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Job Overview (Part 2)



Bible Book Overviews - Steve Gregg

In this overview, Steve Gregg discusses the story of Job, a wealthy man considered righteous by God who undergoes severe trials at the hands of Satan. Despite losing everything he had, Job remains faithful to God, and eventually receives restoration from Him. Gregg emphasizes the importance of trusting in God even in the midst of suffering, recognizing God's sovereignty and accepting that His ways are often inscrutable. The story of Job serves as a powerful example of complete trust in God and provides practical lessons for believers experiencing suffering or loss.

Transcript

♪ intro music ♪ Okay, we'll resume our treatment of the book of Job, and now we're actually going to look at the contents of Job. At the beginning, I think we'll just give you an outline of how the book is laid out, and then we'll talk about the specific issues that come up for consideration in it. Of course, we're not going verse by verse through the book.

That takes many hours to do, but I do have lectures posted online, my verse by verse through the book of Job. We don't attempt that at these gatherings here. Now, as I mentioned, the book of Job, the first two chapters are prose narrative.

They are not poetic, and they tell a story in two parts, and they divide, the two parts divide into the two chapters. We're introduced to Job in chapter one as a righteous man, who's also very blessed. He's got a lot of children and a lot of livestock, both of which are considered to be, in the Bible times, a mark of God's blessing on a man.

How long he continued in this, or how old he was, we don't know. He must not have been a very young man, because in some of his speeches, he talks about people, now that trouble has befallen him. He mentions people that mock him, whose fathers he would never have, you know, employed to watch sheep.

You know, assuming that he's as old as their father or older, maybe. I'm not sure. But his actual age is not known, but he obviously spent a period of time reputed as a good and wise and prosperous man.

And it says there at the end of verse three of chapter one, he was the greatest of the men of the east. Now, the east can encompass a very large area, but probably it's talking about the region just east of the Jordan River, just east of Israel. Although, it wouldn't have to mean that.

The greatest of the men seems to mean the wealthiest. Though, if he was Jobab, as I mentioned earlier in the previous lecture, he either was or became a king of the Edomites at some point. That would be great in another sense, great as a powerful man, as well as a wealthy man.

In any case, we're introduced to him. He's an unusually good man for one who is wealthy and powerful. And it says in verse six, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before Yahweh.

And Satan also came among them. Now, many people have puzzled over this scenario. The sons of God gathering before Yahweh, presenting themselves before Yahweh and Satan among them.

It is, at least where I come from, it is usually assumed that the sons of God are angels. One reason for that is because later in the book of Job, when God begins to speak later in the book of Job, he refers to the time when he laid the foundations of the earth. This is Job chapter 38.

He says in 38, 6 and 7, when God is speaking to Job at the end of the book. To what were its foundations, the earth's foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone? When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Now, this is talking about when the earth was, when its foundations were laid at the very beginning of creation.

He mentions the sons of God shouted for joy. And they seem to be identified also with the morning stars. Well, it's hard to know, but probably this is a reference to angels.

Now, there's a modern author, very popular these days, named Michael Heiser, who believes that there was a council of the gods and the sons of God refer to these lesser gods, created beings. But I'm not sure the way he describes them in his popular works, how they differ from what we call angels. In any case, sons of God in Job 38, verse 7 appears to refer to angels.

But most of the time in the Bible, both Old and New Testament, sons of God refers to human beings. Either godly Jews or godly Christians. We're familiar, I assume, with John 1, 12, To as many as received him, to them he gave the power to become sons of God.

Or 1 John 3, verse 2, Beloved, now we are sons of God. It does not yet appear we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him. For we shall see him as he is.

Being sons of God is something in Hosea, God said to Israel that when they are righteous, he says, then you will be called sons of the living God. So, sons of God usually refers to people, though it may refer to angels in Job 38, 7. What does it refer to in Job chapter 1? Well, the fact that Satan is among them has led many people to favor the view that we're talking about here, angels. Because Satan would be on the order of angels rather than humans.

And if the sons of God have gathered and Satan is among them, then maybe he's regarded to be a son of God also. Besides, they presented themselves before Yahweh. And we assume Yahweh lives in heaven.

So, this is usually understood to be a heavenly court scene. God, angels, meeting in heaven, and Satan among them. Now let me just say this, an alternate view is possible.

Because sons of God could be humans. And presenting oneself before the Lord is a term that's used frequently in the scripture. And it's everywhere except here, it's on earth.

People present themselves at the tabernacle before the Lord. They present themselves before the Lord when they come to worship. It's not impossible that Job and other godly men he knew gathered together to present themselves to worship God once in a while.

And Satan was among them. Now, that doesn't mean that Satan was of the same order of being as they were. I would dare say Satan is probably among us here today.

I think Satan goes to church every Sunday. I think that he's always trying to disrupt and distract and things like that. It may not be him personally all the time, it could be the demons.

