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Sermon Notes

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Dragonslayer

Job 40-41

I. Open Our Eyes That We May See

A. Elisha and His Servant

At one point in the history of Israel, the prophet Elisha and his servant were surrounded by an invading army of Syrians who had been specifically sent by the enraged king of Syria to capture him. It seems the prophet was using his supernatural prophetic gift to give critical information to the King of Israel which enabled Israel to thwart all the military plans of Syria. So the King of Syria sent an army who snuck into Dothan at night and surrounded the city. In the morning, Elisha's servant went out and saw the massive army surrounding the city and was instantly filled with terror. "Oh my lord, what shall we do??!" He asked.

Elisha told him, "Don't be afraid. Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

Then Elisha prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes that he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

Surrounding us every moment of our lives is a spiritual dimension, the heavenly realms. This spiritual dimension cannot ordinarily be perceived by the five senses, though occasionally the barrier dividing the two realms is TORN OPEN, like at Jesus' baptism. Whatever information we have about that spiritual dimension

comes only from the Bible. And the Bible teaches us that the spiritual realms that surround us at every moment are filled with spiritual beings called angels and demons.

These angels and demons are created beings. They have great power and great influence over the events of earth. They are invisible, but exert constant force on the minds and bodies of people. So the scripture says.

This morning, this sermon is meant to be a plea to all of us, as Elisha said, "Lord, open our eyes that we may see."

Ephesians 1:18 mentions the "eyes of our hearts" ... not our physical eyes. The eyes of our hearts is our FAITH... the ability to see invisible, spiritual truths. This sermon is a plea that the eye of our hearts would be enlightened to see invisible spiritual realities. And those realities include demons and Satan himself.

B. The Book of Job: Addressing the Problem of Evil and Suffering

The Book of Job is given to the people of God to explain the problem of evil and suffering in this world. Answering the oft-repeated question, "Why do bad things happen to good people?" is the purpose of the book, among other things. And the problem of evil and human suffering in the world cannot be fully explained without understanding the effect of Satan and his angels... called demons.

A. Job 40-41: Behemoth and Leviathan: The Problem of Interpretation

That is the approach I am taking as we look at the two chapters Job 40-41... and two mysterious beasts in them called "Behemoth" and "Leviathan."

This is such a significant issue that I plan on spending two weeks on it.

But first, I have to deal with hermeneutics... the science of proper Bible interpretation. When you pick up the Book of Job and read it as it is written, and you come to Job 40-41, you don't have any mention of demons or Satan. You have two

mysterious beasts – Behemoth and Leviathan – described in beast-like terms.

God is speaking out of whirlwind to his suffering son, Job. Job has had his life shredded by wave upon wave of suffering... the loss of all his wealth, then the loss of all his children, then the loss of his health. Wave upon wave. Job has sinfully accused God of injustice...

To humble Job, God speaks to Job out of a whirlwind:

Job 38:2-3 "Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge? ³ Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me.

He then exposes Job's frailty and limitations as a man by rolling out natural theology and connecting it directly to Job.

God walks Job through the overwhelming evidence of God's power in creating the universe... the foundations of the earth, the boundaries of the sea, the clouds, the rhythm of sunrise and sunset, the patterns of weather (snow, hail, lightning, thunder, the path of the east winds), the giving of the right amount of rain and dew to satisfy the grass, the freezing patterns with ice... even up to the distant stars that make up the constellations, with the mysterious laws of physics that govern their motions and light and color and position... the use of all these inanimate patterns to control events on earth

Then God brings forth more evidence from creation... ten living creatures – animals and birds – that God made and controls: the lion, the raven, the mountain goats, the deer, the wild donkey, the wild ox, the ostrich, the horse, the hawk, and the eagle. He cites their birth, their habits and habitats, their feeding, their marvelous attributes – the stealthy hunting of the lion, the mighty strength of the ox, the freedom of the wild donkey, the speed of the ostrich, the bold courage of the horse, the flight of the hawk, the eyesight of the eagle.

