

## The 2<sup>nd</sup> Speech from the Whirlwind: Cosmic Balance

### I. Brief outline of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Speech

- A. (40:6-7) - God's Opening Challenge
- B. (40:8-14) - God's Challenge for Job to Execute his own brand of justice
- C. (40:15 - 41:34 [Heb 41:26]) - Primordial Chaos Monsters
  - 1. (40:15-24) - The Confidence and Creatureliness of Behemoth
  - 2. (41:1-34 [Heb 40:25-41:26]) - God's Primordial Pet, Leviathan
- D. (42:1-9) - Job's Second Response and God's Approval

### II. Preliminary Issue: Why a second speech?

- A. It was not merely to silence Job
  - 1. If it were, God would have stopped when Job put his hand over his mouth after the first speech
  - 2. God launches into a second speech, indicating that God is not interested in merely defeating Job
- B. God wants to instruct Job concerning the nature of divine rule
  - 1. In the first speech, he began with the cosmic picture and moved to the natural world
  - 2. In the second speech, God moves from the natural world to the cosmic picture
  - 3. God wants Job to gain a deeper insight into God's design and governance
- C. The second speech is designed to demonstrate the following:
  - 1. The inadequacy of human conceptions of justice
    - a. God challenges Job to do what God does not do, nor has he worked strict justice into the plan
    - b. God does not punish "all" the wicked by destroying them when they act wickedly
  - 2. Everything in existence is a creation of God
    - Primordial chaos monsters are God's creation along with every thing else
  - 3. Chaos (natural evil) has its place in the created order
    - a. Like the darkness and the lion of the first speech, these primordial chaos monsters appear at home
    - b. Contrary to the typical Ancient Near Eastern concepts, there is no hint of God having to do battle with these creatures

- c. Like the darkness, the lion, etc. of the first speech, God does not destroy these monsters
- 4. Though God knows the workings of the creation, he chooses to leave certain questions unanswered
  - a. God does not deal specifically with Job's case
  - b. God deals with big picture generalizations

### III. (40:6-7) - God's Opening Challenge

#### A. Translation:

- 6. And Yahweh answered Job from the whirlwind and said,
- 7. Gird, I ask<sup>1</sup>, like a hero<sup>2</sup> your loins,  
I will ask you, and you will cause me to know<sup>3</sup>

#### B. God does not stop with one speech due to Job's response

- 1. Job does not declare faith or confidence in God
- 2. God begins his second speech in the same way as he did the first
  - a. This indicated that Job still sees himself as a "hero"
  - b. Even though Job does not "know" the answers to the questions God asked, he apparently still has wrong presuppositions about God which led him to put his hand over his mouth rather than declare a renewed faith.

#### C. This demonstrates that God's interests are relational

### IV. (40:8-14) God's Challenge for Job to Execute his Own Brand of Justice

#### A. Translation:

- 8. Will you annul<sup>4</sup> my justice?  
Will you condemn me as guilty  
so that you will be right?
- 9. An Arm like God do you have?  
With a voice like his can you thunder?
- 10. Deck yourself, I ask, (with) majesty and exaltation  
and splendor and honor be clothed (with)
- 11. Scatter the overflowings of your anger

<sup>1</sup> Most English translations leave the particle of entreaty, **אֵל**, untranslated

<sup>2</sup> There are several words that can be translated "man" in Hebrew, such as **אָדָם** or **אִנוּשׁ**, but this word is **גִּבּוֹר**, "geber," which means "man," is can be used of military men as warrior, mighty man, hero, etc. Examples in Jud 5:30; 2 Sam 23:1; Jer 41:16. **גִּבּוֹר** "gibbor," "warrior," appears to be interchangeable with geber when you compare Ps 18:25[Heb 26] and 2 Sam 22:16, as one text uses geber, and the other, gibbor.

<sup>3</sup> **יָדַע** - Root meaning is "to know" or "knowledge." In Hiphil form it means to "make one know" or "to instruct." The word "knowledge" in verse two is from the same root.

<sup>4</sup> **פָּרַר** - To violate, frustrate, make ineffectual, annul

- and see every proud one and make him low
12. See every proud one and humble him,  
and tread down the wicked ones under them<sup>5</sup>
  13. Hide them in the dust/earth together before them  
Their faces bind in the hidden place<sup>6</sup>
  14. And then I myself will confess/praise you  
that your right hand will deliver you<sup>7</sup>
- B. God contrasts God's brand of justice with Job's
1. In 40:8, God asks, "Will you annul my justice"
    - a. To annul God's justice would mean
      - 1) Declaring God's "justice" as wicked
      - 2) Condemning God and his justice as wrong and Job's justice as right.
      - 3) This is based on Job's concept of justice
    - b. God will pit his justice against Job's concept of justice
  2. Job's speeches demonstrate Job's concept of divine justice
    - a. Reward and punishment
      - 1) 9:20-24 - Job accuses God of promoting injustice
      - 2) 19:7 - Job laments that God does not hear his cry for justice
    - b. Prevention of wickedness
      - 1) 29:14-17 - Job remembers his righteousness
        - a) Job put on "righteousness"
        - b) Job's "justice" was a robe and turban
      - 2) The result was that Job didn't just punish wickedness but strove to prevent it
      - 3) Job believes that God should both punish and prevent
  3. God challenges Job to execute Job's concept of justice
    - a. Attributes of God related to divine rule and justice include his "Arm, voice, thunder, majesty, exaltation, splendor and honor" Examples:
      - 1) Ex 15:7 - God destroys enemies with his majesty
      - 2) Ps 45:3-4 - God as a divine warrior
      - 3) Ps 89:10-14 - Combination of images of the divine warrior and the divine creator who established justice with his mighty arm
      - 4) Isa 30:30-31 - God uses his arm against enemies
      - 5) Job 26:11-13 - God rebuked the creation to bring

<sup>5</sup> Text does not indicate what "them" are. Perhaps it is a reference to Job's feet

<sup>6</sup> טִמְךָ - Refers to the hidden or dark place, sometimes of being buried. This is probably a reference to the grave and would fit with the parallel line.

