JOB 40
The LORD Begins His 2nd Discourse By Challenging Job
The LORD Questions Job About “Behemoth”

Introduction:
In this chapter the Lord continues His interrogation of Job based on examples from the animal kingdom, specifically about a mighty beast called “Behemoth”.

This beast CANNOT be a mythological animal because it is described as being an actual creation of God: “Look now at the behemoth, which I made along with you.....he is the first of the ways of God; only He who made him can bring near His sword” {vv.15, 19}.

There are many commentators and Biblical expositors who say that this animal is the “river horse”, more commonly known as a hippopotamus. However, we shall see that the description of this animal can only match that of what we today refer to as a “dinosaur”!

After the Lord has asked Job numerous questions regarding the created natural world Job would have to conclude that he doesn’t know all that much. Perhaps he should not insist that God has become his enemy and should not have condemned the LORD to justify himself.

But this chapter marks a pause in the LORD’s interrogation of Job and he sort of “catches his breath”. He is able to collect his thoughts, which he does to his profit. Then Job is ready to further hear what the LORD says to him.

So now Job is ready to answer another question. The Lord asks him if “the one who contends with the Almighty should correct him?” In other words, Job has acted and spoken like he knows better than the Lord what is right and what is wrong {Job 10:3-7; 27:2, 5-6}.

Job had considered himself better qualified to judge his situation than the LORD was and therefore, he concluded, that the LORD was unjust in letting him suffer so horribly {e.g., Job 9:17; 10:14-17; 13:23-24; 16:11-14; 19:6, 11; 30:20-21}.

Job had rebuked the LORD {Job 10:3-7} and now the LORD tells him, “He who rebukes God, let him answer it!”

But after considering the creative wisdom and power of God, could there be a change of attitude?

Yes! For during this pause in questioning Job says, “Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; yes, twice, but I will proceed no further.”

However, although Job humbles himself light of he has not yet been brought to repentance so the LORD again begins to speak to Job anew {v.6} and so begins His 2nd discourse rebuking Job with more questions and challenges.

Like the Lord’s first discourse {Job 38—39}, this second one includes a challenge {Job 40:6-7}, a stern rebuke {Job 40:8-14}, and questions about the created world {Job 40:15-41:34}.

God’s first discourse included both to inanimate and animate creation; this second discourse calls Job’s attention to only two animals, but they are quite amazing in their attributes!

Unlike the first discourse this second one does not end with a closing rebuke and challenge because Job finally repents of the sin of pride and self-righteousness {Job 42:1-6}.

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vv. 1-2 > THE LORD’S CLOSING REBUKE: IS GOD SUBJECT TO MAN’S CORRECTION?

Moreover the LORD answered Job and said: 2 “Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God let him answer it.”

ALMIGHTY GOD has just finished interrogating Job regarding the natural world and had convincingly demonstrated His majesty, wisdom and power by giving him numerous examples of His creative genius; which covered many fields of science.

Now, turning from His interrogation, the LORD ends His FIRST DISCOURSE with a rebuke in the form of a thought-provoking question \[v.2a\] and a personal challenge to respond\[v.2b\].

Moreover the LORD answered Job and said…... “Moreover…..” that is, continuing to answer Job’s accusations and complaints. The LORD ends His FIRST DISCOURSE, with (1) a rebuke, in the form of a question, and (2) a challenge.

[Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him?] The Hebrew word rendered “contends” here literally means; “to toss” and refers to “striving with or wrangling with”. It is used seven other times in this book, six times by Job and once by Elihu.

Job had a controversy with the LORD and he had been strenuously striving with Him about it.

But the question is, in contending with the LORD, does anyone have the right and authority to correct GOD ALMIGHTY?

Like many of us, Job, in anguish over his pain and frustration about the reason why he was suffering, had forgotten some practical theological truths. Note what he had said earlier:

Then Job answered and said: “Truly I know it is so, but how can a man be righteous before God? If one wished to contend with Him, He could not answer Him one time out of a thousand. God is wise in heart and mighty in strength. Who has hardened himself against Him and prospered?”—Job 9:1-4

This question is a rebuke to Job’s attitude, which attempted to correct the LORD regarding His supposed treatment of Job. Basically, the LORD is asking, “Is Almighty God subject to man’s correction?” The answer is, “Of course not! Who would even dare such a thing?”

This question should be asked of anyone who thinks that God is fallible and needs to be corrected and rebuked; as Job did!

[He who rebukes God, let him answer it.] The LORD has been speaking directly to Job; he was in “court” with Him. Job got what he wanted. But this becomes a case of; “Beware of what you ask for—you may get it!”

