meant to be reflective. Job wasn't expected to know all this. If you're not scared enough by the fact that God Himself is lecturing us here on what we know in a comparison to what God knows, we're just getting warmed up! Wait until you see what God has to say in Verse 7, it may change our view a little about creation. Speaking of that:

13. Verse 7: while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?

- a) One of the great theological mysteries is when were angels created? Did God first make the world and then make angels to make a difference in our world, or did He create the angels first? This verse tells us the angels were made first. The angels were around for the purpose of praising God when the world was created! That implies that angels do not need a world in order for them to exist! It also implies that a purpose for creating angels is for them to glorify God. I've pondered all through this book on the issue of why did God make us in the first place. The short answer is to glorify Him by acknowledging He rules over our lives and by trusting in Him for the complete payment of our sins, we get to live with Him forever as we use our lives to glorify Him.
- b) OK then, back to the question, why did He create angels? After all if God is God, can't He just interfere in our world whenever He wants to? I believe He created angels as a class in order to have servants who would glorify Him. God wanted "messengers" between Him and us, so we wouldn't be scared by God. As scary as it is to have an encounter with that type of entity, it's still less scary than having an encounter with God. Apparently, God did give angels free will, which is why some chose to rebel against God. Why? I'd say some of the angels didn't like the fact that people were to be the center of God's love and not them.
- c) Bottom line time, angels existed before the world was created and they were made for the purpose of glorifying God. Whether or not we like it, that's the way the world exists, and Job gets the privilege of God telling him all of this!
- d) By the way, this text says all the angels praised God. That would include Satan as Ezekiel 28 tells us he was the head angel before he rebelled. All I'm saying is that all the angels, even the fallen one's were around for this pre-creation praise fest!
- e) Ok, onto the next strange question: what are the "morning stars" that sing together? Know that throughout the bible, "stars" are a nickname for angels. No it does not mean every light in the sky is an angel. It is just referring to angels praising God in a poetic way.
  - i) So isn't it is egotistical to think that people are the center of the universe? How do we know there isn't life somewhere else in the universe? First the odds of any form of life existing as so mathematically improbable, it's almost impossible to know. A way I believe the bible is true is because thirty percent of it is predictions written a

long time before they ever came true and it's a way to prove that God is real and I am convinced that humans are the "center" of the universe. As I was taught, "If life does exist elsewhere in the universe, their salvation comes from a "cross" in Israel!"

- ii) Like I implied Chapters 38 and 39 are full of strange questions, and we've still got a long way to go. OK, let's keep our thinking caps on, and move on.

14. Verse 8: "Who shut up the sea behind doors when it burst forth from the womb,<sup>9</sup> when I made the clouds its garment and wrapped it in thick darkness,<sup>10</sup> when I fixed limits for it and set its doors and bars in place,<sup>11</sup> when I said, 'This far you may come and no farther; here is where your proud waves halt'?"
  - a) If you've ever seen pictures of the earth as taken from satellites or spacecraft, what we're looking at is mostly water. About three quarters of the earth's surface is ocean. I mention that because God asks in effect, "Who decided how much of the earth's surface would be "water" and where does land begin?"
  - b) Also pause to realize that God's stating the "world is round" here and there is a limit to its size. It flies against the argument that some people thought the world was flat. I'm sure a lot of debate existed over the world's size, the bible taught from the early days that it was a round "ball" and its surface is mostly oceans.
  - c) These verses also hint of the creation story itself. When you read Genesis One, you notice that the earth was created first and the sun didn't come around for a few days later. Is that what God means here in Genesis about the seas "wrapped in darkness?" I suspect so. All I am saying is that the account here can easily match up with the Genesis account of how it is God created the world. These verses are also in a colorful way that there was a limit to how far the oceans "go" and where land begins.
    - i) I've heard lectures by climatologists reminding me that the amount of water in our world is essentially fixed. That means for example, when a great storm occurs, it's also an indication of how much water had to evaporate to be in the sky in the first place! It also leads to speculation of how the great flood occurred. From what I've read, rain alone is not enough to wipe out life. Something had to cause the oceans to erupt and make all that moisture rise. I'm sure it occurred simply by the fact we know of flood stores all around the world. Anyway, all of this is hinted at here in a handful of verses here in Job. All I'm saying is the bible is consistent in what it is teaching us about how our world is created.
  - d) Besides all the scientific questions of these chapters, let's back up and remember why it is God's asking these questions in the first place? It's not to give Job a lecture on the science of how God "did it". It's to get Job to realize who he is in comparison to who God is. No God doesn't expect Job to answer these questions. God wants us to think, "Who are we to question Him in the first place?" Speaking of God questioning, Job, let's look at Verse 12:
15. Verse 12: "Have you ever given orders to the morning, or shown the dawn its place,<sup>13</sup> that it might take the earth by the edges and shake the wicked out of it?"
  - a) Time for more paraphrasing, "Hey Job, did you decide how long the day would be?" Did you have any say in how the earth revolves around sun and the sun moves around all of the galaxy and the galaxy moves around the universe? Hey Job, do you get all of that? If you get all of that, where were you when I decided to create it all and decided how it was all going to take place?" Yes, I'm paraphrasing, but the idea here for us to understand that we weren't there to figure all this out, and that's God's underlying point.
  - b) What about the last phrase that says, "Shake the wicked out of it?" Obviously the spinning of the world doesn't cause the wicked to fall off of it. What it simply refers to the fact that

