

Job 28

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[0:00] Job chapter 28. Job chapter 28 is where we're at this evening. Job chapter 28. We will look at all 28 verses of the 28th chapter.

! As we just continue to make our way through Scripture. So let's pray and then we'll get right into our text. So I'll give you guys just a moment.

See, when I started two minutes early, people were still coming. See? I'm just joking. We haven't even started. You're good. I did it on purpose because Miss Sarah looked at me at five minutes till. She said, we still got 20 minutes before Billy Joe starts.

And I said, all right. It was in 13 minutes I started. So I did it. It was my fault. I know. I did it on purpose. It was so me. It's so my fault. I'm sorry. I was just doing it so that Sarah would be wrong. And here I messed us up. So there we go. I heard her thoughts out loud and I said, well, I'm going to prove her wrong. And that's what I get for that. So I get easily distracted. So my apologies, Miss Sarah. And I'm sorry.

[1:04] But we're okay. We're in Job chapter 28 tonight. But let's pray. Father, we thank you so much just for the opportunity of gathering together.

We thank you for the privilege it is of fellowship and the privilege it is of opening up your word. And we pray that you would help us as we open it up to understand it, Lord, to learn of you and to be amazed even more and more in your presence.

May you be glorified and honored in our study. May you get all the glory and praise from our understanding. And Lord, may we lean into you more and more each and every day. We ask it on Christ's name. Amen.

The 28th chapter of Job is really unique in its setting. It is unique because it is so different from the verses and the chapters which precede it and even those which come after it.

The 28th chapter is not a part of the argument between Job and his friends. As a matter of fact, that portion of the book of Job ended in the 27th chapter.

[2:16] Nor is it part and portion of Job's extended speech that begins in chapter 29. It is not a part of God's response to Job.

Neither is it a response of the fourth individual, Elihu, who has been sitting there listening to this whole exchange. This 28th chapter, if we're reading it in its integrity, it is hard to reconcile it with the chapter that went before it or the chapter that follows it.

This leads some biblical scholars to believe that it was a chapter interjected into the account by the author of the book of Job. We do not know who wrote the book of Job.

Some have suggested that Moses is the author. There have been many other suggestions throughout history. But we do not simply know who wrote the book of Job.

We know that it predates in happenings and events any other book of Scripture. We consider it the oldest book of Scripture and the teachings that come from it.

[3:23] But what we have in the 28th chapter is something that is introduced to us to help us to understand the remainder of the book.

It is really the question that is posed in our mind at the very beginning of the argument of Job and his friends. And it is the key that we need in comprehending and understanding all that takes place in the end of the book.

And it is the search for wisdom. Because as Job's three friends have come and set before him to comfort him and to console him, they have spoken to him with the worldly wisdom and counsel that they have, that they possess.

The very first one to speak was from a region known for its wisdom, the Temanite. He is from Teman. He is from a region that is known for their, quote unquote, wisdom and knowledge.

And yet, the wisdom that he has given has been inaccurate and unhelpful. He has been considered to be a foolish counselor or one of no benefit to Job.

[4 : 30] And so the overarching question that we're asked is, how can men be wise? How can we understand? How can we know exactly what is going on in our own lives and even in the world around us?

And that is what is reintroduced to us here in the 28th chapter before we find the answer to that in the remainder of the book. The word of God says, Surely there is a mine for silver and a place where they refine gold.

Iron is taken from the dust and copper is smelted from rock. Man puts an end to darkness and to the farthest limit. He searches out the rock in gloom and deep shadow.

He sinks a shaft far from habitation, forgotten by the foot. They hang and swing to and fro far from man. The earth from it comes food and underneath it it is turned up as fire.

Its rocks are the source of sapphires and its dust contains gold. The path no bird of prey knows, nor has the falcon's eye caught sight of it. The proud beasts have not trodden it, nor has the fierce lion passed over it.

[5 : 35] He puts his hand on the flint. He overturns the mountains at the base. He hews out channels through the rocks as his eyes see anything precious.

