

## Job Chapter 38

Verses 38:1 – 40:2: Job had called on many occasions for God to appear. Finally, He does appear in a whirlwind, but not with the answers Job desired. Rather, God comes with questions. There are a total of 39 questions (in chapter 38), which easily ranks it as the chapter with the most questions in all the Bible. When added to the 20 questions (in 39:1 – 40:2), the total comes to 59 questions that God asked Job in the first cycle of interrogation. The second cycle (40:6 – 41:34), contains another 24 questions. The significant thing about these questions is that Job cannot answer a single one! God was driving home the point that Job must let God be God, the sovereign and omnipotent Creator who answers to no one.

Jobs complaints that he had no mediator between himself and God are met in Yahweh's first speech as the Lord counters with the truth of Job's comparable insignificance. The glory of the story is that God Himself did prepare the very Mediator that Job requested, in the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ (see notes on 9:32-35).

God appeared and engaged in His first interrogation of Job, who had raised some accusations against Him. God had His day in court with Job.

(In verses 1-3), Job received his audience with God, and now he would be subject to divine cross-examination. The tempest he feared (in 9:17), had appeared, but rather than an object of judgment, it was God answering Job's questions "out of the whirlwind", just as He spoke to Moses (Exodus 19:16-17). Likewise, Ezekiel saw the glory of God in the storm (Ezek. Chapters 1-2).

### **Job 38:1 "Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,"**

"The Lord": Yahweh, the covenant Lord, was the name used for God in the book's prologue, where the reader was introduced to Job and his relationship with God. However (in chapters 3-37), the name Yahweh is not used. God is called El Shaddai, God Almighty. In this book that change becomes a way of illustrating that God has been detached and distant. The relationship is restored in rich terms as God reveals Himself to Job using His covenant name.

"Out of the whirlwind". Job had repeatedly called God to court in order to verify his innocence. God finally came to interrogate Job on some of the comments he had made to his own accusers. God was about to be Job's vindicator, but He first brought Job to a right understanding of Himself.

Elihu and Job's three friends had greatly disputed with Job. Notice, God spoke to Job. God can be in any thing He desires to be. A whirlwind was probably used here, because of the great confusion. Now, God spoke out of this confusion and settled it all.

### **Job 38:2 "Who [is] this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?"**

Job's words had only further confused matters already confused by useless counselors.

God did not recognize Elihu or Job's three friends. He would not allow them to speak for Him. Their counsel had been no good at all. They had hurt, instead of helped.

**Job 38:3 "Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me."**

"I will demand of thee": God silenced Job's presumption in constantly wanting to ask the questions of God, by becoming Job's questioner. It must be noted that God never told Job about the reason for his pain, about the conflict between Himself and Satan, which was the reason for Job's suffering. He never gave Job any explanation at all about the circumstances of his trouble. He did one thing in all He said He asked Job if he was as eternal, great, powerful, wise, and perfect as God. If not, Job would have been better off to be quiet and trust Him.

God in this, was speaking as if Elihu was less than a man. These were the same questions that Elihu had asked Job. Now, God demanded Elihu to answer the same questions. If he knew God better than Job, then he could answer the questions He posed.

Verses 38:4-38: The questions cover a wide range of the marvels of God's creation, with the emphasis placed on the inanimate world: earth (verses 4-7), sea (verses 8-11), the dawn ("dayspring" verses 12-15), unseen wonders (verses 16-21), weather phenomena (verses 22-30), and heavenly bodies (verses 31-38). God asked Job if he participated in creation as He did. That was a crushing, humbling query with an obvious "no" answer.

Verses 4-11: God challenged Job's wisdom immediately with an inquiry about Job's lack of omnipotence and omnipresence. (Proverbs 3:19-20 and 8:22-31), reveal the connection between God's wisdom and creation.

In verses 4-7: Creation is spoken of using the language of building construction.

**Job 38:4 "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding."**

When I settled it as firm upon its own center as if it had been built upon the surest foundations? Then thou wast nowhere; thou hadst no being: thou art but of yesterday; and dost thou presume to judge of my eternal counsels? I made the world without thy help, and therefore can govern it without thy advice or direction.

