

## Lessons From Creation

Job 38:1-15, 40:1-5

### Introduction

Happy New Year, everyone. It's good to see you all. I haven't seen you guys in over a month. I wasn't sure how many people would be here tonight because of the recent surge, so thanks for being here!

I think this is the first time that I've seen all of you together since Pastor Kim's announcement on Sunday. I've been holding that announcement in for a long time but if you missed the announcement, here it is: After 3 years of interning as the intern for this youth group and after another 7 years of being the pastor of it, I will be stepping down from my role for good this summer and Megan and I will be moving to Texas at the end of summer.

It's more bitter than it is sweet, because this past decade was probably the best thing that happened to me. Megan and I started dating through our involvement in youth ministry. James Choi and I became best friends through youth group. I learned how to care for and be a pastor through this ministry. I saw you and many of your siblings grow up and graduate out of this high school group. They're probably like good riddance. There are so many great things that happened to me because of this ministry. I love you guys and I love this ministry. But I'll share my more of my thoughts and reasons for stepping down on another Friday night, because it'll take up too much time if I share tonight.

We're almost done with the book of Job much to the relief of many of you. We've fast-forwarded a lot as you can tell in your notes. The last time we were in the book of Job, we were in chapter 28 and tonight, we're looking at a portion of chapter 38.

Honestly, not much has happened between those chapters. Job stops talking in chapter 31 and another character named Elihu comes onto the scene. In my view, he's not that important because he's pretty much saying the same thing as Job's friends have been saying: Job, you get what you deserve. Something bad happened to you, therefore you must've done something to deserve it. But again, as we've been saying, it doesn't apply to Job. So Elihu is pretty much poop just like the rest of Job's friends. In fact, God doesn't even acknowledge him.

And after Elihu's done, finally, the last character in the book of Job shows up. God surprisingly God shows up. What do you think God will say to Job? I won't be reading chapters 38 in one whole sitting, but like last time, I'll read them in chunks over the course of tonight's message. But please turn there with me to chapters 38 and once we're there, we'll pray and get started.

### **Opening illustration**

I was thinking about how to introduce tonight's message and I thought the subreddit, TIL, Today I Learned, might teach us something educational, so I checked and I was wrong. It was just a bunch of weird stuff posted by 10-year-olds.

So instead, I want us to watch a brief clip that every 7<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher probably had their students watch. You can just tell how old this clip is because its highest stream quality is like 480p.

### **Create the need**

I think we get the point. We are small compared to the scale of the ever-expanding universe. And, I mean, I guess it's cool to be reminded of how small we are. We like to be reminded of that every so often. Like, when we go to Yosemite or Mammoth, at the top of the mountain, we never tell ourselves, "Wow, look at how great I am." We are always amazed at the immensity of creation.

And this is cool and all when we're on vacation, but what about in the context of trauma or difficulty? To be reminded of our littleness in the midst of pain doesn't seem like a comfort to us. To be reminded of the grandeur and the expansiveness of the universe makes us wonder if God even cares about us at all.

In what way is this helpful to someone who just found out that their parent had cancer? In what way is the almost infinite scale of the universe helpful to those who just got into a shouting match with their parents at home? In what way is knowing our smallness and the limits of our understanding helpful when we hurt?

### **Transition**

And yet this is exactly what God does. We'll see what God says in just a second, but when Job is hurting, when Job's life has fallen apart, and when Job wants an answer from God, God surprisingly gives it. And just as surprising as his appearance is what he says. He essentially says, "Job, what you need is a dose of perspective."

But for people who have suffered tragedy, experienced trauma, endured loss, perspective almost seems cruel. Perspective is disingenuous and lacks sensitivity. One author writes, “When man steep himself in the beauty of the world, his troubles grow petty, not because they are unreal, but because they dissolve within the larger plan, like the tiny dabs of oil in a masterpiece of painting. The beauty of the world becomes a painkiller to man’s suffering.”

I mean, this is escapism. How could Job possibly sedate himself with beautiful sunrises and impressive animals as a way to numb the pain and loss of his dead children? Is perspective really all that God is saying?

After 37 chapters of anticipation, is this all that God has to say? Is God’s long-awaited message to Job and all sufferers simply to look at the vast expanse of creation and see how small we all are? If so, then God’s speech adds nothing new to what Job and his three friends have already know. Job’s friends, even Job himself, all know that God is great and all-powerful.

