

Comments About Job 40–41

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website, churchofgodbigandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of July 7, 2018.

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Recently, I began a series of brief articles to discuss the book of Job. There will be times when we talk about (1) a group of chapters, (2) one chapter and (3) a portion of a chapter. Today, we will discuss Job 40-41.

I hope this project encourages you to review the valuable history and lessons found in the book of Job.

What was Job’s sin?

In last week’s article, I mentioned three verses that gave succinct statements about Job’s sin.

- The servant Elihu said: “Therefore Job opens his mouth in vain; he multiplies words without knowledge” (Job 35:16).
- God began his first confrontation by asking: “Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge?” (Job 32:2).
- God concluded his first confrontation by asking and saying: “Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God, let him answer it” (Job 40:2).

Confronting Job

Early in Elihu’s commentary to Job, we see him issue a challenge to Job.

Job 33:5—“If you can answer me, set your words in order before me; take your stand.”

When God finally talked to Job, He confronted Job twice.

Job 38:3—“Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me.”

Job 40:7—“Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me.”

Job’s response to first challenge

Here is Job’s response to God’s first challenge.

Job 40:4-5—“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.”

Although that response may appear sufficient to many people, God proceeded to confront again (Job 40-41).

Asked more questions

When God confronted Job the second time, He asked additional questions.

Job 40:8—"Would you indeed annul My judgment? Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?"

Job 40:9—"Have you an arm like God? Or can you thunder with a voice like His?"

God proceeded to give some advice (Job 40:10-14) and to remind Job of the mammoth animal (verses 15-25).

Can you catch a sea monster?

Next, God asked Job if he could catch a sea monster?

Job 41:1-7—"Can you draw out Leviathan with a hook, or snare his tongue with a line which you lower? Can you put a reed through his nose, or pierce his jaw with a hook? Will he make many supplications to you? Will he speak softly to you? Will he make a covenant with you? Will you take him as a servant forever? Will you play with him as with a bird, or will you leash him for your maidens? Will your companions make a banquet of him? Will they apportion him among the merchants? Can you fill his skin with harpoons, or his head with fishing spears?"

God concluded His challenge by discussing the magnificence of the large animal (verses 8-34).

Job's response to the second challenge

Job's response to the second challenge is recorded in the next chapter (Job 42:1-6).

We will look at Job's words in next week's article.