

Series: Questions

Title: Who is This That Darkeneth Counsel by Words Without Knowledge?

Text: Job 38: 1-2

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Since this is the last day of 2017, knowing that with each new year God will see to it his people are tried, I thought it would be good to look at two questions God asked Job at the end of his trial. The first question is found in Job 38. The second question in Job 40. God asked Job a lot of questions but these two questions deal with the two problems Job had for which God sent him the trial. So in this message we will take the first question in Job 38. Then we will take the second question in the next message.

Job 38: 1: Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, 2: Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? 3: Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

This is God's question to Job—"Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" Here the LORD begins to teach Job the lesson for which he gave Job such a grievous trial. The trial brought out what God knew was in Job's heart—and God sent the trial to deal with it and to teach Job.

Do you recognize Job's problem by God's question?—"Who is this that darkeneth counsel without knowledge?"—this was a question meant to humble. Job had a problem with pride, self-exaltation, thinking himself wise, even wiser than God. Job spoke some good things about God—but Job also spoke some prideful things that exalted himself.

Job 23: 3: Oh that I knew where I might find him! *that* I might come even to his seat! 4: I would order *my* cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. 5: I would know the words *which* he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.

Job is saying, "I would demand of God some answers as to why he has treated me this way." Job is proud. He considers himself wise, accusing God of not dealing with him wisely by sending him this trial. So already, we see Job's first problem was pride: self-exaltation. So God is about to humble him. This is a problem every believer has. God humbles his child so that we do not perish in pride.

Proposition: The Lord humbles us by reminding us that he—not us—is the absolute sovereign who creates and rules with perfect power and wisdom.

GOD IS THE SOVEREIGN CREATOR

God humbles us from our pride by declaring he is the sovereign creator, not us.

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

When we become proud of our understanding, remember, you and I were nowhere around when God created all things. We were nowhere around when God purposed to create a new heavens and new earth. God chose Christ his Son and chose a people in his Son before the foundation of the world. God trusted his Son to create his people new and thus create a new heaven and new earth. But where where we when God did so?

Job 38: 5: Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? 6: Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; 7: When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

When we begin to be lifted up in pride, God says then answer these questions if you are so wise. Christ was with God. Christ is Wisdom who was with God from the foundation of the world when the stars sang and the sons of God shouted for joy. And Christ is the Foundation upon which all was founded in covenant. Christ is the Chief corner stone of the foundations of the world, upholding all things by the covenant word of his power!

Job 38: 8: Or *who* shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, *as if* it had issued out of the womb? 9: When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, 10: And brake up for it my decreed *place*, and set bars and doors, 11: And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?

When we become proud, look to the ocean. God made the seas to be born like an infant. He salted and swaddled preserving the sea. God set the bounds of the sea saying, “Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further.” So when we are the proud waves, look to the sea and remember who said “*Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further.*”

Remember it is God who created us. It is Christ who creates his people anew in righteousness and true holiness. We did not make ourselves to be born-again, new creations—he did. We did not salt and clean and preserve ourselves, he did. We did not swaddle ourselves, he did. And he governs just as he does the sea. Like Job, when the child of God begins to be lifted up in pride, God says, “Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed!”

GOD IS THE SOVREIGN RULER

God humbles his child reminding us that he, not us, rules all things by his sovereign power. When we become proud of our power, answer this question.

Job 38: 12: Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; *and* caused the dayspring to know his place; 13: That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it? 14: It is turned as clay *to* the seal; and they stand as a garment. 15: And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken.

The clay is without form, without beauty, until the master rolls the seal over it. Then the clay is turned into a thing of beauty. God is the Potter, we are the clay. Only Christ can make his child a work of beauty in his hand. Therefore, Christ is able to bring down the proud and break the high arm. He does so by making us to know it was God who spoke and created life in dead sinners like us. He took these lifeless, formless, sinful voids and Christ the DaySpring shined forth his Light revealing in our hearts that we are the wicked. Christ turned us from being plain old clay into his beautiful new creation like clay to the seal. It is by his power that he brings down our pride and breaks our high arm.

GOD IS SOVEREIGN WISDOM

God humbles his child by reminding us that he, not us, is wisdom.

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

The beginning is the spring of life. God supplies the little springs from where the mighty oceans are filled with water. Do we know where the springs of the sea are? Have we walked in the search of the depth? There are deep places in the sea that no man has ever been.

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

God also knows the end: the gates and doors of death. We have no experience of what is beyond the gates of death. We know what scripture says. But we have never been beyond death. God has!

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

God knows everything in between the beginning and the end. Do we know it all? Can we declare these things? Oh, how little we really know!

Job 38: 19: Where is the way *where* light dwelleth? and *as for* darkness, where is the place thereof, 20: That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths *to* the house thereof? 21: Knowest thou *it*, because thou wast then born? or *because* the number of thy days is great?

Where does the sun get its light? Where did darkness begin? God says I create light and I create darkness. Are we old and wise as God to know these things?

Job 38: 22: Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, 23: Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war? 24: By what way is the light parted, *which* scattereth the east wind upon the earth?

