

# Where Is Wisdom?

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Preacher: Niels van de Kastele

[ 0 : 0 0 ] our father thank you that we are not in the dark thank you that light has come into the world supremely in jesus but your word is a light to our feet and a lamp to our path please speak to us now speak to our hearts address our fears address our concerns address our anxieties address yeah our sin point us to jesus point us to his love his grace on the cross to your greatness please yeah do a deep work in us now by your spirit as we hear you speak to us in jesus name amen and reza will read from the book of job our scripture reading for today is from the book of job chapter 28 starting in verse 1 surely there is a mine for silver and a place for gold that they refined iron is taken out of the earth and copper is smelted from the ore man puts an end to darkness and searches out of the farthest limit and the ore in gloom and deep darkness he opens shafts in a valley away from where anyone lives they are forgotten by travelers they hang in the air far away from mankind they swing to and throw as for the earth out of it comes bread but underneath it is turned up as by fire its stones are the place of the fires and it has dust of gold that patno bird of prey knows and the falcon's eyes has not seen it the proud bees have not rooted in it the lions has not passed over it man puts his hand to the flinty rock and overturns mountains by the roots he cuts out channels in the rocks and his eyes sees every precious thing he dumps up the streams so that they not trickle and the thing that is hidden he brings out to light but where shall wisdom be found and where is the place of understanding man doesn't know its words and it is not found in the land of the living the deep says it is not in me and the sea says it is not with with me it cannot be bought for gold and silver cannot be weighed as its price it cannot be valued in the gold of offer in precious onyx or sapphire gold and glass cannot equal it nor can it be exchanged for jewels or fine gold no mention shall be made of coral or of crystals the price of wisdom is above pearls the topaz of utopia cannot equal it nor can it be valued in pure gold from where then does wisdom come and where is the place of understanding it is hidden from the eyes of all living and concealed from the birds of the air abaddon and death say we have heard a rumor of it with our ears god understands the way to it and he knows its place for he looks to the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens when he gave to the wind its weights and apportioned to the waters by measure when he made a decree for the rain and a way for the lightning of a thunder then he saw it and declared it he established it and searched it out and he said to the man behold the fear of the lord that is wisdom and to turn away from evil is understanding this is the word of god thank you risa that's great to keep the passage open as we'll look at it together as well as some other further chapters from job but yeah as you've heard the word wisdom come up a few times i don't know about you but i love to know things and i love to kind of i hate not knowing things and so i really love having a smartphone with the internet in my pockets i don't know if you have that our family dinners when we talk about something and something comes up from the past and i forgot it and so what is my natural response i get

out my phone and i go to google and find the answer right and try to remember i know what we're all it's very rude i shouldn't do that but it's right we want to know stuff uh uh now of course we have chat gpt and that will give you an even nicer answer rather than some websites um no we want to know things that's how we live right we live by knowing things the more we know the better we can live that's what everyone believes but of course where can we find the answer to everything and we've been looking at the book of job and the job is about when actually when there's no answer when something very difficult happens and we can't understand it why did this great man uh this wonderful godly man suddenly experience such intense suffering and we don't know i mean could chad gpt help i thought i'd just try that hey chad gpt why am i suffering okay this is what they said i'm sorry to hear that you're suffering i mean that's very nice right but uh there could be many reasons why you might be experiencing difficulties both physical and emotional it might be helpful to