we were created in a way that we don't get to live forever on earth and eventually all life's coming to an end as we know it as far as this life is concerned.

- i) That leads me to quickly discuss the idea of living forever. Stop and consider that whatever body we get in the next life, it don't wear out or get old. That body has to be different from our current body simply by the fact it doesn't wear out. It ties to this verse simply by the fact that the wicked "die" in the sense they won't be part of the eternity that God desires to be with people who've freely given their lives to Him to spend eternity with Him, period!

- ii) Speaking of wicked people and the length of life they get, I present Verses 14-15:

16. Verse 14: The earth takes shape like clay under a seal; its features stand out like those of a garment. <sup>15</sup> The wicked are denied their light, and their upraised arm is broken.

- a) I suspect a reason God's getting into all of this, is all the debate chapters of Job spent time discussing the fate of wicked people! Here's God confirming the fact a judgment day will come for all people and whatever joy wicked people get, "this life is all that there is". This is a reminder that whatever suffering we experience in this life for the Gospel's sake is far greater than whatever joy wicked people get in this life. It's pondering, is it better to have fun in this life as if there is all there is to eternity, or is it better to bet on eternity and trust that God exists and whatever suffering we have in this life is "worth it" compared to how long we'll exist for eternity? That's an underlying question of these verses.
- b) Yes there are literal aspects to these verses. It implies the earth was shaped and those who are wicked don't get to appreciate the true joy of making God the center of our lives!
- c) It's also interesting how this verse compares the world's "features" to those of a garment that has features that stand out! Picture some sort of clothing with a really distinct feature that people can't help but notice. Now think of the world and the fact that mountains also stand out. My point is simply in the big picture, the earth is not a bunch of flat land with a bunch of water in between that flat land. Then it jumps to the fact that wicked people in a sense could "care less" about the fact that God created all of this, as by definition all they care about is their own lives and acquiring things or status for themselves.
- i) The reason for all of this is for Job and us to realize the world was created for us to glorify God by realizing something greater than us must have made all of this. To fail to realize this is in effect a waste of life.
- ii) OK, God's still speaking and I'm still interrupting Him! Let's continue:

17. Verse 16: "Have you journeyed to the springs of the sea or walked in the recesses of the deep?"

- a) I don't know where Job and his three friends lived, but I suspect it's not too far from Israel as in somewhere in the "Middle East". The point is I don't think Job was on the beach here being lectured by God. Yet God is saying in effect, "Do you understand the depth of those oceans or how they work?" It's time to share the story of Matthew Maury. He lived in the early 19th century. He's called the father of "Oceanography" as he discovered there are currents that flow through the ocean. It's only been in the last century when the depths of the oceans got mapped. All I'm saying is our understanding of oceans is a relatively recent compared to this ancient book. Yet here in Job God is saying, "Hey Job, are you an expert on the ocean?" It is another "Hey Job, do you know what I know" question by God.
- b) It's funny to consider that lots of people want to question God as to ask, "Don't you know who I am?" It never occurs to most people that God might reverse the tables and ask, "Do you know what I know?" That's the humbling that Job's getting in these two chapters!

