

4. Hebrew Poetry with Mythopoeic / Mythopoetic Language

This comes as a complete surprise to many readers. The book of Job includes many references, allusions, & word plays from ancient mythology.

Some of these are strangely obscured in the KJV – by means of translation. The ESV reveals most of these.

KJV:	ESV:
Job 3:8 Let them curse it that curse the day, Who are ready to raise up their mourning (לְחַיֵּי לְחַיֵּי?).	Job 3:8 Let those curse it who curse the day, who are ready to rouse up Leviathan .
Job 7:12 Am I a sea (יָם), or a whale (תַּיִם), That thou settest a watch over me?	Job 7:12 Am I the sea, or a sea monster, that you set a guard over me?

Thoughts:

1. Job the man (and the book) was an **absolute monotheist!**

Job 31:19 **If** I have seen any perish for want of clothing, **Or** any poor without covering; **Job 31:20** **If** his loins have not blessed me, And **if** he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep;

Job 31:21 **If** I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, When I saw my help in the gate:

Job 31:22 **Then** let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, And mine arm be broken from the bone. **Job 31:23** For destruction from God was a terror to me, And by reason of his highness I could not endure. **Job 31:24** **If** I have made gold my hope, **Or** have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; **Job 31:25** **If** I rejoiced because my wealth was great, **And** because mine hand had gotten much; **Job 31:26** **If** I beheld the sun when it shined, **Or** the moon walking in brightness; **Job 31:27** **And** my heart hath been secretly enticed, **Or** my mouth hath kissed my hand: **Job 31:28** This also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: **For I should have denied the God that is above.**

Most ANE civilizations were polytheistic with many gods & goddesses.

Closely related to, and compatible with, animism = spirits, demons, sprites....

Some were more Henotheistic = one god, but one powerful god at the top

Still many gods, ranked to some degree, sometimes paired.

Monotheism = only one God

2. The Book of Job **includes** mythopoeic / mythopoetic language.

3. Mythopoeic / mythopoetic language is found **primarily** in poetry.

Books such as Job, Psalms, Proverbs, and Isaiah.

4. Mythopoeic / mythopoetic language in Job is found **the most** in the speeches of Job and God.

Much less in the speeches of the friends.

Note: we are discussing language and not the religion.

Process:

Natural phenomena:	Supernatural explanation → the deification of the phenomena	Natural use of the supernatural language
Phenomena such as sea, thunder, rain, storms, night, day, and eclipses.	Maybe we could call this the personification of phenomena	Vestiges, Debris Potentially exploited as poetry

Cereal every day for breakfast but do we think of Ceres?

Phenomenological language:

Poetry often steals language to capture attention!

יִקְבְּהוּ אֲרָרֵי־יָוִם הַעֲתִידִים עָרַר לַיְתָן: **Job 3:8**

Job 3:8 Let them curse it that curse the day, Who are ready to raise up **their mourning** (לַיְתָן).

Leviathan (Lotan in Ugaritic):

Many levels in this text:

- Many cultures believed that a dragon / monster swallowed up the Sun during an eclipse
- Maybe a play on similar sounding words for day & sea
- A play on “Let them curse” and “ who are ready to raise up”

Job 41:1 Canst thou draw out **leviathan** with an hook? Or his tongue with a cord which thou letteth down?

Job 26:13 By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; His hand hath formed **the crooked serpent**.

Isaiah 27:1 In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword Shall punish **leviathan** the piercing serpent, Even **leviathan** that crooked serpent; And he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.

Psalms 74:14 Thou brakest the heads of **leviathan** in pieces, And gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

Psalms 104:26 There go the ships: There is that **leviathan**, whom thou hast made to play therein.