At Waterloo, Napoleon was defeated because he had to wait till noon to attack because he was waiting on the ground to dry out. During World war 2, Russia turned back the mighty German army for one reason, God sent the worst winter they had ever seen. In the American Revolution, Washington crossed the Delaware to defeat the Brits at Trenton because God froze the river so there was just a narrow portion to cross by boat out in the middle of the river. During the Civil War a simple wind made Lee change his strategy and led to his defeat.

Likewise, God conquered our proud hearts by Christ his Wisdom. He sent Christ the Life, the Beginning and the Ending, the Alpha and Omega. Christ is the Ancient of Days. He who conquered us in the day of battle and changed our course forever! So when we become lifted up in pride of wisdom remember Christ is the Wisdom of God, our Wisdom, who knoweth all things and by his knowledge saves his people—not us!

GOD IS THE SOVEREIGN PROVIDER

God humbles his child from our pride by reminding us that he alone provides for us, not we ourselves.

Job 38: 25: Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder; 26: To cause it to rain on the earth, *where* no man is; *on* the wilderness, wherein *there is* no man; 27: To satisfy the desolate and waste *ground*; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth? 28: Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew? 29: Out of whose womb came the ice? and the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it? 30: The waters are hid as *with* a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen.

God takes man out of the way. He speaks of the wilderness where there is no man to work the ground, no man to irrigate the ground. Who sends the rain to bring forth the tender herb to feed the hungry animals in the wilderness? Are these things done by 'father nature' or is God the Provider? Are these things done by 'mother nature' or is God the provider?

Job 38: 31: Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? 32: Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons? 33: Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth? 34: Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? 35: Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we *are*? 36: Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart? 37: Who can number the clouds in wisdom? or who can stay the bottles of heaven, 38: When the dust groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together? 39: Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion? or fill the appetite of the young lions, 40: When they couch in *their dens, and* abide in the covert to lie in wait? 41: Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.

God controls the constellations in heaven. Can you and I control the laws of heaven so that they provide for the living on earth? When we grow proud thinking we are our own providers, remember it is God, not us, who is our provider

He provided his Son from heaven to cause it to rain on earth and bring forth life by his Word, "*To satisfy the desolate and waste ground*"—desolate sinners like us—"*and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth!*" Christ is the Dominion ruling heaven and earth, who put wisdom in our inward parts and gave true spiritual understanding to our hearts. When our dry hearts were like hard clods of dry dirt, he sent the rain of grace. He fed us the Bread from heaven like he feeds the lion in the wilderness. When he brings us to cry out to him like the baby ravens, he feeds us and provides all: righteousness, holiness, redemption, protection, food for our souls.

Brethren, let none of us be proud that we are our provider. Christ is our Provider, our Rain, our Bread, our Life.

GOD IS THE SOVEREIGN GIVER

God humbles his child by reminding us he is the one who gave us life, who gives us a nature which controls our will and who gifts us with all gifts.

God is the giver who gave us life and spiritual life—**Job 39: 1: Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve? 2: Canst thou number the months *that* they fulfil? or knowest thou the time when they bring forth? 3: They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows. 4: Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn; they go forth, and return not unto them.**

God is the giver who gives us a nature which dictates our will—**Job 39: 5: Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass? 6: Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings. 7: He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. 8: The range of the mountains *is* his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing. 9: Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib? 10: Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee? 11: Wilt thou trust him, because his strength *is* great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him? 12: Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather *it into* thy barn?** When God gives a nature it dictates ones will. The wild ass loves the wilderness, scorns the city and lives on every green thing because that is the nature God gave it.

Either this animal called a unicorn has a nature that can be tamed to work for a man or he may be saying it cannot be tamed by man but serves God purpose in the wild. Either way this animal is willing to do this because that is the nature God gave it. Christ is he who makes his people willing in the day of his power when he gives us a new nature to believe and serve him.

God gives us the gifts we have and withholds the gifts we do not have—**Job 39: 13: Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich? 14: Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in dust, 15: And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them. 16: She is hardened against her young ones, as though *they were* not hers: her labour is in vain without fear; 17: Because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding. 18: What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider.** God deprived the ostrich of wisdom to protect her young but he made her fearless to lift up herself against horse and rider. Likewise, God gifted the horse. **19: Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? 20: Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils *is* terrible. 21: He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in *his* strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men. 22: He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword. 23: The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield. 24: He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that *it is* the sound of the trumpet. 25: He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.** When it comes to the hawk, God is the giver who gifted the hawk and eagle to build her nest in safety. **26: Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, *and* stretch her wings toward the south? 27: Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? 28: She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place. 29: From thence she seeketh the prey, *and* her eyes behold afar off. 30: Her young ones also suck up blood: and where the slain *are*, there *is* she.**

We have no reason to be proud of our gifts because every gift we have came from God our Father.

James 1: 17: Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning

GOD'S REBUKE AND JOB'S REPLY

Job 40: 1: Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said, 2: Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct *him*? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.

When God sends the trial, let us not contend with him. Let us not attempt to reprove God with our murmuring. For we can be sure God will humble us by his sovereign hand.

Job 40: 3: Then Job answered the LORD, and said, 4: Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. 5: Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.

So in the new year, when trials come, if we truly believe all salvation is by the sovereign hand of our God then trust that same sovereign hand every day in everything that he sends our way.

Amen!