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Dinosaurs and Dragons

Key Themes

- The Bible tells us how God created the universe.
- God created the universe by the power of His Word.

Key Passages

- Job 40:15–24, 41:1–34

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify the two dinosaur-like creatures described in the book of Job.
- Describe the biblical and other support for man living alongside dinosaurs.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Write on the board, “Did man and dinosaurs live together?”
Have students use a bookmark to mark Job 40:15 and 41:1 in their Bibles.



Studying God's Word

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Students will find descriptions of a dinosaur and dragon in the Bible. Confirmations of the Bible's teaching that dinosaurs lived alongside man will be presented. As we look through the lens of the Bible, the world of dinosaurs makes sense!

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.
- Print one Dragon Legend map from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use in teaching the lesson.
- Print one Animal Tails images from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use in teaching the lesson.



Activity: Dinosaurs and Dragon Legends

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Students will watch a video describing the connection between dinosaurs and dragon legends and the biblical explanation and support for man living alongside dinosaurs.

- Preview the video clip “Dinosaurs and Dragon Legends” (11:00) from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- DVD player and TV or computer



Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

To prepare yourself for this week's lesson, read Genesis 1:24–25; Job 40:15–24, 41:1–34. Meditate on the fact that God's Word is our final authority over man's word in every circumstance and situation.

We know that dinosaurs are perhaps used more than anything else to indoctrinate all of us into believing in millions of years of earth history. As we continue to explore Creation Week and the one who spoke all things into existence, 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 move on to 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; Psalms 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 burning lights that flash from his mouth and shoot out fire (Job 41:18–21)? This is a creature unheard of today yet repeatedly mentioned by God and may very well have been a fire-breathing creature.

As you prepare for this lesson, proceed confidently knowing that the entirety of God's Word is truth (Psalm 119:160) and it should always be our starting point and foundation when addressing questions presented by the world.

APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

We mentioned above that dinosaurs and man were created on the same day of Creation Week—about 6,000 years ago. But is that what we hear around us? Absolutely not! "Dinosaurs died out millions of years ago and could never have lived with man!" Over and over this message is repeated with no regard to what God's Word says. Our response to this 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?

Why is this important? The belief that dinosaurs lived and died millions of years before man attacks the very foundation not only of the Bible, but 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. 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. Both animals and man were originally vegetarian (Genesis 1:29–30). It was Adam and Eve's sin against a holy God that brought judgment on the whole creation—death, both spiritual and physical (Genesis 2:17, 3:19). In fact, it was Adam's sin that provoked the first killing of an 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—the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world (John 1:29). Jesus came to earth in order to provide payment for the consequence of sin—which is death—and to offer eternal life (Romans 6:23). So you see, when we accept the notion of millions of years of animal death before the creation and Fall of man, we contradict and destroy the Bible's teaching on death and the full redemptive work of Christ.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Many believe the author of the book of Job was Job himself, who lived in the land of Uz (see Job 1:1). 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.

There are also several 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. They appear in art, literature, and folklore. There are many Native American legends as well—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:

- 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 worshiped 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.
- Who can overlook the story of St. George, popular in England, which 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 sixteenth 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 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 the 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 pre-suppositions—that dinosaurs lived millions of years ago. This prevents them from even considering the evidence, whether historical or biblical. Our worldview needs to begin with God's Word as we rely on it for the foundation of all we believe.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Lord, you alone laid the foundation of the earth. You determined its measurements. I am of small account, and yet the entrance of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple. Please use this lesson to help me see how your truth compares to the lies I hear from the world—especially about dinosaurs. Lord, help me to rely completely on your Word and to share my confidence in your Word with the students I teach this week. I pray they will come to love it and trust it over any opinion of man.

Review

In last week's lesson, we finished working through the details of Creation Week and describing what was created on each day. We have seen that there are major inconsistencies between the evolutionary view of the origin of the universe and the life we see on earth and the biblical view of the creation of all things in six normal days.

