

## September 13<sup>th</sup>

### Chapters 38-39

God speaks at last to Job from the whirlwind. Despite what Elihu has said these last few chapters, God DOES speak to Job as if God were Job's legal opponent. God speaks directly to what Job accused God of in chapter 9 (that the world is random, without design), and God defends God's self against these claims, showing God to be wise and able to govern. In verse 2, the Lord asks "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" in other words, who is the one who denigrates my divine design? Job had accused God of not knowing how to create, so God responds by asking if Job was present at creation to witness creation for himself? God questions Job repeatedly, in defense of the divine design of the world, to which Job has no answer. God reveals that everything, even the seemingly stupid ostrich, was made stupid by God's design. God's hand of intention is present in every aspect of our creation, the beautiful, the foolish, the playful. God lists 8 items of design from the inanimate world, and 8 items of design from the animal and bird kingdoms, it's interesting that neither Job nor the human race as a whole are mentioned in this list of God's achievements. In other words, God is saying that humanity is NOT the center of the universe.

38: 1-11, A common myth told at this time was that the sea was a monster whom the storm god defeated in order to create the sea as we know it. Here, the fearsome monster of myth is reduced to an adorable infant, whose waters are the primordial birth waters rather than the remnants of violence. God is so enormous, that God wrapped the clouds and skies around the sea as a parents swaddles an infant. God baby-proofed the world by establishing the precise boundaries of the lands, past which the sea could not cross.

38:12-41, God responds to Job's accusation that God does not distinguish between the wicked and the righteous by stating that the Dawn rises and exposes the deeds of darkness and wickedness. God again reveals that God knows things that are simply inscrutable for human beings to know. Through all of this talk of righteousness and wickedness, God reminds Job that God even sends rain showers on the land where no humans live, so that this world which God loves and created so precisely will flourish. The earth does nothing to deserve God's blessing, it simply is part of God's design. God knows where the weather comes from, and God knows the

place of every star. God hears the cries of the animals, and provides prey for them to eat and be nourished. Even the circle of life, which seems brutal, is God's design for the providence of our world.

In Chapter 39, God presents God's self as the midwife for all of creation, following the pregnancy schedules of all living creatures, and attending all births, and providing for the young who swiftly leave their mother's side. God details the strange, inhospitable habitats in which some creatures happily make their homes, and lauds the heroism of horses and their usefulness to humans in battle. Everything in our world is by God's design, and human beings, according to this passage, are not necessarily the center of it all.