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## Job 39.

(2015)

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But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

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## Job 39.

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### Topics.

- Do you know when goats give birth and deliver their young?
- Who has let the wild donkey freely roam the mountains?
- Is the unicorn willing to serve you? Will he spend the night at your manger?
- The wings of the ostrich wave proudly, she, laughs at the horse and rider.
- Do you make the horse leap like the locust and say 'Aha!' at thunder?
- Is it by your wisdom the hawk soars and the eagle makes its nest on high?

**FOR INFORMATION:** concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

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**INTRODUCTION:** the book of Job is considered both a theological and a literary masterpiece it is an honest discussion of why God allows good people to suffer. The test of Job's faith, allowed by God in response to a challenge from Satan, reveals God's sovereignty and the supremacy of divine wisdom over human wisdom (personified by Job's four friends). Believing that God is good despite the apparent evidence to the contrary, Job rested in faith alone.

In the depths of agony he could still proclaim, "I know that my Redeemer lives" (Job 19:25). In the end God silenced all discussion against the truth that He alone is wise (Job chpts. 38–41). Yet he vindicated Job's trust in him (chpt. 42), proving that genuine faith cannot be destroyed. The unknown author was probably an Israelite writing sometime between 2000 and 500 B.C.

**Helpful facts:** before reading Job it is helpful to understand when Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu are speaking they are not speaking, "thus sayeth the LORD", they are simply giving their opinions on how they personally perceive things to be. Amongst their conversations there is truth and wisdom, but it must be kept in mind not everything they are saying is true or even wise, in fact God rebukes Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar and tells them they have spoken foolishness, but Job has spoken what is right (Job 42:7-9). The book of Job is not about doctrinal truth, but human suffering and the questions regarding God that arise during a person's calamity and pain.

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The LORD speaks

### Do You Know when Goats Give Birth and Deliver their Young?

Job 39:1-4 ----- <sup>1</sup>"Do you know when the mountain goats give birth? Do you observe the calving of the does?  
<sup>2</sup>Can you number the months that they fulfill, and do you know the time when they give birth,  
<sup>3</sup>when they crouch, bring forth their offspring, and are delivered of their young?  
<sup>4</sup>Their young ones become strong; they grow up in the open; they go out and do not return to them.

In the previous chapter the LORD spoke to Job out of a whirlwind (Job 38:1-3) and asked him a multitude of questions he could not answer. Now in this chapter the LORD continues asking Job questions. The idea that God is speaking to Job out of a whirlwind means He is speaking to Job out of a dark and thick cloud. God is often represented in Scripture as speaking to people in this way perhaps for the following three reasons: -

1. If God appeared to us in our fallen sinful state His glory would destroy us so He has to veil Himself when He appears to man.
2. Veiling Himself in dark clouds was the usual method of manifesting Himself to men in those times.
3. To humble and awaken Job and his friends to the seriousness of what He is about to say and to give His words greater majesty.

The LORD said that Job's speeches had been without knowledge this does not refer to natural human knowledge, but to the knowledge of the entire universe, the sun, moon, stars and creation and complete knowledge of God himself and His ways. Another way of saying the same thing would be to write Job's speeches had been bound and limited by man's mortal and limited knowledge and understanding of God and of the entire universe and creation and of God's ways with mankind on earth etc.

God is about to be Job's vindicator and abundantly bless him, but He must first bring him to a right state of mind. Job wrongly craved understanding of God's ways and passionately desired that God explain Himself to him when the right attitude would have been to submit to God's working in his life. God rather than vindicating Himself to Job humbles Job by shining a brilliant spotlight upon the enormous lack of his knowledge of God and upon the littleness of his knowledge of creation and of the universe and of the pride of man.