18. Verse 17: Have the gates of death been shown to you? Have you seen the gates of the shadow of death?

- a) Well, even if by some miracle Job had a vague understanding that big oceans exist, that do have currents, there is no way Job understood what happens to people after they die. Yes, Job believed in resurrection. Way back in Chapter 19 Job proclaimed, "His redeemer lives" (Job 19:25), so I'm positive Job believed in that as much as he believed in God.
  - b) During all the debate chapters, we had a lot of death references to ponder what happens after we die? We've had long discussions about what happens to wicked people as well as good people after they die. Now here's God chiming in on death as to ask, "Do you really get what happens to you after you die, or are you just speculating? Since I'm God I know what exactly happens to people after they die, so how about that Job!" I'm paraphrasing a lot but the idea is essentially the same: God knows a lot of things we don't and who do we think we are to even question why God "this or that" in the first place? It's a big reminder of the fact, "He's God and we're not and who are we to question Him in the first place?"
19. Verse 18: Have you comprehended the vast expanses of the earth? Tell me, if you know all this.
- a) The simple point of this verse is Job has no idea of the "vastness" of our world. He's never seen a microscope to realize all that happens on a very tiny level, nor can any of us grasp just how vast our universe is. People spend a lifetime trying to understand all the aspects of our physical universe. I'm just saying it's vast and God's "rubbing it in" to Job as to say, "Hey buddy, I'm God, you're not, deal with it!"
  - b) At this point, I'm pretty positive Job's feeling "two inches high" and just wants to crawl in a hole as if to say, "Sorry God, I never should have questioned you in the first place. No I don't know any of this stuff, and truthfully it's painful to hear You remind me of just how little I know in comparison to You". My point is the next time we are complaining to God about how bad our situation is, pause and consider who God is, what He knows and what we know in comparison to that! Then ask, "Do we still want to question God, and get this type of response from Him?"
20. Verse 19: "What is the way to the abode of light? And where does darkness reside?
- a) Speaking of mind boggling things to study, one is light and darkness. Einstein argued the speed of light is constant. Now it's being debated in science. Is darkness a simple lack of light or is it something more than that? Who created darkness and light to begin with? In the first chapter of Genesis darkness existed and light was created. All I'm saying is there is far more to darkness than just a lack of light. It also refers to something demonic based on a lack of light and what exists and doesn't exist in darkness. The subject is a lot bigger than just turning a light on versus being in the dark, that's all I'm saying here.
21. Verse 20: Can you take them to their places? Do you know the paths to their dwellings? <sup>21</sup> Surely you know, for you were already born! You have lived so many years!
- a) At this point, I think God's "rubbing it in" as if to say to Job, "Hey you've lived a full life as you've considered some of these things! Come on Job, "prepare yourself like a man" as to ponder these issues and answer Me if you can!
  - b) Personally, I'd want to go crawl in a hole at this point as if it were possible to slither out of that scene. When the God of the universe starts to ask us, "Do you know what I know, I'm going to shut up as I know I've already lost the argument even before I make any effort to try to defend myself!"
  - c) As to the literal aspects of these verses, God's still on "light" and explaining how it does or does not reach certain places? However, that's secondary to the fact Job lost this debate in the moment that God started speaking.