We saw that the Bible describes limits to the amount of change that God's creatures can undergo. Plants and animals of all sorts were created in special groupings.

? Who remembers what those groupings are called? *Kinds.*

? Who can give me an example of a created kind and what animals might be included?
The cat kind, dog kind, and camel kind were discussed in the previous lesson, but other examples would include the finch kind, the parrot kind, the rodent kind, etc.

Of all of God's creatures, mankind was made distinct from the animals. God made man—both male and female—in His own image. Rather than being the physical appearance

of God, we all reflect God's character and many of His attributes. Next week we will expand on that idea and look at the account of Genesis 2 and the creation of Adam and Eve.

The value of human life comes from the image of God in every person, not from their benefit to society or their usefulness to others. From the evolutionary perspective, man has no more worth than any other animal. Most evolutionists would reject this idea practically, but from a naturalistic worldview actions like slavery, abortion, and racism are completely justifiable. Looking at these issues through biblical glasses, we can reject slavery, abortion, racism, and other dehumanizing ideas, knowing that God has created each person in His image.

As you transition to the activity, try to make it a seamless transition. You are going to be leading the students into a trap in order to make a point about God's description of the behemoth and leviathan.



➤ Write on the board, "Did man and dinosaurs live together?"

➤ Have students use a bookmark to mark Job 40:15 and 41:1 in their Bibles.



Studying God's Word

In the book of Job, God described the secrets of His creation to Job, using many natural elements like rain, snow, and various animals. Included in the list of animals are the behemoth and leviathan—two creatures that many believe are mythical creatures. Present the following script with some passion, and as you get to the end, you will be presenting a fictional animal, the kophir, as if it were real. This will lead into the study of the creatures described in Job 40 and 41.

When I consider how creative God is, I think about hummingbirds with their shimmering iridescent feathers.

I think of majestic birds like the peacock or the vibrant color of the Amazon parrots or the brilliant patterns on tiny poison dart frogs and the amazing tongue of the chameleon.

He has made creatures that can fly using all kinds of wings—bats, birds, butterflies, and . . . He has made people!

The multitudes of graceful antelope roam the plains of Africa alongside the gallant lion and the imposing elephants.

In the oceans we find miniature creatures that produce their own glass houses, fish with striking patterns of color and texture, lobsters with probing claws, the great whales that travel the globe in search of food, and many other amazing creations.

Oh, and don't forget the amazing strength and beauty of the kophir with its long horn and flowing mane. The kophir alone demonstrates God's power and creativity, don't you agree? *Expect responses of confusion as this is not a real animal. This will hopefully make the point that Job knew what the behemoth and leviathan were, or the illustrations would be meaningless. God listed many animals with which we are familiar, along with leviathan and behemoth., so these were real animals as well, not mythical animals.*

Today, we are going to look at dinosaurs from a biblical perspective. In the book of Job, God presented His power over His creation in a series of questions to Job. God asked questions about mountain goats, eagles, the ocean, the clouds, the constellations, and many other parts of His creation.

Near the end of the questioning, God described two creatures that sound quite fantastic to many people. Some have suggested that these creatures are mythical. But if God had been describing things that Job was familiar with, it makes no sense that He would suddenly interject a piece of fantasy into the questioning.

We are going to look at these two creatures described by God and try to determine what they are by carefully examining the text.

READ THE WORD

Open your Bibles to Job 40. *Wait until all the students have found the verses.*

In the passage we will be studying, God was speaking to a man named Job. Job was a real historical person; he is mentioned by Ezekiel the prophet and James in the New Testament. He lived after Noah and before Moses. This portion of Scripture is part of a conversation between God and Job.

? Who can show me on our classroom timeline when Job lived? *Help students find Job on the Seven C's Timeline.*

We are going to read from verses 15–24, but I want you to scan through chapter 39 to get an idea of what God had been saying to Job before this point.