When we are in doubt to what is happening in our lives and we have done all we can do, but still have no control over our circumstance great faith does not doubt and question God, if we are tempted to complain about and question God we should heed the voice of wisdom which shouts "Exalt and adore silence." (i.e., don't speak). If we are suffering a trial or hardship that we have no control over as Job was the only way to find peace is to accept it and rather than spend all our time complaining and adjust our life accordingly. God now continues with his questions.

**The first question:** (v1-4) do you know when the mountain goats give birth? If the question was of domestic goats perhaps Job maybe able to answer yes, but it is of wild goats that dwell in high and steep rocks and roamed at large on inaccessible cliffs and steep-mountain sides where no man can go. These goats would with the greatest of ease leap from mountain to mountain with nimble swiftness. Often these mountains were covered with dark thick forests making it near impossible for man to observe the goats.

But the question implies much more than human observation and knowledge of the particular time such an animal is born which can be discovered by careful observation. The question embraces the exact moment of conception and their inward instincts which only God can know and the care of them and their new-born in such dangerous dwelling places. These verses highlight the truth that God not only cares for the domestic animals that have been tamed and brought into the care and service of man, who provides them with food, shelter and comfort, but also cares for the wild animals of the mountains the forests and the wilderness.

The underlying message of God's question carries the following thought, "O vain man that would think he could understand my wisdom, knowledge and secrets, he who has never climbed the rocks to see the wild goats give birth or assisted with their labour or cared and feed them.

### **Who Has Let the Wild Donkey Freely Roam the Mountains?**

Job 39:5-8 ----- <sup>5</sup>"Who has let the wild donkey (wild ass free in KJV) go free? Who has loosed the bonds of the swift donkey (wild ass free in KJV), <sup>6</sup>to whom I have given the arid plain for his home and the salt land for his dwelling place? <sup>7</sup>He scorns the tumult of the city; he hears not the shouts of the driver. <sup>8</sup>He ranges the mountains as his pasture, and he searches after every green thing.

In the question, who has let the wild donkey (wild ass free in KJV) go free? The word donkey (ass) comes from the Hebrew word (*cappiyr*) and literally means a gem while the word wild comes from the Hebrew word (*pere'*) and carries the idea

of running wild. In the question, who has loosed the bonds of the swift donkey (wild ass free in KJV), the word donkey (ass) comes from the Hebrew word (*'arowd*) and refers to one who has lonesome habits while the word wild comes from the Hebrew word (*'arowd*) and carries the idea of a fugitive, because of lonesome habits. It is not referring to two different animals (as some think), but to different aspects of the same animal.

**Who has let the wild donkey go free?** (Job 39:5) does not mean who has set it free from bondage and sent it out into the wilderness? Since it never was in bondage until it was tamed. Its natural nature and temperament is to always be free to roam the pasturelands at its pleasure. The question carries the following three ideas, who has given the wild donkey such a nature and temperament that: -

1. He loves freedom and so fiercely hates subjection that he strongly resists it while many other creatures willingly and peacefully submit too such authority and subjection.
2. He loves not being under the restraint of any to roam free in wilderness places.
3. He is obstinate, stubborn and fiercely tenacious to resist any form of authority and subjection.

It is certainly true that the wild donkey maybe tamed, but it chooses to be free since this is its true nature. God is basically pointing out to Job if you cannot even establish the nature and instincts within wild animals which I have done, why would you even begin to think I should explain myself to you? If Job was to be held guilty of any sin it was, believing God should explain Himself to mere mortal man. Job was not guilty of being a self-righteous man, or a hypocrite, or a wicked man as Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu accused him of being, but he was guilty of requiring God to explain Himself to him.

Having said this no one should think of Job too harshly since he was speaking from ignorance and confusion, pain and suffering and not from any malice of the heart or from a spirit of condemnation as Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu were speaking to him. Added to this it is very likely much of what Job said many faithful believers throughout all generations suffering extreme hardships and painful sicknesses month after month have thought in the silent self-talk of their minds.

For further insight into Job's sin, see the title: -

- Was Job a Self-Righteous Man or a Humble Man of Great Faith?

