

Job 40:1–24 – Humbled Before the Almighty

The Confrontation (Job 40:1–2)

“Moreover the Lord answered Job, and said: ‘Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God, let him answer it.’” (Job 40:1–2, NKJV)

The Lord responds to Job with a direct and searching question. Job had longed for an audience with God, hoping to understand his suffering. But now that God answers, it is not to explain *why* Job suffered, but to reveal *who* God is.

The phrase, *“Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him?”* puts man in his proper place. The issue is not whether God owes us an explanation but whether we trust Him even when we don’t have one.

This hits close to home. Have you ever caught yourself trying to explain to God how He should run your life? “Lord, if You really loved me, You would have intervened by now,” or “God, why are You allowing this if I’ve been faithful?” In such moments, we are trying to “instruct” the Almighty. But He is not the student—we are.

Job’s First Response (Job 40:3–5)

“Then Job answered the Lord and said: ‘Behold, I am vile; What shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; Yes, twice, but I will proceed no further.’” (Job 40:3–5, NKJV)

Job doesn’t argue. He confesses. In saying, *“I am vile,”* he’s not declaring himself worthless, but unworthy to challenge or question God. This is the beginning of humility—when we stop trying to justify ourselves and instead simply surrender to God’s wisdom.

Sometimes, the most spiritual thing we can do is *lay our hand over our mouth*—to stop speaking and start listening. It’s in silence before God that the soul learns reverence.

God’s Continued Challenge (Job 40:6–14)

“Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said: ‘Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me: Would you indeed annul My judgment? Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?’” (Job 40:6–8, NKJV)

God doesn’t let Job off the hook. He challenges Job with another series of questions. The issue is now *righteousness*. Will Job accuse God of being unjust just to defend his own innocence?

How often do people fall into this same trap? In pain, it’s tempting to frame God as unjust so we can feel morally upright. But doing so not only misjudges God’s character—it also makes ourselves the standard of righteousness, a place we were never meant to hold.

“Have you an arm like God? Or can you thunder with a voice like His?” (Job 40:9, NKJV)

This poetic challenge draws a contrast between the power of the Creator and the frailty of His creation. God essentially says, “If you think you can question My justice, then demonstrate My power.”

Then God gives a Job description:

- Humble every proud person (vv. 10–11)
- Crush the wicked (v. 12)
- Hide them in the dust of the earth (v. 13)

If Job could accomplish even *one* of these tasks, then perhaps he could claim the right to judge God. But since he cannot, Job must admit: “*My own right hand cannot save me.*”

“*Then I will also confess to you that your own right hand can save you.*” (Job 40:14, NKJV)

The message is clear: salvation is not found in our strength, morality, or intellect—but in God alone. Human effort cannot deliver us from suffering, sin, or death. Only the Creator has the power to save.

Behemoth: A Creature of Strength (Job 40:15–24)

“*Look now at the behemoth, which I made along with you; He eats grass like an ox.*” (Job 40:15, NKJV)

God draws Job’s attention to one of His creatures—*behemoth*, a massive, grass-eating animal. Scholars have speculated whether this was a hippopotamus, a dinosaur-like creature, or something else. But the main point is not its identity—it’s its design.

Behemoth is strong (v. 16), majestic (v. 17), peaceful (v. 20), and yet utterly beyond man’s control (v. 24). It lives according to God’s purposes, untouched by the chaos around it. God says: “*Indeed the river may rage, yet he is not disturbed.*” (v. 23)

Here’s the personal application: If this animal, so large and immovable, lives in peace under God’s hand, why can’t we? If a creature who doesn’t reason or pray can rest in the order God has created, how much more should those made in His image trust Him?

Summary & Application

Job 40 is a turning point. Job’s defiant questioning begins to crumble before the majesty of God. And God doesn’t answer Job’s “why” directly—He simply reveals *who He is*. And that is enough.

Key Lessons:

1. **God doesn’t owe us answers, but He always reveals Himself.**
 - When you’re in the valley, seek not an explanation, but His presence.
2. **True humility is acknowledging that God is right—even when we don’t understand.**
 - Faith is not having all the answers; it’s trusting the One who does.

3. We are not the authors of our salvation.

- If we could humble the proud and crush the wicked, we might claim self-sufficiency. But we can't—and that's why we need God.

4. Creation itself teaches us to rest in the Creator.

- Look at the behemoth. Look at the birds of the air. Trust that the God who made them has not forgotten you.

Reflection:

- Have you been trying to “instruct” God lately?
- Are there areas in your life where you're trying to justify yourself and, in doing so, subtly accusing God of injustice?
- What would it look like to “*lay your hand over your mouth*” today and simply be still before Him?

Let us echo Job's heart: “*Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer You?*” Let that confession become the soil in which trust, reverence, and peace with God can grow.