



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

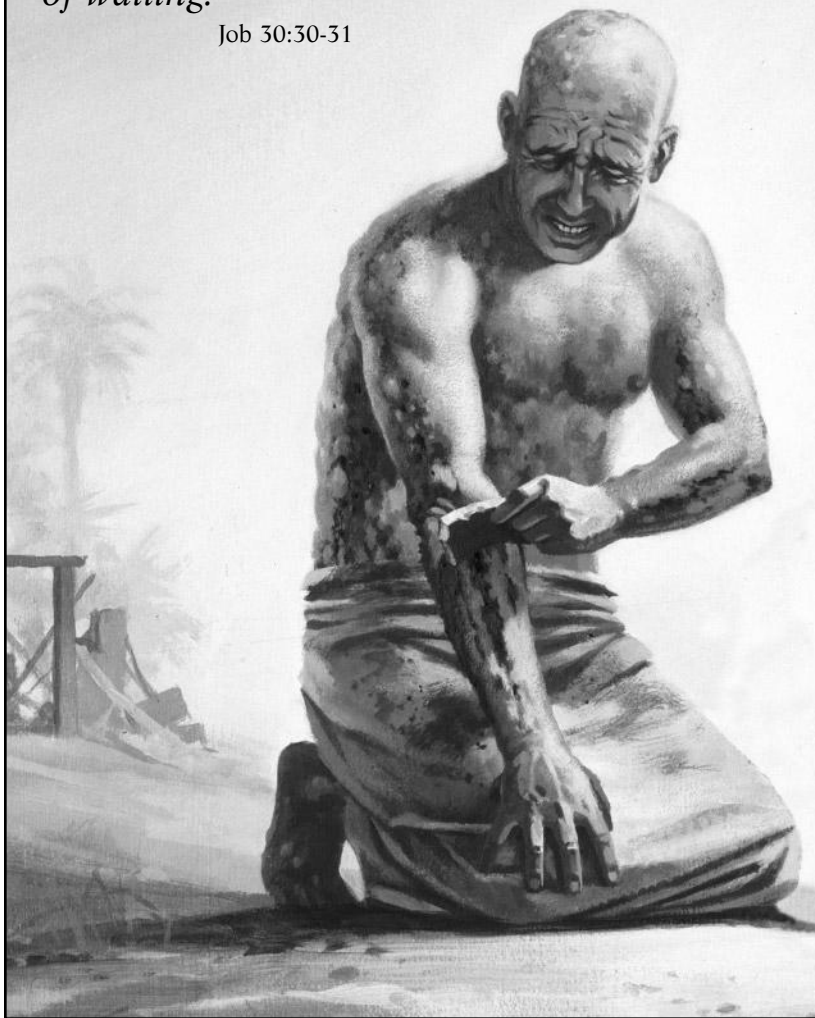
THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

JOB

Week 4

*“My skin grows
black and peels;
my body burns
with fever. My
harp is tuned to
mourning, and my
flute to the sound
of wailing.”*

Job 30:30-31



Artwork by Ken Tunell—PTM

God—Are You Out There?

DAY 22

Job 30:20–31:40

Have you ever cried out to God in misery, wanting him to answer immediately—but nothing happens?

1. Job assumed that his misery also came from above (30:20-23). How did God respond?
2. Was God as just to Job as Job had been to others (vs. 24-27)? How was Job mourning (vs. 28-30)?
3. Job declared his innocence one last time (ch. 31). Had he been tainted by lust or immoral conduct (vs. 1-12)? Was he insensitive or unjust (vs. 13-23)? Greedy (vs. 24-25)? Idolatrous (vs. 26-28)? Bitter toward his enemies (vs. 29-34)?
4. Did he believe that neither God nor humans could indict him of sin (vs. 35-40)?

1. Do you think it's okay to be upset with God? Will he help your attitude?
2. Have you ever *made a covenant with your eyes* like Job (31:1)?
3. Consider Job's declaration of innocence—in what ways are you innocent? In what ways are you guilty? Can you admit them to yourself—and then to God?

Idolatry was common in a world of polytheism where it was thought that the heavenly bodies were to be worshiped as gods. Here monotheistic Job says that he never worshiped the sun or moon (vs. 26-28). Nor had he placed wealth and fortune above his commitment to God (vs. 24-25).

OPENING
up to the Word

DIGGING
into the Word

LIVING
out the Word

WINDOW
on the Word

Feel the Breath of God

Job 32–33

OPENING
up to the Word

Do you think wisdom comes with age, authority, observation or experience? Or is it a gift from God?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. The speeches of Zophar, Eliphaz and Bildad have ended. Now Elihu, the youngest of the five men (32:6), felt compelled to speak (v. 18). Why was he angry (vs. 2-5)?

