Job Chapter 38

The LORD Begins His 1st Discourse By Questioning Job:
“Where were you” When I Created the Earth?
The Lord Reveals His Absolute Wisdom and Power to Job

Introduction:
Job had repeatedly knocked on heaven's door, longing for God to answer his inquiries about why he was unjustly suffering {Job 13:22; 31:35}. Since God seemed angry at him, Job had wished for an arbiter {Job 9:33} or an advocate intercessor {Job 16:19-20} that would speak on his behalf and present his case in a Heavenly court of law.

The divine confrontation between Job and the LORD represents the Bible's longest, continuously recorded discourse by the LORD. [The second longest is the Sermon on the Mount {Matt. 5—7; Lk. 6:20-49}]. The LORD uses much poetical/metaphoric language to communicate scientific processes.

The LORD’s discourse can be divided into two parts (A) Job 38:1—40:2 and (B) Job 40:6—41:34; each time speaking from a "whirlwind" [a powerful wind]. The first part of the discourse is followed with Job's response of humility {Job 40:3-5}; while the second part of the discourse is followed with Job's response of repentance {Job 42:1-6}.

In this and the following three chapters the LORD, Yahweh, at last finally grants Job’s plea to get some answers. But, surprise, the answers come in the form of questions that the LORD asks Job! This response was nothing like Job had anticipated.

Job, the patriarchal plaintiff, wanted a legal hearing, an opportunity to prove the injustice of God's onslaughts against him. But, instead of answering Job's subpoena to a legal hearing, God issued a subpoena to Job! Instead of answering Job's charges about perceived injustices, the LORD asks Job questions! Rather than explaining the theory of evil or the role of suffering, God rebukes Job for presuming to challenge His ways and bring Him down to his level.

In more than 70 questions [none of which Job could answer] the LORD interrogates Job regarding numerous aspects of the natural world that He created. These series of questions cover a broad range of knowledge [i.e., “science”] including theology, cosmology, astronomy, oceanography, meteorology, geology, and zoology. The wondrous wisdom and power of God's creation are displayed through an astonishing array of examples from outer space, the sky, the earth and the animal kingdom.

These examples of the wisdom and power of God revealed to Job that he was speaking from ignorance rather than insight and that he needed to surrender to an awesome and mighty God despite the fact that he did not comprehend all of His ways.

Although the LORD’s barrage of questions left Job speechless [and as someone has said, “he flunked the pop quizzes”], he did finally hear directly from God. Job, the sufferer, had not been abandoned by Almighty God after all. Job could not answer the LORD’s questions except to say, “I don’t know!”

And this should be a lesson for all the rest of us!

vv. 1-3➤ The LORD [Yahweh] Answers Job: “Prepare Yourself Like a Man”
[1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said: 2 “Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge? 3 Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me.”]

[Then the LORD answered Job.....] Note the change in the name from God [El, Elohim] to LORD [Yahweh]. In chapters 3 through 37, whenever Job and the others address or refer to God they use the names Shaddai, Ell/Elohim with just two exceptions in Job 12:9 and 28:28, where Job uses the names “YAHWEH” and “Adonai”, respectively.
What is the significance of this?

We were first introduced to this name in Job 1:6 when the angels of God, including Satan, present themselves before YAHWEH in what might be called the “Heavenly Throne Room”.

Now God Himself speaks and He refers to Himself by His unique and holy name, YHWH\(^1\), which we pronounce as YAHWEH or YAHVEH. In English translations of the Bible, this name is usually printed with all letters capitalized, as LORD to distinguish it from all others.

This is the One who calls Himself, “I AM”, when Moses asked Him, “Who shall I say to them sent me?” {Ex. 3:14}.

YAHWEH is used over 1600 times in the Pentateuch [the first five books of the Bible] and over 200 times in the book of Joshua. This name is usually associated with the life-sustaining and the saving power of God. For example:

“Who among all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this, in whose hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind?”—Job 12:9-10

“With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you”, says the LORD, your Redeemer.”—Isa. 54:8

This name then, YAHWEH, is God’s redemptive name—there is no other like it in all the world because no other name [i.e., god] can save a man’s soul from eternal judgment!

Interestingly, the name is used by Job to address God [as the Sustainer of life] after he loses all his property [wealth] and children [7 sons and 3 daughters] when he says,

“Naked I came from my mother's womb and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”—Job 1:21

Additionally, the Hebrew name of the incarnate Savior {see Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Mic. 5:2} is “Y'shua Mashiyach”\(^2\); transliterated it’s “Joshua Messiah”. This is both the name and title of the Redeemer, our Savior. Y'shua means “YAHWEH is salvation” and Mashiyach\(^3\) [or Messiah] means “anointed” [i.e., to save]. See for example 2 Chron. 6:42; Ps. 132:10; Isa. 61:1; Hab. 3:13; Lk.4:18; Acts 10:38. Note:

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound…”.—Isa 61:1

“You went forth for the salvation of Your people, for salvation with Your Anointed. You struck the head from the house of the wicked, by laying bare from foundation to neck.”—Hab. 3:13

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound….”—Isa 61:1

“LORD God, do not turn away the face of Your Anointed; remember the mercies of Your servant David.”—2 Chron. 6:42

Note that in Dan. 9:25-26 the Hebrew word for “anointed” is actually transliterated as “Messiah” in English versions of the Bible.

In the New Testament {Acts 4:10-12} the equivalent redemptive name of the MESSIAH in Greek is "Iesou Christou", or, in English, “Jesus Christ”.

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\(^1\) YHWH [Hebrew: יהוה] is famously referred to as the “Tetragrammaton” [“four letters”] to which vowel points [jots and tittles] are supplied [the Hebrew alphabet has no vowels] to help us pronounce the names; e.g., Yahweh or Yahveh.

\(^2\) Pronounced “Yah-shua Maw-shee'-akh”.

\(^3\) Derived from a Hebrew word which means “to rub with oil”.

So it is significant that the One True God who now speaks to Job is called by His redemptive name\(^5\). Note that it is before YAHWEH that the “sons of God” [“ben ha-Elohiym”] appear {1:6}.

[... out of the whirlwind] The Hebrew word rendered “whirlwind” refers to a powerful wind or tempest; e.g., hurricane force winds. A storm was brewing and the LORD speaks from a position of fearsome power and force. He will speak out of a whirlwind again when He begins His second discourse {Job 40:6}.

Compare Elihu’s reference to the whirlwind in Job 37.9

**Application:** Remember the time that the disciples were in a small fishing boat on the Sea of Galilee and a violent storm descended on them. The disciples were straining to row to shore and safety but the great wind and waves were against them. Jesus came walking to them on the water and the disciples were “troubled” because they thought He was a ghost. But Jesus spoke to them and said, “Be of good cheer, it is I, do not be afraid”. Refer to Matt. 14:22-33 and Jn. 6:16-21.

The Lord oftentimes draws near to us from a “storm”; when things are hard and challenging, when things are difficult and demanding. We have lot’s of questions, but so does He. He is there, but not to answer our questions. Why? Because the LORD Himself is the “Answer!”

Note:

“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”—Heb. 12:1-2

[Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge?] Oops! Since the LORD does not need to ask a question to gain knowledge, this does not bode well for Job. This is only the first of over 70 questions that the LORD asks Job—none of which he dares to answer!

The basis of the question is that the LORD says that Job is without knowledge. Job had prided himself in knowing many things; even to the point of coming across that he knew about things better than God.

What a devastating impact this first question must have had on Job’s ego!

Although Job believed that his “counsel” was good, the LORD says that his understanding was “without knowledge” and so he was really in the “dark”. This something that Elihu had also told Job {Job 34:35; 35:16}.

[Now prepare yourself like a man] Literally, “Gird up your loins\(^6\) like a man”. A contemporary expression would be, “Put on your ‘big-boy’ pants”! The idea here is to make yourself as strong and vigorous as possible so you will be unencumbered to answer the LORD boldly and courageously when He questions you.

There is irony in this command because Job believed he was in a position to give advice to God and convince Him that he was right and God was wrong. He was so confident that he knew all about God’s plans and purposes in managing His creation that he was able to justify himself rather than God {Job 32:2}.

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\(^5\) The name “El” or “Elohim” is primarily associated with God’s creative wisdom and power.

\(^6\) The phrase, “gird up the loins”, is an reference to the style of dress in ancient times. The commonly worn loose fitting and flowing robe was usually pulled up and fastened around the waist with a belt when a man ran, labored in a field, or engaged in battle. The apostle Paul uses this imagery when speaking of the first piece of spiritual armor we are to put on [waist girded with Truth] (see Eph. 6:14).
Note what Job has previously said:

“I would present my case before Him and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which He would answer me and understand what He would say to me. Would He contend with me in His great power? No! But He would take note of me. There the upright could reason with Him and I would be delivered forever from my Judge.”—Job 23:4-7

“Now if it is not so, who will prove me a liar and make my speech worth nothing?”—Job 24:25

“My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; my heart shall not reproach me as long as I live......I will teach you about the hand of God; what is with the Almighty I will not conceal. Surely all of you have seen it; why then do you behave with complete nonsense?”—Job 27:6, 11-12

But now the LORD now calls upon Job to “prove” his claims that he is worthy to expound on the “mysteries of the Universe”.

[I will question you......] The LORD will ask Job over 70 questions—none of which he is able to answer; except with an “I don't know” or “I can’t”! These series of questions cover a broad range of knowledge including theology, cosmology, astronomy, meteorology, geology, oceanography, and zoology.

The meaning is that “Since you think you know so much, I will submit some questions to test you”.

Surely so wise a man as Job thinks he is, who could explain the hidden counsels of the Most High God with so much confidence, should then be able to explain those things which pertained to the visible creation.