Job had rebuked God on several occasions and accused Him of being unjust. It will be helpful to review what Job said:

“If I called and He answered me, I would not believe that He was listening to my voice. For He crushes me with a tempest and multiplies my wounds without cause. He will not allow me to catch my breath, but fills me with bitterness.”—Job 9:16-18

“Does it seem good to You that You should oppress, that You should despise the work of Your hands and smile on the counsel of the wicked? Do You have eyes of flesh? Or do You see as man sees? Are Your days like the days of a mortal man? Are Your years like the days of a mighty man, that You should seek for my iniquity and search out my sin, although You know that I am not wicked and there is no one who can deliver from Your hand?”—Job 10:3-7

1 These series of questions covered a broad range of knowledge [i.e., “science”] including theology, cosmology, astronomy, oceanography, meteorology, geology, and zoology.
Moreover Job continued his discourse, and said: “As God lives, who has taken away my justice and the Almighty, who has made my soul bitter.....Far be it from me that I should say you are right; till I die I will not put away my integrity from me. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; my heart shall not reproach me as long as I live.”—Job 27:1-2, 5-6

By the time everything is said and done, Job will regret and repent of speaking those words!

Now, the LORD was giving Job an opportunity to speak and “answer”, that is, explain his justification for rebuking God. This may also have been a challenge for Job to reconsider his position and attitude.

But as we shall see, the majesty of God’s glory and power leaves him speechless.

**vv. 3-5➤ Job Begins to See the “Big Picture”**

[3 Then Job answered the LORD and said: 4 “Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. 5 Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; yes, twice, but I will proceed no further.”]

Seeing that man is not the “master” of Creation, and that God controls and cares for His creation in a way that man could never even hope to do, Job acknowledges; (1) his insignificance and (2) his inability to defend himself further.

[Then Job answered the LORD and said.....] Job realizes he needs to respond in some way to the LORD’s rebuke and challenge.

[Behold, I am vile.....] In other words, Job is admitting he despises himself and realizes that he is to be lightly esteemed. Later he will declare; “Therefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes” {Job 42:6}.

Job is acknowledging his insignificance when compared to the LORD’s awesome wisdom, and power.

In Heaven the LORD is worshipped because:

“You are worthy, O Lord to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things and by Your will they exist and were created.”—Rev. 4:11

“You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals; for You were slain and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation and have made us kings and priests to our God and we shall reign on the earth.”—Rev. 5:9-10

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing!” And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying; “Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, forever and ever!”—Rev 5:12-13

[.....what shall I answer You?] In other words, I’m speechless. Job is unable to answer the LORD—as he should be! Job is now in humble submission to the LORD—as we all should be!

[I lay my hand over my mouth] So, in an outward show of sincerity, Job lays his hand over his mouth indicating that he has been reduced to silence.

Ironically, this is what he had suggested his friends do earlier {Job 21:5}.

[Once I have spoken, but I will not answer.....] Job had much to say, but now, after the LORD has reminded him of His awesome majesty, wisdom and power, he has nothing to say.
Not only did Job speak once, but he spoke out against the LORD on several occasions—but now he says he will cease his arguments. Instead, he will continue to listen intently.

Job’s former self-confidence in defending his cause has been shattered and replaced with a humble attitude.

However, although he was humbled, Job was not quite ready to repent, so the Lord begins His second discourse and summons Job to try to answer more questions.

**vv. 6-7**  **THE LORD BEGINS HIS SECOND DISCOURSE BY CHALLENGING JOB**

[6 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said: 7 “Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me:”]

[Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind] After Job makes his humble confession, but does not repent, the LORD begins His SECOND DISCOURSE by again speaking out of a whirlwind, just as He did in His first discourse {Job 38:1}.

The Hebrew word rendered “whirlwind” refers to a powerful wind or tempest; e.g., hurricane force winds.

Elihu had referred to the fearsome power of a hurricane {Job 37:9}. A severe windstorm was buffeting Job and his friends and the LORD continues to speak from a position of awesome power and force.

[Now prepare yourself like a man.....] This is the challenge that the LORD gave Job at the beginning of his FIRST DISCOURSE {back in Job 38:3}. Now, as He begins His SECOND DISCOURSE He repeats the exact same challenge.

[I will question you and you shall answer Me] Basically, the LORD is saying; “Job sit still and listen up. You need to seriously consider my questions and then think before you answer Me.”

The LORD makes the importance of this clear; it’s so He can question Job, as He did previously {Job 38:3}, and Job will answer—if he can!