He damns up the streams from the flowing, and what is hidden he brings out to the light. But where can wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?

Man does not know its value, nor is it found in the land of the living. The deep says, it is not in me, and the sea says, it is not with me. Pure gold cannot be given in exchange for it, nor can silver be weighed as its price.

It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir, in precious onyx or sapphire. Gold or glass cannot equal it, nor can it be exchanged for the articles of fine gold.

Coral and crystal are not to be mentioned, and the acquisition of wisdom is above that of pearls.

The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it, nor can it be valued in pure gold.

[6 : 37] Where then does wisdom come from, and where is the place of understanding? Thus it is hidden from all the eyes of all the living, and concealed from the birds of the sky.

Abaddon and death say, with our ears we have heard a report of it. God understands its way. He knows its place. For he looks to the ends of the earth, and sees everything under the heavens.

When he imparted weight to the wind, and meted out the waters by measure. When he set a limit for the rain, and a course for the thunderbolt. Then he saw it, and declared it.

He established it, and also searched it out. And to man he said, behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom. And to depart from evil is understanding. Job chapter 28.

The word of God here reveals to us the great search for wisdom. It is the one thing that has been asked over and over again through the book of Job.

[7 : 42] It is the one longing of Job's friends. It is really the thing that his friends have all claimed to possess. And they have possessed the wisdom that would declare to Job the reality of his situation.

It is the one thing that Job has called into question. Because he knows his own integrity. And the righteousness which he clings to. And therefore the wisdom of the world does not meet the circumstances of Job.

And what is needed is a greater wisdom. But the question is asked, where can we find wisdom? Where can we understand it? Where can we comprehend it?

And it is not knowledge, but rather wisdom that we're searching for. And we'll see the difference in just a moment. But before that question is asked, we are introduced to some amazing things in this 28th chapter.

Things that not only shine light upon our own lives, but shine light upon the biblical understanding of mankind. The first thing that we notice is the advancement of man's industry.

[8 : 53] It is the advancement of man's industry. We notice it here when Job, again, the oldest book in scripture. It is the oldest historical record that we know of mankind.

And he does not paint for us a picture of Neanderthal man walking around with his knuckles dragging the ground. Carrying a club behind him. Trying to figure out how to find that day's meal.

Rather, it is the picture of man mining to the depths of the earth. Swinging from the ropes to and fro, it says. Going into the deepest part of the nether world.

Not only to pull out the precious stones. It says there is a mine for silver. But it says that there is a place of refinery for gold. It is the advancement of man's industry. And the reality that not only were they pulling precious ore from the ground. They were also refining it. And using it in a beautiful sense.

[9:52] Even here we have the introduction to us of iron. We know Tubal Cain in the book of Genesis was the master in iron works. But before Tubal Cain, we have here the record of the book of Job.

The very early on, man understood the reality of his knowledge. Man could do great and advanced things. We are very confused, I believe.

In thinking that we have advanced so much further beyond our predecessors in history. But the biblical account paints for us that what God created, he created very good.

And his creation was very good. Very knowledgeable. Very understanding. One thing that I wish we could wrap our mind around. And it is so important even in our text.

Is the reality that man has not progressed and become a superior being. But rather that God created man a superior being. From the very beginning of creation.

[10:52] Man has been one of advanced industry. They have utilized the giftedness of God. The ability to do the things that nothing else can do.

It is the ability to not only know what silver and gold and iron and ore and copper and all these things are. But the ability to go get them and to refine them. And you say, why does this matter? Stay with me. We see that they advanced in their industry. Because man was created in the image of God. And in the image of God, he fashioned him. And part of that image is not only to be bearers of his image.

The image of God within us. But to also have this longing and this understanding. I read somewhere earlier this week. That our imagination.

I believe it was C.S. Lewis that said one of the greatest gifts that God gives us is our imagination. The imagination unlocks for us the possibilities of God's reality. And the imagination unlocks for us the possibilities of what God can do with us.

