

God Questions Job About Creation (c. 2200 BC)

Job 38:1–38

Yahweh’s Introductory Challenge—“I will question you...”

- 1 Then Yahweh answered Job from the storm, and he said,
- 2 “Who *is* this darkening counsel
by words without knowledge?
- 3 Prepare yourself for a difficult task like a man,
and I will question you, and you shall declare to me.

Creation of the Earth

- 4 “Where were you at my laying the foundation of *the* earth?
Tell *me*, if you possess understanding.
- 5 Who determined its measurement? Yes, you do know.
Or who stretched *the* measuring line upon it?
- 6 On what were its bases sunk?
Or who laid its cornerstone,
- 7 when *the* morning stars were singing together
and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

The Sea

- 8 “Or *who* shut *the* sea in with doors
at its bursting, *when* it went out of *the* womb,
- 9 at my making *the* clouds its garment
and thick darkness its swaddling band,
- 10 and I prescribed my rule for it,
and I set bars and doors,
- 11 and I said, ‘You shall come up to here, but you shall not go further,
and here it will set *a boundary* for your proud surging waves’?

The Rotation of the Earth

- 12 “Have you ever in your life commanded *the* morning?
Have you made the dawn know its place,
- 13 to take hold of the earth’s skirts
so that the wicked might be shaken off from it?
- 14 It is changed like clay *under* a seal,
and they appear like a garment.
- 15 And their light is withheld from *the* wicked,
and *their* uplifted arm is broken.

The Underworld

- 16 “Have you entered into *the* sea’s sources?
Or have you walked around in *the* recesses of the deep?
- 17 Have *the* gates of death been revealed to you?
Or have you seen *the* gates of deep shadow?
- 18 Have you considered closely *the* earth’s vast expanse?
Declare *it*, if you know all of it.

Light and Darkness

- 19 “Where then *is* the way *where the* light dwells?
And where then *is* its place,
- 20 that you may take it to its territory,
and that you might discern the paths to its home?
- 21 You know, for you were born then,
and the number of your days *is* great.

The Weather

- 22 Have you entered into *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 Where then *is* the way *where the* light is distributed,
where he scatters *the* east wind upon *the* earth?
 25 “Who has cut open a channel for the torrents
 and a way for *the* thunder bolts,
 26 to bring rain on a land where no one lives,
 a desert where no humans live,
 27 to satisfy desert and wasteland,
 and to cause *the ground* to put forth *the* rising of grass?
 28 Is there a father for the rain,
 or who fathered *the* drops of dew?
 29 From whose womb did the ice come forth,
 and who fathered *the* frost of heaven?
 30 Like stone *the* waters become hard,
 and *the* faces of the deep freeze.

The Stars

- 31 “Can you bind *the* chains of *the* Pleiades,
 or can you loosen *the* cords of Orion?
 32 Can you lead forth the southern constellations at their appointed time,
 or can you lead *the* Bear with its children?
 33 Do you know heaven’s statutes,
 or can you establish their rule on the earth?

The Clouds

- 34 Can you lift up your voice to the clouds
 so that a flood of water may cover you?
 35 Can you send forth lightnings, that they may go?
 And will they say to you, ‘Here we are’?
 36 Who has put wisdom in the [inner parts],
 or who has given understanding to the [mind]?
 37 Who can number *the* clouds with wisdom?
 Or who can tilt heaven’s jars,
 38 at *the* flowing of *the* dust into a cast
 and *the* clods cling together?

God Questions Job About the Animals (c. 2200 BC)

Job 38:39–39:30

Lions and Ravens

- 38:39 “Can you hunt prey for *the* lion?
 And can you satisfy *the* hunger of strong lions
 40 when they are crouched in the dens,
when they lie in the thicket in an ambush?
 41 Who prepares for the crow its prey,
 when its young ones cry to God for help,
 and they wander around for lack of food?

Mountain Goats

- 39:1 “Do you know *the* time when *the* goats of *the* rocks give birth?
 Do you observe *the* doe deer’s giving birth?
 2 Can you number *the* months they fulfill,
 and do you know *the* time of its giving birth?
 3 When they crouch, they bring forth their young ones;
 they get rid of their labor pains.
 4 Their young ones grow strong; they grow up in the open;

they go forth and do not return to them.

Wild Donkeys

- 5 “Who has sent forth *the* wild ass free?
And who has released *the* wild donkey’s bonds,
6 *to* which I have given *the* wilderness *as* its house
and *the* salt flat *as* its dwelling place?
7 It scorns *the* city’s turmoil;
it does not hear *the* driver’s shouts.
8 It explores *the* mountains *as* its pasture
and searches after every kind of green plant.