But the world that we live in is full of spiritual beings. Angels and demons. God and the devil.

And, you know, it would be very naive to suggest that when Christians gather together, the devil's never there. Now we know one thing in the New Testament, when Christians gather, Jesus is there. He said, where two or more gather to my name, there am I in the midst.

But that doesn't mean we don't have other less welcome presences among us as well. So it's uncertain whether this is a gathering of godly people, including Job, as sons of God, worshipping God somewhere on earth and the devil coming to examine them and accuse them. Now the Bible refers to Satan in one place in Revelation 12.10 as the accuser of the brethren.

And we certainly see the devil accusing Job in this story. And God kind of likes to rub Job in Satan's face a little bit. Because there aren't very many good men like Job.

The devil can gloat about most people. He's got most of them under his spell, so to speak. The devil is probably fairly pleased with the majority of people on earth.

God, probably with a smaller number. But God was clearly pleased with Job. And when Satan comes, God says to Satan, where do you come from? And Satan answered the Lord and said, from going to and fro on the earth and from walking back and forth on it.

And God says, have you considered my servant Job? That there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil. It's pretty high praise coming from God's mouth about a human being. Not a word here at all about total depravity of the man.

Anyway. So Satan answered the Lord and said, does Job fear God for nothing? Have you not made a hedge around him, around his household and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, his possessions have increased in the land. But now stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.

So this is the accusation. Job does, you know, honor you, God. He knows better than to do otherwise because he knows you're the sugar daddy.

He knows that if he keeps you happy, he's going to stay rich, he's going to stay healthy. All these things are... he's enjoying his circumstances in life. He knows you're the one who gives it to him.

He's not going to turn on you. But if you take those things away, he will no longer have that incentive. And he'll just turn on you like a dog biting the hand that feeds it.

He'll curse you to your face. Now, God didn't say, no, he won't. God just basically said, let's try that.

Let's just see if you're right about that. So the Lord said to Satan, behold, all that he has is in your hand, in your power. Only do not lay a hand on his person.

And so Satan went out from the presence of Yahweh. Now, God says you can touch anything that belongs to him, but you can't touch his body. In other words, you can't make him sick, can't kill him, can't do anything like that.

So Satan goes out and Job has a really bad day. His camels, his flocks, and even his children. All are either stolen or killed from him.

His servants are killed. For some reason, God leaves his wife alive to pester him because she comes and says, why don't you curse God and die? You know, she obviously was part of the temptation or the test. However, losing your children, losing your possessions is the kind of stuff that can turn a man against God.

Job knew that very, I mean, Satan knew that very well. And he was pretty sure Job was, you know, like the rest. But he found out that this was not so.

Job did not curse God. Instead, in verse 21, or verse 20, he fell to the ground and worshipped. And he said, naked I came from my mother's womb, naked I shall return there.

The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. In other words, you know, I had a lot of stuff, but I wasn't born with this stuff.

It was a gift that God gave me. If God wants to take it away, isn't that his prerogative? This man sees things as they really are. In ways that we seldom do when we lose important things.

I had a wife who was killed in an accident once. We'd only been married six months. And she was hit by a truck and killed.

And when the paramedics told me that she was dead, I remember thinking that very same thing. I thought, well, the Lord gave and the Lord took away. It seems like that's his prerogative.

It's not accusing God. It's acknowledging God as the one who's the giver of all good gifts and they're his to take if he wants. Everything you own should be seen that way.

Including your children, apparently. Because that was included in what Job talked about. Including your wife, including your husband, including your home.

Everything. God gave it. What if you would lose it all? Well, God's got every right to take it.

You don't have an inherent right to it. It was given to you. And Job understood that and he blessed God.

And it says, in all this, God did not charge God with wrong. Now, I want to say this. Job didn't say, the Lord gave and the devil took away.

And I say that partly to correct the attitude of word of faith people. Word of faith people say, God's a good God. He doesn't give trials.

He doesn't try you. He doesn't bring disaster. He only gives good things.

If you've lost your health, if you've lost loved ones, if you've suffered loss, that's the devil. He's come to rob and kill and destroy. It's the devil that takes things away.

Well, they would be right in a sense because it was the devil who took these things away from Job. Right? I mean, God said, okay, devil, do what you want to do. And the devil did

it.

If Job had said, the Lord gives and the devil takes away, he would not have been wrong. It was true. But notice it says he was not wrong in what he said.

In all this, Job did not sin or charge God with wrong. He said, God took away. Is that charging God with wrong? Kenneth Copeland, a Word of Faith teacher, wrote a little book that called, well, he wrote a book saying that God doesn't take stuff away.

It was the devil that does it. I was thinking of another book that was written by Kenneth Hagin called Don't Blame God. And essentially he was saying, don't say God took them.

That's the devil who took them. Well, Job said God took it. And he didn't say the wrong thing.