Using these questions, the LORD challenges Job’s competence to judge His control of the world. The rhetorical nature of these questions use irony [e.g., “Tell Me”, vv.4, 18; “Surely you know!” vv.5, 21] to expose Job’s pride and lack of respect for the wisdom and power of God.

The LORD was about to take Job to task, challenging both his actual knowledge about the created Universe and his ability to explain these facts.

[.....and you shall answer Me] The LORD expects an answer, which Job gives in the last chapter, and it is a good answer because it comes from a heart of humility:

Then Job answered the Lord and said: “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 Me.’ 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.”—Job 42:1-6

Job was humbled and proven to be faithful and that was the purpose of God from the very beginning.

vv. 4-7 ➤ THE LORD QUESTIONS JOB ABOUT GEOLOGY

[4 “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. 5 Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? 6 To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, 7 when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”]
Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? What a provocative and humbling question! This is the key question we need to ask the Evolutionist when he/she makes a typical statement like the following:

“The universe began with a ‘big bang’ 15 billion years ago. The stars formed 10 billion years ago, the sun formed 5 billion years ago and the molten earth came into existence about 4.5 billion years ago.....Water formed on the earth some 3.8 billion years ago and over hundreds of millions of years life formed from non-life through the processes of Natural Selection and Mutation; then evolved into fish, then amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, then ape-like creatures and then man—a process involving chemical & biological innovation, death and extinction.”

These writers make it sound like they were there as eye-witnesses of the beginning of creation and have the audacity to speak about it as if it were fact! Only an Evolutionist has the arrogance to make these kinds of statements, which are based on pure speculation and not really even based on scientific truth.

The reason such unscientific statements are made is because they are based on faith in atheism [that there is no God], which is, ironically, referred to as “secular humanism”—the religion of an atheist. A humanist does not want to believe he/she is accountable to an all-powerful God and therefore puts all their faith in man and the natural world.

“Where were you when God laid the foundations of the earth?” This is the key question that every Evolutionist needs to be challenged with. Well they weren’t there so they don’t really know! We do not have first-hand knowledge—but the LORD does!

But, we do have One who was there and He’s told us about the beginning of creation in the book of Genesis, 1:1; “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth........”

Not only was God an eye-witness to His testimony, but He is also its DESIGNER!

This truth is captured in Solomon’s “Hymn of Creation” where he personifies pure “Wisdom”, i.e., the “Logos” of God, in designing and creating everything that exists.

“The LORD possessed me [i.e., “Wisdom”] at the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I have been established from everlasting, from the beginning, before there was ever an earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, I was brought forth; while as yet He had not made the earth or the fields, or the primal dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, I was there, when He drew a circle on the face of the deep, when He established the clouds above, when He strengthened the fountains of the deep, when He assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters would not transgress His command, when He marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside Him as a master craftsman; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him, rejoicing in His inhabited world, and my delight was with the sons of men.”—Prov. 8:22-31

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7 The Evolutionist, as defined here, is a person [scientist or not] who believes that the Darwinian theory of Evolution is actual fact and there is no God, no supernatural agency, involved in the creation and existence of the Universe. Most Evolutionists are also Humanists—believing that the natural world is all that exists and it was self-starting and is self-propagating.

8 Believe it or not, Secular Humanism was recognized as a religious system in the logic behind the U.S. Supreme Court findings in the case of Torcaso v. Watkins in 1961 and also in the findings of the South Carolina Supreme Court in the case of Silverman v. Campbell in 1996; which upheld First Amendment protection of the “free exercise of religion” for an atheist seeking public office.
Note that it appears the LORD pre-planned and designed everything before He actually brought it into existence by His sheer wisdom and power—BY SIMPLY SPEAKING IT INTO EXISTENCE! See also Ps. 33:6-9; 102:25-26; 104:5-9; and Heb. 1:1-4, 10-12.

[Tell Me, if you have understanding.] The Lord gives Job the opportunity to answer the question if he truly had understanding as he had claimed. But Job cannot answer such question because it draws him to the realization that he would have had to been there with the LORD, at the beginning of Creation, assisting Him!

Job thought he had understanding and had expounded on it at length. But now, when the LORD asks him a question that really challenges what he understands—he is left speechless!

[Who determined its measurements?] The Lord asks Job who determined the physical dimensions of the earth. This would include its orbit around the sun, which is not too close or too far away, but just right!

Although secular humanists would dispute this\(^9\), the fact remains that the earth, solar system and even the Universe itself, “has built into it” finely-tuned physical constants, which not only allow life to exist but also allow it to thrive.

This speaks of an Intelligent Designer, who made sure that His creation is finely-tuned to sustain life. Here is a short list of some of these physical constants required to support life:

- The electrode\(\text{magnetic “coupling constant”}\) that binds electrons to protons in atoms is at just the right strength. If it was “weaker”, fewer electrons could be held and atoms could not exist. If it was “stronger”, electrons would be held too tightly and atoms of one element could not combine with those of other atoms and chemical compounds could not form.
- The ratio of an electron to proton mass is “fixed” at just the right value (1:1836). If this was larger or smaller, atoms [i.e., the elements] and molecules could not form.
- Carbon and oxygen nuclei have finely tuned energy levels which allow the existence of organic [carbon based] life.
- Electromagnetic and gravitational forces are finely tuned, so the right kind of star conducive to life can be stable; e.g., not turn into a “red giant” or “super-nova”.
- Our sun is also the right type, mass and size and therefore, temperature. If it was larger, its brightness would change too quickly and there would be too much high energy radiation [cosmic rays and Ultraviolet light] harmful to organic life\(^10\). If it was smaller, there would not be enough energy available to support life.

\(^9\)Their argument would go something like this: “There are multi-universes, we just happen to exist in the one that has the best conditions for life so we would expect to find physical constants being conducive to life”. This however is a “tautology”—its logic is based on circular reasoning and does not really explain things.

\(^10\)Note that there is a very interesting judgment in the book of Revelation relating to the stability of the sun. Although the sun’s brightness is reduced by a third (Rev. 8:12) by the “Fourth Trumpet” judgment, its heat energy increases relative to the inhabitants of the earth and they are scorched with great heat and fire (Rev. 16:8-9) by the “Fourth Bowl” judgment. One plausible explanation to these, seemingly, opposite effects is that (1) on the one hand the earth’s atmosphere becomes extremely polluted [diminishing the amount of light and heat energy reaching the earth] but (2) at the same time, the sun undergoes into a major change becoming what’s referred to as a “red giant” star [increasing its heat energy]. Such a conclusion appears justified because when the Sixth seal is opened (Rev. 6:12), the sun is also described as becoming “black as sackcloth of hair” and the moon [which reflects sunlight] is described as becoming “like blood” [i.e., the color of blood, red].
• The moon’s size, mass and distance from the earth and the earth’s rotational period [24 hrs] creates just the right amount of tidal forces to keep the water along the earth’s coastlands form either (a) alternatively flooding the land or (b) stagnating.

• The earth’s distance from the sun is at the right distance for a stable water cycle. Too far away, and most water would freeze; too close and most water would boil. Solar tidal forces on the earth are also balanced to keep the earth’s rotational period stable.

• The earth’s rotational rate of 24 hours, coupled with it’s distance from the sun and the sun’s temperature allows just the right variation in temperature ranges over the earth to allow life to thrive.

• The earth’s mass\textsuperscript{11}, axial tilt\textsuperscript{12}, magnetic field strength\textsuperscript{13}, oxygen/nitrogen ratio\textsuperscript{14}, carbon dioxide, water vapor and ozone levels are just right to prevent harmful but allow beneficial solar energy reaching the earth’s surface\textsuperscript{15}. For example, if these variables were not balanced as they are photosynthesis could not occur and plants would not grow.

[Surely you know!] The LORD mockingly asks Job if he knows. But of course he doesn’t.

[Or who stretched the line upon it?] Does Job know who measured the earth with a measuring line? No he doesn’t.

[To what were its foundations fastened?] Does Job know to what the foundation [rock] was attached [literally, “made to sink”]? No he doesn’t. However, here we can give some credit to Job because he did accurately confess that God hung the earth on “nothing” \{Job 26:7\}. The Bible provides the best ancient understanding of our Universe. Other ancient cultures wrap their understanding in fantasy. For example, the ancient Hindus believed that the earth consisted of an enormous round disc, curved on the top side, which rested on the back of four elephants, which stood on the back of a gigantic sea turtle swimming through space!

Today, the foundations of the earth would be referred as the “basement granite”. The secular humanist, because of a prior commitment to Darwinian Evolution, which requires enormous amounts of time to even make it remotely plausible [note, not probable], would set an age of these “foundation stones” of several hundreds of millions or billions of years.

However, there are some “honest” scientists who are more reasonable with their statements regarding the origin of the earth and humbly admitting they don’t have the answers. They, along with Job, could not answer this question as the following examples show:

“Certain fossils appear to be restricted to rocks of a relatively limited geological age span. These are called ‘index fossils’. Whenever a rock is found bearing such a fossil, its approximate age is automatically established......This method is not foolproof. Occasionally an organism, previously thought to be extinct, is found to be extant. Such 'living fossils' obviously cannot function as index fossils except within the broader time span of their known existence\textsuperscript{16}.”

\textsuperscript{11} Which determines gravitational pull and the effects of lunar tidal forces.

\textsuperscript{12} Measured from the earth’s “orbital plane” relative to the sun.

\textsuperscript{13} Which traps harmful charged cosmic particles and deflects the “solar wind”.

\textsuperscript{14} 20%/80%.