In Job, in Commentary OT (ON WEBSITE MENU).

### **Is the Unicorn willing to Serve You? Will He Spend the Night at Your Manger?**

Job 39:9-12 ----- <sup>9</sup>Is the wild ox (the unicorn in KJV) willing to serve you? Will he spend the night at your manger? <sup>10</sup>Can you bind him in the furrow with ropes, or will he harrow the valleys after you? <sup>11</sup>Will you depend on him because his strength is great, and will you leave to him your labour? <sup>12</sup>Do you have faith in him that he will return your grain and gather it to your threshing floor?

**The unicorn:** there has been great diversity of opinion among interpreters as to what this animal refers to, some say a: -

- The rhinoceros.
- A large and fierce species of the antelope.
- The wild buffalo.

Since there is so much controversy over what animal the unicorn was (and most likely will forever be) the best way for us to discover what the unicorn might be is to look at the eight mentions of it in their surrounding context in the following verses with the intention of discovering common characteristics: -

1. His (Joseph's) glory is like the firstling of his bullock (*showr*) and his horns are like the horns of unicorns (*r<sup>e</sup>'em*): with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh. (Deut. 33:17).

**The unicorn:** comes from the Hebrew word (*r<sup>e</sup>'em*) and means a wild bull (from the fact it is easily seen, noticed and readily visible and observable to the eye) it carries the idea of being lifted up.

**The bullock:** comes from the Hebrew word (*showr*) and can refer to a bullock, cow or ox, it carries the idea of a traveller. It also comes from the Hebrew word (*par*) this also refers to a bullock, but it carries the idea of breaking forth in wild strength and figuratively to violate, frustrate, break, cast off or cause to cease and utterly make void (it can also refer to a young bull, a calf or an ox).

Unicorn in this verse is used in the context of prophetic language. The strength of the unicorn is in its horns they are so powerful they can not only push multitudes of people together, but also push them to the ends of the earth. Whatever animal the unicorn was it is presented here as a symbol of royal power and mighty strength such as Joseph had.

- 2 God brought them out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn (*r<sup>e</sup>'em*). (Numbers 23:22).

Unicorn in this verse is used in the context of poetic language. Here the unicorn had such mighty strength it was able to deliver Israel out of the bondage of Egypt. Whatever animal the unicorn was it is presented here as a symbol of God's power and mighty strength to deliver the people of Israel from the slavery of Egypt.

- 3 King Balak called Balaam to curse his enemy Israel, but instead of cursing Balaam lifted up his eyes and said: <sup>7</sup>He (Israel) shall pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted. <sup>8</sup>God brought him (Israel) forth out of Egypt; he (Israel) hath as it were the strength of an unicorn: he shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows. <sup>9</sup>He (Israel), couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion: who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee. <sup>10</sup>And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he smote his hands together: and Balak said unto Balaam, I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed them these three times. (Num. 24:1-10).

Unicorn in this verse is used in the context of prophetic language. The unicorn is likened to something that has such mighty strength it is able to eat up nations, meaning utterly destroy and break them in pieces. It is used in the context of the seed of Israel and their king and his kingdom being highly exalted and in war utterly conquering his enemies and nations. Whatever animal the unicorn was it is presented here as a symbol of Israel's king and his royal power and mighty strength being so great that he is able to utterly destroy all nations that would come against his kingdom.

- 4 Will the unicorn (*r<sup>e</sup>'em*) be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib? <sup>10</sup>Canst thou bind the unicorn (*r<sup>e</sup>'em*) with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee? <sup>11</sup>Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him? (Job 39:9-11).

Here the LORD is speaking to Job. The question, "Will the unicorn lay by your crib (i.e., manger or stall) as tame or common animals do," carries the idea that the unicorn will not suffer himself to be tied or confined all night and kept to work the next day as domestic animals do? Whatever animal the unicorn was it is presented here as something of such great strength and power that it could not be tamed or bought into submission to man and therefore could not be trusted to be left alone to labour in the fields. The idea is, if Job cannot even tame and rule such a creature how much less should God who governs the world explain and justify Himself to him.