[11:56] Creation does not do that. It just does what it does. Man has the ability to advance in industry. And very early on. We see them doing it.

It is astounding here to notice that they are going to the depths of the earth and shining light on the dark places. They are pulling from the ground these precious metals.

And Job wants us to understand when we are talking about this. Do not discount Old Testament patriarchs. Don't say, oh well, we have come such a long way.

Friend, we do not even completely understand how they built the ziggurats in Genesis chapter 11. We may can draw diagrams of it. But nobody can tell us how they built it.

We do not know how in Solomon's temple they moved stones that weighed multiple tons. And were quarried to the exact measurements that you could not slip a piece of paper between them.

[12:54] And yet they moved them with such precision and put them in such place that they were unsettled. And they had to set the temple on fire to get the gold out from between them.

Do not let anyone tell you that when we read the Old Testament, we are looking at a lesser definition of man. The question of the patriarchs in the Old Testament are the same questions we wrestle with today.

Notice the advancement of their industry. Man was accomplishing very great things from the very beginning. Noah's Ark is a testimony to the greatness of what God could do with a man when he gave him a vision and a purpose.

And I know that there have been people that have questioned the possibilities of that. But if they were swinging on ropes and pulling silver and gold out of the ground long before man ever figured out how to do it on this side of the cross, surely they could do it then.

Notice here the advancement of man's industry. Man is superior within the realms of creation.

[14:13] It tells us in this text that the places where man have went, where the places where no bird of prey knows, nor falcon eye caught sight of it.

The proud beasts have not trodden it, nor has the fierce lion passed over it. What is the author telling us here? Man is superior.

Man is superior. Man is superior. And out of the dust of the ground, he formed man and breathed life into him. And he was very good. And then he fashioned woman and brought her to the man.

It's very good. Man is the pinnacle of God's creative work. He is the display of God's magnificent powers. That is not to put ourselves on a pedestal.

But it is to remind ourselves that among God's creation, there is no equal to mankind. Now, I'm an animal lover. I love animals. But we need to love them in the right domain.

[15 : 41] We are the pinnacle of God's creation. And he has called us to live in that manner.

Man has accomplished things very early on that nothing else in creation has done. It says that these have never even seen it. But look at what it says man does. He put his hand to the flint. He overturns the mountains at the base. He who's out channels through the rocks and his eyes see anything precious. He dams up the streets from flowing. And what is hidden, he brings out to light. Notice man's ability. I was astounded. I was going through TV channels the other day. I found those channels that put people to sleep. You know those history channels and interesting places in America.

That in the early 19th century or mid-19th century, Chicago had a problem. Chicago's problem was all the city sewage was coming out of the city and it was polluting their drinking water. It was a major problem.

[16 : 41] So what they did in Chicago in the mid-19th century, so you're talking about the 1800s, is they reversed the flow of the Chicago River to go the other direction through the city of Chicago. Chicago, they literally dug a channel, and I've been across that river, in order to reverse the flow.

And to this day, that river flows backwards. So that it would carry the sewage away from the city and away from its source of drinking water. Now that was in the mid-1800s.

But we're told here in the book of Job that they were turning the channels of water even then. And they were doing wonderful things even then.

Why? Because man is the pinnacle of God's creative work. Give man enough time and there's no telling to what he can do.

Put enough minds together. Enough imagination taking place. Enough desire. And we're told all these things not to puff us up.

[17 : 41] We are introduced to this reality that man is advanced in his industry. That man is superior to creation. Because the very next verse shows us the limitations of man's knowledge.

When we look around the history of mankind and we are astounded of all that they could do. We are amazed at the accomplishments of man.

And then we come to the next verse in verse 12. But where can wisdom be found? For all of his advancements.

For all of his superiority. Man still has one plaguing question. Where can I find wisdom? I know where to find the silver.

I know where to find the gold. I know how to refine it. It is really one of the challenges to exposition of the scripture. Is when it says that he turns the waters. We know that they're talking about using it in a mining process.

