

Job Is Speechless after God Addresses His Pride

Job Chapters 40:1–41:34

Job 40:1–2 Moreover the LORD answered Job, and said,

² Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.

HERE we observe even further the extent of Job's sin against God. First it was that Job had darkened God's counsel by speaking words without knowledge. *Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?* (Job 38:2). Now Job is accused of contending with the Lord and thinking himself able to both reprove and instruct Him in respect to His dealings in Job's life. *Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.* Job had wanted an audience with the Lord, and now he has it. It would not transpire as he had previously either hoped or suspected, however. And though Job had not previously believed his actions to be sinful, in the Lord's eyes they are now revealed, without question, as criminal. Job had blurred the Lord's character, and now he thought himself able to question God's justice. For this God would demand that he give a full account and answer for his actions.

(Keil and Delitzsch Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, Job 40:2) With Job 40:1; Job 38:1¹ is again taken up, because the speech of Jehovah has now in some measure attained the end which was assigned to it as an answer to Job's outburst of censure. . . . The question means, will Job persist in this contending with God? He who sets God right, as though he knew everything better than He, shall answer the questions put before him.

Job had questioned God, and now God required Job to stand before Him and give answers to the Lord's own questions. Understandably the roles have been reversed, because now it was not the Lord who was demanded to give account of what He had allowed in Job's life, but rather it was Job and what he had falsely said of the Lord that must be addressed. To contend with the Lord and think oneself able to reprove and instruct Him constitute a great sin. Even if this attitude originates because of ignorance, it is still esteemed as rebellion. To question God is viewed to be the very same thing as condemning Him. Ultimately the Lord sees no difference between the two, and soon Job would completely agree with Him as he came to realize the reckless words and thoughts that he had foolishly directed against his Creator. He had questioned God's justice, and now the Lord demanded why he thought himself able to reprove One so much greater than himself.

It is not uncommon for sinners to contend with the Almighty and think themselves able to both instruct and reprove Him for how they erringly believe He has wronged them. Thus Job's account is perhaps one of the great reasons that the book of Job has gained such religious notoriety and criticism from the critics of God. For when most read of His dealings with Job, they are quick and ready to reprove the Lord and enter into contention with Him over what they believe are His unjust dealings with men. Not afraid of God's judgment, sinners will readily condemn God's ways and foolishly think themselves able to reprove God.

¹ *Job 38:1 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,*

Job 40:3–4 Then Job answered the LORD, and said,

⁴ Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.

Job's demeanor now experiences a dramatic change: thus, instead of continuing to maintain that he is personally righteous and without fault, he now confesses his own vileness. Whereas before, Job falsely presumed God was at fault and himself righteous, now he views God as righteous and himself as vile. The Lord's correction and display of heavenly wisdom had accomplished their purpose and had done exactly what God had designed they should, which was to put Job in his place, bring him to his knees, and cause him to see the human arrogance and insubordination in his heart. The Lord's reproof of Job accomplished exactly this. *So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it* (Isa. 55:11).

(*Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary*, Job 40:1–5) After God had shown Job, by his manifest ignorance of the works of nature, how unable he was to judge of the methods and designs of Providence, he puts a convincing question to him; Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? Now Job began to melt into godly sorrow: when his friends reasoned with him, he did not yield; but the voice of the Lord is powerful. When the Spirit of truth is come, he shall convince. Job yields himself to the grace of God. He owns himself an offender, and has nothing to say to justify himself. He is now sensible that he has sinned; and therefore he calls himself vile. Repentance changes men's opinion of themselves. Job is now convinced of his error. Those who are truly sensible of their own sinfulness and vileness, dare not justify themselves before God.

Job 40:5 Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further.

Job had spoken once—indeed, more than once—in an insulting manner, but now he sees his egregious spiritual error. Afraid that he might sin again, he refuses to speak anymore without first confessing his personal unworthiness. Job's words as well as his thoughts had gotten him into trouble, and now he desires not to compound his situation any further by speaking out of turn and revealing even more fleshly conceit. He had done it once, *yea, twice*, but he is both resolved and determined not to do it again. If Job had not realized how important it was to restrain his tongue from speaking evil before, he surely did now.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Job 40:5) *Once have I spoken*—That is, in vindicating myself. He had once spoken of God in an irreverent and improper manner, and he now saw it.

but I will not answer—I will not now answer, as I had expressed the wish to do. Job now saw that he had spoken in an improper manner, and he says that he would not repeat what he had said.

