

Day 76 - FRIDAY: January 20th

Job 41

Job 41:1-34 NKJV

"Can you draw out Leviathan with a hook, Or snare his tongue with a line which you lower? Can you put a reed through his nose, Or pierce his jaw with a hook? Will he make many supplications to you? Will he speak softly to you? Will he make a covenant with you? Will you take him as a servant forever? Will you play with him as with a bird, Or will you leash him for your maidens? Will your companions make a banquet of him? Will they apportion him among the merchants? Can you fill his skin with harpoons, Or his head with fishing spears? Lay your hand on him; Remember the battle—Never do it again! Indeed, any hope of overcoming him is false; Shall one not be overwhelmed at the sight of him? No one is so fierce that he would dare stir him up. Who then is able to stand against Me? Who has preceded Me, that I should pay him? Everything under heaven is Mine. "I will not conceal his limbs, His mighty power, or his graceful proportions. Who can remove his outer coat? Who can approach him with a double bridle? Who can open the doors of his face, With his terrible teeth all around? His rows of scales are his pride, Shut up tightly as with a seal; One is so near another That no air can come between them; They are joined one to another, They stick together and cannot be parted. His sneezings flash forth light, And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. Out of his mouth go burning lights; Sparks of fire shoot out. Smoke goes out of his nostrils, As from a boiling pot and burning rushes. His breath kindles coals, And a flame goes out of his

mouth. Strength dwells in his neck, And sorrow dances before him. The folds of his flesh are joined together; They are firm on him and cannot be moved. His heart is as hard as stone, Even as hard as the lower millstone. When he raises himself up, the mighty are afraid; Because of his crashings they are beside themselves. Though the sword reaches him, it cannot avail; Nor does spear, dart, or javelin. He regards iron as straw, And bronze as rotten wood. The arrow cannot make him flee; Slingstones become like stubble to him. Darts are regarded as straw; He laughs at the threat of javelins. His undersides are like sharp potsherds; He spreads pointed marks in the mire. He makes the deep boil like a pot; He makes the sea like a pot of ointment. He leaves a shining wake behind him; One would think the deep had white hair. On earth there is nothing like him, Which is made without fear. He beholds every high thing; He is king over all the children of pride."

Daily Deep Dive:

Today's chapter deals with Leviathan. I would encourage you to read the following scriptures before (or in addition to) Job 41:

Job 3:8

Psalm 74:13-14

Psalm 104:25-27

Isaiah 27:1

Here is today's reading from the UCG plan that pulls this all together:

"That brings us next to Leviathan in Job 41. *Leviathan* is basically a transliteration of a Hebrew word whose root means "twist" or "writhe." Psalms 104:25-26 shows Leviathan to be a great sea creature. Many think the reference in Job 41 is to a crocodile. They see the fire

and smoke going out of its mouth and nose respectively (verses 19-21) as sunlight reflecting off of water vapor the crocodile churns up or breathes out, thereby creating the illusion of fire. But why would God in His description be passing along a false illusion as if it were real? And why would He make the specific statement that the creature's breath kindles coals? This is not adequately explained by the flashing of reflected sunlight. It seems obvious that the description here is of some kind of fire-breathing sea dragon.

Is a literal creature portrayed here? It would seem so, but it may not be a physical animal. Even if such an animal species does exist, the greater reference here is evidently to something else. Job had mentioned Leviathan in Job 3:8 in conjunction with those who called upon dark powers of cursing. Psalms 74:12-14 presents Leviathan as a beast whose multiple heads were broken when Israel was brought out of Egypt and led through the sea. This parallels the reference to Egypt as "Rahab" in Isaiah 30:7—a name meaning "Fierce" or "Violent" and perhaps identifiable with the Egyptian crocodile god Sobek, whose name meant "Rager." Job mentioned Rahab in Job 9:13 and Job 26:12, referring to him as "the fleeing serpent" that God has pierced (verse 13). Isaiah 26:21-27:1 says that when God comes to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity at the end of the age, He will "punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan that twisted serpent; and He will slay the reptile that is in the sea."

At the time of future judgment, we know that God will destroy a final human empire described as a seven-headed beast rising up out of the sea (Revelation 13; 17). Yet the seven heads of this beast are also portrayed as emerging from the great, fiery red dragon or serpent of old, Satan the devil (see Job 12:3, 9). Drawing the scaly monster Leviathan out with a hook in his jaw (Job 41:1) parallels the description in Ezekiel 29:3-4 of God putting hooks in the jaws of the Egyptian pharaoh, described there

as a river monster likened to a crocodile. So a great physical empire or ruler seems intended in part by the references to Leviathan throughout Scripture, but the even greater spiritual power behind the throne of all human kingdoms and false gods, Satan the devil, is surely also in mind. Indeed, this seems to be the primary meaning, especially in Job 41. Consider the words that conclude the description of Leviathan here: "He is king over all the children of pride" (verse 34). Who or what does this phrase describe better than Satan? His "heart as hard as stone" (verse 24) most likely refers to his cruelty and stubborn unwillingness to submit to God.