? What animals do you see in chapter 39? *Mountain goats (v. 1), wild donkey (v. 5), wild ox (v. 9), ostrich and stork (v. 13), horse (v. 19), locust (v.20), hawk (v. 6).*

Keep that in mind as we read Job 40:15–24 together. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

Refer to the Bible Study poster to remind your students how to dig deeper into God's Word by asking the right questions.

- ? **Who was speaking and being spoken to?** *God is speaking to Job.*
- ? **What type of literature is this passage?** *It is a poetic passage written in a series of couplets. There are also many similes in the description.*
- ? **What creature is being described?** *Behemoth.*
- ? **What does the behemoth eat?** *Grass like an ox.*
- ? **How is the size of the behemoth described?** *He is the first/chief of the ways of God, his food comes from the mountains (a vast area), it takes many trees to give him shade, a raging river doesn't disturb him.*
- ? **How is the strength of the behemoth described?** *His strength is in his hips with powerful muscles and sinews, his bones are like bronze or iron, he can face a raging river, he cannot be snared.*
- ? **How is his tail described?** *As large as a cedar tree.*
- ? **Where does the behemoth live?** *The description sounds like swampy land with rivers, willows, and lotus trees.*
- ? **On which day of creation would behemoth have been created?** *Since behemoth was a land animal, he would have been created on Day Six.*
- ? **Who is able to subdue behemoth with a sword?** *Only God.*
- ? **What is the main point of the passage?** *Job was to understand the limit of his own power in light of God's absolute power over His creation.*
- ? **What does the passage tell us about God?** *He made both Job and behemoth and has power over both of them.*
- ? **What creature might God have been describing to Job?** *Some commentators have suggested that the behemoth is a hippo or an elephant since those are the largest land creatures living today. If any students have Bibles with study notes, have them share what the commentators say about the identity. For example, the Bible Knowledge Commentary identifies the hippo as the best explanation, though it says it may have been a dinosaur.*

Discover the Truth

There is no doubt that God was describing a massive creature to Job and a creature that Job was familiar with. One of the key characteristics was the tail of the behemoth. It is described as moving like a cedar tree. Knowing that God was not describing a mythical creature like the kophir, this must be a real creature.

? The Bible describes the majestic cedars of Lebanon that were used as beams for the construction of the Temple built by Solomon. Does an elephant or a hippo have a tail like a cedar tree? *No. Show Animal Tails pictures from the Resource DVD-ROM.*

? What kind of animal do you know of that has a tail that could be compared to a cedar tree? *A sauropod dinosaur is the only reasonable conclusion.*

? Do the rest of the descriptions of the behemoth fit a sauropod dinosaur? *Yes, it is the largest land creature we know of and it has a tail like a cedar tree.*

This interpretation is rejected by most modern scholars because they reject the idea that dinosaurs ever lived alongside mankind. To accommodate the evolutionary view, they suggest the behemoth is a hippo, an elephant, or a water buffalo—none of which has a tail like a cedar or could ford a raging river with no concern.

D.A. Carson suggests in the New Bible Commentary that the behemoth is a hippo and explains the tail conflict by saying, “Even his tail, though short and small, has the strength of a cedar.” The tail of a hippo is very small and it is quite a stretch of the imagination to compare it to a cedar tree.

So what is the point? Well, you may have heard that dinosaurs NEVER lived with men, right? And you’ve heard that they lived and died out millions of years ago, right? But once again, God’s Word tells us something very different. In Job 40:15, God told Job, “Look now at the behemoth, which I made along with you.” God said to Job, “Look at it; I made it when I made you.” It sure seems like that behemoth dinosaur was living at the same time as Job.