In all of this natural theology, God humbles Job with his limitations:

Job you are limited in time... I am not.

You are limited in wisdom... I am not.

You are limited in power... I am not.

So how can you think to question me? How can you think to challenge me? How can you think to question my justice?

By the time this display of natural theology is done, it seems the work is done – Job is humbled completely:

Job 40:3-5 Then Job answered the LORD: ⁴ "I am unworthy-- how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. ⁵ I spoke once, but I have no answer-- twice, but I will say no more."

But God didn't feel the work was done. There was still more to say. God doesn't deal lightly with the corruption of the human heart... he probes deep, deeper, deeper still.

Job 40:6-7 Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the whirlwind: ⁷ "Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me."

We saw last time that God addresses the fundamental disrespect of Job toward God... his fundamental unbelief, charging God with injustice:

Job 40:8 "Would you discredit my justice? Would you condemn me to justify yourself?"

So this clearly proves that that is exactly what Job WAS doing... charging God with injustice! But as we saw last time, this is the very thing we must not do when we are suffering – see God as the enemy. God is not accountable to us... God is infinitely above the entire human race and knows exactly what he is doing. Job is not God... he has no splendor of his own, no glory radiating from his being, and no mighty voice:

Job 40:9-10 Do you have an arm like God's, and can your voice thunder like his? ¹⁰ Then adorn yourself with glory and splendor, and clothe yourself in honor and majesty.

Neither can you humble wicked men and lay them low like I can.

Job 40:14 Then I myself will admit to you that your own right hand can save you.

So, Job... you are limited in time, limited in knowledge, limited in power... and you CANNOT SAVE YOURSELF.

Now that is exactly the point we are at... we suffering humans CANNOT SAVE OURSELVES.

But from what??? That is where the last two beasts come in:
Behemoth and Leviathan

Fundamentally, God wants Job to know that his own right hand cannot save himself from his true enemies – Behemoth and Leviathan. You cannot save yourself – they are too powerful for you. You cannot **control** them, you cannot **capture** them, you cannot **kill** them. You are helpless before them. But I can control them. I can capture them. I can kill them.

B. Taking them Simply as Animals... What Then?

Now, we come to the mystery of interpretation of Job 40-41. Does God make his final speech to Job based on two more animals after the ten he's already mentioned? Should we just take these beasts as literal animals on earth that are fearsome predators, beyond Job's power? Two more animals beyond the ten... to humble Job?

Possibly... and some Christian scholars will do that. It is safe, in one respect. Just take the words at face value. Two mighty animals you cannot control, you cannot capture, you cannot kill... but God can. So be humble before God. Don't question God. Repent before God. If you cannot deal with them... how can you deal with me!

Job 41:10-11 No one is fierce enough to rouse him [Leviathan]. Who then is able to stand against me? ¹¹ Who has a claim against me that I must pay? Everything under heaven belongs to me.

The simple literal approach to Behemoth and Leviathan is a “how much more” argument. If you cannot control, capture, or kill these beasts, how much more their mighty Creator?

And the simple literal approach goes through the evidence of the text to find out what literal animals they are – generally the Behemoth is identified as the hippopotamus, the Leviathan as perhaps even a fire-breathing dragon that literally lived back then, but is now extinct. But absolute certainty about the literal interpretation will elude us. We would not be able to say for certain what animals these are. But the point would be made – God is mightier, you should humble yourself before God.

C. Indications That Behemoth and Leviathan May Be More Than Just Two More Animals

But I do not think this is satisfying. It seems strange that the Book of Job would end that way. The ten animals cited in Job 38-39 are enough to make that point. And deeper still... the overall question the Book of Job is seeking to answer – the problem of evil and human suffering in the world – these two animals don’t really directly address that. At best, we would say, “The God who made and controls mighty beasts like Behemoth and Leviathan deserves our worship and praise at all times; we should trust him, even when we are suffering. God knows what he is doing.” And that is fine at one level.

