

JOB: Man Of God
December 11, 2005
Message 11
Scripture reading Job 40:15-24

INTRO: In the last message, I read for you descriptions of the outworking of pride. A number of you have requested a copy of that list. One person said, "I need to read this over every day." Another said, "I could see myself in some way in almost every description." Pride, oh thou almost almighty sin! Pride, oh thou deceiver. So the young man said, "I have some pride, but that is not my main problem!" Another got to see himself and said, "I have good news for you and bad. The good news is I am more proud than all of you. The bad news is, you have plenty yourself." This morning we want to see how big pride is.

Now I have two confessions to make regarding these messages in Job. First, I had intended these messages for the church, but they have searched my own heart and shown me many things about myself. Second, you have the poorest outline I have ever given you. The big points are fine, but I have not broken the rest down as I usually do. We have been under point C. for a number of messages, and we are still on the same point. It is Job's testing by God, and we are continuing it this morning.

C. By God continued (38:1-42:6)

So our question this morning is, "How big is pride?" Well, let us begin by reading 40:8-14. How big is pride? If you have the ability to take the proud and the wicked and to humble them, then you can save yourself! How big is pride? Well it is so big, that if you can make proud and wicked people humble, you can save yourself! How big is that? Unmeasurable. Neither you, nor I stand a chance. Here is something so huge that only God Almighty can do it. We must make no mistake about it, man is an incredibly proud creature! Even saved man! You see, I think that is why God points out this sin in the most righteous man on earth. If you or I think we have almost mastered pride, this book is meant for us. It should make us say, "Search me Oh God, try me and know my thoughts, and know my heart and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

What would it take for a person to save himself? Well, he would have to become God. How much chance of that happening? There is no hope. There is NO hope of that ever happening. How big is pride? Well, what shall we compare it to? Well, let us let God do that for us (read 15-24).

Now, why does God talk about this animal, behemoth? Well notice that it is in connection with the section on pride (read 12-15). He has just talked about something so big, that if Job could do it he could save himself. And then He compares it to behemoth. You see, God will give Job a picture of comparison. Pride, in size, is compared to this animal.

So we have a task before us and that is to seek to identify this animal. This animal is hard to identify. Listen to JFB, "The description in part agrees with the hippopotamus, in part with the elephant, but exactly in all details with neither." Listen to Matthew Poole, "But what it is, is a matter of some dispute among the learned. The generality of them are agreed that this is the elephant, and the following leviathan the whale; which being two of the goodliest and vastest creatures which God made, the one of the land, the other of the sea..."

Now I believe Adam Clark is on the right track in his commentary when he writes, "These, having been carefully considered and deeply investigated both by critics and naturalists, have led to the conclusion that either the *elephant*, or the *hippopotamus* or *river-horse*, is the animal in question; and on comparing the characteristics between these two, the balance is considerably in favour of the *hippopotamus*. But even here there are still some difficulties, as there are some parts of the description which do not well suit even the *hippopotamus*; and therefore I have my doubts whether either of the animals above is that in question, or whether any animal now in existence be that described by the Almighty. Mr. Good supposes, and I am of the same opinion, that the animal here described is now extinct."

Personally, I have no doubt that what is in view is a dinosaur of some kind. If so, from verse 15 we learn

that it was a grass eating dinosaur. Now notice in verse 16 that his strength is in his hips and stomach muscles. That describes a dinosaur. Notice further, in verse 17, that he moves his tail like a cedar. Now that does not describe the hippopotamus at all. It does not describe the elephant. It describes a dinosaur. Notice in verse 18, that his bones are like beams of bronze, his ribs like bars of iron.

Verse 19, then gives a very important clue to the identity of this animal. The NKJV says this animal is the first of the ways of God. The word translated "first" can be either first, or beginning, or chief. I believe the KJV is right when it translates that this animal is the chief of the ways of God. It is the biggest. It is the strongest. It is the greatest God created! This agrees with the fact that the word 'behemoth' is in the Hebrew plural. John Gill writes, "The word is plural, and signifies beasts, and may be used to denote the chiefest and largest of beasts, and therefore is commonly understood of the elephant..." Well, the elephant is by no means the chief of the ways of God. Many kinds of dinosaurs were far larger. How large was this animal? Man was not able to kill this animal. Look at 19b, "...only He who made him can bring near His sword."

So, let me take time in this message to deal with a matter that has troubled many of our Mennonites. Many of us were taught that there never were dinosaurs. Why did we teach that? Because we thought that if there truly were dinosaurs then the unbiblical teaching of evolution was right. We knew evolution was wrong so therefore, no dinosaurs.

Well, I want to show you something this morning, but first let me explain. When we lived at Three Hills, Alberta we quite often went to the Red Deer River. The river was in the valley and almost all the banks were eroded soil. Many thousands of dinosaurs were once buried there and the erosion exposed the bones of dinosaurs. We spent quite a lot of time in those hills.

One year my wife's parents came. We took them to Drumheller and then we crossed the River and went dinosaur bone hunting across the River from

Drumheller. Over the years we found many bones, most of which I have given away when I teach the time-line of the history of mankind from the Bible in our VBS class. Well, on this particular trip we were quite high up in the hills when my father-in-law found the largest bone I ever saw there. Now in the museum at Drumheller there are larger bones, but this was the largest we found. It was covered with rock for the most part, but we carried it to the car. My father-in-law then took it home and he chipped all the rock off and exposed the piece which had been embedded. I brought it along this morning to show you, in case you have a hard time believing that there ever were dinosaurs.

A few years ago we were visiting my wife's parents when I saw the bone in Dad's shop. I said, "When you write your will, I wouldn't mind if you willed this to me." He said, "You want it? Take it along." I did before he could change his mind. Let me show you. How big do you think this animal might have been?