seek support from a health care professional or a therapist who can help you identify the root cause of your suffering and work with you to find effective ways to manage it in the meantime please know that you're not alone and there are resources available to help you yeah we don't know right there might be lots of reasons you're not alone i think for job that's really comfortable right with his friends around him with he's just been arguing yeah you're not alone uh but this doesn't help right the thing and then the thing is we often don't know what to do i mean what does it say here find someone who can help you manage it the thing is if you suffer you want to do something about it and and what can i do about it and if you don't know what's wrong what should you do i mean if you are sick you want to know okay what is this sickness right that's why you go to the doctor and a doctor can now tell you okay this is wrong and you need this medicine if you don't know then what can you do and it can be paralyzing otherwise but then again does that really help all right sometimes sadly there's medical conditions and you don't know what it is uh sometimes even even if you know how the question is why right that's the existential question okay i can see how cancer comes about i can't see why i now get cancer right that's a much deeper question and and why was there covet that messed up the world so much and why is there a war in ukraine and you can think of of course we can give some explanations but basically we don't know and that's why job is so great to study right it addresses the questions we have uh or maybe prepares us basically for when we have questions and no answers and that's what we want to know because we all get older and we're all going to face difficulties that we are not even aware of yet how will we be ready and in a way especially this chapter is going to be really helpful now what is this chapter that you just heard i think it's helpful to look at the the structure of of job we're going through the book of job and last week i kind of forgot to uh do that i thought i'd put it here so these are kind of how job is this long book but divided into sections here we looked at the the introduction where kind of things in heaven and how job loses everything and then he complains and then last week we did those 24 chapters and you may wonder is that just one big section well it's a debate between job and his friends and basically a friend says something and job responds and the next friend and job responds etc so they just go around in a circle one by one if you read through it oh yeah now it makes sense right it's just they go round and round three times although the third time they kind of get stuck and you know the the second friend build up he's got almost nothing to say and so far he's got really he's silent uh they get stuck as we heard last week because job he suffers he goes through this really difficult time and they thought there's a simple explanation you know sin except that that is not the explanation and and then what is it and so they're kind of stuck and actually as the book goes on we are not having dialogues anymore we're having monologues we're having just you know speeches uh job will make a final appeal and then elihu some guy shows up we'll look at him next week god himself will show up and we have the epilogue that's what we're going to do but then what is today's chapter because as you can see in the color i called it the same as the the beginning and the end i mean you could think this is just job right because before it is job and after it is job and it doesn't say who is speaking it in verse 20 in verse one but it's very different from how job speaks right job he is very angry and agitated after this debate and this poem is very calm it's very reflective and so most people think actually this is uh inserted by the by the writer by the narrator let's press pause and let's just see where we got to uh like uh yeah acquire in a greek tragedy or something like that um so it's uh it's a way to step back and that's really helpful for us and as you can hear well this is wisdom literature this is it's about wisdom right verse 12 where is wisdom to be found verse 20 from where then does wisdom come and in the last verse uh behold this is wisdom it is about wisdom wisdom of course is about knowing and understanding uh but it's about understanding the world and how it works understanding god's world so that we can live in it right the wise person knows how to live and of course how you live is related to how you think the world works so what is wisdom and that is what job and his friends try to do they try to okay what is the wise thing to do how do we understand this well let's see and so this would be really helpful for us and well the first thing that we get from this poem it's not what we want to hear but wisdom is inaccessible wisdom is inaccessible we can't find it out we can't reach it there's a lot of interesting things about how god covers the world but we don't know them and the comparison here is with uh with mining right uh getting metals or or jewels uh verse one surely there's a mine for silver and a place for gold that they refine iron is taken out of the earth and copper is smelted from the ore right this is of course three and a half five thousand years ago and so uh back then yeah or it doesn't grow in trees right how do you get iron well you need to mine you need to uh well the man goes to the mountains he uh he puts his hand to the flinty rock and overturns

mountains by the roots he cuts out channels in the rocks and he uh you know you go to the mountains and you dig a deep tunnel and you hang and you pick and you look for metal and gems and yeah i mean mankind we're very creative and we're very curious and we if we want something we try and get it right and so that's what we do uh of course this is a long time ago if this was modern it would talk about quantum mechanics how does everything work uh exploring the universe we want to know all the secrets we want to know all the the precious things and that's and we've explored a lot we understand a lot about the world but verse 12 where shall wisdom be found and where's the place of understanding you know can we find out why things happen can we understand how god runs the world can we understand how why job job suffers and the answer is uh no right uh verse 13 man does not know it's worth it's not found in the land of the living you can dig all you want you can explore all you want