Yea, twice—He had not only offended once, as if in a thoughtless and hasty manner, but he had repeated it, showing deliberation, and thus aggravating his guilt. When a man is brought to a willingness to confess that he has done wrong once, he will be very likely to see that he has been guilty of more than one offence. One sin will draw on the remembrance of another; and the gate once open, a flood of sins will rush to the recollection.

Job 40:6 Then answered the LORD unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

The intensity of the situation has not lessened in the slightest. For still the Lord is speaking out of a whirlwind to impress upon Job the great spiritual and dynamic power that he has offended. Hence, after Job's initial confession of uncleanness and his desire to say no more lest he incrimi-

nate himself further, the Lord continues His lengthy correction of this sincere yet spiritually unenlightened man.

Job 40:7 *Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.*

(NIV) *“Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me.*

(NLT) *“Brace yourself like a man, because I have some questions for you, and you must answer them.*

Every man will ultimately, like Job, have to stand and give an account of the life he has lived, the words he has uttered, and the thoughts he has entertained. Thus, for every man there will come a day of reckoning when he will be required to give a full and detailed account of all the things done in his body, including all he has both said and thought of God.² *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad* (II Cor. 5:10).

(*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, II Cor. 5:10) *That every one may receive the things done in his body.*—It would have seemed almost impossible, but for the perverse ingenuity of the system-builders of theology, to evade the force of this unqualified assertion of the working of the universal law of retribution. No formula of justification by faith, or imputed righteousness, or pardon sealed in the blood of Christ, or priestly absolution, is permitted by St. Paul to mingle with his expectations of that great day, as revealing the secrets of men's hearts, awarding to each man according to his works. “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7) was to him an eternal, unchanging law.

Job 40:8 *Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?*

In this simple verse of Scripture we discover the primary source for condemnation and questioning of God: it is so that men may perceive and believe themselves as inwardly pure and righteous. *There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness* (Prov. 30:12).

(*Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*, Prov. 30:12) *There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes,....* Not in the eyes of God, who sees the heart, and all the impurities of it, as well as of life and conversation; nor in the eyes of others, though such may appear outwardly righteous before men; but in their own eyes, in their own conceit and imagination, trusting in themselves that they are righteous: but such have not their eyes opened or enlightened to see the plague of their own hearts, the spirituality of the law of God, the perfection of righteousness that requires; nor the righteousness and holiness of God himself; nor the imperfection and insufficiency of their own; did they, they would not seem pure and righteous to themselves.

Ultimately there are no bounds that a sinner will not cross, which include even condemning his Creator, to maintain belief in his own personal righteousness.

(NIV) *“Would you discredit my justice? Would you condemn me to justify yourself?*

(NLT) *“Will you discredit my justice and condemn me just to prove you are right?*

Practically, the primary cause of all human condemnation of God is the desire of men to justify themselves and think of themselves as gods. But by questioning the Lord's judgments, sinners reveal they have reckoned themselves as equal to the Lord. Hence, it is easy to see why

² Matt. 12:37 *For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.*

God deals so harshly with the pride and hubris of man,³ since both are the genesis of spiritual rebellion. For he who is willing to speak against the Lord and question His ways has already assumed a position of rebelling against Him. To speak against anyone is to think ourselves above the person. To speak against God reveals that we think ourselves as gods. *For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil* (Gen. 3:5). Wherever and whenever men imagine themselves able to judge good and evil, apart from God revealing it to them, they reveal that they have already believed Satan's lie of being little gods themselves. This blasphemous and dangerous assumption is similar to Satan's own desire when he sought to lift himself to the level of the most high. *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!*

For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High (Isa. 14:12–14).

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Isa. 14:14) *I will be like the Most High*—There is a remarkable resemblance between this language and that used in 2 Thessalonians 2:4, in regard to antichrist: 'He, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.' And this similarity is the more remarkable, because antichrist is represented, in Revelation 17:4–5, as seated in babylon—the spiritual seat of arrogance, oppression, and pride. Probably Paul had the passage in Isaiah in his eye when he penned the description of antichrist.

Job 40:9 Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?