\textsuperscript{15} For example, Ultraviolet radiation [light energy] is harmful to skin but is necessary for photosynthesis to occur. Just the right amount of UV radiation reaches the earth’s surface to keep these opposing effects in balance.

\textsuperscript{16} Dr. William D. Stansfield, (Biology, California Polytechnic State University), \textit{The Science of Evolution}, Macmillan, New York, 1977, p. 80.
“All the above methods for dating the age of the earth, its various strata, and its fossils are questionable, because the rates are likely to have fluctuated widely over earth history........It is obvious that radiometric dating techniques may not be the absolute dating methods that they are claimed to be. Age estimates on a given geological stratum by different radiometric methods are often quite different (sometimes by hundreds of millions of years). There is no absolutely reliable long-term radiological ‘clock’.”

“The age of our globe is presently thought to be some 4.5 billion years, based on radio decay rates of uranium and thorium. Such ‘confirmation’ may be short-lived, as nature is not to be discovered quite so easily. There has been in recent years the horrible realization that radio decay rates are not as constant as previously thought, nor are they immune to environmental influences.”

“These results indicate that even total-rock systems may be open during metamorphism and may have their isotopic system changed, making it impossible to determine their geologic age.”

[Or who laid its cornerstone?.....] Does Job know who laid the earth’s “cornerstone”? Although Job could have answered, “Why it was you Lord”: the implication of this question is much deeper. “Hidden” within this question is the Second Person of the Godhead.

Note also another question, with Whom God’s creative wisdom and power is associated:

“Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son’s name, if you know?”—Prov. 30:4

“His Son’s name” is of course Jesus Christ [Y’shua Ma’shiyach], who is the LIVING WORD, the LOGOS {Jn. 1:1-4} of God, Who “spoke” everything into existence {Ps. 33:6-9; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 11:3} and became flesh {Jn. 1:14}, that He might redeem that which was lost and reconcile man to God {Lk. 19:10; Col. 1:18-20}. Note:

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.”—Col. 1:15-20

Job obviously did not know God’s Son’s name—but we do!

On a spiritual level, the same One who laid the cornerstone of the earth is the same One who is the Chief Cornerstone of salvation and the Church.

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17 Ibid, pp. 82-84.
19 Prof. Gunter Faure (Dept. of Geology, Ohio State Univ., Columbus) & Prof. James L. Powell (Dept. of Geology, Oberlin College, Ohio); Strontium Isotope Geology, Springer-Verlag, Berlin and New York, 1972, p.102.
20 Proverbs chapter 30 are the words of a man named Agur the son of Jakeh, his utterance is referred to as an “oracle” [i.e., a burden the Lord wanted him to communicate].
Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures\textsuperscript{21}: ‘The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord’s doing and it is marvelous in our eyes’?”—\textit{Matt. 21:42}

“This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone’. Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”—\textit{Acts 4:11-12}

“Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture\textsuperscript{22}, ‘Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame’. Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, ‘The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone’.....”—\textit{1 Pet. 2:4-7}

\[.....when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?\]

“The morning stars” refer to angels as they are oftentimes symbolized that way. For example:

- Lucifer, another name for Satan, literally means “day star”\textsuperscript{23} in \textit{Isa. 14:12}.
- The “stars” as part of the host of Heaven that are cast down to earth \{\textit{Dan. 8:10}\}.
- The “great star” descends from Heaven is called “Wormwood” \{\textit{Rev. 8:10-11}\}.
- A “star” falls from Heaven and to him was given the keys to the bottomless pit, which he uses to open that pit \{\textit{Rev. 9:1-2}\}.
- The seven stars that Jesus Christ holds in His right hand are the angels [or messengers] to the seven churches \{\textit{Rev. 1:16, 20}\}.

The angels sang together when God created the heavens and earth, when God said, “Let there be.......”

The phrase “sons of God” [“ben ha-Elohiym”] has been used before in \textit{Job 1:6} when they were introduced as presenting themselves before the LORD [YAHWEH]; where see detailed notes. These are a created order of angelic beings and not part of the human race.

These all “shouted for joy”. All these angels joined together in a \textit{concert of praise and worship} of the One who created the heavens and the earth! What an awesome worship service that must have been!

Note that it was usual to celebrate the laying of a cornerstone, or the completion of an edifice, by singing rejoicing \{e.g., see \textit{Zech 4:7; Ezra 3:10}\}, perhaps following the pattern in Heaven.

Evidently there was a lot of heavenly rejoicing going on at the \textit{beginning} of God’s creation—as there will be at the \textit{ending} of this present creation, during the “MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB”!

“And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunders, saying, ‘Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready’. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.”—\textit{Rev 19:6-8}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{21} Psalms 118:22-23.
  \item \textsuperscript{22} Isaiah 28:16.
  \item \textsuperscript{23} Or “morning star”, “bright star”. Satan is a counterfeit for the True Bright and Morning Star—Jesus Christ (\textit{Rev. 22:16; Num. 24:17}).
\end{itemize}
vv. 8-11> **THE LORD QUESTIONS JOB ABOUT OCEANOGRAPHY**

[8 “Or who shut in the sea with doors, when it burst forth and issued from the womb; 9 When I made the clouds its garment and thick darkness its swaddling band; 10 When I fixed My limit for it and set bars and doors; 11 when I said, ‘This far you may come, but no farther and here your proud waves must stop’!”]

Again, using a beautiful metaphor, but in terms which are scientifically accurate, the LORD describes the creation and maintenance of the oceans.

*[Or who shut in the sea with doors?.....] In other words, the LORD is asking Job who does he think set the boundaries of the water which form the seas and oceans. See v.10.*

This harkens all the way back to the beginning of creation when Moses recounts what God had told him:

> In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.....Then God said, ‘Let there be a firmament [i.e., the sky] in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.’ Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day. Then God said, ‘Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear’; and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good.”—*Gen 1:1-2, 6-10*

With this the Apostle Peter is in agreement:

> For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water.”—*2 Pet. 3:5-6*

[.....when it burst forth and issued from the womb] The water that formed the seas and oceans came bursting forth like a baby being born. See also *Ps. 33:7; Isa. 40:12.*

*[When I made the clouds its garment and thick darkness its swaddling band] Clouds are produced by the evaporation of water and so are logically mentioned in association with seas and oceans {v.8}.*

Appropriately, the clouds are described as the “garment”, which in this context the seas and oceans “weave” [i.e., through evaporation].

Remember that “the “womb” in this context represents the source of the water—God Himself! And the waters represent the “baby” issuing forth from the “womb”.

So it is fitting that the LORD continues the metaphor by using the term “thick darkness” for dark and ominous storm clouds, which are then described as the “swaddling band”\(^\text{24}\) for the waters.

The point that the Lord is making is eloquently summed by the prophetic word given to Isaiah, encompassing oceanography and geology; justice and wisdom:

> Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, measured heaven with a span and calculated the dust of the earth in a measure? Weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, or as His counselor has taught Him? With whom did He take counsel, and who instructed Him and taught Him in the path of justice? Who taught Him knowledge and showed Him the way of understanding?”—*Isa 40:12-14*

\(^{24}\) The Hebrew noun rendered “swaddling band” is used only here, in this verse.
When I fixed My limit for it and set bars and doors.....] Again, the Lord is emphasizing that He is the one who designed the limits of how far the water of seas and oceans can come inland.

“Bars” refers to the locks that are put on doors to secure them and may be a reference to the rocks found along many coastlines.

The creation of new “bars” and “doors” is dramatically seen in those places in the world where lava from volcanic eruptions flow out and spill into the ocean forming rocky new land.

The word for “doors” has its emphasis on the hinges, which allow a door or gate to swing back-and-forth. The reference may be to coastal sand bars which come and go, dependent on the ebb and flow of the ocean tides.

That much water gushing forth would have seemed unstoppable to Job [or anyone else, for that matter] but God in His creative wisdom and power determined its confines, which is clearly declared by the LORD in the next verse!

[.....when I said, ‘This far you may come, but no farther and here your proud waves must stop’!] It was God’s creative wisdom and power which set the limits of all the world’s seas and oceans using the topography of the coastlands; which He also created!

As powerful and persistent as crashing waves can be, they can only come onto to land so far and then they must stop. God planned the design of the coastlands and then made his plan a reality by commanding it to be so.

vv. 12-15  THE LORD’S CREATIVE WISDOM & POWER ASSURES US THAT THE DEEDS OF THE WICKED WILL NOT GO UNPUNISHED

[12 “Have you commanded the morning since your days began and caused the dawn to know its place, 13 that it might take hold of the ends of the earth and the wicked be shaken out of it? 14 It takes on form like clay under a seal and stands out like a garment. 15 From the wicked their light is withheld and the upraised arm is broken.”]

[Have you commanded the morning since your days began.....] The thought behind this question is to establish that Job has not been around from the “dawn” of day and night [the “diurnal cycle”]. Again, the purpose is to get Job to see that he does not have all the knowledge available and therefore he should not expect to have all the answers to his questions.

[and caused the dawn to know its place.....] That is, since Job did not help God create the Heavens and earth, then he cannot know how the evening and morning cycle began.

[.....that it might take hold of the ends of the earth and the wicked be shaken out of it?] This is poetic imagery describing the fact that God, who created the diurnal cycle, causes the light of day to shine over all the earth and thereby expose the deeds of the wicked.

25 Such as is regularly the case with the eruption of the volcanic caldera Kilauea and more active volcanic “vent”, Pu’u O’o, on the southern coast of the big island of Hawaii. The formation of new coastland in this manner is a spectacular and breathtaking sight to behold for those able to view it first hand. Iceland is another such place where lava from volcanic eruptions can form new coastlines.
When this happens the wicked are like the dust which is shaken off a linen sheet.