But clearly the problem of evil is deeper than that. And there is another issue not yet resolved... the role of SATAN. He is introduced at the beginning of the book, he goes out and directly causes the suffering of Job’s life in both phases – the loss of his wealth, the loss of his children, the loss of his health. Satan does this after two different interactions with God.

1. Satan does appear at the beginning of this book

Remember:

Job 1:6-12 One day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them. ⁷ The LORD said to Satan,

"Where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it." ⁸ Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil." ⁹ "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. ¹⁰ "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. ¹¹ But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face." ¹² The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

The way the narrative goes, the loss of Job's oxen, donkeys, sheep, camels, and even his ten children immediately follows Satan going out from the presence of the Lord to wreak havoc on Job. But Satan was limited at that point... not able to touch Job himself.

Then in phase two, Satan comes back... and God directly ascribes the suffering in Job's life to Satan's accusations and activity. Some might argue that Satan was not mentioned – the Sabeans took Job's oxen and donkeys, the "fire of God" fell from the sky and burned his sheep and servants, the Chaldeans stole his camels, and a mighty wind from the desert destroyed Job's children. But we must see Satan's hand in all of that. That's how the narrative reads. And now, Satan comes back for more:

Job 2:1-6 On another day the angels came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came with them to present himself before him. ² And the LORD said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the LORD, "From roaming through the earth and going back and forth in it." ³ Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason." ⁴ "Skin for skin!" Satan replied. "A man will give all he has for his own life. ⁵ But stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely

curse you to your face." ⁶ The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life."

And this time, there can be no doubt... it was Satan himself who made Job sick:

Job 2:7 So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the top of his head.

It is reasonable therefore to see ALL the suffering Job experienced as worked by Satan.

Therefore, any explanation of evil in this world must address the activities of Satan. YET... Satan is not mentioned again in the Book of Job. He never comes up in the debates between Job and his friends. Elihu never mentions Satan. And God never speaks to Job directly about Satan.

BUT it may well be that Behemoth and Leviathan represent the demons and the devil... though hidden behind the forms of the beasts. Satan first appeared as a SERPENT in the Garden of Eden... so this isn't at all far-fetched. And 1 Peter 5 likens him to a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.

So if Behemoth and Leviathan represent Satan and demons, then this Book of Job comes full circle. God is saying to the human race: evil and suffering in the world is directly worked by the devil and his angels... they use wicked men as their puppets, but they control the evil world. And Behemoth (representing demons) and Leviathan (representing Satan) are vastly more powerful than you are... you cannot control them, you cannot capture them, and you cannot kill them. BUT GOD CAN... and in the end, he WILL!

God uses demons and Satan to work ultimate good in his universe. They are serving God's mysterious purpose to display his glory for the greatest good. Any theology of evil and suffering that does not deal with the devil and his angels is defective. But if

Behemoth and Leviathan represent the demons and Satan, God has a comforting word to his suffering people.

SO... I will proceed with that interpretation – Behemoth represents demons, and Leviathan represents Satan. Then we will see how the verses expose them to us.

2. Biblical evidence focuses on Leviathan... he's the KEY

II. Leviathan Representing Satan: Job 41

In taking a symbolic approach to Leviathan, we see much biblical grounding and support...

He is mentioned in Isaiah as an enemy whom God slays with his sword:

Isaiah 27:1 In that day, the LORD will punish with his sword, his fierce, great and powerful sword, Leviathan the gliding serpent, Leviathan the coiling serpent; he will slay the monster of the sea.

John Calvin, commenting on that passage, wrote this:

“The word ‘leviathan’ is variously interpreted; but in general it simply denotes either a large serpent, or whales and sea-fishes, which approach the character of monsters on account of their huge size... For my part, I have no doubt that he speaks allegorically of Satan and his whole kingdom, describing him under the figure of some monstrous animal...”

