

Battling the Behemoths of Our Time

There was a time—and not too long ago—when many believed communism to be an unstoppable, indestructible force. The fear surrounding this system and cloaking its activities behind an “iron curtain” prompted an era of anxiety and uncertainty in the Western world. Few could imagine the day this behemoth would fall—for it was, indeed, one of the most pure examples in modern history of a behemoth.

A behemoth is any system large enough in size or power to oppress multitudes of people. It can be a religious, political, cultural or economic system—and even a blend of those, as in the case with communism. Behemoths are erected by the enemy to keep the gospel out and multitudes of people in darkness.

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Communism was an antichrist system that controlled hundreds of millions. But this system has been shaken and continues to fall. The head of this system (.) has crumbled economically and politically, and now the gospel is being preached in Russia, and churches are springing up everywhere. For years the church prayed and fasted for the dismantling of this behemoth, and now we see the results of our prayers.

Behemoths are strongholds that must be broken in order to see millions of people released from darkness and come into the glorious light of the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Yet these demonic “giants” have been around for generations. In Job 40:15, the Lord calls Job’s attention to a creature known in

his day as the behemoth: "Look now at the behemoth, which I made along with you; he eats grass like an ox." The Berkeley translation calls him "the hippopotamus." Another translation calls him "the river ox." The ox is known primarily for its strength. Behemoth is a massive creature known for its power and strength. Both in the natural here and in the spirit realm today, his sheer size and strength make him a formidable foe.

Thankfully, the Lord is raising up an army of believers who understand spiritual warfare and will challenge and pull down the behemoths of our day. Yet the church must realize that when we are dealing with Behemoth, we are fighting a demonic system that is large and strong, whether it be religious, economic, cultural or political. Many believers who engage in spiritual warfare have accurately identified strongholds in a city, region or even nation; and in fact stronghold has become a common term among Christians. But it's time the church woke up and recognized that there are some strongholds in various parts of the world that are behemoths—and this size alone should cause us to seek deeper understanding and revelation from the Lord on how to deal with them in spiritual warfare.

The Behemoth of Islam

One of the most formidable behemoths in our world today is Islam. Just as communism controlled the minds of millions through its antichrist ideology, so does the religion known as Islam. Islam controls entire nations, enslaving millions of people through its antichrist message. The gospel is kept out by this behemoth, and millions are dying without the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. The church must realize that we are fighting more than a spirit of antichrist and false religion. We are dealing with a behemoth that influences and controls governments, cultures and economies of entire nations.

This religious system has enslaved some nations for more than 1,000 years. It is an oppressive system that enslaves multitudes to its rigid code of religious law. The good news

is that the behemoth of Islam will fall just as the behemoth of communism is falling, and the gospel will be preached to those people for whom Jesus died.

To see that day, however, the church must recognize some of the key attributes of this enemy, which we can glean from Scripture.

1) Behemoth's nature is to reproduce. In describing the physical behemoth of old, Job 40:16 says, "Lo now, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly" (KJV). This verse talks about the strength of Behemoth's loins. "Loins" represent the ability to reproduce and have offspring. Reproduction is a key to having dominion. Whatever or whoever is able to reproduce eventually will have dominion and the ability to subdue. The strength of Behemoth is his ability to reproduce himself and subdue those under his power.

This was the key to communism. From its roots in Russia, the Bolshevik revolution in 1917, it spread to such places as China, North Korea, North Vietnam, Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, East Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Cuba and Romania.

The same is true of Islam. From its roots in Arabia, it spread to countries including Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Turkey, Afghanistan, Sudan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Indonesia, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Mauritania and Niger. These nations are completely or partially under the control of Islam.

2) Behemoth's power is in his virility. The Spurrell translation of Job 40:16 says "his virility [is] in the navel of his belly." To be virile means having the nature, properties or qualities of an adult male—to be capable of functioning as a male in copulation. This is the ability to reproduce—the ability to grow, multiply and subdue. Note also

that this is a spiritual law: “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it” (Gen. 1:28, KJV).

Whatever is fruitful, whatever multiplies and replenishes eventually will subdue. Behemoth’s ability to reproduce gives him the strength to subdue. The political system of communism and the religious system of Islam reproduced themselves in many nations. They became behemoths that controlled the people and bound up nations, preventing them from receiving the truth.

3) Behemoth’s makeup reflects his strength. Job 40:17 says, “He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of his stones are wrapped together” (KJV). This verse speaks of Behemoth’s tail and his sinews (muscles). The New American Bible says, “The sinews of his thighs are like cables.” The quadriceps in the thigh are among the body’s strongest muscles.

In the next verse, the Lord describes his bones: “His bones are as strong as pieces of brass; his bones are like bars of iron” (Job 40:18, KJV). Bones provide the structure for the physical body. The structure of a behemoth is one of strength, characterized by strong bones. The Jerusalem translation says, “His vertebrae are bronze tubing, his bones as hard as hammered iron.” His bones, though hard, are not impossible to break. However it is difficult to break a system that has become a behemoth. With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

4) Despite Behemoth’s size and strength, God is still Master. In Job 40:19, we find a key spiritual insight into Behemoth: “He is the chief of the ways of God: He that made him can make his sword to approach unto him” (KJV). The Amplified says, “[The hippopotamus] is the first [in magnitude and power] of the works of God [in animal life]; only He Who made him provide him with his [swordlike tusks, or only God Who made him, can bring near His sword to master him].”