- 5 Save me (David) from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns. (Psalm 22:21).

Unicorn in this verse is used in the context of poetic language. It is in the context of David praying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Many strong bulls of Bashan have compassed me and gaped upon me with their mouths as ravens and roaring lions. Dogs have compassed me and the assembly of the wicked have pierced my hands and my feet and parted my garments among them and cast lots upon my vesture. Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog and then David says: "Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns. (Psalm 22:11-21).

In this Psalm bulls, lions and dogs all represent the wicked not the actual animal, likewise the unicorn represents the strength of David's prayer and by extension Christ's prayer on the bloodstained cross of Calvary.

Throughout Scripture the unicorn commonly represents power and strength and it continues to do so in the context of these verses. David's words, "thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns," carry the following idea, "O LORD I have prayed with all the strength that my heart and mind can muster, I have no more I am emptied in my cry for your deliverance from the lion's mouth (the wicked) to save me. In the same way that the lion is a symbol of the wicked the unicorn is used as a symbol to highlight the strength of emotion and the deep cry of David's (and by extension Christ's) heartfelt prayer.

- 6 The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty. <sup>5</sup>The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. <sup>6</sup>He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn (*r<sup>e</sup>em*). (Psalm 29:4-6).

Unicorn in this verse is used in the context of poetic language. It is in the context of the voice of the LORD being so powerful and full of majesty that it is able to make the cedars of Lebanon skip like calves and young unicorns. The picture of young animals skipping carries the idea that they are full of joy and happiness. Whatever animal the unicorn was it is presented here as a symbol of overwhelming joy and happiness.

- 7 For lo, thine enemies O LORD shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered. <sup>10</sup>But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil. Psalm 92:9-10).

Unicorn in this verse is used in the context of poetic language. This is in the context of the Psalmist giving thanks to the LORD on the Sabbath Day and singing praises to the name of the Most High. The expression, "My horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of a unicorn," most likely refers to the Psalmist seat of authority and power, he is saying that he will again be exalted to his rightful place of power and authority.

It could refer to King David or some other royal king that had been brought to ruin, but knew they would again be established to their kingly authority and dominion, of which the horn of a unicorn was an appropriate symbol. Whatever animal the unicorn was it is presented here as an animal of such regal and royal standing faithful men desired to attain to its majestic and noble status.

- 8 The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, *and* with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. <sup>7</sup>And the unicorns (*r<sup>e</sup>em*) shall come down with them, and the bullocks (*par*) with the bulls (*'abbiyr*); and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness. <sup>8</sup>For *it* is the day of the LORD'S vengeance, for the controversy of Zion. (Isaiah 34:6-8)

**Bull:** comes from the Hebrew word (*'abbiyr*) it literally means chiefest one, mighty one, strong one, valiant one and strong of heart and can refer to an angel or a bull.

Unicorn in this verse is used in the context of prophetic language. In this group of verses the bullocks and bulls symbolise the chief rulers and their most powerful armies, while the unicorn symbolises the most exalted powerful kings and their royal kingdoms. Isaiah is saying that the most powerful of the nations will be slaughtered on the Day of the LORD'S Judgment.

Horn or horns speak of the principal seat of strength, and the instruments of assault and defence. It appears that the horn of the unicorn was considered to have some unique and special majesty and dignity, power and dominion that not only attracted attention, but also surpassed the beauty and power of all other animals.

Whatever animal the unicorn was it is presented as surpassing the beauty of all other animals and being so powerful it: -

- Could refer to a wild ox, bull or buffalo.
- Could push multitudes of people to the ends of the earth.
- Could deliver Israel out of the bondage of Egypt.
- Could not be tamed by anyone (as common animals were tamed).
- Could not be tied or confined or bought into submission to man.
- Could eat up nations (meaning utterly destroy and break them in pieces).