He said the right thing. As a matter of fact, later on, at the end of the book of Job, it says that God was angry at Job's friends because they did not speak rightly of God as Job did. When Job spoke about God, he spoke rightly of God.

So if the Word of Faith people say something else, they're speaking wrongly about God. You can't contradict Job and not be wrong when he's speaking rightly. So this book is very, very hard on that particular doctrine.

Now, Satan did not obtain his object with Job in this, so he went back to God again to try to turn the heat up more. And it says in verse 1 of chapter 2, again, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord. Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord.

The Lord said to Satan, Where are you come from? Satan answered, The Lord said, From going to and fro on the earth, from walking back and forth on it. Then the Lord said to Satan, Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him, etc., etc. And he says, and he has maintained his integrity.

That means he didn't curse me like you said he would, even though you inclined me against him to destroy him without cause. Satan answered to the Lord, said, Skin for skin, yes, all that a man has will he give for his life. That's a funny old saying, skin for skin.

What in the world is that? What's the origin of that saying? No one knows for sure, but it's possible that it means something like this. In the marketplace, you give this to obtain that, with a merchant. Okay, a shekel for a loaf of bread.

Well, what will you give for your skin? Well, I wouldn't give anything less than, I wouldn't take anything less than skin for my skin. Saving your skin would be a way of saying saving your life. I'm not, my life is worth nothing less than a life.

I'm not going to take something less than that in exchange for it. If you want my skin, you'll have to give me skin back for it. Skin for skin, that's the price, that's the value.

There's nothing less than skin that I would take in exchange for my skin. And that's probably the Middle Eastern origin of that strange statement. But it certainly is explained then in the next line, all that a man has he'll give for his life.

But stretch out your hand now and touch his bone and his flesh and he will surely curse you to his face. The Lord said to Satan, Behold, he's in your hand, but spare his life. So Satan went out and struck him with horrible, painful boils and sickness.

And Job was in great misery. He was not killed because God wouldn't let Satan kill him. But he was certainly at the point where he wished he was dead.

And yet his wife came to him at verse 9 and said, Do you still hold your integrity? Curse God and die. Now that's interesting that she'd say that because that's exactly what the devil was expecting Job to do, is curse God. Now his wife told him, Curse God.

It's interesting how people close to you, even well-intentioned people who care about you, can become a mouthpiece for Satan to become a temptation. Like when Jesus first told his disciples he was going to be crucified. And people said, No, Lord, that won't happen to you.

And Jesus said, Get behind me, Satan. You're an offense to me. You're stumbling me.

You see, God can speak through trusted friends, trusted loved ones. I mean, I say God, Satan. Satan can speak through them to try to add to the strength of the temptation.

And Job actually rebuked his wife for this. He says, You speak like one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept the good from God and shall we not accept adversity also? By implication, it means from God.

Shall we accept one thing from God and not the other thing from God? He sees good and adversity as something to accept, not to resist, not to deny, but accept it. And what's it say? In all this, Job did not sin with his lips. It keeps telling us he's saying the right thing.

He's saying things that are good things, correct things. And he's saying, You know, we should be able to suffer at the hands of God. The Lord can give, the Lord can take away.

The Lord can give adversity as well as good things. And we're always told Job was right about that. Now, we're told at the end of this chapter that Job's three friends came.

And they sat silently for seven days, which was a very sensitive thing to do because, I mean, the guys had so much grief, they don't want to just speak suddenly. And then they begin to speak, but not until Job does. They let him speak first.

And he breaks the silence in chapter three, and that's where the poetry begins, because all the speeches are in poetry, all the way to, you know, the early part of chapter 42, which is the last chapter. Now, these people trade off. Job speaks first.

Basically, it's a long diatribe cursing the day he was born. Then his friend Eliphaz, the Temanite, speaks up. And he speaks for two chapters in verses four and five.

Basically, he's saying, conventional wisdom tells us that people don't really suffer when God is on their side. And God's on your side when you're doing the right thing. So if you're suffering, you're not doing the right thing.

Something you're doing is wrong. And, you know, people know this. He basically bases this on personal experience.

In verse three, he says, I have seen this happen. He bases it also on a vision he had of a spirit that came to him in the night and told him something like that. And also, in verse 27, he indicates that, this is chapter five, verse 27, that this is kind of something that wise men have figured out, and it's kind of conventional wisdom among the wise.

Verse 27 says, Behold, this we have searched out. It is true. Hear it, and know for yourself.

So they're basically saying, God treats good people well. Bad people, he's hard on them. Now, God's being hard on you.

So, put two and two together, you must be a bad person. He doesn't come right out and say you're a bad person, but he gets around to that eventually. At this point, Job answers, and he speaks for a couple chapters, chapters six and seven.

He basically says, you know, I'm very much aware of this. I used to say the same kinds of things, but it's not true. I haven't done anything wrong.