<sup>7</sup> There is a tiqqune sopherim on this word. It was originally לִי "me" rather than לָךְ "you." The original reading before the emendation was, "...your right hand will deliver me." This seems to indicate that God is suggesting that "if" God failed in executing divine rule, then someone such as Job, should proceed to do it himself, thus rescuing God from a bind. This, of course is ridiculous, which is what God demonstrates in his challenge to Job to execute justice.

- order and peace
  - a) 26:14 - Job no longer understands God's thunder
  - b) It should have been for the purpose of punishing the wicked, but he has observed that God does not do this
  - c) In his speeches, Job does not attribute these attributes to God, since he believes God failed
- b. Elihu's modifications of these attributes
  - 1) 37:2-4 - Elihu attributes these attributes to God
  - 2) 37:22-23 - God is awesome in majesty
  - 3) 37:9-13 - God uses these attributes for more than justice, but also for:
    - a) Correction
    - b) For his land
    - c) For love<sup>8</sup>
  - c. Of course, Job is not able to execute his own justice
- 4. God's speeches demonstrate that this is not how God executes justice
  - a. 40:12-13 - God challenged Job to humiliate "all" of the arrogant and wicked
  - b. God's speeches demonstrate that God does not always do this
    - 1) 38:12,19 - There is a "place" for both the dawn and the darkness
    - 2) 38:9-10 - Yam has a designated place within limits
  - c. God does not consistently execute justice in every instance in every place
    - 1) This can be empirically verified
    - 2) Whether this is because God cannot do it, or chooses not to do it goes unanswered
- 5. All of this demonstrates that Job's concept of justice and of God was inadequate
- 6. In the rest of the second speech, God will demonstrate that he has balanced chaos and order in the cosmos

## V. Primordial Chaos Monsters

- A. The identification of Behemoth and Leviathan
  - 1. The proposals fall into 2 basic categories
    - a. Natural Animals.
      - 1) Behemoth
        - a) Elephant<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> חֶסֶד - Love, lovingkindness, loyalty

- b) Hippopotamus<sup>10</sup>
      - c) A bovine, such as a Water Buffalo<sup>11</sup>
    - 2) Leviathan
      - a) Whale<sup>12</sup>
      - b) Crocodile<sup>13</sup>
      - c) Water dinosaur<sup>14</sup>
  - b. Mythic
    - 1) Behemoth - There are numerous Ancient Near Eastern depictions of an unruly creature
      - a) Ugaritic: Baal (or Anat?) vanquished El's ferocious bull<sup>15</sup> on the road to kingship
      - b) Egyptian: Hippopotamus, the symbol of Seth, evil brother of Osiris, who spoke a curse against Horus and Isis, and was slain by Horus.
      - c) Gilgamesh slays the ferocious "Bull of Heaven," which was sent to attack him by Ishtar after Gilgamesh spurned her.
    - 2) Leviathan - There are numerous references to a dragon/serpent-like monster in Ancient Near East
      - a) Sumerian & Babylonian: Marduk slew Tiamat and created the cosmos with her carcass
      - b) Ugaritic: Baal slays a serpent-like creature on the road to kingship<sup>16</sup>
2. Problems with the naturalistic identification
- a. Behemoth as a plural

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<sup>9</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *The Literal Exposition of Job: A Scriptural Commentary Concerning Providence*, translated by Anthony Damico (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 448.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Gordis, *The Book of Job: Commentary, New Translation and Special Studies* (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1978), 571.

<sup>11</sup> Carol Newsom, "The Book of Job: Introduction, Commentary and Reflections," In *NIB*, edited by Leander E. Keck, 4:317-638 (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1996), 618.

<sup>12</sup> Aquinas, *The Literal Exposition of Job*, 454.

<sup>13</sup> Gordis, *The Book of Job*, 571.

<sup>14</sup> Eric Lyons, "Behemoth and Leviathan-Creatures of Controversy," *RRev* 21 (January 2001), 6. The dinosaur identification stems partly from a misunderstanding of the nature of mythopoeic imagery and language in the Old Testament and Ancient Near Eastern culture as something that is inherently untrue, which is a Greek rather than a Mesopotamian understanding of myth. In addition to this, Lyons erroneously interprets the phrase, "first" of the ways of God in 40:19 as the "largest" of God's creatures, which he interprets as a dinosaur. However, "first" ראשית does not mean "largest," but means "first" in either a temporal or qualitative sense. In addition to these difficulties, there is the abundant Ancient Near Eastern mythic imagery of a hostile, serpent-like chaos monster associated with the sea that unsuccessfully opposed God. This motif appears throughout the Hebrew Bible, usually in poetic or prophetic contexts. Some of the examples include Job 3:8; 26:12; 41:1 [MT 40:25]; Ps. 74:14; Ps. 89:10 [MT 11]; Isa. 27:1; 51:9.

<sup>15</sup> Duck Woo Nam, *Talking About God: Job 42:7-9 and the Nature of God in the Book of Job* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2003), 150.

<sup>16</sup> Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 150. Cross translates a significant Ugaritic passage, "When you, (Ba'l) smote Lotan, the primeval dragon, Destroyed the coiled serpent, Tryant (Silyat) of the seven heads, (Then) the heavens withered (and) drooped Like the loops of your garment."