**It is often used to symbolise: -**

- Mighty strength and power of kings or of God.
- The instrument of assault and defence.
- Overwhelming joy and happiness.
- The principal seat of authority strength, power and dominion.
- The most exalted powerful kings and their royal kingdoms.
- Royal power or some unique and special majesty and dignity and dominion.
- Israel's king and his royal power and mighty strength being so great that he is able to utterly destroy all nations.

**Conclusion:** the word unicorn is mostly used in poetic and prophetic language. It is very difficult to determine from Scripture what animal the unicorn is since no animal seems to meet all the characteristics perfectly. For this reason it is pointless to spend more time attempting to find the answer to the question, "What animal was the unicorn?" It could have been some ancient animal that became extinct with the dinosaurs, a mythical creature that held a high place of esteem in the mind of man at that time or simply applies in certain verses to a bull or ox, because of their great strength and in other verses is used as a symbol of the strength and power of such animals and at other times a symbol of a kings royal power or the LORDS majestic power and dominion over all things.

Perhaps rather than try to determine what type of animal the unicorn was a better idea would be to focus on its essential nature, rather than suppose what the person using it in Scripture had in mind, especially since it is not needful to be known whether there ever was such a creature or whether it refers to some other animal, since it is its character that is the focus of the writers and what is important.

**The Wings of the Ostrich wave Proudly, She, Laughs at the Horse and Rider.**

Job 39:13-18 ----- <sup>13</sup>"The wings of the ostrich wave proudly, but are they the pinions and plumage of love? <sup>14</sup>For she leaves her eggs to the earth and lets them be warmed on the ground, <sup>15</sup>forgetting that a

foot may crush them and that the wild beast may trample them. <sup>16</sup>She deals cruelly with her young, as if they were not hers; though her labor be in vain, yet she has no fear, <sup>17</sup>because God has made her forget wisdom and given her no share in understanding. <sup>18</sup>When she rouses herself to flee, she laughs at the horse and his rider.

The King James Bible says: -

- Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich? <sup>14</sup>Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in dust, <sup>15</sup>And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them. <sup>16</sup>She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers: her labour is in vain without fear; <sup>17</sup>Because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding. <sup>18</sup>What time she lifteth up herself on high, she scorneth the horse and his rider. (Job 39:13-18).

**Peacock:** comes from the Hebrew word (*renen*) and literally means an ostrich (from its wail, its shrill and its harsh grating breathing sound). It carries the idea of goodly and singing aloud with joy and triumphant rejoicing. Its tail is known as a train since it consists not of tail quill feathers, but highly elongated upper tail of coverts (i.e., feathers that cover other feathers). The coverts help to smooth airflow over the wings and the tail. They spread out in a distinctive train that is more than 60 percent of the bird's total body length and displays large colourful eye markings of blue, gold, red, and other shades of colour.

The large train is used in mating rituals and courtship displays. It can be arched into a magnificent fan that reaches across the bird's back and touches the ground on either side. Females are believed to choose their mates according to the size, colour, and quality of these most beautiful feather trains. Technically, only males are peacocks. Females are peahens, and together, they are called peafowl.

**Ostrich:** comes from the Hebrew word (*nowtsah*) from the sense of flying and the wing or feathers of a bird (especially the feathers of an ostrich) it carries the idea of going forth and by implication to bring to ruin, to strive and quarrel (together) and lay waste and desolate. It is a large flightless bird with a long neck and very large eyes 50mm (2.0in) in diameter that help them see predators at a great distance. Male ostriches can be from 2m to 2.8m in height, while female ostriches are slightly smaller.

Their lifespan is up to 40–45 years and they weigh from 63 to 145 kilograms or as much as two adult humans and their wings span about 2 metres (6ft 7 in). The legs of an ostrich in a single stride can cover 3 to 5m, they run much like a four footed animal and though they cannot fly their wings act as sails in that they make them lighter and are therefore able to reach speeds that exceed 70km/h (43mph) making them the fastest bird on land.

