

Sunday, September 1

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Job 40:1 - 42:17

40 **1** Then the LORD said to Job, **2** “Do you still want to argue with the Almighty? You are God’s critic, but do you have the answers?” **3** Then Job replied to the LORD, **4** “I am nothing—how could I ever find the answers? I will cover my mouth with my hand. **5** I have said too much already. I have nothing more to say.” **6** Then the LORD answered Job from the whirlwind: **7** “Brace yourself like a man, because I have some questions for you, and you must answer them. **8** “Will you discredit my justice and condemn me just to prove you are right? **9** Are you as strong as God? Can you thunder with a voice like his? **10** All right, put on your glory and splendor, your honor and majesty. **11** Give vent to your anger. Let it overflow against the proud. **12** Humiliate the proud with a glance; walk on the wicked where they stand. **13** Bury them in the dust. Imprison them in the world of the dead. **14** Then even I would praise you, for your own strength would save you. **15** “Take a look at Behemoth, which I made, just as I made you. It eats grass like an ox. **16** See its powerful loins and the muscles of its belly. **17** Its tail is as strong as a cedar. The sinews of its thighs are knit tightly together. **18** Its bones are tubes of bronze. Its limbs are bars of iron. **19** It is a prime example of God’s handiwork, and only its Creator can threaten it. **20** The mountains offer it their best food, where all the wild animals play. **21** It lies under the lotus plants, hidden by the reeds in the marsh. **22** The lotus plants give it shade among the willows beside the stream. **23** It is not disturbed by the raging river, not concerned when the swelling Jordan rushes around it. **24** No one can catch it off guard or put a ring in its nose and lead it away.

41 **1** “Can you catch Leviathan with a hook or put a noose around its jaw? **2** Can you tie it with a rope through the nose or pierce its jaw with a spike? **3** Will it beg you for mercy or implore you for pity? **4** Will it agree to work for you, to be your slave for life? **5** Can you make it a pet like a bird, or give it to your little girls to play with? **6** Will merchants try to buy it to sell it in their shops? **7** Will its hide be hurt by spears or its head by a harpoon? **8** If you lay a hand on it, you will certainly remember the battle that follows. You won’t try that again! **9** No, it is useless to try to capture it. The hunter who attempts it will be knocked down. **10** And since no one dares to disturb it, who then can stand up to me? **11** Who has given me anything that I need to pay back? Everything under heaven is mine. **12** “I want to emphasize Leviathan’s limbs and its enormous strength and graceful form. **13** Who can strip off its hide, and who can penetrate its

double layer of armor? **14** Who could pry open its jaws? For its teeth are terrible! **15** The scales on its back are like rows of shields tightly sealed together. **16** They are so close together that no air can get between them. **17** Each scale sticks tight to the next. They interlock and cannot be penetrated. **18** “When it sneezes, it flashes light! Its eyes are like the red of dawn. **19** Lightning leaps from its mouth; flames of fire flash out. **20** Smoke streams from its nostrils like steam from a pot heated over burning rushes. **21** Its breath would kindle coals, for flames shoot from its mouth. **22** “The tremendous strength in Leviathan’s neck strikes terror wherever it goes. **23** Its flesh is hard and firm and cannot be penetrated. **24** Its heart is hard as rock, hard as a millstone. **25** When it rises, the mighty are afraid, gripped by terror. **26** No sword can stop it, no spear, dart, or javelin. **27** Iron is nothing but straw to that creature, and bronze is like rotten wood. **28** Arrows cannot make it flee. Stones shot from a sling are like bits of grass. **29** Clubs are like a blade of grass, and it laughs at the swish of javelins. **30** Its belly is covered with scales as sharp as glass. It plows up the ground as it drags through the mud. **31** “Leviathan makes the water boil with its commotion. It stirs the depths like a pot of ointment. **32** The water glistens in its wake, making the sea look white. **33** Nothing on earth is its equal, no other creature so fearless. **34** Of all the creatures, it is the proudest. It is the king of beasts.”