[18 : 42] That they were using water as a part of the mining process. Nobody really knows how they were doing it. Because it was a process that was well known to them. That is unknown to us.

They know how to mine with the power of water. They know how to dig out the mountains. They know how to quarry the stone. But they do not know where to find wisdom. Because wisdom is much different than ability.

And it is the wisdom to understand the ways and purposes of God. And it is the one thing that plagues man.

For all of his advancements. And all of his accomplishments. Man still has this lack. But where can wisdom be found? Where is the place of understanding?

Each new development of science. Has brought with it. A greater understanding. Of not only the things that we do know.

[19 : 44] But the things that we cannot understand. It has opened up greater doorways. To realities. That there are some things that we will never define. I believe it was Louis Giglio.

On one of his tours. That he did with Chris Tomlin. And I can't remember what they called him. But Louis Giglio. Was one of his stars and whales. If you've never listened to stars and whales. You need to. How all of creation sings.

And he takes the sound of the stars. And the sounds of the whales. And he puts them all together. We did it here once one time. It's really cool. You got to look that up. But Louis Giglio was talking

about. How Christ testifies. That he is the thing.

That holds all mankind together. That all of creation is held together by him. Through him and for him. You understand that text right? And you got to talk about. How scientists realize. That your skin. Is held on by certain things.

I think it's called. It starts with. I can't remember what it is. But there's a certain. Material that holds the skin. On your body. And scientists were finally able. To get down to the microscopic level.

[20 : 38] And to look at this stuff. That is actually holding your skin. On your body. And now Christ said. I am the thing that holds. All of creation together. But what's amazing. Is the cellular structure.

Of these particles. Holding your skin on. Are in the exact shape of a cross. That it is the cross. That is holding the skin. Onto your body. And that without the cross.

It would fall apart. And so every time man makes a discovery. Man is amazed at what he didn't know. And he is left with more questions.

And there is this great search for wisdom. But where can wisdom be found? Man does not know its value. Nor is it found in the land of the living.

So here's the testimony of the book of Job. Wisdom is not found among other men. We can gain knowledge from one another.

[21 : 39] We cannot gain wisdom from one another. There's a big difference. Never ever equate knowledge with wisdom. I'll give you a perfect example.

Have any of you ever met someone that was so smart. They just. It's seeming like they had no common sense whatsoever. Now don't call their names out okay. Don't do it.

Don't get yourself in trouble. Like man they're the smartest guy I know. But I would never ask them to change the oil in my car. Because wisdom is not always equal to knowledge.

And that's not derogatory. We don't comprehend wisdom. Because we don't know where to find it. It's not found in the land of the living. The deep says it's not here. And the sea says it's not with me.

And then he begins to describe the value of wisdom. Pure gold cannot be given in exchange for it.

[22 : 41] So man doesn't know where to find it. And if man knew where to find it. Man would not have the ability to purchase it. It is beyond us.

I love the verse here that says. Abaddon and death. That is the netherworld. Say we have heard of such a thing as wisdom. But we don't know where it is.

And Job is reminding us here. Of the limitations of man. And it is that we can accomplish a lot. And we are the pinnacle of creation.

But we are not necessarily the possessors of wisdom. Because that's beyond our scope. It's beyond our abilities.

And that points us to the whole purpose of this chapter. It's all building up to the last few verses.

And that is the relationship that we are to pursue. Because since man cannot attain wisdom.

[23 : 42] We know that it is there. For we have the questions which plague us. It tells us in verse 23. God understands its way. And he knows its place.

So now we're introduced to the one who does indeed know wisdom. Who is the possessor thereof. And he gives us his power. For he looks on the earth.

He looks to the ends of the earth. And he sees everything under the heavens. His omniscient presence. I love verse 25 by the way. When he imparted weight to the wind.

That is that God gives the wind its weight. And he meted out the waters of the sea. When you look at the oceans. And the great expanse of the seas.