What right did Elihu have to ask Job this since he was not there when God created the earth? Of course, he could not answer, because he did not have understanding.

**Job 38:5 "Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? Or who hath stretched the line upon it?"**

Who hath prescribed how long, and broad, and deep it should be? Or who hath stretched the line upon it? The measuring-line, to regulate all its dimensions, so that it might be as beautiful as useful.

"If thou knowest": But if thou art ignorant of these manifest and visible works, do not pretend to the exact knowledge of my mysterious providences.

"Or who hath stretched the line upon it": To wit, the measuring line, to regulate all its dimensions, so as might be most convenient both for beauty and use?

I think in all of this, God had waited patiently and allowed them to say all of these things to Job, and He finally had enough. Elihu had claimed to be speaking for God. God did not even recognize Elihu at all.

**Job 38:6 "Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof;"**

These details follow naturally upon the adoption of the particular metaphor of a house or building. They are not to be pressed. The object is to impress on Job his utter ignorance of God's ways in creation.

"Or who laid the corner stone thereof?" Who gave the last finishing touch to the work (see Psalm 118:22; Zech. 4:7)? "Canst thou tell?" If not, why enter into controversy with the Creator?

Of course, in all of this, we know that it was God. Elihu did not have any idea, any more than anyone else. This is that lesson that we must not correct others on things we know nothing of ourselves.

**Job 38:7 "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"**

"Morning stars ... sons of God": The angelic realm, God's ministering spirits.

The "sons of God" in this verse, were probably speaking of the angels. It appears that they were some of the first of the creations. We do know that the heavens were created before the earth. It speaks of this (in Genesis chapter 1). In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Verses 8-11: God's power over the sea by raising the continents is described, along with the thick clouds that draw up its water to carry rain to the land.

Verses 8-9: God constrains and clothes even the most powerful forces of "the sea", far beyond anything a mere mortal can do.

**Job 38:8 "Or [who] shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, [as if] it had issued out of the womb?"**

Who was it, you or I, that did set bounds to the vast and raging ocean, and shut it up as it were with doors within its proper place and storehouse, that it might not overflow the earth. Which without God's powerful restraint it would do? (See Psalm 33:7 104:9). This sense seems most proper, and to be confirmed by the following verses.

"When it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb": I.e. at its birth, when it was first formed, by the gathering together of the waters into one place (see Gen. 1:9).

God put boundaries upon the water, so it would not cover the land unless He commanded it. The seas breaking forth from the womb speaks of its birth. God gave everything the possibility to be, when He created them. The seas were no exception.

**Job 38:9 "When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it,"**

The account of creation here given is certainly not drawn wholly from Genesis. It is to be viewed as a second, independent, account of the occurrences, in fuller detail, but ill-defined, by reason of the poetical phraseology.

"And thick darkness a swaddling band for it": The infant sea, just come from the womb (verse 8), is represented as clothed with a cloud, and swaddled in thick darkness, to mark its complete subjection to its Creator from the first.

Perhaps the wording here of the clouds pertaining to the sea, shows the sea's dependence on God. Actually, the seas and the sun and the clouds all work together to bring rain to the earth.

**Job 38:10 "And brake up for it my decreed [place], and set bars and doors,"**

I.e. made those valleys, or channels, and hollow places in the earth, which might serve for a cradle to receive and hold this great and goodly infant when it came out of the womb (see Gen. 1:9-10 Psalm 33:7). Or, ordained or established my decree upon or concerning it.

"And set bars and doors": To keep it in its decreed appointed place, that the waters might not go over the earth. These are the shores, as the Targum, the cliffs and rocks upon them, the boundaries of the sea. To which may be added, and what is amazing, the sand upon the seashore is such a boundary to it that it cannot pass (Jer. 5:22); but these would be insufficient was it not for the power and will of God, next expressed.

**Job 38:11 "And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?"**

The waters of the sea shall spread themselves to such and such shores, and wash them, but go no further. Its rolling tides shall go up so far in rivers that go out of it, and then return, keeping exactly to time and place. This is said by Jehovah, the Word of God, and through his almighty power is tended to.

"Thy proud waves": Which rage and swell as if they would overwhelm all the earth.

