

Can You...?

JOB 38 VERSES 31-33

Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades or loose the cords of Orion? 32 Can you lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season, or can you guide the Bear with its children? 33 Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you establish their rule on the earth?

INFORMATION

Job suffered mightily due to Satan's attempts to cause him to stumble and falter in his faith for God. At the end of his suffering, he cried out to God, seeking an explanation for his suffering. The verses above present part of God's challenge to Job. God's response was probably not exactly what Job wanted. (Everyone should read Job and try to comprehend the extent of his suffering so that they have a better understanding of God's response). God, here, declares his command over the heavens, specifically all of the constellations (that's what Mazzaroth means), and lists three well known constellations in which ancient people were well aware.

Job was, undoubtedly, a very intelligent man, but it is doubtful he had as much scientific knowledge as we have today. He probably did not have an understanding of gravity or a deep understanding of how stars work. He probably did have a good understanding of the night sky and how the sky changes throughout the year and over time. However, God is showing that Job was powerless in regards to these heavenly objects, events and laws. God is presenting himself as much higher than Job and that He is above Job's challenges and suffering.

WHAT IT MEANS TO OUR FAMILY

Today, we have access to a tremendous volume of knowledge in the areas of astronomy & cosmology and, in fact, all of the sciences. We understand gravity, the phenomenon that binds Pleiades together and holds Orion together. Even with our advanced knowledge and understanding, we, nevertheless, are every bit as powerless as Job. God's message to Job is just as relevant today. Can we cause the Pleiades to remain gravitationally bound, can we cause Orion to break apart? Of course not. All of our knowledge does not cause us to be like God or closer to his power. Gathering knowledge and becoming wise in the ways of science is not a bad thing, but we must not allow it to lead us away from God, but rather, allow us to grow closer to him. We can accomplish that by reflecting on the things that God would have us reflect; these are God's precepts, laws, wondrous works, and his mighty deeds. A greater understanding is a good thing, and in the proper context can draw us closer to God.

However, we should also, finally, consider the end of Job and how God ultimately treats Job. God did not leave Job to continue suffering and to be left with a sense that he was meaningless to God. Job eventually repented before God, and God accepted his repentance. In fact, God restored Job to good health, restored his wealth, and gave him a new family, where his daughters were the most beautiful in the land. God's response to Job showed a little of just how much greater God was and is compared to Job (and us), yet God is not unconcerned or unfeeling towards his people.

Relevant Passages

Job 8:1-12

Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, 2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? 3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. 4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. 5 Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? 6 Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; 7 When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? 8 Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? 9 When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, 10 And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, 11 And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed? 12 Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place; 13 That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?

Ecclesiastes 7:13

Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?

Isaiah 63:9

In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

Mark 2:7

Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?

Romans 8:31

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

1 Corinthians 10:13

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.