

Three times in the first two chapters of the book of Job, we find that Job was called a “perfect and upright man.” And two times God even comments that “there is none like him in the earth.” Job loved righteousness and hated evil. There was not another man his equal in all the earth.

God chose to take away everything this man had, except his life and his wife. And even then, his wife did not have courage to continue on in the Lord. He lost his possessions, his family, and his health. All this happened to the best man on the earth, one who had no equal.

This raised a lot of questions in the minds of Job and his three friends. For many chapters in the book of Job, Job and his three friends try to make sense of all this. We might say that they tried to “figure out God.” Isn’t that the same thing we try to do today? We have discussions and brothers meetings, trying to get to the bottom of God and understand the “whys” and the “hows” of God. In this same way, Job and his three friends spend many chapters trying to figure out God.

But they could not seem to get to the bottom of the whole thing. One thing that impresses me with all those discussions they had is that so much of what those four men said was so right. But yet, not quite.

We find ourselves so many times in the same situation when discussing God. We are so right in what we say about God, but at the end of the day, we are not able to live them.

After Job and his three friends had pretty well discussed everything they knew about God, and still had not come to an agreement, the Lord begins to speak to Job out of a whirlwind. This speech of God is found in chapters 38 and 39. For the sake of space, we will not print it here. But to summarize it, God showed Job just who He was. Job’s response? “Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.”

Job basically says that if he had understood who God was, he would have never said what he had just said to his three friends. In modern English, he might have said, “I would have kept my big mouth shut.”

In chapters 40 and 41, God continues His speech to Job by telling him about two monsters, behemoth and leviathan. Now God was showing Job who Job really was. Before, He had revealed to Job who God was. Job, after seeing these things, humbles himself even further, saying, “I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

These two responses from Job—keeping his mouth shut and abhorring himself—were not happening in all the previous chapters. Neither Job nor his friends were truly humbled, and their mouths were running, so to speak, faster than they could think. A lot of good things were being said.

But when Job saw who God was, he said, “I will put my hand over my mouth.” And when he saw himself, he said, “I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

Self—The

Based on a message pre



We—as individuals and as congregations—are up against a monster called “Self.” This old monster seems to just hang around like a shadow everywhere I go. When I went to Bolivia, he followed me there. And now that I am back in the USA on a visit, he followed me back!

God is self-sufficient. He has no need of man, although He loved man and asked him to be with Him. A lot of the questions God asked Job out of the whirlwind started with the phrase, “Where were you when I (did this or that) ...?” He didn’t need Job to make anything.

Self wants us to be like God: self-sufficient. But God asks Job to prove and see if he can do anything without Him. In fact, He asks Job to deny Self. In chapters 40 and 41, God asks Job many questions about these monsters, like, “Hey Job, can you put a rope around his tongue and pull it out?” God was essentially asking, “Can you control your tongue without my help, Job? Can you lock him up in a cell?” And many other similar questions.

No, we cannot do that, without God. Now we can tend to think that Self only has sway in the unbelievers. I wish that were so! Self likes to come to church. He shows up ev-

Monster

ached by Alfred Amstutz



ery Sunday morning! And if you are not careful, when you deny Self some time, Self will be there gloating in the fact that you denied Self so well! He is a monster that shows up everywhere.

Many people have thought that once they had their incredible conversion they would never have to do with Self again. There is an element of truth in that: Self will be taken care of by God when we humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. But believe me, when I walked up here this morning to preach, the old monster wanted to come along!

He is such a monster that you and I have no sword of our own that can take care of him. I have been disgusted time and again with all the monsters that show up in television and movies. I have thought that if people could really come to grips with the terrible monster of self, it would shake them up ... it shakes me up!

This monster often makes me want to quit being a disciple of Jesus, because there is no church system, no church doors, that can bar him out. He comes right in with people when they come in. Churches try to come up with some kind of system—conferences, nonconferences, rules, no rules—

and in spite of all the various church administrations, Self is right there. He shows up right in brothers meeting! And before you know it, the heat rises and things are coming out of mouths that shouldn't. It is like it says in verse 21 of chapter 41: "His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth." Then it continues saying that he has a stiff neck and his heart is "firm as a stone." You know, it's like the attitude that says, "Nobody is going to tell me what to do! And if you really want something done right, just ask me!" Those are some of the attitudes of Self.