Even the sea is controlled by the laws of nature that God set into motion. Only at the command of God are the seas allowed to go beyond their original boundaries.

Verses 12-41: The steady flow of questions has obvious answers, exposing Job's folly in presuming he could set God straight. The Creator-creature distinction is undisputable.

In verses 12-13 the dawn rises, and as it spreads light over the earth, it exposes the wicked, like shaking the corners of a cloth exposes dirt.

**Job 38:12 "Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; [and] caused the dayspring to know his place;"**

That is, the morning light, or the sun, which is the cause of it. Didst thou create the sun, and appoint the order and succession of day and night.

"Since thy days": Since thou was born: this work was done long before thou was born.

"And caused the dayspring to know its place": To observe the punctual time when, and the point God is going from one thing in creation to the other and explaining that mere man had nothing to do with creating any of it. Not only did man have nothing to do with creating all of this, but was not even there when it was created. Man cannot speak of things of nature with knowledge then. God caused the separation of light, which causes day and night. Day springs forth each morning, and none of us understand exactly why.

**Job 38:13 "That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?"**

The idea seems to be that the dawn, suddenly appearing, seizes hold of all the ends of the earth "at one rush", and lights up the whole terrestrial region. The wicked, lovers of darkness, are taken by surprise, and receive a shock from which they recover with difficulty (compare Job 24:16-17). That they are "shaken from the earth" must be regarded as Oriental hyperbole.

Day seems to spring all at once as far as you can see. Those who love darkness of night to commit their sins in, are shocked by the suddenness of the morning.

**Job 38:14 "It is turned as clay [to] the seal; and they stand as a garment."**

"Clay to the seal": Documents written on clay tablets were signed using personal engraved seals upon which was written the bearer's name. "Turned" conveys the idea that the earth is turned or rotated like a cylindrical seal rolled over the soft clay. Such rolling cylinder seals were found in Babylon. This speaks of the earth, rotating on its axis, an amazing statement that only God could reveal in ancient days. The dawn rolls across the earth as it rotates.

This perhaps, is speaking of a seal such as a stamp of government. It seems to be just a clump of moist clay until the design of the stamp is placed upon it. Perhaps, this is connected with the darkness before the dawn. In the dark, it is difficult to make things out. When dawn comes, we see designs in everything. A garment is but a shadow in the dark, but we can see it clearly when the sun comes up.

**Job 38:15 "And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken."**

“Their light”: The light of the wicked is darkness, because that is when they do their works. The dawn takes away their opportunity to do their deeds and stops their arm that is lifted and ready to harm. Was Job around when God created light (verse 21).

The wicked like the darkness better than they do the light. They can raise their arm against others in the dark without being found out. When the sun rises, it is as if their arm is broken because it is useless to attack others with in the day.

**Job 38:16 "Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?"**

The emphasis is on the word "springs," which means sources, origin, or deepest depths (see the Septuagint, which has *πηγή*, and the Vulgate, which has *profunda*). Canst thou go to the bottom of anything, explore its secrets, and explain its cause and origin?

“Or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?” (Rather, the deep places). Art thou not as ignorant as other men of all these remote and secret things? Physical science is now attempting the material exploration of the ocean depths, but "deep sea dredging" bring us no nearer to the origin, cause, or mode of creation of the great watery mass.

God was asking Elihu who had bragged of his knowledge, if he knew where the sea began.

**Job 38:17 "Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?"**

By "the gates of death," Sheol, the abode of the dead, seems to be intended (compare Job 10:21-22; 17:16). Has Job explored this region, and penetrated its secrets? Or is it as unknown to him as to the rest of mankind?

"Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?" Is a mere echo of the first, adding a new idea.

He had not experienced death, so he knew nothing of that either. Notice, the "gates of death been opened". A person cannot even die, unless God opens death to him.

**Job 38:18 "Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? Declare if thou knowest it all."**

Nay, dost thou so much as understand the extent and all the parts of the earth, and the state and quality of all countries, and of the men and things in them?

"Declare, if thou knowest it all": Give me an answer to these questions, which it is far easier to do than to answer many other questions which I could put to thee about my secret counsels, and providences. And my reasons for dealing with thee as I do.

