

Lesson 16

Dinosaurs and Dragons

Dinosaurs were created during the creation week.

Overview

Lesson Focus

Dinosaurs were created on day six along with the other land animals and lived with man. The book of Job mentions Behemoth and Leviathan—both dinosaur-like creatures—created on days five and six. As we look through the lens of the Bible, the world of dinosaurs makes sense!

Key Passage

Job 40:15–19, 41:1–2, 41:5, 41:8, 41:14, 41:18–19, 41:21, 41:25

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify the two dinosaur-like creatures described in the book of Job.
- Identify on which days of creation these types of animals were created.

Memory Verse

Psalm 8:5–6 Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet.

Prepare to Share

Scriptural Background

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages for this lesson along with this background.

We know that dinosaurs are perhaps used more than anything else to indoctrinate people into believing in millions of years of earth history. As we continue to explore creation week, we're going to take a more in-depth look at this very controversial subject—dinosaurs and dragons.

Let's begin in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." This was the beginning of time as we know it. Before this moment in history, nothing existed except God. And then God created the universe in six days, about 6,000 years ago!

As we look at Day Six of the creation week, we learn that God created all the beasts of the earth, everything that creeps on the earth, and man (Genesis 1:24–27). This reveals some very critical information. We know dinosaurs are land animals; we know land animals were created on Day Six; we know man was created on Day Six; so man and dinosaurs lived together at the same time only 6,000 years ago!

God references dinosaurs again in the book of Job. As God is describing his greatness to Job, he reminds Job of the largest animal he created—the behemoth (Job 40:15–24). The biblical description of this animal does not fit any living animal we know of today. It does, in fact, fit the description of a dinosaur—a sauropod—one of the largest dinosaurs, created by God on Day Six.

And to give us even more confirmation, God describes the leviathan in the next chapter (Job 41:1–34). What an amazing creature that must have been! This creature is mentioned four other times in Scripture (Job 3:8; Psalm 74:14, 104:26; Isaiah 27:1). It is believed that this was some sort of mighty dinosaur-like sea monster able to overwhelm the hunter (Job 41:9), but not too fierce for God. And what about the light and flame that flashed from his mouth (Job 41:18–21)? It may have been a fire-breathing creature, a creature unheard of today yet repeatedly mentioned by God.

Historical/Apologetics Background

The book of Job describes a fire-breathing “dragon.” Most scholars agree that Job lived after the Flood of Noah’s day (Job 22:16 makes an obvious reference to the global Flood). Based on the text, biblical researchers have determined that Job lived to be over 200 years old. His life span fits with the life spans of the early descendants of Noah recorded in Genesis 11.

This is important to note because it reveals that Job (and other men) lived with dinosaurs (behemoth and leviathan) after the flood. Not only do we see this truth revealed in Scripture, but also in extra-biblical accounts of dinosaurs living with man.

Legends from around the world tell of heroes who killed large reptilian creatures. The ancient Europeans, for example, called these monsters dragons. Dragons appear in art, literature, and folklore. There are also many Native American legends of flying reptiles.

Then we have petroglyphs—rock paintings of dinosaur-like creatures. Similar images have been found on old pottery.

Other known historical accounts and legends of dinosaurs and/or dragons include the following:

A Sumerian story dating back to 2000 BC or earlier that tells of a hero named Gilgamesh, who, when he went to fell cedars in a remote forest, encountered a huge, vicious dragon. He slew it, cutting off its head as a trophy.

When Alexander the Great (c. 330 BC) and his soldiers marched into India, they found that the local people worshipped huge hissing reptiles that they kept in caves.

China is renowned for its dragon stories, and dragons are prominent on Chinese pottery, embroidery, and carvings.

The story of St. George, popular in England, tells of the hero who slew the dragon that lived in a cave.

In the 1500s, a European scientific book, *Historia Animalium*, listed several living animals that we would call dinosaurs.

Ulysses Aldrovandus, a well-known naturalist in the 16th century, recorded an encounter on May 13, 1572, near Bologna, Italy, between a peasant named Baptista and a dragon whose description fits that of the small dinosaur *Tanystropheus*. The peasant killed the dragon.

Keep in mind that none of the above references use the word dinosaur. We wouldn't expect to find the word in these accounts or in certain Bibles like the Authorized Version that was published in 1611. That's because the term dinosaur wasn't coined until 1841, not long after bones of these great creatures were unearthed and studied. Before that, they were called dragons. You may notice that the Hebrew word *tannyn* is translated as dragon a number of times in the Old Testament. If you look at a King James Version translation, you'll see the word is still used in several places (Nehemiah 2:13; Psalm 91:13; Isaiah 27:1; Ezekiel 29:3).

None of the evidence that dinosaur-like creatures lived with man is deemed valid by evolutionists. Why? Because their worldview is based on their own presuppositions—that dinosaurs lived millions of years ago. This prevents them from even considering the evidence, whether historical or biblical.

What is the big deal? Why is this important? Because the belief that dinosaurs lived and died millions of years before man attacks the very foundation not only of the Bible, but also of the gospel. The Bible makes it clear that God's original creation was "very good" (Genesis 1:31). Yet, the fossils of dinosaurs reflect death, disease, suffering, cruelty, and brutality—all evidences of sin according to God's Word. If we accept that these fossils represent millions of years of earth history, then we are accepting death in the world before Adam's sin.

The Bible tells us there was no death in the garden. Everything was very good. It was Adam and Eve's sin against a holy God that brought judgment on the whole creation. The wages of sin is death. Because of Adam's sin, the entire human race would inherit his sin nature at birth. Because of sin, all people would die—both spiritually and physically (Genesis 2:17, 3:19). In fact, it was Adam's sin that provoked the very first killing of any animal in God's very good creation—the animal (or animals) God killed to provide Adam and Eve with skins to cover their nakedness (Genesis 3:21).

This first shed blood in the Garden of Eden was a foreshadowing of the Savior and the redemptive plan that God had set in place. Jesus' perfect death is the only sacrifice that could provide payment for the consequence of sin—death—and offer eternal life (Romans 6:23). The notion of millions of years of animal death before the creation and Fall of man contradicts what the Bible says about sin bringing death.

How we respond to millions of years, death before sin, and the truth about dinosaurs ultimately comes down to whether we trust God's Word or man's word. There can be no compromise. Where does your allegiance lie? What is your worldview? For Christians, the only thing that makes sense is the truth of God's Word. We must not compromise any of it! It must be our final authority.

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