

## **Patriarchal Age**

A patriarch is the oldest father of an extended family. The Patriarchal Age began with Adam and ended with Moses leading the Children of Israel out of bondage of slavery in Egypt. During this period God spoke directly to the patriarch. We have record of God speaking to Adam, Noah, Job, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

It is also stated God walked and talked with Enoch. Melchizedek was a priest to whom Abraham paid tithes; therefore, it is assumed he also talked with God.

After the Children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, a new covenant and priesthood was established followed by the giving of the Ten Commandments.

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### **Adam**

**Setting:** It is not known when the Angels and other heavenly beings were created, but God, the Father, God, the Word, and God, the Spirit, have always existed. At some point in eternity, They created the universe, man and everything else. During this time God walked upon the earth with man.

**Text:** Genesis 1 – 5

### **Key Point(s):**

1. God created man in His/Their image and with the ability of choice.
2. God spoke during this period directly to Adam telling him what to do and what not to do.
3. Eve saw the forbidden fruit was good for food, pleasing to look at and desirable for gaining wisdom.
4. She chose to disobey her desires by disobeying God and so did Adam.
5. This disobedience was sin for which they were punished but given hope for forgiveness.

### **Word Study:**

- 1:26 Image – resemblance; not physical but His nature – love, just, righteous, kind, merciful, peaceful and forgiving.  
More likely in character traits.
- 2:8 Breath of Life becoming a Living being - An air breathing individual that is not plant or fish.

2:10 Eden – a place of delight or pleasantness.

3:14 Cursed - harm or hardship to fall upon someone not in an ordinary way

## Noah

**Setting:** Noah was born about 1056 years following the creation of Adam who died 126 years before Noah was born. Knowing where Noah lived is not important only that he and his family were righteous and all others were wicked.

**Text:** Genesis 6 – 10

### Key Point(s):

1. Noah was given specific commands regarding what he must do to save his family and all who would believe God's message.
2. Noah obeyed; thus, he and his family were saved by God's grace.
3. Following his deliverance Noah worshipped God.
4. Speaking of Noah and his family Peter stated "... eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also-not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 3:20-21)  
"By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith." (Hebrews 11:7)

### Word Study:

6:1 Sons of God - People of Godly character - righteous and just people

6:1 Daughters of men - People lacking Godliness - unrighteous people

6:11 Corrupt - morally perverted actions not pleasing to God

7:1 Righteous - justified and vindicated by God

8:20 Burnt Offering - an offering to God entirely consumed in the altar's flames going up to God in worship.

## Tower of Babel Era

**Setting:** Only eight righteous people came out of the ark. They all lived in the same general area. As they grew in number, they became displeasing to God.

**Text:** Genesis 11

### Key Point(s):

1. All mankind spoke one language and lived together.
2. Their plans were contrary to God's plan.
3. They displeased God, by implication they disobeyed some command(s)
4. God separated them into language groups.

### Word Study:

11.3 Shinar - country of two rivers, the ancient name for the territory later known as Babylonia or Chaldea

11.4 Make a name - a mark or memorial of individuality; by implication honor, authority, character to self rather than to God:

## Abram's Call

**Setting:** Abram appears to have been born less than 900 years after Noah's birth and less than 300 years following the flood. He appears to have lived in the general area of where the tower of Babel was located.

**Text:** Genesis 12-13

### Key Point(s):

All the people of the earth will be blessed through Abram.  
Abraham allowed Lot to choose first. He took what was left.  
Lot selected the best land, thinking of himself.  
Opposite attitudes – Others vs self

**Related reference:**

Abraham's call and faith in God - Hebrews 11:8-19 (at the end of the Patriarchs)

**Word Study:**

12:9 Pitched his tent - To take up a temporary residence.

12:9 Negev (Negeb)- the region south of Judah.

### **Abraham Gives Tribute to a Priest**

**Setting:** Abraham obeyed God and was living in Canaan, an area we know as Palestine. This land was west of the valley of Shinar or Ur of the Chaldeans with the Arabian desert between and the Mediterranean Sea to the west. It was during this time God spoke to heads of families which is often referred to as the Patriarchal age.

**Text:** Genesis 14

**Key Point:** Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God. The greater Melchizedek blesses the lessor, Abram. Abram gave to Melchizedek one tenth [tribute] of what he had taken from battle.

**Related Reference:**

Melchizedek - Hebrews 7 – (at the end of the Patriarchs)

### **Ishmael, the Natural Son**

**Setting:** God promised a son to Abraham and Sarah but they became impatient with God taking matters into their own hands.

**Text:** Genesis 15-16

**Key Point:** By his actions Abraham showed he believed God which was credited to him as righteousness.

**Related References:**

Ishmael - Galatians 4 – (at the end of Patriarchs)

**Related Study**

The Creation Before Genesis, BibleWay Publishing

**Word Study:**

16:7 Angel of the Lord - A messenger from God [could be God, the Son]

### **Covenant With Abraham**

**Setting:** Abraham was 99 years old and living in the land of Canaan when God entered into the covenant with him. Ishmael was around 12 or 13 years old and Isaac was still just a promise.

**Text:** Genesis 17 - 18:19

**Key Point:** Abraham lived a life before God based on righteousness (justice), integrity, truthful, innocent and unimpaired. So should we.

**Related References:**

God's Covenant with Abraham, Romans 4 (at the end of the Patriarchs)

**Word Study:**

17:2 Blameless - with integrity based on truth, unimpaired, innocent and wholesome

17:2 Covenant - promise, pledge, constitutional agreement or alliance,

**Sodom and Gomorrah**

**Setting:** A short time following the covenant of circumcision God appeared again to Abraham to tell him that Sarah would have a child promised long ago. Following this announcement Abraham was told about God's wrath toward the wicked citizens of Sodom and the surrounding cities.

**Text:** Genesis 18:20 - 19

**Key Point:** The lifestyle of the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah were so grievous to God that He decided to totally remove all their inhabitants from His presence.

**Related References:**

Sodom and Gomorrah – (at the end of the Patriarchs)

Also Lev. 20:13, Rom. 1:18-27, 1 Cor. 6:9-11 and 1 Tim. 1:9-11

**Word Study:**

19:5 Have sex with them - Sexual acts between the same sex [homosexual]

19:23 Burning sulfur – properly, cypress resin; by analogy, sulfur.

**Isaac, the Son of Promise**

**Setting:** Before the birth of Isaac, Abraham moved near Gerar in the country of Abimelech. Not trusting God and fearing for his and Sarah's life he lied about Sarah being his wife which led Abimelech to take her for his wife.

**Text:** Genesis 20 - 21

**Key Point:** God is always faithful and His promises are always fulfilled. Man tends to sin so easily.

**Word Study:**

20:7 – Prophet: a spokesman, a speaker who delivers God's message

**Testing of Faith**

**Setting:** No doubt Isaac was very dear to Abraham as he was Sarah's only child and the child God had promised to them. Abraham's righteousness and faithfulness did not waiver in his relationship with God.

**Text:** Genesis 22 –23

**Key Point:** Can God determine our love of him by what we give to Him or what we withhold from Him? Abraham did not withhold Isaac.

**Word Study:**

22:1 Tested - to test, try, prove, tempt, assay, put to the proof

22:2 Your only son – a) only, unique, one, b) solitary

22:6 Burnt Offering – the whole being consumed by fire, and regarded as ascending to God while being consumed.

22:15 Angel of the Lord – a messenger, a representative – (at the end of the Patriarchs)

**Abraham's Final Days**

**Setting:** Abraham's servant journeyed from Canaan to the land of the Chaldeans, where Abraham lived before God called him, for the purpose of getting a wife for Isaac. The servant then returns to Abraham.

**Text:** Genesis 24 - 25:19

**Key Point:** Isaac marries one who believes in God, not some idol worshipper.

**Word Study:**

24:2 Hand Under Thigh – The thigh was the seat of generative power, and the region of sacramental consecration, and to put the hand under the thigh was to acknowledge and pledge obedience to him who requires the oath.

24:62 Negev – the region south of Judah, boundaries not exactly defined.

**Life of Isaac**

**Setting:** Abraham died and was buried in Canaan. Isaac's and Rebekah's twin sons are now adults and Isaac settles among the Philistines.

**Text:** Genesis 25:20 - 26

**Key Point:** I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed because Abraham obeyed me. (Note offspring is singular indication only one person.)

**Word Study:**

25:30 Edom – red, the elder twin-brother of Jacob; hence the region (Idumaea) occupied by him.

25:32 Birthright – The birthright of the firstborn consisted of a double portion of a father's estate.

**Jacob Deceives**

**Setting:** Isaac was getting old and he wishes to bless Esau

**Text:** Genesis 27 - 28

**Key Point:** God promised Jacob that through one of his descendants that all people on the Earth will be blessed.

**Word Study:**

28:29 Vow – promises to perform certain things for or to bring certain offerings in return for certain benefits which were hoped for.

**Jacob Arrives in the East Country**

**Setting:** Jacob had deceived Isaac and angered his brother Esau. He fled to his mother's home which was in the land of the Chaldeans.

**Text:** Genesis 29 - 30

**Key Point:** Earlier Rebekah and Jacob deceived Isaac and now Jacob is being deceived.

**Word Study:**

29:16 Mandrakes – an aphrodisiac, a love-apple; assumed to excite sexual desire, and favoring procreation

30:27 Divination – to divine, to observe signs, to learn by experience, to diligently observe, to practice fortune telling, to take as an omen

**Jacob Flees Laban**

**Setting:** Jacob's four wives bore several children to him while they lived with Laban, his mother's, Rebekah, brother, in the area where God called Abraham to leave. But time had come for Jacob to return to Canaan where Isaac lived and where Abraham was buried.

**Text:** Genesis 31 -32

**Key Point:** Jacob deceived his father and brother and was deceived by his uncle many times. Jacob fulfilled his commitment and then made things right with Esau.

**Words Study:**

31:53 Oath – invoking a curse upon one's self if one has not spoken the truth or if one fails to keep a promise. Oaths play a very important part, not only in lawsuits and state affairs, but also in the dealings of everyday life.

**Jacob Returns Home**

**Setting:** Jacob arrives in Canaan with his wives, children and flocks not knowing what to expect from his brother who he had wronged years before.

**Text:** Genesis 33

**Key Point:** God has blessed me. I have all I need.

**Jacob Returns to Bethel**

**Setting:** Jacob has returned home and made things right with Esau. He then returned to the place where God appeared to him when he fled for his life.

**Text:** Genesis 34 - 36

**Key Point:** Jacob draws closer to God by requiring all idols be removed. He returns to the place where God appeared and gave him the same promise as He had given to Abraham and Isaac, through one of his descendants all people would be blessed.

**Words Study:**

35:6 Altar – A place of slaughtering a sacrifice for a worship or offering

35:14 Drink Offering – libation [an act of pouring out a drink offering to a deity], an offering of wine, rarely water, sometimes of oil, and usually accompanying the burnt offering but often with the peace offerings.

**Jacob's Trouble**

**Setting:** After Jacob returned to Canaan and made peace with Esau. Isaac their father died. Rachel, the wife for whom Jacob had worked 14 years, also died. Jacob favored Joseph, Rachael's first born, causing much jealousy among his other sons.

**Text:** Genesis 37 - 38

**Key Point:** God uses a terrible hate situation to his glory and to the saving of Jacob and his family. It was through Jacob the Savior would come.

**Word Study:**

37:7 Sheaves – a quantity of stalks of grain and ears of grain bound together

37:20 Cisterns – a hole dug in the ground to gather and hold rainwater.

**Joseph, The Slave**

**Setting:** Joseph had been sold as a slave by his brothers to a band of Ishmaelite travelers going to Egypt. The Ishmaelites were descendents of Ishmael the son of Abraham by Sarah's handmaid. Upon arrival in Egypt, they sold Joseph to one of Pharaoh's officials.

**Text:** Genesis 39 - 41:40

**Key Point:** Even in the most difficult times it is necessary to refrain from sinning although the consequences may be harsh and grossly unfair.

### **Joseph, The Ruler**

**Setting:** Suffering the consequences of living righteously, Joseph was sent to prison. While in prison he was abandoned by those he helped but not by God.

**Text:** Genesis 41:41 - 44

**Key Point:** a). From a slave to the second most powerful person in Egypt, righteous Joseph still allowed God to use him to His glory and to fulfill His plans. b). Judah who had suggested selling Joseph into slavery now offers himself as a slave to protect Benjamin, the son so bound up in Jacob's life.

### **Jacob Goes to Egypt**

**Setting:** Joseph's brothers bowed down to Joseph fulfilling the dreams he had as a youth of seventeen and Jacob acknowledges his guilt. Then Joseph revealed to his brothers that he was Joseph with whom they had acted so treacherously many years before.

**Text:** Genesis 45-47

**Key Point:** But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

### **Jacob and Joseph Die In Egypt**

**Setting:** Jacob pronounced a blessing upon his sons and upon the sons of Joseph before he dies

**Text:** Genesis 48 - 50

#### **Key Point(s):**

a) The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his. b) But God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

### **Tragedy Strikes**

**Setting:** Job appears to have been one of the Patriarchs God talked with. Job offered burnt offerings to God just as Noah did. It is uncertain if he lived before, was contemporary with or lived after Abraham. There is no record of any relationship with Abraham.

**Text:** Job 1 -3

**Key Point.** "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised."

#### **Word Study:**

1:1 Uz– The Land of Uz was not extremely far from the land of the Chaldeans, present day Iraq and Iran, nor the land of the Sabeans, present day Yemen. Therefore, Uz was probably east of Palestine in the Arabian desert.

#### **Related references**

Behemoth and Leviathan – (at the end of the Patriarchs)

### **Eliphaz and Job**

**Setting:** Job appears to have been one of the Patriarchs God talked with. Job offered burnt offerings to God just as Noah did. It is uncertain if he lived before, was contemporary with Abraham or lived after him. There is no record of any relationship with Abraham.

**Text:** Job 4 – 7

**Key Point.** “Then I will still have this consolation – my joy in unrelenting pain – that I had not denied the words of the Holy One.”

#### **Bildad and Job**

**Text:** Job 8 – 10

**Key Point.** “Surely God does not reject a blameless man ... But how can a mortal be righteous before God.”

#### **Zophar and Job**

**Text:** Job 11 – 14

**Key Point.** “Men at ease have contempt for the misfortune” but God’s “hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.”

“Though He slay me, yet will I hope in Him.”

#### **Eliphaz and Job Again**

**Text:** Job 15 – 17

**Key Point.** “Even now my witness is in heaven; my advocate is on high. My intercessor is my friend as my eyes pour out tears to God; on behalf of a man he pleads with God as a man pleads for his friend.”

#### **Bildad and Job Again**

**Text:** Job 18 – 19

**Key Point.** “I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God.”

#### **Zophar and Job Again**

**Text:** Job 20 – 21

**Key Point.** “So how can you console me with your nonsense? Nothing is left of your answers but falsehood!”

#### **Eliphaz**

**Text:** Job 22 – 24

**Key Point.** “My feet have closely followed his steps; I have kept to his way without turning aside. I have not departed from the commands of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread.”

#### **Job’s Closing Statements**

**Text:** Job 25 – 31

**Key Point.** “As long as I have life within me, the breath of God in my nostrils, my lips will not speak wickedness, and my tongue will utter no deceit.” ... “The fear of the Lord – that is wisdom.” ... “what will I do when God confronts me? What will I answer when called to account?”

#### **Job’s Closing Statements continued**

**Text:** Job 32 – 37

**Key Point.** “Listen to my words; pay attention to everything I say. I am about to open my mouth; my words are on

the tip of my tongue. My words come from an upright heart; my lips sincerely speak what I know. The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.”

### **God Speaks**

**Text:** Job 38 – 42

**Key Point.** "You said, 'Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me.' My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore, I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."

### **Related references**

Behemoth and Leviathan – (at the end of the Patriarchs)

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## **Abraham's Call and Faith in God**

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

By faith Abraham, even though he was past age-and Sarah herself was barren-was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. From this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country-a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death. (Hebrews 11: 8-19)

## **Melchizedek**

This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, his name means "king of righteousness"; then also, "king of Salem" means "king of peace." Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like the Son of God he remains a priest forever.

Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder! Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people-that is, their brothers-even though their brothers are descended from Abraham. This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. And without doubt the lesser person is blessed by the greater. In the one case, the tenth is collected by men who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living. One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor.

If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the law was given to the people), why was there still need for another priest to come-one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? For when there is a change of the priesthood, there must also be a change of the law. He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, and no one from that tribe has ever served at the altar. For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. And what we have said is even

more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life. For it is declared: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

(Hebrews 7:1-17)

### **Ishmael**

Tell me, you who want to be under the law, are you not aware of what the law says? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman. His son by the slave woman was born in the ordinary way; but his son by the free woman was born as the result of a promise.

These things may be taken figuratively, for the women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written:

"Be glad, O barren woman,  
who bears no children;  
break forth and cry aloud,  
you who have no labor pains;  
because more are the children of the desolate woman  
than of her who has a husband."

Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. At that time the son born in the ordinary way persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit. It is the same now. But what does the Scripture say? "Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son."

Therefore, brothers, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman. (Galatians 4:21-31)

### **God's Covenant with Abraham**

What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about-but not before God. What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:

"Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him."

Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness. Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before! And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them. And he is also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value and the promise is worthless, because law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring-not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." (Romans 4:1-17:1)

### **Sodom and Gomorrah**

Leviticus 20:13 "If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.

Romans 1:18-27 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities-his eternal power and divine nature-have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

Therefore, God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator-who is forever praised. Amen.

Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

### **Behemoth and Leviathan**

The Bible refers to many of the common animals we know today. The list includes lions, wolves, bears, sheep, cattle and dogs along with various kinds of birds, rodents, reptiles, and insects. What is interesting is that this extensive list includes three animals that we no longer recognize. These three are (in the original Hebrew language) tanniyn, behemoth (yes, it's spelled correctly—at least as close as we can get in Roman characters), and livyathan.

Although we alter the spelling of behemoth and Leviathan slightly, we still use those same words in bibles today. However, tanniyn is always translated into another word when we write it in English. Tanniyn occurs 28 times in the Bible and is normally translated "dragon." It is also translated "serpent," "sea monster," "dinosaur," "great creature," and "reptile." Behemoth and Leviathan are relatively specific creatures, perhaps each was a single kind of animal. Tanniyn is a more general term, and it can be thought of as the original version of the word "dinosaur." The word "dinosaur" was originally coined in 1841, more than three thousand years *after* the Bible first referred to "Tanniyn." To make things clearer, we constructed the following table comparing the scientific names with the Biblical names tanniyn, behemoth, and Leviathan.

#### **Behemoth**

It "eats grass like an ox."

It "moves his tail like a cedar." (In Hebrew, this literally reads, "he lets hang his tail like a cedar.")

Its "bones are like beams of bronze, His ribs like bars of iron."

"He is the first of the ways of God."

"He lies under the lotus trees, In a covert of reeds and marsh."

Some bibles and study bibles will translate the word "behemoth" as "elephant" or "hippopotamus." Others will put a note at the edge or bottom of the page, stating that behemoth was probably an elephant or a hippopotamus. Although an elephant or hippopotamus can eat grass (or lie in a covert of reeds and marsh), neither an elephant or a hippopotamus has a "tail like a cedar" (that is, a tail like a large, tapered tree trunk). In your kid's dinosaur book, you will find lots of animals that have "tails like a cedar."

We would expect behemoth to be a large land animal whose bones are like beams of bronze and so forth, so whatever a behemoth is, it is large. A key phrase is "He is the first of the ways of God." This phrase in the original Hebrew implied that behemoth was the *biggest* animal created. Although an elephant or a hippopotamus are big, they are less

than one-tenth the size of a Brachiosaurus, the largest (complete) dinosaur ever discovered. [1] A Brachiosaurus could therefore easily be described as “the first of the ways of God.”

Comparing all this information to the description in your kid’s dinosaur book, you may come to the conclusion that “behemoth” is not a normal animal, it is a dinosaur—the brachiosaurus. We agree with that conclusion!

Note: Some paleontologists have found fragmentary leg bones, ribs, or vertebrae which they propose belong to “new” sauropods larger than Brachiosaurus. Examples of these include Amphicoelias, Argentinasaurus, Sauroposeidon, Seismosaurus, Supersaurus and Ultrasaurus. There currently is not enough evidence to *really* determine the size of any of these, and some paleontologists believe that they are merely large examples of known dinosaurs like Brachiosaurus or Diplodocus. In any case, only the “modern scientific name” of behemoth would change. The point would still remain that behemoth refers to a dinosaur, not a “modern animal” like an elephant or hippopotamus.

## Leviathan

The following is a list of attributes according to Job chapter 41, Psalm 104:25, 26 and Isaiah 27:1. This is only a partial listing—just enough to make the point.

“No one is so fierce that he would dare stir him up.”

“Who can open the doors of his face, with his terrible teeth all around?”

“His rows of scales are his pride, shut up tightly as with a seal; one is so near another that no air can come between them; they are joined one to another, they stick together and cannot be parted.”

“His sneezings flash forth light, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. Out of his mouth go burning lights; sparks of fire shoot out. Smoke goes out of his nostrils, as from a boiling pot and burning rushes. His breath kindles coals, and a flame goes out of his mouth.”

“Though the sword reaches him, it cannot avail; nor does spear, dart, or javelin. He regards iron as straw, and bronze as rotten wood. The arrow cannot make him flee; slingstones become like stubble to him. Darts are regarded as straw; he laughs at the threat of javelins.”

“On earth there is nothing like him, which is made without fear.”

Leviathan “played” in the “great and wide sea” (a paraphrase of Psalm 104 verses 25 and 26—get the exact sense by reading them yourself).

Leviathan is a “reptile [1] that is in the sea.” (Isaiah 27:1) Note: The word translated “reptile” here is the Hebrew word *tanniyn*. This shows that “Leviathan” was also a “*tanniyn*” (dragon).

Unlike behemoth, who is *huge*, Leviathan is *ferocious and terrifying*. Many references (we have not listed them all) refer to the sea, so Leviathan is probably a sea creature. Although some bibles refer to Leviathan as an alligator or crocodile (and both of these are fierce) neither of these is a sea creature. They like the water, but they spend much of their time on land. Further, the question “Who can open the doors of his face. . .” implies that nobody can pry Leviathan’s jaws open. Yet we are all familiar with “alligator wrestlers” who routinely pry open an alligator’s jaws. Alligators do not match the description of Leviathan—and we are not done yet.

The description of the scales is interesting. Several verses describe these great scales. Compared to Leviathan’s armor, iron is like straw and arrows cannot make it flee. Let’s face it, an arrow can do a lot of damage to a crocodile or alligator. This is not a description of either of them—or any living animal we are aware of.

*And now for the key ingredient: fire.* It is hard to read Job 41:18-21 without realizing the Bible is telling us that Leviathan breathes fire. That alone will eliminate *almost* every living animal. *Yes, there is one animal that can spew fire in today’s world.* It is called a **bombardier beetle**. This beetle is a native of Central America and has a nozzle in its hind end that acts like a little flame thrower. It sprays a high-temperature jet of gas (fueled by hydroquinones and hydrogen peroxide with oxidative enzymes) for protection. Now, if a Central American *beetle* has a built-in flame thrower, *so could Leviathan*. By the way, crocodiles and alligators are out of the picture on this one, don’t you agree?

Before we leave the topic of fire, there are two more notes you may find interesting:

The history of every culture is filled with stories of fire-breathing dragons. If you think about it, in all the past ages wouldn’t *someone* have made up a story of a fire-breathing lion or something? Nobody did because the dragon stories are based on truth, and only “dragons” breathed fire. It is easy to imagine Leviathan as a member of the dragon (*tanniyn*) family. (Plus, Isaiah 27:1 strongly implies this connection.)

Many fossil dinosaur skulls contain unexplained, empty passages. Scientists have not been able to guess the reason for these passages. Would it make sense that some dinosaurs used these passages as “gas tanks” for the combustible mixture used to “breathe fire?” We believe it does.

Comparing all this information to the description in your kid's dinosaur book, you may come up with the conclusion that Leviathan is a kronosaurus. We have heard (and read) other suggestions, but the kronosaurus is the best match of any known creature to the description of Leviathan. Internet web site [clarifyingchristianity.com/dinos.shtml](http://clarifyingchristianity.com/dinos.shtml), 11-20-2004