Self will show up in brothers meetings and begin to "kindle coals" and burn. James says, "The tongue can no man tame. It is a fire, a world of iniquity." James is really just describing the tongue of this monster, the monster that no one can handle on his own strength.

Paul describes this monster in Romans 7. If you do not stay close to God, you will soon be doing things you really don't want to do, and the things you want to do, you can't. Self is right there to get the best of you. What an ugly monster that we see in Job 41.

Now, I don't get a picture that Job had done anything wrong to "deserve" his calamities. He loved righteousness and hated evil. And yet God had to show him that there was a monster in his life that Job was unable to overcome on his own. And up until Job saw that monster as God portrayed it to him, I don't think Job fully realized how big he really was. But when he fully realized, he could only say, "I abhor myself."

Brothers and sisters, if we could come together and genuinely see ourselves, and abhor our Self, the blessings of God would break out in such a way that we could not stop them! But I struggle every day of my life with this monster, and I often do not really see Self for who he really is. In fact, I often think he is a pretty nice guy, at least better than a lot of the other people around.

In chapter 41, there are a number of questions God asks Job about this monster:

- Canst thou put an hook into his nose? or bore his jaw through with a thorn? (Can you catch him and pull him around like a fish on a hook?)
- Will he make many supplications unto thee? will he speak soft words unto thee? (Does he ever meekly ask you what he should do?)
- Will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a servant for ever? (Will he ever surrender on his own to be your servant?)
- Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens? (Can you tie him up in the life of your little girls so that they can control the Self inside them?)
- Shall the companions make a banquet of him? shall they part him among the merchants? (Can you catch

him and eat him? Or does he catch and eat you?)

- Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with fish spears? (Can you kill him on your own?)
- Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle, do no more. (If you try to conquer him on your own, you will become so discouraged you will quit after a while.)

Self is so nice if you don't fight him that you will be tempted to try to just take him into your life as a helper—after all, he treats you so nicely! He looks out for you so well that it makes it very comfortable to just let him go and live with him.

When I look at all the inroads of Self, in different parts of the world and in all kinds of people, I have to admit that I am tempted to just lift up my hands and say, "We're sunk! He's a monster, neither you nor I nor Job have any sword to finish him off with."

I have contemplated much on how there have been so many wonderful conversions, and yet after a while this monster finds a way to get back in. He doesn't need to wait to come back in until you have committed some terrible immorality. He doesn't need to wait to come in until you have purposely told some really black lies. He can make his entrance right while you are discussing the deep things of God. How can that be? By discussing the deep things of God for a wrong motive. Because, "If I win this argument, look who I will be! I will prove to everybody that I was right and they were wrong." And all that happens in deep discussion of spiritual things—Self is right there!

So far, things have been pretty negative in this article. Let's look at the good news now. God told Job concerning behemoth, "he that made him can make his sword to approach unto him." And in Isaiah 27:1, we find the following announcement: "In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."

When I become discouraged and God has shut my mouth and there is nothing more to say, I can be like Job when he abhorred himself. I can humble myself and all at once the picture changes and the blessings of God begin to fall, as on Job's life. God's sword will "approach unto him," and God will divide His inheritance with His saints.

And, in our case as Christians, we will receive a lot more than "double" and a lot more than another 140 years on earth—it will be eternity with God!

Meditating upon this whole scene in Job, and the state of the church and even my own life, it came to me in the following sentence: We have been saved from downtown Broadway, but are lost in the woods.

The church in general knows that it needs to be saved from what I will call "downtown Broadway," the filth of the world that goes on in dark places, hardly without any shame. We know that the church needs to be delivered from such slut, and there are many awesome testimonies of people delivered from that kind of a lifestyle. But sadly, too many are now "lost in the woods."

By the phrase "lost in the woods," I mean a calm, peaceful place, with just trees around. Now we know that there is nothing wrong with trees in and of themselves.

And it seems as a church we are more likely to just wander around in the "trees of complacency" than to know where we are going and what our goal is. Thinking of being lost in the trees, my mind goes to all the things that God has provided on the earth that we humans use and enjoy. A lot of beautiful things that I will call "trees."