Then his second friend speaks in chapter eight, and he speaks just for chapter eight, and Job answers him in chapter nine and ten. Then the third friend, Zohar, speaks in chapter 11, and Job answers him in chapter 12, 13, and 14. Now, by this time, all three men have had a chance to speak, and Job has answered them.

All of them have the same thesis. That is, his friends are all saying, you know, we've always thought of you as a good man, but look at this. Our theology tells us there's something you're doing wrong.

You need to figure out what that is. Get right with God, and things will turn around for you. Job always answers, sometimes a little indignant by their presumption, and sometimes understanding the way they're thinking, because he said, I thought that way too.

They say, this is an exception. I have not done whatever it is you think I've done. I've been very faithful to God.

I've been very strict with myself. I've always been obedient. And so, they're kind of at loggerheads here.

So you've had one cycle where all three men have spoken. Now the same three men speak in the same order again. You've got two full cycles of these three guys speaking.

Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zohar. And so, you have it again. Eliphaz speaks again in chapter 15.

Job answers in chapter 16-17. Then we have Bildad speaking again, very much along the same lines in chapter 18. And Job answers him in chapter 19.

Then the third man, Zohar, he speaks in chapter 20. And Job answers him in chapter 21. So you've gone through the whole cycle twice.

Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zohar. They each have their turn trying to convince Job to fess up to something he's done wrong. And he keeps being indignant.

Now, they get more and more impatient with him. And he gets more and more impatient with them. And they start insulting each other somewhat more.

But, you know, they were a little gentle at first. Trying to say, you know, they're doing grief counseling here. They're not very good at it.

But they're trying. And they're trying to say, you know, you know what God is like. Just get right with God and things will get better for you.

And Job keeps saying, no, that's not the explanation of this situation. They don't have any other answers. Of course, he doesn't either.

Job doesn't know why this is happening either. He's as confused as they are. The only difference is he knows they're wrong.

He doesn't know what's right. He doesn't know why this is happening. But their thoughts about the reason, he knows they're wrong.

And, you know, once their theology has been denied, they're finding him to be obstinate. Almost sacrilegious. And so they get a little angry at him.

Now, they start a third cycle of speeches. It doesn't finish. You have Eliphaz.

He does speak in chapter 22. Job answers him in chapters 23 and 24. And then Bildad is the last of them to speak again.

Zophar and Job. Zophar never speaks again. Bildad gives a really short little speech and

fizzles out real quick in chapter 25.

So, we don't have Zophar again. So we've got two full cycles and two thirds of a cycle. So there's almost three cycles of this debate where each man gets a chance to speak.

But Zophar bows out of the third one. Now, in chapter 26, Job answers them. But he keeps speaking.

He gives additional speeches in chapters 27 through 31. And their content is essentially they've stopped talking. So he keeps speculating about what's up with God.

I wish I could talk to God directly about this. I wish I could stand before him and present my case to him. I wish he could hear me out.

I've got a complaint here. I'd like to file a complaint with God. And, you know, he's just kind of ranting, giving his speech.

I mean, frankly, the guy can be forgiven. He's in absolute misery. He's lost ten children in one day.

His entire estate vanished the same day and now he's in miserable pain. And his wife is not much supportive. And his friends who came to comfort him, whom he refers to them in the course of this as miserable comforters.

He says, you guys are miserable comforters. They're just accusing him. And by the way, it's interesting how you know, a man can remain strong and trust in God and keep his attitude right when he loses his property, his family, even his health.

But let someone start accusing him falsely and that gets his goat. You know? In other words, his reputation is on the line now. There might be a little bit of pride hurt here.

I'm sure there is. And some people say, well, see, that was Job's problem. He was proud.

No, that wasn't his problem. God said he didn't have a problem. God said he was blameless.

But yeah, you can start you can start reacting when you're saying, listen, I didn't do anything. I could use a little sympathy and support here and all you're doing is trying to accuse me and condemn me of things I haven't done. And that's what really seemed to get his goat.

And I believe his counselors failed him on this occasion. We'll talk about that a little bit later. But Job gives his speeches and he rants quite a bit and he's entitled to do so.

He's suffered. He can rant. And so in chapters 27 through 31 he gives these speeches.

Now, a fourth man appears in chapter 32 named Elihu. And he's not been mentioned

before. In fact, no one even mentioned his arrival.

And suddenly he's there and he dominates the conversation briefly. Actually, Job never really answers Elihu I don't think, but just Elihu talks and he talks and he talks for about like six chapters. Longer than anybody has talked yet in the book.

And you kind of expect he starts out saying, you know, I'm younger than you guys so I thought I'd hold my peace. I thought that age should speak first. Age would have the right answers.

You guys are older men, smarter than me. So he sounds kind of humble at first. He says, so I thought I'd just defer to you and see if you could answer Job.

But he said, I've been listening to everything you've said. Your answers have been totally inadequate. And I have some answers that I'd like to give now.