So, it seems best to me to do the same... Leviathan represents Satan, the monster, whose wickedness is devastating the whole earth

This is made even stronger when we see how much Leviathan seems like a fire-breathing DRAGON

Job 41:14-17 Who dares open the doors of his mouth, ringed about with his fearsome teeth? ¹⁵ His back has rows of shields tightly sealed together; ¹⁶ each is so close to the next that no air can pass between. ¹⁷ They are joined fast to one another; they cling together and cannot be parted.

Especially the fire-breathing aspect:

Job 41:18-21 His snorting throws out flashes of light; his eyes are like the rays of dawn. ¹⁹ Firebrands stream from his mouth; sparks of fire shoot out. ²⁰ Smoke pours from his nostrils as from a boiling pot over a fire of reeds. ²¹ His breath sets coals ablaze, and flames dart from his mouth.

Many cultures have artistic representations of dragons that are very similar to one another; it is quite possible some now extinct creature like this really did exist

Answers in Genesis has done a lot of research on “Dragon Legends” and they have a whole wing in their creation museum in Petersburg, Kentucky... Creationists point to Job 40-41 as evidence of creation as opposed to evolution

As valuable as those insights are, and I am indeed a young-earth creationist in favor of such research, for me it is more important to understand Leviathan as an actual beast that represents Satan

... and Revelation 12 represents Satan as a DRAGON as well:

Revelation 12:3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads.

Revelation 12:9 The great dragon was hurled down-- that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

So if Leviathan represents Satan, it seems also that Behemoth represents his demons

III. Behemoth Representing Demons

A. Behemoth is Plural

1. The Hebrew word in the singular just means “beast”... like the beasts of the field... like any four-footed creature, cattle, etc.
2. The plural is used here, yet it is spoken of as a singular beast... “He eats grass like an ox...”

3. For this reason, all the translations just bring the word “Behemoth” over into the English as a whole word
4. The plural sets us up well to see Behemoth as representing the demons collectively...
5. Satan is not God... he is not omnipresent; so he exerts his evil influence through his army of fallen angels
6. Revelation 12: When Satan was evicted from heaven after losing his battle with the Archangel Michael, it is said there that he swept 1/3rd of the stars from the heavens with his tail and flung them to the earth
7. Matthew 25, “Sheep and Goats”: Jesus spoke of the final end of the eternal Fire which God prepared “for **the devil and his angels**”
8. In Mark 5, when Jesus interacted with the demoniac of the Gadarenes, the demons spoke with one voice, calling themselves “Legion” “for we are many”
9. So Behemoth is a plural word representing many demons acting collectively as one evil force in the world

B. What Does God Say About Behemoth?

1. First, Job 40:15 “**Behold, Behemoth**”... God is unveiling the power of this hidden beast to Job’s eyes; he will use earthly “beast-like” language, but it is a hidden, evil being; he says “**I made him along with you**”... God created every being that exists; as the Creator, he also SUSTAINS every creature that lives; demons are sustained every single moment of their evil existence by God; if God chose, he could in an instant remove their very existence
2. Then, he says “**Behemoth eats grass like an ox**”: We know how a beast of the field would do this... how do demons “eat grass like an ox”? Perhaps it represents the frailty of mortal humans who die like the grass of the field:

Isaiah 40:6-8 "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. ⁷ The grass withers and the flowers fall,

because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass. ⁸ The grass withers and the flowers fall

Demons may be executioners... God had to tell Satan not to kill Job; so demons have the power to kill human beings, and without God's protective hedge, they do it every single day

3. The next statements all speak to the overwhelming power of Behemoth... this beast is strong, much stronger than human power

Job 40:16-18 What strength he has in his loins, what power in the muscles of his belly! ¹⁷ His tail sways like a cedar; the sinews of his thighs are close-knit. ¹⁸ His bones are tubes of bronze, his limbs like rods of iron.

The power of demons is vastly, immeasurably greater than that of humans; a single angel rolled back the stone in front of Jesus' grave and sat on it; the demoniac of the Gadarenes...

Mark 5:4 ... had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him.

