

Job 28 (PM)

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[0 : 00] So there's this little hole-in-the-wall restaurant in my neighbourhood that's my favourite sort of cheap eats place. It's called Laksa King. It's on Hastings. And the food is amazing. Love this place.

It was run by an older couple in their late 60s with their kids working for them. My wife and I went in there just a couple of weeks ago, and the son was at the cashier.

And just after we ordered, he said, listen, I want you guys to know that, I'm telling you this because you're regulars, that my father, he died last week. He had a massive stroke, and he never recovered from it.

And then the son started to get very teary, and he was saying, he was shaking his head, and he just kept saying, I just don't understand this. I don't understand. He was such a good man. It doesn't make any sense. He wasn't that old.

He always used to treat people so well. I don't understand. Why him? I don't understand. Why him? Why now? Why us? So we're talking about Job 28.

[1 : 04] Job's life has gone completely sideways, and he's asking God these questions of why. Why now? Why me? Why this? And at this point in the book, we've had 25 chapters back and forth between Job and his friends, and they're all saying, well, the friends are all saying to Job, listen, you're suffering terribly.

We know the reason you're suffering terribly. It's because you're really just an awful person. And Job is saying, no, no, I'm just trying to walk with God. And I mean, he's really disheartened by everything going on.

But he's just trying to walk with God and understand why he's suffering so much. His friends, of course, think he's hiding something. They can't understand why he doesn't just admit that he's horrible.

So it's been 25 chapters of Job and his friends just frustrating each other. And then we get to chapter 28. And all the accusations stop for a moment.

The story just sort of slows down. And we have this very puzzling chapter. It's calmer than the stuff previous.

[2 : 19] It's quieter. It's more reflective. And if you had to give it a title, you would call it a hymn to wisdom.

A hymn to wisdom. So why does the story stop to all of a sudden talk about the topic of wisdom? Because his friends are lacking human wisdom, aren't they?

They accuse. They don't walk with Job in his pain. They don't listen to him. They need human wisdom. And Job is screaming out to God, why? Why is this happening to me?

He wants insight into God's wisdom. So that's why the narrative takes a break. And it stops and it says, let's just talk about wisdom for a moment. It separates itself out from the ongoing story.

So we're going to take a few minutes. We're going to look at this chapter, chapter 28. And we're going to ask the question, what does God want us to learn from it? So we'll start with the first 11 verses.

[3 : 17] And they are odd to our ears. Let me tell you what it is. The first 11 verses are praising the mining industry.

No, no, no, seriously. That's what it is. It's a poem praising the mining industry. Just look at the first few verses there, one to two.

Surely there's a mine for silver. Iron is taken out of the earth. Copper is smelted. Humans have this amazing technology. They can get valuable things out of the ground.

Isn't that incredible? Then look at three and four. Have a look there. It's going to come up on the screen here. Man puts an end to darkness. And then it goes on in verse four to talk about he opens shafts in a valley away from where anyone lives.

So these miners, they go, they're incredible people. They go into these really inhospitable places. They dig these huge tunnels. And then they work out how to get light into these tunnels.

[4 : 19] Brings up verses five and six. Do you see there in verses five and six? This will come up on your screen here. As for the earth, out of it comes bread. But underneath it is turned up as by fire.

That's referring to sometimes they come across these massive rocks. And they wanted to crack them open and get the gems out of them. So they build fires around the rocks and then pour cold water on them to break them open.

Verses nine and ten. Talking about the miners again. They overturn mountains. They cut channels into rocks. They dam up streams. It's a poem to mining.

What's it doing here? It's basically saying, look what humans can do. Isn't it great? We can get hard to reach gems and metals out of the ground.

That's amazing. And it is. It is astonishing what people can do. Back in the days, this was one of the most advanced industries at the time. If it was written today, instead of mining, perhaps the poem would talk about space exploration or something like that.

[5 : 24] In verses seven and eight. The path, no birds of prey. No, it's basically saying those verses, read them. It's basically saying even the most impressive animals in the world, these birds of prey and lions, even the most impressive animals in the world can't come close to what humans can do.

