

Fleas on a Dog

Job 38:1—11

Introduction

In *Crocodile Dundee*, Sue asks Mick what he thinks about the Aborigines' claim to the land. He says that they don't claim to own the land, that the land was here long before we got here and will be here long after we're gone. Arguing about who owns the land is like two fleas arguing about who owns the dog they're on. When you think about it, that's not a bad analogy. We mark borders on maps, survey property lines, buy and sell land like it's just another commodity. But when it comes down to it, we're like fleas on a dog. This helps us understand what our attitude toward creation and all the things God does should be, by putting us in our place, just like God did with Job in our Old Testament reading today.

God's Answer

When God answers Job *from out of the whirlwind* (**Job 38:1**), He doesn't seem to address the issue at all. To Job, at least, the issue is this: *Why do the righteous suffer?* God merely tells Job to get ready to answer some questions, and then He asks questions that He knows Job can't answer. "*Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?*" (v. 4) "*Who determined its measurements?*" (v. 5) "*Who laid its cornerstone?*" (v. 6) "*Who shut in the sea?*" (v. 8) For 68 verses, God questions Job like this. To get a better understanding of this answer, we must back up and see how we got here.

Background

Job's suffering wasn't due to any fault of his own. Satan had accused God of putting a hedge of protection around Job, and that was the only reason Job was so faithful (**Job 1:9—11**). God took down his hedge and Satan took away all Job's wealth, killed his ten children, and gave him a severe case of boils (**1:13—19; 2:7**). Job still didn't sin (**2:10**).

Job's Friends

Then Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar came and sat with him in silence for seven days and nights (**2:13**). Then they stopped being good friends. They opened their mouths and spoke. The prevailing wisdom of the day was that God rewards good and punishes evil. Job was suffering greatly; therefore, he must have sinned greatly to suffer such great affliction. We know that there is a connection between sin and suffering. All suffering in this world is a result of the first sin. But there are many different reasons individuals suffer.

Job's Faith (19:25—27)

Throughout Job's suffering, he maintained his faith in God (read **Job 19:25—27**). Job clung to the hope that, no matter what happened to him in this body, he would be raised from the dead and live with God, his Redeemer.

Job's Mistake (23:3—5)

However, Job made a mistake that caused God to come with His puzzling answer (read **Job 23:3—5**). Job thought that if he could just get an audience with God, he could plead his case and God would vindicate him, as any just judge would. His mistake was thinking that God was on the same level as us humans.

God's Point

So, God's first words are, *"Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Dress for action like a man; I will question you, and you make it known to me"* (**Job 38:2—3**). God's point is this: Job, you don't know what you're talking about. You *don't* have all the answers. You never *will* have all the answers. You don't *need* to have all the answers.

Don't Ask "Why"

The same is true for us. We *don't* have all the answers. We never *will* have all the answers. We don't *need* to have all the answers. We must accept the fact that there are many things in this life that are above our pay grade. We're like the little boy whose mother tells him something and he asks, "Why?" She gives an answer, and again he asks, "Why?" This goes on until she says, "Because I say so, that's why." It doesn't pay for us to ask God "Why." Who can know the mind of God?

True Faith

True faith is learning to live with uncertainties. How can **FLEAS ON A DOG** expect to know why the dog does what he does? Nor can these fleas control what the dog does. All we can do is cherish what God has given us, salvation through the means of grace and every earthly blessing. Then allow Him to care for us as He sees fit. That may not seem like much, until you remember that God loves you so much, He gave His only Son to die for you.

*And the peace of God,
Which surpasses all understanding,
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