2. Why had Elihu been silent to this point (vs. 6-16)? Why was he now so intent on speaking (vs. 17-22)?

3. Elihu denounced Job's attitude in his suffering (33:1-33). Did he come to Job as an all-knowing expert or merely as one man to another (vs. 1-7)?

4. How did spiritual pride lie at the root of Job's problem (vs. 8-13, 17)?

5. How does God speak to humans (vs. 14-30)? Could Job answer (vs. 31-33)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. How true was Elihu's argument about the ways God speaks to humans? Do you believe God speaks to you through dreams and visions (33:15-18), in pain and suffering (vs. 19-22), through angels (vs. 23)?

2. Have you experienced any of the gifts of God that Elihu mentions (vs. 24-30)? Restoration of health (vs. 25)? Restoration to righteousness (vs. 26)? The ability to share what God has done for you with others (vs. 27-28)?

WINDOW
on the Word

The *Elihu section*, chapters 32-37, reaches a deeper wisdom regarding Job's adversity. Elihu sees God as a teacher (35:11; 36:22) who uses suffering as an opportunity to impart wisdom.

What's God Waiting for?

DAY 24

Job 34–35

Why might you not answer a friend's request? (a) you didn't hear, (b) it's too expensive, (c) he's asking for the wrong things, (d) you don't have the time, (e) you will have more time for him next week.

1. In Elihu's second speech (ch. 34), he called for all listeners to review Job's complaints (vs. 1-9). What were Job's two main complaints (vs. 5, 9)?

2. To whom does absolute authority belong (vs. 10-15)? How can an accusation of injustice be just (vs. 16-20)? How can God's sovereign presence be deemed unjust (vs. 21-30)? So can Job's complaints be seen as rebellion against God (vs. 32-37)?

3. Elihu's third speech (ch. 35) addressed Job's second complaint that there is no advantage to godliness (vs. 1-4; 21:15; 34:9). Can the greatness of God be affected by either the virtue or vice of humans (35:5-8)?

1. Has God ever wronged an innocent person (34:5), or has the source of persecution come from elsewhere? From Satan, perhaps?

2. Has God ever seemed to ignore any of your requests?

3. Have you ever felt, like Job, that godliness holds no advantage? Do the ungodly seem to prosper?

*For Elihu, as with Eliphaz (22:3), **God is transcendent**—he can't be changed by human virtue or vice (35:5-8). Yet later biblical writers do consider God to be affected by his love for humans (Jer 31:20; Hos 11:8).*