[It takes on form like clay under a seal and stands out like a garment] The LORD uses poetic language to describe the appearance of “the ends of the earth” as the light of the day rises above the horizon and spreads over the earth. This has the effect of exposing the geography of the landscape [i.e., the topography of the land; “the ends of the earth”].

Just as the definitive shape that clay [i.e., “ends of the earth”] takes after it’s struck by a “seal”, which in this case refers to an signature ring engraved with special markings......

......all the subtle “nooks and crannies” of mountains, valleys and chasms become more prominent as the contrast between the illuminated areas and those areas hidden by long shadows is enhanced by the dawning of a new day.

Or, similarly, the “ends of the earth” take on the form of the folds of a garment, when it’s perhaps laid down on the ground [i.e., “stands out like a garment”].

Indeed, this imagery becomes obvious if one has done any traveling through the isolated country sides and deserts of America. Early in the morning, as the light of the sun begins illuminating the landscape, the hills and valleys take on an appearance of being molded like clay struck by a signature ring or folds in a garment laid on the ground.

[From the wicked their light is withheld and the upraised arm is broken] The Lord is reassuring Job that He sees what the wicked are doing and they do eventually receive the just recompense for their sin and iniquity.

They are put into confusion [“light is withheld”] and the extent of their influence is broken [“upraised arm is broken”].

The point is, the LORD is reminding Job [and us] that he has not forgotten to punish the wicked person. But He is also patient, giving each one time to repent, not will that any should perish in an eternity of judgment.

By reminding Job of His great wisdom and power in Creation, the LORD is reassuring him [and us] of His intention and ability to punish the wicked.

vv. 16-18 ➤ THE LORD CONTINUES QUESTIONING JOB ABOUT OCEANOGRAPHY

[16 “Have you entered the springs of the sea? Or have you walked in search of the depths? 17 Have the gates of death been revealed to you? Or have you seen the doors of the shadow of death? 18 Have you comprehended the breadth of the earth? Tell Me, if you know all this.”]

The LORD continues to ask Job questions in “rapid-fire” fashion. They continue with the theme of oceanography.

[Have you entered the springs of the sea?] The Hebrew word here rendered “the springs” occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures. In the Vulgate26 it is rendered “the deep parts” and in the Septuagint27 it is rendered “the fountains”. The word is derived from another word which means “to boil up”, and so literally means “to bubble up”, in reference to a fountain of water.

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26 The Latin translation of the Old Testament.  
Just as there are springs and fountains of water on the earth, the reference here appears is to the deep fountains at the bottom of the sea, and which many people are unaware of. It is known that in some places the upward flow of water from these underwater fountains is so great it’s action is perceptible at the surface. One such fountain exists in the Atlantic ocean near the coast of Florida. Other such sources of underwater fountains are geothermal in nature and exist at the south-western shore of the big island of Hawaii and also in the northern-most tip of the Gulf of Cortez [between Baja California and Mexico].

We have already seen in Prov. 8:28 that when the LORD “established the clouds above” by His creative power He also “strengthened the fountains of the deep” by that same power.

To gain a clearer understanding of this note the following references to these fountains:

“In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.....The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained.”—Gen. 7:11; 8:2

Evidently, the LORD ripped open the sea bottom and let water burst forth, which covered the earth. Indeed, if one were to look at a topographical survey of bottoms of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans one can discern the colossal “scars” left by this global event.

The LORD is asking Job if he’s so knowledgeable, does he have first-hand knowledge of; has he seen and actually swam in the fountains of water springing up from the bottom of the seas. The answer is, “Of course not!”

[Or have you walked in search of the depths?] In conjunction with the last question, this question is a reference to personally having investigated the deepest parts of the sea28, which would include the deep ocean trenches29.

This of course is ludicrous, Job has no ability to do this; but the point the LORD is making is that if Job were as knowledgeable as the thinks he is, he would have first-hand knowledge of the ocean depths.

Again, the Lord was trying to humble Job and get him to come to his senses.

[Have the gates of death been revealed to you?] The “gates of death” could also be rendered “doors of death”. Naturally transitioning from the unfathomable depths of the sea to the region of the dead, the LORD now questions Job about a place even deeper than the ocean floor—the entrance to the dark abode of the souls of the dead; the “grave” or “SHEOL”. See Job 7:9; 11:8; 14:13; 17:13, 16; 21:13, 32; 24:19.

Job refers to this in Job 17:15-16 when he says, “Where then is my hope? As for my hope, who can see it? Will they go down to the gates of Sheol? Shall we have rest together in the dust?”

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28 Seas which Job probably was familiar with are the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, and perhaps even the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. Included in this would also be the Dead Sea, which at it’s deepest point is almost 1000 feet deep. It runs along the same fault zone as the African Rift Valley.

29 In some places the depth of the world’s oceans is truly amazing. The two deepest ocean trenches are the Grand Cayman Trench, in the Caribbean Sea [260 miles long and over 4.5 miles deep]; and the Mariana Trench, in the Western Pacific Ocean [1580 miles long, 43 miles wide and almost 7 miles deep]. In 2012 it was also discovered that water flowing from the deep geothermal vents of the Grand Cayman Trench is at a temperature of 450 °C [842 °F].
This is a reference to the entrance of SHEOL, the “land of darkness” from which no one returns. It is the place the souls of the dead went\(^{30}\). In the New Testament this place is called “HADES”. See for example Matt. 11:23; 16:18; Lk. 16:23; Acts 2:27, 31; 1 Cor. 15:55; Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13-14.

SHEOL/HADES is located in the subterranean depths of the earth for Jesus tells us:

> But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah”. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the SON OF MAN be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”—Matt 12:39-40

By “the heart of earth” is meant SHEOL/HADES is made clear in the following scripture:

> “For David says concerning Him: ‘For You will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption’....he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.”—Acts 2:25, 27, 31-32

Note that the LORD, who created SHEOL/HADES, is the only One who has control of the “gates of death” for He says;

> “I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.”—Rev. 1:18-19

Furthermore, there is an “ABYSS” [or the “Bottomless/Unfathomable Pit”; see Rev. 9:1-2, 11; 20:1-3], which evidently connects SHEOL/HADES to a place known as “TARTARUS” [2 Pet. 2:4]. It is obvious that this place also has a door because we are told that an angel has a key to the ABYSS and opens it as part of the Fifth Trumpet Judgment:

> “Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace.”—Rev. 9:1-2

The same angel later “arrests” Satan, puts shackles on him and locks him up in the ABYSS, shutting him in:

> “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished.”—Rev. 20:1-3

Thus, the “gates of death” and “doors of the shadow of death” are appropriate epitaphs to the dark abode of the dead.

It is important to note that we learn in Eph. 4:7-10 that the souls of believers were taken from “the lower parts of the earth”\(^{32}\) [i.e., SHEOL/HADES] by Jesus Christ Himself [as part of His resurrection] and are now in Heaven with Him. From that time onward, the souls of all those who are saved by faith go immediately to the bright and glorious abode of Heaven when they die {see 2 Cor. 5:6-8}.

\(^{30}\) Note that in Luke 16:19-31 we learn that this place, called “Hades” in the Greek, was divided into two separate and mutually exclusive compartments or regions. Please refer to Job 7:9 notes for more detailed information about “Sheol”.

\(^{31}\) Refer to Jonah 2:1-2.

\(^{32}\) Lower parts of the earth; refer also to Psalms 63:9.
Surely Job was unaware of all these things, which we today have the privilege of knowing through New Testament revelation. But even though we have had additional details about SHEOL/HADES, and HEAVEN, revealed to us; based on Job’s experience, we can safely conclude that we still don’t know everything there is to know about these subjects!

The point of the LORD’s question is again to get Job to see that he is not as knowledgeable as he thinks he is; not about oceanography but especially about the grave—a place he had desperately wanted to go to (e.g., see Job 3:5, 11-13, 16-22; 10:18-19; 17:1, 13-16).

[Or have you seen the doors of the shadow of death?] The same word used for “gates” is here used for “doors” in the previous sentence; so this could read “gates of the shadow of death”.

This expression related to the entrance of the abode of the dead is more intensive than in the previous sentence. Here the emphasis is on the long and dismal shadows and gloomy darkness in SHEOL after one enters through its “doors”.

Job refers to it in Job 10:21 when he says, “Before I go to the place from which I shall not return, to the land of darkness and the shadow of death”.

The LORD is asking Job not only if he has seen the doors of SHEOL, but has he even seen “shadow” behind those doors. The fact that the LORD asks Job this question indicates that he had not.

The point of the question is, that the LORD saw all that occurred in the dark and gloomy “shadow of death” where the souls of the dead were congregated, but a living man could not. Thus, the LORD’s vast superiority to man is again confirmed by His being able to penetrate and see into those regions hidden away from a living man as in the brightness of the noonday sun.

**Application:** Note that for those who have a personal relationship with the Lord through faith in Him, there is nothing to fear because He is present everywhere. Note that this truth is the basis of David’s praise of joy:

> “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into Heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, ‘Surely the darkness shall fall on me’, even the night shall be light about me; indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You.”—Ps. 139:7-12

It is interesting to note that this Psalm acknowledges the two places that the Lord questions Job about: the depths of the sea and the depths of Sheol! But remember, as was stated in the notes, a believer’s soul/spirit immediately goes to Heaven at the point of death (2 Cor. 5:8).

[Have you comprehended the breadth of the earth?] The Hebrew word rendered “breadth” is used only here and in Job 36:16 where it is rendered “a broad place”. It refers to the vast expanses of the earth.

Even today, there are large regions of the earth which have yet to be explored, both on land and under the sea.