³ Deut. 1:26 *Notwithstanding ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God:*

Deut. 1:43 *So I spake unto you; and ye would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and went presumptuously up into the hill.*

Deut. 9:23 *Likewise when the LORD sent you from Kadeshbarnea, saying, Go up and possess the land which I have given you; then ye rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his voice.*

I Sam. 15:23 *For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*

Neh. 9:26 *Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy prophets which testified against them to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations. Ps. 107:10–11 Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron;¹¹ Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High:*

Ps. 5:10 *Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee.*

Isa. 1:19–20 *If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:²⁰ But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.*

Jer. 28:16 *Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the LORD.*

Jer. 29:32 *Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed: he shall not have a man to dwell among this people; neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people, saith the LORD; because he hath taught rebellion against the LORD.*

Ezek. 20:8 *But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.*

Ezek. 20:13 *But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them.*

Ezek. 20:21 *Notwithstanding the children rebelled against me: they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; they polluted my sabbaths: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness.*

The discussion of God's *arm*, and his voice of being like *thunder*, are symbolic of divine strength and power⁴ and are meant to demonstrate that Job should not condemn a Being so much mightier in power than himself. It is a simple question put forth to Job: If you think yourself equal with God, can you do as He does? It is often necessary and generally essential that for men to be properly humbled, God must reveal His power to them.⁵ For not until the Lord reveals Who He truly is, in both wisdom and might, will pretentious men come to know both what and whom they are not.

Job 40:10 Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency; and array thyself with glory and beauty.

There is no natural ability or any moral quality in men that would allow them to clothe themselves with the majesty that is God's or to array themselves in the same glory and beauty as God.

(Pulpit Commentary, Job 40:10) God is at all times "clothed with majesty and strength" (Psalm 93:1), "with glory and beauty" (Psalm 104:1). He "decks himself with light as with a garment" (Psalm 104:2). Job is challenged to array himself similarly.

Jesus' parable of the marriage of the king's son reveals the importance of wearing a heavenly garment worthy of God's presence.⁶ This holy garment is revealed in the parable as necessary for entrance into heaven and is not anything that men can make for themselves. And as with the

4 *Exod. 6:6 Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments:*

Exod. 15:16 Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased.

Deut. 7:19 The great temptations which thine eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the stretched out arm, whereby the LORD thy God brought thee out: so shall the LORD thy God do unto all the people of whom thou art afraid.

Deut. 26:8 And the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders:

II Kings 17:36 But the LORD, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and a stretched out arm, him shall ye fear, and him shall ye worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice.

Ps. 98:1 O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.

Isa. 30:30 And the LORD shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.

Isa. 40:10 Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.

Jer. 32:17 Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:

Ezek. 20:33 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you:

5 *Rom. 9:17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.*

Exod. 14:31 And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.

Ps. 106:8 Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.

6 *Matt. 22:1-13 And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, ²The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, ³And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. ⁴Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. ⁵But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: ⁶And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. ⁷But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. ⁸Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which*

priests who served the Lord in the temple, no natural nakedness or fleshly indecency⁷ was allowed to enter God's presence. What this teaches us is that unless the Lord provides a holy and heavenly garment, which is reflective and worthy of heaven, then true communion and fellowship with the Lord are impossible. The majesty, glory, and beauty of this garment must mirror the majesty, glory, beauty, and excellency of the Lord Himself. To then partake of heaven, sinners must be so transformed in order to take on the same glory and majesty of heaven. For the Christian this entails being transformed by God's power into the image of God's Son,⁸ and this is not a feat or ability that men can accomplish through their own power. The Lord therefore wants Job to fully realize and understand that it is impossible for any mortal creature to deck and array himself in the glory, beauty, and majesty of God. By this it is hoped that he would be humbled to realize how inferior man is to such a heavenly and holy Being. Man is also foolishly prone to criticize and condemn.

Job 40:11–14 Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one that is proud, and abase him.

¹² Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place.

¹³ Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in secret.

¹⁴ Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.

The Lord brings up Job's lack of spiritual ability to abase the proud as grounds that

he could never save himself. Undoubtedly Job must have at least partially still believed in his individual strength to deliver himself. For God would never address Job's inability to save himself unless it remained an unresolved issue in Job's heart. Hence, the pride of men is often such that only as a last resort will the sinner yield to the divine reality that all true deliverance must come from the Lord and cannot come from himself.⁹ Consequently, not until all human hope and confidence in self are lost will most realize that only God's power, and not their own, can save them. Not until also the sinner's pride and fleshly independence are fully broken and not purposed to be rebuilt will he be ready to actually trust in the Lord and in the process forfeit all previous fleshly confidence. The Lord also reminds Job of his inability to bring the proud low, which is exactly what He has accomplished in Job's life. He has sufficiently humbled the proud, and this includes the very one He is now speaking to.

Job 40:15 Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee; he eateth grass as an ox.

