

## Who and what is Leviathan?

By Rich Jacobs, M.D.

Read **Job 41**. Note the key creature called Leviathan.

**Job 41:1** “*Can you pull in the leviathan with a fishhook or tie down his tongue with a rope?*” (NIV)

1. Note the characteristics of Leviathan.

- a. He seems to be associated with the “sea” (**Job 41:1, 7** – other verses on this to follow).
  - b. He is more powerful than any other living creature on earth. (**Job 41:9, 10**)
  - c. Flashes of light, fire, and smoke come out of him (**Job 41:17–21**)
  - d. No mortal weapon can slay or harm him (**Job 41:22–29**)
  - e. No earthly creature is his equal for power and terror (**Job 41:33**)
  - f. “. . . *he is the king of all that are proud.*” (**Job 41:34**).
- Does the creature described in **Job 41** sound like any earthly creature? Why or why not?
  - What point is God trying to make to Job by telling him about Leviathan?

2. Leviathan comes from the Hebrew word (*Livyatan*, לִיְוִיָּאֵן), which the *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Koehler & Baumgartner) says means “wreathed or twisted animal”. Brown, Driver, & Briggs says “leviathan” means “serpent, dragon, sea monster, possibly a crocodile or whale”. The Septuagint translates “leviathan” as “dragon” (Greek: *drakon*, δράκων).

3. Read **Isaiah 27:1**.

**Is. 27:1** *In that day the LORD will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, With His fierce and great and mighty sword, Even Leviathan the twisted serpent; And He will kill (Hebrew: harag, הָרַג - destroy) the dragon who lives in the sea.* (NASB)

- What other nouns and adjectives are used to name and describe Leviathan?
- What will God do to Leviathan?
- When will God do this to Leviathan? (Hint: Read **Isaiah 26:19–27:6**)
- Where does Leviathan live? How do you interpret this?

4. Notice that NASB translation of **Isaiah 27:1**, also calls Leviathan the “dragon” (Hebrew: *taniyn*, תַּנִּינַיִם – a venomous snake or serpent), perhaps an interpretation from the Septuagint’s translation of the same word into Greek, δράκων (“dragon”). Now read **Revelation 12:3–17**.

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- These verses in Revelation also speak of the “dragon” (Greek: δράκων). What is this dragon doing in these verses? How do you interpret what he’s doing? When do you think he’s doing these things?
- Describe what this dragon looks like?

### 5. Read **Psalm 74:14**.

**Psa. 74:14** It was You who crushed the heads of Leviathan and gave him as food to the creatures of the desert. (NIV)

- Is there anything unusual about the physical description of Leviathan in this Psalm?
- How does this physical description compare with the one given in **Revelation 12**?
- Do you think these scripture verses are talking about the same creature? Why or why not?

6. Several other scripture verses seem to suggest another name for Leviathan, the dragon, the twisted serpent, is Rahab (see **Psalm 89:9, 10; Isaiah 51:9**). The name Rahab comes from a Hebrew word (רָהַב), which means “arrogant, defiant”.

- Compare the Hebrew meaning of the name, “Rahab” with what God said about Leviathan in **Job 41:15, 34**. Does this comparison support or refute the notion that Rahab and Leviathan are one and the same creature? Explain.

### 7. Now read **Revelation 20:2**.

- From this verse, who is the “dragon”, the “serpent”?
- What conclusion have you drawn about the identity of Leviathan? Rahab?

8. Leviathan was said to live in the “sea”. The Beast of Revelation, empowered by the “dragon” (Satan), was said to live on “waters” (Greek: hydata, ὕδατα) symbolized “peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues” (**Revelation 17:15**).

- If there is a connection between Leviathan’s “sea” and the Beast’s “waters”, what do you speculate it could be? (*Hint*: See **Revelation 12:9**).
- What do think is the relationship between Satan’s power over us and our faith and obedience to the Lord? Explain.