And then he doesn't seem as humble anymore. He kind of makes himself out to be smarter than all these wise guys. And yet, you know, all of these guys say some true things.

Like I said, the things they say that don't turn out to be right are things you can find support for in the Psalms and the Proverbs and other parts of the Bible. You know, God is good to good people. God's hard on bad people.

That's true, except when it isn't true. And, you know, so a lot of the things these guys say are generally true. Their mistake is not in thinking the general principles of their theology.

It's in thinking that God can be in a box. And he can't operate and do things out of that box. And Elihu is like that too.

He says a lot of edifying things, but he comes out basically the same place the other guys do. You almost wonder why his speeches are even in there. Because he blathers on a long time.

And some of it's good stuff. But he's still making the same mistake. He's still basically calling Job to repent and get right with God and so forth.

So I'm not really seeing a major difference in Elihu. But then, after Elihu is done, Job doesn't even answer him. Instead, God answers.

Now, chapters 38 through 41 are God's speech. Now you expect at this point the reader is puzzled because they've heard Job's friends say a lot of things that make a lot of sense. Every godly person who reads the book of Job, when they're listening to what Eliphaz and Bildad and Zophar say, and even Elihu, what they say, you say, yeah, these guys are saying a lot of really true things.

That is true. I mean, that is biblically true, what they're saying. And yet, you hear what Job says, and you say, yeah, he's right too.

And you're kind of puzzled. You say, who's going to resolve this? And suddenly God shows up and says, good. Now we're going to get a straight answer.

And God speaks for four chapters and he doesn't give an answer. It's kind of disappointing in a way because you think now that God has shown up after these men have been speculating and getting close to the truth and missing it, it seems like God shows up. He could give kind of a He could kind of explain, okay, you guys, you're all doing a good job, best you know how.

I realize this is all confusing you. Here I am. I'll tell you what's really going on.

But he doesn't. Instead, he actually kind of rebukes Job too. He's not really that hard on Job.

But he basically rebukes Job for Job thinking that God can really be understood in all of his ways. Now, of course, God wants us to seek to understand him. He wants us to understand his character.

And by the way, Jeremiah in Jeremiah, God is very emphatic about this. God says, let not the rich man glory in his riches, let not the mighty man glory in his might, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom. But he says, this is Jeremiah 9, 23 and 24, he says, but let him who glories, glory in this, that he understands and knows me, God says.

God wants people to understand and know him. So why is Job rebuked for thinking he can understand God? But God says, I want people to glory in anything in this, that they understand and know me, that I am Yahweh, exercising loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight, says the Lord.

Now, in other words, I want people to understand the kind of God I am. I exercise mercy and justice and loving kindness, I delight in these things, but that doesn't mean you can figure out everything I'm up to. You can be sure that whatever I'm up to is going to conform with justice and mercy and loving kindness, because those are what I delight in.

I want you to understand that I am a good God. I want you to know my character, even if you don't have a clue about why I'm doing any particular thing or how that fits into my overall plans. You see, what God is trying to point out to them is you can't understand all the ways of God.

You can understand whatever He reveals, and you can certainly hold the view with confidence that God is doing the right thing. He knows what He's doing. He's basically saying, I know what I'm doing, trust me on this.

You know, the Jews who had the advantage of the prophets at a later time in the history, and the prophets prophesied the Messiah would come and do such and such things. They believed that the Messiah would come and rescue Israel from the Romans and things like that. And John the Baptist, being a Jew, also believed those things.

Then he got put in prison by Roman authority. He eventually was killed in prison by Roman authority, John the Baptist was. And while he was sitting in prison rotting, he was noticing Jesus, whom John had pointed out as the Messiah, wasn't doing anything about the Romans.

He wasn't doing what the Messiah was believed to, supposed to do. And he sent messengers to Jesus and said, well, what is it? Are you the guy or not? And Jesus said, tell him what you're seeing here. You know, the lame are walking, the blind are seeing, the gospel is being preached to the poor.

And he says, and tell John this, blessed is he who's not stumbled by me. Now that's a pretty cogent statement. Jesus is basically saying, trust me, don't stumble over me because I'm not doing what you think I should be doing.

I'm doing the right thing. Trust me in this, you know. Blessed is the man who's not stumbled because I'm not doing it the way he thinks I should be doing it.

I'm not doing what you thought the Messiah would do. You thought the Messiah was going to overthrow the Romans and you'd be out of prison. I'm doing something else, but trust me, it's the right thing.

I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing. And that's what trusting God means. Trusting God doesn't mean I'm sick, I'm trusting he's going to heal me.

I'm poor, I'm trusting he's going to make me rich. You know, I've got unhappy circumstances, I'm trusting that he's going to, you know, give us good leaders in our country. It'd be nice if he did and we can pray for that, but frankly, if he doesn't, I'm still trusting him that he's doing the right thing.

