

SUMMARY AND REVIEW

1. Take 5-10 minutes to discuss the sermon from this past Sunday, *Then the Lord Answered Job*.

INTRO TO THE TEXT

God listens to Job explain his innocence and righteousness before God; God listens to Job's friends give their attempts at wisdom and explanation; God finally gets tired of listening and speaks, exhorting Job to explain, with all of the wisdom and knowledge he and his friends claim to possess, how the world and everything in it was created. Job has nothing to say and is eventually humiliated into realizing that only God knows all things and Job's role is to trust the one who knows all. Job relates how he is, after all, a sinner knowing nothing....and declares that he will listen to the Lord.

READ Job 38:1-3, 40:8-11, 42:1-6

ANALYZE THE TEXT

1. What is going on in Job 38:1-3? (Explain in 21st century lingo).
2. Read Job 38:1. The word "storm" or "whirlwind" is often taken in the literal sense of a weather event. Discuss times when you heard God speak to you amidst the "storm" of your life, times when you were threatened and overburdened.
3. Read Job 38:2: Talk about the times you have caught yourself or others attempting to explain what God is doing. When is this helpful and when is this actually inappropriate?
4. Read Job 40:8. What has Job implied about God by defending his own character and innocence to his friends?
5. Job 42:1-6 is an incredible picture of humility. What verse or phrase sticks out to you and why? What has Job finally understood?
6. Many adhere to a mantra that "bad things do not happen to good people *unless* they have sinned." What are some examples of this mantra affecting you or those around you? Think hard because we often live into this belief without even realizing it.

A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER

Chapter 38:1-3 God humbles Job by asking him to compare God's eternal existence with Job's own infinitesimally small amount of time on earth, comparing God's knowledge of all things with Job's own ignorance, and comparing God's great power with Job's own weakness. We are often prone to expound our ignorance in an attempt to explain God's wisdom.

Chapter 40:8-11 Only God has the power to humble and bring down proud people and the wisdom to know when and how to do it. It's not for us to teach Him how to govern the world because ultimately, we cannot secure our vindication—only God can.

Chapter 42:1-6 Job now has a sense of guilt in attempting to justify himself before God. He now understands himself to be a sinner who is only justified by God's grace and not his own works. God's grace always leads us to confess our sins without the need of self-justification.

APPLY If willing, break up into men and women

1. How often do you catch yourself trying to control how/why events take place? Does it work? What's missing?
2. Understanding fully that you are a sinner is often a profound moment. Discuss these times/events in your own life and how you felt.
3. How do you keep yourself from pridefully slipping into a period of forgetting that you are a sinner?
4. As we end this study of Job, what has been most encouraging? Convicting? Though-provoking? How is this going to change the way you live? Is there a way your small group can keep you accountable to that end?

MEMORIZE Job 42:3 (from The Message)

You asked, 'Who is this muddying the water, ignorantly confusing the issue, second-guessing my purposes?' I admit it. I was the one. I babbled on about things far beyond me, made small talk about wonders way over my head.

FURTHER READING *When God Interrupts*, by Craig Barnes; *Disappointment with God*, by Philip Yancey