[Tell Me, if you know all this.] Apparently, the Lord is calling Job’s “knowledge bluff”. If Job was as intelligent and knowledgeable as he’d been acting he would know the answers to these questions and be able to answer the LORD.

The question was meant to bring Job back to his senses and humble him.
vv. 19-21 > The Lord Questions Job About Cosmology

[19 “Where is the way to the dwelling of light? And darkness, where is its place, 20 that you may take it to its territory, that you may know the paths to its home? 21 Do you know it, because you were born then, or because the number of your days is great?”]

God now personifies “light” and “darkness” as having houses or dwelling places and asks Job several rhetorical questions related to their nature.

[Where is the way to the dwelling of light?] God is “light” and there is no darkness in Him {1 Jn. 1:5}. On the first day of Creation God said, “Let there be light”; and there was “light” {Gen. 1:3}.

The LORD asks Job “where” is the way or journey to where the light dwells, that is, how is it propagated and what is its source. I take this to be a reference to the literal source and nature of light.

Therefore, this “light” is not to be confused with light from the sun and stars, which God made on the fourth day. The source of daylight is of course the sun, which the pagans falsely worshipped, rather than the Creator {see Rom. 1:18-25}.

Today we know that what is called “light” is part of what is known as the ‘electromagnetic spectrum’ describing the “colors” of light. Light actually includes [from smallest to highest frequency] radio, infra-red, visible, ultraviolet, x-rays and gamma rays. The visible light spectrum includes only the colors that the created human eye can “see”. These colors range from dark red to deep purple; with red, yellow and blue being the so-called “primary colors” and orange, green and purple being the “secondary colors”.

The “Laws of Physics” provide us with equations which describe the behavior of “light”. For example, the energy of a photon [the basic “unit” of light] is given by a special constant multiplied by the frequency of the light. There are over two dozen definitions that describe various measurements of light.

And the frequency of light varies according to the speed of light [which is another constant] and varies inversely to its wavelength.

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33 However, there are some who see here [and v.19b] a reference to the light coming from the sun [and its absence] which would then be an allegory of the rising and setting of the sun and the associated light of day and darkness of night that is being described here. If this is the case, then the LORD was asking Job about the dynamics of the rotating earth, which alternatively caused the day and night, something the people at the time of Job knew nothing about. Thus, the Lord was asking him if he knew how and why the sun moved through the sky, set in the evening, which made everything dark—except when there was a full moon. Most people during Job’s time could only suspect that the moon’s light was merely the reflection of the sun, which is sometimes even seen during the day.

34 If the light from the sun is meant here, then the metaphor dispels the pagan beliefs of ancient civilizations like the Egyptians who thought the sun, personified as “Ra”, was born anew each morning and then died as it set each evening. They believed, logically, that at the same time the other side of the earth must then be in darkness and they had another set of gods ruling over that realm; representing not only darkness but death as well.

35 A form of radiation consisting of packets of energy called photons.

36 There are certain animals and insects which were created to detect infrared radiation [e.g. snakes, the blood sucking fly]. Some animals can detect ultraviolet radiation [e.g., cats, bats and rats].

37 Called “Planck’s constant” named after the German physicist Max Planck who derived it from experimental studies he performed.

38 Refer also to the “photoelectric effect”, for which Albert Einstein received a Nobel Prize in Physics in 1921.
Thus the speed of light, which is constant \([c]\), is given by the product of its frequency \([f]\) and wavelength \([\lambda]\) or \(c = f \times \lambda\); so that the frequency and wavelength are always balanced.

Light [i.e., photons] is usually produced when the electrons in an atom of a particular element or compound are in what’s called an “excited state”, that is, in a higher energy orbit and the electron(s) fall back to a lower orbit, which causes the atom to emit photon(s) of light.

But even today, although we know a lot more about the source and nature of light, physicists are divided as to the nature of “light” because it can behave like both a quantized “particle” [e.g., an electron] or a continuous “wave”; depending on how it’s measured!

And the fact that the nature of light seems to be based on universal physical constants [i.e., its speed and Planck’s constant] still has scientists puzzled.

So the Lord’s question is as relevant as it was almost 4,000 years ago!

[And darkness, where is its place.....] Also on the first day of Creation God separated “light” from the “darkness”; “And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness” {Gen. 1:4}.

Darkness is the absence of light and must have been the initial state of things prior to Creation. Job is asked if he knows where the “place” of this darkness was.

[.....that you may take it to its territory.....] In other words, Job is being asked if he knows enough about the nature of light so that he can explain it’s nature.

[.....that you may know the paths to its home?] Even today physicists are divided over the nature of “light”. Is it a “wave” or is it a “particle” [i.e., just a photon]? Depending on how it’s measured, “light” behaves as a wave or a particle, but it seems it can be only one thing!

A dramatic example of God being able to manipulate light and darkness for His own purposes is given in Exodus narrative during the crossing of the Red Sea:

“And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness to the one, and it gave light by night to the other, so that the one did not come near the other all that night.”

—Ex 14:19-20

[Do you know it, because you were born then.....] The LORD sarcastically asks Job if he was born at the beginning of Creation that he might know how light was created.

[.....or because the number of your days is great?] Job is essentially being asked if the number of candles on his birthday cake makes his knowledge all-inclusive, all-knowing; this is, is his age commensurate with the knowledge he claims to have.

The Lord had already alluded to this in vv.4,12.

Eliphaz, the oldest of Job’s friends, had also sarcastically asked him similar questions; “Are you the first man who was born? Or were you made before the hills?” {Job 15:7}.

The meaning is this—does the accumulated knowledge of Job’s life justify his conclusions about God? Eliphaz had previously asked him, “Do you limit wisdom to yourself?” {Job 15:8b}.

The answer for him, and for us, is “No, of course not! How can our knowledge compare with that of an infinite God?”
Application: These are some pretty powerful questions for Job to contemplate—but more importantly, they are also questions we should be contemplating. Our conclusions should lead us to realize how limited our understanding really is and acknowledge our woeful inferiority to God. But it should also lead us to our grateful thanksgiving knowing that He pours out His grace on us lavishly because He loves us! See 1 Tim 1:14; Tit. 3:4-7.

vv. 22-24  The Lord continues to question Job about meteorology

[22 “Have you entered the treasury of snow, or have you seen the treasury of hail, 23 which I have reserved for the time of trouble, for the day of battle and war? 24 By what way is light diffused, or the east wind scattered over the earth?”]

[Have you entered the treasury of snow.....] The Hebrew word rendered “treasury” in this verse refers to a depository or storehouse where something valuable was kept.

Elihu had specifically mentioned this in his discourse {Job 37:6-13}.

The Lord is asking Job if he has entered into the place where snow is made; that is, how snow is made in the clouds. This is a process that requires the right conditions of temperature and humidity [i.e., moisture content of the surrounding air].

Today, an entire branch of scientific study is dedicated to understanding how snow is formed. Although we understand a lot more about this than Job did, just like in the case of lightning and light, there are still many aspects of this process that are amazing and still to be discovered.

The more we know about this and other processes, the more we must admit we don’t know everything. For example, why is lightning associated with the generation of rain? Why does water freeze at a certain temperature?

[.....or have you seen the treasury of hail.....] The Lord asks a similar question, this time related to the origin of hail, or frozen water droplets.

Just like with snow, the formation of hail also requires the right conditions of temperature and humidity. Additionally, in order for hail to form strong super-cooled wind currents are required in the clouds to keep the freezing water droplets from falling too early. In forming hail, a water droplet can melt, join with other water or ice particles, and refreeze many times before it actually hits the ground.

Job knew nothing of how snow and hail was formed.

Although today we know much more about how this process works, it’s still a complex process that amazes us. And there are other things we do not know everything about.

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39 Snowflakes form when tiny water droplets condense [nucleate] on dust particles in the atmosphere by attracting trillions of super-cooled water molecules, which freeze into hexagonal-shaped crystals of varying size and shape; dependent on the local atmospheric conditions. The snowflakes combine and when they get heavy enough they fall as snow. Although all snowflakes have unique shapes and designs, almost all snowflakes have 6 characteristic sides or points based on the molecular structure of water [H₂O].

40 One can sometimes see the effects of this process by splitting a large hailstone in half and seeing the various “shells” which formed the hail.
For example, there are things about the atomic structure of matter and the nature of energy that remain mysterious to us. We know that the nucleus of an atom is made up of a distribution of tightly spaced neutrons and protons. Like charges repel each other but protons, although having the same charge, remain fixed within the nucleus!

[.....which I have reserved for the time of trouble.....] The LORD has reserved the activity of snow and hail storms to effect conditions according to His plans. The Hebrew word rendered “trouble” in this verse refers to the turmoil associated with fighting one’s adversaries or enemies.

Such may have been the case when Benaiah killed two Moabite warriors and also killed a lion in a pit on “a snowy day” {see 2 Sam. 23:20}

[.....for the day of battle and war?] Earlier Elihu had mentioned that God used various elements of weather to stop people from working {Job 37:6-7}, or to punish people {Job 37:13}.

Now the LORD tells Job that He sometimes uses snow and hail storms to affect the outcome of warfare. An example of this may be found in Josh. 10:7-11 where Joshua and his army fought against an Amorite confederacy, which came to make war against Israel. The LORD cast down large hailstones on the Amorites which killed more of them than were slain with the sword.

[By what way is light diffused.....] This is a reference to the way snow and ice [hail] reflect and refract sunlight. It perhaps may also be an allusion to the formation of a rainbow.

[.....or the east wind scattered over the earth?] The “east wind” is associated with a dry and powerful wind. In Africa, Saudi Arabia and the Middle East these powerful winds have names like “Sirocco” and “Shamal” and commonly referred to as a “Haboob”.