The answer of this is no. Men have a little better way of discovering all of this today than in the time of Job. Even now there are many mysteries pertaining to all of this. At first people thought that the earth was flat. Then they thought it was round. Now they say it is not exactly round but a little more oval. Man really knows very little even today.

**Job 38:19 "Where [is] the way [where] light dwelleth? and [as for] darkness, where [is] the place thereof,"**

Or, which is the way to the dwelling place of light? Where does light dwell? What is its original and true home? Light is a thing quite distinct from the sun and moon and planets (Gen. 1:3, 16). Where and what is it? Dost thou know the way to its dwelling place? If not, why? Once more, dost thou pretend to search out the deep things of God?

"And as for darkness, where is the place thereof?" Darkness too, light's antithesis, must not have a home. A "place" of abode, as Job himself had postulated, when he spoke of "a land of darkness and the shadow of death, a land of darkness as darkness itself. Where the light is as darkness" (Job 10:21-22) if so, can Job point out the locality?

This is not speaking of the sun and moon. This is speaking of the source of all light. The One we call Jesus Christ is that Light. Darkness is the absence of Light. We would be hard pressed to determine where that Light originated and so would Job, Elihu, or Job's friends.

**Job 38:20 "That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths [to] the house thereof?"**

Either darkness, or rather the light; take it as it were by the hand, and guide and direct its course to its utmost bound. This only the Lord can do and does. He has set a tabernacle for the sun, which goes forth at his command as a strong man to run a race. Whose going forth is from the end of the heavens, and his circuit unto the ends of it. In which his course is so steered and directed by the Lord, that he never misses his way or errs from it. But keeps his path exactly, as well as knows its rising and setting, its utmost bounds.

"And that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof?" From whence it sets out, and whither it returns (see Psalm 19:4). And so the light and darkness of prosperity and adversity, as well as natural light and darkness, are of God. At his disposal, and bounded by him, and therefore his will should be submitted to. Which is the doctrine the Lord would teach Job by all this.

We are told to walk in the Light, as He is in the Light. The only way to find that path, is to fix our eyes on the Light (Jesus Christ). We must walk toward Him to stay in the path of Light. We do not know where it begins.

**Job 38:21 "Knowest thou [it], because thou wast then born? Or [because] the number of thy days [is] great?"**

The irony that has underlain the whole address comes here to the surface, and shows itself capable of being perceived. Job of course, is as old as the Almighty, or at any rate, the same age with creation. Otherwise he could not presume to take the tone which he has taken, and arraign the moral government of the Creator.

“Or because the number of thy days is great!” Compare the sarcasm of Eliphaz (Job 15:7).

Verses 22-30: The earlier logic of Job and his friends suggested that weather occurs in direct relationship to good or evil actions. God exposed the flawed thinking of the retribution principle by asking about “rain” in places that are uninhabited.

**Job 38:22 "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail,"**

“Treasures”: These are the storehouses. The storehouse of these elements is the clouds.

This just shows that only God knows the exact source of the snow or hail.

**Job 38:23 "Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?"**

As if they were carefully treasured up to be brought forth as they shall be needed. The idea is, that they were entirely under the direction of God.

"The time of trouble": Or "the time of need." The meaning probably is, that he had kept them in reserve for the time when he wished to bring calamity on his enemies, or that he made use of them to punish his foes (compare notes of Job 36:31-33).

"Against the day of battle and war": Hailstones were employed by God sometimes to overwhelm his foes, and were sent against them in time of battle (see Joshua 10:11; Exodus 9:22-26; Psalm 18:12-13; compare notes at Isa. 29:6).

In several instances in the Bible, large hail came on the enemies of God in battle.

**Job 38:24 "By what way is the light parted, [which] scattereth the east wind upon the earth?"**



That is, dost thou know by what way it is parted or divided? As at the first creation, when God divided the light from darkness (Gen. 1:4). Or at sun rising and sun setting; and so in the two hemispheres, when there is darkness on the one, and light on the other. Or under the two poles, when there are interchangeably six months light and six months darkness. Or how it is parted in an unequal distribution of day and night, at different seasons and in different climates. Or how on one and the same day, and at the same time, the sun shall shine in one part of the earth, and not another. And more especially if this had been now a fact, and known, that there should be darkness all over the land of Egypt, and light in Goshen.