Humans are really amazing. So there you go. It's a great thing to be a human. We can accomplish pretty impressive things. That's one to 11. And then you see in verse 12, the chapter pivots, doesn't it?

Turns a corner. Verse 12. But where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding? So now we understand the praise of mining a bit better, I think.

Humanity is really good at finding difficult things to find. Humanity is really good at finding precious things hidden away. But there seems to be one thing, a very important thing, a very precious thing we can't seem to find.

And that is wisdom. It's wisdom. It's wisdom that answers the big questions of life. It's wisdom that tries to make sense of the world. What's it all about?

[6 : 38] What does the future hold? Why does my life seem so unfair? Where is that wisdom? Wisdom. In the next 10 verses, the writer takes these mining themes and applies it to wisdom.

And the basic idea, I'll tell you what it is. The basic idea is simply this. There's something really, really valuable that is very, very hard to find.

It's called wisdom. Let's look at a few verses here. We'll start with verses 15 and 16 here. And this just talks about how precious wisdom is.

It cannot be bought with gold and silver cannot be weighed as its price. And then have a look at 17, 18 and 19 now. Gold and silver cannot equal it.

It's basically saying wisdom is more precious than gold and silver and onyx and sapphire and coral and crystal and pearls. It's more valuable than the topes of Ethiopia.

[7 : 38] Now, verses 20 to 22. Here we have a bit of a reveal. From where then does wisdom come? We've got wisdom. It's incredibly precious.

Precious than any precious jewels or gold you could find in the world. And where does it come from? Verse 21 there, it says, It is hidden from the eyes of all living things and concealed from the birds of the air.

So at this point, the hymn is saying, Wisdom, yes, very, very valuable. This is something you want. It's hidden from you. Even birds who have this enormous perspective on the world, they can't find it. They don't know where it is. Verse 22. Abaddon and death say we've heard rumors of it with our ears. Even if you asked the guardians of hell.

And again, just remember, this is poetry. The genre here is poetry. Even if you ask the guards of hell, there's some mysterious creatures.

[8 : 41] Where is wisdom? Where are we going to find wisdom? They would shrug their shoulders and go, Oh, well, we've heard rumors about it. I had a cousin, a second cousin, who sort of knew

maybe where, I don't know.

But basically, we don't know. We don't know where to find it either. So where are we so far in this chapter? Well, Job is desperately looking to God for answers.

He wants to know, Well, why is this stuff happening to me? He wants wisdom. He wants wisdom. He wants to know God's reasoning behind everything going on.

And what a thing to want. What a great desire to have. There's no greater goal for the human mind than to find this sort of wisdom. Yes, the most precious thing in the world. But he won't find it. He won't get those answers. And that's where we are at verse 22. So it's frustrating. This precious wisdom that you seek, you're not going to find it.

[9 : 44] Now we get to verses 23 to 28. And it offers us something of a resolution. God understands the way to it. He knows its place.

For he looks to the ends of the earth and sees everything. It starts off the section of this poem. Simply says, You don't know where to find wisdom, but God knows.

He knows where it is. Because he knows everything. And then in a surprising move, It gives us an example. And it's a surprising move because it starts to talk about the weather. Which is one of the most seemingly random things in the world.

And you'll see why this is a great example. Look at verses 25, 26, 27 here. It's saying here, When he gave, It's God. He gave to the wind its weight, A portion of the waters its measure.

He made a decree to the rain, The lightning, the thunder. He established it. He declared it. He stretched it out. He searched for it. He made it happen. So, back in the old country, in New Zealand, we had this saying.

[10 : 48] And the saying was this. If you don't like the weather, just wait a minute. And it was true. Like, it was one of the most truest sayings in New Zealand.

You could walk outside. It could be thundering and pouring down with rain. A howling wind. Completely terrible outside. And you would just say, Dorei, just wait a minute.

The weather will be better shortly. And honestly, like five minutes later, It could just be beautiful sunshine. Like, the weather is just bonkers. Like, we just don't get it.