In chapter 12:13, Job says that “with God are wisdom and might; he has counsel and understanding. With him are strength and sound wisdom; the deceived and the deceiver are his.” If Job already knows that God is great, then it makes God’s speech not a flex, but redundant. And after demanding an audience from God for so long, God’s speech doesn’t even seem to answer any of Job’s questions. God’s speech seems random and even irrelevant.

In fact, it’s precisely because Job believes that God is great and powerful that he feels like God is a royal jerk. That God doesn’t care about justice—he just perverts it. He thinks the world is unfair and mismanaged. That God doesn’t care about the sufferer. That he just lets evil run free. But that’s the problem, isn’t it?

Grief and anger unchecked leads to uncharitable and false conclusions about God. Suffering leads to accusation. As much as we are authorized to be honest with God about how we feel about him, the hard things in our lives tend to lead us to make bad conclusions about God that ultimately aren’t true.

And as we’ve been talking about all throughout the book of Job, as much as Job’s honesty with God authorizes our honesty with him, and though Job’s criticisms of God are understandable, the criticisms are ultimately wrong.

Like his dodo friends, Job thinks he's figured God out. He thinks he knows what God is up to in the world. When he looks at his life, Job is a little too confident at the conclusions that he makes. But the reality is that Job, like his friends, doesn't know.

*This* is why God speaks; *this* is what God is responding to. As we look at our passage everything that God says, directly, but subtly addresses everything that Job has criticized God for. But God's appearance, at last, at the end of the book isn't to own or wreck Job. God challenges Job, for sure. God will address and refute line by line all of Job's criticisms of God. But God appears to Job in grace, not judgment. What is God's speech seeking to do in Job and in us? What are we supposed to take away from God's speech to Job?

### **Key Idea**

God wants us to reorient ourselves back to him through 3 lessons from creation.

## **3 lessons from creation**

### **1. The Lesson of the Earth (vv. 1-7)**

After a very long-winded introduction, take a look finally at verses 1-3.

**38** Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:

<sup>2</sup> “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?

<sup>3</sup> Dress for action like a man;

I will question you, and you make it known to me.

We didn't read the passage, but in 31:35, Job says, “Oh, that I had one to hear me! (Hear is my signature! Let the Almighty answer me!). God heard and this is God's answer.

And there's something that I want you guys to notice before we look at God's words. If you'll remember, at the beginning of, it was a great wind that killed Job's children. And it's not a mere coincidence that God appears to Job out of the whirlwind. It's not the same wind that took Job's children away, but it's not just a mere coincidence.

God speaking out of the whirlwind would have been triggering for Job. Why would God appear to Job in a similar way that took away the lives of his kids? Doesn't God know how painful it would be for Job?

Of course, he does. And it's precisely why he does. God is trying to help Job face the things that are hard and don't go away. God appearing in a whirlwind reminds Job that he will never get over it. Does that surprise you? Does that sound hopeless?

Or is admitting this freeing? I mean, think about it. Of course, Job will never get over it. How could he? What happened to Job was so wrong, so terrible, so bad, how could Job possibly get over the trauma of what happened to him and his family? How could Job possibly get over the constant flashbacks of his servants telling him that his kids were dead? That somehow only he and his wife survived. How often he wished he took their place instead. The guilt he felt. How could he get over any of that?

And in a similar way, whatever wrong you have experienced, whatever violation you faced, whatever betrayal you endured, whatever gossip you heard about yourself, how could you forget it?

You may get over the misery of the flu, or not getting exactly what you ordered from In N Out, or failing a test. But you don't *get over* something that marks and stains you. Your sufferings do count and aren't minimized.

How freeing to admit that truth about such terrible wrong. You're not supposed to just move on, or numb yourself, or hope the bad thoughts go away. It means that you don't have to ruin your life with constant attempts to dull the pain. That you don't have to feel like a failure when you're not happy and smiley all the time.

Of course, you won't get over it. And of course, Job won't get over it. In the next chapter, Job has a new set of kids and restored wealth. But it'll never replace what he had before nor erase the pain that he had before. Even Job's new kids and restored wealth bear the marks of what happened.

But while it's true that you may not forget what happened, it's also true you don't have to be forever defined by what happened. Job won't get over it, but it doesn't mean that Job has to be forever defined by what happened to him.