Because I know that he's just and he's right and he can make no mistakes. And that's the point that Job had to learn. He couldn't know what God would do in a particular situation like if a man's good, would God let him suffer or not? Can't know.

God is wise, God is sovereign, he can do what he wants to do and he'll do what he thinks is right. What I'm supposed to do is recognize I'm not as smart as he is, I can't see the connections and things like he can, I don't know why what he's doing is right, but I know that he does nothing wrong. That he's, his righteousness is non-negotiable although many of his ways are past scrutiny.

They're inscrutable. And so what God does when he comes up and speaks, he doesn't

tell Job, okay, I know you're confused about what's going on, let me explain it for you, this will make it all easy for you. No, God says do you, did you make the stars? Do you bring the constellations? Is it you that brings the constellations out here? Was it you that set the boundaries for the ocean? Was it you that made the dry land appear? Is it you that laid the foundations of the earth? I don't think so.

Guess who it was? It was me. Do you understand how that works? You don't understand, you just trust that I know more than you do about stuff. And it goes on in, especially in chapter 39 to talk about how God takes care of all the wild animals and he goes through a list of several wild animals.

The mountain goats in chapter 39, verse 1 in verse 5, the wild donkeys in verse 9, the wild ox in verse 13, the ostrich in verse 19, the horse verse 26, the hawk verse 27, the eagle these are all animals that are familiar to us and he says, basically he says, do you do you feed all these wild animals? Do you help them have offspring? Do you control nature in other words? Basically what God is saying is, I don't think you're qualified to tell whether I'm doing the right thing or not. But I'm doing stuff that you don't understand and that shouldn't surprise you, you don't understand half of what I do. Do you understand how I laid the foundations of the earth? How I bring the hail? Where does the hail come from? Do you know where the storehouses of the hail are? Basically God is pointing out how immense he is and his wisdom and his competence in contrast to man who even the best of men and the wisest of men are so inferior to God in wisdom that they just have to trust him in these situations where he doesn't seem to be doing what makes sense to them and this is what the book really comes down to God doesn't seem to be making sense well what's that do? Does that make you wonder whether God's right and wrong? Or do you just say, well God is right? That's non-negotiable it's not even a question in my mind that God's right.

You know when people a lot of people as Satan predicted Job would, when things go badly for him they think, well that shouldn't happen, I don't deserve this, I was being good, I paid my tithes what's up with this? They say, okay God is not responding, he's not reciprocating here like I think he's supposed to so I'm not going to serve him anymore. They may not say it quite like that. I remember Chuck Smith said that he, when he was a young pastor he went to a man's house, knocked on the door, hadn't been to the church for a while was going to invite him back, hadn't seen him for years, and the man said get off my property and don't come anywhere near here again Chuck said, why? Where's all this hostility come from? He says, I can't believe in a God who would let my three year old daughter die so what can we deduce from this man? He had a three year old daughter who died, he was a believer before that not after that I can't believe in a God who'd do that what kind of a good God would take my daughter from me? Well, I don't know the answer to that I don't know why God did it, but I've got a reason to believe he knows what he's doing when I had a wife who died, it never crossed my mind to say how dare God do that? I thought God knows best certainly not what I

thought was a good thing not what I would have, it wouldn't have been on my short list of good things to happen, but God doesn't make any mistakes and he's always good, I mean that's just it's just a given a person who's going to succeed as a believer has got to have a fundamental determination that's immovable, that God doesn't make mistakes and he's got the right to do what he wants and whatever he does is in the end just and loving no matter how much it doesn't look like it to you, and that's how God is rebuking Job.

Now in the midst of this, we come to chapter 40 and 41 where God is still speaking and it's interesting, God gives Job gives a real brief response to God in chapter 40 verses 3 through 5 and God continues and he talks about two other animals and this is very interesting because in Job 40 verse 15 he says, look now at Behemoth which I made along with you he eats grass like an ox see now his strength is in his hips and his power is in his stomach muscles he moves his tail like a cedar tree the sinews of his thighs are tightly knit, his bones are like beams of bronze his ribs like bars of iron, he is the first of all the ways of God the most impressive of God's creation only he who made him can bring near his sword no one can overpower this creature except God, his maker no human could, surely the mountains yield food for him, that is it takes a whole mountain of grass to feed him and the beasts of the field play there, he lies under the lotus trees in a covert of reeds and marsh the lotus trees cover him with the shade the willows by the brook surround him, indeed the river may rage, yet he is not disturbed he is confident though the Jordan gushes into his mouth though he takes it in with his eyes or one pierces his nose with a snare this is a pretty big animal an animal that no human being can defeat that has ribs like bars of iron and bones like pillars of bronze and a tail like a cedar tree now what in the world could that be? it seems to be relatively harmless, it eats grass it's a grass eating creature now the next chapter describes another creature which is called Leviathan and the whole chapter talks about him and he's not such a easy one to face his mouth brims with sharp teeth he's got scales on his belly so thick that if you throw a spear or shoot an arrow at it it treats it like dead straw let's say the arrow breaks against him like it's a piece of straw he's fierce, he's ferocious men would not come near him they're terrified of him and he's huge and you think what are we talking about here? now the interesting thing here is that nothing fits these descriptions nothing we know fits these descriptions more than what we would today call dinosaurs now the bible doesn't talk about dinosaurs by name but then no one did until the 19th century the word dinosaur was invented in the 19th century when they first found dinosaur bones humans in modern times didn't know about dinosaurs until the 19th century they first began to find them and give them a name but Job was not a paleontologist Job and his friends didn't go digging bones and discover wow there must have been some big lizards millions of years ago here he's talking about creatures that men are terrified of that men try to defeat but their weapons are helpless against them and what's more, these creatures are spoken of as matter-of-factly as was the wild horse the wild goat, the eagle, the ostrich and the horse all the animals God's mentioned so far