Job has already started to do this—now he needs to continue to keep quiet and listen and, in the end, be prepared to give an informed and thoughtful answer.

**vv. 8-14**  **THE LORD QUESTIONS JOB & CHALLENGES HIS ATTITUDE**

[8 “Would you indeed annul My judgment? Would you condemn Me that you may be justified? 9 Have you an arm like God? Or can you thunder with a voice like His? 10 Then adorn yourself with majesty and splendor, and array yourself with glory and beauty. 11 Disperse the rage of your wrath; look on everyone who is proud, and humble him. 12 Look on everyone who is proud, and bring him low; tread down the wicked in their place. 13 Hide them in the dust together; bind their faces in hidden darkness. 14 Then I will also confess to you that your own right hand can save you.”]

Job is getting “his day in court” and it’s not going so well! Just like a prosecuting attorney, the LORD now directly confronts Job with four questions meant to indictment Job of his self-righteousness.
In His rebuke of Job, the LORD asks him four questions intended to help Job remember his own status in the “grand scheme of things” and challenge his attitude.

Would you indeed annul My judgment? The Hebrew word rendered “annul” here literally means “to break up” in the sense of breaking a covenant, contract or agreement. Here it means, does Job really believe that he can make the LORD’s judgment “null and void”? When it’s put this way it’s quite an indictment!

Job had a zeal for God but it was in conflict with true knowledge revealed by God. This is confirmed by the LORD’s very first question to Job: “Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge?” {Job 38:2}.

Job had been speaking without knowledge of God’s infinite wisdom and power—he had not given the LORD the credit, that is, the honor and respect and, yes, the worship, that was due to Him! What are some of the evidence for this? Let Job’s own words speak for themselves:

Would you condemn Me that you may be justified? In justifying himself, Job was at the same time condemning the LORD’s justice.

And the LORD here is confirming what Elihu had said earlier when he first began his rebuttal against Job:

“So these three men ceased answering Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. Then the wrath of Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, was aroused against Job; his wrath was aroused because he justified himself rather than God.”—Job 32:1-3

But Job was convinced, actually self-deceived, by thinking that God would be on his side:

“Would He contend with me in His great power? No! But He would take note of me.”—Job 23:6

Note that Elihu, Job’s youngest friend had gotten it right:

“Look, in this you are not righteous. I will answer you, for God is greater than man. Why do you contend with Him? For He does not give an accounting of any of His words.”—Job 33:12-13

Which gets back to the point of the Lord’s previous question; “Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him?”

Job had forgotten all these things. We need to guard against doing the same thing—forgetting who the LORD actually is!

Have you an arm like God? Here is an anthropomorphistic reference to the “arm of God”, which is meant to ask Job if he has the same force and power as God. That power is awesome in terror {Jer. 32:21}. He does not!

To get a sense of what this entails, note the following references:

“Your right hand, O Lord, has become glorious in power; Your right hand, O Lord, has dashed the enemy in pieces.”—Ex. 15:6

“You have a mighty arm; strong is Your hand, and high is Your right hand.”—Ps. 89:13

“And command them to say to their masters, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel’—thus you shall say to your masters: ‘I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are on the ground, by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and have given it to whom it seemed proper to Me’.”—Jer. 27:4-6
“Ah, LORD God! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You. You show loving-kindness to thousands, and repay the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them—the Great, the Mighty God, whose name is the Lord of hosts.”—Jer. 32:17-19

“Moreover, concerning a foreigner, who is not of Your people Israel, but has come from a far country for Your name’s sake [for they will hear of Your great name and Your strong hand and Your outstretched arm], when he comes and prays toward this temple.”—1 Ki. 8:41-42; 2 Chron. 6:32

Speaking to the Jews scattered by the Babylonian Captivity, the LORD says:

“As I live”, says the Lord God, “surely with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you. I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out.”—Ezek. 20:33-34

The mighty outstretched “arm” of the LORD is most often associated with the act of redeeming His people, Israel out of Egypt, through the wilderness and across the Red Sea. See for example Ex.6:6; Deut. 4:34; 5:15; 7:19; 9:29; 11:2; 26:8; 1 Ki. 17:36; Ps. 136:12; Jer. 32:21.

[Or can you thunder with a voice like His?] Here the LORD uses a metaphor of thunder to describe the attention-getting power of His voice. The Lord’s voice strikes terror to those who oppose Him.