Revelation 12:1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: **Revelation 12:2** And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

Revelation 12:3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold **a great red dragon (δράκων πυρός μέγας)**, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. **Revelation 12:4** And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and **the dragon (ὁ δράκων)** stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

Revelation 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against **the dragon (τοῦ δράκοντος)**; and **the dragon (ὁ δράκων)** fought and his angels,

Revelation 12:9 And **the great dragon (ὁ δράκων ὁ μέγας)** was cast out, that **old serpent (ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος)**, called the **Devil (διάβολος)**, and **Satan (Σατανᾶς)**, which deceiveth the whole world (ὁ πλανῶν τὴν οἰκουμένην ὅλην): he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. **Revelation 12:10** And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for **the accuser (ὁ κατηγορὸς τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἡμῶν) of our brethren** is cast down, which accused (ὁ κατηγορῶν αὐτῶν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτός) **them before our God day and night. Revelation 12:11** And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. **Revelation 12:12** Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for **the devil (ὁ διάβολος)** is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. **Revelation 12:13** And when **the dragon (ὁ δράκων)** saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

Revelation 12:15 And **the serpent (ὁ ὄφις)** cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. **Revelation 12:16** And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which **the dragon (ὁ δράκων)** cast out of his mouth. **Revelation 12:17** And **the dragon (ὁ δράκων)** was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 13:2 And **the beast (τὸ θηρίον)** which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon (ὁ δράκων) gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

Revelation 13:4 And they worshipped the dragon (προσεκύνησαν τῷ δράκοντι) which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast (προσεκύνησαν τῷ θηρίῳ), saying, **Who is like unto the beast (Τίς ὅμοιος τῷ θηρίῳ)?** who is able to make war with him?

Revelation 13:11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon (ὡς δράκων).

Revelation 16:13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon (ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ δράκοντος), and out of the mouth of the beast (ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ θηρίου), and out of the mouth of the false prophet (ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ ψευδοπροφήτου).

Revelation 20:2 And he laid hold on **the dragon (τὸν δράκοντα)**, that **old serpent (τὸν ὄφιν τὸν ἀρχαῖον)**, which is the **Devil (διάβολος)**, and **Satan (ὁ Σατανᾶς)**, and bound him a thousand years,

Rahab (No, not her!)

The word means...

Job 9:13 If God will not withdraw his anger, The **proud helpers (בַּהֲרֵי)** do stoop under him.

Job 26:12 He divideth the sea with his power, And by his understanding he smiteth through **the proud (בַּהֲרֵי)**.

Psalm 87:4 I will make mention of **Rahab** (רַהַב) and Babylon to them that know me: Behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; This man was born there.

Psalm 89:10 Thou hast broken **Rahab** (רַהַב) in pieces, as one that is slain; Thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm.

Isaiah 30:7 For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: Therefore have I cried concerning this, Their **strength** (רַהַב) is to sit still.

Isaiah 51:9 Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; Awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut **Rahab** (רַהַב), and wounded the dragon (תַּנִּינִן)?

Job 5:6 Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, Neither doth trouble spring out of the ground; **Job 5:7** Yet man is born unto trouble, **As the sparks** (רִשְׁמֵי־אֵשׁ) fly upward.

Job 13:24 Wherefore hidest thou thy face, And holdest me **for** thine **enemy** (לְאֹיֵב)?

Job 1:1 THERE was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job (אִיּוֹב); and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

Job 38:32 Canst thou bring forth **Mazzaroth** (מַזְרָוֹת) in his season? Or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?

Thoughts about mythopoetic / mythopoeic language:

- We all use MPL every day, all day
- We rarely rarely this language as having mythological roots!
- We never~ use this language with mythological meaning
- We would only use this language with mythological meaning intentional

To make a point

As analogy

As a joke

Days:	Months:
Sunday = Sun Day	January: Janus: new beginnings
Monday = Moon's Day	February: Februalia, cleaning out
Tuesday = Tyr's Day (in Latin, the god Mars)	March: Mars, god of war
Wednesday = Wotan Day	April: to open, spring, budding
Thursday = Thor's Day	May: Maia goddess of Growth & planting
Friday = Frige's day	June: Junius, goddess Juno, patron of women, marriage and young people
Saturday: Saturn Day & maybe Shabbat	July: Julius Caesar 44 BC
	August: Augustus Caesar 8 BC
	September: Septem, seven
	October: Octo, eight
	November: Novem, nine
	December: Decem, ten

Job 3:9 Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; Let it look for light, but have none; Neither let it see **the dawning of the day** (בְּעֵצְפֵי־שָׁמַיִם):

Job 16:16 My face is foul with weeping, And on **my eyelids** (עַדְעֵפִי) is the shadow of death;

Job 41:18 By his neesings a light doth shine, And his eyes are like **the eyelids** (בְּעֵצְפֵי־שָׁמַיִם) **of the morning.**