

## God Displays His Authority and Power (Job 40-41)

### I. God Relentlessly Questions Job (1-8)

#### A. Job is Silenced by God's Indictment (1-5)

1. God challenges Job to Answer (1-2)
  - a. Job is called a "faultfinder"
  - b. Job is said to be contending against God
  - c. Job is said to argue with God
  - d. Job is upset that God did not give him a timely answer or come to vindicate Job's case
2. Job is Unable to Answer God's Rebuke (3-5)
  - a. Job admits his is too insignificant to answer (4)
  - b. Job has already spoken presumptuously, He refused to do so again (5)

#### B. God Prepares Job for Another indictment (6-8)

1. God Prepares Job for Another Examination (6-7)
2. Job has Accused God of Injustice (8)

### II. God Alone Has the Power to Rule (9-24)

#### A. Job is Summoned to Display His Power (9-14)

1. Does Job have the Strength of God (9)
2. God Challenges Job to Put on His Divine Garments (10)
3. God challenges Job to unleash his wrath on the wicked (11-13)
4. God will acknowledge Job if he is successful.

#### B. God Documents His Power (15-24)

1. God displays Behemoth's Power to Job (15-18)
  - a. Behemoth is God's creation (15)
  - b. Behemoth is mighty and muscular (16)
  - c. Behemoth's tail is like a cedar (17)
  - d. Behemoth's bones are tubes of bronze (18)
2. God demonstrates that only the Creator can Tame Behemoth (19-24)
  - a. Job is challenged to engage Behemoth with the sword (19)
  - b. Behemoth is not afraid of the great rivers
  - c. Job is challenged to ensnare him if he can

### III. God Displays His Sovereign Rule (41)

#### A. God Compares Man to Leviathan (1-11)

1. Man is Not the Most Powerful Creation (1-10)
  - a. Can Job Subdue Leviathan? (1-7)
    - i. Is Job capable of catching the great beast? (1-2)
    - ii. Will Leviathan submit to Job? (3-4)
    - iii. Can Job tame Leviathan? (5)
    - iv. Can Job overcome Leviathan (6-7)
  - b. No Man Can Stand before Leviathan – much less God (8-10)
    - i. If Job tries – he won't try a second time (8)

- ii. Man is overcome by the sight of Leviathan (9)
    - iii. Man is too fearful to wake Leviathan
    - iv. Therefore, man cannot stand before God (God can subdue Leviathan)
  - 2. Man Cannot Put God in His Debt (11)
    - a. Man has not given God anything worthy of repayment
    - b. All of creation already belongs to God
- B. The Terrible Leviathan is too great for Mankind (12-34)
  - 1. God describes the Terror of Leviathan (12-25)
  - 2. Man's Weapons Cannot Prevail against Leviathan (26-29)
  - 3. No Creature can stand before Leviathan (30-34)

The biggest question here is the identification of Behemoth and Leviathan. I wish it were an easy question to answer. The two major interpretations are, 1. They are poetic descriptions of actual animals – some claim they are the hippopotamus and the crocodile (both fearsome animals in the ancient near east). Others believe they represent dinosaurs that dwelt on the earth with early mankind.

The second interpretation says they are poetic descriptions of mythical beasts that were often used to explain the world in pagan cultures. In the near eastern myths, a good god did battle with primordial monsters to secure the creation and maintenance of the universe. Many see Behemoth and Leviathan as symbolic of cosmic forces that are hostile to the true God's rule. Unlike the early myths of creation, the true God creates all that is under the heavens. He doesn't need to do battle against the forces of evil. He commands them.

In John Harley's commentary on Job, he writes, "In the OT God creates these amazing creatures, and they playfully enjoy God's world (cf. 9:13; 26:12; Gen. 1:21; Ps. 104:25-27). They are never viewed as rival forces on a par with God. Yahweh, however, must defeat foes that threaten his purpose in the course of the redemptive history. To convey the cosmic dimensions of these battles Israel's enemies are labeled Leviathan and Rahab (cf. Isa. 27:1; 51:9; Ps. 74:13-14; 89:10). Apocalyptic literature, concerned with the cosmic dimensions of conflict between good and evil, also employs the terms Behemoth and Leviathan to represent primordial cosmic forces in conflict with God (1 Enoch 60:7-9; 4 Ezra 6:49-52; 2 Bar. 29:4).

Personally, I think that Behemoth and Leviathan are pictures from popular ancient near eastern thought which represent evil in its most terrifying form. Because of the structure of the book, it would seem that the descriptions of Leviathan (a great sea dragon) point to the reality of the "dragon" in the book of Revelation and the "serpent" in the Garden of Eden. The book ends in the same way it began – with Satan the adversary. He is commanded and restrained by God in the beginning of Job and despite all his power and fury over Job, he is but a mere creature to the true God.

The point of this final discourse is to prove that Job cannot even master the created order. He cannot master evil. In fact, he can't even master the beasts of creation. He is not even at the top of his own food chain. Therefore, he has no right or authority to question God's rule. God can tame Behemoth and Leviathan. God does rule over them.