"Which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?": That rising sometimes with the sun, or first spring of light (see Jonah 4:8). Or which light spreads and diffuses itself "from the east", as it may be rendered. The sun rises in the east, and in a very quick and surprising manner spreads and diffuses its light throughout the hemisphere. Or this may respect the east wind itself, which scatters the clouds; and either spreads them in the heavens over the earth, or disperses them and drives away rain, as the north wind does. Or as Mr. Broughton (an English scholar and theologian in the 1500's), renders the words, "and the east wind scattereth itself over the earth"; it blowing invisibly and without our knowledge, goes and returns as other winds do (John 3:8).

This is asking for an explanation of the planning of God, which is an impossibility to mere man. Thousands of years later, we still do not know these secrets of God.

**Job 38:25 "Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder;"**

For the showers of rain, which come down orderly and gradually, as if they were conveyed in pipes or channels. Which, without the care of God's providence, would fall confusedly, and overwhelm the earth.

"Or a way for the lightning of thunder": Who opened a passage for them out of the cloud in which they were imprisoned? And these are joined with the rain, because they are commonly accompanied with great showers of rain.

The answer is that God made all of this. The rivers flow into the ocean, and the ocean seems to never be too full.

**Job 38:26 "To cause it to rain on the earth, [where] no man [is; on] the wilderness, wherein [there is] no man;"**

God not only causes his rain to fall equally on the just and on the unjust (Matt. 5:45), but equally. Or almost equally, on inhabited and uninhabited lands. His providence does not limit itself to supplying the wants of man, but has tender regard to the beasts, birds, reptiles, and insects which possess the lands whereon man has not yet set his foot.

**Job 38:27 "To satisfy the desolate and waste [ground]; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?"**

Parched ground seems to cry aloud for water, and so to make a piteous appeal to Heaven. Perhaps rain is not wholly wasted, even on the bare sands of the Sahara, or the rugged rocks of Tierra del Fuego. It may have uses which are beyond our knowledge.

"And to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth": Where the rain produces herbage, it is certainly of use, for wherever there is herbage there are always insects, whose enjoyment of life has every appearance of being intense.

God sustains these places. Someday someone will live there, and wonder where the wild flowers came from. This is the way God had of caring for the things He created.

### **Job 38:28 "Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?"**

How do rain and dew come into existence? Can Job make them, or any other man? Can man even conceive of the process by which they were made? If not, must not their Maker, who is God, be wholly inscrutable?

Mankind has no idea how rain came into existence. Yes, the rain has a Father. He is a heavenly Father.

### **Job 38:29 "Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?"**

That is, who has caused or produced it? The idea is, that it was not by any human agency, or in any known way by which living beings were propagated.

"And the hoary frost of heaven": Which seems to fall from heaven. The sense is, that it is caused wholly by God (see notes at Job 37:10).

We all know that water can be changed to ice by drastically reducing the temperature where the water is. We do not understand why this happens though. Some things are left to the mystery of God.

### **Job 38:30 "The waters are hid as [with] a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen."**

Rather, the waters are hardened like unto stone. When the frost comes, the waters are congealed and rendered as hard as stone.

"And the face of the deep is frozen": By "the deep" is certainly not meant here either the open ocean, which, in the latitudes known to the dwellers in South Western Asia, never freezes, or the Mediterranean. Some of the lakes which abound in the regions inhabited by Job and his friends are probably meant. These may occasionally have been thinly coated with ice in the times when the Book of Job was written (see comments on Job 6:16).

This is speaking of the water being frozen over. When it turns to ice, it is as if the water is gone.

Verses 31-32: Pleiades ... Orion ... Arcturus”: Stellar constellations (compare Job 9:9), are in view.

**Job 38:31 "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?"**

Generally understood of the seven stars, which, rising about the time of the vernal equinox, bring in the spring. Canst thou restrain or hinder their influences?

About all we or anyone else could do would be to look at this through a telescope and admire it. Our knowledge of any more about them is very limited. There seems to be something that holds the stars in these groups together, but no one can cause them to come any closer than they already are.

