**Harmony Church – Chronological Bible Study Guide – Job Chapters 38-42**

**God Speaks**

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| **Job 38-39** | **God Uses Nature To Challenge Job’s Wisdom** |
| **Job 40:1-5** | **Job’s Initial Repentance** |
| **Job 40:6-41:34** | **God Challenges Job’s Authority Over Nature** |
| **Job 42** | **Job’s Repentance (Vss. 1-6)**  **Job’s Intercession For His Friends (Vss. 7-9)**  **God Restores Job’s Prosperity (Vss. 10-17)** |

**Chapter 38**

***Key Verse: Job 38:1-2, “Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, 2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?”***

**Summary**

Then, God himself addresses Job “out of the whirlwind.” He demands, “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? / Gird up your loins like a man, / I will question you, and you shall declare to me.”

Job doesn’t get a chance to respond to Elihu’s speeches. That’s because God suddenly addresses Job directly for the first time. He does so in terrifying form, unseen yet heard through the awesome, dangerous force of the whirlwind. After all Job’s questions, God says it’s time for him to question Job. He dismisses Job’s speech as “without knowledge” and warns him that he’d better get ready.

God continues to question Job. Where was Job, he asks, when God laid the earth’s foundations? Surely Job knows the earth’s measurements! Who shut the doors of the sea, telling it, “Thus far shall you come, and no farther”?

God’s onslaught of questions is laced with sarcasm, as he mocks Job that surely, he must understand how God made the world. God clearly implies that Job has no idea what he’s been talking about.

God keeps interrogating Job, asking him if he has walked in the sea’s depths, seen the gates of death, or knows where light or darkness dwell. “Surely you know,” God mocks Job, “for […] the number of your days is great!” Who makes rain fall on the desert? Can Job “bind the chains of the Pleiades”? Who gives wisdom and understanding? Who provides prey to young lions?

**Chapter 39**

**Key Verse: Job 39:13, “Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrichh?”**

**Summary**

The beauty is God has not come to Job as one who is standing behind a bench ready to judge him for his questions. Instead, he has met Job as a teacher. One who is simply opening his eyes to the realities of life that often are right before his eyes yet have gone unnoticed or had not given heed to.

Our searching for answers often brings us up short. In particular with the hard questions to God about the way He moves and what His control is over. The reminder to Job and even us is that God is in control of so many things of which we take for granted. We want answers to the pain we have, the turmoil we’re in, the struggles we face.

And although God does not give any specific real answers to Job of what he inquired, what God is stating here is the answer is Himself. There are so many things in life we don’t understand. Mysteries that indeed may not be revealed. Yet, we are called to trust in God’s power, in His wisdom and the goodness that radiates from the central core of God’s character. For His dominion is over all things, down to the nature of animals.

If you have been searching for answers and wrestled greatly with something – where is God simply asking you to open your eyes to His ultimate control of all things (maybe even things in the animal kingdom) and trust His goodness and wisdom? Where is He being a teacher to you in the middle of it all that may not give answers but reaffirms to trust His heart and His character?

**Chapter 40/41**

**Key Verse: Job 40:4, “4 Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.”**

**Summary**

The LORD asks Job, “Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty?” If Job argues with God, he must give a response. Job replies that he is small; how can he answer? “I lay my hand upon my mouth,” he tells God, and will speak no more.

**God calls Job a “faultfinder”—meaning that Job has been finding fault with God and therefore shouldn’t dare to question God. Finally given a chance to speak to God directly, Job’s response is silence—he now sees that no other response is fitting.**

God again speaks to Job out of the whirlwind, telling him to “gird up his loins like a man” and answer when he’s questioned. He orders Job to “deck yourself with […] dignity,” bring low the proud, and tread upon the wicked. Only then will God acknowledge that Job can gain victory by his own hand.

God isn’t done with Job yet. Next, he challenges Job to embody God’s justice and power by dealing justly with the proud and wicked. If he can do that, then maybe Job is worthy to question God.

God tells Job to consider Behemoth, which God made just as he made Job. This powerful creature eats grass just like an ox. Its creation was God’s first great act, and only God can control it. It lies in the shade of the lotus plant, surrounded by the willows in the wadi. It’s unafraid of the turbulent River Jordan.

Can Job draw Leviathan out with a fishhook? Can he put a rope in its nose? Can he play with it or put it on a leash for a children’s pet? Indeed, he couldn’t even hope to capture it; it’s so fierce that nobody dares confront it. God speaks of Leviathan’s “coat of mail” and terrifying teeth; “its sneezes flash forth light,” and it breathes fire. No weapon—sword, spear, or javelin—can pierce it. This fearless creature is king over all lesser creatures.

Here, God continues to question Job regarding the mysteries of creation, vividly describing a mysterious dragon-like being that terrifies all other creatures, but frolics like a harmless pet for God. Like Behemoth, Leviathan’s precise identity isn’t certain; it could be a crocodile, or it could be a mythical beast. The bigger point is that no, Job could never catch such a creature—God alone can.

**Chapter 42**

**Summary**

Job answers the LORD and says he knows that God can do all these things; God’s purpose can’t be thwarted. He admits that he has spoken things he didn’t understand—things “too wonderful” for him. He had heard of God before, but now he has seen him. Accordingly, he “despises” himself and “repents[] in dust and ashes.”

After God’s speech, Job returns to the worshipful attitude he had at the beginning of the book. Notably, God has not answered Job’s pressing questions about his suffering. However, Job has witnessed God’s “wonderful” power, which seems to preclude the need for answers. Instead, recognizing his utter smallness, Job repents of his arrogance in questioning God.

After the LORD finishes speaking to Job, he addresses Eliphaz the Temanite and says that his wrath is kindled against Eliphaz and his two friends, because unlike Job, they haven’t spoken rightly about him. Therefore, he orders Eliphaz to sacrifice seven bulls and seven rams as a burnt offering; they must also ask God’s servant Job to pray for them. God will accept Job’s prayer that he not deal with these men “according to [their] folly.” So Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar do this, and God accepts Job’s prayer on their behalf.

God rebukes Job’s friends for not speaking truthfully about him. While Job had to repent of his arrogance is demanding answers from God about his suffering, God implies that Job did not speak falsely of him, while Job’s friends did. This difference suggests that even if Job’s friends correctly understood certain truths about God, suffering, and human behavior, they didn’t apply those truths accurately to Job’s situation—which essentially negated whatever theoretical wisdom they had. In turn, this suggests that from a divine perspective, there’s much more to wisdom than theoretical knowledge, and by wielding such knowledge ineffectively, Job’s friends have sinned. God further vindicates Job’s righteousness by upholding Job, not his friends, as a pinnacle of righteousness to whom his friends should appeal for prayer.

After Job prays for his friends, God restores Job’s fortunes. In fact, God gives Job twice as much as he had before. All of Job’s siblings and acquaintances come to visit, show sympathy, and comfort Job for all that God has put him through. God blesses the latter years of Job’s life more than the beginning of his life.

Not only does Job have 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, and 1,000 donkeys, but he also fathers more children: seven sons and three daughters. The daughters are named Jemimah, Keziah, and Keren-happuch. They are the most beautiful women in the land, and they receive inheritances just as their brothers do. Job lives 140 years after this, seeing four generations of his offspring. Then Job dies, “old and full of days.”