4. Next, his rank in creation

Job 40:19 He ranks first among the works of God

- a. Demons are fallen angels...
- b. God created them good, glorious, powerful, intelligent beings
- c. Though they had no bodies like humans, they are greater than humans in power and glory
- d. Thus the statement, "He ranks first among the works of God"; first in chronological order, for it seems the angels celebrated when God laid the foundations of the earth

Job 38:7 while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?

5. Yet, God the Creator retains full power over him to kill him any time he chooses

Job 40:19 yet his Maker can approach him with his sword.

It is very obvious that, while demons are vastly more powerful than humans, God is infinitely more powerful than they are

We are powerless... Satan and demons have great power... God has all power!

This is our great hope... Behemoth, representing demons, exist continually under the threat of God's terrifying sword

Remember the passage from Isaiah about Leviathan:

Isaiah 27:1 In that day, the LORD will punish with his sword, his fierce, great and powerful sword, Leviathan the gliding serpent, Leviathan the coiling serpent; he will slay the monster of the sea.

Satan and his angels are in terror of God's "fierce, great, and powerful SWORD" ... the sword is the WORD OF GOD!!

Jesus wields that sword effortlessly

So, the demons were terrified of Jesus:

Mark 1:23-24 Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, ²⁴ "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are-- the Holy One of God!"

6. The whole world pays homage

Job 40:20 The hills bring him their produce, and all the wild animals play nearby

- a. Satan runs the world, and his demons run it with him
- b. Just as Satan wanted Jesus to fall down and worship him, so the demons thrive on the worship of men
- c. All false worship is worship of demons...

1 Corinthians 10:20 the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God

- d. Thus the unbelievers of the world are feeding the egos of the demons with their false worship
- e. And the wickedness of unbelievers—their sinful play—also stokes the fires of the demons’ desires, like when Israel ran amok with the golden calf

7. Behemoth is concealed

Job 40:21-22 Under the lotus plants he lies, hidden among the reeds in the marsh. ²² The lotuses conceal him in their shadow; the poplars by the stream surround him.

This is beast-like... the hippo does this in the river; concealed by the reeds

So it is with demons; they do their work in the shadows, hidden from view; when Satan attacked Job’s property and family, he did it through his demons, and they were never seen

So the Apostle Paul said,

Ephesians 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

These demons do their destructive work in the heavenly realms, concealed from our eyes... they lurk in the shadows and suddenly rise up to attack

8. The demons are fearless of man... no man can tame them

Job 40:23-24 When the river rages, he is not alarmed; he is secure, though the Jordan should surge against his mouth. ²⁴ Can anyone capture him by the eyes, or trap him and pierce his nose?

So, man cannot control Behemoth... he cannot capture Behemoth... he cannot kill Behemoth.

We are POWERLESS against him.

9. Undefeatable by man... utterly fearless

Job 41:33-34 Nothing on earth is his equal-- a creature without fear. ³⁴ He looks down on all that are haughty; he is king over all that are proud.

Satan rules over the whole world and every lost person in it

1 John 5:19 We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.

This terrifying beast cannot be controlled by man... we cannot put a bridle in his mouth

This terrifying beast cannot be captured by man... we cannot put ropes or hooks in him to subdue him

This terrifying beast cannot be killed by man... our arrows and lances bounce off his armor and fall weak and worthless on the ground

As Martin Luther wrote in "A Mighty Fortress is Our God,"

"Did we in our own strength confide our striving would be losing."

We need a DRAGONSLAYER... and that DRAGONSLAYER is Christ

IV. Christ the Dragonslayer

A. Christ the Dragonslayer Was Predicted in the Garden of Eden

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

B. Christ the Dragonslayer Could Not Be Killed When He Was Born

Revelation 12:4-5 The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born. ⁵ She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne.