? From a biblical perspective, is there any reason that a dinosaur could not have been alive at the same time as Job? *Use the timeline to point out the life of Job shortly after the Flood. Since the behemoth is a land animal, it would have been created on Day Six and would have been alive alongside man. Some might suggest that the dinosaurs all died in the Flood, but Noah took representatives of all of the land animal kinds on the Ark, so the sauropod dinosaurs would have been alive after the Flood. There is no reason, from a biblical perspective, that this could not be the description of a dinosaur—a creature Job was familiar with.*



READ THE WORD

Let’s read more of what God has to say here in Job. I think you are going to enjoy this next animal God describes. Take a look at chapter 41, beginning in verse 1. Pay careful attention to the details again as I read. Once more, I’m going to ask you to do your best to figure out what this animal is. Listen as God describes it. If you see a unique feature that gives us a big clue to what this animal is, put your finger there and we’ll come back to it. *Read verses 1–34 dramatically.*

Job 41:1–34

Sauropod:
dinosaurs
with long tails
and necks like
Apatosaurus
and
Brachiosaurus

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? Another animal is named in verses 1–34. Who can tell me what this animal is called? *Leviathan.*
- ? Look at verses 1 and 2. *Read these verses.* What picture is painted of this creature? *It is not possible to capture it.*
- ? Look at verses 8 through 10. *Read these verses.* What do we learn from these verses? *Leviathan is a fierce creature but God is more powerful.*
- ? Jump to verse 18 and I will read through verse 22. *Read these verses.* What ability is this describing? *This is describing some sort of ability to breathe fire.*
- ? So, what is your sense of this leviathan? What was he like? *Answers should include a great, fire-breathing animal that put fear into even the mightiest hunter and was very difficult to kill! There was nothing like him.*

Discover the Truth

The passage goes on to describe how leviathan has skin that cannot be penetrated by darts and arrows and how it stirs up the sea as it moves about. This is a massive creature that strikes fear in the hearts of men and fears nothing.

Again, some scholars suggest that this is describing a crocodile, but those details don't fit a crocodile—especially the description of breathing fire.

- ? What reason is there to doubt that God was describing a massive, fire-breathing creature to Job? *There is no reason from the context to suggest that this was not a real creature. Some might suggest the poetic language precludes that this is a real description, but poetry can communicate true details.*

You may have heard of dragons—and thought they were just stories or legends. But there have been dragon legends told over and over all over the world. The fact that these legends show up in so many places could mean that dragons were real—people did encounter them. The dragon legends actually confirm God's Word—and His description of the behemoth and the leviathan. *Show Dragon Legends map. Point out that these legends are from all around the world.*

- ? Although it might be a dinosaur-like animal, why couldn't the leviathan be a dinosaur—based on what we now know? *Dinosaurs are land animals. This animal clearly lived in the sea.*

So technically, a leviathan is not a dinosaur. It's like a dinosaur, but since it lives in the water, it is a sea creature. So we call it “dinosaur-like.”

? Is the Bible saying that all dinosaur-like creatures were made on Days Five and Six—giant sea creatures, flying reptiles like pterodactyls, and dinosaurs? *Yes!*

? What else did God make on Day Six? *God created man and woman.*

? So, God created man and woman and all the land animals on Day Six, right? If the Bible tells us this so clearly, why do we get so confused when we hear something different? *Allow students to answer.*

I think it's because we hear so much about dinosaurs evolving hundreds of millions of years ago and then dying out before man evolved. We hear that story more than we hear or read the Bible's true historical account. And because we hear it so much, we just begin to believe it.

The dinosaurs were created on Day Six of Creation Week. We know from this information in the Bible that dinosaur-like animals lived on the earth from Days Five and Six and at least through the time of Job.

? Were there people living on the earth at the same time? *Of course!*

So, according to the most reliable source of history, the Bible, dinosaurs and man lived together.

? Do you have any idea why the Bible doesn't contain the word dinosaur? Why does it say "behemoth" instead of "dinosaur"? *Allow students to answer.*

The Bible doesn't use the word "dinosaur" because that word wasn't made up until 1841! The English Bible was translated long before that.