- d) I was thinking about the fact that for most of this book, Job wanted to defend his life to God. Now that God's actually speaking, I doubt Job's still desiring that. All of this should humble us to ask, "Do we still want to question why God allows this or that to occur?"
22. Verse 22: "Have you entered the storehouses of the snow or seen the storehouses of the hail, <sup>23</sup> which I reserve for times of trouble, for days of war and battle?
- a) Of all the verses in this lesson, I'd say these two pose the greatest mystery. They appear to be prophetic of some end time event. Somehow God's reserving snow and hail to be used as part of the end time scenario. The book of Revelation has several references to a great hailstorm (Revelation 8:7, 11:19 and 16:21). My simple point is He's going to use really bad weather such as a hailstorm as a method of God's final wrath upon the earth one day.
- b) Could it also refer to some other wars where weather was a factor? All through history, a lot of battles have been determined by weather conditions. It's a possibility, but I still lean on the end time scenario for these verses. The main point is Job has no knowledge of any of this and all he can do is keep his mouth shut while God explains all of this.
23. Verse 24: What is the way to the place where the lightning is dispersed, or the place where the east winds are scattered over the earth? <sup>25</sup> Who cuts a channel for the torrents of rain, and a path for the thunderstorm, <sup>26</sup> to water a land where no man lives, a desert with no one in it, <sup>27</sup> to satisfy a desolate wasteland and make it sprout with grass?
- a) While God brought up the topic of weather in the past few verses, God goes "all out" as if to say, "Hey Job, speaking of understanding how the weather works, do you get where all of the lightening bolts land? Can you explain which way the wind blow? Do you know of which way storms move in the sky? Do you get how water ends up in the desert areas of the world? Yes, I'm God and I can affect the world's landscape if I felt like it!
- b) I kind of picture Job standing there dumbfounded as if to say, "OK God I get it, I've got no right to question you! I don't know the answers to any of this stuff!"
- c) While I'm in the neighborhood of God "changing the landscape by the weather", I'd like to quickly share a story about Israel's physical geography. When many Jewish people made the decision to return to live in Israel roughly a century ago, the Arabs who owned a lot of that land said in effect, "It's swamp land, but if you want to buy it at my ridiculous price, I will sell it to you". Israelites planted trees to change swampland into usable land again! It is simply an indication that the earth's surface can be altered if it's God's will to do so!
24. Verse 28: Does the rain have a father? Who fathers the drops of dew? <sup>29</sup> From whose womb comes the ice? Who gives birth to the frost from the heavens <sup>30</sup> when the waters become hard as stone, when the surface of the deep is frozen?
- a) God finishes his "weather lecture" here in these three verses. I realize I'm only scratching the surface in terms of explaining weather patterns and how water in all its forms exist all over the world's surface. My goal here is simply to give us a glimpse at how vast all of it to understand. This includes the idea of frozen water that actually expands when it turns into a solid form. All I'm saying is it's a complicated topic and understanding how all of it actually works is God's "department" that we can barely grasp!
- b) Ok from here, God switches from weather patterns to the night sky, let's continue:
25. Verse 31: "Can you bind the beautiful Pleiades? Can you loose the cords of Orion? <sup>32</sup> Can you bring forth the constellations in their seasons or lead out the Bear with its cubs?
- a) Here we get two verses on the night sky as seen in the Northern Hemisphere. Yes God is well aware that these are stars and that's simply the pattern they form in the night sky. It's not a lecture saying those stars are actually that close together. It's simply to ask Job if he gets why the stars "look" the way they look from our perspective.