As triggering as it was for Job to see God in the whirlwind, the whirlwind also happened to be Job's salvation. Because the thing is, God doesn't appear to Job in tranquility and utopian peace. God meets Job in turbulence and violent wind. The precise location of

God in the storm identifies an encounter with God not outside of trauma and pain, but within trauma and pain itself. The promise of God in pain and trauma is that God will be with us in it.

Take a look now at verses 4-7.

- <sup>4</sup> “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?  
Tell me, if you have understanding.  
<sup>5</sup> Who determined its measurements—surely you know!  
Or who stretched the line upon it?  
<sup>6</sup> On what were its bases sunk,  
or who laid its cornerstone,  
<sup>7</sup> when the morning stars sang together  
and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”

All throughout chapters 38-41, God asks Job a bunch of leading questions. And the anticipated answers for all of the questions that he will ask are either “nowhere, not me, and no.”

God is now directly confronting the accusations that Job has made about how God rules the world. And what God is trying to show us in these questions is that if we accuse God of being a terrible manager of the universe, if we accuse God that he has no idea what he’s doing, if we think that we can run the world better than God can, then we have to prove that we know better than God and that we can manage the world better than God does, and that we can make better decisions than God can.

If we accuse our parents of being terrible parents, or accuse our teachers of being terrible teachers, or our pastors of being terrible event planners, which I admit, you’re not wrong, then we have to prove that we know better and are better than them.

And this is what God sets out to prove. God asks Job if he witnessed the initial creation of the world, if he knows who set the circumference of the earth.

And as modern readers, we can easily look up the circumference of the earth on Google. But it’s easy to think of comparable questions that put us modern readers in the same humbled position as Job: Who is the one person who completely understands the paradoxes of quantum entanglement? Or unified field theory? I mean, maybe a PhD in

mathematics or physics, but even if that was the case, is there one person who completely understands everything in the universe?

Where were *you* when God laid the foundation of the world? Old-earth creationists follow modern research dating and estimate that the age of earth is roughly 4.5 billion years old, while young earth creationists estimate that the age of the earth is between 6,000 to 10,000 years ago. Whether you believe the earth is 4.5 billion years old or 7,000 years old, the question is still the same—have you lived that long? Were you there when the earth was born? Was Job there?

The obvious answer that God wants Job to conclude, the answer that Job deep down knows but whose pain suppressed, is that God is the One who knows because God is the one who laid the foundation of the earth.

The lesson of the earth is that our knowledge is finite. It's limited. It's not exhaustive. You know, the older I get, the more I study, and the more I read, I more I realize I don't know jack. Like seriously. The more I read my Bible, the more I realize I don't know anything about God. The more I help people, the more I realize how helpless I am. The more I do in ministry, the more I realize I have no idea what I'm doing. Emily and Peter never think this way because they almost have PhDs.

But what do we know about the world and the universe? I mean, don't get me wrong. I'm not a nihilist. Of course, we can know some things. We might not have full, comprehensive knowledge, but we can have true, genuine knowledge.

But to know *everything*? And to be *expected* to know everything? Only God knows and only God is expected to know. And that's the whole point of being human. Being human is being finite, limited, dependent upon others for human life. I know we live as if it isn't true, I know that your school schedules and what's expected of you by your parents betrays the truth that you are limited and finite. I know we don't live like it, but it's the truth. And it's also good news.

How freeing it is to know that the management of the universe, the knowledge of your circumstances, the choice of where you go for college, the execution of your dreams and plans, ultimately does not rest upon you.

Imagine if you were the master of your own fate and destiny. I mean, you might like it for a while, and it sounds alluring now, but it will crush you later. I mean, some of us get stressed choosing what to wear in the morning.

What if *you* were expected to run your world? To have the freedom but not the exhaustive knowledge to choose option A over option B? Which option is better? How do you know? What if I mess up? What if I don't like what I choose? It's no wonder we feel anxious, stressed, pressured, exhausted all the time.

But you might say, "C'mon, Eric, don't you know it's all about your heart? It's not about your circumstances." Don't give me that junk. It's just as much what's imposed upon us by society, by our friends, by our teachers, by the internet, by our parents, by our church, as much as all these things expose and reveal our hearts. And these impositions and expectations upon our lives can even be good things, but when we go beyond our God-given limits, when we are expected to exceed our God-given limits, we start to crack, break, and malfunction. It's only natural that we do. That's the logic of the body.

God's first speech in many ways is actually a sermon about embracing and coming to terms with our own limits of human knowledge. To own up to the fact that we actually don't know how to govern the world, let alone our own. And the lesson of the earth is that this limit is meant to lead us back to God.