And you see how much water is in them. What the author is telling us. Is that God measured every drop of water in that body. And every gust of wind was weighed through his existence.

[24 : 45] He sets the course for the thunderbolts. And tells the rain where to fall. Surely he who has such power. Knows wisdom. And now we're beyond ourselves.

And then it tells us. In verse 28. By the way. It is not that God found wisdom. God is the source of wisdom. And that's why it's a relationship to be pursued.

And to man he said. Behold the fear of the Lord. That is wisdom. In Hebrew scriptures you had the law, the prophets. And the books of wisdom.

The books of wisdom all repeat this refrain. It is in Psalm 111 verse 10. The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom.

Proverbs chapter 1 verse 7. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Ecclesiastes chapter 12 verse 13. The end of the matter is to fear the Lord your God all the days of your life.

[25 : 56] For that is wisdom. Every book of wisdom records for us here this reality. It is not an accidental matter. Here the word for Lord is Adonai.

Because this book predates the name Yahweh. The fear of Adonai. The Lord God Almighty is wisdom. By the time we get to the book of Psalms and the book of Proverbs.

It is Yahweh. For it is the fear of the covenant God Yahweh. For that is who they are writing in. By the time you get back to the book of Ecclesiastes. It is Adonai once again. But what we are told here is that wisdom is not found among mankind.

But it is to fear. To have reverence. A holy reverence for the Lord God Almighty. And how do you have reverence? You pursue that relationship.

He is the source of wisdom. It is Psalm 25 that said, Who is the man who fears the Lord God? Surely Yahweh will tell him the direction that he should choose.

[27 : 04] He is the source of wisdom. He is the one in which we lean upon. And we pay attention to. And we walk in reverence for.

And it says to depart from evil is understanding. I love how Barnes said here, If we do not know what to do, Surely the simplest thing we could do is to depart from evil.

If we do not have any understanding, What would the Lord God have me to do? To stop sinning is always a good thing. To stop doing what is wrong is always a good thing. And it is to depart from evil is understanding.

Each place in the wisdom literature that says God is the source of wisdom unites the knowledge of God with the action of his people.

It is to fear the Lord your God and to depart from sin and evil. It is to have such a reverence for him that your life looks different how you live.

[28 : 05] That is wisdom. It is wisdom being applied to life circumstances. So we cannot have a fear of God and a love for sin.

We cannot have a fear of God and an affinity for disobedience. Because that's not reverence. We ought to have a holy reverence for the Lord God Almighty.

To such an extent that causes us to depart from the sin and the evil that is the natural inclination of our hearts. For he is wisdom.

And the ways in which he leads us are perfect and wise. We do not know where to find wisdom. But we do know the one that we ought to pursue in relationship and trust his leading.

And this is why we can say this. And I'll say this in closing. Any knowledge which is separated from godliness is a true departure from true wisdom.

[29 : 08] Knowledge without godliness is not wisdom. Because if he's not in it. There is no wisdom there. You can have all the knowledge in the world.

But if it does not promote godliness within your life. Then my friend that is understanding. But it's not wisdom. For the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

And the path that he leads us will always be a wise path. So what does the author tell us? We don't know all that we should know. Mankind is pretty amazing.

But there's a lot that we don't know. But we know the one who does. And if we pursue him and trust him. And have a fear of him. Then we can be sure we're walking in wisdom.

Let's pray. Father we thank you for this day. I thank you for your faithfulness to us. I thank you for the testimony of your word. That the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

[30 : 16] So God help us to have a reverence for you. Help us to bow before you in holy admiration. Help us to long to walk closer to you each and every day.

May we pursue you as you pursue us. And may we lean into you as we depart from evil and wicked ways. With the understanding you give us from your presence.

Lord your creative work is an amazing testimony to who you are. But we don't want to know your creation. We want to know you. So Lord may we walk in your wisdom.

In every decision we make. And may it be for the glory of the Father alone. And we ask it all in Jesus name. Amen. Thank you guys and thank you very much.