

Baba Batra 15a

You say that **Moses wrote his book and the section of Balaam and Job.**

This supports the opinion of R. Joshua b. Levi b. Lahma who said that Job was contemporary with Moses — [The proof is that] it is written here [in connection with Job], O that my words were now [efo] written, and it is written elsewhere [in connection with Moses], For wherein now [efo] shall it be known. But on that ground I might say that he was contemporary with Isaac, in connection with whom it is written, Who now [efo] is he that took venison? Or I might say that he was contemporary with Jacob, in connection with whom it is written, If so now [efo] do this? or with Joseph, in connection with whom it is written, Where [efo] they are pasturing?— This cannot be maintained; [The proof that Job was contemporary with Moses is that] it is written [in continuation of the above words of Job], Would that they were inscribed in a book, and it is Moses who is called 'inscriber', as it is written, And he chose the first part for himself, for there was the lawgiver's [mehokek, lit. 'inscriber's'] portion reserved. Raba said that Job was in the time of the spies. [The proof is that] it is written here [in connection with Job], There was a man in the land of Uz, Job was his name, and it is written elsewhere [in connection with the spies], Whether there be wood [ez] therein. Where is the parallel? In one place it is Uz, in the other EZ? — What Moses said to Israel was this: [See] if that man is there whose years are as the years of a tree and who shelters his generation like a tree.

A certain Rabbi was sitting before R. Samuel b. Nahmani and in the course of his expositions **remarked, Job never was and never existed, but is only a typical figure.** He replied: To confute such as you the text says, There was a man in the land of Uz, Job was his name. But, he retorted, if that is so, what of the verse, "The poor man had nothing save one poor ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up etc." Is that anything but a parable? So this too is a parable. If so, said the other, why are his name and the name of his town mentioned?

R. Johanan and R. Eleazar both stated that **Job was among those who returned from the [Babylonian] Exile,** and that his house of study was in Tiberias. An objection [to this view] was raised from the following: 'The span of Job's life was from the time that Israel entered Egypt till they left it.'

15b

There is a difference on this point between Tannaim, as it has been taught:

R. Eliezer says that **Job was in the days 'of the judging of the judges,'** as it says [in the book of Job], Behold all of you together have seen it; why then are ye become altogether vain? What generation is it that is altogether vain? You must say, the generation where there is a 'judging of the judges'.

R. Joshua b. Korhah says: **Job was in the time of Ahasuerus,** for it says, And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job. What was the generation in which fair women were sought out? You must say that this was the generation of Ahasuerus. But **perhaps he was in the time of David** [in connection with whom] it is written, So they sought for a fair damsel?— In the case of David [the search was only] in all the border of Israel, in the case of Ahasuerus, in all the land.

R. Nathan says that **Job was in the time of the kingdom of Sheba,** since it says, The Sabaeans fell on them and took them away.

The Sages say that **he was in the time of the Chaldeans,** as it says, The Chaldeans made three bands.

Some say that **Job lived in the time of Jacob** and married Dinah the daughter of Jacob. [The proof is that] it is written here [in the book of Job], Thou speakest as one of the impious women [nebaloth] speaketh, and it is written in another place [in connection with Dinah], Because he had wrought folly [nebelah] it, Israel.

All these Tannaim agree that Job was from Israel, except those who say [that he lived in the days of Jacob]. [This must be so,] for if you suppose that [they regarded him as] a heathen, [the question would arise,] after the death of Moses how could the Divine Presence rest upon a heathen, seeing that a Master has said, Moses prayed that the Divine Presence should not rest on heathens, and God granted his request as it says, That we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.

אבן עזרא איוב פרק ב

(יא) אליפז התימני - ממשפחת תימן בן אליפז בן עשו. והקרוב שהיה קרוב מימי משה, כי לא יתיחש לתימן כי אם אחר דורות. וחז"ל אמרו כי משה כתב ספר איוב; והקרוב אלי כי הוא ספר מתורגם, על כן הוא קשה בפירוש כדרך כל ספר מתורגם:

Eliphaz the Temanite: From the family of Teman, son of Eliphaz, son of Esau. Most likely he was during the era of Moses, because the lineage to Teman would take several generations. The Sage said that Moses wrote the Book of Job; most likely, it is a translated book; therefore, it is difficult to interpret as are all books in translation.

Job

There was a man in the land of Uz named Job. That man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. The LORD said to the Adversary, "Have you noticed My servant Job? There is no one like him on earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and shuns evil!" The Adversary answered the LORD, "Does Job not have good reason to fear God? And will surely blaspheme You to Your face."