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

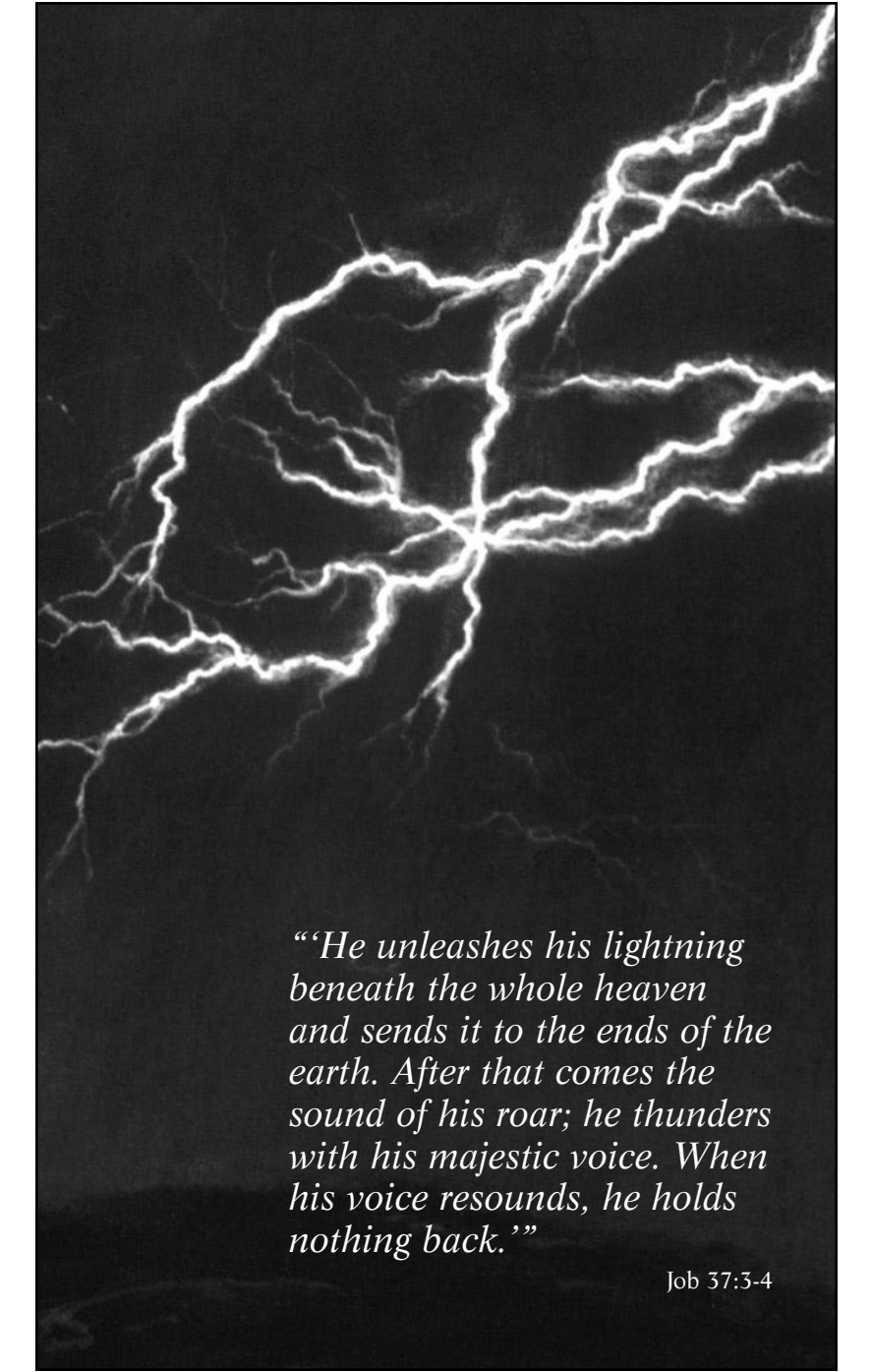
into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word



*“He unleashes his lightning
beneath the whole heaven
and sends it to the ends of the
earth. After that comes the
sound of his roar; he thunders
with his majestic voice. When
his voice resounds, he holds
nothing back.”*

Job 37:3-4

How Great Thou Art!

DAY 25

Job 36–37

Remember the worst storm you've ever experienced. Did you fear for your life? From wind, water or lightning?

1. Elihu's fourth speech focuses on the greatness of God. How is the providence of God trustworthy (36:1-7)? What is God's intention (vs. 8-16)?

2. What do you feel God, the Master, was leading Job to understand (vs. 17-25)?

3. How does nature declare the greatness of God (36:26–37:13)? In the rain drops (36:27, 28)? In the thunderstorm (36:29–37:5)? In the snow and ice (vs. 6-10)? In the clouds (vs. 11-13)?

4. How did these phenomena of nature apply to Job's life (vs. 14-24)? Who was perfect in the knowledge of the ways of the Lord (vs. 15-18)?

1. Human choice increasingly enters the picture. In the long run, how can you achieve happiness (36:11-15)?

2. Do you often make presumptuous claims (37:19-24)? What should drive your tongue (v. 24)?

Winter storms, magnificent yet often devastating, give Elihu the literary vehicle to expound on the incomprehensible power of God (36:32–37:24). Although God is beyond comprehension, Elihu understands him to be absolute in power and justice, never violating anyone's rights (37:19-24).

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

“Then the Lord answered Job out of the storm. He said: ‘Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge? Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me.’”

Job 38:1-3



Artwork by Jody Eastman

Job 38:1-38

Does the night sky speak to you? Can you feel God's presence there?

1. The Lord finally answers Job. Why do you think God used the creation to exemplify his power to Job (vs. 4-11)?

2. God speaks about the dawning of morning and the turning of the earth (vs. 12-14). Do you think this is a literal reference to the rotation of the earth—a fact not widely understood before Copernicus in 1543 A.D.?

3. How does the dawn typify God's eventual rising against evildoers (vs.12-15)? Is it inevitable that the darkness of evil will be uncovered by the light of truth?

4. How much does Job know about God (vs.16-21)? About the mystery of snow and hail, lightning and thunder, even light itself which diffuses over the earth? And how God sustains the universe, from Pleiades to Orion to the Bear (vs. 22-38)?

1. When you look at the stars and the moon, how does God's creation speak of his control and his sustaining of the seasons?