Attention is brought to the *behemoth*. Exactly what this animal actually was is open to conjecture. Some have supposed it to be the hippopotamus, others the elephant. If we had to choose between the two, the hippo would be the most reasonable choice. However, if we are to adhere to the strict interpretation of the scripture, probably neither of these creatures is the true identity of the behemoth spoken of. Very likely this great beast is now extinct.

were bidden were not worthy. ⁹Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. ¹⁰So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. ¹¹And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: ¹²And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. ¹³Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁷ Exod. 20:26 Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.

⁸ I John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

⁹ Ps. 3:8 Salvation belongeth unto the LORD: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.

Like the hippo, its power lay in its loins. According to verse 19, the behemoth was considered the *chief of the ways of God*. No other creature could match it in size or strength, indicative also of the Lord's own power and ability. For He Who creates both large and intimidating creatures like behemoth must be, and certainly is, far greater in strength and inherent might than them.

Job 40:16–24 Lo now, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly.

¹⁷ He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapped together.

¹⁸ His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron.

¹⁹ He is the chief of the ways of God: he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him.

²⁰ Surely the mountains bring him forth food, where all the beasts of the field play.

²¹ He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens.

²² The shady trees cover him with their shadow; the willows of the brook compass him about.

²³ Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth.

²⁴ He taketh it with his eyes: his nose pierceth through snares.

If sinners would never even consider wrestling with a creature such as the one spoken of, why should they so foolishly imagine that they could actually strive against the Lord and hope to be successful? If a beast of the field is greater in power and might than mere man, which many undoubtedly are, then how unwise is it for men to foolishly believe themselves able to strive against their Creator?

Job 41:1–7 Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down?

² Canst thou put an hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?

³ Will he make many supplications unto thee? will he speak soft words unto thee?

⁴ Will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?

⁵ Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?

⁶ Shall the companions make a banquet of him? shall they part him among the merchants?

⁷ Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with fish spears?

(Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Job 41:1) *Leviathan*.—There can be little doubt that by this is meant the crocodile or alligator, whatever may be the true meaning of behemoth.

The Lord now queries Job as to whether he could tame such a ferocious creature as the leviathan, or crocodile. *Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?* Since Job could not subdue and domesticate this large and ferocious reptile, then how could he so foolishly believe himself equal to quarrel and contend with the Lord? Hence, if Job could not domesticate the crocodile and make creatures such as this become subject to him, then how could he ever be so foolish as to believe that the Lord would bow to his own human will?

Job 41:8–9 Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more.

⁹ Behold, the hope of him is in vain: shall not one be cast down even at the sight of him?

The Lord reminds Job that if he were ever to contend with the crocodile, a creature found to be over twenty feet in length, weighs almost 2,500 pounds, and is the largest reptile on earth, then he would experience very quickly that he could never be physically able to do it again—as any attempt to wrestle such a dangerous, fierce, and

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savage creature as this would result in certain and excruciating death.

Job 41:8 (NIV) If you lay a hand on it, you will remember the struggle and never do it again!

Job 41:8 (NLT) If you lay a hand on it, you will certainly remember the battle that follows. You won't try that again!

Job 41:9 (NIV) Any hope of subduing it is false; the mere sight of it is overpowering.

Job 41:10 None is so fierce that dare stir him up: who then is able to stand before me?

The fierceness and ferocity of the crocodile are so great that only a foolish, ignorant, and reckless man would arouse and awaken him to anger. Since this is undoubtedly true concerning the crocodile, should it not likewise be even more true and paramount in respect to God? Hence, there are many creatures upon the earth, like the hippo, the elephant, the crocodile, the lion, the tiger, and even the North American grizzly, that men have the natural sense not to stir to anger lest their own bodily lives be endangered in the process. Yet it is astounding how few sinners and ungodly men hold a similar fear and reverence for God, Who is so much more fierce and terrible than even these notorious predators of man. The truth is also that though the crocodile can easily kill one man, or even perhaps a small group of men, the Lord has proven His ability to extinguish and virtually bring to complete extinction all mankind.¹⁰

Job 41:11 Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him? whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine.

¹⁰ Gen. 6:13 *And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.*

Gen. 7:23 *And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.*

(*Benson Commentary*, Job 41:11) The apostle quotes this sentiment for the silencing of all flesh in God's presence, (Romans 11:35,) *Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? ...* Having said, and largely proved, that man could not contend with God in power, he now adds that he cannot contend with him in, or with respect to justice; because God oweth him nothing, nor is any way obliged to him: which having briefly hinted, to prevent an objection, he returns to his former argument, the description of leviathan.