42 **1** Then Job replied to the LORD : **2** “I know that you can do anything, and no one can stop you. **3** You asked, ‘Who is this that questions my wisdom with such ignorance?’ It is I—and I was talking about things I knew nothing about, things far too wonderful for me. **4** You said, ‘Listen and I will speak! I have some questions for you, and you must answer them.’ **5** I had only heard about you before, but now I have seen you with my own eyes. **6** I take back everything I said, and I sit in dust and ashes to show my repentance.” **7** After the LORD had finished speaking to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite: “I am angry with you and your two friends, for you have not spoken accurately about me, as my servant Job has. **8** So take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and offer a burnt offering for yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer on your behalf. I will not treat you as you deserve, for you have not spoken accurately about me, as my servant Job has.” **9** So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite did as the LORD commanded them, and the LORD accepted Job’s prayer. **10** When Job prayed for his friends, the LORD restored his fortunes. In fact, the LORD gave him twice as much as before! **11** Then all his brothers, sisters, and former friends came and feasted with him in his home. And they consoled him and comforted him because of all the trials the LORD had brought against him. And each of them brought him a gift of money and a gold ring. **12** So the LORD blessed Job in the second half of his life even more than in the beginning. For now he had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 teams of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys. **13** He also gave Job seven more sons and three

more daughters. **14** He named his first daughter Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third Keren-happuch. **15** In all the land no women were as lovely as the daughters of Job. And their father put them into his will along with their brothers. **16** Job lived 140 years after that, living to see four generations of his children and grandchildren. **17** Then he died, an old man who had lived a long, full life.

2 Corinthians 5:11 - 21

5 11 Because we understand our fearful responsibility to the Lord, we work hard to persuade others. God knows we are sincere, and I hope you know this, too. **12** Are we commending ourselves to you again? No, we are giving you a reason to be proud of us, so you can answer those who brag about having a spectacular ministry rather than having a sincere heart. **13** If it seems we are crazy, it is to bring glory to God. And if we are in our right minds, it is for your benefit. **14** Either way, Christ's love controls us. Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. **15** He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them. **16** So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! **17** This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! **18** And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. **19** For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. **20** So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" **21** For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

Psalms 45:1 - 17

45 1 Beautiful words stir my heart. I will recite a lovely poem about the king, for my tongue is like the pen of a skillful poet. **2** You are the most handsome of all. Gracious words stream from your lips. God himself has blessed you forever. **3** Put on your sword, O mighty warrior! You are so glorious, so majestic! **4** In your majesty, ride out to victory, defending truth, humility, and justice. Go forth to perform awe-inspiring deeds! **5** Your arrows are sharp, piercing your enemies' hearts. The nations fall beneath your feet. **6** Your throne, O God, endures forever and

ever. You rule with a scepter of justice. **7** You love justice and hate evil. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you, pouring out the oil of joy on you more than on anyone else. **8** Myrrh, aloes, and cassia perfume your robes. In ivory palaces the music of strings entertains you. **9** Kings' daughters are among your noble women. At your right side stands the queen, wearing jewelry of finest gold from Ophir! **10** Listen to me, O royal daughter; take to heart what I say. Forget your people and your family far away. **11** For your royal husband delights in your beauty; honor him, for he is your lord. **12** The princess of Tyre will shower you with gifts. The wealthy will beg your favor. **13** The bride, a princess, looks glorious in her golden gown. **14** In her beautiful robes, she is led to the king, accompanied by her bridesmaids. **15** What a joyful and enthusiastic procession as they enter the king's palace! **16** Your sons will become kings like their father. You will make them rulers over many lands. **17** I will bring honor to your name in every generation. Therefore, the nations will praise you forever and ever.

Proverbs 22:14

22 14 The mouth of an immoral woman is a dangerous trap; those who make the LORD angry will fall into it.