

Job 40:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one that is proud, and abase him.

Analysis

Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one that is proud, and abase him. In this verse, God challenges Job to demonstrate divine prerogatives—specifically, the ability to execute moral judgment against pride and wickedness. The phrase "cast abroad" translates hafeits (חָפֵץ), meaning to scatter or disperse widely, while "rage of thy wrath" uses evrot appecha (אֶפְךָ), denoting overflowing fury or indignation against evil.

God's ironic challenge exposes human limitation: if Job possessed divine wisdom and power, let him identify and humble the proud. The word "proud" (ge'eh, גְּאַה) refers to those who exalt themselves against God and others. "Abase" translates hashpileihu (הַשְׁפֵּילֵהוּ), meaning to bring low, humiliate, or reduce to nothing. This echoes biblical themes where God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble (Proverbs 3:34, James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5).

The verse reveals essential attributes of divine governance that humans cannot replicate: omniscience to identify all pride, omnipotence to judge righteously, and moral authority to execute judgment. God alone can "behold every one that is proud"—seeing all hearts, all motives, all secret arrogance. Job's inability to fulfill this challenge demonstrates that questioning God's governance while lacking God's attributes is presumptuous. The passage teaches that righteous judgment requires both perfect knowledge and perfect power—attributes belonging to God alone.

Historical Context

Job 40 forms part of God's second speech from the whirlwind (Job 40-41), responding to Job's demand for vindication. After God's first speech cataloging His creative power (Job 38-39), Job submitted but did not fully retract his complaints. God's second discourse therefore intensifies the challenge, asking Job to demonstrate not merely creative power but moral governance—the ability to judge righteously and humble the proud.

In ancient Near Eastern thought, controlling chaos and establishing justice were primary divine responsibilities. Creation myths from Mesopotamia and Egypt portrayed gods subduing chaos monsters and establishing cosmic order. By challenging Job to abase the proud and control Behemoth and Leviathan (likely representing chaos forces), God asserts His unique authority over both physical creation and moral order.

The historical context of Job—likely set in the patriarchal period—shows a righteous man suffering without explanation. Ancient wisdom literature struggled with the prosperity of the wicked and suffering of the righteous (Psalms 37, 73; Ecclesiastes). God's challenge here addresses this dilemma: human beings lack the comprehensive knowledge, power, and authority to judge who deserves what. Only God sees all, knows all, and can execute perfect justice in His timing.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. Why does God challenge Job to execute judgment against the proud rather than simply explaining Job's suffering?
2. How does our inability to "behold every one that is proud" reveal our incompetence to judge God's governance?

3. In what ways do we, like Job, presume to understand God's justice while lacking His omniscience and omnipotence?
4. What does this verse teach us about the relationship between humility and trust in God's sovereign purposes?
5. How should recognizing our limitations in judging others affect how we respond when God's justice seems delayed?

Interlinear Text

פָּצַץ	וְתַּעֲבֹר	עַל־בָּתְּךָ	אַפְּנָה	וְרִאֵה	כָּל־	גַּאֲהָה
Cast abroad	the rage	of thy wrath	and behold		H3605	every one that is proud
H6327	H5678	H639	H7200			H1343

וְשִׁפְילָה:

and abase

H8213

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 4:37 (Judgment): Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

Isaiah 2:17 (Parallel theme): And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.

Nahum 1:6 (Parallel theme): Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.