God's intention with Job isn't to win an argument or to flex on him by demonstrating his lack of knowledge. It's to reorient Job back to himself, to give him a renewed vision of the world and the only One who can rule it wisely. God's world is much vaster, more complex, and more mysterious than we or Job have recognized. The earth is not a sinister, chaotic mess Job has portrayed, where innocent lives are trampled, and God does nothing. When we are tempted to presume that we know better than God, the question "where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?" is a dose of sane wisdom.

All throughout the book, Job has continually interpreted outwards from his own tragedy to make broad generalizations about God's mismanagement of creation, imagining that God lets evil run free.



For example, if a someone sailing in a rowboat in the Pacific Ocean were to run into a rough patch of weather, it would be wrong to infer that the entire Pacific Ocean was nothing but a raging storm.

When Job insists on his innocence, he speaks in knowledge, but when he says God is hostile and uncaring, he speaks in ignorance. So rather than interpreting and assuming what God is like from disaster, tragedy, and bad circumstances, we interpret disaster, tragedy, and bad circumstances *in light of* who God is. The lesson of the earth is that we don't know, therefore we reorient ourselves back to God who does know and understands all things.

## 2. The Lesson of the Sea (vv. 8-15)

Take a look at verses 8-11.

- <sup>8</sup> “Or who shut in the sea with doors  
when it burst out from the womb,  
<sup>9</sup> when I made clouds its garment  
and thick darkness its swaddling band,  
<sup>10</sup> and prescribed limits for it  
and set bars and doors,  
<sup>11</sup> and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther,  
and here shall your proud waves be stayed?’

The sea and the ocean, if you didn't know, were recurring symbols for cosmic chaos in the Old Testament. The sea represented an uncontrollable, relentless, unorganizable force that could sweep people away in an instant and drown freight ships. RIP the supply chain.

I mean, I know Torrance beach, Redondo Beach, Manhattan Beach or whatever beach, are all super nice. But for how nice these beaches are, you still can't control and contain the sea in the way you can with the earth. No one can impose any order or boundary on it. The sea and its waves are naturally dangerous.

And I've tried to illustrate how impossible it is with this huge tub of water. You kind of have to suspend belief for a moment and imagine that this is a wave. If I shake it and mimic the movement of water in an ocean, it sloshes and kicks up violently. There's no

possible way that I can control where the water lands or how high or how low I want it to go.

But what was the sea a symbol of exactly? The sea is a symbol for the evil that occurs in our lives. When you experience evil whether in the form of physical or emotional pain, from broken friendships, from sickness, from loss, evil is disorienting. Evil makes your life uncontrollable; evil feels bad, it feels like it's never-ending, evil doesn't seem to have any predictable movement, any discernible logic, or any boundaries, just like the sea and Bitcoin. We can't control evil in the same way that we can't control the chaotic, seeming randomness of the ocean.

But God can and God does. He tells us that he is the only one who can put a boundary on it. God is the only one who can command the sea to rise and fall. In fact, the way he treats the violence of the sea is the way we treat the crying of a baby. God swaddles the sea with clouds and thick darkness.

I grabbed a blanket from the children's classroom. I mean, how do you swaddle the sea? The picture is intentionally ridiculous. God's swaddling of the sea is a direct response to Job's accusation that God sets evil and chaos free. God is the Creator who constrains and limits chaos, not the one who lets it run wild in the world.

God hasn't mismanaged the world after all. God isn't the amoral and violent ruler who can't tell right from wrong. God is the one who puts a limit on human evil. In fact, the picture of God swaddling the violent sea shows us that God is much kinder than Job has cynically imagined.

What does it practically mean, though, that God limits evil? Does it mean that God actually does only give us more than we can handle or only enough that we can handle? Is that what we mean by limits? The actual truth is that God doesn't give us more than we can handle and God doesn't give us less than we can handle. What's closer to the truth is that we don't handle anything—God does. It's up to God to deal with the evil that we face.

And the lesson of the sea reminds us that he does. The fact that God puts doors and bars on the sea means that God is the one who prevents evil from overwhelming us.

But the lesson of the sea also reminds us that God allows evil, pain, and suffering to remain in creation. For as much as the world is created by God and is good, because of the entrance of sin and death, the world is also stained by terrible evil. It's a world where the wonder of technology makes us feel stressed, burdened, afraid of being found out by others, and always connected.

