



**BELIEVERS CHAPEL**

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Psalm 104

Fall 2021

"The Blue Planet"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Seth, and good morning. That's a good Bible verse to introduce our passage this morning. We have finished the Book of James. We finished that last week, and often I like to take a few Psalms before we begin a new series. And so I've chosen for the first one, Psalm 104. And in a couple of weeks we'll begin a new series in the Gospel of John; but this is a great Psalm. I think I chose it because last year I was reading through the Bible, (I try to do that every year), and I came to the Psalms. And I came to this Psalm and thought, "That's a magnificent Psalm. It needs to be preached." So, that's what I'm going to do this morning. But let's begin by reading it. It's a lengthy Psalm and I'm going to read the whole Psalm, all 35 verses;

Bless the Lord, O my soul!

O Lord my God, You are very great;

You are clothed with splendor and majesty,

<sup>2</sup> Covering Yourself with light as with a cloak,

Stretching out heaven like a *tent* curtain.

<sup>3</sup> He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters;

He makes the clouds His chariot;

He walks upon the wings of the wind;

<sup>4</sup> He makes the winds His messengers,  
Flaming fire His ministers.

<sup>5</sup> He established the earth upon its foundations,  
So that it will not totter forever and ever.

<sup>6</sup> You covered it with the deep as with a garment;  
The waters were standing above the mountains.

<sup>7</sup> At Your rebuke they fled,  
At the sound of Your thunder they hurried away.

<sup>8</sup> The mountains rose; the valleys sank down  
To the place which You established for them.

<sup>9</sup> You set a boundary that they may not pass over,  
So that they will not return to cover the earth.

<sup>10</sup> He sends forth springs in the valleys;  
They flow between the mountains;

<sup>11</sup> They give drink to every beast of the field;  
The wild donkeys quench their thirst.

<sup>12</sup> Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell;  
They lift up *their* voices among the branches.

<sup>13</sup> He waters the mountains from His upper chambers;  
The earth is satisfied with the fruit of His works.

<sup>14</sup> He causes the grass to grow for the cattle,  
And vegetation for the labor of man,  
So that he may bring forth food from the earth,

<sup>15</sup> And wine which makes man's heart glad,  
So that he may make *his* face glisten with oil,  
And food which sustains man's heart.

<sup>16</sup> The trees of the Lord drink their fill,  
The cedars of Lebanon which He planted,

<sup>17</sup> Where the birds build their nests,  
And the stork, whose home is the fir trees.

<sup>18</sup> The high mountains are for the wild goats;  
The cliffs are a refuge for the shephanim.

<sup>19</sup> He made the moon for the seasons;  
The sun knows the place of its setting.

<sup>20</sup> You appoint darkness and it becomes night,  
In which all the beasts of the forest prowl about.

<sup>21</sup> The young lions roar after their prey  
And seek their food from God.

<sup>22</sup> *When* the sun rises they withdraw  
And lie down in their dens.

<sup>23</sup> Man goes forth to his work  
And to his labor until evening.

<sup>24</sup> O Lord, how many are Your works!  
In wisdom You have made them all;  
The earth is full of Your possessions.  
<sup>25</sup> There is the sea, great and broad,  
In which are swarms without number,  
Animals both small and great.  
<sup>26</sup> There the ships move along,  
And Leviathan, which You have formed to sport in it.

<sup>27</sup> They all wait for You  
To give them their food in due season.  
<sup>28</sup> You give to them, they gather *it* up;  
You open Your hand, they are satisfied with good.

<sup>29</sup> You hide Your face, they are dismayed;  
You take away their spirit, they expire  
And return to their dust.

<sup>30</sup> You send forth Your Spirit, they are created;  
And You renew the face of the ground.

<sup>31</sup> Let the glory of the Lord endure forever;  
Let the Lord be glad in His works;

<sup>32</sup> He looks at the earth, and it trembles;  
He touches the mountains, and they smoke.