Elihu has alluded to this

“And after it a voice roars; He thunders with His majestic voice and He does not restrain them when His voice is heard. God thunders marvelously with His voice; He does great things which we cannot comprehend.”—Job 37:4-5

And ironically, so has Job, when He heaped praises upon the LORD and acknowledged His majesty, wisdom, power and glory:

“Sheol is naked before Him and Destruction has no covering. He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing. He binds up the water in His thick clouds, yet the clouds are not broken under it. He covers the face of His throne and spreads His cloud over it. He drew a circular horizon on the face of the waters, at the boundary of light and darkness. The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at His rebuke. He stirs up the sea with His power and by His understanding He breaks up the storm. By His Spirit He adorned the heavens; His hand pierced the fleeing serpent.”—Job 26:6-13

Then, as if to summarize the significance of all this, he adds:

“Indeed these are the mere edges of His ways and how small a whisper we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand?”—Job 26:14

In other words, these attributes of the LORD merely “scratch the surface”.

Did Job have the ability to cause terror with his voice? No, he did not!

Job’s pride and self-centeredness has caused him to lose his focus on who the LORD really is!

The LORD has just finished explaining the power and authority necessary to be equal with Him.

[Then I will also confess to you that your own right hand can save you] What an amazing statement. If Job can match the majesty, power and glory of the LORD, then the LORD will confess that Job’s own power can save him!

If one could do all this [which no one could ever legitimately hope to do] then the Lord would admit that a person’s own righteousness could save them.
Application: In going about seeking to establish his own righteousness, Job was nullifying the true righteousness that comes from God alone, which is a sin. The prophets tell us:

“But we are all like an unclean thing and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; we all fade as a leaf and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.”—Isa. 64:6

“The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart; I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.”—Jer. 17:9-10

Job had a zeal for God, but it was without “knowledge”. Therefore, when God allowed him to be seriously tested through his suffering, his lack [or perhaps forgetfulness] God’s knowledge got him into trouble. It compelled him to defend his own righteousness; he then concluded that the LORD was unjust and so was inadvertently condemning the LORD.

We need to avoid becoming arrogant or apathetic in our humility and faith, falling into an attitude of being religiously zealous and seeking to promote our own righteousness. The apostle Paul powerfully speaks to this issue when he says:

“For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of God’s righteousness and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”—Rom. 10:2-4

We need to constantly remember that:

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”—Eph. 2:8-10

As Christians, when we are “tested”—when the Lord allows us to go through trials, we also need to guard against forgetting the “knowledge” that was given to us and “seeking to establish our own righteousness”. We need to remember:

“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No trial has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tested beyond what you are able, with but the testing will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”—1 Cor. 10:12-13

The first animal that the LORD questions Job about in His second discourse appropriately surpasses all those He has mentioned so far.

[Look now at the behemoth, which I made along with you; he eats grass like an ox. 16 See now, his strength is in his hips and his power is in his stomach muscles. 17 He moves his tail like a cedar; the sinews of his thighs are tightly knit. 18 His bones are like beams of bronze, his ribs like bars of iron. 19 He is the first of the ways of God; only He who made him can bring near His sword.”]

The first animal that the LORD questions Job about in His second discourse appropriately surpasses all those He has mentioned so far.

[Look now at the behemoth…….] This is the only place in the Bible where the Hebrew word rendered “behemoth” is used. Interestingly, it is also a plural noun.

The LORD refers to this animal in the plural, “behemoth”, implying this may be referring to a group of animals—an “animal kind”. But what could these animals be?

First of all, the animal called “behemoth” here CANNOT be referring to a mythological animal because the LORD says, “Look now at”. This strongly indicates that the animal described here is an actual creation of God and Job could observe it!
Note that the statements made in v.19 confirm this because the Lord would not speak about an imaginary animal this way: “he is the first of the ways of God” and “only He who made him can bring near His sword”. This indicates a real creation of God which was actually observable.

[…..which I made along with you] This was a land animal which was created on the 6th day of creation, along with other land creatures, including mammals, reptiles and insects [i.e., “creeping things”]. Refer to Gen. 1:24-25. Note that man was also created on the 6th day of creation [Gen. 1:26-27], which is affirmed in v.15; “made along with you”.

However, it is possible that this animal has become extinct since Job’s day.

[…..he eats grass like an ox] This animal is an herbivore; a plant eater. Many Bible expositors identify this animal either with the elephant; or, consistent with vv.21-23, the “river horse”; that is, the hippopotamus.

It is not the rhinoceros² because it was probably already mentioned in Job 39:9-10.

However, a careful analysis of the description of this animal soon removes these two animals from being viable candidates; note especially v.17 [“He moves his tail like a cedar”].

