

Dragons:

Deinos (greek. Terrible) + *Sauros* (greek. Lizard) = “Terrible Lizards” by Sir Richard Owen in 1841.

Dragon, *Tannin* (Hebrew). *Tanninim* is plural for Dragons.

Jackal, *Tan* (Hebrew). *Tannim* is plural for Jackals.

Genesis 3:1 refers to Satan as the serpent [*nachash*]. Isaiah 27:1 refers to the Leviathan as a fleeing and twisting serpent [*nachash*]. Job 41’s description of a Leviathan resembles the dragon of history.

Numbers 21:6 says, “So the LORD sent fiery [serpent: *saraph*] serpents [snakes: *nachash*] among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died.” 21:8-9 “Then the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent [*saraph*], and set it on a pole [ensign, sign: *nes*]; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.” So Moses made a bronze serpent [*nachash*], and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent [*nachash*] had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent [*nachash*], he lived.”

JOB:

“Look now at the **Behemoth (STRONG #930)**, which I made *along* with you; he eats grass like an ox. See now, his strength *is* in his hips, and his power *is* in his stomach muscles. He moves his tail like a cedar [tree]; the sinews [ligaments, tendons] of his thighs are tightly knit. His bones [*etsem*] *are like* beams of bronze, his ribs [*gerem*] like bars of iron. He *is* the first [beginning: *reshith*] of the ways of God; only He who made him can bring near His sword. Surely the mountains yield food for him, and all the beasts [living: *chay*] of the field [land] play there. He lies under the lotus trees, in a covert of reeds and marsh. The lotus trees cover him *with* their shade; the willows by the brook surround him. Indeed the river may rage, *yet* he is not disturbed; he is confident, though the Jordan gushes into his mouth, *though* he takes it in his eyes, *or* one pierces *his* nose with a snare [bait, lure, trap].” Job 40:15-24 NKJ

“Can you draw out **Leviathan [*livyathan*]** with a hook [fishhook], or *snare* his tongue with a line *which* you lower? Can you put a reed through his nose, or pierce his jaw with a hook? Will he make many supplications to you? Will he speak softly to you? Will he make a covenant with you? Will you take him as a servant forever? Will you play with him as *with* a bird, or will you leash him for your maidens? Will *your* companions make a banquet of him? Will they apportion [divide] him among the merchants? Can you fill his skin with harpoons, or his head with fishing spears? Lay your hand on him; remember the battle—Never do it again! Indeed, *any* hope of *overcoming* him is false; shall *one not* be overwhelmed at the sight of him? No one *is so* fierce that he would dare stir him up. Who then is able to stand against Me? Who has preceded Me, that I should pay *him*? Everything under heaven is Mine.

I will not conceal his limbs, his mighty power, or his graceful proportions. Who can remove his outer coat? Who can approach *him* with a double bridle? Who can open the doors of his face, *with* his terrible teeth all around? *His* rows of scales [shield] are *his* pride, shut up tightly *as with* a seal [signet ring]; one is so

near another that no air can come between them; they are joined one to another, they stick together and cannot be parted.

His sneezings flash forth light, and his eyes *are* like the eyelids of the morning. Out of his mouth go burning lights [torches]; sparks of fire shoot out. Smoke goes out of his nostrils, as *from* a boiling pot and burning rushes. His breath kindles [burns] coals, and a flame goes out of his mouth.

Strength dwells in his neck, and sorrow dances before him. The folds of his flesh are joined together; they are firm on him and cannot be moved. His heart is as hard as stone, even as hard as the lower *millstone*. When he raises himself up, the mighty are afraid; because of his crashings [destruction] they are beside themselves. *Though* the sword reaches him, it cannot avail; nor does spear, dart, or javelin. He regards iron as straw, *and* bronze as rotten wood. The arrow cannot make him flee; slingstones become like stubble to him. Darts are regarded as straw; he laughs at the threat of javelins. His undersides *are* like sharp potsherds; he spreads pointed *marks* in the mire [mud, clay]. He makes the deep boil like a pot; he makes the sea like a pot of ointment. He leaves a shining wake behind him; *one* would think the deep had white hair. On earth there is nothing like him, which is made without fear. He beholds every high *thing*; *he is* king over all the children of pride.” Job 41:1-34

GENESIS:

“So God created great **sea creatures [dragons: *tannin*]** and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird [flying creature: *oph*] according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good.” Genesis 1:21 NKJ

MALACHI:

“But Esau I have hated, and laid waste his mountains and his heritage for the **jackals [dragons: *tannah*]** of the wilderness.” Malachi 1:3 NKJ

DEUTERONOMY:

“Their wine *is* the poison [heat, rage, wrath: *shemah*] of **serpents [dragons: *tannin*]**, and the cruel venom of cobras.” Deuteronomy 32:33

EXODUS:

“When Pharaoh speaks to you, saying, ‘Show a miracle for yourselves,’ then you shall say to Aaron, ‘Take your rod and cast *it* before Pharaoh, *and* let it become a serpent [**dragon: *tannin*].**’ So Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they did so, just as the Lord commanded. And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants, and it became a **serpent [tannin]**.

But Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers; so the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For every man threw down his rod, and they became **serpents [tannin]**. But Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods.” Exodus 7:9-12 NKJ

ISAIAH:

“In that day the Lord with his hard and great and strong sword will punish **Leviathan** the fleeing serpent [*nachash*], **Leviathan the twisting serpent** [*nachash*], and he will slay the **dragon [tannin]** that is in the sea.” Isaiah 27:1 ESV

“Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in days of old, the generations of long ago. Was it not you who cut Rahab in pieces, who pierced the **dragon [tannin]**?” Isaiah 51:9 ESV

JOB:

“Am I a sea, or a **sea serpent [tannin]**, that You set a guard over me?” Job 7:12 NKJ

JEREMIAH:

“I will take up a weeping and wailing for the mountains, and for the dwelling places of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are burned up, so that no one can pass through; nor can *men* hear the voice of the cattle [livestock: *miqneh*]. Both the birds [flying creatures: *oph*] of the heavens and the **beasts [behemoth (STRONG #929)]** have fled; they are gone.” Jeremiah 9:10 NKJ

“Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon has devoured me, he has crushed me; he has made me an empty vessel, he has swallowed me up like a **monster [dragon: tannin]**; he has filled his stomach with my delicacies, he has spit me out.” Jeremiah 51:34 NKJ

NEHEMIAH:

“And I went out by night through the Valley Gate to the **Serpent [dragon: tannin] Well [fountain]** and the Refuse Gate [heap], and viewed the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down and its gates which were burned with fire.” Nehemiah 2:13 NKJ

PSALMS:

“You divided the sea by your might; you broke the heads of the **sea monsters [tannin]** on the waters.” Psalm 74:13 ESV

“You crushed the heads of **Leviathan**; you gave him as food for the creatures [people, tribes] of the wilderness.” Psalm 74:14 ESV

“You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, the young lion and the **serpent [tannin]** you shall trample underfoot.” Psalm 91:13 NKJ

“Praise the LORD from the earth, you **great sea creatures [tannin]** and all the depths;” Psalm 148:7 NKJ

REVELATION:

“So the great dragon [*drakon*] was cast out, that serpent [snake: *ophis*] of old, called the Devil [*diabolos*] and Satan [satanas], who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Revelation 12:9

Where Dragon [tannin] gets confused with the plural for Jackals [tanim]:

JEREMIAH:

“I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins, a den of **jackals [tan]**. I will make the cities of Judah desolate, without an inhabitant.” Jeremiah 9:11 NKJ

“Behold, the noise of the report has come, and a great commotion out of the north country, to make the cities of Judah desolate, a den [dwelling] of **jackals [tan]**.” Jeremiah 10:22 NKJ

“Hazor shall be a dwelling for **jackals [tan]**, a desolation forever; no one shall reside there, nor son of man dwell in it.” Jeremiah 49:33 NKJ

“Babylon shall become a heap, a dwelling place for **jackals [tan]**, an astonishment and a hissing, without an inhabitant.” Jeremiah 51:37 NKJ

“And the wild donkeys stood in the desolate heights; they sniffed at the wind like **jackals [tan]**; their eyes failed because *there was* no grass.” Jeremiah 14:6 NKJ

ISAIAH:

“And thorns shall come up in its palaces, nettles and brambles in its fortresses; it shall be a habitation of **jackals [tan]**, a courtyard for ostriches.” Isaiah 34:13 NKJ

“The beast of the field will honor Me, the **jackals [tan]** and the ostriches, because I give waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen.” Isaiah 43:20 NKJ

MICAH:

“Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked; I will make a wailing like the **jackals [tan]** and a mourning like the ostriches,” Micah 1:8 NKJ

JOB:

“I am a brother of **jackals [tan]**, and a companion of ostriches.” Job 30:29 NKJ

PSALMS:

“But You have severely broken us in the place of **jackals [tan]**, and covered us with the shadow of death.” Psalm 44:19 NKJ

EZEKIEL:

Dragons or jackals? Possibly originally tannin in Hebrew. Septuagint shows δράκων, drakon in Greek, meaning dragon.

“Son of man, raise a lamentation over Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him: ‘You consider yourself a lion of the nations, but you are like a dragon [jackal: tannim. Septuagint- δράκων: drakon] in the seas; you burst forth in your rivers, trouble the waters with your feet, and foul their rivers.” Ezekiel 32:2 ESV

“Speak, and say, Thus says the Lord God: ‘Behold, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon [jackal: tannim. Septuagint- δράκων: drakon] that lies in the midst of his streams, that says, ‘My Nile is my own; I made it for myself.’” Ezekiel 29:3 ESV

LAMENTATIONS:

“Even the **jackals [tannin]** present their breasts to nurse their young; *but* the daughter of my people is cruel, like ostriches in the wilderness.” Lamentations 4:3 NKJ

While copying the texts, the Masoretes took extreme care to faithfully copy the manuscripts. They refused to make any changes to the manuscripts, but they did write notes in the columns to explain difficulties in the actual texts. They also included what is tantamount to a pronunciation guide, called the *Qere* (from the Aramaic word meaning “to be read”). In [Lamentations 4:3](#), the *Qere* states that it should be *tannim*.²⁰ So the Masoretic scribes copying the Old Testament believed that *tannim* was the proper word here, but they refused to alter any letter of the text. Furthermore, the Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible, completed by Jerome c. 405 AD, renders the word in question as *lamiae*, the Latin word for “jackals.” Apparently, Jerome was in possession of at least one Hebrew copy with *tannim* in [Lamentations 4:3](#).

Using *tannin* here also does not fit the grammar of the sentence, since *tannin* is in the singular form, but the pronoun (“their”) referring to this word is plural. If the original word were truly *tannim*, then the plural pronoun would match the plural noun.²¹ The context of this passage provides another clue that this word should be “jackals” (*tannim*). In approximately half of the uses of *tannim* in Scripture, it is used in connection with “ostriches,” just as in this verse.²² Yet *tannin* is not found elsewhere in connection with ostriches.