Wild Oxen

- 9 “Is *the* wild ox willing to serve you,
or will he spend the night at your feeding trough?
10 Can you tie *the* wild ox *with* its rope to a furrow,
or will it harrow *the* valleys after you?
11 Can you trust it because its strength *is* great,
or will you hand your labor over to it?
12 Can you rely on it that it will return your grain
and *that* it will gather *it* to your threshing floor?

Ostriches

- 13 “*The* wings of *the* female ostrich flap—
are they the pinions of *the* stork or *the* falcon?
14 Indeed, it leaves its eggs to the earth,
and it lets *them* be warmed on *the* ground,
15 and it forgets that a foot might crush an egg,
and a wild animal might trample it.
16 It deals cruelly with its young ones, as *if they were* not its own,
as *if* without fear *that* its labor *were* in vain,
17 because God made it forget wisdom,
and he did not give it a share in understanding.
18 When it spreads its wings aloft,
it laughs at the horse and its rider.

Horses

- 19 “Do you give power to the horse?
Do you clothe its neck *with* a mane?
20 Do you make it leap like the locust?
The majesty of its snorting *is* terrifying.
21 They paw in the valley, and it exults with strength;
it goes out to meet *the* battle.
22 It laughs at danger and is not dismayed,
and it does not turn back from before *the* sword.
23 Upon it *the* quiver rattles
along with the flash of *the* spear and *the* short sword.
24 With roar and rage it races over the ground,
and it cannot stand still at *the* sound of *the* horn.
25 Whenever a horn *sounds*, it says, ‘Aha!’
And it smells *the* battle from a distance—
the thunder of *the* commanders and *the* war cry.

Hawks

- 26 “Does *the* hawk soar by your wisdom?
Does it spread its wings to *the* south?
27 Or does *the* eagle fly high at your command
and construct its nest high?

- 28 It lives *on the* rock and spends the night
on the rock point and the mountain stronghold.
- 29 From there it spies out *the* prey;
its eyes look from far away.
- 30 And its young ones lick blood greedily,
and where *the* dead carcasses *are*, there they *are*.”

God Questions Job About the Behemoth and the Leviathan (c. 2200 BC)

Job 40–41

Concluding Challenge

40:1 Then Yahweh answered Job and said,

- 2 “Shall a faultfinder contend with Shaddai?
Anyone who argues with God must answer it.”

Job Recognizes His Lack of Knowledge and Power, and Does Not Presume to Answer God

3 So Job answered Yahweh and said,

- 4 “Look, I am insignificant.
What shall I answer you?
I lay my hand on my mouth.
- 5 Once I have spoken, and I will not answer;
even twice, but I will not proceed.”

Yahweh Continues to Question Job

6 Then Yahweh answered Job from the storm, and he said,

- 7 “Prepare yourself for a difficult task like a man,
and I will question you, and you shall declare to me.

God’s Justice

- 8 “Indeed, would you annul my justice?
Would you condemn me, so that you might be righteous?
- 9 Or do you have an arm like God,
and can you thunder with a voice like his?
- 10 Adorn yourself *with* pride and dignity,
and clothe yourself *with* splendor.
- 11 Pour out the overflowing of your anger,
and look at all *the* proud, and humble them.
- 12 Look at all *the* proud, humble them,
and tread down *the* wicked where they stand.
- 13 Hide them in the dust together;
bind their faces in the grave.
- 14 And I will also praise you,
that your *own* right hand can save you.

The “Behemoth”

- 15 “Look, Behemoth, which I have made just as *I made* you;
it eats grass like the ox.
- 16 Look, its strength *is* in its loins
and its power in the muscles of its stomach.
- 17 It keeps its tail straight like a cedar;
the sinews of its thighs are tightly wound.
- 18 Its bones *are* tubes of copper,
its limbs like rods of iron.
- 19 “It *is* the first of God’s actions;
the *one who* made him furnishes *it with* his sword.

- 20 Yes, *the* mountains yield produce for it,
and all wild animals play there.
- 21 Under *the* lotus tree it lies,
in *the* hiding place of *the* reeds and *in the* marsh.
- 22 *The* lotus trees cover it *with* their shade;
the wadi's poplar trees surround it.
- 23 Look, *if the* river is turbulent, it is not frightened;
it is confident even though *the* Jordan rushes against its mouth.
- 24 Can anyone take it by its eyes?
Can he pierce *its* nose with a snare?

