

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, June 5, 2011

Passage: Job 38-40:5

Memory Passage: Job 38:1-3

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Job 38:1-3.** What is the counsel that Job darkens? What does the word “darken” suggest to us? About what has Job spoken “words without knowledge?”
- (b) Why does God command Job to “gird up (his) loins” (ESV: “Dress for action”)? What does the qualifying phrase “like a man” tell us (i.e. what is the difference between one who “girds their loins” & one who “girds their loins like a man”)?
- (c) Put yourself in Job’s shoes and write down what you would be thinking after God speaks these initial words to you. Would you remember all of your arguments? Would you be ready to plead your case? Would you be fearful or fearless being in the presence of the God whose justice you have both proclaimed/counted on and maligned?
- (d) *Family:* Prior to your study find a flashlight/spotlight and be prepared to darken your room. At the beginning of your study, darken the room and shine your spotlight into the room from a doorway. Then have one of your children walk toward the spotlight until their shadow is cast over the lighted area behind them (if you do this several times with different people walking & holding the light you will more actively engage everyone in your family). Ask probing questions of your family to explain what has happened, why the shadow exists, and what the shadow does to the light. Then **Read Job 38:1-3** and explain what it means for Job to “darken the counsel” of God using the shadow darkening the beam of light as an object lesson. Emphasize that “darkens” reminds us of ignorance (37:19) and that Job is ignorant (“without knowledge) about the secret things of God about which he has spoken when he questioned God’s justice. If you have time, bring a long garment that will trip up your children if they try to walk in it (demonstrate this by having someone try to run in this garment) and then show them what it means to “gird up their loins” by using a belt to gather the extra garment around their waist so they can walk or work or go into battle. Explain that in Job’s case God is challenging him to prepare for a battle of words.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Job 38:4-15.** What general premise is God establishing with his first question & statement in v. 4? Is God expecting an answer to this, or any of the following questions He asks?
- (b) What 3 metaphors does God use in verses 4-15 to speak of His acts of creation (hint: the 3rd metaphor might be a commanding general©)? About which aspects of creation does He speak?
- (c) God continues the book’s metaphoric use of darkness & light to refer to good & evil in vs. 12-15. Which of Job’s objections is God answering in these verses and how does He answer it?
- (d) What do we learn about God’s character in these verses? How does God’s view of His own acts of creation in these verses help us to worship Him? To trust Him? To rejoice in Him? In what specific circumstances would these truths bring comfort & encouragement to you or those you know?
- (e) *Family:* **Read Job 38:12-15.** Use your spotlight/flashlight again. With the room dark, simulate the sunrise with your light (If you really want to be energetic, wake your family up before sunrise and do this same exercise with the real sunrise looking out over your yard!). As you gradually reveal & raise your light across the room, have your family talk about what they see as things come into focus. Help them see shapes & colors becoming clear in light that were not clear in the dark. Then **Read Job 38:12-15** and help them see how God describes the sunrise and what He claims about His control over the wicked (i.e. God’s control of the wicked is just as if he shook the dirt out of a blanket. When the sun rises, the wicked “are shaken out” of their darkness and not allowed to continue, even as they “uplift” their arm against God.)

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Job 38:16-38.** In these verses God moves from describing His acts of creation to His acts of governing His creation. According to v. 23, for what does God reserve the storehouses of snow & hail? Can you think of a time in Scripture where God has done this (see Ex. 9:22-26, Josh. 10:11, Is. 30:30, Jer. 13:11 & Rev. 16:21 for help)?
- (b) What do we learn about God’s wisdom & mercy in vs. 25-27? What is God implying about man’s wisdom & mercy in comparison to God’s?
- (c) What do we learn about the working of God in vs. 34-38? What lessons do we learn about His character? How do these lessons prepare us for understanding God’s mercy in times of drought? In times of flooding? What message do we have for others experiencing these kinds of calamities?

(d) *Family*: Go here: <http://www.ostriches.org/factor.html> and print off “fact or fiction” questions concerning ostriches to start your discussion (I would avoid the next to the last one). Then **Read Job 39:13-18** & discuss these verses with your family, using these facts about ostriches to illustrate: Ostriches can’t fly (v. 13), they bury their eggs (vs.14-15), several hens may bury their eggs together (v. 16), they have small brains (v. 17), & they are among the fastest running animals in the world (v. 18). You can link to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1r-b8uY7C9E&feature=related> to show a video of an ostrich running. Lead your family to thank God for His creation of the amazing ostrich!

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Job 38:39-39:30**. For each of the animals God describes, answer the following questions: (1) What do you learn about God’s character through His creation of and provision for the animal? (2) What is God teaching Job with this illustration? (3) What did you learn new about the animal? (4) What fact most amazed you about God’s creation, control & provision for the animal?

(b) *Family*: **Read Job 39:19-25**. As you read this passage slowly, have your family draw pictures of what they hear. Then go back through, as they keep drawing, and explain in more detail what is being described (the horse’s beauty & strength, jumping ability, bravery, readiness to go into battle, the soldier with weapons mounted on the horse’s back, the anticipation in the horse as he awaits the trumpet’s call into battle) so they complete their drawings. You can also show pictures of warhorses, or videos, of which there are many available with one quick Google search. But be sure to screen them prior to using them because many of them are reenactments of battles and people look as if they are getting killed. Then have your family come up with words to describe these majestic and glorious animals God created, and lead them to praise God for horses.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Job 40:1-5**. Explain God’s question to Job in v. 1. Does He expect an answer? How does Job answer God? Is it sufficient? Do you think God is satisfied? Why or why not?

(b) In this, the first of two speeches by God, does God directly answer Job’s questions? (e.g. Where are you? Why do the wicked prosper & the righteous suffer? Why will you not vindicate me? Why am I suffering?) If you were Job would you be satisfied with what God has said? What would be your response to God’s question?

(c) What have you learned so far from God’s speech concerning how we should respond to God when we are suffering, or when we are confused by what God is doing, or when we see the death/suffering of the righteous or prosperity of the wicked? What reasons have you been given to praise God and give Him thanks as you have contemplated God’s 1st speech?

(d) *Family*: **Read Job: 39:26-30**. As you discuss these verses with your family, emphasize God’s sovereign power & authority over these magnificent birds. It is by God’s wisdom & understanding that the hawk migrates south for the winter. It is by God’s command that the eagle builds its nest and lives high up on a mountain and thereby can keep its eggs safe, and that God gave the eagle keen eyesight so that even from this height it can see its food far below. You can show your family one of a multitude of videos of eagles flying & feeding if you wish. This link provides one of an eagle hunting a sea snake, which I thought might be a little easier to take than the many videos of eagles capturing cute animals like bunnies and foxes, which might bother your kids! <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xf240LcsPno>

DATE: June 5, 2011

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God: Shall A Faultfinder Contend with the Almighty?