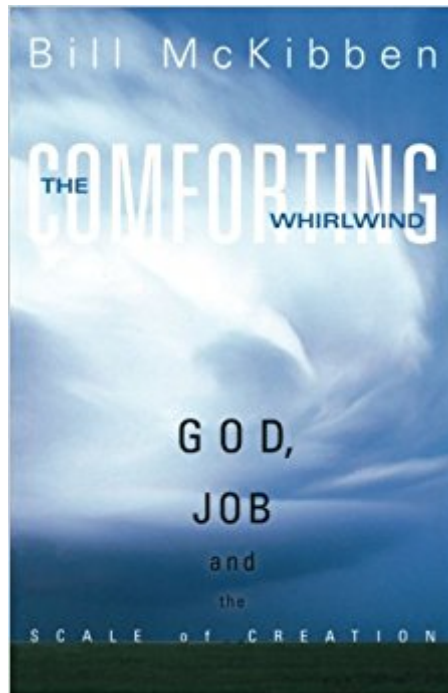


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The Comforting Whirlwind: God, Job, And The Scale Of Creation



Synopsis

In *The Comforting Whirlwind*, Bill McKibben turns to the biblical book of Job to demonstrate our need to embrace a bold new paradigm for living if we hope to reverse the current trend of ecological destruction.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a book that people of faith, deists, agnostics and even outright atheists will find wise and though-provoking. It should not be viewed as a scholarly work of biblical exegesis, but a kind of sermon or homily on the meaning of Job. I have always found the story of Job problematic and troubling, and McKibben's piece is one of the few I've read that puts the story in a context that makes sense, while avoiding the conclusion that God is simply unjust and capricious. It is a story about being humble in the face of Creation. Many fundamentalist Christians have the mistaken impression that there is some fundamental conflict between the Bible and care for the environment. The Old Testament talks more unabashedly about nature and stewardship than the New Testament, which is more human-centric, but in neither one will one find any equation of care for the environment with paganism. It is simply a matter of keeping straight whether you are worshiping the Creator through his creation (Nature) as opposed to worshiping nature itself. It is also a matter of retaining humility in the face of things that are beyond our understanding. The Universe is a very big place indeed, and we only have a small glimpse behind the curtain. McKibben's take on Job brings out this latter aspect beautifully.

Bill McKibben is best known today as a writer and activist against global warming. He has also written many other books, such as *Enough*, about how our modern desire for costly gratification is destroying our lives and the planet. He is one of the leading science writers of our time. The *Comforting Whirlwind* was written as a church devotional, but beautifully brings out some of the same ideas. It is a short book and if you can get one, I would recommend it. I suspect it did not sell well--I ended up with a signed copy without requesting one. But I am glad I read it.

This book is a remarkably fresh and insightful take on the lessons that can be drawn from the Bible about man's relation to nature. Although the book of Job is widely viewed as one of the most pessimistic and perplexing ones in the Bible, McKibben leaves the reader feeling uplifted.

Reading this leaves me wanting to know more. We all can be actively seeking to preserve the earth. Future generations are at stake.

Twenty years after the original publication, McKibben's call to humility and joy holds up very well.

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