<sup>33</sup> I will sing to the Lord as long as I live;  
I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.

<sup>34</sup> Let my meditation be pleasing to Him;  
As for me, I shall be glad in the Lord.

<sup>35</sup> Let sinners be consumed from the earth  
And let the wicked be no more.

Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Praise the Lord!

#### Psalm 104

May this time together, as we study this Psalm, lead us to praise the LORD too.

*(Message)* Recently, Jeff Bezos sent actor William Shatner on a ten-minute ride into space. Star Trek didn't prepare him for what he saw. When the actor returned to earth he was emotional. Later, in an interview, he rhapsodized about the experience of seeing the blackness of space all around and the blueness of earth below—which he said was overwhelming. 'The blackness', he said, 'was death, and the blueness was life'; which is true—but why?

Why is this blue planet full of life and the red planet next door completely dead? Every planet we know of is utterly lifeless but this one. Our oceans are teeming with life.

Our continents are covered with life: human life, animal life, plant life, microscopic life. There is life in the most inhospitable places on earth: lichens on Antarctic glaciers and sea worms in 176-degree sea vents. This world is full of life—everywhere. We have air to breath. —Why?

In this scientific age of ours we might expect the smart men who study the universe to have an answer. But I think the statement of one paleontologist, Peter Ward, represents many when he said, "We're just incredibly lucky. Somebody had to win the big lottery, and we were it."

The psalmist gives a very different answer in Psalm 104: God made it. He filled it with life. He enjoys it; and He sustains it. Verse 24 gives a good summary of the Psalm. "O LORD, how many are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all; The earth is full of Your possessions." And the application of the Psalm is, 'The LORD is worthy of our worship and trust.' That's the praise the psalmist gives of the LORD: He is good; He is God; the God who created life and the generous giver of good gifts.

His outline for the Psalm is taken from Genesis 1 and loosely follows the six days of creation. But it's a poem. All the Psalms are Hebrew poetry. It's about real events but it's written poetically; not in the prose of history. So, for example, the psalmist describes the LORD 'clothing Himself in light', and 'opening His hand to feed His creatures.' His splendor is so bright, so great that no one can look upon Him. He is wholly other; and yet He lovingly provides for every living thing. This Psalm was the basis of Robert Grant's great hymn, *O Worship the King*. It begins, "O worship the King, all glorious above, O gratefully sing of His power and His love." The LORD's power and love; that's what we see praised in Psalm 104—a magnificent Psalm.

On the first day God created light. And that is where the Psalm begins, with a description of God, "...clothed with splendor and majesty", covering Himself "...with light as with a cloak." (vs1-2). You just get this picture as He puts on this great garment, this great robe of light around Himself. —That's the poetry. And what that does (really,

from the start), is set God apart from the creation. That's very important. From the beginning, this Psalm sets God apart from the creation. It's different from the ancient religions. This was a kind of revolutionary thought for the nations, the Gentiles.

The ancient religions were nature religions. They were pantheistic. Everything was god and they worshiped everything in the universe; from the trees to the stars and the moon. Well men today, secular men today, in effect do that as well. They view the universe as self-originating. When there was nothing, it became. And it, the universe, is all there is.

The psalmist begins where Moses began, the Book of Genesis, with God, "In the beginning God." That's the starting point: God exists. And this Psalm of creation begins, "Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, You are very great;". The psalmist saw His greatness in His being, that shines forth like light in the darkness. "He is distinct from His universe...", as Kidner wrote, "...but He is anything but remote from it. He made it all."

Verse 2, "...Stretching out the heavens like a *tent* curtain." This isn't an early revelation of an expanding universe, (that's one of the great discoveries that was made in the early 20th century—that this isn't a static universe. It's actually moving and it's moving outward—and it's moving at an accelerated rate.) So this isn't a description of that but it is an interesting coincidence; "He stretched out the heavens like a tent curtain", He created the vast heavens. And I think he's suggesting here; as easily as you might draw a curtain, He did it—created the galaxies and space between. He didn't leave them to function on their own according to the impersonal laws of nature.