There isn't a creature God made that He can't control. The Lord, with His strong and mighty sword, can master Behemoth. Every ungodly, antichrist system erected by the devil to hinder the message of the gospel can and will be destroyed by the awesome power of our God! The gates of hell will not prevail against the church. Behemoth's power will be broken, his bones crushed, his sinews ripped, and his loins stripped of power by the might of our God.

5) Behemoth is a tyrant. The New English Bible states, "He is the chief of God's works, made to be tyrant over his peers." The key word here is *tyrant*. Behemoth is a tyrant. Religious, political or economic systems that are behemoths become tyrannical and oppressive. They become controlling and domineering. This is nothing other than the spirit of witchcraft. To control the mind and will of a person, or a people, is witchcraft.

The gospel of Jesus Christ always produces liberty. Behemoths resist the gospel and the truth of Jesus Christ and attempt to keep people in bondage. Behemoth denies religious freedom, fights the existence of the church, and tries to control the church. This can be a tyrannical government system such as communism (which, thanks be to God, is crumbling around the world), or a religious system such as Islam (which also shall fall—glory to God!).

6) Behemoth is full of pride. A few verses later, in Job 40:23, we find a revealing characteristic: "Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth" (KJV). The Amplified translation says, "Behold, if a river is violent and overflows, he does not tremble; he is confident, though the Jordan [River] swells and rushes against his mouth."

One of Behemoth's characteristics is self-confidence. He is large and strong enough to swallow a raging river. Thus, we see Behemoth is closely related to Leviathan. God is using

these creatures as pictures of pride. Pride causes men to rebel against God; all rebellion and disobedience are rooted in pride.

Our confidence isn't in the flesh but in God. Any religion of works is one of self-confidence, but true Christianity is based on salvation by grace with our confidence in the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

Martin Luther and the Behemoth of Religion

No one is known more for preaching this message of salvation by grace than Martin Luther. Yet Luther found himself facing a behemoth when he began to oppose the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. A religious system can become a behemoth when it becomes controlling and oppressive. And the established Catholic church of his day certainly controlled kings, governments and entire nations. The pope's word was supreme, as he was considered to be the voice of Christ on Earth. He was considered infallible and could install, approve or disapprove of kings and rulers.

The Roman Catholic Church had absolute authority in church matters, to establish and set doctrine, to ordain and install ministers (priesthood), to excommunicate members considered heretics, etc. Those who disagreed with the teachings of the church were not only subject to excommunication but sometimes death. Many were placed on "the rack" (a method of torture designed to stretch the human body), burned at the stake or beheaded. The Roman Catholic Church was so large and powerful it affected the politics, economics, religion and culture of most of Europe during the Dark Ages.

Enter one Martin Luther, who is known throughout history as the "father of the Protestant Reformation." He was not the only reformer of his day, but his stand against the behemoth of his day was unprecedented. He was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church in 1521. Those who followed him were

called Lutherans. They left many of the established church's teachings, which they considered false when compared to the Word of God, and began to follow the teachings of the Holy Bible.

Behemoth can become violent when attacked. He uses fear and intimidation to maintain his control. The Taylor translation of Job 40:19 says, "How ferocious he is among all of God's creation, so let whoever hopes to master him bring a sharp sword!" (TLB).

Martin Luther lived in constant fear for his life. There was an edict issued that declared him an outlaw. Legally anyone could strike him dead and not be punished for murder. But the anointing upon Luther caused him to preach and teach the Word of God despite this behemoth of established religion. His message of "the just shall live by faith" (Heb. 10:38) shook the religious system of his day and set many people free from religious error and false teaching.

Conquering Behemoth

God continues his description of the behemoth: "He taketh it with his eyes: his nose pierceth through snares" (Job 40:24, KJV). The Taylor translation says, "No one can catch him off guard or put a ring in his nose and lead him away" (TLB). The New American translation says, "Who can capture him by his eyes, or pierce his nose with a trap?"

This verse shows us the difficulty and impossibility of catching and conquering Behemoth. This stronghold cannot be attacked like others because of the sheer size and magnitude of its strength. This size can include geographical, monetary, political and military strength. It took years to pray and dismantle the behemoth of communism, and it will require the same, if not more, to take down Islam. Yet persistence and patience are necessary in pulling down a behemoth. Prayer, fasting and often martyrdom are necessary to destroy a

behemoth.

It's important to note, however, that man, in his own strength, cannot tame or capture Behemoth or Leviathan. Only God who created them can tame and subdue them. Our confidence is in the Lord of hosts. Our Captain is raising up and training an army of believers who will wage war in the spirit against the behemoths of our day. Do not attempt to face this strongman head-on or alone. You must be submitted under the proper spiritual covering to be effective in the fight. Let the leaders and mature spiritual-warfare ministers in your church lead you in how to pray against Behemoth. Some spirits are beyond our individual authority. (Remember what happened to the seven sons of Sceva in Acts 19:11-20.)

United under the leadership of the God of heaven's armies, we have been anointed and commissioned to pull down strongholds and set the captives free. The Lord is increasing our discernment and understanding of the strongholds of the devil. And as this happens, we will begin to recognize the behemoths of our time and, by the power of Jesus Christ, destroy these massive strongholds of the enemy.

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