- 1) The word is plural of Hebrew, *behemah* "beast"
- 2) This is a plural of majesty, indicating that this is the beast par excellence
- 3) The only other plural of majesty that occurs in the Hebrew Bible is with God - "Elohim"
- 4) This indicate that Behemoth is not on the level of any ordinary creature
- b. The theme of the 2<sup>nd</sup> speech
  - 1) Unlike the first speech which dealt with creation and governance, this speech deals with justice, as indicated by the first section
  - 2) If these are nothing more than regular animals, then it is irrelevant to the theme of justice
  - 3) Primordial chaos monsters fit squarely with the them of justice and moral order
- c. There are other mythic allusions in the Old Testament
  - 1) Mythopoeic language appears throughout the Old Testament usually in poetic or prophetic texts.<sup>17</sup>
  - 2) References in Job to לִוְיָתָן *lwyātān*, (leviathan), יָם *yām* (sea), תַּנִּין *tannîn* (dragon, or sea monster), נָחָשׁ *nāḥāš* (serpent), and רַהַב *rahab* all allude to the battle with a dragon like sea creature.<sup>18</sup>
3. Problems with the mythic interpretation
  - a. The use of non-Biblical or pagan material in the Bible
    - 1) This is not the only instance where this appears
    - 2) Examples in the New Testament
      - a) Jude - Jude quotes from 1 Enoch
      - b) Acts - Paul quotes from a Pagan poet
        - In the original context, this was attributed to Zeus
      - c) This was not meant to affirm the authority of pagan sources, but to communicate a truth
    - 3) Old Testament examples
      - a) Ps 64:12-17 - Clearly a poetic use of pagan

<sup>17</sup> Horsnell, 458-459. Some of the expressions include: "references to *lilit*, "night hag" (Isa 34:14); *rešep*, "Canaanite god of pestilence" (Hab 3:5); and the latter sons, *bēnê rešep* (Job 5:7), all of whom reflect divine beings in ancient Near Eastern mythology." Horsnell also highlights the allusion to astrological ideas by the reference to the "chains of Pleiades," "the cords of Orion," and "the Bear with its children," in Job 38:31f.

<sup>18</sup> Horsnell, 459. Horsnell cites the various Old Testament passages with allusions to the battle with the dragon motif: "Leviathan (*lwyātān* - Job 3:8; 41:1 [MT 40:25]; Ps. 74:14; Isa. 27:1; 2 Esd. 6:49, 52), Rahab (Heb. *rahab* - Job 9:13; 26:12; Ps. 89:10 [MT 11]; Isa. 30:7; 51:9), Tannin (*tannin*) i.e., "dragon" or "sea monster" (Job 7:12; Ps. 74:13; Isa. 27:1; 51:9), Yam (*yām*), i.e., "sea" (Job 7:12; Ps. 74:13; Isa. 51:10; Hab. 3:8), Nahar (*nāḥār*), i.e., "river, stream" (Ps. 93:3; Hab. 3:8), and Nahash (*nāḥāš*) i.e., "serpent" (Job 26:13; Isa. 27:1). It had several heads (Ps. 74:13f.) and had apparently made the gods afraid (Job 41:25 [MT 17]). Yahweh subdued and killed it (Isa. 27:1) by smiting it (Job 26:12), by cutting it to pieces (Isa. 51:9), by piercing it (Job 26:13; Isa 51:9), by crushing it (Ps. 89:10 [MT 11]), and by bludgeoning its heads (Ps 74:13f.). Yahweh also defeated the monster's allies (Job 9:13; Ps. 89:10 [MT 11])."

- imagery, but attributed to Yahweh
- b) Ps 89:7-14 - An allusion to a primordial victory which serves as a backdrop for this Psalm
- b. Why would God use pagan imagery?
  - 1) God's revelation is analogical in nature
  - 2) Obvious examples
    - a) God's "breath"
    - b) God's "right arm"
    - c) God "inclines his ear"
  - 3) These are intended to communicate a truth by analogy
- c. Keep in mind that there is nothing like a fully developed story of a primordial victory in connection with God's kingship as in Ugaritic mythology. The Bible merely borrows the imagery from it in order to communicate another truth that stands in contrast to pagan mythology.
- 4. Other parts of scripture clearly use mythic imagery and non-biblical material in order to communicate
  - a. In some cases, mythic creatures common in Ancient Near Eastern culture are used as symbols for the opponents of God. These mythic figures are historicized in various biblical passages and applied to human foes.
    - 1) Isa 27:1 - Enemies are called "Leviathan"
    - 2) Isa 30:7 - The oracle calls Egypt "Rahab"
    - 3) Isa 51:9-10 - Motif of a primordial battle applied to the Exodus and to a future "Exodus" for God's people
    - 4) Ps 74:12f - Primordial battle and creation imagery used as a basis to ask God to rise up again against the enemies
  - b. Eventually, these images gave way to a full-blown apocalyptic genre. The clearest biblical example comes from the book of Revelation
    - 1) Rev 13:1f - Rome is represented by a pair of beasts
    - 2) Rev 12:3f - Satan is represented by a seven-headed dragon
  - c. Even the New Testament quotes non-biblical material in order to communicate
    - 1) Acts 17:28-29 - Paul quoted from pagan poets concerning God, affirming their correctness in saying we are all a creation of God. The passage that Paul quotes was part of a hymn to Zeus.<sup>19</sup>
    - 2) Jude 1:9, 14-15 - Jude uses traditional Jewish apocalyptic literature that his audience was sure to be

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<sup>19</sup> Dennis Gaertner, *Acts* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1993), 278-279. Paul quotes from both Epimenedis, "in him we live and move and have our being." and Aratus, "we are his offspring." This was originally attributed to Zeus, and included in a hymn to Zeus.

familiar to illustrate the character of false teachers.<sup>20</sup>

d. Quotation from non-Biblical material

- 1) This does not affirm the authority of extra-biblical material
- 2) As in the case of Paul on Mars Hill, it is often used for communicative purposes.
  - a) A clear illustration of this would be the "anthropomorphisms" concerning God
- 3) The application of familiar cultural imagery, such as the multi-headed dragon, would have readily communicated to that audience