That's what some have believed. The deists of the 18th century held that view; that God created the universe like a clock maker, and He wound it up like a great clock—and just lets it tick away on its own. He's not involved; it's all just working its way out. "God exists...", they would say, "...but not for us. We're on our own."

Not at all. According to the psalmist, He takes pleasure in this world and universe. He hasn't left it. He is personally involved in it, and in every detail of it. He sustains it. He keeps it going, filling it with His energy.

Verse 3, "...He makes the clouds His chariot; He walks upon the wings of the wind;" This is poetry to say He is personally, intimately involved in the universe and its workings.

Verse 4 shifts from the natural world to the spiritual, "He makes the winds His messengers, Flaming fire His ministers." Now on the face of it, that seems to continue with the glories of nature. But the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament and of the Psalms, translates this as a reference to angels. And we see that in Hebrews chapter 1, verse 7. The author of Hebrews quotes the Septuagint quite a bit, and following the Septuagint he wrote, "And of the angels, He says", (God says), " 'Who makes His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire.' " And that does follow the Hebrew text more closely.

The word *messengers* is the same word for angels. Angels are messengers of God. They are His servants. So I take it the translators of the Septuagint understood this correctly. The angelic realms exist. Angels are real. Myriads of angels are real: And they are not only His creation, but His servants. The elements and the spirits obey Him. He 'rides the winds like a flying chariot.' He commands the angels to carry out His will. He's covered in light that pierces the night. —Light is glory, and light is life.

Later Paul would write in 1 Timothy 6, verse 16 that God "...alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light..." In Revelation chapter 4, verse 3, John sees God seated in heaven, like precious stones with "...a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance." —The revelation of God's colorful splendor. Before His throne is "...a sea of glass, like crystal..." (vs6), showing His separateness. He's different and distinct from the creation—and He rules it; which should reassure us. We're not governed by blind fate. We're not ruled by chance, not at all, but by the sovereign God, who is a personal God. And this great God looks over us, watches over us. That should reassure us.

Verses 5 through 9 describe God's work of creation on the third day when He made dry land. In its original state, "The earth was formless and void..." That's Genesis 1, verse 2. The Jewish commentator Umberto Cassuto likened it to a lump of clay that a

potter would shape on a vessel. Water was on the face of the globe and God began to bring order out of the chaos by making dry land. You almost get this sense of the potter beginning to form this mass of formless clay and water into something magnificent. And He brings order out of all of that. He said, "...let the dry land appear, and it was so.", Genesis 1, verse 9.

The psalmist describes that with poetic majesty. When God created the earth, he wrote in verse 5, God "...established the earth upon its foundations, so that it will not totter forever and ever." It is firm. This world is immovable. Man cannot destroy this earth. It's destiny is determined by God, not man. He established it and brought order out of the chaos.

Verses 6-9, "You covered it with the deep," (that is ,with the oceans), "You covered it with the deep as with a garment; The waters were standing above the mountains. At Your rebuke they fled. At the sound of Your thunder they hurried away. The mountains rose; the valleys sank down to the place which You established for them. You set a boundary that they may not pass over, So that they will not return to cover the earth."

We love the sea, (I think most of us probably do). Some of us like to take holidays at the seashore. But the ancient Hebrews didn't love the sea. They feared it. It was a place of danger; it was a place of death. No person could live in the sea. It's often pictured negatively in Scripture, as in Isaiah, chapter 57, in verse 20, "The wicked are like the tossing sea."

God controls it all. First he wrapped the earth in the oceans. He put the water on the earth. He did it. It didn't just happen. This was His design. "He covered it," the psalmist says, "with the deep." (vs 6). And then He brought dry land out of it. He did it.