- b) If you know anything about stargazing, you would know that this is "seasonal". My point is the star cluster known as Pleiades is best visible at one time of the year and the "cords of Orion" are best visible at another time of the year. The cluster known as the Bear we know better as "The Big Dipper". The good news is I'm not here to make us experts on how all of those stars got in those positions. The simple point God's making is, "Hey Job will you explain to Me how all of that works, and how those stars "move" from the your nighttime view? Can you explain all of this to Me?" Obviously, God isn't expecting an answer from Job here. This whole lecture is to say in effect, "I'm God, you're not and therefore you have no right to question why I do things!"
  - c) Speaking of God's dominion, he continues this theme for a few more verses, until He will switch to the topic of understanding the animal kingdom! Again, the reason for all of this is not to understand what God knows, but simply to realize that if we think about asking God why did You allow "this to happen", stop and realize God might turn the tables on us as if to say, "You want to ask Me a question, hey I might do that to you too!"
  - d) Speaking of which, time to get back to God lecturing us on how He works:
26. Verse 33: Do you know the laws of the heavens? Can you set up God's dominion over the earth?
- a) Time for more paraphrasing, "Hey Job, do you understand how the world works? Do you know what is My timing over the world? Do you Job, have the power that I have to work in the world that I created?" Obviously the answer is no, and this is God's way of asking, "Do you have any idea who you're messing with when you want to ask Me about how it is the world works?" Yes, I'm humbled by just thinking about all of this stuff. Job must be shaking in his boots at this point and God's got chapters more to share with us!
27. Verse 34: "Can you raise your voice to the clouds and cover yourself with a flood of water?
- a) "Hey Job, can you change good weather into bad, so all of a sudden a downpour occurs in your life of a really bad storm?" That's another unanswerable question that God decided to throw at Job here. Wait, it gets worse:
28. Verse 35: Do you send the lightning bolts on their way? Do they report to you, 'Here we are'?
- a) "Hey Job, are you in charge of lightening? Do you know when and where it'll strike? All of this is in effect meant to drive us to our knees and say, "Sorry God I bothered you with my questions about my woe's, I can see you're really busy right now!"
  - b) This leads to the question, "So is it ok to bother God?" The answer is yes it is. Despite the fact God's in control of all these things, He loves to hear from us. God created us for the purpose of having a relationship with us. It didn't bother God that Job asked about what's happening to him. God's just saying He doesn't have to explain Himself to us but he does want to intervene in our lives. That's why He wants to hear from us.
  - c) It's always been amazing to me to consider that the God who created everything also likes to get involved in the world He created. We can't force Him to work any specific way, but we must accept He does "put Himself" in what He created and get involved in our lives so we can use our lives for His glory! OK, enough of that, back to God!
29. Verse 36: Who endowed the heart with wisdom or gave understanding to the mind? <sup>37</sup> Who has the wisdom to count the clouds? Who can tip over the water jars of the heavens <sup>38</sup> when the dust becomes hard and the clods of earth stick together?
- a) Here is the last of the "non-animal" verses which will cover the rest of the lesson. Verse 36 is when God backs up to ask, "Hey Job, you getting all of this? Are you beginning to grasp that I'm God and you're not? Yes, Job, I love to hear from people and get involved in their lives when I choose, but I can't be forced to do anything because again, "I'm God so please deal with it"". That's the tone of these verses.

- b) Verses 37-38 simply give more examples using the simple examples of earth and water as to illustrate God fully gets how all of it works as He created it in the first place! This is just another example that what God knows is beyond our ability to comprehend.
  - c) Ok enough of this, time for God to give us His "zoo tour"!
30. Verse 39: "Do you hunt the prey for the lioness and satisfy the hunger of the lions <sup>40</sup> when they crouch in their dens or lie in wait in a thicket?
- a) Since Chapter 39 focuses on animals and Chapter 38 was on creation, I have no idea why a chapter break was not placed before Verse 39 instead of after Verse 41. Like I love to state, the chapter breaks were not added until about two millennia after it was written, so do not worry about that specific fact.
  - b) Anyway, God switches topics here as if to say, "Hey Job, while you're busy contemplating how I'm able to make the world, has it ever occurred to you that as God I provide food for hunting animals to hunt? Has it occurred to you that I created animals that eat other ones as a way to control the growth of animals on this planet? Job even if that thought occurred to you, are you aware that I know what they eat when they eat it?"
  - c) To quote another saying I'm fond of, "Every time I try to think about how big God is, all it does it give me a headache!" The underlying point of both these chapters is there are some things that God does reveal to us, (such as His nature and the fact He desires to be with us forever), there are a lot of things that are beyond our ability to comprehend. That includes how God created the world (focus of Chapter 38) and how and why He created animals to exist with us, which is the focus of Chapter 39 and the final verses of Chapter 38.
31. Verse 41: Who provides food for the raven when its young cry out to God and wander about for lack of food?
- a) Here we switch from lions to ravens. The question for Job is who ultimately provides food for those raven babies to eat? Ravens are "scavenger" birds and the simple point is they do find things so that as a species they continue to live. OK, God's just getting warmed up in His discussion about animals. Let's continue with Chapter 39.
32. Chapter 39: "Do you know when the mountain goats give birth? Do you watch when the doe bears her fawn? <sup>2</sup> Do you count the months till they bear? Do you know the time they give birth? <sup>3</sup> They crouch down and bring forth their young; their labor pains are ended.
- a) Just when we're on the verge of having our minds blown on the topic of how big God is, it gets worse to Chapter 39, God's essentially asking if we're aware of when mountain goats or deer actually reproduce? Do we know when all of that occurs? Whether or not God is aware of every one of those instances is truly beyond our ability to grasp.
  - b) What all of this should be doing (and doing to me) is to humble us to realize the extent of God's power and just who it is we're praying to in the first place. If God is aware of all of this while He's listening to all of our prayers, that just means His power is truly beyond a normal person's ability to comprehend. It's a subtle way of saying, "Hey Job, do you know what you're really doing when you question Me about what I'm doing?"
33. Verse 4: Their young thrive and grow strong in the wilds; they leave and do not return.
- a) How and when do animals know not to return to their parents? Why don't we read of say a dog searching for its long lost mother? Animals have an instinct to leave their parents as they move on in life. It's an instinct that humans don't have. God's question is essentially if all animals including humans involved, why do animals act that way, while we humans as a general rule maintain a relationship with our parents to the end of their lives? This is simply another way of saying, "Hey, Job, you can't explain all things!"