[See now,…..] The Lord invites Job [and us] to consider the immense size, strength and power of this animal; which is called “the first of the ways of God” {v.19}:

- his strength is in his hips [or loins] {v.16}
- his power is in his stomach muscles {v.16}
- he moves his tail like a cedar {v.17}
- the sinews of his thighs are tightly knit {v.17}
- his bones are like beams of bronze {v.18}
- his ribs like bars of iron {v.18}

NOTES:

(a) The Hebrew word rendered “hips” in v.16 literally refers to the “loins”; thus the area of the body where the legs meet the torso.
(b) The Hebrew word rendered “muscles” in v.16 is used only here and refers to the belly of the animal.
(c) The Hebrew word rendered “cedar” in v.17 literally refers to a “cedar tree”.
(d) The Hebrew word rendered “tail” in v.17 refers to a literal “tail”.
(e) The Hebrew word rendered “moves” in v.17 literally refers to being “inclined [with emotion]” and in every other instance it is rendered “desire”, “pleased” or “pleasure”. Here it may refer to the bending, i.e., swaying of its tail when it’s excited. It doesn’t mean “to make stiff”; as those who argue this is referring to a hippopotamus when it “stiffens its tail” like the “branch of a cedar”.
(f) The Hebrew word rendered “thighs” in v.17 is used only here and refers to the pelvic area; specifically the genital area. This is consistent with “strength in his loins” {v.16}.
(g) The Hebrew word rendered “tightly knit” in v.17 literally means “wound or twisted together”. The animal’s flesh is firm and taut indicating great strength. It is used only here and in Lam. 1:14.

² The rhinoceros is still not the largest land animal as its weight [4,000 to 5,000 lbs.] and height [6 ft. tall] puts it between the elephant and hippopotamus in overall size.
Consistent with this, behemoth have a skeletal structure that is exceptionally massive [like beams of bronze] and tremendously strong [like bronze and iron], also suggesting an enormous body.

Whatever they are, taking the description given at ‘face value’, they have huge bodies, which are extremely sturdy.

So let’s put this all together. The animals described here are large and massive, having powerful muscles and very strong bones; like bronze and iron. This conjures up some of the largest land animals such as elephants or hippos, which are shown in Figure 40-1.

African elephants, the largest land animal, typically weigh between 9,000 and 15,000 pounds and are 10 to 13 feet tall; while full-grown hippos are about half as large and typically weigh between 3,000 and 5,000 pounds and are on average 5 to 6 feet tall.

Therefore, there many Bible expositors who believe that the term behemoth is referring to one of these kinds of animals. But are these really the largest and, more importantly, the most impressive land animals that ever lived?

Figure 40-1. The Two Largest Land Vertebrates: (a) African Elephant and (b) Hippopotamus.

Also, there is a dilemma with this conclusion and it’s found in v.17. We are told that behemoth wag their tails like a cedar tree [i.e., the trunk], not a cedar branch. And even though elephants have large, muscular trunks; that wag back-and-forth, the Hebrew reference is clearly to “tails” and not to “noses”.

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We can see from the pictures of an elephant and hippopotamus shown in Figure 40-1, their tails look nothing like the trunk of a cedar tree. A cedar twig or branch perhaps; but not the trunk of a tree!

Not only that, but there is no mention or reference of the prominent and imposing tusks that these animals had; as one would expect if the LORD was indeed referring to these kinds of animals.

That leaves us with the questions: “What other massive land animals do we know of that have powerful muscles and strong bones? Could this be referring to an animal, which as far as we know may be extinct, such as a group of animals we refer to as “dinosaurs”?! 

The answer to this question is “Yes, it is definitely possible!”

So what would a person prior to 1841 [when the term “dinosaur” was coined] call a giant, powerful, wondrous lizard if they saw one? The answer to that question is really quite obvious, especially if we look back into the historical record for evidence of large, powerful, wondrous lizards. The most common English word used to describe a terrible, powerful, wondrous lizard, prior to the usage of the term “dinosaur”, was “dragon”.

Encounters with “dinosaurs” certainly would have resulted in people referring to them as “dragons”. Although the two species of theropod dinosaurs shown in Figure 40-2 are not sauropods [i.e., “Behemoth” candidates], they do especially bear a remarkable resemblance to what is commonly referred to as a “dragon”.

Figure 40-2. Fossil Skulls of Dragon-Like Dinosaurs. (a) Dracorex Hogwartsia; “Dragon King of Hogwarts” and (b) Stygimoloch Spinifer; “Thorny Styx Demon”.

Furthermore, the sight of a pterosaur [i.e., a pterodactyl]; a large, flying reptile; could have been the inspiration for the images of the flying dragon seen in Western literature.