are familiar animals and now he's talking about these two as if they are familiar animals too somewhat more impressive than the others but still well familiar to Job and his generation now because modern science tries to tell us that dinosaurs died off 70 million years ago and that no man ever lived alongside dinosaurs because they believe man evolved less than a million years ago so there'd be like 68 million years where dinosaurs were gone and man wasn't here yet so there'd be no overlap between dinosaurs and man there's no way that Job could know about dinosaurs and yet God speaks about these creatures as if Job is very much familiar with them just like he is with the horse and the eagle and the ostrich and the wild goat so many modern bible commentaries say that the behemoth is a reference to a hippopotamus and that the leviathan is a reference to a crocodile well that'd be probably as close as we could get with any modern animals that we can see in the zoo but they don't work a hippopotamus, first of all his ribs are not like iron and he doesn't have a tail like a cedar tree there's nothing about a hippopotamus that would really fit this except that he's huge and he goes in the water and he eats a lot of food but lots of animals do that this one has characteristics that no hippopotamus or even elephant has elephants don't have tails like cedar trees either now as far as leviathan being a crocodile yeah his face is described like being a crocodile's face of sorts but crocodiles can be shot with arrows you can stab a crocodile with a spear even the biggest of them, they can be 35 feet long maybe 30 feet long anyway huge reptiles as long as this room but you can shoot one with an arrow right through their skin they don't have skin that treats arrows and spears like stubble they were talking about something much larger now I don't really have a dog in the fight as to whether dinosaurs lived alongside man or not but I just would like to go with evidence many cultures, Chinese and others have and even in European cultures have believed there were dragons St. George and the Dragon is a legend or maybe not so legendary but there's all kinds of societies have described dragons as if they really believed that dragons lived alongside human beings for all we know, maybe they did Job talks about them too and Job he wouldn't know anything about these things unless they were around he was not a paleontologist he wasn't digging up bones and putting them here oh look at this, he made a big old dinosaur thing out of these bones these are creatures that he and his contemporaries were afraid of they don't dare come near him they found out what their weapons can do against him nothing and therefore it does seem that the evidence is this very ancient book describes creatures that are familiar to us only from their bones today but were apparently familiar with skin on in Job's day and God is boasting about these impressive creatures that he's made in fact it's the crescendo and the high point of his speech look at these guys aren't they impressive now when God stops speaking Job speaks again in chapter 42 and he says in verse 2 I know that you can do everything and that no purpose of yours can be withheld from you you asked who is this who hides counsel without knowledge therefore I have uttered what I did not understand things too wonderful for me which I did not know listen please and let me speak you said I will question you and you shall answer I have heard of you by the hearing of the ear but now my eye sees you therefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes so when man