B. The depiction of Chaos Monsters in Job and the nature of ruling power

1. The Ancient Near Eastern Primordial myths intend to give a paradigm for the universe rather than merely give a series of creation events<sup>21</sup>
  - a. The Baal cycle shows the origin of kingship among the gods
  - b. Kingship came about by slaying the chaos monster
  - c. The pattern for this primordial creation in Ugaritic.<sup>22</sup>
    - 1) The divine warrior goes off to war against the chaos monster
    - 2) Nature writhes and convulses at the wrath of the divine warrior
    - 3) The victorious divine warrior returns to assume kingship among the gods and is enthroned on his mountain
    - 4) The divine warrior utters his voice from the temple and nature responds with the heavens fertilizing the earth, animals writhing and giving birth, and humans whirling and dancing in joy
  - d. Variations of this pattern occur in many other ancient cultures. Life and order are established by violent, ruling power.
  - e. Ancient Kings took this as the pattern for royal rule<sup>23</sup>
    - 1) Monarchs were often seen as extensions of the deity, and granted ruling power by the deity
    - 2) The Monarch believed he was to exercise his rule using the same creative, community building, coercive and violent power his deity used in initially establishing order in creation.
    - 3) Monarchs used creation texts as political documents

<sup>20</sup> Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 499. Verses 14-15 of Jude are a direct quotation from 1 Enoch 1:9. The dispute between Michael and the Devil over the body of Moses seems to come from the apocryphal book, *The Assumption of Moses*.

<sup>21</sup> Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 150.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 162-163.

<sup>23</sup> J. Gerald Janzen, "On the Moral Nature of God's Power: Yahweh and the Sea in Job and Deutero-Isaiah," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 56 (July 1994), 458-478



- to validate the nature of their rule
- 4) In other words, the understanding of the nature of ruling power stemmed from how they believed their deity established the created order.
- 2. God gives a dramatically different picture in his speeches, especially the second speech where he uses the imagery of chaos monsters
  - a. There is no primordial battle
  - b. There are no rivals to God's kingship
  - c. The primordial chaos monsters appear to be at home under Yahweh's lordship

## VI. (40:15-24) - The Confidence and Creatureliness of Behemoth

### A. Translation:

- 15. Here<sup>24</sup> is Behemoth!  
Whom I made with you  
Green herbage like the cattle he eats
- 16. Here is his strength - in his loins  
and his vigor - in the muscles of his thighs intertwined
- 17. He bends<sup>25</sup> his extremity<sup>26</sup> like a cedar<sup>27</sup>,  
the sinews of his thighs<sup>28</sup> are intertwined
- 18. His bones are channels of bronze  
his bones are rods of iron
- 19. He is the first/chief<sup>29</sup> of the ways<sup>30</sup> of God.  
His maker brings near his sword
- 20. For the mountains bring to him their produce  
And all living things of the field play/make-sport/laugh<sup>31</sup> there.
- 21. Under the lotuses he lies down,  
in the covering of the reed of the swamp
- 22. The lotuses cover/protect him  
his shadow surrounds him, poplars of the river
- 23. Lo! The river is strong! He will not be alarmed

<sup>24</sup> הִנֵּה - Untranslatable particle of immediacy. It does not mean "behold" as it does in current English usage, which means "look!" The best way to render this is "Here is..."

<sup>25</sup> חָגַץ - Normally means to "delight in." Some English translations may have chosen to go with the LXX, which uses ἵκετο - to set/stand up. "He sets/stands up his tail..."

<sup>26</sup> זָנָב - End, stump, tail. In post-biblical Hebrew, this is usually a colloquialism for male genitals

<sup>27</sup> Sometimes used as a connotation for power or stateliness

<sup>28</sup> פֶּחַד - Fear, terror, or dread. The Aramaic Targums render this פְּחִיין "testicles." Several Semitic parallels indicate that "thigh" is a euphemism for genitals. Delbert R. Hillers, "*Paḥad Yiṣḥāq*," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 91, (1972), 90-92.

<sup>29</sup> רִאשִׁית - Beginning (in a temporal sense), chief (in a qualitative sense)

<sup>30</sup> דֶּרֶךְ - Way, road, path. Is often used metaphorically for a normal way of doing something.

<sup>31</sup> שָׁחַ - To make sport, play, or laugh. The imagery here is of the animal being playful in the field in the presence of the Behemoth

He will trust when the Jordan rushes to him mouth  
 24. With rings<sup>32</sup> he will take him  
 With snares<sup>33</sup> he will pierce the nose.

## B. Features of Behemoth

1. God does not challenge Job to do anything, but merely describes
  - a. The word, "behold" in the sense of "look" does not appear in the Hebrew text.<sup>34</sup>
  - b. "Which I made just as I made you" indicates some sort of parallel feature between humans and Behemoth
    - 1) Since Behemoth has allusions to a chaos monster, a subtle implication in this is that humans have a chaotic effect on the create order.
    - 2) Evidently, God intends the description of Behemoth to educate Job on the nature of humanity and God's relationship with humanity.
2. Creatureliness
  - a. Behemoth was created by God
  - b. This brings the Behemoth down from the level of monstrous primordial cosmic chaos deity to a creature of chaos
  - c. Behemoth is not a rival deity
3. Consumes Grass like an Ox
  - a. Unlike a regular Ox, a primordial monster eating grass would be a threat
  - b. Some might equate this with pestilence on crops
4. Source of Strength
  - a. In the loins and the muscles of his belly
    - 1) Most four-legged creatures have strength in their neck, shoulders, or back
    - 2) For most four legged creatures, the belly is one of the weakest parts of their body
    - 3) Verses 16-17 is likely a reference to his sexual organs<sup>35</sup>
    - 4) This masculine image for Behemoth communicates several things about his strength in a picturesque way
      - a) He is strong

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<sup>32</sup> עֵין means eye or spring, but could also mean ring, which would have derived from the Proto-Semitic script as 𐤍. Note the ring shape of the ayin. עֵין is also translated as "ring" in Hos 10:10. The "ring" here could denote a ring in the nose, or a ring shaped snare or trap.

<sup>33</sup> מִוֶּקֶשׁ - bait, lure, snare.

<sup>34</sup> הֵנָּה - Untranslatable particle of immediacy.