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3 The word “dinosaur” is a relatively new word in the English language. The word became popular after biologist and paleontologist, Sir Richard Owen, coined the term “Dinosauria” in 1841 to describe fossils of large reptiles that were beginning to be discovered during the early 19th century. The word “dinosaur” derives from the compound of two Greek words <deinos> + <sauros> = [“terrible-powerful-wondrous”] + [“lizard”] so it means “terrible or wondrous lizard”.

4 The genus of theropod dinosaurs includes tyrannosauroidea, allosauroidea and megalosauroidea.

5 Discovered in the Hell Creek Formation in South Dakota.

6 Known since the early 1980’s and fossil remains are found in Southern Montana, Eastern Wyoming and the Dakotas.
But going back even further in time the LORD evidently refers to them as “behemoth” during the time of Job!

One such kind of dinosaur, a sauropod, exactly matches the description of “behemoth” given by the LORD. An example of a sauropod is shown in Figure 40-3 next to an elephant.

![Figure 40-3. A Sauropod Dinosaur Compared to an Elephant.]

*Sauropod* dinosaurs were four-legged with a relatively small skull, a long neck, an enormous body, with a highly ellipsoid cross section, a long, muscular tail and massive, columnar limbs which had the appearance of “pillars”.

*[He is the first of the ways of God….] The Hebrew word rendered “first” here literally means “chief”, “foremost” or “first in order or rank”. This implies that this creature was the largest in size and strength and therefore the most impressive of the land animals that God created]*

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7 Fossils of sauropods [e.g., *titanosaur*] have been found in the Middle East; Job could have seen one.
8 The fact that this animal is described as being an herbivore {v.15} would rule out the theropod [bipedal] dinosaurs such as the Allosaurus and Tyrannosaurus, which were carnivores.
9 Sauropods are a genus of dinosaurs represented by *Brachiosaurus, Diplodocus, Apatosaurus* and *Brontosaurus*. 
Although *African elephants* can weigh upwards of 8 tons, they weren’t the largest land animal that ever lived on earth. The largest elephant is dwarfed in comparison to the largest sauropod.

The *Supersaurus* dinosaur, which was 100 feet long, over 24 feet tall and weighed an estimated 40 tons, would certainly fit this description. Refer to Figure 40-4.

![Figure 40-4. Artistic Reconstruction of *Supersaurus* Showing Characteristic “Spines” Observed In Some Fossilized Skin Specimens.](image)

[…..only He who made him can bring near His sword] That is, to come near with the intention of either capturing it or killing it. This animal is so awesome in size and power that only God can subdue it. This does not sound like a description of an *elephant* or *hippo*, which can be subdued, but definitely sounds like a large dinosaur!

Since Job lived *after* the *GREAT FLOOD*, and “behemoth” was most probably some form of sauropod, this would imply that Noah also took representatives of the dinosaur “kinds” on the *ARK*. These could have been juveniles, which would have been much smaller\(^\text{11}\) and easier to handle.

As far as the fierceness of the meat-eating kinds, it needs to be remembered that God made sure that the animal kinds *came to* Noah {Gen. 6:20}; which implies they were made *docile* for the benefit of their survival. Noah did not have to go out and “hunt them down”, which also saved time!

We also know from the *morphology*\(^\text{12}\) evidence found in the fossil record\(^\text{13}\) that many of the dinosaurs were closely related to each other and can be classified into “kinds” of animals.

\(^{10}\) A living animal that rivals the behemoth in sheer size, weight and power lives in the ocean—the blue whale; which is a marine mammal classified as a “baleen” whale because, instead of teeth, it has bristles made of keratin [the same substance as fingernails and hair] growing from its jaws, which filter the water to collect food such as *krill* [very small marine crustaceans]. Mature, adult blue whales typically weigh around 180 tons and are 100 feet long! Another impressive example of God’s creation.

\(^{11}\) Remember that dinosaurs, being reptilian, hatched from eggs no larger than a football and would have started out life being relatively small but then continued to grow very rapidly [as most reptiles do].

\(^{12}\) *Morphology* is a branch of biology dealing with the study of the *form* and *structure* of living organisms; their specific *structural features*. This includes both *external* and *internal* [anatomical] form; although for fossils this is primarily the former.

\(^{13}\) It should be noted that what some of the sauropods *actually* looked like is questionable since complete sauropod fossil finds are rare. Many species, especially the largest, are known only from fragmentary and disarticulated bones and many of the specimens lack heads, tail tips and limbs.
Therefore, God would have only needed to insure that just the various “kinds” [Gen. 7:14-16] of dinosaurs were represented on the ARK; which was enormous!