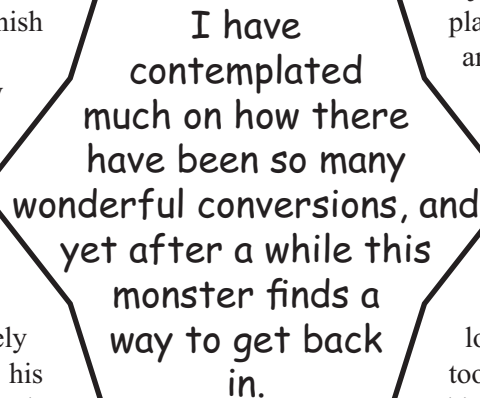
My point is that if you get too many "trees" in your life you will get lost among them. It has happened to me too many times in my own life. So many things come into my life. And no, they are not things from "downtown Broadway."

They are just trees, beautiful trees. Awesome trees. A peaceful place to be. But they are so many that I find myself going around in circles in all the trees, not really sure where I am going. So many trees ... so many things to enjoy in life. And sometimes I get this uneasy feeling—"I am not getting anywhere! I had better do something about it."

But then my mind goes back to when I was saved from "downtown Broadway." And I console myself, "That is all God really wants, isn't it? He isn't too concerned if I am going in circles, as long as I am among these beautiful trees, is He?"

This part of the message has strengthened ever since I have been on my visit back to the USA. I have visited different churches and family. My heart was burdened by the conversations I have had with people, not those living in "downtown Broadway," but people who have been saved from there. They are saying, "Nobody is interested in the church anymore, no one wants to join. The young people laugh at the church, even mock." Those telling these things seem to not be able to figure it out.

As I consider this, it seems to me that the problem is that so many that have been saved from Broadway are now lost in a self-centered life in the woods—lost among the many



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beautiful trees. The monster of Self does not bother them in the same way as before, when they walked Broadway. Nevertheless, he is still there! He walks right into the church doors with them. He has filled their life with beautiful trees!

The end result is a powerless Christian life. One that the youth look upon and say, "I don't want anything to do with that. Unless I can see something that has more depth than that, I am not interested." So they head downtown to enjoy themselves until somebody can show them something different. At least something is happening down there. But I can tell by the looks on their faces that they really are not enjoying themselves in all that excitement. But what else is available?

Lost in the trees ...

As I say all these things, I want everyone to know that I am not pointing fingers. I see Self too much in my own life, and at times I could understand why nobody would want to fellowship with me. When I thought I had Self licked, there he showed up again. The only thing that gives me courage to continue on is a fresh look at Jesus.

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When I look at Jesus while He walked this earth as a man, I cannot one time see the monster in His life. Jesus has some hard things to say, but the monster is gone. The monster did not have his way in Jesus' life. And when I look up and see our perfect Example, I am not sure how it happens, but I feel courage rise again in my heart ... and I am ready to go on!

The Bible says, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God."

That is what God wanted to do with Job, by showing him those monsters. Now my Bible has notes that suggest what kind of animal behemoth or leviathan were; a hippopotamus or whatever. I don't know if there ever was a literal animal like what chapters 39

and 40 describe or not. Some people think so, others don't. I can imagine that God would have created an animal just like that, just so Job and we could understand who we really are. He created a lamb to show us the character of Jesus, so He could have created a special creature to show us who Self is.

It is so easy for us as Christians to get ourselves into the mentality that we pretty well have this thing of being a Christian wrapped up and figured out. If anyone asks us a

About the cover picture ...

Obviously, the picture on the cover and at the beginning of the article is a fabrication. However, the base photo is a picture of a real iguana, with teeth, fire, lightning, and smoke added, as well as a doctored eye.

What did the real leviathan look like? Was it a real animal? We know of no species today that fits the following description given in Job 41:12-24:

I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion. (13) Who can discover the face of his garment? or who can come to him with his double bridle? (14) Who can open the doors of his face? his teeth are terrible round about. (15) His scales are his pride, shut up together as with a close seal. (16) One is so near to another, that no air can come between them. (17) They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundered. (18) By his neesings [sneezings] a light doth shine, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. (19) Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and sparks of fire leap out. (20) Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a seething pot or caldron. (21) His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth. (22) In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow is turned into joy before him. (23) The flakes of his flesh are joined together: they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved. (24) His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone.

Notice the underlined sections that describe his teeth, eyes, nose, and mouth. Either the species has died out, or God was only using symbolic language to speak to Job. Whether there was (and still might be in some remote corner of the earth) such a species is sort of beside the point, as the article points out. Leviathan seems to be a picture of an animal that man is incapable of controlling. Hence, the portrayal of Self. Leviathan has even been linked to the beast portrayed in Revelation 13, which arose out of the sea (with the beast arising out of the earth being behemoth), which every man has to conquer or be a slave to.