The LORD said to the Adversary, "Have you noticed My servant Job? There is no one like him on earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and shuns evil. He still keeps his integrity; so you have incited Me against him to destroy him for no good reason." The Adversary answered the LORD, "Skin for skin—all that a man has he will give up for his life. But lay a hand on his bones and his flesh, and he will surely blaspheme You to Your face."

His wife said to him, "You still keep your integrity! Blaspheme God and die!" But he said to her, "You talk as any shameless woman might talk! Should we accept only good from God and not accept evil?" For all that, Job said nothing sinful.

Why did I not die at birth, Expire as I came forth from the womb? Why were there knees to receive me, Or breasts for me to suck? For now would I be lying in repose, asleep and at rest, With the world's kings and counselors who rebuild ruins for themselves,

Eliphaz:

Think now, what innocent man ever perished? As I have seen, those who plow evil And sow mischief reap them. They perish by a blast from God, Are gone at the breath of His nostrils.

Bildad:

Will God pervert the right? Will the Almighty pervert justice? If your sons sinned against Him, He dispatched them for their transgression. But if you

seek God And supplicate the Almighty, אם-תִּזְהַר וְיִשָּׁר אֶתְּךָ כִּי-עֲתָה יַעִיר עֲלֶיךָ וְשָׁלַם נֹת צְדָקָה: If you are blameless and upright, He will protect you, And grant well-being to your righteous home.

Zophar:

Do you not know this, that from time immemorial, Since man was set on earth, **כי רִנַּת רָשָׁעִים מְקֻרָב וְשִׂמְחַת חֲנוּף עַד־רִגְעָה: The joy of the wicked has been brief, The happiness of the impious, fleeting?**

Elihu:

Here I have waited out your speeches, I have given ear to your insights, While you probed the issues; **וְעַד־כֵּן אֶתְּבוֹנָן וְהִנֵּה אֵין: ועַד־כֵּן אֶתְּבוֹנָן וְהִנֵּה אֵין: But as I attended to you, I saw that none of you could argue with Job, Or offer replies to his statements.**

In this you are not right; I will answer you: God is greater than any man. **אֶף-אֲמַנֶּם אֵל לֹא-יִרְשָׁע וְשֹׁדֵי לֹא-יַעֲוֶה מִשְׁפָּט: For God surely does not act wickedly; Shaddai does not pervert justice.** **אֶף אֶרְשׂוּא לֹא-יִשְׁמַע: אֵל וְשֹׁדֵי לֹא יִשְׁוֹנֶה: Surely it is false that God does not listen, That Shaddai does not take note of it.** **אֶף: אֶף: Though you say, "You do not take note of it," The case is before Him; So wait for Him.**

God:

Then the LORD replied to Job out of the tempest and said: **מִן-יָמַי מִמְדִּיָּהּ כִּי תִדַּע אִן מִי-נִטָּה עָלֶיהָ: Where were you when I laid the earth's foundations? Speak if you have understanding.** **עַל-מָה אֲדַבְרָהּ? Do you know who fixed its dimensions Or who measured it with a line?** **וְיִסָּךְ: Onto what were its bases sunk? Who set its cornerstone?** **וְיִסָּךְ: Who closed the sea behind doors When it gushed forth out of the womb,** **וְיִסָּךְ: When I clothed it in clouds, Swaddled it in dense clouds,** **וְיִסָּךְ: When I made breakers My limit for it, And set up its bar and doors,** **וְיִסָּךְ: And said, "You may come so far and no farther; Here your surging waves will stop?"** **וְיִסָּךְ: Have you ever commanded the day to break, Assigned the dawn its place,**

Then the LORD replied to Job out of the tempest and said: **וְיִסָּךְ: Gird your loins like a man; I will ask, and you will inform Me.** **וְיִסָּךְ: Would you impugn My justice? Would you condemn Me that you may be right?** **וְיִסָּךְ: הִנֵּה-נָא בְּהִמּוֹת אֲשֶׁר-עָשִׂיתִי עִמָּךְ: Take now behemoth, whom I made as I did you; He eats grass, like the cattle.** **וְיִסָּךְ: His strength is in his loins, His might in the muscles of his belly.** **וְיִסָּךְ: He makes his tail stand up**

עצמיו אפיקי נחישטה גרמיו כמטיל. תְּמַשְׁךָ לַיּוֹתָן בְּחִכָּה וּבְחֹבֶל. His bones are like tubes of bronze, His limbs like iron rods. תְּמַשְׁךָ לַיּוֹתָן בְּחִכָּה וּבְחֹבֶל. Can you draw out Leviathan by a fishhook? Can you press down his tongue by a rope? הֲתִשִּׁים אֶגְמוֹן בְּאַפּוֹ וּבְחוֹחַ תִּקְוֹב לְחִיוֹ: Can you put a ring through his nose, Or pierce his jaw with a barb?