Now let me tell you briefly why there are a lot of dinosaur bones. How do you think these bones became buried under tons of dirt? Well, it is certainly not because of evolution! These bones, I have no doubt, are the result of the worldwide flood in Noah's day! Do you know what it takes to petrify bones like this? It takes a lot of mud and water, and there has never been more mud and water than there was in the flood! In some places they find the skeleton of the whole animal! And no doubt the dinasaur is the chief of the ways of God! And so, when God wanted some huge animal to use as a comparison to pride, that is the animal He chose.

Now the hardest verse to translate in this chapter is verse 24, and yet it is, I believe, key in understanding these verses on behemoth. The NKJV says, "Though he takes it in his eyes, or one pierce his nose with a snare." As I studied and worked on this verse I became very perplexed. I worked to my own conclusion and then I e-mailed Dr. Herb Sturhaan, a Hebrew scholar.

Dr. Sturhaan wrote as follows: My musings about the translation of this verse are below. I hope this is

somewhat helpful to you. I don't think I can do a better translation than the ones which have already been done. So I am citing four of the major translations.

KJV He taketh it with his eyes:
 his nose pierceth through snares.

NKJV Though he takes it in his eyes,
 Or one pierces his nose with a snare.

NASB Can anyone capture him when he is on watch,
 with barbs can anyone pierce his nose?

NIV Can anyone capture him by the eyes,
 or trap him and pierce his nose?

The various translations render this verse in different ways because the text is difficult to interpret. The phrase which you asked about specifically is literally "with the eyes" or "in the eyes" or "by the eyes." (You know from your study of Greek that prepositions can be very slippery.) The NASB version is almost a paraphrase, but the other three take is quite literally. I think the interpretation of this verse as a rhetorical question (NASB and NIV) is better than a statement (KJV and NKJV). The rhetorical question fits the context better because of the parallel rhetorical question in chapter 41:1-2.

It seems to me that however you translate it the point is basically the same, namely, that this creature is so powerful that it cannot be overcome by a mere man. The next two verses, namely 41:1-2 make the same point regarding another powerful creature, the leviathan. The LORD is saying that these two powerful creatures, behemoth and leviathan, are too strong to be captured by man. The implication is, of course, that the LORD can tame these creatures because he made them. I hope this is helpful."

Dr. Sturhaan's final analysis is that the purpose of this passage is to show that this creature was so powerful, it could not be overcome by man. My conclusion was just that before I wrote him. I have

no doubt that this was God's purpose for this section on behemoth.

In verses 6-14, the Lord has challenged Job to humble proud and wicked people. He said, "If you can do that, I will confess, you can save yourself." Then in verses 15-24, if I summarize it in my own words it would go like this: Job, to humble people is a task so big I can hardly give you a good comparison. But take the biggest animal I have made, behemoth. And then go take this animal when he is on the watch. That is how impossible it is for man to make proud and wicked people humble.

Let me point out several areas in which pride defeats most of us, I think. The first is in the area of prayer. We find this in 2 Chronicles 7:14, a well known verse. The Lord says, "If my people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." God wants to bless His people. He wants to heal their land. And the first step to it is for them to humble themselves and pray. Before prayer comes humility. Pride keeps us from praying. How many of us cannot pray verbally with our family, or in a prayer meeting? And the reason? Not only does pride keep us from prayer. It keeps us from asking for prayer.

There is a second area in which pride defeats many. It is in the realm of faith. I had never noticed this until Lou Sutera pointed it out. There is a verse which many of know the last half of. But if I asked for the first half, none would likely know it. Here is the part we know, "...the just shall live by faith." What we fail to notice is that this clause begins like this: "...but the just shall live by faith." The life of faith is contrasted with another life. So I wonder, who knows the first part of this verse? (Turn to it and read it. Hab. 2:4.)

Why does it come so hard to exercise faith? Because pride stands in the way! And pride is sin and leads to sin. Notice now verse 5, "Indeed, because he transgresses by wine, he is a proud man..." You could replace wine there with any sin. Sin is pride! Why do

we find it so hard to trust God? Because of pride and sin! Would you be daring enough to say, "Lord, help me get a little sight of myself?"

There is a third area where pride defeats many a Christian. It is in the realm of worrying. Turn to 1 Peter 5:5-7 (read). "Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for 'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.' Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." Where is the place of humility? Under the mighty hand of God!

But I want us to notice something now. I have just taught a grammar course using the Bible. English grammar says a participle cannot modify a verb. I cannot understand that rule. I believe it is incorrect. In the Greek language, a participle used in the same way may modify a verb. So if in this passage it may not be done in English, then I will use the Greek and say it does modify a verb. And here is why. In this verse, the words, "...casting all your cares upon Him...", I believe, tell us how to humble ourselves.

How much do much do I worry? How much pride do I have? Do you begin to see why God used behemoth to show what a thing pride is?

CONCL: And so, in conclusion, we have had a dinosaur of a topic this morning: PRIDE. How big is pride? It is so big that if one person is able to humble another person, he could save himself. He would no longer need God! But to get a little perspective on how large pride is the Lord compares it to going over to the huge dinosaur here called behemoth, and capture him while he is looking. The chance is 100% negative.

I would like to give you the opportunity to stand if you have come to sense a deep need in this area. But that will not work in this case. So I want us to bow our heads and close our eyes. Every eye closed. And if God has spoken to you in a loud and clear voice and you would like to acknowledge your need for prayer, I would give you

opportunity to do so. Do not raise your hand several times. Just slip it up and down. God has spoken to me. You can pray for me. Has God spoken to you and you wish prayer in this area?