After the GREAT FLOOD, these “kinds” were released from the ARK and were again free to reproduce. As they did so, the genetic variability that God designed into their genes [i.e., DNA] would have been allowed to express itself in the successive generations of offspring [as it did after the original Creation]. The original “kinds” would have then “speciated” through the process of Natural Selection [which should not be confused with Darwinian Evolution].

As evidence for this, pictures of dinosaurs have been found depicted on engraved stones in Peru dated from around 500 A.D. See Figure 40-5.

![Figure 40-5. Peruvian Stone Engravings of Dinosaur Interaction with Man.](image)

A bas-relief of a stegosaurus has been found engraved on a stone column, along with numerous other still-living animals, in a collection of ruins called Angkor Thom in Cambodia; which was built in the late 1100’s by King Jayavarman VII. See Figure 40-6.

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14 There are about 668 names of dinosaurs given to the fossils found so far. Of these, there are perhaps only about 55 different “kinds” of dinosaurs and only about 11% of them are larger than a sheep. Therefore, Noah would have only needed to take about 110 [juvenile] dinosaurs onto the Ark.

15 Remember also that the Ark was huge. According to Gen. 6:15 the Ark measured 300x50x30 cubits, which is about 460x75x44 feet, giving a volume of almost 1.52 million cubic feet or 56,300 cubic yards. This is approximately equivalent to the volume of 522 standard U.S. railroad boxcars. Each boxcar can comfortably hold about 240 sheep and only 11% of ALL land animals are larger than a sheep.

16 “Again” in the sense that after they were originally created, “according to their kinds”, on the 6th day of the Creation week [Gen. 1:24-25]; they were allowed to speciate through reproduction and Natural Selection into the various species of dinosaurs we find in the fossil record—which itself is a result of the cataclysmic burial of animals during the upheavals on the ocean floor and earth surface caused by the Great Flood [when the “fountains of the deep were opened”; Gen. 8:2].

Additionally, numerous ancient sculptures of dinosaurs were found in Acambaro, Mexico not to mention *pictoglyphs* and *petroglyphs* carved by ancient American Indians.

In the book entitled *Amazon Expedition* there is a picture of an ancient South American cave drawing showing armed men surrounding a dinosaur [V. Nelson, p.25; 2015, Red Deer, AB: http://www.untoldsecretsofplanetearth.com/home].

**vv. 20-24**  
**The Behemoth’s Behavior is Described**

[20 “Surely the mountains yield food for him and all the beasts of the field play there. 21 He lies under the lotus trees, in a covert of reeds and marsh. 22 The lotus trees cover him with their shade; the willows by the brook surround him. 23 Indeed the river may rage, yet he is not disturbed; he is confident, though the Jordan gushes into his mouth, 24 though he takes it in his eyes, or one pierces his nose with a snare.”]

The LORD gives us more clues as to what kind of animal He is referring to.

[Surely the mountains yield food for him…..] This is not an amphibious or water animal, like a hippopotamus; it gets its food primarily from the *dry land*, i.e., the mountains.

[…..and all the beasts of the field play there] The Hebrew word rendered “beasts” literally means “living things”. The Hebrew word rendered, “play there” means “to laugh”; i.e., “to enjoy oneself”. The description conjures up animals which are “romping” around; like sheep and deer.
Evidently the behemoth shared its habitat with other land animals, which lived and thrived in the hills and mountains. This indicates that they were social animals and therefore probably moved in herds.

This is exactly how sauropods are oftentimes depicted in artistic renderings by modern researchers. [He lies under the lotus trees, in a covert of reeds and marsh] The Hebrew word rendered “lotus trees” literally refers to “shady trees”; and the Hebrew word rendered “marsh” refers to “a swamp” or “miry places” [and is so rendered in Job 8:11 and Ez. 47:11.].

The scene now switches from the hills and mountains to the wet and miry environment of swamps.

Although it is true that hippos frequent these kinds of areas, it is not true that they are found in the “mountains”, socializing among other land animals; as the behemoth did.

Evidently sauropods would also seek refuge and comfort in swamps; and lie down nestled among reeds and grassy marshes.

It should be noted that it thought some sauropods, like the brontosaurus, also inhabited swampy regions of marshlands. [The lotus trees cover him with their shade.....] See previous comment on “lotus trees”. As behemoth would lie down, the shadows of the trees growing in and around the swamp would provide them relief from the heat of the sun.

[.....the willows by the brook surround him] The Hebrew word rendered “brook/stream” here can also refer to a river.