Farmers around the world farm them for their very valuable feathers, which are decorative and also used as feather dusters. The feathers of adult males are mostly black on the body and white on the tail they have about 50–60 tail feathers, and about 40 on their wings. Arab's named the ostrich, "the crying bird," because of its night cries. The prophet Micah said, "I will lament and wail; I will go stripped and naked; I will make lamentation like the jackals, and mourning like the ostriches." (Micah 1:8).

**Did you give the goodly wings to the peacock and the wings of the ostrich wave proudly?** The use of the word peacock in these verses has caused much confusion amongst theologians throughout all generations since peacocks are not remarkable for their wings and plumage, but for the beauty that lies in their tail feathers added to this they do not have a plumage of feathers as the ostrich does nor do they leave their eggs to be crushed by others and being only small in size compared to the ostrich they would not be spoken of as scorning and laughing at the horse and its rider. It is certainly true that the peacock would have far more reason to wave its feathers with pride, because of their stunning beauty than the ostrich, so perhaps in the sense of pride the peacock maybe more fitting, but when the entire contexts is taken into account it is clearly the ostrich that is in focus and not the peacock.

The LORD is basically saying to Job did you give the ostrich its wings and instil in its nature their lack of wisdom, understanding and fear. The implication is that if Job could not even do this task, what gives him the right to think that God should explain His ways to him when he is so lacking in power over mere birds.

**Do you make the Horse Leap like the Locust and say 'Aha!' at Thunder.**

Job 39:19-25 ----- 19"Do you give the horse his might? (Strength in KJV) Do you clothe his neck with a mane? (cloth his neck with thunder in KJV) 20Do you make him leap like the locust? (Grasshopper in KJV) His majestic snorting is terrifying. 21He paws in the valley and exults in his strength; he goes out to meet the weapons (armed men in KJV). 22He laughs at fear and is not dismayed; he does not turn back from the sword. 23Upon him rattle the quiver, the flashing, spear, javelin and shield. 24With fierceness and rage he swallows the ground; he cannot stand still at the sound of the trumpet. 25When the trumpet sounds, he says 'Aha!' He smells the battle from afar, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

**Do you give the horse his might and strength?** (v19) the description here is of a war horse that is about to plunge into battle. At this time it was most likely the horse was used far more for battle than it was for domestic purposes. His strength would embrace his physical strength and his fortitude and courage

**Do you clothe his neck with a mane and with thunder?** (v19) some Bibles mention nothing about the neck of the horse, but only his mane, while others mention nothing about his mane but only his neck. This should not bother anyone since you cannot have a horses mane without a horses neck, likewise you cannot have a horses neck without a horses mane so it matters not which is mention since the writer would naturally suppose that the other is included. A thick large mane on a horse was seen as a an adornment and beautification of the animal and the neck of a horse has great strength.

The expression, "did you clothe the horses' neck with thunder," carries the idea of the horse with his neck arched and his nostrils snorting and his mouth neighing with rage and violent anticipation of the battle strikes terror into his enemies as the force and power of thunder does to those caught in a wild storm. The Orientals expressed the strength and might of the war horse with the following expression, "Can you make him afraid as a grasshopper, which is easily affrighted, and chased away by the least noise of a man."

**Do you make him leap like the locust and the grasshopper?** (v20) it matters not whether this refers to the locust or the grasshopper since they both act in the same way. The expression carries the idea of being able to jump to great heights and leap great distances with nimbleness and swiftness as locusts and grasshoppers do.

**His majestic snorting is terrifying:** (v20) the majesty and magnificence, of multitudes of horses snorting before battle strike great terror in their enemies. The prophet Jeremiah expresses this magnificence and terror in the following words: -

- The snorting of their horses is heard from Dan; at the sound of the neighing of their stallions the whole land quakes. They come and devour the land and all that fills it, the city and those who dwell in it. (Jer. 8:16).