The world is not a great machine, functioning on its own with no maker or designer; God is the maker. Again, He was, and is, intimately involved in it. He created it and He made it livable. God spoke, and the restless waters obeyed. And by analogy, God rules over and tames the chaos that is in this world, as illustrated here in His creation of



it and His control of the primordial seas. Just as He controls that, He controls the events around us and all of life.

But while oceans terrified Hebrews, water is essential to our existence. The oceans are the reason the earth is the blue planet. And it, water, is described as God's gift to His creatures in verses 10 through 13. When the planet was no longer submerged under water, He watered the dry land. 'He sent springs of water in the valleys', (vs10), to give drink to the animals of the field; to the wild donkeys, and the birds.

He takes care of His creatures; and that, the psalmist emphasizes throughout this Psalm. And the lesson of that is one that Jesus took and applied in Matthew chapter 6, verse 26. 'If our heavenly Father cares about the birds, well then He cares far more about you, and He will provide for you. Don't be anxious. Don't worry.' And the conclusion of His homily there, (His exhortation there), is "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Matthew 6:33. God cares about the birds. He cares more about you and He will take care of you. He's faithful to His animals; He will be faithful to His people.

On the third day of creation in Genesis 1, the LORD brought forth plant life. He filled the world with trees and vegetation so that he feeds both cattle and men. He causes the grass to grow and vegetation for the labor of man so that he may bring forth food from the earth. He made this earth fertile, very fertile, to produce food in wide variety, abundances of it; wine, and oil, and fruit.

In this modern age we can appreciate that really even more than the psalmist could. Derek Kidner made that point: "To the modern reader," he wrote, "this planet, with the almost infinite variety of life which it supports, stands out in all the more brilliant contrast to its starkly inhospitable neighbors. And there's nothing like this blue planet."

The next section of the Psalm moves to the next day, day four of the creation, when God made the luminaries—the stars and planets. Emphasis here is on the sun and moon as time keepers. Now that's the glory of it and the wisdom in God's creation; its utility, its usefulness for us. The sun and moon serve us, serve mankind and the animal kingdom.

Verse 19, "He made the moon for seasons; The sun knows the place of its setting." There is regularity to everything. There's regularity to the sunrise and sunset, so that we can plan our day, we can arrange our calendar according to it. We're able to mark time and calculate the seasons for planting and harvesting. The light of day gives man time to labor; and the darkness gives the beasts time to go out hunting. That's verse 20 through 23, "You appoint darkness and it becomes night, in which all the beasts of the forest prowl about. The young lions roar after their prey And seek their food from God. *When* the sun rises they withdraw And lie down in their dens. Man goes forth to his work And to his labor until evening."

God made the animals nocturnal and man diurnal, meaning creatures of the daytime. The LORD did it to establish harmony, and keep both safe from each other; allowing both time to work and rest. Amazing wisdom in the order of things. We can just take it for granted and don't think much of it, but this psalmist was very perceptive. He looked at all aspects of the creation and he marveled over all of it, just the way things are ordered and how things work in such harmony between mankind and the animal kingdom. And so the psalmist saw the wisdom of it and he marveled over it.

In fact, in verse 24 he paused for a moment of reflection, which is the reason for this Psalm. It isn't simply a list of divine deeds and a catalog of wonderful works. It's that, but it's far more than that. The Psalm is about adoring God, praising and worshiping Him for the great and good things He has done—which should create within us a heart of confidence and trust in Him. So he says, in verse 24, "O Lord, how many are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all; The earth is full of Your possessions."

This brings us back to the question I posed at the beginning, the question we began with: Why is this little blue planet in this vast canvass of darkness here? How did it happen? Why is this world burgeoning with life of all kinds, of great variety, and why is there such order to it all? How does life, the smallest particle of life, come out of lifeless matter, (as we're told it has)? How does order result from the chaos of a 'Big Bang', an explosion or, I think it's probably more proper to describe it as, an extremely rapid expansion of an extremely tiny particle that theoretically became the universe in all of its complexity and regularity? Well, I say how did that happen?