Job:

ידעת [ידעת] כי-כל תוכל ולא-יבצר ממך. Job said in reply to the LORD: ידעת [ידעת] כי-כל תוכל ולא-יבצר ממך. I know that You can do everything, That nothing you propose is impossible for You. מי זה? מעלים עצה בלי דעת לכן הגדתי ולא אבין נפלאות ממני ולא אדע. Who is this who obscures counsel without knowledge? Indeed, I spoke without understanding Of things beyond me, which I did not know. שמע-נא ואנכי אדבר אשאלך והודיעני. Hear now, and I will speak; I will ask, and You will inform me. I had heard You with my ears, But now I see You with my eyes;

The LORD וה' שב את-שבית [שבבות] איוב בהתפללן בעד רעהו ויסף ה' את-כל-אשר לאיוב למשנה: The LORD restored Job's fortunes when he prayed on behalf of his friends, and the LORD gave Job twice what he had before.

THEODICY

משנה אבות פרק ד טו: רבי ינאי אומר אין בידינו לא משלות הרשעים ואף לא מיסורי הצדיקים
Within our ken is neither the tranquility of the wicked nor the suffering of the righteous

THEODICY: The, or a, vindication of the divine attributes, esp. justice and holiness, in respect to the existence of evil; a writing, doctrine, or theory intended to 'justify the ways of God to men'.
(OED)

The problem of evil, in the sense in which I shall be using the phrase, is a problem only for someone who believes that there is a God who is both omnipotent and wholly good. And it is a logical problem, the problem of clarifying and reconciling a number of beliefs.

J.L. Mackie's Inconsistent Triad

Epicurus's old questions are yet unanswered. Is [God] willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is impotent. Is he able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent. Is he both able and willing, but ignorant of evil's existence? Then he is not omniscient. Whence then is evil?

David Hume- "Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion"

A God who gives human beings such free will ["free and responsible choice"] necessarily brings about the possibility and puts outside his own control whether or not that [moral] evil occurs. It is not logically possible—that is, it would be self-contradictory to suppose—that God could give us such free will and yet ensure that we always use it in the right way.

Richard Swinburne: "Why God Allows Evil"

The terrible paradox is that no righteous man can measure his love of God unless he suffers a fate befitting the wicked.

Moshe Greenberg: "Reflections of Job's Theology"

The Rav listed four important lessons that must be learned from the story of Purim.

1. From time to time, human beings replace their personalities, in which the image of God is implanted, with a satanic personality in which evil deeds prevail.
2. Amalek is the symbol of evil and the enemy of mankind, in general, but first, foremost, and especially, he attacks Jews.
3. The hatred of Jews is not aimed at the religious Jews alone, or even specifically. It is aimed at everyone who is known by the name, Jew.
4. Whenever the modern Satan-Amalek struggles with "the diffuse and scattered nation", there will surely arise a factor that will protect that nation, oppose Amalek with full force, and overcome him.

Joseph B. Soloveitchik: "Purim, a Time for Spiritual Sobriety"

Dr. Moshe Sokolow: "Job"

Behemoth and Leviathan:
Zoology or Mythology?

Inspired by Robert Gordis: *The Book of Job* (NY, 1978)

X

איוב מ'

thee. (15) Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee; He eateth grass as an ox. (16) Lo now, his strength is in his loins, And his force is in the stays of his body. (17) He straineth his tail like a cedar; The sinews of his thighs are knit together. (18) His bones are as pipes of brass; His gristles are like bars of iron. (19) He is the beginning of the ways of God; He only that made him can make His sword to approach unto him. (20) Surely the mountains bring him forth food, And all the beasts of the field play there. (21) He lieth under the lotus-trees, In the covert of the

a snare? (25) Canst thou draw out leviathan with a fish-hook? Or press down his tongue with a cord? (26) Canst thou put a ring into his nose? Or bore his jaw through with a hook? (27) Will he make many supplications unto thee? Or will he speak soft words unto thee? (28) Will he make a covenant with thee, That thou shouldest take him for a servant for ever? (29) Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens? (30) Will the bands of fishermen make a banquet of him?

