

Session 20

*Job is Speechless after God Addresses  
His Pride*

*Job 40:1–41:34*

Scriptures

<i>Job 40:1–2</i>	<i>Job 40:8</i>	<i>Job 40:16–24</i>
<i>Job 38:2</i>	<i>Proverbs 30:12</i>	<i>Job 41:1–7</i>
<i>Job 40:3–4</i>	<i>Genesis 3:5</i>	<i>Job 41:8–9</i>
<i>Isaiah 55:11</i>	<i>Isaiah 14:12–14</i>	<i>Job 41:10</i>
<i>Job 40:5</i>	<i>Job 40:9</i>	<i>Job 41:11</i>
<i>Job 40:6</i>	<i>Job 40:10</i>	<i>Job 41:12</i>
<i>Job 40:7</i>	<i>Job 40:11–14</i>	<i>Job 41:13–32</i>
<i>II Corinthians 5:10</i>	<i>Job 40:15</i>	<i>Job 41:33–34</i>

*Job 40:1–2 Moreover the Lord answered Job, and said,  
<sup>2</sup> 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 had been that Job had darkened God's counsel by speaking words without knowledge.

*Job 38:2 Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?*

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 His justice. For this, God would demand that he give a full account and answer for his sinful words.

*Keil and Delitzsch Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, Job 40:2*

With Job 40:1; Job 38:1 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 requires Job to stand before Him and provide answers to the Lord's own questions.

Understandably the roles have been reversed, because now it is not the Lord who is being demanded to give an account of what He had allowed in Job's life, but rather it is Job, and what he has falsely said concerning God, which must be accounted for.

To contend with the Lord, and think oneself able to reprove Him is a great sin.

Even if this action originates through ignorance, it is still esteemed as rebellion, since to question the Lord and His dealings in our life, is viewed by God to be the very same thing as condemning Him.

Ultimately, the Lord determines no difference between internal murmuring and external rebellion.

It is not uncommon for sinners to contend with the Almighty and think themselves able to both instruct and reprove Him for how they ignorantly believe He has wronged them.

Not afraid of God's judgments, sinners will regularly condemn His ways and foolishly think themselves higher than Him.

*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 an abrupt and 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 has accomplished their purpose and has 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 perceive the arrogance of his heart.

Like all God's prophetic Word, when it is sent, it shall accomplish everything that God has purposed it should.

*Isaiah 55:11 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.*

*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 a confession of personal unworthiness.

Job's words as well as his thoughts had gotten him into trouble, and now he desires not to compound the situation by continuing to speak and reveal even more misguided and unformed judgments of God. He had done it *once, yea, twice*, but he is both resolved and determined never to do it again.

If Job had not realized how important it was to restrain his tongue from speaking evil before, he surely does 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. The Lord continues to speak out of a whirlwind to impress upon Job the great spiritual power that he has offended.

Hence, even after Job's confession of uncleanness and his desire to say no more lest he incriminate himself further, still the Lord continues His correction of this god-fearing, yet still relatively blind 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 all men there will come a day of reckoning, when each will be required to give a full and detailed account of the things done in their bodies, including all that has been both thought and said of God.

***II Corinthians 5:10 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.***

*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 verse of Scripture we observe the primary reason for sinners both questioning and condemning God: it is so that they may believe themselves as both pure and righteous.

***Proverbs 30:12 There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.***

*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.

(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?"*

Without doubt, the primary cause of all human condemnation of God originates in the desire of sinners to justify themselves and think of themselves as gods.

But by questioning the Lord's judgments, sinners reveal they have reckoned themselves as the Lord's equal.

It is reasonable to perceive why the Lord deals so harshly with the pride and hubris of man, since both are the genesis of spiritual rebellion.

He who is willing to speak against the Lord and question His ways, has already, by his foolish actions, 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 inwardly believe ourselves as above Him.

***Genesis 3:5 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.***

Wherever and whenever men imagine themselves able to judge good and evil, apart from receiving divine revelation, they have already believed Satan's lie of being gods themselves.

Just as Satan first exalted himself above God, so does he now lead willing sinners to do the same, and this is always accomplished by leading them to disregard God's Word, to thus rely upon as grounds for the truth, human thought, reason, and opinion.

***Isaiah 14:12–14 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!***

<sup>13</sup> ***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:***

<sup>14</sup> ***I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.***

*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?***

The discussion of God's *arm*, and his voice as being like *thunder*, are symbolic of divine strength and power and are meant to demonstrate that Job should not condemn a Being so much mightier in power than himself.

It is a simple yet profound question put forth to Job: If you think yourself as equal to God, can you do as He does?

It is often both necessary and essential that for men to be properly humbled before God, then God must reveal both His wisdom and power to them.

For not until the Lord reveals Who He truly is, in both wisdom and might, will the pretentious come to know exactly what 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 the Lord's, nor to array themselves in the same manner, 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 (Matt. 22:1–13). This holy garment is revealed in Christ's parable as necessary for entrance into heaven, and is not a garment that any can make for themselves. Like with the priests who served the Old Testament temple, no natural nakedness or fleshly indecency was allowed to enter God's presence (Exod. 20:26).