34. Verse 5: "Who let the wild donkey go free? Who untied his ropes? <sup>6</sup> I gave him the wasteland as his home, the salt flats as his habitat. <sup>7</sup> He laughs at the commotion in the town; he does not hear a driver's shout. <sup>8</sup> He ranges the hills for his pasture and searches for any green thing.
- a) God's "animal lecture" continues with a specific type of donkey. I heard a few sermons on this animal, but essentially it's a specific type of donkey that can't be tamed. It doesn't care about interacting with other animals and essentially lives to survive. God's bringing it up as if to say, "Hey Job, you think all animals evolve the same? Why is it there are donkeys that can be tamed to be used and others that cannot? It's another example of God saying to us, "Evolution can't explain animal life if one studies it carefully". It's God saying to us, "Hey think about "this one", why is it different from "that one" when they look alike?"
  - b) Again, we're getting this animal lecture so Job can realize he's got no right to ask God why He does what He does when we can't explain all things. Alright, let's continue:
35. Verse 9: "Will the wild ox consent to serve you? Will he stay by your manger at night? <sup>10</sup> Can you hold him to the furrow with a harness? Will he till the valleys behind you? <sup>11</sup> Will you rely on him for his great strength? Will you leave your heavy work to him? <sup>12</sup> Can you trust him to bring in your grain and gather it to your threshing floor?
- a) Of all the animals that can be tamed, the ox is the largest. The bible commonly uses the ox as a symbol of service for that reason. The point here is simply that an ox is required to be tamed before it can be used. In other words, one can't just tie an ox to a plow and say let's get going. It has to be trained. The way ox are usually trained is an existing plow ox will be "saddled" with a newcomer and that's how the new one is trained.
  - b) In the Gospels Jesus refers to an ox's "yoke" (harness) when He says "My burden is light." (Matthew 11:30). Jesus was speaking to people who mostly understood how to harness an ox. Jesus point is in comparison to what ox have to do when harnessed, his requirements of us, is lighter than an ox in that we're completely saved by faith and we're not "plowing our way to heaven" by our works. I'm just mentioning this to say that Jesus also used ox harnessing to make a point. Bottom line, wild oxen can't plow and that is the point here.
36. Verse 13: "The wings of the ostrich flap joyfully, but they cannot compare with the pinions and feathers of the stork. <sup>14</sup> She lays her eggs on the ground and lets them warm in the sand, <sup>15</sup> unmindful that a foot may crush them, that some wild animal may trample them. <sup>16</sup> She treats her young harshly, as if they were not hers; she cares not that her labor was in vain, <sup>17</sup> for God did not endow her with wisdom or give her a share of good sense. <sup>18</sup> Yet when she spreads her feathers to run, she laughs at horse and rider.
- a) I have to admit, this section is my favorite in the two chapters. I've always believed God does have a sense of humor. He created us in His image and that includes the ability to laugh at times. Think of when Jesus said, "Before you get the speck of dust out of your brother's eyes, consider the wood beam in your own eye". That's an exaggeration and is funny! (From Matthew 7:3). The humor is the fact that God created an animal this "silly".
  - b) Anyway, in this section God picks on the ostrich. Let's be honest, it's a silly bird. One of the things the verses says is that it doesn't care well for it's young. It lays it's eggs on the ground and forgets about them, so wild animal can crush those eggs! At the same time, it is a very fast bird and can outrun a horse!
  - c) God's point is simply that it doesn't have the "brains" of most animals and is another thing that Job nor any human can explain why it was created that way.
  - d) Before I move on, notice there is a hint of the Holy Spirit here. Yes this is "Jehovah" doing the talking. Yet God said that "God didn't give this bird much wisdom". All I'm saying is the text here implies more than one "God entity" in these verses.

