**Reflections on Job 38:1-7, 34-41**

**Begin with an opening prayer**

Lord, you are amazing and wonderful.  
You are dressed in the beauty of the world you created.  
You control the skies and the waters.  
We praise you for your countless creations,  
for the stunning beauty you have made.  
You made them in your wisdom.  
We praise you, Lord.  
**Amen.**

**Read the passage**

*Consider different ways to read the text. For example, hearing it in more than one version of the Bible.*

Job 38: 1-7, 34-41

**The Lord Speaks**

**38**Then the Lord spoke to Job out of the storm. He said:

**2**“Who is this that obscures my plans  
    with words without knowledge?  
**3**Brace yourself like a man;  
    I will question you,  
    and you shall answer me.

**4**“Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation?  
    Tell me, if you understand.  
**5**Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!  
    Who stretched a measuring line across it?  
**6**On what were its footings set,  
    or who laid its cornerstone—  
**7**while the morning stars sang together  
    and all the angels[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=job%2038&version=NIV#fen-NIV-13801a)] shouted for joy?

**34**“Can you raise your voice to the clouds  
    and cover yourself with a flood of water?  
**35**Do you send the lightning bolts on their way?  
    Do they report to you, ‘Here we are’?  
**36**Who gives the ibis wisdom[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=job%2038&version=NIV#fen-NIV-13830f)]  
    or gives the rooster understanding?[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=job%2038&version=NIV#fen-NIV-13830g)]  
**37**Who has the wisdom to count the clouds?  
    Who can tip over the water jars of the heavens  
**38**when the dust becomes hard  
    and the clods of earth stick together?

**39**“Do you hunt the prey for the lioness  
    and satisfy the hunger of the lions  
**40**when they crouch in their dens  
    or lie in wait in a thicket?  
**41**Who provides food for the raven  
    when its young cry out to God  
    and wander about for lack of food?

**Explore and respond to the text**

*Start by reading the Bible notes below. You may want to read them more than once or pause after each paragraph to reflect on what you have read.*

**Bible notes**As we read though the Bible an interesting question arises. Does God change or do the writers’ understandings of God change? CS Rodd suggests that when reading Job, ‘We need to put away all thoughts of the rather sentimental “fatherhood” of God that have become common in modern Christianity. God in Job is the omnipotent and omniscient creator’(1). One could say God in Job is like the drill sergeant Emil Foley, played by Louis Gossett Jr in the classic film An Officer and a Gentleman. Foley’s sole mission seems to be to get new recruit Zack Mayo (played by Richard Gere) to ‘man up’ (cf ‘Gird up your loins like a man’, Job 38:3), putting him through an endless sequence of hellish physical and psychological tests. The whirlwind (38:1) emphasises the power and transcendence of God. The verses that follow form quite a contrast to chapter one, when God is celebrating Job. Here God addresses Job very harshly. One commentator describes it as the divine cross examination. In verses four to seven, we have a picture of creation in keeping with the religio-scientific thinking of the time. Pointing to the complexity of creation, God none too subtly lets Job know who is boss.

**Reflection**

*Spend a few moments thinking about what stands out for you from the Bible reading. This idea may help.*

In both Job and Psalm 104, reverence or respect for God centres on God’s work of creation. Celebrating God’s work in creation is a popular theme of both songs and prayers used in gathered worship. But what about the rest of life? How does the way in which we treat creation speak of our attitude towards the Creator? Does it speak of reverence or indifference or even contempt? And what does our consumption of the resources of creation say about our attitude to others? Do we lord it over those with less or give of ourselves for their good?

**Questions for reflection**

A silhouette of a person in a field with a starry sky

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**Questions**

* What fills you with awe?
* How do you respond to something vast and beyond your comprehension?
* What words could you use to describe how wonderful God is?
* **A prayer to end the Bible study**
* Go with God and search for his wonders.  
  Go with God and look for his glory.  
  Go with God to proclaim his greatness.  
  Go with God as your Lord and your friend.  
  **Amen.**