Note that it was by a strong east wind that the LORD [His redemptive name] used to cause the waters of the Red Sea to be parted and made dry land to appear {see Ex. 14:21}. That still can’t be explained except as a miracle—the divine manipulation of natural physical laws.

The east wind is relentless and nothing can stop it {e.g., Hab. 1:9}.

The east wind can bring an abrasive sandstorm {see Jonah 4:8}.

The east wind can bring the onset of drought conditions to crops and cause famine {Gen. 41:6, 23, 27} and it can bring devastating locusts {Ex. 10:13}.

The LORD uses the east wind to accomplish His purposes in times of war as Jeremiah tells us; “I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy; I will show them the back and not the face, in the day of their calamity” {Jer. 18:17}.

Ironically, Job mentions a strong east wind in reference to the wicked being taken and swept away from their place {Job 27:6}.

Job did not understand any of these things even though he thought he had a lot of information, understanding and wisdom. So how could he credibly challenge the LORD’s wisdom and power!?

Even today, meteorologists generally know the conditions necessary to produce wind, but they don’t know exactly what specific location it starts and where it ends.
In the spiritual realm, note that Jesus sublimely uses the mysterious quality of wind as an illustration in His discourse on the Holy Spirit and being “born again”. After Jesus makes the statement, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” Nicodemus asks Him a foolish question about being physically reborn to which Jesus replies:

“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again’. The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”—John 3:5-8

vv. 25-30➤ THE LORD QUESTIONS JOB ABOUT METEOROLOGY
[25 “Who has divided a channel for the overflowing water, or a path for the thunderbolt, 26 to cause it to rain on a land where there is no one, a wilderness in which there is no man; 27 to satisfy the desolate waste and cause to spring forth the growth of tender grass? 28 Has the rain a father? Or who has begotten the drops of dew? 29 From whose womb comes the ice? And the frost of heaven, who gives it birth? 30 The waters harden like stone and the surface of the deep is frozen.”] Job could not predict where God would dispense lightning flashes (cf. Elihu's words along this line in 36:30, 32; 37:3, 11, 15; cf. 38:35) or where the winds would blow.

[Who has divided a channel for the overflowing water.....] The reference is to torrential rain, which instead of pouring down as one immense flood of water, comes down in “channels” which seem to have been cut out through the clouds41. This has the effect of making the rain look like it is coming down in “flowing sheets” rather than as “gushing waterfalls”. The causes of rain, the manner in which water was suspended in the clouds, and the reasons why the water always comes down in sheets rather than is “dumped” all-at-once as an overflowing flood, remains somewhat of a mystery.

[.....or a path for the thunderbolt......] Lightning42, and the booming sound of thunder associated with it, was discussed earlier by Elihu {Job 36:27-33}. What determines the exact conditions needed to produce lightning? And “why” does lightning happen at all?

The idea is that a path appears to be created in the atmosphere for the flash of lightning to travel—where there was no sign of a path before. By what agency or by what laws are the zigzag patterns determined? Especially since the path that branches of lightning take appear to be random and cannot be predicted.

How the path of lightning is “decided” remains unknown so this question is still valid today!

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41 Earlier it had been discussed that clouds seem to defy gravity since the heavy moisture in them is suspended in the air although water is heavier than air. See notes on Job 37:16.
42 Lightning primarily occurs when warmer air is mixed with colder air resulting in atmospheric “friction” which polarizes the atmosphere, which separates negatively charged particles from positively charged ones. As a massive negative electric charge is localized in the bottom of the thundercloud, an equal electric charge, but of opposite polarity, is induced on the Earth's surface underneath the cloud. When the electric charge ["field strength"] between the bottom of the thundercloud [negative charge] and ground [positive charge] is strong enough to overcome the insulating effect of the atmosphere, a lightning strike ["thunderbolt"] occurs. This electrical discharge is a complex process, which is still not fully understood!
The point of this question is that Job does not know and only the Almighty God, who

designed this process, knows!

[......to cause it to rain on a land where there is no one.....] The LORD has designed the
hydrologic cycle independent of mankind; although it benefits mankind. Rain will fall in
regions where there are no people to see it, be affected by it or benefit from it. Yet it will still
rain in these areas. This is a testimony to the sovereignty of an omnipotent God.

[......a wilderness in which there is no man.....] The idea of a “wilderness” means a wasteland,
desolate and devoid of water and vegetation. The idea here is the same; in the course of a
hydrologic cycle it will rain in areas that haven’t seen rain for an extended period of time.

[......to satisfy the desolate waste and cause to spring forth the growth of tender grass?] We
have seen an example of this before in the notes for Job 14:2 [concerning a metaphor that Job
uses to describe the temporal nature of flowers]:

"The Atacama Desert is comprised of a 600 mi strip of land along the northern coastline Chile,
west of the Andes Mountains and east of the Chilean Coastal Range. It is noted for being the
driest non-polar desert in the world. Although this dry and sandy landscape is separated from
the waters of the Pacific Ocean by only several yards of seashore, this desolate area hosts the
driest spot on earth due to the relatively cool coastal waters, the topography of the land and
prevailing wind patterns. In the summer the heat can split volcanic rocks. However, about once
every ten and a half years the waters warm and there is enough evaporation to form
rainclouds. The wind currents change so that rainfall drenches this desert coastline for several
days. What happens next is nothing short of spectacular—the desert blooms with flowers! As
far as the eye can see there is an astonishing sea of flowers and color; a garden of calandrinus,
lilies, narcissus [daffodils], and California poppies. Their seeds and bulbs have been dormant in
the sand for a decade waiting to be revitalized by the rainfall. But the flowers last only long
enough, about a month, to be pollinated, form new seeds and then succumb to the dry and
harsh climate, they wither and die. The new seeds fall into the sand awaiting the next rainfall.
The desert wind then comes along and blows the dried flowers and leaves away. Now there is
only sand as far as the eye can see—just as if there had never been any flowers!"

The point is, the rain that falls in uninhabited areas of the world may seem to be wasted, but
this is not the case in the divine scheme of things. No rain that falls in a desert, or on an
uncharted island, or a remote jungle, or on a barren rock; however purposeless it may seem to
us, is nevertheless useful in fulfilling the design and purposes of God.

These questions reveal that there are many things that God has designed and implemented that
man has a difficult time understanding. Some exist purely for the pleasure of God.

Using the metaphor of childbirth, the LORD now asks Job several additional questions
concerning meteorology.

[Has the rain a father?] This is a metaphorical reference to the origin of rain—including the
formation of clouds, their suspension in the air and the conditions for rainfall. Job could not
answer this question. The point is, the rain cycle was created by God, not man.

This question may be a scornful reference to the fact that in Canaanite mythology rain was
considered the “semen of the god Baal” [who was known chiefly as the god of fertility and
also the god of storms] by which “mother earth” supposedly bears her “children”— the
fruitful harvest of crops. The “rain dance” of American Indians is another example of this.

43 Possibly tied in with the 11-year solar sunspot cycle.
Note that this issue is addressed in the prophetical book of Jeremiah:

"Are there any among the idols of the nations that can cause rain? Or can the heavens give showers? Are You not He, O Lord our God? Therefore we will wait for You, Since You have made all these.”—Jer. 14:22

Therefore, the idea behind this question perhaps relates to the controversy between pagan religion and God’s revealed truth. Rain does not have a literal “father”, but the entire rain cycle does have an Author, an Originator [like a “father”] who created the process.

[Or who has begotten the drops of dew?] Certainly no one, including Job, completely knows how, or why, God designed the processes which bring rain and formulated the conditions necessary for the formation of dew and fog.

[From whose womb comes the ice?] A similar question relates to the processes and conditions that form ice and snow. Job would have seen ice and snow in the region he lived but not been able to explain its origins and production.

During the GREAT FLOOD enormous fissures opened up in the sea floor when the “fountains of the deep” were opened up {Gen. 7:11; 8:2}. This flooded the earth with hot, geo-thermal water, which mixed with the existing oceans making them extremely warm and causing massive amounts of water to evaporate on a scale never seen before.

This rising moisture formed thick cloud layers which released their water over vast regions of the earth as rain, ice and snow. This entire process would have been global in nature and was probably the catalyst for a single, “ice age”, when glaciers were formed in the upper and lower latitude regions [above] of the earth.

This water stored in these clouds eventually precipitated down to earth in the form of water, ice and snow.

Since Job lived approximately 400 years after the GREAT FLOOD there may have been a vast amount of snow and ice that could still be observed in the aftermath of this catastrophic event.

A very interesting quality about ice is that it is less dense than water even though it is frozen! Most other substances contract and get more dense at colder temperatures, but water does not. It gets “lighter” so it floats.

44 As men began to multiply [again] on the earth after the flood, it is reasonable to assume they were forced to live in holes and caves in the ground for shelter from the cold conditions. These people are very likely represented by the Neanderthal fossils that have been discovered in caves and would be the remains of our ancient human ancestors descended from one or more of Noah's three sons. Note that the cranium capacity of Neanderthals was slightly larger than modern man's indicating they had greater intelligence. The long bones of those found in Europe show signs of “rickets”, a bone deformity caused by the absence of vitamin D, which is produced in our skin by the effect of medium-wave ultraviolet light from the sun. Since most foods do not contain vitamin D, if you lived in a cave most of the day your body would not produce the necessary vitamin D required to keep the bones strong and growing normally. It is interesting to note that the bones of Neanderthals found in the Middle Eastern regions do not show signs of these deformities because it would have been warmer nearer the equator. These bones appear fully human! [It should be noted that a Neanderthal skull in the Paris Museum had to be artificially modified during reconstruction to make it appear more ape-like to maintain the facade of Evolutionary history.] For a detailed description of this refer to Buried Alive; Jack Cuozzo, Master Books, 1999. This book reveals the true story of a group of people living in Africa, the Middle East and Europe that are known as the Neanderthals.