Whether or not you think that leviathan was a real animal—or whether he signifies Self or not—I trust that you can make the application in this article of dealing with the self-life.

Leviathan or not, Self is an ugly animal! ~

question, we have the answer. Would to God we would have more experiences—and I can't tell you how to manufacture this—where our mouths would be stopped. It is so easy to have a lot to say and to have the answers ... and "it is obvious that the church over there doesn't have the answers." So we separate ourselves from everybody who doesn't have the answers, and pretty soon Self has us convinced that our only course is to stick it out by ourselves somewhere until our years are over.

It is easy to see this monster in our brother. But would to God we could see him in our own life, because it is only in our own heart that we can do something about him. And if we successfully deal with him in our own life, that would provide an example for our brethren who need an answer to him in their life. We need examples of people who have not only been delivered from "downtown Broadway," but delivered from the Self of the peaceful woods.

The only place I have found that this monster does not want to hang around is when there is humility around. If you begin to confess who and what you really are, he won't hang around! And when you begin to confess like Job did, and abhor yourself, he won't hang around, and the blessings of God will begin to fall.

If we will just back up and look at the incredible conversions that we have had, when we were saved from "downtown Broadway," you will find that element of humility there. Many times young people (and older ones as well) want to get converted. And they try, and pray, and seek. And it seems they can't come through. They feel like they are almost there, but they can't quite attain. Then one day they come to God, their life is in shambles, a total mess. And they confess to God, "God, my life is a mess, and I can't get anywhere. All I am able to accomplish is to make it worse. God, would you please help!"

The final end of leviathan

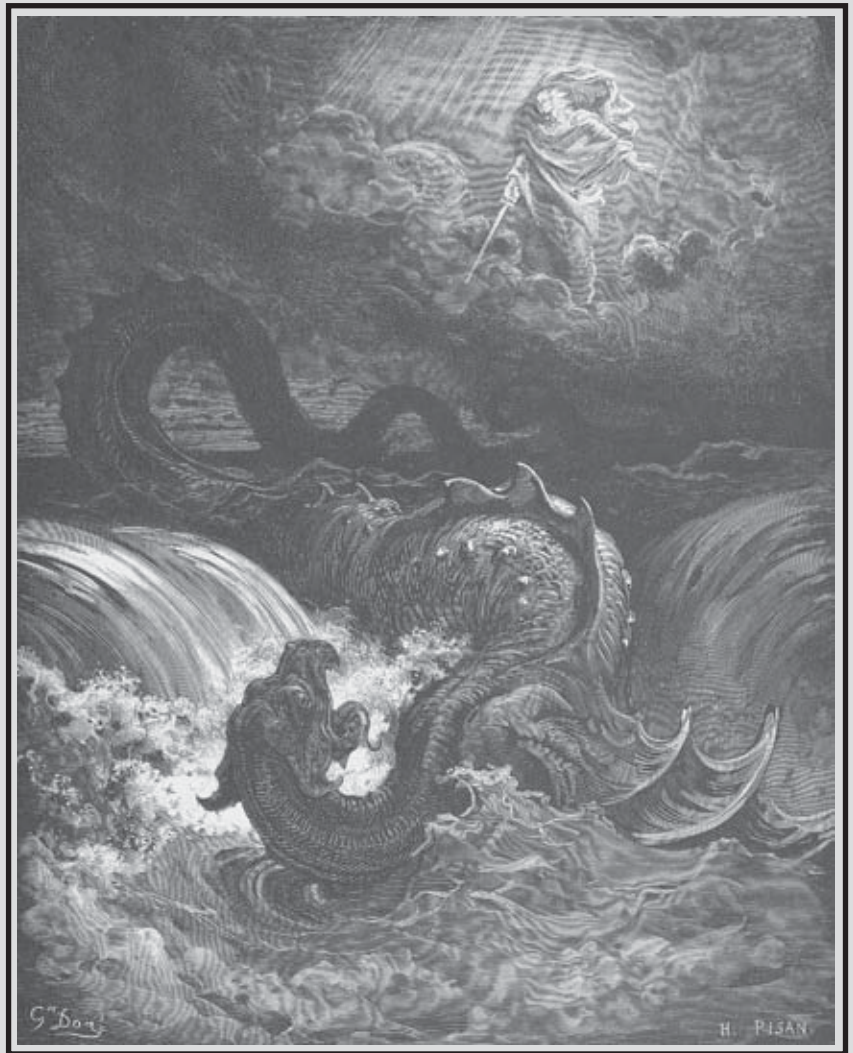
In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.

