

JOB 40

“BEHOLD NOW BEHEMOTH!”

After the Lord had heaped many hard questions upon Job, in order to show him – by his obvious ignorance in the works of nature – what an incompetent judge he was of the methods and intentions of Providence, He hammered home the nail with one more demand. It seems that God paused awhile (as Elihu had done), to give Job time to say what he had to say, or to think of what he had just heard; but Job was in such confusion that he remained silent. And therefore, God spoke again to move him to reply. Although Job had not said anything, yet the Lord was said to “answer” him (verse 1); for He knows men’s thoughts, and can return a suitable answer to their silence.

Communion with the Lord effectually convinces and humbles a saint, and makes him glad to part with the sins that he has loved. We must be thoroughly convinced and humbled, in order to prepare us for remarkable deliverances. As Job remained speechless after the Lord’s words in the last two chapters, He put 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 indeed. When the Holy Spirit of truth comes, He convinces! Job yielded himself to the grace of God; he acknowledged himself to be a sinner, and he had nothing to say to justify himself. He was now sensible that he had sinned; and therefore, he called himself vile. Repentance changes people’s opinion of themselves, and those who are truly sensible of their own sinfulness and vileness will not dare to justify themselves before God. Job now realized that he was a poor, foolish, and sinful creature, who ought not to have uttered one word against the Lord’s works. One glimpse of God’s holy nature is enough to frighten the stoutest rebel. How, then, will the wicked bear the sight of His glory on the Day of Judgment?

It is a very solemn thing to draw near to the Lord – even when we come to Him through the Mediator. Surely a soul was never brought into the presence of the holy God with lightness. O how little is thought of such an interview by those who are ignorant of the Redeemer, and who know nothing of the vast importance of His blood and righteousness! Even David wrote that he trembled when he thought of God’s judgments (Ps. 119:120), and yet he was looking entirely for acceptance in Jesus. Alas! What horrors will instantly invade that soul that shall rise from the bed of death without that righteousness to justify, that Mediator to intercede, and that God-Man to redeem!

Outline of the chapter:

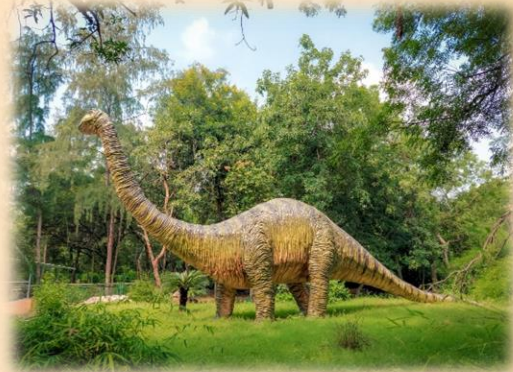
- ❖ *The Lord demands an answer to the questions which He had asked – verses 1-2*
- ❖ *Job submits to the Lord in humility – verses 3-5*
- ❖ *God shows Job that he is by no means an equal match with Him – verses 6-14*
- ❖ *He gives an instance of His own power, as seen in behemoth – verses 15-24*

Job's state of humility before the Lord is the state to which every truly regenerated and awakened soul is brought at last. Here grace triumphs, and the sinner casts himself entirely upon God's mercy in Christ. Let us observe how very graciously the Lord was now dealing with Job. It is true that He did utter solemn demands from him; but we see none of those cutting words which Job's three friends had used. O sovereign grace! O boundless mercy! How is Divine love manifested and magnified when it is proclaimed by God Himself, in the Person and righteousness of the Lord Jesus!

After Job's humble acknowledgment of sin, the Lord began to speak again, in verse 6. Those who profit by what they have heard from God shall hear more from Him. And those who are truly convinced of sin need to be humbled continually. No doubt God – and He alone – has power to humble and bring down our sinful pride; He has the wisdom to know when and how to do it, and it is not for us to teach Him how to govern the world.

There is a great deal of Gospel in these verses. Is it not in the same way and manner that the Lord now brings sinners to a sense of sin, when He darts conviction into their minds? O how blessed and gracious it is when God thus sets up a tribunal in the conscience, in order to make us sensible of the riches of His grace! And what the Lord says in the conclusion of this expostulation (verse 14) is, in fact, said to every convinced sinner: "If man could justify himself on these points, and do these things that I Myself alone can do; then I will agree that he might as easily redeem and save himself from sin!" Let us not overlook the most blessed part of this discourse – how, by such gracious means, the Lord is preparing the soul for the cordial reception of redemption by Jesus alone.

In verses 15-24, the Lord represented the sovereignty of His power, in a description of the largest of land animals, known as behemoth – which was most likely a giant sauropod dinosaur! Having described this mighty monster's strength, greatness, and fortitude, the Lord pointed out to Job that the same power which made this beast can also unmake him in a moment. And He took occasion from



this to make note of His own distinguishing grace to man, who was formed from the dust of the earth on the same day of Creation that behemoth himself was. And no doubt, in the description here given, the Lord intended Job to conclude that if all and everything resulted from His infinite power and wisdom, then surely there was enough in such views of Divine greatness and Divine goodness to induce humble and dutiful submission to the Divine will.

Lord, we acknowledge our smallness and nothingness, and confess that we are indeed vile. Humble our foolish pride and lay it low in the dust, and help us to turn our eyes to our Redeemer and place our trust in Him alone! Amen.