The question, in light of what we hear today, would have been risible to the psalmist, as it is to me. Now I'm not suggesting there was no 'Big Bang'. God could have brought things into existence in that way. But the idea that it happened apart from God, that the universe is self-originating, is impossible! Again, the answer that the wise men of this age refuse to believe is present in this book. It's present in the very first verse of this verse, Genesis 1:1, and it informs everything about our thinking and behavior. God did it all, and God is worthy of our praise and worthy of our trust.

After this brief pause of praise by the psalmist, he returns to God's creation in verses 25 and verse 26, and the vast region of the earth that was so unsettling to most Hebrews—but not to the psalmist. Verse 25, "There is the sea, great and broad, In which are swarms without number, Animals both small and great. There the ships move along, *And Leviathan*, which You have formed to sport in it."

That's a description of the fifth day of creation, when God made the creatures of the sea and the birds of the air. He gives special attention here to Leviathan—which is a sinister being in other places. For example, in Psalm 74, verses 13 and 14, Leviathan is a great sea monster the LORD destroyed; He broke its head. There Leviathan represents Pharoah and how the LORD overthrew him in the Red Sea.

And there may be some hint of that here, some hint of the sinister aspect to remind us that God created even His enemies, His greatest enemies. And He controls them all. In fact, He not only controls them all, He uses them all for His good purpose.

He got glory from Pharoah's demise. That's what Paul speaks of in Romans 9, verse 17. And that's true of the greatest of the LORD's enemies, the greatest enemy there is, what Leviathan ultimately represents—which is Satan. In Isaiah 27, verse 1, Leviathan is “the twisted serpent” in the sea.

God controls it all—even the evil one. So we're not to fear. We have nothing to fear with this God as our God. But here the meaning of Leviathan is, ‘Leviathan is not something fearsome. It's a creature. God made the creature’. We don't know what Leviathan is, but the most likely suggestion is the whale. And like all of His creation, it's good. It pleased Him. He made it, or formed it, the psalmist says, ‘to sport in the sea,’; to play in it. The idea seems to be, it's been suggested, that Leviathan is God's pet and the sea is its playground. He made it to play; and He enjoys it. He enjoys watching this magnificent creature play in the sea.

Think of that when you see one of these great blue whales bursting out of the ocean, playing in it, sporting in it. God made them, and a vast variety of creatures in the sea and on the land for His good pleasure. It pleases Him—and that's reason enough. And He takes care of them, faithfully. This is the theme we see all through this Psalm.

And it's all to His glory. You see that especially in the next verses, verses 27 through 30, "They all wait for You To give them their food in due season. You give to them, they gather *it* up; You open Your hand, they are satisfied with good." (vs27-28).

I love that picture. God opens His hand and He feeds His creation, very personally. This is, of course, a picture of the providence of God. His invisible hand guides and provides all of nature so that it lives and thrives according to His will, according to His power. And He's always faithful to provide, to give life and to sustain life.

But life does end. It ends according to His will. "You take away their spirit," he said. Or literally, that can be translated, "You take away their breath," because in Hebrew

the word for spirit and breath are the same, just as they are in Greek. So we could read this, "You take away their breath, they expire and return to dust." (vs29).

But that's not the end 'God's Spirit, creates life', we're told. And, 'He renews the face of the ground'. (vs30). Life continues. From beginning to end, the creation is God's work.

So the psalmist ends with praise to the LORD. He prays that God's glory will continue, because that is the highest end of all things—to glorify God. And he vows, himself, to do that, to glorify God: Verse 33, "I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. Let my meditation be pleasing Him; As for me, I shall be glad in the Lord."(vs33-34).

He will "sing praises" and "be glad in the Lord" because the Lord is worthy of his praises, worthy of his worship. He's sovereign over the natural world. "He touches the mountains and they smoke." (vs32). He created it, He controls it, He filled it with life, with animal life, human life, angelic life. 'His works are many,' (vs24), the psalmist said. They show His wisdom. And every day He proves His faithfulness to His creatures.