This refers to Satan moving his puppet king Herod to kill the baby Jesus in Bethlehem after he was born. But God protected him

C. Christ the Dragonslayer Moved Out to Destroy Satan's Kingdom

1. God anointed Jesus with the power of the Holy Spirit
2. In the power of the Spirit, he drove out demons effortlessly
 - a. At the beginning of his ministry in Capernaum, when that demon-possessed man shouted out at him

Mark 1:25-26 "Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!" ²⁶ The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

- b. The demoniac of the Gadarenes... terrifying power, breaking chains from his legs... shouted at Jesus

Mark 5:7 "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won't torture me!"

He identified himself as Legion... 6000 demons in one man

But it is clear he was terrified of Jesus; they knew his power to torture and kill them; they begged permission to go into the huge herd of pigs and he gave them permission

Jesus was absolutely in charge of BEHEMOTH...

- c. The Syrophenician woman

Mark 7:27-30 "First let the children eat all they want," he told her, "for it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs." ²⁸ "Yes, Lord," she replied, "but even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." ²⁹ Then he told her, "For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter." ³⁰ She went home and found her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Effortless power!!

- d. Jesus' own statement about his power over demons

Matthew 12:28-29 *if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²⁹ "Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house.*

Luke 11:21-22 *"When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. ²² But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up the spoils.*

Satan is the strong man, fully armed... trusting in his armor

Jesus is vastly more powerful... he is able to tie up Satan and plunder his house... rescuing people

Job 41:13 *Who can strip off Leviathan's outer coat? Who would approach him with a bridle?*

Jesus can... effortlessly!

D. Destroying Satan by His Death

Hebrews 2:14-15 *by [Jesus'] death he destroyed him who holds the power of death-- that is, the devil-- ¹⁵ and freed those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

E. Destroying Satan's Kingdom by His People

Revelation 12:17 *Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring-- those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus*

Revelation 12:11 *They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.*

F. Killing Satan for All Eternity

Revelation 20:10 *And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

That is the death of Leviathan!

And here is the death of Behemoth... and all the wicked people who served Satan:

Matthew 25:41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'

V. God's Goodness in Controlling, Using, and Conquering Evil

A. Final Lessons

The big picture topic of the Book of Job is the issue of suffering and evil in the world

The Book of Job makes it plain that Satan has a huge role in that

Any theology of evil that does not reckon with the devil and his demons is defective

In Job 40-41, we have revealed the power of two great beasts... Behemoth, representing demons, and Leviathan, representing Satan

These beasts are too powerful for human beings to capture, to control, or to kill

But God has them on a leash... he uses them for his own purposes; he controls them every day... and in the end, he will kill them for all eternity

In the meantime, we need to understand how wise and good it is for God to do this

We might well ask God, "Why create such monsters in the first place?" Why create the powerful beasts Behemoth and Leviathan? And why not kill them NOW?

Well, clearly God did not create them to be evil, for everything God made originally was good. God did create them to be powerful, and they chose to use their power for evil.

And God COULD instantly kill them if he so chose. "In him they live and move and have their being."

Augustine said "[God] judged it better to bring good out of evil, than not to permit any evil to exist." [The Handbook on Hope, Faith, and Love, Chapter 27]

God is using Satan and the demons as foils, creating a context for him to display his power, his wisdom, his love...

Every single day, God uses evil to bring about good. The clearest example of this is the death of his Son, Jesus Christ. The most evil thing that has ever happened in history has produced the greatest good!

But so also the evil of pain, suffering, natural disasters, wars... create contexts where God's people can be courageous, sacrificially loving, laying down their lives for others, displaying amazing love. Without the evil and the suffering, such displays could never occur.

So God USES evil to achieve infinite good. And in heaven, we will have the fullest displays for all eternity of how much God used evil to bring about radiant glorious good.

Next week: discussing WHAT TO DO ABOUT ALL THIS?

Simple answers:

1) Be aware

2 Corinthians 2:11 in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

2) Be alert

1 Peter 5:8-9 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith

3) Be prepared to stand your ground

Ephesians 6:10-13 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

4) Fight for your lives, your families, your fruitfulness

5) Be confident in final victory

Romans 16:20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.