

God Has Something to Say

1. In the plot twist to end all plot twists, a new speaker arrives and He has something to say. We've heard, several times, from Eliphaz, Zophar, and Bildad. We heard an extended speech – with some definite high points – from Elihu. Job has had his say at the end of each speech, but he doesn't get to respond to Elihu.
2. God has something to say. **Job 38:1**. Please notice where God is. He is IN the storm. We often look at storms as signs of the absence of God. We cry out “how long, oh Lord?” when He is right there, at work, and speaking in the middle of the storm. (remember: it was a storm, a whirlwind, that took Job's children. He had no idea God was in that storm)
3. God's presence does not mean that the storm is ending or will end. Jesus prayed that the cup of suffering would be taken away from him...and it wasn't. (one of the reasons why my relationship with prayer is: it's complicated)
4. The next two verses set us up for God's first speech. **Job 38:2-3**. I have heard of several lawsuits that were dismissed because the ones bringing the suit “have no standing” before the court. Job is about to find out that His demands that God answer his questions are about to be tossed out of court.
5. Let me give you a special heads up about what is going to happen in the next several chapters. We are going to talk about something called scientific foreknowledge. We did that years ago when looking at Leviticus and called it the Buick in the Pyramid. Here, in Job, we will find a lot of scientific information that is very anachronistic – way before its time.
6. The Canadian astrophysicist, Hugh Ross, runs a good website called www.reasons.org. I'm not giving it my blanket endorsement and he would go places I would not and say things I wouldn't be comfortable saying...but it's good to know it's there. He has written articles and a book about the scientific surprises we find in Job. And, there, I am right with him.

7. What you need to get right now – and this is very important – is that God is about to do something for the first time ever. This is the oldest book of the Bible, a story that is probably 300-500 years older than Moses...and God is going to tell the story of creation.
8. This is the first description of what Creation was and how it was done. Ever. Genesis 1 is a response to the Gilgamesh saga and creation stories like that. It was widely believed that the universe was born in the chaos that resulted from wars between gods or beasts. Genesis lays it out as orderly and precise. God lays it out with drama.
9. **Job 38:4-7**. We live in a universe that has a sense of order...even in the chaos. In fact, those who embraced chaos theory eventually had to admit that chaos occurs and progresses through predictable stages. The universe is still incredibly weird...but it isn't without its own rules and boundaries.
10. God leads with this because, for Job to have standing, he would have to know what God knows and be able to do what God did and does. That's a pretty high bar...
11. **Job 38:8-13**. Job...do you understand physics? Do you understand what you are asking? If God were to pick up the earth and shake all the evil out of it...what would happen? The whole planet would die. (McDonalds with heavy people unable to get in and anorexic folk trying to get out – evil is a tougher problem than we realize. And fixing it without destroying humanity is...well, something only God can do)
12. **Job 38:16-18**. By the way, a people who lived in the northeast region of the Arabian peninsula would have no concept of freshwater springs in the sea. But they are there.
13. **Job 38:19-21**. A couple of things here. First, yes, God is getting sarcastic. He can do that. And He does, a lot, right here in these speeches. I can wait a moment to let your picture of God to adjust accordingly. Second – light has mass. We know that, now. Before Einstein and Niels Bohr...not so much. (lasers, and it gets weirder in quantum physics)

14. This passage also talks about the dwelling place of darkness. Hmm. For our physics, astrophysics and quantum physics to work, to be predictable and testable, we have to accept that the universe is full of dark matter and dark energy. In fact – and please check this because I know it sounds crazy – if you add up the percentage of the universe made up of dark matter and dark energy, you come up with 99.37%. In other words, almost the entire universe is made of these two strange things.
15. And we can't find them. We see their effects on what we DO see and know so we know they are there...somewhere. And God smiles and says "found that darkness yet?" I think He would love for us to find it!
16. And how about the first description of the water cycle in history? **Job 38:22-30**. Whew. I could go for an hour on the design of water because I had a chemistry professor who was mesmerized by it. The way it freezes from the top, not the bottom, therefore allowing marine life in colder regions. The way lightning balances electrical charge and nitrogen dispersal all over the earth. The fact that every drop of rain requires a particle of dust to form. Without deserts, there is no rain. The balance of clouds, rain, evaporation, storms, lightning...is unfathomably complex. And yet...it just...is.
17. There is more about the water cycle that we will get to next week, but let's end today with wonder. Childlike wonder is called for when we see what God has made...and is making, right now. **Job 38:31-33**. [four slides. I will call for each of them as the band comes back to the stage]