Isaiah 27:1

Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

Ps. 74:14

Right: A woodcut by Gustave Doré (1832-1883) depicting the coming of the Lord to kill the monster that man is incapable of conquering. What a Saviour!



And when that level of humility is reached, all at once God is there! And the blessing falls and the conversion happens. The person gets excited and is ready to tell everyone, "I have been saved!" And he begins to share his testimony as to how God has saved him.

And the next thing you know, the old monster comes along and whispers, "You have the answer. Now you can tell everyone what it is all about and that you have the answer." And before you know it pride enters and the monster has robbed the blessing. Now they feel that they have the answer, and that they can run their own life again. Now they don't feel the great need of God and that they are a total failure anymore.

The result of God showing Job who He was and who Job was left Job abhorring himself in sackcloth and ashes. Totally dependent upon God. And God's blessings could then fall. But for Job to get there, it cost him. It cost him everything but his wife and his life, and even his wife was not really with him.

Now we would like to experience Job's latter blessings without having to pass through what Job did. We want to get there without having to feel the great need we have, and without having to really say, "I abhor myself."

But it will not happen to you or I if we try to sidestep the lowliness. The monster says, "That is such a low road. You cannot afford to walk around like that. You will never make it. Lift yourself up! Pull yourself up! Get your act together! You can do it!"

But the blessings do not fall.

In the last verse of Job 41 it says this monster is "a king over all the children of pride." What is the opposite of pride? Humility.

God has chosen to put this thing called humility in the Christian life and has chosen to only bless in that atmosphere. You may be the most financially successful person around, but if you do not have humility, it is not the blessing

of God. In fact, it would be the blessing and mercy of God if the same thing that happened with Job would happen with you. It is only in humility that God has chosen to bless and give victory.

And if you have achieved "success" and "victory" outside of humility, it is not the real thing. Such "success" and "victory" is associated with another king, not King Jesus. It is the king called Self, and he is king over all the children of pride. This usurper "beholdeth all high things"—he loves things that the world holds high!

I wish I could give you a "pat" answer that if you just put this or that church administration in place, then the monster will be taken care of. Just do this and that, and it will all turn out right in the end. It will not help you just to change churches. The monster will meet you over there. It will not help you to get another preacher. The monster doesn't leave you when you get another preacher. In fact, Self could arise stronger, since we think we now have the best preacher around.

When we begin to think we have it all figured out now, and that we would really like to tell everyone else just how it is, beware ... like the Pharisees, who had the answers. The Pharisees were not lost in the woods, they were lost in the words! Incredible! They could quote the Bible by memory ... but they were lost in the many words.

But if we will take a fresh look at the life of King Jesus and humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, and stay there, He has the answer and He wants to bless. And He will do just that! ~

Alfred and Carolyn Amstutz and family moved to Bolivia 11 years ago. This message was preached by Bro. Alfred on a visit to the USA. Alfred and his family currently live near Huacareta, in the Department of Chuquisaca, where Alfred milks a few cows and tries to preach the glorious gospel of the kingdom so that others may experience the power to overcome leviathan and walk in humility with Jesus.

Is leviathan your king?

The last thing God told Job about leviathan strikes sobriety into my soul (Job 41:34b): "he is a king over all the children of pride."

That translates into this: if you are a proud person, leviathan is your king. He tells you what to do, and you obey. He dictates what clothes you must wear to meet the approval of your peers, and you obey. He reminds you how to behave in a crowd, and you obey. He will not let you walk in humility, so God is compelled to resist you and withhold His grace from you. You belong, not to the kingdom of God, but to the kingdom of leviathan.

Sobering?

All those who are part of God's kingdom on earth will reign eternally with Him. All those who refuse the Lord's salvation from leviathan will suffer the same reward as he will suffer from the sword of the Lord.

Is proud leviathan your king?

Or is the humble Jesus your king?

Whom do you obey in the everyday decisions of life, like which one to purchase, what to put on, how to interact in a group, what words to use? He whom you obey is your king.