

BOOK OF JOB

Job 38:1–41:34 (ESV)

The Lord Answers Job

38 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:

2 “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?

3 Dress for action[] like a man;

I will question you, and you make it known to me.

4 “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Tell me, if you have understanding.

5 Who determined its measurements—surely you know!

Or who stretched the line upon it?

6 On what were its bases sunk,

or who laid its cornerstone,

7 when the morning stars sang together

and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

8 “Or who shut in the sea with doors

when it burst out from the womb,

9 when I made clouds its garment

and thick darkness its swaddling band,

10 and prescribed limits for it

and set bars and doors,

11 and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther,

and here shall your proud waves be stayed’?

12 “Have you commanded the morning since your days began,

and caused the dawn to know its place,

13 that it might take hold of the skirts of the earth,

and the wicked be shaken out of it?

14 It is changed like clay under the seal,

and its features stand out like a garment.

15 From the wicked their light is withheld,
and their uplifted arm is broken.

16 “Have you entered into the springs of the sea,
or walked in the recesses of the deep?

17 Have the gates of death been revealed to you,
or have you seen the gates of deep darkness?

18 Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth?
Declare, if you know all this.

19 “Where is the way to the dwelling of light,
and where is the place of darkness,

20 that you may take it to its territory
and that you may discern the paths to its home?

21 You know, for you were born then,
and the number of your days is great!

22 “Have you entered the storehouses of the snow,
or have you seen the storehouses of the hail,

23 which I have reserved for the time of trouble,
for the day of battle and war?

24 What is the way to the place where the light is distributed,
or where the east wind is scattered upon the earth?

25 “Who has cleft a channel for the torrents of rain
and a way for the thunderbolt,

26 to bring rain on a land where no man is,
on the desert in which there is no man,

27 to satisfy the waste and desolate land,
and to make the ground sprout with grass?

28 “Has the rain a father,
or who has begotten the drops of dew?

29 From whose womb did the ice come forth,
and who has given birth to the frost of heaven?

30 The waters become hard like stone,

and the face of the deep is frozen.

31 “Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades
or loose the cords of Orion?

32 Can you lead forth the Mazzaroth[] in their season,
or can you guide the Bear with its children?

33 Do you know the ordinances of the heavens?
Can you establish their rule on the earth?

34 “Can you lift up your voice to the clouds,
that a flood of waters may cover you?

35 Can you send forth lightnings, that they may go
and say to you, ‘Here we are’?

36 Who has put wisdom in the inward parts[]
or given understanding to the mind?[]

37 Who can number the clouds by wisdom?
Or who can tilt the waterskins of the heavens,

38 when the dust runs into a mass
and the clods stick fast together?

39 “Can you hunt the prey for the lion,
or satisfy the appetite of the young lions,

40 when they crouch in their dens
or lie in wait in their thicket?

41 Who provides for the raven its prey,
when its young ones cry to God for help,
and wander about for lack of food?

39 “Do you know when the mountain goats give birth?
Do you observe the calving of the does?

2 Can you number the months that they fulfill,
and do you know the time when they give birth,

3 when they crouch, bring forth their offspring,
and are delivered of their young?

4 Their young ones become strong; they grow up in the open;

they go out and do not return to them.

5 “Who has let the wild donkey go free?

Who has loosed the bonds of the swift donkey,

6 to whom I have given the arid plain for his home

and the salt land for his dwelling place?

7 He scorns the tumult of the city;

he hears not the shouts of the driver.

8 He ranges the mountains as his pasture,

and he searches after every green thing.

9 “Is the wild ox willing to serve you?

Will he spend the night at your manger?

10 Can you bind him in the furrow with ropes,

or will he harrow the valleys after you?

11 Will you depend on him because his strength is great,

and will you leave to him your labor?

12 Do you have faith in him that he will return your grain

and gather it to your threshing floor?

13 “The wings of the ostrich wave proudly,

but are they the pinions and plumage of love?[]

14 For she leaves her eggs to the earth

and lets them be warmed on the ground,

15 forgetting that a foot may crush them

and that the wild beast may trample them.

16 She deals cruelly with her young, as if they were not hers;

though her labor be in vain, yet she has no fear,

17 because God has made her forget wisdom

and given her no share in understanding.

18 When she rouses herself to flee,[]

she laughs at the horse and his rider.

19 “Do you give the horse his might?

Do you clothe his neck with a mane?

20 Do you make him leap like the locust?

His majestic snorting is terrifying.

21 He paws[] in the valley and exults in his strength;

he goes out to meet the weapons.

22 He laughs at fear and is not dismayed;

he does not turn back from the sword.

23 Upon him rattle the quiver,

the flashing spear, and the javelin.