תושע לך ימינך. (טו) הנה נא בהמות אשר עשיתי עמך חציר כבקר יאכל. (טז) הנה נא כחו במתניו ואונו בשרירי בטנו. (יז) יחפץ זנבו כמו ארז גידי פחדו ישרגו. (יח) עצמו אפיקי נחשה גרמו כמטיל ברזל. (יט) הוא ראשית דרכי אל העשו יגש חרבו. (כ) כי בול הרים ישאו לו וכל חית השדה ישחקו שם. (כא) תחת צאלים ישכב בסתר קנה ובצה. (כב) יסבהו צאלים צללו יסבוהו ערבי נחל. (כג) הן יעשק נהר לא יחפוז יבטח כי יגית ירדן אל פיהו. (כד) בעיניו יקחנו במוקשים ינקב אף. (כה) תמשך לויחו בחכה ובחבל תשקיע לשנו. (כו) התשים אגמן באפו ובחוח תקב לחיו. (כז) הירבה אליך תחנונים אם ידבר אליך רבות. (כח) היכרת ברית עמך תקחנו לעבד עולם. (כט) התשחק בו כצפור ותקשרנו לנערותיך. (ל) יכרו עליו חברים יחצוהו בין כנענים. (לא) התמלא בשכות עורו ובצלצל דגים ראשו. (לב) שים עליו כפף זכר מלחמה אל תוסף.

Zoology: Hippopotamus and Crocodile

Mythology: Primordial monsters defeated during the cosmic battle that preceded creation.

תהלים ק"ד

(כו) שָׁם אֲנִיּוֹת יִהְיוּ לְיָמֶיךָ לְשִׂחָק־בּוֹ:

There go the ships; There is leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to sport with it/therein.

איוב מ

(לא) הֲתִמְלֵא בְּשִׁכּוֹת עוֹרוֹ וּבְצִלְצֵל דְּגָיִם רֹאשׁוֹ:

Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? Or his head with fish-spears?

" הרחמן הוא יזכנו לישב בסוכת עורו של לויטן."

May the Compassionate merit us to sit in the sukkah made of the skin of the Leviathan.

בראשית א' כא

וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַתַּיִמָּנוֹת הַגְּדֹלִים וְאֶת־כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ הַחַיָּה | הַרְמֵשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר־שָׂרְצוּ הַמַּיִם לְמִינֵיהֶם וְאֶת־כָּל־עוֹף כְּנָף לְמִינֵהוּ וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב:

God created the large sea creatures, and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed, after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind. God saw that it was good.

רש"י בראשית א':כ"א

התנינים – דגים גדולים שבים. ובדברי אגדה: הוא לויטן ובן זוגו, שבראם זכר ונקבה ושחט הנקבה ומלחה לצדיקים לעתיד לבא, שאם יפרו וירבו לא יתקיים העולם לפנייהם.

THE HUGE CREATURES – the large fishes that are in the sea; and according to the statement of the Agada (Bava Batra 74b) it means here the Leviathan and its consort which He created male and female. He, however, killed the female and preserved it in salt for the benefit of the righteous in the time to come, for had

they been permitted to be fruitful and to multiply the world could not have endured because of them.

✘

איוב מ'

thee. (15) Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee; He eateth grass as an ox. (16) Lo now, his strength is in his loins, And his force is in the stays of his body. (17) He straineth his tail like a cedar; The sinews of his thighs are knit together. (18) His bones are as pipes of brass; His gristles are like bars of iron. (19) He is the beginning of the ways of God; He only that made him can make His sword to approach unto him. (20) Surely the mountains bring him forth food, And all the beasts of the field play there. (21) He lieth under the lotus-trees, In the covert of the

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ינקב אף. (כה) תמשך לויתן בחכה ובחבל תשקיע לשנו. (כו) התשים אגמן באפו ובחוח תקב לחיו. (כז) הירבה אליך תחנונים אם ידבר אליך רבות. (כח) היכרת ברית עמך תקחנו לעבד עולם. (כט) התשחק בו בצפור ותקשרנו לנערותיך. (ל) יכרו עליו חברים יחצוהו בין כנענים. (לא) התמלא בשכות עורו ובצלצל דגים ראשו. (לב) שים עליו כפף זכר מלחמה אל תוסף.

These creatures represent a paradox. Ordinarily peaceful, they are, nevertheless, possessed of incredible strength, thereby emphasizing the miracle of God's creation. Only real flesh and

blood creatures—ugly in man’s eyes, but a delight to God—are pertinent to the book’s objective of intimating the presence of divine purpose even when invisible to mortal man.