you can't find out how god runs the world uh even you know verse 14 the deep says it's not in me the sea says it's not with me you know the most inaccessible places in the world right the bottom of the ocean it's not there you can go all the way there you can't find it even though it's so precious right because it goes on look wisdom would be so wonderful verse 15 it cannot be bought for gold silver cannot be weighed in its price and verse 19 the topaz of ethiopia can't equal it nor can it be valued in pure gold wouldn't you want to understand all the secrets won't you wouldn't you want to understand why things happen in your life and in the world of course we want to we'll be so valuable but again we can't right verse 20 from where then does wisdom come where's the place of understanding it is hidden from the eyes of all living and concealed from the birds of the air abeddon and death say we've heard a rumor of it with our ears even if you leave this world you go to the place of the death you go to the spiritual realm is it there is there how we can find it out and they say well yeah maybe someone once mentioned it i think i remember i'm not quite sure right basically we can't find out wisdom we can't find out how the world works instead well verse 23 the only one knows is god god understands the way to it he knows its place god understands the world right why well because he he understands it verse 24 for he looks to the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens when he gave to the wind its weight and apportioned the waters by measure when he made a decree for the rain and a way for the lightning of the thunder and then he saw it and declared it he established it and searched it out now why does god understand the world so well well he made it right he made the winds and the thunder and everything he knows why that's running wind and thunder right for them farmers that controlled life i mean god made those god runs those so yeah he knows how the world works but we don't right we are humans we're limited creatures we can't find it out we don't understand how god runs everything this chapter says and it's a bit of a rebuke right here are job and his friends and they've been arguing well this is why you're suffering and this is why this happens and they got nowhere and the narrator and the writer says yeah that's right they got nowhere because some things we just don't know there's a lot of things we do know but many things in life why this happens we just don't know maybe you are struggling with things you know you have this great relationship and you broke up why we don't know you know this uh you didn't get into the uni program you wanted why i don't know why did all your best friends leave hong kong well you can give some reasons but other people are still here you know why we don't know right there's so much we just don't know god knows he governs the world and you can of course seek him and ask him and try and pray but you may get it wrong right basically we don't know maybe you're here as a visitor and you want to know you're looking for answers right you're wondering why does this happen and why that and christianity has a lot of answers it has a lot of wisdom trust me if you look at it and yet there are some things we can't explain there are some things that okay generally i can see it but why this particular thing happened god hasn't told us and i'm sorry i don't know we need some uh but what do we need then because this is ah frustrating right we want to know the answer but

well wouldn't it be great if god just told us right if god knows it he could tell us and well at the last verse he said to man right god tells mankind okay here's the answer what what do we need what is wisdom and he says well wisdom here's wisdom wisdom is revealed right second point but it's maybe not what you expect what did he say well behold the fear of the lord that is wisdom and to turn away from evil is understanding you want to be wise well fear the lord live in a right relationship with him turn away from evil live his way basically make god the center of your life and and live like that and and that's wisdom now you may wonder is that how the world works actually wisdom kind of it has two meanings maybe you wondered did i make a spelling mistake in the title that uh it said wisdom with a lower case actually wisdom with a capital w is kind of how the world how god runs

the world uh wisdom with a lower case is how we live in the light of it okay do you see those two that's uh yeah in hebrew it's like it's the wisdom versus a wisdom kind of did that make sense but uh that's why it's like this but lower case wisdom this is how to live and it's the same actually in all the wisdom books right if you've read proverbs what does it say well the fear of the lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the holy one is insight you want to be wise well the fear of the lord again ecclesiastes last year right this whole book about how the world doesn't make any sense how should we live 12 verse 13 the end of the matter all has been heard fear god and keep his commandments but this is the whole duty of man the same thing right fear god and keep his commandments i mean slightly different turn away from evil versus keep his commandments job didn't have the law that's why it can't say keep his commandments because he didn't have them but that's the idea uh fear yeah it's about god you you fear him you trust him you follow him which feels a bit like a cop-out right i don't know what you think i'm a parent and my kids always ask why why do i need to do this and if you're a parent you can relate and i always try to explain right i'm a i'm an engineer science background i want to always give okay this is why and i keep on explaining and e j is always very frustrated they should just do what you say but i want to explain and but the bible it often gives reasons it often tells you a lot of useful things but sometimes it just says no here it's just you know trust god fear god live his way and and and that's enough just follow him when you don't understand it there's lots that you don't understand just follow him although it's not unrelated right they're not two unrelated things i mean what is the connection between the two well god is of course the one who runs the world and who governs the world who made the world it makes sense of course that you trust him right if you want to use something well how was it made who made it and then you know how it works right so so following the maker following the creator makes really good sense but that's the idea we don't know how the world works but god does so let's just trust him let's just follow him now of course what does this mean i mean fearing god that's such a strange phrase right and it sounds like being terrified and being being afraid of god actually it's not like that because if you hear that fear god and turn away from evil who is the best example of that well in this book it's very simple right it's job job himself how did he get introduced in one verse one and there was a man in the land of us whose name was job and that