<sup>35</sup> See footnotes on the translation

- b) He is brave and bold
    - c) He is proud, majestic, and perhaps arrogant
  - b. Bones of bronze and iron
    - 1) This could communicate he was unbreakable
    - 2) Since "bones" was the seat of health or disease, this could be a subtle reference to his invincible health

#### 5. Limited

- a. "His maker brings near his sword"
  - 1) There is no hint of a battle in this section
  - 2) Rather than slay the beast, God appears to limit him with the sword
- b. God leads this monster with a ring in its nose
  - 1) Imagery of a domesticated bovine creature
  - 2) Seems to indicate this is God's creature
- c. Like Sea/Yam in the first speech, God places limits on this monster

### C. Lessons

#### 1. God's actions in general

- a. This monster is the first of the "ways"<sup>36</sup> of God
  - 1) How God deals with Behemoth tells something about God's character
  - 2) The way God deals with Behemoth in this passage stands in contrast to typical Ancient Near Eastern thought
- a. God could annihilate evil, but does not
  - 1) There is no hint of a battle with this monster
  - 2) God does not vanquish or destroy this monster
- b. God places limits on evil
  - 1) He brings near his sword
  - 2) He puts a ring in its nose
  - 3) It has a habitat, not free range anywhere
- c. There is a place for evil in creation
  - 1) Behemoth has a "home" in his habitat
  - 2) Just as there is a "place" for the darkness in

#### 2. Lesson on humanity

- a. God made Behemoth along with Job
- b. This suggests certain commonalities between humans and the monster
  - 1) Humans are a creation of God
  - 2) Humans can be monsters, having a chaotic or evil

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<sup>36</sup> דֶּבַר - Way, road, path. Used figuratively of a mode of operation, a way of living or doing. An example would be, "the path of sinners."

effect on the world

- 3) God limits humans and their power
- 4) Humans are not rivals to God
- 5) God does not annihilate or battle humans
- 6) Humans have a place in creation

## VII. God's Primordial Pet, Leviathan (41:1-34 [Heb 40:25-41:26])

### A. Translation:

1. Will you draw out Leviathan with a hook?  
And with a cord will you press down his tongue?
2. Will you place a rope in his nose?  
And with a barb will you pierce his jaw?
3. Will he make to you many supplications?  
And will he speak to you tenderly?
4. Will he cut a covenant with you?  
Will you take him as a servant forever?
5. Will you make sport/play with him like a bird?  
And will you bind him for your damsel/betrothed?
6. Will business partners make trade of him?  
Will they divide him between traders/merchants?
7. Will you fill with barbs his skin?  
And with a fishing spear (will you fill) his head?
8. Place upon him your palm!  
Remember the battle. You will not do again.
9. [Heb 41:1] Lo, his hope is shown to be false.  
Also, at his appearance is not he cast down?<sup>37</sup>
10. [2] No one is fierce that he will rouse/awaken him.  
But who is he (that) he would take his stand against<sup>38</sup> me?
11. [3] Who confronts me that I should make compensation?  
Under all the Heavens, he is mine!
12. [4] I will not silence<sup>39</sup> his boastings<sup>40</sup>  
and the word<sup>41</sup> of his mighty deeds<sup>42</sup>  
and the grace of his arrangement.
13. [5] Who will uncover the face of his garment?  
With his double halter/bridle<sup>43</sup> who will come?

<sup>37</sup> This phrase is difficult in Hebrew because the text does identify who "he" is. The NRSV has apparently made a slight emendation of **הגם אל-מראיו יטל** "And also, at the sights of him he is cast down?" to **הגם אלים ראיו יטל**, placing the **ם** as a plural ending for **אל** rather than a prefix for **ראיו**. Thus it renders the phrase, "Were not even the gods when they saw him cast down?"

<sup>38</sup> The preposition, **לפני** "in front of, before," can carry the sense of confronting someone instead of just standing before someone.

<sup>39</sup> **לא אֶחְרֹשׁ** is a hiphil, a causative - "I will not make silent" not "I will not be silent."

<sup>40</sup> **בָּדִי** - BDB II definition is "boasting" or "idle talk."

<sup>41</sup> **דָּבָר** - word, thing, matter

<sup>42</sup> **גְּבוּרוֹת** "valor, strength" in the sense of "mighty deeds/exploits" as in Dt 3:24 and Ps 71:16.

14. [6] The doors of his face, who will open?  
Around his teeth is terror.
15. [7] His back are channels of shields,  
shut up as a tight seal.
16. [8] One in one they draw near,  
and the wind will not go between them
17. [9] One to the other they are joined,  
they grasp each other and are not separated
18. [10] His sneezings flash light.  
And his eyes are like eyelids of the dawn
19. [11] From his mouth torches go.  
Sparks of fire escape.
20. [12] From his nostrils come smoke  
like the smoke of a pot blown and a bulrush.
21. [13] His breath<sup>44</sup> sets ablaze coals.  
And a flame from his mouth goes.
22. [14] In his neck lodges strength.  
And before him dances dismay/terror.
23. [15] The hanging parts of his flesh cling close.  
It is firmly cast upon him, it does not dislodge.
24. [16] His heart is cast hard like a stone.  
And it is cast hard like a lower millstone
25. [17] At his uprising, the gods are afraid.  
At the crashing, they lose themselves.
26. [18] The one who overtakes him with the sword fails,  
The spear, dart, and javelin will not stand.
27. [19] It counts iron as straw.  
Like a rotten tree is copper/bronze
28. [20] The son of the bow does not clause him to flee.  
Turned by him into stubble/chaff are the stones of a sling.
29. [21] Like stubble/chaff he counts the club.  
And he laughs at the rattling of the javelin.
30. [22] His underpart is sharpened earthenware/potsherd.  
He spreads out a threshing sledge on the mire.
31. [23] He causes the deep to boil like a pot.  
The sea he sets like an ointment pot
32. [24] Behind him a pathway gives light.  
He counts<sup>45</sup> the deep<sup>46</sup> as hoary/old aged.