The "Leviathan"

- 41:1 "Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook?
Or can you tie down its mouth with a cord?
- 2 Can you put a rope in its nose?
Or can you pierce its jawbone with a hook?
- 3 Will it make numerous pleas for mercy to you?
Or will it speak gentle words to you?
- 4 Will it make a covenant with you?
Will you take it as a slave forever?
- 5 Will you play with it as *with* birds
and put it on a leash for your girls?
- 6 Will guildsmen bargain over it?
Will they divide it between tradesmen?
- 7 Can you fill its kin with harpoons
or its head with fish spears?
- 8 Lay your hands on it;
think about *the* battle—you will not do *it* again!
- 9 "Look, the hope of capturing it is false.
Will one be hurled down even at its sight?
- 10 *Is* it not fierce when somebody stirs it?
Who *then is* he *who* would stand before it?
- 11 Who has come to confront me, that I should repay *him*?
Under all the heavens, it belongs to me.
- 12 "I will not keep quiet *concerning* its limbs
or concerning *the* extent of its might and *the* gracefulness of its frame.
- 13 Who can strip off its outer covering?
Who can penetrate its double harness?
- 14 Who can open *the* doors of its face?
Its teeth all around *are* fearsome.
- 15 Its back *has* scales of shields;
it is shut up closely *as with* a seal.
- 16 They are close to one another—
even *the* air cannot come between them.
- 17 They are joined one to another;
they cling together and cannot be separated.
- 18 "Its snorting flashes forth light,
and its eyes *are* red like dawn.
- 19 Torches go from its mouth;
sparks of fire shoot out.
- 20 Smoke comes from its nostrils
as *from* a kettle boiling and *burning* bulrushes.
- 21 Its breath kindles charcoal,
and a flame comes from its mouth.
- 22 "Strength abides in its neck,
and dismay dances before it.
- 23 Its flesh's folds of skin cling together;
it is cast on it—it will not be moved.

- 24 Its heart is cast as stone;
yes, it is cast as *the* lower millstone.
- 25 When it raises itself, *the* mighty ones are terrified;
they retreat because of its thrashing.
- 26 Reaching it *with the* sword does not avail,
nor with the spear, *the* dart, or *the* javelin.
- 27 It regards iron as straw,
bronze as rotten wood.
- 28 An arrow will not make it flee;
sling stones are turned to stubble for it.
- 29 Clubs are regarded as stubble,
and it laughs at *the* short sword's rattle.
- 30 "Its underparts *are* shards of a potsherd;
it moves over mud *like* a threshing sledge.
- 31 It makes *the* deep boil like a cooking pot;
it makes *the* sea like a pot of ointment.
- 32 Behind it, it leaves a glistening wake;
one would think *that* the deep *has* gray hair.
- 33 "On the ground it has no equal—
a creature without fear.
- 34 It observes all *the* lofty;
it is king over all that are proud."

God Restores the Fortunes of Job (c. 2200 BC)

Job 42

Job Humbles Himself Before Yahweh

- 1 Then Job answered Yahweh and said,
- 2 "I know that you can do all *things*,
and *any* scheme from you will not be thwarted.
- 3 'Who *is* this darkening counsel without knowledge?'
Therefore I uttered, but I did not understand;
things too wonderful for me, but I did not know.
- 4 'Hear and I will speak;
I will question you, then inform me.'
- 5 By the ear's hearing I heard *of* you,
but now my eye has seen you.
- 6 Therefore I despise *myself*
and repent in dust and ashes."

God Is Angry With Job's Friends

- 7 And then after Yahweh spoke these words to Job, Yahweh said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath has been kindled against you and against *the* two of your friends, for you have not spoken to me what is right as my servant Job *has*."
- 8 So then, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to my servant Job and offer a burnt offering for yourselves. And my servant Job will pray for you, for I will certainly accept his prayer, so that it will not be done with you *according to your* folly, for you have not spoken to me what is right as my servant Job *has*."
- 9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite *and* Zophar the Naamathite went and did just as Yahweh had told them, and Yahweh accepted Job's prayer.

God Restores the Fortunes of Job

- 10 Then Yahweh returned Job's fortune when he prayed to him on behalf of his friends. Thus Yahweh increased all that Job had twice as much as before.
- 11 So all his brothers and all his sisters and all *those who* had known him before came to him, and they ate bread with him in his house and showed sympathy to him and comforted him for all the disaster that Yahweh had brought upon him. Then each one gave to him one piece of money, and each one *gave to him* one ornamental ring of gold.
- 12 So Yahweh blessed Job's latter days more than his beginning. Thus he had fourteen thousand sheep and goats and six thousand camels and a thousand pair of oxen and a thousand female donkeys.

13 And he had seven sons and three daughters.

14 And he called the name of the first Jemimah and the name of the second Keziah and the name of the third Qeren-Happuk.

15 And beautiful women were not found in all the land like Job's daughters, and their father gave to them an inheritance in the midst of their brothers.

16 And Job lived after this one hundred and forty years, and he saw his sons and his grandsons *for* four generations.

17 Then Job died old and full of days.

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