

Job 40:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Lo now, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly.

Analysis

"Lo now, his strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly." God describes Behemoth's massive strength concentrated in its core—motsnyav (מָתְנָיו, "loins") and shorerey vitno (שָׁרֶרֶי בִּתְנוֹ, "muscles of its belly"). Scholars debate whether Behemoth represents hippopotamus, elephant, or symbolic creature. Regardless, it demonstrates God's power to create what humans cannot control. The detailed description invites Job to consider that if this creature's design surpasses human comprehension, how much more does divine providence surpass understanding?

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern texts occasionally referenced large creatures like hippopotami and crocodiles as symbols of chaos that only gods could control. Unlike pagan myths where gods struggled against such creatures, Yahweh presents Behemoth as His peaceful creation, demonstrating effortless sovereignty over the most powerful created beings.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does God's creation of creatures beyond human control humble your pretensions to comprehensive understanding?
2. What "behemoths" in your life—overwhelming situations—must you remember are still under God's sovereign design?

Interlinear Text

בָּשָׂרִים וְאֵלֶּה אֵת אֲבָנָה
H2009 H4994 Lo now his strength is in his loins and his force is in the navel
H3581 H4975 H202 H8306

בָּטָן:
of his belly
H990

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