But here it's saying, and this is an example, But God gets it. It happens like it happens in God's wisdom. We don't understand it. But God has reasons behind it.

Looks random to us, but not to God. So, as Job is wrestling with his pain, And he's looking for answers. He's never reprimanded for looking and asking. That's fine to do that. But he is reminded here that There is a way to look at everything That makes perfect sense.

[11 : 56] There is a way to look at everything in the world And all the events that make perfect sense. But only God has that perspective. Job is being reminded here, There is more to his suffering than he will ever know.

And in fact, we will get to the end of this book. We will get to the end of the book of Job. And Job will never find out why he suffered. But God always knew. And just because we don't know the reason, Just because we don't understand the suffering, It doesn't mean there isn't a reason for it. So life can feel so brutal and random, Like the weather. But there is wisdom behind it. It's just wisdom we don't have access to.

Think about it like this. Imagine that you have had a baby, And after a couple of months, That baby has to get its shots, Has to get vaccinated. You will take, And I've been there, I've been there a lot. You know, you take the baby to your family doctor, And you put the baby on your knee, And the doctor says, Put your arms around the baby, Lock it in. And it gets a shot in each arm.

[13 : 05] That child of yours will look at you, And feel utterly betrayed by you, As you hold them, And the pain comes, And they are thinking, Why am I, Why is this happening to me?

Why am I feeling this pain? What have you done to me? And you have no way of explaining to them, What's going on? Because you know immeasurably more than them, But you can't get it across.

You can't explain to them how antibodies work. You can't explain to the baby what, And how antigen functions. That's something of a crude parallel to what's going on here.

As we wrestle with pain, And some of it is just so awful, As we wrestle with it, And we try and make sense of situations we find ourselves in, We're reminded in Job 28, There is more going on.

There is more going on than we can understand. And there is a way of looking at it from God's perspective, As our creator that makes sense to God. We just don't have access to that

perspective.

[14 : 15] Not all the time anyway. But he sees everything. We only see a part. So this hymn to wisdom technically finishes in verse 27.

But there's a final verse, It doesn't have the same cadence or rhythm than the rest of it. It's like a postscript. Verse 28, It will come up on your screen here. Verse 28, And he, That's God, Said to man, Behold, The fear of the Lord, That is wisdom.

And to turn away from evil is understanding. So do you see what it's doing here? It says, Even though you can't see from God's perspective, God says, Walk with me.

Trust me. I have that wisdom. So you're sort of directed away from finding out all the reasons to the person who knows the reason. So we never get the theory of everything, but we get God, and we get to walk with him.

And that's what the poem says we should do. Be in awe of him. Live in a way that pleases him, which is what Job's been doing all along. He's been seeking God. Here's an image that maybe is helpful.

[15 : 21] It's like, Imagine you're walking into a forest, and you see a house in the distance, and that's like your sanctuary, and the lights are on. And it's the only light you see. What are you going to do?

You focus on that light, and you keep walking towards that light. There's all this stuff going on around you. You don't understand it. You can't really see it. You can't do anything about it, really. You just keep walking towards what has been shown to you.

You see those lights on. You walk towards that light. So to finish, does the New Testament add anything to this? Yes.

I mean, there's a lot you could say, but I'm just going to, I just want to show you one verse here, Colossians 2, 2 to 3. God's mystery is Christ. Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

So God's wisdom is mostly hidden from us, but it is put on spectacular display in Christ. Jesus Christ is at the center of God's wisdom.

[16 : 25] So we might not understand everything, but we have a savior. We don't have the answers, but we have a person. We have someone to seek, someone to be in awe of, someone to follow, and someone to trust with all our joy and with all our grief and our pain.

Amen. animals are just the self- flame. Amen. Sages are the starting point of the pattern in the early years of the ■■ kahkaha.

Sages are the starting point of all of our pain. Sages are the starting point of the■■jus of■■■■, going into to the identification of célest rotting of Joseph and all of our daily miracles to get done. Sages are the starting point of the pattern that's arab■ to have warned■kö Tabii, through that the pain of this nation.