**He paws in the valley and exults in his strength:** (v21) refers to the courage of the horse and his hoof impatiently digging into the earth and kicking up the dirt while he waits without fear for the trumpet sound to give him the command to charge into battle. It's a picture of the horse mocking at fear while he waits to meet the armed men and their weapons of terror and war. He has no fear of what other creatures' dread, instead of turning back from the terror of the sword and the fear of the spear He laughs and mocks them.

**Upon him is the rattle quiver, the flashing, spear, the javelin and shield:** (v23) the quiver is pictured as rattling because of the many arrows that it holds these are all outward and visible expressions that highlight the inward strength and courage of the war horse.

**With fierceness and rage he swallows the ground:** (v24) can carry the following two ideas: -

- 1 In his eagerness to charge into battle he is so full of fury that he not only champs at his bridle, but is ready to tear and devour the very ground on which he goes.
2. When he does charge into battle vast amount of ground quickly pass under him because he moves so swiftly and rapidly over it and toward his enemy that is as if the ground is being devoured and swallowed up underneath him.

**When the trumpet sounds, he says 'Aha!'** (v25) he has been so long eagerly waiting for the trumpet to sound that when it does sounds he says, "Aha," meaning finally! It is time. He does not have to stand still any longer biting at his bridle, snorting from his nostrils and stamping his hoof in the earth. He is now free to charge with the shouting of his captains toward his enemies and the battle, that up to now he has only smelled from a great distance away.

All these characteristics of the horse are from God, and not of men. The LORD is highlighting to Job that it was not his power and wisdom that gave the horse his glory, but God's. The implication is that if Job could not create an animal with such strength, might and magnificence, what gives him the right to think that God should explain His ways to him when he is so lacking in power to create even one animal.

### **Is it by your Wisdom the Hawk Soars and the Eagle makes its Nest on High?**

Job 39:26-30 ----- 26"Is it by your understanding (wisdom in KJV) that the hawk soars and spreads his wings toward the south? 27Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up and makes his nest on high? 28On the rock he dwells and makes his home, on the rocky crag and stronghold. 29From there he spies out the prey; his eyes behold it afar off. 30His young ones suck up blood, and where the slain are, there is he."

**The hawk:** is a common name for a small to medium-sized bird of prey that varies greatly in size. They are mainly woodland birds with long tails and eyes that are visually sharp for hunting prey which they do by making sudden dashes from a concealed perch. Falconry was also called hawking, and any bird used for falconry could be referred to as a hawk.

**Is it by your understanding and wisdom that the hawk soars?** (v26) in this verse the word hawk comes from the Hebrew word (*nets*) it can refer to a flower a flower (from its brilliancy) and to a hawk (from its flashing speed) it carries the idea of glaring and of being, bright coloured and sparkling. The expression, "Does the hawk fly by understanding and wisdom: refers to its remarkable swiftness, speed rapidity and its cunning to speedily catch its prey. In flight the hawk is among the most rapid of the birds.

**The hawk soars and spreads his wings toward the south:** (v26) refers to it migratory nature of birds to move at certain seasons of the year from colder climates towards the winter, and steers its course to the south towards warmer ones which the hawk does by an instinct in its nature, put into her by the power and wisdom of the LORD and not through the instruction of man.

**The eagle:** is a common name for sixty species of large birds of prey. Eagles are large, powerfully built birds of prey with a heavy head and beak. Even the smallest of eagles have long and broad wings which enable them to fly at great speeds when in flight despite their reduced size of feathers. The length of a full grown eagles wing is around 1.06 m (3ft 6in) and its wingspan is about is around 2.27m (7ft 5in).