2. Have you ever watched a dawn sky? What does this magnificent display say about God? Is he more reliable than the rising of the sun?

*After all the debate between Job and his friends, we hear **God's perspective.** The word for man here is *geber*, meaning "man in his strength." God takes humanity on as a worthy opponent, as Job suggests (31:35-37; 13:22), or perhaps as his worthy creation. God wants a relationship with humans to be based on his love and grace.*

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

The Animal Kingdom

Job 38:39–39:30

OPENING
up to the Word

What is your favorite zoo animal? (a) lion, (b) elephant, (c) monkey, (d) ostrich, (e) eagle.

DIGGING
into the Word

1. How does God care for the lion and her cubs (38:39–39:4)?

2. How does God grant freedom to the wild donkey (39:5-12) and strength to the wild ox and the horse (vs. 19-25)? Could Job or any human do what God has done?

3. Does the creation help us understand God, or make it more difficult to understand God? What does the ostrich, who leaves her eggs out in the sun, help you to understand about God (vs. 13-18)?

4. How majestic are the hawk and the eagle, floating high above the world of Job (vs. 26-30)? How wonderful is the constant cycle that evaporates ocean water, carries it into the clouds, and gently drops rain on a thirsty land (vs. 25-29)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. What other animals can you compare to God's strength? A human being's strengths? A human being's weaknesses?

WINDOW
on the Word

*The **ostrich** is a strange animal, leaving her eggs uncovered during the heat of the day, and using some of the unhatched eggs as food for the chicks that hatch.*



*“Does the eagle
soar at your
command and
build his nest on
high?”*

Job 39:27

Can You Top This?

Job 40–41

OPENING
up to the Word

Remember Godzilla? King Kong? The Blob? Jurassic Park? What giant monsters do you harbor in your life? Do you really think you can control them by yourself?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. What did Job have to say to God? Was he starting to feel his insignificance (40:3-5)?
2. God moved from the created order (chs. 38–39) to the moral order (40:6-14). Do you think Job was beginning to understand God's point?
3. Could Job control the Behemoth (vs. 15-24)? Who is stronger? Who can tame him?
4. List the qualities of the Leviathan (41:1-4). Does the description fit a dragon? A dinosaur? A crocodile? How much more awesome must its Creator be (vs. 10-11)?
5. How terrible and fierce was this Leviathan (vs. 12-34)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Apart from the written revelation of God, what does the natural revelation (creation) teach us about God?
2. Of course Jesus, the Eternal Word of God, came to reveal the Father. It is in and through Jesus we come to know God in spirit and in truth.

WINDOW
on the Word

*The monster **Behemoth** of chapter 40 probably represents the hippopotamus, an animal of great strength that lives on land and in water.*

I Repent...

DAY 29

Job 42:1-6

Admitting the truth about yourself is one of the hardest things to do. Has a severe trial ever prompted you to see yourself in a way you would not have otherwise?

1. How did Job respond to the words of God (vs. 1-6)? Was he seeing God differently? Was he understanding that his past “righteousness” had not been true worship (vs. 1-2)?

2. Earlier, Job had challenged God (38:3). How did he now view his words (42:3-4)? Had he been too proud for his own good? Too accusatory?

3. Did Job finally understand the difference between real and empty faith (vs. 5-6)? What is the difference?

1. Divide a sheet of paper into two columns. In one column, briefly describe God the way Job saw him before his repentance. On the other side briefly describe God the way Job saw him after his repentance.

Job had known about God, but now he claims to really know him (42:4-5). Job “sees” God—not in his divine essence, but through his creation and power.

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word



“So now take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and sacrifice a burnt offering for yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer and not deal with you according to your folly. You have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has.”

Job 42:8

Happily Ever After...

DAY 30

Job 42:7-17

Do you prefer your movies or books to end “happily ever after”? How do you think the story of your life will end?

- 1.** Here is the epilogue to the story. Why was God “angry” with Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar (vs. 7-10)? Why was Elihu not included?
 - 2.** In a strange irony, who intercedes for whom (vs. 8-10)? Why? Was Job now secure and content with God’s spiritual blessings? Had he previously ignored them due to his physical dilemma?
 - 3.** After his enormously traumatic trial, what was restored to Job (vs. 10-17)?
 - 4.** How does the conclusion of the book of Job affect your life (v. 17)? Does it communicate hope for all of us?
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1. Know that whatever trials come—whether they be from other people, time and chance, or bad decisions on your part, that God knows what is happening to you and is greater than all that is against you!

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

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