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<sup>43</sup> רֶסֶן - Bridle, halter. The LXX translates this, εἰς δὲ πτύξιν θώρακος αὐτοῦ τίς ἂν εἰσέλθοι "But into the fold of his breastplate who can enter?" This is probably where some English translations interpret this as the "coat of mail." Evidently, the LXX translators mistook the Hebrew רֶסֶן "his bridle" for סְרִינָה "breastplate."

<sup>44</sup> נֶפֶשׁ - Normally means "soul, living/breathing thing, self, appetite, passion." As a "breathing" being, it breathes fire.

<sup>45</sup> Taking חָשַׁב "he counts/thinks of as..." in the same way it is used in verse 27 - "It counts iron as straw..."

- 33. [25] There is nothing upon the dust/earth of his likeness,  
One who acts without terror.
- 34. [26] All who are exalted/haughty he sees.  
He is king over all the sons of pride.

#### B. Justice and divine rule

- 1. Ancient readers would have readily identified Leviathan with the theme of justice and divine rule
  - a. The paradigm would have included a primordial battle and victory of God over the monster
  - b. Job judged God on the basis of this
  - c. Job's friends defended God on the basis of a God who always preserves justice
- 2. Characteristics of Leviathan
  - a. Wild and untamable
    - 1) 41:1-2 - He cannot be captured by human means
    - 2) 41:3-5 - Cannot be tamed as a pet or made a slave
  - b. Cannot be subdued or captured or slain
    - 1) 41:6 - Merchants cannot utilize him
    - 2) 41:7-8 - He cannot be captured
    - 3) 41:13-17 - His body is impenetrable
    - 4) 41:26-28 - Conventional weapons are useless
  - c. He is terrifying
    - 1) 41:9 - The sight of him causes dismay
    - 2) 41:14 - There is terror around his teeth
    - 3) 41:25 - The gods are afraid when he rises up
      - a) This does not affirm the existence of rival deities to God
      - b) The Bible clearly teaches there is only one God
      - c) The word "god" sometimes refers to other heavenly beings, such as angels and such
        - Psalm 84:7; 95:3; 96:4;
        - Psalm 82:1 & 89:7 - The "council" in these two Psalms also seems to appear in the opening of Job when the "sons of God" present themselves before Yahweh. In this sense, "gods" refer to angels.
    - 4) 41:22 - Terror dances before him
  - d. He is reckless and destructive
    - 1) The text only implies this
    - 2) 41:19-21 - It breathes fire
    - 3) 41:25 - He "crashes" around

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<sup>46</sup> In the Ancient Near East, "The Deep" can be a powerful, adversarial force against light, life, and what is good. It can represent death. But here, it is nothing to the Leviathan.

- 4) 41:30 - Spreads itself like a threshing sledge
    - 5) 41:31-32 - Causes huge waves and wake
  - e. He is strong
    - 1) 41:22 - Strength in his neck
    - 2) 41:24 - He has a heart of stone
  - f. He is fearless and proud
    - 1) 41:33 - He has no fear
    - 2) 41:34 - He is king over all who are proud
  - g. He is unique
    - 41:33 - There is nothing like him in all creation
- 3. Some surprises
  - a. God does not battle and vanquish Leviathan
    - 1) There is no hint of a cosmic battle here
    - 2) 41:12 - God does not silence Leviathan
    - 3) The passage clearly implies that God is able to, but God does not
  - b. Leviathan is God's creature
    - 1) Taken with Behemoth as the final pair of creatures, Leviathan is also made by God along with humans
    - 2) 41:11 - God declares that Leviathan belongs to Him
    - 3) Leviathan is not a rival deity, but a creation of God that has his "place" in the creation just as the darkness does
  - c. Nagging question - Why did God create a monster?
- C. Unlike the Behemoth section, God once again issues challenges
  - 1. Is Job able to capture, slay or subdue Leviathan
  - 2. God returns to the same sort of questions that began this chapter
    - a. God had challenged Job to execute Job's brand of justice
    - b. God does not rule in the way Job would like him to
    - c. If Job were to take over, he would make a mess
  - 3. There appears to be a balance of light and dark, good and evil, and Job's brand of justice and rule would upset that balance.
- D. Purpose of God's questions:
  - 1. To correct a misunderstanding of divine rule
    - a. Job's friends believed God to basically be a dispenser of punishment and reward
    - b. Job himself believed that God should execute justice in a timely manner
    - c. God demonstrates that justice is not the foundation of divine rule, that there is much more to God than justice.
  - 2. To highlight misunderstood aspects of his character
    - a. For Job and his friends, God is a dispenser of justice
      - 1) God is to reward the righteous

- 2) God is to punish the wicked
- b. God has demonstrated that justice is not the sum total of his character and the nature of his rule
  - 1) There is a sense of justice in God's character but there is more than just justice
  - 2) God is a God that values freedom
    - a) God brought this out in his first speech
    - b) In the second speech, the implications of his freedom are subtly demonstrated
  - 3) God's freedom allows other options than merely dispensing justice
    - a) He is free to forgo justice in the favor of grace
    - b) He is free to forgo grace in the favor of justice

### VIII. Job's Second Response (42:1-6)

#### A. Translation

- 1 Then Job answered Yahweh and he said,
- 2 You<sup>47</sup> know that (in) all things you are able.  
And impossible for you is no purpose/device.
- 3 Who is this who conceals a plan/counsel without knowledge?  
Therefore I declared but I do not understand.  
What is too difficult/extraordinary for me, I do not know.
- 4 Hear, I ask, and I will speak,  
I will ask you and you cause me to know.
- 5 By hearing of the ear I heard you.  
But now my eye sees you.
- 6 Therefore I reject<sup>48</sup>,  
and I am comforted<sup>49</sup> over/beyond dust and ashes.