It's a place where the blessing of our own success somehow enables us to look down on others. It's a society where the laws that benefit so many also happen to be laws with implicit bias. It's a world where we enjoy the Southern California sun but on the other side of the globe people experience ethnic cleansing and genocide. And it's a world in which blameless Job suffers.

We get and praise God that he sets a limit on human evil and suffering, but it raises a more fundamental question, why is there evil and suffering to begin with? Why does God allow *that* in the first place? Why does God allow a world with pandemics, pain, injustice, tears, and sorrow?

The closest answer that we get to this question in Scripture is actually here in Job 38-41, but Scripture intentionally never gives us a direct answer to this most pressing and disturbing question. The history of the church's short and long answer to this question is three frustrating, but enormously important words: we don't know.

We don't know is an answer that you find in Eastern Orthodox traditions, Roman Catholicism traditions, Anglican traditions, Lutheran traditions, and Reformed traditions like ours. It's the same answer that we find in Job and Ecclesiastes. Why do people suffer? We just don't know. Why is there evil? No clue.

That's the sort of answer that will cause all of you to tune out for the rest of this message. And it's probably what I would've done if I had heard it when I first became a Christian. But after pastoring for 7+ years, which admittedly isn't a long time, reading church history, talking with others about the problem of evil, knowing people with disabilities, I genuinely think "we don't know" is the best, the most honest, and most biblical answer to the problem of suffering.

I mean, we can go the John Piper route, which is really the Jonathan Edwards route, and say that evil exists for God's glory. I mean, yeah, of course. Everything, including evil, exists for God's glory. But it still doesn't really give us clarity on why evil exists, because

you can say that for anything. It's almost a tautology. It's like trying to explain to someone what broccoli is. Broccoli is...broccoli.

Of course, this doesn't mean that Scripture is completely silent on the problem of evil. Scripture identifies two fundamental aspects of evil—sin and death—and it shows us both their beginning and their end. It insists repeatedly and stubbornly that the world will not always be like this. That even now, according to our passage, it is limited. And over and over again, Scripture's solution to sin and death, which has been the problem of humanity, is the crucifixion and resurrection of God's Son.

Scripture also tells us numerous stories of people who suffered far more than we have yet clung to God nonetheless. And the story of Scripture concludes with a picture of a world in which all evil is gone. It comforts us that it will not be like this forever. In Revelation 21:1, the apostle John records that there will come a day when the sea symbolically will be no more. When evil will be no more. When chaos will be no more. When broken hearts will be restored, broken relationships will be reconciled, broken bodies will be redeemed. But for all of Scripture's help, it never gives us a direct answer to this most pressing and disturbing question.

This also doesn't mean that there aren't morally, philosophically, or theologically satisfying reasons that explain *some* suffering in the world. Human choices, physical laws, the growing of our faith, the consequences of sin can all explain *some* of the pain that we experience, some of the time. But none of them can explain all of it, all the time.

No matter how long I think about it, and no matter how many times people ask me, I simply can't think of a satisfying reason why God would allow evil and suffering. Since sin and death is conquered by Jesus, I suspect that part of the answer has to do with Jesus, but beyond that, I don't know. And in all likelihood, I never will. And that's okay.

That's the lesson of not only the sea, but it returns us back to the lesson of the earth. Just because we don't know doesn't mean that God doesn't know. And just because evil exists in the world doesn't mean that God isn't doing something about it.

### **3. The lesson of the sunrise (vv. 12-15)**

Take a look at vv. 12-15.

- <sup>12</sup> “Have you commanded the morning since your days began,  
and caused the dawn to know its place,  
<sup>13</sup> that it might take hold of the skirts of the earth,  
and the wicked be shaken out of it?  
<sup>14</sup> It is changed like clay under the seal,  
and its features stand out like a garment.  
<sup>15</sup> From the wicked their light is withheld,  
and their uplifted arm is broken.

God was doing a million things before we woke up today. And as we were waking up, the sun was there. I didn't cause it to rise, you didn't cause it to rise. And yet, there it was. But what does the sunrise coloring and giving definition to the topography of the earth have to do with breaking the arm of the wicked?

Like, what does a beautiful sunrise have to do with shaking the wicked as if we shake off ants from a blanket? Well, like the sea, light and darkness were symbols that represented something else. Light represented justice, the destruction of the wicked, while darkness was another metaphor for evil and the dwelling place of evil. Evil hides in the darkness and hates the light.