37. Verse 19: "Do you give the horse his strength or clothe his neck with a flowing mane? <sup>20</sup> Do you make him leap like a locust, striking terror with his proud snorting? <sup>21</sup> He paws fiercely, rejoicing in his strength, and charges into the fray. <sup>22</sup> He laughs at fear, afraid of nothing; he does not shy away from the sword.
- a) Ok, we're almost done with our "animal example tour" (at least until Job interrupts all this for the first few verses of Chapter 40). Here God points out the "war horse".
  - b) One of the fascinating thing about horses is their born with a competitive spirit. They like to race each other just to test their strength. Horses are used in battle because they'd obey an order to charge despite the noise and confusion of battle. Horses when trained will go where they are told in spite of danger.
  - c) All of these verses describe a war horse's ability to charge through a battle. It doesn't have the natural fear of other animals. I have no idea how much Job knew about horses. What the point here is to compare say, horses to ostriches. How did one animal evolve that will run from danger and abandon it's own children while other animals can run through and to danger? Whether it's intended this way or not, the point is God's killing the argument that animals "naturally evolved" over time!
  - d) Since I'm "killing" the discussion of evolution here, let me pose one more point. There is a classic argument by evolutionists that "If you give monkeys enough time to write, they'll eventually write a famous play by accident." What that argument fails to note is what if every other key on the keyboard is fatal to the monkey? If you learn how DNA works, it truly kills the evolution argument about time solving the problems. I know I'm scratching the surface on that one, but let's just say the study of DNA actually kills evolution's case!
  - e) OK, then, back to the zoo: God's still on horses here.
38. Verse 23: The quiver rattles against his side, along with the flashing spear and lance. <sup>24</sup> In frenzied excitement he eats up the ground; he cannot stand still when the trumpet sounds. <sup>25</sup> At the blast of the trumpet he snorts, 'Aha!' He catches the scent of battle from afar, the shout of commanders and the battle cry.
- a) God spends a lot of verses on the "war horse". It is as if God is saying "I'm really proud of this one, it's special and it serves man well by what it can do working with this animal!
  - b) Consider that if man had no need for war, it'd have no need for a horse to be used the way it is intended. It's God's way of saying, I designed a lot of animals to help man to get their goals done, including oxen for plowing and horses for yes, war use!
  - c) You may argue that if man didn't fight wars, there'd be other uses for horses. Of course it is true. God's simple point here is such wars do exist and horses can be used that way.
  - d) OK, better jump to a safer topic. Time to check out some birds!
39. Verse 26: "Does the hawk take flight by your wisdom and spread his wings toward the south? <sup>27</sup> Does the eagle soar at your command and build his nest on high? <sup>28</sup> He dwells on a cliff and stays there at night; a rocky crag is his stronghold. <sup>29</sup> From there he seeks out his food; his eyes detect it from afar.
- a) The final few verses of this chapter focus on birds of prey, specifically hawks and eagles. If you know anything about how those birds descend on their prey, they don't fly straight down. The fastest way down is in a rotating circular motion. The exact motion is hard to describe. What's amazing is these birds have a natural instinct to fly in the exact way as to get there as fast as possible. These birds also have an amazing ability to spot food from a good distance away. Eagles hide in places where they are hard to spot. At the same time, they have an incredible ability to spot food a good distance away. They are predators, so