#### B. Job's second response

1. There is no third speech of God, indicating that Job's response is acceptable to God
2. What Job says
  - a. God has a plan and is able to execute it
  - b. Job knows less about God's divine rule than he thought

<sup>47</sup> The Masoretic text reads, יָדַעְתָּ "You know." The qere in the Masoretic notes indicate that it should be read, יָדַעְתִּי "I know."

<sup>48</sup> אָמַצְתִּי - "I reject." This is not a reflexive verb "I reject myself" as some translations have it. It is a transitive verb that expects an object, but the sentence does not provide one. Job does not say what he rejects. Perhaps it is the lawsuit, or perhaps it is the view of God that he had before, perhaps it is the dust and ashes, or perhaps it is all the above.

<sup>49</sup> נִחַמְתִּי - The root, *nḥm* means "comfort," as in the name, Nehemiah "Yahweh comforts." It could also mean "to have compassion, be grieved, to console." This appears here in the Niphal form, which means the verb is passive - "I am comforted." The normal Hebrew word for "repent," in the sense of from sin comes from the root שָׁבַח. Job did not say, שָׁבַחְתִּי "I repent."



- c. Job is ready to learn something new about God rather than merely making conclusions based on ignorance
- d. Job now "sees" something about God
- e. Job rejects
  - 1) The text does not say what Job rejects
    - a) Since this is not a reflexive verb, it does not mean, "I reject myself"
    - b) An object would normally be expected for the verb, but the text does not provide one
    - c) Perhaps this is a reference to a number of things, including the lawsuit and the view of God that the lawsuit was based on.
  - 2) Job had understood the world through the lens of retributive justice, and now must reject this
  - 3) Job's lawsuit was based on his misunderstanding of divine rule, so Job must reject the lawsuit
  - 4) Job's mourning on the dust and ashes was based on his misunderstanding, which lead him to believe God had either failed or had become his enemy. Job also rejects dust and ashes
- f. Job is and is consoled over dust and ashes
  - 1) The word used here is not "repent" in the sense of repenting from any sin
    - a) The Hebrew word for repent, "shuv" is not what is used here
    - b) The word used here is "Niham," which means comfort, console, be sorry for
    - c) The word is passive, meaning that the action is done to Job, rather than Job doing it - "I am consoled."
    - d) God does not condemn Job for any overt sin, but only questions and challenges him concerning his ignorance and impotence.
  - 2) While on the ash heap, Job is consoled
    - a) Job does not describe how he is consoled
    - b) We are left to reflect on what ways Job could have been consoled

C. The consolation of Job. Possibilities:

- 1. Job is not guilty of sin
- 2. Job's relationship with God does not have a legal basis
- 3. Job now knows that God has not turned against him
- 4. Job knows that God has not failed in his rule
- 5. God appeared to Job from the whirlwind and spoke to him

## **IX. Summary of the second speech and Gods response<sup>50</sup>**

God has revealed his character in a subtle way through ironic questions in the second speech. God did not dispute with Job on the reality of the seemingly chaotic elements of the world. However, Job withdraws his lawsuit because he now understands that the basis of his suit had no merit. He believed that there was an underlying principle of justice that God was subject to. He has learned that God is subject to nothing outside of himself because he is the creator of the cosmos, and the cosmos has worked and continues to work according to his design, rule, and governance. God is not reckless as Job claimed in chapter 12, nor is he unjust as Job claimed in chapter 21. In fact, God's view of justice is much larger than strict reward and retribution. God does not rule the world according to strict reward and retribution. Everything that exists in the cosmos is God's creation and has its designated place, whether it be the dark forces of chaos or the dawn which shakes out the wicked and sends them scurrying for cover. Leviathan is God's servant, just as humans are also God's servants. They both have their place in God's created order. God's creation has a balance of both light and darkness. Both Job and his friends had too narrow a view of God. God does not rule according to Job and his friends' concepts of justice.

That the adversary and his wager never appear again in the book of Job is evidence that the question of the nature of piety had become secondary to the question of God. This was also true for Job. The central issue for Job was not merely his seemingly unjust suffering but the nature of God. This is why Job is able to accept the fact that God did not deal with his particular situation but dealt with the larger issues of governance. Job understands that it is possible for suffering to have little to do with guilt or innocence of either God or the sufferer. Job also understands that God was not and is not his enemy. The reader, who knows much more than Job, knows that suffering can come as a result of being blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil, as in the case of Job. The existence of Leviathan in the world does not mean God has failed, nor does it mean God has turned against the world. Leviathan and all that he represents has a designated place in creation by God's design within limits. He is not God's equal, which means he is truly not God's rival, but is instead his creature. To say otherwise is to darken God's plan without knowledge.

As a result of Job's new understanding, Job no longer protests God and his rule over creation. His "hearing," which probably came from a rigid and twisted "orthodoxy" concerning God and the nature of his relationship with humans, was transformed by this new existential "seeing" of reality. God's interests are much wider than Job or his friends previously had thought. God's care and concern go far beyond a single human or even a righteous human. God's concern extends out into the desolate margins of society. God does not see the outside margins the way those who are on the inside do. To God, it is not a desolate, worthless, or contemptible place. Rather, God sees it as a place of dignity and beauty, which is based not on any merit of its own, but on the virtue of the fact that it is his creation.

This apparently is just the beginning for Job. Job now knows and understands much less than he originally thought he did. However, his attitude is now one of openness to learn new things within his new perspective of God and his world. He is ready to be silent and let God instruct him. This is likely what the author of Job intends for the reader as well.

### **Interaction with the Former Issues in the Book**

God's speeches deal with the most important issues the dialogues have raised concerning him earlier in the book. As to the question of the nature of his rule, God has revealed that: 1) There is nothing in all the cosmos outside of his lordship. 2) He nurtures all things, including those forces

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<sup>50</sup> John Telgren, "The Character of God in the Speeches of Yahweh in the Book of Job" (M.A. thesis, Abilene Christian University, 2006), 115-221.

which appear hostile to human life and order. 3) Those forces which appear to be his adversary are actually part of his plan to carry out his purposes. 4) There is no such thing as a true rival to God's rule. 5) God does not rule according to a consistent, combative power against the forces of chaos.

