

JOB

A MAN OF HEROIC ENDURANCE

STUDY EIGHTEEN

Full Repentance for All the Right Reasons

Job 40:6–42:6

Having come to an end of himself, Job sits humbly before his Lord, surrendered and contrite. Surrendered and contrite—two words we’re not familiar with, especially in our culture.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

MANY parents will identify with this family scenario. A mom and dad are raising a young teenaged son—bright, gifted, and tenacious. On good days, he is a model child. But he soon adopts a surly, independent spirit. His natural tenacity devolves into stubbornness, arrogance, and conceit. He’s now ungrateful, can’t be told much, and questions authority. The one-time family harmony has gone haywire.

Finally, dad reaches his limit. He calls in his son, saying, “Sit down.” Dad pulls out his clipboard full of questions. “Son, as your father, I’m in charge. Let me ask you a few things. Can you earn a living to support this household? Can you cover the mortgage? Can you pay for our cars? Can you drive yourself to soccer practice? Can you make hard decisions for this family? Can you cook three square meals a day? Can you vote or hold public office? We love you. But I’m tolerating this no longer. We’re not functioning as a family. When you’re ready to adjust your attitude and demonstrate a teachable spirit, we’ll restore your lost privileges.”

To his parents’ pleasant surprise, he meekly muttered, “Dad, Mom, I’ve been wrong. I’m sorry.”

Much like the father, God had addressed Job with a series of confrontive questions in Job 38–39. In the passage for this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, the loving Lord keeps Job on the hot seat with more truthful talk. Job hears the message, and, like a good son, he repents for all the right reasons.



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SEARCHING
THE
SCRIPTURES
BIBLE STUDIES

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PREPARE YOUR HEART

Jeremiah captures the spirit of Job's humble response:

LORD, there is no one like you!

For you are great, and your name is full of power. (Jeremiah 10:6)

As you enter into God's private conversation with Job, begin with a prayer inviting the Lord to refresh your reverence for Him and remind you of His fatherly love for you.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Through all his pain, Job never sinned “by blaming God” and cursing Him—despite his wife's urging (Job 1:22; 2:9). And yet, Job was human. Deep emotions poured out of his soul in torrents of grief, heartache, and confusion. He complained bitterly to God: “Why won't you leave me alone?” “What have I done to you?” “Why make me your target? Am I a burden to you?” (7:19–20).

He crossed a line, however, when he made demands of God:

“Now summon me, and I will answer!

Or let me speak to you, and you reply.

Tell me, what have I done wrong?

Show me my rebellion and my sin.” (13:22–23)

Job would get his audience with God . . . but not as he expected. The Lord appeared to Job from a fearsome whirlwind and rebuked him:

“Who is this that questions my wisdom

with such ignorant words?” (38:2)

As we examined in our previous study of Job 38–39, God asked Job a series of questions to demonstrate His sovereign authority over creation. Job replied with humility, “I am nothing . . . I will cover my mouth with my hand” (40:4). Now, beginning in 40:6, God asked Job a second series of questions to demonstrate His sovereign power. Let's see how Job models the sort of heart we all must have before Almighty God.

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Observation: “Job, I Have Some Questions for You”

Use your skills of observation as you answer the following questions, noticing contrasts and comparisons, vivid word pictures, and the tone of the passage. Put yourself in Job’s place as you imagine him listening to God.¹

God Declares His Power—Job 40:6–14

Read [Job 40:6–14](#). In the opening verses, what similarities do you notice with the opening verses of God’s first message in [38:1–3](#)? What aspects of His power did God challenge Job to match in 40:8–14?

The Lord takes Job by the shoulders and gives him a good shake. He’s saying to him, “Job, listen to me. I am God. You are man. I am authority. You are servant. I am in charge. You are the clay. I’m molding and shaping. You will be shaped. It’s important that you understand, Job, you are not on My level. You are not God.” —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

God Illustrates His Power—Job 40:15–41:34

Recall that Job accused God of punishing him unjustly and failing to judge the wicked. In response, God proves His ability to execute justice mightily by giving Job a display of His power. God told Job, in essence, “Here are two of my fiercest creatures. They sit atop the food chain. All other creatures bow to these beasts. If you can subdue them, then maybe you can take My place and be king of the world.”

Behold Behemoth—Job 40:15–24

Read [Job 40:15–24](#). First, God asked Job to consider the magnificent *Behemoth*. What physical attributes does Behemoth possess, according to 40:15–18?

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According to Job 40:19–23, while creation serves Behemoth, who alone subdues this beast? What images are used in 40:23–24 to demonstrate Behemoth’s control over natural forces?