Now consider verses 3-4. God challenges Job regarding Leviathan: "Will he make many supplications to you? Will he speak softly to you? Will he make a covenant with you?" This makes little sense if a mere animal is intended. The implication here is that Leviathan has made requests of God in a soft-spoken way as part of striking some kind of deal or agreement with God. This is exactly what Satan was described as doing at the beginning of the book of Job—he appealed to God to allow him to try Job and God agreed to let him do so within certain limits. Yet God was the real master of what was going on. He is the one who provoked Satan into the challenge so that his purpose would be fulfilled. God was *using* Satan for His own greater design. This helps to make sense of what God says next of Leviathan: "Will you take him as a servant forever?" (verse 4). Not that Satan wants to serve God. He simply has no choice. God allows Satan to rule the world throughout this age as part of a great plan. Yet the ultimate Sovereign—who sets the limits of Satan's rule—is still God. Then: "Will you play with him as with a bird?" (verse 5). Again, Satan thought he was really getting away with something in the trial of Job. But God was just toying with him to fulfill His own greater purpose. This is ever the case. Consider when Satan succeeded in leading Judas to betray Christ. Whose will was

ultimately served in what happened? That's right. Once again, Satan was unwittingly played—this time to fulfill what God had explicitly foretold and to accomplish the supreme sacrifice to redeem humanity.

Notice also: "Or will you leash him for your maidens?" (verse 5). God puts a leash on Satan, imposing certain restrictions on him, for the sake of His people. And God will later completely imprison Satan (Revelation 20:1-3). The next questions in this series are: "Will your companions make a banquet of him? Will they apportion him among the merchants?" Perhaps the idea here is that the wealth and kingdoms that spring from Satan will be apportioned among survivors at the end of the age, just as Egypt's wealth was dispersed at the time of the Exodus, when God "broke the heads of Leviathan in pieces and gave him as food to the people inhabiting the wilderness" (Psalms 74:14).

Any human attempt to subdue this being would fail (Job 41:7-10). Only God can stand against him. And God will. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* offers this alternative translation of verses 11-12: "Who can confront me and remain safe? When under all the heavens he dares oppose me, will not I silence his boastings, his powerful word and his dubious arguments?" (see footnotes on verses 11-12).

This is just what God is accomplishing through Job. Consider this analysis from *Expositor's*: "By telling of his dominion over Behemoth and Leviathan, the Lord is illustrating what he has said in Job 40:8-14. He is celebrating his moral triumph over the forces of evil. Satan, the Accuser, has been proved wrong though Job does not know it. The author and the reader see the entire picture that Job and his friends never knew. No rational theory of suffering is substituted for the faulty one the friends proffered. The only answer given is the same as in Genesis. God permitted the Accuser to touch Job as part of his plan to humiliate Satan. But now that the contest is over, God still did not reveal his reason to Job. Job did not find out what the readers know. That is why Job could

be restored without destroying the integrity of the account. To understand this is to understand why the forces of moral disorder are veiled underneath mythopoeic language about ferocious, uncontrollable creatures.... We emphasize that if the specific and ultimate reason for his suffering had been revealed to Job even at this point—the value of the account as a comfort to others who must suffer in ignorance would have been diminished if not cancelled" (note on Job 41:1-34).

Yet without giving away the specifics of what has been going on, God is revealing to Job some important general principles that all of God's people should bear in mind during this age. Job probably understands Leviathan to be Satan. And Job likely knows that Satan is out to harm him. Perhaps he even realizes that Satan is the one afflicting him, though he blames God for this since he knows that God could prevent it. God in response assures Job that He does not step aside and cooperate with evil forces in allowing harm to come to His people. Rather, God bends the forces of evil to serve His will with the intent of working out the ultimate benefit of His people. It may appear on the surface that evil is triumphant. But God in His high and mysterious ways is using these circumstances to accomplish His awesome purposes. Job himself could never achieve the like. No man could. Only God has everything under control. Only God can rule and judge supreme—in omnipotent power and omniscient justice. Job has only to trust Him and submit to whatever He is doing." [END]