45 See An Ice Age Caused by the Genesis Flood; Michael Oard, Institute for Creation Research, 1990.
In God’s creative wisdom He made sure that lakes and ponds would not freeze from the bottom up, thereby killing the fish, but from the top down to insure the survival of fresh water marine life and also a source of food for man! [Water also has some other unique properties.]

Why water should behave this way is still somewhat of a mystery.

[And the frost of heaven, who gives it birth?] A similar question relates to the processes and conditions that form frost. God designed the conditions for frost, but how and why He did it is known only to Him.

[The waters harden like stone and the surface of the deep is frozen] We take for granted the fact that large amounts of water can be frozen. But this happens because of the “physics” of natural processes God that designed.

And stop and think about the vast amount of heat energy that needs to be lost for a lake to freeze over. This is really quite amazing when you stop and think about it. It conjures up images of a super hero/villain who has the power to freeze things at will.

vv. 31-33➤ THE LORD QUESTIONS JOB ABOUT ASTRONOMY & COSMOLOGY

[31 “Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades, or loose the belt of Orion? 32 Can you bring out Mazzaroth in its season? Or can you guide the Great Bear with its cubs? 33 Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you set their dominion over the earth?”]

The ancients were aware of the constellations and movement of stars and planets. They even had names for them as we do today.

[Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades?] Literally, “Can you bind the lattice of a cluster?” The Pleiades are a star cluster in the constellation of Taurus [“the Bull”] and were known by many ancient peoples. They are also mentioned in Amos 5:8 where the Hebrew word rendered “Pleiades” here is rendered “the seven stars”. See Figure 38-1.

The Pleiades have already been mentioned by Job in Job 9:9, along with Ursa Major [“the Bear”] and Orion. So Job knew about them. The point is, the L ORD is not going to ask Job about anything that he’s not already familiar with.

The nine brightest stars visible to the naked eye are also known in Greek mythology as the “Seven Sisters” along with their parents, the stars called ‘Atlas’ and ‘Pleione’.

Job has no excuse for not knowing the significance of these things. The LORD does the same with us!

The LORD is asking Job if he has the power to bind up the stars to make a cluster of them forming a “lattice”—of course not!

Then maybe he should not be so hasty in judging God and justifying himself. Perhaps he should be a little more humble!

[.....or loose the belt of Orion?] Literally, “or open the cord of fat?” The Hebrew word rendered “belt” or “cord” is used only here. The phrase refers to a group of very bright stars.

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46 A constellation is a grouping of stars which are associated so as to sketch out a pattern of “dots” [i.e., stars] which, when connected, represent the form of an animal or man.

47 Such as the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Arabs, as well as aboriginal Australians, the Maori, Hawaiians, the Chinese, the Japanese, the Mayans, the Aztecs, the Celts, and the American Indians [e.g., Sioux, Cherokee].

Job Chapter 38

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“Orion” is the name for another cluster of stars near the Taurus constellation, in winter. They are also mentioned in Isa. 13:10 and together with the Pleiades in Job 9:9 and Amos 5:8.

The Orion constellation represents a hunter wearing a “belt” made up of three very bright stars in the middle of the constellation [Alnitak, Alnilam, Mintaka]. See Figure 38-2.

The LORD is asking Job if he has the power to loosen the stars that form a cluster—to rearrange them and move them to another location. Of course he doesn’t!

Figure 38-1. The Pleiades.                                         Figure 38-2: Three Stars of Orion’s Belt.

[Can you bring out Mazzaroth in its season?]  Literally, “Can you bring forth the heavenly bodies in their season?” The Hebrew word rendered “Mazzaroth” is used only here.

This is a reference to the various constellations that can be seen with the unaided eye, which are seasonal because their observance is dependent on the tilt of the earth and its orbital position around the sun.

The constellations of the “zodiac” number twelve and which ones can be seen during a given time of the year is dependent on the season, fall, winter, spring or summer.

The LORD is asking Job if he is able to reconstruct the star patterns, as seen by an observer on earth. Can he duplicate the constellations which can be seen during various seasons. Of course he can’t!

[Or can you guide the Great Bear with its cubs?]  Literally, “Can you lead the swift one with his sons?” The “swift one” is also mentioned by Job together with the Pleiades and Orion in Job 9:9 [but no where else]. This is probably a reference to the “Great Bear” constellation, which appears to move quickly through the sky. It is also known as Ursa Major	extsuperscript{48}, or more commonly, the “Big Dipper”.

In other words, did Job engineer and then maintain the path that the Ursa Major constellation, takes—after he put the stars in their relative position? Does Job control the dynamics and the interplay of the trajectories of these stars so that seen from an observer on earth they define a pattern or image of pot with a handle?

No Job did not and does not control the stars!

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\textsuperscript{48} There is also the “Little Bear” or “Ursa Minor” constellation, more commonly called the “Little Dipper.”
Do you know the ordinances/statutes of the heavens? That is, do you understand the motion of constellations, stars and planets through space and can you explain them? No, Job did not and cannot. We are reminded that God created the sun and moon [and stars] for man’s benefit:

Then God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth”; and it was so. Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth.....” —Gen 1:14-17

The statutes, or laws, which govern the motions of planets and stars were unknown to Job and his contemporaries. They were ignorant about this and had no “wisdom” in the matter.

The wonder and majesty of the Universe captured King David’s imagination and him to proclaim:

“When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels [lit. “Elohim”] and You have crowned him with glory and honor.” —Psalms 8:3-5

However, in the days since Job, it is true that the scientific disciplines of astronomy and cosmology have revealed to us many of the physical laws which describe the motion of planets and stars. Indeed, current theories are a complex mixture of science and speculation.

The motion of heavenly bodies through space obey strict laws of physics and make it appear as though the Universe is operating like a finely tuned clock. Indeed, a model of the planets and moons in our own solar system [referred to as an “orrery”] can be quite accurately represented using small balls attached to spokes, levers and gears that rotate in the correct way to simulate their motion—to the testimony of the Designer! See Figures 38-3 and 38-4.

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49 Some of the better known astronomers include Nicolaus Copernicus, Tyco Brahe, Johannes Kepler and Sir Isaac Newton. These were all involved in the study of heavenly bodies and derived laws and equations which describe their movement through space. The planetary laws of motion that Kepler and Newton discovered are still used today in the space program.

50 Birmingham Museum.

51 Captain Kobold, Flickr photo.
Therefore, the laws of planetary motion are only discoveries of how the creation of God works! But they don’t necessarily answer why things work the way they do. We still do not fully understand why the Universe should have been designed in the way that it has.

And the specific mathematical equations that describe these laws only serve to enhance our understanding of the beauty and glory of the Intelligent Designer who conceived and implemented a physical system on such a wonderful and grand scale!

Thus, there remains an awe and mystery about the Universe today that impresses the human mind with a sense of awe at the majesty of God. For example, the fact that mass produces a measurable property we call “gravity” remains a mystery to this day!

[Can you set their dominion over the earth?] The Hebrew word rendered “dominion” is used only here. That is, can you control their impact and effect on the earth; let alone explain their heavenly motions. No, Job cannot.

The sun provides energy which causes plants and trees to grow; according to the way they were created. The moon determines the earth’s tides, which prevents coastlines from becoming saturated with putrefying, stagnant water. And the stars help us navigate during the nighttime.

All of these questions were meant to impress Job with God’s infinite wisdom, power and majesty, contrasted with his own limited wisdom and power and fallibility. They were meant to demonstrate God’s superiority and man’s inferiority.

vv. 34-38  MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT METEOROLOGY
[34 “Can you lift up your voice to the clouds, that an abundance of water may cover you? 35 Can you send out lightnings, that they may go and say to you, 'Here we are!'? 36 Who has put wisdom in the mind? Or who has given understanding to the heart? 37 Who can number the clouds by wisdom? Or who can pour out the bottles of heaven, 38 when the dust hardens in clumps and the clods cling together?”]

The purpose of these next series of questions relate to getting Job realize the limited power that he actually has.

[Can you lift up your voice to the clouds.....] Can the sound of Job’s voice reach up to the clouds. No, Job’s voice cannot reach the clouds. But for what purpose?.........................

[.....that an abundance of water may cover you?] So that at the command of Job’s voice he can make it rain. Since his voice cannot even reach the clouds, Job has no chance to make it rain, let alone understand how the process works.

[Can you send out lightnings, that they may go and say to you, 'Here we are!'?] Similarly, does Job have the power to call forth lightning so that, humorously, the lightning bolts cry out, “Here we are!” No, Job does not have that power.

[Who has put wisdom in the mind?] The Hebrew word rendered “mind” is used only here and Ps. 51:6 [king David’s contrite confession of his sin with Bathsheba] to describe the “inward parts”, i.e., the innermost thoughts.

The Lord is asking Job, “Who has put wisdom in the innermost thoughts?”
Note that “Wisdom” is having the capacity to not only understand things, but also having the ability to productively apply knowledge in a practical way to make morally correct decisions. “Wisdom” is oftentimes contrasted with “foolishness” (e.g., Prov. 14:24).

The point of this question is to ask Job if the “innermost wisdom” he has came from himself or did God give this to him? It was of course GOD ALMIGHTY!

Sadly, many people do not give God, their Creator, credit for the intelligence and understanding they have.