Verses 32-33: “Or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?” Referring to the constellation Ursa Major. God questioned Job’s knowledge of the operations of the heavens, further exposing Job’s inability to speak to how the world operates.

**Job 38:32 "Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? Or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?"**

Namely, into view? Canst thou make the stars in the southern signs arise and appear?

"Or guide Arcturus with his sons?" A northern constellation; with his sons. The lesser stars which belong to it, that are placed round about it, and attend upon it as children upon their parents.

This is speaking of some constellations that are not as familiar as Pleiades and Orion.

**Job 38:33 "Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?"**

“Ordinances of heaven”: The laws and powers that regulate all heavenly bodies.

God is not speaking of astrology but astronomy. Astronomy is an evidence-based study of the stars and the planets, but unlike astrology, it does not seek to interpret world events in light of their placement or alignment.

The laws of nature that God put into motion are understood to some extent by knowledgeable man. There is no way that any of us could ever understand how God formed the universe. We certainly know very little about the heavens. Even the fact that God set the earth out into the open air, and told it to remain in place, is a mystery to me.

**Job 38:34 "Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?"**

Will the clouds take their orders from thee, listen to thee, and obey thy voice? None but the "medicine-men" of savage tribes profess to have any such power. Elijah, indeed, "prayed, and the heaven gave rain" (James 5:18). But this was a very different thing from "commanding the clouds of heaven." His prayer was addressed to God, and God gave the rain for which he made his petition.

We cannot call down rain from heaven, unless it is the will of God.

**Job 38:35 "Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we [are]?"**

If Job cannot command the clouds, much less can he send (or rather, send forth), lightning, these marvelous and terrible evidences of almighty power. Even now, with all our command of electricity, our scientists would find it difficult to produce the effects which often result from a single flash of lightning.

Lightning is one of the most mysterious of all things of God. Man has discovered how to use the power of electricity, but even the source would be hard to explain. When I see lightning in the sky, it reminds me of the magnitude of God.

**Job 38:36 "Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?"**

"Wisdom ... understanding": This is at the heart of the real issue. The wisdom of God which created and sustains the universe is at work in Job's suffering also (see 39:17).

Wisdom is a gift from God. The understanding of man comes from the Holy Spirit of God teaching and guiding.

**Job 38:37 "Who can number the clouds in wisdom? or who can stay the bottles of heaven,"**

I.e. who is wise enough to number the clouds, and say how many they are?

"Or who can stay the bottles of heaven!" Rather, who can pour out (see the Revised Version)? The "bottles," or "water-skins," of heaven are the dense clouds heavy with rain, which alternately hold the moisture like a reservoir, and pour it out upon the earth. God alone can determine when the rain shall fall.

With all of the powerful telescopes that we have today, we are still not able to find the end of the universe. Every time the scientists believe they have counted the stars in the sky, they find a few more they forgot to count. The clouds heavy with rain only drop their rain where God commands them to.

### **Job 38:38 "When the dust groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together?"**

Aphar (אֶפְרַיִם) here often means "earth," or "soil," rather than "dust." When by the heat of the sun's rays the ground grows hard, and the clods cleave fast together, baked into a compact mass, then is the time when rain is most needed, and when the Almighty in his mercy commonly sends it. The consideration of inanimate nature here ends, with the result that its mysteries altogether transcend the human intellect, and render speculation on the still deeper mysteries of the moral world wholly vain and futile.

This is speaking of a drought and famine.

Verses 38:39 – 39:30: God asked Job the humiliating questions about whether he could take care of the animal kingdom. Job must have been feeling less and less significant under the crushing indictment of such comparisons with God.

The next series of questions emphasizes the marvels of the animal world: the "lion" (38:39-40), the "raven" (38:41 – 39:4), the wild donkey (39:5-8), the "unicorn," or better, the wild ox (39:9-12), the "peacock" (the stork), and the "ostrich" (39:13-18), the "horse" (39:19-25), the "hawk" (39:26), and the "eagle" (39:27-30).

God switches His discourse from His control of the cosmos to His provision for even the wild animals (Matt. 6:26).