actually gets a glimpse of God as he really is it tends to ruin his self esteem I've heard of you before now I see you and I hate myself I loathe myself I repent in dust and ashes I thought I was pretty good when I was giving my speeches I was telling you what a good man I was how many good things I did how people respected me how they stood up when I entered the room how I was really a remarkably good man but now that I see God I realize this standard I was measuring myself against was the wrong standard measured against the standard of other men I look pretty good against the standard of God I'm loathsome I loathe myself and so when he humbled himself like that God healed him and actually he actually told the friends to come and bring sacrifices and Job would offer them on their behalf and he prayed for them it actually says in the end of the book the Lord changed Job's fortunes when he prayed for his friends and God gave him back his wealth twice as much wealth same number of children same number of daughters same number of sons it's either coincidental or some have thought possibly they were the same kids not that God raised them from the dead but we're never really told by the narrator that they died we're told that on the same day that all his goods were taken a messenger ran to him and said a wind blew the house down where your kids were and they're all dead so Job assumed they were the messenger apparently assumed they were too the house fell on them it's not impossible that the children survived because he had the same number of sons and daughters exactly when it was over or maybe they did die and God gave them new ones it's not all that clear but his property was doubled so he was twice as well off financially at least afterwards as before so God did make it up to him we can say now what are the lessons of this story for us well there's many of them there's a lot of things we might wonder about that need to be answered or maybe don't need to be answered but we wonder like how, we don't know who wrote the book but how did the person who knew about it know about this wager that Satan and God made in the first two chapters Job didn't know this story when these things happened to him he didn't know what the first two chapters contained he didn't know that God and Satan had a bet on him, had a wager on him but we do because the author of the book knew but how did he know we have to assume therefore that the author if he's telling the truth and again the rest of the bible indicates it is a true story that it was an inspired author a prophet you know later on a different prophet Zechariah in the book of Zechariah chapter four or three Zechariah chapter three he saw a vision in which Satan was accusing Joshua the high priest before God and God rebuked Satan for it so this heavenly scene where Satan was in conflict with God's people and God you know was there too a prophet saw that in a vision Zechariah chapter three saw that there could have been a prophet who saw this too in a vision this could be after Job's story was over somebody did get a revelation from God about what was really going on what really had happened in any case the story of that wager is of great value to us because it tells us a number of things practical things because we suffer too we suffer losses of all kinds so did Job we are told that the devil brought that suffering upon him but he did so with God's permission and therefore when Job said the Lord gave and the Lord took away he did not speak wrongly because God could have prevented that and he did not God allowed

Satan to take it we see that Satan is in a sense on a short leash with God because Satan says let me do this and God said I'll let you do this much and no more take his stuff but don't touch his body and Satan had to adhere exactly to what God said later Satan comes back and asks permission to do more and God says ok you can touch his body but don't kill him and Satan can only go that far Satan is under God's control that doesn't mean he's in league with God he's the enemy but it does mean that whether he's in league with God or not God's sovereign God is over everything in the universe including Satan Satan is a created being too but he uses Satan apparently to test the faithfulness of Godly people and this is something we can take from the book of Job when I am being tested when things are going badly for me what's really going on? where is God? well he's right where he always is however apparently he's he and the devil he's given the devil permission to do something to me to see if I will remain loyal the devil hopes I will not God expects I will and therefore he's permitted it and we are told in 2nd Corinthians chapter 10 that God will not permit us to be tested beyond what we're able to endure God will with the temptation allow provide a way of escape that we can endure it so it's never the case that God will allow us to be tempted more than we can endure if we're looking to him and Job did trust God and he did endure it but it's good to put that perspective on every time something bad happens whether it happens to me or it happens on a larger scale like there's a hurricane there's a tsunami there's an international crisis where lots of innocent people are hurt the twin towers fall or a bunch of innocent people are rounded up by ISIS and murderously killed how could that happen in a universe where God is sovereign how can there be a God in those cases? well that's the time that your faith is tested it may be that what's happening is happening to you directly but if it's not it's still coming to you as information for you to have to process there's evil in this world how can that be if God is who I think he is and he could stop this well again the message of the book of Job is God knows what he's doing you don't but this is happening at least in part to give you an opportunity to show that you can trust him when it's not the easiest thing in the world to do. Our faith is being tested why? because God wants in the end of history to have a group of people who have been tested and found faithful when Jesus is seen riding on a white horse coming back if that's what is happening in chapter 19 of Revelation we're told that those who are with him are called and chosen and faithful. There are people who are called but they responded to the call so they're the chosen but having been chosen they were tested and they've been found faithful too God's looking for faithful people.

If we endure we'll reign with him the Bible says so we have to be tested you can't turn us loose reigning the universe with him if we haven't been proven if we haven't proven that we're trustworthy if we're going to turn on him as soon as he displeases us as soon as we don't understand why he's doing what he's doing we're going to turn on him and doubt him you fail. You fail the test I'm not saying you go to hell I'm just saying you fail God's looking for people who don't fail Job didn't fail. He came close he didn't curse God.

He cursed the day that he was born which is something different and he did have some real struggles but in the midst of it all he said when he has tried me I shall come forth as gold in Job 23 10 when he has tried me I shall come forth as gold. He saw that he was being tested. He didn't understand why but he knew that this would end up for his good he'd improve through it at another point he said even if he slays me I'll trust him so I mean this is complete trust I don't think God should slay me in fact I don't think he should have taken my kids or my property either but if he does I'm going to trust him that's that's a man who doesn't even have a bible that's a man who never met someone who had a bible that's a man who there had never been a a bible book written and yet he knew enough about God to say God can't can't be wrong I don't understand how he's right and I'd like to complain to him a little bit about it too but I'll trust him even if he slays me and that is certainly what the message is we get from Job now there's a whole lot more in the book of Job but we don't have more time but you can get I think you can get all of it from if you go to the lectures online on Job the verse writers I think everything's there because I don't limit myself in terms of time in my lectures