As to accountability, the speeches from the whirlwind demonstrate the following: 1) God allows humans to complain, lament, and protest. 2) While God is not morally accountable to human conceptions of just rule, God can allow for it, but not on the basis of a legal requirement. 3) For reasons known only to God, God does not reveal the full extent of his wisdom, knowledge, and plans to humans.

Concerning knowledge, the speeches of God show these things: 1) God's knowledge concerning the behind the scenes working of creation is far superior to human knowledge. 2) God knows intimately the ways of all his creatures, even those that are hidden from sight. 3) God knows how to rule the universe in a balanced way that works the best.

God deals very little with how far he will go to discover the extent of a person's piety. He hints that he knows all creatures intimately but says nothing of humans. All the reader knows is that God was responsible for an almost unbearable test to determine the motivation for a good man's piety. Whether God actually knows the extent of Job's piety from the outset is left unsaid.

### Two New Characteristics of God

To these issues concerning the character of God, the text adds two more, those of freedom and grace.

Since God is not bound to any human conceptions of just rule, and since God is the creator, God is free to do as he chooses.<sup>51</sup> But it is not as if God is whimsical or reckless. God has demonstrated that creation is not chaos. Everything has its place and limits. Job's brand of justice is only one piece of the puzzle. Job and his friends saw this brand of justice as the main picture, if not the entire picture. In 3:23, Job ironically complained about the "fence" that God placed around him, when all along both he and his friends attempted to place a "fence" around God. The fence consisted of the belief that God created and maintained the world through a system of combative and violent justice. Job's allusions to the primordial combat myths and the friends' insistence on a system of divine rewards and punishments are evidence of this perspective. However, God demonstrates that he is not confined to any artificial hedge that humans try to put around him. God does not act on the basis of some moral or legal authority outside of himself but within himself. God acts according to his character. What God has done was to enlarge Job's view of God, and thus of the nature of God's justice. God's brand of justice is not always punitive. It can also be relational, redemptive, or preventative. In fact, God's speeches show that it is more the norm for God's brand of justice to be of the preventative or the redemptive kind rather than of the punitive kind.

If God chooses to refrain from punishing someone directly, he is able to do so by his own right. By the same token, if God chooses to inflict hardship on someone, as he did Job, he is free to do so. It is not always about reward and punishment. Job does not know the reason behind his calamity. But he now knows that it does not fall under the category of guilt or innocence. It is difficult to see how Job's calamity could have had a restorative or redemptive purpose. God had already praised Job's exemplary piety in the prologue. It is more possible that it may have had some sort of preventative purpose. The reader simply does not know. Perhaps this is the point. As Job

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<sup>51</sup> Ernst Wurthwein, "Egyptian Wisdom and the Old Testament," In *Studies in Ancient Israelite Wisdom*, edited by Harry M Orlinsky (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1976), 129-131. Wurthwein points out that the culmination of Old Testament faith is not some sort of moral order in the world, such as the Egyptian *ma'at*, which binds humans and God together in the same way, but rather a *personal* God who stands as Lord over the world. Since God cannot be reduced to a principle of justice such as *ma'at*, I believe that this should caution us against conceiving of our relationship with God primarily in legal terms.

knows much less than the reader, so the reader knows much less than God. Perhaps the message is simply that God does not consistently use hardships and calamity for punitive purposes.

God's freedom enables God to move beyond the principles of reward and retribution to that of grace. Grace is not "unmerited" favor but simply favor. Elihu hinted at God's grace in 33:23-24, when he spoke of a mediator and God's response to be gracious as a result of the mediator. God spoke more of grace in his speeches as he spoke of all the living creatures in his creation, both primordial and natural. God cares and nurtures all things, including those natural and supernatural forces that are harmful and dangerous to human life and order. God causes it to rain not only on the cultivated lands, but also in the desert where no man lives. Darkness, Yam, Behemoth, and Leviathan all have a designated place in God's created order and are also subjects of God's nurture and care. All of this happens due to God's graciousness, not due to any system of reward and punishment. This graciousness is part of God's character and therefore extends to other parts of God's creation, which includes humans.

Job now has a more holistic view of God. God's freedom and grace allows him to move beyond the perspective of reward and retribution to that of grace. God cannot be reduced to a single rule, such as retribution. God nurtures and cares for all of his creation on the basis of God's pleasure, rather than on the basis of some sort of merit. It is interesting to note that Job's view of justice does not seem to have a place for the freedom to set aside reward and retribution and act strictly on the basis of grace. When God blesses Job in the end, he blesses him with the same kind of animals Job had previously had but doubled them. He also blesses Job again with seven sons and three daughters. But there are some differences in Job's life that seem to reflect his transformed understanding of God. First was Job's treatment of his daughters. In a culture that oppresses women, Job's daughters receive an inheritance, not on the basis of merit, but because of Job's gratuitousness.<sup>52</sup> Normally, only the sons receive an inheritance. The narrator highlights this transformed view by giving the names of the daughters. Second, there is no mention of Job having slaves. Job's transformed understanding of God has led to a more gracious Job. This demonstrates how one's understanding of God forms a worldview and ethic. This also demonstrates the importance of not having a warped view of God.

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<sup>52</sup> Ellen Davis, "Job and Jacob: The Integrity of Faith." In *The Whirlwind: Essays on Job, Hermeneutics and Theology in Memory of Jane Morse*, edited by Stephen L. Cook, Corrine L. Patton, and James W. Watts (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 120. According to Davis, a main issue in Job is what it means to have integrity  $\square$ . Contrary to the accusation of the adversary, Job serves God for nothing as God cares for the wild creatures for nothing, which is the basic idea behind  $\square$ . Job's daughters' inheritance, like God's service, is gratuitous, which is what  $\square$  is, according to Davis.