

Job Chapter 28

My great grandfather is one of those Chinese that joined the California Gold Rush around the 1849 period. He moved to California through months of boating from southern China to the San Francisco area. At that time, people from other part of US as well as Chinese from China like to find gold in California to have a dream of getting rich. That is why those people were call forty-niners (49ers). At about the same time, there were gold fields found in Australia also. Chinese also rushed to Australia as well as US. The “second Chinese gold rush” happened years later. I will continue this topic at the end of our study on chapter 28 of Job.

Job is one of the earliest Bible books if not the earliest. Job went through a terrible set of painful events which was allowed by God. However, his friends do not know why Job has so many terrible problems. They thought Job has sinned and concluded that was the cause of those events. Job in chapter 28 shifted the debate with his friends and pointed their friends to consider the topic of God’s wisdom. In fact, one of the major themes in the book of Job is about God’s wisdom.

1) People worked very hard to find wealth but is this what they really need?

Job 28:1-11 described people try to find minerals and precious metals such as gold. Those precious metals are from rocks and sand. It took time and effort to search, dig and refine the raw rocks and sand to turn them into precious metals like gold. Human took a lot of effort to pursue wealth such as the time of Gold Rush. But have they considered there is something much more precious and meaningful to pursue, that is God’s wisdom? Today, many people’s final goal in life is to pursue physical wealth. We Christian should guide them to the topic of God’s wisdom like what Job did.

2) God’s wisdom is more precious than earthly wealth

Job 28:12-22 described God’s wisdom is more precious than any precious metals (Proverbs 16:16). The list includes gold, silver, gold of Ophir, onyx, sapphires, crystal, coral, jasper, rubies, and topaz of Cush. But where can God’s wisdom be found? It is hidden from the eyes of every living thing (Job 28:21). However, there is one solution.

3) God’s wisdom can only be found through seeking God and fear of Him

Job 28:23-28 revealed the answer. Godly wisdom can only be obtained from God. God's wisdom to us are given and revealed in various ways from physical to spiritual. Job 28:28 and Psalms 111:10 stated Fear of the Lord is wisdom. **In the spiritual aspect, Fear of the Lord involves seek, listen, obey and remain faithful. Obedience includes shunt evil and follow God's command and will.** (James 1:5)

There are many ways you can apply what you have learned in your life. An example of application on the Fear of the Lord can be found in the Gold Rush. People in the Gold Rush are looking for physical wealth, but Christians know they need God more than wealth. God want us to spread the good news to them. In the fear of the Lord, some Christians listened to God's calling and in obedience reached out to those 49ers. The famous preacher is William Taylor. He moved to San Francisco and preached in street corners. Often used a whisky barrel for his pulpit. He preached to thousands of those mining settlers. Wisdom also includes the planning and willingness to act and execute God's calling as William Taylor did.

The second wave of Chinese participated in Gold Rush (I created this "second Chinese Gold Rush" term) was in the 1980s and 1990s. China under strict Communism rule had closed the door until about early 1980s. Once the door was open, many Chinese in Mainland China would like to go to western countries especially northern America, Europe and Australia. They were looking for better opportunities including wealth. Christians knew they need God more than wealth itself. This time, there were a lot of oversea Chinese Christians listened to God's calling. In the fear of the Lord, these oversea Chinese Christians reached out to them in various ways from cared about their physical needs to pray for them (James 3:17). These Christians used traditional methods and creative approaches to bring the gospel to those new migrants. Harvested many souls in Northern America and Australia in this second wave of Gold Rush. I hope this recent history and example encourages you to have wisdom (Fear of the Lord) from God!