Look Upon Leviathan—Job 41:1–34

Read [Job 41:1–34](#). Next the Lord showed Job the second fierce creature, *Leviathan*. It too rules over all other creatures. What images are used in 41:1–5, 13 to demonstrate a person’s inability to catch, control, or domesticate Leviathan? How would you describe this wild creature?

How does 41:11 point to God’s eternal and sovereign nature? What is the purpose of His rhetorical question?

What other powerful attributes do you observe in 41:12–32? What point did God make in His conclusion in 41:33–34?

God’s whole point was this: “You’re no match against something this strong, this overpowering. If I, Yahweh, am powerful enough to create and subdue a creature this strong and intimidating, I’m deserving of your trust, your submission, your worship.” —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Job Repents—Job 42:1–6

Humbled to his knees, Job repented in dust and ashes. Read [Job 42:1–6](#). What details did Job include in his confession and repentance?

What new understanding of God did Job gain, according to 42:2, 5?



Interpretation: Characteristics of a Contrite Heart

God's illustrations from the animal kingdom highlighted His absolute power over the most terrifying beasts Job had ever encountered: *Behemoth* and *Leviathan*. What are these creatures?

Use your Bible study resources to research the possible meaning of these names. For an online resource, consult the articles, "[What Is the Behemoth?](#)" and "[What Was the Leviathan?](#)" at gotquestions.org. Summarize your findings here.

Is there a more frightening creature than Behemoth or Leviathan? Certainly, the devil—whom Scripture calls the *roaring lion* (1 Peter 5:8) and the *great dragon*- (Revelation 12:9). Although Job didn't see the connection, perhaps the reader is meant to see in these creatures Job's original tormentor whom God will judge now that Job's test of faith is ending. What message was God communicating to the readers of Job about His power and ultimate justice?

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God said that Leviathan is “king over all the sons of pride” (Job 41:34 NASB), and Job got the point. Job had been one of those sons of pride. He had no right to question God’s wisdom and power. Reread [Job 42:1–6](#). What characteristics of Job’s repentance should be characteristics of anyone who repents? Based on Job’s example, write down a few principles of repentance.

The beautiful thing to witness is this strong-hearted person, Job—who is surrendered and humbled with a “broken and contrite spirit”—entertaining no grudges, making no demands, having no expectations, offering no conditions, anticipating no favors. And the marvelous thing when we repent? God begins to use us in the most amazing ways. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Pride Bows in Humility

Some of Scripture’s most powerful people faced moments of deep *retraction* and *repentance*. While their situations differed, each found himself prostrate in humility.

David penned Psalm 51 following the misery he endured in the backwash of his adultery with Bathsheba. Read [Psalm 51:1–3, 10, 17](#) and describe David’s countenance, the nature of his confession, and his open-palmed requests before the living God.

After Nebuchadnezzar, the supreme ruler of Babylon, conquered Judah and destroyed Jerusalem, the Lord disciplined him with seven years of insanity. When restored, how did he express repentance in [Daniel 4:34–35](#)?

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Much as Job encountered the Lord in the whirlwind, Saul encountered the risen Christ on the road to Damascus. Saul would undergo a spiritual transformation, a missional redirection, and a name change. Read [Acts 9:3–5](#). How does Saul's experience parallel Job's? What was Saul's response?

What is the common sentiment and pattern within these three passages?

God will stop at nothing to bring us to the place of full repentance. He doesn't bring relief and then expect repentance. It is amid the pain He waits for words like this: I retract, I repent. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: It's All About God

Whatever our life station or life situation, *it's all about God*. Our giftings are all about God. Our privileges are all about God. Our possessions are all about God. Our families are all about God. Our careers are all about God. None of it is deserved; all of it is granted by Him. But there are times we don't understand this until we are faced with impossible moments that level us to a place of complete submission. Then, we emerge as a people of God and a people all about God.

While Job's suffering had not lessened, he still repented of his prideful words toward God. What lesson do you take from his humble posture? How might you need to follow his example?

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With contrite hearts we nurse no grudges, make no demands, have no expectations, offer no conditions, and anticipate no favors. We surrender. Give up the fight. Repent. Release our rights for God to do with us however He may be pleased to do.

In closing, what prayer of surrender would you like to offer the Lord?

Living in a place of repentance doesn't mean we lose influence. In fact, we become more fruitful. Repenting allows God to empower us to do greater things for His kingdom—greater than we could ever imagine.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, it's my great desire to live a life that is wholly committed to You. I pray that You will use these words and these examples from Your Book to stop me in my tracks, to make me realize how arrogant and conceited I have become and how wholly dependent I am upon You for forgiveness. I pray You will begin the process of change even this day. May it never cease until I see Your Son face to face. In Jesus' great name I pray. Amen.

ENDNOTE

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, "[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)"

For the 2026 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Marshall F. Davis in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 2002, 2026 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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