Job 41:12 I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion.

The Lord continues revealing to Job details of the leviathan's—the crocodile's—strength and natural power. By considering the might of such a fierce and dreadful creature as this, whose domain anyone with any reasonable sense would never enter, it is hoped that Job can see his own fragility of entering into contention with God. For God's holy presence is far more threatening and dangerous to enter into than even the crocodile's marshy, murky, habitat of the swamp. *I will not conceal his parts*, reveals the Lord, Who is now ready to reveal in even more detail why men should fear Him.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Job 41:12) *I will not conceal his parts— ...* A description follows of the various parts of the animal, all tending to confirm this general impression, and to fill the hearer with a deep conviction of his formidable character. The words rendered, "I will not conceal," mean, "I will not be silent;" that is, he would speak of them. The description which follows of the "parts" of the animal refers particularly to his mouth, his teeth, his scales, his eyelids, his nostrils, his neck, and his heart.

Job 41:13–32 Who can discover the face of his garment? or who can come to him with his double bridle?

¹⁴ *Who can open the doors of his face? his teeth are terrible round about.*

¹⁵ *His scales are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal.*

¹⁶ *One is so near to another, that no air can come between them.*

¹⁷ *They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundered.*

¹⁸ *By his neesings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.*

¹⁹ *Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out.*

²⁰ *Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething pot or caldron.*

²¹ *His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.*

²² *In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow is turned into joy before him.*

²³ *The flakes of his flesh are joined together: they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved.*

²⁴ *His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone.*

²⁵ *When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of breakings they purify themselves.*

²⁶ *The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon.*

²⁷ *He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood.*

²⁸ *The arrow cannot make him flee: slingstones are turned with him into stubble.*

²⁹ *Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear.*

³⁰ *Sharp stones are under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire.*

³¹ *He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.*

³² *He maketh a path to shine after him; one would think the deep to be hoary.*

The specific and threatening characteristics of the crocodile that are brought to Job's attention include his terrible teeth

(v. 14); the compactness and density of his mighty scales and protective armor (vv. 15–17); his penetrating and menacing eyes (v. 18); his fuming nostrils, mouth, and rancid breath (vv. 19–21); the great strength of his neck (v. 22); and the hardness of his heart, unable also to be swayed by either human reason or emotion (v. 24). The crocodile also possesses such natural defenses that neither human spears, arrows, or darts can penetrate his rough and extremely dense exterior (vv. 26–29). With respect to the crocodile's movements, the Lord reminds Job that the creature makes the deep waters boil like a hot, boiling, and bubbling pot, especially when the creature is subduing its prey (v. 31). Today men refer to this as the crocodile's death roll, in which with rapidity and great force it rolls and twists, disorienting its prey until it is eventually drowned and ready to be consumed as the animal's next meal.

Job 41:33–34 Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear.

³⁴ *He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride.*

Two verses in this chapter are distinctly important. The first is *None is so fierce that dare stir him up: who then is able to stand before me?* (v. 10). The second is *He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride* (v. 34). Though both verses deal directly with creatures that God has made, their real emphasis is the Lord Himself.

(*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Job 41:10) *Who then is able to stand before me?*—The meaning of this is plain. It is, "If one of my creatures is so formidable that man dare not attack it, how can he contend with the great Creator?" This may perhaps be designed as a reproof of Job. He had expressed a desire to carry his cause before God, and to urge argument before him in vindication of himself. God here shows him how hopeless must be a contest with the Almighty. Man trembles and

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is disarmed of his courage by even the sight of one of the creatures of God. Overpowered with fear, he retires from the contemplated contest, and flees away. How then could he presume to contend with God? What hope could he have in a contest with him?

All of God's creation, including each of His varied and magnificent creatures, reveals characteristics of the Lord's own distinctive glory and might.¹¹ And though most may not initially comprehend the

reason for a creature such as the crocodile, its beauty lies in its great impenetrability, independence, and fearlessness. Like God, it has no equal and fears nothing in all of creation. The crocodile is therefore king of its domain, as God is of His. Since there is nothing that can rival it or anything or anyone who can cause it to fear, it resembles the Lord's own independence and inability to be swayed by human criticism. *Nothing on earth is its equal—a creature without fear* (Job 41:33 NIV).

¹¹ Ps. 104:24–25 O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. ²⁵So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.

Isa. 40:26 Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth.

Rom. 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

Col. 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: