

# OpenTheo

## May 12th: Job 40 & Jude

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Job and the Behemoth. Jude warns about false teachers.

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## Transcript

Job chapter 40, And the Lord said to Job, Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty? He who argues with God, let him answer it. Then Job answered the Lord and said, Behold, I am of small account. What shall I answer you? I lay my hand on my mouth.

I have spoken once, and I will not answer, twice, but I will proceed no further. Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said, Dress for action like a man. I will question you, and you make it known to me.

Will you even put me in the wrong? Will you condemn me, that you may be in the right? Have you an arm like God, and can you thunder with a voice like His? Adorn yourself with majesty and dignity. Clothe yourself with glory and splendour. Pour out the overflowings of your anger, and look on everyone who is proud and abase him.

Look on everyone who is proud and bring him low, and tread down the wicked where they stand. Hide them all in the dust together. Bind their faces in the world below.

Then will I also acknowledge to you that your own right hand can save you. Behold Behemoth, which I made as I made you. He eats grass like an ox.

Behold his strength in his loins, and his power in the muscles of his belly. He makes his tail stiff like a cedar. The sinews of his thighs are knit together.

His bones are tubes of bronze, his limbs like bars of iron. He is the first of the works of God. Let him who made him bring near his sword, for the mountains yield food for him, where all the wild beasts play.

Under the lotus plants he lies, in the shelter of the reeds and in the marsh. For his shade the lotus trees cover him, the willows of the brook surround him. Behold if the river is turbulent, he is not frightened.

He is confident, though Jordan rushes against his mouth. Can one take him by his eyes, or pierce his nose with a snare? In Job chapter 40, the Lord continues his challenge to Job from the whirlwind. In the preceding two chapters he had directed Job's attention to the creation and the various elements of the natural world, and then to the animals in chapter 39 especially.

Within the Lord's portrait of the various realms and forces of the cosmos, and various creatures that he had fashioned, Job's anthropocentric, or human-centered vision of the world was unsettled, and the Lord indicated the fact that there is a place within his creation for forces that are threatening or ambivalent. God created the terrifying abyss, not just the dry land. He created Sheol and the darkness.

He created the meteorological forces that give rise to the storm. He created the wild wastes, not just the habitable lands. Likewise, he populated his creation with untamed, and in some cases untameable, creatures.

Within this portrait of the creation, Job should start to see his own suffering in a different aspect. Job had rightly insisted upon the fact that he was innocent, but in the way that he had done so, he had impugned God's justice. He had suggested that God had been unjust in the way that he had treated him.

The Lord then addresses him here as a fault finder who has to make a case for himself. Earlier in the book, Job had wanted to put his case before the Lord and have the Lord answer him. Now, however, Job himself is in the dark, and the Lord is cross-examining him.

Job's initial response to the Lord's challenge is to refrain from speaking. This is less than the full act of repentance that we see later on, but Job is recognising that he has

overstepped the bounds. Job, in the claims that he had made for himself, had been presumptuous, trying to backseat-drive the universe.

Yet, as the Lord charges Job in verses 6-14, Job lacks the wisdom, the strength, the authority and the justice to actually rule the universe. So why has he undertaken to judge God for the way that he does it? It is very easy in ignorance to speak dogmatically about things that we simply do not understand. Much as a very young child may not understand the various things that their parents are doing for them, yet ought to trust in their parents' goodness and wisdom, being confident in their good intentions towards them.

So Job, like other human beings, needs to trust the Lord with the ruling of the universe, even if God is moving in mysterious ways and his purposes are difficult to understand. A childlike trust in God's character can go a long way to relieving the anxiety that can arise from the inscrutability of God's purposes within his hard providences. It is at this juncture that the Lord brings forward two key figures onto the scene, Behemoth and Leviathan.

Over the history of the interpretation of the Book of Job, these figures have excited all sorts of speculation. There are naturalistic interpretations. Behemoth is the Hippopotamus and Leviathan is the Crocodile.

Like certain features of the creatures in chapter 39, they are exaggerated. Perhaps this is for poetic purposes or perhaps it is because they have assumed exaggerated proportions through tall traveller's tales. These are not creatures that Job would have had first-hand encounters with, they are exotic creatures from foreign countries.

Mighty and powerful as the Hippopotamus and Crocodile may be, identifying these creatures as the Hippopotamus and Crocodile respectively does seem a little underwhelming. They are depicted as something so much greater. Is the Hippopotamus really the first of the works of God or does he make his scrawny tail stiff like a cedar? Advocates of this naturalistic interpretation can see the tail as perhaps a reference to the penis.

The tail being made stiff like a cedar is an image of the animal's virility. Comparing his bones and limbs to bronze and iron within the naturalistic interpretation of this beast is entirely legitimate poetic license. Others doubting that these are to be identified with the Hippopotamus or Crocodile, even in the exaggerated ways that these might have been portrayed by travellers, suggest that maybe these are legendary beasts.

Creatures imagined to exist in some far off land where dragons and mighty monsters dwelt. Leviathan, for instance, seems to be a fire-breathing dragon, the sort of creature that appears in legends all around the world. More recently, Young Earth creationists have argued that these creatures resemble nothing so much as dinosaurs.

What other creature, for instance, has a tail like a cedar? Or is so appropriate to be brought forward by the Lord as an example of his most mighty creatures? While I've not encountered such a position within the commentaries, one could also imagine a hybrid naturalistic position. The Lord is describing a monstrous beast and a dragon of legend, but these things are grounded in actual creatures that he created. Even though they were extinct, human beings in their exploration of the earth may have come across the bones of these great beasts, and the legends had been built up around them.

Others see here a composite image of mighty land beasts, representing and mythologically embodying the beasts more generally. The behemoth is a symbol of something very real, the mysterious, terrible and awe-inspiring might of the beasts. The behemoth's name is an intensive plural of the word for beast, much as the Hebrew word for God is an intensive plural.

Naturalistic readings of the behemoth and leviathan, to my mind, leave quite a lot to be desired. Reading these figures as imaginary or symbolic has a long history. We have references to such readings going back to the early church.

The interpretation of behemoth that I've found most compelling is that given by Robert Feil. In his book, *Now My Eyes Have Seen You, Images of Creation and Evil in the Book of Job*, he argues that the figure of behemoth is to be associated with the character of Mart, a mythological deity associated with death and likely referenced elsewhere in the Book of Job. The god Set, who in Egyptian mythology was associated with the underworld, appeared on occasions as a red hippopotamus, which may explain in part some of the images that are drawn upon here.

Feil also notes that Mart and Bael in the Canaanite stories are depicted as going about like wild oxen, and the eating of the grass like the ox may not just be a reference to eating, it may be a reference to devouring. This is a creature that consumes and devastates the grass. If he is to be associated with death, then it makes more sense to speak of him as the first of the works of God, a great powerful creature that will be later set loose upon humanity and allowed to prey upon them after their fall.

Feil translates verse 20 as follows. God, however, is the creator of all, and he is the master even of the monsters of chaos. The figure of behemoth, then, is, I believe, mythological but very real.

It is an imaginative portrait of the monster of death within the world, a monster that can be seen in the face of nature itself and in many of its features. When we see an image of a great dinosaur, for instance, we see something of the face of death. It is not just a particular beast that we are seeing, it is an aspect of nature more generally.

In this poetic portrait by the Lord, Job is being introduced to this monster, that is a monster that God created and can tame and control. A question to consider, how might

Job apply this teaching concerning the behemoth to his own experience? The Book of Jude Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James. To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ.

May mercy, peace and love be multiplied to you. Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only master and Lord Jesus Christ.

Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe, and the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day. Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire. Yet in like manner these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority and blaspheme the glorious ones.

But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, The Lord rebuke you. But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively. Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain, and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error, and perished in Korah's rebellion.

These are hidden reefs at your love-feasts, as they feast with you without fear, shepherds feeding themselves, waterless clouds swept along by winds, fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted, wild waves of the sea casting up the foam of their own shame, wandering stars for whom the gloom of utter darkness is not a shame. It was about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him. These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires.

They are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage. But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you, In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions.

It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith, and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to

eternal life. And have mercy on those who doubt, save others by snatching them out of the fire, to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garments stained by the flesh.

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority before all time, and now and forever. Amen. The similarities between the book of Jude and 2 Peter are quite obvious, especially between their respective cause, Jude 4-18 and 2 Peter 2-1-3-3.

The similarities are so pronounced that either one of them must be presumed to have used the other, or they both used a common source. Of these, by far the most likely position is that there was no common source, but that Jude came first, and 2 Peter incorporated and developed much of its material. For instance, in 2 Peter we see the thread of God's preservation of the righteous being introduced alongside the theme of the destruction of the wicked.

The epistle seems to have come from a time when the ministry of the apostles had ended, at least among those to whom it is addressed, as verse 17 implies. However, their ministry is well remembered. Indeed, the purpose of the epistle is, in large measure, that of stirring up its readers to remember what they had been taught earlier, at a critical moment.

I suspect that we should date the epistle to the final years of the 60s AD. The most probable author of the epistle was Jude the brother of Jesus, referred to in Mark 6 verse 3. James, another brother of Jesus, was an early leader of the church in Jerusalem, and the most likely author of the epistle of James. His introduction of himself as a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James is interesting.

The James to whom he refers was clearly very well known. James the brother of John had been killed back in Acts chapter 12. The next most famous James was James the brother of Jesus.

He is described as a slave of Jesus Christ, servant is a bit too soft, but the brother of James. This contrast between the relationships that he has with his two brothers is noteworthy. He doesn't appeal to some brotherly privilege relative to Christ.

The addressees are beloved in God the Father, upheld by his love, which preserves them for his son Jesus Christ. Jude wishes his hearers mercy, peace and love. This is the only occasion that love is mentioned at the beginning of such an epistle.

He had wanted to write a more general treatment of the salvation that they had received and which they awaited, but as false teachers arose he needed to speak to that situation more urgently. At stake is the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. The church has received a deposit of truth and must jealously guard it from pollution with

error.

There are persons within the church who have crept in. They are seeming members of the church, but they do not share its spirit. No one noticed the sowing of the tares, but now that they are growing they have become unavoidably apparent and active.

However, the rise of such false teachers is not a surprise to God. Their rise was determined long beforehand and occurs according to prophecy in precedent. Jesus had foretold the rise of such false teachers in the Olivet Discourse and then there was Old Testament prophecy and typology.

They are distinguished by their ungodliness, their licentiousness and their denial of the lordship of Jesus. They live without reference to God. Their lives are characterised by debauchery and by sexual immorality and excess.

They denied the lordship of Christ, most probably practically in resisting his authoritative claim over their lives, but perhaps also in a denial of his divinity. They perverted grace into license, twisting the teaching of the gospel into an excuse for sin. He presents his readers with three Old Testament types for their situation.

The exodus from Egypt, the fall of the angelic sons of God prior to the flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. And the use of these particular examples finds plenty of precedent in Jewish extra-canonical works. In the book of Sirach, chapter 16, verses 7-10, he did not forgive the ancient giants who revolted in their might.

He did not spare the neighbours of Lot whom he loathed on account of their arrogance. He showed no pity on the doomed nation, on those dispossessed because of their sins, or on the 600,000 foot soldiers who assembled in their stubbornness. In the book of Jubilees, chapter 20, verses 5-6, and he told them of the judgment of the giants and the judgment of the Sodomites, how they had been judged on account of their wickedness and had died on account of their fornication and uncleanness and mutual corruption through fornication.

And particularly important when reading Jude is to recognise that while it is inspired and none canonical works are not, the New Testament should not be hermetically sealed off from the world of first century Judaism. The scriptures were not written in a vacuum, in detachment from the world into which they were delivered. To understand books like Jude, it really matters that we have some awareness of wider Jewish writings.

Many of the New Testament writings would primarily have been heard within such a world of texts and thought. This also matters when interpreting the book of Jude. When we appreciate that the story of the Watchers and the Giants was a key evidence for God's judgment in other Jewish texts of the time, in association with the wilderness generation and the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, it starts to strain credulity that Jude

isn't referring to these traditional readings of Genesis chapter 6, verses 1-4.

This is strengthened by the reference to the prophecy of Enoch a few verses later. While this can trouble some people, it is by far the most natural reading of 1 Peter chapter 3 verses 19-20, 2 Peter chapter 2 verse 4 and Jude 6. Had Peter and Jude not meant to refer to this tradition of the angelic watchers and their sin with human women, they would have been inviting all sorts of confusion in their hearers by the way that they spoke. The first of the three cautionary examples is that of Israel coming out of Egypt.

This particular example is used elsewhere and developed in far greater length in places such as Hebrews chapters 3 and 4 and 1 Corinthians chapter 10 verses 1-11. In those verses we read, Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. In that passage Paul wants his hearers to recognise the resemblances between themselves and the people of the wilderness generation, and Jude has something similar in mind here.

Verse 5 raises textual questions, as there are different versions, some with Jesus and others with Lord. Jesus is likely the stronger of the two positions on merely textual grounds. However it is a highly surprising reading.

It identifies Jesus as the one who brought Israel out of Egypt, which isn't what we would expect, even though Paul presents Christ as being personally active in the deliverance, identifying him with the rock that followed them, and arguing that they put Christ to the test before they were destroyed by the serpents. Perhaps we might also see some identification of Christ as the angel of the Lord that leads them out. Both textually and theologically this would be a possible reading, although it is unexpected enough to make us wonder whether the alternative reading was the original.

Those who did not believe were destroyed. They failed to enter into the promised land and perished in the wilderness. Even though they participated in the salvation from Egypt, they did not enter into the promised land.

Jude wants his hearers to recognise the parallels between false believers who are among them, but who will not enter into the blessings of the age to come. The angels left their proper dwelling, their appointed domain. This traditional reading of Genesis chapter 6 verses 1-4 is found in non-canonical texts like in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs or the Book of Jubilees or the Book of 1st Enoch.

In the Testament of Naphtali, for instance, a very similar connection is drawn between the angels prior to the flood and to Sodom. Both relate the sin of Sodom and the sin of the watchers. While Sodom is judged for other sins too, the perversity of the sexual behaviour of Sodom is especially focused upon in Jude.

This perversity has different facets to it. Both the watchers and the men of Sodom go



after strange flesh. The angelic watchers pursue relations with human women and the men of Sodom pursue violent homosexual relations with the angelic visitors when men should only have sexual relations with human women.

The manner of their relations is violent and the most extreme form of inhospitality. But the object of homosexual relations is itself presented as an abomination by Jude, as it is the objects of their violent intentions, not just the violent intentions themselves that he holds out as examples of their perversity. In some way, these examples are comparable with the false teachers.

They are characterised by the same sort of unbelief that characterised the Israelites in the wilderness. They are also characterised by the gross sexual perversity and rejection of station that characterised the angelic watchers and the men of Sodom. He elaborates upon their sins in verses 8-10, connecting them with the sins of the groups previously mentioned with in like manner.

Here we discover that the false teachers seem to have appealed to dreams to justify their behaviour. The three sins he lists are sexual perversions, rejection of authority, presumably that of Christ and his servants, and blaspheming of angels. The three groups mentioned earlier were guilty of these sins in various ways.

The Israelites were guilty of rejection of the authority of God and of Moses and Aaron and of sexual immorality. The men of Sodom were guilty of the rejection of God's authority, mistreatment of the angelic visitors and sexual perversion. And the angelic watchers were guilty of rejection of God's authority, of sexual sin with human women, and also of the violation of the proper relative station of angels and humans.

In contrast to the preparedness of the false teachers to blaspheme the glorious ones, Jude gives the example of Michael the archangel, who in contention with the devil himself did not revile him, but called for the Lord to rebuke him. There is a close parallel here between this account and Zechariah 3, verses 1-2. However, the particular story to which Jude refers seems to be in an apocryphal work, the Assumption of Moses.

The story effectively illustrates Jude's point, whether or not he believed it to be true. There is no reason to believe that he considered the book to be canonical. Much as Paul quoted pagan poets and alluded to extra-canonical Jewish traditions, such as that of Jannes and Jambres being the opponents of Moses in 2 Timothy 3, verse 8, Jude could quote extra-canonical works without claiming that they were divinely inspired in the way that scripture is.

Non-canonical is not synonymous with false, nor is it synonymous with sinful, and the church has long considered certain non-canonical texts to be of great value, or even in certain quarters to be penumbally related to the canonical texts themselves. Why is blasphemy of evil angels an issue? Some people, when they see sin in authority figures,

love to speak of them in a way that dishonours and reviles them, not showing the respect that is due to their office and authority. How many people speak of politicians, for instance, or how rebellious children might speak of their parents are examples of this.

Blasphemy in this context is a lower form of blasphemy than the blaspheming of God. It is extremely serious, nonetheless, as it represents a willful rejection of authority, which is ultimately from God. To speak in a way that dishonours our political leaders, for instance, is one thing.

It is quite another to speak in a way that dishonours angelic authorities. That is to play a game that is entirely out of our league, manifesting only our presumption and pride. Jude declares woe upon the false teachers, suggesting that they are walking in the way of Cain.

Cain was the first murderer, killing his brother Abel in his anger and envy. However, Cain's sin began with his presumptuous approach to God, approaching God on his own terms, and being angry when God did not accept his offering, but accepted the offering of his brother. Balaam was a mercenary prophet who perverted the way of a prophet for the sake of money.

The false teachers were likely travelling teachers who sought money from those that they taught, perverting their message to open their hearers' wallets. Korah rejected the authority of Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. He declared that all Israelites were equally holy, and that no one should be placed over others.

Jude describes the character of the false teachers further. They are like hidden reefs in their congregations, people upon whom the unwary might run aground. When they gathered together in their shared meals, presumably followed by the Lord's Supper, these individuals were brazenly participating with them.

They are described as shepherds feeding themselves. Jude here alludes back to Ezekiel 34, verses 2 and 8. Thus says the Lord God, Ah shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves, should not shepherds feed the sheep? And then, the shepherds have fed themselves, and have not fed my sheep. By describing them as false shepherds, Jude suggests that they may have been pastors.

They are waterless clouds, swept along by winds. They promise life-giving water, but they disappoint. They are like trees that never deliver fruit, no matter how late into the season of harvest you wait.

They are twice dead, not just dead in their original state of spiritual insensitivity, but facing a second death too. This is because they are uprooted, they have no grounding in the One from whom we draw our life. They toss around like the restless sea, incessantly casting up the foam of their wickedness.

This is likely an allusion to Isaiah 57, verse 20. But the wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up mire and dirt. They are wandering stars, heavenly bodies that stray off their course, and cannot be looked to for any sure direction.

Their final destination is the inky blackness of God's wrath. Jude references the prophecy of Enoch here, seemingly quoting the non-canonical and pseudepigraphical book of 1 Enoch, specifically chapter 1, verse 9, even though at first glance it might appear otherwise. In quoting the text in such a way, we need not assume that Jude believed that 1 Enoch was an inspired text, just that this particular quotation was true in some sense.