### **Job 38:39 "Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion? or fill the appetite of the young lions,"**

The appeal here is to the instincts with which God has endowed animals, and to the fact that he had so made them that they would secure their own food. He asks Job whether he would undertake to do what the lion did by instinct in finding his food, and by his power and skill in seizing his prey. There was a wise adaptation of the lion for this purpose which man could neither originate nor explain.

"Or fill the appetite of the young lions": Whose appetite is sharp and keen, and requires a great deal to fill it, and especially to satisfy a great many of them. Herds of them, as Mr. Broughton renders the word, and which signifies a company (see Psalm 68:30). Men cannot feed them, but God can and does. There being some ends in Providence to be answered thereby (see Psalms 104:21; 34:8).

Man does not go out into the wilderness where the lion lives, to make sure that he has food and water. God takes care of the animal's needs, like He takes care of the needs of man. One of the most beautiful parts of creation is that God prepared the earth and everything on it, for the use of man, and then He made man. He provided for man, before He even made him.

### **Job 38:40 "When they couch in [their] dens, [and] abide in the covert to lie in wait?"**

Which some understand of old lions, who, for want of strength, lying with the body resting on the legs and the head raised in their dens, or in some hidden place, waiting for any prey that passes by, to seize upon it. But the same pasture and places are used by younger lions, as well as old ones. Who are emblems of wicked men, cruel persecutors, and bloodthirsty tyrants, who fill their palaces and kingdoms with murder and violent seizure (see Psalm 10:8, Nahum 2:11).

Even the place where the lions hide away is a habitat that God arranged for them. God did not overlook anything in His creation. God taught the lion to couch in the den, and to lie in wait for its prey. God built the earth balanced. Each thing helped something else. In our world today, man is about to destroy the balance of nature.

**Job 38:41 "Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat."**

Not man, but God. He feeds the ravens, creatures very voracious, mean and useless (Luke 12:24).

"When his young ones cry unto God": Cry for want of food; which is interpreted by the Lord as a cry unto him, and he relieves them (Psalm 147:9). When deserted by the old ones; either left in their nests through forgetfulness, as some; or because they are not, till fledged, black like them, as others. When God feeds them, as some say, with a kind of dew from heaven, or with flies that fly about them, and fall into their mouths. Or with worms bred out of their dung but these things are not to be depended on. It may rather respect them when cast out of the nest by the old ones, when able to fly, which is testified by naturalists; and with this agrees what follows.

"They wander for lack of meat": Being obliged to fend for themselves, when God takes care of them. Which is an instance of his providential goodness; and how this is to be improved (see Matt. 6:26).

Man does not care for the need of the raven, nor does he really care they are in need. Only God hears and understands the cry of the raven. One of the things we should have learned in this lesson, is the care and planning that God went to, to establish the world as we know it for the use of man.

### **Job Chapter 38 Questions**

1. The voice of God came to Job out of the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Why did He choose that?
3. God did not recognize \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Elihu was less than a \_\_\_\_\_ in God's sight.
5. What would God demand of Elihu?

6. What was God's first question in verse 4?
7. What could Elihu answer to God?
8. Who were the "sons of God" in verse 7?
9. God put \_\_\_\_\_ upon the waters.
10. When would be the only time they could get out of those boundaries?
11. Even the sea is controlled by the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Why do the wicked love darkness?
13. What is the clay in verse 14?
14. What is unusual about death in verse 17?
15. At first people thought the earth was \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Then, men thought it to be \_\_\_\_\_.
17. What is verse 19 speaking of?
18. We are told to walk in the \_\_\_\_\_, as He is in the \_\_\_\_\_.
19. What is the source of all Light?
20. What did God say He reserved hail for?
21. Why does it rain where no man is?
22. Hath the rain a Father?
23. What is verse 30 speaking of?
24. What are Pleiades, Orion, Mazzaroth, and Arcturus?
25. What does lightning in the sky remind the author of?
26. Wisdom is a gift from \_\_\_\_\_.
27. Where does man's understanding come from?
28. How many stars are there in the sky?
29. Who cares for the lion and the raven?
30. God built the earth \_\_\_\_\_.

31. What should we have learned in this lesson?