And what God is saying is that as often as the sun rises, as often as he commands the sun to rise, God actively works against human evil. The active thwarting of injustice is woven into the fabric of the natural order. God has crafted the world in such a way that it resists and counteracts human evil. And we have to remember why this matters.

A central aspect of Job's criticisms against God is that God is an amoral dictator where the earth is under the power of the wicked. In 9:24, he says, “the earth is given into the hand of the wicked; he covers the face of its judges—if it is not he, who then is it?”

But the very fact that God commands the sun to rise proves that God deeply cares about the injustice of the world. Just because God allows evil limited freedom in the world doesn't mean that he's an unjust tyrant. And just because God doesn't eliminate evil doing swiftly and permanently, doesn't mean that God is evil or uncaring.

In fact, the rising of the sun is so mundane that we hardly even think about it. We hardly think about the million, different ways God has sustained our lives today. We don't even think about breathing, or blinking. But the reality is that God is doing a million things in our lives that we take for granted, assume, and don't even notice. God is doing a million

things that we just don't see, that we just don't know, and that we don't even acknowledge.

The lesson of the sunrise is that the rising of the sun is the hopeful reminder that evil will never have the last word. That God's justice will triumph always. God is as faithful as the rising of the sun. And I don't believe the sun has ever failed to rise. The rising of the sun leads us back to the God who has never lied, who has never broken a promise, who has never failed us. When we are tempted to make false conclusions about, to believe the lie that God does not care, feel the warmth of the sun, don't look directly at the sun, but remember the sun. To remember the sun is a spiritual act of remembering the faithfulness of God, whose mercies and steadfast love renew every morning.

We're running out of time so we're not going to read the rest of chapter 38-39. You're welcome. But I will give you the TL;DR. It's, more or less, the same series of questions that God has been asking of Job. Does Job know the depths of the sea or has he seen the gates of death? Has he observed the weird quirks of animals that live independently from human life? Does he care and provide for the wildlife? The point of all of it is that God has. God's world, contrary to Job's criticisms, is that it is all carefully managed.

The world that God created is not a sinister, dark place, as Job has insisted. God isn't the cosmic destroyer, but the greater sustainer and provider, caring even for creatures totally outside human control and understanding. God's goodness exceeds our expectations. His kindness far outstrips anything Job has imagined in the debate with his friends. God's world is a very good one, but not one in which all evil is punished neatly and immediately. And the question is what is Job's response to these lessons?

#### 4. Responding to the lessons (40:1-5)

Take a look finally at verses 1-5.

<sup>1</sup>And the LORD said to Job:

<sup>2</sup> "Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty?  
He who argues with God, let him answer it."

<sup>3</sup>Then Job answered the LORD and said:

<sup>4</sup> "Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer you?  
I lay my hand on my mouth.

<sup>5</sup> I have spoken once, and I will not answer;  
twice, but I will proceed no further."

As we've seen, as much as suffering isn't a lesson to be learned, suffering nevertheless puts a fork in the road of your heart. Job will never get over what happened to him. After all, this is a man whose children are dead, whose wealth has been confiscated, whose family was taken away, whose health was ruined, whose status was removed. And when something happens to you that is so wrong that you never get over it, it will either make you bitter or make you wise. So what is Job's response? He puts his hand over his mouth as visible confession and recognition that he doesn't know. What is there to even say?

Job is starting to get the lessons. By appearing to Job in the whirlwind, God begins the slow, sometimes painful, but always gracious work of reorienting Job back to himself. The lesson of the earth is that we don't know everything. We can't possibly know everything. But God does. The lesson of the sea is that evil is allowed to exist but it is nevertheless contained by God. The lesson of the sunrise is that God will do something about it.

You know, God can speak to Job from the whirlwind because he wasn't above it all. He entered into our sinful and suffering plight. He was a man of sorrows, intimately acquainted with grief. Jesus never got over it. He never got over his incarnation, his humiliation. He never got over his experience of evil. He never got over the cross. He never got over the weight of our sins. And rising again, he never got over the experience of death. He had the marks of the nails in his hands and feet to prove it. But Jesus was not deformed by what he suffered. Unlike Job, he didn't accuse God of foul play. Jesus experienced and will never forget the experience of pain, but he was not defined by his pain.

We can't know everything. But we know the God who comes to us in the whirlwind. This was enough for Job and the question is, "Is he enough for us?"