Most eagles are larger than any other raptors (i.e., birds of prey that hunt and feed on other animals) apart from some vultures. Like all birds of prey, eagles have very large hooked beaks for tearing flesh from their prey, strong muscular legs, and powerful talons. Eagles' eyes are extremely powerful, having up to three and a half times the sharpness of eye sight that humans have which enables them to spot potential prey from a very long distance.

This keen eyesight is primarily attributed to their extremely large pupils that ensure minimal diffraction (scattering) of the incoming light. The nests are not in plains, but in high trees and inaccessible high cliffs and often shielded from the weather by some jutting crag that hangs over it they are constructed of sticks of five or six feet in length, interlaced with twigs, and covered with layers of rushes and moss. With occasional repairs the nest would normally serve the same couple during their lives unless it is destroyed by some accident. From here it spies out its prey.

Many species lay two eggs, but the older, larger chick frequently kills its younger sibling once it has hatched. The dominant chick tends to be a female, as they are bigger than the male. The parents take no action to stop the killing.

Due to the size and power of many eagle species, they are ranked at the top of the food chain in the world of birds. Most eagles grab prey without landing and take flight with it so the prey can be carried to a perch and torn apart. However, if an eagle does target prey too heavy to carry in flight it is either eaten at the site of the kill or taken in pieces back to a perch or its nest. It has been observed that most birds of prey look back over their shoulders before striking prey (or shortly thereafter); since they may have a bird hunting them. All hawks seem to have this habit, from the smallest to the largest, but not the eagle.

The eagle has always been celebrated for the height to which it is able to soar directly upward till they are out of sight, which no other bird can do. This is why the ancients gave it the name, "the bird of heaven." In the same way that a lion is considered the king of beasts, the eagle is regarded as the king of birds and considered the king of the skies and messenger of the highest gods. In mythology the eagle is connected by the Greeks to the god of Zeus, by the Romans to the god of Jupiter by the Germanic tribes to the god of Odin and by Judeo-Christian Scriptures to those who hope in God (Isa 40:31).

**God asks Job:** is it by his power and his wisdom that the hawk soars and instinctively knows to spread its wings toward the south at the approach of winter to seek warmer weather and is it by his command that the eagle mounts up and makes its nest on high? (v26-27).

The implication is that if Job could not create a hawk with such strength, might and magnificence, or the eagle with its sharp eyesight and ability to soar to such heights that it cannot be seen and if he cannot do these things that God has done by the word and breath of His mouth what gives him the right to think that God should explain His ways to him when he is so lacking in power to create these two birds.

The purpose of all God's questions (with more to come) and His references to: -

- The mountain goat, the wild donkey and wild Ox.
- The ostrich, the war horse, the hawk and the eagle.

Where to shine a brilliant spotlight on the extreme lack and absolute emptiness of Job's knowledge and it accomplishes God's purpose, it strikes Job's heart and humbles him so deeply that he is not only without answers, but also struck silent. God in His great wisdom puts an end to Job's words without any debate. This is fascinating when it is considered in previous chapters Job stated that he had prepared his case should he have the opportunity to stand before the LORD and now when he does get the opportunity rather than speak, he is struck silent.

**Imagine for a moment:** how Job would be feeling, he is standing dumbfounded before some form of dark whirlwind (perhaps in the form of a pillar of cloud much like God spoke to Moses out of) and the LORD is asking him a multitude of questions from it and he can't even answer one of them. Ponder how you would feel in the same position, especially if you had spent a great amount of time questioning God's ways and wishing God would explain Himself to you as Job did.

**The lesson to learn from the story of Job:** the works of nature, should teach us a right view of the riches of the wisdom of God who made and sustains all things and all life by His wisdom power and Spirit.

The desire to have God explain His ways with mankind and His works on earth is ever present in us all, but the faithful who have true wisdom and understand the breathtaking greatness of God and that He is sovereign in all things do not speak unworthily of Him by demanding He explain Himself and His ways to them, but instead surrender to His will and trust that He in His wisdom is moulding and fashioning them to be His treasured possession.

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End.