



## Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

July 7, 2021

### DAILY ENCOURAGEMENT DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC By Rev. Maria Szabone Berces



Source: Our Daily Bread

Beloved Carstairs Bancroft United Church Members,

The Our Daily Bread message below reminded me one of my previous sermons. I think it's a big thing, because even I don't remember all of the homilies, I delivered on Sunday mornings. 😊

This particular one was about the size of our God. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> Lent worship service in March, I quoted Rev. Charles Hoffacker: *"Gods come in different sizes. Lent is a good time to consider the size of the God we are here to serve."* ([www.sermonwriter.com](http://www.sermonwriter.com))

To this quote I added the following thoughts, which I believe to be valid beyond the Lenten Season: *"I think he makes a good point here. As we prepare ourselves for the celebration of the Resurrection, do we worship a God, for whom everything is possible; or a little god, who has no power on changing anything in our lives and circumstances?"*

We had elapsed those church year celebrations, and we hope to roll past the pandemic times as well. During the challenges these months brought, what size of God did we encounter? And a more important question: do we *want* to meet the Divine as we have been wrestling with health, financial or any other issues?

I believe – and experienced in my own life challenges – that the words, which were formulated by Moses thousands of years before we were born, are still 'legit': **"Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God."** (Psalm 90:1-2)

During the difficult periods and losses of my life, I could sense the sustenance that came from the Almighty. I felt that the strength I received in those situations came from the **"everlasting to everlasting"** God. So, for me it's sad to hear that many – especially in the younger generations – can't think of the Holy One as their **"dwelling place"**, a Source of safety, support and nourishment. I can't imagine wrestling with my failures or griefs without the grace and presence of the Creator.

Even if we can't see or touch God the same way as we do the physical reality of this planet, we are encouraged to reach out to our Maker in prayers and as we read the Scriptures. When we choose to rely on the One who created this whole universe – stars, huge creatures like the "Behemoth", and us humans - we will agree with David, who wrote: **"As for me, I call to God, and the Lord saves me. ... Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you..."** (Psalm 55:16; 22)

May we all gain assurance that David's words apply to us as well, and that our Heavenly Father is bigger than our problems!

Grace and Peace to You All,

Rev. Maria



## Bigger than Our Problems

*Look at Behemoth, which I made along with you.*

Job 40:15

### READ Job 40:15–24

What do you imagine dinosaurs looked like when they were alive? Big teeth? Scaly skin? Long tails? Artist Karen Carr recreates these extinct creatures in large murals. One of her panoramas is over twenty feet tall and sixty feet long. Because of its size, it required a crew of experts to install it in sections where it resides in the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History.

It would be hard to stand in front of this mural without feeling dwarfed by the dinosaurs. I get a similar sensation when I read God's description of the powerful animal called "Behemoth" (Job 40:15). This big guy munched grass like an ox and had a tail the size of a tree trunk. His bones were like iron pipes. He lumbered through the hills grazing, stopping occasionally to relax at the local swamp. When floodwaters surged, Behemoth never raised an eyebrow.

No one could tame this incredible creature—except its Maker (v. 19). God reminded Job of this truth during a time when Job's problems had cast ominous shadows over his life. Grief, bewilderment, and frustration filled his field of vision until he began to question God. But God's response helped Job see the real size of things. God was bigger than all his issues and powerful enough to handle problems that Job couldn't resolve on his own. In the end, Job conceded, "I know that you can do all things" (42:2).  
– By **Jennifer Benson Schuldt**

### REFLECT & PRAY

**Dear God, I believe You can help me with the things I'm facing today. Help me to be open to Your power and goodness when I feel overwhelmed by trouble. Amen.**

Which is bigger, your worst problem or the God who made everything? How does your view of God affect the way in which you handle problems?

### SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

In the midst of his pain (Job 1–3), Job seeks to understand why he has to suffer so much. Instead of explaining why He allowed evil to exist or human beings to suffer (chs. 4–37), God confronted and confounded Job and asked him if he knew how the world and its creatures were created, controlled, and cared for. Job 38–42 is not an explanation of why man has to suffer, but a revelation of who God is! God reveals Himself as Creator (ch. 38), Sustainer (ch. 39), and Controller of all creation (chs. 40–42). Job didn't need to fully understand God's ways, for no one can (Isaiah 55:8–9). He only needed to humble himself (Job 42:1–5), trust God fully, and fear and revere Him (37:23–24). – By **K. T. Sim**

*Used with permission*