But to a naturalist or biologist, to someone who studies nature or to someone who occasionally goes to the country, all this may seem just a little too idyllic, a little too serene. There's another side to nature, to this natural world, that's really not so nice. Things aren't always as pleasant as the psalmist might seem to suggest. It's like the dance of the scorpions: You ever seen that? When the male and female mate, (I'm getting a little risqué here), when the male and female mate, the male grabs the female's pincers in his pincers, and they begin what looks like a square dance. Now how charming is that? Now that's the wonder of nature, that where sometimes even scorpions dance. Is there anything sweeter than that?...The reality's not so sweet. He grabs her pincers to keep her from eating him. Sometimes marriages have their problems.

Well, I see that and I say, "Yikes!" —That's nature, too. That's the other side of it. As Tennyson put it, "Nature is red in tooth and claw." Why is that? Well, it's because of sin. Sin invaded God's beautiful garden, and brought death to all things—from bugs to people.

That end is appointed to man. And no, the psalmist didn't forget that. In verse 35, he ends the Psalm on a prayer for God to correct the problem justly, with His justice, "Let sinners be consumed from the earth And let the wicked be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul. Praise the Lord."

Not everyone of the psalmist's contemporaries saw the world through his eyes; praising God's many works. The world around the psalmist gladly received the food from God's hand but denied His existence—and thanked *Baal* or *Jupiter* instead. And today, men marvel over the universe, and rightly so. And in our day, great attention is given to the universe, and great study of it is made. People devote their lives to that, and that is a worthy endeavor.

We speak of Christianity as having two books; the 'Great Book' and the 'Small Book', (or the specific book, the special book, which is the Bible). But the 'great one', the large one, is the universe. We see God in all of that. It's well worth studying and considering, as the psalmist did.

But these men today who study it, look at it, marvel over it—and then dismiss any notion of a creator as myth. Well the psalmist saw such men as sinners and wicked. And he prayed that they would "be consumed from the earth." (vs35).

Now that's a little disturbing to us, I think, to the way we think and talk. But he wasn't being vindictive. This isn't an angry response. It's simply a longing for things to be put right; for righteousness to prevail. It's really something like us today praying, "Thy kingdom come." Or, as the Book of Revelation ends, "Come, Lord Jesus." Because when He comes He's coming with sword. When He comes He's coming with judgment on the unbelieving world. And so we're praying for that. We're praying that wickedness be ended and righteousness be established and prevail.

And Paul tells us in Romans 8 that the whole creation is looking forward to that day. It is presently under a curse. The ground produces thorns, scorpion stings; and men have to work by the sweat of their face. And so Paul wrote in Romans 8:19 of the "...anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God." And the picture that you get is of the creation stretching its neck out, looking for this day when the redemption will come and the curse will be lifted.

Time and space are presently out of joint, and only the LORD can set it right. And He will do that. But again all of this, as I've indicated or hinted through the lesson, is out of step with the modern world view—at least in the west, which is secular, materialistic. We know the things of this Psalm. We rejoice in the things of this Psalm and all of Scripture by faith. We recognize that. Don't be embarrassed about that. That's the truth. We believe this to be true, and therefore we know it's true by faith. And that's what Augustine said, famously, "I believe in order to understand." In other words, 'I begin with faith in order to know truth.'

It's the opposite of the modern notion that "seeing is believing." That's the scientific process. And so we're dismissed as naïve; and we're dismissed as unscientific. But the reality is, everyone begins with faith. Everyone believes in order to know. All life is lived by faith. Believing is seeing.

I'm quoting a respected scientist and former atheist who wrote an article in the Wall Street Journal. Every Friday the Journal has its religious section—and 99 percent of the time it's not worth reading. But this was a very good article. He titled the article, *Why Atheists Need Faith*. Michael Guillen, maybe you've heard of him or seen him, wrote, "Reason itself depends on faith. Every logical argument begins with premises that are assumed to be true. Euclid's geometry, the epitome of logical reasoning, is based on no fewer than 33 axiomatic, unprovable articles of faith. You can't do math without faith."