24 With fierceness and rage he swallows the ground;

he cannot stand still at the sound of the trumpet.

25 When the trumpet sounds, he says 'Aha!'

He smells the battle from afar,

the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

26 "Is it by your understanding that the hawk soars

and spreads his wings toward the south?

27 Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up

and makes his nest on high?

28 On the rock he dwells and makes his home,

on the rocky crag and stronghold.

29 From there he spies out the prey;

his eyes behold it from far away.

30 His young ones suck up blood,

and where the slain are, there is he."

40 And the Lord said to Job:

2 "Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty?

He who argues with God, let him answer it."

Job Promises Silence

3 Then Job answered the Lord and said:

4 "Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer you?

I lay my hand on my mouth.

5 I have spoken once, and I will not answer;

twice, but I will proceed no further.”

The Lord Challenges Job

6 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said:

7 “Dress for action[] like a man;

I will question you, and you make it known to me.

8 Will you even put me in the wrong?

Will you condemn me that you may be in the right?

9 Have you an arm like God,

and can you thunder with a voice like his?

10 “Adorn yourself with majesty and dignity;

clothe yourself with glory and splendor.

11 Pour out the overflowings of your anger,

and look on everyone who is proud and abase him.

12 Look on everyone who is proud and bring him low

and tread down the wicked where they stand.

13 Hide them all in the dust together;

bind their faces in the world below.[]

14 Then will I also acknowledge to you

that your own right hand can save you.

15 “Behold, Behemoth,[]

which I made as I made you;

he eats grass like an ox.

16 Behold, his strength in his loins,

and his power in the muscles of his belly.

17 He makes his tail stiff like a cedar;

the sinews of his thighs are knit together.

18 His bones are tubes of bronze,

his limbs like bars of iron.

19 “He is the first of the works[] of God;

let him who made him bring near his sword!

20 For the mountains yield food for him

where all the wild beasts play.

21 Under the lotus plants he lies,
in the shelter of the reeds and in the marsh.

22 For his shade the lotus trees cover him;
the willows of the brook surround him.

23 Behold, if the river is turbulent he is not frightened;
he is confident though Jordan rushes against his mouth.

24 Can one take him by his eyes,[]
or pierce his nose with a snare?

41 [] “Can you draw out Leviathan[] with a fishhook
or press down his tongue with a cord?

2 Can you put a rope in his nose
or pierce his jaw with a hook?

3 Will he make many pleas to you?
Will he speak to you soft words?

4 Will he make a covenant with you
to take him for your servant forever?

5 Will you play with him as with a bird,
or will you put him on a leash for your girls?

6 Will traders bargain over him?
Will they divide him up among the merchants?

7 Can you fill his skin with harpoons
or his head with fishing spears?

8 Lay your hands on him;
remember the battle—you will not do it again!

9 [] Behold, the hope of a man is false;
he is laid low even at the sight of him.

10 No one is so fierce that he dares to stir him up.
Who then is he who can stand before me?

11 Who has first given to me, that I should repay him?
Whatever is under the whole heaven is mine.

12 "I will not keep silence concerning his limbs,
or his mighty strength, or his goodly frame.

13 Who can strip off his outer garment?
Who would come near him with a bridle?

14 Who can open the doors of his face?
Around his teeth is terror.

15 His back is made of[] rows of shields,
shut up closely as with a seal.

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

17 They are joined one to another;
they clasp each other and cannot be separated.

18 His sneezings flash forth light,
and his eyes are like the eyelids of the dawn.

19 Out of his mouth go flaming torches;
sparks of fire leap forth.

20 Out of his nostrils comes forth smoke,
as from a boiling pot and burning rushes.

21 His breath kindles coals,
and a flame comes forth from his mouth.

22 In his neck abides strength,
and terror dances before him.

23 The folds of his flesh stick together,
firmly cast on him and immovable.

24 His heart is hard as a stone,
hard as the lower millstone.

25 When he raises himself up, the mighty[] are afraid;
at the crashing they are beside themselves.

26 Though the sword reaches him, it does not avail,
nor the spear, the dart, or the javelin.

27 He counts iron as straw,

and bronze as rotten wood.

28 The arrow cannot make him flee;
for him, sling stones are turned to stubble.

29 Clubs are counted as stubble;
he laughs at the rattle of javelins.

30 His underparts are like sharp potsherds;
he spreads himself like a threshing sledge on the mire.

31 He makes the deep boil like a pot;
he makes the sea like a pot of ointment.

32 Behind him he leaves a shining wake;
one would think the deep to be white-haired.

33 On earth there is not his like,
a creature without fear.

34 He sees everything that is high;
he is king over all the sons of pride.”