What this teaches us is this, that unless the Lord provides a sufficient holy and heavenly garment, which is reflective and worthy of heaven, then habitation in heaven, will be refused.

To actually partake of heaven, sinners must be transformed by Christ, in order that they might share in the same spiritual nature as Him.

For the Christian this entails being transformed by divine power into the image of God's Son, and this is not a feat or ability that any can accomplish through their own natural power.

The Lord therefore desires Job to truly realize that it is impossible for any mortal creature to deck and array itself in the glory, beauty, and majesty of God. This great transformation, only divine power can accomplish.

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

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

<sup>13</sup> *Hide them in the dust together; and bind their faces in secret.*

<sup>14</sup> *Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.*

The Lord brings up Job's insufficient 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 ability to do so. For the Lord would never address Job's inability to save himself, unless it still remained an unresolved issue in Job's heart. Teaching us that the pride of men is such that they often only as a last resort will they yield to the divine reality that all true deliverance must come from the Lord, and cannot come from themselves.

Thus, not until all human hope and confidence in personal ability is lost, will most realize that only divine power, and not their own, can save them.

Not until also the sinner's pride and spiritual independence is broken, will he be ready to actually trust in the Lord.

The Lord also reminds Job of his inability to bring the proud low, which, in contrast to this, is exactly what the Lord has accomplished in Job's own life.

***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 is the true identity of the creature spoken of. Very likely the great beast is now extinct. Like the hippo, its power lay in its loins.

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

<sup>17</sup> *He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapped together.*

<sup>18</sup> *His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron.*

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

<sup>20</sup> *Surely the mountains bring him forth food, where all the beasts of the field play.*

<sup>21</sup> *He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens.*

<sup>22</sup> *The shady trees cover him with their shadow; the willows of the brook compass him about.*

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

<sup>24</sup> *He taketh it with his eyes: his nose pierceth through snares.*

According to verse 19, the behemoth was considered the *chief of the ways of God*. This reveals that no other creature could match it in size or strength, indicative also of the Lord's own power and ability.

If sinners would never even remotely consider wrestling with a creature such as the one spoken of here, why should they so foolishly imagine that they could actually strive with the Lord, and hope to be successful?

If a beast of the field is so much greater in power and might than man, how foolish is it for any to believe themselves able to strive against the beast's Creator?

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

<sup>2</sup> *Canst thou put an hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn?*

<sup>3</sup> *Will he make many supplications unto thee? will he speak soft words unto thee?*

<sup>4</sup> *Will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?*

<sup>5</sup> *Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?*

<sup>6</sup> *Shall the companions make a banquet of him? shall they part him among the merchants?*

<sup>7</sup> *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 questions Job as to whether he could tame such a ferocious creature as the leviathan—the crocodile.

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

Since Job could never subdue and domesticate this large and ferocious reptile, 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 it become subject to him, then how could he ever imagine that the Lord would ever surrender to Job's human will?

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

<sup>9</sup> *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 croc, a creature able to grow to over twenty feet in length, and weigh almost 2,500 pounds, and is the largest reptile on earth, then he would discover very quickly that he could never be physically able to ever do it again, since any attempt to engage in battle with such a dangerous, intimidating, and fierce creature as this, would result not only in certain death, but also experiencing an excruciating death as well.

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

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

(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?*

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 health be endangered in the process.

Yet, it is astounding how few sinners hold a similar fear and reverence for God, Who is so much more fierce and terrible than even these notorious predators.

The truth is also that though the croc can easily kill one man, or even perhaps a number of men, the Lord has proven His frightening ability to both extinguish and bring to virtual extinction, all mankind.

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

*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 reasonable sense would never enter into, it is hoped that Job can see his own foolishness of entering into contention with the Lord.

For the Lord's holy presence is far more threatening and dangerous to enter into, than even the crocodile's marshy, murky, habitat of the swamp.

The Lord's words, *I will not conceal his parts*, reveal that He is now ready to reveal in even more detail, why men should fear the croc, and even more importantly, Himself.

*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?***

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

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

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

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

<sup>18</sup> *By his needings a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>27</sup> *He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood.*

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

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

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

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

<sup>32</sup> *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 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 appear 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 physical force it rolls and twists, disorienting its victim, until it eventually drowns and consumes it.

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

<sup>34</sup> *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 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 the creatures mentioned, reveal characteristics of the Lord's own distinct glory and might.

And though most may not initially understand the reason for the Lord mentioning a creature such as the crocodile, its innate beauty lies in its impenetrability, independence, and fearlessness. Like God, it has no equal, and fears nothing in its habitat.

The crocodile is king of its domain, as God is of His.

Since there is nothing that can rival it, or anything that can match its strength, it resembles the Lord's own independence, and inability to be either influenced or swayed by human judgments and/or criticisms.

*Job 41:33 (NIV) Nothing on earth is its equal—a creature without fear.*