[Or who has given understanding to the heart?] The Hebrew word rendered “heart” is used only here and literally means, “observant”; as one who “mounts up”. Thus, this verse literally reads, “or who has given understanding to the observant?”

“Understanding” is having the capacity to properly apply wisdom. “Understanding” is oftentimes contrasted with “folly” (e.g., Prov. 15:21).

The point of this question is to ask Job, as an ‘observer of life’ [as he had claimed to be; {Job 12:1-3; 13:1-2}], if he has given himself “understanding” or was it God? As with “wisdom”, the answer is again, “It was of course GOD ALMIGHTY!”

The irony is Job already knew this but evidently had forgotten it for in Job 12:13 he says, “With Him are wisdom and strength, He has counsel and understanding.”

Our danger, like Job, is forgetting the spiritual truths we already know and begin to think and act foolishly; as if we are the ones responsible for what we know.

[Who can number the clouds by wisdom?] The Hebrew word rendered “clouds” here literally refers to “powder”, that is, the individual particles of dust and water droplets that make up a cloud.

While it might be possible to count most of the clouds, their constant movement and appearing and disappearing makes that difficult. However, that is not what is at issue here.

With the wisdom that Job does have, can he number the individual particles of dust and water making up the clouds? God can, but Job can’t!

[Or who can pour out the bottles of heaven......] The Hebrew word rendered “bottles” here literally refers to an animal bladder [e.g., “wineskin”] which was used to hold liquids.

The Hebrew word rendered “pour out” literally means “to cause to lie down” and is most often used in the context of laying down to rest or as part of physical intimacy.

Continuing the theme of the previous thought, this is probably a metaphor for the clouds which hold water like a wineskin. Again, as in v.34, the LORD is asking Job if he has the power to make the water in the rain clouds descend as rain, poured out like wine from a wineskin and “laying down” to cover the earth. The answer is still, “No, he can’t”.

Such a downpour would produce flooding and lots of areas of muddy puddles.

[.....when the dust hardens in clumps and the clods cling together?] The Hebrew word rendered “hardens” refers to melting metals together for the purpose of pouring them out and casting them into usable objects. The word rendered “clods” is used only here and Job 21:33.
The Hebrew word rendered “cling together” means to “fuse or be joined together”, i.e., into one solid piece. The same word is used to describe the consummation of marriage: “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” {Gen. 2:24}.

“When.....”; this is a reference to what happens to the mud after a heavy rainstorm.

It is a fitting description of what happens to rain soaked red clay earth, so common in the Middle East, after it hardens.

First, the heavy downpour of rain dissolves dust and dirt together into a continuous flowing mass like molten metal. Then, after the rain ends the “sticky” mud clumps and clings together, dries becomes as hard as stone.

vv. 39-41 THE LORD QUESTIONS JOB ABOUT ZOOLOGY: LIONS & RAVENS
[39 “Can you hunt the prey for the lion, or satisfy the appetite of the young lions, 40 when they crouch in their dens, or lurk in their lairs to lie in wait? 41 Who provides food for the raven, when its young ones cry to God and wander about for lack of food?”]

The LORD’s line of questioning now turns to the Animal Kingdom and continues through to the end of the next chapter. In this section, 11 creatures are described: 6 animals and 5 birds. These are all offered as evidence of the creative wisdom, power, and providential care of God.

Then in chapters 40 and 41 we are introduced to 2 entirely different and unique creatures which are called “behemoth” and “leviathan”. What are they? Stay tuned..................

[Can you hunt the prey for the lion.....] Appropriately, the list begins with the lion, the “king of the beasts”. Job was not expected to be, nor was he capable of being able to hunt the lion’s prey for them! It would be a very dangerous and risky activity to say the least.

Job would have stayed clear of the lions, but it was God, who in his creative wisdom, made sure that lions would have food to eat.

[.....or satisfy the appetite of the young lions] The Hebrew word rendered “appetite” literally refers to the existence and sustenance of life. Job could not provide food for the young lions to keep them alive; they did so for themselves as God created them to do.

[.....when they crouch in their dens.....] That is, could Job crawl into the den of a female lion with her cubs and feed them? No he could not!

[.....or lurk in their lairs to lie in wait?] That is, when the lions hide and wait in the brush to attack their prey. Is Job able to find their prey and lure them into the lion’s path?

Of course not! Humans would not generally attempt to perform such a feat, for fear of the risk of death or injury. In the natural world, the one God created, the lion’s abilities and the conditions that exist are more than adequate to provide food for them.

[Who provides food for the raven.....] Similarly, Job is asked if he could provide food for the ravens [this would include crows]. These birds are among the most intelligent that God has created and they are perfectly capable of getting their own food as God has designed them to do.

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52 Note also the similar process used to make adobe “bricks”, which are used to construct homes and other buildings in the Southwestern United States.
The point is, mankind has not been given the responsibility to make sure that lions and ravens eat. The natural world that God designed and created in His wisdom and power insures the survival of His creatures.

[...when its young ones cry to God and wander about for lack of food?] Nor could Job provide the food to the young ravens when they are forgotten by their parents {ref. Ps. 147:9}. Although there are hundreds of zoos around the world in which thousands of different animals are taken care of and provided for, no one can ever be the provider and sustainer of the world’s entire animal kingdom!

But God has designed and programmed the animal kingdom to be self-sustaining through the process of natural selection! This is something that man is incapable of doing.

**Application:** Here we see dramatic testimony that God has not only created the plants and animals that populate this planet, but He also provides for their protection and survival. Jesus uses this truth to teach us a valuable spiritual lesson on trusting the LORD!

Then He said to His disciples, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith?"—Luke 12:22-28

God does not neglect the care of the animal kingdom. Therefore, as we see the care and provision that God has bestowed on the animals, would He not also care and provide for people, who are more valuable to Him than the animals?

**Natural Selection.** At this point it is instructive to point out a fallacy found in science. The terms “natural selection” and “survival of the fittest” are used by evolutionists to “prove” that living organisms evolve from a simple state to a more complex state and become a new kind of organism with a completely different anatomy [not to be confused with a new species, which retains the anatomy of the “kind” of plant or animal]. This is oftentimes referred to as “Darwinian Evolution”.

But neither natural selection nor the survival of the fittest can add any new beneficial information to the DNA of a living organism. But just such a mechanism would be required for the organism to have any chance of evolving into a new kind of creature having a completely different anatomy. Mutations can make changes to the DNA, but these are generally non-beneficial to the survival of the organism and over time have a lethal effect. [Think of copying a letter over-and-over again—the words will eventually become unrecognizable].

For example, sickle cell anemia, which is caused by a mutation in the gene that causes a red blood cell to have a crescent, or sickle, shape, is often touted as a positive mutation because people who have this are naturally resistant to malaria. But they also have a harder time getting oxygen to the tissues in the body [because their blood cells are malformed] so their organs deteriorate at a more rapid rate than a person who does not have this disease.
The point is that the process of **natural selection** can only **conserve** traits within a given species [i.e., the ones that enhance survival] but it **cannot create new genetic information** to change the living organism to a completely **different kind**, having a completely **different anatomy**. But this is **exactly** what would be required for the Theory of Evolution to be correct!

This is what is referred to as “**survival of the fittest**” and has nothing to do with plants and animals evolving into new kinds of plants and animals.

In the beginning God created the **general kinds** of plants and animals. The DNA contains all the information for a particular **kind** of plant or animal, such as **roses** and **lilies**; **conifers** and **deciduous trees**; **felines** and **canines**, etc. The DNA that God did design and create does allow for a great variety of differences in shape, color, size, etc. via **mutation** and **natural selection** to help the organism survive. This is referred to as “**speciation**” within a kind.

Note that another name for **breeding** various types of cows, horses, sheep, dogs and cats, etc., is “**artificial selection**” where the selection process is not done in nature, but done in barns and stalls using the intelligence of expert breeders.

In nature **natural selection** simply describes the process known as “**survival of the fittest**”; which again, has nothing to do with Darwinian Evolution. The point is, that in a “perfect world”, one that was **not corrupted by sin**, creation would not be “red in tooth and claw”\(^{53}\).

The bottom line is that after the Fall in the Garden ALL of creation suffered consequences:

> “For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.”—Rom. 8:20-23

This situation will not change until Jesus Christ returns to establish His kingdom on earth and He restores creation to much of its pre-fallen state:

> “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”—Isa. 11:6-9

So, when you stop and think about it God, who when He judged sin, also imposed a curse on His creation resulting in the process we call “**natural selection**” to help plants and animals **survive in a fallen world**.

One amazing example of this is the **tobacco plant-hornworm** symbiosis. The tobacco plant **Nicotiana attenuata** releases volatile organic compounds after a herbivore attack by Manduca [tobacco hornworm] caterpillars. These organic compounds contain pheromones which attract other insect predators [i.e., wasps] that eat the eggs deposited by hornworm’s on the leaves; thus reducing the hornworm’s population and greatly reducing further damage to the plant\(^{54}\).

\(^{53}\) Quote from the poem "In Memoriam A.H.H.", Canto 56, Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 1849. This poem is a requiem for the British poet's beloved Cambridge friend, Arthur Henry Hallam, who died suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhage in Vienna in 1833.

Table 38-1. The Major Themes Repeated in Job’s Responses

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<th>First Round of Speeches</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Declaration of God’s greatness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disillusionment with God’s ways</td>
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<td>Despair with life (or desire to die)</td>
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<th>Second Round of Speeches</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Disappointment in his friends</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disillusionment with God’s ways</td>
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<td>Despair with life (or desire to die)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desire for vindication with God</td>
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Bibliography


(4) Barnes Notes,


(9) The NET Bible, Copyright © 1996-2006; Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C., Dallas, Texas.