But the Bible does contain these descriptions of dinosaurs. So we can be confident that all dinosaur-like creatures were created on Days Five and Six. Some flew like the pterodactyl; some lived in water like the leviathan; and some lived on land like the behemoth. These creatures, which are now extinct, lived alongside man since Days Five and Six of Creation Week, 6,000 years ago, not millions of years!

Since man and all other creatures were created within one day of one another, a giant sea creature like leviathan could have lived alongside man. Although this sounds a bit fantastical to many, basing our thinking on God's Word gives no reason to reject this idea. In fact, there is much evidence to support the idea that man and dinosaurs lived together. We are going to watch a video that will help you make a few connections.





Dinosaurs and Dragon Legends

MATERIALS

- “Dinosaurs and Dragon Legends” video on the Resource DVD-ROM
- DVD player and TV or projector

INSTRUCTIONS

Show the video.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

How we look at the presence of dragon legends and dinosaurs depends on our starting point. The Bible makes it clear that man and dinosaurs lived together. To

confirm this truth from Scripture, there are accounts of dragons in cultures around the globe. There are paintings on rocks and sculptures that look much like dinosaurs.

Those who reject the biblical account of history must also reject that man lived alongside dinosaurs. For them, dinosaurs died out 65 million years ago and man has only been around for a few hundred thousand years. The Flintstones is an impossibility from an evolutionary perspective, but not much of a stretch from a biblical perspective.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Today, we have taken a very brief look at the biblical view of dinosaurs. Starting from the Bible, we know that man and the land dinosaurs, like behemoth, were both created on Day Six of the Creation Week. And we also know that sea creatures, like leviathan, were created on Day Five. Even though the word “dinosaur” is not used in the Bible—it wasn’t even coined until 1841—there is no reason to reject that dinosaurs were familiar to mankind through the millennia.

When we read of great sea creatures and other giants and dragons in Scripture, we can trust they were real creatures. The legends and lore of fire-breathing dragons are very possibly encounters with real creatures that have been embellished over the centuries. The rock drawings, legends, and artifacts from around the globe add additional confirmation to the idea that man and dinosaurs truly did live together.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

- ? **What is the importance, in our world today, of having an explanation for the existence of dinosaurs on a young earth?** *Many people will write off anyone who believes in the Bible, but having an answer can help those who are not openly antagonist to realize that there are reasonable alternative explanations to the evolutionary ideas.*
- ? **Knowing that the vast majority of books, movies, and television programs teach that dinosaurs lived 65 million years ago, how can you help others understand this issue from a biblical perspective?** *Sitting down with someone with the Bible open to passages that speak of dinosaurs, like Job, and having them read the passages for themselves is a great start. Using the Bible should be an important part of communicating truth. There are also many books, videos, and pamphlets that deal with the topic that could be used for follow up.*
- ? **How can dinosaurs be used as an opportunity to share the gospel?** *Many people are interested in dinosaurs, so it presents many opportunities to begin conversations with a variety of people. Taking people back to the perfect creation where dinosaurs lived alongside man peacefully (they both had vegetarian diets) and then to the entrance of sin can lead directly to the hope of the gospel.*
- ? **How do we balance the scientific study of the fossils of dinosaurs and other extinct creatures with what the Bible tells us about such creatures?** *We must make sure that if there is ever a conflict in the explanations that we look to the Bible first.*
- ? **Christians know that they will face ridicule from those who reject the Bible as the authority when discussing issues like dinosaurs. How do we deal with such criticisms?** *We must remember that Christ suffered on our behalf and serves as an example for us (1 Peter 2:21). Seeking to honor Christ and to act like He would act in the face of ridicule is an important part of portraying our testimony in front of a skeptical world.*



MEMORY VERSE

Exodus 20:11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Praise God for His unchanging character.
- Thank God for His justice and mercy toward sin.
- Ask God that each person would have boldness to share the hope of Christ with others.