So he wrote, "Believing is seeing, because what we hold to be true dictates how we understand everything. Where we begin determines where we will end. Because

what we hold to be true dictates how we understand everything: ourselves, others, and our mostly invisible universe—including its origin."

The materialist who holds to the physical reality around us as the only reality holds that notion by faith. The greatest scientists today know with only relative certainty only a fraction of what is out there. It's believed that 95 percent of the universe is invisible. It's made of dark matter and dark energy; and nobody knows what that is and they're not even sure that it is—that it exists.

So people's views are often changing. In fact, I have another quote from David Martin Lloyd-Jones that was sent to me by a friend, someone you know. Mike Black sent this to me, so I don't have the reference on it, but this reads like Lloyd-Jones, and I'm convinced it's from him: "My dear friends, if your position is going to depend upon what scientists may or may not say, well then, I tremble for you. They have their fashions. They say one thing one day; and it will be denied the next." Well, that's science. Science is always changing. It has to.

The question God asked Job at the end of his great trial is relevant today. It's interesting. All of the Word of God is relevant for today. As ancient as it is, it's absolutely relevant today. And this certainly was when God said to Job, "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?" (Job 38:4). Now that was a rhetorical question. God knew where he was, and Job did, too. He was nowhere. That put things in perspective, and that humbled the great man, Job.

We all live by faith. Secular man's faith is in human reason, which is fallible, and ultimately leads to skepticism—uncertainty. Christians live by faith in revelation, which is divine and infallible and it is preeminently reasonable. Nothing is unreasonable at all about this Psalm; it's preeminently reasonable. The author of Hebrews wrote, "By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible." (Heb 11:3). And then he concludes, "It is impossible to please God." (Heb 11:6).



So Paul wrote that "we walk by faith". (2Cor 5:7). It's faith in the Triune God: The only God who has revealed Himself in His Word, as well as in nature. And revealed Himself as eternal and infinite, all powerful and wise. He demonstrates that power and sufficiency every day in His personal management of the creation so that we have every reason to worship Him, to praise Him, to trust Him. If He's faithful to the birds and the whales, He will be faithful and care for you. That's the great application of this Psalm: Trust the LORD, walk by faith, and worship Him.

But the greatest article of faith is that God is loving and merciful: So much so that He sent His only begotten Son into the world to die for sinners and make them a new creation. He did that by taking our place in judgment when He went to the cross and He died for our sins, to remove them, and remove our guilt forever. We have that. We receive that through faith alone.

If you've not believed in Him, we invite you to do that; it's urgent that you do. In verse 29, the psalmist said of the animals, "You take away their spirit..." You take away their breath and they expire. Well, that is true for us, too. In Daniel 5, verse 23 the prophet told Belshazzar, the wicked king of Babylon, to hear the sentence of judgment on him from the God "...in whose hand are your life breath."

Every one of us breathe our breath by the gift of God. It's His sovereign gift. Every moment of our life is, and He can take it away at any moment. And He will. Look to Him today. As the preacher said, "If you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts".

May God give you that grace to trust in Him. And give all of us the grace to trust in Him and rejoice in His greatness and His faithfulness to us.

Father, we are children of dust. We are weak and unable in and of ourselves to live to do anything that pleases You. We live and move and exist in You. All things do. You supply us with life and energy at every moment of our existence. And we're sinners. We're unworthy of the care and faithfulness You show to us, but we thank You for it. LORD, make us a grateful, thankful people. And that thankful heart should be the fulcrum

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*"The Blue Planet" by Dan Duncan*

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of an active, obedient, godly life. Give us that, LORD. Make us men and women, young and old alike, that live to Your praise and glory. We look to You for that, Father.

Now the LORD bless you and keep you. The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The LORD lift up His countenance on you and give you peace. In the name of Christ. Amen.

*(End of Audio)*