Perhaps he used it because the false teachers made use of 1 Enoch themselves. Did he believe that these were actually the words of the historical Enoch? Possibly, but by no means necessarily. Presumably it was widely known that the book was not by the actual historical Enoch, but was a fictional text that was nonetheless of theological insight, being the product of a deeply scripturally formed imagination, much as many Christians might regard a text like John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Part of the challenge for scholars in such cases is working out such things as the conventions that surround genres, the ways that certain books were regarded, and how they were used. For instance, when Paul refers to Janneys and Jambres, should we read that as a claim that the historical characters that opposed Moses were named Janneys and Jambres? Or is he merely referring to a traditional elaboration of a story, much as many Christians might speak of three wise men called Melchior, Caspar and Balthasar, without assuming its historical veracity? Whatever is the case, Jude relates the judgement that Enoch, whether the historical person or his fictional portrayal, prophesied concerning the wicked to the false teachers that he is condemning. The prophecy itself is a fairly generic one, which draws upon elements found at various other points in scripture.

God's coming and judgement in the prophecy is described in a way reminiscent of Deuteronomy 33, verse 2, where God's glory at Sinai is described. He said, Similar statements are found in the New Testament, in places such as Matthew, chapter 25, verse 31. Jude describes the false teachers as grumblers and malcontents, like the Israelites in the wilderness, and rebellious characters such as Korah.

They are critical people who stir up trouble. They are driven by their sinful desires, rather than by any commitment to edifying others. They are arrogant, boastful in their rebellion, while strategically flattering others to gain a following and an advantage.

The rise of such false teachers was foretold by the apostles, and before them by Christ himself in the Olivet Discourse and elsewhere. For instance, Paul spoke of this to the Ephesian elders in Acts, chapter 20, verses 29-30. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock, and from among your own selves

will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

The rise of such false teachers is a characteristic feature of the last days. Their rise will be a cause of division within the church, as their affections are earthly, and their lives are unspiritual. Jude, however, hopes for better things in his hearers.

He exhorts them to renewed vigilance and faithfulness in this situation. There is a Trinitarian character to his exhortation. In contrast to the false teachers, who are devoid of the Spirit, they must build themselves up in the faith and pray in the Holy Spirit, drawing upon the Spirit's resources as they draw near to God in their prayer.

They must keep themselves in the love of God the Father, abiding in His love by living in a way that ensures that their fellowship with Him is not broken by unrepented sin and that they don't become alienated from Him by spiritual neglect. They must wait for the mercy of Jesus Christ, sustaining themselves in the hope of the salvation that they await. They must be watchful over each other.

Three types of persons are mentioned. They should be merciful to those who doubt, people whose faith is uncertain. Such persons should be gently persuaded of the truth when they have been misled by false teachers.

The second type seem to be more seriously affected, and more urgent and immediate action is required to snatch them from the fire. The final group are in the most serious state of all. They must be treated with mercy, but also with a deep awareness of the gravity and danger of their condition and how desperately contaminating it can be.

In these last two cases, there might be some allusion to Zechariah chapter 3. In such a perilous climate, filled with false teachings and misled brothers and sisters, how can anyone remain faithful? Jude concludes the epistle by looking to God for this. It is God who is able to preserve us from stumbling, shepherding us safely through the dangers of this present age, until He presents us unblemished before Him, as pure sacrifices, offered up to Him. He will do this with great joy.

He does not wish to see us fall. He rejoices in our overcoming and will give us the strength that we need to endure as we look to Him. To Him belong all praise and authority throughout all ages.

A question to consider. Considering the stories of the flood, the rebellious angels and sinful humanity, and the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, what might have made them stand out as the primary paradigms of divine judgment? What further lessons might we draw from them as we examine them more closely?