[ 20 : 11 ] man was blameless and upright one who feared god and turned away from evil you want to see what it looks like to follow god and look at job and job wasn't terrified of god right he loved god and he sought god and when he went through unimaginable things he asked hard questions and he missed god and he wanted him and he wanted an answer and he wanted his friendship back and but he certainly didn't come across as afraid right no fearing god is just that he's number one that he's the one you're yeah who is the most important in your life and therefore yeah you trust him you follow him and then that is what job did right in all for the debate last week he kept on wanting to speak to god if only if i could speak with god and because he he knew him he loved him that is fearing god treating god as he deserves having a right relationship with him though of course what does that look like then as well well it of course if you trust him you will live his way right of turning away from evil which is of course also what job did anyway you get a really beautiful picture of that as you read on in the next few chapters because job gives kind of this this final appeal yeah his summary defense you know god i don't understand this i don't deserve this i think please let me know why i'm going through this it sets up the answers we will get from elihu and god himself but but let's just look at what job is like yeah so what does he miss so chapter 29 he will long ago things were so good but what what did what did he miss oh verse 2 oh that i were as in the months of old as in the days when god watched over me when his lamp shone upon my head and by his light i walked through darkness as i was in my prime when the friendship of god was upon my tent when the almighty was yet with me and when my children were all around me he doesn't say oh back when i was rich and when i was healthy no when when god was with me when he was his friendship was with me and you know we we did things together and you know what does he miss he missed doing good because what was job like verse 7 when i went out to the sit the gate of the city when i prepared my seat in the square the young man saw me and withdrew and the aged rose and stood why was job so respected his money no um verse 12 because i delivered the poor who cried for help and the fatherless who had none to help him i put on righteousness and it clothed me my justice was like a robe and a turban and he was such a selfless man yeah he was rich he was the richest man around but he used he did good and then now of course that's all gone chapter 30 yeah i've lost everything 30 verse one my now my now they laugh at me men who are younger than i whose fathers i would have disdained to set with the dogs of my flock uh verse 19 god has cast me

into the mire i've become like dust and ashes i cry to you for help and you do not answer me i stand and you only look at me yeah god this is my situation and so please give me an answer chapter 31 let me be weighed in a just balance and let god know my integrity oh that i had want to hear me here's my signature let the almighty answer me he wants an answer joe yeah god why i don't know what you think is he asking too much is he demanding god show up and tell me where we're going to see the coming weeks whether that is right but you can see his heart right his heart for god and his heart to do good chapter 31 it's so challenging as he just says look god i haven't done anything i mean uh 31 verse 1 it puts us to shame um i have made a covenant with my eyes how then could i gaze

at a virgin right i've made a solemn agreement i'm not going to look at kind of young unmarried women you know challenging right somewhere in hong kong uh challenging uh he treats his slave so well right i think that's that's interesting chapter 31 uh verse 13 if i've rejected the cause of my manservant or my maidservant when they brought a complaint against me yeah if i've treated my slaves badly uh verse 15 did not he who made me in the womb make him and did not one fashion us in the womb so he says my slaves and me we're the same we're both made my gods right you maybe you think the bible justifies slavery or something like that some people say that actually three and a thousand years ago it said well we're both human and so i shouldn't treat them badly amazing and uh of course we saw he did good right he uh he helped the poor and uh good for hong kongers he he didn't trust in money verse 24 if i have made gold my trust or called fine gold my confidence job in so many ways he really loved god and followed him you know it is a far higher standard than the old testament law it's it's almost the sermon on the mount it's so uh yeah now i don't know what you think of this you hear that and we need to hear it rightly i know how i usually hear this i hear this and think oh man this is what i need to obey this is what the standard that i need to keep if i want to really uh live god's way of course then we're sinners we can't we we can never fully live up to this i know i mean job needs to be amazing right for this book to work if job was just an or was if yeah no one would ever think that i'm innocent and yeah right it has to be someone blameless and perfect for this book to raise this question but then we think oh job is just an ideal and we don't even try actually uh if we love god if we know who he is we want to live his way even though if you don't do it perfectly i hope you know if you love god you want to live we don't want to trust in other things and we don't want to displease him and we want to have his heart for other people and those kind of things right that's just natural and if he says what is good then i guess we follow it right of course we don't want to trust gold because god is our number one god is the one we trust and also he says that money is the root of all kinds of the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil no wonder we shouldn't be greedy it's not good for us we should yeah but i hope you can see the point right uh again don't mistake last week last week i said your suffering's got nothing to do with your sin don't take that just to mean okay sin really doesn't matter all right justice denied well actually it's justice delayed but the point is this it's about how we live right we may not understand what happens in life we can't understand what god is doing but we just keep trusting him and keep living for him and keep following him uh which means yeah trying to please him doing what he says is right and doing and that's that's how you live if you trust someone you live as that person says as that person wants you to live because that's that's a relationship right i hope that makes sense but that's the challenge for us right maybe some very difficult thing happens at work tomorrow and what are you going to do maybe you wonder why why did god put this in my life i guess it says don't turn away right don't be like job's wife you know curse god and die you know seek him pray ask for answers but trust him right don't turn away from him when it happens uh don't don't be paralyzed actually you know what to do right maybe oh what should i do now well keep trusting god and keep just living his way it's actually not difficult um don't you know don't pause on your christian life i have that sometimes and when your life is messed up okay i'm gonna just press pause and i'm not gonna do anything christian until i know the answer i think that that's very tempting right uh i'm not gonna uh yeah actually that is this is no uh keep going keep trusting keep living keep walking just keep going with god even if you have no idea what's going on you have no idea why this is coming to your life god says just trust me and keep going in a way it's liberating right we we know what to do god has told us just keep following me and it'll work out it'll be fine just keep trusting me i think what we need to do then yeah do we trust god right here's the question we we trust our knowledge more than other things right if i just know the answer then i trust that and god actually says well in this case you're human and i'm god and you know you just