they do have the ability not only to hunt, but to kill the animals they find. Then they will bring the dead carcasses back to their nest. Speaking of which, time for the last verse:

40. Verse 30: His young ones feast on blood, and where the slain are, there is he."
- a) OK, why do we get this? Why is God getting all "bloody" on us to describe war horses and then birds of prey? What's the purpose for this lecture? Thought you'd never ask! First I'd like to comment on blood itself. It's a symbol of life. Israelites weren't allowed to eat any animal that was a predator out of respect for "blood". I think God mentions "bloody" type of animals as if to say He created all of it, and whether we like it or not, that's the way the world works.
  - b) Now let me back up and ask, "Why the zoo lecture?" Let's face it God could have just said He was God, Job wasn't there when He made things, so now, Job, what is it you wanted to say in your defense? My point is Chapter 38 alone made me shut up and say, "OK God is God, and I'm not allowed to question why He does what He does. I must simply accept it as His will. I can ask for relief. I can ask for help, but if God chooses not to, I must accept it as His will. That's the one big thing I get from reading the book of Job.
  - c) Meanwhile, why the zoo lecture? I suspect the simple point is to show the diversity of the animals God created as if to say, "OK Job, explain this if you can?" It's as if God's saying to Job, "look how diverse I made the animals. Some are smart, some are not. Some can run a very fast pace. Some can fly in ways that say, look as strange but is very efficient. I'm the one who gave all of those animals their knowledge or lack thereof. In other words, "Yes, I am God, deal with it". Since Job probably had some familiarity with those animals God is speaking to Job on a level he can relate to. That includes the fact that some birds kill other animals in order to survive and bring the "bloody mess" to their children to eat!
  - d) At this point Job is going to interrupt God's speech. The really good news is this lecture by God worked. Let me preview the first few verses of Chapter 40 just to show it worked:
41. Job 40:1: The LORD said to Job: <sup>2</sup> "Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him? Let him who accuses God answer him!" <sup>3</sup> Then Job answered the LORD: <sup>4</sup> "I am unworthy--how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. <sup>5</sup> I spoke once, but I have no answer-- twice, but I will say no more."
- a) I'll discuss these verses in the next lesson. I just wanted to show, "it worked". Job put his hand over his mouth as if to say, "You win. I'll be quiet. I won't question you any more!"
  - b) Ok, what's the take home lesson for us? Do we stop praying because He's God and we're not? Of course not. If anything all of this is a reminder of the power of what God did and what He wants to do in our world. The amazing thing is He wants us to be a part of it. He wants us involved in His plan for redemption of souls. There is a classic expression that is "In the world people are the pawns and the prizes". That means God uses people in order for His will to get done. We're the "pawns". We're also the "prizes" as we're the ones who God wants to redeem to be with Him forever. Therefore, as Job "shuts up" here, hopefully we've learned a few things about how God created things, and how He is working in our world. That's the main thing to get from God's lecture on what He does.
  - c) OK, now what? That's the fun part of the last few chapters. In the meantime, I'm overdue to close in prayer for one week!
42. Heavenly Father, Understanding creation and the animal kingdom is truly beyond what we can learn. We simply accept the fact that You know all things and created all things, ultimately to glorify You. May we do the same. May we use the most valuable thing You've given us, our time in order to make a difference for You in this world. Yes we can pray and ask for Your will to be done in our lives. At the same time, we accept there are things beyond our ability to grasp.

That's why we're grateful You exist and You created us to glorify You. May the Spirit guide us as we use our lives for that difference. We ask this in Jesus name, Amen.