In the next verse the river is identified as the Jordan River, which runs 156 miles from the once large and swampy Lake Huleh [slightly above sea level] to the Sea of Galilee [about 650 feet below sea level] eventually terminating at the Dead Sea [1380 feet below sea level]. “Willows” here refers to tail grassy plants that grow in wetlands and along streams like the “cat tail” and bamboo. There are areas along the Jordan River valley which this is describing [e.g., marshlands around Lake Huleh in the Northeastern corner of Israel].

Thus, lying down along the bank of the river, behemoth are nestled among and surrounded by the reeds which grow there.

[Indeed the river may rage, yet he is not disturbed.....] The Hebrew word rendered “river” is slightly different than the one used in the previous verse and refers to a much larger flow of water. It seems to refer to a stream when it floods and becomes a river of raging water. The Hebrew word rendered “disturbed” here means “to start up suddenly”, “to be startled”. Even when the brooks and creeks turn into raging rivers, the behemoth is not frightened. Obviously, the sheer size and mass of the behemoth would make it naturally impervious, even to raging torrents of rushing water.

[.....he is confident, though the Jordan gushes into his mouth.....] The Hebrew word rendered “confident” literally means “to hide for refuge”; and refers to being secure. The Hebrew word rendered “gushes into” actually means “to bring forth” or “to take”
During the rainy season, the Jordan River floods and swells to a raging torrent of water, 90 to 100 feet wide and up to 12 feet deep and, evidently, the behemoth were near or in the river when this happened.

For those who think the behemoth are the hippos, this description poses a problem. Hippos were never known to inhabit or frequent the Jordan River area; not today and not in ancient times.

However, a sauropod like a brachiosaur or brontosaur would easily have been able to withstand the onslaught of such a flood, even though the water was at the level of its mouth. The behemoth remained secure and confident of its safety.

On the other hand, a hippo would be swept away by this rapidly flowing water.

[.....though he takes it in his eyes or one pierces his nose with a snare] This is a somewhat difficult verse to translate, but it needs to be taken in the overall context of the previous verses.

The Lord has been describing the fearlessness and confidence of the behemoth in the face of the white water rapids of a raging river. The river would contain a lot of plant debris from reeds and willows and, perhaps, even branches from low lying trees that would have been torn off or uprooted by the torrent of raging water.

The Hebrew word rendered “snare” refers to a “noose” used for catching animals; and the word [naqab] rendered “pierces” literally means “to puncture”. However, naqab is also translated “to curse or blaspheme”; as in giving a piercing offense [e.g.; Lev. 24:11, 16; Num. 23:8, 25]. Also, the word “one” is not in the original Hebrew so the action is not referring to someone doing this to behemoth.

Therefore, this verse could mean; “though the water rushes into his eyes and the swirling debris hits him in the nose”; the behemoth remains unfazed.

Such a large and imposing animal would certainly have been enough to impress Job with the wisdom and power of God’s creative genius. Can you imagine actually being in the presence of one of these gigantic animals? It would surely be a humbling experience!
### Table 40-1. The Major Themes Repeated in Job’s Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Round of Speeches</th>
<th>1st Speech</th>
<th>2nd Speech</th>
<th>3rd Speech</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Disappointment in his friends</td>
<td>6:14-30</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>12:1:1-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Declaration of God’s greatness</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>9:1-12</td>
<td>12:7-25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disillusionment with God’s ways</td>
<td>7:11-19</td>
<td>9:13-10:17</td>
<td>—</td>
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<tr>
<td>Despair with life (or desire to die)</td>
<td>6:8-13; 7:1-10</td>
<td>10:18-22</td>
<td>14:1-22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disappointment in his friends</td>
<td>16:1-5; 17:3-5</td>
<td>19:1-4</td>
<td>21:1-6</td>
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<td>Disillusionment with God’s ways</td>
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<td>19:5-22</td>
<td>21:7-18, 23-24</td>
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<td>Despair with life (or desire to die)</td>
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<td>Desire for vindication with God</td>
<td>16:18-17:2</td>
<td>19:23-27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disappointment in his friends</td>
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<tr>
<td>Declaration of God’s greatness</td>
<td>23:8-17</td>
<td>26:1-4</td>
<td>26:5-14; 27:28</td>
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<td>29:1-25; 30:1-31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desire for vindication with God</td>
<td>23:1-7</td>
<td>31:1-40</td>
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- **Elihu Speaks Chapters 32—37**
- **The LORD Speaks Chapters 38—41**
Bibliography

(4) *Notes on the Bible*, Albert Barnes (1834).