need to trust me you can't know everything you just need to trust me and can we trust him oh yeah i think you know the answer to that right can we trust him yes we can and especially as christians because we have something that job didn't have right because we talk about wisdom that it's so inaccessible right it's uh it's not here on earth it's not in the realm of the dead where it's it's with god but what if wisdom didn't stay up in heaven what if wisdom came down and that's the thing right wisdom has come down and proverbs talks about wisdom as a person how a person kind of you know through whom god created the world and uh you know that other philosophies did that like the greeks they thought of uh the the principle behind the universe the logos or word and john picks that up in his gospel john says hey uh there is a person at the heart of who god is john one in the beginning was the word and the word was with god and the word was god he was in the beginning with god all things were made through him without him was not anything made that was made here is the one through whom god made everything here's the one who is in a way at the heart of the universe right and then that person yeah came down and the word became flesh and dwelt among us and we have seen his glory glory as the only son from the father full of grace and truth god sent him down to us god's wisdom become become human and so yeah he is where we he's then the source of all wisdom right that's what paul says when he says you know i want you all to know christ because then what can we do well to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of god's mystery which is christ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge everything you might want to know about the universe everything god wants to tell us about everything it's in christ doesn't mean that if you know jesus you can get seven phds that's not what it means no it means that you know we now know the heart of god we know god has revealed more to us than ever before he's revealed what is at the heart of who god is right a father and a son loving each other in the unity of the spirit god has made known the heart of his plans to bring everything together under christ right he has made his his heart his character right how do we see god so clearly when jesus came down and died on the cross in his love and grace for all our sin and all our rebellion and all our unbelief that is how we can see who god really is we we know him better than ever before and when he revealed himself job wanted to speak to god well actually god

was here god the wisdom of god in human form and we know him and that means that yeah we we can't understand the world but we can know this person we can know this wonderful person and who has all the answers and surely if someone died for you you can trust him right if he's gave his life for you you can give your life to him we don't know how the world works but it's run by the one who died for you then we can trust him and that is what we have that job didn't have and so let's do this right we don't understand everything we don't understand why sickness and disasters and accidents and things that we don't know why all this happens we just know it's in jesus hands and so let's let's trust him let's keep following him let's be committed to okay i'm gonna keep doing what jesus wants i don't know what's going on but i know what he says is right and i'm gonna live his way and trust that he will love me and he will bring me through and he will sort everything out in the end and i yeah that is it that is how a christian lives by faith we repent and we trust in jesus and we trust him in all of life why don't we do that together why don't i give you some time i've put two questions here on the screen to think about you know just think how are you tempted to respond when things don't make sense well what is your temptation are you paralyzed and do you press pause on your christianity do you turn away from god now what will it look like for you to fear the lord and turn away from evil and and then just think about jesus and his love for you and how that changes things so let me give you a minute or two and then i'll pray for us adoration and

Thank you.

[ 35 : 08 ] Thank you.

Thank you. Let's pray together. Father, we want to humble ourselves before you. We admit that you are God and we're not. And we don't know everything that's going on. We don't understand the deep workings of you, of you, how you rule the universe, how you rule our lives. But thank you that we can trust you. Thank you that you sent your son. That he is now the one ruling the universe for our good to bring us home, to bring everything to completion. Help us to trust. Help us to see where we are tempted to not live with you, not follow Jesus. Turn us in love and trust back to him, back to your son.

[ 36 : 30 ] That we would know your love and live accordingly. Thank you we can do that. Thank you that you graciously revealed that we can just trust you. By your spirit, please strengthen us and help

us to do that.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.